
7. Description

Condition
 excellent deteriorated unaltered original site
 good ruins altered moved date N/A
 fair unexposed

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

Pleasant View Home is a large, early 20th century Georgian Revival institutional building situated on 48 acres in Concord, approximately 1.5 miles west of the central business district. In addition to the main building, a five-vehicle garage of the same style and period stands to the east. The property abuts Pleasant Street on the north and undeveloped land formerly part of the original estate on the east, south and west. The surrounding area is a mix of residential, institutional and, farther south, agricultural properties ranging from the mid-19th through the mid-20th centuries.

Pleasant View was constructed in 1925-27 to plans prepared by Boston architect Arthur H. Bowditch. Stylistically, it is faithful to the Georgian Revival both on the exterior and interior. It is a two-and-one-half story, symmetrically massed structure, consisting of a central 185' east-west gable-roofed section bisected by a full-height cross gable and flanked by north-south hip-roofed wings which terminate in angular bays at the south end. The entire roof is clad in slate. Gabled dormers with 6/6 sash puncture the roof. Four main chimneys rise from the central section; they have broad sides with arched niches. Exterior walls of the building are faced with red brick and trimmed with limestone (cornice, quoins, keystones, sills, balustrade). Fenestration is regularly spaced; primary openings are rectangular with 6/6 wood sash. Between many of the windows is a small, narrow opening containing a three-light casement.

North (front) elevation: The facade is organized into three parts: 3-bay end wings and a 10-bay center section bisected by a projecting 3-bay gabled portico. A limestone belt course runs above the first story, and a balustrade runs the length of the center section at ground level. The focal point of the elevation is the portico which rests on a one-story concrete base scored to resemble stone and rises two stories. It is carried by paired Tuscan columns with a balustrade at the base. The gable is ornamented with an oculus, carved festoons and, along the eaves, block modillions. The main entrance to the building is set within a one-story pavillion that projects from the portico base. A plain, metal hood on chains has replaced the original decorative iron marquee. Paired French doors flanked by sidelights lead into the main lobby. Both end wings have one-story projections surmounted by decorative iron railings. Access to the second floor deck is through a French door beneath a transom. Above is a second door leading onto an iron balcony. The first floor of the east end wing has an arched blind niche on the north end and, on the east and west walls, arched double-hung sash and arched shutters. The west end wing has a columned portico sheltering paired French doors capped by a fanlight.

East and west elevations: The east and west elevations are treated similarly to each other. The ground story is fully exposed toward the rear. Projecting from each elevation is a 3-bay, hipped-roof section containing a vertical stack of doors (converted to windows in 1975) opening onto iron balconies. The east elevation has several entrances at ground level: a glass/wood door beneath a copper hood at the southeast corner (and matched by one at the southwest corner of the

8. Significance

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

Specific dates 1925-27

~~BUILDER~~ Architect Arthur H. Bowditch

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

Pleasant View possesses integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling and association. The building is significant architecturally as an intact example of Georgian Revival institutional architecture in its original setting, of which few examples are found in New Hampshire. Its historic significance derives from its origin as an elegant retirement community, one of the earliest and largest of its type in the country. Pleasant View thus meets Criteria A and C of the National Register of Historic Places.

Architecture: Pleasant View is one of New Hampshire's only grand Georgian Revival institutional buildings; its garden setting and open vistas, coupled with its well-preserved condition make it the state's finest representative.

The architect of Pleasant View, Arthur H. Bowditch (1870-1941), was brought to Concord from Boston by the Christian Science Mother Church. Bowditch's career had begun in the Boston office of J. Merrill Brown and Joseph Chandler. From the latter, a noted authority on colonial architecture, Bowditch undoubtedly acquired some of his familiarity with classical architecture, put to use at Pleasant View. Bowditch proved a versatile architect, often the forerunner of a concept or design approach. His Stoneholme Apartment Building (1907) was Boston's grandest courtyard apartment, a building type greatly favored in the city. His Old South Building (1902) was the first office building to incorporate an inner arcade with shops. One of Boston's two most prolific architects in the business district, Bowditch designed over a dozen buildings, including the Beacon Trust Company Building, the Congress Building, Merchant's Building, the Publicity Building and the Paramount Theater. Pleasant View was a major departure from Bowditch's earlier Shingle Style residences and commercial commissions and was featured in American Architect and Building News the year after its completion. Its Georgian Revival style, atypical of Bowditch's work, was chosen for its compatibility with the surrounding area and as suitable for the purpose of the building. It is probable that the architect of the only other Georgian Revival institutional building in Concord, the nearly Odd Fellows Home (1932) was influenced by Pleasant View's design. There are no other buildings in New Hampshire attributed to Bowditch.

Pleasant View was designed prior to the age of specialized design for housing the aged, precipitated by federal acts and funding programs formulated in the 1930-50s. Yet, provisions for abundant elevators, fireproof construction, ample public rooms with good exposure and ventilation, and private lavatories (a luxury for the period) were made, without sacrificing the atmosphere of normal home living.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Grant, Richard Southall, Landmarks for Christian Scientists from Bow to Boston, Boston: Rand Avery Co., 1934
 Crocker, Christopher, "A Brief History of Old-Age Institutions in the United States", 1974 (unpublished paper written for Center for Program Effectiveness, Univ. of Virginia (CONT.))

10. Geographical Data

Acreege of nominated property 48 Acres
 Quadrangle name Concord, New Hampshire Quadrangle scale 1:24000

UTM References

A	1,9	2,9,2,2,0,0	4,7,8,4,6,0,0	B	1,9	2,9,2,3,4,0	4,7,8,4,2,2,0
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
C	1,9	2,9,2,5,2,0	4,7,8,4,2,4,0	D	1,9	2,9,2,5,6,5	4,7,8,4,1,6,0
E	1,9	2,9,1,9,8,0	4,7,8,4,0,0,0	F	1,9	2,9,1,9,5,0	4,7,8,4,0,8,0
G	1,9	2,9,1,9,8,0	4,7,8,4,1,0,0	H	1,9	2,9,1,8,9,5	4,7,8,4,5,2,0

Verbal boundary description and justification

(see continuation sheet)

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

state	N/A	code	county	code
state	N/A	code	county	code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Elizabeth Durfee Hengen
 organization Consultant in Historic Preservation date June 8, 1984
 street & number 39 Auburn Street telephone (603) 225-7977
 city or town Concord, state New Hampshire 03301

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national state local

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

Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer signature *William G. [Signature]*
 title Director, Division of Parks and Recreation and Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer date 7/28/84

For NPS use only

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

[Signature] date 9/19/84
 Keeper of the National Register

Attest: _____ date _____
 Chief of Registration

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

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

For NPS use only
received
date entered

Continuation sheet 1

Item number 4

Page 1

4. Owner of Property

Assessors' Lot 3416-D:
(includes main building,
garage & 43.5 acres)

Pleasant View Associates
PO Box 7217, Heights Station
Concord, New Hampshire 03301

Assessors' Lot 3416-B:
(includes 4.5 acres)

McKerley Management Systems, Inc.
20 Maitland Street
Concord, New Hampshire 03301

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

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

For NPS use only

received

date entered

Continuation sheet 2

Item number 7

Page 2

7. Description (cont.)

west elevation); and paired service doors adjacent to a metal overhead loading door in the projecting hip-roof section. The arched sash at the north end is a continuation of the north elevation treatment.

South elevation: Like the north elevation, the south elevation is divided into three sections: hip-roof end wings which terminate in a flat roof, angular bay; and the main center section which is bisected by a 3-bay gabled pavilion. The slope of the building site allows full exposure of the ground story. Fenestration of the ground floor of the central section, which projects outward some 8', is paired 6/6 sash; an iron railing extends the entire width above to create a deck off the first story. Remaining fenestration is similar to other elevations, minus the shutters. The central pavilion contains paired French doors with sidelights and transom between two tripartite windows on the ground floor. The first floor is an open porch supported by broad brick piers flanked by Tuscan columns and encircled by a balustrade; paired French doors lead onto the porch. The upper two stories have full-height paired pilasters between bays; the center bay of the second story has French doors and 6/6 windows. The gable is lit with an oculus. The angular end wings, which are sunrooms on the interior, have 6/6 sash on the ground floor, paired 6/9 on the first, and paired 6/6 on the top two floors. Wide bands of limestone divide bays vertically and floors horizontally.

Interior: The interior of Pleasant View has been only superficially altered since its construction. The plan consists of a central corridor with single room living units on either side, and public rooms concentrated in the center of the building. Significant interior finish is limited to the primary public areas. On the ground story, the dining room, lit by tripartite windows, has a coffered ceiling and freestanding columns. Walls have applied molding strips and pilasters. Three doorways with fanlights lead into the lobby; the French doors were replaced with flush plywood in 1975, and the doorways partially enclosed. A double stairway with ornamental bronze railing and mahogany handrail leads to the first floor and the main outside entrance, the vestibule of which is faced with marble. Applied molding strips trim the walls of the lobby and living room, which are joined by three arched doorways, the outer two with fanlights. A classically-designed fireplace sits against the east wall of the living room; the ceiling is coffered and features a deep classical cornice. In the east wing is the assembly hall equipped with a shallow stage and rows of wood chairs with period upholstery. Original lighting fixtures wired into the ceiling are found in the living room, lobby, assembly hall and upstairs sitting room.

The living units and connecting corridors are simply finished with narrow baseboard, cornice and door/window casings. Most of the rooms have oak flooring and stained, six-panel fir doors with glass hardware.

Alterations to the interior occurred in 1975 when the building was occupied by the State of New Hampshire. Fire doors were installed in the corridors, and an exposed sprinkler system run throughout the building. Many of the doors, especially the French, were replaced with flush plywood doors. Part of each window

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

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

For NPS use only

received

date entered

Continuation sheet 3

Item number 7

Page 3

casing was removed to allow installation of interior metal screens (since removed). The oak flooring was ripped up in several areas.

Garage: Just east of the main building stands a five-vehicle, one-and-one-half story brick garage designed in the Georgian Revival style. The west (front) elevation has a central projecting gable containing an arched opening with wooden doors. Remaining vehicle door openings are flat-topped with flared lintels and limestone keystones. The doors, all wooden, fold open on hinges, leaving one leaf stationary to open separately. Gabled dormers and a square louvered cupola pierce the slate hip roof. The interior has been recently renovated to house offices; the attic still contains an apartment.

Setting: The nominated property includes the entire historic landscape associated with Pleasant View. The main building is sited to take full advantage of the open southern views and designed to be fully exposed on that side. Noted landscape architect Arthur A. Shurcliff of Boston laid out formal gardens in the rear and to the west of the main building. Though portions of the landscape design were re-executed in the 1950s by Hooksett (N.H.) landscaper Leon Pearson, many of the original plantings and walks survive, including the primary walkway from Pleasant Street, a double path lined with deciduous trees and evergreen shrubs. On either side the front lawn is dotted with specimen shade trees.¹

Other landscape features which remain on the site include wood balustrades which extend east-west from the north elevation, a latticed screen at the northwest corner of the main building, a wood trellis in the west garden, an artificial pond to the southeast of the building and, along Pleasant Street, a late 19th century cast iron fence with scrolled gates which marked the entrance to Mary Baker Eddy's former house on the site. A variety of flowering fruit trees follow the tree line on the northeast edge of the property and form a double row along a cart path which divides the rear fields. Lilac, spirea, honeysuckle and rhododendrons are used extensively around the building and in shrub borders.

The building is now encircled with a drive, and a paved service court is located between the building and the garage. A paved lot is found south of the garage, and a covered parking area to the east.

¹ Unfortunately, the only surviving plans of Shurcliff's design do not include a planting schedule. The maturity of most plants indicate they are original to the building, but several elements shown on the plans, such as tennis courts and a greenhouse, were apparently never executed.

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

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

For NPS use only
received
date entered

Continuation sheet 4

Item number 8

Page 2

8. Significance (cont.)

Landscape Architecture: The land surrounding Pleasant View was originally laid out by noted Boston landscape architect Arthur A. Shurcliff in 1926. Although the approximately one-hundred acres which accompanied the Home when built were gradually diminished to the present amount in a succession of sales in the mid-twentieth century, the setting, open vistas and formal gardens have not been disturbed and are included in the nominated parcel. As such, they constitute a unique resource in the City of Concord and represent the only known example of Shurcliff's formal garden work in New Hampshire.

Shurcliff (1870-1957) was from a prominent Boston family. After graduating from MIT and Harvard University, he studied with Charles Eliot and the Olmsted brothers for ten years until he founded his own firm in 1905. During the 1920s, Shurcliff served as the advisor to the Boston Parks Commission where he designed the Charles River Esplanade and many of the stone footbridges in the Fens, continuing the work begun in the late 19th century by his former firm. Shortly after Shurcliff completed Pleasant View, he was chosen landscape architect for the restoration of Williamsburg, a position he filled for thirteen years.

Already described in this nomination, Shurcliff's work at Pleasant View reflected the more formal approach he used later in his career and which culminated at Williamsburg. His designs for stately double walkways and formal garden plantings adjacent to the building complemented its symmetrical, classical appearance. Yet, in the southern meadowland, Shurcliff preferred a more naturalistic scheme of flowering fruit trees, a wooden rail fence and unpruned shrubs.

Though it is probable Shurcliff was brought to the project through Bowditch, a friend and colleague from Boston, he was no stranger to New Hampshire. An active conservationist and hiker, he worked with the Society for the Protection of New Hampshire Forests and the State Forestry Commission designing highways through the White Mountains in a sensitive manner and approaches to the Old Man of the Mountain, as well as acquiring and devising management strategies for lakes and scenic areas. For the Appalachian Mountain Club he designed shelters and huts in the White Mountains. Among his other New Hampshire commissions, Shurcliff prepared site designs for St. Paul's School, the Newmarket Manufacturing Company, the Draper Company Spindle Mill, and laid out the Sandwich Town Common.

Religion: Pleasant View played an important role within the Christian Science Church as its sole retirement facility. The only other institution operated by the church was its sanatorium in Brookline, Massachusetts where members could stay for temporary, recuperative periods. Criteria for entrance to Pleasant View included a record of service within the Christian Science faith, a minimum age of sixty-five, good health, and an entrance fee. Consistent with the tenets of the religion, which is based upon spiritual power, understanding and healing, Pleasant View offered a home for contemplation and spiritual growth amidst

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

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

For NPS use only

received

date entered

Continuation sheet 5

Item number 8

Page 3

comfortable and attractive surroundings. In accordance with church practice, the Home provided basic nursing, but not medical care, and there was no infirmary connected with the building.

The choice of location for Pleasant View was directly tied to the history of the Christian Science Church. It was situated on the site of the former home of Mary Baker Eddy, the founder and leader of the Christian Science faith. During her sixteen-year residency at Pleasant View (1892-1908), as her house was also called, Mrs. Eddy formulated the bulk of the spiritual framework of her new religion. While a citizen of Concord, the city benefited directly from her numerous philanthropic acts. In 1908, two years before her death, Mrs. Eddy moved to Boston to be closer to the administrative heart of the church.

The site of Mrs. Eddy's house had held strong associations for her, which led directly to its selection for the location of the present building. The land overlooked the hills of Bow to the south, Mrs. Eddy's birthplace and for which she had fond memories. Following her death, her house was demolished, as requested in her will, and the site remained vacant until the construction of Pleasant View. The cast iron fence along Pleasant Street and the artificial pond remain from Mrs. Eddy's occupancy on the land.

Social/Humanitarian: As a facility providing care for the elderly, Pleasant View stood apart from others in several ways. Unlike most homes which drew upon a local or regional pool, Pleasant View attracted residents from all sections of the United States as well as from Europe. They were for the most part economically well-off and physically active, seeking a home for spiritual growth as much as for retirement. In contrast with most retirement facilities of the period, including the nearby Odd Fellows Home, Pleasant View, with its 150 units, was larger, more elegantly appointed, and the grounds more extravagantly landscaped. Equipping each resident's room with a private lavatory reflects the higher degree of comfort than was customary in such institutions.

The concept of a church providing care for its needy and elderly was not novel. As early as the 1500s, there was public concern in western society for the destitute, ill, insane, homeless and aged, but the various categories of neediness were not differentiated until relatively recently. Specialized care for the elderly was not directly addressed until the late 19th century, triggered by a general interest in social reform. Between 1890 and 1910, many private facilities intended for care of the aged were founded in Europe and the United States. A high proportion were sponsored by religious and fraternal groups dissatisfied with the available public facilities and whose members were increasingly able to contribute financially to their care by willing their assets to the home. However, most private institutions attracted primarily impoverished or infirm residents; care was responsibly provided, but basic.

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

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

For NPS use only

received

date entered

Continuation sheet 6

Item number 8

Page 4

Construction of Pleasant View began in late 1925 with funds solicited from member churches and individuals. The main building was designed to accommodate 150 people, including employees. In the center of the H-shaped plan were a large dining room seating 200 and a commodious living room, both designed to admit light and air on three sides. Each floor of the two flanking wings had a sunroom at the south end overlooking the distant hills of Bow; the views and southern exposure were further enhanced by the use of French doors. A paneled library, gumwood recreation room, chapel and assembly hall used for movies, concerts and lectures were located on the lower two floors. Though residents ate together in the dining room, each floor was equipped with a kitchenette and small dining room for private parties. The individual living units consisting of a single, small room, closet and lavatory, were simply but tastefully finished and individually decorated. A telephone and service buzzer were provided with each room. Employees were housed on the ground floor in equally large, but plainer rooms.

A portion of the 100-acre estate was occupied by two farms which supplied eggs, milk and fresh produce to the Home, and an orchard with several hundred fruit trees. (The farms are no longer part of the acreage and have ceased operations.) Formally landscaped gardens were designed by Arthur A. Shurcliff of Boston. The artificial pond to the southeast was a gift to Mary Baker Eddy from a student; it and the fence along Pleasant Street are the only landscape features dating to her occupancy on the land. Gazebos and fountains once ornamented the grounds; they were removed by the church when the property was sold. West of the main building was a croquet lawn and, to the far south, a golf course. Tennis courts and a rose garden with pool proposed by Shurcliff were apparently never executed. Paths ran through the fields and woods.

In June 1927 the building was ready for occupancy. In its first year, it attracted 13,500 visitors. Within three years, despite the onset of the depression and the financial difficulties faced by most institutions, Pleasant View was filled to capacity, and the Board of Directors was faced with a waiting list. Residents remained active, exemplified by the recreational facilities found on the grounds. A variety of indoor activities complemented these, including carpentry, sewing, musical events and lectures, in addition to bus excursions and shopping trips. (The building's plan included a specially designed entrance that opened onto a loading platform to facilitate entering the bus.)

Pleasant View ultimately outgrew its original purpose. With the increase of federally assisted care and the growing number of other comfortable retirement facilities, Christian Scientists began choosing to remain closer to their home communities. Decline in use, coupled with increased operating costs, led to the sale of Pleasant View in 1975. The building and seventy-four acres were purchased by the State of New Hampshire who used the property for adult psychiatric patients. An initial restriction placed by the church banning the

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

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

For NPS use only
received
date entered

Continuation sheet 7

Item number 8

Page 5

use of property for medical purposes was lifted, though the State did agree to disallow liquor sales, gambling and surgical activities. The interior was modified to maximize security. In 1981 the State vacated the premises. After remaining empty for two years, Pleasant View is being restored and returned to its original use: a privately operated, luxurious retirement home.

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

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

For NPS use only
received
date entered

Continuation sheet 8

Item number 9 & 10

Page 2

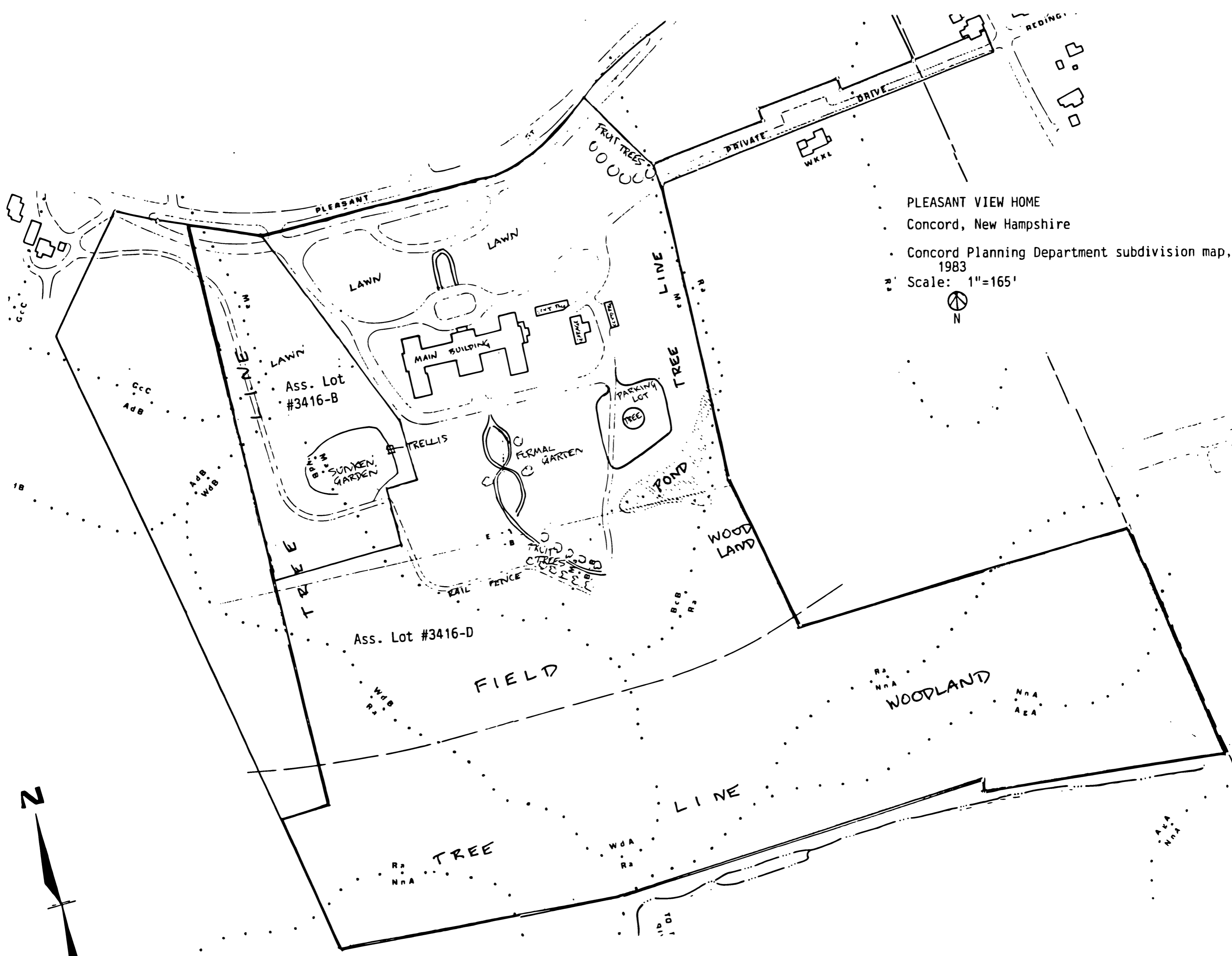
9. Major Bibliographic References (cont.)

- Kennedy, Hugh Studdert, Mrs. Eddy, San Francisco: The Farallon Press, 1947
American Architect and Building News, vol. 134, no. 2549, p. 139-40, July 20, 1928
Concord Monitor, 8/1/1921
10/21/1924
1/19/1925-
10/13/1925
10/17/1925
11/13/1925
6/2/1927
Christian Science Sentinel: 11/1/1924
10/31/1925
2/27/1926
10/2/1926
Christian Science Journal: 3/1975
6/1975
Boston Herald: 8/24/1975
"Buildings for the Aged", Architectural Record, vol. 119, no. 5, May 1956, pp. 191-226
Fisher, Jacob, "Trends in Institutional Care of the Aged", Social Security Bulletin, vol. 16, October 1953, pp. 9-28
Donahue, Wilma (ed.), Housing the Aging, Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1954
Photograph and archival collection, The Mother Church, Boston, MA
-----, Concord Public Library, Concord, NH
Cushing, Elizabeth Hope, "Arthur A. Shurcliff" (thesis in progress through the American and New England Studies Program, Boston University)
Brookline Historical Commission files, Brookline, Massachusetts
Tucci, Douglas Shand, Built in Boston: City and Suburb, 1800-1950, Boston: New York Graphic Society, 1978

10. Geographical Data

Boundary Description: The nominated property includes two parcels of land, as outlined in red on the attached sketch map and described in Book 1465, Page 0437 (Assessors' Lot # 3416-D) and Book 1464, Page 958 (Assessors' Lot #3416-B) at the Merrimack County Registry of Deeds.

Boundary Justification: The nominated property includes the entire historic landscape and open areas surrounding and associated with Pleasant View. The boundary follows visual sightlines, generally following the tree line along the western edge, a shallow tree line at the terminus of a distant second field along the southern edge; it cuts into extensive woodland on the east side, reaching the treeline again at the northeast corner on Pleasant Street.



PLEASANT VIEW HOME
 Concord, New Hampshire
 Concord Planning Department subdivision map,
 1983
 Scale: 1"=165'

