

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 of eligibility for individual properties or 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 an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories listed in 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 Nathan C. Aldrich House & Resthaven Chapel

other names/site number _____

2. Location

street & number 111 Providence Street

☐ not for publication

city or town Mendon

☐ vicinity

state Massachusetts

code MA

county Worcester

code 027

zip code 01756

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I certify that this ☒ nomination ☐ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property ☒ meets ☐ does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant ☐ nationally ☒ statewide ☒ locally. ☐ See continuation sheet for additional comments.

Brona Simon

April 4, 2006

Signature of certifying official/Title Brona Simon Deputy SHPO, MHC

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 H. Beall *5.17.06*

Nathan C. Aldrich House & Resthaven Chapel

Name of Property

Worcester County, Mass.

County and State

5. Classification**Ownership of Property**

(Check as many boxes as apply)

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

Category of Property

(Check only one box)

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

Number of Resources within Property

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

Contributing	Noncontributing	
4	0	buildings
0	0	sites
2	1	structures
0	0	objects
6	1	Total

Name of related multiple property listing

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

N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

none

6. Function or Use**Historic Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC, single dwelling

DOMESTIC, camp

EDUCATION, school

EDUCATION, education-related

RELIGION, religious facility

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC, single dwelling

7. Description**Architectural Classification**

(Enter categories from instructions)

MID-19TH CENTURY, Greek RevivalLATE 19TH & 20TH CENTURY REVIVALS,

Late Gothic Revival

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation STONE, granite

walls STONE, granite

WOOD, weatherboard

roof ASPHALT

other BRICK

WOOD, shingle

Narrative Description

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

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National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Nathan C. Aldrich House & Resthaven Chapel
Mendon, Worcester County, Massachusetts

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7. Narrative Description

LOCATION & SETTING

The Nathan Aldrich House and Resthaven Chapel are located at 111 Providence Street about 1½ miles south of Mendon Center in the town of Mendon, Worcester County, Massachusetts. Mendon is situated in the southeast corner of Worcester County, abutting the towns of Hopedale and Bellingham in Norfolk County on the east, Blackstone and Millville on the south, which are against the State of Rhode Island, and Uxbridge, Northbridge and Upton on the west and north. (All these towns were divided from the early Colonial-period Town of Mendon, established in 1670.) Providence Street becomes Blackstone Street once it enters the town of that name, and terminates at the industrial village also named Blackstone. This route linked Mendon Center with the industrial centers in the Blackstone River Valley in both Massachusetts and Rhode Island. It also was a route by which Quakers in Mendon, such as Nathan Aldrich and his forebears, traveled to other meetings in the orbit of the Smithfield, Rhode Island, Quarterly Meeting of the Society of Friends.

Providence Road paralleled the west side of the Mill River, which was improved for small rural mills along its route to meet the Blackstone River in Woonsocket, Rhode Island. Hills of 100 to 150 feet of elevation on either side drain into the Mill River. Nathan Aldrich's farm included one of its principal tributaries, Spring Brook, and his family had reputedly established a small mill on this waterway east of the road. Large farms, such as the 130-acre parcel originally associated with the Nathan Aldrich House, were spaced along the road. Mendon remained the agricultural center for the area, even after the southern part of the town separated in 1845 and organized as the Town of Blackstone. The loss of its piece of the Blackstone River Valley industry severely diminished Mendon's prosperity and it was slow to develop or change afterwards. When Catherine Regina Seabury purchased the property in 1892, the farm and its rural environment was intact, although the local agricultural economy had been in a depressed state for many years. It would not be until after Seabury's death in 1929 that the town began experiencing suburban development pressure. Joseph I Ashkins, a Milford physician, subdivided the property in 1974, leaving the Nathan Aldrich House and Resthaven Chapel on its present 4.90-acre parcel.

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The nominated parcel currently enjoys a rural suburban setting. The house is prominently sited on a knoll and set back from the west side of Providence Street. (PHOTO 1) The Spring Brook, which has cut a deep gorge through the north side of the lot, provides a natural, wooded buffer from housing subdivisions on the north and west. Neighboring houses are visible on the south side of the property, where Ashkins platted a subdivision in 1974, and on the east side of Providence Road. Increased development along this route has resulted in the road becoming more of a highway. The road frontage of the nominated property is distinguished by a stone wall constructed of large granite rocks; massive, square gateposts demarcate the entrance. Large rock outcroppings are conspicuous north of the house. A small, stone chapel is sited at the rear of the yard at the edge of the plateau carved out by the Spring Brook. It was built in two phases during the period Catherine Regina Seabury operated a retreat for Boston working girls and later a female academy. A storage shed from that period is also extant along the south side at the rear of the property. Barns and other agricultural outbuildings associated with the farm no longer exist. The barn's location is evident south of the house where parts of the stone foundation remain in place. The house, chapel, shed, and a pump house on the brook's bank west of the chapel are contributing buildings; the stone wall along the street and the stone barn foundation are contributing structures (6 contributing features). An in-ground swimming pool in the lawn north of the house is the only non-historic feature on the property (1 non-contributing structure). A spacious lawn with mature trees and plantings provides an adequate setting for the appreciation of the design of the house and chapel, and the property's historical significance in the surrounding landscape.

NATHAN ALDRICH HOUSE – EXTERIOR

The exact date is unknown, but design features in the Nathan Aldrich House suggest that it was designed in the Greek Revival period, or ca. 1830. The original house comprised three telescoping sections with a large, two-story, gable-roof granite dwelling anchoring the east end; a two-story, gable-roof wood-frame kitchen ell attached to west end of the stone structure; and a 1½-story, gable-roof, wood-frame carriage shed terminating the west end of the complex. (PHOTO 2) The form, configuration and materials of this house remain intact with the exception of the carriage shed having been enclosed and elevated to two stories and dormers added to roofs. A non-historic one-story, gable-roof, wood-frame two-stall garage has been attached to the west end of the former carriage shed by a short breezeway.

Main House

The stone section of the house is constructed of locally-quarried stone faced with dressed granite blocks,

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or ashlar. It is capped by a low-pitched gable roof with box gutters that overhang the north and south sides. A narrow wood cornice distinguishes the roof edge, which returns a short distance on the ends where it meets a similar treatment of the raking roof edge. The box gutter has been roofed over and seamless metal gutters and downspouts have been installed on the building. The stone wall extends up into the gable space on the east end facing the road, while the west gable is framed with wood shingles. (PHOTOS 1 & 4) The roof surface is covered with black asphalt shingles. Two tall brick chimneys are located at each end, and a fifth chimney was added later near the center of the house.

The five-bay principal façade is oriented towards the south. A central entrance, framed by side lights and a transom, is recessed in a wide opening spanned by a large stone lintel. The door is original. (PHOTO 3) A granite slab forms a landing in front of the door, and the present stone steps and platform are replacements of what was probably a similar structure constructed of wood. There does not appear to have been any kind of roof or canopy over the entrance. There are two windows on each side of the entrance, and five on the second story spaced directly above the lower openings. (PHOTO 2) All the windows have large ashlar lintels and protruding granite sills. Six-over-six sash are set within thick wood frames. The center window on the second story is not distinguishable from the others; that is, it is not elaborated to enhance the entrance bay. There are holes on either side of the windows that were drilled for shutter dogs. The façade is symmetrical although the center three bays have a wider spacing than the outer two bays. Three gable roof dormers were added to the roof when bedrooms were partitioned in the attic in ca. 1912. They are not aligned with the windows in the lower wall and disturb the otherwise strict regularity of the house. The east-facing gable end is oriented to the road and contains two stories of four evenly-spaced windows, as well as a pair in the attic. (PHOTO 1) The six-over-six sash are in wood frames and have stone openings that are the same as those on the front (south) side. Holes for shutter dogs are present near all the windows. This orderly façade, with its precise stone masonry, numerous windows, thin, raking cornice and prominent pair of chimneys, combines with the front to present a large and imposing object to the public view.

The rear (north) façade of the house is not visible from the street and lacks the organization of the principal sides. (PHOTO 4) A central door is flanked by two window bays on both stories that are vertically aligned but not evenly spaced horizontally. Their placement responds to interior spaces rather than exterior balance. The windows and their openings are constructed in the same manner as those on the other sides of the house. Holes for shutter dogs are present as well as holes where a wood porch covering the rear door and passage window was attached to the stone wall. There are three ca. 1912 dormers in the roof on this side, as well as a seamless metal gutter with downspouts at the roof's edge.

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The stone portions of the west wall return to terminate at the wood-frame walls of the kitchen ell. The kitchen wing is about half the width of the stone house, and it is centrally placed on the west wall exposing roughly six feet of stone wall on either side. There are no openings in these walls except for a basement entry on the south side. The granite steps and wing walls of this entry are concealed under a hatch in the porch spanning the front (south) façade of the kitchen ell. (PHOTO 2) This is an original feature. Unlike the east, street façade, the wall within the gable end of the west façade is constructed with a wood frame and covered with wood shingles. The shingles appear to be a 20th-century material; this wall was likely covered with wood clapboards originally. Like the opposing facade, the west gable end contains two windows. (PHOTO 4)

Kitchen Ell

The kitchen ell represents what is now the eastern half of the wood frame extension on the west side of the stone house. It was a small, squarish, two-story gable roof appendage with a chimney at its western end. (PHOTOS 2 & 4) The fenestration on both the north and south sides of the ell appear to be original; that is, three bays with a central doorway on the ground floor and two window bays on the second floor. A second-story window on the south side was altered into a door in ca. 1912; there was likely a deck and railing above the porch roof at this time that has since been removed. The wood shingle siding is a 20th-century material that likely replaced wood clapboards as was done in the west gable end of the main house. The dimensions of the porch seem to be appropriate to the construction of the house, and it is possible that there was a similar porch on the north side as well. A stone terrace of greater area was constructed in this location in the 1940s. The low-pitch gable roof has narrower eaves than the stone portion of the house, and decoration is minimal. A low shed dormer was added to the roof on the south side, although it illuminates an uninhabited area of the attic.

A section of nearly identical size is located west of the old kitchen. (PHOTOS 2 & 4) Originally, this was a 1½-story utility building that contained a wagon house on the west end and a wood shed and kitchen workspace between the wagon shed and the kitchen. Sometime in the early 20th century, the building was raised to the same level as the kitchen and renovated for more contemporary uses. It contains two second-story windows similar to the kitchen, but the ground story has been more recently altered with the addition of a three-sided bay window on the north side and replacement windows and entry on the north side. A two-stall garage was added around 1943.

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NATHAN ALDRICH HOUSE – INTERIOR

The interior of the house was organized around a wide central passage with pairs of rooms of relatively equal size on either side. Later changes to the room plan have obscured the original relationships, but it appears that the two rooms on the east side of the passage functioned as parlors, perhaps connected by a wide doorway. The front (south) parlor would have had four windows and access to the front of the passage; the rear parlor would have had three windows and been secondary. Both rooms would have been heated by stoves venting to chimneys between the windows constructed within the east exterior stone wall. (PHOTO 5) The front room on the west side of the house was likely the dining room, and it connected to the kitchen ell via a pantry where there once were stairs to the kitchen garret. It, too, may have been heated by a stove, although there is evidence of a small hearth at the extreme south end of the west wall where the stone exterior made a short return. The rear room on the west side of the passage also has a small fireplace with a trabeated Grecian mantel. (PHOTO 6) This room probably functioned as a bed chamber. The front of the passage is essentially intact with the entrance architrave and stair with its turned mahogany newel post still in place. (PHOTO 7) Most of the original interior door and window trim is intact on the west side of the passage with flat edge boards and plain corner blocks. The passage and east room display wide, multi-stage moldings with rounded elements uncharacteristic of conventional angular Grecian surrounds, which suggests they were added later in the 1890s. Window sash and many of the doors also appear to have been replaced at this time.

Originally, the second story rooms would have been in the same plan as those on the ground level, although they were also later reconfigured. Basement and attic spaces were uninhabited and unpartitioned when the house was built. The kitchen was located in the first stage of the wood frame ell on the west end of the house, and it had a cooking fireplace on its west end that was later modified when the space was converted into a dining room. Windows and doors on the north and south sides have simple board surrounds reflecting the modest decoration of the former work space. The present kitchen and laundry section of the ell west of the kitchen are located in what were likely a wood shed and wagon house in the beginning. A half-story above the kitchen would have contained one or more bed chambers for servants. The shed section was only one-story tall.

In this way, the interior plan of the Nathan Aldrich House was conceived in a usual manner of a traditional farmhouse of the rural elite. It was a substantial stone house with a double parlor and dining room that indicates a social standing that included entertaining and a genteel lifestyle. The building was progressive in its use of stove heating and stylish woodwork.

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Alterations, 1892 – ca. 1912

Catherine Regina Seabury purchased the house and property in 1892 and used it as a country retreat for her family and working women from Boston. It seems that shortly after acquiring it, the wagon house/wood shed was elevated to two stories converted into a ground-floor kitchen with a bed chamber above. The room that formerly functioned as the kitchen was converted into a dining room, and the cooking fireplace was made smaller and ornamented with a mantelpiece designed in a Craftsman style. (PHOTO 8) Windows sash and trim were updated through most of the house.

When Seabury opened a female boarding school in the house in 1912 in the house the attic was partitioned into eight small bed chambers and one bathroom arranged on either side of a narrow corridor that runs along the ridge of the main portion of the house. Existing windows on the east and west walls of the house were utilized and six dormers – three on each side of the roof – were added. The rooms are plastered and wallpapered. The presence of the bathroom indicates that plumbing was introduced into the house at this time. New stairs were constructed to the attic from the second-story stair hall. A doorway connects the attic of the main house with a low attic above the kitchen ell. This space is unfinished, but a low shed dormer was apparently added during Seabury's ownership to light the space and ornament the exterior.

Other changes may have included removing the partition between the rooms on the east side of the main floor of the house. The large open space and the run of four windows on the east exterior wall give the suggestion of a classroom space. The present bathroom on the second story at the head of the stairs may have also been created during Seabury's tenure in the house. However, if she had directed these and other alterations to the interior of the house, they have been obliterated by the changes made by the next owner.

Alterations, after 1943

Joseph I. Ashkins, a physician from nearby Milford, purchased the property from Catherine Regina Seabury's heir in 1943. He proceeded to renovate the interior of the house to modernize its services and bring it up to date with contemporary country house interior design. Wendell T. Phillips, a prominent Milford architect, developed plans for the renovation. They document that the interior of the house is essentially intact to this period. (Copies of these drawings are included in the supporting documentation.)

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The main floor may have already been altered by the removal of the supposed partition wall between the parlors on the east side of the passage to create classroom space in ca. 1912, yet Phillips's plans indicate that the present living room, with the addition of a wood-burning fireplace built out in the center of the west wall of the 15' x 30' space were part of Ashkins's renovation work. (PHOTO 9) The architect designed a Federal-style wood mantel to surround the firebox. Historic wall, ceiling, and floor materials were preserved, including woodwork, with the exception of the addition of glazed French doors in the connection to the rear hall. All evidence of the original stove heating system has been removed. A large 13' x 17' library was created in the front on the west side of the passage, taking part of the rear room, the remains of which were altered into a rear hall connecting to the kitchen ell and a lavatory. In the library, bookshelves were constructed on the east and west walls; the former pantry connector to the kitchen was enclosed as a large closet on the west side of the room. The plans show that the architect intended that the doorway from the front of the passage be closed off and that access to the room be limited to a wide doorway from the hall behind it. However, this change was not implemented and the historic doorway remains in place. A small stove hearth is located at the south end of the west wall in the library, in the short return of the stone exterior wall on that side of the house. This feature is not shown on the architect's renovation plans. A bookcase is delineated in its place. The fireplace on the north side of the house was retained in a small alcove created as a buffer for the entrance to the lavatory. A partition dividing the center passage was removed to create an open hallway across the entire breadth of the house and provided a connection with the cross-passage connecting to the dining room.

The plan of second-story rooms essentially matched that on the first to the extent that a large master chamber suite was created across the entire east end house with two smaller bed chambers on the west side of the upstairs hall. (FIG. 2) A full bathroom was constructed on the north end of the hall, which may have simply upgraded a bathroom Seabury had installed earlier. It abutted a master bath in the north end of the master suite, which was augmented by clothes closets. The chambers on the west side of the hall were of nearly equal size and divided by a narrow hallway connecting with the upper level of the wood frame ell. Historic woodwork was preserved on existing walls and replicated in new door openings. No alterations were made to the attic rooms and based on their appearance; they were not inhabited by the Ashkins or by subsequent owners.

The Seabury dining room in the wood frame kitchen ell was preserved but painted white to give the room a Colonial Revival appearance. Two arched doorways, one leading to the rear hall and one framing a recessed cupboard with glazed doors adjacent to the fireplace contribute to the theme.

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(PHOTO 8) The cupboard is not depicted on the architect's plans, however. The new kitchen space created by Seabury was updated in the 1943 renovation, but it has been further changed by subsequent owners. The ca. 1943 plans include the addition of the two-car garage presently appended to the west end of the building. In the second story, a guest chamber was created above the dining room with the hall turning from its exit from the main house to follow along the north exterior wall. A maid's quarters with a full bath room was positioned over the kitchen. From there, stairs descended to work spaces in the west end of the ell. The household linen closet was located in the maid's quarters at the head of the service stairs and conveniently above the laundry.

A stone terrace outside of the north side of the dining room was marked as existing on the ca. 1943 plans suggesting that this feature, which continues to exist, was added by Seabury when the old kitchen was converted into a dining room. It appears that a porch spanning the door and window in the rear hall of the main house was also present when the plans were drawn. This feature has been removed completely.

Alterations, 1974 and after

There have been five separate owners since the Ashkins subdivided the farm and sold the house and 4.90 acres in 1974. The renovations made by the Ashkins were significant and durable enough that few changes have been made in the ensuing 30 years. Room installations and finishes designed in ca. 1943 have been remarkably preserved, including bathroom fixtures. One modification that can be noted is that the kitchen was refitted, most lately in 1996, and bay window added to create an eating nook on the north side of the room. A partition that enclosed a service hall at the west end of the kitchen was removed, opening the stairs to the enlarged kitchen space. The existing windows and door on the south side of the kitchen vary from those indicated on Wendell T. Phillips' plans, which show a paired window unit over the kitchen sink and a door entering a vestibule. There is now a single window over the sink and another window paired with the entrance where a closet has been removed to allow for an interior connection to the garage.

One other conspicuous alteration can be identified. There is a glazed door located on the second story of the south façade of the wood frame ell above the roof of the porch located there. It does not appear on the architect's plan, and without a deck for exterior access it is difficult to explain this alteration. It may remain from the Seabury era and was not indicated, or changed as planned, in the drawings. It may be an alteration by a subsequent owner that was completed as intended.

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RESTHAVEN CHAPEL

The chapel was built in two sections, a rectangular one-story, gable-roof section approximately 16 feet long and 12 feet wide built in 1899, and an extension to the chapel along with a square, pyramidal-roof tower section approximately 12 feet on a side that was added in ca. 1912. (PHOTOS 10, 11 & 13) In both cases, the exterior walls were constructed of sizeable stones collected from old farm walls on the property. The first section is composed of rounded granite stones with larger dressed stones at the corners; the addition is composed of roughly dressed granite stones. There is a basement under the first phase of the building. The original building contained two square windows on its side elevations, each with diamond lights in wooden frames. These windows are located on the western end of the existing building (PHOTOS 10 & 11) A hatchway encloses the basement entrance on the northwesterly side of this section. The roof overhangs the side and end walls with the rafter ends exposed on the exterior. Originally covered with wood shingles, the roofing material is now asphalt shingles. The addition was designed to enlarge the chapel interior a few feet and add a squat tower form with parapet walls and corner piers. (PHOTOS 11 & 13) The pier in the westerly corner coincides with a brick chimney that vented a furnace located in the basement of the chapel. Pairs of diamond-light windows in wooden frames are centrally placed on the side elevations. A doorway is centered in the façade on the northeasterly end of the tower. It is flanked by small windows. The openings have large stone headers with the door header pointed and the window headers flat. The façade is distinguished by a crude bell cote in the parapet that contains a small bell. The door is constructed with vertical boards and is embellished with decorative straps meant to appear as old-fashioned hinges. The roof of this section is also covered with asphalt shingles that replaced an original wood shingles. A cross is attached to the apex of the pyramidal roof.

The interior of the chapel is divided into two spaces consistent with the phasing of the construction. There is no dividing wall between them. (PHOTO 12) The interiors of the stone walls have been whitewashed. In both sections, the rafters and roof deck are exposed on the interior and finished as a ceiling. Narrow, tongue-and-groove boards create the floor. The wood ceiling and windows are stained dark in contrast to the light walls; the floor has been painted. The chimney is visible on the northwesterly side of the interior where the chapel and the tower sections are joined. Brass sconces and hymn boards are mounted between the windows on the side walls of the original section. The sconces were made to hold candles as there is no electrical service in the building. Many of the original furnishings survive in the chapel including an altar table lectern and kneelers that were installed in 1899 and benches that were purchased for the addition.

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The chapel is a significant component of the property and its association with Catherine Regina Seabury and her religious and social work.

SHED

The shed is a small, wood-frame, gable roof shed with wood shingle siding and asphalt roofing located in the southwest corner of the property. (PHOTO 14) It appears to remain from the Seabury era when it functioned as a garage. There are two vehicle stalls that were entered from doors on the north side. The construction date of the shed is within the period of significance, and it is a contributing building.

PUMP HOUSE

The pump house is a small, stone- and wood-frame building embedded at the edge of the ravine of the Spring Brook, which forms the west and north bounds of the nominated property. (PHOTO 15) Wood shingles cover the exposed section of wood frame walls and roof. A brick chimney protrudes above the south end of the roof and presumably vented a pump engine within. This building is no longer used and is in a state of decay; however, it still contributes to the significance of the property as a component of the Seabury era.

STONE WALL

The stone wall that distinguishes the property line where it meets Providence Street is a distinctive component of the property. (PHOTO 1) Erected during the period the Aldrich family established the farm and constructed the house, it is a contributing structure.

SWIMMING POOL

An in-ground swimming pool was constructed at the edge of the yard on the north side of the house in the 1980s. It is a noncontributing structure.

Archaeological Description

While no ancient Native American sites are known on the Aldrich House property, sites may be present. Four sites are located in the general area; all on terraces bordering the Mill River or its tributary streams. Environmental characteristics of the property represent locational criteria (slope, soil drainage, proximity to wetlands) that are favorable for the presence of ancient sites. The nominated property contains several

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well-drained knolls and terraced landforms located within 1,000 feet of wetlands. Spring Brook drains northeasterly through the property to its confluence with Muddy Brook and the Mill River. The area lies within the Blackstone River drainage. A large rock outcropping reported north of the house may also indicate the presence of a windbreak type site. Given the above information and the size of the parcel (4.90 acres), a high potential exists for locating ancient Native American resources on the nominated property.

A high potential also exists for locating historic archaeological resources on the Aldrich House and Resthaven Chapel property. Structural evidence may survive from barns and outbuildings associated with domestic and agricultural use of the farm. Archaeological survey may identify evidence of quarrying activities present on the farm. A club house, built for the Seabury School, is also reported on the property. None of these buildings exist today. A stone barn foundation is visible south of the house. Structural evidence and archaeological features may also exist from the original construction and later renovations to the house and chapel. Occupational related features (trash pits, privies, wells) should also exist on the property associated with domestic use of the farmhouse, the Seabury female boarding school and agricultural use of the property.

(end)

Nathan C. Aldrich House & Resthaven Chapel

Name of Property

Worcester County, Mass.

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 a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- ☐ **B** removed from its original location.
- ☐ **C** a birthplace or grave.
- ☐ **D** a cemetery.
- ☐ **E** a reconstructed building, object or structure.
- ☐ **F** a commemorative property.
- ☐ **G** less than 50 years 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.)

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

ARCHITECTURE

SOCIAL HISTORY

Period of Significance

ca. 1830 – 1956

Significant Dates

ca. 1830 approx. construction date

1899-1900 Resthaven Chapel built

ca. 1912 Parker addition

1943 Seabury family sells

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

Catherine Regina Seabury

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Gurdon Saltonstall Parker

Wendell Phillips

9. Major Bibliographical References**Bibliography**

(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
N/A
- ☐ recorded by Historic American Engineering
Record # N/A

Primary location of additional data

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

Name of repository:

Taft Memorial Library, Mendon, Mass.

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8. Narrative Statement of Significance

The Nathan Aldrich House is architecturally significant under Criterion C as a distinctive example of a farmhouse built in the Greek Revival-style in the Town of Mendon. It is also historically significant under Criteria A and B for its association with significant events that shaped the town and with Catherine Regina Seabury, who used the property to the benefit of working girls in Boston. Constructed ca. 1830 with dressed granite masonry walls, the house is notable among town's distinguished collection of early 19th-century public and domestic architecture. Retaining integrity of location, design, setting, feeling, materials, workmanship, and association, this property is significant on the local and state levels.

Nathan Aldrich was a Quaker, and the restrained design and ornamentation of the house aptly reflects the Friends' principle of plainness, in spite of its large proportions and commodious interior spaces. Located outside and south of Mendon Center, the property is a prominent indication of rural development in the town during its economic heyday as agricultural improvements and industrial development in the Blackstone Valley combined to create a remarkable, if short-lived, period of architectural expression. The Nathan Aldrich House is also an important landmark of the presence of the Society of Friends in the region and their contribution to the history of Mendon and the Blackstone Valley. Alterations made to the house and property in the late 19th and early 20th centuries during the ownership of Catherine Regina Seabury are significant reflections of the transition that occurred on many old farms in Mendon, and elsewhere in the state, as the agricultural economy declined and city dwellers and industrial workers sought restorative retreats in the country, often the result of well-meaning philanthropists of privilege. In Seabury's case, it was especially noteworthy as she established a "rest haven" for female factory workers in Boston who were otherwise unable to afford the luxury. Daughter of an Episcopal rector of a Manhattan church and great-granddaughter of Samuel Seabury, who was appointed the first Bishop of the American Episcopal Church in 1789, Catherine Regina Seabury created the Women's Mutual Improvement Society in East Cambridge in 1889. Following a prolonged search for a suitable location for a summer retreat, she purchased Nathan Aldrich's Mendon farm in 1892. Seabury and her family resided in the stone house, while a "club house" (demolished in the 1960s) was constructed for her philanthropic charges. A devout churchwoman, she directed the construction of the Resthaven Chapel in 1899-1900 using plans commissioned of her nephew, Gurdon Saltonstall Parker. The novice architect designed an addition that was constructed around 1912, the year Miss Seabury opened a school for girls in the stone house. The house was altered to accommodate the school with the addition of attic bed chambers and dormers for them. The school was not successful, although Catherine Regina Seabury endeavored to keep her mission going until her death in 1929. Her heir failed in making the property into a church retreat and finally sold the Aldrich farm in 1943 to Joseph I. Ashkins, a local physician. Ashkins hired Milford architect Wendell T. Phillips to design the

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renovation of the interior of the stone house in a 20th-century country house taste. In 1974, the owner received approval for a 23-lot subdivision of the farm, which left the house on its present 4.9-acre parcel. None of Nathan Aldrich's farm buildings exist and few features remain from the Seabury era; however the house and chapel survive as key architectural elements of events that shaped the Town of Mendon's history.

Historical Overview

Mendon was one of the first towns created in Worcester County. On October 16, 1660, the General Court granted the Town of Braintree the privilege to establish a plantation eight miles square, and three years later, after thirteen proprietors from Braintree and ten from Weymouth, together with their minister, were presented to the Court, a settlement was planted in an area known as Quinshepaug.¹ The original boundaries of the town included all or portions of the present towns of Uxbridge, Northbridge, Upton, Milford, Bellingham, Blackstone and Millville. Because of this, Mendon has become known as the "Mother of Towns." The town's original center remains within its bounds. Its site was determined by the construction of the first meetinghouse there in 1669.

The proprietors distributed land in a manner consistent with the prevailing patterns in Massachusetts. The deed between the Nipmucks and Moses Paine and Peter Brackett, who representing the proprietors, was conveyed to the selectmen of Mendon for the use of the inhabitants on December 12, 1670. Proprietors received grants of 150 acres for each 100 Pounds of personal estate value. In the first division, each grant was divided into a thirty-acre house lot parcel, five acres of swamp, ten acres of meadow and 105 acres in the "Great Lott" or common land.² About 34 families established homesteads spread out along a five-mile stretch of road extending from the Mill River northwest to the Upton town line, or what are presently Providence and Main Streets and North Avenue.³

Mendon's first Quaker meeting was organized in 1729. The Society of Friends built a meetinghouse on what is now George Street in the vicinity of Quaker families who had settled there. It was a Preparative Meeting for the Monthly Meeting in Smithfield, Rhode Island. In 1757 twenty-six Quaker families were listed as living in Mendon. The Friends' Burying Ground on George Street remains to mark the site.⁴

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¹ John G. Metcalf, "Mendon," in History of Worcester County, vol. II. (Boston: C.F. Jewett, 1879), 42.

² Metcalf (1879), 43.

³ "Mendon Historic Resources Survey Narrative History," Massachusetts Historical Commission, 21.

⁴ Peter Hackett, "An Historical Account of Mendon, Massachusetts." Mendon, Massachusetts, 1667-1967, Mother of Municipalities. (Mendon Historical Society, 1967), 44.

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Assessors were elected for the first time in 1694, and the first pound and stocks were built for restraining rule-breaking men or beasts, respectively. The principal official town activity was fence viewing, indicating that crop areas and the number of livestock were increasing. By 1703, there were seventy names on the Mendon tax list.⁵ No evidence of the homes and farm buildings of these people have survived, although the open landscape around the Muddy Brook north, east, and south of the center have been in agricultural uses since that time. The selectmen were active in other municipal matters, and town reports in this era record numerous civic improvements. The local road system was expanding linking the multiplying number of farms to the center. Before the end of the 17th century, a radial network of highways extended from the center west to Uxbridge (Hastings Street), east to Milford (George Street) and Bellingham (Thayer Road), and south to Blackstone (Providence and Blackstone streets) and Millville (Millville Road).

The Massachusetts General Court directed the towns in 1764 take an exact census of "dwelling houses, families and people, including as well as Indians civilized, Negroes and Mulattos." At that time 336 families comprised of 907 white males, 922 white females, resided in 184 houses. In addition, there were five Negro or Mulatto males and four Negro or Mulatto females. No Indians were counted, but a total of five French Neutrals or Acadians were recorded.⁶ As the 18th century came to a close, the Town of Mendon was completely settled in a pattern of farms spreading in all directions from the center. Population in the town, even with the loss of Milford, would have been around 2,000 persons.

In 1800 a portion of the Ninth (Hartford-to-Boston) Turnpike was opened in Mendon following a route along the present roads of Hartford Avenue West, Uxbridge Street, Maple Street, Main Street, George Street, Neck Hill Road, and Hartford Avenue East. By this time, the north-south route through the center (Providence and Main streets and North Avenue) had emerged as an important regional highway linking Providence and Worcester. The new road routing was part of a transformation that conveyed Mendon Center from its 18th-century landscape of dispersed farms loosely arranged around the meetinghouse to a modern commercial village. Many rural towns in Massachusetts were experiencing the same changes as local farm and commercial economies became part of broader regional networks. New state and local governments provided the framework for this network and new transportation routes, such as turnpikes and canals, improved interregional trade and communication. Mendon Center never developed into a central place in its region like Uxbridge or Milford did; however, it grew significantly in size, density and commercial function. The early decades of the 19th century were the years where Mendon reached its peak population, its widest range of activities, its greatest prosperity, and the fullest extent of architectural development. Whatever Colonial-era buildings were left at this point were replaced.

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⁵ Metcalf (1879), 45.

⁶ Hackett, 47.

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Clearly, the most significant architectural development that occurred in the town during the Federal Period was the construction of the Second Unitarian Church in Mendon Center. The church cost \$6460 to build, which was satisfied by the subscriptions of 43 members.⁷ The monumental rectangular building with its Tuscan portico and three-stage tower topped by a steeple was designed by Worcester-based church architect Elias Carter. (The steeple was reproduced in 1936 after being destroyed by a lightning fire.) The white clapboard church signaled a certain prominence for the town and positioned it with the other ambitious communities in the region that were emerging from the rural quietude of the previous century. This was especially dramatic in Mendon where a primitive meetinghouse nearly a century old was replaced with this impressive new landmark. The Quaker Meetinghouse on George Street was still active in this period and functioned until 1841. It was removed shortly after. It is unlikely that this was the original building constructed when the Society of Friends organized the meeting in 1729. The Friends had experienced internal divisions as well, with Hicksite and Orthodox Quakers separating in 1828.

The early introduction of water-powered machinery for the processing of wool and the weaving of fabric in the Blackstone Valley put the Mendon villages of Blackstone and Millville on the map. Esek Pitts opened one of New England's earliest woolen mills in Millville in 1814, opening a thriving industrial era in the region. Textile manufacturing enterprises multiplied. Labor forces grew rapidly and financial investment, banking and real estate speculation brought new personalities and venture capital into the town. Well-established farms, some still occupied by their founding families, prospered as improved transportation, notably the Blackstone Canal (1828), opened up new markets. A gradual shift was made from the traditional farming practices of the eighteenth century, which heavily favored beef production, to dairy and orchard products. Growing industrial village populations relied on fresh milk, poultry and garden products, and canal mules and other work animals required increasing amounts of hay.

Large, lavish houses were built in the center as well as on farms along the fertile intervalle along the Mill River. Mendon Center's plan is a significant representation of the New England village or town center as it developed in the Federal Period.⁸ As was the case in hundreds of other New England towns, the final transformation of Mendon Center into a New England village did not fully occur until 1820 when the forces of changing transportation routes, expanding economies, and town-building fervor combined to relegate the colonial idea of the town center to antiquity. Many examples of this fashionable new architecture survive in Mendon in a wide range of types including elite mansions, laborers' cottages, stores, offices, and churches in the center and substantial farmhouses and farm buildings in rural sections along North Avenue and Providence Road.

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⁷ Hackett, 51.

⁸ Joseph S. Wood and Michael Steinitz. *The New England Village*. (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins UP, 1997), 88-134.

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In 1845 a large, two-story public meeting hall was constructed at the main intersection in Mendon Center. Named Harrison Hall after the late president, William Henry Harrison, who had died in office in 1841, its design is credited to Dr. John G. Metcalf, a visionary local leader. Shortly after the long, rectangular building with a two-story Doric portico was built, the town voted to buy it and put it to the shared use of a town hall and school. This prominent public landmark illustrates the emergence of the Greek Revival style in Mendon, yet it also represents the end of the town's prosperous and optimistic era.

During the deliberations over moving the town hall, Mendon's selectmen were also grappling with the controversial issue of Blackstone's separation from the town. Having rejected requests for years, Mendon's leaders finally relented, and the Town of Blackstone was created in 1845. Because of the tremendous economic development in the industrial villages along the Blackstone River, the loss of Blackstone had repercussions more serious than earlier separations from mother Mendon. The town's personal and real estate valuations plummeted. Blackstone comprised nearly 60% of the town's real estate value and over 70% of its personal estate. Positioned in the center of three prospering industrial towns: Uxbridge, Milford and Blackstone, Mendon was reduced to a secondary status among them where it remained until it became fashionable to live in the country many, many years later.

Farming sustained a modest local economy, but little occurred that was reflected in the physical development of the community. There is a significant gap in the town's architectural catalog for the last half of the 19th century, and it coincides with this period when Mendon reverted to being an isolated rural frontier once more. During this same period, eastern Massachusetts transformed from a rural landscape to an urban-industrial one. Substandard fertility of farmland combined with the industrial revolution to create a place where manufacturing mills were erected everywhere, even on even marginal waterways. Factory jobs were plentiful for new immigrants and country refugees alike. The farm economy was no longer the dominant factor in the livelihood of the Commonwealth or the New England region. Industrial villages and cities grew and prospered, even though thousands of workers lived in squalor and had little job security. In a way, Mendon was saved from even greater disappointments experienced in Blackstone, Uxbridge and Milford, as factories ran through repeating boom and bust cycles that kept their communities in constant turmoil. Wendell Williams said of Mendon at the end of the 19th century, "I can't think of but one house erected in the village during the twenty-five years of my residence there."⁹ People from other towns could hardly point to houses in their communities that remained from that period.

As these neighboring towns evolved from small, traditional rural communities to industrial villages,

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⁹ Ibid.

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they transformed in ways that soon obliterated any connection to a tangible past and a pastoral environment. Suddenly, Mendon became that unspoiled place where there was open space, picturesque landscape, fresh air, cool temperatures, and a quiet existence. All the people who had rejected the country for the promise of the city now regarded the country with nostalgia. They began returning to Mendon as summer visitors, and the town developed renown as a rural retreat. The venerable farms and their bucolic setting attracted summer boarders seeking respite from the industrialized towns nearby.

Nathan C. Aldrich

Nathan C. Aldrich (1799-1866) was the fifth generation of his family to reside in Mendon. The progenitor of the clan was George Aldrich, one of the original proprietors of the town. Arriving in Massachusetts from Derbyshire, England, in 1631, George Aldrich was recorded as a freeman living in Dorchester in 1636 where he is believed to have been a tailor. He relocated to Braintree when granted land there in 1640. One of twelve Braintree proprietors of the plantation at Quinshepaug, which was later to be called Mendon, George Aldrich established a homestead there by 1663, and his family was among those returning there after King Philip's War. This property was adjacent to the old burying ground at the south end of Mendon Center. George Aldrich willed it to his youngest son, Jacob Aldrich, and when Jacob died in 1695, his widow, Huldah Thayer Aldrich, sold the estate to their son, Jacob, for 183 Pounds. The homestead was purchased by Rev. Caleb Alexander in 1786; more lately it has been incorporated into land owned by the Gaskill family.¹⁰ The old house no longer exists.

Jacob Aldrich's son Moses (1690-1761) joined the Society of Friends when he was 21 years of age, and was a founding member of the Mendon meeting in 1729. He was renowned as a preacher and spent 20 years proselytizing in other American colonies, traveling as far south as the Carolinas and Barbados. Moses also spent two years in the British Isles. He retired to Mendon and is listed among the 26 Friends residing in the town in 1757.¹¹ When he died in 1761, he was survived by his wife, Hannah White, and twelve children. His will indicates that he had amassed a large amount of real estate in Mendon along the Muddy Brook. He conveyed his homestead on the west side of the Muddy Brook to his son Luke, which included his dwelling house, barn, malt house and blacksmith shop, as well as a half-share in a grist mill and pond. His son Moses received land on the east side of the Muddy Brook with a dwelling house and tan yard. Five of Moses Aldrich's seven sons were provided with generous gifts of land. The will stated that a sixth son, Thomas, had already been given his full share "by learning," presumably meaning funds his father had expended on his education. Robert Aldrich only received 15 Pounds from his father's estate, which was to be paid to him by his brother Luke in compensation for land he was otherwise bequeathed. Why Robert was so conspicuously excluded from Moses Aldrich's will remains a mystery.

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¹⁰ Alvin James Aldrich, The George Aldrich Genealogy, 1605-1971 (privately published, 1971).

¹¹ Ibid.

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Robert Aldrich (1719-1794) was Nathan Comstock Aldrich's paternal grandfather. Born in Mendon, he married Patience Mann of Smithfield, Rhode Island. They were members of the Society of Friends and produced 11 children. They were living in Cumberland, Rhode Island when their son Luke was born in 1764. Luke Aldrich (1764-1814) married Sarah Comstock in 1788. She was born in West Wrentham, Massachusetts. Her maternal grandfather, Seth Arnold, had built the first mill in Woonsocket, Rhode Island in 1710. All these people and places were linked through the Society of Friends and the Smithfield Quarterly Meeting. At some point, Luke Aldrich relocated his family to his paternal town of Mendon.

Luke Aldrich died in 1814 at age 50 with four of his seven children still minors. He had provided farms for his three eldest sons, Luke, Jr., Anson, and Robert, who were only in their twenties. His will states that he had already conveyed a farm to his eldest son and namesake.¹² Luke, Jr. was 25 years of age and married. He was enumerated as a head of household in the 1810 U.S. Census with a wife, five children under the age of ten, and a free white female over 45 years of age, possibly his mother-in-law. Anson and Robert Aldrich were 23 and 20 years of age, respectively. Their father willed them "my Quinset Hill estate containing about 280 acres," which was southwest of his homestead in the vicinity of Round Meadow Brook.¹³ In return, the two brothers were instructed to pay \$1200 to their youngest brother Chiron when he reached adulthood. Nathan C. and Scammell Aldrich were willed "the farm on which I now live containing about 225 acres" as long as they provided for their mother's "rights of dower and power of thirds" for her lifetime and paid their sister, Sarah, and brother, Chiron, \$200 upon her death.¹⁴

The four youngest children likely continued to reside with their mother, Sarah Comstock Aldrich, in the homestead. Sarah, the only female child, was 18 years of age, followed by Nathan Comstock (15), Scammell (13), and Chiron (9). They evidently were still in their mothers' care when the 1820 U.S. Census enumerated two households headed by Luke Aldrich, although the elder was deceased. By the time the 1830 U.S. Census was published, Nathan C. Aldrich was the head of his own household, which contained three white males and four white females. He had married Dianna Comstock, daughter of George and Margaret (Lane) Comstock of Smithfield, Rhode Island and had settled on a farm south of the homestead that he purchased from his brother Luke.¹⁵ Scammell Aldrich remained on the homestead throughout his lifetime. Luke Aldrich, Jr. appears to have moved to a property on the Hartford-Boston Turnpike near the Uxbridge line. Census entries in 1830 suggest that their mother was residing with Luke, Jr. at that time. According to the Aldrich genealogy, Sarah Comstock Aldrich died in 1838.

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¹² Worcester County Deeds, book 193, page 445, 1 April 1814.

¹³ Will of Luke Aldrich. Metcalf's 1831 Map of Mendon identified a property with Anson Aldrich in this location.

¹⁴ Will of Luke Aldrich. The "rights of dower and power of thirds" refers to the item in the will where the deceased granted his wife, Sarah Comstock Aldrich, rights to one-third of his real estate and the privilege to occupy one-third of their house during her lifetime.

¹⁵ The George Aldrich Genealogy, 1605-1971. Dianna Comstock's grandfather, George Comstock (who resided in Mendon) and Nathan C. Aldrich's grandfather, Nathan Comstock, were brothers.

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Nathan Comstock Aldrich (1799-1866) resided on the farm, "by estimation 130 acres, more or less," he had purchased from his brother Luke Aldrich, Jr. on February 14, 1821 for the price of \$3,000.¹⁶ On the same day, Nathan conveyed to Luke, Jr. his one undivided half "of the farm whereon my late father Luke Aldrich lived and died. It being all the land and buildings devised to me [and brother Scammell Aldrich] by the last will and testament of the said Luke Aldrich, deceased."¹⁷ It was on this farm, about the time of the birth of his only child, Elizabeth in 1831, that he built a large and distinctive residence using dressed granite stones for its exterior walls.

Nathan C. Aldrich House

When completed ca. 1830, the massive stone house, and its 130-acre farm, reflected wealth and status of the highest degree in the Town of Mendon. Perhaps typical of Nathan C. Aldrich's association with the Society of Friends, his personal history appears to have been quiet, modest, and unrecorded. The situation is an elegant example of the Quaker paradox where successful Friends struggled to reconcile their material success with their principals of plain living. With no archival record of how Nathan C. Aldrich conducted his business and community affairs, his house is the only document of his mentality and lifestyle.

Stone farm houses are very rare in the region. The Aldrich house is one of three such buildings that are known to exist within the present confines of the Town of Mendon. It is by far the largest and most imposing of the three; the other two are smaller 1½-story dwellings.¹⁸ Stone architecture was more common in the mill villages in the Blackstone Valley between Worcester and Providence. Early textile mills were built of the stone in the late 18th and early 19th centuries, before brick became the preferred material. There are also examples of multiple-unit mill worker housing and commercial buildings constructed of stone. The mason who built Nathan C. Aldrich's house would have had to be familiar with stone architecture in the broader region. Many Friends were involved in manufacturing enterprises in the Blackstone Valley. (The Brown family in Providence, who financed much of the industrial and transportation development along the Blackstone, were Quakers. Nathan's mother's grandfather, Seth Arnold, is said to have built the first mill in Woonsocket, R.I. in 1710.) The tight-knit, self-supporting Society of Friends would have brought Nathan into contact with those knowledgeable with stone construction. Recognizing this, his mason was probably a Quaker.

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¹⁶ Worcester County Deeds, book 223, page 193.

¹⁷ Worcester County Deeds, book 223, page 194. Will of Luke Aldrich, February 7, 1815, Worcester County Surrogates Records, book 46, page 106.

¹⁸ One of these houses is located on 12 George Street in the Mendon Center [See National Register Nomination Form for Mendon Center Historic District (2002), Photo 29]; the other is located on Inman Hill in a rural section of the town.

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The granite utilized to construct the house was ubiquitous in the area, and the stone with which the house was constructed would have been quarried near the house, in all probability on his 130-acre property or the adjacent family homestead farm where Nathan's brother Scammell lived. Stone masonry flourished in the region following the construction of the Blackstone Canal in the 1820s, which utilized the material in the construction of locks and other engineered features. Similar methods were employed to construct basements for local wood frame houses. The large dressed slabs that were used to face the exterior of them can still be seen on the many 19th century houses in the town. Retaining walls, walkways, stoops, gate posts and other yard whimsies fabricated from this granite distinguish so many properties in the town as to suggest that there was an active stone-cutting craft in place during this period. Why more of Mendon's elite families did not construct their houses entirely of stone is perplexing where its evidence is so prominent. How Nathan C. Aldrich came to decide to build his house entirely of stone is also unknown, yet it did set him clearly apart from his neighbors and peers.

The material was the principal design feature of Nathan C. Aldrich's house, and typical of Quaker taste, the craftsmanship of the construction is emphasized over the decoration. The precise ashlar masonry facing presents a tooled but rough surface on the exterior, and the composition is free of artful flourishes, such as quoins, arched openings, or decorative patterning. Door and window openings are spanned by heavy lintels and projecting sills. The front entrance is framed by side lights and a transom divided by slender posts and rails, and the roofline is distinguished with the simplest of wood cornices. The interior of the house is equally restrained with a broad central passage extending past a stair with turned balustrade and pairs of rooms on each side. Stove flues were concealed within the thick stone walls of the house in another subtle expression of clever craftsmanship. In spite of its elegant proportions, a wood frame service wing containing a kitchen, wood shed, and wagon house was appended to the west end in the character of farm houses.

Nathan C. Aldrich's real estate was valued at \$5,000 in the 1860 U.S. Census. Twenty-three, or eight percent, of the 283 households enumerated in the Town of Mendon owned real estate assessed at \$5,000 and above. Adelaide Davenport, who occupied her deceased husband Seth Davenport's farm at the north end of North Avenue topped the assessment list with a farm valued at \$12,000.¹⁹ Nathan George, a farmer, lawyer, and boot manufacturer whose distinctive property can still be seen opposite the town burying ground at Main and George streets in Mendon Center, was assessed with \$10,000 of real estate and a remarkable \$20,000 of personal estate. The Aldrich property was one of eight valued at the low end of the range \$5,000, which represented more than one-third of the elite assessments. The names of proprietor families were conspicuous in the list, e.g., Taft, Thayer, and Aldrich, as well as families that came to the town later and achieved prominence, such as Davenport, George, Gaskill, and Wood. A

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¹⁹ See National Register Nomination Form for North Avenue Rural Historic District, Mendon, Worcester County, Massachusetts (2002).

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cursory review of the census entries revealed median farm values to be in the \$1,500 to \$2,000 range. The majority of families recorded in the census were of the laboring class employed on farms and in boot and broom shops. Many of them did not own real estate; those that did had homes assessed in the \$500 to \$600 range. A typical example was Peter Moore, an Irish-born boot bottomer. He owned a dwelling valued at \$600 where his wife and eight children resided. His two eldest boys were also recorded as boot bottomers. Thus, Nathan C. Aldrich and his family lived in relative comfort in a home valued three or four times more than the average farmer in the town and as much as ten time more than a common laborer.

Later Family History

Nathan's brother, Scammell, still resided nearby in the family homestead in 1860. His real estate was assessed at \$4,000. (Census records indicate that Luke, Jr., who was 70 years of age in 1860, was residing with his wife in a small house in Woonsocket. None of the other brothers surfaced in a digital search of the 1869 U.S. Census.²⁰) Another neighbor, the widow Ann Swan, owned real estate valued at \$8,000 and had a personal estate amounting to \$5,000. Part of her wealth was associated with the saw and cotton batting mill her husband had established on the Muddy Brook.²¹ She is important to the story of the stone house because her son, Willard Henry Swan, married Nathan C. and Dianna Aldrich's only daughter, Elizabeth, in 1851. The marriage produced a son, William, in 1853 and sufficient unhappiness to result in Elizabeth suing for divorce in 1866 on the grounds of desertion and non-support. Willard Swan was living with his mother in 1860, and Elizabeth and their son remained in her parent's household. Willard H. Swan remarried in 1868, while Elizabeth and her son had their names legally changed back to Aldrich in 1874. William Henry Swan became known as Theodore William Aldrich.²²

Nathan Comstock Aldrich died in 1866. In his brief will, he conveyed one-half of his real and personal estate to his widow and the other half to his daughter and grandson. His real estate was valued at \$8,400 and his personal estate at \$1,458.²³ A tax list published by the Town of Mendon on May 1, 1868 included an entry for Dianna C. Aldrich as executrix of will of Nathan C. Aldrich. It valued the house at \$1,000 along with a barn at \$600, a crib at \$25, 164 acres of land at \$5,100, two oxen at \$225, two steers at \$100, three cows at \$200, a horse at \$100, and a buggy and harness at \$50. The tax assessed was \$62.90, which was a figure at the highest end of the range, indicating that the property had maintained a premium value. As late as the 1895 tax list, the taxes paid to the town on the property remained in the top eight percent of assessments. In that year the house was assessed at \$1,500, a value that was exceeded by only three other properties, the highest being \$1,900.²⁴

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²⁰ Searches were made using ProQuest.com.

²¹ Beers Atlas of the Town of Mendon (1870).

²² U.S. Census for 1860; Worcester County Registry, Surrogates Court Records.

²³ Worcester County Wills, Book 397, page 544, August 30, 1866. Also Worcester County Surrogates Court Records, Book 345, page 260, October 24, 1866.

²⁴ Tax Lists for 1868 and 1895. Mendon Town Reports.

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On January 7, 1882 Dianna C. Aldrich and Theodore W. Aldrich conveyed their shares of the farm to Elizabeth C. Aldrich, and she became sole owner of the farm.²⁵ The deed stated that the property was subject to three mortgages held by Samuel Gaskill amounting to \$2,400. (A fourth mortgage to Gaskill for \$119 had been discharged in 1879.) There evidently were financial problems in the household. Although a precise date is not known, it appears that Dianna died shortly thereafter. Elizabeth sold the farm to Welcome A. Thayer of Blackstone on October 6, 1883 for only \$500. The depressed price reflected that the property was still subject to the three mortgages to Samuel Gaskill as well as taxes for 1883.²⁶ The Thayers were another of Mendon's founding families who had joined the Society of Friends. Five months later Elizabeth married Stephen D. Nichols in Milford. Nichols worked as a laborer on the farm and had been recorded in the Aldrich household since the 1870 U.S. Census. His military pension papers indicate that he was widowed in 1879.

Thayer sold the farm to George Fox Allen, whose family had long lived nearby.²⁷ Since both Thayer and Allen lived elsewhere, it is possible that Elizabeth Aldrich Nichols and what remained of her family continued to live on the farm and that the owning parties were guided somewhat by charity. There is no particular evidence that they were living anywhere else during this time. However, when George Fox Allen sold the property to Catherine Regina Seabury for a summer retreat in 1892, they would have had to vacate the property.²⁸ By 1900 Elizabeth Nichols was widowed and living with Daniel D. and Agnes Smith on Woonsocket Hill Road in North Smithfield, Rhode Island.²⁹ Agnes Smith was Elizabeth's adopted daughter who had been in the Aldrich household since she was at least three years of age.³⁰ She had married Daniel D. Smith in 1897. Elizabeth's son Theodore William Aldrich had relocated to Grove County, Kansas where he married an Iowa-born woman in 1891.³¹ Elizabeth died at her daughter's home in 1918.

Catherine Regina Seabury and the Creation of Resthaven

The nominated property had additional significance for its association with Catherine Regina Seabury and her efforts to improve the spiritual and recreational opportunities of working women. Her creation of a rural retreat for working women at Resthaven in 1891 was an early instance of this social service. Seabury formed the Women's Mutual Improvement Society in 1889 from her Sunday school at the Church of the Ascension in East Cambridge, Massachusetts. After a two-year search of appropriate

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²⁵ Worcester County Deeds, Book 1108, page 458.

²⁶ Worcester County Deeds, Book 1160, page 110, October 6, 1883.

²⁷ Worcester County Deeds, Book 1236, page 592, April 25, 1887. Metcalf's Map of Mendon (1831); Beers's Worcester County Atlas (1870). George F. Allen's real estate was assessed at only \$1,500 in the 1860 U.S. Census.

²⁸ Worcester County Deeds, Book 1389, page 147, July, 3, 1892.

²⁹ U.S. Census, North Smithfield RI (1900).

³⁰ U.S. Census, Mendon MA (1880).

³¹ U.S. Census, Baker Township, KS (1900).

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vacation locations, she purchased Nathan C. Aldrich's 140-acre farm in Mendon. The imposing stone farmhouse was adapted into a country home for Seabury and her sister's family, while an old schoolhouse on the property was renovated into the clubhouse for the working women. One nephew, Stanley B. Parker designed the clubhouse renovations, while another, Gurdon Saltonstall Parker, designed the two stages of a chapel built behind the house. The first section of the chapel was built in 1899-1900 with family members contributing funds and furnishings. Her brother-in-law, the Rev. Henry Ainsworth Parker, conducted services at the chapel every Sunday during the summer. In 1912 Seabury opened a progressive college-preparatory school for girls at Resthaven. While the boarding school was not groundbreaking in its mission, it still represented an important moment in the movement to provide academic education for women. The school operated for only a few brief years until it was closed during the First World War. Seabury's reopened it after the war but was frustrated by ill health and a bout of blindness. The chapel played an important role in the school's program. The Resthaven Club donated \$1000 to enlarge the building, which occurred ca. 1912. Catherine Regina Seabury died in 1929. Her nephew, Reginald S. Parker, inherited the property and deeded the clubhouse to the Resthaven Association, which was created for its continued operation. An unsuccessful attempt was made to raise funds to support Resthaven as a retreat for clergy and church layworkers. Parker used the property and the chapel for his private use until he sold the property in 1943.

Organizations for working girls were uncommon in 1889 when Catherine Regina Seabury created the Women's Mutual Improvement Society in East Cambridge. They were generally created by a philanthropic individual or institution to ameliorate the unpleasant working and social conditions in industrial cities (although there are also examples of rural improvement societies). The first "adult school" is said to have begun in Nottingham, England in 1798 to meet the needs of young women in lace and hosiery factories. It was independent of any other organization and run by William Singleton, a Methodist, and Samuel Fox, a Quaker.³² Seabury's "club" evolved out of a Sunday School class she led at the Church of the Ascension where her sister's husband, The Rev. Henry Ainsworth Parker, was the rector. Sunday schools were the more usual means of churches' efforts to educate and socialize the working poor. Religious training was not the sole purpose, as is the case today, and school was held on Sunday because it was the only free day workers had. The main learning activities were reading and writing, since illiteracy was a universal and debilitating problem. The Bible was the principal source. Social activists in Boston and elsewhere also formed reading clubs and societies in local libraries. As mutual improvement societies and adult schools developed, for both men and women, these organizations addressed other deficiencies in working class life than education, such as financial management, nutrition, recreation and, particularly for women, self-reliance. According to one of her biographies, Catherine Regina Seabury was one of the first patrons "to seek a place where her girls could spend their vacations in sunshine and fresh air and the fragrance of the woods."³³

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³² J. W. Rowntree & H. B. Binns. A History of the Adult School Movement (London: Headley Brothers, 1903) 10-11, 26-28.

³³ "Seabury House, Resthaven, Mendon Massachusetts." in Local History Files, Taft Memorial Library, Mendon MA.

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Catherine Regina Seabury was particularly well-suited to the challenge. She came from one of the most distinguished American Episcopal families. Her great-grandfather Samuel Seabury, was appointed the first Bishop of the American Episcopal Church in 1789.³⁴ Catherine Regina Seabury's father was the grandson and namesake of the legendary Bishop. Samuel Seabury (1801-1872) was also an ordained Episcopal minister and was rector of the Church of the Annunciation on 14th Street in Manhattan from 1838 to 1863. He was a member of the faculty of the General Theological Seminary as well. Between 1833 and 1851, Rev. Seabury was the editor of The Churchman, the official periodical publication of the American Episcopal Church. Catherine's brother, Rev. Dr. William Jones Seabury assumed their father's ecclesiastical and academic posts following his retirement. Her sister was married to another Episcopalian minister, Henry Ainsworth Parker, at whose East Cambridge parish she began the Women's Mutual Improvement Society. Catherine Regina Seabury's aunt Catherine was the first woman to be inducted into the Episcopal Sisterhood in America. Catherine was consecrated into "religious life" in 1846 at the Parish of the Holy Communion in New York City and was received as a full Sister of the Holy Communion in 1854. She attended to the sick and the poor and served in the parish infirmary, which became St. Luke's Hospital in 1858. Through her efforts, a Shelter for Respectable Girls and a Babies' Shelter were established in the parish. At the time she created the Women's Mutual Improvement Society, Catherine Regina Seabury was a devout churchwoman, although she was never consecrated into the sisterhood. She was a teacher at St. Agnes's School of the

³⁴ Samuel Seabury (1729-1796) was raised in New London, Connecticut and Hempstead, New York where his father was the rector of Anglican churches. He attended Yale University receiving a bachelor's degree in 1748 and a master's degree in 1751 in theology under the direction of his father. He then studied medicine at the University of Edinburgh while waiting to receive his ordination, which occurred in 1753. On his return to America, Seabury was elected rector of Christ Church in New Brunswick, New Jersey and served this parish from 1754 to 1757. While at New Brunswick he was married, on October 12, 1756, to Mary, the daughter of Edward Hicks of New York. He was then called to Grace Church, in Jamaica on Long Island, where he was rector from 1757 to 1766, and in 1766 he was inducted into the rectorship of St. Peter's, West Chester, which he held until the outbreak of the Revolutionary War. By 1774, with much of America verging on armed revolt, Seabury was publishing his anonymous "Letters of a Westchester Framer," in which he declared: "If I must be enslaved, let it be by a KING... If I must be devoured, let it be by the jaws of a lion, and not...by rats and vermin!" Seabury's outspoken loyalism led to his imprisonment in New Haven. He was released six weeks later at the request of the governor of New York as he had been taken from his province without process of law. Unable to continue his duties he closed the church and took refuge in New York City where he supported his family by the practice of medicine. He also served as chaplain of the King's American Regiment, under commission of Sir Henry Clinton. Following independence Samuel Seabury was elected by the clergy of English ordination in Connecticut (Woodbury, March 25, 1783), to be the bishop of the church in that state, and sailed for England with credentials as an applicant for consecration by the English bishops. The English bishops could not legally confer consecration without the oath of allegiance to the king, which could not be taken by one who was to exercise his office in a foreign state. Seabury then went to Scotland where at Aberdeen, Nov. 14, 1784, he was consecrated by the Scotch bishops, returning to America as the first Bishop of Connecticut, as well as of the American Church. At the General Convention of 1789 in Philadelphia, by action of the House of Bishops, he became by virtue of seniority of consecration the first to hold the office of presiding bishop. During the exercise of his episcopate he resided in New London, Connecticut being the rector of St. James church from 1785 to 1796. In 1790, he was also made bishop of Rhode Island. His first and only act of consecration occurred on Sept. 17, 1792, making Thomas John Claggett bishop of Maryland, through whom every subsequent bishop of the American Church traces his Episcopal lineage. [The Twentieth Century Biographical Dictionary of Notable Americans, vol. IX, (Boston: The Biographical Society, 1904) 256.]

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Episcopal Diocese in Albany, New York and she apparently lived in that city for many years before moving permanently to Resthaven.³⁵

In her desire to find a vacation place for the girls of the Women's Mutual Improvement Society, Catherine Regina Seabury traveled throughout eastern Massachusetts, including coastal towns, such as Duxbury, and elevated areas, such as Princeton on the south slope of Mt. Wachusett. When she discovered Nathan C. Aldrich's old farm in Mendon, her search ended. The 140-acre farm enjoyed an unspoiled rural setting. It had the unusual feature of a large and elegant stone house that would provide a comfortable residence for her and her family, as well as provide housing and for the girls. The property may have been somewhat run down, as the Aldrich's had experienced financial difficulties in their later years, but caring for the farm and its animals would provide suitable vacation work. Catherine Regina Seabury named the retreat Resthaven, and for the next ten summers she welcomed working women for rest and recreation.

*Many were the happy gatherings there, thirty and forty girls at a time, bubbling over with fun and frolic, yet always singing the club song, "Onward, ever Onward," and always ready to reach a helping hand to those less fortunate than themselves. Countless stories are told of those happy days when Miss Seabury was at once hostess, leader and the inspiration of them all.*³⁶

On summer Sundays, the Rev. Henry Ainsworth Parker would travel from East Cambridge to Resthaven and hold services in a pine grove on the farm using a stone for an altar.³⁷ The Parkers, and perhaps other relatives, were frequent houseguests in the summers, and soon the stone house was overcrowded. The club spirit remained strong and welcomed new members each year, yet the girls had grown older, fewer and scattered as they married and had families of their own. A cottage was created for the club residence from an abandoned school house on the property. Stanley B. Parker drafted plans and Sister Catherine provided funds to renovate the building with cousins Louisa Lee Schuyler and Georgiana Schuyler of New York contributing a staircase and another friend paying for the fireplace.³⁸ This building was

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³⁵ Herbert Mitgang, The Man who Rode the Tiger: The Life and Times of Judge Samuel Seabury (NY: Lippincott, 1963). Mary Caroline Crawford, "A Little School for Little Girls, Resthaven in Mendon, Massachusetts" and "1854-1904," Booklet honoring the fiftieth anniversary of the Sisterhood of Sister Catherine in Local History Files, Taft Memorial Library.

³⁶ "Seabury House, Resthaven, Mendon Massachusetts." An appeal of the Resthaven Association, [1932]. Local History Files, Taft memorial Library.

³⁷ Crawford.

³⁸ "Seabury House ..."

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demolished ca. 1960. At about the same time Gurdon Saltonstall Parker drew plans for a small stone chapel in which his father could conduct his services. A student at the Lawrence Scientific School of Harvard University, he designed the building in the manner of private chapels in England. Construction began of the western portion of the chapel in 1899.

Strong white oxen borrowed from a neighbor were pressed into service to haul from the confines of the old estates the stones for the outer wall of the chapel, and the younger brothers of the youthful architect, assisted by a country mason, laid its sturdy foundations. In the autumn of 1899 the first service was held here. The only roof at this time was supplied by the spreading arms of a large hickory tree, the young architect having been telegraphed by the Varsity football squad at Harvard to return for training! The next summer the roof was added and much later the bell tower.³⁹

The Rev. Dr. William Jones Seabury, Catherine Regina Seabury's brother contributed the "churchly equipment" to the chapel, which included the "beautifully proportioned altar" and kneelers. A copy of Fra Angelico's fresco of the Virgin Mary looking into the empty tomb after the Resurrection was hung over the altar. Sister Catherine gave brass wall sconces and the altar furnishings.⁴⁰

Catherine Regina Seabury left her position at St. Agnes's School in 1912 and opened a school of her own in the stone house at Resthaven. She was assisted in this effort by her aunt, Sister Catherine, who had retired to Resthaven after over 50 years of service in New York, and other friends who had worked with her in the past. Morning and evening prayers were administered each day by Sister Catherine in the chapel, which soon became the "mainspring" of daily life at the school.⁴¹ Its small size became a problem, and it was enlarged with the addition of a square bell tower on its east end. Pews were installed in this space to accommodate the students and faculty more comfortably. Gurdon S. Parker is credited with the design of this addition, which he would have done before volunteering for military service during the First World War in 1917.⁴² The Women's Mutual Improvement Society, which was still vacationing in the Club Cottage contributed \$1,000 to the chapel expansion.⁴³

The stone house was altered to accommodate the school and its students. Bed chambers were partitioned in the attic with dormers added to the roof to provide light and ventilation to them. The shed section of

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³⁹ Crawford.

⁴⁰ Ibid.

⁴¹ "Seabury House ..."

⁴² Crawford.

⁴³ "Seabury House ..."

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the house was raised to two stories, and the kitchen was relocated to its ground level. The original kitchen was converted to a dining room. New rooms were created on the second floor of the ell, where Catherine Regina Seabury and her aunt may have retreated for privacy. Alterations made to the rooms in the stone section of the building in the 1940s removed any evidence of school-era use, yet main floor rooms were likely used for educational purposes. The large double parlor on the east side of the center passage may have been opened up in this period for greater space, and with four windows along the east wall, it would have had the appearance of a classroom. The later use of the front room on the west side of the passage as a library may have sustained an earlier function. Second story bed chambers would have been suitable locations for teachers' quarters, as well as boarding students.

In addition to the chapel, the garage located in the southwest corner of the present property was built during the Resthaven years. It was near a barn that had survived from the Aldrich period, which since became the victim of neglect and demolition. The 130-acre farm remained intact throughout this period, although it is likely that much of it laid fallow.

The war forced the closing of the school in 1918, and while Catherine Regina Seabury always intended to reopen it, she was unable to achieve that goal. Efforts in 1924 were frustrated by a temporary bout of blindness. Before her death in 1929, she willed the property to her nephew Reginald S. Parker with a \$2,000 trust fund for the preservation of the chapel. Parker deeded the Club Cottage to the Resthaven Association for its continued use and worked with other heirs with the goal of operating Resthaven as a spiritual retreat and conference center associated with the Episcopal Church. This plan never materialized, and Parker sold the property to a Milford physician, Joseph I. Ashkins in 1943.⁴⁴

Renovations by Joseph I. Ashkins

Ashkins hired Milford architect Wendell T. Phillips to develop plans for a complete renovation of the interior of the stone house. The architect worked on residential projects throughout the locality, yet his firm had particular expertise with church architecture and was the designated architect for the Springfield (MA) Roman Catholic Diocese. In addition to Springfield, Phillips designed numerous churches, schools and institutional buildings for Catholic parishes in Fall River and Worcester, Massachusetts, and Hartford, Connecticut. He also designed buildings constructed on the campus of Notre Dame University in South Bend, Indiana. Other projects included schools, elderly housing projects, and state armories throughout the Commonwealth. Wendell T. Phillips's son, Donald F. Phillips, succeeded him in the firm and continued its work into the 1970s.⁴⁵ Donald F. Phillips designed an addition to the public school in Mendon Center in 1964. This building was listed on the National Register as a component of the Mendon Center Historic District.

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⁴⁴ Worcester County Deeds, Book 2894, page 514, September 18, 1943.

⁴⁵ Milford Daily News, Monday, February 28, 1955 and Thursday, June 24, 1999. Also Boston MA, Massachusetts Historical Commission, MACRIS Maker Index.

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Features surviving from the antique farm house and changes made to accommodate the Resthaven School were removed or altered to create a 20th-century country house plan and aesthetic and upgrade plumbing, heating, and kitchen and bathroom facilities. The most significant changes occurred on the east side of the house. A large chimney stack was constructed against the west wall of the room to provide the ambiance of a wood-burning fireplace in the center of a new living room. If this space had not been opened up into one open area for the school, it was clearly done so at this time. The Colonial Revival style design of the additions, including a wood mantelpiece, were conceived with the idea of maintaining a historic appearance in the house. A large master bedroom was created above the living room on the second floor, with a closet and two bathrooms arranged around the chimney. More design liberties were taken in these more private areas.

A library was planned for the front of the house on the west side of the passage. The existing space was enlarged by moving the north partition towards the rear of the house. A hall connecting the center passage to the dining room in the wood frame ell was constructed behind the library, which replaced the original linkage that had been located within the library. This area, which included a set of service stairs, was made into a large closet with a wet bar based on Phillips's plans. The remaining space in the rear of the house north of the new hall to the dining room was enclosed and made into a lavatory. A small alcove was created to contain a small fireplace and Greek Revival mantelpiece that survived there. A second hearth is located at the south end of the library's west wall. The architect's plans indicate that it had been intended to cover it over with a bookcase, although those features do not exist. The dining room created by Catherine Regina Seabury in the old kitchen space was preserved with its fireplace and Craftsman style mantel. The kitchen she created in the old shed was similarly upgraded.

The changes wrought by Ashkins and his architect reflect the 20th-century taste in adapting historic farm houses into country houses or weekend retreats. For Ashkins, this was more of a suburban home, as it was his primary residence, and on the eve of his retirement in 1976, he filed a subdivision plan that created 23 house lots on Nathan C. Aldrich's 150-year old farm.⁴⁶ The property containing the stone house and chapel had been reduced to its present 4.90 acres when Ashkins sold it two years earlier.⁴⁷ The chapel had been maintained up to that point. The Ashkins's daughter was married there in 1958, and their granddaughters were christened there in 1960 by the rector of Trinity Episcopal Church in Milford. The Ashkinses also permitted groups associated with that church to use the chapel for services. The chapel has not functioned in a religious use since their departure. The property has changed ownership four times since 1974, and remains essentially as the Ashkinses had left it.

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⁴⁶ Worcester County Registry, Plan Book 464, plan 61. Survey by James B. Kolloch on March 8, 1976, approved by the Town of Mendon Planning Board on July 10, 1978, and recorded on August 16, 1978.

⁴⁷ Worcester County Deeds, Book 5504, page 324. May 30, 1974.

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Archaeological Significance

Since patterns of ancient Native American settlement in Mendon are poorly understood, any surviving sites could be significant. Native sites in this area may contain important information that helps understand the relationships and variations between subsistence and settlement patterns based in the uplands and those concentrated in the coastal lowlands. The Aldrich House property, while located in the southeastern part of the Worcester Plateau in the Central Massachusetts uplands, also occupies a location at the headwaters of two important regional coastal drainages. The district lies within the Mill River drainage that converges with the Blackstone River and flows southerly to Narragansett Bay. The Charles River drainage is also located approximately two miles east of the district and drains northeasterly to Boston Harbor. Ancient sites in the district may contribute important information that indicates the extent that Native Americans in the Central Massachusetts uplands adopted unique or specialized upland strategies in their exploitation of plant, animal and mineral resources that varied from the exploitation of similar resources in coastal locales. Ancient sites may also contribute information that indicates the extent social, technological, and exchange patterns on the Worcester Plateau were affected by relationships with different socio/political groups in the Boston Harbor and Narragansett Bay regions.

Historic archaeological resources described above may contribute important information related to 19th century Quaker settlement, agriculture and architecture in Mendon and later use of the house as a boarding school for girls and restorative retreat in the country. Documentary research and archaeological testing may locate changes to the Aldrich House during its occupation by the Aldrich Family and later use for the Catherine Regina Seabury female boarding school. The stone farmhouse, possibly built by Quaker masons with locally quarried stone, is reported as very rare in the region. Construction features may exist that reflect specialized construction techniques unlike those used for timber-framed dwellings. Analysis of the stone used for construction and identification of the quarry; possibly located on the property, may contribute information related to 19th century Quaker quarry technology and masonry techniques. Archaeological survey and testing may help identify the sites of barns and outbuildings located on the farm during its period of agricultural use. The latter information may help identify the functions and organization of 19th century Quaker farms.

The location and detailed analysis of the contents of occupational-related features (trash pits, privies, wells) may also contribute important information related to the functioning and organization of 19th century Quaker farms and the social, cultural, and economic aspects of the inhabitants of the farm. Occupational-related features may contain information that helps understand the principles attributed to the Society of Friends. For example, the Aldrich House is reported to reflect the Friends principle of

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plainness while at the same time reflecting wealth and status of the highest degree in Mendon. Occupational related features may contribute important information that clarifies this apparent contradiction. Information from occupational-related features may help better understand Quaker lifeways and agricultural methods. Occupational-related features may also exist related to the Seabury female boarding school. Detailed analysis of the contents of deposits associated with the school may contribute important social, cultural, and economic information related to the lives of 19th century female factory workers and their activities and standard of living at the Seabury School.

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Nathan C. Aldrich House & Resthaven Chapel**Worcester County, Mass**

Name of Property

County and State

10. Geographical DataAcreage of property 4.90 acres**UTM References**

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1 19 290540 4662310
Zone Easting Northing3
Zone Easting Northing

2

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☐ See continuation sheet**Verbal Boundary Description**

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

Boundary Justification

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

11. Form Prepared Byname/title Neil Larson with Betsy Friedberg, Massachusetts Historical Commission
organization Massachusetts Historical Commission date April 2006
street & number 220 Morrissey Boulevard telephone 617-727-8470
city or town Boston state Mass. zip code 02125**Additional Documentation**

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets**Maps**A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.**Photographs**Representative **black and white photographs** of the property.**Additional items**

(Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner

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

name Thomas and Colleen Conley
street & number 111 Providence Street telephone _____
city or town Mendon state MA zip code 01756**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 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 Reduction Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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Verbal Boundary Description

The 4.90-acre property is bounded on the east by Providence Road and on the other sides by surveyed lines as indicated on the survey map included with this nomination form.

Boundary Justification

The existing boundaries were established in 1974 when the house and chapel were separated from the historic Nathan C. Aldrich farm, which was subdivided into building lots. The property represents the only historic setting that remains for the historic buildings.

PHOTOGRAPHS

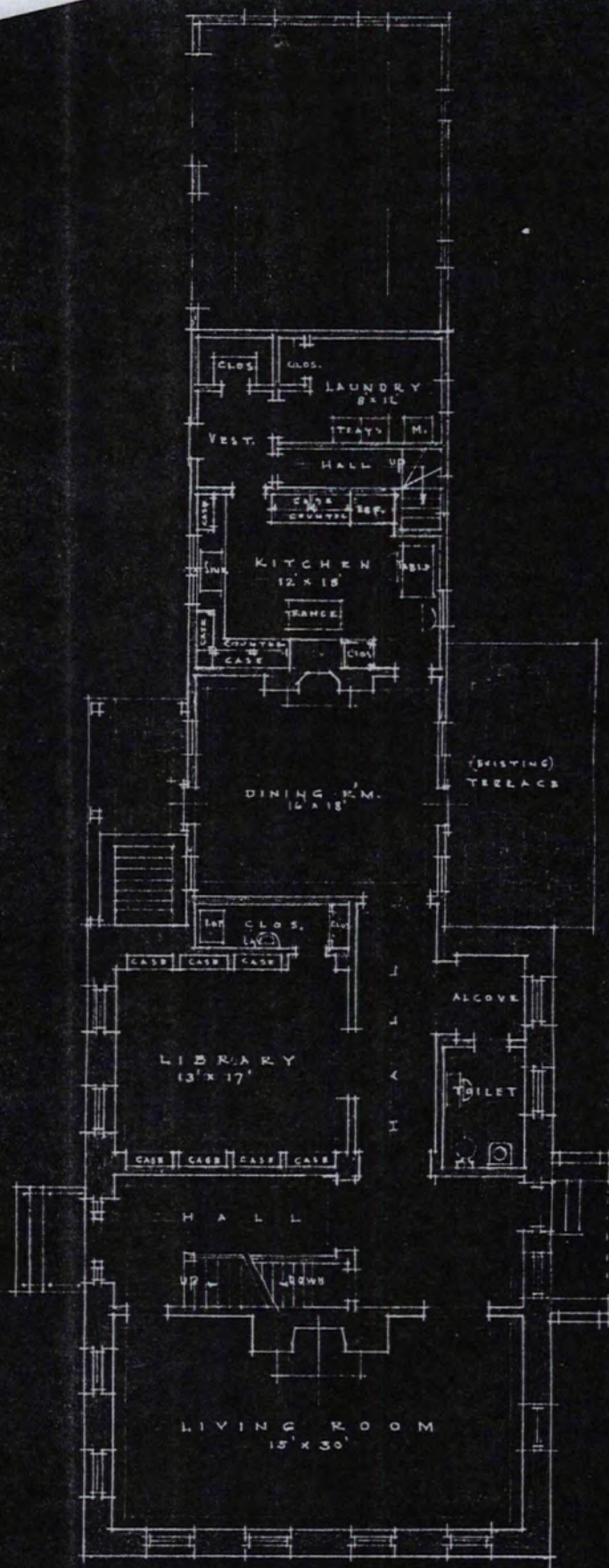
Photographer: Neil Larson

Date: 2004

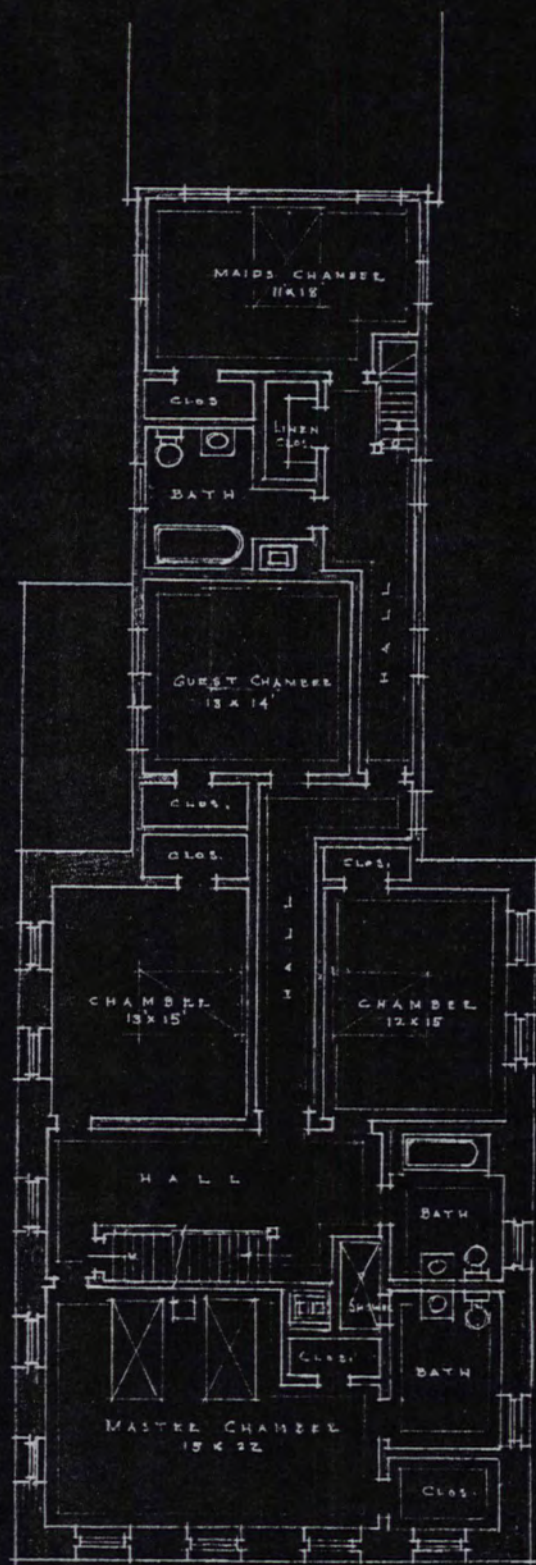
Location of negatives: with owner

1. View of house from east at Providence Road
2. View of front of house, south façade
3. Detail of front entrance
4. View of rear façade from northeast
5. Interior-windows on east side of living room
6. Interior-fireplace in northeast alcove on first floor
7. Interior-view of center passage from rear (north)
8. Interior-dining room looking west towards kitchen
9. Interior-fireplace in living room
10. View of chapel looking northeast from corner of house
11. Chapel from southeast
12. Interior-Chapel looking west
13. Chapel, west façade
14. Garage and barn foundation looking south

(end)



• FIRST FLOOR PLAN •
 SCALE $\frac{1}{16}'' = 1'-0''$
 • RESIDENCE •
 OF
 • JOSEPH ARKINS • M.D. •
 MENDON, MASS.
 • WINDFEL & PHILLIPS, ARCHTTS. •
 • MILFORD, MASS. •



SECOND FLOOR PLAN

SCALE $\frac{1}{16}$ " = 1'-0"

RESIDENCE

OF
JOSEPH ASHKINS M.D.
MENDON MASS.

WENDELL T. PHILLIPS ARCHITECT
MILFORD MASS.



1139

**NATHAN C. ALDRICH HOUSE
AND RESTHAVEN CHAPEL**
Mendon, Worcester County, Mass.

BOUNDARY MAP

Worcester County Registry
Plan Book 397, Plan 98
May 31, 1974

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: NOMINATION

PROPERTY Aldrich, Nathan C., House and Resthaven Chapel
NAME:

MULTIPLE
NAME:

STATE & COUNTY: MASSACHUSETTS, Worcester

DATE RECEIVED: 4/06/06 DATE OF PENDING LIST: 4/26/06
DATE OF 16TH DAY: 5/11/06 DATE OF 45TH DAY: 5/20/06
DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:

REFERENCE NUMBER: 06000399

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 5.17.06 DATE

ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:

Entered in the
National Register

RECOM./CRITERIA _____

REVIEWER _____ DISCIPLINE _____

TELEPHONE _____ DATE _____

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

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



Nathan C. Aldrich House & Resthaven Chapel
Mendon, Worcester Co., Massachusetts

Photo by Neil Larson, 2004
Neg. at owner

PHOTO 1: View of house from east at
Providence Road



Nathan C. Aldrich House & Resthaven Chapel
Mendon, Worcester Co., Massachusetts

Photo by Neil Larson, 2004
Neg. at owner

PHOTO 2: View of front of house (south facade)



Nathan C. Aldrich House & Resthaven Chapel
Mendon, Worcester Co., Massachusetts

Photo by Neil Larsen, 2004
Neg. at owner

PHOTO 3: Detail of front entrance



Nathan C. Aldrich House & Resthaven Chapel
Mendon, Worcester Co., Massachusetts

Photo by Neil Larsen, 2004
Neg. at owner

PHOTO 4: View of rear facade from northeast



Nathan C. Aldrich House & Resthaven Chapel
Mendon, Worcester Co., Massachusetts

Photo by Neil Larsen, 2003
Neg. at owner

PHOTO 5: Windows on east side of living room



Nathan C. Aldrich House & Resthaven Chapel
Mendon, Worcester Co., Massachusetts

Photo by Neil Larson, 2003

Neg. at owner

PHOTO 6: Fireplace in NE alcove on first floor



Nathan C. Aldrich House & Resthaven Chapel
Mendon, Worcester Co., Massachusetts

Photo by Neil Larson, 2003
Neg. at owner

PHOTO 7: View of center passage from
lean (north)



Nathan C. Aldrich House & Resthaven Chapel
Mendon, Worcester Co., Massachusetts

Photo by Neil Larson, 2003
Neg. at owner

Photo 8: Dining room looking west
towards kitchen



Nathan C. Aldrich Home & Resthaven Chapel
Mendon, Worcester Co., Massachusetts

Photo by Neil Larson, 2003
Neg. et owner

PHOTO 9: Fireplace in living room



Nathan C. Aldrich Home & Resthaven Chapel
Mendon, Worcester Co., Massachusetts

Photo by Neil Larson, 2004
Neg. at owner

PHOTO 10: View of chapel looking NE
from SE corner of house



Nathan C. Aldrich House & Resthaven Chapel
Mendon, Worcester Co., Massachusetts

Photo by Neil Larson, 2004
Neg. at owner

PHOTO 11: Resthaven Chapel from Southeast



Nathan C. Aldrich House & Resthaven Chapel
Mendon, Worcester Co., Massachusetts

Photo by Neil Larson, 2004
Neg. at owner

PHOTO 12: Chapel interior looking west



Nathan C. Aldrich House & Resthaven Chapel
Mendon, Worcester Co., Massachusetts

Photo by Neil Larson, 2004
Neg. at owner

PHOTO 13: Front (west) facade of chapel



Nathan C. Aldrich House & Resthaven Chapel
Mendon, Worcester Co., Massachusetts

Photo by Neil Larson, 2004
Neg. at: owner

PHOTO 14: Garage (right) and barn
foundation (left) looking south



UXBRIDGE, MASSACHUSETTS - RHODE ISLAND

7.5 X 15 MINUTE SERIES (TOPOGRAPHIC)



SCALE 1:25 000
1 CENTIMETER ON THE MAP REPRESENTS 25 METERS ON THE GROUND
CONTOUR INTERVAL 3 METERS

UXBRIDGE, MASS. - R. I.
42071-A5-TM-025
1982

NATHAN ALDRICH
HOUSE
2, 1857
CHAPEL

Uxbridge

MASS. - R. I.

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

1982

Produced by the United States Geological Survey
in cooperation with Massachusetts Department
of Public Works

Control by USGS, NOS/NOAA, and Massachusetts Geodetic Survey

Compiled by photogrammetric methods from aerial photographs
taken 1980. Field checked 1981. Map edited 1982

This area also covered by 7.5-minute, 1:24,000-scale
maps: Uxbridge and Blackstone dated 1969

Projection and 1000-meter grid, zone 19: Universal
Transverse Mercator. 10,000-foot grid ticks based on
Massachusetts coordinate system, mainland zone,
and Rhode Island coordinate system. 1927 North
American Datum

To place on the predicted North American Datum 1983
move the projection lines 6 meters south and 40 meters
west as shown by dashed corner ticks

There may be private inholdings within the boundaries of
the National or State reservations shown on this map

CONTOUR INTERVAL 3 METERS
NATIONAL GEODETIC VERTICAL DATUM OF 1929
CONTOUR ELEVATIONS SHOWN TO THE NEAREST 0.1 METER
OTHER ELEVATIONS SHOWN TO THE NEAREST 0.5 METER
THIS MAP COMPLIES WITH NATIONAL MAP ACCURACY STANDARDS

FOR SALE BY U.S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY
P.O. BOX 25286, DENVER, COLORADO 80225

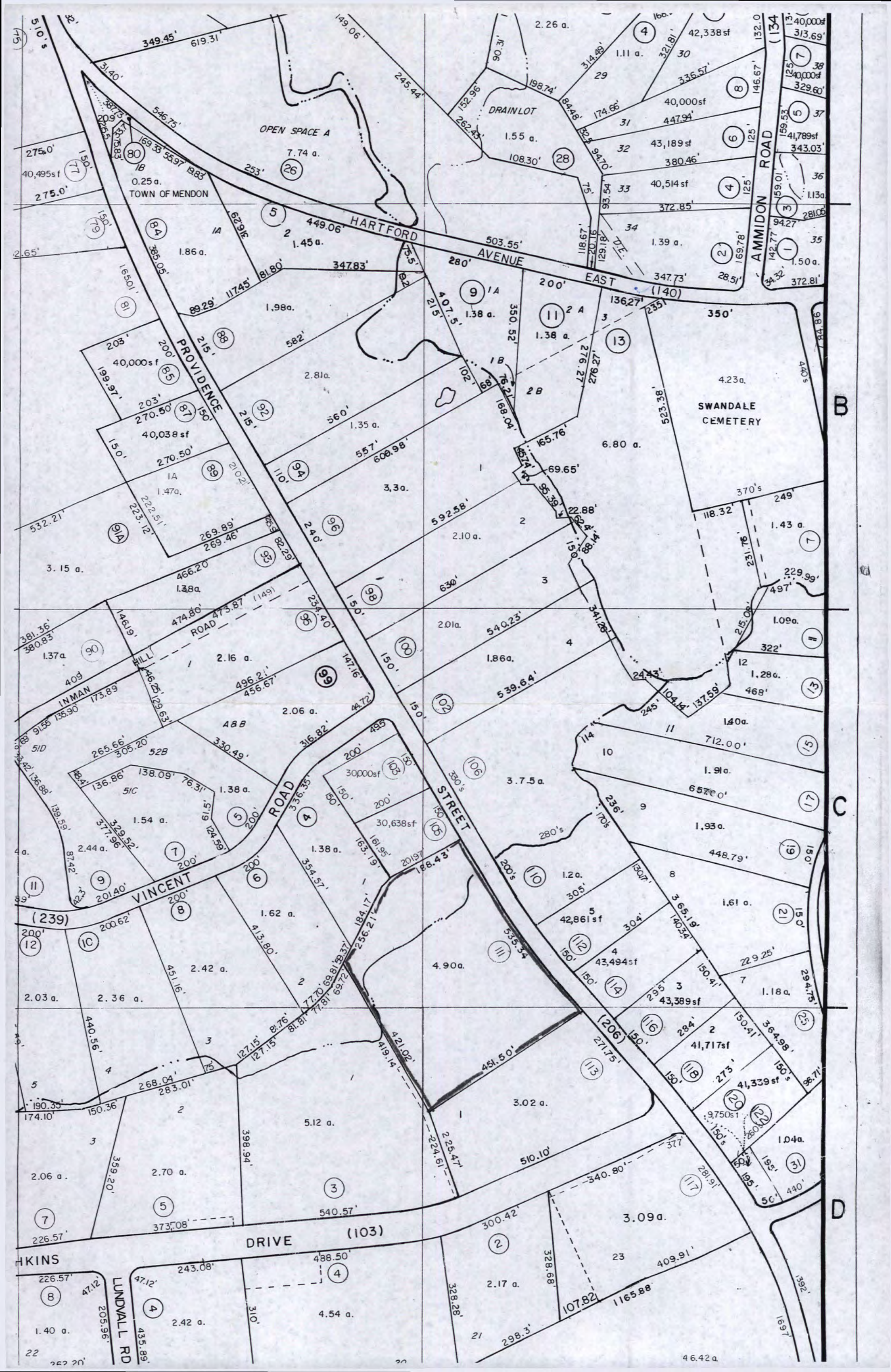
CONVERSION TABLE		DECLINATION DIAGRAM		ADJOINING MAPS	
Meters	Feet			1 2 3	
1	3.2808			4	5
2	6.5617			6	7
3	9.8425			8	
4	13.1234				
5	16.4042				
6	19.6850				
7	22.9658				
8	26.2467				
9	29.5275				
10	32.8084				
To convert meters to feet: multiply by 3.2808		UTM grid convergence (1983 and 1985 magnetic declination (MM) at center of map Diagram is approximate		1 Worcester South 2 Milford 3 Middle 4 Franklin 5 Thompson (7.5') 6 Uxbridge (7.5') 7 Blackstone (7.5') 8 Attleboro	
To convert feet to meters: multiply by 0.3048					

ISBN 0-607-23420-2
9 780607 234206

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	.....	.....
Bridge: drawbridge	.....	.....
Footbridge: overpass; underpass	.....	.....
Build-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	.....	.....
Well; 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	.....	.....
Repts, large and small; bays, large and small	.....	.....
Submerged meads; marsh, swamp	.....	.....
Land subject to controlled inundation; woodland	.....	.....
Scrub; mangrove	.....	.....
Prohibit; vineyard	.....	.....

A pamphlet describing topographic maps is available on request





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

April 4, 2006

Dr. John Roberts
National Register of Historic Places
Department of the Interior
National Park Service
1201 Eye Street, NW 8th floor
Washington, DC 20005



Dear Dr. Roberts:

Enclosed please find the following nomination form:

Nathan C. Aldrich House and Resthaven Chapel, 111 Providence Street
Mendon (Worcester), MA

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

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Betsy Friedberg".

Betsy Friedberg
National Register Director
Massachusetts Historical Commission

enclosure

cc: Neil Larson, preservation consultant
Thomas and Colleen Conley
Kenneth O'Brien, Board of Selectmen
Kathleen Coffey-Daniels, Planning Board