

LIGHTHOUSES OF MASSACHUSETTS
THEMATIC GROUP NOMINATION

LIGHTHOUSE INFORMATION FORM

NUMBER 31

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
80 Boylston Street, Boston, MA 02116

PHOTOGRAPH KEY

Photo-Jack Clarke - MHC - 1980

1) Light & Keeper's House

HISTORIC NAME: Nobska Point Light Station

TOWN: Falmouth

LOCATION: On Nobska Road east of harbor entrance.

COUNTY: Barnstable CODE: 001

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT: 10th

LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION:

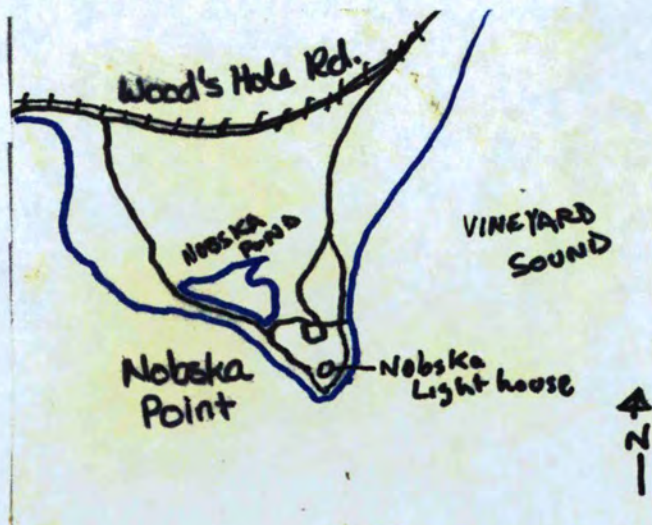
Barnstable County Courthouse

(Book 3, p. 86)

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION:

See attached assessor's map.

SKETCH MAP



LAT./LONG.: 41°30'56"N 70°39'20"W

UTM COORDINATE: 19/361/700/4597/200

USGS QUADRANGLE: Prov. RI., Mass., Conn.

SCALE: 1:250,000

ACREAGE: 2.11 acres

OWNER(S): First Coast Guard District
408 Atlantic Avenue
Boston, MA 02210

STATUS: Unmanned/Active

RECORDED BY: N. Salzman/J. Clarke

ORGANIZATION: MHC/Cape Cod Planning

DATE: July 24, 1981

LIGHTHOUSES OF MASSACHUSETTS
THEMATIC GROUP NOMINATION

SITE DESCRIPTION

The Nobska Point Light Station complex is a major navigational aid located at the entrance to Woods Hole Harbor (Falmouth) between Buzzard's Bay and Vineyard Sound; it covers Hedge Fence and L'Hommedieu Shoal. Sited high on a rocky promontory east of the entrance to Wood's Hole, it is bare of vegetation and thus can be seen clearly from all directions. It represents a typical picturesque and intact site.

Major ELEMENTS DESCRIPTION

Extant elements include the light tower with entry porch (1876), two keeper's dwellings (1876, 1900) connected by a porch, a brick oil house (1876), paint lockers (1876), garage (1931), and radio beacon building (1937).

Tower

EXTERIOR: A white cylindrical tower consisting of four "rings" of iron panels, surmounted by a standard cast iron lantern. The tower is 40' high and sits 47' above the water. Three typical Italianate windows are located at Levels 1,2,3; Level 4 shows four portholes. The tower is sealed on a concrete base and has a standard copper lightning rod ground strap bolted onto the iron drum, buried and then returning through a ceramic pipe.

Entry porch: one story vinyl clad wood frame room measuring 72" x 78" with red shingle roof; no windows; cement floor; six panel door; doorway into tower is 11 1/2" thick; walls and ceiling sheathed in 2 1/2" tongue and groove wainscotting, painted white.

INTERIOR: Interior is of red sandblasted brick. Stair is standard South Shore iron with simple tubular construction; curves along wall 32 steps to landing.

Windows: at level 2,3 identical size 30" x 49" outside frame, 24 x 46" (interior or measurements) with 2/2 sash. The sills decrease in depth as the outer walls slope: Level 1: 8 1/2"; L2: 5"; L3:3"; four portholes at L4 (lamp room).

Lamp Room: sheathed in vertical tongue and groove wainscotting. The framing is wood; 2 iron panels separate the stairwell from the room. At the end of this curving inner wall is a 3 shelf cupboard with original door. The ladder is standard curved type with 7 treads (cf. Chatham, #11).

Lens Rooms: is entered through a new plywood trapezoidal trap door with two original iron straps terminated with a decorative flat finial. A fine vertical brass grab assists entry into the upper lens room. The ten sided room is sheathed in vertical wood wainscotting, 3 1/2" wide. The deck is also wooden. A series of five ventilator openings set into the wall are covered by the original brass fan dials (5 openings) and turned by a small brass knob. The vent housing is 8 1/1" in diameter.

Windows are standard size, 26 1/2" x 35 1/2"; three are blackened to shield the light from landward houses. A red pane set in a frame attached to one window marks Hedge Fence and L'Hommedieu Shoal.

Balcony: standard black painted iron; circular with a 51" diameter from lens room to the outer edge. Originally Italianate in style, the elaborate posts and single rail have been replaced by a post with pointed top and two simple bars. The outside wall contains a typical narrow rectangular-rimmed vent outlet, with a 6 1/2" opening. Iron astragals hold the glass in place.

Roof: is in ten sections. It is surmounted by an intact round ball resting on a molded base. The lighting rod protrudes from the top.

KEEPER'

DWELLING: 1876 - 1 1/2 story wood frame building, (31' x 25' containing 1650 sq. ft.) with a fieldstone foundation with full basement; land slopes away on north side to provide entrance to basement; presently enclosed by red asphalt roof and sheathed in white vinyl siding. L shaped gables, two chimneys, three single dormers on east (rear). The original front elevation was to the south facing Martha's Vineyard. Level 1 now has an attached covered porch connecting with the second house. Level 2 has an original triple window with lower sidelights and molded Gothic Revival tab hood.

The present front (west) elevation has an enclosed front porch, now part of the connecting porch. Alongside the entry is the projecting front wing, its gable ridge lower than the main N-S roof. At level 1 are two 6/6 windows. The north side elevation contains a narrow attic window (unusual), two 6/6 at level 2 and two 6/6 directly beneath at Level 1. A third 6/6 window on level 1 is within the projecting front gable wing. The east facade contains three cellar windows, five at Level 1 and three single dormers at Level 2. All vergeboard and tab window moldings have been removed on the east facade.

1900- 1 1/2 story wood frame, 27' x 28' containing c. 1200 sq. ft; on site of former wood storage house; T-shaped gables, one chimney. Main facade faces west with one 6/6 window at level 2, a three-sided bay at level 1 and a steel bulkhead door directly beneath; a one story, one bay extension, with 6/6 window attached to the covered porch of 1876 house, on left; on right of bay is 6/6 window, now part of enclosed entry porch. South facade contains one window 6/6 each at Levels 1 and 2, with cellar window beneath; to left in angle formed by wings is an enclosed porch two bays wide with original main entrance; molded tab hood has been recently removed. East, rear facade contains two 2/2 windows plus a smaller one on the right at level 1; level 2 contains a large gable. As a typical of other Keeper's Houses (cf. West Chop, #40) of the period; north side is connected to 1876 house at level 1. Window in gable at Level 2.

OIL HOUSE: paint locker, 10' x 12', brick gable roof with gable ends N-S.

RADIO BEACON BUILDING: 1937 rectangular 1 story brick gable, Federal Revival style; N-S sides contain two windows at L1 and a segmental curved window high in gable. East side has 2 windows. West side, facing house, contains window and door, chimney on west gable.

LIGHT CHARACTERISTICS: LIGHT is a classic 4th order Fresnel lens (with a cotten cover). Light characteristics are FIW, 6 sex., Red Sector. 16 mi. Red (263-289*). Horn 2/30 sec.

CHRONOLOGICAL HISTORY

7/7/1828 - land purchased for \$160 from William and Hannah Lawrence and Andrew and Elizabeth Davis. Light built on top of Keeper's dwelling (80' above the water).

1876 - tower rebuilt in iron with brick lining for \$50,000.

1876 - wood frame dwelling, 1 1/2 story, 31' x 35', 1650 sq. feet, built at cost of \$9,000.

1876 - brick one story oil house, 22' x 26' (120 square feet) built at a cost of \$1,000. Brick one story paint locker 22' x 26' (120 square feet) built at a cost of (\$1,000).

1900 - second keepers house built to south of earlier house on site of wood house. Wood frame 1 1/2 story 27' x 28' (c. 120 sq. feet) built for \$6000.

1931 - garage built. Fog Horn attached (now removed).

1937 - radio beacon building, equipped with beaco, built; connected by two way telephone with the West Chop Light.

1948 - steel skeleton tower 125' for radio beacon (\$2000) and fog horn structure (\$1000), built.

1985 - light was automated and unmanned; living quarters now used for Woods Hole group commander.

Level of Significance

Nobska Point Light possesses integrity of location, design, setting, materials and workmanship as well as significant associations with the development of aids to navigation in Massachusetts. Dating mainly from 1876, it is an excellent example of lighthouse complex including the cast iron tower, two keeper's houses, an oil house and a paint locker as early elements. It is important for its scenic qualities, sited on a bluff overlooking Vineyard Sound, and for its strategic location at the junction of Vineyard and Nantucket Sounds with Buzzard's Bay. The complex meets criteria A & C of the NRHP on the state level as well as survey criteria 2a, 2c, 3a, 3b.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form

For NPS use only

received MAY 4 1987
date entered

Continuation sheet

Item number

Page 2 of 4

Multiple Resource Area
Thematic Group

Name Lighthouses of Massachusetts TR
State MASSACHUSETTS

Nomination/Type of Review

Date/Signature

11. Minot's Ledge Light

Entered in the
National Register

for
Keeper

Melrose Byers 6/15/87

Attest

12. Nauset Beach Light

Entered in the
National Register

for
Keeper

Melrose Byers 6/15/87

Attest

13. Ned Point Light

Entered in the
National Register

for
Keeper

Melrose Byers 6/15/87

Attest

14. Newburyport Harbor Light

Entered in the
National Register

for
Keeper

Melrose Byers 6/15/87

Attest

15. Newburyport Harbor Front Range Light

Entered in the
National Register

for
Keeper

Melrose Byers 6/15/87

Attest

16. Nobska Point Light Station

Entered in the
National Register

for
Keeper

Melrose Byers 6/15/87

Attest

17. Race Point Light Station

Entered in the
National Register

for
Keeper

Melrose Byers 6/15/87

Attest

18. Sankaty Head Light

Entered in the
National Register

for
Keeper

Melrose Byers 6/15/87

Attest

19. Scituate Light

Entered in the
National Register

for
Keeper

Melrose Byers 6/15/87

Attest

20. Straightsmouth Island Light

Entered in the
National Register

for
Keeper

Melrose Byers 6/15/87

Attest

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

Nobska Point Light Station (Lighthouses of
Massachusetts TR)
Barnstable County
MASSACHUSETTS

Working No. 4/28/88
Fed. Reg. Date: 2/2/89
Date Due: 6/18/87
Action: ACCEPT 6-15-87
 RETURN
 REJECT
Federal Agency: USCG -DOT

- 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		Check one	Check one
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input type="checkbox"/> original site
<input type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved date _____
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed		

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: _____



 **COAST GUARD**
NOBSKA POINT LIGHT STATION

#11.

Nobska Point Lighthouse

Nobska Rd.

Falmouth, MA

10/80

Jack Clarke

NOBSKA POINT LIGHT STATION
FALMOUTH, MA. #32

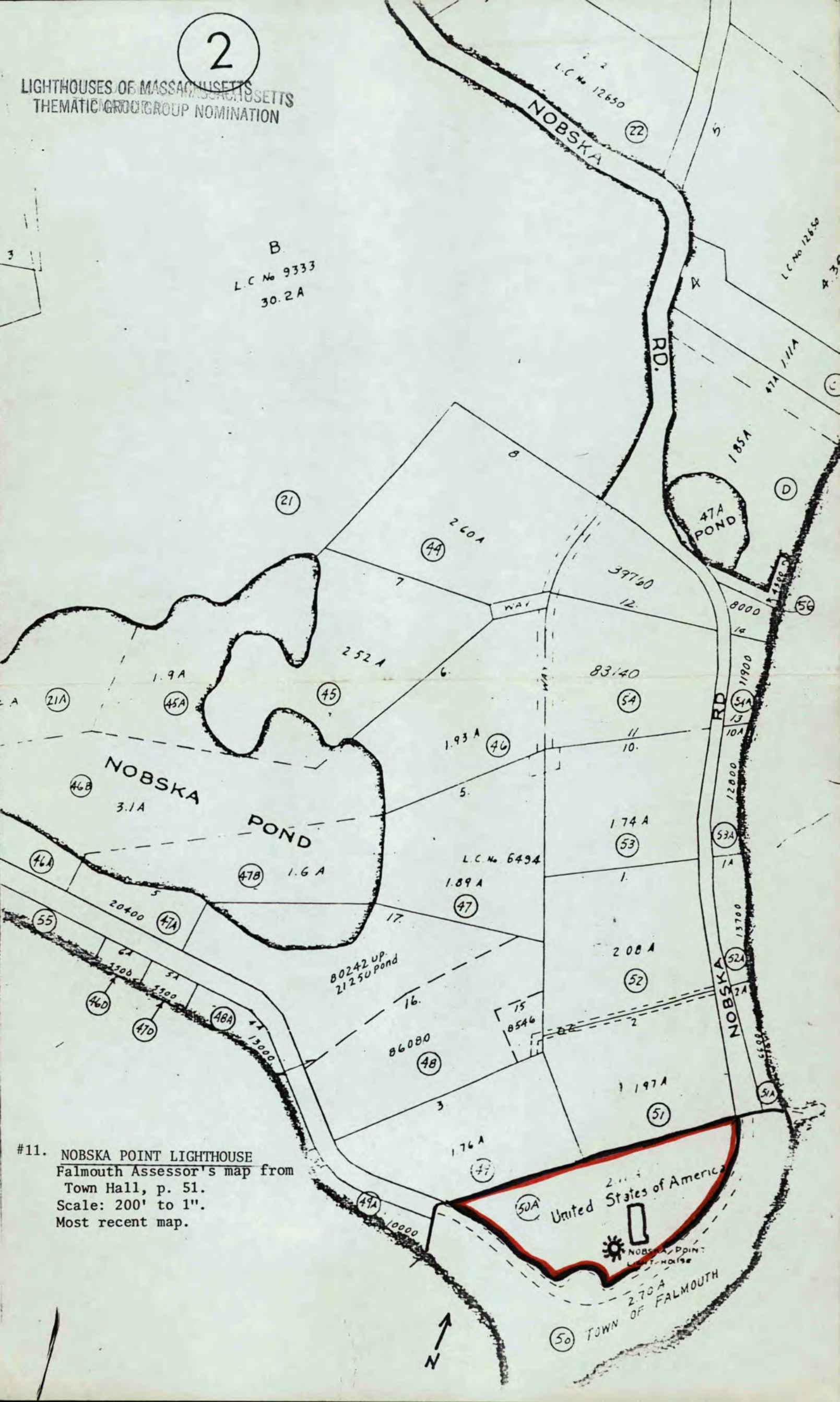
PHOTO #1 OF 1

CAPE COD PLANNING
AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION
1st DISTRICT COURT HOUSE
BARNSTABLE, MASS. 02630

LIGHTHOUSES OF MASSACHUSETTS
THEMATIC GROUP NOMINATION

2

LIGHTHOUSES OF MASSACHUSETTS
THEMATIC GROUP NOMINATION



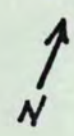
B
L.C No 9333
30.2A

L.C No 12650

L.C No 12656

L.C No 6494

#11. NOBSKA POINT LIGHTHOUSE
Falmouth Assessor's map from
Town Hall, p. 51.
Scale: 200' to 1".
Most recent map.



Please refer to the map in the
Multiple Property Cover Sheet
for this property

Multiple Property Cover Sheet Reference Number: 64000282