

United States Department of the Interior
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form

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Continuation sheet 59

Item number 7

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NAME: Oliver A. Wickes House
LOCATION: 794 Major Potter Road
OWNER: Mrs. Valerie T. Bechaz
794 Major Potter Road
Warwick, R.I. 02818
CONDITION: Excellent; Altered; Original Site

DESCRIPTION:

The Oliver A. Wickes House is located in a sparsely settled rural area on Spencer Hill in extreme southwestern Warwick. Until recently the center of a fifty-five acre farmstead, the house now stands on five acres with two barns, an early twentieth-century windmill, and a stone wall and picket fence along the road. The house is a rectangular, two-and-one-half-story, hip-roofed dwelling of uncoursed fieldstone with an open porch on the south side. It is in a vernacular style incorporating features of the Federal and Greek Revival styles. Its four-bay facade (east side) contains a recessed entrance framed by a transom and sidelights. This doorway opens into a central hall with a single-run staircase to the left which curves at the top. The house originally had two small, paired interior chimneys; the southern one was removed some time ago, but the present owners have replaced it with a replica above the roofline, to restore the symmetry. The house originally followed a five-room plan but has recently been altered by the removal of the partition between the rear center and northwest corner rooms to enlarge the kitchen. The southwest corner room, originally a pantry and rear entry, has been converted to a laundry room/entry and contains a back staircase. The parlor and dining room (northeast and southeast corner rooms) have elaborate door and window architraves with triangular, pediment-like tops. The second floor follows a five-room plan and the principal chambers, over the parlor and dining room, also have pedimented window and door architraves.

PERIOD: 1800-1899
AREA OF SIGNIFICANCE: Architecture
SPECIFIC DATE: 1855
BUILDER/ARCHITECT: Unknown

SIGNIFICANCE:

The Oliver A. Wickes House, built in 1855, is an exceptionally handsome and well preserved example of a mid-nineteenth-century vernacular farmhouse notable for the unusual use of masonry in its construction. It is the only stone dwelling of its type in Warwick and is one of very few in the entire state.

(See Continuation Sheet #60)

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ACREAGE: 5 acres
QUADRANGLE NAME: East Greenwich, R.I.
UTM: 19 293980 4616290

BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION AND JUSTIFICATION:

The nominated property is coextensive with lot 8 in Assessor's Plat 225, as defined by the City of Warwick, and measures five acres. This parcel encompasses the farmhouse and associated structures together with nearby fields and woodland that provide an appropriate rural setting.

LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE: LOCAL

(See Continuation Sheet #61)