

**United States Department of the Interior
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

For HCRS use only

received JUL 24 1980

date entered OCT 31 1980

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

1. Name

historic Benjamin Barker House

and/or common

2. Location

street & number 1229 Main Road (Rte. 138) ___ not for publication

city, town Tiverton ___ vicinity of #1 Hon. Fernand J. St Germain
congressional district

state Rhode Island code 44 county Newport code 005

3. Classification

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

4. Owner of Property

name Anthony Salvo

street & number The Coachmen Restaurant, 1215 Main Road (Rte. 138)

city, town Tiverton ___ vicinity of state Rhode Island

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Town Clerk's Office, Tiverton Town Hall

street & number 343 Highland Avenue

city, town Tiverton, state Rhode Island 02878

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date federal state county local

depository for survey records

city, town state

7. Description

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

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The Benjamin Barker House stands on a gently east-to-west sloping site atop a high ridge affording vistas to the west across the Sakonnet River, Aquidneck Island, Mount Hope and Narragansett Bay (see figure 1 and map).

This scenic area, known as Tiverton Heights, is traversed by old Main Road (State Route 138) which borders the Barker House property on the east. Just south of the Barker property is Route 24, a limited-access, 4-lane highway completed in 1968; it runs through a cut bridged by Main Road. Immediately north and west is the Coachmen Restaurant--an extensive complex developed in the 1960s which incorporates the former Barker carriage house into its large restaurant building. Drylaid stone walls gird the Barker property on the east, north and south. Broad lawns and mature shade trees surround the house. Two structures stand within the confines of this parcel: a recently built greenhouse and garage, now derelict, which for the purposes of this nomination is classed as a non-contributing building; and the Barker House itself. The greenhouse & garage stands just southwest of the residence.

Probably built in about 1850, the Benjamin Barker House is an impressive, temple-form, Greek Revival style dwelling (figures 1 and 2) which has stood vacant since it was seriously damaged by fire in January, 1979. It is a wood-frame building, clapboard-clad, painted white. Its rubble foundation is faced with granite blocks. The gable-roofed 2½-story main block, roughly 45 feet square, has a colossal, tetrastyle, pedimented Ionic temple front on the east, facing an oval entrance drive and Main Road. The three-bay east front has a sidehall entrance. The first-story windows have 6-over-9 double-hung sash and the second floor windows have 6-over-6 sash.

A thoroughly anti-classical, triple window pierces the pedimented east and west gables, illuminating attic rooms; other attic spaces gain light and air by means of small three-light sliding sash windows let into the cornice on the north and south sides of the house. The roof, now almost wholly destroyed, has two ridge-line chimney stacks and a large, central, octagonal belvedere. The north elevation incorporates a two-story, semi-octagonal bay window. The complex south front has a two-story, rectangular projection; a single-story, semi-octagonal bay window; and a small, single-story Ionic porch. Barker House exterior trim has characteristic Greek Revival massiveness and is well executed. The Ionic capitals, related to those of the Erechtheum, are particularly fine (figure 3).

A two-story wing on the west side of the main body of the house, very possibly an addition of the 1850s or '60s, has a nearly flat roof and bracketed porches on its west and south sides. Taking advantage of the sloping site, the rear of this wing's basement story is at grade; it probably housed the kitchen and other service areas. The west wing was remodelled in the 1970s and at that time its south porch was closed in. A

(See Continuation Sheet #1).

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single chimney stack rises through this wing.

The Barker House floor plan (continuation sheet # 3) accommodates an entrance and stairhall; three major rooms, all with fireplaces; and a diminutive, solarium-like library on the first floor, within the main body of the house. The interior of the west wing first story has been thoroughly reworked, but it appears to have contained major rooms rather than service areas. The second floor of the main block contains three bedrooms. The second floor of the west wing and the attic are too badly damaged by fire to make it possible to describe their arrangement well.

Interior trim is simple, massive and characteristic. The six-panel doors, as well as the windows, have mitred architraves and heavy cornices (figure 4). The windows have interior shutters, and first-story windows are floor-length. Mantels are simple and typically Greek Revival, executed in marble or slate. Despite the fire and extensive water damage, all first-story trim and most of that in the second-story is well preserved.

FHR-8-300A
(11/78)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
HERITAGE CONSERVATION AND RECREATION SERVICE

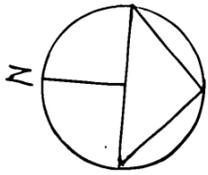
NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

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CONTINUATION SHEET 3

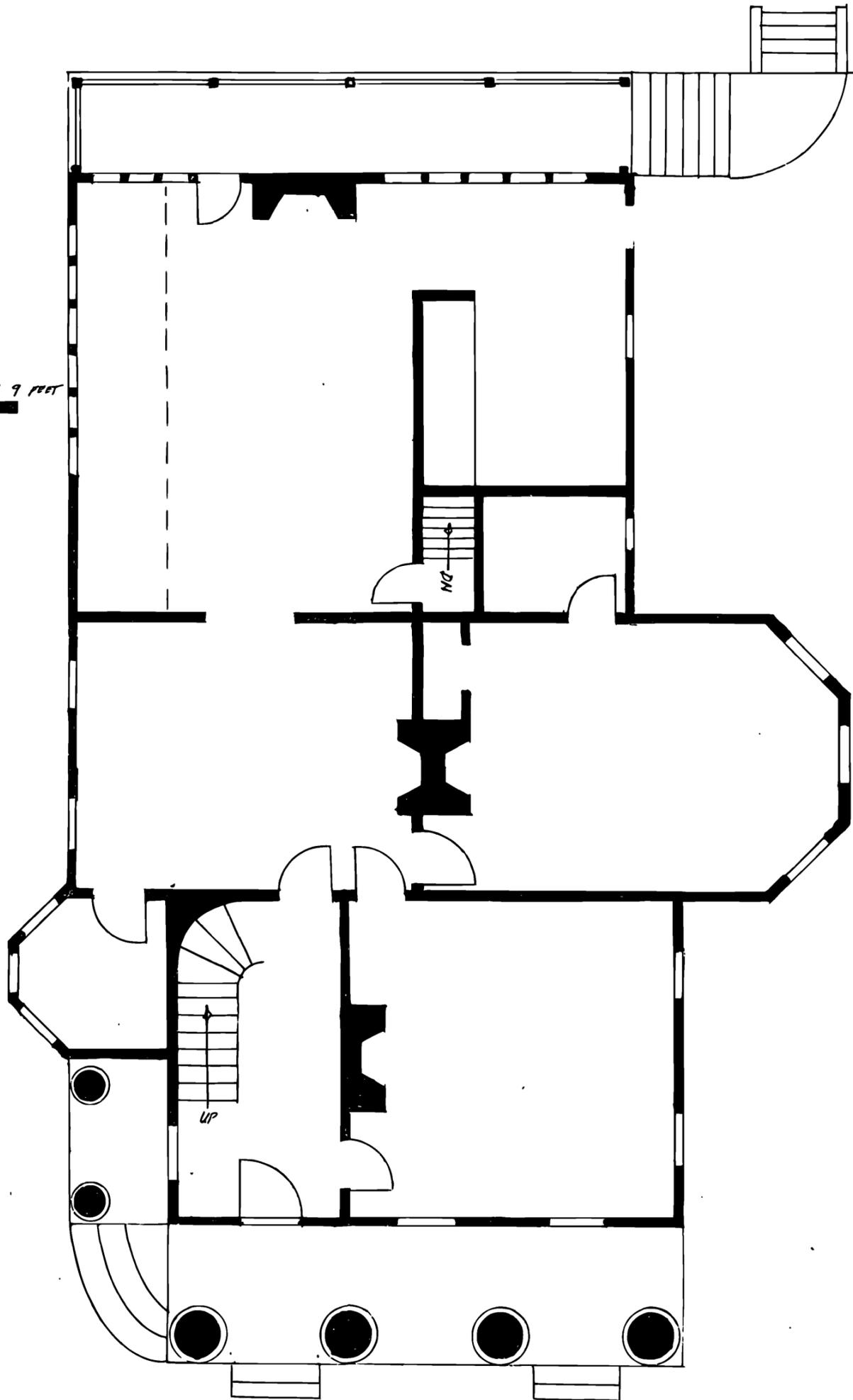
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*BARKER HOUSE
WEST MAIN ROAD
TIVERTON, RHODE ISLAND*

APPROX. SCALE 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 FEET



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Continuation sheet 4

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In spite of extensive fire and subsequent weather damage, the Barker House appears to be in good enough condition to be rehabilitated. The building has lost virtually all of its roof; the cupola is extant, but on the ground. The attic story is gutted, and is missing the western half of its floor; that portion of the floor above the main block of the house is intact. On the second story the ell, again, has been destroyed, but the trim, mantels and floors remain in good condition in the main house. As there is virtually no roof over the house, water is obviously moving through it. However, since the second floor is so well ventilated, it quickly dries and seems to cause little severe damage.

The first floor is boarded up, and therefore is damper than the second. Consequently, although the mantels and trim are in good condition in the main house, the floors have buckled. The front hall and stair are in remarkably good condition all the way to the attic story. The floor in the ell is intact, but the trim and paneling has been lost. This was the area that had been thoroughly remodeled in the 1970's. Indeed, it is fair to say that more of the recent renovation work was destroyed than original fabric. The three large rooms in the main house retain original sash, doors, trim, shutters, and mantels.

Unfortunately, the plaster throughout the house is missing or badly damaged. It was originally plain plasterwork with no cornice or medallions; so that it could easily be redone. On the exterior, the portico and side porch are intact. Even the rear porch remains in good condition. The fire moved vertically through the rear of the house, and then forward through the attic.

It is imperative that the Barker House be closed to the weather as soon as possible, to forestall further water damage. Listing on the National Register of Historic Places will assist the owner in doing so.

8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400–1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500–1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600–1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/ humanitarian
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700–1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800–1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900–	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		

Specific dates c. 1850

Builder/Architect

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The Barker House is an architectural landmark worthy of preservation. Although it has long been a local showplace, its early history is inadequately documented and the identity of its architect is unknown. The presumed original owner, Benjamin Barker, was a prosperous lumber merchant in the thriving industrial city of Fall River, some five miles north of the house. The Barkers were an early Tiverton family and had farmed in this area since the eighteenth century. The house descended in the family through the early 1960s, when it was purchased by the present owner who developed the Coachmen Restaurant nearby.

The design of the house has been attributed to Russell Warren, a Tiverton native whose extensive architectural practice was centered in Providence. Warren was responsible for a number of ambitious Greek Revival residences, several in Fall River. No specific basis for attribution exists, however, and any one of a number of architects and architect-builders active in the area could have authored the Barker House. Whoever the designer was, his dependence on builders' guides is evident, as was so common in this period. Minard Lefever's Beauties of Modern Architecture, for example, issued in 1835 and re-issued through the mid-1850s, was the source of the Ionic capitals and also of the mitred window and door casings.

The Benjamin Barker House, despite fire damage, is one of the Rhode Island's finest examples of Greek Revival style, monumental domestic architecture. Large, first-quality, temple-form homes have always been rare in this state. Today they must be considered an endangered species. Because of its condition, the Barker House is a threatened property. Listing on the National Register of Historic Places will assist its owner in his efforts to preserve this important historic building.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Providence Journal, 23 August 1903.
Rhode Island Census, 1865.
Tiverton: A Tercentennial History, 1936.
United States Census for Rhode Island, 1850.
Walling's Map of Rhode Island, 1855.

ACREAGE NOT VERIFIED
UTM NOT VERIFIED

10. Geographical Data

Acres of nominated property less than one acre

Quadrangle name Fall River

Quadrangle scale 1:24,000

UMT References

A 1 9 | 3 1 6 | 3 3 0 | 4 6 | 1 2 | 1 2 0
Zone Easting Northing

B | | | | |
Zone Easting Northing

C | | | | |

D | | | | |

E | | | | |

F | | | | |

G | | | | |

H | | | | |

Verbal boundary description and justification

The Barker grounds are defined by stone walls on the north, east and south. To the north and west are the parking areas, vegetable gardens and (See Continuation Sheet #2).

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

state code county code

state code county code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title David Chase, Deputy Director

organization Rhode Island Historical Preservation Commission date 14 April 1980

street & number 150 Benefit Street telephone 401-277-2678

city or town Providence, state Rhode Island 02903

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national state local

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature Frederick Williamson date 7/10/80

title _____ date _____

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

Bruce A. Jorgensen date 10/31/80
Keeper of the National Register

Attest: Patrick Andrus date 10/29/80
Chief of Registration

see phone report of 8/26/80

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buildings of the Coachmen Restaurant. Main Route (State Route 138) fronts the property on the east and an access ramp leading to Route 24 skirts the property on the south. The Barker House grounds constitute the southeast corner of Tiverton Assessor's Block 195, Card 1A; the Coachmen Restaurant complex constitutes the remainder of this parcel. Only the Barker House and its grounds are the subject of this nomination.