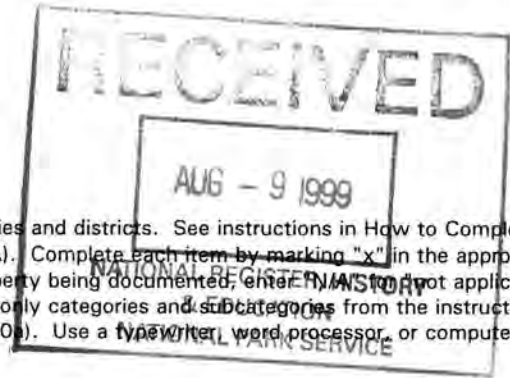


United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

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" or "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 Assonet Historic District

other names/site number _____

2. Location

street & number Elm, North Main, South Main, Mill, High, Forge, School, Pleasant Streets, The Lane not for publication

city or town Freetown

vicinity _____

state Massachusetts code MA county Bristol code 005 zip code 02702-1115

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.)

Judith B. McDonough
Signature of certifying official/Title Judith B. McDonough, Executive Director
Massachusetts Historical Commission, State Historic Preservation Officer

7/29/99
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): _____

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

Edson A. Beall

9/9/99

Assonet Historic District
Name of Property

Bristol, 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	
120	31	building
32		sites
39	2	structures
5		objects
196	33	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

Name of related multiple property listing

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

N/A

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

Domestic - single dwelling
Industry - manufacturing facility
Commerce - department store
Government - town hall
Religion - religious facility
Funerary - cemetery
Transportation - road related
Education - school

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

Domestic - single family
Religious - religious facility
Governmental - town hall
Funerary - cemetery
Education - library
Landscape - park
Transportation - road related

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions)

Colonial - Georgian
Early Republic - Federal
Mid-19th Century - Gothic Revival

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation granite
walls clabboard
roof asphalt
other wood
brick

Narrative Description

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

See continuation sheets

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7. DESCRIPTION

The Assonet National Register Historic District is a well preserved and compact village center located at the point where the Assonet River empties into Assonet Bay. Set in the rolling hills of southeastern Massachusetts' coastal area, immediately north of the industrial city of Fall River, Assonet is the larger of two distinct village centers in the town of Freetown. The small community developed in the last years of the seventeenth century along the crossroads formed by major travel routes: North/South Main Streets and Water/Elm Streets, with Mill Street/Howland Road joining nearby. Clustered around the focal intersection known as Assonet Four Corners are the village's municipal buildings, memorial marker, and sites of the former commercial center. Radiating outwards are industrial remains and structures relating to 19th century boat building along the Assonet River, two excellent examples of stone bridges from the beginning and end of the 19th century, and a fine collection of houses dating from c. 1720 to the mid-20th century. On the edges of the district are an intact cattle pound built into a natural bluff, a textile mill built over the remains of the town's earliest saw mill, and the Town Cemetery.

The district is characterized by frame construction, and all buildings are clad in clapboard or shingle except the brick municipal Fire Station, 3 Elm Street (1947, Map # 3) and a masonry industrial complex. However, the abundant granite is visible everywhere, as fieldstone in the stone walls that are a prominent element of the streetscapes, and the locally quarried fence posts, retaining walls, stairs and generally massive foundations.

The majority of contributing buildings in the district are single family houses, and some of the non-domestic buildings are also at residential scale, such as the Hathaway Library, 6 North Main Street (1895, Map # 38), and the former Peabody Store, 1 South Main Street (1869, Map # 78). The Town Hall, 3 North Main Street (1888, Map # 33, MHC # A-14, Photo # 7) and three churches were designed at institutional scale, but fit gently into a residential context. Remaining exceptions are the industrial buildings. Buildings are sited on modest to larger lots and observe a vaguely defined street-line, although several are sited at the rear of the lot and a few are placed close to the street. Many of the houses retain their barns or carriage houses, others have newer garages. The majority of the district's buildings are enclosed with gabled roofs, three houses and the Village Schoolhouse 5 North Main Street (1794/1906, Map # 35, Photo # 7), have hip roofs and there are two early gambrel-roofed houses. For its size, the district contains a remarkable number of burial grounds--three family graveyards, and a public cemetery.

A principal landscape feature of the district is the changing aspect of the Assonet River, which flows south and west to bisect it. Visible as a mill pond and falls east of the Winslow Dam, Mill Street (1695, Map # 31.4) it narrows and is hidden by its banks along Mill Street, then reemerges

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as a narrow mill pond at the western end of Mill Street where it flows over the falls, then under the Elm Street Bridge (1822, Map 7, MHC # A-900). At this point it widens steadily, and, as the land on the south side of Water Street and the north side of The Lane is open, it is visible as a usually placid stream, occasionally edged by stone walls, and at other places by a low vegetated margin. Hathaway Park, Water Street (c. 1790s/1965) located at its widest point in the district, provides public access to the river.

Possibly the largest ash tree in Bristol County stands in the yard of the Elder Philip Hathaway House, 23 South Main Street (1792, Map # 94, MHC # A-26) while a very large black walnut tree is located across the street at the J. Peabody House, 26 South Main Street (c. 1850, Map # 95, MHC # A-25). Two endangered species of ground-covers, the princess pine and creeping jenny, are found throughout the district, often in conjunction with the indigenous white pine trees.

An important feature of the district is its linear planning. The long, unbroken development along Water Street and the historic transportation routes is infrequently intersected by cross streets and only occasionally interrupted by cul de sacs. This results in a somewhat dense development pattern without traditional shorter blocks and right-angle intersections. The gentle hills forming the Assonet River valley crossed by North and South Main Streets, the high rocky outcropping incorporated into the Cattle Pound, High Street, (c. 1705-1790, Map # 106), and the many mature shade trees found in the side and back yards of the residential properties also help to define the character of the district.

The district retains much of its 19th and early 20th century appearance, with a mix of architectural styles. There is markedly less building in late nineteenth and early twentieth century styles than in those of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, giving the district a decided tilt towards the Georgian and Federal periods. Although a good number of the buildings have been altered, most retain basic design integrity. Water Street in particular retains nearly all of the buildings shown on the map of 1871, with only a few erected thereafter. The extensive docks and wharves at the river front have all but disappeared, but the granite retaining walls that line the river are remarkably intact. The known architects of the district are Charles C. Marble, a New Bedford contractor who designed and built the Town Hall, 3 North Main Street (1888, Map # 33, MHC # A-14), and Ebenezer Pierce who designed and built the Congregational Church, 9 North Main Street (1809, Map # 37, MHC # A-11, Photo # 7).

The Assonet Historic District contains a total of 229 resources: 196 contributing, including 120 buildings, 39 structures, 32 sites, and 5 objects; and 33 noncontributing, including 31 buildings and 2 structures. The many archeological sites, together with the concentration of private cemeteries, contribute to the high number of sites, while the many character-defining stone walls and beautifully designed wood and iron fences lining the roads add to the number of structures.

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Most of the commercial buildings and the industrial buildings which operated on water power, or produced goods no longer manufactured locally have been demolished. While these demolitions introduced significant gaps in the village fabric, they have not typically been filled with inappropriate replacement buildings. Most new construction has continued the modest scale and siting established in the nineteenth century.

Contact Period (1500-1620)

It is thought that much of the present day road system follows paths used by the native peoples of the area. A north south route to Acushnet paralleled the Tauton and Assonet Rivers, now North and South Main Streets. It was intersected by a trail from Assonet Bay eastward to Long Pond which crossed the Assonet River at Elm Street. A trail over what is now Mill Street/Richmond Road and Slab Bridge/Chase Roads met the east-west trail near the ford.

First Settlement Period (1620-1675)

In 1659 twenty six Plymouth Bay residents bought from the local native leaders the large, virgin tract of upland meadow thereafter called the Freeman's Purchase. Divided into lots the following year, settlement did not occur in earnest until the 1680s. The lot allocations, however, affected the orientation and layout of properties along the pathways. The boundaries of the original purchase divisions can be traced in today's property lines, and the private ownership of all the land had consequences in the development of the town.

Colonial Period (1675 - 1775)

Native pathways improved by settlers appear to include what is now North and South Main Streets, Mill, Richmond Roads, and High Street in response to the small settlement at Assonet. There was probably a bridge carrying South Main Street over the Assonet River, said to be old in 1745. Elm Street, however must have remain unimproved, as it does not appear on the map of 1794, the main route to East Freetown being Mill Street/ Forge and Howland Roads. There is evidence that Water Street existed as a path before 1685.

The foundations of the first mill erected on the Assonet River survive, the c. 1695 Winslow Dam and Saw Mill, 31 Mill Street (Map # 31.1, 31.2). Indeed, the mill's still extant fieldstone foundations including an arched opening for the tail race, and stone-lined river bank currently support a 20th century industrial building. The Old Locust Street Bridge abutments (date unknown, Map # 31.3) remain to indicate the former location of the bridge. In the 17th, 18th and 19th centuries a house (1706) and a fulling mill were built on the south side of the mill pond and a grist mill on the north side. All are now demolished. The still extant Tisdale Dam built in 1710 at the intersection of the Assonet River and Elm/Mill Street (Map # 18.1) was associated with a grist mill (Map # 18.3) on the northwest bank for "Indian corn" and ca. 1810 a saw mill

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(Map # 18.4) and later a box board and shingle mill on the southeast bank. Evidence of the site's active use through the 19th century is both photographic and physical, although the dam may have been successively rebuilt. A capstan or turbine stands near the dam on the south bank of the river (Map # 18.2).

The houses the first settlers built between 1659 and 1719 do not remain. Probably the oldest surviving house in the district is the Winslow/Dean/Aunt Kate/Peabody House, 10 South Main Street (c. 1720-1725, Map # 84, MHC # A-21, Photo # 1). The well preserved 1 1/2 story, gambrel-roofed house is seven bays long by a narrow two bays wide. A 1 1/2 story gable-roofed ell was added to the rear and is placed to the side to form a Beverly jog. The rhythm of the facade's fenestration and door placement suggests that it could have been a five-bay house with additions at both ends, while a central chimney stack reinforces this inference. The simple six-panel door is surround by half-length sidelights. The upper floor, which contained a large hall in the 19th century, is lit by three quite small pedimented dormers. The house's tight eaves line and simplicity are characteristic of Colonial period building.

A second 1 1/2 story gambrel-roofed cottage, the Pearce/Tew House at 3 The Lane (c. 1738-1740, Map # 108, MHC # A-31), is only three bays long, with a chimney in the first bay, a form known as a three-quarters Cape Cod cottage. A porch was added to the facade c. 1920. Two pedimented dormers are symmetrically placed. Both these houses have minimal ornamentation around doors, windows and roof, giving them a severe but weather-tight appearance.

Next door is the Reed House, 5 The Lane (c. 1750-1780, Map # 109, MHC # A-30). A full Cape cottage, the rectangular plan is 1 1/2 stories high, and enclosed by a side-gable roof, with the door in the center of the five-bay facade and a large center chimney. It has a later Greek Revival door surround of half-length sidelights and a plain boxed cornice. The roof is framed without returns.

The third of a trio of early 1 1/2 story houses on The Lane is the William Read/Wilber House at 7 The Lane (c. 1760-1790, Map # 110, MHC # A-70). Like the other full Cape on The Lane, the side-gable cottage has a center entrance and chimney. Its splayed lintels could date its construction from the mid to the end of the 18th century. However, the roof is framed with short returns, suggesting a later 18th century date. A modern porch conceals the original facade. These three cottages all sited to face the river make a fine grouping.

The Georgian style Winslow/Durfee/John D. Wilson House, 5 Elm Street (said to date from 1725-1734, but probably rebuilt c. 1785, Map # 5, MHC # A-52, Photo # 2) is the most elaborate of the remaining pre-Revolutionary War houses. The south facing, 2 1/2 story house with a side gable roof is set back from the road adjacent to the first falls in the Assonet River. The five-bay

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house has a center chimney and entry. Several unique features make it an important example. The first concerns a framing technique in which the side gable field or eaves area projects out beyond the plane of the house to form an eaves overhang. This medieval holdover was used sporadically from the late 17th century throughout Massachusetts, but its persistent, continued use is characteristic of, and concentrated in Freetown and its surrounding area. Here, however, the framing technique is used not once but twice, between the first and second floors of the side elevations, as well as in the gable overhang.

Another distinctive element is the wooden representation of ashlar stone-work. To achieve it, the carpenter scored lines in the oversized surrounds, which include wide splayed lintels as well as splayed under-sill aprons, the casing, and the cornerboards to suggest quoins. The airy one story Italianate/Gothic Revival porch across the facade, probably installed by mill owner John D. Wilson, somewhat obscures this interesting design. The one story ell, probably added when the house was remodeled in the high-style Georgian style shows the same distinctive detail.

The Dogget Store/J. D. Wilson Tenant House at 7 Elm Street (c. 1750-1800, Map # 5.3, MHC #A-53) adjacent to the mill and river once served as a store, with trap doors overhanging the river to facilitate off-loading goods, and may have housed the workers employed next door in the saw and grist mills. The very simple two-story, side-gable roof house is seven bays long. On its eastern end the roof slopes down over a rear extension in a broken saltbox construction. A much later Italianate door hood was inserted in the mid 19th century, possibly when its roof was reframed.

The tall, centrally located Jael Hathaway/Durfee/Col. Thomas Gilbert House, 1 Elm Street 1744-1745, (Map # 2, MHC # A-15), had its symmetrical five-bay, center-entry organization altered to three bays and is now clad in vinyl rather than clapboard. However, it retains its basic proportions, 2 1/2-story height and side-gable roof, with central chimney. The five-light transom and Georgian pediment over the door have also been replaced.

Very probably the Muster Field now the Assonet Burial Ground, South Main Street (ca. 1760/1865, Map # 101, MHC # 818) was informally laid out a rough patch of unenclosed ground, but its civic function allowed the property to be reused as a Town Burial Ground after local militias were absorbed into county wide structures.

Federal Period (1775-1830)

The Three Arch Bridge carrying Elm Street over the Assonet River, (1822, Map # 7, MHC # A-900) is constructed of thin fieldstone slabs dry laid in random courses. One of few surviving bridges of this period, and in excellent condition, it is supported on three distinctive keystone arches whose heavy voussoirs are larger pieces of the same rough stone.

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The Village School, 5 North Main Street (c. 1793/1906, Map # 35, MHC # A-12, Photo # 7) was built during this period but heavily altered one hundred years later, giving it a Colonial Revival appearance, especially after it lost the acroteria or cresting which edged the roof line. However, its hip roof, high brick foundations, and proportions are distinctly Federal. It was built privately as a law office, but was used as a private school from ca. 1800 and as a public school after 1854 until 1950, and for Town Meetings at different times.

The Federal-style, tall white Congregational Church, 9 North Main Street (1809, Map # 37, MHC # A-11, Photo # 7) was built by master builder Ebenezer Pierce (1777-1852) of Assonet and Middleborough, with the assistance of the ship builders of the village and possibly designed by him as well. In 1868 the building was extended twenty feet to the rear, and in 1925 the Parish House on the south was added. The building is set slightly back from the roughly observed street-line and sited on a slight rise to face east on one of the village's major roads.

Two stories high with a central tower rising through the pediment of the five bay gable front, the building has a shallow pedimented pavilion containing three entries. The larger center entry has a door surround composed of half-round fluted pilasters with Doric capitals supporting a dentil trimmed entablature of metopes and triglyphs: the two flanking doors have eared architrave surrounds topped by cornices on consoles. On the second floor, a Palladian window is placed in the center of the pavilion. The 20/20 windows are repeated in the mid-nineteenth century addition. The two stage tower is composed of a square base with a clock made in 1830 by George H. Holbrook and added in 1882, and an open, octagonal domed belfry containing a Paul Revere foundry bell. It is surmounted by a lyre motif weathervane covered in gold leaf.

The largest number of houses in the village were constructed during this period, giving the district a strong flavor of the Georgian-Federal style. The Henry Winslow/James M. Phillips House at 12 Elm Street (c. 1760-1785, Map # 9, MHC # A-55), still emphasizes Georgian proportions and stylistic elements. Five bays long by two wide, the rectangular plan rises 2 1/2 stories high to a side gable roof. It is framed with a slightly projecting box cornice finished with a small bed mold which hides the joint between the frieze and soffit, and very small returns. The entry in the center bay is protected by a rather low portico with replacement pillars but a possibly original cornice. A large central chimney is set at the ridge line. The high-set second floor windows butt against the bed mold of the facade, while first floor windows are topped by small crown or cornice hoods. Windows on the side elevations have splayed lintels.

Although built in the Federal period, the Barlow/Barrows House, 10 Mill Street (1789, Map # 23, MHC # A-58, Photo # 4) is also more Georgian than Federal in style. On low foundations with a wide sill and cornerboards, it repeats the J. M. Phillips House plan with a somewhat steeper pitched side gable roof. Windows show similar placement and stand well out from the plane of

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the house in the Georgian manner. Uniquely, they have molded sills. This house displays the pronounced side gable overhang. The narrow frontispiece door surround features a six light transom, flanked by pilasters which support a triangular pediment with dentiled trim. A door on the south elevation also has a transom and simple cornice.

Built about 1782, the Elder Philip Hathaway House, 23 South Main Street (Map # 94, MHC # A-26, Photo # 5), is two stories high under a low-pitched side gable roof. The five bay, center-entry house is only one room deep, as in earlier construction. A formerly unattached gambrel-roofed ell to the rear with several original 12/8 windows was originally a store. Built about 1796, it was located at the bottom of Simpson Lane and moved much later. The house displays several Georgian holdovers mentioned above, a squat, hip roof portico, low proportions and smaller windows which are high placed on the second floor, have deep splayed lintels and stand out from the body of the house. The house originally had a central chimney.

A second two-story house is the Welcome Hathaway/Jason Hathaway House at 28 Water Street (c. 1809, Map # 69, MHC # A-37). Of the same plan as the Elder Philip Hathaway House but with two interior chimneys, the house displays a pronounced side gable overhang, has smaller splayed lintels on the first floor, while on the second floor, small crown molds break forward where they touch the cornice mold. The trabeated door surround composed of fluted pilasters with high capitals flanking a six light transom and supporting a projecting cornice.

The majority of the houses built in the Federal Period are 2 1/2 stories high. A good example is the house built by blacksmiths Eleazer and Peter Nichols and later home of Eleazer's son-in-law Col. Joseph Durfee, 8 Water Street (c. 1799, Map #59, MHC # A-43). It is five bays long with a center entry and chimney plan and has an enclosed entry portico. Distinctive elements include the side gable overhang, splayed lintels and sills and dentil trim on the bed molding of the frieze board.

An example of a 2 1/2 story house with a conventionally framed gable field is the Strange/Lawton/Pierce House, 22 South Main Street (c. 1, Map # 93, MHC # A-23) which is only four bays long and has one interior chimney. Windows are capped by crown molds and the door surround is a rather plain three part entablature over long sidelights. Another four bay example, the Josiah Paddock/Dr. Thomas Bump House at 6 Water Street (c. 1796, Map # 57, MHC # A-46), has a door surround with deep jutting entablature with unique zigzag trim.

Three high style 2 1/2 story, five bay houses are similar in plan and have elegant, nearly identical center door surrounds, as if fashioned by the same hand: the Robert Strowbridge/D. Burrows House, 32 North Main Street (c. 1800, Map # 50, MHC # A-3), the Ambrose Dean House, 14 Water Street (c. 1797-1803, Map # 62, MHC # A-40, Photo # 6) and the Dr. Nicholas Hathaway

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House, 21 South Main Street (1806, Map # 92, MHC # A-24). The door surrounds featuring broken pediments with modillions and dentils are set on fluted half-round pilasters whose Ionic capitals are decorated with rosettes. This enframingent encloses a delicate half-round fan-light divided by leaded swags. The houses are generously proportioned and very finely detailed. The last two have paired interior chimneys and a side gable overhang, the Strowbridge/Burrows House has a large central chimney. Both the Strowbridge/Burrows House and the Dean House are set behind well preserved fences, the former of pickets with a granite base and posts, the latter in cast iron with granite posts. A one story porch added to the facade of the Dr. Nicholas Hathaway House covered the pediment of its fine door surround, but the remaining fabric suggests a similar treatment. This house originally had a central chimney.

One and one half story cottages of this period are well represented in the district. All of these are rectangular in plan, (although many have ells), five bays long with a center door, and nearly all have a central chimney. The one clear exception with two interior chimneys was built late in the period. The Hopkins-Briggs House at 13 North Main Street, (c. 1790-1820, Map # 40, MHC # A-9) is a good example of the center chimney type. The Cape cottage is Georgian in style, with a high pitched roof, a boxed-eaves cornice, and windows standing out from the plane of the house. The narrow door surround has paneled pilasters with plain high capitals and a projecting cornice. The clapboards on the facade are narrower towards the base, and there is no exposed sill.

Cottages of this type displaying the overhanging gable end are numerous. The Ebenezer and Sylvanius Payne House, 38 Water Street (c. 1780-1800, Map # 73, MHC # A-33) sits on high foundations to allow extra usable space in the basement. The house displays the typical late 18th century features: windows in high relief and narrow door with five-light transom. They are repeated with slight variations at the Thrasher/Rose House, 3 Water Street (c. 1792-1797, Map # 54, MHC # A-47), which has the large scale splayed lintels used so frequently about this time, and at the Luther Cudworth / J. Thresher House, 1 Pleasant Street (c. 1790, Map # 77), which was remodeled ca. 1840-1870 with a stock Italianate door hood and a high, central Gothic Revival cross gable. Here the windows of the first floor have wide surrounds and crown or cornice lintels which break forward as they meet the bed mold under the eaves overhang of the gable end. The house makes good ensemble with its rear ell and closely sited barn, which is nearly intact.

Although altered ca. 1900 with a large central mansard dormer, the house at 20 South Main Street (c. 1760-1800, Map # 91), may date from the last third of the 18th century. Like most of the surviving early houses, it is 1 1/2 stories high and topped with a side gable roof. It too displays the side gable overhang, but here it is embellished with delicate modillion block and dentil trim, a decorative technique usually found in much grander houses. This is one of few

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houses in the district with clapboards placed closer together on the lower courses, a Georgian-Federal practice to protect against damp.

Three surviving, two story, five-bay-long houses built in this period in the district have hip roofs. The Rev. David A. Leonard House at 6 Elm Street (1802, Map # 6, MHC # A-51) is one of the most impressive. Its monitor roof, four tall chimneys at the corners, large quoins, splayed lintels and 12/12 sash on the second floor make it stand out. A portico on Doric columns shelters the central door. The Dr. Thomas Nichols House, 15 North Main Street (Map # 42, MHC # A-7), was erected c. 1800-1825 with a low hip roof and two tall interior chimneys. Its central door surround is composed of full length sidelights supporting a blind, elliptical fan. A third house, the Philip Hathaway/Capt. Washington Read House, 36 Water Street (c. 1800, Map # 72, MHC # A-34, Photo # 3) was built on a plan which closely resembled the Elm Street house. The monitor roof may be original, but the bay windows, slightly inset door surround and bracketed roofline were the result of a remodeling in the Italianate style c. 1840-1870.

*Archeological Sites**Industrial and Commercial Sites*

Many of Assonet's archeological sites relate to its Federal and Early Industrial Period ship building and shipping industry. These include Cudworth's Wharf, Water Street (c. 1790s, Map # V-4), Nichols' Wharf, Water Street (c. 1782, Map # 74.2), and Store House (c. 1790-1930, Map # 74.3), Read's Wharf (c. 1782, Map # 66.5), Hathaway's Wharf (c. 1790s, Map # 66.), Vaughn's Wharf (c. 1790s, Map # 66), and Winslow's Wharf (c. 1782, Map # V-8). Perhaps Lawton/Read Wharf (Map # V-10, V-11, V-12) was in operation at this time, but its granite sea-wall to the east was constructed in 1848.

The commercial buildings of the period existing only as archeological sites include the Johnson (Boston) Store Site (c. 1800s, Map # 79.1) and Green Dragon Tavern Site (c. 1773, Map # 79.2), now the Bandstand site on South Main Street (Map # 79); and the Old Corner or Sampson and Nichols Store (c. 1810, rebuilt 1820, Map # V-6, MHC # A-18).

Although the date is unknown, the Tan Yards may have been constructed in the first third of the 19th century on the lot now occupied by the Chester Briggs House at 10 Elm Street, (c. 1865-1883, Map # 8, MHC # 54) but some or all of the buildings, including shoe makers shop, bark mill, curry shop and tan vats could have been constructed just after the Revolution. Neither buildings nor structures constructed at this site remain above ground. Only the faintest indication is visible of the ca. 1784 Tide Mill across the Assonet River at the former Vaughn/Hathaway House Site 9 South Main Street (Map # EE 83).

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Freetown (Bristol Co.), Mass.*Residential Sites*

The two story, hip roofed Welcome Hathaway House (ca. 1797 but possibly as early as 1734, Map # 66.3), now the site of the riverside Hathaway Park (1965, Map # 66) probably was constructed during this period. It was five bays long with a central door, large central chimney, and had 12/12 windows.

Early Industrial Period (1830-1870)

Although the earliest graves in the Assonet Burial Ground, South Main Street (Map # 101, MHC # 818) date from the last third of the 18th century, the cemetery itself was not opened until 1865. The tall, square pillars of the fieldstone gate posts may have been erected later in the 19th century or at the beginning of the 20th century. They are set with rough granite plaques bearing, on one side the date in Roman numerals, and on the other the name of the burial ground. The burial ground, set back from the road behind a long driveway, was once fenced with granite fence posts. The graves, more or less regularly spaced in family plots, are accessed by straight gravel roadways laid out on a rough grid. The large burial areas are defined by granite borders.

The Peabody Store, 1 South Main Street (1869, Map # 78, MHC # A-17) was built in this period but has lost most of its Greek Revival/Italianate detailing. Remaining is the cross-gable form whose roof is framed with returns.

The First Christian Church, 30 South Main Street (Map # 96, MHC # A-27), was constructed in 1832-1833, but successively remodeled in four successive decades between 1867 and 1885, adding Italianate, Gothic Revival and Colonial Revival motifs to the basic Greek Revival form. The building is oriented with the three-bay gable end and full pediment towards the street. Originally two doors flanked a center window. The current organization is reversed, with a central door flanked by two windows. The facade's tripartite organization is emphasized by paired, paneled pilasters at the corners, and single pilasters flanking the door. A three stage tower rises behind the facade. It consists of a square base and a belfry trimmed with the locally characteristic parapets featuring shallow pediments and acroteria shapes. The belfry is punctuated on each side by lancet windows with now missing blind fans. The steeple and cross were added when the building became a Catholic Church about 1973. The building, was sided with vinyl in 1998 but appears to retain its decorative features beneath the artificial cladding.

The Rufus Bacon House 25 North Main Street (Map # 48, MHC # A-5, Photo # 8), is thought to have been built in 1814. If so, its unique Greek Revival design must have been the result of a ca. 1830-1840 remodeling or major addition, possibly by the relatively wealthy storekeeper Earl Sampson. The 1 1/2 story house is extremely broad, being five bays long by five wide. The east-facing North Main Street elevation has the door in the center of the five bays, two tall

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interior chimneys rise from the front and rear walls between the first and second, and fourth and fifth bays. On the south, or side elevation is a indented, one story portico of six octagonal columns supporting the frieze and pediment of the side gable roof. Detailing is fine: the 6/6 windows have cornice-hood lintels trimmed with dentils. The entry is slightly indented under a low entablature squeezed under the frieze which wraps the house, the doors are embellished with rounded panel inset with carved anthemions, and are flanked with three-quarters-length sidelights.

The Elnathan P. Hathaway House, 18 Mill Street (c. 1830, Map # 25, MHC # A-59) is transitional from the Federal to the Greek Revival style. It is 2 1/2 stories high under a side-gable roof, with the traditional five-bay facade and center entry, but with the more modern two interior chimneys. The lawyer's house was extended at the rear and connected to a barn. The Greek Revival door surround is composed of full-length sidelights flanked by paneled pilasters supporting an entablature which is trimmed with a curious triangular design, possibly Gothic Revival in inspiration. Georgian-Federal motifs include the high-placed second floor windows and cornice-hood window lintels.

The Adonian Crane/H. Elbridge Tinkham Cottage, 2 Forge Road (c. 1854, Map # 33), is one of the few examples of the three-bay, front-gable Greek Revival form. It was altered in the Queen Anne style with the addition of a porch embellished by a spindle cornice, gable field ornament and scalloped shingling, but its basic lines remain. Distinctively Greek Revival are the "eyebrow" windows of the second floor on the side elevation, a feature also seen at the J. Pickett/W. Goff Cottage, 24 Mill Street (c. 1850-1855, Map # 28, MHC # A-60), which presents its side gable to the street but places the door on the west-facing long side.

The Colonial or Federal Period Mrs. Bredham Cottage at 24 Water Street (c. 1750-1790, Map # 67, MHC # A-38) was remodeled between 1830 and 1860 with a fine Greek Revival door surround, the only of its kind in the district. Its fluted architrave surround is accented with corner blocks and a large, rectangular central boss. It encloses broad, half-length sidelights with cross-hatched panes.

Probably only one of the four Italianate houses in the district, the home of Davis gun engraver B.F. Aiken, 1 High Street (c. 1855-70, Map # 102) was constructed in the Early Industrial period.. The 1 1/2 story house was designed with more flexible cross gables and has a one story porch with open pillars and a now missing rail. A large, rectangular bay window is centered on the bracketed gable end. Similar in proportion and elevation are the later Chester Briggs House, 10 Elm Street (c. 1874-1883, Map # 8, MHC # A-54), and two, side by side, nearly identical cottages at 6 Mill Street (c. 1874, Map # 21), and 8 Mill Street (c. 1874, Map # 22, MHC # A-57). The cottages were probably built by one builder. These three-bay, side-entry residences of

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1 1/2 stories have double doors, door hoods on consoles, and one is lighted by a rectangular bay window.

Several of the houses in the district were remodeled at the end of the period in the Italianate style, among them the Hathaway/Read/Wilson House, 36 Water Street (c. 1800, Map # 72, MHC # A-34), the J. Mackoon/J. Brown/T. Valentine/Joseph Taylor House, 2 Water Street (c. 1792-1797, Map # 53, MHC # A-16), which has since lost its stock door hood but retains the bracketed cornice, the George Cudworth House, 42 Water Street (c. 1790s, Map # 75, MHC # A-32) which got a new entry and Gothic Revival cross gable, and the Darius/Luther Cudworth/A. J. Thresher House, 1 Pleasant Street (c. 1790, Map # 77) which received similar treatment.

The James W. Peabody House, 26 South Main Street (c. 1850, Map # 95, MHC # A-25) is a good example of the Gothic Revival style as it occurred in the district. An elaboration of the familiar 1 1/2 story, five bay, center entry house form, it has a steeply pitched, central cross gable in the plane of the house. A pointed, tri-partite window is centered on the cross gable. Smaller pedimented gable dormers project forward to break through the cornice on either side. The portico displays Greek Revival elements: a heavy, bracketed cornice is supported on octagonal columns, which shelter a simple door surround with full length sidelights. Its equally well preserved barn with matching bracketed central gable and grand lathe-turned baluster fence make a complete grouping.

This basic design is repeated at a different scale at the Dearden/Barnaby House, 16-18 North Main Street (c. 1860-1873, Map # 44, MHC # A-6). The dormers flanking the central, bracketed cross gable are larger than those of the Peabody House and have Queen Anne style scalloped shingles in their pediments. The door hood is trimmed with Carpenter Gothic edging. Both houses have cornice hood window lintels.

The Captain John Marble House, 33 North Main Street (c. 1847-1864, Map # 51, MHC # A-2) may have been built by Capt. Marble. A ship's carpenter, he also built the abattoir and ice houses at the Forge. This 1 1/2 story cottage turns the gable to the street. The door in the first of three bays is sheltered by a simple portico. Scrolled, open-work bargeboards and high peaked cross gables are features of the local Gothic Revival style. This house retains its elaborate Gothic Revival barn, making a pleasingly complete composition. The 1 1/2 story board and batten structure features the same steep central cross gable trimmed with scrolled bargeboard, and adds a central pointed window motif. The garage doors inserted in the center do not compromise the design.

The 1 1/2 story Captain James Burr/Dr. Campfield/N. W. Davis House, 23 Elm Street (c. 1850-1870, Map # 16, MHC # A-56, Photo # 9) echoes this design. The entry in the center of three

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bay facade is sheltered by a small portico supported on octagonal columns. The light, airy, pointed arch motif of the side porch is repeated on the portico. The Gothic theme is carried by large, lacy, scalloped bargeboards with decorative pendants and quatrefoil windows in the gable fields.

Late Industrial Period (1870-1915)

Few buildings in the district were constructed in the Queen Anne Style. At the Town Hall, 3 North Main Street (1888, Map # 33, MHC # A-14, Photo # 7) Charles C. Marble, a Fall River builder and architect, combined the Queen Anne with elements of the Colonial Revival style. The building contained the town offices as well as the fire station. Its wide double doors in the north bay opening onto North Main Street have been replaced with windows. Between 1892-1895 the building also housed the town library.

The rectangular, 2 1/2 story building is dominated by an open turret with a Colonial Revival spindle rail centered on the steeply pitched gable on hip roof. The entry was placed center of the three bay facade. Above it a shallow pavilion contains a tri-partite window topped with a blind elliptical fan. The blocky massing of the building was broken by using natural colored shingle for the second story and light painted clapboard with contrasting dark trim for the first. Although the building was extended north by one bay in 1926 and its uniformly white painted surfaces masks the detailing, it retains much of the original design.

The Guilford H. Hathaway Library, 6 North Main Street (Map # 38, MHC # A-13) was built in 1895 with funds donated by Florence E. Hathaway. The small Queen Anne/Colonial Revival/High Victorian Gothic style building raises 1 1/2 stories to a high hip roof, here placed on cross gables. An offset two story tower is topped by a hip roof. The interior is lit by banded, tri-partite windows and High Victorian Gothic pointed windows in the attic gables.

The well preserved South Bridge at South Main Street over the Assonet River (1887, Map # 85) was constructed after the ca. 1823 double-arched bridge was destroyed by a log coming over the Tisdale Dam in a February "freshet" of 1886. Rebuilt in stone as a single arch span, the south abutments were damaged and rebuilt as well.

The 1 1/2 story Christian Church Parsonage, 32 South Main Street (Map # 113, MHC # A-28) was erected in 1895 in the Queen Anne style on the same lot as the church. Expanded with cross gables, its facade echoes the church's gable end to the street. The entry's stock, machined hood in the first of three bays and a porch with turned posts to the rear were not covered by the recently installed vinyl siding.

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The modest house for store-keeper James Winslow, 14 North Main Street (c. 1888-1894, Map # 41, MHC # A-8) is similar frame, 1 1/2 story, cross gable example. Ornamented by front and side porticos, a porch elaborated with spindle cornices and turned posts, cornice hood lintels and a stained glass stair window, it is a good example of the Queen Anne styles.

The Dr. Charles A. Briggs House, 12 North Main Street (Map # 39, MHC # A-10), was built around the turn of the century in the Colonial Revival style. The large, cross gable house is 2 1/2 stories high, and extended in the rear with one story ells. A pillared porch with spindle rail wrapping the house on two sides introduces a transition between interior and exterior spaces. A bracketed eaves line, leaded Palladian window in the gable field, matching carriage house and extensive stone wall are important features of the property.

The most elaborate of the Colonial Revival houses is the large, rambling Major John Deane House at 16 Water Street (1896-1897, Map # 63, MHC # A-39, Photo # 10). Set on high granite foundations, the tall, 2 1/2 story building is complicated by a three story turreted corner tower, an Ionic pillared porch which curves to wrap the house on two sides, and several oriels, or unsupported bay windows. Its large size and array of decorative features--bracketed cornice, Palladian window and arched gable field windows--are central to its impressive effect.

Early Modern Period (1915-1949)

The one story Fire Station, 3 Elm Street (1948, Map # 3) was designed by the large engineering firm of Stone and Webster. It was built to accommodate Freetown's larger, more powerful post-World War II fire engines. The minimally detailed red brick building with white trim was constructed in the popular Neo-Colonial style. Massing is minimized as its short side, containing the fire doors, faces the street.

The oldest building of the Puritan Mills Company, 31 Mill Street (1910, Map # O 31), was constructed in the Craftsman style as a three story shingled structure over the foundations of the Winslow Grist Mill (c. 1695, Map # 31.1). A major addition was probably built in 1948. The building is currently artificially sided. Across the road at 32 Mill Street the complex of two, ten-bay-long, two-story, concrete block mills (Map #s 32.2 and 32.3), a one-story garage, now office (Map # 32.1), and a one-story, seven-bay frame garage (Map # 32.5) were erected by Swiss Mills /Monument Manufacturing Company for war production between ca. 1944 and 1948. Articulated with piers and metal-framed windows, the concrete-block mill buildings and garage/office have shallow side-gable roofs with Craftsman-style exposed rafters at the eaves.

The Telephone Building, 4 North Main Street (c. 1936-1937, Map # 34) is a small, one-story building which has been extended to the rear. Only two bays long, it is constructed of novelty siding, a type of clapboard popular in the years preceding World War II. The Neo-Colonial

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style building was designed by the telephone company to house machinery rather than people, but resembles a house in order to relate to its neighborhood context.

24 North Main Street (c. 1930, Map # 47) was constructed after a fire demolished an earlier house on the lot. Designed in the Dutch Neo-Colonial style, a modern, academic recollection of Georgian and Federal motifs from the Mid-Atlantic states, the 1 1/2-story cottage places the ridge of the deep gambrel roof parallel to the street. A long shed-roof dormer lights the upper floor and lifts the design. It is broken by a pedimented hood on brackets over the door. The house at 2 School Street (1927, Map #36) uses many of the same motifs.

The front gable George and Miriam Brown House, 34 South Main Street (c. 1918, Map # 98), and the gambrel-roofed house at 38 South Main Street (c. 1920s, Map # 100) were erected about the same time in the Neo-Colonial style. The design and perhaps materials for the Brown residence was furnished by one of the many mail order companies such as Sears Roebuck. The firm created the plan and usually shipped the pre-cut materials for erection on site. Both cottages are 1 1/2 stories high and three bays wide, and have one story porches across the facade, now enclosed at 38 South Main Street.

There have been comparatively few buildings in the district constructed after the period of significance. Most are houses and garages, and, with few exceptions, those that were built employ a scale and massing that is not intrusive. The brick gas station on South Main Street ironically occupies the former location of the livery stable, and it is relatively modest in size and style, but its exposed, focal position and extensive blacktop form an intrusive element. While the massing, materials and much of the design of the former Christian Church, 30 South Main Street (1833, Map # 96, MHC # A-27) remain under the recently applied vinyl siding, its details were covered, changing its appearance.

Several of the most significant losses have been concentrated in the near the Four Corners. Standing until 1996 and documented in the community's Inventory of Historic Resources was a two story house with a distinctive low-pitched saltbox roof at 7 South Main Street (c. 1760, Map # V-6, MHC # A-20). The five-bay house had a central door and chimney. The Green Dragon Tavern (c. 1773, Map # 79.2) demolished in 1933, stood on the South Main Street site now occupied by the town Bandstand (c. 1934, Map # 79). The Georgian-style stage coach stop was 2 1/2 stories high and was distinguished by a pedimented door surround. Pierces Hall, Elm Street (c. 1838, Map # 1.1) a modest, front gable, 1 1/2 story store was demolished about 1930, and the Sampson and Nichols Store, 2 South Main Street (c. 1820, MHC # A-18, Map # V-5), demolished in 1995, was a long, narrow, minimally ornamented two-story, Federal-style hip-roofed building.

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Of the thirty-three noncontributing resources, nine represent alterations to buildings constructed within the period of significance, eleven are buildings and two are structures built after the period. Eleven more are outbuildings, such as garages or barns, constructed after the period of significance. These outbuildings, generally small garages sited to the rear of the lot, have marginal impact on the district.

Archaeological Description

One prehistoric site is recorded in the district and a high potential exists for the recovery of additional prehistoric resources. Environmental characteristics of the district represent several locational criteria (slope, drainage, distance to wetlands) that are favorable indicators for many types of prehistoric sites. Well-drained level to moderately sloping terraces in close proximity (within 1000 feet) to wetlands are found throughout most of the district. Nearly all of the district lies within 1000 feet of the Assonet River or its tributary streams. The Assonet River meets Assonet Bay at the western boundary of the district. The confluence of the Assonet River and Taunton River lies approximately 2 to 3 miles southeast of the district. Prehistoric settlement has been documented in this area of southeastern Massachusetts for the full period of human settlement thus far recognized for the northeastern United States. Earlier periods of settlement including the Paleoindian (12,000-9,000B.P.) and Early Archaic (9,000-8,000B.P.) periods are also better demonstrated in southeastern Massachusetts than in other areas of southern New England. Major concentrations of prehistoric sites have been documented along the main drainage of the Taunton River including the western portion of Freetown. Thirty prehistoric sites are recorded in the town. Prehistoric site 19-BR-419, the only known site in the district, is located in the western part of the nominated area on the southern shoreline of the Assonet River immediately east of Route 24. Little interpretative information beyond locational factors survives for the site. Much of the present day road system in Freetown also follows early Native American paths. Given the above information, the size of the district (189.95 acres), and the availability of open space, the presence of prehistoric sites is documented and a high potential exists for the recovery of additional prehistoric resources in the district.

There is also a high potential for the recovery of historic archaeological resources in the district. Further historical research combined with archaeological survey and testing can help document the residential, commercial and industrial growth that occurred in the village from the 17th through 19th centuries. Assonet Village grew as a direct result of its location near water power and the crossroads formed by several major travel routes. Although the early Assonet settlement lacked centralized public land or a community focus, the area known as Four Corners, formed by the intersection of North and South Main Streets and Water/Elm Streets, gradually adopted this role. Many of the village's historic archaeological resources including some of the district's most significant losses are concentrated in the Four Corners area. Radiating out from this center

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are roadways leading to archaeological resources representing residences and industrial remains associated with two mill centers and maritime trades including boat building and commerce. Archaeological sites associated with industrial and commercial resources may be the most common archaeological resource type in the district. The earliest group of known industrial resources in the district lie in the vicinity of the Winslow Dam and power canals at the intersection of the Assonet River and Locust Street/Mill Street. Structural evidence may survive from the earliest dam constructed in 1695 and later mills, bridges and residences. Structural remains may survive from the saw/grist mill built on the site in the 18th century. Foundations and the arched opening from a tail race reported to be from the original grist/saw mill and visible from the river currently support a 20th century textile mill. Evidence may also survive from a fulling mill and industrial operations associated with machinery for carding wool that were added to the site at a later date. Structural evidence and occupational related features (trash pits, privies, wells) might also survive from the Winslow House (c.1706) demolished for an extension of the Puritian Textile Mill (1910). The Winslow House was thought to be the oldest house in the town before it was demolished. Downstream, a second dam and related industrial structures were constructed in the early 18th century near the intersection of the Assonet River and Elm/Mill Street. Structural evidence may survive from the original Tisdale dam and power canals as well as their later alterations. Water power related machinery including a capstan and turbine are currently visible in the Tisdale dam area. Structural evidence may also survive from a saw mill and grist mill constructed near the dam by c. 1715, both of which burned in the 1940's. Archaeological evidence might also survive from a box card and shingle mill constructed near the dam in the 19th century. Abutments related to the Wilson Road Bridge (c. 1790 and later) and another river crossing at 17 Mill Street are also present in the area. Structural evidence from the Porter Mill (c. 1820) may also survive near the bridge abutments at 17 Mill Street. Structural remains from a 1784 tide mill that spanned the Assonet River might survive near the Four Corners area. Stonework related to that mill are reportedly visible at the site of the former Vaughn/Hathaway House site at 9 South Main Street. The latter house was demolished in 1997. Archaeological evidence may also survive from the Briggs Tan Yard, originally located near the Assonet River at 10 Elm Street.

West of the Four Corners area, nearly all industrial development concentrated on the maritime related trades. Wharves, shipyards, outbuilding type structures and residences lined the entire shoreline south of Water Street from the Four Corners area to Route 24. Structural evidence from numerous wharves may survive in the area as well as evidence from warehouses and workshops originally located on the wharves. Potential wharf sites dating to the late 18th century and later include Cudworth Wharf, Hathaway Wharf, Chase/Rodman/Vaughn Wharves, Read Wharf and Nichols Wharf. The area currently known as Hathaway Park on the south side of Water Street may actually contain evidence from several of these wharves as well as a shipyard, including drydock, and the Welcome Hathaway House Site (ca.1797). On the south

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side of the Assonet River wharves and related structures were also present in the area between the Lane and the river. Archaeological evidence from the Job Lawton Wharf site may survive in this area. The Winslow Wharf Site is also reported in the South Main Street area. The Water Street area might also contain sites where firearms manufacture was carried out in the 19th century. In 1853, the firm of Davis and Thrasher formed to make muzzle loading rifles on Water Street. By 1854, the firm had moved to the now demolished Thresher Building located on the south side of Water Street near Pleasant Street. The former plant burned in 1864 then soon reopened in the Sampson and Nichols Store building that was demolished in 1995. In 1869 the firm purchased the no longer extant Dean's Hall (1847) on Water Street that was converted to the Assonet Machine Shop/Davis Gun Factory. Firearms production was consolidated there by 1873-74. Structural evidence may survive in the Water Street area from each of the shops where firearms manufacture occurred. Occupational related features, especially industrial related trash deposits may also be present.

Commercial related sites in the Four Corners area represent another important and numerous potential site type in the district. These sites can be especially important since relatively little is known about commerce in Assonet during the late 18th and early 19th century period. One of the few documented 18th century commercial sites in the district is the Green Dragon Tavern Site (c.1773) located in the area of the present Bandstand on South Main Street. Structural evidence from the tavern building and occupational related features may survive in the Bandstand area. Similar evidence may exist from several stores no longer extant in the Four Corners area. They include the Pierce's Hall/Store Site (c. 1838) located in the area of Elm and North Main Streets and demolished in the 1930's, the Barrows Store Site at 3 North Main Street demolished in the 1920's, the DCHB Store Site (1850's) at 1 South Main Street, the Boston/Johnson Store Site (1800's) originally located in the Bandstand area, and the Shove Smith Shop Site (1850's) at 8 South Main Street. Archaeological evidence may survive from the Briggs Shoe Shop Site (c.1800) originally located at 11 Water Street and a blacksmith shop (c.1800) located at 4 Elm Street. Structural evidence might also survive from a corn storehouse (c. 1800-1886) originally located in the vicinity of 14 South Main Street. Structural evidence from agricultural related buildings should also be present in the district. An 1831 valuation of the town lists 220 houses and 158 barns in the town. Many barns, possibly associated with agricultural production or the use of draft animals, could survive archaeologically in the district. The presence of a corn warehouse and cattle pound (c. 1705-1790) located on High Street in the district may offer further evidence of the potential for agricultural related resources in the district. On the other hand, barns, corn warehouses and cattle pounds can also be explained as serving transportation and storage related functions, possibly associated with maritime commerce.

While the sites of relatively few residential buildings, no longer extant, are known in the district,

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more sites should exist. Little documentation is reported for pre Civil War residences in the district. No residences built between 1659 and 1719 by the village's first settlers are known to exist. Structural remains and related occupational type features associated with homesteads from this period should exist. Grog seller John Barnes 22nd lot from the original Freetown Purchase was settled by cooper Ben Chase about 1685, however, the exact location of the homestead is unknown. Several potential residential sites in the district have been noted above. Additional residential sites may include the S. and Frank Briggs House Site (c.1770) located at 11 Water Street, the site of the Old Dean Homestead at 16 Water Street, the Col. E.W. Pierce House Site (c. 1814-1936) in the vicinity of 19 South Main Street, and a two story salt box (c.1760) standing at 7 South Main Street until 1996.

Civic and institutional buildings are also represented in the archaeological record in the Assonet District. Structural evidence may exist related to the 1793-96 Baptist Meeting House at 30 South Main Street, demolished after construction of the 1833 South or Christian Church, now known as St. Bernard's Church. Foundation stones from the earlier meeting house were reported to be still recognizable in the early 20th century. Structural remains may also survive from a small schoolhouse (1798), originally located next to the Baptist Meeting House but later moved to a site across the road from the cattle pound. Similar remains may also survive from a second schoolhouse (pre-1773) originally located in the vicinity of 8 South Main Street.

Burial grounds represent another potentially important archaeological resource present in the district. Prior to the official opening of the Assonet Burial Ground off South Main Street in 1865, individuals were often buried in several family burial plots in the district or buried in Fall River. Many individuals originally buried in Fall River were moved to the Assonet Burial Ground after it's opening. Smaller family burial grounds in the district include the Payne Hathaway Cemetery on Mill Street, the Hathaway Cemetery (1749) on South Main Street, and the Nichols Cemetery on North Main Street. Each of these burial grounds contain the physical remains of village residents and a source of information on the general health of the inhabitants. Each of the burial grounds may contain unmarked graves either the result of missing burial markers or intentional burial practices. Unknown persons and/or paupers may have been buried without stone markers. Local oral tradition also has it that Freetown slaves were buried in the corners of burial grounds, possibly without lasting markers. Slavery was abolished in Massachusetts in 1783. Prior to that date, some wealthy landowners in Freetown were known to own slaves.

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Assonet Historic District

Name of Property

Bristol, 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 and 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):

- ☐ 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)

ARCHITECTURE

COMMERCE

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND PLANNING

GOVERNMENT

INDUSTRY

Period of Significance

c. 1720-1949

Significant Dates

n/a

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

n/a

Cultural Affiliation

n/a

Architect/Builder

Ebenezer Pierce

Charles C. Marble

Primary location of additional data:

- ☒ State Historic Preservation Office
- ☐ Other State agency
- ☐ Federal agency
- ☐ Local government
- ☐ University
- ☐ Other

Name of repository:

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Assonet National Register Historic District, Freetown, possesses integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling and association. This well-preserved village, one of two centers in Freetown, meets criterion A for its role in the development of Freetown and its associations with the growth of the religious, commercial, and governmental center, and with the development of its ship building, milling and gun manufacturing industries. Its location at the furthest navigable northeast point of the Assonet River gave it access to coastal and international shipping and the commercial opportunities which allowed it to flourish. The district's role in the military history of the developing nation, from the French and Indian Wars through the American Revolution and Shay's Rebellion gives it additional significance. The district meets criterion C for its fine collection of architectural examples dating from the early 18th century through the early 20th century, particularly its Georgian, Federal and Gothic Revival residences, two bridges constructed at the beginning and end of the 19th century, and a fine Federal church. The two churches are integral parts of the district. The former Congregational or North Church derives its primary significance from its architectural distinction, the Baptist/Christian or South Church from its association with the development of the district and with the Christian Movement. Significant at the local level, the district's period of significance extends from 1710 to 1949.

Historical Significance**Contact Period: (1500-1620)**

Once covered with deciduous and pine forest, the remnants of which survive as Freetown State Forest, the area in which Assonet Historic District is located was the seasonal home of the native Polanokets (Wampanoags), who maintained north-south trails through the area (remaining as North and South Main Streets, with a fording place at its junction with the Assonet River, and an east-west trail as Elm and Mill Streets-Richmond-Howland Roads. While no settlement sites have been established for this period, this riverine area is considered particularly sensitive for its archeological resources.

First Settlement Period: (1620-1675)

In 1657 a group of Plymouth settlers wished to buy from the local tribes one of the last remaining large, virgin tracts west along the Assonet River. Perhaps at the instigation of tavern keeper John Barnes, Ossamequin, the Wampanoag king, (called Massasoit by the English), went into debt to Barnes for his liquor. Although Massasoit, his elder son Wansutta, (called Alexander) and wife Tatapanum, (Weetamow, Queen of the Pocassets) were reluctant to sell, in 1659 they finally agreed to discharge this debt in exchange for the land and a few English made articles such as kettles, coats and shoes.

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The Freeman's Purchase, and ultimately the town, is named for the 26 Original Purchasers who were freemen, i.e., allowed to vote and conduct business in their community. It was the last major purchase before King Philip's War in the Province of the Massachusetts Bay. However, in the years after 1659 settlement was light to nearly non-existent, and it is believed that the purchase was principally speculative.

The name adopted for the village appears to have derived from Wampanoag usage, but translations differ markedly. Rev. Orin Fowler thought that Assonet meant a place of stone crags, while for Town Clerk Palo Alto Pierce it signified a song of praise. The record of the initial interaction between native peoples of the district and its first white settlers is not well documented. It appears that relations between them were at least amicable, as the deed reserved a life interest in a three to four acre lot for a Wampanoag ferry keeper.

The Freetown Purchase was four miles wide and seven long and included most of what is now Fall River. It was bounded on the east by the original line of the purchase, still visible in the shape of the town and indicated on the map of 1871, and on the west by the Assonet River and Bay, giving access to this early transportation route through a roadless area. In 1660 the tract was divided by a committee of three into twenty-six approximately even lots, one for each purchaser, all of whom agreed not to contest their allotment.

The lots were each roughly 100 yard wide and four miles long. They were laid out west to east to include water frontage and possibly access to the north-south native path, now North and South Main Streets. This east-west orientation of division lines is still a dominant feature in Assonet property layout. The decision not to provide for a Common had a lasting effect on the development of Assonet. As the settlement had no centralized public land where civic buildings could be located, and no clear community focus, the busy crossroads at the Four Corners gradually adopted this role.

Four of the lots, numbers twenty through twenty-four, fell within what came to be known as Assonet, and areas of each of these four are located within the Assonet Historic District. Historians differ about the location of the ancient lot lines, Palo Alto Pierce holding that the south line of John Barnes' twenty-second lot could be traced in the south line of the Hathaway Cemetery on South Main Street (c. 1749, Map # 97, MHC # 806) and indeed a line can be drawn on both sides of South Main Street. However, an overlay map by recent surveyor Ben Evans drew its south limit on a line running behind the cottages on The Lane, then eastward between the two Hathaway houses at 23 South Main Street (Map # 94) and 21 South Main Street (Map # 92). Pierce, however, placed its north boundary a little south of Elm Street, Evans thought it ran a little north of Elm Street. Sammy's Lane and Forge Road may represent the north border of the twenty-third lot.

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Colonial Period: (1675-1775)

The original purchasers bought for speculation or future rather than immediate settlement, so development waited for one or even two generations. Residents of the surrounding towns abandoned their homesteads for the safety of Taunton during the devastating King Phillips War of 1675, and after the war settlement of the Purchase was slow. The twenty-first lot was purchased but not settled by Samuel Nash of Plymouth. Grog seller John Barnes' twenty-second lot was settled by cooper Ben Chase about 1685. Chase became Selectman of the town for two years. The twenty-third lot was settled by Joshua Tisdale, the original purchaser's son. Joshua later served as Town Clerk, Assessor and Selectman. He built the Tisdale Dam in 1710, (Map # 18.1) and about the same time a Grist and Saw Mill (Map #18.3, 18.4) on Mill Street, dying there in 1714.

Capt. Josiah Winslow, who settled on his grandfather's twenty-fourth lot, built the district's earliest known structure, the Winslow Dam (Map # 37.2) in 1695 and erected first a Saw Mill and then a Grist Mill, Mill/Locust Streets (Map #31.1). On the other, or northwest side just outside the district, a group of residents composed of Gilbert, Barnaby and Kenelm Winslow built a saw mill which remained in the Winslow family for nearly 200 years. Captain Josiah Winslow served in the militia, and was Selectman, Assessor, Moderator and Treasurer for the Town. He died in 1761 at 92. Later a fulling and machinery for carding wool were added to the site. The Winslow House was built ca. 1706 just east of the grist mill. It was thought to be the oldest house in town before it was demolished for the extension of the 20th century textile mill, (Puritan Mills (1910, Map # O 31) built on the foundations the saw/grist mill.

It was not until enough residents had settled on it that the purchase passed out of private or proprietary ownership. In 1683, by order of the Massachusetts General Court, the Town of Freetown was established. As part of the Plymouth Colony it was required in 1689 to contribute to the Colony's military force and to organize a local militia. Only three years after establishment as a Town, probably under the impetus of approaching King William's War, Freetown had formed a company under a lieutenant-commander.

By 1688 the population, including those who resided in what is now Fall River, reached 270. The same year the town voted a tax to build the south bridge over Assonet River at the location of the present South Main Street bridge, (Map # 85). In 1692 the Plymouth Colony merged with the Massachusetts Bay Colony and in 1700 the eastern boundary with Tiverton was established, so that what is now East Freetown was still part of Tiverton. By 1705 a cattle pound had been enclosed, probably the Cattle Pound, on High Street (Map # 106) indicating the largely farming occupations of the residents.

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In 1699 the town voted to erect the meeting house required for every Massachusetts town, but it took years to build, remaining unfinished until 1713. Its location, now in Fall River, served the whole town. More years passed before a satisfactory clergyman was obtained, for the settlers were wary of the demand for civil support of the clergy and desired greater separation of church and state than the quasi-theocratic Massachusetts Colony thought proper. Besides, the factious residents could not agree on the theological qualifications of proposed candidates. Finally they petitioned London to supply a suitable man, hoping to postpone the issue. In 1747 the church was formally organized but its first permanent minister was accepted by the congregation with a contract stating that he was never to receive a salary from the Town, as required by law, but instead would be supported by the free will of its residents.

As soon as there were enough residents to sustain them, those fortunate enough to own land on a fall in the river, built a dam to trap their power. Then they built the mills needed to convert the surrounding forests into building materials, grind the local crops into flour and corn-meal, and process the local wool for clothing and bedding. Besides the mills noted above, another dam (1702, rebuilt 1704) was established just north and east of the district which was to play an important role in its development. The Forge, an iron works built in 1704 to process Taunton iron, continued to produce iron tools after 1820 through the nineteenth century.

A second settlement node was established just south of the river. The probable oldest house in the district, the gambrel roofed "Old Homestead" at 10 South Main Street (c. 1720-1725, Map # 84, MHC # A-21, Photo # 1) was kept as tavern at least from 1765, possibly earlier, as owner Lot Strange had a license to keep a tavern from 1729-38. Nearby a group of snug cottages were built between 1735 and 1770 on The Lane. In 1746, Ephriam Tisdale sold a piece of land and erected the first publicly owned schoolhouse in Assonet. It appears to have been located just north of the "Old Homestead" at approximately 8 South Main Street (Map #s DD 82) setting an early precedent for governmental building near the Four Corners. The schoolhouse burnt and the new school (1773) built on the same lot was also used for Town Meetings.

Residential and institutional development continued to relate to the First Settlement Period travel routes--North and South Main Streets and Mill Street/Richmond Road. Only a few local streets were added, such as Water Street, said to be a path before 1685, and The Lane. Elm Street may have been a dead end residential street, as it does not appear on the map of 1794, but is found on the map of 1831.

Assonet's leading, and probably wealthiest citizen, Col. Thomas Gilbert, earned his military reputation in the French and Indian War of 1755-1756, serving with three others from Freetown. His house much altered house at 1 Elm Street (Map # 2, MHC # A-15) was built c. 1744-1745, probably by Ephriam Tisdale, Gilbert's father-in-law.

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Between the end of the Indian wars and the beginning of the American Revolution, the area around Newport became involved in a lucrative trade with the West Indian islands. This involved the exchange of slaves, rum, sugar and West Indian goods. It is not known to what extent the residents of Freetown participated in the slave trade, but it appears that they were involved in what has been called the triangular trade, using small vessels manned by small crews. Freetown ships appear to have carried local coopers and the materials to make casks. The hoops were made in near-by Narragansett, the white oak staves for the rum casks and red oak staves for sugar hogsheads came from Taunton. The elegance of many of Freetown's early buildings might be credited, at least in part, to the wealth derived from this trade.

Although Freetown families also purchased and used slaves for farm labor and house service, probably only the wealthiest actually kept them, and that their numbers were small. The practice was ended when the Revolution began as small American vessels could not escape being captured by the British cruisers lying in wait for them along the Atlantic coast. Local landowner Jacob Hathaway owned seven slaves in 1754, but in 1783 slavery was abolished in Massachusetts. The census of 1790 indicates that there were no slaves living in the town. However, churches built in Freetown until about 1833 were constructed with "Negro pews". Local tradition holds that Freetown slaves were buried in the corners of burial grounds.

While a portion of Tiverton, called New or East Freetown, was annexed to Freetown in 1747, eighteen years later, the enlarged town, including the present Fall River, was still thinly populated, with a total of 1,492 residents. By 1776 it had climbed to 1,901, a gain of 409 in eleven years. Perhaps this rapid rise was based on the strength of the local commercial economy. About 1773 the now demolished Green Dragon Tavern was built on the site of the Bandstand on South Main Street (c. 1930s, Map # 79.2).

Federal Period (1775-1830)

On the eve of the American Revolution, the Town of Freetown, led by Assonet residents, placed itself firmly in the Tory or Loyalist camp. In 1774 it instructed its General Court Representative Col. Thomas Gilbert to prevent repetitions of the Boston Tea Party. The staunchly anti-Whig Colonel took command of Loyalist sympathizers in southern New England, making Assonet the hub of pro-British resistance.

In 1775, at the direction of British General Gage, Col. Gilbert stored muskets, powder and bullets in his house at 1 Elm Street, (c. 1744-1745, Map # 2, MHC # A-15). He also collected three hundred Bristol County men to quell the impending insurrection of the area. However, on April 9th and 10th, just a week before the battles of Concord and Lexington, a superior force of two thousand Minute Men marched on the "detested" Loyalist village, seized twenty-nine Tories and the munitions in Gilbert's house, and dispersed the Tory leaders, forcing them to flee.

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Gilbert escaped to a British man of war at Newport but his son in law, who was found hiding in the Elm Street house was not so fortunate. After being discovered hiding in his in-law's oven he was placed backwards on his horse and started for the Taunton jail. When the Colonel and his slave Pompey, who had returned from Newport, intercepted the group and demanded his release, the crowd, too respectful of the old soldier's power and reputation to oppose him, let the younger man go.

The wealthy, older residents of Assonet continued to be strongly Loyalist. They had done well under the British and were afraid to risk their property in a war. Their stance was in contrast to the Whig or Patriot sentiments of many of the residents of New or East Freetown, who were neither as rich nor conservative as their longer established neighbors in Assonet. It was only after the leading Tories had been driven away in 1776 that Assonet came under the control of the Patriots.

After the departure of most of Assonet's Loyalist leaders, Colonel Joseph Durfee, a Patriot who had served in the Battle of White Plains, returned home to re-organized the militia. On May 25, 1778, the British moved across Mt. Hope Bay to attack the southern part of Freetown (now Fall River). They had begun to move inland when the troops were met by Durfee and the Freetown militia. Out-gunned, the locals retreated towards Fall River's Main Street, but regrouped, killed two Redcoats, and drove off the enemy without a single loss of their own.

Durfee later owned the house at 8 Water Street (c. 1799, Map # 59, MHC # A-43) built by blacksmiths, brothers Eleazer and Peter Nichols, Durfee's father-in-law. While the Battle of Freetown did not actually take place in present-day Freetown, its leader was an important resident of the district. Durfee served as Selectman in 1780.

The majority of the Tories did not leave town, and in May 1777, Town Meeting sent to trial twenty-eight of the accused Loyalists, most from Assonet. The quirky local historian Gen. E. W. Pierce described how the Tories continued to make every possible trouble for the patriot cause. Before the end of the war, the Tories had allowed residents who were ineligible to vote but Loyalist to vote, creating "anarchy and confusion", and requiring an appeal to State authorities.

Assonet residents, like many in the area, continued to vigorously resist the centralized authority of the American government. During Shay's Rebellion of 1786, Freetown resident David Valentine led the pro-British rebels, and the town became Bristol County's Tory headquarters. Freetown's stock of munitions, vulnerable to the "mobcrats", was saved by Captain Benjamin Weaver and the First Company, (Assonet) militia. Manufactured in Freetown, the rescued bullets were carried by Assonet's men in the War of 1812 and the Civil War.

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The period between the end of Revolutionary War and the opening of the railways in 1835 was perhaps Freetown's greatest period of growth and evident prosperity for its citizens. The cessation of hostilities allowed industries, trade and shipping to flourish, while the introduction of the more efficient rail transportation damaged the town's boat building and shipping trades, and the commercial activity based upon them.

Between 1776 and 1790, when the town's population was 2,220, Freetown had grown by 301 people. By 1800 it had added another 333. Even though the Town of Fall River was set off in 1803, by 1810 Freetown population was reduced by only 657 residents. And in spite of the annexation of part of the town by Fairhaven in 1815, in 1820 Freetown had regained all but fifteen of its 1810 number. Indeed, its population steadily advanced until 1830, when it began a decline which was to continue throughout the nineteenth century.

The town could support the burgeoning population during this period in part because of the growth of its ship building, shipping, commerce and industry, much, though by no means all of it focused in Assonet. The first record of ship building in town dates from 1782, the last was constructed in 1848. At first only small ships were built, but after the Revolution, Freetown yards built vessels of 100 tons or more.

Ship building in Freetown reached its pinnacle about 1834, and towards the end of the period, about forty to fifty men were employed in this trade. One of the prominent dry docks in town was Welcome Hathaway's on Water Street, now Hathaway Park (c. 1790s, Map # 66). A ship yard was located at about the site where John Deane moved the old Dean Homestead now 19 Water Street (c. 1750, Map # U 64) after ship building had ceased. It had stood on the site of 16 Water Street. The only building in the ship yards was generally a storage shed, but a saw pit over a trench, and a steam box for bending wood were usually constructed on the site.

The men of Assonet earned their livelihood in a variety of ways connected to the industry: they were the ship builders, sailed the vessels, imported and exported goods and sold them as well. "It was said of Welcome Hathaway, who in his day was largely interested in shipping and ship building, that he could model a vessel, build her, rig her, make her sails, and sail her". [Pierce, Palo Alto, A History of Freetown, Massachusetts, J. Franklin and Co., Fall River, 1902, p.173.] His house, (Map # 66.3) located in what is now Hathaway Park was built ca. 1800. Many were simply investors. John M. Deane listed over 300 vessels hailing from Freetown from 1792 to 1902, most dating before 1830. He counted 254 which were built wholly or partly for citizens of Freetown, most of these built by residents of the town.

The small vessels carried local wood, cut lumber and other cargoes to the cities of the eastern seaboard as far away as Baltimore, but larger ships engaged in the "southern carrying trade",

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ferrying cargoes of rice, cotton and seed between southern ports as early as 1811 and perhaps earlier. These ships were refitted in Assonet during the summer, giving employment to many men.

Many of the people involved in the ship building and importing trades lived in Assonet, and more specifically in the district. Their houses stand as records of the vigor of the industry and of their owner's desire to use the often considerable wealth it created for their dwellings. The house at 2 Water Street (c. 1792-1797, Map # 53, MHC # A-16) was the home of mariners Jonathan Bowen, Thomas Valentine and Capt. James Burr; 5 Water Street (c. 1790s, Map # 56, MHC # A-45) belonged at one time to Capt. George Pickens. Investor Josiah Paddock, who put money in the 37 ton Sloop Eliza, (1799) built the house at 6 Water Street (c. 1796, Map # 57, MHC # A-46); Jason Hathaway who built 28 Water Street (c. 1809, Map # 69, MHC # A-37), was both master and part owner of Sloop Rosette (1816); blacksmith Peter Nichols, of 8 Water Street (ca. 1799, Map # 59, MHC # A-43) partly owned Sloop Two Peters (1795); Elder Philip Hathaway built the house at 36 Water Street (c. 1800, Map # 72, MHC # A-34, Photo # 3) later altered by master mariner Captain Washington Read. Philip Hathaway, who had money in many vessels, also lived in 23 South Main Street (1792, Map # 94, MHC # A-26). His son who followed him there was Captain Edmund, a master mariner and owner of several ships. This represents only a partial description of the major impact of ship building and investing on the district's buildings.

Assonet's active and successful participation in shipping and commerce is attributed to its location at the head of navigation on a river of easy approach and ascent. Teams arrived from surrounding towns with manufactured articles, wood and agricultural produce and left the wharves with sugar, molasses, salt, flour, and rum. "Occasionally the river would be dotted with pine apples, oranges, limes and other decaying tropical fruit that had been thrown overboard from vessels engaged in the West Indian trade." [Deane, John M., in Palo Alto Pierce, A History of Freetown, Massachusetts, J. Franklin and Co., Fall River, 1902, p. 192.] So extensive was Assonet trade that Captain and ship investor Edmund Hathaway was told that he himself paid more customs duties than any other three towns combined in the Dighton Customs District.

During this period Assonet developed its wharves, having 26,720 superficial feet of wharf land listed in the 1831 census. Scores of local, coastal, and foreign vessels tied up at the now mainly demolished wharves. A stout stone river retaining wall remains at the Lower Wharves at the west end of Water Street: Nichols Wharf Site, now 39 Water Street (c. 1790s, Map # 74.2), and the Cudworth Wharf Site (c. 1790s, Map # V 5). Other wharves were clustered near what is now Hathaway Park, Hathaway's (c. 1790s, Map # 66.5 on the west and Chase/Rodman/Vaughn's (c. 1790, Map # 66.6) on the east. The vessels were met by ox teams from Fall River, Taunton and Middleborough carrying manufactured articles and raw materials

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for shipment to Providence, New York, or foreign ports, or raw materials for export. The iron products from East Freetown's furnace were shipped from the port at Assonet and after 1818 iron "pigs" arriving from New Jersey were shipped here as well.

Other industries contributed to the wealth. Grist mills continued to run in season, perhaps at the Winslow Mill, Mill Street (Map # O 31.2) which had the first machine to grind corn and cob together; the Forge, run by the Hathaway family until about 1820 and by Josiah Winslow until about 1845. The Tisdale Mills on Mill Street continued to grind corn (Map # 18.3) and saw wood (map # 18.4), as did Henry Porter's now demolished mill just outside the district. The remains of the abutments and access road (Map # 18.5) to the now demolished house which went with the mill on the northwest side of the river are still clearly visible. Joseph Winslow erected a Grist Mill at a tide mill just east of the South Main Street bridge in 1784, (Map # 83.2). The Briggs Tan Yard located next to the river on the property now 10 Elm Street (Map # 8, MHC # A-54) may have opened, as evidenced by the valuation list of Freetown in 1831 which cites four tan yards. It was sold as a working yard in 1840.

Farming continued to play a role in the local economy, producing either for home consumption or for export to Fall River or Boston. The 1831 valuation of the town shows 220 houses and 158 barns, suggesting that most of town's residents were still involved in food production.

About commerce during this period in Assonet we know relatively little, but Freetown is said to have had fourteen stores in 1800. The Sampson and Nichols Store (1810, rebuilt 1820, demolished 1995-1996, Map # V 6, MHC # A-18) served the surrounding towns as well as Assonet folk. Sampson also owned the Forge off Richmond Road and the Dogget Store at 7 Elm Street (c. 1750, Map # 5.3, MHC # A-53) the later possibly owned by Ephriam Winslow in 1822. Another smaller, gambrel roofed store, now attached as an ell to the Elder Philip Hathaway House, 23 South Main Street (house c. 1792, store ca. 1796, Map # 94, MHC # A-26) stood on South Main Street at what is now Simpson Lane. It catered to sailors as they came off the wharf on The Lane.

The institutions of the town grew to accommodate a population which was enlarging in size and outlook. The controversy between Assonet's Loyalists and Patriots, far from being a purely political matter, had a role in the creation of new institutions. The quarrel invaded the Congregational congregation to such an extent that its much beloved minister, Silas Brett, abandoned the church and town in 1776, leaving the congregation in disarray. To satisfy the religious needs of the citizens, the Baptist Church organized before 1781 in Assonet. Between 1793-96 the Baptists erected a Meeting House. It was located at 30 South Main Street adjacent to the South or Christian Church (1833, Map # 96, MHC # A-27) now St. Bernard's Church. Demolished for the construction of the 1833 building, its the outline of its foundations were still recognizable in the early 20th century.

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Without a functioning Congregational Church, the Baptist Church became the center of Assonet's religious life. In 1807 the town was swept by the "Second Awakening", a religious revival movement which invigorated the new nation in response Unitarian theological ideas originating in Boston. Under the leadership of its respected leader, Elder Philip Hathaway of 23 South Main Street (c. 1792 but possibly earlier, Map # 94, MHC # A-26) the Baptist congregation church discarded its strict Calvinist and orthodox Baptist views and adopted those of the "Christian Connection" movement.

In 1803 the seaport town of Fall River was set off from Freetown. This required a reorganization of the now leaderless Congregational Church, whose old meeting house and cemetery was now in Troy, Fall River's original name. The defunct congregation had a strong tradition of rejection of quasi-theocratic requirements for local support of the clergy, and willingness to seek religious life elsewhere if the those requirements were too invasive. In the decades after the Revolution when alternate sects such as Quakers and Baptist challenged the monopoly of the Congregationalists, Unitarian ideals softened religious dogma, and revivals reintroduced positive religious experience, Assonet's Congregational community reconstituted itself.

In 1808-1809, galvanized by the "Great Awakening", the remnants of the Congregational congregation were able to build a church at Assonet, the new focus, although not the geographical center, of the re-drawn town. Its location near the Four Corners reinforced the ascendancy of the crossroads as the locus of the public life of the community. The church's size and up-to-date elegance reflected the energy, wealth and sophistication of its largely Assonet congregation.

The carpenter of the new church building was Ebenezer Pierce of Middleborough and Assonet. To erect the structure he imported timber from Maine in his sloop. Pierce probably built his large, Georgian-Federal style house (c. 1814, Map # 90.1), which equaled or exceeded the church in refinement. It was demolished for the original St. Bernard's Church, now altered as a restaurant at 19 South Main Street (1937-1938, Map # HH 90).

In 1798, probably in response to recent population growth, the Assonet school district was divided into two. A small schoolhouse, possibly built in 1798, was located next to the 1793 Baptist Meeting house. Its hearthstone was discovered in the late 19th century under the church walk. Later the school was moved across the road from the Cattle Pound, High Street (c. 1705, Map # 106).

In 1794, William A. Leonard, a lawyer from Raynham, erected a large office building that later became the Village School, 5 North Main Street (Map # 53, MHC # A-16, Photo # 7). It probably continued as an attorney's office until about 1830. The building was used later by the

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Assonet Academy, a private high school. In 1854 it was purchased by a School House Committee, and three years later the Town bought it for the village elementary school. It continued as the Assonet School until 1950. In 1906 it was remodeled in the Colonial Revival style, orienting the entry to face the street rather than the church.

To adjust to the town's new boundaries, in 1805 Assonet was divided into east and west to form two of the town's eight school districts. The 1773 schoolhouse on South Main Street was sold at auction. A re-drawing of the districts in 1814 resulted in three new Assonet districts using the "Four Corners", as a diving line. One of the schools stood on the south side of Water Street east of the Hathaway Park (Map # 66).

In 1823 the triple or three arched Elm Street Bridge (Map # 7, MHC # A-900) over the Assonet River was erected by order of the Town Meeting. The earlier bridge at the site may have been stone, as Town records indicate rebuilding. Perhaps the heavy traffic to and from the port required that the bridge be strengthened, and Elm Street itself may have been improved by this time to transport the iron products manufactured by the East Freetown Furnace. While it is not shown on the map of 1784, it appears on that of 1831. A public right of way along its margins may indicate the site of the original ford. A coach between Fall River and Boston passed through Assonet once a week, probably stopping at the now demolished Green Dragon Tavern on South Main Street, (c. 1773, Map # 79.2).

At some point, perhaps during this period, Water Street was a driftway, and a gate or bars was maintained at end of the street. Driftways were paths for driving cattle, so perhaps the bars were removed after the closing of the abattoir in the Benjamin Dean Sr., later the John Dean barn. The barn was demolished in 1865.

The post Revolutionary period saw perhaps Assonet's greatest residential development. Scores of houses were built along the already existing roads to distant destinations: North Main Street was called the Taunton Road, South Main Street the Fall River Road and Mill/Richmond the Plymouth Road into the twentieth century. Water Street, too saw an enormous amount of new home building, remodeling or additions.

Early Industrial: 1830-1870

While the opening of rail transport in the mid-1830s hurt Assonet's shipping trade, it did not destroy it. In fact, indirect access did not come to Assonet until the opening of the New Bedford and Taunton Railroad through East Freetown in 1840. Direct access only arrived in 1845 when

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the Fall River Railroad opened a depot on Elm Street just east of the district, with service from Fall River to Myricks. A year later it connected to Boston.

The Census of 1840 records Freetown's first population decline, with the consequent slowing of home construction. Adding to the general westward movement of the seaboard population was the impetus of the gold rush of 1849. Seventy of the mostly young men in town caught gold fever, and many never returned. "The town has never fully recovered from the disheartening effect of this sudden and severe drain upon its young manhood." [Deane, John M., in Palo Alto Pierce, A History of Freetown, Massachusetts, J. Franklin and Co., Fall River, 1902, p. 237.]

Boat building continued to be an important local industry in the first two decades of this period, although its peak year is thought to have been 1834, when seven boats were constructed in town. In 1848 the last ship built here was launched, but the two whaling voyages out of Freetown in the 1840s were disastrous. Commerce with the south continued, and Darien, Georgia became a meeting point for the Assonet shipping community. Several Assonet merchants opened stores there to trade with the poor whites of the Georgia interior. The floor of the Dean barn at 14 Water Street (1838, Map # 62.1) was constructed of planks from rafts floated down river from the Georgia interior for trade with Assonet merchants. By 1861 the fleet was reduced to four, and the Civil War put an end to this business.

Freetown's combination of shipping and commerce in this period is illustrated by the career of Captain Washington Read. He was born in Freetown in 1813. As his father, a master of vessels in the marine service, had eleven children to support, Read went to sea at nine on his father's ship. He captained his own vessel at thirteen, plying between Fall River, Newport and Providence. Read entered the southern trade, then the West Indies trade, shipped to Europe, and at twenty-one became a master. He captained sixteen ships, crossed the Atlantic seventy five times, and rounded the world in 1850. He rescued fifty two passengers, never lost a vessel, owned many of his vessels, and ended his hugely diversified sea-going life in 1874. Settling in ship owner Elder Philip Hathaway's House, 36 Water Street (c. 1800, Map # 72, MHC # A-34, Photo # 3) Read might have remodeled the house at this time, as his wife was hardly home, having accompanied him on thirty eight of his transatlantic voyages. He was a State Representative in 1875.

The mills, too, continued to power local industries. Henry Porter purchased the Winslow grist mill and made Cut nails and a succession of businesses manufactured edge tools at the Forge. On the south side of the Winslow and Porter dam were a trip hammer shop, and a blacksmith shop, (Map # 24.1).

In 1853 Nathan R. Davis came to Assonet from Hartford where he had learned the gun

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manufacturing business. The firm he established here with Assonet resident David Thrasher would become the largest employer in town and survive into the 20th century. The partners began on Water Street, making muzzle-loading rifles, then moved to the Forge to obtain water power. In 1854 the firm removed to the now demolished Thresher building on the south side of Water Street near Pleasant Street. Here Davis and Thresher may have been the first in America to produce iron frame or lock frame shotguns.

After a brief halt at the start of the Civil War, in 1861 the firm got an enormous subcontract to produce sights for Springfield rifled muskets carried by the Union soldiers. Thrasher retired in poor health in 1862 and Dr. Thomas G. Nichols of 15 North Main Street (c. 1800-1825, Map # 42, MHC # A-7) became Davis' partner. Davis probably built his own house next to partner Dr. Nichols at 21 North Main Street (c. 1853-1860, Map # 45). Benjamin F. Aiken, who worked at the factory, probably built the house at 1 High Street (c. 1855-1870, Map # 102). It was he who designed and developed the reliable Rival Hammerless gun which won a patent in 1886.

The plant was burned in 1864, perhaps by a southern sympathizer, but soon reopened in the Sampson and Nichols Store building, which was demolished on 1995, (Map # V 6, MHC # A-18). In 1869 the firm seems to have purchased Dean's Hall built in 1847 on Water Street. It was converted it into the large, mansard roofed Assonet Machine Shop/Davis Gun Factory (Map # 601.1) but gun production was not consolidated there until 1873-1874.

Farming continued to play a role in the life of this mainly residential area: J. D. Wilson, who lived at 5 Elm Street (c. 1734/1790, Map # 5, MHC # A-52, Photo # 2) listed himself as a farmer and mill owner on the map of 1871, as did Col. E. W. Pierce. Corn and wheat for the village and vicinity were stored over the winter in a warehouse on the lower wharves, probably the Water Street Store House Site (Map # 74.3), or at another at about the location of Col. Pierce's Tenant House at 14 South Main Street (Map # 87.1) which burnt in 1886. A now demolished Blacksmith Shop was located north of the "Old Homestead" at about 8 South Main Street (Map # 82.1) at least by 1853 and probably earlier. In 1871 the shop was operated by J. Shrove who may have lived at 18 South Main Street (c. 1860/1900, Map # 89).

Tanning continued at the Tan Yard, 10 Elm Street (Map # 8, MHC # A-54) under the Briggs family's ownership. H. Elbridge Tinkham came to Assonet in 1853 and began shoemaking. He lived in the Adonian Crane house at 2 Forge Road (Map # 33). After being wounded in the Navy during the Civil War, Ensign Tinkham became the station agent at the Assonet depot. Much of the District's commercial building of this period has been demolished, including the South Main Street Johnson Store (Map # 79.1) and a Livery Stable, 9 South Main Street (after 1800, Map # 83.1) that had been constructed of timbers from the Winslow tide operated Grist Mill (Map # 83.2) just east of the site.

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In 1833 the Baptist/First Christian Church decided to replace its 1793 Meeting house (Map # 96.1). The First Christian Church, 30 South Main Street (Map # 96, MHC # A-27) was erected at the side of the older building, which was then demolished. The new church was designed in the Greek Revival style favored by the new republic. It underwent several stylistic and functional alterations between 1867-1868 and the building extended the building to the rear for an organ. The facade was altered, so that instead of two doors flanking a center window, the pattern was reversed and a central door was installed.

Commerce continued to thrive at the Four Corners. In 1869 John Peabody erected a new store at 1 South Main Street (1869, Map # 78, MHC # A-17). The son-in-law of Capt. Sylvanus S. Payne of 38 Water Street (c. 1780-1800, Map # 73, MHC # A-33, Photo # 3) who kept the "Old Corner Store" at 2 South Main Street (1810/20, Map # V-6, MHC # A-18) Peabody had succeeded him there before building his new grocery shop. The old store became a tack factory and then a grocery again.

Peabody lived in the Strange/Lawton/Peabody House, 26 South Main Street (c. 1850, Map # 95, MHC # A-25). It may have been Capt. Job Lawton and his wife Polly Strange, that built the Gothic Revival-style house. Lawtons Wharf at the foot of The Lane, and the sea wall (Map # V 11-13) next to it was built for Lawton in 1848. On a voyage across the ocean Lawton lost his rudder, but improvised a replacement out of ropes and chains. For his ingenuity he received public praise and recognition from insurance companies.

In 1865 the Assonet Burial Ground, South Main Street (Map #101, MHC # 818) was established, perhaps because of the necessity of burying a number of Civil War veterans. The area had served as the muster field for the local militia, but when that organization was reorganized as a state militia, the old field must have been unused. Many buried in the Fall River cemetery were re-interred in the new cemetery.

Late Industrial Period: 1870-1915

Freetown's population, which had declined by 149 people in the decade following 1860, fell further by 43 persons in the next. Shipping, hit hard by the Civil War, never recovered its former strength, and boat building had ceased to be a viable local industry. By 1902, less land was farmed, although there was more milk and chicken production, and much of the agricultural land had

returned to forest. Wood production, however, increased slightly, and 2 or 3 people in Assonet were employed processing lumber, probably at David Anthony and Captain John Marble's 1885 shingle mill at the Forge. Marble's house was at 33 North Main Street (c 1847-1864, Map # 51,

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MHC # A-2). Cudworth's Wharf (c. 1790s, Map # V-4) was occasionally used for shipping coal and lumber.

The Davis and Sons firm remained an important economic factor in Assonet, employing thirty-five people in 1870 and forty in 1890. The factory was enlarged to meet its expanding production needs over the years, culminating in 1910 when its steam power plant was tripled in size. In 1883 Dr. Nichols died and Davis took his sons, William A. and Nathan W. into the business. Under Nathan's leadership the firm gained success producing double barreled shotguns. Sold in catalogues in the 1880s, and to mail order firms like Sears Roebuck, the inexpensive hunting and all purpose guns became popular with settlers of the newly opening western states and territories.

Nathan Davis died in 1897, and in 1916 the Warner Arms Co. of Norwich Connecticut bought the son's shares. In 1919, after gaining control, the Warner company moved the business to Connecticut. With the closing of the Water Street plant, production of the company's inexpensive guns made in Freetown from 1853 to 1937 ended. The factory was demolished about 1937.

The end of the century was a time for Assonet's civic expansion. In 1886 the double-arched Bridge at South Main Street (Map # 85) washed away in a spring freshet, and it was rebuilt with a single arch in 1887. In the last half of the 19th century Town Meetings had been held in the Dogget Store/Wilson Tenant House at 7 Elm Street (c. 1750-1780, Map # 113, MHC # A-53) and in Captain Allen Payne's warehouse on Water Street. To provide Town offices and a permanent civic meeting space, in 1888 the Town gave itself the gift of a stylish Town Hall, Photo # 7. For its architect, the Town chose a local man, Charles C. A. Marble of Fall River. Appropriately sited close to the Four Corners at 3 North Main Street (Map # 33, MHC # A-14), it originally housed a Fire Station as well. Previously, the town's Water Witch fire engine had been "stored in a small building that stood just south of the present location of the public library, and known as the hearse house" [Deane, John M., in Palo Alto Pierce, A History of Freetown, Massachusetts, J. Franklin and Co., Fall River, 1902, p 230].

The next public building, the Guilford H. Hathaway Library, 6 North Main Street (1895, Map # 38, MHC # A-13) was privately built seven years later. Its location across the street from the Town Hall and the Village School, 5 North Main Street, (c. 1794, Map # 35, MHC # A-12) solidified the town's civic presence at the Four Corners. In 1892 Miss E. Florence Hathaway persuaded Town Meeting to take advantage of a \$100 state challenge grant to acquire local

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libraries, and the books were temporarily housed in the Town Hall. When the library became too large for its quarters there, Miss Hathaway gave the library building to the town in memory of her father. The lot was donated by neighbor John D. Wilson, 5 Elm Street (c. 1734/1750-80) Map # 5, MHC # A-52), grandson of the Col. Weaver who saved the Town's munitions from Shay's men nearly one hundred years earlier in 1786.

Mr. Hathaway was the son of Captain Edmund, an owner of at least thirteen Freetown vessels, and heavily involved in the West Indies trade. Guilford, who lived in the Elder Philip Hathaway House, 23 South Main Street (c. 1792, Map # 94, MHC # A-26) was active in public life, serving between 1834 and 1845 as Treasurer for four years, Selectman for five, and School Committee member twice.

The town's population, which in 1900 was 1,394, gained modestly during the two decades following it, but few houses of this period were built in Assonet. The Maj. John Deane House, 16 Water Street (1896, Map # 63, MHC # A-39, Photo # 10) was one of the most spectacular. John grew up in town, going to the Assonet Academy held at the Village School then became a teacher in the South Assonet District, and when the Civil War broke out, signed up as an officer and served in twenty battles. For "gallant and meritorious service", he was made a Major. After the war he returned to his teaching post, but in 1866 went into the general store and grocery business in Fall River.

At aged 56 and a wealthy man, he built moved the old family homestead across the street and built an impressive summer house on the old site. The Colonial Revival mansion is still the largest and possibly fanciest in town. His wife, Mary, an Assonet native of old family, was a personage in her own right, serving as President of the Fall River Richard Borden Woman's Relief Corps No. 106, and later as a national officer of the organization.

Dr. Charles Briggs' house, 12 North Main Street (c. 1900, Map # 39, MHC # A-10) is another important house of the period. The doctor, who came to Assonet in 1892, served on the School Committee and was a Library trustee.

The Puritan Mill/Swiss Textile/ Plant, 31 Mill Street (1910, Map # O 31) was erected on the site of Winslow Mill to clean cotton and produce a variety of products made from it, including sanitary napkins. While textile production was new to the district, work with cotton was a historic use on Mill Street. For an addition, built c. 1940-1948, the Winslow House, built about 1706 and then the oldest house in town, was demolished. The company was active until 1933 as the Swiss Textile Company.

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Freetown (Bristol Co.), Mass.**Early Modern Period: 1915-1949**

The first Census (1820) after Freetown achieved its present geographical borders showed a population of 1,863 and a thriving economy. One hundred years later, the census counted 331 fewer residents, and its economy was relatively quiescent, with the result that little building in the District took place. In 1930 population rose slightly, but in 1940 its had shrunk by seventy-two. A big jump, however, came after World War II when the population expanded with returning soldiers, children and new families.

Much of the building was to accommodate new technologies. An example is the Telephone Building, 4 North Main Street (c. 1936-1937, Map # 34). Built to house an experimental regional dialing system which replaced operators, the essentially industrial building has a thoroughly residential scale and form and refers to a simplified vision of Colonial America. When the new fire engine of the 1940s required a larger space than Town Hall could provide, the new Fire Station, 3 Elm Street (Map # 3) was erected in 1947-1948. Its site close to the Four Corners was traditional for civic improvements.

Roads too were brought into conformity with highway technology. In the 1920s North Main Street was altered at its intersection with Sammy's Lane to form a less abrupt angle, and its grade was raised opposite the Town Hall about 1926. The irregular bend in Elm Street was straightened in the 1940s.

Residential building of the period was modest in number and size. An early example is the George and Mim Brown House at 34 South Main Street (c. 1918, Map #98). George worked at the N. R. Davis and Sons Company, which had sold its products to Sears Roebuck for years. About 1918 George purchased his house as a kit from Sears, and had it constructed on the site. His daughter Miriam or "Mim", who lived here for nearly a century, became one of the first women owners of a textile machinery business in Fall River, and a respected benefactor and role model in Assonet.

The Swiss Textile Company, which was producing baby layette goods such as pads and bibs, then quilted goods such as pot-holders and bed spreads, was purchased by Monument Manufacturing about 1933. During World War II the firm manufactured items needed for the war effort such as sleeping bags. A new complex was erected across the road at 32 Mill Street (c. 1940-1948, Map # 32) for war production, and the work force rose, perhaps to as many as 175 people. After the war the company manufactured quilted goods: bed spreads, mattress covers, pads and pot-holders. By 1969, with employment down to about sixty workers, Monument Mills closed. Three years later the property was purchased by Lemieux Engineering, Inc., and Piping Systems, Inc., fabricators of piping for industry.

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Architectural Significance

Distinguished by the architecture of many of its buildings and by the cohesive quality of the historic ensemble, the Assonet Historic District is architecturally significant at the local level. It is particularly strong in its collection of vernacular Colonial period, and vernacular and high style Georgian, Federal and Gothic Revival houses, two fine stone bridges and intact pound, a lovely Federal style church and Queen Anne/Colonial Revival Town Hall. While it has suffered the loss of much of its 18th and 19th century commercial and industrial building, its housing stock remains remarkably well preserved. The record of Assonet's important boat building and shipping activity can still be read in the many stone walls lining the river, and in the fine houses of the men who made their living in those enterprises.

Architecture in Assonet is very much a product of its location. Wood from the surrounding forests was turned into lumber for structure and clapboards for cladding by local saw mills operating on the water power of the Assonet River. Granite for foundations, fence posts and walls was quarried nearby by the Hathaway family. Supplies for more refined elements such as leaded glass fanlights must have been limited, as most of these details seem to be nearly identical. Stylistic influences came from Plymouth and Cape Cod to the east, New Bedford/Fall River to the south, Rhode Island to the west and Taunton to the north. But in spite of influences from the wider world brought by its sea going captains and traders, house forms and framing techniques of the district remained remarkably stable. Its conservative builders continued to construct the same plans and use the same roof designs, but altered the stylistic details as they became fashionable.

It is this conservatism and traditionalism that makes building in Assonet so difficult to date by stylistic means. Unfortunately, there is little documentation of the early houses. Besides a nearly illegible map of 1858, the first map to show buildings other than mills or churches is an 1871 atlas, and we have no history discussing the district's pre-Civil War houses.

Probably the district's oldest house is the narrow "Old Homestead" at 10 South Main Street (c. 1720-25, Map # 84, MHC # A-21, Photo # 1). The Colonial Period vernacular cottage is very simple, and like the three-bay Pearce/Tew House, 3 The Lane (c. 1738-40, Map #108, MHC # A-31) has a gambrel roof. This roof form is relatively rare in southern Massachusetts, and the town is fortunate to have two good examples. Both cottages have the tight eaves lines, massive chimneys, (centered at the Old Homestead and off side at the Tew House) and lack of ornamentation associated with early Cape Cod houses. The later Read House, 5 The Lane (c. 1750-80, Map # 109, MHC # A-30) is more elaborated, having a protruding boxed cornice, tapered center chimney stack and a probably later Greek Revival door surround. These cottages

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are examples of the Cape Cod form; low, simple, and built to withstand wet, windy weather.

Two Colonial Period houses are constructed on the same general plan as the Read House, but have 2 1/2 stories instead of one. That plan, which became the standard in the District for more than a century, had an unusual staying power and seemed to provide the idea of "home" to its residents. It featured a central door flanked by two windows on either side and a central chimney placed on or near the roof's ridge line. The formula's longevity many relate to its flexibility: it could be one or two rooms deep and one or two and one half stories high, might be extended with a rear ell, usually only one story high, and its roof could be framed with three different techniques. Several of the houses in the district built on this pattern had their central chimneys removed in the mid to late 19th century, and the more efficient, fashionable paired interior chimneys installed.

Another character defining element of the district is a roof framing technique in which the eaves or gable end projects slightly out from the plane of the house. Called an overhanging gable, it was used as early as the late 17th century in Cambridge and Connecticut, and by 1737 in Providence. The feature which is found in the immediate area of Freetown, is relatively rare outside southeastern Massachusetts, but it is particularly abundant in Assonet, occurring an amazing sixteen times. Interestingly, it appears in only two of Assonet's earliest houses. The continuation of what was essentially a Post-medieval structural technique in the lighter, smoother Federal period after the American Revolution is evidence of the tenacity of Assonet's traditional construction methods.

At the Colonial-Georgian style Winslow/Durfee/J. D. Wilson House, 5 Elm Street (c. 1734/ 60, Map # 5, MHC # A-52, Photo # 2) this overhang is used twice, in the gable end and, uniquely, between the ground and second floors. The overhanging upper floors, massive and molded center chimney are features of vernacular Colonial Period building. Also unique is the decorative treatment of the quoins, splayed lintels and splayed aprons under the sills, (which are themselves the sole example in Freetown). The decorative quoins are carved from a single piece of wood to resemble stone blocks instead of assembled from individual blocks, as was more common. The Italianate one story porch (c. 1855-75), whose thin members are arranged to suggest Tudor arches, as well as expressing the Romantic aspirations of mid-nineteenth century America, provided a sheltered area to experience nature, a departure from the Georgian-Federal practice.

The Dogget Store/Wilson Tenant House, 7 Elm Street (c. 1750-1800, Map # 5.3, MHC # A-52) is thought to have been built around the same time, but its extreme simplicity and probable

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alterations at the roof line and entry make it difficult to date. It is 2 stories high and, like the "Old Homestead" at 10 South Main Street (c. 1720-1725, Map # 84, MHC # A-21) is seven bays long. The broken saltbox extension at the rear is one of only a few to survive.

After the Revolution, the small settlement at Assonet experienced extraordinary growth, with approximately thirty-one houses constructed between circa 1775 and 1820, about 14 per cent of the total number of houses in all of Freetown eleven years later. Water Street in particular was built up in this period. Some of the housing may have been for newcomers drawn by Assonet's boat building, shipping and milling opportunities. Others probably replaced earlier, smaller or less well built houses. Two and one half and one and one half story houses were built in nearly equal numbers, respectively 15 and 13, while there were four two story houses. Except for three four-bay houses, all were five bays long and had center entries. Most of these seem to have been constructed with center chimneys.

The transition between the English inspired Georgian style, with its formal, symmetrical facades and heavy classical design motifs, and the delicate, more transparent Federal style that became popular after the Revolution, was gradual in New England. In Assonet, the shift is difficult to mark, possibly because Assonet housewrights were conservative in their building practices, and their patrons were Anglophile in their taste.

In general, Federal houses had lighter and thinner proportions; admitted more light to the interior with larger windows and more glass around the major entry; used two interior fire places instead of one central stack; and windows, kept closer to the wall plane, were placed lower beneath the cornice, and had spayed or plain, rather than cornice mold lintels. The overhanging gable end, old fashioned outside Freetown's neighborhood during the period of Georgian popularity, continued to be used in Freetown throughout the Federal period.

Like human faces which all have noses, mouths, eyes, cheeks and chins but whose individually we recognize, the houses discussed below are composed of similar elements, but their slightly varying proportions and details make them distinctive.

A good example of the Georgian-Federal transition is the 1 1/2 story Ebenezer Payne Cottage, 38 Water Street (c. 1780-1800, Map # 73, MHC # A-33, Photo # 3). It is one of several houses with narrow doors topped by a five light transoms, as at the Hopkins/Briggs house, 13 North Main Street (c. 1790-1820, Map # 40, MHC # A-9), and the Barlow, Bowen, Barrows House, 10 Mill Street (c. 1789, Map # 23, MHC # A-58, Photo # 4). The Payne Cottage's high basement is unusual, providing room for a school held there the early 19th century. Ebenezer was a master mariner who owned shares in several Assonet-built vessels.

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Another example, the Luther Cudworth Cottage, 1 Pleasant Street c. 1790s, (Map # 53, MHC # A-16) like its neighbor at 42 Water Street (c. 1790, Map # 75, MHC # A-32) was remodeled ca. 1840-1870 with a Gothic Revival gabled dormer and a stock Italianate door hood. However, like so many others in Assonet, it retains the side gable overhang. As in the Payne cottage, its first floor windows butt up against the overhang. Cudworth may have laid out Pleasant Street through his property in the late 18th century.

The David Clark Estate, 16 Elm Street (c. 1760-90, Map # 12) is one of three, four-bay houses of the period in the district. Said to have been rebuilt several times, at 1 1/2 stories high, it has low proportions, sits close to the ground, has small windows with crown molds and a transom over the simple entrance, all suggesting an early date. Probably later four-bay houses include the Josiah Paddock/Dr. Thomas Bump House, 6 Water Street (c. 1796, Map # 57, MHC # A-46) which has cornice hoods over the 12/12 windows and an odd shallow entablature flanked by full length sidelights. Bump was the town doctor and his wife, Pulcheria Cordelia Ophelia was an accomplished woman who kept a school for girls here after 1818. A possibly later four-bay house of 2 1/2 stories is the Strange-Lawton House, 22 South Main Street (c. 1800-1820, Map # 53, MHC # A-16). Its door surround, transitional to the Greek Revival, features full length sidelights under a simple three-part entablature.

Illustrative of the transition between Georgian and Federal styles in a 2 1/2 story dwelling is the Barlow, Bowen, A. CA. Barrows House, 10 Mill Street (c. 1789, Map # 23, MHC # A-58, Photo # 4). It's Georgian motifs include the rather small windows which stand out from the plane of the house, and Georgian crown molds and molded sills. Its triangular pediment over the central door of the facade is similar to the original door treatment of the Hathaway/Tisdale/Gilbert House, 1 Elm Street (c. 1744, Map # 2, MHC # A-15). Mr. Barrows was a master mariner and was invested in shipping in 1816.

The three, surviving two-story, hip-roofed Federal style houses in the district were built around the turn of the 19th century. The John and Dr. Thomas Nichols House, 15 North Main Street (c. 1800-1825, Map # 42, MHC # A-7) employs a delicate elliptical blind fanlight over the door to bring light to the interior. An elaborate example built by Reverend David A. Leonard, at 6 Elm Street (1802, Map # 6, MHC # A-51) adds a popular monitor roof. The quoins at the corners are meant to represent in wood the stone blocks of masonry construction. Its four tall end chimneys reflect the new technology of distributing heat throughout the house instead of thriftily concentrating it at the center. Leonard owned shares in Assonet-built vessels. The similar Elder Philip Hathaway/Read/Wilson House, 36 Water Street (c. 1800, Map # 72, MHC # A-34, Photo # 3) was remodeled with paired bay windows and an Italianate style door surround by Captain Washington Read, possibly after his retirement from the sea in 1874.

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Two more hip roofed houses do not survive. The Welcome Hathaway House, Hathaway Park (c. 1797-1801, Map # 66.3), the Col. Ebenezer W. Pierce House now the site of 19 South Main Street (c. 1814, Map # 90.1). Another west of the district off Pleasant Street was demolished for the construction of Route 24 in 1951. The six, fairly high style hip-roofed houses in a village of this size suggests the wealth and sophistication of its residents.

Three, well-preserved high-style houses in the district--the Dean House, 14 Water Street (c. 1797-1803, Map # 62, MHC # A-40, Photo # 6), the Robert Strowbridge/D. J. Barrows House, 32 North Main Street (c. 1800, Map # 50, MHC # A-3), and the Dr. Nicholas Hathaway/Alden Hathaway House, 21 South Main Street (c. 1806, Map # 92, MHC # A-24) share a common design with slight variations. The last, having been altered with a porch and new paired chimneys is less obviously related. Their nearly identical door treatments involve graceful, semi-circular fanlights with delicate leaded motifs. The fine moldings, Ionic capitals and carved rosettes are examples of the lighter, highly decorative elements of the Federal style. All three houses retain their character-giving fences: the Dean house has cast iron with granite posts, while the others have well-made stone walls. The same door surround is also found at the house just outside the district at 46 High Street (MHC # 160) and at several houses in Taunton.

The Congregational Church, 9 North Main Street (1809, Map # 35, MHC # A-12, Photo # 7) is thought to have been built by Ebenezer Pierce, a local carpenter and ultimately, one of the town's wealthy citizens. The design for the church may have come from one of the many carpenter's pattern books circulating in New England at the time. Carpenters learned a basic vocabulary of plans, elevations and classically inspired details, then combined them using the manuals as models or guides. The elements of this church were well known--a slightly projecting pedimented pavilion with three entries, the two-stage tower set just behind it, and the use of a second floor center Palladian window to provide additional interest. This prominently sited church, characterized by its crisp details, pleasant proportions and excellent state of preservation, plays an important role in the architectural development of the district.

Houses in transition between the Federal and Greek Revival styles continued to employ the traditional 2 1/2 stories, five bays long with a center entry plan, but add a wider, simpler door surround. Examples are the W. H. Hathaway House, 15 South Main Street (c. 1830-1840, Map # 88, MHC # A-22) and the Elnathan P. Hathaway House, 18 Mill Street (c. 1830-1840, Map # 53, MHC # A-16) which uses a simplified Gothic inspired trim on the entablature over the central door.

In 1833 the congregation of the First Christian Church, 30 South Main Street (1833, Map # 96, MHC # A-27) decided to build a new church on their lot, then demolish the old Baptist Meeting house next to it. The Greek Revival style clapboard structure was altered in the Italianate style in 1867, and has recently been covered with artificial siding.

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Strangely, relatively few houses in the district were constructed in the Greek Revival style as the intense period of construction in the district slowed. The Samuel Pickens/Thomas Leeburn House, 7 Water Street (Map # 58, MHC # A-44) is thought to date from 1796, but that structure was probably incorporated into the ca. 1830-1840 Greek Revival house. Its builder adopted the typical Greek Revival practice of turning the gable end to face the street and using the resulting triangular shape to suggest a Greek temple. As here, the three-bay form was often extended with a side ell to gain more space. The little ornament is concentrated around the door: plain pilasters and full length sidelights support a three-part entablature with high frieze. The original house was the home of Samuel Pickens, a ship owner, and his son George a master mariner. Thomas Leeburn listed here in 1871 was a trader working the southern ports before the Civil War.

Another house that seems to have been remodeled in the Greek Revival style is the high style Rufus Bacon/Earl Sampson House, 25 North Main Street (Map # 48, MHC # A-38, Photo # 8). Built by lawyer Bacon about 1814, it must have been quite transformed by its next resident, Corner Store owner Earl Sampson. He may have purchased it in 1828 when Bacon left Assonet. The existing 1 1/2 story, five-bay, center-entry building was probably extended on the south elevation with a wide pediment supported on six octagonal columns to make a recessed portico as in a Greek temple, giving the house two major facades. The circa 1830-1850 remodeling may account for the unique placement of the four chimneys--two on both front and rear walls, and for the entablature of the door surround, which was squeezed to fit under the fine, dentil-trimmed frieze which wraps the whole, low, building. The doors have rounded panels decorated with carved anthemions, a Greek Revival motif.

Interestingly, few surviving houses were updated in the Greek Revival style. Other than the Bacon house discussed above, the only other clear example is the 1/2 story, five-bay Mrs. Bredham House, 24 Water Street (c. 1790s, Map # 67, MHC # A-38). Its door surround, probably installed between about 1830-1850, wraps the central doorway in thick moldings, called an architrave surround, and punctuates it with decorative central rectangle and corner blocks.

Three simple 1 1/2 story houses were built in the style which was emblematic of democratic architecture to the new American republic. The T. Anthony House, 24 Elm Street (c. 1840, Map # 17) and the J. Pickett/W Geoff House, 24 Mill Street (c. 1850-1855, Map # 28, MHC # A-60) present a three-bay, side-gable elevation to the street but retain the traditional entry on the long side. The former has eyebrow windows punched in the frieze band, a typical Greek Revival strategy to gain light in the upper floor. Shoemaker and station agent H. E. Tinkham lived in the Adonian Crane House, 2 Forge Road (c. 1854, Map # 112). It conformed to the popular plan of placing the door in the first of the three bays of the end gable but its remodeling ca. 1890-1905

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with spindle frieze porch, scalloped shingles and gable ornament, makes it appear to have been built in the later Queen Anne style.

Although only four or five houses in the district were built in the Gothic Revival style, they are all of high quality. Two retain architecturally significant barns built to complement the house as well as provide shelter for horse and hay. This idea of making a picturesque ensemble and integrating the utilitarian with the decorative was part of the Romantic movement's vision of the good life--Christian, bucolic, and informal.

The John Marble House, 33 North Main Street (c. 1847-1864, Map # 51, MHC # A-2) is a good example of this idea. It many have been built by its first owner, a carpenter who later built and ran Anthony and Swift's Abattoir and Ice House at the Forge. The house retained the three-bay, side-hall plan of the Greek Revival, but used a jig saw cut bargeboard along the eaves to suggest in wood the carved stone of Gothic church architecture. The high pointed gable at the side and the board and batten barn refer to Medieval imagery, as does the barn's pointed arch window.

The house at 26 South Main Street (c. 1850, Map # 95, MHC # A-25) of store-owner John Peabody retained the traditional five-bay form, and varied its un-Romantic regularity with an even steeper central gable than was used in the Marble House Barn. Here it is bracketed and filled with a tripartite pointed arch window. Two flanking pedimented dormers strongly protrude through the bracketed roofline. Squat Greek Revival octagonal columns similar to those at The Rufus Bacon/Earl Sampson House, 25 North Main Street (1830-1840s, Map # 48, MHC # A-38), the Capt. James Burr, Dr. Campfield/Nathan Davis House, 23 Elm Street and the N. R. Davis House 21 North Main Street (c. 1854-1860, Map # 45) support the portico sheltering the Greek Revival style door surround. The barn reflecting the house is nearly intact.

The date of the Capt. James Burr, Dr. Campfield/Nathan Davis House, 23 Elm Street (c. 1850-1870, Map # 16, MHC # A-56, Photo # 9) is uncertain, but it uses many of the same design elements of other Gothic Revival houses in town, and perhaps the same builder. The J. Deardon/Samuel Barnaby House, 16 North Main Street (c. 1850-1870, Map # 44, MHC # A-6) shares with the Peabody House the five-bay form with bracketed central gable and the distinctive twin pedimented dormers breaking through the eaves. However, the Gothic Revival door hood, Italianate brackets, Queen Anne shingled pediments and Colonial Revival porch give 16 North Main Street a more eclectic look.

The Italianate was another Romantic style but it drew on an idealized vision of Italy, the home of enchanting villas, classical vistas and European elegance. As the heavy post and beam framing

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technique of pre-industrial America was replaced with lighter, mill cut stud walls nailed, rather than fitted together, the rectangular box of the earlier houses could be made more flexible. Bends, turns, bay windows and shapes fitting function rather than geometry became fashionable. In Assonet, these design tenants were usually modified to suit its conservative taste.

Benjamin F. Aiken worked at the Davis Gun Shop and built his house at 1 High Street before 1871 in the Italianate style, (Map #102). The cross-gabled 1 1/2 story house is L-shaped in plan with a porch across the leg of the L. A wide octagonal bay window on the gable end is typical of the style, as are the brackets and open pillars of the porch. Three other Italianate houses were built late in the period, the twin cottages at 6 and 8 Mill Street (c. 1874, Maps # 21 & 22, MHC # A-57), and the house and barn of shoe manufacturer Chester Briggs on the site of his family's tan yard 10 Elm Street, (c. 1874-1883, Map # 8, MHC # A-54). The Briggs house and the cottages differ in height and detail but their design is essentially similar: the gable end is turned to the street and the entry in the first of the bays is sheltered by a stock hood on brackets. A bracketed roofline and square bay windows are features of the vernacular style.

Examples of Queen Anne building in the district are few and modest in intent. Freely adapted from the English, the style absorbed many influences, Medieval, Tudor and American Colonial, and valued a the complication of plan, surface, and ornament in the design. These concerns are muted in the district which retained traditional conservative massing and ornament. The best examples of the style in the district, the James M. Winslow House, 14 North Main Street (ca. 1887-1894, Map # 41, MHC # A-8) and the Christian Church Parsonage, 32 South Main Street (1895, Map # 96.1 MHC # A-27) are repetitions of the vernacular front gable, side hall form as it evolved through Greek Revival and Italianate styles in the district. Cross gables expand their interiors, but elaboration of surface and massing is reduced to the simple gestures of door hood or spindle porch.

The stylistically eclectic Town Hall, 3 North Main Street (1888, Map # 33, MHC # A-14, Photo # 7), and Guilford H. Hathaway Library, 6 North Main Street (1895, Map # 38, MHC # A-13) combine elements of the Queen Anne in their use of high hip roofs, towers and, at the Town Hall, use of clapboard and shingle to break up the wall surface. The pointed windows of the library are High Victorian Gothic, the elliptical arch over the central second floor window, and the balustrade balcony of the Town Hall are Colonial Revival.

Americans began to discover the romance of its own heritage after the Centennial of 1876 celebrated its national identity and impressive achievements. Specifically American architecture, formerly seen as old fashioned and unromantic, became patriotic, the object of Yankee pride. So, in the last decades of the 19th century and throughout the 20th, new

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interpretations of American building styles occurred with regularity. The Colonial Revival style, as it grew out of the fanciful, imaginative Queen Anne style, used Colonial and Georgian motifs freely, often inflating their size or proportions to make new architectural statements. As time went on, it evolved into the Neo-Colonial style, as it became more conservative, formal and academic, less willing to include inauthentic details or proportions, but more willing to use inauthentic materials such as concrete.

The summer residence of Maj. John Deane, 16 Water Street (1896, Map # 63, MHC # A-39, Photo # 10) illustrates the intersection of the Queen Anne's complex massing and multiplication of ornament, and the Colonial Revival's vocabulary of high hip roof, Palladian and oval windows and columnar porch. The tour de force is featured in three photographs in Pierce's History of the Town of Freetown, the most elaborate house in town. To build it, the family's real but tiny Colonial style house was moved across the street. Also pictured in the history is the Dr. Charles Briggs House, 12 North Main Street (c. 1900, Map # 39, MHC # A-10). It shares the Deane House's bracketed roofline, Palladian window and columnar porch, but its more conservative massing and diamond-pane windows reference a Colonial rather than Georgian past.

The Village School, 5 North Main Street (c. 1794, Map # 35, MHC # A-12, Photo # 10) was remodeled in the Colonial Revival style around 1906-1907. The doors were moved to the street elevation and the porch and stairs added. It has recently lost the classical honeysuckle inspired anthemion cresting which edged the roofline, but retains its high cupola, high brick foundation, massing and much of its fenestration. This significant civic building is an excellent candidate for restoration.

Many of the Neo-Colonial houses were topped with gambrel roofs. Usually 1 1/2 stories high, a wide shed roof dormer across the length of the five-bay facade gives headroom to the upper floor, as at Dutch inspired 24 North Main Street (c. 1930, Map # 47), and 2 School Street (1927, Map # 36). Others turn the gambrel's gable end to the street, as at 38 South Main Street (ca. 1920s, Map # 100) and the George and Mim Brown House, 34 South Main Street (c. 1918, Map # 98). The last is an example of a pre-fabricated structure whose plans and parts were chosen and shipped through a mail order company.

Non-residential building in the Neo-Colonial style include the Telephone Building (1936-1937, Map # 34) and the Fire Station, 3 Elm Street (1947-1948, Map # 3). Both small scale buildings employ generic Colonial motifs and seem designed to blend into their neighborhoods.

The only examples of the Craftsman style are ironically industrial rather than residential, as the style was popularized for houses. Popular between about 1905 and 1930, the informal, organic

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style shows up as extended rafters and purlins beneath low pitched gable roofs in the Puritan Mills/Swiss Textiles/Monument Manufacturing complex at 31 Mill Street, (1910, Map # O 31), and 32 Mill Street (c. 1944-1948, Map # 32). The earlier building (Map # O 31) was originally a shingled two storied structure five bays wide by twelve bays long with windowed basement. An addition extended the building c. 1940-1948. The concrete block buildings across the street (Map # 32) reflect the Craftsman style of the earlier mill. They were inexpensively and probably rapidly built of concrete block. The mill buildings are the latest of a long line of mills on the Assonet River that gave their name to Mill Street.

Several houses, commercial buildings, the Locust Street Bridge (ca. 1960, Map # N 30) and an industrial building at Monument Mill (c. 1980, Map # P 32.5) were constructed after the period of significance. The houses were built in response to the post World War II population increase and the opening of Route 24 in 1952 through 1954 allowing residents to live commute to work in the larger surrounding cities. Just outside the district off South Main Street, Simpson and Green Lanes were subdivided in a suburban-style development in the 1950s. However, the essentially 19th century character of the district has not been materially altered by these additions. Indeed, the majority of the non-contributing buildings are either minor out-buildings constructed after the period of significance or alterations to the few buildings erected within that period whose alterations compromised their integrity of design.

Preservation Activities

While it has not been successful in retaining them, the community has energetically tried to preserve two recently demolished buildings: the Hathaway House at 7 South Main Street (c. 1740-1760, demolished 1997, Map # V-6, MHC # A-20) and the Sampson and Nichols Store at 2 Water Street (1810/20, Map # V-5, MHC # A-18, demolished 1995-1996) both documented in the Town's inventory of historic resources. The Freetown Historical Society, organized in 1967, has done much to preserve local history and architecture, and to make the organization's considerable material and human resources available. To house its museum and library the Society remodeled a ca. 1901 cranberry rescreening house next to the railroad.

The Town conducted an inventory of historic resources in 1978 and published the results as Freetown Historic Survey, Universal Engineering Corp. with Southworth City Design, 1978. The publication discusses strategies for preservation, proposes historic districts, explains tax incentives and lists financial aids for preservation projects. Assonet currently faces a critical preservation challenge in dealing with the now vacant Village School, 5 North Main Street (1794, Map # 35, MHC # A-12, Photo # 7) a resource of undoubted architectural and historic significance.

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Archaeological Significance

Since overall patterns of prehistoric settlement in Freetown are poorly understood, any surviving sites in the district could be significant. Recent survey efforts during the 1980's by the Massachusetts Historical Commission (MHC) Prehistoric Survey Team and other professional archaeologists have increased our overall understanding of prehistoric settlement in the Taunton River drainage, however, several parts of that area remain underreported and undocumented. In Freetown, several sites along the Taunton River have been documented through the lifetime efforts of local collector Roy Athearn and the reporting of his collection by the MHC. These sites are, however, biased by their location in a very restricted area along the eastern shore of the Taunton River. Most of the 30 prehistoric sites recorded in the Freetown area are poorly documented, especially sites in interior locales. Any prehistoric sites in the district locale have the potential to further document patterns of prehistoric settlement and subsistence in the town of Freetown. These patterns can also document the role of interior sites along tributary streams of the Taunton River with larger sites in the area of the Taunton River estuary. Prehistoric sites in the district may also contain information that helps to better understand the effects of sea level rise on site distribution and frequency through time. Interior locales including the district may contain information that helps explain the absence of sites along the main basin of the Taunton River through their submergence by rising sea levels. Interior sites may represent segments of settlement models that no longer exist along the main river drainage, especially with earlier sites.

Historic archaeological resources described above have the potential to provide detailed information on a village center that evolved as a result of its location at the juncture of key transportation routes and its industrial and commercial development rather than a planned municipal strategy. Further historical research combined with archaeological survey and testing can help locate the sites of Assonet's first inhabitants who settled the area between 1659 and 1720, the approximate date of the earliest extant structure. The identification of structural remains from these early dwellings can help define early settlement patterns for the village and the architectural features of individual structures. Detailed analysis of early homesteads including occupational related features may contribute significant information on the social, cultural and economic lives of the village's early inhabitants and the formation of a compact village center. Archaeological resources may contain information that helps to understand the formation of the local economy and the growth of agricultural, industrial, maritime and commercial interests. Further analysis of historical and archaeological resources may help identify the relative importance of each of these aspects of the local economy and how they developed, either simultaneously or in stages through time. Archaeological resources may contain information indicating the nature of agricultural production and the point at which the

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emphasis of production changed from subsistence to trade with outside regional markets. Information might also be available from archaeological resources that indicates the which maritime trades developed first and their possible associations with agricultural and industrial production.

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(continued)

Assonet Historic District
Name of Property

Bristol Co., MA
County, State

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 189.95 acres

UTM References See continuation sheet.

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

1. 19 327400 4628940
Zone Easting Northing

3. 19 329000 4629380
Zone Easting Northing

2. 19 328100 4629420
Zone Easting Northing

4. 19 328660 4628800
Zone Easting Northing

x See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

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

Boundary Justification

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

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Heli Meltsner, Consultant to Freetown Historical Commission, with Betsy Friedberg, MHC

organization Massachusetts Historical Commission date July, 1999

street & number 220 Morrissey Boulevard telephone (617) 727-8470

city or town Boston state MA zip code 02125

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

- X A USGS map (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
- X A sketch map for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative black and white photographs of the property. See Attached

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 multiple

street & number _____ telephone _____

city or town _____ state _____ zip code _____

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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(end)

10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

UTM designations (continued)

5.	19	328320	4628000
6.	19	327300	4628400

Verbal Boundary Description

As shown by a dotted line on the Freetown Assessors Maps 227, 206 and 215, revised Jan. 1, 1997.

Boundary Justification

Assonet Historic District encompasses approximately the area of Assonet Village shown on the map of 1871. It focuses on what is historically known as Assonet Four Corners, and includes the properties on the four major roads radiating from it. The district extends on the north to include the houses built within the period of significance on North Main Street; on the northeast it follows the Assonet River up Mill Street to include Assonet's first dam and mill and a house on Forge Road indicated on the map of 1871; to the east it follows Elm Street to include the architecturally significant houses to a point slightly west of the railroad tracks; to the south it extends to include the ancient cattle pound at the northern end of High Street and the Assonet Burial Ground on South Main Street; and on the west it extends to include the last house on Water Street shown on the map of 1871, whose address is presently on Pleasant Street.

The boundaries generally follow lot lines. In a few instances the boundary cuts across a lot where the remainder of the lot is vacant and would not significantly add to the district.

Outside the historic district on the north, although an impressive collection of stone walls line North Main Street, the houses and commercial building there were constructed after the period of

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significance. On the north bank of the Assonet River industrial development occurred after 1949. On the west, Route 24, constructed after the period of significance, makes an obvious boundary, while Pleasant Street generally developed as a residential neighborhood after the period of significance. A high style Georgian house at the northern end of Pleasant Street important in the districts development was considered, but a contiguous boundary could not be drawn to include it. South of the district along South Main Street lies a neighborhood with a high proportion of non-contributing residences and commercial buildings. Adjacent to the district on High Street there is a clear break in the housing density. The boundary was drawn on the east to exclude Walnut Street, which generally developed later, as well as the buildings adjacent to the rail tracks which lack architectural integrity. The district also excludes properties located off new access roads south of Elm Street and east of South Main Street. While this area was agricultural during the period of significance, new housing there constructed in the 1950s altered its historical land use.

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Section number Photos Page 1

Photographer Heli Meltsner
Date May 7, 1998
Negative Location Massachusetts Historical Commission, 220 Morrissey Boulevard, Boston, MA, 02125

1. Aunt Kate's "Old Homestead," 10 South Main Street, Map # 84 looking north
2. Winslow/Wilson House, 5 Elm Street, Map # 5 looking northeast
3. Streetscape: Payne/Peabody House, 38 Water Street, Map # 73 looking east
 Hathaway/Read/Wilson House, 36 Water Street, Map # 72
4. Bowen/Barrows House, 10 Mill Street, Map # 23 looking northeast
5. Elder Philip Hathaway House, 23 South Main Street, Map # 94 looking northeast
6. Ambrose Dean House, 14 Water Street, Map # 62 looking northeast
7. Streetscape: Town Hall, 3 North Main Street, Map # 33 looking northwest
 Village School, 5 North Main Street, Map # 35
 Congregational Church, 9 North Main Street, Map # 37
8. Bacon/Sampson House, 25 North Main Street, Map # 48 looking northwest
9. Dr. Campfield/Burr/Davis House, 23 Elm Street, Map # 16 looking northeast
10. Maj. John Deane House, 16 Water Street, Map # 63 looking northeast

(end)

Assonet Historic District Data Sheet								
Freetown, Massachusetts								
Map #	MHC #	Historic Name	Address	Date	Stat.	Style	Res.	Map-Block-Lot
			Elm Street					
1		World War I Monument	Elm/North Main Streets	ca. 1918	C		O	211 - 24
1.1			Pierce's Hall/store site	ca. 1838	C	demolished 1930s	Si	
2	A - 15	Jael Hathaway/Col. Gilbert	1 Elm Street	ca. 1744 -1745	C	Georgian	B	211 - 25
3		Fire Station	3 Elm Street	1947 -1948	C	Neo-Colonial	B	211 - 26
B 4	A - 50	Wheelwright-Paint Shop	4 Elm Street	ca. 1800/1889	NC		B	211 - 84
			blacksmith shop site					
5	A - 52	Winslow/Durfee/J. D. Wilson	5 Elm Street	1734/1760-1790	C	Georg.-Fed/Italianate	B	211 - 27
5.1			garage	ca. 1930s	C	utilitarian	B	
5.2			fence & posts	ca. 1820-1890	C	Federal	St	
5.4			grist mill-stone		C		O	
5.3	A - 53	Dogget Store/ Wilson Tenant Ho	7 Elm Street	ca. 1750-1800	C	Georgian/Federal	B	211 - 27
6	A - 51	Rev. Leonard/E. Peirce/Nichols	6 Elm	1802	C	Federal	B	211 - 83
7	A - 900	Elm Street Bridge	Elm St./Assonet River	1822	C		St	
8	A - 54	Chester Briggs	10 Elm Street	ca. 1874-1883	C	Italianate	B	211 - 82
8.1			barn	ca. 1883	C	Italianate	B	
8.2		Sylvester & Chester Briggs	tan yards site	ca. 1830-1883	C		Si	
9	A - 55	Henry Winslow/J. M. Phillips	12 Elm Street	ca. 1760-1785	C	Georgian	B	211 - 80
C 10			13 Elm Street	1995	NC	Contemporary	B	211 - 58
D 10.1			garage	1995	NC	utilitarian	B	
E 11			15 Elm Street	1966	NC	Contemporary	B	211 - 59
F 11.1			garage	1966	NC	utilitarian	B	

Map #	MHC #	Historic Name	Address	Date	Stat.	Style	Res.	Map-Block-Lot
			Elm Street					
12		D. Clark Est.	16 Elm Street	ca. 1790	C	Federal Cape	B	211 - 79
13			18 Elm Street	ca. 1880-1886	C	Queen Anne/Col. Rev.	B	211 - 78
G 14			20 Elm Street	1965	NC	Contemporary	B	211 - 77
H 15			22 Elm Street	1955	NC	Contemporary	B	211 - 76
16	A - 56	Dr. J. H. Campfield/Capt. James Burr/N. W. Davis House	23 Elm Street	ca. 1850-1870	C	Gothic Revival	B	211 - 60
16.1			barn	ca. 1900	C		B	
I 16.2			barn	ca. 1950	NC		B	
16.3			stone wall		C		St	
17		T. Anthony	24 Elm Street	ca. 1840	C	Greek Revival	B	211 - 75
			Forge Road					
112		Adonian Crane/H. E. Tinkham	2 Forge Road	ca. 1840-1850	C	Greek Rev/ Q. Anne	B	211 - 37
R 112.1			garage	ca. 1990s	NC	utilitarian	B	
			High Street					
102		B. F. Aiken	1 High Street	ca. 1855-1870	C	Italianate	B	211 - 137
103	A - 29	Capt. Ben Read/Martin	2 High Street	1800-1820	C	Georgian/Fed. Cape	B	211 - 140
103.1			stone wall, posts	ca. 1800-1820	C		St	
104		Mrs P. Aiken	5 High Street	ca. 1870s	C		B	211 - 138
105			7 High Street	ca. 1930	C	utilitarian	B	211 - 139
106		Cattle Pound	High Street	ca. 1705-1790	C	utilitarian	St	215 - 1
			The Lane					
107	A - 69	Mrs. M. Staples	1 The Lane	1888	C	Queen Anne	B	211 - 155
JJ 107.1			garage	ca. 1950	NC	utilitarian	B	

Map #	MHC #	Historic Name	Address	Date	Stat.	Style	Res.	Map-Block-Lot
			The Lane					
108	A - 31	Pearce/ Mrs. Tew	3 The Lane	ca 1738	C	Georg/Federal Cape	B	211 - 156
109	A - 30	Mrs. Reed ?	5 The Lane	ca. 1750-1780	C	Georgian Cape	B	211 - 157
110	A - 70	William Read/Wilber	7 The Lane	ca 1760-1790	C	Georgian Cape	B	211 - 158
KK 111	A - 71		9 The Lane	ca. 1930s	NC	Contemporary	B	211 - 159
			Haskins Chicken Farm Site	ca. 1880s-1920				
V - 10			The Lane					211 - 160
V - 11			The Lane					211 - 161
V 10-12		Job Lawton Wharf Site	Read/Lawton Wharf Site	ca. 1830-1880	C		Si	211-160,161
V-11-12			Stone wall	1847-1848	C		St	211-162, 163
								211-164, 165
								211-166, 167
			Locust Street					
N 30			Bridge	ca. 1960	NC		St	Locust at Mill
			Mill Street					
18.1			Tisdale's dam & spillways	1710/1960	C		St	211 - 29
18.2			capstan/turbine		C		O	
18.3			saw mill site	ca. 1715	C	burned 1940s	Si	
18.4			grist mill site	ca. 1710	C	burned 1940s	Si	
18.5			Wilson rd./bridge abutments	1790/185718/86	C		St	
Q 18.6			Algonquin Gas pump house	1972	NC	utilitarian	St	
J 19			2 Mill Street	1955	NC	Contemporary	B	211 - 57
K 20			4 Mill Street	1960	NC	Neo-Colonial	B	211 - 56
L 20.1			garage	1960	NC		B	
21			6 Mill Street	ca. 1874-1886	C	Italianate	B	211 - 55

Map #	MHC #	Historic Name	Address	Date	Stat.	Style	Res.	Map-Block-Lot
			Mill Street					
22	A - 57		8 Mill Street	ca. 1874-1886	C	Italianate	B	211 - 54
23	A - 58	Bowen/Barrows	10 Mill Street	1789	C	Georgian	B	211 - 53
23.1			barn	ca. 1900	C		B	
24		bridge abutments	17 Mill Street	ca. 1820/1938	C		St	211 - 30
24.1		Porter mill site		ca. 1820/1938	C		Si	
25	A - 59	E. P. Hathaway	18 Mill Street	ca. 1830	C	Federal/Greek Revival	B	211 - 52
26	808	Payne/Hathaway Cemetery	Mill Street		C		Si	211 - 51
27			23 Mill Street	ca. 1887/ 1910	C	utilitarian	B	211 - 32, 31
27.1			carriage house	ca. 1840?	C	Gothic Revival	B	
27.2			stone wall		C		St	
28	A - 60	J. Picket/ W. Goff	24 Mill Street	ca. 1850-1855	C	Greek Revival	B	211 - 49.1,,2,,3
28.1			stone wall		C		St	
V - 1								211 - 33
29	A - 60	J. C. Clark	26 Mill Street	ca. 1850	C		B	211 - 47
M 29.1			garage	ca. 1980	NC	utilitarian	B	
O 31		Swiss Textile/Monument Manuf.	31 Mill Street	1910	NC		B	211 - 34
31.4			pump house	ca. 1910	C		C	
31.1			Winslow saw/grist mill site	before 1794	C		Si	
31.2			Winslow dam/tail race	1695-1900	C		St	
31.3			bridge abutments	?	C		St	
			Winslow house site	ca.1706-1940-1948				

Map #	MHC #	Historic Name	Address	Date	Stat.	Style	Res.	Map-Block-Lot
		Mill Street						
32		Puritan Mills 1910/	32 Mill Street, garage/office	ca. 1940-1948	C	utilitarian	B	211 - 46
32.1		Swiss Textiles c. 1920s/	mill	ca. 1940-1948/1989	C	utilitarian	B	
32.2		Monument Manufacturing 1934	mill	c. 1940-1948	C	utilitarian	B	
32.3			garage	ca. 1948	C	utilitarian	B	
P 32.4			storage building	1985	NC	utilitarian	B	
32.5			garage	ca. 1940-1948	C	utilitarian	B	
		North Main Street						
33	A - 14	Town Hall	3 North Main Street	1888/1926	C	Queen Anne/Col. Rev.	B	211 - 1
33.1		Barrows store site		ca. 1840s	C	demolished 1920s?	Si	
34		Telephone Building	4 North Main Street	ca. 1936-1937	C	Neo-Colonial	B	211 - 23
34.1			Hearse house site	ca. 1800-1860				
35	A - 12	Village School	5 North Main Street	1794/ 1906-1907	C	Colonial Revival	B	221 - 2
35.1			retaining wall		C		St	
38	A - 13	G.H. Hathaway Library	6 North Main Street	1895	C	High Vict. Gothic	B	211 - 22
38.1			stone wall		C		St	
37	A - 11	Congregational Church	9 North Main Street	1808-1809/1925	C	Federal	B	211 - 4
39	A - 10	Dr. Charles Briggs	12 North Main Street	1900	C	Colonial Revival	B	211 - 21
39.1			carriage house	ca. 1900	C	Colonial Revival	B	
39.2			stone wall		C		St	
40	A - 9	Hopkins-Briggs	13 North Main Street	ca 1790-1820	C	Georg./Federal Cape	B	211 - 5
40.1			stone wall		C		St	
41	A - 8	James Winslow	14 North Main Street	ca. 1888-1894	C	Queen Anne	B	211 - 20
42	A - 7	John/Dr. Thomas Nichols	15 North Main Street	1800-1825	C	Federal	B	211 - 6
43		Nichols Cemetery	North Main Street		C		Si	211 - 7

Map #	MHC #	Historic Name	Address	Date	Stat.	Style	Res.	Map-Block-Lot
			North Main Street					
44	A - 6	J. Deardon/Barnaby	16-18 North Main St.	ca. 1850-1870	C	High Vict. Goth./Ital.	B	211 - 19
44.1			garage	1940s	C		B	
45		N. R. Davis	21 North Main Street	ca. 1853-1860	C	Italianate/Gothic Rev.	B	211 - 8
46	A - 4	Dea. Ben. Burt	22 North Main Street	ca. 1822	C	Georgian/Federal	B	211 - 17
46.1			stone wall & fence		C		St	
46.2			barn	ca. 1850	C	utilitarian	B	
47			24 North Main Street	ca. 1930	C	Dutch Neo-Colonial	B	211 - 16
47.1			garage	ca. 1930	C		B	
48	A - 5	Rufus Bacon/Earl Sampson	25 North Main Street	1814/1830-1840	C	Federal/Greek Revival	B	211 - 9, 10
48.1		Cong. Ch. Parsonage	well house	1857	C		St	
48.2			stone wall		C		St	
49		George W. Hall	27 North Main Street	ca. 1840-1860	C	Greek Rev./Italianate	B	211 - 11
49.1			garage	ca. 1945	C	utilitarian	B	
50	A - 3	Robt. Strowbridge/D. J. Burrows	32 North Main Street	ca. 1800	C	Georgian/Federal	B	211 & 206 - 15
50.1		Porter	stone wall & fence		C		St	
51	A 2	John Marble House	33 North Main Street	ca. 1847-1864	C	Gothic Revival	B	211 - 13
51.1			barn	ca. 1847-1864	C		B	
51.2			flag pole	1900s	C		O	
51.3			stone wall		C		St	
113		G.W. Hall Field	22 Pleasant Street			(fronts North Main St.)		211 - 12
			Pleasant Street					
77		Darius/Luther Cudworth/	1 Pleasant Street	ca. 1790/1850	C	Georg/Goth.Rev Cape	B	211 - 186
77.1		A. J. Thresher	barn	ca. 1800-1900	C	utilitarian	B	

Map #	MHC #	Historic Name	Address	Date	Stat.	Style	Res.	Map-Block-Lot
			School Street					
36			2 School Street	1927	C	Neo-Colonial	B	211 - 3
36.1			garage	ca. 1927	C	utilitarian	B	
			South Main Street					
78	A - 17	John W. Peabody Store	1 South Main Street	1869	C	Greek Revival	B	211 - 85
78.1			DCHB Store site	c. 1850s	C		Si	
79			S. Main St. Bandstand	ca. late 1930s	C	contemporary	St	211 - 86
79.1			Boston/Johnson Store site	1800s	C		Si	
79.2			Green Dragon Tavern site	ca. 1773	C	demolished 1933	Si	
V - 5	A - 18	Sampson/Nichols Store Site	2 South Main Street	1810/1820	C	demolished 1995	Si	211 - 175
80	A - 19	G.M.P. Site/Dean	4 South Main Street	mid-19th century	C	Greek Revival	B	211 - 174
81			6 South Main Street	mid-19th century	C	Federal-Greek Revival	B	211 - 173
V - 6	A - 20	Vaughn/Hathaway House site	7 South Main Street	1740-1760	C	demolished 1997	Si	211 - 87
DD 82			8 South Main Street	ca. 1990s	NC	Neo-Col. utilitarian	B	211 - 172
82.1		Shove smith shop site		ca. 1850s	C		Si	
82.2		School house site						
EE 83		gas/service station	9 South Main Street	ca. 1940/1987	NC	utilitarian	B	211 - 88
83.1		Vaughn/Hathaway	livery & stable site	ca. 1800s	C		Si	
83.2		Joseph Winslow	tide/grist mill site	ca. 1784	C		Si	
84	A - 21	"Old Homestead"/Jos Winslow/ Aunt Kate's /Peabody/Dean	10 South Main Street	ca. 1720-1725	C	Colonial	B	211 - 171
V - 7		Winslow Wharf Site	South Main Street		C		Si	211-169,177,170
85		South Main St. Bridge	Assonet River/South Main	1820?/1887	C		St	
86		A. Chase Est.	13 South Main Street	ca. 1820	C	Federal/Col. Revival	B	211 - 89

Map #	MHC #	Historic Name	Address	Date	Stat.	Style	Res.	Map-Block-Lot
			South Main Street					
FF 87		Col. E. W. Peirce tenant house	14 South Main Street	ca. 1887	NC		B	211 - 168
87.1		Corn storehouse site?		ca. 1800-1886				
88	A - 22	W. H. Hathaway	15 South Main Street	ca. 1830-1840	C	Greek Revival	B	211-90 & Christy
88.1			barn	ca. 1850	C	Italianate	B	Lane ROW
V - 8			South Main Street					211 - 167
89			18 South Main Street	ca. 1860/1900	C	Colonial Revival	B	211 - 166
GG 89.1			garage	ca. 1950	NC		B	
89.2			garage	ca. 1850	C		B	
90		St. Bernard's Church	19 South Main Street	1937-1938	C	Neo-Colonial	B	211 - 92
90.1		Col.. E.W. Pierce House site		ca. 1814-1936				
91		Capt. John Pratt	20 South Main Street	ca. 1760-1800	C	Geo./Fed./Col R. Cape	B	211 - 165
92	A - 24	Alden Hathaway/	21 South Main Street	ca. 1806	C	Federal/Col. Revival	B	211 - 93
92.1		Dr. Nicholas Hathaway	barn	ca. 1840s	C	utilitarian	B	
92.2			stone walls		C		St	
93	A - 23	Strange/Lawton/Pierce	22 South Main Street	ca. 1800-1830	C	Federal	B	211 - 164
93.1			barn	ca. 1850	C	Gothic Revival	B	
			stone wall		C		St	
94	A - 26	Eld. Phil. Hathaway/	23 South Main Street	1792/1796	C	Georgian/Federal	B	211 - 94
94.1		Lawton/Kirker	carriage house	ca 1900	C	utilitarian	B	
94.2			barn foundations	ca. 1792	C		St	
94.3			cast iron fence	ca. 1840?	C		B	
V - 9			South Main Street					211 - 135
95	A - 25	J. Peabody	26 South Main Street	ca. 1850	C	Gothic Revival	B	211 - 163
95.1			barn	ca. 1850	C		B	
95.2			fence	ca. 1850-1900	C		St	

Map #	MHC #	Historic Name	Address	Date	Stat.	Style	Res.	Map-Block-Lot
			South Main Street					
96	A - 27	First Christian Church	30 South Main Street	1833/1867	C	Greek Revival/Ital.	B	211 - 154
		Meeting House & School Site		1796/1805				
96.1	A - 28	1st Christian Church Parsonage	32 South Main Street	1895	C	Queen Anne	B	211 - 154
97	806	Hathaway Cemetery	South Main Street	1749	C		SI	211 - 136
98		George/Mim Brown	34 South Main Street	ca. 1918	C	Neo-Colonial	B	211 - 153
II 99			36 South Main Street	1964	NC	contemporary	B	211 - 152, 151
100			38 South Main Street	ca. 1920s	C	Neo-Colonial	B	211 - 150
101	818	Assonet Burial Ground/	South Main Street	1865	C		SI	211 - 148, 149
101.1		Musterfield		ca. 1760-1860				
101.2			S. Main Gates	ca. 1865-1900	C		St	"
			Water Street					
52	A - 49	J.H. Winslow carriage house	1 Water Street	1850?/1946	C		B	211 - 176
52.1			garage	ca. 1946	C	utilitarian	B	
53	A - 16	J. Mackoon/J. Bowen	2 Water Street	ca. 1792-1797	C	Federal/Italianate	B	211 - 223
		T. Valentine/Jos. Taylor/						
		J. Burr						
54	A - 47	Mrs. Thrasher	3 Water Street	ca. 1792-1797	C	Georian/Fed. Cape	B	211 - 177
54.1			barn	mid-19th century	C	utilitarian	B	
55	A - 48	W. Pratt/Hathaway/Dean	4 Water Street	ca. 1792-1797	C	Georg/Greek Rev/Ital	B	211 - 222
55.1			carriage barn	ca. 1870s	C	utilitarian	B	
55.2			fence	ca. 1840-1890	C	utilitarian	St	
56	A - 45	Capt. G.W. Pickens/J. Lykens	5 Water Street	ca. 1790s	C	Georg./Federal Cape	B	211 - 178

Map #	MHC #	Historic Name	Address	Date	Stat.	Style	Res.	Map-Block-Lot
			Water Street					
57	A - 46	Josiah Paddock/Dr. Bump	6 Water Street	ca. 1796	C	Georgian/Federal	B	211 - 221
			garage	ca. 1950	NC	utilitarian	B	
58	A - 44	Samuel P. Pickens/	7 Water Street	1830-1840	C	Greek Revival	B	211 - 179
58.1		Thomas Leeburn	garage	ca. 1900	C	utilitarian	B	
59	A - 43	E & P Nichols/Durfee	8 Water Street	ca. 1799	C	Federal	B	211 - 220
59.1		Johnson & Haskins	garage		C		B	
60	A - 42	I Burbank/William Davis	10 -12 Water Street	ca. 1790	C	Georgian/Federal	B	211 - 219
60.1			garage	ca. 1920	C	utilitarian	B	
S 61	A - 41		11 Water Street	1987	NC	contemporary	B	211 - 180
61.1			Deane's Hall/Davis Gun Site	1847	C		Si	
61.2			S. & Frank Briggs Ho. Site	ca. 1770	C		Si	
61.3			Briggs Shoe Shop Site	ca. 1800	C		Si	
62	A - 40	Ambrose?/Eban. Dean	14 Water Street	ca. 1797-1803	C	Federal	B	211 - 218
62.1		Mrs. R Dean	carriage barn	1838	C	utilitarian	B	
62.2			fence		C		St	
63	A - 39	Maj. John M. Deane	16 Water Street	1896	C	Colonial Revival	B	211 - 217, 214,
63.1			carriage ? barn	1870-1896	C	utilitarian	B	
63.2			foundations		C		St	
63.3			fence		C		St	
			Staples/Hathaway Ho. Site					211 - 216
U 64		Dean Homestead	19 Water Street	ca. 1750/1896	NC		B	211 - 181
		stone wall at waterfront fill		1896	C		St	
W 65		Mrs. M. Dean	20 Water Street	ca. 1740	NC	Neo-Colonial	B	211 - 215

Map #	MHC #	Historic Name	Address	Date	Stat.	Style	Res.	Map-Block-Lot
			Water Street					
66		Hathaway Park/ Shipyard	Water Street	ca.1790s/1965	C		Si	211 - 182
66.1			river edge wall		C		St	
66.2			stone wall		C		St	
66.3			Wel. Hathaway Ho. Site	ca. 1797-1801	C		Si	
66.4			Read Wharf Site	ca. 1790s	C		Si	
66.5			Hathaway Wharf Site	ca. 1790s	C		Si	
66.6			Chase/Rodman/Vaughn Wrf.	ca. 1790s	C		Si	
67	A - 38	Mrs. Bredham?	24 Water Street	1750-1790	C	Fed/Greek Rev. Cape	B	211 - 213
67.1			garage		C	utilitarian	B	
67.2			stone retaining wall	ca. 1900	C		St	
X 68			26 Water Street	ca. 1790s	NC	Neo Colonial	B	211 - 212
69	A - 37	Welcome/Jason Hathaway	28 Water Street	ca 1809	C	Georgian/Federal	B	211 - 211
69.1			barn		C	utilitarian	B	
69.2			retaining wall		C		St	
70	A - 36	R.T.Payne/Sam Bragg	30 Water Street	ca. 1798	C	Federal Cape	B	211 - 210
70.1			garage	1930-1940ss	C	utilitarian	B	
71	A - 35	Brown/Vaughn	32 Water Street	mid-late 18th	C	Geor.Fed./G.R. Cape	B	211 - 209
71.1			garage	1930-1940ss	C	utilitarian	B	
72	A - 34	Hathaway/Read/Wilson	36 Water Street	ca. 1800/1874	C	Federal/Italianate	B	211 - 208
Z 72.1			garage	ca. 1980	NC	utilitarian	B	
AA 72.2			2 car garage	ca. 1940	NC	utilitarian	B	
73	A - 33	Eb. - Sylvanus Payne/Peabody	38 Water Street	1780-1800	C	Georg./Federal Cape	B	211 - 207
			garden shed					
		Right of Way	(12 Pleasant Street)					211 - 201

Map #	MHC #	Historic Name	Address	Date	Stat.	Style	Res.	Map-Block-Lot
			Water Street					
BB 74			39 Water Street	1900	NC	Neo-Colonial	B	211 - 183
74.1			garage	c. 1940	C	utilitarian	B	
74.2			Nichols' Wharf/	ca. 1790s	C		Si	
74.3			Store House site	1790-1930	C		Si	
75	A - 32	George Cudworth	42 Water Street	ca.1790/1840s	C	Georgian/Ital. Cape	B	211 - 206
75.1			fence post		C		O	
75.2			carriage barn	ca. 1900	C	utilitarian	B	
V - 4			Cudworth Wharf site	ca. 1790s	C		Si	211 - 184
CC 76			43 Water Street	1900/1990	NC	Contemporary	B	211 - 185
		TOTAL RESOURCES: 229						
		Contributing Buildings 120	Noncontributing Buildings	31				
		Contributing Structures 39	Noncontributing Structures	2				
		Contributing Sites 32						
		Contributing Objects 5						
		TOTAL 196	TOTAL	33				
		KEY						
		C = Contributing Resource						
		NC = Noncontributing Resource						
		B = Building						
		O = Object						
		Si = Site						
		St = Structure						

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: NOMINATION

PROPERTY Assonet Historic District
NAME:

MULTIPLE
NAME:

STATE & COUNTY: MASSACHUSETTS, Bristol

DATE RECEIVED: 8/09/99 DATE OF PENDING LIST: 8/24/99
DATE OF 16TH DAY: 9/09/99 DATE OF 45TH DAY: 9/23/99
DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:

REFERENCE NUMBER: 99001116

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 9/9/99 DATE

ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:

ENTERED 9 1999

RECOM./CRITERIA _____

REVIEWER _____ DISCIPLINE _____

TELEPHONE _____ DATE _____

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



PHOTO #1

AUNT KATE'S "OLD HOMESTEAD"

10 SOUTH MAIN STREET

MAP # 84

ASSONET HISTORIC DISTRICT,

FREETOWN

BRISTOL CO., MA



PHOTO #2

WINSLOW/WILSON HOUSE

5 ELM STREET

MAP # 5

ASSONET HISTORIC DISTRICT,

FREETOWN

BRISTOL CO., MA



PHOTO # 3

WATER STREET STREETScape:

PAYNE / PEABODY HOUSE, 38 WATER ST. (MAP # 73)

HATHAWAY / READ / WILSON HOUSE, 36 WATER ST. (MAP # 72)

ASSONET HISTORIC DISTRICT, FREETOWN
BRISTOLCO, MA.



PHOTO # 4

BOWEN/BARROWS HOUSE

10 MILL STREET

MAP # 23

ASSONET HISTORIC DISTRICT,

FREETOWN

BRISTOL CO., MA



PHOTO #5

ELDER PHILIP HATHAWAY HOUSE

23 SOUTH MAIN STREET

MAP # 94

ASSONET HISTORIC DISTRICT, FREETOWN

BRISTOL CO., MA



PHOTO # 6

AMBROSE DEAN HOUSE

14 WATER STREET

MAP # 62

ASSONET HISTORIC DISTRICT,

FREETOWN

BRISTOL CO., MA



PHOTO #7

STREETSCAPE : NORTH MAIN STREET

TOWN HALL - 3 NORTH MAIN STREET, MAP # 33

VILLAGE SCHOOL - 5 NORTH MAIN STREET, MAP # 35

CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH - 9 NORTH MAIN ST., MAP # 37

ASSONET HISTORIC DISTRICT, FREETOWN

BRISTOL CO., MA



PHOTO # 8

BACON/SAMPSON HOUSE

25 NORTH MAIN STREET

MAP # 48

ASSONET HISTORIC DISTRICT

FREETOWN, BRISTOL CO., MA



PHOTO 4 a

DR. CAMPFIELD/BURR/DAVIS HOUSE

23 ELM STREET

MAP # 14

ASSAQUET HISTORIC DISTRICT

FREETOWN, BRISTOL CO., MA



PHOTO # 10

MAJ. JOHN DEANE HOUSE

16 WATER STREET

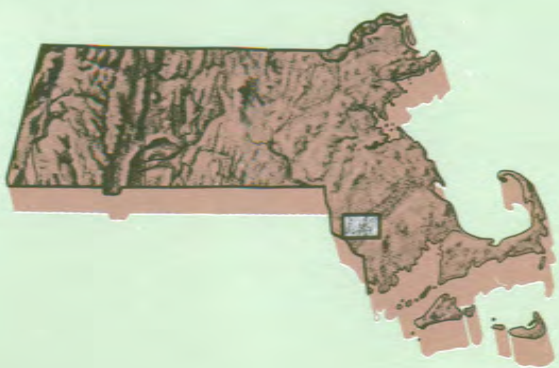
MAP # 63

ASSONET HISTORIC DISTRICT

FREETOWN, BRISTOL CO., MA

Somerset
MASSACHUSETTS

ASSONET HD
FREETOWN (BRISTOL CO.)
MA
1:25 000-scale metric
topographic map



7.5 X 15 MINUTE QUADRANGLE
SHOWING

- Contours and elevations in meters
- Highways, roads and other manmade structures
- Water features
- Woodland areas
- Geographic names



GEOLOGICAL SURVEY

1985

Produced by the United States Geological Survey in cooperation with Massachusetts Department of Public Works
Control by USGS, NOS/NOAA, and Commonwealth of Massachusetts agencies
Compiled by photogrammetric methods from aerial photographs taken 1980. Field checked 1981. Map edited 1985. Supersedes Assonet and Somerset 1:25,000-scale maps dated 1977 and 1980
Selected hydrographic data compiled from NOS chart 13222 (1982). This information is not intended for navigational purposes
Projection and 1000-meter grid: Universal
Transverse Mercator, zone 19
18,000-foot grid ticks based on Massachusetts coordinate system, mainland zone
1927 North American Datum
To place on the predicted North American Datum 1983 move the projection lines 6 meters south and 42 meters west as shown by dashed corner ticks
There may be private landholdings within the boundaries of the National or State reservations shown on this map

CONTOUR INTERVAL 3 METERS
NATIONAL GEODETIC VERTICAL DATUM OF 1929
OTHER ELEVATIONS SHOWN TO THE NEAREST 0.1 METER
DEPTH CURVES AND SOUNDINGS IN METERS
DATUM IS MEAN LOW WATER
THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE TWO DATUMS IS VARIABLE
SHORELINE SHOWN REPRESENTS THE APPROXIMATE LINE OF MEAN HIGH WATER
THE MEAN RANGE OF TIDE IS APPROXIMATELY 0.9 METER

THIS MAP COMPLIES WITH NATIONAL MAP ACCURACY STANDARDS

CONVERSION TABLE		DECLINATION DIAGRAM	ADJOINING MAPS		
Meters	Feet		1	2	3
1	3.2808		4	5	6
2	6.5616		7	8	9
3	9.8424				
4	13.1232				
5	16.4040				
6	19.6850				
7	22.9656				
8	26.2467				
9	29.5276				
10	32.8094				
To convert meters to feet multiply by 3.2808		UTM grid convergence (G) and 1983 magnetic declination (M) at center of map Diagram is approximate	1	2	3
To convert feet to meters multiply by 0.3048			4	5	6
			7	8	9



Topographic Map Symbols

Primary highway, hard surface	
Secondary highway, hard surface	
Light-duty road, hard or improved surface	
Unimproved road; trail	
Route marker: Interstate; U. S. State	
Railroad: standard gauge; narrow gauge	
Canal; drainage	
Footbridge; overpass; underpass	
Built-up area: only selected landmark buildings shown	
House; barn; church; school; large structure	
Boundary:	
National, with monument	
State	
County, parish	
Civil township, precinct, district	
Incorporated city, village, town	
National or State reservation; small park	
Land grant with monument; found section corner	
U. S. public lands survey: range, township, section	
Range, township; section line: location approximate	
Fence or field line	
Power transmission line, located tower	
Dam; dam with lock	
Cemetery; grave	
Campground; picnic area; U. S. location monument	
Windmill; water well; spring	
Mine shaft; prospect; adit or cave	
Control: horizontal station; vertical station; spot elevation	
Contours: index; intermediate; supplementary; depression	
Distorted surface: strip mine, lava, sand	
Bathymetric contours: index; intermediate	
Perennial lake and stream; intermittent lake and stream	
Rapid, large and small; falls, large and small	
Submerged marsh; marsh, swamp	
Land subject to controlled inundation; woodland	
Shrub; mangrove	
Orchard; vineyard	

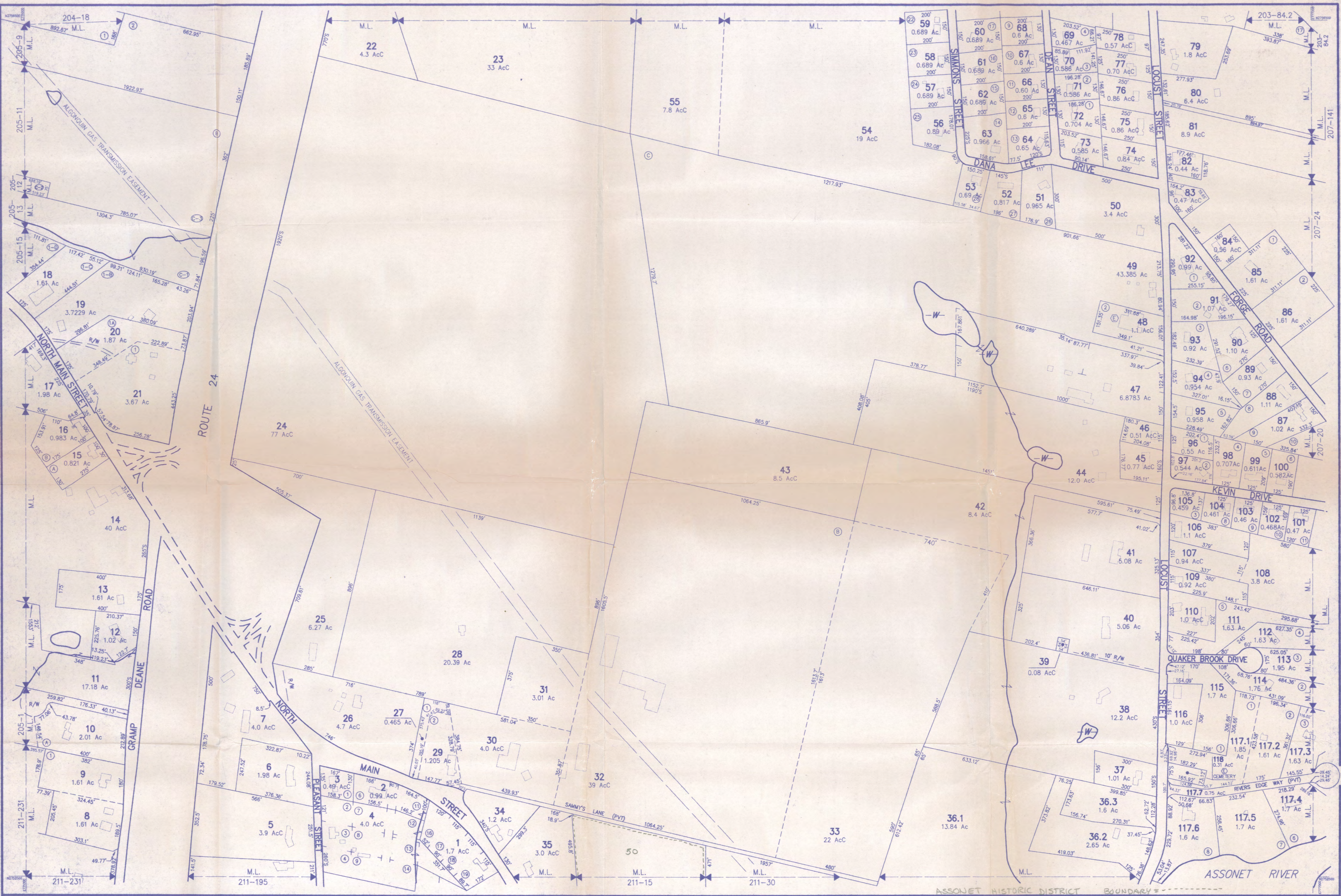
A pamphlet describing topographic maps is available on request

FOR SALE BY U. S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY
DENVER, COLORADO 80225, OR RESTON, VIRGINIA 22092

ASSONET HD
FREETOWN (BRISTOL CO.)
MA

ZONE 19

E	N
1) 327400	4628940
2) 328100	4629420
3) 329000	4629380
4) 328600	4628800
5) 328320	4628000
6) 327300	4628400



THIS MAP IS FOR ASSESSMENT PURPOSES. IT IS NOT VALID FOR LEGAL DESCRIPTION OR CONVEYANCE.

THE HORIZONTAL DATUM IS THE MASSACHUSETTS STATE PLANE COORDINATE SYSTEM.

PHOTOGRAPHY DATE: APRIL 9, 1994

COMPLETION DATE: MAY 1, 1995

PRODUCED IN 1995 BY
CARTOGRAPHIC ASSOC. INC.
PROFESSIONAL CONSULTANTS
MUNICIPAL MAPPING - GIS - LAND SURVEYING - PROPERTY APPRAISAL
11 PLEASANT STREET, P.O. BOX 267, LITTLETON, NEW HAMPSHIRE 03561
(603)444-6768 - (1-800)322-4540 - FAX (603)444-1368

LEGEND

AREA SURVEYED Ac
AREA CALCULATED Ac
RECORD DIMENSION 100'
SCALED DIMENSION 100'
MATCH LINE M.L.
WATER W

EXEMPT PROPERTY
SUBDIVISION LOT NO.
BUILDING
RIGHT OF WAY
COMMON OWNERSHIP
WETLANDS

SCALE 1" = 200'

FEET 0 100 200 400 600
METERS 0 50 100 150

REVISED TO : January 1, 1998

PROPERTY MAPS

FREETOWN

MASSACHUSETTS

INDEX DIAGRAM

MAP NO. 206

204 203 202
205 207
212 211 210



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THE HORIZONTAL DATUM IS THE MASSACHUSETTS STATE PLANE COORDINATE SYSTEM.

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(603)444-6768 - (1-800)322-4540 - FAX (603)444-1366

LEGEND

AREA SURVEYED Ac
AREA CALCULATED Ac
RECORD DIMENSION 100'
SCALED DIMENSION 100'
MATCH LINE M.L.
WATER W
EXEMPT PROPERTY E
SUBDIVISION LOT NO.
BUILDING
RIGHT OF WAY R/W
COMMON OWNERSHIP
WETLANDS W

FEET
100 0 200 400 600
METERS
50 0 50 100 150

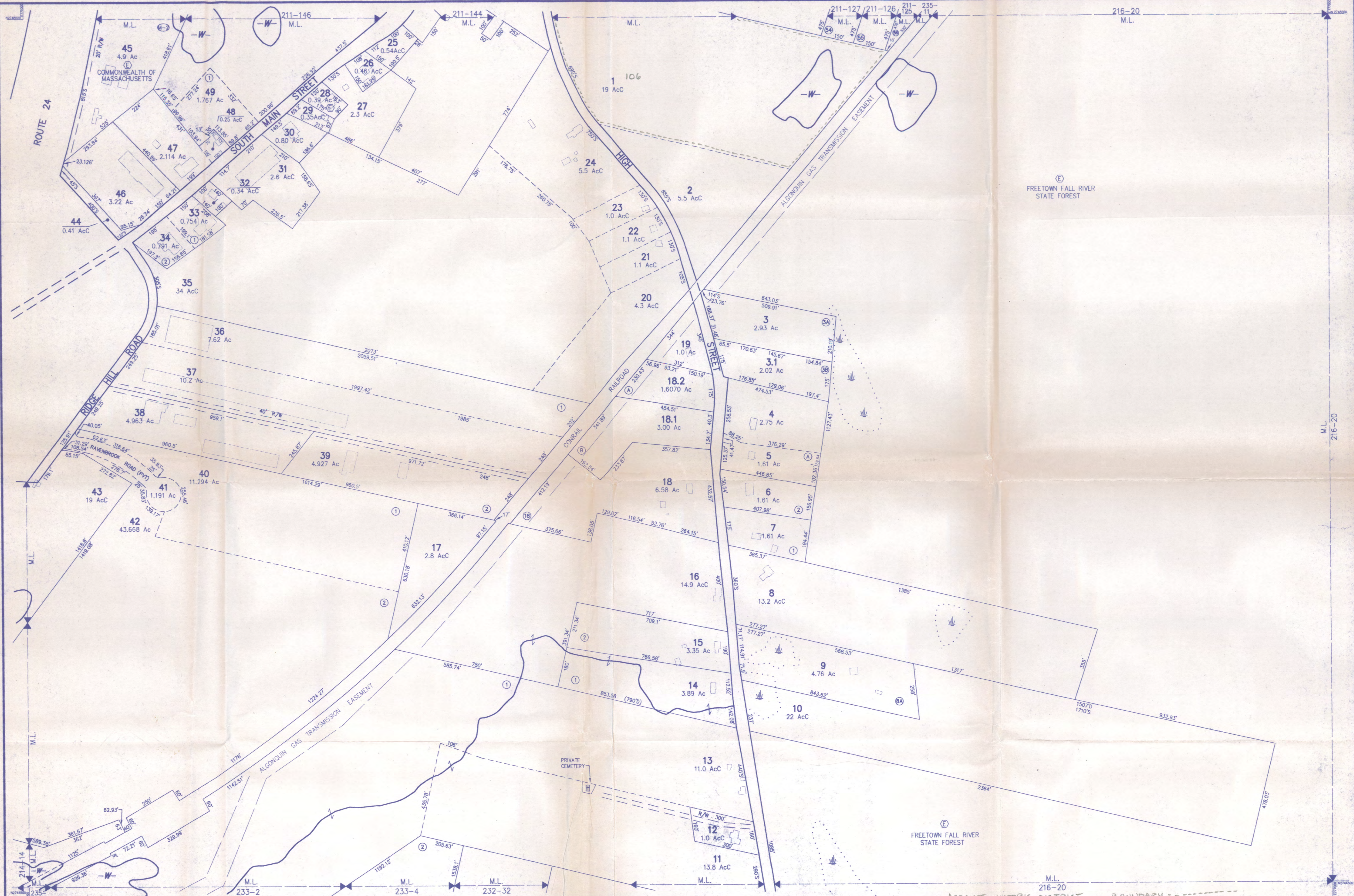
SCALE 1" = 200'

REVISED TO: January 1, 1998

PROPERTY MAPS
FREETOWN
MASSACHUSETTS

INDEX DIAGRAM
205 206 207
212 210
214 215 216

MAP NO.
211



THIS MAP IS FOR ASSESSMENT PURPOSES. IT IS NOT VALID FOR LEGAL DESCRIPTION OR CONVEYANCE. THE HORIZONTAL DATUM IS THE MASSACHUSETTS STATE PLANE COORDINATE SYSTEM. PHOTOGRAPHY DATE: APRIL 9, 1994 COMPLETION DATE: MAY 1, 1995	PRODUCED IN 1995 BY CARTOGRAPHIC ASSOC. INC. PROFESSIONAL CONSULTANTS MUNICIPAL MAPPING - GIS - LAND SURVEYING - PROPERTY APPRAISAL 11 PLEASANT STREET, P.O. BOX 267, LITTLETON, NEW HAMPSHIRE 03561 (603)444-8768 - (800)322-4540 - FAX (603)444-1366	LEGEND EXEMPT PROPERTY. SUBDIVISION LOT NO. BUILDING RIGHT OF WAY. COMMON OWNERSHIP. WETLANDS. AREA SURVEYED Ac AREA CALCULATED Ac RECORD DIMENSION 100' SCALED DIMENSION 100'S MATCH LINE WATER	SCALE 1" = 200' REVISOR TO : January 1, 1998	PROPERTY MAPS FREETOWN MASSACHUSETTS	INDEX DIAGRAM 212 211 210 214 213 216 233 232 231	MAP NO. 215
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The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

William Francis Galvin, Secretary of the Commonwealth
Massachusetts Historical Commission



August 5, 1999

Ms. Carol Shull
National Register of Historic Places
Department of the Interior
National Park Service
Mail Stop 2280, Suite 400
1849 C Street, NW
Washington, DC 20240

Dear Ms. Shull:

Enclosed please find the following nomination form:

Assonet Historic District, Freetown (Bristol 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 properties included in the district 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: Beverly Dickinson, Chair, Freetown Historical Commission
Heli Meltsner, Preservation Consultant
Christopher McCarthy, Chair, Freetown Board of Selectmen
Mary Brown, Freetown Historical Commission
Joel Plissey, Chair, Planning Board
Mim Gurney, Freetown Historical Commission



DIocese OF FALL RIVER
P. O. Box 2577
FALL RIVER, MASSACHUSETTS 02722
TELEPHONE (508) 675-1311

CHANCERY OFFICE

August 18, 1999

RECEIVED

AUG 23 1999

MASS. HIST. COMM.

Judith B. McDonough, Executive Director
State Historic Preservation Officer
Massachusetts Historical Commission
220 Morrissey Boulevard
Boston, Massachusetts 02125

Dear Ms. McDonough:

The Diocese of Fall River is the owner of private property at the following locations:

Saint Bernard's Parish
32 South Main Street
Assonet, Massachusetts 02702

Saint John Neumann Parish
157 Middleboro Road
East Freetown, Massachusetts 02717

Cathedral Camp
Middleboro Road
East Freetown, Massachusetts 02717

The owner objects to the listing of the properties on the National Register of Historic Places.

Witness my hand and seal this 18th day of August, 1999.

Roman Catholic Bishop of Fall River
Corporation Sole (Diocese of Fall River)

By: Sean O'Malley

COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS

BRISTOL, SS.

AUGUST 18, 1999

Then personally appeared the above named Sean O'Malley, of pm, cop.
and acknowledged the foregoing instrument to be his free act and deed, before me.

Lorraine J. Secor
Notary Public

My commission expires April 14, 2006



The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

William Francis Galvin, Secretary of the Commonwealth
Massachusetts Historical Commission

August 30, 1999

Ms. Carol Shull
Keeper, National Register of
Historic Places
National Park Service
Mail Stop 2280, Suite 400
1849 C St., N.W.
Washington, DC 20240

99-1116

8/14/99

Re: Assonet (MA) National Register Historic District objection

Dear Ms. Shull:

Enclosed is an objection for property within the Assonet NR Historic District, Freetown, MA. This nomination was sent to Washington in July and is currently pending before the National Register staff. Although the objection was received at the Massachusetts Historical Commission after the nomination was approved at the state level, and after the nomination was sent to Washington, we are sending the objection to your office so that it may be included in the district's file.

Of the three properties mentioned in the letter, only St. Bernard's Parish lies within a proposed National Register district. The other two properties are not located within the proposed East Freetown district, also pending with the National Register.

Thank you for your attention in this matter.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Philip Bergen".

Philip Bergen
National Register Assistant
Massachusetts Historical Commission

enclosure