

1501
AUG 21 1989

AREA

FORM NO.

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
80 BOYLSTON STREET
BOSTON, MA 02116

NATIONAL REGISTER

WALTHAM, MA MRA

100

Town Waltham

Address 87 School Street

Historic Name First Parish Church

Use: Present church

Original same

DESCRIPTION

Date 1932

Source church history-Sanderson & Castner

Style Neo-Classical

Architect Allen & Collens

Exterior Wall Fabric clapboard

Outbuildings none

Major Alterations (with dates) church school
and chapel wing added 1957/1963

Condition good

Moved no Date n/a

Acreage 43,882 sq.ft. 1.00 A 60-4-2

Setting faces triangular park in area of
primarily mid-19th century houses.

Recorded by Ed Gordon/Rupert A.M. Davis

Organization Waltham Historical Comm.

Date July, 1986

revised by C. Jenkins 4/88

Photo (3"x3" or 3"x5", black and white) Indicate address of property on back of photo. Staple to left side of form.

Sketch Map: Draw map showing property's location in relation to nearest cross streets and/or geographical features. Indicate all buildings between inventoried property and nearest intersection(s).
Indicate north

UTM REFERENCE 19/315980/4693980

USGS QUADRANGLE LEXINGTON

SCALE 1:25,000

NATIONAL REGISTER CRITERIA STATEMENT (if applicable)

The First Parish Church of Waltham possesses integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling and associations. Tracing its origins to Waltham's 17th century settlement period, it has significant associations with the growth and development of the city. It is also an unusual and extremely well-detailed example of the Neo-Classical style by a major architectural firm--Allen and Collens. It meets criteria A and C of the National Register of Historic Places.

ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE Describe important architectural features and evaluate in terms of other buildings within the community.

The First Parish Church is located at the corner of School and Church Streets, overlooking the triangular remnant of Waltham's first common dating from 1836. It is a finely detailed Neo-Classical style building designed by the nationally known and Boston based firm of Allen and Collens in 1932. Built of wood with steel framing, it partially rests on the foundations of its predecessor which burned on August 22, 1932. The church consists of a four bay gabled nave with side aisles fronted by a bell tower surrounded by a prostyle portico with Doric columns and a low pediment. Above the portico, the tower rises squarely to a parapet with anthemions at the corners. Surmounting this is the belfry stage which consists of an open drum with columns supporting a continuous anthemion crest and the spire. Flanked by aisles with four 16/16 light windows, the nave is rectangular and leads to a square ended chancel. Pairs of coupled Tuscan columns separate the nave and aisles and support the barrel vaulted roof. In the chancel, also barrel vaulted, the tall pedimented
(cont)

HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE Explain the role owners played in local or state history and how the building relates to the development of the community.

Waltham's First Parish Church traces its origins directly to the congregation formed shortly after the settlement of Watertown in 1630. By 1695 Watertown was populous enough to require a second meetinghouse in the western part of town at the junction of Belmont and Lexington Streets. Samuel Angier (d.1718), a graduate of Harvard College, became the first minister of the new church. The history of Waltham's First Parish is generally accepted as having started with his ministry. In 1720, by vote of the General Court, Watertown was formally divided into two precincts, each to support its own minister. At this time an old meetinghouse from the neighboring town of Newton was acquired and moved to the western precinct of Watertown. The Reverend Warham Williams, another graduate of Harvard, became the first regularly settled minister in 1723. He remained until 1751 after being stricken by apoplexy in the pulpit. He was succeeded by the Reverend Jacob Cushing, also a Harvard graduate, in 1752.

In 1767, a new meetinghouse was erected on the triangle formed by Lyman Street and two branches of Beaver Street.(near the present entrance to the Vale:NHL) The new building was rectangular with a tower and steeple attached to one side and a porch on the opposite side. In 1770 the steeple was struck by lightning. The ensuing fire was apparently extinguished by a pail of milk. The first lightning rods in Waltham were then added, an event referred to by John Winthrop in a letter to Benjamin Franklin.

(cont)

BIBLIOGRAPHY and/or REFERENCES

- History of the First Parish in Waltham, 1696 - 1957 by Edmund Sanderson and Elizabeth Castner, No date, W.P.L.
- Manual of the First Parish in Waltham. The Two Hundred and Twentieth Anniversary - 1696 - 1916. Waltham, Massachusetts
- Waltham News Tribune, March 15, 1933, Christian Register, November 9, 1933.
- Waltham Public Library Files.
- Discussion With Elizabeth Castner, Archivist, Waltham Public Library.

INVENTORY FORM CONTINUATION SHEET

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
Office of the Secretary, Boston

Community: Waltham	Form No: 100
Property Name: First Parish Church	

Indicate each item on inventory form which is being continued below.

Architectural Significance (cont)

alter is positioned in an arched niche flanked by Ionic columns.

To the right (E) of the church is a one story church school structure added in 1957. Designed by Charles Loring of Boston, the structure was estimated to cost \$100,000. In 1963, a new chapel was dedicated.

The previous structure, built in 1839 and remodelled in 1866 by Henry W. Harwell, had a rectangular nave with interior aisles and chancel. A bell tower surmounted by a clock and cupola sat at the street and together with attached porches.

The First Parish Church's design was provided by the architectural firm of Allen and Collens. Along with Maginnis and Walsh, Allen and Collens were known as major Boston based specialists in Gothic ecclesiastical design; Allen and Collens enjoyed a national reputation. They designed, for example, Riverside Church in New York City. Particularly noteworthy is the Allen and Collens-designed Lindsey Chapel at Emmanuel Church on Newbury Street. Other local work by Allen and Collens includes what is now St. Clement's Church in the Back Bay. The First Congregational Church (1920) in Jamaica Plain (reflecting a Georgian Revival, rather than Gothic stylistic sensibility-dating to the early 1930s) and the Second Church in Newton (1909-1916). Allen and Collens also designed the Georgian Revival Newton City Hall and War Memorial in 1932.

Historical Significance (cont)

With the establishment of the Boston Manufacturing Company in 1813, Waltham's population increased rapidly. By 1820 it was decided to form another parish known as the Second Religious Society. A church was built on Church Street in the midst of the developing town center, and shortly thereafter, in 1826, Theodore Lyman laid out Lyman Street (Area D) as a way to the original First Parish Church. The Second Religious Society was split soon after by the controversy between Unitarian and Trinitarian beliefs, and the Trinitarians formed a third church. (see form #105)

In 1838, the Unitarians of the First Parish and the Second Religious Society united to form the Independent Congregational Society. At that time a new church was begun on the present site in the town center, confirming the strength of that area.

The Reverend Cushing, appointed as pastor in 1752, continued until 1809. He was succeeded by the controversial Reverend Samuel Ripley. When Ripley resigned in 1845, he was replaced by the Reverend Thomas Hill. A man of many talents, Hill had a strong effect on the local school system. He wrote poetry and constructed a machine to calculate the solar eclipse. In 1859, he became president of Antioch College and in 1862, President of Harvard. The Reverend James Parsons replaced him in Waltham in 1860, but was forced to resign in 1864 because of his strong anti-slavery views.

Under the pastorate of the of the Reverend Samuel Flagg (1865-69) the church was remodelled by a member of the congregation, architect Henry W. Hartwell. One minister during the 19th century deserves mention, Edward Y. Young. Pastor from 1880-1892, he was a former Hancock Professor of Hebrew and later Dexter Lecturer of Biblical Literature at Harvard Divinity

Staple to Inventory form at bottom

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INVENTORY FORM CONTINUATION SHEET

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
Office of the Secretary, Boston

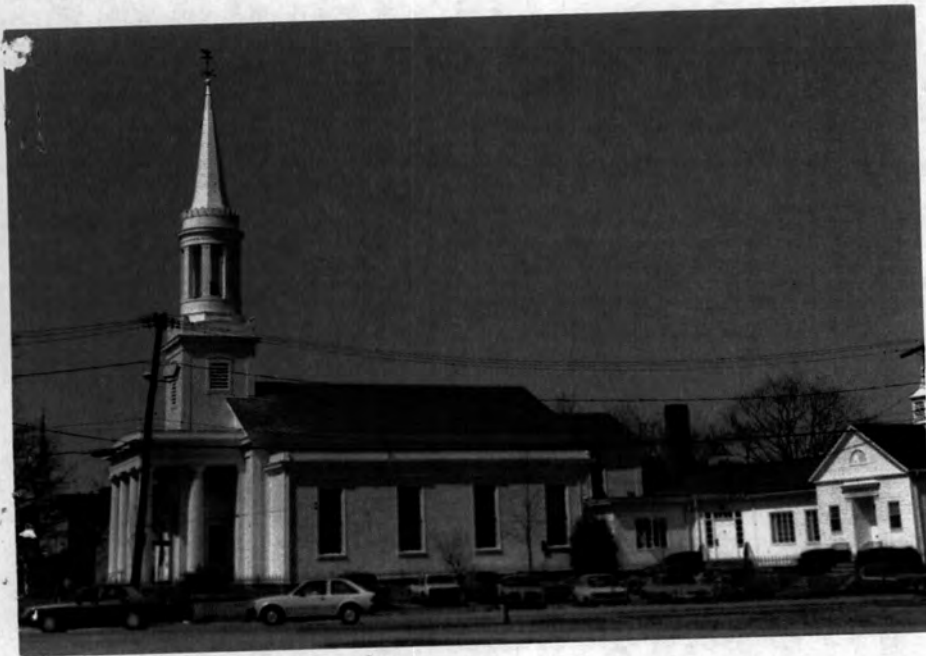
Community: Waltham	Form No: 100
Property Name: First Parish Church	

Indicate each item on inventory form which is being continued below.

Historical Significance (cont)

School.

On August 24, 1932 the church burned. The present structure was erected under the pastorate of the Reverend Kenneth C. Gesner; it was dedicated on October 25, 1933. The choice of a Greek Classical rather than Georgian inspired design (as preliminarily planned) is perhaps a reflection of the period during which Unitarianism rose to prominence in the early part of the 19th century. In 1957, the Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Waltham merged with the First Parish.



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INVENTORY FORM CONTINUATION SHEET

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
Office of the Secretary, Boston

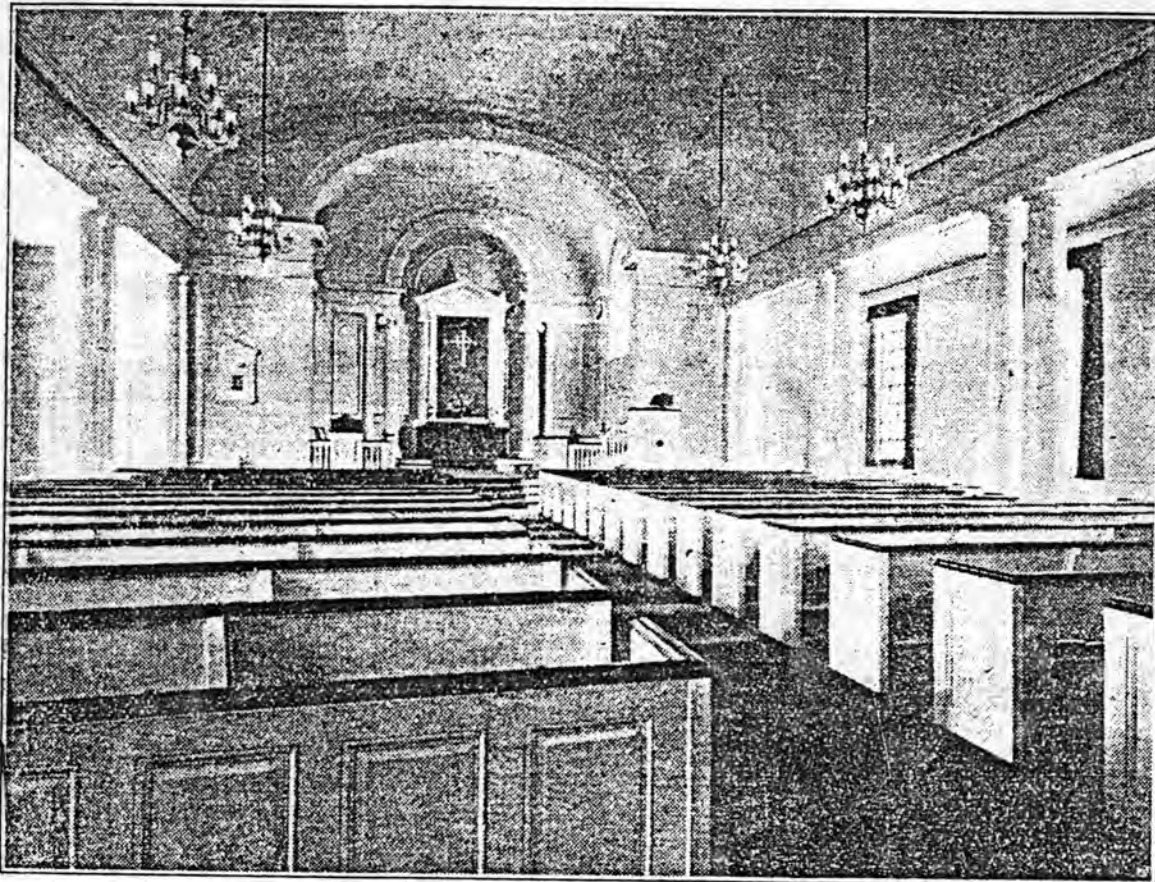
Community: WALTHAM, MA MRA	Form No: 100
Property Name: First Parish Church 87 School St	

Indicate each item on inventory form which is being continued below.

Waltham News-T

WALTHAM, MASS. MONDAY, OCTOBER 16, 1933

First Service Held Sunday In Restored First Parish Church



Interior of First Parish Church

Staple to Inventory form at bottom

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

AUG 21 1989

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number _____ Page _____

Multiple Resource Area
Thematic Group

Name Waltham MRA
State Middlesex County, MASSACHUSETTS

Nomination/Type of Review

Date/Signature

21. Colburn, Gilbert, House *Entered in the National Register*

for Keeper *Aelores Byers* 9/28/89

Attest _____

22. Company F State Armory *Entered in the National Register*

for Keeper *Aelores Byers* 9/28/89

Attest _____

23. Dow, Lenoir, House *Entered in the National Register*

for Keeper *Aelores Byers* 9/28/89

Attest _____

see 24. Dunbar--Stearns House *Substantive Review*

for Keeper *Beth J. Savage* 3/9/90

Attest _____

25. East Main Street Historic District *Entered in the National Register*

for Keeper *Aelores Byers* 9/28/89

Attest _____

26. Eastern Middlesex County District Court *Second Entered in the National Register*

for Keeper *Aelores Byers* 9/28/89

Attest _____

see 27. First Congregational Church *Substantive Review*

for Keeper *Beth J. Savage* 9/28/89

Attest _____

see 28. First Parish Church *Substantive Review*

for Keeper *Beth J. Savage* 9/28/89

Attest _____

29. Fisher, Henry N., House *Entered in the National Register*

for Keeper *Aelores Byers* 9/28/89

Attest _____

30. Fiske, Elijah, House *Entered in the National Register*

for Keeper *Aelores Byers* 9/28/89

Attest _____

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number _____ Page _____

SUPPLEMENTARY LISTING RECORD

NRIS Reference Number: 89001507

Date Listed: 09/28/89

First Parish Church
Property Name

Middlesex
County

MA
State

Waltham MRA
Multiple Name

This property is listed in the National Register of Historic Places in accordance with the attached nomination documentation subject to the following exceptions, exclusions, or amendments, notwithstanding the National Park Service certification included in the nomination documentation.


Signature of the Keeper

9/28/89
Date of Action

Amended Items in Nomination:

Section 8: Criteria considerations

Criteria exception A is applicable for the property's religious function.

This information was confirmed with Ann Tait, Acting National Register Director, MASHPO, by telephone.

DISTRIBUTION:

- National Register property file
- Nominating Authority (without nomination attachment)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: NOMINATION

PROPERTY First Parish Church
NAME:

MULTIPLE Waltham MRA
NAME:

STATE & COUNTY: MASSACHUSETTS, Middlesex

DATE RECEIVED: 8/21/89 DATE OF PENDING LIST: 9/05/89
DATE OF 16TH DAY: 9/21/89 DATE OF 45TH DAY: 10/05/89
DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:

REFERENCE NUMBER: 89001507

NOMINATOR: STATE

REASONS FOR REVIEW:

APPEAL: N DATA PROBLEM: N LANDSCAPE: N LESS THAN 50 YEARS: N
OTHER: N PDIL: N PERIOD: N PROGRAM UNAPPROVED: N
REQUEST: N SAMPLE: N SLR DRAFT: Y NATIONAL: N

COMMENT WAIVER: N

ACCEPT RETURN REJECT 9/28/89 DATE

ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:

RECOM./CRITERIA Accept A+C
REVIEWER Savage
DISCIPLINE Cultural/Archaeological History
DATE 9/28/89

DOCUMENTATION see attached comments Y/N see attached SLR (Y/N)

CLASSIFICATION

count resource type

STATE/FEDERAL AGENCY CERTIFICATION

FUNCTION

historic current

DESCRIPTION

architectural classification
 materials
 descriptive text

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

BIBLIOGRAPHY

GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

acreage verbal boundary description
 UTM's boundary justification

ACCOMPANYING DOCUMENTATION/PRESENTATION

sketch maps USGS maps photographs presentation

OTHER COMMENTS

Questions concerning this nomination may be directed to

_____ Phone _____

Signed _____ Date _____



First Parish church

87 School st

Mt H 100

Waltham, MA MRA



First Parish church - 87 School
St.
MHC Form # 100
WALTHAM, MA MRA



87 School St

MHC 100

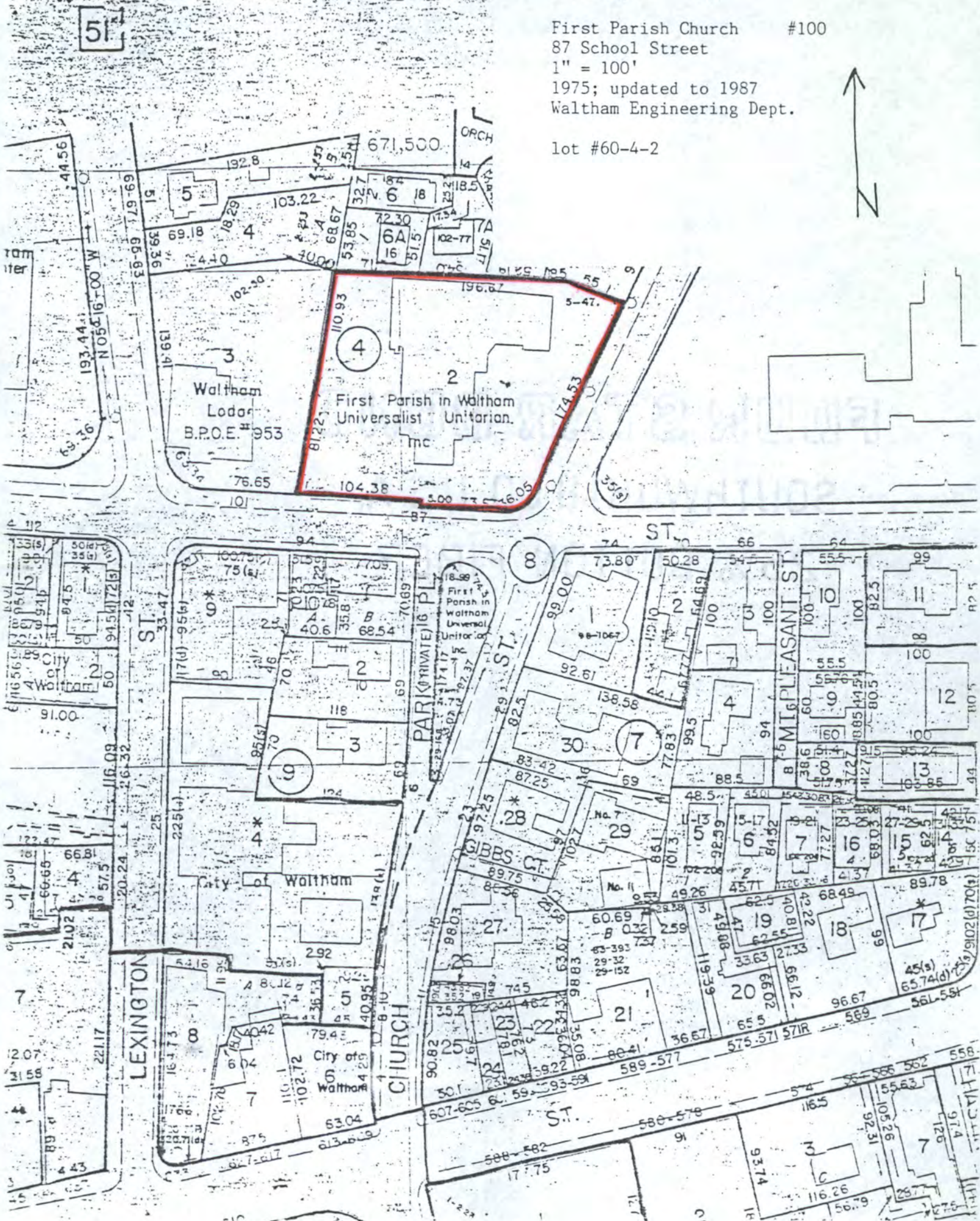
MA

Waltham, ~~MA~~

First Parish Church

First Parish Church #100
87 School Street
1" = 100'
1975; updated to 1987
Waltham Engineering Dept.

lot #60-4-2





1970 Atlas, City of Waltham
 Compiled by the Waltham
 Engineering Division
 Scale: 1 inch = 140 feet

Waltham, Massachusetts MRA
 87 School Street
 Universal Unitarian Church
 16-I-1

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

Multiple Property Cover Sheet Reference Number: 64000301