

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

For NPS use only

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

received **JAN 24 1986**
date entered

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

1. Name

historic Shadow Farm

and/or common " " (Main House & Outbuilding Complex)

2. Location

street & number Kingstown Road (Route 108) not for publication

city, town South Kingstown NA vicinity of

state Rhode Island code 44 county Washington code 009

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational
<input type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<u>NA</u> in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial
		<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military
			<input type="checkbox"/> museum
			<input type="checkbox"/> park
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private residence
			<input type="checkbox"/> religious
			<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
			<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
			<input type="checkbox"/> other:

4. Owner of Property

name (List on file at the R.I. Historical Preservation Commission)

street & number

city, town _____ vicinity of _____ state _____

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. South Kingstown Town Hall

street & number High Street

city, town South Kingstown state Rhode Island

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

Historic & Architectural Resources of South Kingstown,
title Rhode Island, A Prelim. Report has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date 1984 federal state county local

depository for survey records Rhode Island Historical Preservation Commission

city, town Providence state RI 02903

7. Description

Condition		Check one	Check one
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved date _____
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed		

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

Located between the fast-growing village of Wakefield and Route 1, Shadow Farm faces south across Silver Lake, a private enclave (see topographic map). This beautifully sited and architecturally ambitious country place, established in 1869 and handsomely updated in the first decade of the twentieth century, continued as a home and gentleman's farm through the 1950s. In the 1960s agricultural use was discontinued and portions of the property formerly used as grazing land and planting fields were sold. The heart of the estate, subject of this nomination, includes the main house and outbuilding complex and environs. It is now undergoing conversion into a residential condominium community. Its character-defining landscape features remain essentially intact -- the terrain, lakeshore, clumps of mature trees and shrubs, dense perimeter plantings, meadow and lawn, drives, walls and fences (see site plan, figure 18, and the related figures 1-26). All historic buildings have been preserved and the primary views and vistas to and from these structures are unaltered. By virtue of siting and design, the new buildings are clearly subordinate to the historic features of the estate.

Nonetheless, the new construction constitutes a very substantial noncontributing change. For this reason, those portions of the estate devoted to new construction -- both existing and proposed for construction two or three years hence -- have been excluded from the area being nominated to the National Register (see site plan, figure 18). This nomination is confined to Shadow Farm's primary historic components, all of which remain intact -- the main house, the outbuilding complex, and the landscape features and acreage surrounding these focal elements unencumbered by substantive changes.

Thickly massed tree lines and plantings of rhododendron and laurel screen Shadow Farm from the outside world, defining it as a place unto itself. To the north and west are village houses on small suburban lots. To the east is Kingstown Road, a commercial corridor. On the south is Silver Lake which, on the shore facing Shadow Farm, is heavily wooded. The estate's entrance drive crosses a meadow before reaching perimeter wall, a modest gateway, and the forest-like screen of trees and shrubs. Set well back from Kingstown Road, this approach bespeaks seclusion without ostentation.

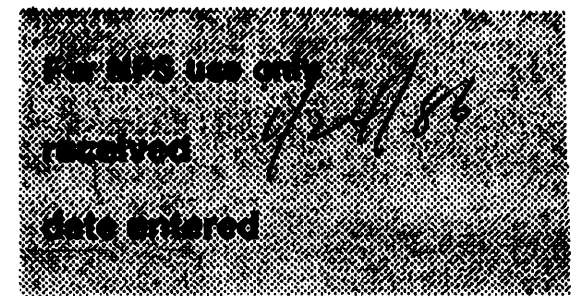
Within the estate precinct one faces meadow again, dotted with large old trees (figure 14). Here is the first of four condominium clusters on the grounds; three more are planned (see site plan, figure 18). All are positioned to preserve the setting of the main house and outbuilding complex. The approach to the house (figures 1 and 2) is unchanged, complete with oval drive and early twentieth-century screen plantings on the east and west. The prime vista from the house has been preserved -- a fine view across the expansive, sloping south lawn to a bosky point and the lake beyond (figures 3, 21 and 22). Likewise, the primary views to the house from the south and north have intentionally been safeguarded free of intrusions.

A large service ell extends west from the main house and beyond it is what was a walled kitchen garden. Within this enclosure eight condominium units have been built (figure 15). The kitchen garden is the only

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historic element of the estate lost to new construction. However, it was a secondary feature to begin with, its form remains, and utilizing its high walls to help downplay new buildings has reduced their impact on the estate as a whole.

Further west from the main house, the drive continues through rows of maples to the outbuilding complex and back gate (figures 6-12 and 17). Visually, house and outbuildings have always been quite distinct, not only because of distance and change in grade, but also due to the intervening kitchen garden and tree line. As in the case of the main house, primary views to and from the service buildings have been retained (figures 6, 11, 12 and 25).

The present main house dates to 1884. The original design was by Douglas Smyth, but the house was enlarged and heavily altered in about 1904 by an as yet unidentified architect. The hybrid result is a spectacular success. The horizontally spreading, symmetrical, 2½-story entrance front (figures 1, 2 and 23), because of its pyramid-like composition, is focused on the porte-cochere and cross-gabled entrance pavilion rising behind. In the first story, obscured now by overgrown foundation planting, the walls are granite rubble (artfully laid up) with brick trim. The juncture of the first and second stories is marked by a double, dentillated beltcourse. It is carried around twin, square-fronted triad bay windows flanking the entrance. The second story is clad in wood shingle. Its single and paired windows have 24/2 sash. The roof, brought down low over these windows by wide eaves, forms a broad plain rising in two steps from the eave line to a high central ridge where the cross gable is bracketed by shed-roofed dormers. A pilastered brick chimney rises from the center of the ridge, and four symmetrically disposed matching chimnies add to the interest of the skyline. The lakeward south elevation (figures 3 and 21), while similar to the entrance front, is more complex and more emphatically focused on the center due to its much bolder, cross-gabled central pavilion. A herringbone-pattern brick terrace surrounds the house on this side. It is partially enclosed to form a porch, now glassed-in. The single slope of the north front's roof becomes a complex gable-on-hip on the south, with recessed flanking gabled wings. The 1½-story west ell was added during the circa 1904 alterations. Heavy plantings of evergreens and shrubs effectively hide the ell from the dwelling's two main fronts.

Comparison of present-day photographs of Shadow Farm's main house to a rendering published in 1884 (figure 20) documents the radical changes made in the first decade of this century. The form of the building survives, modified substantially by major lateral extensions. The 1884 choice of materials -- stone and brick on the first story, shingle above -- was continued in the circa 1904 remodelling. But spindlework and half-timbering ornamenting the building and turned posts on porches and porte-

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cochere were simplified in form as well as in detail. The front chimney accenting the original design was eliminated, replaced by twin chimneys at the ends of the lateral extensions. Existing fenestration was modified and the bay windows and dormers noted above were added. Withall, the early twentieth-century renovations transformed a picturesque Queen Anne country house into a horizontally articulated dwelling, sober and monumental in aspect, very contemporary in inspiration, exhibiting more than a hint of the bungalow and the Prairie School.

The main house interior was also completely reworked in the early twentieth century, but in a rather different spirit. The porte-cochere entrance leads into a large, 2-story stair hall ringed on three sides by a gallery (figures 4 and 24). Wide doorways lead from the hall, left and right, into the living room and dining room (see plan, figure 19). All three rooms have Georgian Revival panelling and woodwork, Adamesque marble mantels, and English eighteenth-century style silvered sconces. Sliding doors flanking the stair hall fireplace open into a long living hall terminating in a semi-octagonal bay window from which French doors lead out onto the south terrace overlooking the lake. This room has a wainscotting of what look to be reused interior window shutters and an unusual white marble mantel, more-or-less Greek Revival in type, decorated with carved baskets of flowers in high relief. Two other major rooms open laterally off the living hall -- the breakfast room and library. The latter has a curious panelling of small, square, raised panels and a simple fireplace surround. This interior appears to be all of a piece and date to the early 1930s (figure 5).

The house is now undergoing conversion into condominium units. Work is still in the planning stages. Except for extension of the two dormers on the south front (figure 3), no substantive changes have been made. The exterior, with this one alteration, is to be restored. No work on any of the major interiors (all noted above) has been carried forward. The fall, 1985 photographs submitted with this nomination (figures 1-5) depict the main house as it exists presently. Comparison of these photographs with similar views taken in 1979 (figures 21, 23 and 24) show that the south dormer alteration is the only noteworthy change made to significant historic fabric since that time. Present plans call for all the dwelling's principal rooms to keep their existing panelling, mantels, fixtures and basic configuration.

The outbuilding complex, replacing nineteenth-century structures, dates to the first decade of the twentieth century. This extensive grouping of service structures, most inter-connected, occupies a sloping site overlooking the lake (figures 6-13). At the upper level are carriage house, stable, and staff quarters forming a rectangular forecourt (figure 9). They are wood-shingled, roof and walls, and have the same eaves and 45° roof pitch as the main house. Indeed, the cross-gabled main entrance, accented by a hip-roofed vent on the ridge, subtly invokes the compositional format of the dwelling's entrance front. The land drops off

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behind the courtyard buildings, and their foundations, faced in water-smoothed granite stones, are a full story above grade in back. At this level is a walled barnyard and tile-clad silo (figure 8). A stone farm implement shed forms the south side of the barnyard. Standing close by the farm buildings is a three-stall garage/carriage house (figures 6 and 7) built of matching stone. At the southwestern extreme of the entire complex is a small, picturesque, frame corncrib (figure 11). The interiors of all the service buildings are very plain, as one would expect, and have no notable features of plan or finish.

As in the case of the main house, so too the outbuilding complex will eventually be converted to multi-unit residential use. The only work carried ahead has been removal of vegetation climbing on the buildings, replacement of deteriorated shingling and addition of two dormers matching those already on the buildings. The fall, 1985 photographs of the complex accompanying this nomination (figures 6-13) show it as it exists. Comparison of these contemporary pictures with views taken in 1979 (figures 25 and 26) show that no significant alterations have taken place in the interim.

Shadow Farm's four new, nonhistoric and clearly noncontributing condominium clusters (figures 12-18) have been excluded from the area being nominated to the National Register. Built between 1982 and 1984 from designs by Hygens & Dimella, with considerable input from preservation theorist and architect William Shopsin, they recall the design vocabulary of the main house and outbuildings in form and materials. These deferential modern structures fit in as inoffensively as possible within the estate and are sited so as to preserve the primary site lines to and from the main house and outbuilding complex.

8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/ humanitarian
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		

Specific dates c.1904

Builder/Architect

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

Aesthetically, Shadow Farm is one of South Kingstown's outstanding country estates: it is considered the best-preserved example of this once prevalent property type. Shadow Farm's historic buildings, dating largely to the early twentieth century, display a degree of design sophistication unparalleled locally.

The period character of the estate has been diminished by new construction, but despite these changes, one experiences Shadow Farm today, one "reads" it first and foremost as the product of its historic function and era -- on site, one perceives it still as a gracious, secluded, turn-of-the-century country place of compelling beauty.

While the focal components of this historic property are the main house and outbuilding complex, many features contribute to the overall effect -- the ample lakeside setting; the treatment of the estate's borders and of the entrance drive; the meadows and lawns, screen plantings and old trees. All these are valuable elements of the historic entity which is Shadow Farm. Considered as a unit centered on house and outbuildings but involving much more, Shadow Farm retains sufficient integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association to merit nomination to the National Register under criterion "c" as a locally important example of the elaborated rural retreat possessing substantial architectural significance.

The origins of Shadow Farm date to 1869, when Mr. and Mrs. Samuel Strang of New York purchased a 60-acre parcel on Silver Lake from Elisha Robinson, whose family had owned large tracts in the area since the early eighteenth century. The land was only a few miles from Narragansett Pier, then burgeoning as a summer resort. In 1884 the Strangs replaced their original farmhouse with a costly Queen Anne dwelling designed by Beaux Arts-trained and New York-based Douglas Smyth, a former assistant to Richard Morris Hunt. Smyth's design was published in the American Architect & Building News April 19, 1884 (figure 20). Samuel Strang died in 1898. In 1901 his widow sold Shadow Farm to John L. Welsh of Philadelphia. The architect Welsh employed to make-over the house and plan a new group of outbuildings has not been determined. Whoever he was, the architect did an extraordinary job, eliminating the Queen Anne flourishes of the main house, recasting its picturesque form into a horizontal mass with vertical accents recalling in its horizontality and the nuances of its visual balance and counterbalance the work of Wright and his followers. The outbuilding complex is no less an achievement. Architecturally, the Welsh outbuildings rank with the best in the state.

John Welsh's circa 1904 revisions to the estate established its fundamentally early twentieth-century architectural character. Lacking

(See Continuation Sheet #4)

9. Major Bibliographical References

Woodward, William McKenzie, "Shadow Farm" (c.1979 assessment of the property Rhode Island Historical Preservation Commission files.)
 Nebiker, Walter, Historic & Architectural Resources of South Kingstown, Rhode Island: A Preliminary Report, R.I. Historical Preservation Commission, 1984.

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property 24 acres

Quadrangle name Narragansett Pier, RI

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

UTM References

A	19	292140	4590280
	Zone	Easting	Northing
C	19	291410	4589990
E			
G			

B	19	292420	4589840
	Zone	Easting	Northing
D	19	291480	4590380
F			
H			

Verbal boundary description and justification

(See Continuation Sheet #6)

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state	code	county	code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title David Chase, Consultant

organization _____

date January 1986

street & number 5613 Boxhill Lane

telephone (301) 435-8221

city or town Baltimore

state MD 21210

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national state local

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature

Frank C. Williamson

title _____

date 23 Jan 1986

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I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

for *Coral O. Shull*
 Keeper of the National Register

date 2-7-86

Attest:

Beth L. Savage
 Chief of Registration

date 2-7-86

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good documentation, it is difficult to determine with precision which components of Shadow Farm's landscaping resulted from early twentieth-century modifications and which date to the 1880s or even earlier. Like the main house, it is probably best to consider the extant landscape design a very pleasing hybrid. The siting of the main house on the highest ground overlooking the lake to the south was set by 1884 and in all likelihood in 1870, when the first house on the estate was erected. The oval drive before the residence and the naturalistic plantings surrounding the house and along the lakeshore are nineteenth-century in inspiration, surely, and correspond to what is at least suggested in the Smyth rendering published in the American Architect in 1884. The perimeter plantings of laurel and rhododendron, the modest main entrance gateway, and the relatively straight main drive, on the other hand, appear to be early twentieth-century emendations, as does the walled kitchen garden, the foundation planting on the north front of the house, the screen planting hiding the service ell, and the rows of trees leading to the back gate and outbuilding complex.

While the overall plan and primary features of the estate have been preserved, and all elements of the landscape design pertaining specifically to the house and service complex (views and vistas, drives, lawns, plantings, etc.) are intact, it is an inescapable fact that the historic character of the whole has been altered by placement of new buildings within the walled kitchen garden and on portions of the estate's meadow land. The latter is perhaps the more significant change, for what were expansive open spaces are now (or eventually will be) taken up in part by buildings. Care was taken to make each cluster of new buildings relatively small and inconspicuous, and to surround it with open space so that the original landscape plan remains legible. But, all in all, it must be said that the integrity of Shadow Farm's landscape design is the aspect of the significance of the estate which has suffered most from construction of condominiums on the property and, consequently, "landscape architecture" has not been checked off as an area of significance, and those portions of the estate now or in future to be occupied by new buildings have been excluded from the area nominated.

The Welsh family continued to use Shadow Farm as a summer place until well after the Second World War. It was then the property of John Welsh's daughter, Mrs. Caryl Roberts. The Roberts eventually lived here year-round. Farm operations were discontinued in the 1960s and portions of the agricultural acreage away from the environs of the main house, on the opposite side of Silver Lake, were sold. The estate, reduced to some thirty acres, remained in family use until 1979. When Shadow Farm was acquired for development, the new owners were so taken with the beauty and historic character of the place that they engaged the

(See Continuation Sheet #5)

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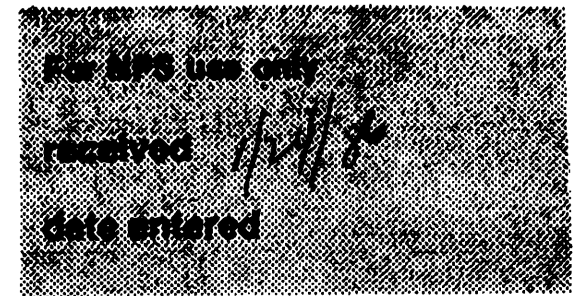
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Rhode Island Historical Preservation Commission to survey the property. As plans matured, the new owners hired architect William Shopsin, author of Saving Large Estates: Conservation, Historic Preservation, Adaptive Re-use which had recently been published. Shopsin played an active role in determining the location and design of new buildings and the most sympathetic approaches to preserving and adapting the existing buildings. Such a developer-sponsored preservation effort remains unusual and commendable.

The Rhode Island Historical Preservation Commission's 1984 survey report for South Kingstown recommends Shadow Farm for listing in the National Register. That recommendation was based in part on an analysis of regional historical trends which underscored the importance of such late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century summer places in the local cultural scene. Just as South Kingstown's upland river valleys provided power sites for typical, small-scale Rhode Island textile mills, so too its broad coastal plain, farmed since the seventeenth century, became the site of gentlemen's farms and country retreats, of which Shadow Farm is a noteworthy example. Moreover, the survey demonstrated that in one respect at least Shadow Farm was not merely representative: Shadow Farm is distinctive in the local context for the quality of its architecture and the beauty of its setting. No South Kingstown estate had a more winsome situation or has finer, more sophisticated buildings. The character of Shadow Farm's landscape design has been substantially altered by new construction, but the character -- and quality -- of the estate's historic buildings is unaltered. The main house and outbuilding complex retain their integrity and value, and merit National Register listing.

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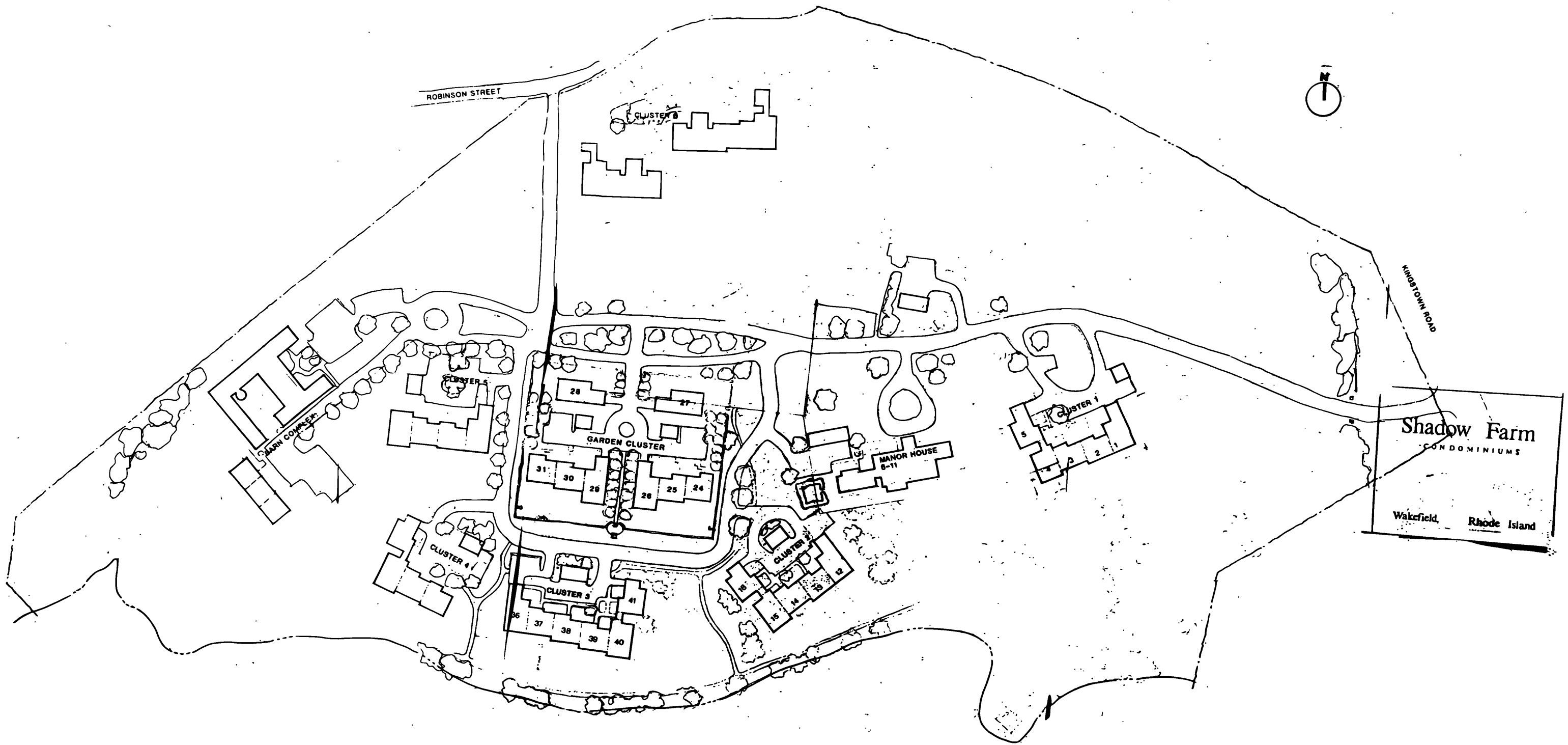
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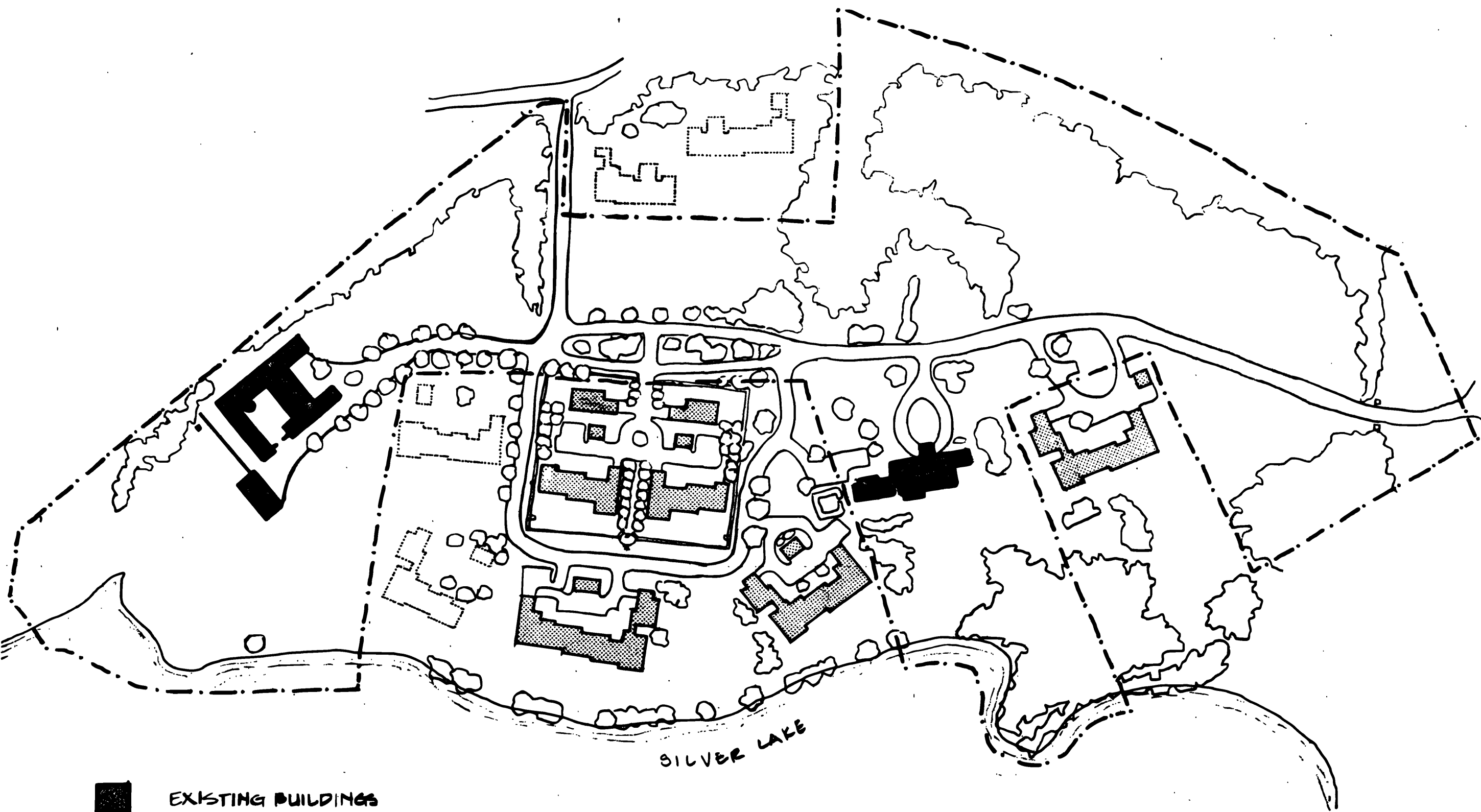
Verbal boundary description and justification




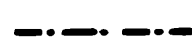
The 24-acre area nominated herein constitutes the bulk of lot 1 of South Kingstown Assessor's Plat 57-3, as indicated on the site plan (figure 18). It comprises the core of the original property, all extant historic buildings, their environs, as well as walls, drives, fences, and other extant historic landscape features undisturbed by new development. Acreage once part of the estate on the south side of Silver Lake, now heavily wooded, has been excluded because it contains no historic landscape features or structures and is discontinuous with the main body of the estate. All of the former estate on the north side of the lake is included in the area nominated save three parcels now or in future to be occupied by new buildings. The lakeshore, perimeter wall and border plantings create distinct margins for the main body of the estate. Despite the intrusion of new buildings, this area still reads as an historic entity.



Shadow Farm
Kingstown Road, South Kingstown, RI

Clusters 1 through 6: new construction
Manor House
Barn Complex (to the left)



-  EXISTING BUILDINGS
-  NEW CONSTRUCTION
-  PROPOSED CONSTRUCTION
-  NATIONAL REGISTER PROPERTY BOUNDARY

SCALE : 200'-0" = 1'-0"

SHADOW FARM SITE PLAN
South Kingston, Rhode Island

figure 18

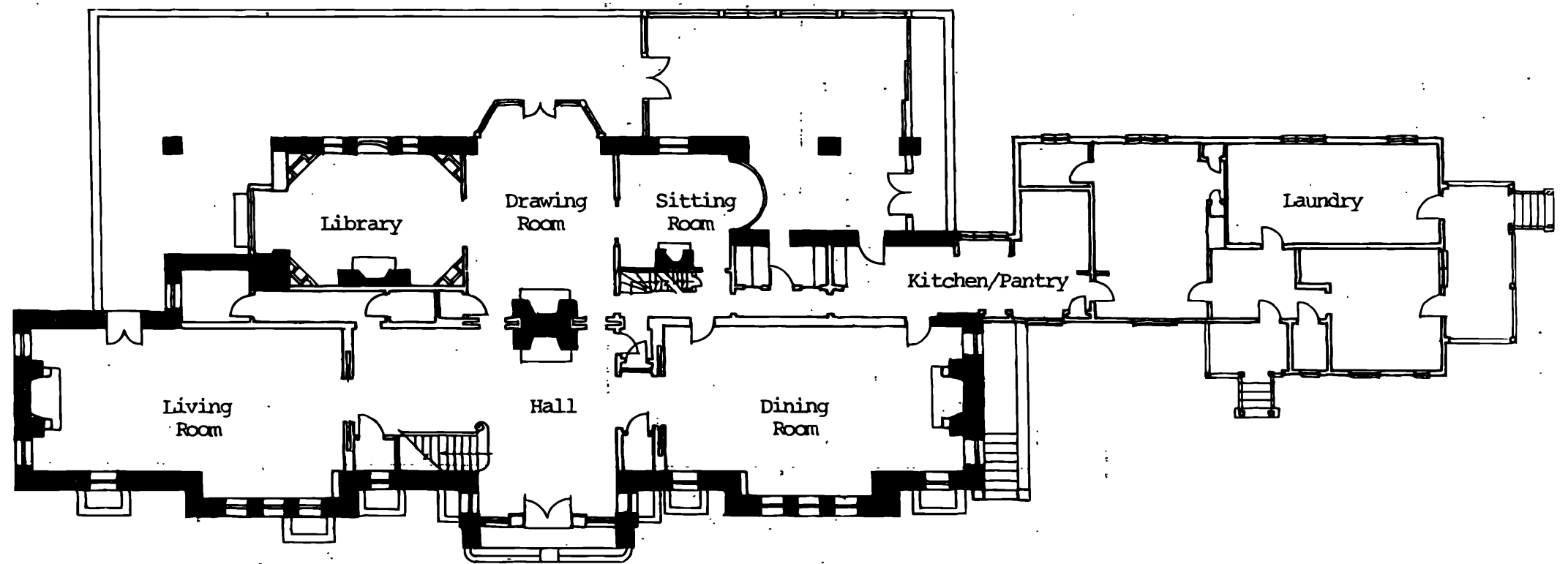
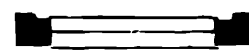


figure 19



FIRST FLOOR PLAN

MAIN HOUSE AT SHADOW FARM
SOUTH KINGSTOWN, RHODE ISLAND.