

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 Metropolitan Life Insurance Company Hall of Records  
other names/site number \_\_\_\_\_

### 2. Location

street & number 759 Palmer Road  not for publication  
city or town Yonkers  vicinity  
state New York code NY county Westchester code 119 zip code 10708

### 3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,  
I hereby certify that this  nomination  request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.  
In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:

national  statewide  local

Ruth A. Purpant DBAHO 6/26/14  
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:

- 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): \_\_\_\_\_

Joe Edson H. Beall 9-3-14  
Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

Metropolitan Life Insurance Company Hall of Records  
Name of Property

Westchester Co., New York  
County and State

**5. Classification**

**Ownership of Property**  
(Check as many boxes as apply.)

**Category of Property**  
(Check only **one** box.)

**Number of Resources within Property**  
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

- private
- public - Local
- public - State
- public - Federal

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

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1		buildings
		sites
		structures
		objects
1		<b>Total</b>

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

**Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register**

**6. Function or Use**

**Historic Functions**  
(Enter categories from instructions.)

COMMERCE/TRADE/warehouse

**Current Functions**  
(Enter categories from instructions.)

VACANT

**7. Description**

**Architectural Classification**  
(Enter categories from instructions.)

20<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY REVIVAL/Classical Revival

**Materials**  
(Enter categories from instructions.)

foundation: CONCRETE  
walls: BRICK  
STONE/Granite  
roof: ASPHALT  
other: METAL/Copper

Metropolitan Life Insurance Company Hall of Records  
Name of Property

Westchester Co., New York  
County and State

---

### **Narrative Description**

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance of the property. Explain contributing and noncontributing resources if necessary. Begin with a **summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, setting, size, and significant features.)

#### **Summary Paragraph**

Located at the eastern edge of Yonkers, New York, the Metropolitan Life Company Hall of Records was originally designed in 1906 by the company's consulting architect, D. Everett Waid. The building is located on a landscaped parcel between Palmer Road and the Sprain Brook Parkway and is surrounded by suburban residential development that primarily dates to the early-to-mid 20<sup>th</sup> century. The building is slightly raised and is bordered by an ashlar granite block wall that serves as a retaining wall for the site.

The subject building was enlarged and expanded in the two decades after its original construction, yet its current three-story exterior is architecturally unified with a brick veneer façade and Neoclassical Revival detailing. The building features a prominent curved main entrance portico flanked by fluted columns and topped with a Neoclassical cast stone entablature. The remainder of the building features brick pilasters with cast stone capitals; cast stone cornices and belt courses span the building's full perimeter. The windows and doors are clad in copper sheathing. The interior features large open spaces. Interior finishes are utilitarian and include concrete and modern laminate tile floors, concrete and plaster walls, and concrete ceilings. The Hall of Records retains its integrity as an early 20<sup>th</sup> century structure.

---

### **Narrative Description**

**Setting:** The Metropolitan Life Insurance Company Hall of Records is located three and a half miles east of Yonkers, New York town center. Yonkers is the fourth largest city in the state and is located fifteen miles north of Midtown Manhattan. The building's location was often described historically as Bronxville, New York, a Westchester village of 6,500; however, the Hall of Records is located a half-mile west of Bronxville's current official boundary and falls within the Yonkers city limits. The surrounding area dates primarily to the middle of the 20<sup>th</sup> century and is generally a mixture of low-rise garden-apartment complexes along major thoroughfares and single-family homes along secondary streets on large lots.

The building is located on the east side of Palmer Road between the Sprain Brook Parkway, which runs north-south on the eastern edge of the site, and Central Park Avenue (SR 100), which runs north-south a quarter-mile west of the subject building. The Sprain Brook Parkway is a high-volume, limited access, six-lane highway that connects the Bronx River Parkway and the Taconic State Parkway. Palmer Road has one traffic lane and one parking lane in each direction. The undulating road is a primary local access route between the neighborhoods of northeast Yonkers, through Bryn Mawr to Bronxville.

The subject building's immediate neighbors to the north, south, and west all date to the middle of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Adjacent to the north is the Delaware Aqueduct; that system, constructed between 1939 and 1945, siphons water from the Delaware River's tributaries and carries approximately half of the New York City water supply. Although the aqueduct is underground here, the property north of the subject building features a two-story red-brick Georgian water service building for the City of New York's Board of Water Supply, constructed c. 1940. Located immediately south of the subject building are two three-story apartment buildings. To the west of the subject building, on the west side of Palmer Road, are several low-rise garden apartment complexes.

Metropolitan Life Insurance Company Hall of Records  
Name of Property

Westchester Co., New York  
County and State

**Site:** The Hall of Records is located on a 0.97-acre irregularly-shaped site. The south and north boundaries of the parcel measure 208 and 157 feet, respectively; the west lot line follows the arc of Palmer Road, while the east property line is approximately 210 feet. The site's grade drops sharply to the east, and the parcel's eastern boundary abuts the Sprain Brook Parkway, which forms an impassable barrier and isolates the site from neighboring properties to the east.

The Hall occupies approximately 60% of the parcel. It is aligned at an angle from the street with a setback of fifteen feet at the north end that shrinks to ten feet at the south end of the parcel. Along Palmer Road, the building is separated from the street by a concrete sidewalk, flanked by grass planting strips, and a low granite-block wall. This wall is set back twelve feet from the street and acts as a retaining wall for the site. A concrete and brick path, with a set of granite block steps, interrupts the retaining wall and leads to the primary entrance, which is recessed approximately twenty feet from the retaining wall.

Site plantings consist of mature trees and lawn around the periphery of the site and foundation shrubbery. A small paved parking lot, accessed by a twenty-foot wide paved parking lot, abuts the building's stepped-back elevations at the northwest corner of the parcel. An asphalt ramp with brick knee walls and granite coping extends from this parking lot to the exterior door on the building's north elevation. The ramp is separated from the building by a set of concrete steps that lead down to an exterior entrance to the building at the basement level.

The rear (east side) of the site is inaccessible from the street. Because the grade is lowered on this portion of the site, the basement level on the subject building's east elevation is daylighted.

**Building:** The building consists of a 1906 two-story section at the west, a third floor that was added in 1920, and two additions to the east elevation that were constructed in 1917 and 1927. The 1906 building is constructed on a stone foundation with load-bearing brick walls. Two later additions to the east are constructed of reinforced concrete with brick curtain walls. The roof features a one-and-a-half-story penthouse, which is recessed from all elevations and consists of steel frame structure.

**Exterior:** In form, the building is approximately L-shaped with a convex portico at the interior of the L. Although built in stages, it reads as a single composition today.

Materials are consistent on all elevations, and consist of brick walls and pilasters, with cast stone ornamentation that includes the building's water table, capitals, portico columns, and moulding. The bays on the first and second floors are separated by brick piers, while the first and second floor windows within each bay are divided by copper spandrels with beveled panel insets. A cast stone block cornice with cast stone egg-and-dart moulding and lion head mascarons separates the lower floors from the top floor on all elevations. Windows throughout the building are primarily 2/2 copper-clad windows.

The building's primary elevation faces west towards Palmer Road. The elevation of the original west section consists of a projecting portion on the south end of the building, with a secondary recessed elevation on the north end of the building. The 1927 addition at the rear (east) of the building projects to the north beyond the main block of the original building, and thus includes a secondary two-bay west-facing elevation. This portion of the façade is consistent with the main sections of the west elevation, although the first floor contains garage doors in each of the two bays. The northern bay here contains paneled copper-clad vehicular doors, while the southern bay contains a modern metal roll down door. The west elevation features two-story brick pilasters

Metropolitan Life Insurance Company Hall of Records  
Name of Property

Westchester Co., New York  
County and State

throughout, which separate each bay of the façade on the first and second floors. The pilasters include cast stone bases and capitals, and the second and third floors are separated by a cast stone cornice. One-story brick pilasters divide the bays on the third floor and are topped with cast stone capitals, which abut a cast stone cornice that encompasses the full perimeter of the building.

This primary façade features a central convex portico that extends the full height of the building and has a brick parapet with cast stone trim at the roofline of the building. Bronze letters that spell “METROPOLITAN LIFE INSURANCE CO. HALL OF RECORDS” are affixed to the portico parapet above the third floor cornice. This portico features paired two-story fluted cast stone columns that flank the primary entrance; its cornice between the second and third floors includes cast stone Neoclassical wreaths (not found elsewhere on the building). The building’s primary entrance is located at the center of this curved portico and consists of a double-leaf paneled copper-clad door with a latticed copper and glazed transom, set within a cast stone door surround. The first and second floors on this portico are separated by a cast stone cornice, which extends along the portico façade (behind the columns) and distinguishes the portico portion from the other sections of this elevation.

The north and south elevations are consistent in materials and similar in composition with the main sections on the primary elevation. Features include two-story brick piers that separate each bay and include cast stone bases and capitals. The second and third floors are separated from the third floor by a cast stone cornice, and the third floor’s bays are separated by one-story brick piers with cast stone capitals that abut the cast stone cornice around the perimeter of the building.

The north elevation features three exterior entrances, one toward the west end of the elevation, a second at the center of the elevation accessed via a ramp, and a third basement door accessed via a stairwell. The first west door is double-leaf half-paneled copper-clad. The second is modern, double leaf full glass aluminum frame, the third is flush hollow core metal. The downward slope of the site toward the east is evident on this elevation with the basement level exposed on the east end. The basement wall here is ashlar granite block. Adjacent is a small one-story brick addition that abuts the north elevation at the basement level and below the grade of the parking area at the west.

The east elevation of the building is similar in materials and composition to the building’s other elevations, but it features a fully-exposed basement level of ashlar granite block (which is below grade on the western half of the site). A cast stone belt course separates the basement from the upper brick floors. In response to the upward slope of the site on its western edge, this belt course corresponds with the water table on the other elevations of the building. The first, second, and third floors on the east elevation are consistent with the other elevations, with brick piers separating the window bays at the first and second floors. The second and third floors are separated by the same cast stone cornice that encircles the other elevations, and the east elevation is topped by another stone cornice.

The building features a flat-roof penthouse that occupies a portion of the subject building’s main roof, which is flat. The two northernmost bays of the penthouse are two stories in height above the roof, while the remainder of the penthouse is one story. The penthouse is set back on all elevations from the parapet of the building. It features a copper-clad exterior with metal pilasters and capitals, and steel windows throughout with varying configurations, including: 1/1, 2/2, 4/4, and 6/6 hung, and 6-light pivot sash. The north elevation of the penthouse features a half-paneled single-leaf door with a 6-light inset sash and a 3-light transom.

Metropolitan Life Insurance Company Hall of Records  
Name of Property

Westchester Co., New York  
County and State

**Interior:** Although the building has evolved over time, it has always served as records storage on all levels, from the basement to the penthouse. Finishes throughout are utilitarian in appearance. The first, second, and third floors each include a freestanding mezzanine levels that was inserted in 1933, though the footprint of the mezzanine varies floor to floor. Each floor is also bifurcated on the interior by the north-south painted brick demising wall that served as the east exterior wall for the original 1906 building. In addition, a limited number of demising walls at the north end of each floor are brick, corresponding to the original exterior elevations of the 1917 addition (before the 1927 addition enveloped its north, east, and south elevations).

Primary access to the building is from the entry at the center west. This doorway leads to a small vestibule. From here, to the south is a single loaded southward L-shaped corridor that leads to six rooms along the west and southwest walls totaling approximately 2,000 square feet. These originally served as a caretaker apartment but were later adapted to offices. Finishes in these spaces include plaster walls and ceiling, wood floors and wood trim. Off the vestibule to the north are a full height single passenger elevator and a full height open dog-leg concrete stair with metal rails and posts. At the north are two interior loading bays accessed from the vehicle doors on the west. These lead to concrete docks. Adjacent to the south of these docks is a service corridor/lobby with full height service elevator and full height narrow metal stair. Also in this location are toilets. This space is part of the 1927 addition and abuts the 1906 building. Further north is another set of narrow metal stairs. To the west of the docks are a receiving office and a former men's restroom later adapted to office space. Most of the floor is open divided only by the north-south bifurcation wall and the structural grid. Floors are concrete; the ceiling is the underside of the concrete deck above. Perimeter walls are a combination of plaster and exposed brick.

The second floor and third floor are similar to the records storage area of the first floor with the vertical circulation. The exception is on the northwest end of the second floor in the 1927 addition (above the loading docks); this space was originally a 1,200 square foot women's rest room adapted into a lunch room a decade later.

The penthouse also has an open floor plan. The north end of the penthouse features two levels, while the south end is one story. Finishes in the penthouse consist of concrete floors, walls, and ceilings.

The basement is primarily consistent in plan with the first, second and third floors, with a painted brick demising wall between the original 1906 building and the additions on the eastern half of the site. The basement also features the same grid of columns found on the other floors of the building. Unlike the other floors, the basement features additional painted brick and concrete demising walls that enclose large portions of the north and west ends of the floor. Basement finishes consist of concrete floors, painted concrete walls, and concrete ceilings with exposed mechanical systems.

**Alterations:** The subject building has a high degree of integrity. The original 1906 building has been expanded several times but all within the period of significance. The Hall of Records' primary historic character-defining features and finishes remain intact, including: the building footprint and façade configuration, exterior cladding materials and ornamental features, primary entrance, and interior floor plan. No character-defining features on the exterior or interior have been significantly altered.

Metropolitan Life Insurance Company Hall of Records  
Name of Property

Westchester Co., New York  
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.

**Areas of Significance**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

COMMERCE

ARCHITECTURE

**Period of Significance**

1906-1964

**Significant Dates**

1906, 1917, 1920, 1927, 1933, 1937

**Significant Person**

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

**Cultural Affiliation**

**Architect/Builder**

Waid, D. Everett

**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.

**Period of Significance (justification)**

**Criteria Considerations (explanation, if necessary)**

Metropolitan Life Insurance Company Hall of Records  
Name of Property

Westchester Co., New York  
County and State

**Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph** (Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance and applicable criteria.)

Constructed in three phases beginning in 1906, the Metropolitan Life Insurance Company Hall of Records is significant under Criterion A for Commerce as the main off-site records storage repository for Metropolitan Life, the leading insurance company in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. The building was constructed soon after the release of the Armstrong Committee report, a ten-volume inspection of the New York insurance industry that had long-lasting implications for Metropolitan Life's recordkeeping practices. The subject building is also significant under Criterion C for Architecture as a locally-significant work of prominent New York City architect D. Everett Waid, Metropolitan Life's company architect. He was responsible for the review of all drawings and specifications for the company's funded projects, which he applied to his design for the Hall of Records. In this role as Metropolitan Life's company architect, Waid exerted considerable influence over the speculative development of New York City in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, even as he contributed his own high-profile commissions to the city's built environment, including the Long Island College Hospital in Brooklyn and Metropolitan Life's Home Office building on Madison Avenue. Waid's influence in the architectural profession also extended to his presidencies over both the New York State Board of Architectural Examiners and the American Institute of Architects.

The Hall of Records remained under Metropolitan Life's ownership until 2006, and continued to serve as a remote repository for the insurance company until that date. The building is significant at the local level, and its period of significance spans from 1906, the year of its original construction, through 1964 in compliance with the National Register's 50-year guideline. Important dates pertain to the building's original construction and subsequent major alterations, which date to 1917, 1920, 1927, 1933, and 1937; these alterations quadrupled the records storage capacity of the original building. The Metropolitan Life Insurance Company Hall of Records retains its physical and associative integrity as a design by D. Everett Waid for his own parent company, and as a reflection of Metropolitan Life's explosive growth in policies, recordkeeping, and commercial and architectural influence in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century.

---

**Narrative Statement of Significance** (Provide at least **one** paragraph for each area of significance.)

### **History of the Building**

The Metropolitan Life Insurance Company Hall of Records was constructed in several phases, beginning with the completion of the original two-story structure in 1906. The building, which alleviated the records storage at Metropolitan Life's Home Office in Manhattan, was intentionally placed at the eastern edge of Yonkers, New York, near the Village of Bronxville, on a site that was isolated from immediate neighbors (and accompanying fire hazards) but accessible from New York City via the Harlem Railroad. Metropolitan Life's consulting architect, D. Everett Waid, designed the original building (and its subsequent additions) with a fully fireproof design to protect the records of the ascendant insurance company.

#### *Yonkers and Bronxville*

At the time of the Hall of Records' construction on Palmer Road, its surrounding streets consisted of scattered residential development in the undeveloped land between the Town of Yonkers (to the west) and the Village of



Metropolitan Life Insurance Company Hall of Records  
Name of Property

Westchester Co., New York  
County and State

Bronxville (to the east). Yonkers, which has 17<sup>th</sup> century roots, transformed in the 19<sup>th</sup> century from a small agricultural town to an industrial outpost of New York City. By the start of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, Yonkers was the site of world-famous companies, including the Otis Elevator Company (established by Elisha Otis in 1853 as the first elevator factory in the world) and the Alexander Smith and Sons Carpet Company, which employed over 4,000 workers and shipped its carpets to cities as far away as Moscow. Despite the industrial ties between Yonkers and New York City, the town rejected a referendum in 1894 to become part of the “Greater New York City.”<sup>1</sup> Instead, Yonkers remained an industrial center independent from the city but very much connected to it.

The Village of Bronxville, located in southeastern Westchester County and fifteen miles north of Midtown Manhattan, was established in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century but saw its real population growth in the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries with the introduction of the railroad from New York City. With the establishment of the Harlem Railroad to Westchester County, affluent businessmen from New York City began to purchase property in Bronxville, Yonkers, and their surrounding areas, in the hopes of drawing a wealthy population of New York’s commuters. The most prominent and influential of these speculative developers was pharmaceutical titan William Van Duzer Lawrence, who commissioned architect William A. Bates to design the planned community of Lawrence Park (NR 1980) in Bronxville.<sup>2</sup> In addition to Lawrence Park, Bronxville was home to an artists’ colony beginning in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, and several wealthy New Yorkers constructed estates and summer retreats in and around the village.

### *Hall of Records*

In this context, separate from—but linked to—New York City, Metropolitan Life Insurance Company constructed its Hall of Records. The company selected a one-acre site adjacent to Sprain Brook, accessible by road but separated from the city’s density that posed a threat of fire. The building’s only neighbors initially were the estate of Theodore G. Knowlton, opposite the Hall of Records on Palmer Road, and the Lawrence Park Country Club, located south of Knowlton’s house. Metropolitan Life’s own consulting architect, D. Everett Waid, designed the building in 1906, employing the Neoclassical Revival style to assimilate the building with its upscale neighbors.

Records were shipped from the Manhattan Home Office to the Hall of Records by freight train to Bronxville Station, and then by horse-drawn truck to the building. In the early years of the Hall of Records’ use, the building was staffed full-time by one Metropolitan Life employee, Elijah G. Cattell. Cattell’s daughter worked in the Home Office in Manhattan, and she brought home requests for records in the evening. Elijah would retrieve the records, and his daughter would carry them back to the Home Office the next day. This two-person system was sufficient for a short time, but within a decade, the demand for new Hall of Records staff and space was unavoidable.<sup>3</sup>

### *Additions and Alterations*

---

<sup>1</sup> Michelle Nevius and James Nevius, *Inside the People: A Streetwise History of New York City* (New York: Free Press, 2009): 178.

<sup>2</sup> Bronxville Centennial Celebration, Inc., *Building a Suburban Village: Bronxville, New York 1898-1998*, ed. Eloise L. Morgan (Bronxville, NY: Bronxville Centennial Celebration, Inc., 1998): 12.

<sup>3</sup> Metropolitan Life Insurance Company, “Nothing’s Antique about Our Hall of Records—Except the Records,” in *The Home Office* 21, no. 3 (August 1939): 3.

Metropolitan Life Insurance Company Hall of Records  
Name of Property

Westchester Co., New York  
County and State

Although Metropolitan Life claimed in 1914 that “the storage capacity will be ample here [at the Hall of Records] for the records of the Company for many years,” the building was soon full, thanks to the company’s ongoing growth and success. Between 1907 and 1918, the company acquired thirteen firms. In 1912, advertisements for the company declared that the company’s policies in force equated to more than the populations of Greater New York, Chicago, Philadelphia, Boston, St. Louis, and Cleveland combined. Moreover, the company asserted, Metropolitan Life paid 526 claims per day, and 6,432 policies were issued and revived daily.<sup>4</sup>

This dominating success quickly overwhelmed the storage capacity of the Hall of Records. Just eleven years after the building’s original construction, and only three years after the company dismissed any concerns about storage capacity, D. Everett Waid designed an addition to the rear of the building, which was constructed in 1917.<sup>5</sup>

The three-story 1917 addition, as well as a third floor added to the original building in 1920 and a subsequent four-story rear addition constructed in 1927, supplemented the records storage of the building to meet the demands of the expanding company. Development in the surrounding areas of Yonkers and Bronxville was still relatively scattered and residential. The additions adopted the same Neoclassical architectural language as the original structure’s “country home” exterior.<sup>6</sup> The 1917, 1920, and 1927 additions were also fireproof, with a reinforced concrete frame, roof, and floors, and brick perimeter walls designed to be consistent on all elevations.<sup>7</sup> On the interior, automatic fire doors were inserted between the original building and the rear additions, further ensuring the protection of the thousands of files stored at the building.

The building’s one-acre site remained a protective buffer in the decades after the building’s construction, even as residential development increasingly encroached. As part of the 1927 addition, a portion of the granite wall along Palmer Road was removed and a paved parking lot was inserted at the northwest corner of the site. The rear addition included two garage doors to accommodate the vehicle access that this new parking lot enabled.

Despite the large additions on the east portion of the site, which more than doubled the size of the original building, storage constraints continued to be a challenge at the Hall of Records in the 1930s. To mitigate this issue, Waid inserted a mezzanine level at each floor in 1933. The resulting structure comprised over 56 linear miles of filing space in shelving units and cabinets that held records from as early as 1899. This exponential increase in records at the building necessitated additional staff as well, which in turn required the design of a new lunch room, kitchen, and break room for the building in 1937. By 1939, over 70 Metropolitan Life employees worked at the Hall of Records (a marked contrast with the original two-person system of filing records).<sup>8</sup>

---

<sup>4</sup> *The Indicator* XXXVIII (Jan.—Dec. 1912): 366.

<sup>5</sup> *The American Contractor* (December 29, 1917): 34.

<sup>6</sup> “The Safeguarding of Public Records,” 33.

<sup>7</sup> Sanborn Fire Insurance Company, 1950.

<sup>8</sup> Metropolitan Life Insurance Company, “Nothing’s Antique about Our Hall of Records,” 6.

Metropolitan Life Insurance Company Hall of Records  
Name of Property

Westchester Co., New York  
County and State

*Sprain Brook Parkway and Late 20<sup>th</sup> Century*

By the late 1930s, the land immediately east of the site was owned by the Westchester County Park Commission. County officials expressed interest in a new highway between New York City and Albany. The proposal initially faced significant local opposition, and the planned parkway was shortened from Bronxville to Elmsford.<sup>9</sup> Parkway discussions were revised in the 1950s by the State Council of Parks, led by Robert Moses, and construction on the new Sprain Brook Parkway began in 1958.<sup>10</sup> The new route for the parkway cut directly across the eastern perimeter of the Hall of Records' site, and in 1959, Metropolitan Life sold a small portion of its land to the State of New York for the construction of the parkway.<sup>11</sup>

The Hall of Records continued in operation as the off-site repository for Metropolitan Life until 2006. During that time in the mid- to late-20<sup>th</sup> century, the land around the Hall of Records was increasingly developed with primarily low-rise garden apartment complexes. The facility remained little altered following the 1930s expansion, and operations remained relatively unchanged. As computer and imaging technologies advanced in the last decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, Metropolitan Life gradually updated its recordkeeping systems. Requirements for hard copy access have been replaced with computerized records, which are concentrated at the company's Manhattan headquarters. This transition allowed Metropolitan Life (now known as MetLife) to discontinue storage operations at the Hall of Records. Metropolitan Life sold the building in 2006.

**Criterion A: COMMERCE**

The building is significant under Criterion A in the area of Commerce for its role in the recordkeeping practices of Metropolitan Life, which was the leading insurance company in New York in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century.

*Metropolitan Life Insurance Company*<sup>12</sup>

The Metropolitan Life Insurance Company was established in 1863 as the National Union Life and Limb Insurance Company. Funded by a group of New York City businessmen, the company insured sailors and soldiers who were injured in the Civil War. The business languished with little success initially, and by the end of the war, it ranked last among life and casualty firms in New York. As a result, the company's directors voted to separate the life and casualty arms of the business into the National Life Insurance Company and the National Travelers' Insurance Company. The latter began to focus on life insurance in 1867. In 1868, National Travelers became the Metropolitan Life Insurance Company.

Metropolitan Life's reorganization and new publicity propelled it to more success than its predecessors, and its emphasis on small-amount policies distinguished it from the dozens of emerging companies that did not offer these popular plans. By the end of 1869, the company had ascended to 25<sup>th</sup> out of 70 American insurance firms in New York in terms of number of policies in force. The insurance industry declined in the early 1870s due to a national economic recession, but Metropolitan Life remained solvent, in part due to the leadership of the company's new vice-president, John Hegeman, and company president Joseph Knapp. Hegeman and Knapp

<sup>9</sup> "Bleakley Disputes Swope's Road View," in *The New York Times* (April 23, 1941): 23.

<sup>10</sup> "State Will Start Westchester Road," in *The New York Times* (October 1, 1958): 39.

<sup>11</sup> City of Yonkers Building and Tax Records, 759 Palmer Road.

<sup>12</sup> Information on the history of Metropolitan Life Insurance Company is drawn from: George R. Adams, "Metropolitan Life Insurance Tower," National Register Nomination, 1977.

Metropolitan Life Insurance Company Hall of Records  
Name of Property

Westchester Co., New York  
County and State

implemented several changes at Metropolitan Life that sustained the company during the recession and elevated its national profile, including the creation of a monthly policyholders' magazine, *The Metropolitan*. As a result, by 1873, only two American life insurance companies were issuing more policies than Metropolitan. When the industry once again declined in the mid-1870s, Metropolitan Life revived its emphasis on small-amount policies, which the company marketed to the country's burgeoning working-class and immigrant populations. These policies were referred to as "industrial" insurance because most of the small-amount policyholders were laborers in the country's new industries.

In the last two decades of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, Metropolitan Life continued to expand its insurance empire. By 1905, it was the fourth-largest life insurance company in the United States. Its growth coincided with the emergence of the muckraking movement in the progressive era, in which corporations faced new scrutiny from journalists and government investigations. When newspapers began to report on financial disputes at Equitable Life, the New York legislature called for an investigation on all of New York's insurance companies. The resulting Armstrong Committee report had far-reaching effects on the insurance industry and at Metropolitan Life.

### *Armstrong Committee*

Convened by the New York State Legislature in 1905 and concluded in 1906, the Armstrong Committee was named for its chair, New York State Senator William Armstrong. The committee was originally tasked with the investigation of insurance practices at Equitable Life, but the scope of the inquiry soon expanded to include all of New York's major insurance companies, including Metropolitan Life. The committee ultimately issued a ten-volume report on its investigation and recommendations for New York's insurance companies. The committee reserved its strongest rebukes for the life insurance practices at Equitable Life, New York Life, and Mutual of New York. Given its emphasis on industrial insurance rather than tontine life insurance, Metropolitan Life actually escaped the report's worst condemnation.<sup>13</sup> Indeed, some critics accused the company of currying favor with investigators in order to avoid consequences.<sup>14</sup> Nevertheless, the report had clear implications for all of New York's insurance companies—including Metropolitan Life—and their recordkeeping practices. The committee's report called for the standardization of policy forms and for insurance companies to file much more thorough annual reports on their investment and administrative activities.<sup>15</sup>

Metropolitan Life's strong management practices, coupled with the fact that it fared relatively well in the Armstrong Committee report compared to its competitors, spurred immense growth for the company in the first decade of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. By 1909, Metropolitan Life had surpassed its three major competitors and become the largest life insurance company in the world.<sup>16</sup>

### **Metropolitan Life Insurance Company Hall of Records**

The Hall of Records, constructed immediately after (and likely in response to) the release of the Armstrong Committee report, was built during the decade of the company's strongest growth. It represents Metropolitan

---

<sup>13</sup> Kenneth J. Meier, *The Political Economy of Regulation: The Case of Insurance* (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 1988): 57-58.

<sup>14</sup> Metropolitan Life Insurance Company, *The Metropolitan Life Insurance Company: Its History Its Present Position in the Insurance World, Its Home Office Building, and Its Work Carried On Therein* (New York: Metropolitan Life Insurance Company, 1914): 23.

<sup>15</sup> Marquis James, *The Metropolitan Life: A Study in Business Growth* (New York: The Viking Press, 1947): 161.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid* 168.

Metropolitan Life Insurance Company Hall of Records  
Name of Property

Westchester Co., New York  
County and State

Life's rise to ascendancy in the worldwide insurance market, and the resultant demand for storage for the company's records. Given the Armstrong Committee's recommendations for more detailed annual reports, as well as the voluminous increase in insurance policies and standardized paperwork, Metropolitan Life's on-site repository at its Madison Avenue Home Office in Manhattan was no longer sufficient as a storage facility. Once built, the new Hall of Records maintained strong ties to the Home Office's operations, and was lauded in company publications as an integral component of Metropolitan Life's business.<sup>17</sup> The building's various additions in the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, and the corresponding increase in staff at the site, reflected the company's overall success. The Hall of Records was Metropolitan Life's only off-site archives facility. Its construction signified the company's massive growth and administrative reforms at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

### **Criterion C: ARCHITECTURE**

The building is also significant under Criterion C in the area of Architecture as the work of D. Everett Waid, company architect for Metropolitan Life and (from 1924-5) President of the American Institute of Architects. In his role as company architect, Waid reviewed the plans and specifications for all of Metropolitan Life's bond and mortgage investments—a responsibility that wielded significant influence over New York's built environment in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. The Hall of Records represents the company's architectural principles applied to one of its own buildings and designed by the same architect who reviewed all of Metropolitan Life's investment construction projects.

#### *D. Everett Waid (1864-1939)*

The Hall of Records' architect, D. Everett Waid, was born in Gouverneur, New York in 1864, and studied architecture at Monmouth College, the Chicago Art Institute, and Columbia University. After graduating from Columbia in 1888, he worked as a draftsman for Jenney and Mundle in Chicago before establishing his own practice in 1894. Waid earned two high-profile commissions early in his practice: an auditorium at his alma mater, Monmouth College (1896, extant as the Dahl Auditorium) and the Long Island College Hospital project (not extant), a commission he and his associate John Galen Howard won in a design competition in 1898. The latter commission prompted Waid to move to New York, where he was based for the remainder of his career until his death in 1939. Later important projects included hospitals in Puerto Rico and Alaska and schools in Cuba and the western United States.<sup>18</sup>

Waid's most significant commission came in 1902, when Metropolitan Life Insurance Company hired him as a consulting architect to review its loan-funded projects. The position, which he held until his death in 1939, earned him a prominent place in the architectural profession in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, with high-profile commissions for the company and elected offices with national organizations, including the American Institute of Architects. Waid eventually became the company's chief architect, designing (with Harvey W. Corbett) Metropolitan Life's new Home Office building at 11 Madison Avenue in Manhattan (1933).<sup>19</sup> That building was

---

<sup>17</sup> Metropolitan Life Insurance Company, "Nothing's Antique about Our Hall of Records," 3.

<sup>18</sup> R. Randall Vosbeck, FAIA, "D. Everett Waid," in *A Legacy of Leadership: The Presidents of the American Institute of Architects 1857-2007* (Washington, DC: American Institute of Architects, 2008): 58-9.

<sup>19</sup> "D. Everett Waid, Architect, Was 75," in *The New York Times* (November 1, 1939): 29.

Metropolitan Life Insurance Company Hall of Records  
Name of Property

Westchester Co., New York  
County and State

originally designed as a 100-story skyscraper, which would have made it the tallest building in the world at the time. The stock market crash and subsequent Great Depression, however, curtailed the tower at the 29<sup>th</sup> floor.<sup>20</sup>

In addition to his prominent role for Metropolitan Life (which was profiled in many trade magazines at the time), D. Everett Waid held several other positions of influence in New York City's architectural field. He served as president of the New York State Board of Architectural Examiners and was a member of the New York City Board of Appeals. In addition, he was elected president of the American Institute of Architects in 1924, and was reelected in 1925—an office he held concurrently with his position with Metropolitan Life.

### *Design Review at Metropolitan Life*

D. Everett Waid oversaw one of Metropolitan Life's most pioneering policies in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century: design review of all construction projects funded by the company. (The paperwork from this expansive program no doubt further contributed to the need for the Hall of Records.) Beginning in 1902, Waid's department reviewed all plans and specifications for projects that borrowed from Metropolitan Life for bond or mortgage financing. The designs were evaluated for both technical and aesthetic aspects, assessing the fire risk of the building as well as its design in context. Given that Metropolitan Life was the largest lender in New York City real estate at the time of the program's creation, D. Everett Waid and his department represented an unprecedented use of an insurance company's financial clout to affect architectural design and construction.<sup>21</sup>

Waid's supervisory review of projects did not end at the drawing boards—the *Architectural Forum* noted that “the distinguishing feature of the Metropolitan's system is its thoroughness.” Waid visited building sites throughout the construction process—sometimes as often as twice a week—assessing details as specific as the depth and placement of pier holes.<sup>22</sup> He was responsible for protecting Metropolitan's bond and mortgage investments in an era of increased construction, operation, and maintenance costs. In that role, Waid was involved in all of the company's construction investments from the initial conceptual planning phase through the building's completion.<sup>23</sup>

Waid's “technical analysis” (as it was called) mandated “the installation of fire-prevention expedients and fire-resisting materials” for the all of the building's framing and features. Moreover, he insisted on fireproof corridors in office buildings and smoke proof towers in loft buildings. Waid required that samples of certain materials be submitted to his department, including “face brick, fireproof doors, corner beads, all hardware, elevator door hangers, marble and mosaic.”<sup>24</sup> For one office building in Lower Manhattan, Waid's evaluation was detailed enough to specify that:

*“All the structural steel in the exterior walls must be covered with a trowel coat of Portland cement mortar carried up a half-story or so in advance of the masonry walls. The steel must be separated from the cinder fill by rich concrete. All surfaces of interior structural steel and iron, except the top flanges of*

<sup>20</sup> Metropolitan Life North Building, National Register Nomination (1996).

<sup>21</sup> “Metropolitan Life Helps in Work of Fire Prevention,” *The Adjuster: An Insurance Journal* 45, no. 1 (July 1912): 151.

<sup>22</sup> “Safe Building: Metropolitan Life Insists When Making Loans, on Right Construction,” in *The Insurance Press* XXXV (September 25, 1912): 11.

<sup>23</sup> “Architectural Design and Structural Requirements of Loaning Institutions,” in *The Architectural Forum* XXXII, no. 3 (September 1922): 120—1.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid* 121.

Metropolitan Life Insurance Company Hall of Records  
Name of Property

Westchester Co., New York  
County and State

*beams, will be protected by concrete or a trowel coat of Portland cement mortar. The shop details of all the steel framing will be submitted to the consulting architect of the Metropolitan Life.*<sup>25</sup>

D. Everett Waid, who helped draft the city's new building code and also served on the State Board of Architectural Examiners, was thus directly involved not only in the preparation of New York's modern building codes in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, but also in their application on a broad and influential scale.

Waid also considered a project for its aesthetic merits, insisting that "a building must not be seriously out of tune with its neighbors" and that "it must preserve the architectural conventions." This level of input from an insurance company's architect was unparalleled, and was largely positively received by the city's architects, who welcomed the demand for better quality buildings. Indeed, the *Architectural Forum* went so far as to assert that "many speculative builders, through their experiences with Metropolitan loans, have come to realize the financial value of higher standards and, in more than one case, have taken pride in erecting better buildings."<sup>26</sup> Insurance and architecture trade publications alike praised Metropolitan's program and Waid's work for their importance and impact. The *Insurance Press* wrote that "the example of the Metropolitan in this respect is worthy of emulation by other institutions loaning money on bond and mortgage." The *Architectural Record* exclaimed that "it is chiefly [thanks] to Mr. Waid's work for the Metropolitan...that we owe the advance in standards on permanent construction in New York."<sup>27</sup> As *The Adjuster* noted, Metropolitan Life was enforcing codes that had not even been passed yet by the city, underscoring the company's influence on both the design and construction of New York City real estate in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>28</sup>

## Hall of Records

Designed in 1906 by Waid, Metropolitan Life's Hall of Records represents the application of these aesthetic and technical design principles to one of the company's own buildings. The design was both stylistically integrated with its neighbors and fully fireproof. The repository was also a rare case of Waid designing a building for the company, rather than reviewing others' designs. As the only off-site archives for Metropolitan Life, the Hall of Records was designed to demonstrate Metropolitan Life's tremendous growth in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. It also was a significant internal investment for the company that pioneered new standards for all of its external investments.

The Metropolitan Life Hall of Records was originally constructed in 1906 to provide "the storage of such of its records as are of value, but are not in daily use." Its location was remote from the city yet accessible, with proximity to roads and railroads that connected Westchester County with New York City. Despite this relatively isolated setting, D. Everett Waid designed the building with a Neoclassical exterior in order to resemble "a fine and extensive villa." The style, popular at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century in an era of architectural revivals, was adapted to the Hall of Records' commercial function in order to assimilate the building with its upscale, suburban residential context. Waid's design incorporated extensive ornamental details, including brick piers, cast stone capitals and cornices, and paired fluted columns around the entrance, in an architectural gesture to the building's scattered—but well-heeled—neighbors.

<sup>25</sup> "Metropolitan Life Helps in Work of Fire Prevention" 152.

<sup>26</sup> "Architectural Design and Structural Requirements of Loaning Institutions," 122.

<sup>27</sup> "Safe Building: Metropolitan Life Insists When Making Loans, on Right Construction," 11.

John Taylor Boyd, Jr., "A Departure in Housing Finance," in *The Architectural Record* (August 1922): 141.

<sup>28</sup> "Metropolitan Life Helps in Work of Fire Prevention," 152.

Metropolitan Life Insurance Company Hall of Records  
Name of Property

Westchester Co., New York  
County and State

In addition to their aesthetic importance, the building's Neoclassical elements and materials served a second, more practical purpose. The Hall of Records' elaborate masonry exterior disguised a structure that was entirely fireproof—a feature of utmost importance, given the repository's contents. Indeed, beginning with the building's location on a buffered one-acre parcel of land, all aspects of the building's design and operations were considered with respect to the building's fire resistance. Each phase of the structure was built with steel, brick and reinforced concrete, and on the interior, all filing cases, doors, and interior fittings were made of metal.<sup>29</sup> Moreover, fire insurance maps noted that a custodian lived in the building as an on-site safeguard against any incidents.<sup>30</sup>

The building was integrally connected to operations in Metropolitan Life's headquarters in Manhattan. Contemporary trade publications highlighted the Hall of Records' technological ties to Metropolitan Life's main building, noting that "attendants are in constant communication by telephone with the home office."<sup>31</sup> This close communication between the main building and the Hall of Records 18 miles away was a point of pride for Metropolitan Life's operations. In a book that the company published in 1914 to chronicle its history to date, Metropolitan Life underscored the telephone and operational ties between the Home Office and the Hall of Records, so that "when a particular document is needed it may be at once taken from its filing case in this storage warehouse and forwarded to the Home Office."<sup>32</sup> Two decades later, a profile of the Hall of Records in the company magazine emphasized that the building was "manned by a staff of nearly 70—our fellow employees, even though they are 18 miles removed from 1 Madison Avenue."<sup>33</sup> The Hall of Records was intrinsically connected—architecturally and operationally—to Metropolitan Life's Home Office in Manhattan.

## Conclusion

The Metropolitan Life Hall of Records is significant under Criterion A for Commerce, and under Criterion C for Architecture. The subject building was designed by D. Everett Waid, a nationally recognized architect who, in his decades-long career as Metropolitan Life's company architect, instituted systems of design review for insurance-financed projects that had far-reaching effects in New York City's early 20<sup>th</sup> century built environment. The building was constructed, and added to, during several decades of substantial growth for Metropolitan Life, and in an era of progressive reforms that had implications for insurance agencies nationwide. The Metropolitan Life Hall of Records remains intact in its original location, and it retains its architectural and associative integrity as a commercial archives facility that represents the design standards of a company that set new standards for design.

---

<sup>29</sup> "The Safeguarding of Public Records," in *American Industries: The Manufacturers' Magazine* 16, no. 8 (March 1916): 33.

<sup>30</sup> Metropolitan Life Insurance Company, *The Metropolitan Life Insurance Company: Its History*, 63. Sanborn Fire Insurance Company, 1917.

<sup>31</sup> "Archives for Valuable Records," *Safety Engineering* XXXI (1916): 15.

<sup>32</sup> Metropolitan Life Insurance Company, *The Metropolitan Life Insurance Company: Its History*, 63.

<sup>33</sup> Metropolitan Life Insurance Company, "Nothing's Antique about Our Hall of Records," 3.



Metropolitan Life Insurance Company Hall of Records  
Name of Property

Westchester Co., New York  
County and State

---

## 9. Major Bibliographical References

---

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

- Adams, George R. *Metropolitan Life Insurance Tower*. National Register Nomination. 1977.  
*The American Contractor* (December 29, 1917): 34.
- “Architectural Design and Structural Requirements of Loaning Institutions.” In *The Architectural Forum* XXXII, no. 3 (September 1922): 119—22.
- “Archives for Valuable Records.” In *Safety Engineering* XXXI (1916): 13—5.
- “Bleakley Disputes Swope’s Road View.” In *The New York Times* (April 23, 1941): 23.
- Boyd, John Taylor, Jr. “A Departure in Housing Finance.” In *The Architectural Record* (August 1922): 133—142.
- Bronxville Centennial Celebration, Inc., *Building a Suburban Village: Bronxville, New York 1898-1998*. Edited by Eloise L. Morgan. Bronxville, NY: Bronxville Centennial Celebration, Inc., 1998.
- City of Yonkers Building and Tax Records, 759 Palmer Road.
- “D. Everett Waid, Architect, Was 75.” In *The New York Times* (November 1, 1939): 29.
- The Indicator* XXXVIII (Jan.—Dec. 1912): 366, 369.
- James, Marquis. *The Metropolitan Life: A Study in Business Growth*. New York: The Viking Press, 1947. 161.
- Meier, Kenneth J. *The Political Economy of Regulation: The Case of Insurance*. Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 1988. 57-58.
- “Metropolitan Life Helps in Work of Fire Prevention,” In *The Adjuster: An Insurance Journal* 45, no. 1 (July 1912): 151—2.
- Metropolitan Life Insurance Company, *The Metropolitan Life Insurance Company: Its History Its Present Position in the Insurance World, Its Home Office Building, and Its Work Carried On Therein*. New York: Metropolitan Life Insurance Company, 1914. 23.
- . “Nothing’s Antique about Our Hall of Records—Except the Records.” In *The Home Office* 21, no. 3 (August 1939): 2—6.
- Metropolitan Life North Building*. National Register Nomination. 1996.
- Sanborn Fire Insurance Company. 1917.
- . 1950.
- “Safe Building: Metropolitan Life Insists When Making Loans, on Right Construction.” In *The Insurance Press* XXXV (September 25, 1912): 11.
- “The Safeguarding of Public Records.” In *American Industries: The Manufacturers’ Magazine* 16, no. 8 (March 1916): 33.
- “State Will Start Westchester Road.” In *The New York Times* (October 1, 1958): 39.
- Vosbeck, R. Randall, FAIA, “D. Everett Waid.” In *A Legacy of Leadership: The Presidents of the American Institute of Architects 1857-2007*. Washington, DC: American Institute of Architects, 2008. 58—9.

Metropolitan Life Insurance Company Hall of Records  
Name of Property

Westchester Co., New York  
County and State

**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** .97 acres  
(Do not include previously listed resource acreage.)

**UTM References**

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1	<u>18</u>	<u>0597054</u>	<u>4533047</u>	3	<u>          </u>	<u>          </u>	<u>          </u>
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
2	<u>          </u>	<u>          </u>	<u>          </u>	4	<u>          </u>	<u>          </u>	<u>          </u>
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing

**Verbal Boundary Description** (Describe the boundaries of the property.)

The boundary for the Metropolitan Life Insurance Company Hall of Records is Westchester County Parcel number 15206956380480000000.

**Boundary Justification** (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

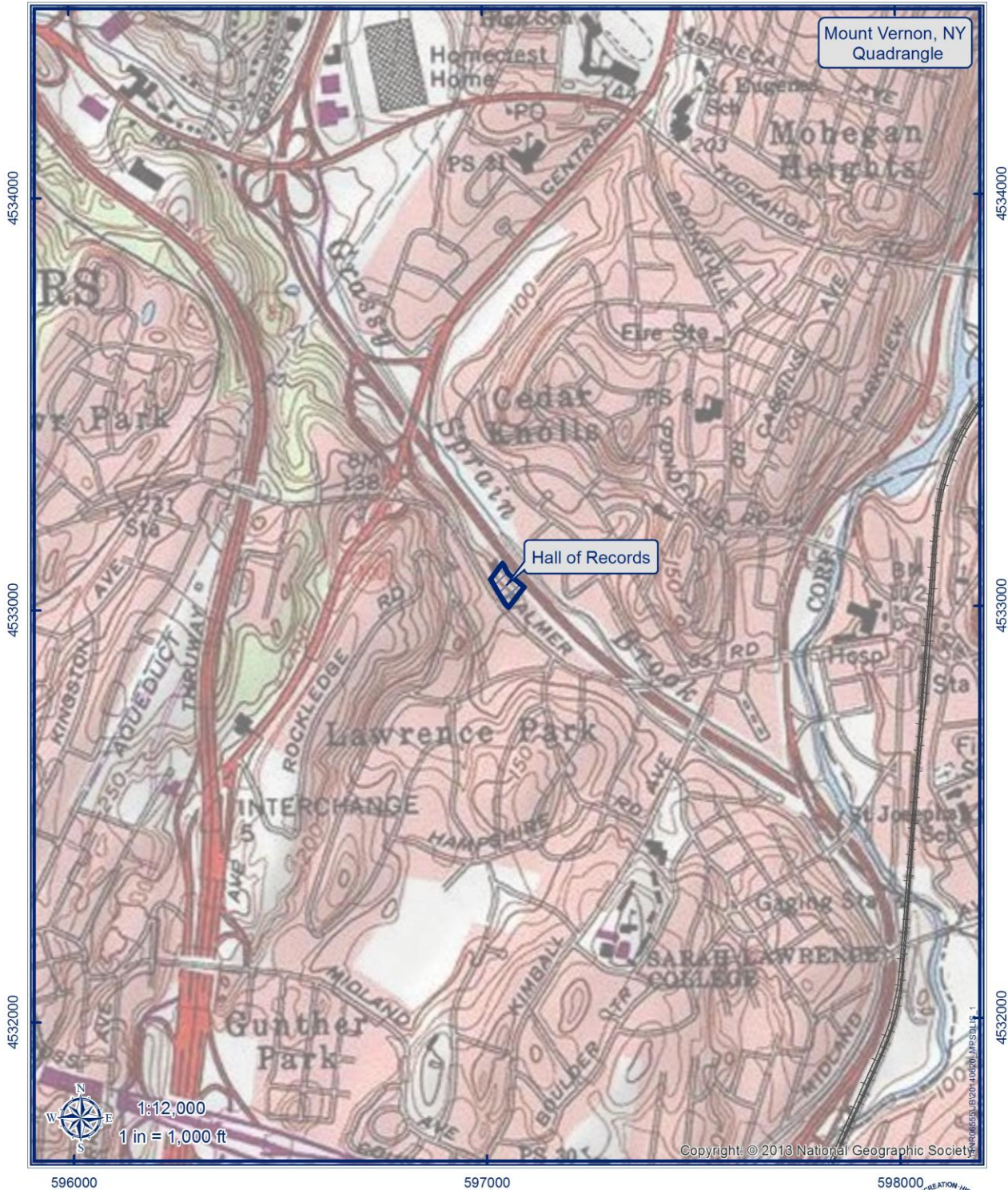
The nominated property includes the parcel historically and currently associated with the Metropolitan Life Insurance Company Hall of Records.

Metropolitan Life Insurance Company Hall of Records  
Name of Property

Westchester Co., New York  
County and State

Metropolitan Life Insurance Company Hall of Records  
Yonkers, Westchester Co., NY

759 Palmer Rd.  
Yonkers, NY 10708



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



 Hall of Records

Tax Parcel Data:  
Westchester Co. RPS  
[giswww.westchestergov.com](http://giswww.westchestergov.com)



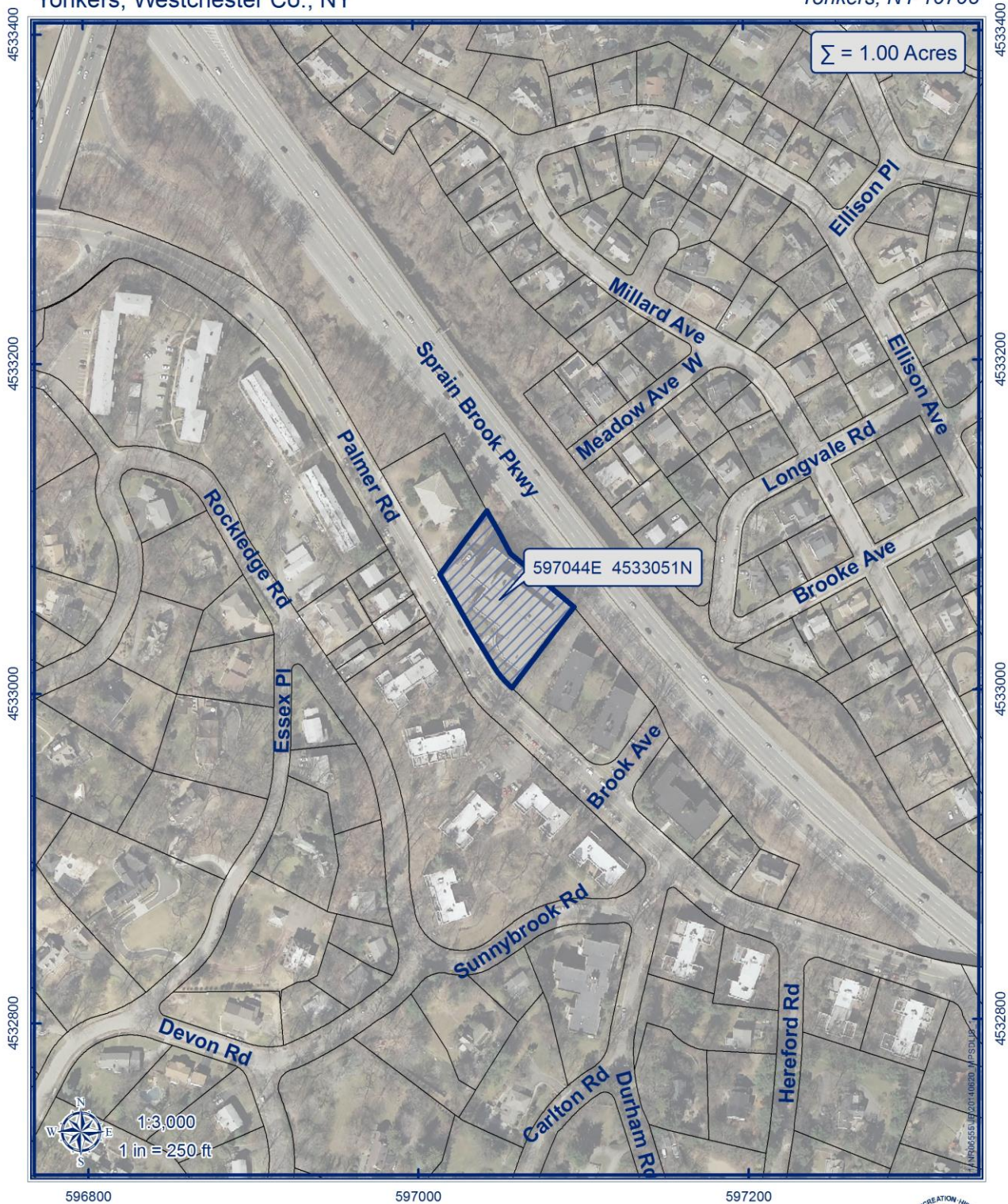


Metropolitan Life Insurance Company Hall of Records  
Name of Property

Westchester Co., New York  
County and State

Metropolitan Life Insurance Company Hall of Records  
Yonkers, Westchester Co., NY

759 Palmer Rd.  
Yonkers, NY 10708



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



 Hall of Records

Tax Parcel Data:  
Westchester Co, RPS  
[giswww.westchestergov.com](http://giswww.westchestergov.com)



Metropolitan Life Insurance Company Hall of Records  
Name of Property

Westchester Co., New York  
County and State

---

### 11. Form Prepared By

---

name/title John M. Tess

organization Heritage Consulting Group

date March 31, 2014

street & number 1120 NW Northrup Street

telephone 503-228-0272

city or town Portland

state Oregon

zip code 97209

e-mail jmtess@heritage-consulting.com

---

### 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:

---

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map.

Name of Property: Metropolitan Life Insurance Hall of Records

City or Vicinity: Yonkers

County: Westchester

State: New York

Photographer: Heritage Consulting Group

Date Photographed: September 2013

Description of Photograph(s) and number:

1 of 19 N NY\_Westchester County\_ Metropolitan Life Insurance Hall of Records\_0001  
Exterior View, West (Palmer Road) Façade, camera looking east

2 of 19 NY\_Westchester County\_ Metropolitan Life Insurance Hall of Records\_0002  
Exterior View, West (Palmer Road) Façade, camera looking east

3 of 19 NY\_Westchester County\_ Metropolitan Life Insurance Hall of Records\_0003  
Exterior View, West (Palmer Road) Façade, camera looking east

4 of 19 NY\_Westchester County\_ Metropolitan Life Insurance Hall of Records\_0004

Metropolitan Life Insurance Company Hall of Records  
Name of Property

Westchester Co., New York  
County and State

- Exterior View, West (Palmer Road) Façade, camera looking east
- 5 of 19 NY\_ Westchester County\_ Metropolitan Life Insurance Hall of Records\_0005  
Exterior View, West (Palmer Road) Façade, camera looking south
- 6 of 19 NY\_ Westchester County\_ Metropolitan Life Insurance Hall of Records\_0006  
Exterior View, West (Palmer Road) Façade, camera looking east
- 7 of 19 NY\_ Westchester County\_ Metropolitan Life Insurance Hall of Records\_0007  
Exterior View, North Façade, camera looking east
- 8 of 19 NY\_ Westchester County\_ Metropolitan Life Insurance Hall of Records\_0008  
Exterior View, North Façade, camera looking west
- 9 of 19 NY\_ Westchester County\_ Metropolitan Life Insurance Hall of Records\_0009  
Exterior View, East Façade, camera looking south
- 10 of 19 NY\_ Westchester County\_ Metropolitan Life Insurance Hall of Records\_0010  
Exterior View, East Façade, camera looking south
- 11 of 19 NY\_ Westchester County\_ Metropolitan Life Insurance Hall of Records\_0011  
Exterior View, South Façade, camera looking west
- 12 of 19 NY\_ Westchester County, Metropolitan Life Insurance Hall of Records\_0012  
Exterior View, South Façades, camera looking north
- 13 of 19 NY\_ Westchester County\_ Metropolitan Life Insurance Hall of Records \_0013  
Interior View, Basement, camera looking east
- 14 of 19 NY\_ Westchester County\_ Metropolitan Life Insurance Hall of Records\_0014  
Interior View, First Floor, camera looking south
- 15 of 19 NY\_ Westchester County\_ Metropolitan Life Insurance Hall of Records\_0015  
Interior View, First Floor Elevator Lobby, camera looking west
- 16 of 19 NY\_ Westchester County\_ Metropolitan Life Insurance Hall of Records\_0016  
Interior View, Second Floor, camera looking west
- 17 of 19 NY\_ Westchester County\_ Metropolitan Life Insurance Hall of Records\_0017  
Interior View, Second Floor, camera looking north
- 18 of 19 NY\_ Westchester County\_ Metropolitan Life Insurance Hall of Records\_0018  
Interior View, Second Floor Stair, camera looking west
- 19 of 19 NY\_ Westchester County\_ Metropolitan Life Insurance Hall of Records\_0019  
Interior View, Third Floor, camera looking north

**Documents:**

- Figure 1:** Site Plan  
**Figure 2:** Floor Plans (All floors similar)  
**Figure 3:** Sanborn Maps (1917 and 1950)  
**Figure 4:** Historic Photograph – 1939 (From “The Home Office”)

Metropolitan Life Insurance Company Hall of Records  
Name of Property

Westchester Co., New York  
County and State

---

**Property Owner:**

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

---

name Metloft Bronxville LLC c/o Kerry Wellington, WY Management  
street & number 79 Main Street telephone 800-994-4842  
city or town Nyack state NY zip code 10960

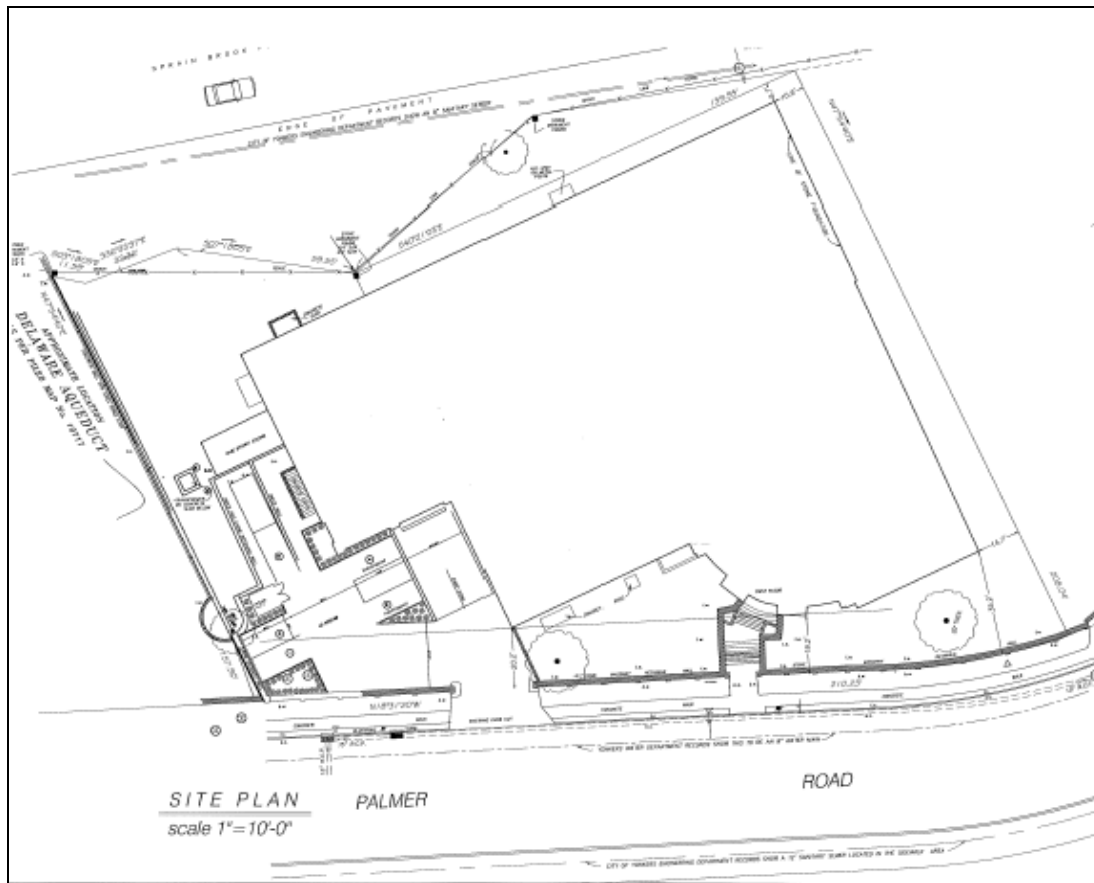
**Paperwork Reduction Act Statement:** This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to 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.

Metropolitan Life Insurance Company Hall of Records  
Name of Property

Westchester Co., New York  
County and State

**Figure 1:** Site Plan

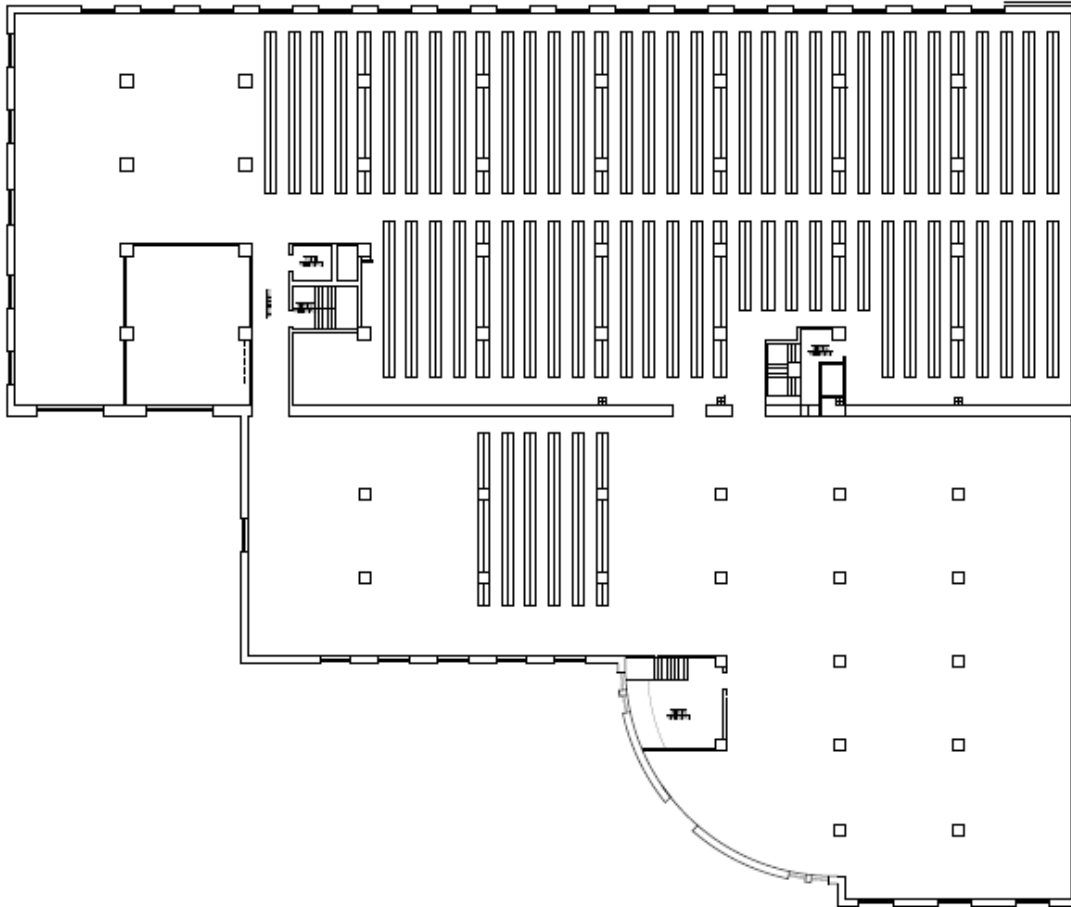




Metropolitan Life Insurance Company Hall of Records  
Name of Property

Westchester Co., New York  
County and State

**Figure 2:** Floor Plan (all floors similar)



Metropolitan Life Insurance Company Hall of Records  
Name of Property

Westchester Co., New York  
County and State

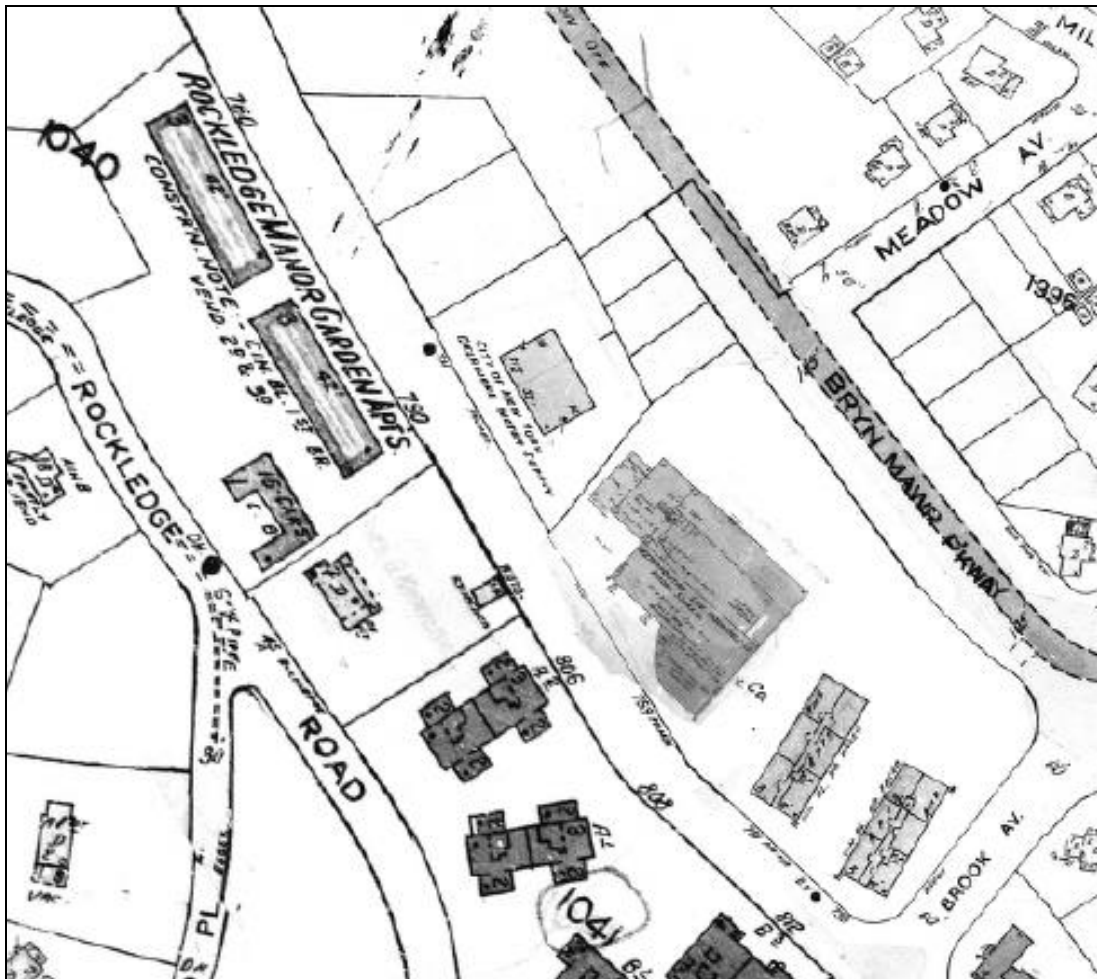
**Figure 3-a:** Sanborn Map (1917)



Metropolitan Life Insurance Company Hall of Records  
Name of Property

Westchester Co., New York  
County and State

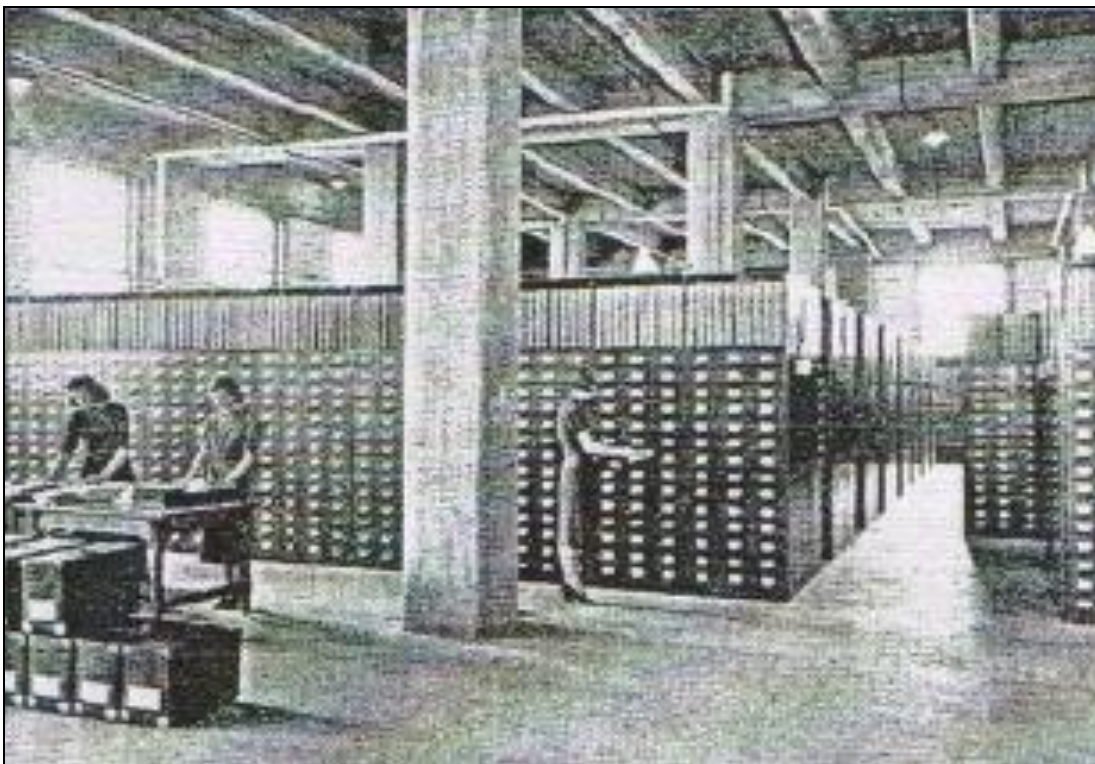
**Figure 3-b:** Sanborn Map (1950)



Metropolitan Life Insurance Company Hall of Records  
Name of Property

Westchester Co., New York  
County and State

**Figure 4:** Historic Photographs – 1939 (From “The Home Office”)







17-10000  
VARIANCE  
17-10000  
17-10000

NO PARKING  
ANYTIME







VILLIPOLE TANK & INSURANCE CO.  
HALL OF RECORDS



CITY OF YONKERS  
ON THESE PREMISES  
APPLICATION FOR A  
**VARIANCE**  
DO NOT SIGN AT ANY  
DATE: DEPT. 1, 11 AM  
AT CITY HALL, 4TH FLOOR  
FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CALL  
BY: 917-882-6348 OR 917-882-6349  
TOWN OF YONKERS AND  
IN ACCORDANCE







CITY OF YONKERS  
PLANNING DEPARTMENT  
**VARIANCE**  
1. I, \_\_\_\_\_, owner of the property at \_\_\_\_\_, Yonkers, New York, hereby apply for a variance from the \_\_\_\_\_ Ordinance of the City of Yonkers, New York, in order to \_\_\_\_\_.  
2. I hereby certify that the proposed use is a use of a similar character to that permitted by the Ordinance and that the proposed use will not be injurious to the public health, safety or general welfare of the community.  
3. I hereby certify that the proposed use is a use of a similar character to that permitted by the Ordinance and that the proposed use will not be injurious to the public health, safety or general welfare of the community.





































NO SMOKING

FIRE EXTINGUISHER

EXIT

FIRE EXTINGUISHER















NO SMOKING









EXIT

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: NOMINATION

PROPERTY NAME: Metropolitan Life Insurance Company Hall of Records

MULTIPLE NAME:

STATE & COUNTY: NEW YORK, Westchester

DATE RECEIVED: 7/18/14      DATE OF PENDING LIST: 8/15/14  
DATE OF 16TH DAY: 9/02/14      DATE OF 45TH DAY: 9/03/14  
DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:

REFERENCE NUMBER: 14000543

REASONS FOR REVIEW:

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

COMMENT WAIVER: N

ACCEPT     RETURN     REJECT    9.3.14 DATE

ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:

Entered in  
The National Register  
of  
Historic Places

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.





**New York State Office of Parks,  
Recreation and Historic Preservation**

Division for Historic Preservation  
P.O. Box 189, Waterford, New York 12188-0189  
518-237-8643



**Andrew M. Cuomo**  
Governor  
**Rose Harvey**  
Commissioner

1 July 2014

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

Re: National Register Nominations

Dear Ms. Abernathy:

I am pleased to enclose the following five National Register nominations, all on discs, to be considered for listing by the Keeper of the National Register:

First Unitarian Church, Monroe County  
Metropolitan Life Insurance Company Hall of Records, Westchester County  
John Mollenhauer House, Suffolk County  
Ambrose Latham House, Wayne County  
Glenwolde Park Historic District, Westchester County

Please feel free to call me at 518.237.8643 x 3261 if you have any questions.

Sincerely:

Kathleen LaFrank  
National Register Coordinator  
New York State Historic Preservation Office



OFFICE OF THE MAYOR  
MIKE SPANO

June 6, 2014

Ruth L. Pierpont  
Deputy Commissioner for  
Historic Preservation  
New York State Office of Parks, Recreation  
And Historic Preservation  
Historic Preservation Field Services Bureau  
Peebles Island  
P.O. Box 189  
Waterford, New York 12188-0189

Re: Metropolitan Life Insurance Company Hall of Records [former]  
759 Palmer Road  
Block: 5638; Lot: 48

Dear Commissioner Pierpont:

The City of Yonkers has received an application for nomination to the National and State Registers of Historic Places for the above-referenced matter.

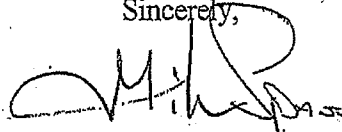
The Landmarks Preservation Board voted unanimously to support the nomination based on: Criteria A, the property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad pattern of our history in the area of commerce. Specifically, for its role in the recordkeeping practices of Metropolitan Life, a leading insurance company in New York in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century and Criteria C, Architecture. The Hall of Records was designed by architect D. Everett Waid. Mr. Waid earned several high-profile commissions in his early career and was both a Fellow and President of the American Institute of Architects. He eventually became the chief architect for Metropolitan Life and designed its home office building 11 Madison Avenue in Manhattan (1933). He also participated in drafting the city's modern building codes of the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. The architecture of the Hall of Records is a distinctive Neoclassical style.

June 6, 2014  
Page 2

I support the Landmarks Preservation Board's findings that the Metropolitan Life Insurance Company Hall of Records exemplifies one of the many historical treasures within the City of Yonkers and warrants inclusion on the National and State Registers of Historic Places.

Thank you for your courtesies and the City of Yonkers looks forward to the preservation of this worthy landmark.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mike Spano". The signature is stylized with a large, looped initial "M" and a long, sweeping underline.

**MIKE SPANO**  
Mayor

## **Report on Nomination of the Metropolitan Life Insurance Company Hall of Records to the State and National Registers of Historic Places**

At its meeting of May 7, 2014 the Yonkers Landmarks Preservation Board reviewed the nomination of the Metropolitan Life Insurance Company Hall of Records for placement on the State and National Registers of Historic Places and gave its unanimous endorsement. The Board based a positive recommendation on:

- 1) Criteria A, the property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad pattern of our history in the area of commerce. Specifically, for its role in the recordkeeping practices of Metropolitan Life, a leading insurance company in New York in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century.
- 2) Criteria C Architecture. The Hall of Records was designed by architect D. Everett Waid. Waid earned several high-profile commissions in his early career and was a both a Fellow and President of the American Institute of Architects. He eventually became the chief architect for Metropolitan Life and designed its home office building 11 Madison Avenue in Manhattan (1933). He also participated in drafting the city's modern building codes of the early 20<sup>th</sup> century.
- 3) The architecture of the Hall of Records as a distinctive Neoclassical style.

The Board finds the Metropolitan Life Insurance Company Hall of Records to exemplify one of the many historical treasures within the City of Yonkers and warrants inclusion on the State and National Registers of Historic Places.

Sincerely,

Richard A. Carlson  
Chairman