

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

For NPS use only

received NOV 6 1985
date enteredNational Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination FormSee instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*

Type all entries—complete applicable sections

1. Name

historic Second District School

and/or common John Adams School (preferred)

2. Location

street & number 16 Church Street

N/A not for publication

city, town Weymouth N/A vicinity of

state MA code 025 county Norfolk code 021

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use	
☐ district	☐ public	☐ occupied	☐ agriculture	☐ museum
☒ building(s)	☒ private	☒ unoccupied	☐ commercial	☐ park
☐ structure	☐ both	☐ work in progress	☒ educational	☐ private residence
☐ site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	☐ entertainment	☐ religious
☐ object	☐ N/A in process	☒ yes: restricted	☐ government	☐ scientific
	☐ N/A being considered	☐ yes: unrestricted	☐ industrial	☐ transportation
		☐ no	☐ military	☐ other:

4. Owner of Property

name Mr. and Mrs. Joseph LoPresti

street & number 26 President Road

city, town Weymouth N/A vicinity of state MA 02188

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Norfolk County Registry of Deeds

street & number 650 High Street

city, town Dedham state MA

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Inventory of the Historic Assets
of the Commonwealth has this property been determined eligible? ☐ yes ☒ nodate 1978 Form #282 ☐ federal ☒ state ☐ county ☐ local

depository for survey records Mass. Historical Commission 80 Boylston Street

city, town Boston state MA 02116

7. Description

John Adams School, Weymouth, MA

Condition

☐ excellent
☒ good
☐ fair

☐ deteriorated
☐ ruins
☐ unexposed

Check one

☒ unaltered
☐ altered

Check one

☒ original site
☐ moved date _____

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The John Adams School, Weymouth, is sited on a rectilinear lot of 7,330 square feet at the historic center of Weymouth, south of Boston. On the northerly side of the lot, there is a paved entrance leading to town-owned common land. The land on the east, west, and south sides is grassed with some trees. The topography is gently sloping toward north and east.

This ca. 1855 Italianate-style schoolhouse reflects in its gabled form and corner pilasters, with recessed panels, the earlier Greek Revival style. The quiet rectilinear massing with its matchboarded, symmetrical facade is enlivened by strong architectural ornaments under the eaves--shaped brackets characteristic of the Italianate style. The brackets are reiterated under the door and window lintels, giving the facade a plasticity new for the times. The front facade, with its two entryways and centrally placed window is topped by three evenly spaced windows; they, in turn, are surmounted by a lobed lunette (presently hidden behind plywood, it is in the attic, intact with its tracery.) The fenestration on the other three walls is also symmetrical, with windows that are six over six, single glazed. The rear, or south side, is crossed diagonally with a fire escape placed there in 1937. The slate roof has its ridgepole pierced in the front section by a flue line, while in the rear is a large (for the period) chimney. The foundation is granite block. The walling material--including matchboarding, clapboards, and corner pilasters--is entirely wood.

The interior plan, unlike the exterior, is retardataire in its one-room-per-floor arrangement. (Elsewhere, the "modern plan," separating recitation activities from the main classroom, was being used.) Adams School pupils entered through the two front doors. Each door opened onto a stairhall leading to the first floor's large room, or to stairs going up to the second floor. Between the two stairhalls on the ground floor is an antechamber and a smaller room. The second floor's main room (approximately 1,000 square feet) included a patterned tin ceiling, with walls made up of matched horizontal boards below slate boards, which in turn were topped by a textured metal wall covering. The ground floor has similar dado decoration but has simple plaster walls and ceiling. The interior windows, adorned with a simple stylized Greek pediment, indicate another retardataire element in the structure. All these decorative elements are retained. The basement has a small room for the heating unit; half of it is less than normal height. The attic, reached with a ladder through an opening on the ceiling (northeast side), is unfinished.

8. Significance

John Adams School, Weymouth, MA

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

Specific dates	Ca. 1855	Builder/Architect	Unknown
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Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The John Adams School, Weymouth, retains integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association. The building is an excellent example of Italianate-style school architecture, with a well-preserved interior as well as exterior and with good detailing throughout. Historically, the school is significant as the earliest standing school in town, built near the site of Weymouth's first school and located adjacent to the town common, in an area of important 18th and 19th century settlement. The John Adams School thus fulfills Criteria A and C of the National Register of Historic Places.

The John Adams School, so named in 1870 to commemorate the second president of the United States, was first known as the Second District School, indicating its location in Weymouth Heights, north of the present town center. The first permanent school committee of the town of Weymouth, established in 1797, voted in 1799 "to choose a committee to divide the town into school districts; eight were sent out, the 2nd being in the North Parish." It was also voted at this meeting "that each district provide its own school house and that each shall be considered a free school." The Second District is mentioned for the first time in the "Schedule of Expenses of the Town of Weymouth from March 1835 to March 1836."

The first clue leading to the date of the school's construction lies in the relation of John Adams to the High School. In 1851 in the "Report of the Special School Committee," it was decided that "one high school be located in each section of the town, according to the following division: the first division to include 1st, 2nd, and 10th districts," and "that \$500 be appropriated to the support of each High School." The first Town Hall, built in 1852, housed this newly established high school. In 1854, it was the turn of the 9th District School and in 1855 in the list of expenditures for the high school is written "Paid 2nd District School for use of school room 83.25." The second major clue lies in the following year's report, ending March 10, 1856: the School Committee quotes "...we wish to say a word in relation to our school houses. The Second District during the past year (1855) have erected a large and beautiful house, whose liberal and convenient construction is indeed very creditable" and, continuing under the heading of the Second District, the committee notes "...the school being now located in the new school house..." The report of the High School notes "the committee decided to accept a room in the new house of the Second District."

It can therefore be reasonably assumed that the Second District School (later, the John Adams School) was built in 1855, not only from evidence culled from the Town Reports but also from visual architectural evidence. The third clue

Continued

9. Major Bibliographical References

Coolidge, John, Mill and Mansion. Columbia University Press, Reissued 1967, by Russell and Russell, New York.

Developer's Kit for the Surplus John Adams School. School Reuse Committee, Weymouth, Massachusetts May 5, 1983. Continued

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property 7,330 sq. ft.

Quadrangle name Weymouth

Quadrangle scale 1:25,000

UTM References

A 19 339400 4671681913
Zone Easting Northing

B
Zone Easting Northing

C

D

E

F

G

H

Verbal boundary description and justification Bounded Northwesterly by an easement, hereinafter granted seventy-three and 37/100 (73,37) feet; Northeasterly by land now or formerly of Peter and James C. Mihos, a distance of one hundred and 29/100 (100,29) feet; Continued.

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

state N/A code county code

state code county code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Minxie Fannin/Montique Lehner

organization Preservation Consultants date August 1984
Fannin Lehner

street & number 271 Lexington Rd./72 So. Pleasant St. telephone Fannin Lehner
369-6703 749-1806

city or town Concord 01742 Hingham 02043 state Massachusetts

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

 national state X local

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

State Historic Preservation Officer signature

Valerie A. Talmage

Executive Director,

title State Historic Preservation Officer

date October 23, 1985

For NPS use only

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

Entered in the
National Register

date 12-5-85

for Shelley Bryan
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 John Adams School, Weymouth, Item number

8

Page 1

MA

lies with the first Town Hall, built in 1852 in a style that was pure, simple Greek Revival in form, massing, and decorative details. Had the Second District been built earlier than 1855, it surely would have followed the same architectural formula. Three years later, it is conceivable that the committee wished to build in the newly developed style of the incipient revivalism. As John Coolidge noted in his book, Mill and Mansion, "The earliest monuments to show the influence of revivalism were the churches and the public buildings (town hall, markets, and schools.)" The transition in the John Adams School from the past Greek Revival style of the Town Hall to the new "Italian Style" is subtle; it is found in the adornments of the structure, the brackets, the emphasis on the beautifully lobed gable window, and the heavy window and door lintels. Cambridgeport, Massachusetts, in this same period (ca. 1850) was experiencing school building activities similar to Weymouth's. The schools were also called "school houses," denoting the residential scale of these structures (often, later metamorphosed into private dwellings). "School" meant a level of instruction and "school house" was the physical building. Up to the Civil War, these school houses were relatively small in size, for they were meant to accommodate only the immediate neighborhood scholars. The Adams School's two-story plan is unusual.

Located on the rise of the hill in Weymouth Heights, the John Adams School sits squarely in a historic neighborhood closely related to John Adams, who became the second President of the United States, and his wife, Abigail. In close proximity to the schoolhouse are the Abigail Adams Homestead (birthplace of Abigail Adams), the First Church of Weymouth, otherwise known as Old North Church, and the Old North Burying Ground, the cemetery in which are buried Abigail Adams' parents and other well-known Weymouth citizens of the 18th century.. The John Adams School also stands across the street from the site of the first Weymouth schoolhouse of 1681 and at the edge of Weymouth Common, permanently designated town land.

Architecturally, the John Adams School is significant as the oldest extant school building in Weymouth, and as an intact, well-preserved vernacular example of the transition from Greek Revival to the Italianate style, with fine detailing.

ARCHAEOLOGY

With its small lot size and the presence of some ground disturbance, the Adams School is not likely to have substantial archaeological remains present. But because of its location at the center of an area of 18th and 19th century settlement, adjacent to the town common and the site of Weymouth's first school, the nominated property may be considered to have some potential for historic archaeological remains. And its proximity to the tidal flats of the Weymouth Fore River indicates a low potential for prehistoric remains if the ground surface has not been too severely altered.

**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 John Adams School, Weymouth, MA Item number 9 Page 1

9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

- History of Norfolk County Massachusetts 1622-1918. Louis A. Cook, Supervising Editor. Volume 1. New York, Chicago: The S.J. Clarke Publishing Co., 1918.
- History of Weymouth, Massachusetts, Volume 2, Historical. Published by the Weymouth Historical Society, 1923.
- Kevitt, Chester B., Weymouth Massachusetts: A New England Town. Weymouth, Massachusetts, 1981.
- Mussey, Barrows, Old New England. New York: A. A. Wyn, Inc., 1946.
- Nash, Gilbert, Historical Sketch of the Town of Weymouth, Massachusetts, From 1622 to 1884. Published by the Town of Weymouth, 1885.
- Report of the Selectmen of the Town of Weymouth. Year ending March 1, 1870.
- Survey of Architectural History in Cambridge, Report Three: Cambridgeport. Cambridge Historical Commission, distributed by the MIT Press 1971.
- Weymouth 350th Anniversary Committee. Weymouth 350th Anniversary, 1972.
- Weymouth Town Reports 1834 to 1860. 1836, 1840, 1853, 1854, 1855, 1856, and 1860.

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

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

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received

date entered

Continuation sheet John Adams School, Weymouth, MA Item number 10

Page 1

10. VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION AND JUSTIFICATION

Southeasterly by lands now or formerly of James M. and Margaret T. Tower, sixty-four and 57/100 (64,57) feet; Southwesterly by land now or formerly of said Tower one hundred and 58/100 (100, 58) feet.

See plan of a part of Weymouth; Scale: one inch = 100 feet (1908)
Engineering Division Department of Public Works
Sheet 13, Revised January 1, 1984
Area 174

See plan of Land, Weymouth, Norfolk County, Mass. February 19, 1982.

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

85003068

Adams, John, School
Norfolk County
MASSACHUSETTS

Working No. NOV 6 1985
Fed. Reg. Date: 2/3/87
Date Due: 12/5/85 - 12/21/85
Action: ☒ ACCEPT 12-5-85
☐ RETURN
☐ REJECT

Entered in the
National Register

Federal Agency: _____

- ☐ resubmission
☐ nomination by person or local government
☐ owner objection
☐ appeal

Substantive Review: ☐ sample ☐ request ☐ appeal ☐ NR decision

Reviewer's comments:

Recom./Criteria _____
Reviewer _____
Discipline _____
Date _____
_____ see continuation sheet

Nomination returned for: _____ technical corrections cited below
_____ substantive reasons discussed below

1. Name

2. Location

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
	Public Acquisition	Accessible	

4. Owner of Property

5. Location of Legal Description

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

Has this property been determined eligible? ☐ yes ☐ no

7. Description

Condition

- | | |
|------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| ☐ excellent | ☐ deteriorated |
| ☐ good | ☐ ruins |
| ☐ fair | ☐ unexposed |

Check one

- ☐ unaltered
☐ altered

Check one

- ☐ original site
☐ moved date _____

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

- ☐ summary paragraph
☐ completeness
☐ clarity
☐ alterations/integrity
☐ dates
☐ boundary selection

8. Significance

Period Areas of Significance—Check and justify below

Specific dates

Builder/Architect

Statement of Significance (*in one paragraph*)

- ☐ summary paragraph
- ☐ completeness
- ☐ clarity
- ☐ applicable criteria
- ☐ justification of areas checked
- ☐ relating significance to the resource
- ☐ context
- ☐ relationship of integrity to significance
- ☐ justification of exception
- ☐ other

9. Major Bibliographical References

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property _____

Quadrangle name _____

UTM References _____

Verbal boundary description and justification _____

11. Form Prepared By

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

____ national ____ state ____ local

State Historic Preservation Officer signature

title

date

13. Other

- ☐ Maps
- ☐ Photographs
- ☐ Other

Questions concerning this nomination may be directed to _____

Signed _____ Date _____ Phone: _____

Comments for any item may be continued on an attached sheet



The John Adams School
16 Church Street
Weymouth Heights

Photo by Monique B. Lehner, July 1984
72 So. Pleasant Street
Hingham, MA 02043

Negative with photographer

Photo #1 of 5
Facade, North Side

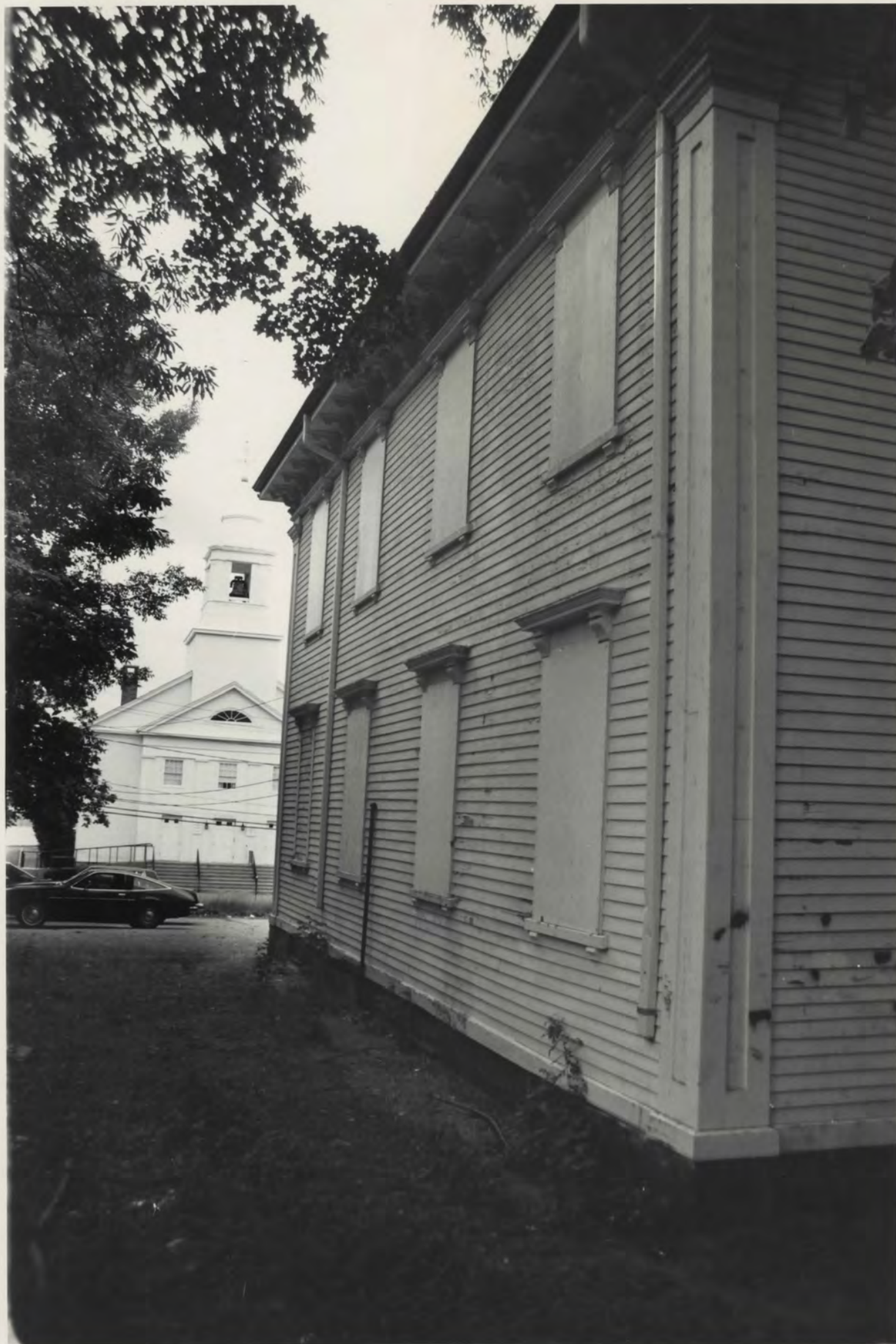


The John Adams School
16 School Street
Weymouth Heights

Photo by Monique B. Lehner, July 1984
72 So. Pleasant Street
Hingham, MA 02043

Negative with photographer

Photo #2 of 5
East Side Elevation



The John Adams School
16 Church Street
Weymouth Heights

Photo by Monique B. Lehner, July 1984
72 So. Pleasant Street
Hingham, MA 02043

Negative with photographer

Photo #3 of 5
West Side Elevation



The John Adams School
16 Church Street
Weymouth Heights

Photo by Monique B. Lehner
72 South Pleasant Street
Hingham, MA 02043

Negative with photographer

Photo #4 of 5
South Side (rear) Elevation



The John Adams School
16 Church Street
Weymouth Heights

Photo by Monique B. Lehner, July 1984
72 South Pleasant Street
Hingham, MA 02043

Negative with photographer

Photo #5 of 5

Detail: Gable with brackets and lobed
window of facade.

The John Adams School
16 Church Street
Weymouth Heights

Document 3C

August 1984

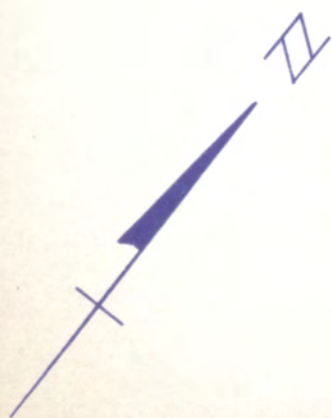
PLAN OF LAND WEYMOUTH, NORFOLK COUNTY, MASS.

JOHN H. MORSE - TOWN ENGINEER
FEBRUARY 19, 1982 SCALE: 1" = 20'

William D. Millett

I CERTIFY THAT THIS PLAN CONFORMS WITH THE
RULES AND REGULATIONS OF THE REGISTERS OF
DEEDS

William D. Millett



CHURCH

STREET

CB (FND.) 171.35' N50°-15'-20"E 39.35' CB (FND.) 399.07' 34.47'

PROPOSED
ACCESS EASEMENT
3549 S.F.
LAND

COMMON

N52°-25'-45"E
73.37'

JAMES M. &
MARGARET T.
TOWER

7330 S.F.

PETER & JAMES C. MIHOS

S37°-14'-40"E

100.29'

N37°-42'-20"W

100.58'

JOHN ADAMS
SCHOOL

S52°-32'-01"W
8.00'

64.57'

S52°-09'-29"W

SCALE

0 10 20 40 60

The John Adams School
16 Church Street
Weymouth Heights

Document 3A

August 1984

John Adams School
16 Church Street
Weymouth, Massachusetts

Weymouth Quadrangle
UTM Reference:
19/339400/4676893

CONVERSION
SCALES

Feet Meters

15000 4500

14000 4000

13000 3500

12000 3000

11000 2500

10000 2000

9000 1500

8000 1000

7000 700

6000 600

5000 500

4000 400

3000 300

2000 200

1000 100

0 0

Feet Meters

1 3048

2 6096

3 9144

4 12192

5 15240

6 18288

7 21336

8 24384

9 27432

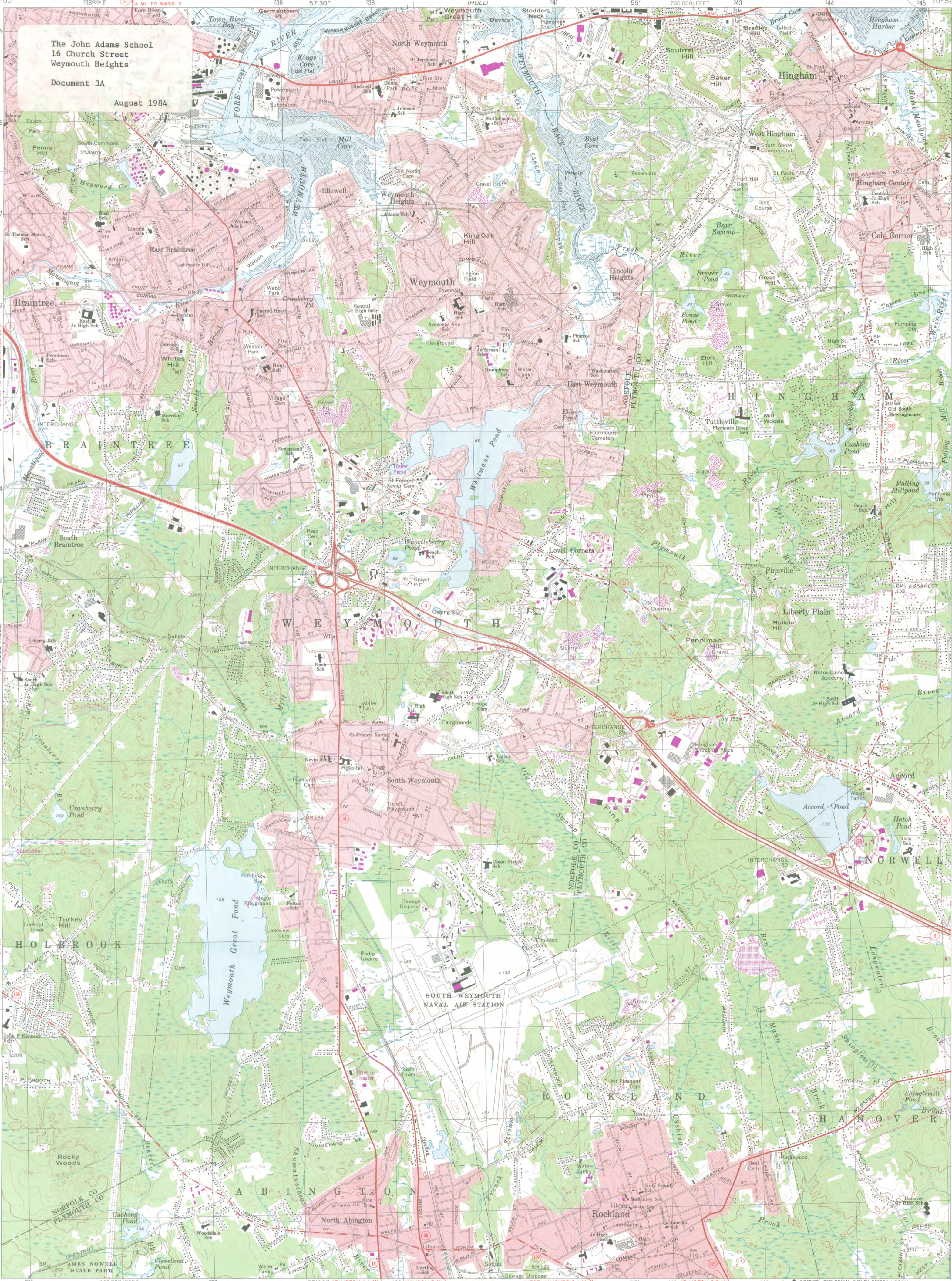
10 30480

To convert feet to meters

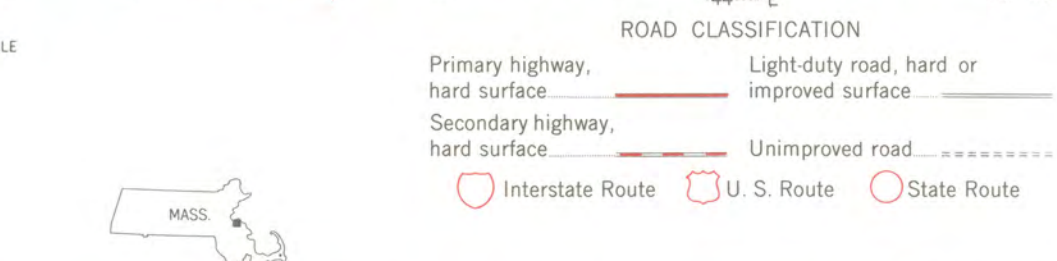
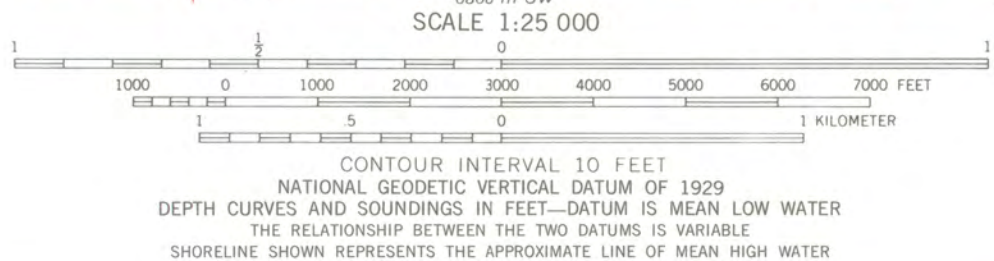
multiply by 3048

To convert meters to feet

multiply by 3.2808



Mapped, edited, and published by the Geological Survey
Control by USGS, USC&GS, and Massachusetts Geodetic Survey
Planimetry by photogrammetric methods from aerial photographs
Topography by planimetric surveys 1936. Revised from
aerial photographs taken 1969. Field checked 1971
Selected hydrographic data compiled from US&GS Chart 246 (1971)
This information is not intended for navigational purposes
Polyconic projection. 1927 North American datum
10,000-foot grid based on Massachusetts coordinate system,
mainland zone
1000-meter Universal Transverse Mercator grid,
zone 19
Red tint indicates areas in which only
landmark buildings are shown
There may be private inholdings within the boundaries of
the National or State reservations shown on this map



Revisions shown in purple compiled in cooperation with State of
Massachusetts agencies from aerial photographs taken 1977 and other
source data. This information not field checked. Map edited 1979

WEYMOUTH, MASS.
N4207.5-W7052.5/7.5
1971
PHOTOREVISED 1979
AMS 6868 III NW-SERIES V814



P 284 880 609

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

Office of the Secretary of State
Michael Joseph Connolly, Secretary

Massachusetts Historical Commission

Valerie A. Talmage

Executive Director

State Historic Preservation Officer

October 24, 1985

Carol Shull
National Register of Historic Places
Department of Interior
National Park Service
P.O. Box 37127
Washington, DC 20013-7127

Dear Ms. Shull:

Enclosed you will find the following nomination forms:

Boston, Hingham, Hull, Quincy, Weymouth and Winthrop, Boston Harbor Islands Archaeological District, Boston Harbor, 21 islands.

Boston, Dudley Station Historic District, Washington, Warren and Dudley Streets, 40 properties.

Lawrence, 34-30 Summer Street, 4 properties. HPCA pending, no number assigned.

Lynn, Central Square Historic District, Central Square, Munroe, Union and Willow Streets, 15 properties. HPCAs pending: The Peavear Building, 101-127 Munroe Street, #0758-85-MA. New Bergengren Block, 1-21 Central Square, #0653-85-MA.

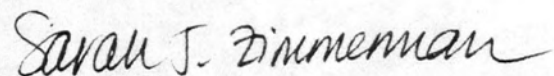
Weymouth, John Adams School, 16 Church Street, 1 property.

Wrentham, Plimpton-Winter House, 127 South Street, 1 property.
HPCA complete: #MA-85-0727.

All have been voted eligible by the State Review Board and have been signed by the State Historic Preservation Officer. Owners were notified of pending State Review Board consideration 30-75 days before

the meeting and were afforded the opportunity to comment. Comments received to date are attached to the nomination forms.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Sarah J. Zimmerman". The signature is fluid and elegant, with a long, sweeping underline.

Sarah J. Zimmerman
Director, Preservation Planning
Massachusetts Historical Commission

Enclosures

SJZ/dr