

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Multiple Property Documentation Form

6459040



This form is used for documenting multiple property groups relating to one or several historic contexts. See instructions in *How to Complete the Multiple Property Documentation Form* (National Register Bulletin 16B). Complete each item by entering the requested information. For additional space, use continuation sheets (Form 10-900-a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer to complete all items.

☒ New Submission ☐ Amended Submission

A. Name of Multiple Property Listing

Downtown Architecture of H.M. Francis, Fitchburg, MA

B. Associated Historic Contexts

(Name each associated historic context, identifying theme, geographical area, and chronological period for each.)

C. Form Prepared by

name/title Kate Myer and Taya Dixon, Epsilon Associates, Inc., with Betsy Friedberg, NR Director, Massachusetts Historical Commission

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city or town Boston state MA zip 02125

D. Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this documentation form meets the National Register documentation standards and sets forth requirements for the listing of related properties consistent with the National Register criteria. This submission meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60 and the Secretary of the Interior's Standards and Guidelines for Archeology and Historic Preservation.

( See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature and title of certifying official

Brona Simon  
Brona Simon, SHPO, MHC

3/10/09  
Date

State or Federal Agency or Tribal government

I hereby certify that this multiple property documentation form has been approved by the National Register as a basis for evaluating related properties for listing in the National Register.

Patrik Andrus  
Signature of the Keeper of the National Register

4/30/2009  
Date of Action

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**Continuation Sheet**

**Downtown Architecture of H.M. Francis, Fitchburg, MA, MPS  
Fitchburg (Worcester), MA**

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**Statement of Historical Context**

*Fitchburg History*

Originally the western part of Lunenburg, MA, Fitchburg became a separate town in 1764 and a city in 1872. The power of its major waterway, the Nashua River, was harnessed early for the grist and saw mills needed to support an agricultural community. In the early 19<sup>th</sup> century, paper and textile mills made their debut along the banks of the Nashua, which would drive the economy for the next 100 years. By the mid 19<sup>th</sup> century, Fitchburg's center began to grow as a manufacturing and commercial focus, boosted by locally financed railroad connections, and Fitchburg became an important hub in the developing regional rail network.

In the 1850s, Fitchburg was the third largest cotton manufacturer in Massachusetts. Despite two severe financial panics, the period of 1872 to 1900—the so-called “Golden Years” that began with Fitchburg becoming a city—was a time of prosperity driven by a flourishing industrial sector. The value of products manufactured in Fitchburg between the years 1850 and 1900 grew 2,100%, as the city's population, inflated by the influx of immigrants, grew six-fold, from 5,120 in 1850 to 31,531 by the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

The economic boom, which continued into the 20<sup>th</sup> century, is reflected in the City's fine collection of commercial, civic, and institutional structures. Commercial buildings, churches, and a public library sprang up to form a dense and imposing grouping along Main Street, and homes and schools were built along newly established residential streets. Entrepreneurial endeavors in paper production, textiles, shoe manufacturing, and machinery resulted in new mill buildings and created wealthy industrialists who built homes that symbolized their economic success and stature in the community. An emerging middle class of professionals in the city built elegant homes reflecting their refined tastes and knowledge.

*H.M. Francis*

Henry Martyn Francis (1836-1908) was born in Lunenburg, Massachusetts, and educated at Lawrence Academy in Groton. He first learned the architectural trade as an apprentice in the Framingham firm of the noted New England architect Alexander R. Estey. Next Francis applied his newfound knowledge of architecture to the practical arts of carpentry in his hometown of Lunenburg. He was then employed in the architecture offices of George Harding of Portland, Maine, and George Meacham of Boston. In 1868, Francis opened his architectural firm on Fitchburg's Main Street, where he was a prolific practitioner of his trade for over forty years, renaming his company H.M. Francis and Sons in 1902 when his two sons, Frederick L. and Albert F., joined the firm. By the time of his death, H.M. Francis left an architectural legacy in Fitchburg and New England, that included at least 30 school buildings, 25 churches, 15 libraries, numerous public and commercial buildings, and hundreds of residences, all in a variety of architectural styles. His sons continued to practice architecture in the city until 1943, bringing the Francis firm's presence on Main Street through three-quarters of a century. The period of significance for this historical context extends until 1943 and includes properties designed by H.M. Francis and H.M. Francis and Sons.

Fitchburg's growing population meant that the city also needed civic and commercial buildings, and Fitchburg's Union Depot was a major commission for Francis in 1877. Francis also designed many commercial buildings along Main Street, including the Belding and Dickinson Building (1866), Fitchburg Savings Bank (1870-1871), Wachusett National Bank (1875), Stiles Block (1875), Coggsall and Carpenter Block (1877), Proctor Block (remodel, ca. 1880), J.W. Twitchell Block (1883), Cushing Block (1885), Wallace Building (1892), Phoenix Building (1893), Safety Fund National Bank Building (1894), and Cutler Block (1896). Many of these commercial buildings have been razed to make way for modern commercial buildings, but six of the

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buildings (Coggshall and Carpenter, Belding & Dickinson, Cutler Block, Phoenix, Safety Fund, Proctor Block) still stand as a testament to the architectural beauty of commercial buildings designed in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century by H.M. Francis. Among the demolished commercial structures designed by Francis and his firm are the Union Depot, Stiles, Cushing, J.W. Twitchell, and Wallace Buildings, and two bank buildings, Fitchburg Savings and the Wachusett National Bank.

H.M. Francis was responsible for a number of other civic and institutional structures in downtown Fitchburg, and about half of those that have been identified remain extant. The Academy and School Street Schools, the Finnish First Universalist Church, Elm Street Congregational Church, Rollstone Congregational Church, Calvinistic Congregational Church, and Swedish Congregational Church, the Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA), the Fitchburg Art Museum, City Hall, Unitarian First Parish Church, German Congregational Church, the Fitchburg Historical Society, and Wallace Way are all the work of H.M. Francis or H.M. Francis and Sons, and all survive today. Among the identified Francis buildings lost in downtown Fitchburg are the First Methodist Church, Trinitarian Church, High School, Hastings School, Fitchburg Police Station, and Wallace Library and Art Building.

(See Appendix I for a description of the known extant works of H.M. Francis and H.M. Francis & Sons in Fitchburg.)

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Associated Property Types

1. *Commercial Buildings*

A. Description

This property type is associated with a wide variety of commercial buildings that include business, professional, organizational and financial institutions, and retail stores. This property type includes a large proportion of the downtown buildings of H.M. Francis. Over time, a number have been neglected, altered (particularly on the lower floors), and/or demolished. Within the property type, financial institutions form a subtype, with multistory buildings holding a mix of banking facilities and office space. In addition, this property type includes a subtype of buildings for which Francis was responsible for major additions to or alterations of pre-existing structures.

Francis worked in a variety of architectural styles and his commercial structures reflect his familiarity with a broad vocabulary. His designs included the Romanesque style (Wallace Block, 1892 [demolished 1975]) and more frequently, the richly detailed Renaissance Revival style (Coggs Hall and Carpenter Block, 1877; Phoenix Building, 1893; Safety Fund National Bank, 1895; Cutler Block, 1896). He also worked in the Second Empire style (Fitchburg Savings Bank, 1871 [demolished]), Italianate style (Belding and Dickinson Building, 1866; Stiles Block, 1875 [demolished]) and Victorian Eclectic style (Union Depot, 1877 [demolished]). Character-defining features of Francis' commercial buildings in downtown Fitchburg include multiple-story masonry structures that were set flush with the sidewalk, elaborately detailed, and often finished with a broad overhanging cornice. Most were three to five stories in height, steel-frame buildings clad in red or buff brick or limestone, and with façade ornamentation in a variety of materials (including rusticated granite, carved brownstone, and terra cotta), and forms (for instance, applied columns, carved stone beltcourses, applied panels or plaques, corbelled cornices, granite lintels and sills). Fenestration, in a mix of single, double, and triple-grouped, rounded arch, and rectangular, enlivens the upper stories of the street façades. Entrances are sometimes set within two-story bases, as with the Safety Fund National Bank Building and the Fitchburg Savings Bank, and some emphasize the entrance to their upper office stories with a portico or by a pilastered entryway (e.g., Phoenix Building).

Among those commercial buildings for which Francis and his firm Francis and Sons were responsible for remodeling and updating with façade improvements and additions, the design vocabulary included two buildings that brought the Chicago style of Louis Sullivan to Fitchburg: the Proctor Block (1832; remodeled ca. 1880), and the Torrey & Wood Block (ca. 1845, remodeled 1911).

B. Significance

H.M. Francis' commercial buildings are significant under criterion A for their association with Fitchburg's commercial development, and under criterion C by embodying the distinctive characteristics of their design, period, style, and type. They are also significant under criterion C for their associations with H.M. Francis, prominent local architect, who practiced his craft during the largest economic growth period in the city of Fitchburg first as a sole practitioner and later with his sons until his death in 1908. With the city's economy flourishing during the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, numerous commercial, institutional, and civic buildings were erected in the expanding downtown, close to the railroad line. H.M. Francis and his firm, H.M. Francis and Sons, were responsible for at least 13 commercial buildings in downtown Fitchburg including the Fitchburg Savings Bank (1870-1871, demolished), Stiles Block (1875, demolished), Wachusett National Bank (1875, demolished), Union Depot (1877, demolished), J. W. Twitchell Block (1883, demolished), Coggs Hall and Carpenter Block (1877), Cushing Block

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(1885, demolished), Wallace Block (1892, demolished 1975), Phoenix Building (1893), Safety Fund National Bank Building (1894), Cutler Block (1896), Quinlan Building (1913, demolished), and the Belding and Dickenson Building (1866). Buildings for which the firm was responsible for remodeling include Torrey & Wood (1840, 1911) and the Central Block (1847, 1925, since demolished). While some of the extant structures are currently vacant, several still continue to serve a mix of commercial purposes.

**C. Registration Requirements**

To be eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places under this property type, buildings first should be fully verified as being the work of H.M. Francis or H.M. Francis and Sons. The survey data in the files of the Massachusetts Historical Commission has identified at least 16 earlier structures either in full or updated by the firm in downtown Fitchburg. The locations of these buildings have been determined, and it has been confirmed that at least nine are no longer standing. It is possible that additional commercial buildings designed by the firm have not yet been identified.

Because these buildings were often larger and multi-storied, their overall appearance becomes more important. Buildings under this property type should retain sufficient exterior integrity on their upper levels to convey a sense of original design and architectural detailing. Integrity of location, design, workmanship, feeling, and association are particularly important in this property type. Because of the changing nature of Fitchburg's downtown commercial district, the integrity of setting should be secondary to physical integrity in evaluating commercial buildings designed by Francis and his firm.

It is to be expected that lower-story facades are commonly changed on commercial buildings while upper stories remain unchanged, a practice that allows cost-effective modernization. Lower-story façade changes, including changes to window and door openings and use of new material, will not have altered the surviving examples' physical integrity to the point of ineligibility. On the upper levels, however, it is to be expected that fenestration patterns will be retained; window replacement in kind should be permissible. If exterior changes have been made to the upper stories, such as covering of the original fabric, the physical integrity of the building may have been compromised. In addition, cumulative exterior changes on the upper stories, such as fundamental window bay modification or removal of the cornice, may also affect the physical integrity of the building to render it ineligible for National Register listing. Nevertheless, the overall physical integrity of a multistory building's exterior may remain quite good, despite changes at the lower levels. Of those Francis commercial buildings identified in the context, most have had a range of window replacement on the upper stories, and most have seen storefront updating and alterations. It is likely, therefore, that some buildings will fall within the lower end of physical integrity. Among the most intact are the Coggs Hall and Carpenter Block and the Phoenix Building, while those that are more altered include the Proctor Block, and the Safety Fund Building. In all cases, sufficient character-defining features—including form, materials, ornament, cornice detail—remain to support these structures' integrity for designation under the context.

In recent years, with urban decline and urban renewal, a number of Francis' buildings in the downtown, particularly along Main Street, have been lost to neglect, fire, and demolition. Thus amongst the rare survivors, the relative number of extant buildings representing this property type should be considered; all surviving examples of the work of the most prolific and skilled architect practicing in the city become increasingly significant, and even those that have seen some compromise to their integrity are potentially eligible for National Register designation. Six of the buildings still stand as a testament to the architectural beauty of commercial buildings designed in the late nineteenth century by H.M. Francis. The relative rarity of surviving examples must be recognized to enhance the significance of the commercial resources associated with architect H.M. Francis.

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2. Institutional / Religious Buildings

A. Description

This property type is associated with at least nine ecclesiastical buildings in downtown Fitchburg, of which two have been demolished. This property type also includes two subtypes: additions to pre-existing structures, including the Unitarian Church Georgian Revival-style addition, which was completed in 1888 and dedicated in 1889; and former churches adaptively reused by H.M. Francis. Although no extant examples of the latter subtype have been identified, several razed properties (including the former Trinitarian Church of 1844, remodeled by Francis in 1875 and 1883 for commercial use; and the former First Methodist Church, remodeled in 1888 into apartments and known as the Wesley Building) suggest that other examples of this subtype may exist. Further research may identify additional properties that could be included in the National Register under this subtype.

Francis worked in a variety of architectural styles, and his church buildings reflect his familiarity with a broad vocabulary. His earliest known religious building is the High Victorian Gothic-style Rollstone Congregational Church of 1868. Later buildings include the Renaissance Revival-style Finnish First Universalist Church of 1886; Shingle Style German Congregational Church of 1892 at 125 Rollstone Street; the Gothic Revival-style Swedish Congregational Church of 1893; the Romanesque Revival-style Calvinistic Congregational Church (1897; NR); and the Shingle Style Elm Street Congregational Church (1903).

All but one (Swedish Congregational Church) of the surviving ecclesiastical buildings by Francis in the Downtown Fitchburg area are built of buff or red brick or sandstone, with beltcourses of contrasting materials, with gray or greenish slate roofs, and facades further enlivened by an abundance of details in granite, brownstone, and terra cotta, creating a polychromatic effect. All have a gable-front façade with a corner tower; an elaborate window set within a pointed arch or rounded arch is centered within the façade.

B. Significance

H.M. Francis' ecclesiastical buildings are historically significant under criterion A for their association with Fitchburg's development in the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries and also architecturally significant under criterion C, by embodying the distinctive characteristics of their design, period, style, and type. Practicing at a time of rapid expansion and industrial development in the city, accompanied by rapid growth of its ethnic populations, Francis designed churches to house a range of nationalities and religions. Among the churches designed by Francis and located in the downtown are: the Rollstone Congregational Church; Finnish First Universalist Church; an addition to the Unitarian First Parish Church; German Congregational Church; Swedish Congregational Church; Calvinist Congregational Church; and the Elm Street Congregational Church. In addition, Francis was responsible for the remodeling of the Trinitarian Church for commercial purpose and for the First Methodist Church's remodeling as the Wesley Building.

C. Registration Requirements

To be eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places under this property type, buildings first should be fully verified as being the work of H.M. Francis or H.M. Francis and Sons. The survey data in the files of the Massachusetts Historical Commission has identified at least nine works of this property type by the firm in downtown Fitchburg. The locations of these buildings have been determined, and it has been confirmed that at least two are no longer standing. It is possible that additional ecclesiastical buildings designed by the firm have not yet been identified.

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Buildings under this property type should retain sufficient exterior integrity to convey a sense of original design and architectural detailing. Integrity of location, design, workmanship, feeling, and association are particularly important in this property type. Because of the changing nature of Fitchburg's downtown, the integrity of setting should be secondary to physical integrity in evaluating ecclesiastical buildings designed by the firm. Expected alterations that do not compromise the overall integrity of the buildings include window and door replacements. In some cases, the addition of synthetic siding has completely obscured the building's original detail and character, and this factor combined with window replacements may have compromised the building's physical integrity and may thus render the building ineligible for listing in the National Register. One church building identified in the survey, the First Universalist Church, has lost its distinctive turret and the top part of its tower; in addition, a small open gallery above the entry porch has been filled with windows. Nevertheless, the building retains sufficient character-defining features, including polychromatic ornament and trim, slate and copper roof, and elaborate rose window, to retain its physical integrity. Another building, the Swedish Congregational Church, has been sheathed in synthetic siding, entirely masking its details and trim; in the process, it also appears that windows were either partially obscured or removed entirely. Although this property may be found to retain physical integrity were the siding to be removed, it is at present not eligible for listing under the context. One church building, the Calvinistic Congregational Church, was individually listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1979.

In recent years, with urban decline and urban renewal, a number of Francis' buildings in the downtown have been lost to neglect, fire, and demolition. Two identified examples of this property type, churches altered by Francis or Francis and Sons to serve a new purpose, have since been demolished (the former Trinitarian Church of 1844, remodeled by Francis in 1875 and 1883, at which time it was in commercial use; and the former First Methodist Church, remodeled into apartments by Francis in 1888 and known as the Wesley Building). Thus all surviving examples of the work of the most prolific and skilled architect practicing in the city become increasingly significant, and even those that have seen some compromise to their integrity are potentially eligible for National Register designation. The churches of H.M. Francis surviving in downtown Fitchburg serve as testament to the architectural beauty of the ecclesiastical buildings designed in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century during Fitchburg's heyday.

*3. Institutional / Educational Buildings**A. Description*

This property type is associated with at least eight institutional/educational buildings in downtown Fitchburg, of which three have been demolished. Within this property type are two subtypes: institutional buildings, such as the Fitchburg Art Museum, the YMCA, the Library (now demolished), and the historical society; and school buildings, such as the Second Empire style Academy Street School (1869, burned and demolished 1934), the second Fitchburg High School (now demolished), and several grammar schools, one of which has also been demolished. A third subtype is buildings for which Francis or Francis and Sons was responsible for major additions to or alterations of pre-existing structures.

Francis worked in a variety of architectural styles and his institutional/educational buildings reflect his familiarity with a broad vocabulary. His earliest known building under this property type is the Second Empire-style Academy Street School (1869), Fitchburg's first high school. Later buildings include the Romanesque Revival-style Wallace Library and Art Building (1894 [demolished]); the Renaissance Revival-style Hastings School (1860 with 1884 alterations by H.M. Francis [demolished]); the Gothic Revival-style Francis-designed building that is now part of the complex forming the Fitchburg Art Museum (1885); the Romanesque Revival-style School Street School (1890); the Renaissance Revival-style YMCA (1894); and the Fitchburg High School (1895, burned 1934 and demolished). The Georgian Revival-style Fitchburg Historical Society (1911, NR, 2003) was designed by H.M. Francis and Sons.

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Character-defining features of Francis' institutional/educational buildings include masonry construction and an attention to detail executed in rough-cut granite and carved stone, sandstone, and wood. The Renaissance Revival-style YMCA and Romanesque Revival-style School Street School both display rounded arches of rough-cut stone, and corner towers (cut down in the case of the YMCA).

**B. Significance**

H.M. Francis' institutional buildings are historically significant under criterion A for their associations with Fitchburg's development and growing civic pride in the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries and are architecturally significant under criterion C, embodying the distinctive characteristics of their design, period, style, and type.

**C. Registration Requirements**

To be eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places under this property type, buildings first should be fully verified as being the work of H.M. Francis or H.M. Francis and Sons. The survey data in the files of the Massachusetts Historical Commission has identified at least eight works of this property type by H.M. Francis and his firm in downtown Fitchburg. The locations of these buildings have been determined, and it has been confirmed by fieldwork that three are no longer standing. It is possible that additional institutional buildings designed by the firm have not yet been identified.

Buildings under this property type should retain sufficient exterior integrity to convey a sense of original design and architectural detailing. Integrity of location, design, workmanship, feeling, and association are particularly important in this property type. Because of the changing nature of Fitchburg's downtown, the integrity of setting should be secondary to physical integrity in evaluating institutional buildings designed by the firm. Expected alterations that do not compromise the overall integrity of the buildings include window and door replacements. In some cases, buildings are deteriorated due to disuse and neglect, but nevertheless they retain sufficient physical integrity to be eligible for listing in the National Register under the context.

One institutional building, the Fitchburg Historical Society, the work of H. M. Francis and Sons (erected in 1910), was individually listed on the National Register in 2003. Another, the Fitchburg YMCA (1894), is within the Monument Square National Register District (1978).

In recent years, with urban decline and urban renewal, a number of Francis' buildings in the downtown have been lost to neglect, fire, and demolition. Three examples of the property type – the Fitchburg High School, the Hastings School, and the Wallace Library and Art Building – have all been demolished. Thus all surviving examples of the work of the most prolific and skilled architect practicing in the city become increasingly significant, serving as testament to the architectural beauty of the institutional buildings designed in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century during Fitchburg's heyday, and are potentially eligible for National Register designation.

**4. Institutional / Government Buildings**

**A. Description**

This property type is associated with at least four institutional/governmental buildings and structures in downtown Fitchburg, of which one has been demolished. Of the survivors, one is a structure, the Wallace Way, which is an elaborate set of steps leading to the former site of the high school (burned 1934). The other falls within the subtype of buildings for which Francis or Francis

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and Sons was responsible for major additions to or alterations of pre-existing structures. The latter category includes Fitchburg City Hall (1879 addition to 1852 building) and Fitchburg Armory (whose 1914 addition to an 1891 building, designed by Wait and Cutter, was the work of H. M. Francis and Sons).

Francis worked in a variety of architectural styles and his institutional/governmental buildings reflect his familiarity with a broad vocabulary. The Renaissance Revival-style Police Station, constructed in yellow brick in 1894, was demolished ca. 2000 to make room for a new public safety facility. Among the surviving structures, most notable is Francis' 1879 addition to, and extensive remodeling of, the City Hall, which echoes the materials, form, fenestration, and ornament of the Greek Revival/Italianate-style original building.

**B. Significance**

H.M. Francis' governmental buildings and structures are historically significant under criterion A for their associations with Fitchburg's development and growing civic pride in the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries and are architecturally significant under criterion C, embodying the distinctive characteristics of their design, period, style, and type.

**C. Registration Requirements**

To be eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places under this property type, buildings first should be fully verified as being the work of H.M. Francis or H.M. Francis and Sons. The survey data in the files of the Massachusetts Historical Commission has identified at least four works of this property type by the firm in downtown Fitchburg. The locations of these buildings and structures have been determined, and it has been confirmed by fieldwork that one (the Police Station and District Court) is no longer standing. It is possible that additional governmental buildings and structures designed by the firm have not yet been identified.

Buildings and structures under this property type should retain sufficient exterior integrity to convey a sense of original design and architectural detailing. Integrity of location, design, workmanship, feeling, and association are particularly important in this property type. Because of the changing nature of Fitchburg's downtown, the integrity of setting should be secondary to physical integrity in evaluating institutional buildings designed by the firm. Expected alterations that do not compromise the overall integrity of the buildings include window and door replacements. In some cases, buildings are deteriorated due to disuse and neglect, but nevertheless they retain sufficient physical integrity to be eligible for listing in the National Register under the context.

One institutional/governmental building, the Fitchburg Armory (1891, 1914 addition), is within the Monument Square Historic District (1978).

In recent years, with urban decline and urban renewal, a number of Francis' buildings in the downtown have been lost to neglect, fire, and demolition. One important example of the property type--the imposing Renaissance Revival-style Police Station--has been demolished. Thus, all surviving examples of the property type amongst the work of H.M. Francis become increasingly significant, serving as testament to the architectural beauty of the governmental buildings designed during Fitchburg's heyday, and are potentially eligible for National Register designation.

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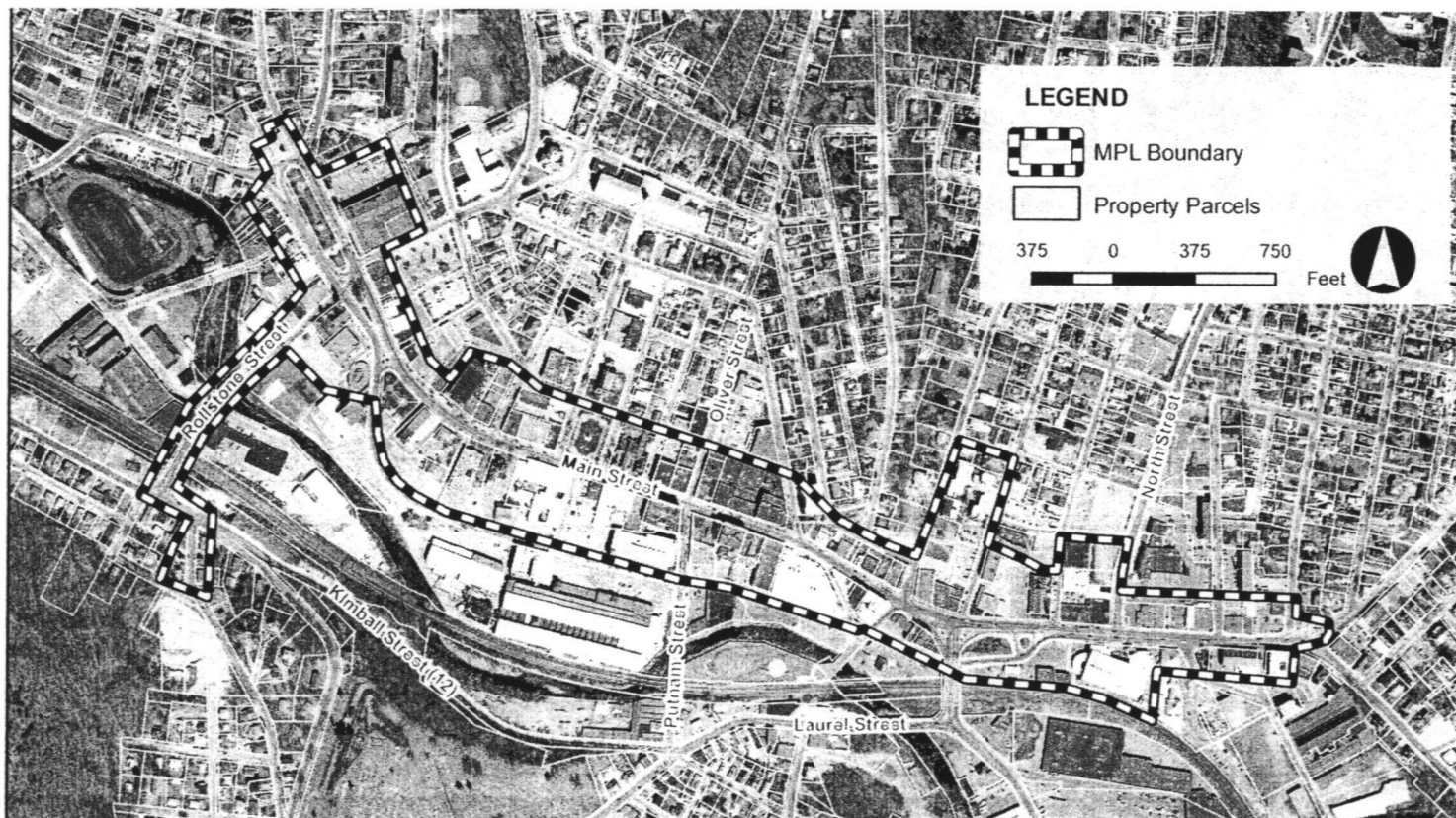
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Downtown Architecture of H.M. Francis, Fitchburg, MA  
Worcester County, MA

Geographical Data

The limits of the Multiple Property Listing run the length of Main Street in downtown Fitchburg, extending from the Upper Common, at the junction of Main, Prospect, and Mechanic streets, running southeasterly to the junction of Lunenburg and Summer streets. The listing also includes the area of Rollstone Street, extending to the south side of the Nashua River, as well as the area encompassed by Day, Union, and Blossom streets to the north of Main Street. The boundaries are depicted on the map below:



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**Geographical Data Sheet**

Name of Property	Address	Date of Construction	Architectural Style
<i>Commercial Buildings</i>			
Belding and Dickinson Building (MHC #412)	350-356 Main Street	1866	Italianate
Fitchburg Savings Bank	745 Main Street	1871 (demolished)	Second Empire
Stiles Block (MHC #206)	748 Main Street	1875 (demolished ca. 1977)	Italianate
Wachusett National Bank	Main Street	1875 (demolished)	Style unknown
Union Depot	Main Street	1877 (demolished 1961)	Victorian Eclectic
Coggs Hall and Carpenter Block (MHC #411)	347-357 Main Street	1877	Renaissance Revival
Proctor Block (remodel) (MHC #210)	773-779 Main Street	ca. 1880	Victorian Eclectic
J.W. Twitchell Block	Main Street	1883 (demolished)	Style unknown
Cushing Block	Main Street	1885 (demolished)	Style unknown
Wallace Block (MHC #214)	796-808 Main Street	1892 (demolished 1975)	Romanesque Revival
Phoenix Building (MHC #212)	781 Main Street	1893	Renaissance Revival
Safety Fund National Bank (MHC #418)	470 Main Street	1894	Renaissance Revival
Cutler Block	480 Main Street	1896	Renaissance Revival
Torrey & Wood Block (MHC #209)	759-769 Main St.	1840s, 1911	Chicago Style
Quinlan Building (MHC #204)	721-725 Main St.	1913 (demolished date unknown)	Classical Revival/ Chicago Style
Central Block (MHC #205)	730-740 Main St.	1847, 1925 (demolished 1994)	Italianate/ Classical Revival

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<i>Institutional / Religious Buildings</i>			
Rollstone Congregational Church (MHC #405)	199 Main Street	1868	High Victorian Gothic
Trinitarian Church (remodel to commercial) (MHC #3)	621 Main Street	1875 and 1883 (demolished)	Style unknown
Finnish First Universalist Church (aka First Universalist Church, Finnish) (MHC #1231)	66 Day Street	1886	Renaissance Revival
First Methodist Church (aka Wesley Building) (remodeled for apartments) (MHC #219)	866 Main Street	1888 (demolished ca. 1977)	Victorian Eclectic
Unitarian First Parish Church (addition) (aka First Parish Unitarian Universalist)	923 Main Street	1888	Georgian Revival
German Congregational Church (aka First German Congregational Church; Evangelical Church, German)	125 Rollstone Church	1892	Shingle Style
Swedish Congregational Church (aka Evangelical Congregational Church, Swedish) (MHC #235)	15 Rollstone Street	1893-1897	Gothic Revival
Calvanist Congregational Church (aka Faith United Parish) (MHC #215) (NRIND, 1979)	820 Main Street	1897	Romanesque Revival
Elm Street Congregational Church (aka Finnish Evangelical Mission Church; United Church of Christ) (MHC #2008)	264 Elm Street	1903	Shingle Style
<i>Institutional / Educational Buildings</i>			
Academy Street School (MHC #159)	76 Academy Street	1869	Second Empire
Hastings School (addition and renovation) (MHC #162)	High Street	1884 (demolished ca. 1977)	Renaissance Revival
Fitchburg Art Museum (MHC #247)	Merriam Parkway	1885	Gothic Revival
School Street School (MHC #343)	School and Main Streets	1890	Romanesque Revival
Young Men's Christian Association (MHC #9) (Monument Park NRDIS, 1978)	533 Main Street	1894	Rom. Revival
Wallace Library and Art Building	Main Street	1894 (demolished)	Renaissance Revival
Fitchburg High School	Academy Street	1895 (demolished by	Victorian Eclectic

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		fire 1934)	
Fitchburg Historical Society (MHC #5) NRIND, 2003	50 Grove Street	1911	
<i>Institutional / Government Buildings and Structures</i>			
Fitchburg City Hall (rear addition) (MHC #203)	718 Main Street	1852 with 1879 addition	Greek Revival
Fitchburg Police Station and District Court (MHC #100)	20 Elm Street	ca. 1894 (demolished ca. 1977)	Renaissance Revival
Wallace Way (MHC #921)	Wallace Way/ Academy Street	1902	N/A
Fitchburg Armory (MHC #4) (Monument Park NRDIS, 1978)		1891 by Wait & Cutter, with 1914 addition by Francis and Sons	

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**Summary of Identification and Evaluation Methods**

An important goal of the Fitchburg Historical Society, an organization with headquarters in an H.M. Francis and Sons-designed building, is to preserve and champion the architecture of H.M. Francis and his firm in downtown Fitchburg, including the rehabilitation of its headquarters. Consistent with this goal and in keeping with the Fitchburg Downtown Urban Revitalization and Development Plan, Twin Cities Community Development Corporation (Twin Cities CDC) proposes rehabilitation of the Safety Fund National Bank Building at 470 Main Street, utilizing state and federal historic rehabilitation tax credits, an activity that requires the building be listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

To secure federal historic tax credits for the Safety Fund National Bank Building project and to provide an avenue for future rehabilitation of Francis-designed buildings in downtown Fitchburg, Twin Cities CDC retained Epsilon Associates to develop this historic context in consultation with the Fitchburg Historical Society and the Massachusetts Historical Commission. The Inventory of Historic and Archaeological Assets of the Commonwealth maintained by the Massachusetts Historical Commission was consulted to identify all previously recorded properties by H.M. Francis and his firm in downtown Fitchburg. A field survey confirmed the existence of multiple properties designed by Francis and his firm, which provided the context for this nomination. Existing conditions photographs and property descriptions were evaluated by the Massachusetts Historical Commission and National Park Service, and it was determined that a multiple property submission of H.M. Francis and H.M. Francis and Sons properties was appropriate and that there were sufficient properties within the downtown to meet the criteria for National Register listing. It is anticipated that the Safety Fund National Bank Building will be the first of many H.M. Francis and H.M. Francis and Sons properties listed as part of this multiple property listing.

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## Extant Buildings

### Government

1. Fitchburg City Hall, 718 Main Street (MHC #203)

The addition to Fitchburg City Hall, 718 Main Street (**Photos 1.A, 1.B**), undertaken by Francis in 1879 included the remodeling and enlargement of the existing 1852 Greek Revival building. The original, 1852, primary façade is a two-story symmetrical five-bay, central entry building topped with an expansive pedimented gable roof. The façade is ornamented with engaged colossal brick ionic pilasters that flank each of the five bays, which are topped by a broad, delicately denticulated cornice, on which reads "Fitchburg City Hall." The 1879 addition is similar in style, materials, and fenestration to the original portions of the building; however, the 1879 addition includes a fourth story created by a slate-clad shed dormer. The building continues to serve as the city's municipal building, and has hosted a number of famous speakers over the years including, Henry David Thoreau, Horace Greeley, and Wendell Phillips.

2. Fitchburg Armory, 14 Wallace Avenue (MHC #4)

The Fitchburg Armory, 14 Wallace Avenue (**Photos 2.A – 2.C**), was designed in 1891 by Robert P. Wait and Olin W. Cutter and includes a 1914 addition by H.M. Francis & Sons. The original 1891 headhouse is a Gothic Revival, two-story brick building topped with a flat roof. Beneath the first-floor window sills, a sandstone watertable runs continuously throughout the building, and above, a corbelled stringcourse defines the base of the entablature that consists of a crenellated parapet wall ornamented with a series of cruciform openings. A corbelled-brick, square, central tower, including a small turret on the southern end, rises above the roofline of the building. The tower serves as the main entry to the building and consists of an expansive segmental-arch opening, flanked by a turret on either side. The tower has a large carved relief that reads "ARMORY MVM" (Armory Massachusetts Volunteer Militia) crowned by the seal of the Commonwealth. The 1914 addition has a broad slate stepped-gable roof that is masked by a façade similar in style, materials, and fenestration to the original of the building. The Armory is listed in the National Register as a contributing property to the Monument Square Historic District (1978).

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## Institutional

3. Fitchburg Historical Society, 50 Grove Street (MHC #5)

The Fitchburg Historical Society, 50 Grove Street (**Photo 3**), is a Georgian Revival building erected in 1911. Built of brick and ornamented in terracotta, this two-story, hip-roofed, symmetrical five-bay building has a heavy ornamented central entry that consists of a sizeable double door topped with a semi-circular fanlight. This slightly projecting arched entry is flanked on either side by partially engaged Doric columns on raised plinths. The entablature reads "Fitchburg Historical Society" and is topped by a delicate iron balustrade. A terracotta water table runs continuously around the building. Openings on the first floor are tall arched double hung windows with broad terra-cotta sills, and arched brick lintels featuring terra cotta keystones. Openings on the second floor are six-over-six double hung sash windows with splayed terra-cotta lintels and keystones. Other decorative features of the building include an elaborate terra-cotta modillioned and denticulated cornice and terra-cotta corner quoins. Today, the building is still used for its intended function: the headquarters of the Fitchburg Historical Society. The building is individually listed in the National Register (2003).

4. Fitchburg Young Men's Christian Association, 553 Main Street (MHC #9)

The YMCA (**Photo 4**), 553 Main Street, is a monumental, three-story Renaissance Revival-style, red brick building erected in 1894. Situated at the corner of Main and Fox Streets, the building exhibits two major facades, a projecting corner bay detailed with rusticated granite window openings, granite banding, decorative granite panels, and a ca. 1960s era storefront at the ground level. Originally constructed as a five-story building, two stories were removed prior to 1975. The Main Street elevation is five bays wide with three monumental, rusticated granite central arches inset with double-hung windows. The nine-bay-long Fox Street façade contains punched window openings and more restrained monumental arches. The YMCA was listed in the National Register as a contributing element of the Monument Square Historic District in 1978.

5. Fitchburg Art Museum, Merriam Parkway (MHC #247)

The Fitchburg Art Museum, Merriam Parkway (**Photo 5**), is a Gothic Revival building erected in 1885. Built of brick, this two-story irregularly massed, t-shaped building is topped with a slate crossed-gable roof. The cornice consists of modest denticulated brick, but the eaves of the gabled entry are very broad. The entry is located in the projecting bay of the cross gable and consists of an elaborate iron double door topped with a semi-

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circular fanlight. Directly above this entry is a large paired, fixed eight-paned window. A small paired chimney is located directly next to the projecting entry. Originally, this building was designed as the stables for the nearby Phillips House on Main Street. It is presently attached by a second-story walkway to a second building, part of the museum complex.

### Religious

6. First Universalist Church, 66 Day Street (MHC #1231)

The First Universalist Church, 66 Day Street (**Photo 6**), is a Victorian building with Renaissance-Revival style influences constructed in 1886. Built of brick, the church has a monumental entrance with a large rose window set above a colonnaded porch centered on a gable-front facade. The exterior is accentuated with a cut granite base, wide terracotta banding, granite sills, and engaged columns. The brick tower with granite ornament and English buttresses, though truncated, is set at the northeast corner of the building. Although minor alterations have occurred over the last century, the building remains relatively unchanged and is one of the most architecturally expressive structures in Fitchburg.

7. Finnish Evangelical Mission Church, 264 Elm Street (MHC #2008)

The Finnish Evangelical Mission Church, 264 Elm Street (**Photo 7**), is a Shingle Style building constructed in 1903. A central front porch with decorative columns projects from the front elevation beyond the projecting, square corner tower with a tall, slate-clad spire. Extending above the roofline of the main building, clad in aluminum siding, the tower is devoid of ornament except for two columns on each elevation within the belfry. A large rose window is set above the entryway and five bays of tall windows illuminate the side elevations. A small addition was made to the northeast corner of the church in 1964, but it did not alter the original form of the building.

8. Rollstone Congregational Church, 199 Main Street (MHC #405)

Rollstone Congregational Church, 199 Main Street (**Photo 8**), is a High Victorian Gothic building erected in 1868. Built of brick, the church has a pointed-arch window and door openings trimmed with granite, a 150-foot-tall three-stage tower with crocket-ornamented spire, and, centered on the symmetrical, gable-front facade, a large rose window set within a pointed arch. It was Francis' first architectural commission in Fitchburg. The building is essentially unaltered, having received a small chapel addition ca. 1929.

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9. Calvinist Congregational Church/Faith United Parish, 820 Main Street (MHC #215)

The Calvinistic Congregational Church, 820 Main Street (**Photo 9**), is a Romanesque Revival- style building erected in 1897. The building is constructed of rough-faced reddish sandstone blocks with light tan sandstone trim. It stands on a high basement of larger sandstone block, separated from the main floors by a watertable. The roof is a purple slate with decorative green bands and copper cresting. The church has a triple-arched projecting entrance portico below a large rose window and a square, 158-foot-tall tower with a belfry framed by clasping buttresses with copper-clad pinnacles. Clock faces are found on all four sides. The church is relatively unchanged since its original construction and is individually listed on the National Register of Historic Places (1979).

10. Swedish Congregational Church, Rollstone Street (MHC #235)

The Swedish Congregational Church, Rollstone Street (**Photo 10**), is a Gothic Revival-style structure erected in 1893 by H.M. Francis with later modifications in 1894, 1895 and 1897, also by Francis. Set on a high brick base, the building has a large, projecting corner tower topped with an open-arch, foliated belfry with corner turrets. Although the original rounded-arch window above the main entrance has been obscured beneath modern vinyl siding and the tall stained-glass windows on the side elevations have been replaced with smaller-scale double-hung sash, the building retains its original ecclesiastical form, projecting side gables, and slate roof with copper cresting.

## Educational

11. Academy Street School, 76 Academy Street (MHC #159)

The Academy Street School, 76 Academy Street (**Photo 11**), is a Second Empire building erected in 1869. Built of brick and trimmed with brownstone, this three-story, five-bay school has a steep mansard roof with integrated dormers of varying sizes that are topped with white pedimented and arched window hoods. The second story is ornamented with an expansive white-bracketed cornice that extends across each of the façades of the building. The three central bays make up the large, three-story projecting portico. A raised, one-story post and lintel porch, ornamented with a white denticulated entablature supported by paired columns, projects from the portico, over the central entry of the building. Both the portico and the corners of the building have broad brownstone quoins. Remarkably unaltered, the Academy Street School was one of the first buildings designed by Francis in Fitchburg. The building has suffered deferred maintenance and is in poor condition.

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12. School Street School, School Street (MHC #343)

The School Street School, School Street (**Photos 12.A, 12.B**), is a Romanesque building erected in the late 1880s or the early 1890s. This three-story, five-bay former elementary school is built of brick and trimmed in both textured granite and carved brownstone. The central bay consists of an elaborate square tower entry that extends nearly a full story above the roofline of the rest of the building. This tower has a steep sloping hipped roof that is topped with copper roof cresting and finials. Entry into this tower is achieved through an expansive Syrian arch, typical of the style, which is supported by squat columns. The building remains relatively intact, although it was altered throughout the twentieth century, with the additions of the two porches extending on either side of the central tower. Additionally, many of the window openings throughout the building have been altered, infilled, or boarded up. When built, the school replaced a previous one that had been built on the same site in 1840. The building has suffered deferred maintenance and is in poor condition.

**Commercial**

13. Coggs Hall and Carpenter Block, 347-357 Main Street (MHC #411)

The Coggs Hall and Carpenter Block (**Photo 13**), 347-357 Main Street, is a Renaissance Revival-style commercial building erected in 1877. The three-story, red brick building is richly detailed with decorative brickwork, rusticated-granite trim, and carved granite brackets. The three-bay elevation contains an offset entrance, three bays of triple windows, and a heavy overhanging brick and granite cornice. The ca. 1960 ground floor storefronts are framed by richly detailed cast-iron columns and retain their inset entrances and metal and glass storefronts.

14. Belding and Dickinson Block, 350-356 Main Street (MHC #412)

The Belding and Dickinson Block, 350-356 Main Street (**Photo 14**), is a commercial block with office space on the upper floors erected in 1866. The four-story, seven-bay-wide brick building contains arched brick lintels and sandstone sills. An elaborate, overhanging, multi-colored sandstone cornice is supported by heavily stylized brackets. The ground floor retains its original wrought-iron piers and central entry plan. The two storefronts are representative of later decades, including early 20<sup>th</sup> century transom lights above a 1950s-era "jewel-box" storefront with large expanses of glass and a central entry on the left, and a "floating" display-style storefront on the right. Gaining significance on their own right, these storefronts contribute to the history and significance of this restrained Italianate-style building. The attribution of this building to H. M. Francis requires further research.

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15. Safety Fund National Bank, 470 Main Street (MHC #418)

The Safety Fund National Bank, 470 Main Street (**Photo 15**), is a five-story Renaissance Revival-style commercial building constructed in 1895. The yellow brick and brownstone, pier-and-spandrel building has a clear division of base, middle, and cap. The first two stories, representative of the ca. 1960 era of the building, are clad in limestone and granite. The three upper stories display highly detailed and finely executed brownstone carving and have strong vertical piers set between tall window bays capped by rounded-arched window lintels detailed in brownstone with an egg-and-dart design. Originally located above the main bank entrance, an off-center bay is especially accentuated with engaged columns with Corinthian capitals on each side of the window, and further set off by niches on each level. Windows on the fifth level are clearly articulated with a colonnade of brownstone Ionic columns set between wide yellow brick spandrels detailed with narrow horizontal brownstone bands. The overall façade is capped with a heavy, overhanging copper cornice.

16. Cutler Block, 480 Main Street (Photo No. 16)

The Cutler Block, 480 Main Street (**Photo 16**), is a three-story, buff brick commercial building with terra-cotta detailing. Erected in 1895 in the Renaissance Revival style, the building is situated immediately adjacent to the Safety Fund National Bank. The ground-floor storefront is representative of the mid-twentieth century era sleek commercial storefront design that gained popularity in the 1940s. The bases of the six vertical piers creating the five-bay elevation are set directly above the ground-floor storefront. Richly carved terra-cotta panels are set beneath the third-floor windows, and a heavy, overhanging carved terra-cotta cornice is set on the parapet above a band of recessed circular windows.

17. Torrey & Wood Block, 759-769 Main Street (MHC #209)

The Torrey & Wood Block, 759-769 Main Street (**Photo 17**), is a small-scale Chicago School-style office building remodeled in 1911 by H.M. Francis. Originally constructed ca. 1840, this former Georgian Revival-style building is three stories with a four-bay elevation with the narrow, rightmost bay providing access into the upper floors of the building. Primarily devoid of ornament, the front elevation contains horizontal spandrels and vertical piers of yellow brick. Although the original windows have been replaced, the spacing of the vertical mullions suggests tripartite windows on the second and third floors. The horizontal feeling on the main elevation is further accentuated by inset brick panels between the second and third floors and a modest denticulated cornice. The

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storefronts on the ground level, while of modern design, continue to express the vertical piers and horizontal spandrels represented on the upper levels.

18. Proctor Block, 773-779 Main Street (MHC #210)

The Proctor Block, 773-775-779 Main Street (**Photo 18**), was originally constructed in 1832 and was remodeled by H.M. Francis ca. 1880. Considered one of the most unique structures in downtown Fitchburg, this building mixes Gothic Revival styling with features reminiscent of Frank Furness and Louis Sullivan in its unique display of the rounded arch and overhanging copper awning on its third, top floor. The brick building is detailed with tan terra-cotta banding, sills, and lintels, and a brick and terra-cotta block, stepped parapet. Although the ground-floor retail spaces are of modern design, the original columns with decorative Corinthian capitals remain evenly spaced along the ground level. A small, wood-frame rooftop addition, set well back from the main façade, has been added to the building.

19. Phoenix Building, 781 Main Street (MHC #212)

The Phoenix Building, 781 Main Street (**Photo 19**), is a Renaissance Revival-style commercial building with office space on the upper floors. It is five stories high beneath a broad denticulated cornice, and four bays wide with original and replacement double hung sash, some with transoms or set beneath a rounded arch. Its elaborate brick and granite façade is ornamented with carved limestone panels and beltcourses. The three bays of the first-floor storefronts have been replaced; however, the original highly ornamented entryway remains intact. An entablature with decorative swags reading "The Phoenix" is situated between the third and fourth floors. Erected in 1893 for the Fitchburg Mutual Fire Insurance Company, established in 1847, the company operated out of this building until recently.

## Structures

22. Wallace Way, Between Academy Street and Orchard Street (MHC #921)

Wallace Way (**Photo 22**), is an elaborate public way that was given to the city by Rodney Wallace in 1902. Francis designed the three-part staircase that ascends this steep hill, which overlooks the entirety of the downtown area. Each of the three segments of the staircase ascends the hill with an incrementally increasing number of steps in each section. Reminiscent of the striking staircases of Europe, this granite staircase is flanked by dramatic stepped walls that increase in size and ornamentation as they ascend the hill. At its highest point, the walls are ornamented by massive scrolled

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brackets, also in granite. Original elaborate bronze light fixtures have been removed from the staircase. The top of the staircase culminates at the Academy Middle School, formerly Fitchburg High School, built in 1936. The staircase predates the construction of the school.

**Demolished Buildings include:**

**Government**

23. Fitchburg Police Station and District Court, 20 Elm Street (MHC #100)

The Renaissance Revival-style Fitchburg Police Station and District Court was constructed ca. 1894. The three-story, yellow brick, hipped roof building with an arched entry was demolished sometime after 1977.

**Institutional**

24. Wallace Library & Art Building, Main Street

The Wallace Library was located on Main Street on the site of the present modern library. Robert Wallace, owner of The Fitchburg Paper Company, commissioned H.M. Francis to design the Wallace Library and Art Building in 1894. The library was the first of fifteen libraries designed by Francis throughout Massachusetts, New Hampshire, and Vermont. It was designed in the Renaissance Revival style and was characterized by arched windows and entryway.

**Religious**

24. Trinitarian Church, 621 Main Street (MHC #3)

The Trinitarian Church, formerly on a prominent Main Street corner adjacent to Monument Square, was erected in 1844 and was an important gathering place during the abolitionist movement. The church was used by the congregation until 1871, at which time it was sold and used for several years thereafter as the Post Office. H.M. Francis was the architect of record for major alterations to the building in 1875 and 1883. The building stood within the Monument Square Historic District (1978), but has since been demolished.

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**Educational**

26. Fitchburg High School, Academy Street

H.M. Francis' most notable educational building in Fitchburg was a new high school, dedicated in 1895 and located on Academy Street, just down the street from the old one (see Academy Street School above). It combined features of several styles: the Renaissance Revival rounded arch, Georgian Revival hipped roof, and Neo-Classical symmetry. The building was destroyed by fire in 1934.

27. Hastings School, High Street (MHC #162)

The Hastings School was built in 1860 and had a substantial addition and renovation by H.M. Francis in 1884. The building was demolished sometime after 1977.

**Commercial**

28. Quinlan Building, 721-725 Main Street (MHC #204)

The Quinlan Building was a three-story, orange brick commercial structure built in 1913. The building, designed by H.M. Francis and Sons, also housed the Saxony Theatre. The building was demolished sometime after 1977.

29. Central Block, 730-740 Main Street (MHC #205)

The Central Block was a red brick, four-story commercial and residential structure on Main Street. Records indicate it was originally a "Federal Style" building, constructed in 1847. The building underwent substantial alterations in 1925, designed by H.M. Francis and Sons, at which time it was noted to be a lodging house, with commercial space on the ground floor along Main Street. The building was demolished in 1994.

30. Fitchburg Savings Bank, 745 Main Street

Fitchburg Savings Bank was a large, four-story, mansard building erected on Upper Main Street in 1871. Besides the savings bank, the building housed the Fitchburg National Bank and the Masonic Hall.

31. Stiles Block, 748 Main Street (MHC #206)

The Stiles Block was designed in 1875 by H.M. Francis for the merchant James Stiles,

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who ran a dry goods store. The three-story brick building was demolished sometime after 1977.

32. Wallace Block, 796-808 Main Street (MHC #214)

The Romanesque Revival-style Wallace Block was designed in 1892 by H.M. Francis to be the headquarters of the Fitchburg Paper Company and Fitchburg Sentinel. The red brick building with rusticated-stone cladding and a heavy bracketed cornice was noted to be one of most important buildings in the City. The upper stories resembled the Safety Fund National Bank building, built two years later. Both buildings were five-story steel-frame buildings clad in masonry and featuring a two-story base, double-height piers on the third and fourth floors carrying round-arched windows, and a single-story attic level of rectangular windows. The Wallace Building was smaller than the Safety Fund building with a fewer number of window and door bays across the façade. The building was demolished in 1975.

33. Wesley Building/ First Methodist Church, 866 Main Street (MHC #219)

The Wesley Building was designed in 1841 as the First Methodist Church. In 1888, the congregation moved to a new building and H.M. Francis remodeled the building into apartments. The building was condemned in 1977 and demolished shortly thereafter.

Others include:

34. Cushing Block, Main Street (1885)

35. J.W. Twitchell Block, Main Street (1883)

36. Wachusett National Bank, Main Street (1875)

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**Industrial**

37. E.F. Belding Company, 32 North Street (MHC #404)

The E.F. Belding Company Building was a three-story, red brick industrial building, designed by H.M. Francis for the manufacture of shoes. The 18-bay building, constructed in 1902, fronted on North Street in an industrial area north of Main Street. The building was demolished sometime after 1977.

**Transportation**

38. Union Depot

The growth of local industry and population and associated increased demand for rail services resulted in the construction of the H.M. Francis-designed Union Station in 1877, sited at the southern end of Main Street. Union Depot served as Fitchburg's central artery for immigrants, businessmen, passengers, and freight, through which traveled nearly 100 trains a day at the height of Fitchburg's development in the late nineteenth century. The building was demolished in 1961.

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DOWNTOWN ARCHITECTURE of H.M. FRANCIS MPS  
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FITCHBURG City Hall (1852) PRIMARY FACADE

PHOTO # 1 A





DOWNTOWN ARCHITECTURE of H.M. FRANCIS MPS  
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FITCHBURG City Hall 1879 ADDITION

PHOTO 1-B



DOWNTOWN ARCHITECTURE of H.M.  
FRANCIS MPS

FITCHBURG (WORCESTER) MA

FITCHBURG ARMOY 1891, 1914

PHOTO 2A



DOWNTOWN ARCHITECTURE of H M FRANCIS MPS  
FITCHBURG (WORCESTER) MA

FITCHBURG ANONY, SIDE VIEW, 1891, 1914

PHOTO 2B

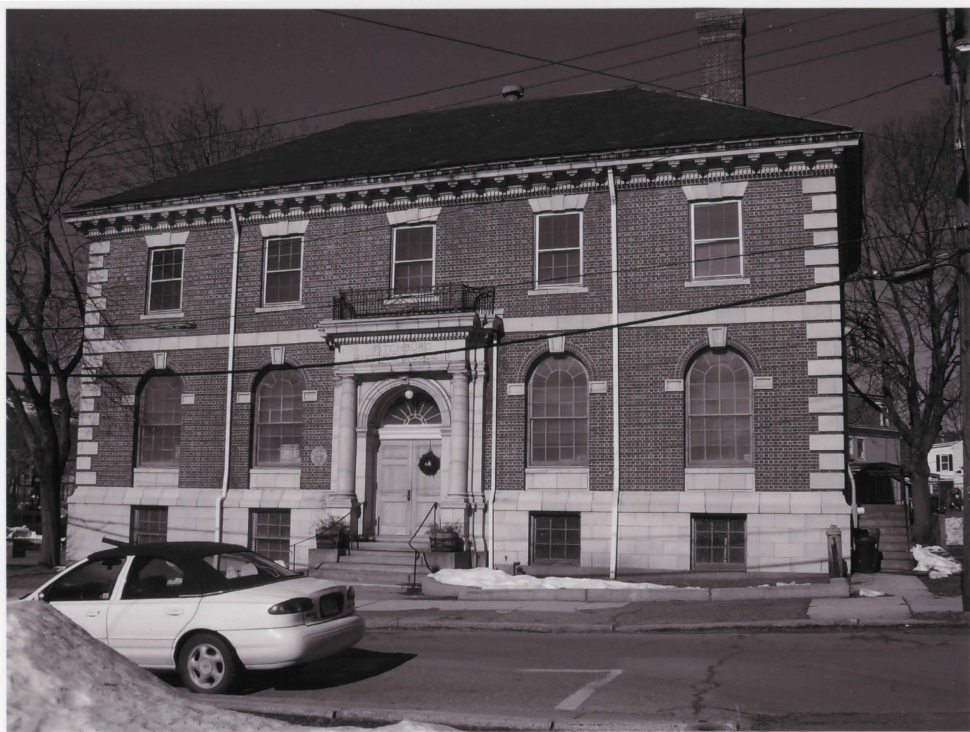




DOWNTOWN ARCHITECTURE of H M FRANCIS MPS  
FITCHBURG (WORCESTER) MA

FITCHBURG ARMONY, LEAR, 1891, 1914

PICTOR 2C



DOWNTOWN ARCHITECTURE of H.M. FRANCIS MPS  
FITCHBURG (WORCESTER) MA

FITCHBURG HISTORICAL SOCIETY 1911

PHOTO 3





DOWNTOWN ARCHITECTURE of H.M. FRANCIS MPS  
FITCHBURG (WORCESTER) MA

FITCHBURG YMCA 1894

PHOTO 4



DOWNTOWN ARCHITECTURE of HM FRANCIS MPS  
FITCHBURG (WORCESTER) MA

FITCHBURG ART MUSEUM 1885

PHOTO 5



DOWNTOWN ARCHITECTURE OF H M FRANCIS MPS  
FITCHBURG (WORCESTER) MA

1<sup>ST</sup> UNIVERSALIST CH. 1886

PHOTO 6



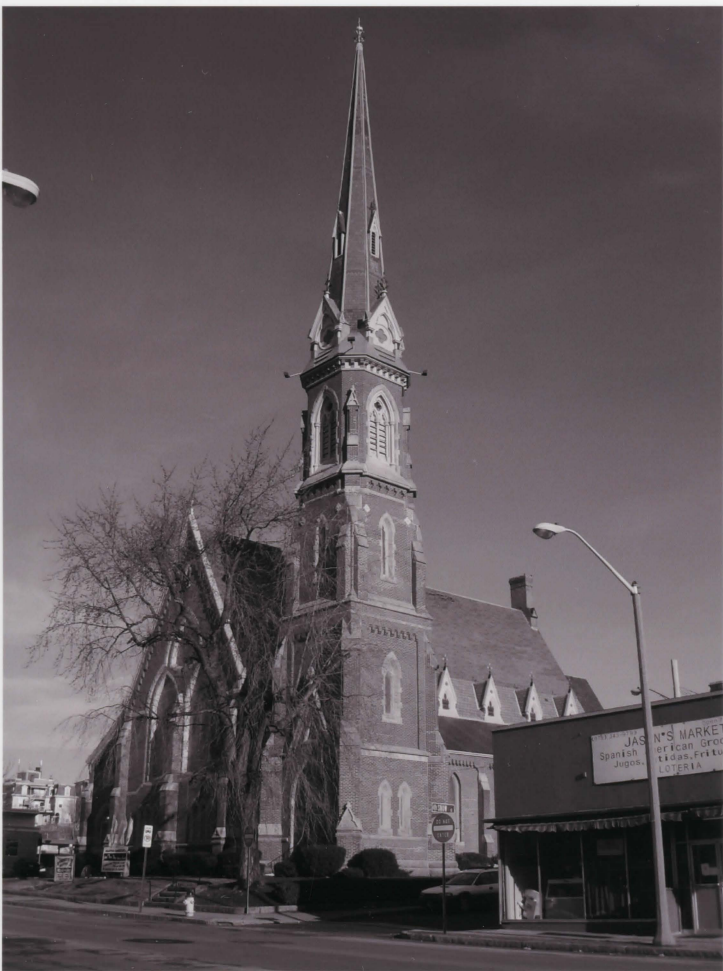


DOWNTOWN ARCHITECTURE of H.M.  
FRANCIS MPS

FITCHBURG (WORCESTER) MA

FINNISH EVANGELICAL MISSION CH.  
1903

Photo 7

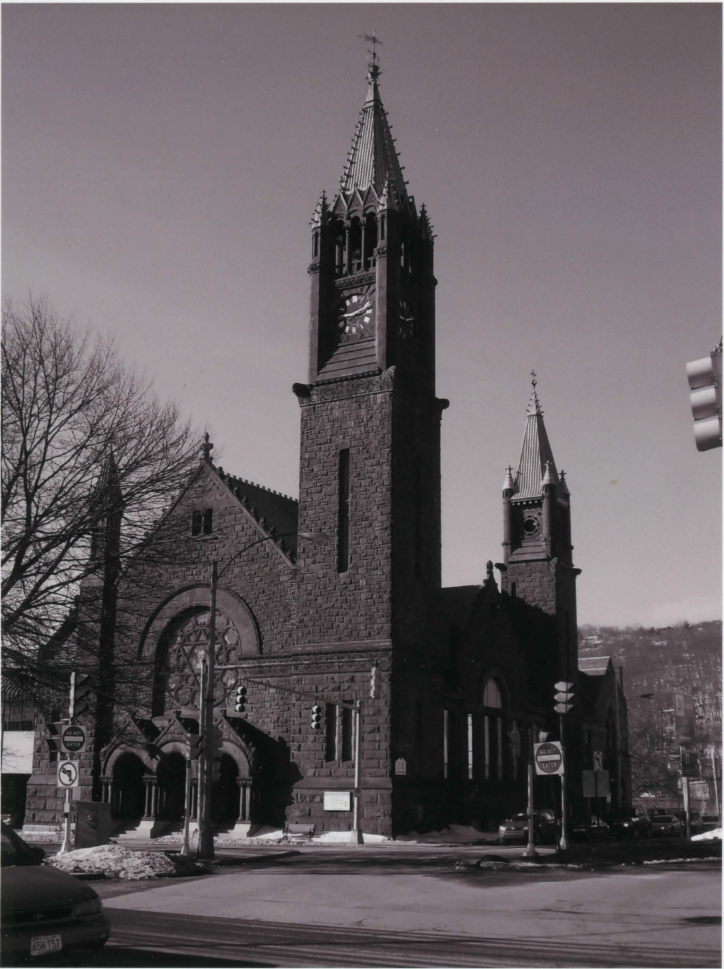


DOWNTOWN ARCHITECTURE of HM  
FRANCIS MPS

FITCHBURG (WORCESTER) MA

ROLLSTONE CONG. CH 1868

PHOTO 8



DOWNTOWN ARCHITECTURE of  
H M FRANCIS NPS

FITCHBURG (WORCESTER) MA

CALVINIST CONG. CH. 1897

FAITH UNITED PARISH

PHOTO 9





DOWNTOWN ARCHITECTURE of H M FRANCIS MPS  
FITCHBURG (WORCESTER) MA

SWEDISH CONG. CH. 1893, 1894, 1895, 1897

PHOTO 10



DOWNTOWN ARCHITECTURE OF H M FRANCIS MPS  
FITCHBURG (WORCESTER) MA

ACADEMY ST. SCHOOL 1869

PHOTO 11



DOWNTOWN ARCHITECTURE of H M FRANCIS MPS  
FITCHBURG (WORCESTER) MA

SCHOOL ST SCHOOL ca. 1890

PHOTO 12A





DOWNTOWN ARCHITECTURE of H M FRANCIS MPS  
FITCHBURG (WORCESTER) MA

SCHOOL ST SCHOOL, REAR, ca. 1890

PHOTO 12 B



DOWNTOWN ARCHITECTURE of H M FRANCIS MPS

FITCHBURG (WORCESTER) MA

COGGSHALL & CARPENTER BLOCK 1877

PHOTO 13



DOWNTOWN ARCHITECTURE of  
H M FRANCIS MPS

FITCHBURG (WORCESTER) MA

BELDING & DICKINSON BLOCK  
1866

Photo 14





DOWNTOWN ARCHITECTURE of  
H M FRANCIS MPS

FITCHBURG (WORCESTER) MA

SAFETY FUND NATL. BANK  
1895

PHOTO 15



DOWNTOWN ARCHITECTURE of  
H M FRANCIS MPS

FITCHBURG (WORCESTER) MA

CUTLER BLOCK 1895

PHOTO 16



DOWNTOWN ARCHITECTURE OF H M FRANCIS MPS  
FITCHBURG (WORCESTER) MA

TORREY + WOOD BLOCK, ca. 1890, 1911

PHOTO 17





DOWNTOWN ARCHITECTURE of H M FRANCIS MPS  
FITCHBURG (WORCESTER) MA

PROCTOR BLOCK ca. 1880

PHOTO 18



DOWNTOWN ARCHITECTURE of H M  
FRANCIS MPS

FITCHBURG (WORCESTER) MA

PHOENIX BLDG. 1893

PHOTO 19



Downtown Architecture of H M Francis MPS  
Fitchburg (Worcester) MA

Wallace Way 1902

Photo 22

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: ADDITIONAL COVER DOCUMENTATION

MULTIPLE

NAME: Downtown Architecture of H.M. Francis, Fitchburg, MA MPS

STATE & COUNTY: MASSACHUSETTS. Worcester

DATE RECEIVED: 1/18/13

DATE OF PENDING LIST:

DATE OF 16TH DAY:

DATE OF 45TH DAY: 03/06/13

DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:

REFERENCE NUMBER:

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  
NEW MPS: N

COMMENT WAIVER: N

\_\_\_ACCEPT \_\_\_RETURN \_\_\_REJECT \_\_\_DATE

ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:

Additional Documentation Approved

RECOM./CRITERIA

REVIEWER

DISCIPLINE

Phone

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 National Park Service.



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

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

**Downtown Architecture of H.M. Francis, Fitchburg, MA, MPS  
Fitchburg (Worcester), MA**

Section number F Page 4

Buildings under this property type should retain sufficient exterior integrity to convey a sense of original design and architectural detailing. Integrity of location, design, workmanship, feeling, and association are particularly important in this property type. Because of the changing nature of Fitchburg's downtown, the integrity of setting should be secondary to physical integrity in evaluating ecclesiastical buildings designed by the firm. Expected alterations that do not compromise the overall integrity of the buildings include window and door replacements. In some cases, the addition of synthetic siding has completely obscured the building's original detail and character, and this factor combined with window replacements may have compromised the building's physical integrity and may thus render the building ineligible for listing in the National Register. One church building identified in the survey, the First Universalist Church, has lost its distinctive turret and the top part of its tower; in addition, a small open gallery above the entry porch has been filled with windows. Nevertheless, the building retains sufficient character-defining features, including polychromatic ornament and trim, slate and copper roof, and elaborate rose window, to retain its physical integrity. Another building, the Swedish Congregational Church, has been sheathed in synthetic siding, entirely masking its details and trim; in the process, it also appears that windows were either partially obscured or removed entirely. Although this property may be found to retain physical integrity were the siding to be removed, it is at present not eligible for listing under the context. One church building, the Calvinistic Congregational Church, was individually listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1979.

In recent years, with urban decline and urban renewal, a number of Francis' buildings in the downtown have been lost to neglect, fire, and demolition. Two identified examples of this property type, churches altered by Francis or Francis and Sons to serve a new purpose, have since been demolished (the former Trinitarian Church of 1844, remodeled by Francis in 1875 and 1883, at which time it was in commercial use; and the former First Methodist Church, remodeled into apartments by Francis in 1888 and known as the Wesley Building). Thus all surviving examples of the work of the most prolific and skilled architect practicing in the city become increasingly significant, and even those that have seen some compromise to their integrity are potentially eligible for National Register designation. The churches of H.M. Francis surviving in downtown Fitchburg serve as testament to the architectural beauty of the ecclesiastical buildings designed in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century during Fitchburg's heyday.

*3. Institutional / Educational Buildings*

*A. Description*

This property type is associated with at least eight institutional/educational buildings in downtown Fitchburg, of which three have been demolished. Within this property type are two subtypes: institutional buildings, such as the Fitchburg Art Museum, the YMCA, the Library (now demolished), and the historical society; and school buildings, such as the Second Empire style Academy Street School (1869), the second Fitchburg High School (now demolished), and several grammar schools, one of which has also been demolished. A third subtype is buildings for which Francis or Francis and Sons was responsible for major additions to or alterations of pre-existing structures.

Francis worked in a variety of architectural styles and his institutional/educational buildings reflect his familiarity with a broad vocabulary. His earliest known building under this property type is the Second Empire-style Academy Street School (1869), Fitchburg's first high school. Later buildings include the Romanesque Revival-style Wallace Library and Art Building (1894 [demolished]); the Renaissance Revival-style Hastings School (1860 with 1884 alterations by H.M. Francis [demolished]); the Gothic Revival-style Francis-designed building that is now part of the complex forming the Fitchburg Art Museum (1885); the Romanesque Revival-style School Street School (1890); the Renaissance Revival-style YMCA (1894); and the Fitchburg High School (1895, burned 1934 and demolished). The Georgian Revival-style Fitchburg Historical Society (1911, NR, 2003) was designed by H.M. Francis and Sons.

(continued)

# Correspondence

The Correspondence consists of communications from (and possibly to) the nominating authority, notes from the staff of the National Register of Historic Places, and/or other material the National Register of Historic Places received associated with the property.

Correspondence may also include information from other sources, drafts of the nomination, letters of support or objection, memorandums, and ephemera which document the efforts to recognize the property.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: COVER DOCUMENTATION

MULTIPLE Downtown Architecture of H.M. Francis, Fitchburg, MPS  
NAME:

STATE & COUNTY: MASSACHUSETTS, Worcester County

DATE RECEIVED: 03/17/09 DATE OF PENDING LIST:  
DATE OF 16TH DAY: DATE OF 45TH DAY: 04/30/09  
DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:

REFERENCE NUMBER: 64501040

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  
NEW MPS: Y

COMMENT WAIVER: N

☒ ACCEPT ☐ RETURN ☐ REJECT 4/30/2009 DATE

ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:

RECOM./CRITERIA Accept cover

REVIEWER Patricia Andrews DISCIPLINE Historian

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Date 4/30/2009

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 National Park Service.

# Correspondence

associated with the Additional Documentation



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

December 26, 2012

Mr. J. Paul Loether  
National Register of Historic Places  
Department of the Interior  
National Park Service  
1201 Eye Street, NW, 8<sup>th</sup> floor  
Washington, DC 20005

Re: Downtown Architecture of H.M. Francis, Fitchburg, MA, MPS (Worcester County)

Dear Mr. Loether:

We are writing to request a technical correction in the National Register records for the above referenced National Register Nomination.

Section F, page 4 of the context statement for the Multiple Property Submission incorrectly reported that the Academy Street School had been demolished. I have enclosed a revision of Section F, page 4 for your files.

Please let us know if you need additional information in order to make the correction.

Sincerely,

Betsy Friedberg  
National Register Director  
Massachusetts Historical Commission

XC: Fitchburg Historical Commission