

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form



This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. **Place additional certification comments, entries, and narrative items on continuation sheets if needed (NPS Form 10-900a).**

1. Name of Property

historic name HENRY'S GARAGE (Multiple Properties: No)

other names/site number HENRY BUILDING; PORT HENRY FIRE DEPARTMENT

2. Location

street & number 14 CHURCH STREET

city or town PORT HENRY

state NEW YORK code NY county ESSEX code 031 zip code 12974

not for publication

vicinity

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,

I hereby certify that this X 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 X meets does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:

national statewide X local

Signature of certifying official/Title

Date

State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria.

Signature of commenting official

Date

Title

State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

X entered in the National Register

determined eligible for the National Register

determined not eligible for the National Register

removed from the National Register

other (explain):

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

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5. Classification

Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply.)

<input type="checkbox"/>	private
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	public - Local
<input type="checkbox"/>	public - State
<input type="checkbox"/>	public - Federal

Category of Property

(Check only **one** box.)

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	building(s)
<input type="checkbox"/>	district
<input type="checkbox"/>	site
<input type="checkbox"/>	structure
<input type="checkbox"/>	object

Number of Resources within Property

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

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1	0	buildings
0	0	sites
0	0	structures
0	0	objects
1	0	Total

Name of related multiple property listing

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

N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

N/A

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

COMMERCE/TRADE: specialty store, warehouse

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

GOVERNMENT: fire station

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions.)

NO STYLE

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions.)

foundation: CONCRETE

walls: CONCRETE BLOCK

roof: SYNTHETIC

other: METAL, GLASS

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Narrative Description

Summary Paragraph

Henry's Garage, located in the Village of Port Henry, Essex County, New York, arrived at its present form following two distinctive building campaigns, 1911 and ca. 1915. Originally constructed by the Henry family to meet the needs of a horse and automobile livery business—and designed by Earl Henry while a student at Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute in Troy, New York—it also soon satisfied the functions of an automobile showroom, service garage and car storage facility. Although the two sections employed coursed concrete block for their exterior walls, they were nevertheless constructed with dissimilar structural systems. The earlier portion utilized a riveted steel frame which was faced with concrete block, with cement floors at first and second-floor level and a steel-truss roof frame; the later section employed load-bearing concrete block with internal concrete piers and wood and steel framing. The original, or southern block, rises three stories in height with an accessible, exposed-at-grade basement on the south, or Henry Street, elevation—the grade slopes downward moving north to south between Church and Henry streets—as thus presents as a four-story building on that side, while the northern block, fronting on Church Street, rises a full four stories above grade. The earlier section is covered by a low-pitched gable roof with a parapet wall that conceals it from view at grade level; the later section is flat-roofed and punctuated by an elevator tower that rises prominently above the roofline. At the time the addition was made, the original Church Street elevation was subsumed within it, and at fourth-floor level within the addition is still visible the cavetto cornice that terminated the original construct's north elevation and the ghost of the lettering "HENRY BUILDING 1911." The building is largely unoccupied, save for that portion used by the Port Henry Fire Company as an active fire station and for storage by the village and its public works department. Inside, both sections are largely utilitarian in nature, the unused areas having largely open floor plans and, where present, the remains of simple wall and ceiling finishes which included ornamental pressed metal, plaster on wood lath, and plasterboard; in many parts of the building the structural system is fully exposed to view. Vertical circulation between the first and upper floors is effected by means of a staircase located where the two sections meet, and there is additionally a heavy freight elevator that allowed for the vertical movement of automobiles between levels, this feature having been moved during the historic period from its original location within the southern block. While some alterations have been made to the building, particularly to accommodate heavy fire-fighting equipment at grade level on the north elevation, and although it has suffered to some extent from deferred maintenance, Henry's Garage retains many historic-era features which portray its use as a livery, automobile dealership and service station.

Narrative Description

Location & Setting

The nominated building is located in the Village of Port Henry, Essex County, New York, and is situated so as to have frontage on both Church Street and Henry Street; its physical address is 14 Church Street. This location places the building a short distance west of South Main Street, or what is otherwise New York Route 22, the principal north-south thoroughfare on the New York side of Lake Champlain. One block north of Church Street is Broad Street (Essex County Route 4), which extends in a westerly direction away from Port Henry towards Moriah. This immediate part of Port Henry is one of mixed architectural character and includes frame and masonry buildings which were built to serve domestic, religious, commercial and civic functions. Notable among these are two previously State and National Register of Historic Places-listed resources, the Sherman Free Library and the Mount Moriah Presbyterian Church, both of which are situated on Church Street between the nominated building and Church Street's intersection with South Main Street, and both of which were listed on the NRHP in 1995. The nominated building, on its Church Street (north) side, is fronted by a flat expanse of asphalt and is flanked to either side by multi-story wood frame houses in

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addition to a third house that is situated immediately adjacent to its west elevation but which is set back from Church Street. On the Henry Street (south) side the building's south elevation is situated close to the street and is again flanked to either side by frame dwellings, the one to the west being set back from the alignment of the road and fronted by a small grassy parcel.

Overview

Henry's Garage, as constructed in two phases, is a rectangular-plan building that was built into the sloping grade of the site. The south section is characterized by walls of coursed concrete block which mimics stone ashlar. This block exhibits a textured, faux rough-hewn face, excepting the corners, exposed basement wall, and belt courses, which were laid up with smooth-faced units. The block for the original building campaign was produced on-site and was made with cement mixed with mine tailings, as was the mortar. A system of rectilinear cedar bracing is anchored to the south wall and returns around the east and west elevations; this was installed during construction due to concerns with the stability of the wall, a non-bearing veneer which is not well integrated with the riveted steel frame within, due to a misunderstanding relative to the cement-to-tailings ratio used for the mortar. Window openings at first, second and third-floor level were treated as pairs, symmetrically arranged and rectangular in shape, and fitted with two-over-two wood sash, much of which remains in situ. A prominent wood cornice terminates this elevation; simple in conception, it is highlighted by paired and stylized brackets. As for the opposite north elevation, it consists of three bays, these articulated by the pier and spandrel grid that defines the recessed wall panels within which windows were centered at second, third and fourth-story level. The three first-story bays—originally consisting of a central garage bay flanked by plate-glass showroom windows—have since been altered to accommodate the building's current use as Port Henry's firehouse. Inside, both sections exhibit aspects of their differing structural systems and historic-era finishes, though the showroom area on the north side of the addition has been in large measure retrofitted to function as a fire station. The earlier portion of the building has a full riveted steel frame which is the building's bearing structure, the exterior block wall, as noted, having been erected as a veneer. Wood joists bear on steel I-beams excepting at first and second-floor level, where the floor is formed of concrete bearing on steel I-beams. The gable roof of this section is sustained by a series of riveted steel trusses. As for the later north section, the loads are sustained by the concrete block walls and internally on concrete piers which support steel I-beams, which in turn carry a system of wood joists; this section's flat roof is borne by massive wood beams which bear on I-beams, many of which have lettering which indicate they are of Carnegie manufacture. Vertical circulation is effected by means of a staircase in the newer section, which also houses the freight elevator which functioned to move automobiles between the various levels; the original 1911 section once contained the elevator and was also fitted with a horse ramp between the basement and first floor at the south side of the building, in addition to a manure pit. The building as presently constituted consists of an estimated 19,000 square feet of floor space.

Exterior

The north elevation, the principal one, will be described first. It is three bays wide and four stories high, and is characterized by the symmetrical division of the wall into rectangular concrete-block panels by the pier and spandrel grid. At first-story level, the original fenestration has been altered to accommodate the current fire house function; overhead doors are situated in the center and westernmost bay, the latter being situated in a bump-out that extends forward from the remainder of the elevation. In the easternmost bay is fitted a modern glazed-and-paneled door, to one side of which is a large window. Above ground level, the original design premise remains all but intact, consisting of rectangular-shaped window openings with concrete sills and lintels, the openings fitted with single plate-glass window units; these are centered within coursed concrete block panels with both smooth and rough-cast faces. One of these openings now accommodates a pair of one-over-one windows, though in the original opening without alteration. A shield is secured above the central window at second-story level which identifies the building as the Port Henry Fire Department; at

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one time a Dodge-Plymouth dealership sign occupied this position. This elevation is terminated by a block parapet which has small and relatively inconspicuous pyramidal caps at either end; centered within it, and corresponding with the center bay, is a large panel with raised lettering that reads "HENRY'S GARAGE 1911."

The opposite south elevation, fronting on Henry Street, represents one of the original building's two principal elevations. It presents as four stories in height, the basement wall being fully exposed at grade. Fenestration is symmetrically arranged and at ground level consists of two large entrance bays and four smaller windows, two of which are positioned centrally between the larger bays. The easternmost one retains its original double-leaf wood doors, each of which is divided into four panels by the rails and stiles, the panels themselves being fitted with diagonally oriented bead-board so as to form a diamond motif; the other entrance is fitted with replacement doors. The window openings are boarded up on the outside and insulated inside. Above this level the windows are arranged into four bays with each being divided into two units by a central wood mullion. Original two-over-two wood sash remains hung in the first and second-story window openings while the upper-story windows have been removed, though the central mullion remains (these openings are boarded-up from the inside).

Both of the side elevations are partially obscured by adjacent buildings. The east elevation is seven bays deep, with four windows corresponding with the south block and three corresponding with the north block; as for the west elevation, it is four bays deep, the wall of the north block being blind. Those openings corresponding with the original south section match the characteristics of the windows which punctuate the upper levels of the south wall; those on the east wall of the addition follow this configuration as well. The seam between the two sections is readily evident and is marked by the original rusticated treatment of the northeast and northwest walls of the original section, a treatment that was mirrored on the addition. Belt courses were employed on the older section to provide a horizontal emphasis and to articulate interior floor divisions, a treatment which is mimicked by the spandrels of the later section, thereby providing a loosely unified design motive.

Interior

The original 1911 south section of Henry's Garage consists of four floors of useable space, inclusive of the exposed-at-grade basement; as for the north addition, it consists of four floors erected above a partial basement. The building currently contains both used and unused space; the third and fourth floors are all but unused at this time. The first floor of the north section corresponds with that area used by the fire department; the first floor of the south section was once used for equipment storage by the village, but that function has been largely discontinued due to concerns with floor loading. The second floor of both sections is used by the village for the storage of seasonal decorations and equipment. As for the basement, the southern portion is used by the public works department; large motorized vehicles and trailers are currently located there. Notwithstanding the area presently given over to the fire company, the building exhibits a fair degree of physical integrity, so far as plan and finish; however, in most areas where finishes are missing or damaged, they are readily interpretable given remaining physical evidence.

The fire company now occupies the area corresponding with the first floor of the ca. 1915 north section, in addition to some of the area to the south in the original section; accommodation has been made for the storage of firefighting vehicles, which operate out of the central and westernmost façade bays, and for the firefighters themselves on the east side of the plan. In the original 1911 block at first-floor level, on the south side of the plan, are visible many aspects of the original building campaign, among them the concrete floors and, above, the steel girders and I-beams which bear the weight of the concrete floor above, at second-floor level. Walls here retain vestiges of what would appear to be panels of Beaverboard or a similar prefabricated

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material, while the ceilings were left exposed to view. The second floor of this original section features a largely open plan and like that below has a concrete floor. A portion of the ceiling in this area appears to have been plastered originally; although the plaster has failed, wood lath and remnants of the plaster keying nevertheless remain (at least one plaster on lath partition wall was also observed on this floor, and areas of plasterboard ceiling were also observed). Moving from this part of the building into the second floor of the ca. 1915 addition, the most conspicuous finish feature is the remains of an ornamental pressed-metal ceiling that was affixed to nailers attached to the wood joists, and a section of corresponding pressed-metal cornice. Flooring is wide-plank wood board and the areas of original wall that remain in situ appear to be finished with plasterboard.

The upper floor reveals the disparate solutions used to engineer the roof structures of the two sections. The older 1911 section's gable roof was built using a series of gusseted steel trusses upon which a wood plank deck was constructed. The newer section, by contrast, is flat roofed, its weight borne by longitudinal steel I-beams upon which massive transverse wood beams are footed, these being sistered where they rest on the beam. These wood beams in turn carry a wood roof deck, with the ends of the beams resting in pockets in the concrete block wall. The remnants of the original 1911 cornice are visible here, although interrupted by the concrete block and concrete piers that sustain the I-beams and roof load. This cornice was constructed with lime-based stucco applied to expanded steel lath and is of a simple cavetto type. Also visible here is the original pointing treatment used for the exterior walls, the horizontal joints being flush, the vertical ones being of the grapevine type.

The basement of the south section has a poured concrete floor and walls, and visible there are the riveted bases of the steel frame's vertical columns where they meet the floor and the main girders and I-beams which sustain the concrete flooring of the first floor above. An irregular aperture now penetrates the original north foundation wall of the original section and allows for communication at this point between the two basement areas.

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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 old or achieving significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions.)

ARCHITECTURE

COMMERCE

TRANSPORTATION

Period of Significance

1911- 1967

Significant Dates

1911; ca. 1915

Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

Cultural Affiliation

Architect/Builder

HENRY, EARL (architect, 1911)

Period of Significance (justification)

The cited period of significance, 1911-1967, is initiated with the construction of the original section of the building and is carried forward to the 50-year cutoff point, given its continuous use to 1967 in association with the Henry family's car dealership and service business.

Criteria Considerations (explanation, if necessary)

N/A

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Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph

Henry's Garage, located in the Village of Port Henry, Essex County, New York, was erected in the nascent years of the automobile era in the region and at a time of transition between horse-drawn power and the car. The Henry family established Henry's Livery in Port Henry in 1903; at that time the business provided a wide range of horse-drawn transportation services, among them freighting hay from Vermont farms across frozen Lake Champlain during the winter, hauling supplies to remote Adirondack logging camps, and conveying goods, mail and passengers between Port Henry and other regional communities. In 1909, and in consideration of a developing if not imminent trend—and to some extent influenced by the family's younger generation—the Henrys augmented their stable of 30 horses, which continued to draw their fleet of wagons, carriages and sleds, with the addition of three automobiles. Two years later, in 1911, the first section of the nominated building was erected. It was designed by Earl Henry, a son of business founders Charles W. and Ella Henry, who was a student of civil engineering at Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute in Troy, New York, along with his younger brother, Harold; their older brother, Ray, had by this time taken over the day-to-day affairs of the business. Earl Henry designed the building, a model automobile sales and service garage, as his senior thesis project; it included accommodations for horses and horse-drawn equipment, although that aspect of the business would rapidly fall away. As noted by descendant Tom Henry, the family's decision to actually erect the building designed by Earl Henry indicated their optimism for the future of the automobile in regional—and American—life, and the robust nature of the local economy at that time, centering on Witherbee, Sherman & Company, a major regional producer of iron ore.¹ Built during the course of eight months, it was a building of no small curiosity to the Port Henry community, it being erected in a modern manner with a steel frame and complete with a heavy elevator, and conceived in large measure for the sale and service of automobiles. Its success soon required an addition, the present north block, added ca. 1915. Henry's Garage proved a successful local business and continued to be so until the later 1960s, when, during the third generation of family ownership, it closed in the face of financial hardship. Since 1971 the building has served as the Port Henry Fire Station, a use that may in time be discontinued. The building is being nominated in association with NRHP Criterion A, in the areas of Commerce and Transportation, as a rare surviving example of an early twentieth century Essex County business which served the dual purpose of horse and automobile livery briefly, prior to transitioning fully to automobile service and sales. It is additionally being nominated in association with Criterion C, in the area of Architecture, as an early example of steel-frame construction in Port Henry, the 1911 section having been designed as a model automobile sales and service center by Earl Henry. It remains a rare and important survivor from the advent of the automobile age in Essex County, the larger region, and New York State.

Narrative Statement of Significance

Historical Context

Port Henry is situated on the western shore of Lake Champlain in the Town of Moriah. This area of Essex County, situated between the Adirondack Mountains to the west and Lake Champlain to the immediate east, witnessed its first significant permanent settlement following the conclusion of the American Revolution. Port Henry was among the first points of settlement in this region, given its direct communication with Lake Champlain, and its first settler arrived there prior to the war. A grant for water power within what is now the bounds of the Village of Port Henry had been granted to Benjamin Porter in 1766. A first-hand account dating from the 1870s noted that in 1805 there was nothing where the village currently stands, save for a small house and a grist-mill.² When European-American settlers began to arrive in the mid-1780s, the inhabitants of the region were largely Native Americans of the St. Regis and Oswegatchie tribes. Lumbering and the extraction of iron ore were principal industries established at an early date; lumber was transported via Lake Champlain to markets in Quebec, Canada, and following the completion of the Champlain Canal refined

¹ Tom Henry, *The Story of Henry's Garage* (2002); not paginated.

² Henry P. Smith, *History of Essex County* (Syracuse: D. Mason & Co., 1885), 566-67.

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lumber was shipped to southern points.³ The extraction and processing of abundant supplies of iron ore soon emerged as the driving force of the local economy, the Moriah iron bed being the most extensive in Essex County; the first blast furnace was in operation by 1822. This industry carried the local economy for a century and a half following its establishment, with Witherbee, Sherman & Company emerging as the preeminent business concern by the latter stages of the nineteenth century. As for the name "Port Henry," it appears its precise derivation remains a point of speculation and coincidental with the Henry family of Henry's Garage.⁴

Like Ticonderoga to the south, Port Henry was an important manufacturing center on the New York side of Lake Champlain; in Ticonderoga, industry centered on paper manufacturing, while the processing of iron ore was preeminent to Port Henry's economic fortunes in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Both communities shipped their products via Lake Champlain to the Champlain Canal and from there the Hudson River, and afterwards via the Delaware & Hudson Railroad. Prior to the advent of the automobile, most visitors to Port Henry arrived via the steamboat or railroad and from there relied on horse-drawn transportation to be conveyed to their final destination. The Henrys livery business was established when this condition remained the norm, but within a few years the influence of the car would be more deeply felt, and many were beginning to take it more seriously as a reliable mode of transportation. As noted by Henry descendant Tom Henry, the year the first section of the nominated building was erected, 1911, was a pivotal year so far as the credibility of the car among Americans:

...[In 1911] major patent litigation had been decided in favor of a group of automobile manufacturers (led primarily by Ford), the four-cycle engine was proving to be dependable, auto manufacturers were refining designs and gearing up plants, and consumers were taking notice as vehicles became more reliable and stylish. It was also the year the Indianapolis Speedway premiered with its first 500-mile auto race, which was won by Ray Harroun at an astounding average of 74.59 miles per hour—that made more than a few headlines. There were about 600,000 cars in the United States then, some powered by steam, others by electricity, but most by gasoline. It was the latter that the Henry brothers correctly saw as both a threat and an opportunity. They knew their old hay burners would not be able to compete much longer with the quick-to-hell-and-back automobiles.⁵

The Henry family, as its name would imply, was central to the story of Henry's Garage. This business concern was established in 1903 by Charles W. Henry and his wife, Ella M. Henry, who had wed in 1885; it was originally Henry's Livery and was wholly reliant on horse-drawn power. In 1900 Charles W. Henry (b. 1863) was residing in Port Henry with Ella (b. 1858) and the couple's three young sons, Ray, Earl and Harold; all five would play a significant role in the family business in the years ahead. At that time the elder Henry was working as a meat cutter; by the time of the 1905 New York census, and with the establishment of the family's business, he noted a new occupation, that of "Liveryman," while his eldest son, Ray, 18 years old, was noted as a "Livery-driver." Charles W. Henry, known to friends by the moniker "C.W.," was a guiding force in the affairs of the business until his official retirement in 1916, though his son Ray had begun to manage the garage in 1909. Ella Henry died in 1918 and Ray died the following year, during the 1919 influenza pandemic. The elder Henry had earned only an eighth-grade education and was in many ways skeptical of the college educations which his sons pursued, with their mother's blessing, preferring instead the path of hard work and self-education to that of the "educated fool."⁶ This stance would have particular ramifications when the time came to build the new Henry's Garage building in 1911.

³ Ibid., 574-75.

⁴ "Why Port Henry?" *The Elizabethtown Post*, 2 March 1911.

⁵ *Henry's Garage*.

⁶ Ibid.

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The couple's middle son, Earl Henry, educated in civil engineering at Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute (R.P.I.) in Troy, New York, was involved with the affairs of the company as a director, though other professional obligations required his attention; he would also design the building that would come to be known as Henry's Garage, originally christened the Henry Building. Thus Earl's younger brother, Harold, assumed most of the day-to-day affairs of the business following their parent's retirement from an active role and the death of their older brother, Ray. Earl Henry's served as chief engineer for Witherbee, Sherman & Company and in that capacity oversaw the construction of the firm's 500-ton-per-day blast furnace at Cedar Point; he additionally designed a dam on Lincoln Pond, oversaw a Jersey dairy herd at nearby Edgemont Farm, and initiated a building supply firm, E.C. Henry, Inc.⁷ His accomplishments in the field of engineering earned him an entry in the 1922 volume of *Who's Who in Engineering*:

HENRY, Earl Charles, Witherbee, Sherman & Co., Mineville; res. Witherbee, N.Y.
Civil and Mining Engr; b. Port Henry, N.Y.; s. Charles W. and Ella M. (Hodgman) Henry;
C.W., Rensselaer Poly Inst., 1911; m. Port Henry, N.Y., Jan. 1, 1913, Helen Raeburn Bigalow;
Children: Lowell, Stuart, Elbert, Edwin. With Witherbee, Sherman & Co., consecutively as
enr. 1911-13, mining capt., Harmony Mine, 1913-17; mill supt, 1917-19, asst. gen. supt since
1919. Mem. firm, Henry's garage, Port Henry, N.Y. Mem. A.I.M. & M. E. Pres., Bd. Education,
Mineville (N.Y.) High School.⁸

Harold, or "Dip" as he was otherwise known by the family, had also graduated from R.P.I., with a degree in mechanical engineering. Following his graduation he worked with the Army Corps of Engineers in the construction of levees on the Mississippi River and later returned to Port Henry to work for Witherbee, Sherman & Company like his brother.⁹ In 1916 he left the company to assume full oversight of the family's garage, his parents having retired. It was Harold "Dip" Henry who guided the business through what were termed the lean years of the 1920s, when the local economy faltered, and the wider-ranging national depression of the 1930s. He continued to manage the business until 1939, when he was stricken by a heart attack and died at the age of 45; as noted by descendant Tom Henry, his passing was a shock to the local community:

...[Harold] was a respected businessman as well as a member of the school board and thirteen other community organizations. The remaining school-board members voted to name the new athletic field at the Port Henry High School "Henry Field" in his honor. Earl [Henry] designed a massive tapered retaining wall, which still supports the south and east sides of the field along College Street. Ironically many cars that Dip had sold to his customers over the years that had become ready for the junk heap were used to help fill in the huge ravine that once dominated the area where the field was constructed.¹⁰

At that time the garage business passed to a third generation of the Henry family, as Harold's son, Clifford, took charge following his father's passing. Already familiar with the business, which he'd been active in since his graduation from college, Clifford Henry was well qualified, having earned a degree from R.P.I. in business administration the previous year. It was Clifford Henry and his wife, Marion, who saw the business through to its closure in the late 1960s, the local mining industry having begun its final collapse.¹¹ In 1971, the building assumed a new life as Port Henry's fire station and as a storage facility for the village and its public works department.

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ John Williams Leonard, ed., *Who's Who in Engineering 1922-23*, vol. 1 (New York: Isaac Goldman Co., 1922), 588.

⁹ *Henry's Garage*.

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ Ibid.

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The first section of Henry's Garage was erected at a time when automobiles were beginning to gain broader appeal and credibility at the regional as well as the national level. They were still a novelty when Charles W. Henry established his horse livery in 1903, but by 1909 the family had added three cars to the lineup. His eldest son, Ray Henry, was managing the garage by this point, having been trained for the job the previous year, the same year that the Ford Motor Company began assembling Model T's in Detroit, Michigan. It was no doubt in part at the insistence of the younger Henry that cars were added to the livery fleet. The year 1909 also corresponded with the Lake Champlain tercentenary celebration, which brought considerable visitation to the region. A guide associated with that event noted Henry's Garage as "the chief livery in this section... [with] three automobiles... being especially appreciated and patronized by tourists who want to see the surrounding country or make trips into the lakes and mountains." That source further noted that horse-drawn vehicles were also available to the wayfarer, as the garage maintained "The handsomest and most serviceable rigs... carried in single, double or three seaters, and the horses are always in condition to be sent out. Competent drivers and chauffeurs are furnished, as eight men are employed."¹²

As the above quote indicates, this remained a time of transition in the field of transportation, as not all were yet comfortable with automobile, preferring instead to travel by the time-honored means of horse-drawn vehicle. The Henrys erected their new building with this in mind, although the horse aspect of the business would rapidly fall away from relevance. When they opened the new business in 1911, the Henrys were capable of offering consumers an array of horse-drawn vehicles, a full inventory of new and used cars and trucks, along with vehicle servicing, parts, rentals, automobile storage, and gasoline. Theirs was by all indications the first business established in Port Henry that looked squarely into the future and placed a premium on the automobile. In 1916 the Henry boys bought out their parents' interests in the business and soon thereafter its horses, tack and horse-drawn vehicles were done away with, replaced shortly thereafter with new Bessemer trucks and Ford, Chevrolet and Buick automobiles. In 1923, as the business continued to grow, the Henry family jacked up a frame building that had originally stood on the property—it served as apartments for livery drivers and sat directly in front of the present north block—and moved it a short distance around the corner to a new location on Cottage Street, where it remains today. In its place went a new parking lot, with new dedicated spaces for cars and trucks and a gasoline pump.¹³

Architectural Context

The nominated building is of particular interest given that the first section, constructed in 1911, was built to the design and specifications of Earl Henry, an R.P.I. civil engineering student, as his senior thesis project, and that it exemplifies a model automobile sales and service facility—though one which still made accommodation for horse-drawn power, albeit ever so briefly (horses were entirely phased out of the Henry business by 1920). Perhaps more extraordinary is the fact that the family was confident enough in its design, and also for the prospects for the automotive industry, that it actually followed through on its construction. It was a building of no small interest to the Port Henry community, given its direct association with the fledgling automobile and the modern construction features employed, namely a riveted steel frame and an elevator—the two features which pushed American buildings to new heights in the latter nineteenth century. Erected during the course of a single building season, in eight months, this original construct was augmented shortly thereafter, ca. 1915, with an addition that created the building's current footprint and form. The original façade, fronting on Church Street, was subsumed subsequently by this addition, portions of which remain visible within it. As indicated by surviving images, it was restrained in character, consisting of the all-but symmetrical arrangement

¹²Ibid.

¹³Ibid.

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of bays, with a horizontal emphasis provided by the belt courses aligned between the stories; the corners were rusticated and laid with smooth block which, along with the belt courses, contrasted with the textured block used otherwise. A deep but relatively plain cavetto cornice, which carried the wording "HENRY BUILDING 1911," served as the façade's terminal feature, while at ground level two large central bays were marked as "LIVERY" and "GARAGE." These were flanked by a door into the office spaces located on the east side of the plan and two large showroom windows. The exterior design was straightforward, practical and largely lacking in ornamental elaboration. The precise configuration of the interior is not currently known, except in broad terms. It included accommodations for horses and horse-drawn vehicles on the south side's two lower levels, which could communicate by means of a ramp, along with a manure pit. The concrete floors at first and second-floor level also provided an adequate surface for automobile storage and display.

The original construction campaign to build the new Henry's building was initiated in March of what had been a relatively mild Champlain Valley winter.¹⁴ The family's existing fleet of horses and equipment were removed to new temporary quarters at a nearby stable at the Lee House, which allowed the Henrys to continue their business in the interim, and shortly thereafter a crew demolished the existing on-site frame livery stables and prepared the site for the new building. In order to expedite the construction process, the Henrys purchased a block press that allowed them to produce patterned concrete block with a faux rough-hewn face, and they used horse-drawn freight to convey the necessary box-car load of cement and 150 ton of mine tailings from the Witherbee, Sherman & Company mines, which were mixed with water to make both the wall block and the mortar used in laying the walls up. Immediately upon the completion of the excavation work forms were prepared for the poured concrete foundation. Although Earl Henry superintended the construction of the building he had designed while still at R.P.I., in one instance his father deviated from the specifications he had carefully developed; the former had called for the mortar used to lay up the walls to be mixed at a ratio of three parts mine tailings to one part cement, but his father instead substituted a five-to-one ratio, presumably for purposes of economy and based on his own experience. Concerned with the structural integrity of the mortar and the walls which were then going up—and well along by the time he became aware of the discrepancy—it was at this time that Earl Henry called for the introduction of the rectilinear wood grid reinforcement system to the walls that remains in place today.¹⁵

Erection of this steel-framed building with concrete block veneer corresponded in many ways with a period of change in American industrial and commercial architecture, at which time the merits of traditional load-bearing masonry with wood internal framing, steel framing, and reinforced concrete construction were all being carefully weighed by architects and engineers. Henry's time at R.P.I. undoubtedly brought him into communication with this active dialogue, particularly given Troy's location in a major regional manufacturing quarter where the merits of textile factory design and construction were a point of debate during the first decades of the twentieth century, a discussion carried forward in contemporary trade journals and newspapers. For his model building Henry choose a load-bearing steel frame, presumably in consideration of the tremendous weight loads the building would need to sustain. By the time the addition was built but a few years later the steel frame was omitted, and the building's floor and roof loads were instead transmitted to load-bearing concrete block walls and an internal matrix of concrete piers, steel I-beams and wood joists. Vertical circulation was a preeminent concern, and it appears that the elevator that is now in the north block was originally located on the south side of the original construct, near the southeast corner, its position as portrayed on the 1930 Sanborn fire insurance map (it appears in its present location in a ca. 1948 view, the elevator tower

¹⁴Ibid. Many aspects of the original building campaign are captured in this account; however, many of the pertinent details relative to the construction of the addition are not as well known.

¹⁵Ibid

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by that time rising above the roofline). Storage of cars was an important early consideration as automobiles at this early date required winter storage quarters.

The construction of the new north block gave the building a new public face, but one which was similarly utilitarian in sentiment to the original 1911 building. It featured the clear articulation of the pier-and-spandrel system, the wall panels occupied by concrete block punctuated by window openings. Large showroom windows now flanked a wide central service bay, larger and more pronounced than in the earlier iteration. A ca. 1948 image shows the building as what would appear a dedicated Dodge dealership, complete with a large Dodge company sign above the central bay and advertisements touting that company's product in the showroom windows.

Conclusion

Henry's Garage ushered in a new era in Port Henry's history by virtue of its physical attributes and its expressed function, each of which symbolized the increasing modernity of American life in the early twentieth century. Both its steel frame construction and automobile elevator aroused considerable interest locally, the new building being additionally conspicuous given its considerable scale; it was clearly a forward-looking building erected on modern terms to satisfy increasingly modern needs. Perhaps more consequentially, its erection served as the first major expression in Port Henry of the new automobile age that was then emerging and which would soon radically transform American life. Both of these prevailing themes were to some extent representative of the generational shift in the life of this family business, as the original founders, Charles W. and Ella Henry, gave their three sons—Ray, Earl, and Harold— an increasing role in the garage's day-to-day affairs, which they would fully assume direction of by the time of the First World War. It was presumably Ray Henry who, along with his brothers, prevailed upon his father to introduce the first three automobiles to the garage's fleet in 1909, and it was of course Earl Henry who designed the original 1911 building as a model automobile garage and showroom while at R.P.I. It remains as a fitting tribute to the vision and optimism of the Henry family, which guided this business for three generations and transformed it from a modest livery stable into a thriving automobile dealership and service station.

Developmental history/additional historic context information (if appropriate)

N/A

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9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography (Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form.)

Henry, Tom. *The Story of Henry's Garage* (2002).

Leonard, John W., ed., *Who's Who in Engineering 1922-23*, vol. 1. New York: Isaac Goldman Co., 1922.

Smith, Henry P. *History of Essex County*. Syracuse: D. Mason & Co., 1885.

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

☐ preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67 has been requested)
☐ previously listed in the National Register
☐ previously determined eligible by the National Register
☐ designated a National Historic Landmark
☐ recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
☐ recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____
☐ recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # _____

Primary location of additional data:

☐ State Historic Preservation Office
☐ Other State agency
☐ Federal agency
☐ Local government
☐ University
☐ Other
Name of repository: _____

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): _____

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property .31 acres

(Do not include previously listed resource acreage.)

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1	<u>18</u> Zone	<u>623311</u> Easting	<u>4878278</u> Northing	3	_____ Zone	_____ Easting	_____ Northing
2	_____ Zone	_____ Easting	_____ Northing	4	_____ Zone	_____ Easting	_____ Northing

Verbal Boundary Description

 (Describe the boundaries of the property.)

The boundary is depicted on the enclosed mapping, which was rendered at a scale of 1:24,000, 1:12,000 and 1:3,600. All maps are entitled "Henry's Garage, Port Henry, Essex Co., NY."

Boundary Justification

 (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The boundary was drawn to reflect historic conditions and includes only that land associated with the building during the cited period of significance. No additional or "buffer" land has been included within the boundary as drawn.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title William E. Krattinger

organization NYS Division for Historic Preservation

date November 2016

street & number Peebles Island State Park, PO Box 189

telephone (518) 268-2167

city or town Waterford

State NY

zip code 12188

e-mail William.Krattinger@parks.ny.gov

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Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **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. Key all photographs to this map.
- **Continuation Sheets**
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items.)

Photographs:

Photos by William E. Krattinger, May 2016; TIFF file format, original digital files at NYS DHP, Peebles Island State Park, Waterford NY 12188.

- 001 EXTERIOR, view showing original south facade and east flank elevation
- 002 EXTERIOR, view looking east towards west elevation of original section
- 003 EXTERIOR, view looking to southeast showing façade of added north section
- 004 EXTERIOR, detail view of north façade
- 005 INTERIOR, first floor, original section, view to southwest showing concrete floor and wood and steel framing
- 006 INTERIOR, third floor, ca. 1915 section, view showing elevation and remaining areas of pressed metal ceiling
- 007 INTERIOR, fourth floor, ca. 1915 section, view showing concrete support pier and wood roof framing
- 008 INTERIOR, fourth floor, ca. 1915 section, view showing cornice of 1911 section
- 009 INTERIOR, fourth floor, ca. 1915 section, detail view of 1911 cornice
- 010 INTERIOR, fourth floor, ca. 1915 section, view showing massive wood rafters bearing on steel beam and pier
- 011 INTERIOR, first floor, original section, view looking west showing steel framing and concrete floors above
- 012 INTERIOR, first floor, original section, detail view of concrete floor system of second floor
- 013 INTERIOR, basement, original section, view showing at-grade entrance doors

Property Owner:

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

name Village of Port Henry
street & number _____ telephone _____
city or town _____ state _____ zip code _____

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C.460 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18 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 Office of Planning and Performance Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.

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ABOVE, Henry's Garage, north elevation, ca. 1948; BELOW, north elevation prior to construction of addition depicted above; the cornice depicted is still visible within the newer addition.



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ABOVE, Henry's Garage "float" from a 1925 Port Henry parade; BELOW, Charles W. and Ella Henry, 1885.



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ABOVE, left to right, Harold, Earl and Ray Henry, 1903; BELOW, Charles W. Henry with son, Earl, and grandchildren, ca. 1925.

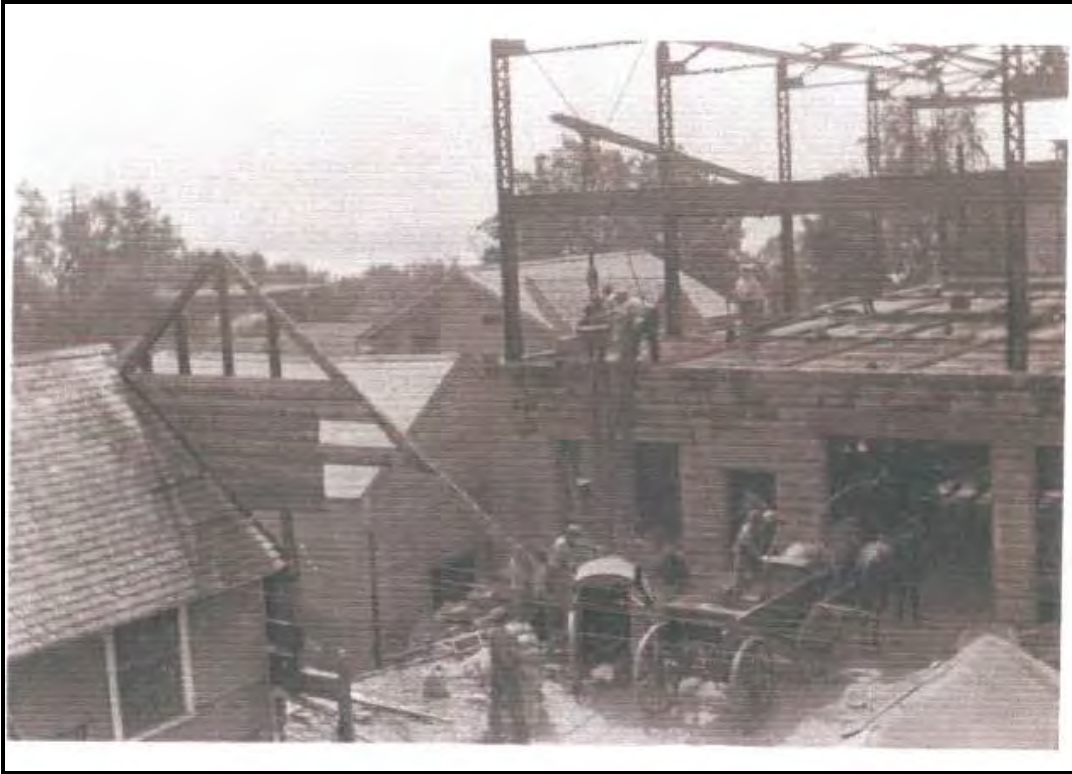


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ABOVE & BELOW, construction of original 1911 section (both views show original north elevation).

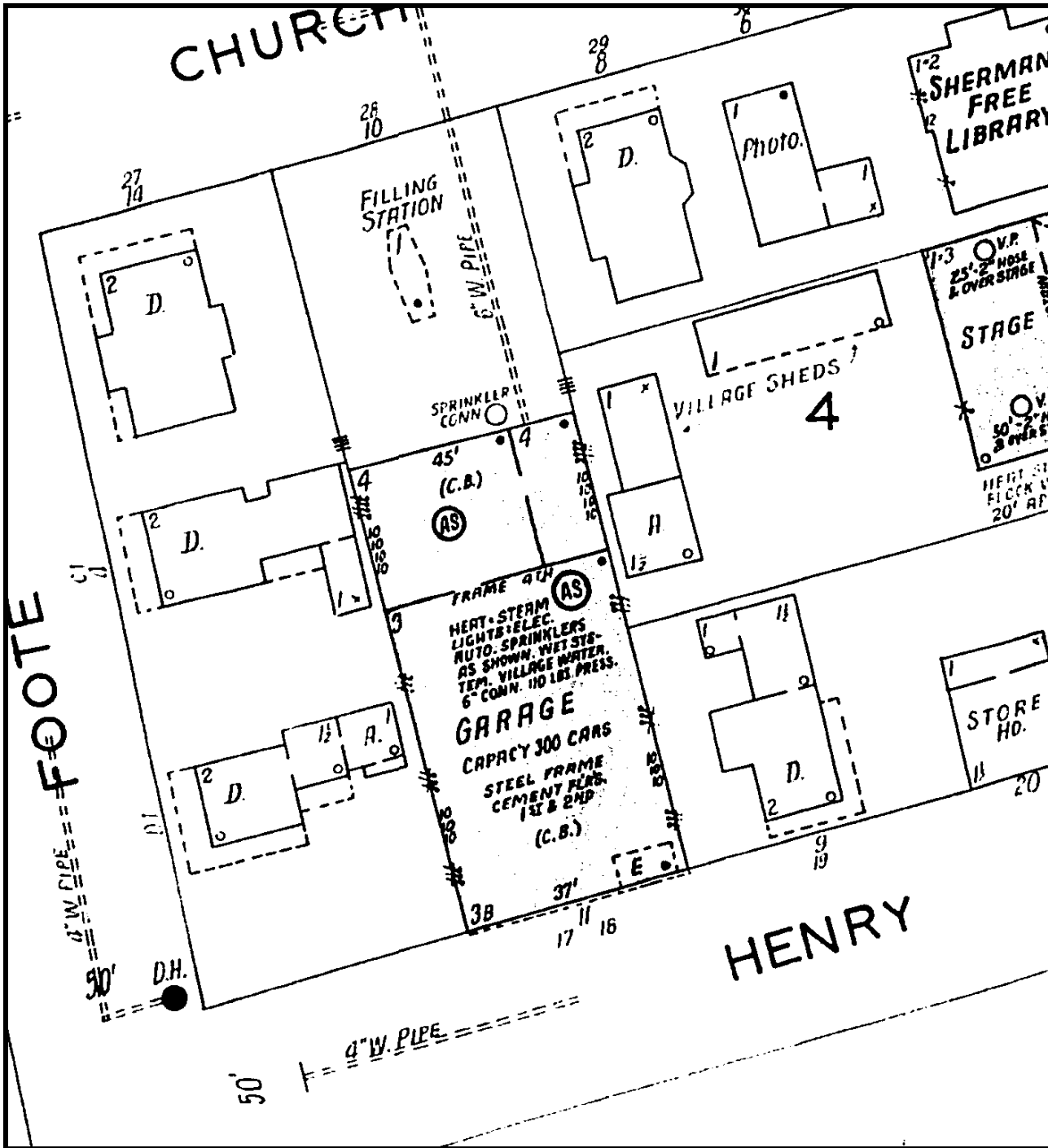


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ABOVE, Henry's Garage as depicted on 1930 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map



Coordinate System: NAD 1983 UTM Zone 18N
Projection: Transverse Mercator
Datum: North American 1983
Units: Meter

0 750 1,500 3,000 Feet

Henry's Garage

NEW YORK STATE OF OPPORTUNITY
Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation





623000

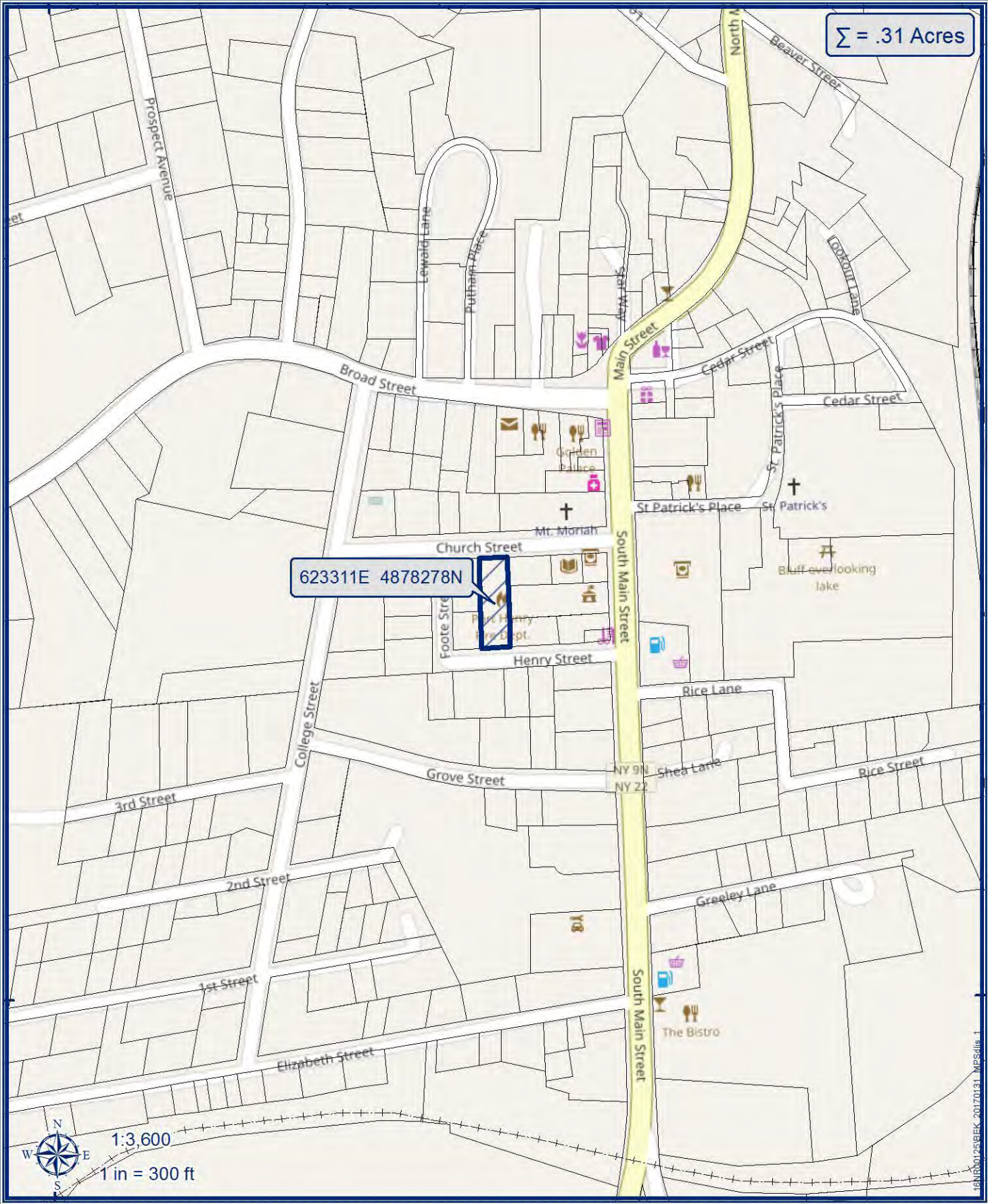
Coordinate System: NAD 1983 UTM Zone 18N
Projection: Transverse Mercator
Datum: North American 1983
Units: Meter

0 112.5 225 450 Feet

Henry's Garage



Parks, Recreation
and Historic Preservation



623000

Coordinate System: NAD 1983 UTM Zone 18N
Projection: Transverse Mercator
Datum: North American 1983
Units: Meter

0 112.5 225 450 Feet

Henry's Garage



Parks, Recreation
and Historic Preservation







HENRY'S GARAGE
1911



HENRY'S GARAGE
1911









Emergency Exit
To the Outside
Do Not Lock This Door



No Smoking





FOLDATANK
FOL-DATANK COMPANY

1500 GAL.
5678 LITERS

22 OZ.

No Smoking







NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

If a nomination is returned to the nomination authority, the nomination is no longer under consideration by the National Park Service.



**Parks, Recreation
and Historic Preservation**

ANDREW M. CUOMO
Governor

ROSE HARVEY
Commissioner



24 March 2017

Alexis Abernathy
National Park Service
National Register of Historic Places
1201 Eye St. NW, 8th Floor
Washington, D.C. 20005

Re: National Register Nomination

Dear Ms. Abernathy:

I am pleased to submit the following MPDF and seven nominations, all on disc, to be considered for listing by the Keeper of the National Register:

Southold Town Milestones, Suffolk County
Southold Milestone 7 (Southold Town Milestones), Suffolk County
Winans-Hunting House, Dutchess County
Reformed Church of Melrose, Bronx County
PS 186, New York County
Henry's Garage, Essex County
Nelson Methodist Church, Madison County
John S. Tilley Ladders Company, Albany County

This is the last batch until your move is completed. Please feel free to call me at 518.268.2165 if you have any questions.

Sincerely:

Kathleen LaFrank
National Register Coordinator
New York State Historic Preservation Office