

AUG 04 1988

1264

AREA

FORM NO.

144

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
80 BOYLSTON STREET
BOSTON, MA 02116

Photo (3"x3" or 3"x5", black and white) Indicate address of property on back of photo. Staple to left side of form.

Sketch Map: Draw map showing property's location in relation to nearest cross streets and/or geographical features. Indicate all buildings between inventoried property and nearest intersection(s).
Indicate north

See Attached Assessor's Map

UTM REFERENCE 19 326/970 4694/720
USGS QUADRANGLE Boston North
SCALE 1:25,000

Town Somerville

Address 130 Highland Avenue

Historic Name First Unitarian Church

Use: Present religious

Original religious

DESCRIPTION

Date 1894

Source cornerstone

Style Richardsonian Romanesque Revival

Architect Hartwell, Richardson, & Driv

Exterior Wall Fabric random quarre
faced granite

Outbuildings none

Major Alterations (with dates) none

Condition good

Moved no Date n/a

Acreage less than one acre

Setting South side of Highland, corner
of Trull Lane, residential, commercial
& institutional surrounds, heavily
travelled route.

Recorded by Gretchen G. Schuler

Organization Mass. Historical Commission

Date September, 1988

NATIONAL REGISTER CRITERIA STATEMENT (if applicable)

The First Unitarian Church retains integrity of location, design, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association with the late-19th century institutional development of the Central Hill area of Somerville. The church is important for its association with well known architectural firm Hartwell, Richardson and Driver. The First Unitarian Church fulfills Criteria A and C of the National Register of Historic Places on the local level.

ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE Describe important architectural features and evaluate in terms of other buildings within the community.

The First Unitarian Church, built in 1894, is a fine example of the Richardsonian Romanesque style for which the building's designers, Hartwell, Richardson, and Driver, were so well known. The imposing structure displays an asymmetrical plan with steeply pitched gable roof clad in greyish-green slate. Variety in materials and architectural shapes contribute to the distinguished design. The random faced granite facades, the slate roof, the vertical wood batten entrance doors, the iron scroll full width door hinges, and the copper gutters and flashing have been retained. Fenestration, which is varied, includes narrow lancet windows, round-headed and rectangular windows of multi lights, stained glass windows, and a one-story polygonal bay. The recessed entrance within a Romanesque arch is set within the base of the pyramidal corner belfry attached to the west side of the main church building.

HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE Explain the role owners played in local or state history and how the building relates to the development of the community.

Built on Central Hill the First Unitarian Church building was the last of several built for this congregation. Highland Avenue, originally part of an old route known as "Barberry Land" or "Middle Way" extended only to Central Street until 1870 when it was continued to Davis Square. It was the site of civic buildings, several churches of large congregations, and of large single family homes.

The First Unitarian Society of Somerville held its first meeting for public worship and was organized in 1844. The congregation had three church buildings between 1844 and 1869. In 1894 this building was erected. Renown architects Hartwell, Richardson, and Driver designed this church building in the style made popular by H.H. Richardson. The building is significant for its well defined architectural style and its association with the well known architectural firm. It is also important for its association with the development of Central Hill as the civic and institutional center of Somerville and for its association with the development of the religious community.

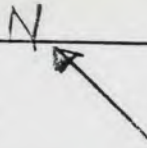
BIBLIOGRAPHY and/or REFERENCES

Bromely, G.W., Atlas of the City of Somerville, 1894.
Samuels, Edward, Somerville: Past and Present, 1897.
Somerville Journal, November 15, 1890.

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1" = 100'

Highland Avenue



First Unitarian church
130 Highland Ave.
Somerville, (MRA) Mass



United States Department of the Interior
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number _____ Page _____

Multiple Resource Area
Thematic GroupName Somerville MPS
State Middlesex County, MASSACHUSETTS

Nomination/Type of Review

Date/Signature

21. Crowell, C.C., House

Entered in the
National RegisterKeeper *Melores Byers* 9/18/89

Attest _____

22. Downer Rowhouses (Adams Street)

Entered in the
National RegisterKeeper *Melores Byers* 9/18/89

Attest _____

23. Downer Rowhouses (Central Street)

Entered in the
National RegisterKeeper *Melores Byers* 9/18/89

Attest _____

24. First Unitarian Church

Substantive Review

Keeper *Beth L. Saurge* 9/18/89

Attest _____

25. First Universalist Church

Substantive Review

Keeper *Beth L. Saurge* 9/18/89

Attest _____

26. Foster, Alexander, House

Entered in the
National RegisterKeeper *Melores Byers* 9/18/89

Attest _____

27. Gaut, Samuel, House

Entered in the
National RegisterKeeper *Melores Byers* 9/18/89

Attest _____

28. Grandview, The

Entered in the
National RegisterKeeper *Melores Byers* 9/18/89

Attest _____

29. Highland, The

Entered in the
National RegisterKeeper *Melores Byers* 9/18/89

Attest _____

30. Hollander Blocks

Entered in the
National RegisterKeeper *Melores Byers* 9/18/89

Attest _____

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number _____ Page _____

SUPPLEMENTARY LISTING RECORD

NRIS Reference Number: 89001264

Date Listed: 09/18/89

First Unitarian Church
Property Name

Middlesex
County

MA
State

Somerville MPS
Multiple Name

This property is listed in the National Register of Historic Places in accordance with the attached nomination documentation subject to the following exceptions, exclusions, or amendments, notwithstanding the National Park Service certification included in the nomination documentation.

Betsy L. Savage
Signature of the Keeper

9-18-89
Date of Action

Amended Items in Nomination:

Section 8: Criteria considerations

Criteria exception A is applicable for the property's religious function.

This information was confirmed with Betsy Friedberg, MASHPO, by telephone.

DISTRIBUTION:

National Register property file
Nominating Authority (without nomination attachment)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: NOMINATION

PROPERTY First Unitarian Church
NAME:

MULTIPLE Somerville MPS
NAME:

STATE & COUNTY: MASSACHUSETTS, Middlesex

DATE RECEIVED: 8/04/89 DATE OF PENDING LIST: 8/15/89
DATE OF 16TH DAY: 8/31/89 DATE OF 45TH DAY: 9/18/89
DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:

REFERENCE NUMBER: 89001264

NOMINATOR: STATE

REASONS FOR REVIEW:

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

COMMENT WAIVER: N

☒ ACCEPT ☐ RETURN ☐ REJECT 9/18/89 DATE

ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:

*Locally significant Richardsonian
Romanesque ecclesiastical design of
prominent architectural firm of
Hartwell, Richardson, and Driver.
Associated with the development of
the Central Hill neighborhood as the
civic/institutional core of the
community.*

RECOM./CRITERIA Accept A+C
REVIEWER Save
DISCIPLINE Architectural History
DATE 9/18/89

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

CLASSIFICATION

☐ count ☐ resource type

STATE/FEDERAL AGENCY CERTIFICATION

FUNCTION

☐ historic ☐ current

DESCRIPTION

☐ architectural classification
☐ materials
☐ descriptive text

SIGNIFICANCE

Period Areas of Significance--Check and justify below

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

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

BIBLIOGRAPHY

GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

☐ acreage ☐ verbal boundary description
☐ UTM's ☐ boundary justification

ACCOMPANYING DOCUMENTATION/PRESENTATION

☐ sketch maps ☐ USGS maps ☐ photographs ☐ presentation

OTHER COMMENTS

Questions concerning this nomination may be directed to

Signed _____ Phone _____

Date _____



1. 130 Highland Avenue
2. Somerville, MA
3. C. Zellie
4. 1985
5. Somerville City Hall
6. looking southeast
- 7 # 144

First Unitarian Church
Somerville MA, Ma

Please refer to the map in the
Multiple Property Cover Sheet
for this property

Multiple Property Cover Sheet Reference Number: 64500253