

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Registration Form



This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. 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 entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name PROSPECT HILL SCHOOL

other names/site number \_\_\_\_\_

2. Location

street & number 33 MONTGOMERY ST. not for publication \_\_\_\_\_

city or town WESTFIELD vicinity N/A

state MASSACHUSETTS Code MA county HAMPDEN code 013 zip code 01085

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, 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  
☐ nationally ☐ statewide ☒ locally. (☐ See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Brona Simon  
Signature of certifying official/Title  
Massachusetts Historical Commission, State Historic Preservation Officer

October 6, 2008  
Date

State or Federal agency and bureau \_\_\_\_\_

In my opinion, the property ☐ meets ☐ does not meet the National Register criteria. (☐ See continuation sheet for additional Comments.)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of certifying official/Title Date

State or Federal agency and bureau \_\_\_\_\_

4. 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): \_\_\_\_\_

for  
Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

Edson H. Beall 11.19.08

**PROSPECT HILL SCHOOL**

Name of Property

**HAMPDEN COUNTY, MA**

County and State

**5. Classification****Ownership of Property**

(Check as many boxes as apply)

☒ private  
☐ Public-local  
☐ public-State  
☐ public-Federal

(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 |            |
|--------------|-----------------|------------|
| 1            | 0               | building   |
| 0            | 0               | sites      |
| 0            | 0               | structures |
| 0            | 0               | objects    |
| 1            | 0               | Total      |

**Name of related multiple property listing**

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

N/A

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

NONE

**6. Function or Use****Historic Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions)

EDUCATION: School

**Current Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions)

VACANT: Not in use

**7. Description****Architectural Classification**

(Enter categories from instructions)

LATE 19<sup>th</sup> & EARLY 20<sup>th</sup> C. REVIVAL: Colonial Revival

**Materials**

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation Brick  
walls Brick  
STONE: Sandstone (trim)  
roof ASPHALT  
other

**Narrative Description**

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

(Please refer to continuation sheets)

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## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Prospect Hill School  
Westfield, Hampden County, MA

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### SECTION 7: DESCRIPTION

The Prospect Hill School is a 2½-story brick schoolhouse constructed in 1897 and remodeled in 1919 to add classroom and assembly hall space at the front of the building and create a new façade. Both the original façade (no longer visible) and the 1919 facade reflect the order and symmetry of the Colonial Revival style popular from the late 19<sup>th</sup> through the early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. Although heavily damaged by water penetration and vandalism since its closing in 1991, the school has changed little from its 1919 appearance.

The City of Westfield is located in southwestern Massachusetts, about nine miles west of Springfield and nine miles north of the Connecticut border. The Berkshire foothills form the city's western border. The Westfield River cuts a southeasterly channel through these mountains, entering Westfield at the foot of Mount Tekoa in Montgomery. Within the Westfield city limits, the terrain is less steeply sloped, and the river provides a broad floodplain about two to three miles in width.

The East Mountain Range, a southerly extension of the Holyoke Range, marks the city's eastern border, where the Westfield River cuts just north of Provin Mountain before heading east through Agawam and West Springfield toward the Connecticut River. The tracks of the Boston & Albany Railroad parallel the river throughout its course. The Little River, which runs down from Cobble Mountain in Granville on Westfield's western border, flows west to meet the Westfield in a broad Y. Westfield's historic town center is concentrated between the branches of this Y.

South of the Westfield River is the city's central business district, a dense collection of 19<sup>th</sup>- and 20<sup>th</sup>-century masonry commercial buildings that line Elm Street (NRDIS 2008). From the business district, Elm Street runs north across the river, continuing on toward Southampton as North Elm Street, then Southampton Street (US Route 202). This half of the city, known as the North Side, was sparsely developed until fairly late in the city's history.

Just north of the Westfield River, the railroad lines of the Boston & Albany Railroad and the New Haven & Northampton Railroad intersect, running nearly perpendicular to each other. The Boston & Albany line runs east-west along the river, while the New Haven & Northampton runs north to south. North of the river, the New Haven & Northampton Railroad line is bordered by North Elm St. (Route 202) on the east and the steep rise of Prospect Hill on the west.

The Prospect Hill School is set in a residential neighborhood of modest-sized, wood-frame homes dating from the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, most of them now clad in vinyl or aluminum siding with enclosed porches. A few brick homes are interspersed with the wooden ones, and there are some scattered multifamily homes and triple-deckers in the neighborhood as well.

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The school serves as the focal point of the star-shaped intersection of Montgomery Street, Old Montgomery Road, Crown Street, and Prospect Street. The Prospect Hill School sits just a little to the northwest of that intersection, at the southeast corner of Montgomery Street and Old Montgomery Street. The school is set back on its lot, which is about 1 1/3 acres in size. The school's lot is almost entirely paved with asphalt and is surrounded by a chain link fence. The rear of the lot is densely overgrown, and the terrain drops off steeply to the railroad tracks below.

The Prospect Hill School is a 2½-story, red brick structure with rough-cut sandstone trim, erected in 1897. The original double-gabled west elevation was replaced by the current façade as part of a 1919 renovation and expansion. In its current form, the building is rectangular in shape, with large windows at all floors levels on all elevations. The hipped main roof (originally slate) has been replaced with asphalt and supports two corbelled brick interior chimneys or vents with arched openings.

The front (west) elevation features a projecting gabled brick entry pavilion. The three-bay-wide pavilion has a prominent cornice return with deep wooden soffits, corbelled brickwork in the eaves, and a central fan light framed with rough-cut sandstone and crowned with a keystone. The entrance door is flanked by a window on each side, with door and window bays slightly recessed between brick piers. Second-floor windows are aligned over the door and side windows. The modern glass and aluminum double door is surmounted by a transom. Between the first-floor door and windows and the upper floor windows are plain wood panels. (photograph 2)

The original single stairway leading to the central entry has been replaced by a double concrete stairway, with a low brick parapet wall at the front. On each side of the pavilion, another modern glass door enters from mid-basement level and is surmounted by a modern metal canopy and a window at the stair landing level. On either side of the west pavilion are two windows with rough-cut sandstone lintels and sills. The building's original windows have all been replaced with translucent insulated Kalwall units inserted in the masonry openings. Small awning-style windows below the insulating panels provide ventilation to the classrooms.

The 1919 expansion continues the sidewalls and roofline of the original 1897 design and preserves a consistent appearance. A slight change in the color of the brickwork distinguishes the older portion of the building from the 1919 addition, with the newer brickwork being slightly lighter in color. The building's foundation is also brick, with a rough-cut sandstone water table at the level of the basement window lintels.

On the side (north and south) elevations, the Prospect Hill School is divided into three distinct sections by window groupings. The older portion of the building (the rear, or easternmost, two-thirds)

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has two groupings of four windows with rough-cut sandstone lintels and sills at both first- and second-floor levels. Basement windows are similarly grouped. The newer portion (the front, or westernmost, third) has a similar grouping of five windows on the building's south façade, and three windows on the north facade. These window bands have linked sills and lintels on the first and second floors, offset by a single narrow window toward the front of the building. These windows also have rough-cut sandstone lintels and sills. **(photograph 3)**

The school's rear (east) elevation is symmetrically arranged and features a basement level that is exposed at grade. A triangular pediment with a deep wooden soffit projects over the central section of the rear façade. The entablature is unornamented, except for two parallel grooves in the brickwork. The rear elevation is divided into three sections, with the two sections on either side set in groupings of four windows with rough-cut sandstone lintels and sills. The center bays of the building are arranged as a grouping of three small square windows on the second floor and a door centered between two small square windows at the first-floor level. A large central window surmounts the door. Windows and doors also have rough-cut sandstone sills and lintels. The building's back door leads to a metal landing and open metal staircase. At the basement level, windows are quite large and are aligned beneath the upper floor windows. A door leads from the basement to the outside, flanked by two large windows. **(photograph 4)**

While the building's interior layout is mostly intact, the hardwood floors, plaster walls, and pressed metal ceilings have been ruined by water damage in many areas. The damage is especially severe on the southern half of the building, where ceiling panels have fallen or are hanging and where floorboards have rotted through. Tarpaulins now protect the roof pending its repair, and work has begun to dry out the building and remove the worst of the damage.

The school's front pavilion opens onto a central vestibule flanked by twin staircases with plain square balusters. A paneled double door with frosted glass panes leads from the vestibule to the school's central hallway. Large multi-paned windows of frosted glass frame the door and form the transom over it. The doorway retains its original woodwork with distinctive patera corner blocks, a motif that is repeated in most of the doorways throughout the building.

The wide central hallway opens onto symmetrically arranged classrooms and office space, with one small office on each side of the western (front) end of the hallway, and two large classrooms on each side of the main portion of the hallway. The hallway narrows just before another set of double doors that mirror those separating the hall from the vestibule. **(photograph 6)**

Beyond the doorway is a wide central staircase with turned balusters and heavy square newels with rounded tops. Matchboard wainscoting covers the walls that surround the staircase. Tucked

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underneath and at the rear of this central stairway is another staircase leading to the basement. Another large classroom is on either side of this staircase, for a total of six classrooms on this floor. The hallway has a pressed-metal ceiling with an anthemion band at the cornice. Classrooms also have pressed-metal ceilings, although most are heavily damaged.

Most of the classrooms retain their original paneled doors with frosted glass transoms and heavy molded wood trim with patera corner blocks. Walls are clad in plain wainscoting below the blackboards. The bands of windows that light the classrooms in the newer (1919) portion of the building have no moldings or decorative surrounds, while those in the older (1897) part of the building have wood trim with patera corner blocks. **(photographs 7, 8)**

At the front of the building, the double front stairway that leads to the second floor takes a turn at the landing level and rejoins to form a single central stairway leading to a large meeting room at the front of the building. This auditorium extends across the width of the building, with a stage filling the north side of the room. A heavy wooden proscenium arch with Doric pilasters frames the performance area. **(photograph 8)** The auditorium retains its matchboard wainscoting and heavy double doors leading to the building's broad central corridor. The double doors are similar in design and trim to those in the first-floor hallway, with frosted glass panes and transoms and patera corner blocks. The two classrooms on each side of the second-floor hallway are similar to those on the first floor.

From the front pavilion, a narrow staircase on the north side leads to the attic, which is lit by the large windows in the central gables at the building's east and west ends. The timber framing of the roof is visible, as well as the brickwork delineating the old from the new portions of the building, including portions of the original double-gable facade.

The basement is divided into several rooms on either side of a central hallway. There are three rooms on each side of the hallway: a large boiler room, boys' and girls' restrooms, and three rooms that appear to have been used for classrooms. The brick foundation and bearing walls are exposed in most of the basement with no ornamental woodwork and a limited amount of pressed-metal ceilings. Large windows light all the basement rooms. **(photograph 5)**

While the Prospect Hill School has suffered considerably from water damage and neglect, its Colonial Revival exterior has changed very little from its 1919 appearance, and a significant amount of interior woodwork remains intact. The building has been secured from further damage, and large ventilator fans are being used to dry it out in preparation for renovation.

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### Archaeological Description

While no ancient Native American sites are known on the school property, it is possible that sites are present. Twelve ancient sites are recorded in the general area (within one mile). Most sites are located on riverine and stream terraces bordering the Westfield River and its many tributary streams in the region. While environmental characteristics in the general area represent locational criteria (slope, soil drainage, proximity to wetlands) that are favorable for the presence of Native sites at several locations, the Prospect Hill School property fails to completely satisfy those criteria. The school occupies a level to moderately sloping hilltop location; however, natural soil types have been altered and the property is located well over 1,000 feet from the nearest wetlands. Natural soils on the property were excessively drained and formed on glacial outwash terraces. Successive phases of school construction, however, have resulted in most soils in the area being classified as urban land, where soils have been altered or obscured by urban works and structures, making identification of soil types impossible. The property was also graded when Montgomery Street was relocated and the school was reoriented on the property. Given the information presented above, the small size of the property (1.38 acres), and effects of historic land use, a low potential exists for locating significant ancient Native American resources on the property.

A moderate to high potential exists for locating historic archaeological resources on the school property, although much of that potential remains to be documented. A schoolhouse is reported at this location throughout most of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, and possibly as far back as the 18<sup>th</sup> century. The existing school was built in 1897. Additional historical research, combined with archaeological survey and testing, may identify the complete sequence of school construction on the property, and the precise location of the schools, outbuildings, and occupational-related features (trash pits, privies, wells). In 1737, a school was built on the north side of the Westfield River in the Prospect Hill area. This school was the first "Great River" district school, although the exact location of the school is unknown. By 1794, Great River is identified as one of 16 school districts in Westfield, with a school at or near the site of the present Prospect Hill School. By ca. 1852, the Great River West School is specifically identified at the site of the Prospect Hill School. It is unknown whether this school was the same Great River school identified in 1794 or a new school. By ca. 1863, the "newly replaced" Great River West School (District #8) became known as Prospect Hill, possibly referring to the ca. 1852 school or yet another school. The new Prospect Hill School fronted on Montgomery Street. In 1886, Montgomery Street was relocated and the school moved to face the new Montgomery Street. The property was regraded when the school was moved. In 1897, the present Prospect Street School was built.

The sites of earlier schools on the Prospect Hill School property may contain structural evidence of the school building, barns, stables, and outbuildings. Structural evidence may also exist, indicating some

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features of earlier schools were reused in later school buildings. Archaeological evidence of occupational-related features (trash pits, privies, wells) may also survive. Some occupational-related features may contain stratified deposits from being used over long periods of time and multiple school structures. The presence of some types of occupational-related features is indicated by the fact that in 1889, only three schools in Westfield had indoor plumbing, suggesting a need for privies and wells. At least one well was dug at the Prospect Hill School in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century.

(end)

**PROSPECT HILL SCHOOL**

Name of Property

**HAMPDEN COUNTY, MA**

County and State

**8. Statement of Significance****Applicable National Register Criteria**

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

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

**Criteria Considerations**

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

Property is:

- ☐ **A** owned by 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 of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

**Narrative Statement of Significance**

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets)

**9. Major Bibliographical References**

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

**Previous documentation on file (NPS):****HPCA # 17137**

- ☐ 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 # \_\_\_\_\_

**Areas of Significance**

(Enter categories from instructions)

**EDUCATION****ARCHITECTURE****Period of Significance****1897-1958****Significant Dates****1897****1919****Significant Person**

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

**N/A****Cultural Affiliation****N/A****Architect/Builder****Augustus W. Holton (1850-1911) – 1897 building****Malcolm B. Harding (1885-1950) – 1919 addition****Primary location of additional data:**

- ☒ Massachusetts Historical Commission/SHPO
- ☐ Other State agency
- ☐ Federal agency
- ☒ Local government
- ☐ University
- ☒ Other

Name of repository: Westfield Atheneum, Westfield, MA;  
Conn. Valley Hist. Museum, Springfield, MA

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### HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE

The Prospect Hill School, erected in 1897 and expanded in 1919, is an institutional building that retains integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association. It meets National Register Criterion A at the local level for its association with early modern educational reform. It meets National Register Criterion C at the local level as a prominent example of the Colonial Revival style designed by two local architects.

The two-story, brick Colonial Revival structure reflects the evolution of Westfield's school system in the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries from a network of ungraded wood-frame one- and two-room district schoolhouses to a modern school system of graded regional elementary schools housed in substantial masonry buildings and providing education according to a uniform community-wide curriculum.

The Prospect Hill School served as a focal point for the Prospect Hill neighborhood, which was one of Westfield's first settled areas. Overlooking Depot Square, Westfield's 19<sup>th</sup>-century transportation hub, the Prospect Hill residential neighborhood developed in tandem with the North Elm Street commercial and industrial district below. Initially a district of scattered farmhouses, Prospect Hill became home to a succession of immigrant groups, from Irish to Italians to Poles, whose children attended Prospect Hill School and often stayed on in the neighborhood to become lifelong residents. Prospect Hill residents remembered their school as a "second home," which influenced many former Prospect Hill students to seek careers in education (Skantz, Leslie, "Prospect Hill history recorded by 'Bunch,'" *Springfield Republican*, Jul 17, 1991).

In addition to its role as a neighborhood and community institution, the Prospect Hill School reflects the work of two local architects: Augustus W. Holton (1850-1911) and Malcolm B. Harding (1885-1950). Working primarily in the Colonial and Classical Revival styles, Holton and Harding both made a specialty of institutional projects and were responsible for several of Westfield's school buildings.

### Colonial Period (1640-1790)

When Englishman William Pynchon traveled west from Roxbury, Massachusetts, in 1636 to establish a settlement along the Connecticut River, one of his goals was to establish a fur trade with the natives of the area. The region known as Woronoco or Wauwunockoo (meaning, according to some sources "it is fat hunting" [Dewey, *Ancient Westfield*, p. 2; Copeland, Vol. 2, p. 321], and "the country with windings," according to other sources [Lockwood, Vol. 1, p. 31]) quickly attracted Pynchon's attention.

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Nestled between the Westfield or "Great" River and the Little River and surrounded by mountains, Woronoco was a rich source of hides and fish. Woronoco (which eventually became Westfield) soon became the western outpost of the Massachusetts colony. While the earliest well-documented European settlement of the area took place around 1658, evidence indicates that there were trading outposts in Woronoco as early as the 1640s (Everts, p. 939, Dewey *Ancient Westfield*, p. 4).

The native peoples, the Woronocos and Pochassics, were members of the Algonquin nation and sold furs and fish to early European traders. Salmon and shad were plentiful in the Westfield and Little Rivers, while Woronoco's forests abounded with fur-bearing game, such as beaver. The floodplains and escarpments set in the juncture of the Westfield and Little Rivers formed some of Westfield's best agricultural land (Heyl & Hamberg, p. 2).

During the late 17<sup>th</sup> century, Westfield was primarily an agricultural community, producing crops and livestock for its residents' own use as well as raising cattle, which were driven east for the Boston markets. In May 1669, Westfield was incorporated, receiving its name because the new town was the westernmost settlement in the Massachusetts colony.

Early transportation routes generally followed native trails. The oldest route through town appears to have been the north-south road leading from Northampton to Hartford, which passed through Westfield along the route taken by today's routes MA 10 and US 202. In 1673, the highway to Springfield (now US Route 20) was improved, with a new bridge built across the Westfield River at Frog Hole. Westfield's population at that time was about 150.

Early development in Westfield was concentrated near the confluence of the Westfield and Little Rivers. Settlers cultivated the fertile topsoil in the broad meadowlands immediately adjacent to the two rivers.

In 1671, Thomas Dewey and other early settlers summoned Edward Taylor (1642-1729), a Harvard-trained minister, to become Westfield's first permanent minister. Edward Taylor was a vital force in Westfield's religious life for nearly sixty years. An English-born and Harvard-educated scholar, Taylor was a physician who is also recognized as one of America's finest 17<sup>th</sup> century poets. In 1676, when King Philip's War threatened Springfield's outlying settlements, Reverend Taylor was one of several Westfield residents who protested the governor's order to abandon the western settlement and relocate its residents to Springfield's main plantation on the Connecticut River.

After 1700, settlement expanded outward from the center of the town. Construction of a new Great River Bridge (Elm Street Bridge) in 1753 improved the link between the north and south sides of

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town. (The bridge was rebuilt again in 1800 when it became a toll bridge.) Westfield's population of 1,324 in 1765 had increased to 2,224 residents in 1790.

Colonial Schools

In 1676, Westfield allotted land for its first teacher, Daniel Denton. The earliest schools seem to have been kept in private homes. In 1701, the town had its first schoolhouse, constructed near the meetinghouse on Main Street. A school was established south of the Little River in 1706, first in a private home. By 1716, the southern school had its own schoolhouse as well. Nehemiah Bull, a young minister who came to Westfield to assist the aging Edward Taylor, became the town's grammar school teacher in 1724. The early grammar school appears to have had no fixed location, but was held at different sites throughout the town so that higher learning could be made available to families no matter where they lived. In 1774, the town voted to stop moving the grammar school from place to place.

Settlement of outlying areas was usually followed by the establishment of a district school, whether in a private home or in a building created just for that purpose. By 1731, a school was added at Munn's Brook, and by 1737, a school had been built on the north side of the Westfield River. The latter was the first "Great River" district school. It was the first of the town's district schools to be built in the Prospect Hill area, although its exact location is unknown.

Like most Massachusetts towns in the 18<sup>th</sup> century, Westfield was divided into school districts, with each district managed by a prudential committee elected by the district's residents. Schools were funded partly by monies collected within each district and partly by funds raised town-wide. This policy meant that schooling throughout the community depended on the financial resources and interest of each individual district, so that the quality of district schools tended to vary widely throughout the town. The situation was not remedied until the mid 19<sup>th</sup>-century.

The closing decades of the 18<sup>th</sup> century saw a reconfiguring of school districts and the construction of a number of new schools. By 1794, the town had sixteen districts. In 1818, when town records show a complete list of districts, there were seventeen district schools.

**Federal Period (1790-1830)**

After a late 18<sup>th</sup>-century growth spurt, growth stalled in Westfield during the first two decades of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, with the population remaining stable at around 2,100 residents. During most of its early history, Westfield had relied primarily on agriculture for its income. Historian John Lockwood speculates that the brief check in the town's growth may have been due to a shortage of new arable land. Given the

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mountains hemming Westfield in to the west and east, much of the best agricultural land was probably already under tillage after nearly a 150 years of settlement (Lockwood, Vol. II, pp. 246-247).

Recovery was not long in coming, however. In the early 19<sup>th</sup> century, Westfield began its transition from an agricultural community into an industrial one. The community's new industrial base evolved around three principal products: whips, cigars, and paper.

### Early Industrial Period (1830-1870)

Transportation, as well as manufacturing, increased Westfield's prosperity. In 1822, Westfield's citizens approved the construction of the Westfield portion of a canal that would join the Farmington Canal to create eighty miles of navigable inland waterways opening to Long Island Sound at New Haven (Lockwood, Vol. II, p. 283).

By 1829, the new canal was open from Westfield to New Haven, Connecticut (Lockwood, Vol. II, p. 293), and by 1835 the link between Westfield and Northampton was complete. The new canal brought cheap transportation and gave Westfield a direct link to the sea.

During the construction of the canal, Westfield's population began to change to include more and more new ethnic groups. Irish immigrants were brought in to do the heavy labor of digging and masonry work required for canal construction. Many of them stayed on to work in the new whip and cigar factories (Lockwood, Vol. II, p. 358). The number of Irish residents in Westfield grew to the hundreds, reaching nearly 1,000 by 1850. These new immigrants tended to settle on Meadow Street south of the Westfield River and in the Prospect Hill neighborhood north of the river.

In spite of a brief flurry of initial profit, the new canal never achieved its expected success. It was difficult to maintain and was quickly displaced by the railroad, which used some of the canal beds and rights-of-way (Lockwood, Vol. II, pp. 294-298). While the canal was still operating for north-south transportation, the Western Railroad (later the Boston & Albany Railroad) was building an east-west line in the 1840s, opening service from Westfield to Chester in 1841.

The Western Railroad linked the town with Springfield to the east and Albany to the west. By 1852, the Northampton & Westfield Railroad had been formed to build a new rail line along the old canal right-of-way. By 1855, the Canal Railroad (later the Hampshire & Hampden Railroad, and finally the New York, New Haven & Hartford Railroad) was completed from New Haven to Westfield, although the Northampton branch had not yet been finished. That same year, telegraph service was initiated between Springfield and Westfield (Lockwood, Vol. II, pp. 317-321).

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The coming of the railroads brought commercial development to the North Side. The two railroads intersected on the north, rather than the south, side of the Westfield River, providing transportation to and from all four compass points. The railroad companies built freight and passenger depots in the shadow of Prospect Hill, near the intersection of North Elm and Pochassic Streets.

By 1860, Westfield had a population of 5,055. Westfield's primary economic base was still agricultural, but the manufacture of whips and cigars was rapidly taking over as the town's leading income generators. During the Civil War, the town's industrial base included 22 whip companies, nine cigar manufacturers, four paper manufacturers, a foundry, a distillery, two gunpowder manufacturers, Johnson's organ factory, a gas manufacturer, a machine shop, a steam engine factory, and a carriage maker (Harding, Malcolm B., Jr. "Westfield in the Civil War" in Janes & Scott, pp. 183-184).

Education in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century

As Westfield's population grew, so, too, did its need for schools. One of Westfield's prominent early 19<sup>th</sup>-century educational institutions was the Westfield Academy, established by a vote of the State Legislature in 1793 "for the purpose of promoting piety, religion, and morality, and for the instruction of the youth in such languages and such of the liberal arts and sciences as the trustees may direct." The school was a quasi public-private venture. It received some public funding from the state and the town, but was neither free of charge nor open to all applicants. The Academy was the first of its kind in Western Massachusetts.

With the Academy serving as an example of the highest academic standards, Westfield's early 19<sup>th</sup>-century educational advocates continually sought to bring the town's public schools up to a similar level of excellence. School Committee, and later School Superintendent annual reports document a desire to keep up with the most modern trends in educational facilities and teaching methods and a strong push for excellence and high standards that was frequently at odds with continuing demands for economy from taxpayers.

Although the number of district schools providing elementary education had grown, the town's original grammar school appears to have been neglected. In 1818, the state fined the town for not maintaining a grammar school as required by state law. Until the establishment of the community's own high school, town officials often contended that the nearby Academy fulfilled the legal requirement that the town have a school for secondary and college-preparatory education. The Academy, however, was an exclusive private institution, and the state law required provision of public grammar schools.

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In 1824, Westfield's first School Committee was formed. However, the committee had little authority to do anything but make recommendations, as ownership and control of the schools continued to lie with the district prudential committees for another forty years. In 1828, with the establishment of Boston English High School, a new form of public secondary education appeared; the first public high school in the United States. Westfield's School Committee looked to this new type of school as a model for the town's own secondary education, and argued forcefully (though often ineffectively) for the establishment of a similar school in town (Abernethy, Thomas J., "Education in Westfield 1669-1969, in Janes & Scott, p. 143).

The importance of education seemed especially significant to the School Committee in light of Westfield's growing industrial base. Predicting that New England's agricultural economy would give way to an industrial one, the committee raised concerns that "the natural *tendency* of the increase of manufactures, without any counteracting influence, is to encourage the growth of ignorance and vice." Anticipating that children who once might have spent their youths growing up on farms would soon be spending their childhood and young adulthood tending machines in factories, the committee warned against allowing Westfield's children "to be herded together, like the operatives of despotic countries, with an imperfect school-education, ignorant, alike, of their duties, and their rights." Without a proper education, children in an industrial society would find that "their evil propensities will increase by contact, and they will become, at once, a disgrace to their friends, and a scourge to their country" (School Committee Report, 1836-1837).

The committee bemoaned the deficiencies of its own common schools, noting that a common school education should be sufficient for most people looking to engage in the "ordinary business of the farmer or mechanic." In reality, the committee claimed, the town's schools did not meet even this standard. Conscientious teachers were stymied by having to deal with too many scholars of varying ages and abilities. The committee recommended establishing high schools as a way to separate the beginning students from the advanced and to provide both with a better education. "...[L]et us have *primary schools*. Let not their usefulness be perverted, by making them half-and-half high schools, or half-and-half academies, and, in consequence of such perversion, leaving our youth half-and-half educated" (School Committee Report, 1836-1837).

In 1836, the town had a total of about 480 students, with about seventy pupils per school district. The committee suggested that, by employing more women, who were paid less than half of what male teachers received, the teacher-pupil ratio could be reduced and the school year extended. They recommended removing the older pupils to a high school and leaving the younger students to the care of female teachers. The committee concluded by reminding the town that its per-pupil spending was only about 40% of what most towns in the Commonwealth spent. "Let us not be backward," the committee urged (School Committee Report, 1836-37).

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While the School Committee was pleading for a high school, one of Westfield's most significant educational institutions was being created. Boston industrialist Edmund Dwight had offered a \$10,000 gift to establish a state-supported school for teacher training in Massachusetts. State Board of Education Secretary Horace Mann persuaded the legislature to match the donation, and a Normal School was established at Barre's Town Hall in 1839 (Knight, Adeline, "The State Normal School At Westfield," *Alma Mater*). Presided over by Samuel P. Newman, the Normal School, now Westfield State College, became the first state-sponsored, co-educational teachers' college in the United States. The death of its president in 1841 put the school into a tailspin and caused its closing. A statewide search began for a new site that was more convenient to rail lines and that could garner matching funds from the host community. Westfield bid on the school, led by Emerson Davis, pastor of the First Congregational Church, former principal of Westfield Academy, and School Committee member, and attorney William Gelston Bates. Davis and Bates won their case, and the new school opened in 1844, sharing quarters with Westfield Academy, and supervised by Davis.

Throughout its history, the State Normal School worked closely with Westfield's public schools. In 1846, the construction of the new State Normal School facility on Washington Street included a "Model School" for practice teaching. About 75 Westfield children from the ages of four to sixteen were taught there, with the town paying the State \$1,500 for the cost of managing the model school. A series of model schools, also called observation schools, practice schools, or training schools, were operated by the Normal School through the 19<sup>th</sup> and well into the 20<sup>th</sup> century, providing practice teaching opportunities to Normal School students, while relieving the Westfield public schools of a number of surplus pupils.

In 1840, the School Committee won over the town's voters to the idea of a high school. Construction plans for the new town hall in 1837 had included provisions for a high school, but the plans do not appear to have been carried out until 1840, when the community voted to finish a room in the new town hall for high school use. The school seems to have been short-lived, however, or it did not live up to expectations. In its 1854-55 report, the School Committee once again complained of the lack of an adequate high school in town and worried about the condition of the town's primary schools.

The committee remarked: "It is evident that our schools are not what they should be...There is nothing attractive about many of our school houses; the location of some of them is very unpleasant; they are small and inconvenient...We recommend that our school system be re-modeled, modernized and adapted to the wants of the age, which can be done, and when done, it will make them more efficient" (School Committee Report, 1854-55).

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The committee argued for a break from the traditional one- and two-room practice of schooling, in which children of all ages and abilities were thrown together with only one teacher to deal with them all:

It has been found by experiment in many towns in the state, that the grading of the schools imparts new life and vigor, especially in those that are required by law to sustain a High School. We recommend, therefore, that first of all, provision be made for a High School, free, like all the others, and open to all the children that have made certain specified attainments at the lower schools...

There should be at least, three grades of schools; (1.) The primary school, in which only the first rudiments shall be taught; (2.) The Intermediate, in which they shall be advanced as far as they now are in our best schools; and (3.) The High School... (School Committee Report, 1854-55, p. 1)

The committee also lobbied for an end to prudential committee management of district schools, which made it impossible to ensure a uniform education for all students in the community. The committee concluded its report by recommending the establishment of a high school, the hiring of teachers by the School Committee rather than the prudential committees, and the grading of schools wherever practicable.

The Westfield School Committee's concerns reflected the recent passage of Massachusetts' first compulsory attendance act in 1852, the result of State Board of Education Secretary Horace Mann's efforts to improve education statewide. The new law required children between the ages of eight and fourteen years old to attend at least 12 weeks of school each year, with six of those weeks to be consecutive. (In 1873, the law was updated to require 20 weeks of attendance; truant officers were appointed to enforce the new regulations.)

At the time of the School Committee's report, the Prospect Hill School was one of two schoolhouses in the Prospect Hill/Union Street area. The two schools were known as Great River West and Great River East. The Great River West School, located on the Prospect Hill School site, may very well have been one of those "unpleasant...small and inconvenient" schoolhouses.

The two-room, wood-frame schoolhouse had 76 pupils, split into two groups by age during the summer session. Three teachers -- Nancy W. Shepard, Laura E. Fowler, and Maria Dewey -- managed the scholars, who included "two or three troublesome boys." The school was operated at a cost of \$247.44 for the year, or about \$3.25 per pupil. Great River West School also housed one of Westfield's earliest

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school libraries. In addition to the subscribers-only Westfield Social Library, two school libraries were set up in Westfield: one on Union Street and one at the Great River West School, where one of the teachers served as librarian (School Committee Report, 1854-55). (The two school libraries were eventually consolidated and given to the Street Improvement Society on Union Street.)

In 1855, the town appropriated \$1,000 to set up a room in the Town Hall basement for the high school, which ran for two eleven-week terms. That year, there were 920 students in the town's public schools. The School Committee reiterated its recommendation that the Prudential Committees no longer select teachers, but that they yield that task to the town School Committee.

In 1855-1856, the number of pupils at Great River West had gone down. Only 58 children studied there, at a cost of \$203. The division of the Great River district into western and eastern schoolhouses had apparently been unpopular with North Side residents, although the School Committee's report does not specify the causes of the dispute. The report simply stated: "The location of the school house has been and still is the occasion of much friction in this district." Perhaps both schools were in bad shape, and the committee sought to consolidate the two to carry out its goal of creating a graded school. The committee recommended: "If Districts No. 7 and 8 were again united in one, and a good house was erected on Union St., having a primary and grammar school in the same building, it would put an end to many evils that now exist" (School Committee Report, 1855-56, p. 10). The Committee would struggle for 40 years to see its proposal enacted.

In 1861-1862, a total of 926 scholars attended the town's schools. The School Committee wanted to modernize all schools with the purchases of globes, blackboards, crayons, and maps, but lamented the absence of even such basics as "the water pail and dipper." Rather sardonically, the committee noted that the high school and a new schoolhouse at West Farms were "the only improvement to be reported...other than that which is at work in the natural progress of decay..."

With rather satirical optimism, the committee noted that "...the increasing dilapidation of the school-houses of some of our largest districts we are obliged to accept as the most cheering evidence that something will finally have to be done." The committee went on to give a scathingly humorous description of the state of the district schools before recommending that a town-wide plan be developed for modernizing or replacing decrepit schoolhouses. The committee strongly recommended grading the schools to prevent "scholars of eighteen or twenty years of age" sitting in the same class "with those of four or five" (School Committee Report, 1861-62).

The committee continued to complain of district-level hiring of teachers and school management, which led to many inequalities among the district schools. The committee again asked the town to permit

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town-wide management of schools by the committee. With the present system, not only were there no uniform hiring standards, but also no uniform school year. Length of school terms ranged from 15 to 41 weeks.

In the Great River West district (Prospect Hill), the School Committee noted problems with overcrowding. "Over Great River, tired of crowding seventy-five scholars into a house built for twenty-five and it is to be hoped somewhat affected by the evident consequences, they are taking steps towards building a new house, and by way of making it easy, it is proposed to divide the district." Attendance at Great River West, the report stated, had been reduced by sickness, which was "clearly traceable to the foul atmosphere of an over-crowded school-room." The committee itself, however, did not favor separation. Instead, they again recommended joining the North Side schools into a single graded school with older and younger scholars taught in separate classrooms (School Committee Report, 1861-62).

In 1863, the district management of schools was finally replaced by town-wide management. The committee succeeded in lengthening the school year from six or seven to nine months, and standardized the opening and closing days as well. The quality of schools had been brought up to a similar level throughout the town, with the committee noting that children "in every part of the town have equal advantages." There was, however, the problem of surrounding towns drawing "away our teachers by offering them higher wages" (School Committee Report, 1863-64).

The newly replaced Great River West School (District #8) became known as Prospect Hill, which was the name commonly used by neighborhood residents. Great River East [District #7] became Union Street School. The school had 97 pupils, with one primary class, one intermediate class, and one class of mixed level students (School Committee Report, 1865-1866).

In 1866, Westfield had 1,116 students under the age of 15 attending its schools, with 25 district schools taught by 28 teachers. Attendance had improved, the committee was requesting appropriations to raise teacher salaries to a level competitive with other towns, and "there has been less corporal punishment than formerly." Suspension rather than switching was beginning to be used for disciplinary problems. Although education at the high school level was praised, the school's quarters needed improvement. The grading of schools had become a success, with each grade specializing in a different segment of the child's education.

That year, the Prospect Hill School lot was improved with a covering of topsoil and grading, and fencing was proposed for the next year. The school had three teachers at the intermediate and primary levels and one assistant to manage one hundred pupils. In 1867, the school received a new stove, and the school's old wood-burning stove was moved to the Town Hall.

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By 1867, Westfield's educational situation had changed so much over the previous generation that the School Committee commented with pride: "[S]uch is the esteem in which our schools are regarded abroad, that many persons move into the town to avail themselves of their advantage, while others manage to send in their children, if they do not come themselves" (School Committee Report, 1866-67).

In its 1868-69 report, the committee requested funds to paint all the wood-frame schoolhouses in town, since they had not been painted since the abolition of the district management system. The high school had become a four-year institution and graduated its first regular class that year. The Prospect Street School by then had 41 students in its intermediate class and 50 in its primary class. It had received substantial repairs and improvements totaling \$4,646 that year.

The town's 1869-1870 School Committee report reflected on the controversial decisions to abolish the district school management system in favor of town-wide management and to tax property to pay for schools, and noted that the decisions had proven wise. "Parents are flocking here for the education of their children, and many who come here for a temporary residence only, find it for their interest to make Westfield their permanent home." The funding requested for painting schoolhouses had been granted, and workers were beginning to repair the Academy building for the high school's use (School Committee Report, 1869-1870).

### Late Industrial Period (1870-1910)

By 1870, Westfield had a population of 6,679, with nearly 15% of them foreign-born. The town's population had tripled in the previous hundred years. Business districts on both the north and south side of the river did a brisk trade. The 1873 Westfield Directory proudly proclaimed, "A large number of stores, representing diversities of trade, give its business streets a city aspect, and everything betokens thrift and enterprise" (p. 5).

In December 1878, a heavy snowfall followed by a twelve-hour rainstorm swelled the Westfield River. The dike along the river collapsed in several places, sending floodwaters rushing through downtown Westfield, covering an area bounded by School Street, the Westfield River, Elm Street, and Charles Street with three to ten feet of water.

The town recovered, however, and through the 1880s, Westfield continued to grow. The Great River Bridge was once again rebuilt, and a new dam and dike constructed to provide waterpower to the factories on the river's banks. Telephone lines were installed in 1880. The 1880-1881 *Westfield Directory* describes the town in glowing terms:

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The village is a lively bustling and thriving place, and wears an air of solid thrift and substantial comfort, while its broad, handsome and well shaded avenues -- thickly adorned with stately elms, make it, especially in the mild seasons of the year, a delightfully inviting retreat.

...Westfield is not surpassed by any other village of its size in New England for natural beauty, business enterprise, and congenial society -- all of which combine to give promise to a bright and prosperous future (p. 6).

The 1880s saw several new groups of immigrants moving to Westfield. Bohemian Czechs and Slovaks from South and Central Europe came to America, fleeing conscription in the Austrian Empire's military. Many of them found employment in the tobacco industry, either on farms or in factories. Czech-Americans established their own Bohemian Hall athletic club on Meadow Street. In 1888, Lithuanians joined the Czechs and Slovaks looking to escape religious or political persecution under either Austrian or Russian rulers. The next year, Westfield's first Polish émigré arrived to work on a tobacco farm. Like the early Irish, many of the Polish immigrants settled in the Meadow Street area. Others moved to the north side of town, near the factories where they worked. Prospect Hill residents found jobs in the factories and shops along North Elm Street.

Westfield's downtown business district continued to grow through the 1890s. The 1895 directory conjures up an image of a bustling, diverse retail center:

It will be sufficient to say that the retail trade of Westfield meets all the requirements of its rapidly-growing population, so that it will not be found necessary to go outside of its corporate limits for the necessities or luxuries of life, which are furnished at the lowest New York and Boston prices (p. 89).

As the 19<sup>th</sup> century closed, the "bright and prosperous future" that had been predicted in the 1880-81 directory was firmly grounded in industry, rather than agriculture. In 1897, Westfield added bicycle manufacturing to its industries, becoming home to the Pope Manufacturing Company, which eventually became the Columbia Manufacturing Company. Pope originally made bicycles and motorcycles, but quickly began to specialize in bicycles. The Woronoco Cycle Company also took advantage of the turn-of-the-century cycling craze.

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### Education and the new Prospect Hill School

As it had periodically before, the School Committee in 1870 once again railed against truancy, citing the Commonwealth's recently passed Truant Laws, which required parents of children fourteen years of age and under to send them to school or be fined up to \$20. If appealing to their wallets wasn't sufficient, the committee also appealed to parents' religious sentiments. "Learning," the committee reminded its readers, "is the handmaid of Christianity." Truants, the committee reminded its readers, fill "our jails and penitentiaries; this class is a moth upon the industry of others, a dead weight upon society."

With one-sixth to one-fifth of its student population chronically absent, the committee advocated removing control of truant students from their parents and handing it over to town or state authorities. Another method for dealing with parents unwilling to participate in the education of their children was for the town to purchase and distribute schoolbooks. Previously, parents had been responsible for buying their children's books, although at times the committee had purchased books wholesale to provide to students at a discount. In the 1870-1871 report, however, the committee recommended that the town take over the purchase of schoolbooks. It would take another fourteen years, however, before the town finally began providing free textbooks to students in 1884, in response to a new state requirement.

At Prospect Hill, a well had recently been dug to supply water to the school, "probably the deepest and most expensive one in town." It was the first in a series of wells that were provided for schoolhouses throughout the town (School Committee Report, 1870-1871).

In 1871-72, Westfield had 1,212 children attending school. The town's schools had grown to such an extent that the committee recommended hiring a School Superintendent. Two members of the committee opposed this step as premature, objecting to the expense of hiring a person with the proper credentials, and fearing that "an old political hack; broken down minister, lawyer, doctor or teacher, would seek and often obtain the position" (School Committee Report, 1871-72). The committee majority persisted in its request for nearly twenty years before the town finally approved hiring George H. Danforth as the town's first school superintendent in 1889.

In 1875, the School Committee made its first attempt at creating a uniform town-wide curriculum. A set of rules and regulations and course of study was published for the town's teachers. The committee challenged a recent town meeting recommendation to reduce teacher salaries. The committee conducted a study of teacher salaries across the state and concluded that the wages of Westfield's faculty were well below the state average (School Committee Report, 1875-76). The issue of teacher compensation was an annual source of debate for the community, with school committees and superintendents constantly pleading for higher wages to attract and keep talented teachers, and town residents and officials repeatedly denying those requests.

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The old Prospect Hill School was in adequate, though not ideal, condition in the 1870s. According to the 1876-77 School Committee Report, "The house on Prospect Hill is not a 'thing of beauty,' the yard is unfenced, but the interior arrangements are of tolerable convenience and comfort; paint and white wash, with slight repairs, will suffice for the present needs." Apparently teachers often took on janitorial duties to supplement their teaching salaries. The School Committee's financial report shows that Prospect Hill teacher Mrs. F. A. Dewey earned extra money by cleaning the school (School Committee Report, 1876-1877).

By 1880, Prospect Hill School's slate roof was leaking and needed to be re-laid, and blackboards needed to be re-slatted (School Committee Report, 1880-81). In 1886, the relocation of Montgomery Street left the Prospect Hill School sitting on the edge of a steep gravel bank and facing the wrong way. The old wooden building was moved to orient it along the new road, and the site was re-graded. The \$1,300 project also paid for the school to be repaired and painted. The re-grading and landscaping provided the school with an acre and a half of tree-shaded land (School Committee Report, 1886-87).

State and local laws relating to school attendance reflected concerns for both public safety and limited concerns for child labor. By 1890, all students were required to have vaccination certificates and were not to attend school if they had a contagious disease. All children from eight to fourteen years old were required to attend 30 weeks of school each year. Ten absences unrelated to illness were permitted; parents who kept their children out of school more than ten days could be fined up to \$20. Children under thirteen could not work in factories, shops, or stores while school was in session (when school was out, however, there were no restrictions on child labor). Children under the age of sixteen needed an "employment ticket and certificate" to work, which could only be obtained with the permission of the child's father. Illiterate children under the age of fourteen could not work at all unless they also attended school, either in the day or evening.

By the 1890s, Westfield's public school system was once again stretched to its limits. In 1890, Westfield had a population of 9,805, with a school-age population of 1,590. The student population had increased an average of about 50 students per year over the previous five years. Additional desks were crammed into existing schools to accommodate additional pupils, and students were transferred from crowded schools to less crowded ones. Superintendent G. H. Danforth noted that it was only the opening of the Model School at the State Normal School that relieved some of the pressure. The school system was in a crisis. While the student population was growing, appropriations for schools had decreased every year from 1892 to 1894. The committee presented their dilemma thus:

We recognize the need of rigid economy in view of the heavy expenses necessarily incurred in the administration of town affairs, but at the same time we realize that it is false economy to endanger the health of our children and to limit the efficiency of our schools by crowding more pupils in a building than sanitary laws allow...We therefore

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recommend the immediate erection of a six-room building on the north side of the river, in accordance with general plans which we shall be ready to present at the adjourned town meeting in April (School Committee Report, 1894-95, p. 9).

At the 1896 town meeting, the town declared its agreement with the School Committee and Superintendent Danforth. \$18,000 was appropriated for an eight-room schoolhouse (the new Prospect Hill School) on the north side of the river. A building committee of five members was appointed. The selected architect was Augustus W. Holton (1850-1911) of Westfield, "who has given careful and conscientious supervision to the erection of the building." Herder C. Wood (d. 1941) of Westfield was hired as the building contractor, with Thomas Little (1839-1914) as masonry subcontractor. Lambson & Rothery provided woodwork and furnishings, and Westfield merchants Snow & Hays supplied curtains.

After some initial debate over the building's site, construction began. The School Committee expected that the new school would "be the best school building, outside of the High School, in the Town, and from its location, upon the elevation where it stands, will be conspicuous as a testimonial to the generosity of the citizens of Westfield and of their loyalty to her schools." The new school was expected to seat 294 students from the Prospect Hill and Union Street districts, for an average of about thirty-seven students per classroom (School Committee Report, 1896-97, p. 6).

Augustus W. Holton was one of Westfield's most prominent architects, and appears to have learned his trade partly through working as a carpenter's apprentice and partly through self-training. Born in Northfield, Massachusetts, in 1850, Holton came from a family with a long history in New England. Holton's father was a farmer and a carpenter. Following in his father's footsteps, Holton apprenticed as a carpenter when he was seventeen, learning from Jonathan Turner of Keene, New Hampshire. Upon turning twenty, Holton bought out Turner's business, running it for a short while before moving to Springfield, Massachusetts, where he continued as a carpenter for about two years. In 1872, Holton moved to Westfield, where he worked for furniture maker C. K. Lambson and at the Johnson organ factory. He moved on to work for mason T. J. Green before setting up his own office in the Parks Block on Elm Street.

Holton was active in town government, serving as Assessor in 1894 and as a School Committee member from 1904 to 1910. He was also a director of the Westfield Co-operative Bank and chairman of the Security Committee. According to the profile of him written for *Biographical Review*, "He was gifted by nature with great mechanical ability and the quick eye and artistic perceptions of one born to the trade; and during the years he has been engaged in his chosen work he has made a constant and thorough study of the art of building, and has proved himself a competent and skilled workman" (*Biographical Review*, p. 83). He specialized in institutional and commercial buildings, with projects that

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included the Colonial Revival Pine Street School in Northfield (now the Northfield Historical Society Museum, ca. 1903, NR); the Colonial Revival Deacon Elwin Hills House (26 College Highway, Southwick, 1906); the Romanesque Revival Ashley Street School (Westfield, 1898; Holton featured this school in many of his advertisements in the Westfield City Directory); the Romanesque Revival Saint Mary's Parish School (1898, Bartlett Street, Westfield); the Lozier Auto Plant (Cycle Street, Westfield, ca. 1900); the Italianate ca. 1900 Bismarck Hotel (16 Union Ave., Westfield); the Renaissance Revival Westfield YMCA (105-109 Elm Street, ca. 1900, NRDIS), and his own elaborate Italianate house at 71 Orange Street (Westfield, ca. 1880), described in *Biographical Review* as "a very pleasant, modern-built residence" (p. 84).

Builder Herder Cutler Wood (d. 1941) was one of the most prosperous contractors in western Massachusetts. In addition to the Prospect Hill School, he built Drury High School in North Adams, the North Adams Post Office, Westfield's Ashley Street School, and the Granville Library. Besides his Westfield operation, he set up a contracting business in Portsmouth, Rhode Island. Like Holton, Wood was active in town affairs, serving on the Board of Assessors from 1925 to 1938. During his tenure on the Board, Wood was credited with creating a comprehensive map of all properties in the city (*Springfield Daily News*, 12 Feb 1941, p. 22).

Mason Thomas Little (1839-1914) was a Brooklyn native who moved to Westfield with his family at the age of thirteen. He apprenticed with Westfield mason and brick manufacturer L. B. Walkley until the Civil War, when both Walkley and Little enlisted in the Union Army. Little served on Westfield's town Appropriation Committee and on the Board of Water Commissioners and was a director of the Westfield Power Company and the Westfield Co-operative Bank (*Springfield Union*, 25 Jul 1919, p. 4).

The new Colonial Revival Prospect Hill School was 2½ stories in height, with a hipped roof and twin gabled pavilions at the front façade. A slightly recessed entryway between the pavilions was shaded by a small columned and pedimented portico. The brick building was trimmed with rough-cut sandstone water table, lintels, and sills. The school opened in time for the 1897-1898 school year, with a student body of 300 occupying seven of the eight new rooms. Seven teachers were in charge of classes from grade one to nine.

The School Committee concluded: "Never in the history of our schools have they held a higher place in the estimation of our people than at present, and never have they been more worthy of it" (School Committee Report, 1897-98, p. 7). The workmanship in the new school was not exemplary, however. In 1901, defective ceiling plaster in the new school needed replacement. Architect Holton was called back to take care of the work, along with mason Thomas Little. The next year, it was discovered

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that the sewer line had been improperly laid out, and had to be replaced at a cost of about \$100. In 1907, the school had more problems with defective plaster ceilings, which were replaced with metal ceilings.

Superintendent Danforth saw the new Prospect Hill School as the beginning of the transformation of Westfield's public school system from a network of ungraded one- and two-room wood-frame schoolhouses packed with students of all ages and levels to a smaller group of consolidated graded schools with substantial masonry construction and small class sizes. In his report for 1896-97, the Superintendent outlined his standards for classroom size and level; he wanted no more than two grades to a room, with no more than 45 pupils per room. He proposed replacing all one- and two-room schoolhouses with larger structures of at least four rooms, and for kindergartens to be established (School Committee Report, 1896-97, p. 20).

Superintendent Danforth envisioned Westfield's schoolrooms as more than utilitarian spaces. Space, light, and ventilation were important, he argued, but so was beauty. Schools should do away with the "non-artistic and often positively ugly school room of the past." Not only fine woodwork in trim and desks (perhaps like that provided by Lambson at the Prospect Hill School), but "artistic treatment" of walls and ceilings was called for with "harmonious colors suited to the conditions of light being substituted for the plain white and for the more objectionable crude coloring which sometimes displaced it. Add good pictures and your school rooms may become positively beautiful, and therefore more useful in the best sense" (School Committee Report, 1896-97, p. 24). Prospect Hill's spacious, high-ceilinged rooms, well-lit by banks of windows, no doubt met with his approval.

In 1900, with a total population of 12,310, Westfield had 2,068 children between the ages of five and fifteen. A total of 1,902 of those children attended public schools, 257 went to parochial schools, and 149 went to the Model School at the State Normal School. The town had 22 schoolhouses with a total of 74 rooms. One hundred and eight students went to evening school, with 75 of them over the age of fifteen. In 1900, Westfield expended \$45,499.57 in tax revenues on its public schools, placing it roughly in the middle of spending for towns of similar size throughout the state.

That year (1900), School Superintendent Danforth was succeeded by Stanley H. Holmes. With the assistance of the State Normal School, Holmes instituted a program to standardize the curriculum for schools throughout town, using the Normal School's Model Training School curriculum as a prototype. He recommended creating a school lunch program. He proposed further consolidation of rural districts, with students from Pochassic School to be sent to Prospect Hill and East Farms students shifted to Middle Farms and Prospect Hill. Prospect Hill now had a kindergarten, with two teachers in charge of the class (School Committee Report, 1900-01).

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In 1902, just five years after opening and two years after getting its kindergarten, Prospect Hill was already crowded. Its kindergarten class moved to a rented building on Columbia Street, off North Elm Street. Even without the kindergarten, the school was above its capacity, with classes ranging from 27 to 54 students, for a total of 363 pupils (School Committee Report, 1902-03).

In 1902, Superintendent Holmes looked back with pride on improvements made the previous year. Total expenditures from all sources for schools had tripled in the two decades from 1880 to 1902, going from \$19,122.86 to \$61,797.60, with the town spending \$16.45 per student in 1880 and \$33.87 per pupil by 1902. Holmes looked forward to re-equipping the schools with new adjustable chairs and desks, and new blackboards for the older schools. Elementary school structure had been changed from nine grades plus kindergarten to eight grades plus kindergarten.

Holmes concluded his report by saying, "We have conditions in our schools to-day, which, if not ideal, are at least excellent—good buildings, good equipment, modern text-books, a strong teaching force, a well arranged and well adapted course of study—a loyal and appreciative public sentiment and generous financial provision. For several years to come the aim of the school management should be not to introduce further innovations or radical changes, but to let well enough alone, and to so direct the school work as to get the largest and best results under the present conditions, and increase their capacity for useful service" (School Committee Report, 1902-03, p. 17).

Prospect Hill by this time had 369 students, and once again had a kindergarten, albeit a small one of only nine pupils. The rest of the school's classes ranged from 29 to 54 students. The eight-year-old school was well beyond its capacity of 294 pupils. The Superintendent's report described its "upper four grades in particular being taxed to their utmost capacity" (Westfield Town Report, 1905-06, p. 187). That same year, a law was passed raising the age of compulsory school attendance for illiterate children from fourteen to sixteen. With a population of 13,610, the town now had a school population of 2,285.

In 1907, both the School Committee and superintendent commented on Westfield's growing immigrant population. The School Committee reminded taxpayers: "The importance of the school system and its possibilities for good are enlarged in these days of unusual immigration" (Westfield Town Report 1906-07, p. 170). Superintendent Simmons wrote about the problems created by the "rapidly increasing population, the influx of many nationalities of diverse characteristics and customs, the necessity for their assimilation into our body politic, the more complex and exacting conditions of life."

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### Early Modern Period (1910-1958)

During the early 1900s, Westfield began to see itself as a city rather than a town. Business and industry, rather than agriculture, had dominated its economy for several decades. Concerns for civic health, improvement, and beautification prompted the establishment of a town Planning Board in 1914. In 1920, a charter committee successfully presented a proposal to Westfield voters, and the town officially became a city, with a population of 18,604 (Adams, James R. "Westfield History 1920-1940" in Janes, pp. 304-305).

With the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the population mix on Prospect Hill had changed from primarily Yankee to a mixture of Irish, Italian, and Polish residents, most of whom worked in the shops and factories on and around North Elm Street. In a 1969 reminiscence of life in the North Side in the 1890s and early 1900s, former Mayor George W. Searle recalled a prosperous business district along North Elm Street below Prospect Hill, with St. John's drug store, the Greek Revival Foster House, the Bay State Hotel, Jesse Cleary's barber shop, a hardware and farm machinery store, Joel Clark's grocery store, a restaurant, a blacksmith shop, livery stables, Henry G. Taylor's tobacco warehouse, and a fire station. The neighborhood's changing ethnic mix was reflected in the names of its businesspeople, with the Italian community represented by cobbler Rocco DePopolo and barber Manuel Pachico, and Irish represented by butchers Ben Callahan and John Shea, barbers John Teahan, Jesse Cleary, and John Kelly, and saloon keeper Joe McGowan (Searle, "The North Side," in Janes & Scott, pp. 407-410).

In 1920, Westfield's new mayor faced a severe challenge. By the end of World War I, the industries which had fostered Westfield's growth were struggling to survive. The coming of the automobile made the whip industry obsolete (Heyl & Hamberg, p. 15).

By fall of 1921, about 15% of the male population was unemployed. Industrial activity through the 1920s was mixed, as manufacturers throughout New England began to feel pressure from companies taking advantage of cheaper, non-union labor in the South. Some companies moved South; others closed altogether. Referring to the recent "industrial depression," in January 1922, Mayor Searle noted that revenues from water bills had fallen off because the consumption of water had declined with the closing of some factories. The City Almoner commented that the industrial depression had strained poor relief resources, with 565 persons needing assistance due to unemployment (Westfield Town Report, 1921-22).

In 1927, a national building slowdown affected local manufacturers, and the plants began to reduce workweeks and lay off workers. By 1930, with the onset of the Great Depression, more than 800 men were out of work in Westfield. The City Almoner, Morrell H. Moore, noted that providing relief to the unemployed was growing more and more difficult as cases became more numerous.

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Federal and state projects under the auspices of the CWA, ERA, WPA, and CCC went some way toward relieving the unemployment situation. Expansion of the State Sanatorium, bridge building, an armory, and a CCC camp on Hampton Plains to deal with gypsy moths were among the projects that brought jobs to Westfielders, but industrial jobs continued to go elsewhere.

Major floods in 1936 and 1938 hit Westfield and the rest of Hampden County hard. While the rising Westfield River closed the Great River Bridge in both cases, damage along Elm Street appears to have been limited. The worst flooding occurred to the east of the central business district. Perched high above Union Street, the Prospect Hill neighborhood was spared any major damage.

Like most communities, Westfield made a turnaround with the coming of World War II. The war years brought some jobs back to town, although a few businesses had to cut production because they could not get materials. The surplus of workers quickly became a shortage. Stanley Home Products expanded, taking over the former Textile Manufacturing Company plant on North Elm Street; bicycle manufacturer Columbia Manufacturing shifted to bomb making and won an Army-Navy E Award for its war production, an accomplishment quickly repeated by American Abrasive. United States Whip Company (U.S. Line Company) went from making fishing lines to producing nylon and silk cord for parachutes and silk and nylon surgical sutures.

After the war, Westfield's manufacturing sector seemed diverse and prosperous. Producers of boilers, radiators, bicycles, and paper products were still going strong, as were textile and thread manufacturers. Other products included brushes, mops, fish lines, celluloid products, brick, boxes, grinding wheels and abrasives, hardware, greeting cards, precision tools, plumbing supplies, electrical motors, and even prefabricated houses. Brick, lumber, and woodworking products were also being made, and the city's marble quarries were still in business.

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The 20<sup>th</sup> century witnessed an expansion in the roles of public schools. Schools were now seen as responsible for children's physical health as well as their intellectual well-being. Annual eye and ear testing of students began in 1906. Referring to a 1906 state law requiring school committees to appoint one or more school physicians, Simmons urged the town to comply with the law, arguing its wisdom in preventing the spread of infectious diseases and alerting parents to possible health problems in their children (Westfield Town Report, 1906-07).

With its 1908-09 annual report, the School Committee began to look beyond the school buildings and out to the schoolyards. Noting a recent trend to encourage pupils to use schoolyards as playgrounds,

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the committee recommended making schoolyards larger and more pleasant, with the addition of shade trees, lawns, and space for ball playing, swings, lawn tennis, and other games. Simmons referred to a recent Massachusetts statute requiring towns with populations over 10,000 to maintain at least one playground. He argued strongly for the benefit of playgrounds in preventing delinquency and improving the health of Westfield's children. In its 1909-1910 report, the School Committee pronounced an experimental playground set up at the Bartlett Street School a success and recommended that playgrounds be created at other schools as well.

In 1909, Prospect Hill had nearly 400 students. The School Committee's 1910-1911 report noted that Prospect Hill needed two teachers in some of its classrooms to handle the number of students. With the prospect of an H. B. Smith foundry expansion on the north side of the river attracting new residents to the area, the committee feared the school would be overwhelmed. Even without the foundry expansion, the committee worried that another room would need to be opened in the nearby Union Street School to handle the overflow from Prospect Hill. Although the committee hoped that the imminent opening of a parochial school connected with Holy Trinity Church would help matters, it would only be a temporary fix and a poor policy to rely on "private enterprise to furnish school facilities." With a population of 16,044 in 1910, Westfield had 2,820 children attending schools, with 75 teachers now employed (Westfield Town Report 1910-11, p. 188).

In 1912, James A. McDougall replaced Simmons as School Superintendent. That year, school attendance became mandatory for all employed illiterates below the age of twenty-one. The new law increased attendance at the evening school, which included courses at the new Industrial School. New classes were added to prepare immigrants for citizenship (the state would eventually provide funds for citizenship classes in 1919). In its annual report for that year, the School Committee noted that the school census had risen from 2,099 to 2,888 children in the previous ten years. The Prospect Hill School was so crowded that hallways were being used as classrooms. With a capacity of 280 students (by McDougall's figures), the school had 419 pupils. Student numbers at Prospect Hill had fluctuated from 345 to a high of 466 over the previous ten years, and had not met McDougall's figure of 280 since the school opened (Westfield Town Report, 1912-13).

In 1913, the town voted funds to build two new schools, including one on Prospect Hill, and to grant teachers their long-awaited raises. The overcrowded schools resulted in "impure air, nerve tension and brain fag on the part of teachers and children," according to Superintendent McDougall. Prospect Hill School was not expanded for another six years. Upon reviewing the recent census data, McDougall discovered that about half of school-age children under fourteen had non-English speaking parents. He stressed the importance of teaching them the fundamentals of the American political system as well as the English language. The evening school, which had begun with a majority of American born students,

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was increasingly becoming a school for immigrants trying to learn English and prepare for citizenship. Only thirteen American-born students attended in 1913. The majority (197) were Poles, with Italians a distant second at 38. The remaining students were a mix of Bohemians, Slovaks, Germans, Greeks, Hungarians, Russian Jews, Lithuanians, Danes, Finns, and Ruthenians from Galicia (Westfield Town Report 1913-14).

Passage of a new child labor law in 1913 compelled children between fourteen and sixteen years of age to be either at school or at work, making for erratic educations for children who only went to school between periods of employment and did not attend the evening schools as required. That same year, the state legislature instituted a Teachers' Retirement Law to provide pensions for teachers over the age of 70. A bill providing for permanent tenure for teachers who had served one year and been re-appointed was also passed, though it was less well-received by the School Superintendent, who noted that there was no provision for "the elimination of the inefficient." (Westfield Town Report 1913-14)

A new facet in outdoor education was added with the institution of a school garden at the Prospect Hill School. Foundry H. B. Smith Company donated an acre of land for that purpose. McDougall was cautiously optimistic about the experiment, expressing concerns about "boys and young men who generally do not consider it anything out of the way to destroy gardens and fruit trees." Students who worked in the garden would be allowed to keep the produce that they grew. McDougall saw the garden as a way to introduce students to agricultural work as a possible future career (Westfield Town Report 1913-14, p. 204). The addition of playgrounds and gardens to school yards and an increasing interest in health programs for students were part of a national trend that began to regard healthcare and physical education as important school functions.

In 1914, McDougall was replaced by C. Edward Fisher as School Superintendent. Fisher complained that no grade schools except for the new Abner Gibbs School had either hot running water or artificial light. Westfield's student population had grown to 3,834, including children at the State Sanatorium, showing gains ranging from 40 to 65 students a year. In order to accommodate the Prospect Hill overflow, the town rented the basement of the Lutheran Church and a store at a cost that, according to Fisher's estimates, would be sufficient to pay for an addition to Prospect Hill. Spending on education in Westfield had fallen far behind state averages, with Westfield spending \$28.45 per pupil, compared to an average of \$37.64 state-wide and \$46.43 in nearby Springfield. Westfield ranked 193rd in the state in per-pupil spending.

Fisher expressed concerns over the high costs of transportation, whether by streetcar or wagon. He also worried over the adequacy of the annual medical inspection, advising the town to hire a school nurse to make better use of the inspection funds. Fisher recommended new schoolhouses near Main and

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Elm Streets, portable schoolhouses for the Franklin, Ashley, and Davis Schools, the purchase of land on Bartlett Street for school construction, electrifying and providing hot running water to all schools. The construction of an addition to Prospect Hill School for manual training, kindergarten, cooking, and sewing classes, was also part of his recommendation. He also recommended adding a sidewalk, curbing, and fencing at Prospect Hill School, citing dangers from the four-way intersection and horse traffic that frequented a nearby watering trough (Westfield Town Report, 1914-15).

Fisher set up a system of standardized testing, using a test he had developed himself in order to encourage a more uniform curriculum. He recommended buying dictionaries for all grammar school students, and reported that the Athenaeum had agreed to add a copy of every public school textbook in use to its collection. In 1915, the first diplomas were granted to eighth-grade students, complete with graduation ceremony. About three-quarters of eighth-grade students graduated. The PTA had assisted by raising funds for a hot lunch program at the new Moseley School, installation of electric lights at Court Street and Ashley Street Schools, and the purchase of Victrolas for Court Street, Ashley Street, and Prospect Hill Schools (Westfield Town Report, 1915-1916).

In 1915, a Superintendent of Buildings was appointed for the School Department, providing a full-time person to manage maintenance and new construction. By this time, the Prospect Hill School had 499 students, an average of more than 60 students per room. Commenting on the continuing problem with overcrowding at Prospect Hill School, Fisher complained in his 1915 report that a store had to be rented to accommodate the kindergarten, and that the sidewalk and curbing he had requested earlier had still not been installed. Superintendent Fisher called for the Superintendent of Buildings to oversee a complete overhaul of all school buildings to put them "in first class condition."

C. Nelson Seymour, the new building superintendent, made a long list of recommendations for Prospect Hill: improved fire alarms, metal ceilings in the basements, new floors in corridors, new treads on stairs, new blackboards, metal weather-stripping on windows, electric lights, new coal bins, the addition of eaves troughs and snow guards, and new sidewalks (Westfield Town Report 1915-16, p. 219). In 1918, Seymour reported the completion of the work, with installation of metal ceilings in the basement, additional electrical work, resurfacing of sidewalks, and new window shades.

In his 1916-1917 report, Fisher pointed out that over the previous decade, Westfield's school population had increased 42%, in contrast to a statewide average of 22%. Yet Westfield's per-pupil expenditure was still 202<sup>nd</sup> out of 353 towns. Still, he believed that Westfield's students made a strong academic showing, thanks to a uniform town-wide curriculum. He cited academic achievements and improvements in the physical fitness of students due to improved playground facilities and sports equipment. In order to improve monitoring of student health, Fisher requested that the part-time school

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nurse be made full time. Fisher recommended reorganizing the school system with institution of a junior high, for a "six-three-three" plan (six years of grade school, three years of junior high, and three years of high school).

At Prospect Hill, the kindergarten class was still housed in a store because the school building was overcrowded, even though enrollment had been reduced to 348 with the opening of the nearby Moseley School. But the Superintendent of Buildings reported that many of the improvements he had proposed had been made, including new coal bunkers, fire alarms, electric lighting, and the painting and varnishing of walls and woodwork, at a cost of \$779.66.

In the 1917-1918 School Committee report, overcrowding at Prospect Hill was again lamented. The student body had grown again to 368 students. Weather-stripping had been added to increase the fuel efficiency of the school. Superintendent Fisher again recommended the addition of metal ceilings in the Prospect Hill basement and the installation of new radiators to save on fuel.

In 1918, Fisher was replaced as Superintendent by Chester D. Stiles. With America's involvement in World War I, Stiles ordered a change in curriculum so that upper grades could study the geography and history of the conflict, and he suggested that arithmetic problems center around Liberty Loans and War Savings Stamps. Stiles also promoted increasing the courses in domestic science available for girls, especially in light of the food conservation and rationing programs then in place. In order to improve the quality of medical inspections, Stiles recommended hiring a full-time school physician. Stiles resurrected Fisher's plan for standardized testing, but with nationally developed tests. He began the use of Curtis Arithmetic Tests, Ayres Spelling and Writing Tests, and Thorndyke English tests in Westfield's schools (Westfield Town Report 1918-19).

The School Committee wrote with pride in its 1918 and 1919 reports that it had never requested special town meetings for budget woes and had always managed to work within its budget. It emphasized that, even though it had taken great efforts to economize, all the buildings were now in good condition, though repairs were anticipated to keep them so for the coming years. The committee went on to complain of the compulsory attendance laws that sent children to school sporadically from the age of fourteen on, if they were temporarily out of work, and recommended that the age of constant attendance be raised to fifteen or sixteen.

In 1919, Prospect Hill School grew yet again, with an addition at the front that created a new façade, still in the Colonial Revival style. The addition cost \$26,577.05 and was designed by Malcolm B. Harding (1885-1950), who received \$1,483.30 for his services. (Although the architect is not named in the report, a payment to Malcolm Harding is listed in the 1919-1920 Treasurer's report; the amount

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matches that listed for "Architect's fees" in the Prospect Hill School figures.) The addition included two new classrooms and an auditorium.

In the 1919-1920 report, the new Prospect Hill addition was praised as "not only improv[ing] the appearance of the former building but it makes ample provision for conditions in the Prospect Hill section for many years to come." A new boiler greatly improved winter comfort, and a new assembly hall "will be one of the finest in town and will render that section of the community a special service, both to the pupils and the public" (Westfield Town Report, 1919-1920, pp. 179-180). At Prospect Hill in 1921-1922, \$701.73 was spent to complete the new addition with painting and the installation of additional electric lights. The school now accommodated 407 pupils. Superintendent Stiles recommended adding manual training and domestic science to the curriculum at the newly renovated Prospect Hill School. He also recommended creation of a summer school to deal with children working below their grade level.

Born in Hatfield in 1885, architect Malcolm B. Harding moved with his family to Southwick and attended Westfield High School. After graduating, he moved to Springfield and worked as a draftsman for architects E.C. and G.C. Gardner. He furthered his architectural apprenticeship in New York City, where he worked for Dodge & Momson and studied at the Pratt Institute and Columbia University. He moved to Westfield in 1914, becoming a partner in the firm of Fowle & Harding. West Springfield High School was his first design project. Harding seems to have made a specialty of designing public schools. He also designed Westfield's High School, the Fort Meadow School (1916, White Street), Longmeadow's Center Elementary School (1928, 811 Longmeadow Street, Colonial Revival), the Russell Elementary School (1923, NR, now the Russell Library and Fire Station, 162 Main Street, English Revival), and the Art Deco Southwick Consolidated School (1927, 456 College Highway, now the Southwick Community Center). Non-academic buildings in Westfield include the Westfield Women's Club (1926, 28 Court Street), the new Westfield Athenaeum building (1927, 6 Elm Street), the Third National Bank (1924, 8 Elm Street), and the White apartment block (1919, 32 Noble Avenue), all in the Classical Revival or Colonial Revival styles. Harding also designed the Granville Town Hall (1927, Colonial Revival). Harding also guided development in the city, serving on Westfield's Board of Survey and Building Code Board of Appeals (*Westfield News Advertiser*, Feb 3, 1950, p. 3).

The renovated school continued to be a focus for the Prospect Hill neighborhood. By now a predominantly Irish enclave that also included a small number of Polish and Italian residents, the neighborhood had developed an identity as a close-knit working-class community. The school's new meeting hall gave the building an added dimension as a community center.

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By the 1921-1922 school year, concerns about the health of Westfield's children prompted several changes. The schools' healthcare staff included a nutrition worker, a school nurse, examining physicians, and a dental clinic. Arrangements were made to provide students with milk from the Farmers' Cooperative Milk Exchange and crackers from the National Biscuit Company for healthy snacks. Lectures on nutrition and proper hygiene were added to the school curriculum, and posters promoting good health were displayed in the schools. Two special health classes were organized, one at the Abner Gibbs School, and one at Prospect Hill, because of the large percentage of underweight children in both schools. Home visits were also made to students of particular concern.

In the 1922-1923 school year, the health program was increased by addition of hot lunches at Abner Gibbs, Moseley, and Prospect Hill Schools. The dental clinic, established in May 1921, examined 1,918 children and found that more than 75% of them needed dental treatment. Those who could not afford a regular dentist were treated by the school clinic (Westfield Annual Report, 1921-22, p. 220).

With residential development moving further from the city center, school transportation was a continuing problem. School wagons and buses were usually full, and trolley transportation was getting expensive. Stiles recommended adding more buses to deal with the problem. He also recommended providing a car for the Superintendent of Buildings.

By the 1923-1924 school year, Prospect Hill had 400 pupils enrolled in ten classes. The city as a whole had 4,823 school-age children, a larger school enrollment than similarly sized communities throughout the state. In his report for that year, Superintendent Stiles noted the importance of extension and evening trade courses for career education. He recommended adding vocational education to the grammar and high school curricula. He also proposed using the Continuation School for placement of girls and boys with employers. Noting the crowding at all school levels, he recommended construction of a new high school and using the old high school building for a junior high school and for manual training, domestic science, and for the academic classes of the Continuation School.

Stiles addressed the role of the schools in meeting students' healthcare as well as job training needs. He praised the success of the recently instituted medical inspections at controlling contagious disease and providing an early warning system for identifying sick and needy children. Chapter 71 of Mass. General Laws had recently been changed to require "indoor and outdoor games and athletic exercise" in the public schools and the appointment of a director of physical education. Stiles recommended that these requirements be attended to quickly in order not to risk losing state funding. (Westfield Annual Report, 1923-1924).

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While the census had shown an increase of four percent in population from 1920 to 1925, the school population had increased nine percent. Classes generally had 42 pupils or more, up to a high of 58, at a time when school officials recommended maximum class sizes of 35 students. Schools had been filled to capacity for several years, and the high school was so crowded that classes were conducted in split shifts, or a "two platoon system." Keefe lamented that "...it seems peculiar of our schools, they are no sooner enlarged than they are immediately filled, as though nature and all the agencies of life were conspiring to defeat the calculations of men" (Westfield Annual Report, 1923-24, p. 28). By 1925, with its addition only five years old, Prospect Hill's lower four grades were crowded. Superintendent Stiles suggested reopening the old Union Street School to remedy the situation.

In his 1927 report, the School Superintendent compared schools of 1927 with those of 40 years earlier. A larger percentage of school-age children were actually attending school, with a school year nearly 40 days longer than that of the 1880s. The basic curriculum of the "three R's," supplemented with a little geography, history, and science, and, if the student was lucky, perhaps some art and music, had expanded to include literature, government, citizenship, "morals and manners, nature study, cooking, sewing, manual training or industrial arts, thrift, safety first, accident and fire prevention, health and physical education." Pedagogy that had focused on memorization had changed to emphasize "developing higher moral character, better health habits, civic efficiency, command of fundamental processes, worthy home membership, vocational efficiency and wholesome use of leisure time" (Westfield Annual Report, 1926-27, p. 35).

In 1928, Mayor Putnam reported the addition of more sidewalks on Montgomery Street and paving Crown Street in the Prospect Hill area. In 1928 and 1929, Pochassic Road was paved between Parker and Atwater Streets, and the northern end of Montgomery Street resurfaced with new gravel (Westfield Town Reports, 1927-29).

When the high school moved out of its Broad Street building in 1930, a new intermediate school moved in. The old high school building was immediately condemned by the intermediate school's principal as being too small and ugly. This change was the culmination of a trend toward eliminating one-room rural schools and consolidating district schools into larger regional or city-wide schools, a process that had begun with the construction of Prospect Hill School in 1897. By 1931, only a single one-room schoolhouse remained in the city, and Superintendent Stiles recommended closing that one (Westfield Town Reports, 1929-31).

With the Depression, Superintendent Stiles recommended keeping children in school longer so that they would be better prepared to compete for jobs when they finished. He also recommended adding an adult education program for commercial and trade subjects to assist unemployed residents to learn new trades.

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In 1932, Superintendent Stiles proposed setting up a pre-school at Prospect Hill, using "vacant rooms" (perhaps in the basement, since the rest of the school seems to have been full to capacity). Some of the school's space problems had been resolved by relocating seventh graders to the Intermediate School and transferring some pupils to the Training School. A newly instituted baseball program for the elementary schools involved Prospect Hill and Moseley School students. That year, the two-year-old high school was already near capacity (Westfield Town Report, 1932-33).

In 1940, an independent consultant was hired to review the city's departments. The consultant found that the total school-age population had been going down over the past five years, from 3,923 in 1935 to 3,094 in 1939, a reversal of a decades-long trend. It is not clear if the decline was due to a loss in overall population, or to parents keeping their children out of school in response to the economic hardships of the Depression. About 13% of Westfield's school children were in private schools, "a considerable relief to the financial burden placed on the taxpayer for the support of public education," the study noted (Griffenhagen, p. 12).

The study revealed that many Westfield teachers lacked bachelor's degrees, with 59 out of 80 elementary school teachers having gone through two years of normal school, but not completing a degree. In the trade school, only four out of fourteen teachers had college degrees, and two had not completed high school. The report recommended requiring all teachers to have bachelor's degrees. In Westfield, it was noted, teachers had an average class size of more than 28 students in 1935. Noting that the national average was actually closer to 30 students per teacher, the study recommended increasing the student-teacher ratio to save on employee salaries. Prospect Hill School's student-teacher ratio was slightly above the average, with about 31 students per teacher.

During World War II, Westfield schools contributed to the war effort. As women went to work to take over the jobs of absent servicemen, the need for childcare facilities became apparent. Prospect Hill School and Abner Gibbs School became pre-school childcare centers. Hot lunches were served in schools to make it more convenient for mothers to work. School hours were changed to allow children to work on farms, where labor shortages were most keenly felt.

At Prospect Hill, the school continued to be an essential part of the neighborhood's tight-knit identity. At a 1991 reunion, former residents fondly recalled the school as a childhood hangout during the 1930s and 1940s, where they gathered to play after school hours. George Kelleher described the school and its surrounding neighborhood as a "playground of learning." Kelleher and his neighbors, Charles Hagan and Robert Andrews, who all grew up in Prospect Hill during the 1930s and 1940s, "said the neighborhood was so self-contained, there was rarely a reason to leave it." (Skantz, Leslie, "Prospect Hill bunch getting together" *Union-News*, Feb 8, 1991). "It was such a tight-knit neighborhood, and even if

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people left the area, they still kept in touch," former resident Maureen Morrissey Oleksak said in a 1991 interview (Skantz, Leslie, "'Hill people' plan to turn reunion into tailgate party," *Union-News*, May 16, 1991). Within the neighborhood, Prospect Hill School became "a second home for children in kindergarten through sixth grade," inspiring many of them to go on to careers in education (Skantz, Leslie, "Prospect Hill history recorded by 'Bunch,'" *Union-News*, Jul 18, 1991).

The public school population, which had declined during the 1930s, rose again in the postwar years. Westfield's total population went from 18,793 in 1940 to 20,962 in 1950. In 1957, Superintendent of Schools Thomas Abernethy brought up the perennial problem of school overcrowding. From 1953 to 1957, the student population had grown from 3,688 to 4,742. The elementary schools were filled to capacity, with some juggling necessary to distribute students from different parts of the city among the grade schools. The superintendent encouraged the School Committee to consider building a new junior high school, hoping to have approval to begin construction in 1960. Abernethy commented on the recent Sputnik launch, and how it had generated increased interest in improving math and science education. Sounding much like his successors fifty years later, Abernethy lamented that, in contrast to Russian children who were pushed to achieve, American children "have been sheltered from failure, and the entire process has been made as easy and as sugar-coated as possible." He encouraged parents to "practice...saying 'No,'" and "banning the TV set while the home work is being done" (Westfield Annual Report, 1957, pp. 49-51). With the passage of the National Defense Education Act in 1958, federal funds became available to improve science, math, and foreign language instruction in the schools.

### Recent History (since 1958)

The construction of the Massachusetts Turnpike in the 1950s and Interstate Route 91 in 1967 encouraged traffic to bypass city centers for suburban residential and business developments. In 1956, an Industrial Development Commission was established to encourage new development and sponsor special events to attract businesses and customers to town. The commission eventually became the Industrial Development Corporation, which managed the city's first industrial park. In 1958, the opening of that park near the Turnpike proved a boon to Westfield. The park was expanded in the late 1960s.

Although the business climate stagnated during the late 1970s and early 1980s, city officials and members of the business community worked together to turn things around during the next two decades. In 1989, the city conveyed more than 200 acres of farmland on the North Side to WestMass Development Corporation to create a high-tech industrial park. In 1999, the Westfield Community Development Corporation created a small business incubator. These two projects were followed by a string of suburban commercial developments, as national retail and restaurant chains added franchises along Route 20. This

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combination of new industrial and retail establishments helped reverse the downward employment spiral of the 1970s and 1980s. More than 3,500 new jobs were created in Westfield between 1997 and 2000, raising the city's total employment from 15,237 to 19,843 (Westfield 5 Year Consolidated Action Plan).

Although population increases were not quite as profound in the 1980s and 1990s, Westfield's population still grew, reaching 38,372 in 1990, and 40,072 in 2000. An influx of Russian immigrants added yet one more group to the city's ethnic mix. While the city's housing stock had grown, newer housing tended to be fairly upscale, single-family suburban homes, with little new housing created for low- and moderate-income residents. A 2004 action plan prepared by the Westfield Community Development Department found a critical shortage of affordable housing (Westfield 5 Year Consolidated Plan).

Westfield's historic downtown continues to struggle in the face of suburban commercial development. Since the 1970s, city planners have targeted the downtown area for redevelopment, with planning studies and consultant reports proposing improvements from landscaping to increased parking to the creation of a downtown pedestrian mall. As in many communities, only a few of the revitalization plan's recommendations were implemented. Retailers like J.J. Newberry, Eaton's, and Fine's Clothing, which had been downtown fixtures for decades, closed in the 1980s and have not been replaced. While a number of service and financial-related businesses continue to operate downtown, Elm Street has only a handful of retail establishments occupying its storefronts.

The Westfield Community Development Corporation began work on an Elm Street Area Revitalization Project in 2004 with improvements to sidewalks and other public amenities, while the Westfield Home Improvement Program (WHIP) targeted housing in the downtown area for rehabilitation. The Community Development Department's 2006-2007 action plan involved creation of a downtown Business Improvement District. A downtown transit center, an upscale hotel, and the enlargement of the Green are all slated for construction over the next few years. Funding has also been approved for renovation of the Great River Bridge and construction of a new "sister bridge" similar in design to the 1939 Great River Bridge; the old bridge will be renovated as a three-lane structure for southbound traffic, while the new bridge, to be constructed east of the old one, will carry three lanes of northbound traffic. (Westfield 5 Year Consolidated Action Plan; *Springfield Republican*, May 26, 2006; Paving and Traffic Congestion Management projects list, Westfield City Engineering Department).

### Prospect Hill School

Issues of school crowding continued into the 1960s and 1970s, as the city's population jumped more than 5,000 residents each decade, going from 20,962 in 1950 to 26,302 in 1960, to 31,433 in 1970,

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to 36,465 in 1980. The increase appears to have been due to a combination of new immigrants from Puerto Rico, and suburban transplants from surrounding communities. In her report of 1964, School Superintendent Lynn Clark projected an increase of 1,000 pupils from 1961 to 1970. Teacher-pupil ratios were still high (by current standards), with 35 students per teacher.

In the early 1960s, interscholastic and intramural sports programs were initiated in the new Junior High School and in the elementary schools. Abner Gibbs Elementary School was expanded, and classroom space was increased at Prospect Hill by installing a folding partition in the rear of the auditorium. Playgrounds at many schools had been paved, which Superintendent Clark had advocated as an improvement for recreational use of the sites. Enrollment had been increasing steadily over the previous ten years, with an increase of two to three hundred students per year for most of the decade. The 1950 citywide enrollment was 2,927 students; in 1960 it was 5,359. In 1964, though, the superintendent noted a gradual decline in the birth rate after the "big baby crop of the 1940 and 1950 decades," and expected enrollments to level off (Westfield Annual Report, 1964, p. 91).

Prospect Hill continued as a regional school into the 1980s, and was upgraded in 1989 with the addition of computer equipment. However, by 1990 the city was considering selling several of its turn-of-the-century schoolhouses. The construction of the new Paper Hill and Munger Schools had made the old schools obsolete. Prospect Hill, Moseley, and Smith Avenue Schools were three that the city proposed to surplus out as part of a redistricting plan.

In 1991, Prospect Hill School was closed, and the School Committee turned it over to the city for disposition. The next year, however, overcrowding again became an issue. The recently closed Moseley School was reopened, but Prospect Hill was considered too outdated to be refurbished.

The closing of the school became an occasion for nostalgia and reminiscence among Prospect Hill's current and former residents. School alumni organized a reunion of past and present Prospect Hill students and neighbors that drew more than a thousand people, some from as far away as Alaska, California, and Texas (Skantz, Leslie, "1,000 return home; Prospect Hill ties renewed," *Sunday Republican*, Jul 16, 1991). The event included tours of the well-loved school and inspired the creation of a series of videos with interviews of former Prospect Hill residents.

Over the next fifteen years, the property languished unsecured, provoking neighborhood concerns about vandalism and safety. In 1997, City Councilor Lenard C. Burlingame described the neglected school as "probably the biggest eyesore in the city...It's a city building," Burlingame continued, "and it deserves a lot more attention than it is getting, which is zero right now" (Hodgson, Kevin, "School building cleanup planned; Volunteer effort in the works," *Union-News*, Aug 21, 1997).

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Later that year, the overgrown school grounds were cleared, and the property became the site of a National Guard training exercise. Several possible new uses for the building were proposed over the intervening years, including a Christian school, a dance studio, office space, and Recreation Department headquarters, but none ever came to fruition.

In the summer of 2004, Westfield invited developers to submit proposals to renovate the property. Nonprofit agency Domus, Inc. proposed to renovate the school for twenty-one units of affordable family housing in garden-style and townhouse units. The organization had previously rehabilitated the Hotel Westfield into low- and moderate-income apartments. The Prospect Hill proposal consisted of two- and three-bedroom units with both low-income and market-rate rentals. "It's a beautiful piece of property and a beautiful building," Domus, Inc. Director Ann Lentini said. City officials expressed concern that action needed to be taken quickly. "It's gotten to the point where we really need to use it or in effect lose the building, which would be too bad," Mayor Richard K. Sullivan, Jr., said. Referring to the Domus proposal, "It's probably our Hail Mary to save the building," said Community Development Director James M. Boardman, who had himself attended the school as a child (cited in Graham, George. "Former school attracts agency," *Sunday Republican*, 19 Dec 2004).

In February 2005, the City Council accepted the Domus proposal. Domus hired Carloson & Schmitt, Inc. as project architects for the rapidly deteriorating building, which by that point had water coming in through the roof and standing water in the basement. Tarpaulins were placed on the roof to reduce the damage. The rehabilitation plan would preserve the exterior's historic appearance, while creating an addition at the rear for an elevator for handicapped access. Parking would be available on-site. Renovations were expected to cost around \$5.3 million.

Domus's proposal to the Massachusetts Department of Housing and Community Development specified that sixteen of the units would be set aside for tenants making 60% percent of the state's median income, or about \$38,400 for a family of four. Tenants would be selected by lottery, with the first eight units reserved for people who lived, worked, or had been educated in Westfield, or had family in the city. The new project was identified in the Westfield Community Development Department's 2004 Action Plan as one of several that would help alleviate a critical shortage of low- to moderately priced housing in the city (Westfield Consolidated Action Plan, p. 9).

With the city's housing stock below the state's recommended ratio for affordable housing, the project was expected to garner state approval. The scarcity of affordable housing also meant that the project would not require rezoning. The project was expected to be financed as a public-private venture with low-income tax credits offered to investors. The developer applied to the state Department of Housing and Community Development for public funding and received approval for CDBG grants for the project.

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In March 2005, the proposal went before Westfield's Zoning Board of Appeals for review of a comprehensive permit application. About forty residents attended the meeting, expressing concerns about traffic and the nature of the tenants. Neighbors expressed concern about the low- to moderate-income housing aspect of the project, stating a preference for senior housing instead. Lentini emphasized that "affordable" housing meant that residents would be working citizens. On Mar 31, the Zoning Board of Appeals approved the permit.

In January 2006, state funds were approved for the project. Lentini coordinated funding from five state and federal sources for a total of \$5.7 million. Work has begun to stabilize and dry out the building. Construction began in 2007 and was expected to be completed the following year.

**Summary**

The Prospect Hill School reflects the evolution of Westfield's school system from a nineteenth-century network of one- and two-room rural schoolhouses haphazardly maintained and employing diverse curricula to a twentieth-century system of graded regional schools equipped with modern conveniences and providing a uniform education to all of the community's students. It represents the culmination of a nearly fifty-year struggle by the School Committee to modernize Westfield's educational system. The first of Westfield's consolidated schools, Prospect Hill was a neighborhood institution fondly remembered by its alumni and neighbors. The rehabilitation of the Prospect Hill School will not only preserve a community institution, but also fill a critical need for affordable housing in the city.

**Archaeological Significance**

Historic archaeological resources described above may help document the history of education in Westfield and the focal point of the Prospect Hill neighborhood, one of the first settled areas of Westfield. Additional historical research may contribute important information that identifies the complete sequence of school structures that occupied the Prospect Hill School property variously known as the District #8 School, the Great River District School, the Great River West School, and finally, the Prospect Hill School. Information obtained through archaeological survey and testing may supplement and corroborate historical sources by verifying school buildings identified through written sources, and by contributing evidence of school buildings and related outbuildings associated with each school. Historical and archaeological resources may help establish architectural characteristics for each school building, when the buildings were built, renovated, and demolished or incorporated into later school buildings. Historical and archaeological research may also help identify the location and function of barns, stables, and outbuildings associated with each school building and the facilities associated with that structure.

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Detailed analysis of the contents of occupational-related features and artifact distributions around school buildings might contribute important information related to the topics identified above, the students, their families, and ultimately the residents of the Prospect Hill Neighborhood. Artifacts and macrofossil evidence may survive that contributes social, cultural, and economic information related to the students and their families. Since the Prospect Hill School and its predecessors served as the focal point for the Prospect Hill neighborhood, information obtained from archaeological features may be representative of the neighborhood as a whole. Important information may also exist related to educational methods and techniques used in the school and how they changed from the 18<sup>th</sup> through 20<sup>th</sup> centuries.

Filling and grading have each occurred on the Prospect Hill School property on at least two occasions since the mid 19<sup>th</sup> century. The school's lot is almost entirely paved with asphalt. Given the above and the history of intensive landuse of the school property during the historic period, integrity remains a potential issue for historic archaeological resources that predate the present school. Any historic resources that predate 1925 may have been destroyed by construction of the present school and earlier grading activities. Filling might have also acted to protect historic resources in some areas.

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**PROSPECT HILL SCHOOL**

Name of Property

**HAMPDEN COUNTY, MA**

County and State

**10. Geographical Data**Acreage of Property 1.38 acres**UTM References See continuation sheet.**

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

1. Zone 18 Easting 686250 Northing 4666180

   See continuation sheet**Verbal Boundary Description**

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

see attached

**Boundary Justification**

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

see attached

**11. Form Prepared By**name/title Michele Plourde-Barker & Gregory Farmer (consultants) with Betsy Friedberg, NR Director, MHCorganization Massachusetts Historical Commission date October 2008 (rev.)street & number 220 Morrissey Boulevard telephone 617-727-8470city or town Boston state Massachusetts zip code 02125-3314**Additional Documentation**

Submit the following items with the completed form:

**Continuation Sheets****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.**Photographs** - Representative **black and white photographs** of the property.**Additional items** (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)**Property Owner**

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

name Domus, Inc.street & number 4 School St. telephone 413-568-4494city or town Westfield state MA zip code 01085

**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. 470 et seq.).

**Estimated Burden Statement:** Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including the 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 Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Project (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Prospect Hill School  
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### Boundary Description

The boundary begins at the southeast corner of Crown Street and Montgomery Street and proceeds in a southwesterly direction along Montgomery Street for 165.56 feet, then turns at a slight angle and continues southwesterly along Montgomery Street for 88.6 feet. The boundary then turns at a right angle and runs east 307.17 feet along the southern property line of 33 Montgomery Street to the southwest corner of 33 Montgomery Street. The boundary turns north and runs along the rear lot line of 33 Montgomery Street for 72 feet. The boundary then turns east and runs in a northeasterly direction along the northern lot line of 33 Montgomery Street for 318 feet to the point of beginning.

### Boundary Justification

The boundary for the nominated property is the same as the boundary for the building lot on which the structure stands.

(end)

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Prospect Hill School  
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Photographs Page 1

Prospect Hill School  
33 Montgomery St.  
Westfield, Hampden County, Massachusetts

Photographer: Gregory Farmer  
Date: October 2006  
Location of Negatives: Domus, Inc.

### Photo #

1. Exterior view of Prospect Hill School, showing west and south elevations.
2. Exterior view of Prospect Hill School, showing primary (west) elevation.
3. Exterior view of Prospect Hill School, showing north and west elevations.
4. Exterior view of Prospect Hill School, showing east and south elevations.
5. Interior view of Prospect Hill School, showing typical basement conditions, looking southwest.
6. Interior view of Prospect Hill School, showing 1<sup>st</sup> floor main corridor, looking east
7. Interior view of Prospect Hill School, showing typical 1<sup>st</sup> floor classroom, looking southeast.
8. Interior view of Prospect Hill School, showing typical 2<sup>nd</sup> floor classroom, looking northeast.
9. Interior view of Prospect Hill School, showing former 2<sup>nd</sup> floor auditorium, looking north.

### Attachments

- a) Neighborhood Map, City of Westfield GIS (2006).
- b) Map of Westfield from Richards, Atlas of Hampden County (1912).
- c) Prospect Hill School from Sanborn Insurance Maps (1917).
- d) Prospect Hill School from Sanborn Insurance Maps (1924).
- e) Photograph of Prospect Hill School and original (1897) facade from City of Westfield Annual Report (1914-15).
- f) Photograph of Prospect Hill School after 1919 remodeling (original source unknown, courtesy Westfield Atheneum).
- g) Photograph of Prospect Hill School (west and south elevations), 1920 from the Ross Conner Collection, Connecticut Valley Historical Museum.
- h) Field day at Prospect Hill School, 1923 (Ross Conner Collection, CVHM).
- i) Auditorium at Prospect Hill School (event not identified), April 1926 (Ross Conner Collection, CVHM).
- j) Graduating class of Prospect Hill School, 1929 (Ross Conner Collection, CVHM).
- k) Chamber of Commerce clean-up day at Prospect Hill School, ca. 1930 (Ross Conner Collection, CVHM).

(End of photographs and attachments)



Disclaimer:  
City of Westfield, MA, makes no warranty or representation as to the accuracy, timeliness or completeness of any of the data. The City of Westfield, MA, shall have no liability for the data or for the use of any decision made or action taken or not taken in reliance upon any of the data.

City of Westfield - GIS

0 50 100 200 300 Feet

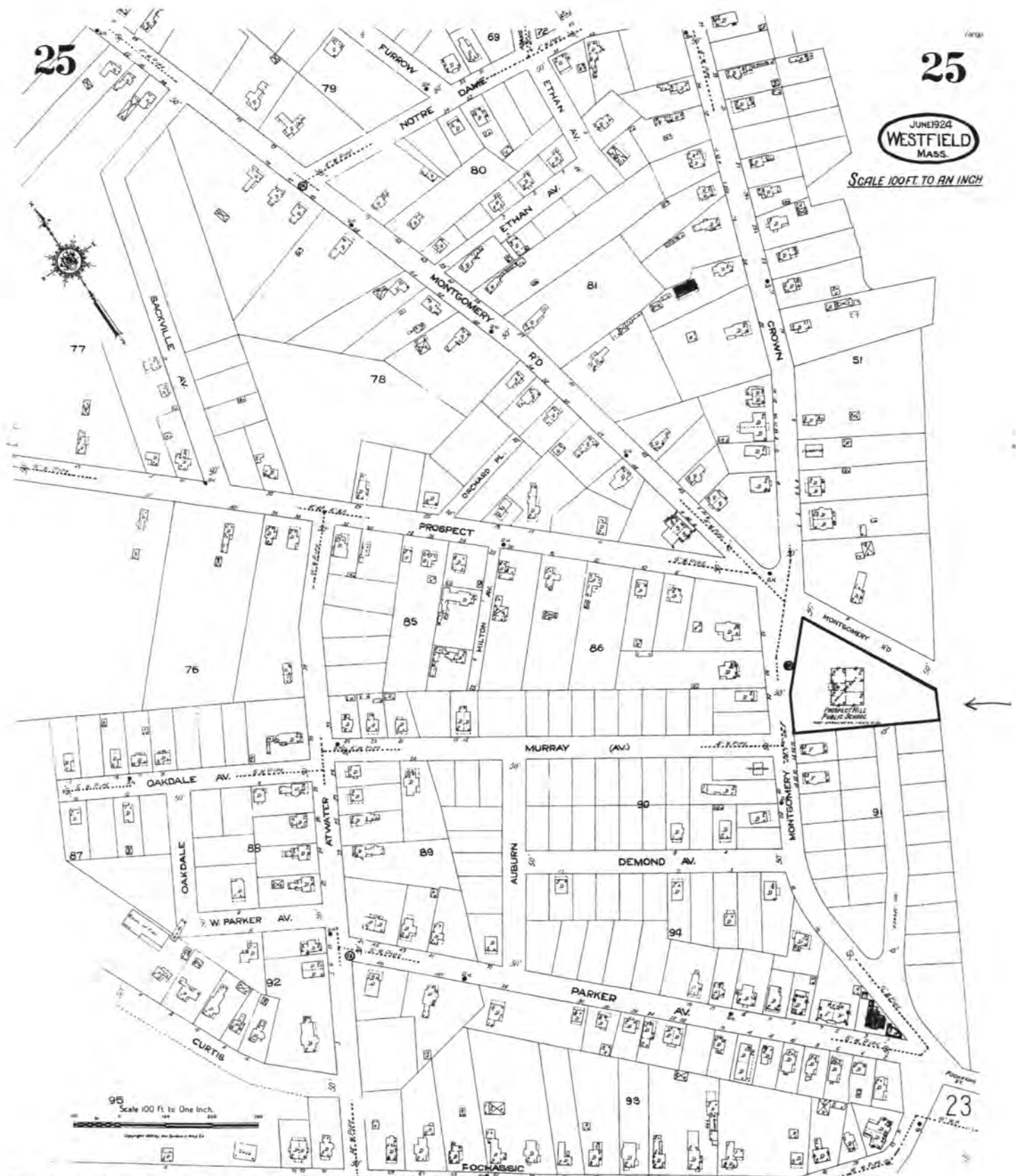




Westfield, Massachusetts, 1912. From Richards Atlas of Hampden County, 1912, Plate 7. Copyright: Richards Map Co., 1912  
 From the Atlas and Map Collection of the Connecticut Valley Historical Museum.

*Prospect Hill School, 33 Montgomery St.*



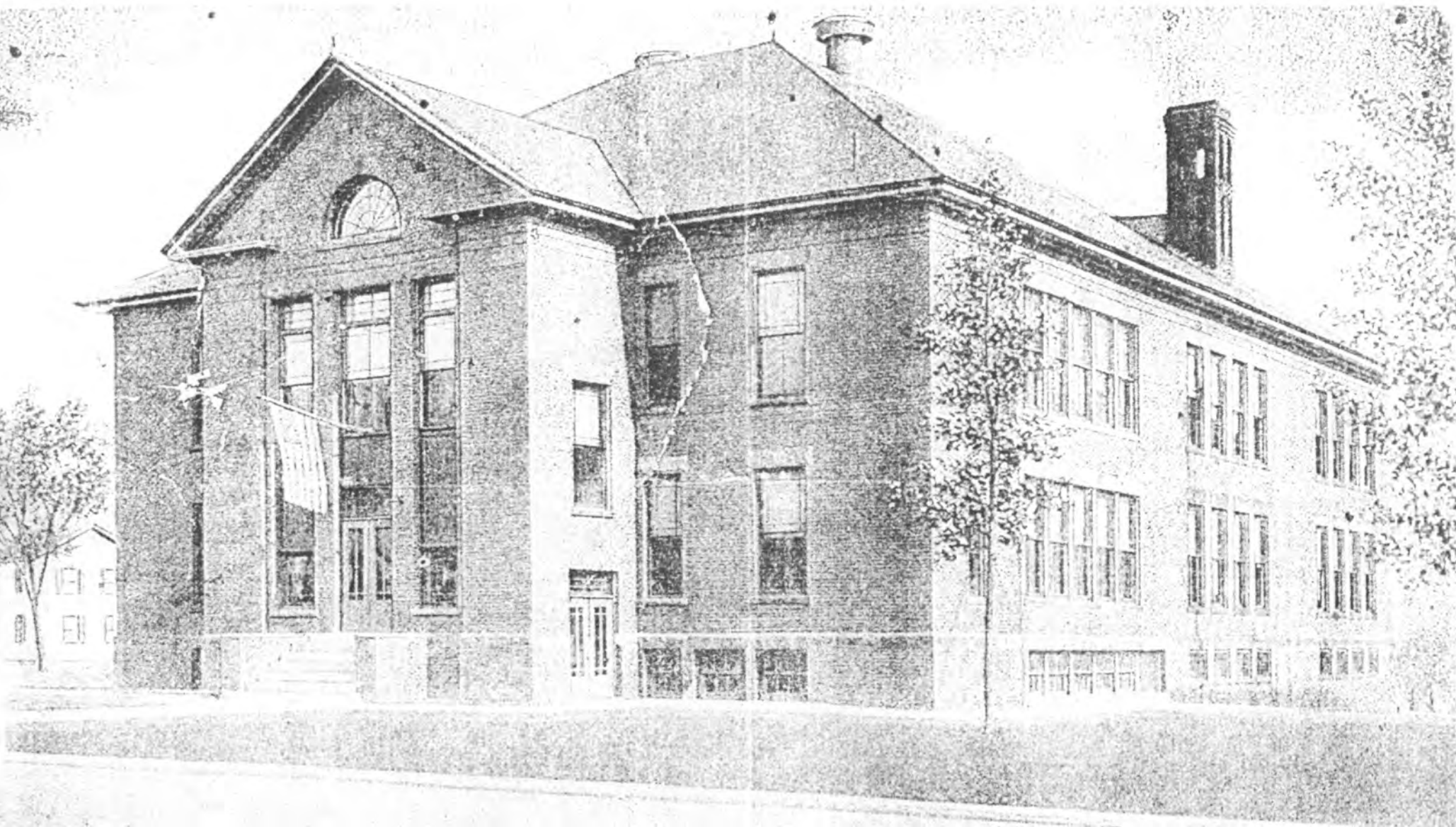


Westfield, Hampden County, Massachusetts. New York: Sanborn Map Company, 1924  
(Prospect Hill School outlined above)

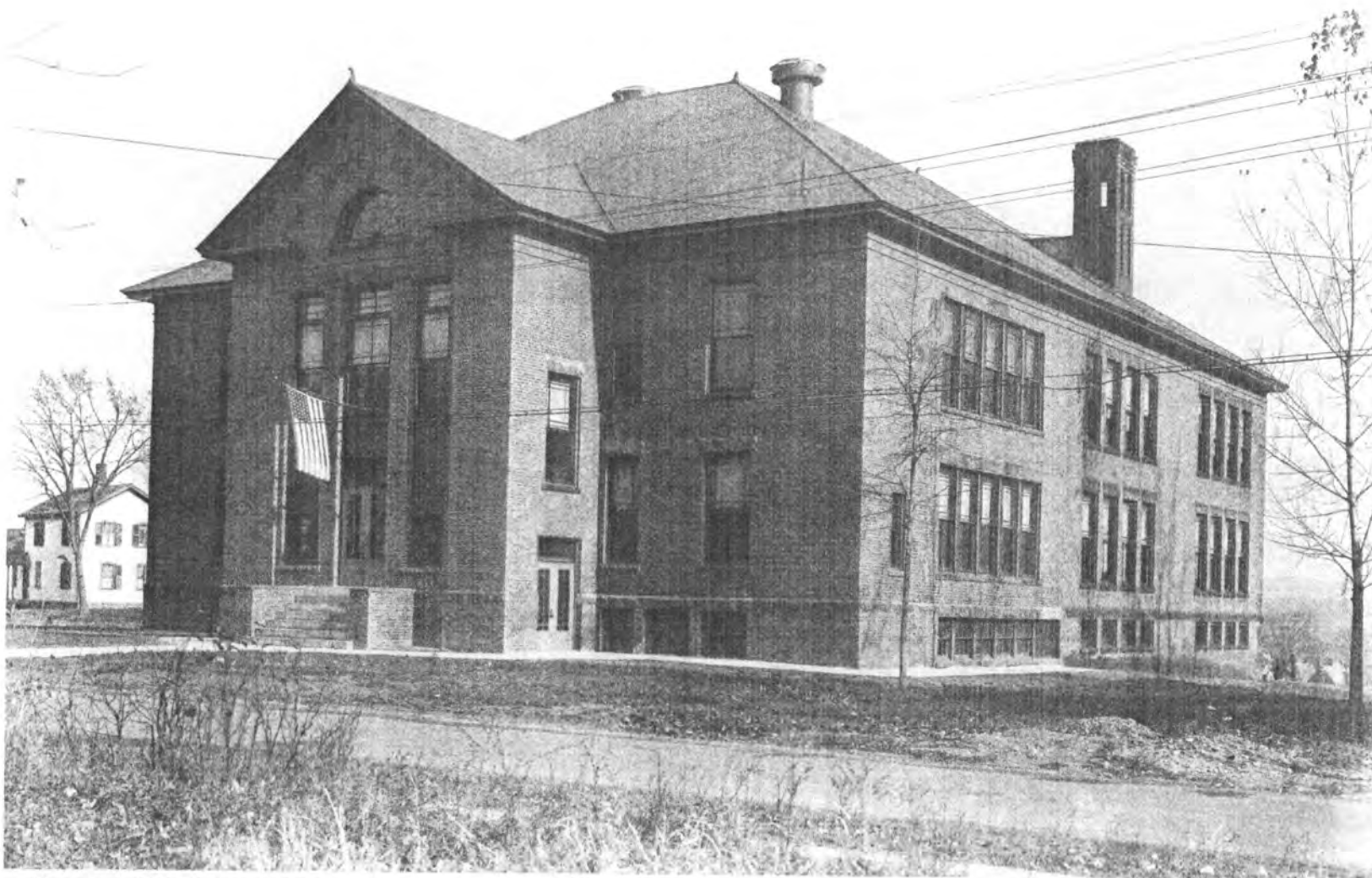
*Prospect Hill School  
33 Montgomery St. Westfield, MA*



Prospect Hill School, original facade  
From Westfield Town Annual Report, 1914-15



Prospect Hill School after 1919 remodeling. Date and source of original image unknown.  
From a photocopy in the collection of the Westfield Athenaeum.



Prospect Hill School, 33 Montgomery Street, Westfield, Mass., 1920

Constructed 1897 - Architect Augustus Holton. Addition and facade remodeling, 1919 - Architect Malcolm Harding  
Scanned from an uncatalogued negative from the Ross Conner Collection at the Connecticut Valley Historical Museum.

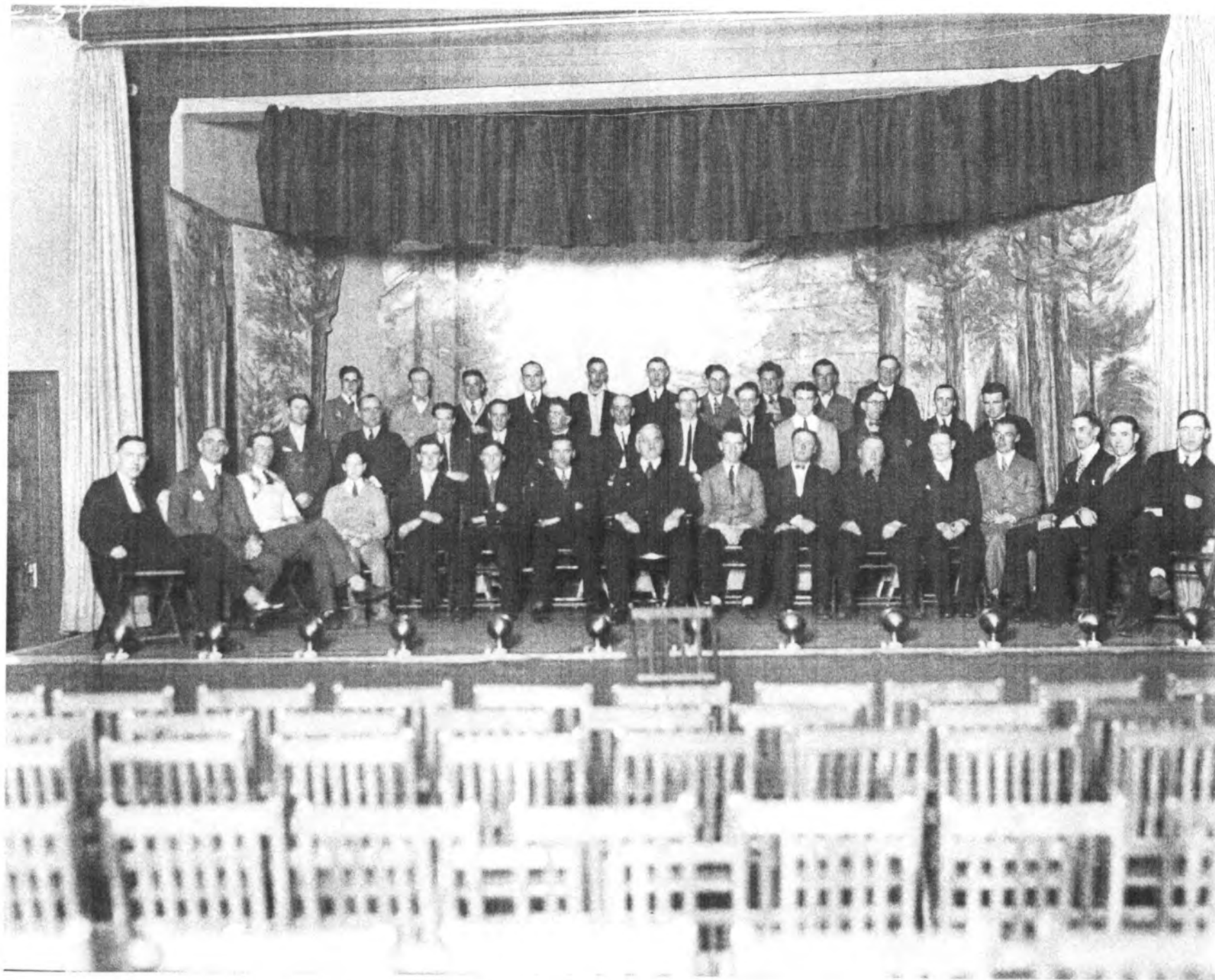
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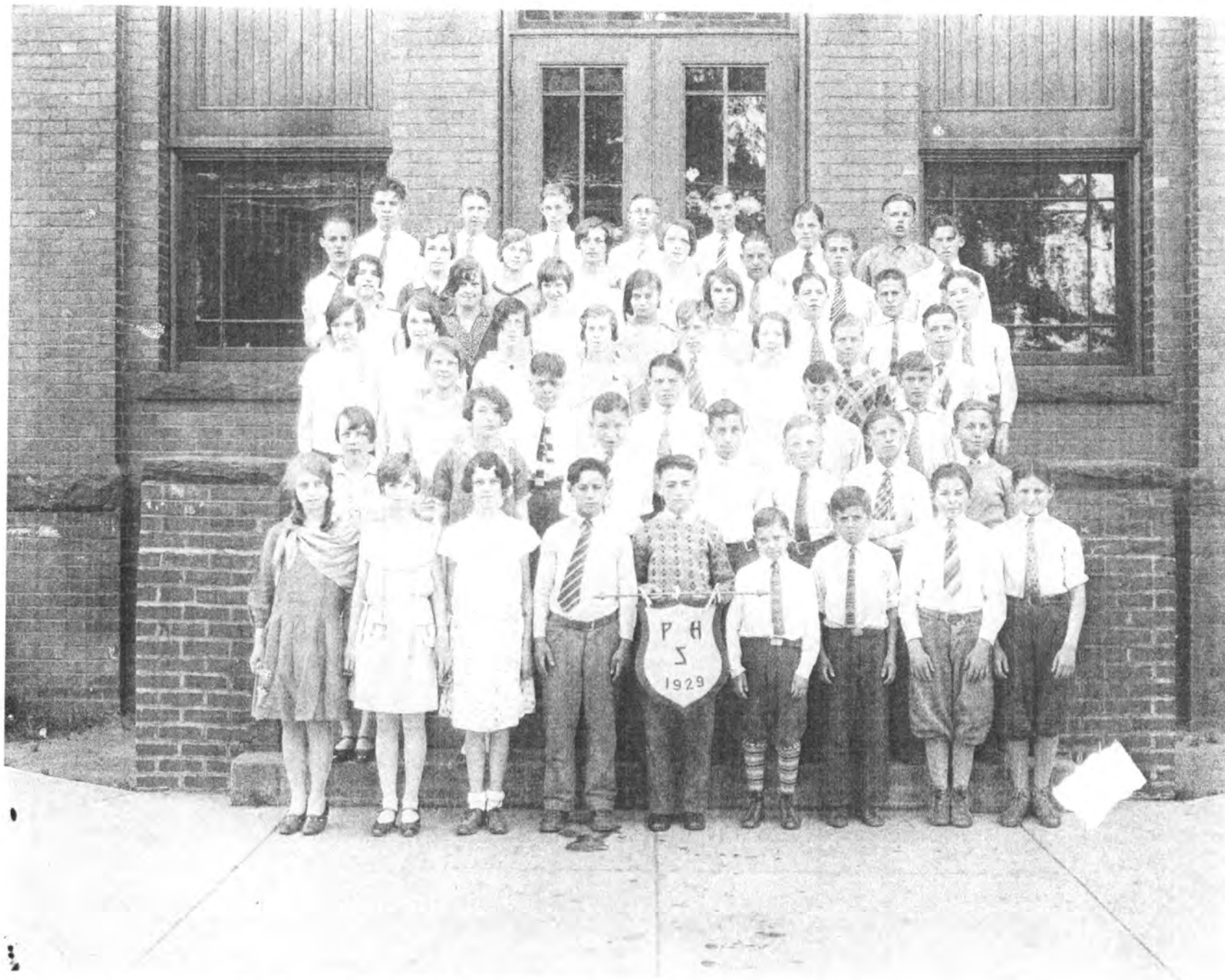
Field day at Prospect Hill School, 33 Montgomery Street, Westfield, Mass., 1923

Scanned from an uncatalogued negative in the Ross Conner Collection at the Connecticut Valley Historical Museum.

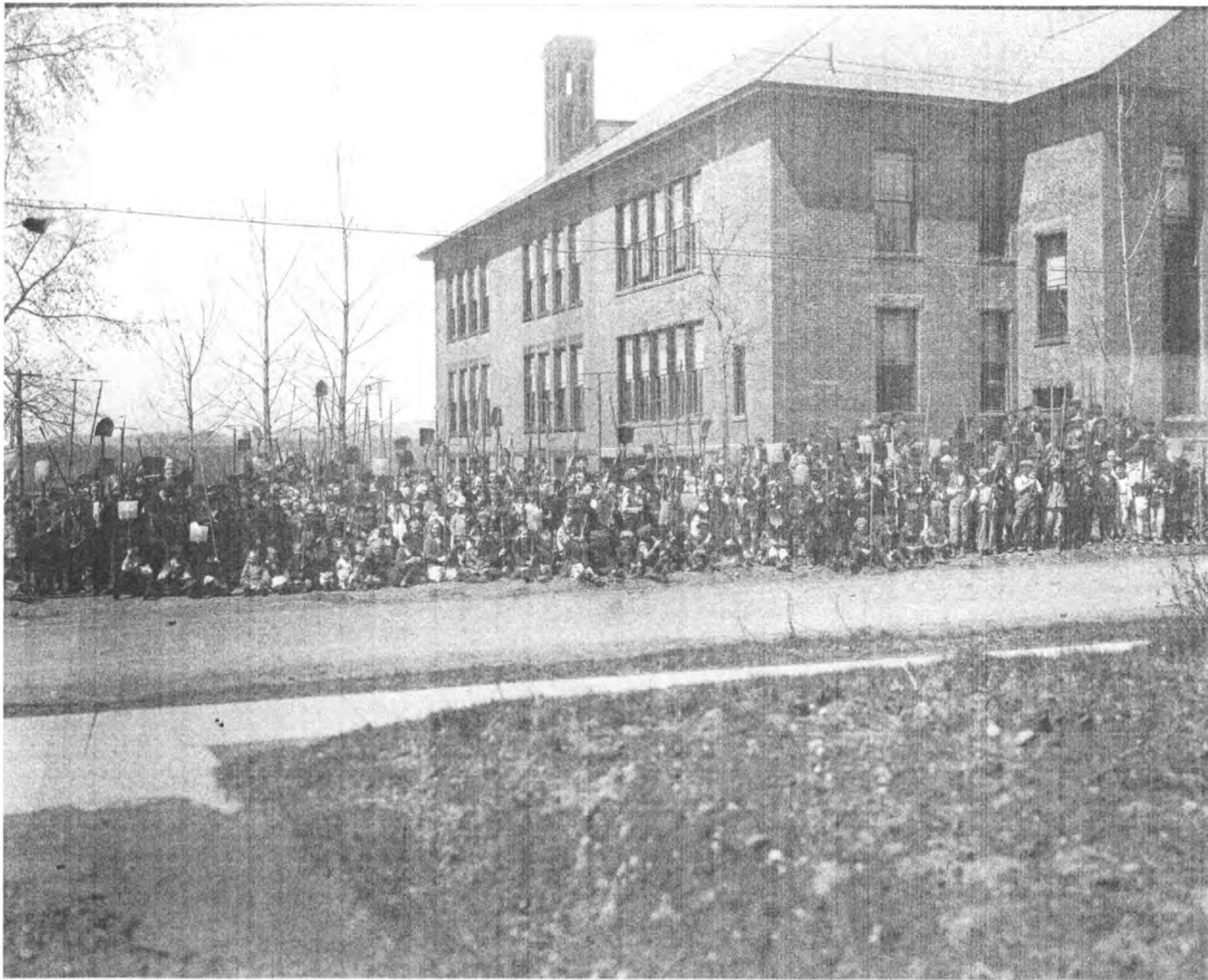
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Unidentified group, Auditorium, Prospect Hill School, 33 Montgomery Street, Westfield, Mass., April 1926  
Scanned from an uncatalogued negative in the Ross Conner Collection at the Connecticut Valley Historical Museum.  
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Graduation group, Prospect Hill School, 33 Montgomery Street, Westfield, Mass., 1929  
Scanned from an uncatalogued negative in the Ross Conner Collection at the Connecticut Valley Historical Museum.  
This image may not be exhibited, copied, or published in any way without permission from CVHM.  
Photographer: Frederick J. Tooke      Copyright: Frederick J. Tooke, 1929



Chamber of Commerce clean-up day at Prospect Hill School, 33 Montgomery Street, Westfield, Mass., circa 1920-1930

Scanned from an uncatalogued negative in the Ross Conner Collection at the Connecticut Valley Historical Museum. This image may not be exhibited, copied, or published in any way without permission from CVHM.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: NOMINATION

PROPERTY Prospect Hill School  
NAME:

MULTIPLE  
NAME:

STATE & COUNTY: MASSACHUSETTS, Hampden

DATE RECEIVED: 10/09/08 DATE OF PENDING LIST: 10/27/08  
DATE OF 16TH DAY: 11/11/08 DATE OF 45TH DAY: 11/22/08  
DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:

REFERENCE NUMBER: 08001069

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 11.19.08 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.



PROSPECT HILL SCHOOL  
WESTFIELD (HAMPDEN), MA

FARMER photograph 2006

EXTERIOR: W, S ELEVATIONS

Photo #1

NR photo #1 of 9

Prospect Hill School, 33 Montgomery St., Westfield, MA

2007



PROSPECT HILL SCHOOL  
WESTFIELD (HAMPDEN) MA

FARMER photo, 2006

PRIMARY (W) ELEVATION

PHOTO #2

NR Photo #2 of 9

Prospect Hill School, 33 Montgomery St, Westfield, MA

2007



PROSPECT HILL SCHOOL  
WESTFIELD (HAMPDEN) MA

FARMER PHOTO, 2006

N, W ELEVATIONS

PHOTO #3

nr photo #3 of 9

Prospect Hill School, 33 Montgomery St, Westfield, MA

2007



PROSPECT HILL SCHOOL  
WESTFIELD (HAMPDEN) MA

FARMER photo 2006

REAR (e) and S elevs.

Photo # 4

NR photo # 4 of 9

Prospect Hill School, 33 Montgomery St. Westfield, MA

2007



PROSPECT HILL SCHOOL  
WESTFIELD (HAMPDEN) MA

FARMER photo 2006

INTERIOR: BASEMENT CONDITIONS, looking SW

Photo #5

NR Photo #5 of 9  
Prospect Hill School, 33 Montgomery St. Westfield, MA

2007



PROSPECT HILL SCHOOL  
WESTFIELD (HAMPDEN) MA

FARMER photo 2006

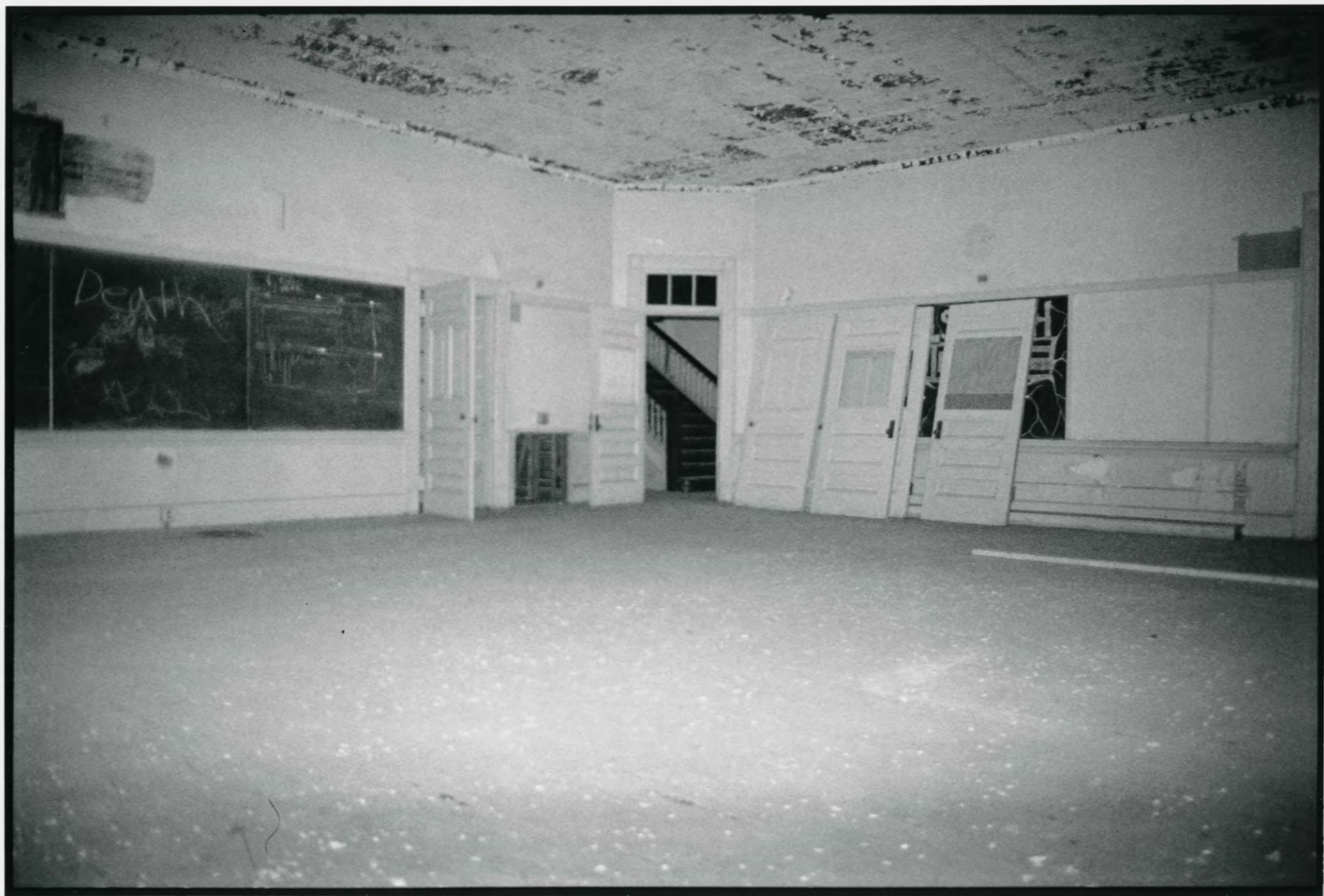
INTERIOR: 1<sup>ST</sup> FLOOR, MAIN CORRIDOR, looking E

PHOTO # 6

nr photo # 6 of 9

Prospect Hill School, 33 Montgomery St, Westfield, MA

2007



PROSPECT HILL SCHOOL

WESTFIELD (HAMPDEN) MA

FARMER photo 2006

INTERIOR: 1ST FLOOR CLASSROOM, looking SE

PHOTO #7

nr photo #7 of 9

Prospect Hill School, 33 Montgomery St, Westfield, MA

2007



PROSPECT HILL SCHOOL

WESTFIELD (HAMPDEN) MA

FARMER photo 2006

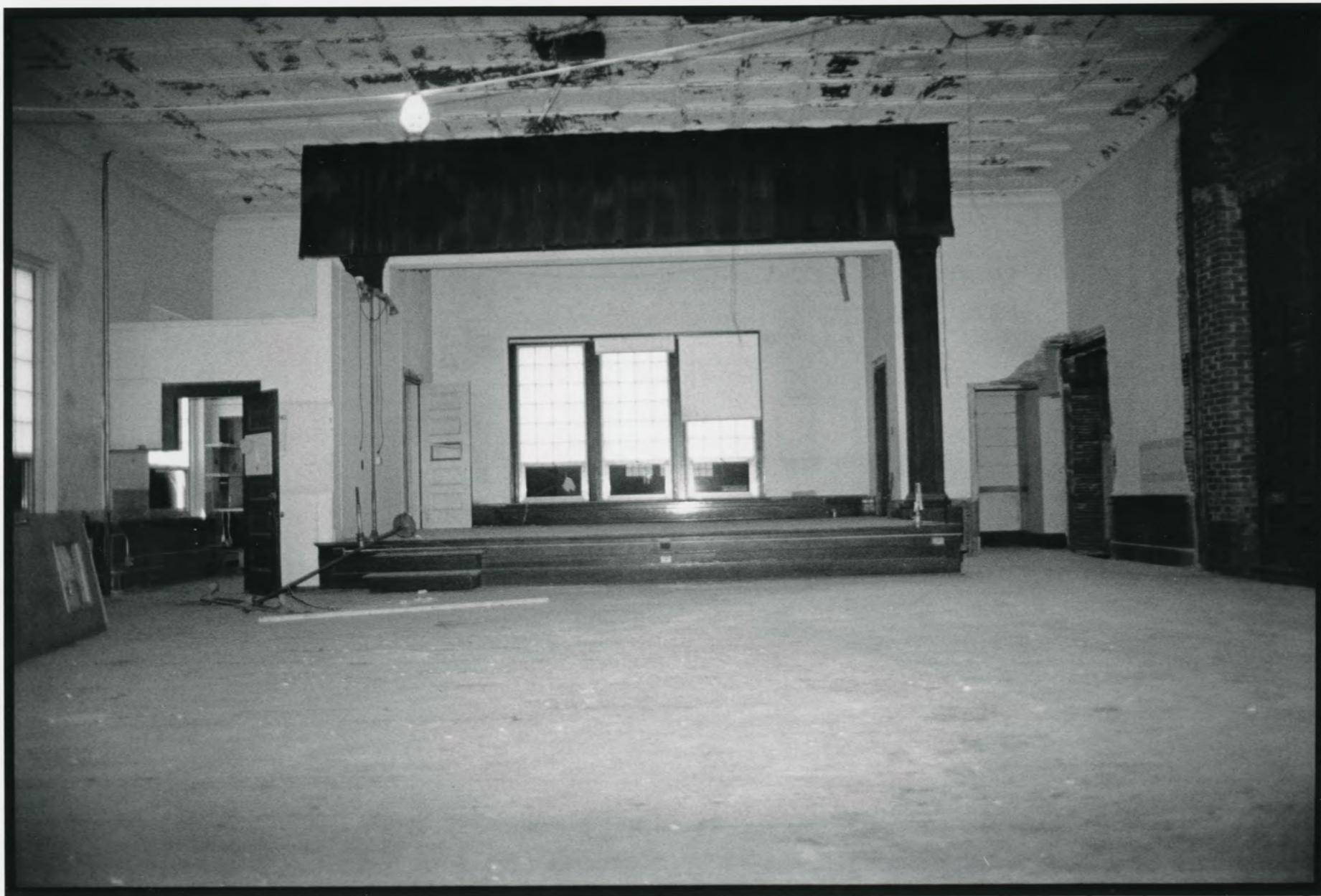
INTERIOR: 2<sup>nd</sup> FLOOR CLASSROOM, looking NE

PHOTO #8

NR Photo #8 of 9

Prospect Hill School, 33 Montgomery St., Westfield, MA

2007



PROSPECT HILL SCHOOL

WESTFIELD (HAMPDEN) MA

FARMER photo 2006

INTERIOR: 2ND FLOOR AUDITORIUM, looking N

PHOTO #9

NR photo # 9 of 9

Prospect Hill School, 33 Montgomery St, Westfield, MA

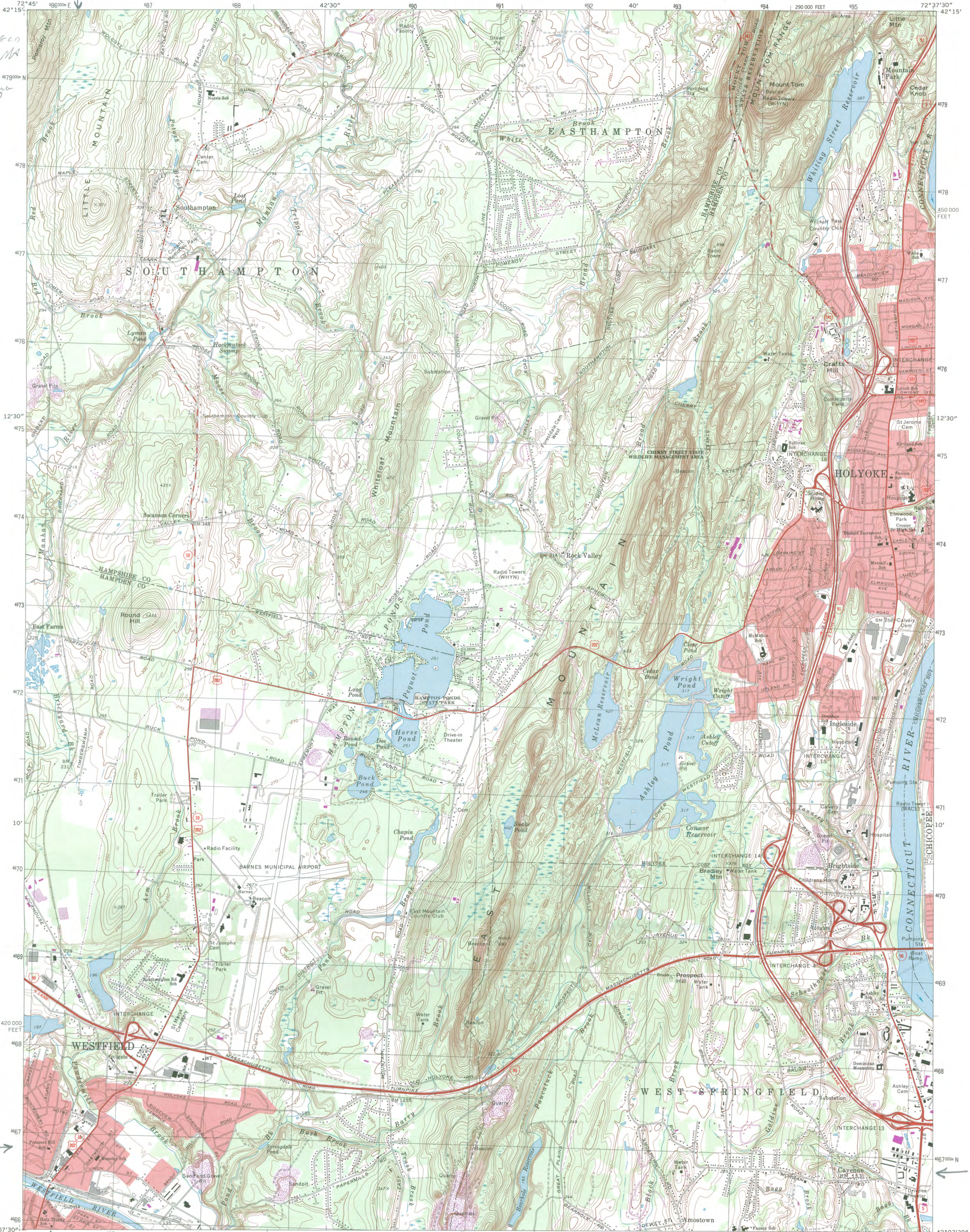
2007



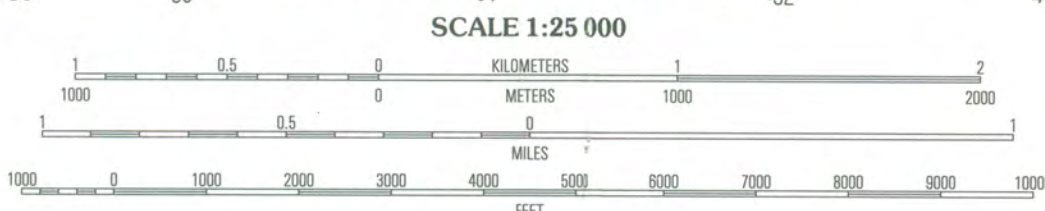
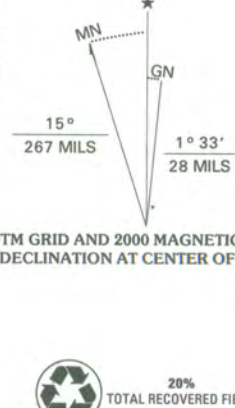
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
U.S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY

COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS  
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS

MOUNT TOM QUADRANGLE  
MASSACHUSETTS  
7.5-MINUTE SERIES (TOPOGRAPHIC)



Produced by the United States Geological Survey  
Topography compiled 1971. Planimetry derived from imagery taken 1975 and other sources. Photosinspected using imagery dated 1998; no major culture or drainage changes observed. Survey control current as of 1972. Boundaries, other than corporate, revised 2000  
North American Datum of 1927 (NAD 27). Projection and 10 000-foot ticks: Massachusetts coordinate system, mainland zone (Lambert conformal conic)  
1000-meter Universal Transverse Mercator grid, zone 18  
North American Datum of 1983 (NAD 83) is shown by dashed corner ticks. The values of the shift between NAD 27 and NAD 83 UTM GRID and 2000 MAGNETIC NORTH  
for 7.5-minute intersections are obtainable from National Geodetic Survey NADCON software  
There may be private inholdings within the boundaries of the National or State reservations shown on this map  
Information shown in purple may not meet USGS content standards and may conflict with previously mapped contours



CONTOUR INTERVAL 10 FEET  
NATIONAL GEODETIC VERTICAL DATUM OF 1929  
TO CONVERT FROM FEET TO METERS, MULTIPLY BY 0.3048

THIS MAP COMPLIES WITH NATIONAL MAP ACCURACY STANDARDS  
FOR SALE BY U.S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY, P.O. BOX 25286, DENVER, COLORADO 80225  
A FOLDER DESCRIBING TOPOGRAPHIC MAPS AND SYMBOLS IS AVAILABLE ON REQUEST



|   |   |   |
|---|---|---|
| 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 7 | 8 | 9 |

ROAD CLASSIFICATION  
Primary highway  
hard surface  
Secondary highway  
hard surface  
Interstate Route  
U.S. Route  
State Route  
Light-duty road, hard or improved surface  
Unimproved road

MOUNT TOM, MA  
1998

NIMA 6468 II NW-SERIES V814





**The Commonwealth of Massachusetts**  
William Francis Galvin, Secretary of the Commonwealth  
Massachusetts Historical Commission



October 6, 2008

Mr. J. Paul Loether  
National Register of Historic Places  
National Park Service  
1201 Eye Street, NW 8<sup>th</sup> floor  
Washington, DC 20005

Dear Mr. Loether:

Enclosed please find the following nomination form:

Prospect Hill School, 33 Montgomery Street, Westfield (Hampden Co.), MA

The nomination has been voted eligible by the State Review Board and has been signed by the State Historic Preservation Officer. The owners of the property were notified of pending State Review Board consideration 30 to 45 days before the meeting and were afforded the opportunity to comment.

Sincerely,

Betsy Friedberg  
National Register Director  
Massachusetts Historical Commission

enclosure

cc: Denise Quinn, Westfield Historical Commission  
Domus, Inc. / Prospect Hill Apartments LP  
Michael Boulanger, Mayor, City of Westfield  
Gregory Farmer, Michelle Plourde-Barker, consultants  
Anthony Petrucelli, Westfield Planning Board