

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service



National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

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

1. Name of Property

historic name George Washington School

other names/site number _____

2. Location

street & number 430 West Washington Avenue

N/A	not for publication
N/A	vicinity

city or town Elmira

state New York code NY county Chemung code 015 zip code 14905

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

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

___ national ___ statewide X local

Ronald Purpont DSHAPO 11/14/16
 Signature of certifying official Title Date

State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

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

Signature of commenting official Date

Title State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

- entered in the National Register
- determined eligible for the National Register
- determined not eligible for the National Register
- removed from the National Register
- other (explain:)

for Alexis Alvarado 1-11-17
 Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

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5. Classification

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

N/A

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
 (Enter categories from instructions.)

Current Functions
 (Enter categories from instructions.)

EDUCATION/school

Vacant

7. Description

Architectural Classification
 (Enter categories from instructions.)

Materials
 (Enter categories from instructions.)

Art Deco

foundation: Stone block

walls: brick

roof: membrane

other: _____

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Narrative Description

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

Summary Paragraph

The George Washington School is located in a largely residential neighborhood in Elmira, NY, and occupies the site of the former Elmira School No. 5. The two-story, U-shaped building encompasses roughly 45,000 square feet in area and is constructed of buff brick masonry atop a stone block foundation with a flat roof. Designed by local architects Haskell & Considine, the school was completed in 1939 and exemplifies characteristics typical of school architecture and planning principles of the time period. Additionally, decorative elements consistent with the popular Art Deco style can be found applied to the exterior façades. The George Washington School opened its doors to students in 1940 and served as a local elementary school until 2006. Though briefly used by the Elmira Alternative High School, it has largely remained vacant since that time; however, due to regular maintenance the school is in remarkably good condition. The exterior façade and fenestration have remained intact, though the existing doors and windows are later replacements. Inside, the classrooms and common areas are largely unaltered. Much of the historic fabric has been retained, including flooring, wall tile, door and window trim, chalkboards and trim, and a fireplace with surrounding bench seating and wainscot. The intent of the new owner is to rehabilitate this building to serve as market rate apartments, while retaining and restoring as many of the extant historic features as possible. In addition, the existing non-historic doors and windows would be replaced with examples more in line with those shown in historic photos, thereby restoring a sense of historic integrity to the building.

Narrative Description

Site

The George Washington School sits on a 3.03 acre lot in the northwest quadrant of Elmira, New York. This lot was once the site of another elementary school serving the Elmira area, School No. 5, which was razed to make way for a new, more modern building. The neighborhood is mainly residential, consisting of single-family homes, but there is a small strip of commercial property located to the east of the school on West Washington Avenue. The Elmira College campus is also located just to the southeast of the school. The lot is bound by West Washington Avenue to the south, Johnson Street to the east, Welles Street to the north, and Lincoln Street to the west. The school is oriented on a north-south axis with the main façade fronting West Washington Avenue. The building is set well back from the street and surrounded by a grass lawn. Two small parking lots run parallel to the streets along the east and west sides of the lawn, and an asphalt-paved frontage road runs along the west side of the building towards the back of the property. To the rear of the property, the void created by the wings of the U-shape is paved in asphalt and can be accessed by the frontage road for parking. The remaining plot extending north to Welles Street is an open, flat, grass lawn area. Two small non-historic sheds, located in the space behind the main school, are too small to count.

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Exterior

The school consists of three wings placed at right angles forming a U-shape. The front (south) block faces West Washington Avenue, and two classroom wings extend behind it towards the rear (north) of the property. The void in the center is partially infilled by a combined gymnasium and auditorium, while the rest of the plan is open to the exterior and paved with asphalt. The entire building is constructed of buff brick laid in a running bond pattern and is set upon a foundation of stone block.

The building is approached by a concrete sidewalk and two flights of concrete steps running up the center of the front lawn. The main (south) elevation features a symmetrical, stepped façade divided into five irregular bays. The center bay is square in shape and serves as the main entry to the school. It is faced in stone block and features carved, stepped corners and horizontal fluting near the cornice area. The name *George Washington School* is incised near the top of the façade. Contained within this center bay is a slightly inset prominent tripartite feature consisting of a wide center bay flanked by two narrower bays. These bays are divided by vertical bands of coping, and a decorative swag carving that runs along the cornice line. The triple solid entry doors are recessed into the façade via a chamfered opening, creating a hooded projection above. Above each door is a transom space, currently occupied by a solid panel. The existing entry doors are later replacements of the originals, which consisted of three six-light glass doors topped by nine-light transom windows. Above the entry doors a carved phrase reads, "Knowledge is proud that he has learned so much / Wisdom is humble that he knows no more." Surmounting this inscription is a triple one-over-one window, with the top third of each window filled by a solid panel. The narrow secondary bays flanking the central entry bay each feature two stacked one-over-one windows with a panel filling the top third. These existing windows are typical throughout the building, and are later replacements dating to the 1980s; however, the original stone sills remain intact. The original windows consisted of either eight-over-eight or six-over-six sash that filled the entire opening.

Stepped slightly back from the square central bay in the main façade are two narrow bays of buff brick masonry set upon a stone block foundation. A band of stone block coursing also runs along the cornice line of these two bays. Each features two stacked one-over-one windows with a panel filling the top third. The western bay also features a single entry door placed directly below the first story window.

At either end of the front façade are two wide bays stepped further back from the central bays. These bays extend back towards the north of the property to create the sides of the U-shape and are also constructed of buff brick masonry atop a stone block foundation. Each bay features two sets of stacked, triple one-over-one windows with a panel infilling the top third. To each side (east and west) of these bays a concrete walkway and short flight of steps leads to a double entry door. These doors retain their geometric Art Deco stone surrounds. Above each door is a single one-over-one window with

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panel infill. Extending down the exterior side of each wing is a regular pattern of four stacked sets of triple one-over-one windows, flanked on either side by a single one-over-one window. The furthest (northern) end features an additional set of stacked, triple one-over-one windows with a single additional one-over-one window on the first floor. As is typical throughout the building, each window has a panel filling the top third of the opening and the original stone sills remain. The northern elevations of each wing contain a double entry door set towards the interior of the U-shape, each of which retains its original geometric Art Deco stone surround. Above each door on the second floor is a single one-over-one window with panel infill.

The interior elevations of each wing face into the void created by the U-shape, and these elevations feature far fewer windows than the exterior. The first floor elevation on each side contains three regularly spaced one-over-one windows with a panel filling the top third. Stacked above these are three shorter one-over-one windows with a narrow panel infilling the top portion of each. A chimney stack is located at the southwest corner. The rear (north) elevation of the central block features two, stacked one-over-one windows at either corner. A large notch/recessed area taken from the rear of the central wing allows four transom windows, located along the second floor elevation, to provide natural light to the gymnasium and auditorium space. Projecting from this elevation is a single story continuation with a flat roof and three one-over-one windows. A doorway serviced by a deteriorated metal stair and platform sits off-center to the left of this projection. Additionally, there is a half-story buff brick extension attached to the right (west) of this doorway. The void space between these wings is paved with asphalt, and beyond the wings extends a flat grass lawn that runs towards the rear (north) of the property. Two non-historic freestanding sheds are located to the rear of the main building.

Interior

The interior of the school retains its original floor plan to a great extent. The building is accessed from the south through the main entry way in the central block. The gymnasium and auditorium space is located directly in front of the entry, with ancillary office and administrative spaces to either side. A largely single-loaded corridor (excepting the entrances to the combination gymnasium/auditorium space) runs along the interior of the U-shape from the entry around either side of the gymnasium into the adjoining wings. Ten classroom spaces are located on the first floor, with five in each wing. These classrooms are located on the exterior walls to take full advantage of the natural light afforded by the large banks of windows at these elevations. The second floor is similar in layout to the first floor, with a single-loaded corridor running along the interior of the space. There are fifteen classroom spaces on the second floor, each of which is pushed to the exterior of the building to allow plenty of natural lighting from the large banks of windows.

Four historic metal stairs remain intact, complete with wooden handrails. Two are located at the furthest (north) end of each wing and two are located at opposite sides (to the east and west) of the main entry. Each stair can be accessed via a secondary entry door and split-level vestibule, featuring an original cased wood opening with transom above. This

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vestibule leads either down to the below-grade, unfinished basement, which serves as storage space and houses mechanical units and utilities, or up a partial flight of steps to the first floor.

The common spaces and classroom areas of the George Washington School have been remarkably well-maintained. Much of the original historic fabric has been untouched. The gymnasium and auditorium area retains its two-story volume and a stage located along the southern side of the space. To the rear (north) are various storage rooms and two restrooms, which can also be accessed from the corridor on either side. Four transom windows are located in the second-story elevation of the northern wall, providing natural light to the space. The original lacquered wood floors are intact in the gymnasium, and the walls feature the same tile wainscoting found in the corridor spaces. The original, solid-paneled wood doors with brass hardware also remain, and the original wood trim has been retained.

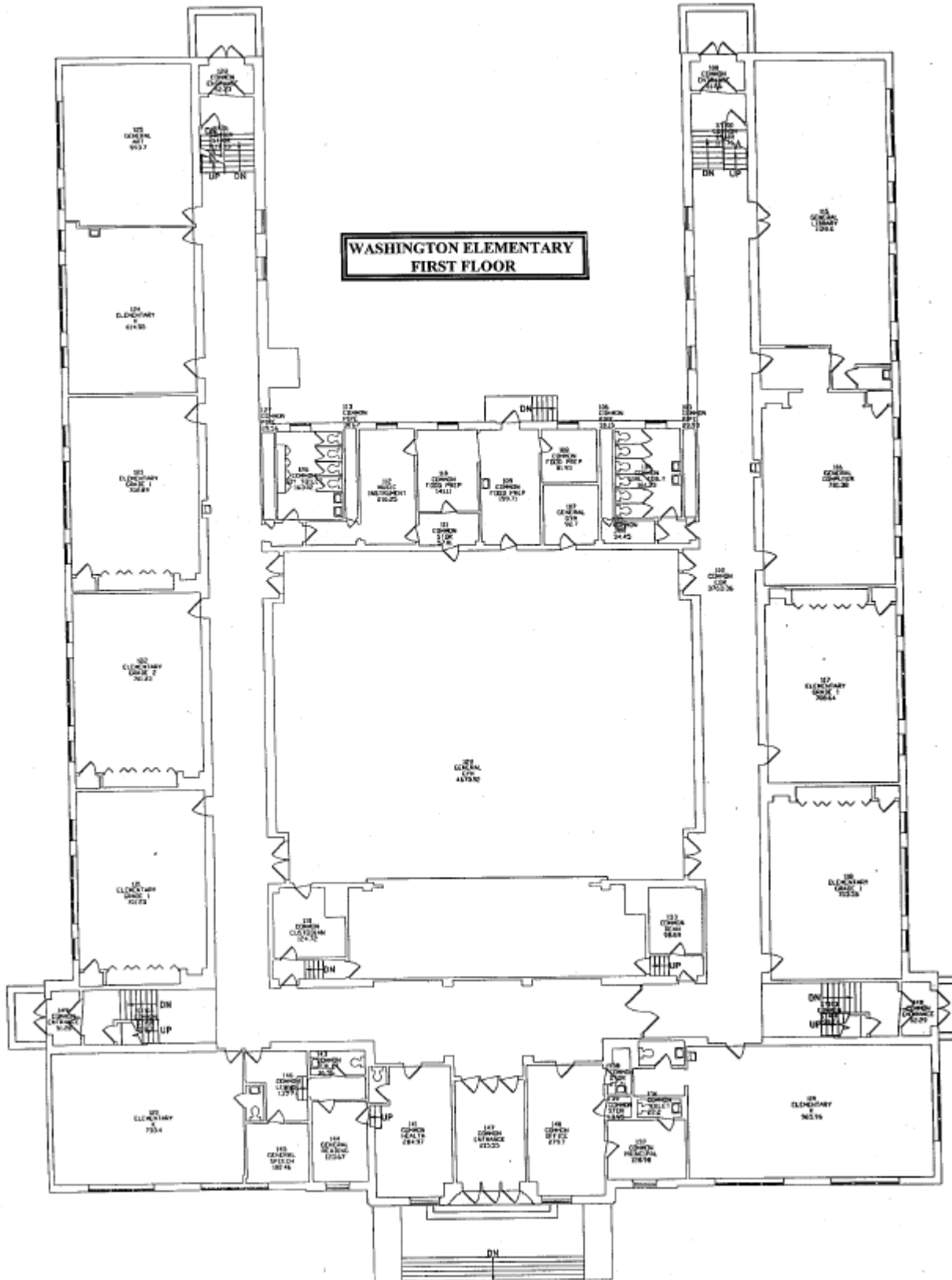
The common corridors retain the original two-toned patterned linoleum flooring and glazed wall tile wainscot. Original paneled wood doors, with inset glass lights and brass hardware, open off these corridors into the classroom spaces. The original wood casing and trim has been retained. The classrooms retain the original lacquered wood floors and many other historic features. Large chalkboards stretch across the front walls of each classroom, which are framed by the original wood trim, many with the original chalkboard insert. The original windows have been replaced, but the wooden trim has been retained. Several classrooms on the second floor feature recessed built-in storage areas that would have had pivoting paneled-wood doors enclosing them. These doors are still on site and can be repaired and restored. The original kindergarten room on the first floor features an original fireplace (now non-functioning) complete with tile surround, wood mantel, built-in wood bench with wainscoting, and hooks for storing coats. The current suspended acoustical ceiling throughout the interior is believed to cover the original plaster ceilings. Removal of these suspended ceilings at the classroom windows would restore the full height of the room.

Integrity

Overall the George Washington School is in excellent condition, largely due to regular maintenance. The amount of intact historic fabric and details make this an outstanding example of school architecture designed by a local architectural firm. While the existing windows are modern replacements, the original openings have remained intact. In addition, the original window trim and stone sills have been retained. The existing entry doors are also modern replacements, but the historic decorative stone surrounds are intact, and the infilled transoms at the main entry can be restored. Historic photos show the original doors and windows, offering an incentive to reproducing what was lost that would add to the overall historic integrity of the building.

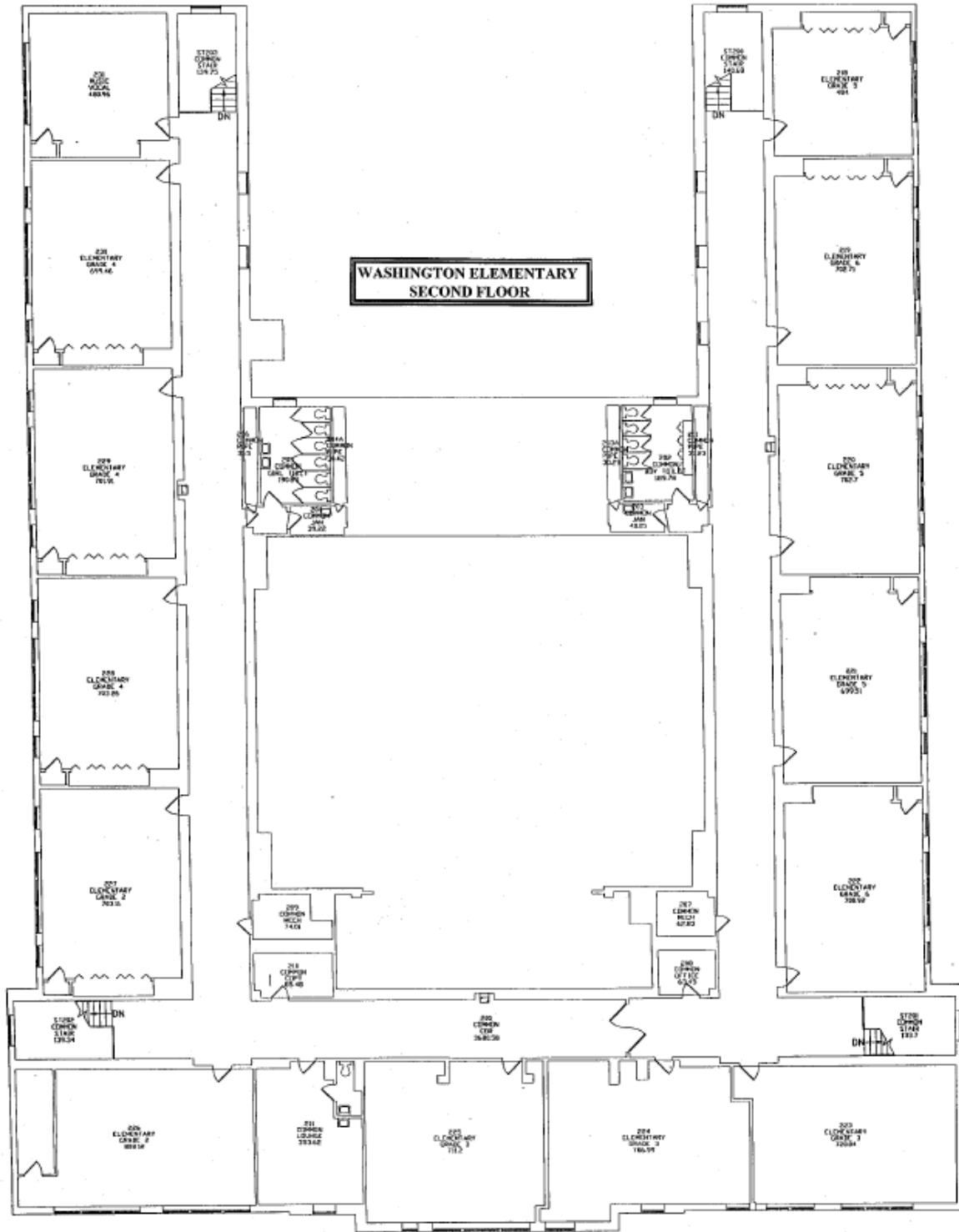
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8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- A Owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B removed from its original location.
- C a birthplace or grave.
- D a cemetery.
- E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F a commemorative property.
- G less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Architecture

Period of Significance

1938-1940

Significant Dates

1938, 1940

Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Haskell & Considine

Period of Significance (justification)

The period begins with the initial construction of the building and ends with 1940 when it was completed and began service as a school.

Criteria Considerations (explanation, if necessary) N/A

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

The George Washington School in Elmira is significant at the local level under Criterion C in architecture as an excellent example of a PWA project that embodied the best practices and contemporary design of the period, as the city took the opportunity to replace existing inadequate school buildings with government assistance and provide employment during the Great Depression. The school was proposed in 1937, when the Elmira Board of Education approached the New York PWA office and the New York State Education Department for approval to expand the Elmira Free Academy to relieve overcrowding and to construct two new grade schools that would follow current guidelines for school construction. School Number 5, renamed the George Washington School, relocated to West Washington and Lincoln Streets, and a new, modern Art Deco building was built on the site in 1940 for students in grades kindergarten through eight (later limited to grade five). The period of significance reflects the beginning of construction in 1938 to its completion in 1940. Designed by local architecture firm Haskell & Considine, the new school was built in the Art Deco style, a reflection of the period and a common style for many PWA projects. Art Deco was seen as a modern style and a rejection of the revival styles that came before it; it looked towards the future rather than the past. The fact that this look could be achieved with relatively little effort meant that funds could go further towards solidifying the concept of a new educational ideal. Few changes or upgrades have been made to the building, resulting in the school retaining a high degree of integrity to its period of significance. The George Washington School served the local elementary school population until 2006, when declining enrollment led to merging the students with another grade school. The building later became the Elmira Alternative High School. Vacant at the present time, the school is being considered for conversion to housing for local college students.

Developmental history/additional historic context information (Provide at least **one** paragraph for each area of significance.)

Education in Elmira

The city of Elmira, located in Chemung County in the Southern Tier of New York, was officially incorporated on April 7, 1864. Throughout Elmira's history, education was clearly an important consideration. According to one historian, "the matter of the education of the children engaged the attention of the citizens, and the interest...never once ceased to grow and increase."¹ One instance of this zeal can be seen in the establishment of the Elmira Female College in 1855. This college would be the first in the nation to "confer upon women a degree equal to that received by men."²

¹ Ausburn Towner, *A Brief History of Chemung County New York* (New York: A.S. Barnes & Company, 1907), 71.

² James E. Hare and James Arthur Kieffer, *Images of America: Elmira* (Charleston, SC: Arcadia Publishing, 2012), 8.

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The first board of education was organized in 1859, at which point there were five public schools in Elmira.³ The original school building in District No. 5 was located on the south side of Fifth Street between Columbia and Davis Streets.⁴ This original schoolhouse served the northwest area of Elmira and was a small frame building consisting of just four rooms. It was abandoned in 1874 in favor of a new, larger building. This new School No. 5 occupied the site of the current George Washington School on West Washington Avenue. Built in 1873 for the sum of \$50,000.00, School No. 5 opened its doors on January 2, 1874 to 462 pupils. Considered a vast improvement over the former four-room schoolhouse, the new school boasted all the modern amenities of the time. All in all it was believed to be “a vast stride in advancement, which suggested few improvements to be desired in future structures.”⁵ School No. 5 was an impressive two-story brick structure, done in the Italianate style. It featured large arched windows with hooded stone lintels, corbeled cornices, and an intricate cross-gabled roofline that was intersected by a number of turrets with a variety of decorative roofs. These turrets were singularly impressive, reaching as much as eighty-one feet in height. The ceiling heights on the interior were equally impressive, measuring eighteen feet. It was believed that higher ceilings resulted in superior ventilation, but School No. 5 proved otherwise. Due to the high ceilings, the building’s five Gold’s sanitary heaters failed to provide adequate warmth; however, the school did have water closets in the basement and drinking water available from a pump in the school yard. School No. 5 also had Elmira’s first woman principal, Miss Hannah Rhodes, who served as principal teacher at No. 5 in 1882, earning a salary of approximately \$150.00 per month.⁶

Progressive Era

While the new School No. 5 was seen as state-of-the-art in 1874 when it first opened, the twentieth century brought about new standards and regulations in school design and education. Schools constructed in the late-nineteenth century were “largely standardized, utilitarian spaces...designed to house as many students as possible.”⁷ The resulting buildings, which were often designed in traditional, neo-classical styles (as was the Elmira School No. 5), had the effect of being “elegant...[but] crowded and impersonal.”⁸

It was not just the style of schools that was changing but views on the education process itself. While school attendance in the nineteenth century was viewed as discretionary, to be supplemented with life training received elsewhere such as at home or in church, twentieth-century laws changed this fact. School attendance became mandatory and enforceable by law. Schooling came to be viewed as a requirement for proper socialization and to “develop and adjust youths for modern

³ Ibid., 75. (Elmira)

⁴ Towner, *Brief History of Chemung County*, 30.

⁵ “A Century of Public Education in Elmira 1845-1945,” Online at <http://www.joycetice.com/schools/1845ed.htm>.

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Lindsay Baker, *A History of School Design and its Indoor Environmental Standards, 1900 to Today* (Washington, DC: National Clearinghouse for Educational Facilities, 2012), 4.

⁸ Ibid., 4-5

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society.”⁹ With this in mind, public education became an important issue for Americans. In 1890, the national expenditure on public schooling totaled \$141 million. By 1940, this increased exponentially to \$2.3 billion. It was said that “[p]ublic education was arguably *the* American public investment of the early twentieth century.”¹⁰

In spite of the Great Depression, construction of new school buildings steadily progressed, due in large part to funding provided by the Public Works Administration. Organized in 1933 as part of the New Deal under President Franklin D. Roosevelt, the P.W.A. was responsible for “financing 70 percent of new school construction for local communities.”¹¹ Another innovation of the 1930s was the founding of the National Council on Schoolhouse Construction (now the Council of Educational Facility Planners International). This group was concerned with developing standards for the construction of schools, and many of these standards are evident in the George Washington School.

Architects

Harry M. Haskell was born in Elmira on April 25, 1885. His father, Myron C. Haskell, was a well-known building contractor in the city. Harry Haskell graduated from the Elmira Free Academy in 1904 and went on to work for the office of J.H. Considine, architect. He remained here until the death of Considine in 1917, and continued to work in his own capacity until 1928. At this time the Haskell took on Leo E. Considine, son of J.H. Considine, as a junior architect and formed the firm of Haskell & Considine. Leo Considine was born in Elmira on December 20, 1897 and graduated from the Elmira Free Academy in 1918. He went on to complete a Bachelor of Arts degree in architecture at the Carnegie Institute of Technology in 1923 and soon took up work in the Pittsburgh office of Carlton Strong. He remained there for three years before pursuing a master’s degree in architecture at Harvard University, which he completed in 1927. From there, he embarked on a study tour through Europe before returning to the states and finally taking up practice with Harry Haskell in April 1928. As a firm, Haskell & Considine completed a number of well-known and recognizable local buildings, including several schools.

Architecture

The decision to build the George Washington School in the Art Deco style was indicative of many of the driving forces behind school planning and design of the time period. The goal of the school building shifted from accommodating as many students as possible to strict, detailed directives describing the necessary requirements of school buildings. Authors such as Wilbur T. Mills published books dedicated to the standards of American school building with mandates based on the square footage allowance per student and desk, shape and arrangement of the school rooms, lighting requirements and

⁹ Tracy L. Steffes, *School, Society, and State: A New Education to Govern Modern America, 1890-1940* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2012), 3.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 6.

¹¹ Baker, *History of School Design*, 8.

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placement, site orientation, and a multitude of other considerations. According to Mills, a school “should be simple, dignified and plain.”¹² He was also a proponent of flat roofs, as “it can not [sic] be denied that many beautiful effects are obtained by the use of pitched roofs...[but] it must be granted that money so expended can often be used to better advantage elsewhere in the building.”¹³ The George Washington School incorporated this attitude, especially when considering the school building it replaced had multiple towers and turrets along its intricate roofline.

In 1920, New York City architects Tooker & Marsh also published guidelines dedicated to the principles of school design. One of their main concerns focused on the projected growth of the student body, in hopes of avoiding some of the overcrowding issues of the past. In addition, they specified acceptable finishes for different areas. These included hardwoods, such as maple, for classroom floors, and linoleum and tile wainscot for corridors. They also recommended that unilateral lighting be utilized in classrooms, and groupings of windows were considered ideal to avoid shadows from mullions. These items are all evident in the architecture of George Washington School, showing that Haskell & Considine were aware of and actively implemented the standards of the day.

Art Deco was seen as a modern style, “the first American style to look forward rather than back, as [was] the case with the preceding revival styles.”¹⁴ A popular style between 1925 and 1940, Art Deco architecture was characterized by rectangular forms massed in a geometric fashion. The “aim was a monolithic appearance with applied decorative motifs.”¹⁵ These motifs include geometric forms such as zigzags or chevrons, and often include reeding or fluting around fenestration. Other identifiable features of Art Deco architecture included stepped outlines, low-relief decorative panels, and windows massed “in continuous horizontal bands.”¹⁶ This style of architecture lent itself to those concerned with stretching funds for school design, as with “projects on a tight budget, the simple box could be decorated with motifs...[and] [v]isual interest would be further enhanced by stretching linear forms horizontally and vertically throughout the building.”¹⁷ The façade of George Washington School perfectly showcased these concepts. What would otherwise be a ‘simple monolithic box’ was enlivened by the stepped façade, fluted lines and vertical bands of coping, and geometric detailing around the main entry way. The massing of windows along the exterior wings reflected the Art Deco style, serving a dual purpose to fulfill the mandate tenets of school planning and natural lighting as well.

Along with George Washington, three other schools in Elmira joined in launching a new curriculum program in February of 1940 and shared several similarities. Thomas K. Beecher, Parley Coburn, and George M. Diven schools were

¹² Wilbur T. Mills, *American School Building Standards* (Columbus, OH: Franklin Educational Publishing Company, 1915), 34.

¹³ Mills, *American School Building Standards*, 38.

¹⁴ “Art Deco Style 1925-1940,” Pennsylvania Historical & Museum Commission. Online at <http://www.phmc.state.pa.us/portal/communities/architecture/styles/art-deco.html>.

¹⁵ Wentworth Studio, “Art Deco Style (1925-1940).” Online at <http://www.wentworthstudio.com/historic-styles/art-deco>.

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ Ibid.

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monolithic brick masonry structures with flat roofs, minimal surface decoration, and blocks of large windows. These contemporaneous buildings, all constructed between 1930-1939, evidenced the tenets of what was considered progressive school design of the era; however, George Washington School was unique in its design style. While the other three schools were decorated with classical motifs, George Washington was the only school featuring the Art Deco style. As the newest school constructed, it made sense that Haskell & Considine would take advantage of the sense of modernity expressed by the Art Deco style, which conveyed ideas of progression and technological achievement. Combined with the fact that the ornamentation needed was minimal, and easily applied to an otherwise-austere façade, this economy of materials was an excellent way both to achieve a physical representation of the new educational ideals being expressed and to put those ideals into practice by investing the money where it mattered with the education of the children.

George Washington School

According to a school dedication booklet:

“On July 13, 1937, the Elmira Board of Education applied for a P.W.A. grant to help finance the construction and equipment of the George Washington School building. A Federal grant of \$119,997.45, amounting to forty-five percent of the total cost, was approved on June 23, 1938. Elmira’s share of the project was financed by bond authorized by the Common Council. Contracts for the erection of the building were awarded by the Board of Education on December 22, 1938, and the building was ready for occupancy on November 22, 1939.”¹⁸

The George Washington School officially opened its doors to students on Monday January 29, 1940. This was one of four schools opening that day in Elmira to serve the local school population with Parley Coburn, Thomas K. Beecher, and George M. Diven schools also opening as part of a new educational program. The intent was to provide the advantage of “a curriculum adapted to the varied interests, abilities, and needs” of the seventh and eighth grade pupils attending the schools.¹⁹ By consolidating many smaller schools, the opportunity was provided to reinvest in the public school program. The new curriculum was meant to “meet the present needs [of the students]...and also to enable them to look forward, in an exploratory way, to vocation and avocational possibilities.”²⁰

The school held a dedication ceremony the following Monday, February 5, 1940, which involved a presentation of the building by architect Harry M. Haskell to president of the board of education, Thomas S. Craig. Once the program was concluded, the public was invited to inspect the new school building. The dedication program listed those who contributed to the construction of the school: PWA engineer Robert Hoppen, Henry W. Streeter Corporation (general contractors), Van Patten Plumbing & Heating Company, American Warming and Ventilation Company, and the M.H.

¹⁸ “Dedication Exercises of the George Washington School,” February 5, 1940 (George Washington School Vertical File, Booth Library, Chemung Valley Historical Society).

¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰ Ibid.

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Salmon Electric Company. George Washington School exemplified the architectural embodiment of these educational ideals and was an example of the community's goals for educating the future generations and of how far American schools progressed from the one room schoolhouse.

Conclusion

George Washington School originally served grades kindergarten through eight and later as an elementary school, ended with grade five. Certain improvements were made over time, including the addition of a chain link fence in 1975, new concrete walkways in 1986, and asphalt paving in 1990.²¹ In addition, the original windows were replaced with the aluminum windows at during the 1980s, but overall, the historic integrity of the building remained largely intact. In June 2006, George Washington School was closed and the student population merged with nearby Fassett Elementary. A major contributing factor to the closing of the school was classroom size. Out "of the eight elementary schools in Elmira, Washington has the smallest classrooms, averaging 680 square feet"²² "For comparison, according to district officials "an average class size of 900 square feet for first- through fifth-grade classrooms and 1,000 to 1,200 square feet for prekindergarten and kindergarten classrooms is ideal."²³ Room size lends itself well to other purposes and plans have been proposed for converting the school into market-rate apartments, which would bring an economic boost to the neighborhood around George Washington School.²⁴

9. Major Bibliographical References

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

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²¹ "Chemung County Interactive Mapping Site," Chemung County Government. Online at <http://chemung.sdgny.com/index.aspx> .

²² Molly McCarthy, "Some Welcome Washington Move," *Elmira Star-Gazette*, undated article, George Washington School Vertical File, Booth Library, Chemung Valley Historical Society.

²³ Ibid.

²⁴ Bob Jamieson, "Senior Apartments Planned for School," *Elmira Star-Gazette*, 7 April 2015, George Washington School Vertical File, Booth Library, Chemung Valley Historical Society.

George Washington School

Name of Property

Chemung County, NY

County and State

Considine & Haskell, Architects. *Helpful Hints for Prospective Builders and Furnishers*. Elmira, NY: Star-Gazette Co., 1929. Booth Library, Chemung Valley Historical Society, 728 HEL.

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McCarthy, Molly. “Some Welcome Washington Move.” *Elmira Star-Gazette*, undated article. George Washington School Vertical File. Booth Library, Chemung Valley Historical Society.

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Towner, Ausburn. *A Brief History of Chemung County New York*. New York: A.S. Barnes & Company, 1907.

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Wentworth Studio. “Art Deco Style (1925-1940).” Online at <http://www.wentworthstudio.com/historic-styles/art-deco>.

George Washington School
Name of Property

Chemung County, NY
County and State

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

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

Primary location of additional data:

State Historic Preservation Office
 Other State agency
 Federal agency
 Local government
 University
 Other
Name of repository: Chemung Valley Historical Society

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): _____

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property ±3.04 acres
(Do not include previously listed resource acreage.)

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1	<u>18N</u> Zone	<u>349400</u> Easting	<u>4662220</u> Northing	3	<u> </u> Zone	<u> </u> Easting	<u> </u> Northing
2	<u> </u> Zone	<u> </u> Easting	<u> </u> Northing	4	<u> </u> Zone	<u> </u> Easting	<u> </u> Northing

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

The boundary is indicated by a heavy line on the enclosed map with scale.

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The nominated boundary is the same as for the period of significance.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Kacie Alaga, Preservation Specialist (edited by Virginia L. Bartos, Ph.D./NYS OPRHP)
organization Johnson-Schmidt & Associates Architects date 22 September 2016
street & number 15 E Market St telephone 607-937-1946
city or town Corning state NY zip code 14830
e-mail kacie@preservationarchitects.com; virginia.bartos@parks.ny.gov

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:** A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

George Washington School
Name of Property

Chemung County, NY
County and State

A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.

- **Continuation Sheets**
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items.)

Photographs:

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 2000x3000 pixels at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. For districts, key all photographs to the sketch map.

Name of Property: George Washington School

City or Vicinity: Elmira

County: Chemung State: New York

Photographer: Virginia L. Bartos

Date Photographed: 19 August 2015

Description of Photograph(s) and number:

- 0001 of 0014: School façade, view looking northwest.
- 0002 of 0014: Detail view of center part of façade.
- 0003 of 0014: West elevation, looking east.
- 0004 of 0014: North elevation, looking south.
- 0005 of 0014: South end of east elevation, looking northwest.
- 0006 of 0014: East elevation looking southwest.
- 0007 of 0014: Interior view of entrance hall doors (1st floor).
- 0008 of 0014: Second floor corridor.
- 0009 of 0014: Detail of end stair (1st floor)
- 0010 of 0014: Second floor classroom.
- 0011 of 0014: First floor classroom.
- 0012 of 0014: Fireplace in Kindergarten classroom (1st floor).
- 0013 of 0014: Boards and cabinets, Kindergarten classroom.
- 0014 of 0014: Stage detail (1st floor Auditorium & Gymnasium).

Property Owner:

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

name Edger Enterprises, Inc.
street & number 330 East 14th St telephone N/A
city or town Elmira Heights state NY zip code 14903

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

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Office of Planning and Performance Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.

George Washington School
Name of Property

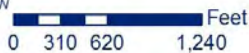
Chemung County, NY
County and State

George Washington School
City of Elmira, Chemung Co., NY

430 West Washington Street
Elmira, NY 14905



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



G. Washington School



Parks, Recreation
and Historic Preservation

George Washington School
Name of Property

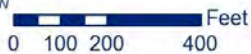
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County and State

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Projection: Transverse Mercator
Datum: North American 1983
Units: Meter



 G. Washington School



**Parks, Recreation
and Historic Preservation**

George Washington School
Name of Property

Chemung County, NY
County and State



CITY OF ELMIRA NEW YORK

Office of the Mayor
CITY HALL • 317 EAST CHURCH STREET • ELMIRA, NEW YORK 14901
www.cityofelmira.net • djmandell@cityofelmira.net

Daniel J. Mandell, Jr.
Mayor

Office: (607) 737-5644
Fax: (607) 737-5824

August 15, 2016

Dr. Virginia Bartos
Division for Historic Preservation
New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation
Peebles Island
P.O. Box 189
Waterford, New York 12188-0189

Re: John W. Jones Court and George Washington School Nomination to the State and National Registers of Historic Places.

Dear Dr. Bartos:

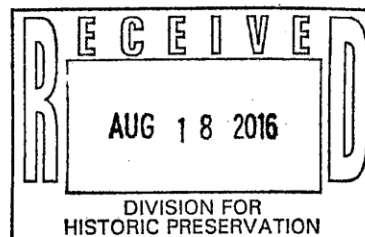
I am pleased to recommend that the State Review Board and the National Park Service approve the nomination of John W. Jones Court and George Washington School to the State and National Registers of Historic Places. The City's Historic Preservation Commission met on August 9, 2016 and attached to this letter is a resolution passed by this body supporting both nominations and concurring, in its opinion, that both properties meet the criteria for listing as outlined in the nomination prepared.

Prospective developers for both properties have nominated them to the State and National Registers of Historic Places in order to take advantage of state and federal commercial historic rehabilitation tax credits making their redevelopment feasible. Both properties have local significance and as a community and a Certified Local Government, we are excited to see their rehabilitation and adaptive reuse.

Thank you for allowing us an opportunity to be part of this important process and for the State Review Board's consideration of John W. Jones Court and George Washington School nomination to the prestigious National and State Registers of Historic Places.

Sincerely,

Daniel J. Mandell Jr.
Mayor- City of Elmira



George Washington School
Name of Property

Chemung County, NY
County and State

RESOLUTION

NO. 16-08-08

Motion by Commissioner Butcher:

Seconded by Commissioner Janowski

WHEREAS, the Commission has reviewed the draft copy of the fully documented nomination proposal and the criteria under which properties are evaluated with regard to John W. Jones Court and George Washington School; and

WHEREAS, there was no public comment regarding this request;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT

RESOLVED, that the Elmira City Historic Preservation Commission, after reviewing the request by the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation, hereby recommends that, in its opinion, the John W. Jones Court and George Washington School meets the criteria for listing on the State and National Registers.

VOTE

AYES

X COMMISSIONER BUTCHER
COMMISSIONER PERRON
X COMMISSIONER JANOWSKI
X COMMISSIONER SEARFOSS
X CHAIRMAN VALLELY

NAYS

ABSENT

8/9/16

GEORGE WASHINGTON SCHOOL

1911



GEORGE WASHINGTON SCHOOL

PROVIDENT SOCIETY
OF WASHINGTON
INCORPORATED
1864





DO NOT
ENTER





PLAYGROUND
CLOSED
KEEP OUT

PUBLIC USE
OF SCHOOL GROUNDS
PROHIBITED FROM
10 PM TO
6:30 AM

PLAYGROUND
RULES
1. NO BALLS OR
2. NO RUNNING
3. NO TRIPPING
4. NO BULLYING
5. NO SMOKE
6. NO ALCOHOL
7. NO DRUGS
8. NO FIREARMS
9. NO VEHICLES
10. NO OTHER
DANGEROUS
OBJECTS







EXIT

STOP DIGGING!













UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

Requested Action:

Property Name:

Multiple Name:

State & County:

Date Received: 12/2/2016 Date of Pending List: 12/27/2016 Date of 16th Day: 1/11/2017 Date of 45th Day: 1/17/2017 Date of Weekly List: 1/17/2017

Reference number:

Nominator:

Reason For Review:

- | | | |
|---------------------------------------|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Appeal | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PDIL | <input type="checkbox"/> Text/Data Issue |
| <input type="checkbox"/> SHPO Request | <input type="checkbox"/> Landscape | <input type="checkbox"/> Photo |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Waiver | <input type="checkbox"/> National | <input type="checkbox"/> Map/Boundary |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Resubmission | <input type="checkbox"/> Mobile Resource | <input type="checkbox"/> Period |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other | <input type="checkbox"/> TCP | <input type="checkbox"/> Less than 50 years |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> CLG | |

Accept Return Reject 1/11/2017 Date

Abstract/Summary
Comments:

Recommendation/
Criteria

Reviewer Alexis Abernathy Discipline Historian

Telephone (202)354-2236 Date _____

DOCUMENTATION: see attached comments : No see attached SLR : No

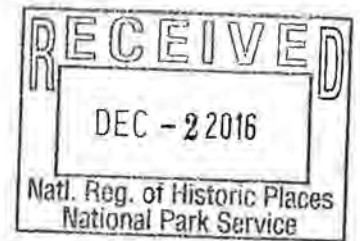
If a nomination is returned to the nomination authority, the nomination is no longer under consideration by the National Park Service.



**Parks, Recreation
and Historic Preservation**

ANDREW M. CUOMO
Governor

ROSE HARVEY
Commissioner



16 November 2016

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

Re: National Register Nomination

Dear Ms. Abernathy:

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

Calvary Episcopal Church, Saratoga County
Syracuse Lighting Company, Onondaga County
Terminal Building, Monroe County
Ancram Hamlet Historic District, Columbia County
George Washington School, Chemung County

Please feel free to call me at 518.268.2165 if you have any questions.

Sincerely:

Kathleen LaFrank
National Register Coordinator
New York State Historic Preservation Office

George Washington School
Name of Property

Chemung County, NY
County and State



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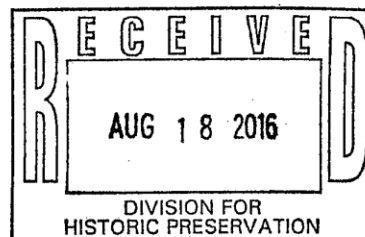
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George Washington School
Name of Property

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VOTE

AYES

X COMMISSIONER BUTCHER
X COMMISSIONER PERRON
X COMMISSIONER JANOWSKI
X COMMISSIONER SEARFOSS
X CHAIRMAN VALLELY

NAYS

ABSENT

8/9/16