

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

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National Register of Historic Places  
Registration Form

FEB 07 1994

NATIONAL  
REGISTER

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an 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 entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name Golden Rod Grange #114

other names/site number N/A

2. Location

street & number West side of NH Route 302 (Main Street) one tenth mile south of intersection with Eaton Road N/A  not for publication

city or town Swanzey N/A  vicinity

state New Hampshire code NH county Cheshire code 005 zip code 03446

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this  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  meets  does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant  nationally  statewide  locally. ( See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Melvin C. Miller January 27, 1994  
Signature of certifying official/Title Date

NEW HAMPSHIRE  
State of Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register criteria. ( See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of certifying official/Title Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:

- entered in the National Register.  See continuation sheet.
- determined eligible for the National Register  See continuation sheet.
- determined not eligible for the National Register.
- removed from the National Register.
- other, (explain:) \_\_\_\_\_

for Signature of the Keeper Entered in the National Register Date of Action  
Gregory M. Lepore 3/17/94

Golden Rod Grange #114  
Name of Property

Cheshire County, NH  
County and State

**5. Classification**

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

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

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

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

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

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1		buildings
		sites
		structures
		objects
1		Total

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

N/A

**Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register**

0

**6. Function or Use**

**Historic Functions**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

SOCIAL/meeting hall

**Current Functions**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

SOCIAL/meeting hall

**7. Description**

**Architectural Classification**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

NO STYLE

**Materials**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation BRICK

walls WEATHERBOARD

roof ASPHALT

other WOOD

BRICK

**Narrative Description**

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

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.)

- XX 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 of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Narrative Statement of Significance

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

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 #

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

SOCIAL HISTORY

Period of Significance

1916-1943

Significant Dates

1916

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

UNKNOWN

Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
Other State agency
Federal agency
Local government
University
XX Other

Name of repository:

Swanzy Preservation Society



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## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

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**Golden Rod Grange #114  
Cheshire County, NH**

### Description

The Golden Rod Grange building is one of a group of structures that date from the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries and constitute the village of Swanzey Center. The building was constructed in 1915-16 and, like most other structures in the vicinity, remains little changed. The Grange hall retains integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association.

The Grange hall is a rectangular two-story building of balloon frame construction. The walls are studded with two-by-four-inch scantling, while the gable roof is composed of two-by-seven-inch rafters formed into Warren trusses by the addition of wooden vertical and diagonal struts connecting the rafters to the ceiling joists below them. These trusses are placed two feet on centers. The building measures about sixty feet in length and thirty-two feet in depth and stands on a foundation of brick on fieldstone footings. The walls of the building are clapboarded, and the low-pitched roof is covered with asphalt shingles.

Because the first and second stories are used for different purposes, the fenestration differs slightly on the two floors. The facade (eastern elevation) of the first floor has a double central doorway in its center, with a simple shed-roofed hood above the opening, concrete steps, and a glazed panel in each of the two doors. Two closely-spaced windows are placed on each side of the doorway, lighting a meeting and dining room within. At the south end of the facade is another window lighting the kitchen at this end of the structure, while at the north end of the facade, in a corresponding position, is a single doorway with a glazed door that provides independent access to a stairhall leading to the second floor. The second floor of the facade has five symmetrically-placed windows, with the central window, placed directly above the double doorway, having a flagpole. All windows in the building have two-over-two sashes with ogee-and-fillet muntin profiles, and plain square-edged exterior casings. The building's cornice is composed of a projecting ogee crown moulding above a flat frieze board.

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**Golden Rod Grange #114  
Cheshire County, NH**

**Description (continued)**

The north end of the building has two windows on each floor, set toward the rear of the structure to provide wall space for a stairway within. The south end has a central doorway on the first floor, providing access to a kitchen at this end of the building, with two flanking windows. The second floor retains the casings and sills of three former windows located directly above the first-story openings; these windows have been boarded up and clapboarded.

Like the facade, the rear (west) side of the building has differing window placement on the two floors. Five regularly-spaced windows on the first story are clustered toward the center of the building and light the meeting and dining room on this floor. At the northern end of this wall is a two-foot by eleven-foot privy projection with a shed roof; this projection has two small windows, each with a two-light sash. On the second story, five windows, spaced more widely apart than those below, echo the five windows on the facade of the building. The southernmost second-story window on the rear elevation provides access to a steel exterior fire escape.

The interior of the building is characterized by simple detailing, much like that of many dwellings of the World War I era. Most woodwork is varnished pine, and walls and ceiling are plaster that has been covered, in some areas, by various types of composition boards.

A single room, measuring about thirty-seven by thirty-two feet, occupies the central portion of the first story. Used as a meeting room and a dining room, this hall is finished with square-edged door and window casings of longleaf southern yellow pine, with a quarter-sawn floor of the same material, and with a ceiling of gypsum or composition board. Four columns, arranged in pairs and cased with southern yellow pine, rise through this hall to support principal girders of the floor of a lodge room above. The first-floor hall is accessible from the outdoors through the double doorway in the center of the facade, and from the stairhall at the north through a single interior doorway.

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**Golden Rod Grange #114  
Cheshire County, NH**

**Description (continued)**

The southern end of the first story is occupied by a kitchen measuring about twelve by thirty-two feet. The upper walls and ceiling of the kitchen project up into the space below a second-floor stage; the ceiling of the kitchen is thus some two feet higher than that of other first floor rooms, providing some relief from the heat in the days when a wood-burning range was used for cooking. Two five-panel pine doors connect the kitchen with the dining room in the center of the first floor; between these doors is an opening in the wall with a hinged table that folds down to provide a connection between the kitchen and dining room. Below this opening is a counter with drawers; other counters line much of the perimeter of the kitchen. At the northwest corner of the kitchen is a single-flue brick chimney for a cooking range, and below the floor in this area is a fifty-foot brick well, now disused, that supplied water to a sink in the southwest corner of the room.

The northern end of the first floor has an eleven-foot-wide stairhall that passes through the building from the exterior door at the northeast corner of the building to the privies at the northwest corner. The staircase, built of varnished southern yellow pine and furnished with square balusters and posts reminiscent of the Craftsman style, rises to the second floor along the northern wall of the stairhall.

The second floor of the building is finished with detailing comparable to that seen on the first story. At the northern end of this floor is the upper stairhall, simply finished with plastered walls (covered in their lower portion by mineral board) and ceiling and lighted by windows in the north and east walls of the building. The northwest corner of the building is occupied by a plastered antechamber, lighted by a window in the north wall of the building and by a second in the west wall. Doors lead from the stairhall and antechamber to the lodge room that occupies the remainder of this story.

The lodge room is a single chamber measuring about forty feet in length by thirty-two in width. The roof trusses above the room permit the ceiling to have an uninterrupted span. The room is lighted by three windows on both its east and west walls. At its southern end is a raised stage with wings reached by two short stairways that lead to doors on both

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**Golden Rod Grange #114  
Cheshire County, NH**

**Description (continued)**

sides of the stage. The wings of the stage are each lighted by a single window on the east and west; that on the west provides access to a steel fire escape that descends along the back wall of the building. Three additional windows on the building's south wall once illuminated the stage itself. The stage is twelve feet deep, the same depth as the kitchen on the first story, and the height of the stage permits the kitchen to have a higher ceiling than other rooms on the first floor. The lodge room, including the curved front of the stage, is finished with southern yellow pine woodwork except for the floors, which are maple. The room has a wainscot of mineral board below a yellow pine chair rail. The ceiling of the room is covered with gypsum or composition board with wood-battened joints. The room retains the furniture and appointments typical of a Grange hall, and the curtain of the stage has a painted scene of a local pond.

Original appearance: The Golden Rod Grange building has changed little since its construction in 1915-16. Some repair work was carried out in 1936. This probably involved the installation of Masonite wainscoting, to cover shrinkage cracks in the two-coat lime plaster, on the lower walls of some areas. In 1941, the present dining room ceiling of gypsum or composition board was installed, probably to cover defects in the original plaster; in 1954, a similar ceiling was installed in the second-floor lodge room. The exterior steel fire escape was installed in 1948. Beyond these changes, other work has been limited to routine maintenance and to changes to the water supply system and range in the kitchen.

**Statement of Significance**

The Golden Rod Grange #114 qualifies for the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A for significance in social history. The Grange was an important movement in rural America during the late 19th and early 20th centuries. The only Grange hall in the town of Swanzey, the Golden Rod Grange retains integrity for the period 1916, when it was constructed, to 1943, the arbitrary 50-year cut-off date.



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**Golden Rod Grange #114  
Cheshire County, NH**

**Statement of Significance (continued)**

The Golden Rod Grange hall was designed and constructed specifically for Grange use. The building offers the amenities usually associated with Grange activities: a lodge room with a stage for dramatic presentations; a dining hall, which is adaptable for general meetings; and a kitchen. The building was designed to reflect the style of older Grange halls and to harmonize with the architecture that surrounds it. It was well built and finished with detailing and materials typical of the early 20th century. It remains in a remarkably original state of preservation.

The rationale behind the Grange movement was to provide help and encouragement to farmers, primarily in terms of educational and social opportunities. In addition to promoting educational and cultural goals, it was intended to foster cooperation among farmers to enhance their economic strength.

Initially established in 1867, the National Grange made slow progress at first. Not until the depression of 1873 did the establishment of subordinate or local Granges really spread. At that time the movement was discernibly a Mid-western one, with half of the subordinate Granges located in that part of the country. The depression had particularly severe consequences to Mid-western farmers because of the large surpluses they were generating. Falling prices and reduced incomes resulted in bankruptcies and foreclosures.

Farmers turned their frustration toward business interests which they felt conspired against them in the marketplace. Bankers, middlemen, and the railroads were blamed for making agricultural products unprofitable. This anger propelled farmers into the Grange and other agricultural clubs as a way of fighting back. The Grange had tremendous influence and provided a mechanism for organizing against unfair railroad tariffs and corporate monopolies. However, as the economy improved toward the end of the 1870s the need for the Grange and with it Grange membership diminished. By 1880 the Grange movement in the Mid-west had virtually come to a close.

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**Golden Rod Grange #114  
Cheshire County, NH**

**Statement of Significance (continued)**

In New England, where a tradition of farmers' clubs and associations had begun as early as the late 18th century, the Grange enjoyed its primary influence in the period after 1880. Rather than being a radical movement, the Grange in New England was stable and conservative. Its interests and influence were more wide-ranging and far more enduring.

The Grange sought to assist farmers to enjoy greater profitability. This objective was pursued in numerous ways. Meetings, discussions, and reports provided a forum for updating and improving information so that farmers could be more expert at the business of agriculture. Strong support was given to state agricultural colleges and experiment stations and alliances were forged with state boards/departments of agriculture and the Farm Bureau. Cooperative stores and insurance companies were organized to reduce costs. The Grange promoted fairer taxation and better transportation. Much of the Grange's work was accomplished by means of legislative initiatives.

Changes in American society during the 20th century frustrated the Grange's efforts; fewer and fewer farms remained in operation and rural areas continued to lose population into the 1940s. Those who remained, however, operated under more advantageous circumstances due to the work of the Grange. Although the organized activities of the Grange were reduced to a fraction of what they once were, Grange halls survive as a physical reminder of an important movement in the life of rural New England.

**Bibliography**

Sherman, Rexford Booth. The Grange in Maine and New Hampshire, 1870-1940. Boston University Graduate School, Ph.D., 1973. (Copy at New Hampshire Historical Society, Concord NH.)

Golden Rod Grange #114 - Secretary minutes 1886 to the present, 1993, unpublished. Available through Mrs. Shirley Bradley, Swanzey NH.

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**Golden Rod Grange #114  
Cheshire County, NH**

### **Bibliography (continued)**

#### **Interviews:**

June 14, 1993. Eileen Longe interviewed Veronica Goodell, grange member.  
Transcript stored with Eileen Longe, 4 Elm Street, N. Swanzey NH 03431.

July 29, 1993. Eileen Longe interviewed William Smith, local contractor.  
Transcript stored with Eileen Longe, 4 Elm Street, N. Swanzey NH 03431.

### **Verbal boundary description**

Boundaries of the nominated property are indicated by the dashed line on the attached sketch map. The parcel is identified in the Swanzey NH Assessors Records as Parcel #19, Map #34.

### **Verbal boundary justification**

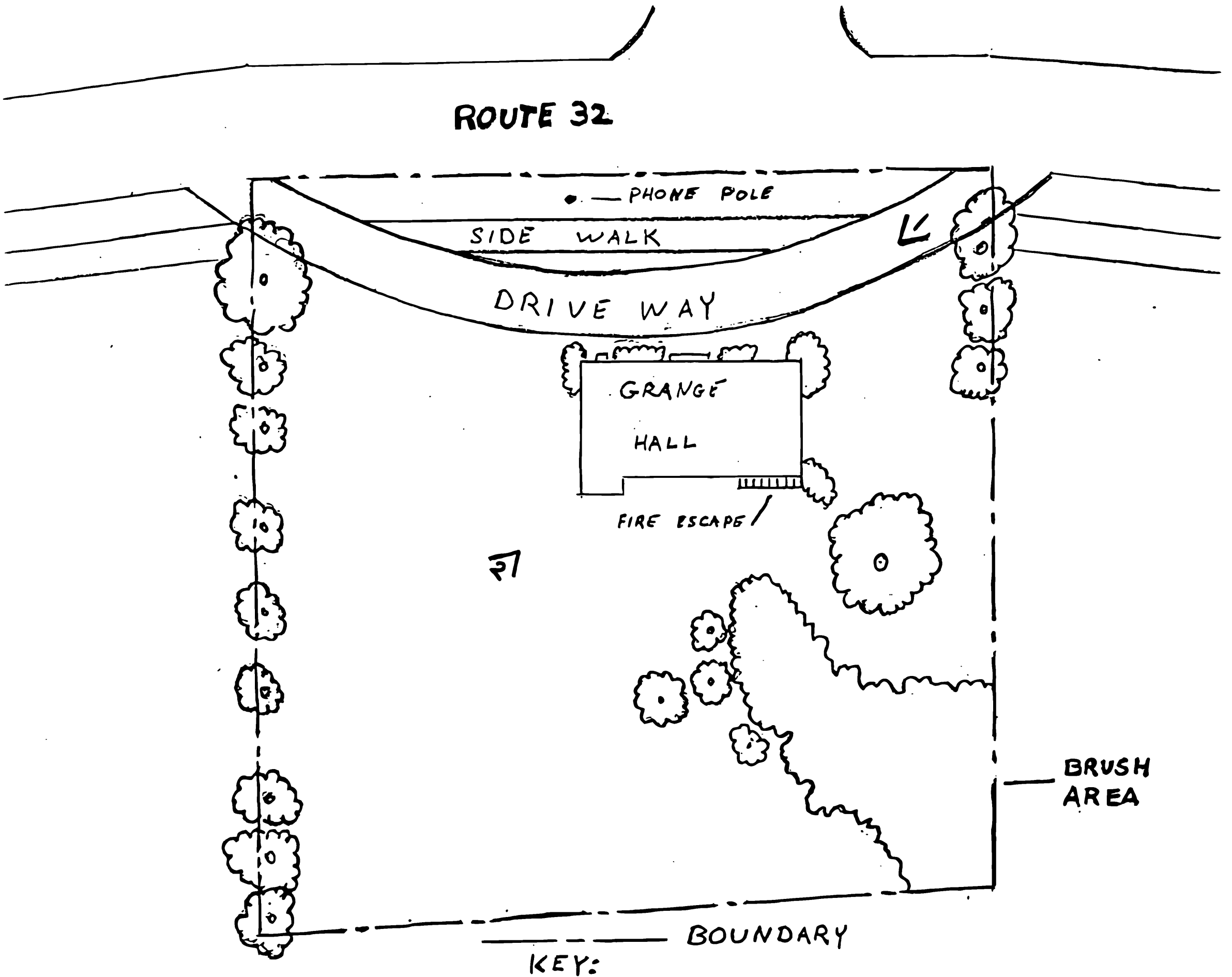
The nominated property represents the original parcel upon which the Golden Rod Grange #114 was constructed in 1915-16.

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Additional Documentation

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GOLDEN ROD GRANGE  
SWANZEY, N.H.

