

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Inventory—Nomination Form

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

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received MAY 23 1983
date entered

1. Name

historic Westminster Village and Academy Hill
and/or common ^{use this} Westminster Village-Academy Hill Historic District (preferred)

2. Location

street & number Bacon Street, Adams Street, and Main Street, ^{Da wley,} Academy Hill Street, Leominster Street, Pleasant Street ^{N/A} not for publication
city, town Westminster N/A vicinity of ~~Congressional district~~
state Massachusetts code 025 county Worcester code 027

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
	☐ being considered	☒ yes: unrestricted	☐ industrial	☐ transportation
		☐ no	☐ military	☐ other:

4. Owner of Property

name Multiple; see attached list
street & number
city, town vicinity of state

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Northern Worcester County Registry of Deeds
street & number 84 Elm Street
city, town Fitchburg state Massachusetts 01420

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Inventory of the Historic Assets of the Commonwealth has this property been determined eligible? ☐ yes ☒ no
date 1979 ☐ federal ☒ state ☐ county ☐ local
depository for survey records Massachusetts Historical Commission
city, town Boston state Massachusetts

7. Description

Westminster Village-Academy Hill Historic District, Westminster,
Mass.

Condition		Check one	Check one	
☒ excellent	☐ deteriorated	☒ unaltered	☒ original site	
☒ good	☐ ruins	☒ altered	☒ moved	date See text
☐ fair	☐ unexposed			

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

Westminster Village-Academy Hill Historic District consists of two sections: the original town center, and the present downtown. The district encompasses about ninety-two acres and is nearly in the geographical center of town. Seventy-two buildings incorporating five intrusions are included.

The earlier area, Academy Hill (once called Parson's Hill and Meetinghouse Hill), was the location of original settlement: the site of the First and Second Meetinghouses, homes of the first and second ministers, and the first school house, all now gone. It remains one of the most scenic areas of Westminster. The original Town Common, bounded by Academy, Dawley and Foster Streets, is surrounded by large and impressive homes built for some of the town's most affluent citizens: the third minister, an early lawyer, surveyor, chair manufacturer and a merchant.

Westminster Village represents a period of expanding prosperity in the first half of the nineteenth century. The Greek Revival style predominates, although a few earlier and later Victorian and Revival structures are also represented. Some buildings combine details of more than one style. Focused on Main Street, the center village includes civic (Old Fire Station, Town Hall), commercial (Brick Store), and religious properties (Baptist, Unitarian and Methodist Churches), as well as residential areas that extend to Bacon, Pleasant and Adams Streets. Unlike Westminster's early homesteads built on sixty-acre tracts, this section developed with the subdivision of the original proprietors' lots. These houses, most with attached sheds and small barns intact, are situated close to the street on small, even miniscule lots. Constructed in prosperous times, most were built for an individual family using the best materials available by skilled local carpenter builders. Property often remained in the same family for generations; as a result, most have been well-maintained and rarely altered. Most are one-and-one-half and two-and-one-half story frame buildings and are painted white, presenting a remarkable consistent vista of a small, rural town center.

Among the oldest and largest residences in the district is the Georgian central chimney house at 3 Leominster Street (Map #14: Photo #9). It was restored in the 1950's by preservation architect James Britten, who dated it ca. 1762. Formerly, large upper and lower barns were located behind the house to house horses, wagons, sleighs and other equipment necessary to the cracker bakery which began operations in the building. The side ell once fronted with the facade. The ornate double-leafed entry and dentiled window heads are not original and may have been added during restoration of the symmetrical, five-bay facade.

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Academy Hill Historic Building

Three outstanding houses on the Hill are representative of the Federal period. The Cyrus Mann house, 6 Dawley Street (4.3) was built in 1815 to replace the original parsonage and may incorporate a portion of that structure. The two and one half story home displays the typical hip roof and finely articulated Federal details in the fluted pilasters that frame the fan-lit doorway. A Federal I-house was built ca. 1820 for Deacon Robert Peckham at 12 Academy Street (10.6). The symmetrical, five bay facade is dominated by a doorway composed of attenuated, carved pilasters supporting a pronounced entablature. The Squire Dustin House, 1809 (7.5), 22 Academy Street, is one of the few brick buildings in the district. A later owner removed a distinctive, original roof balustrade and other Federal trim. As a result, the over-scaled proportions of the Palladian window and the multi-paned sidelights give the home an appearance suggestive of neo-Palladian, English county seats.

Other somewhat formal Federal designs also exist in the homes at 6 Leominster Street, 1818 (16.9) and 134 Main Street, 1823 (70.4). The latter was built by Joseph Whitney, a leading carpenter-builder, for himself. The bay window is not original, but the Federal doorway includes a delicate, elliptical fanlight and the suggestion of a Palladian detail in the semi-circular louvred fanlight above the central window. The impressive home at 19 Academy Hill (8.6) is a traditional Federal period house updated with a finely executed Greek Revival doorway having fluted molding, multi-paned sidelights and transom, and pedimented gables.

Westminster's location on well established transportation routes allowed the early introduction of the Greek Revival style, which was universally adopted for commercial and institutional structures as well as residential structures. As a result, the style predominates in Westminster Village. The indigenous wood crafting industry produced skilled carpenter builders who enriched their construction with a variety of decorative motifs.

The two and one half story temple-fronted home at 123 Main Street (64.25) was built ca. 1820 by Joseph Whitman and expanded in personal rivalry for residential prestige with his former partner, Phineas Reed, who lived across the street. The two story Greek Doric pillars, parlor windows, and uniquely detailed door surrounded with stylized tulip floral pattern are demonstrative of that competition. The Reed House, even larger at three and one half stories, became the Westminster Tavern. It was moved to make room for the Forbush Library, but burned in 1948.

With the moving from the North Common to 127 Main Street in 1833, of the Universalist Church (66.26), one of the earliest Greek Revival structures in Westminster, and the construction of the original First Congregational Church in 1837, Bacon and Pleasant Streets developed as a residential neighborhood for craftsmen. Many of these modest Greek Revival

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structures were built by local carpenter-builders: Luke Minot (23), Joseph Minot (28:10), J. Nelson Minot (34 and 35:12), and Joseph Whitney (27, 30, 31 and 39). This indigenous talent, supported by prosperous clientele, enriched typical sidehall, vernacular houses (28:10; 29, 30, 31, 34, 37, 38, 39, 46) as well as the broad-gable, one room deep, central entry housetype, which is characteristic of northern Worcester County (2.1; 27, 29, 35, 36, 49, 55 and 68), with a variety of detailings.

By the end of the decade, the Greek Revival Town Hall (32.11) was constructed in the village to replace the second meetinghouse still on Academy Hill. Originally a one and one-half story building with a cove-ceiling hall on the upper level, the town house was raised one story with the addition of the brick first level in 1855. The three-bay displays a distinct pediment, small entrance portico and corner pilasters. Windows and doors are treated with fluted trim and corner blocks.

A number of residents in the village were connected with the Cracker Bakery (15:8). Built in 1845, it represents the functional design, spare of ornamentation, which is typical of utilitarian architecture.

The Brick Store (63:24), built in 1829, has been altered many times. The basic Greek Revival configuration with gable pediment remains, but wall openings on the first level and window sash have been removed.

The same is true of the Central Engine House (67.26), originally built ca. 1840 as a factory to make boots and shoes; it was donated to the town before 1855 by five citizens for conversion to a fire station, a purpose it served for more than a century. In 1919, the structure was moved three feet east and lowered four feet from the level of the Universalist Church to allow the engines easier access.

Only a few buildings in the district post-date the Greek Revival period. The First Baptist Church (59:24) was built in 1863 with Greek Revival details in the corner pilasters, pedimented gable fluted door, and window trim with corner blocks. An Italianate tower and spire with bell and clock were added in 1872. Greely Auditorium in the rear was added in 1958. A similar mixture of styles appears in the cruciform First Baptist Parsonage (60:22). Built before 1855, it was altered before being willed to the Society in 1918. Today, the Greek Revival boxed cornice and return also boasts large Italianate brackets that are repeated beneath the eaves of the end wall porches. Window openings on the facade are topped with bracketed consoles.

In 1870, a hybrid Queen Anne/Stick Style (57:20) residence was built at 12 Main Street. Enclosed porches hide the irregular, complex massing. The high, complex roofline includes gables and dormers with projecting eaves supported by large brackets and decorated with verge boards, finials

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and stick work.

The turn of the century is marked by the construction of two important revival structures. The Forbush Library, 1901 (62:23) was designed by Frost, Briggs and Chamberlain combining Flemish and Reconnaissance Revival styles. The one-and-one-half story, yellow brick structure has a three-bay facade with central entry framed by engaged Tuscan columns supporting an entablature. The roofline is defined with a dentilated cornice surmounted in the center by a Flemish dormer with an oval window. Brick work is patterned at the corner to simulate quoins.

The Colonial Revival Upton School (11:7), Academy Street, was built in 1912. The hip roofed brick building contains fenestration and a 2½ story projecting center pavillion with wooden pilasters supporting an entablature and pediment. Brick work is patterned to resemble quoins.

Intrusions are unobtrusive to the District. They consist of two original structures with inappropriately applied commercial additions, an altered residence, a gas station, and a single story office building.

8. Significance Westminster Village-Academy Hill Historic District, Westminster, Mass.

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 1734, et al.

Builder/Architect See text

Statement of Significance (In one paragraph)

Westminster Village-Academy Hill Historic District is significant as incorporating both the original town center, Academy Hill (also known as Meetinghouse Hill), and the center village, an early 19th century residential and commercial development stimulated by the opening of the fifth Massachusetts turnpike in 1801. As a small, rural community which saw its most intensive development in the first half of the 19th century, the Westminster Village-Academy Hill Historic District is distinguished by remarkably consistent streetscapes of 72 historic structures. The area on the local level meets National Register criteria A, B, and C retaining integrity of design, materials, workmanship and setting.

The Town of Westminster was one of seven townships designated in 1733 as part of a land grant made in 1728 by the General Court; this grant fulfilled a commitment made in 1685 to veterans of King Philip's War of their survivors. However, settlement of Westminster did not take place until 1737 and proceeded slowly despite the inducements of \$40 bounty and construction of a grist mill(1741) to lure families. Only after 1750, when the Legislature ordered meeting of proprietors to be held in the township and decisions were rendered allowing public improvements (especially highways), were new residents retained. Narragansett No. 2 was incorporated as Westminster in 1759. In April 1770, the town was granted representation in the Legislature.

Original settlement occurred in the southeast section of the township, centering on the present Academy Hill Common, where a marker (Map #6) locates the site of the original meetinghouse, built in 1739. A committee authorized to subdivide the township began to lay out the lots early in 1734, with six acres set out as a training field and burial place, the first minister's lot also bounded the Common. The Second Minister was located on the Common in 1765, and Westminster's first schoolhouse was erected in 1766 at the northeast corner of Meetinghouse lot. From the Common, a street 4 rods wide (Main Street) was laid out for more than one mile in a northwest southeast direction. On each side of the street were arranged lots 60 x 160 rods large; the ends of the first range bounded the street. Soon after settlement, a way was opened(1733)from this original road southeast to the Sunderland Road, which ran through the south of Westminster between Lancaster and the Connecticut Valley.

A cluster of extant, early buildings around the intersection of Main, Leominster and Academy Streets represents this early period of settlement. The Jabez Bigelow House (72) incorporates a section which dates from ca.1760 and is associated with military history and public service.

(Continued)

9. Major Bibliographical References

See continuation sheet.

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property 92

Quadrangle name Gardner

Quadrangle scale 1:24,000

UMT References

A 19 261000 4714380
Zone Easting Northing

B 19 260950 4714250
Zone Easting Northing

C 19 261020 4713940

D 19 261330 4713800

E 19 261020 4713680

F 19 260880 4713850

G 19 260600 4714380

H 19 260800 4714440

I 19 260840 4714280

Verbal boundary description and justification

Eastern: The eastern property lines of 6 Dawley Road (#4), 34 Academy Street (#5), 2 Seaver Street (#26), 1 Pleasant Street (#28), and 9-19 Bacon Street (#35-40).
(Continued)

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

state	code	county	code
N/A			

state	code	county	code
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11. Form Prepared By

name/title Wendy Frontiero, Preservation Planner, with the
Montachusett Regional Planning Commission

organization Massachusetts Historical Commission date October 1982

street & number 294 Washington Street telephone (617) 727-8470

city or town Boston state Massachusetts

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.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature *Peter L. Weslowki*

title State Historic Preservation Officer,
Massachusetts Historical Commission

date 4/28/83

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

Entered in the
National Register

date 6/23/83

for *Almares Byers*
Keeper of the National Register

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

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The first owner was a son of the only veteran of King Philip's War ever to reside in Westminster. Jabez Bigelow himself served in the French and Indian War and the American Revolution. Later he served the community as a Selectman and in other local offices, a tradition continued by his son and inheritor Asa Bigelow, a colonel in the Massachusetts Militia, member of the Board of Selectmen, Assessor, and member of the School Committee. Jonas Miller purchased the house in later years. His son, J. Hervey Miller, documented his Civil War experiences in a memoir kept by the Historical Society and held local office as Selectman and Assessor for many years. The intersection before the home was named Miller's Square in honor of J. Hervey Miller's grandson, William S. Miller. Their now restored Georgian home (14) at 3 Leominster Street was erected in ca. 1762.

Penniman Tavern (13) became a local landmark and gathering place from its opening by Joshua Everett in 1777. Everett also ran the town's first tannery on the site, an operation that was continued by successive owners for more than 100 years. Hessian soldiers and their servants captured at Bennington were quartered here during the American Revolution. In the 20th century, this property became the home of the Fenno family, which had resided in Westminster since the early 1800s. Frank W. Fenno, Sr. was an officer of Westminster National Bank, later known as the Gardner Trust Company. His son, Rear Admiral Frank W. Fenno, Jr., was honored for his service as a submarine commander in World War II.

Properties in the northwest end of the district are also reflective of the nascent village. One of the first homes on Main Street, 90 Main Street (50), was constructed ca. 1763 by Dr. Jeremiah Everett, Westminster's first practicing physician. His successor, Dr. Daniel Bartlett, lived here until 1780 when he built a new home next door (51), one of the earliest Federal style homes in town. Daniel Bartlett advocated vaccination for smallpox 20 years before it was accepted as a treatment in town; he operated an early drug store on the premises and later the town's first post office.

Continuing focus on the Common during this period was demonstrated by much new construction. A store and tavern were operated by successive owners for many years, beginning in 1739, at the homestead of Silas Beaman (S: Photo #4). Then located on the only main thoroughfare, it is assumed to have been an early stagecoach stop.

The opening ca. 1800 of the fifth Massachusetts Turnpike, which was both direct and well-graded, represented a great improvement over previous communications between towns east and west. It formed the principle thoroughfare between Greenfield, Brattleboro, VT. and Albany, NY to the west and Boston to the east. At first it ran over Academy Hill, but was soon diverted from Main Street to a route almost directly north. The completion of this turnpike elevated the importance of Westminster to a

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center of travel and trade. It accelerated development of the central village in particular, as businesses organized and relocated to be in the heart of activity. Isaac Miles Inn, 1801 (15.8), was situated on the new turnpike and served as a hotel under successive owners until 1827.

In 1829, Westminster Academy(9) was founded by supporters of Syrus Mann, the first Congregational minister. Built largely with the support of his congregation on the western slope of the hill, Westminster Academy educated both male and female students from town and surrounding communities. The secondary school enjoyed its highest enrollment of nearly 200 between 1840 and 1850. With the establishment of public, secondary schools in neighboring towns, its popularity waned, and the town purchased the property in 1872 for use as a high school. It was destroyed by fire in 1888.

Academy Hill remained a choice location for the residences of prosperous individuals. Abraham Wood, teacher and land surveyor, may have incorporated a portion of the house of the second minister, Asaph Rice, into the home he built ca.1829 (8.6). Wood often entertained pupils from the nearby academy. Over the years, several prominent families have chosen to reside in this house. A successful chair dealer, Augustus Eager, constructed the home at 18 Dawley Road (2.1).

The Squire Dustin House, 1810 (7.5) was built by Ethan Greenwood, teacher and lawyer, and has been successively owned by noted individuals. Alexander Dustin was a respected lawyer who held both local and state office. Charles Hudson, Westminster's Universalist minister, occupied the home from 1824-1840. He was also a social activist in favor of popular education, the common school system and abolition; a politician (state and national office); and historian who authored histories of Westminster, Marlborough and Lexington.

The Cyrus Mann House (4.3) was built by Westminster's third minister. It became the Congregational Parsonage. Also a lawyer, author (A Treatise on Trigonometry, the Sabbath, The Evidence of Christianity, and History of the Temperance Reformation), social activist (temperance, anti-slavery), and educator, Mann promoted the founding in 1829 of the school from which the hill derives its name.

The Deacon Robert Peckham House, ca. 1820 (10.6) was owned by an eminent citizen and artist. Active in the Temperance and Abolitionist movements, Deacon Peckham was elected president of the North County Anti-Slavery Society for many years and credited with providing refuge to runaway slaves. He also gained renown as a primitive artist of portraits and landscape. Besides display at the Forbush Memorial Library, his work is included in the holdings of Fruitlands Museum in Harvard, MA, and of the Metropolitan Museum, New York City.

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Before 1800, there were fewer than ten houses on Main Street. With increased commerce, however, the early 19th century witnessed the construction of several sophisticated Federal homes connected with local manufacturers and craftsmen, marking a concentration of interests on Main Street.

The Joseph Darby House, Ca. 1800 (56:19), was successively owned by three different blacksmiths who opened shops on the premises. The Joseph Minot House, pre-1820 (58:21) was constructed by one of several Minot brothers, a family of contractor-builders. Joseph later successfully manufactured bass viols in a shop next door.

Four federal houses are connected with chair manufacturing, which would become the major local industry. The Edgell House, ca. 1820 (52:17), was owned by two brothers: William, a stage driver, tax collector, shoemaker and insurance agent, and John, also a shoemaker and later a chair manufacturer before moving to Gardner, where he continued to be a prosperous businessman. The Joseph Whitney House, 1823, (70:27) was built by a local carpenter, a leading contractor in Westminster and neighboring towns who built many homes (27, 31, 39, 43, and 64) and several meetinghouses in the vicinity. A shop in the rear was later used by Daniel C. Miles to manufacture reed chairs. Luke Minot, another member of the family of carpenters, built the Federal style house (24) on the eastern end of the village, the next owner of which, Sylvester Miller, was a chair manufacturer, dealer and teamster.

The population of Westminster continued to grow in the first half of the 19th century and reached an apex in 1855. Small industrial villages were established at Wachusettville and South Westminster. At Wachusettville, two miles east of the center, paper mills provided employment. Small chair factories were established at South Westminster, one mile from the center at the southwest corner of Meetinghouse Pond.

The center village attracted the largest concentration of population. A period of expanding affluence is represented in the predominance of Greek Revival architecture introduced between 1820 and 1850. A number of these structures were erected by skilled local carpenter builders who introduced the style early and enhanced construction with a variety of detail. While chair and cabinetmaking had become Westminster's principal industry, a number of craftsmen moved to the center and set up shop at or near their residences. Chairmaking (28:10; 60:22; 24; 43:14), cabinetmaking (47), tanning (68), blacksmith (46, 49:16), shoemaking (67:26), baking (15:8), and tinware (38 and 69) were enterprises that supported a growing number of center inhabitants. Bacon and Pleasant Streets developed as residential neighborhoods for local craftsmen. Service interests also located in the village, some removed from Academy Hill. Merchants, deliverymen, dentists and builders were attracted to the focus of commercial and social activities.

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Institutions also shifted locations to attend the public need. In 1837, the First Congregational Society abandoned the second meetinghouse on the hill for a more modern church on Main Street. That building, constructed to hold 500, was used for numerous celebrations and civic functions until it was destroyed by fire in 1940. The current United Church of Christ (71) is a smaller scale version of the church constructed the following year. The Universal Restorationists built ca.1820 one of the earliest Greek Revival structures in town. It was originally located 1½ miles northwest of the district at the North Common. Ten years later, when it was clear the center would remain the nucleus of the community, the town agreed to move the Universalist Church (66:26) to its present location at 127 Main Street. In 1928, the church closed the building, which has been utilized by the American Legion since 1933. The Baptists first chose to locate at the foot of Meetinghouse Pond. By 1863, however, they too relocated in a new building on Main Street (59:24). Town Hall (33), erected in 1829, converged diverse interests in the town center. Besides town meetings, numerous events, - including entertainments, club meetings, and exhibits were held on the premises.

New Store were required to meet the commercial needs of the growing center. Two dry goods merchants were in operation before 1840. The Old Brick Store, 1827 (73:28) remains a local landmark. Operated by Joseph Whitman, it also became a center for the distribution of straw braid for the manufacture of bonnets, a substantial cottage industry during the first half of the 19th century.

About 1845, Alfred Wyman purchased the property at 3 Leominster Street, where the original bakery was located, and built the familiar "Westminster Crackers" factory (15:14), equipped with the most modern appliances for baking bread. Several changes in ownership have succeeded the original operators, and eventually production concentrated on crackers only. By 1889, the plant had evolved into one of the country's largest cracker factories, supplying markets, hotels, and restaurants nationwide. Over the generations, co-owners and workers have lived in the various houses of the district. The many tall chimneys in the extensive rear ells have been removed, as the property now houses only offices. The bakery is now located in a new plant outside of the district.

Successful businessmen also chose to reside in the center village. Joseph Whitman, owner of the Brick Store, built a home (64:27) adjacent to the property ca.1820. Not only a merchant, but also an influential citizen and politician, Whitman was elected representative to the General Court and Senate. Justice of the Peace, and appointed postmaster. Having been in business with Phineas Reed for a period, he entered into a competition of residential grandeur with his former partner, who lived across the street. The Reed home became the second Westminster Hotel; later moved to make room for the Forbush Library, it burned in 1948.

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One of the most impressive residences in the center village (31) was also built ca. 1839 at 11 Pleasant Street by Joseph Whitney, the leading carpenter builder. In 1856, the property was purchased by John Heywood, a local politician and father of William Sweetzer, author of the 1893 History of Westminster and a cousin to the Heywood Brothers who became the leading chair manufacturers in Gardner. The next owner (1883-1915), Joseph Hager, donated Hager Park to the town to provide wood for the Town Hall furnaces (used until the 1940's); it is now used as a public park.

Greenleaf Lamb worked for blacksmith Thomas Gaunt in Main Street before building his own house and shop (46), ca. 1840. The 1-acre impressive home represents the financial success a craftsman could achieve during this period of affluence. Lamb was a superior craftsman who manufactured elliptic carriage springs and agricultural forks.

One of the most elaborate residences in the district (60.24) was built before 1855 by Joseph M. Whitney, son of the merchant who built the Brick Store, and partner with his brother in a chair factory at the Old Red Mill on Bacon Street, just outside the district. The property was sold to Daniel C. Miles, founder and first president of the Westminster National Bank and a businessman engaged locally in lumbering and chair manufacture as well as real estate speculation in the Far West. In addition to holding town office, Miles was an active member of the Baptist Church, to which the house was donated for use as a parsonage in 1918. A memorial to Daniel C. Miles was placed before the Parsonage in that same year.

At mid-century, in recognition of the fact that the expanded town center required protection, five individuals purchased the building at 129 Main Street (67:28) formerly used to manufacture footwear, for conversion to a fire station.

An attempt to secure the main line of the Vermont and Massachusetts Railroad through the center village lost out to influences in Gardner. The new road was located in the north and east parts of town and did little to advance the industrial interests of the community. Later attempts to secure spur lines did not come to fruition, contributing to the eclipse of Westminster as a commercial and industrial community.

Without a railroad terminal, industry began to move into nearby cities Nichols and Stone, chair makers with a factory formerly located just west of the historic district moved to Gardner in 1893. Suffering diminished holding power, Westminster evolved into a residential community. Townspeople sought employment in the rapidly industrializing nearby communities of Fitchburg and Gardner.

The only architect-designed building (47:22) in the town center is also the only genuine Victorian structure. The combination Queen Anne/Stick Style home was designed by Samuel J.F. Thayer of Boston in 1870 for David W. Hill, a businessman who sought to demonstrate his affluence to his fourth wife. It was later owned by W.E. Putney, an insurance company, who altered

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the property extensively and added finely landscaped grounds where lawn parties were held. The houses was divided into apartments after the Second World War.

New residential development of the turn of the century included several former workers' homes moved from South Westminster (12 and 25) and a group of simple cottages (19, 20, 21 and 22) built by Albert Howard to provide in-town housing for retired farmers and others who preferred the greater convenience of the central location.

The newest buildings in the district are municipal properties executed in revival styles. Forbush Memorial Library (62:25) was built in 1901 with a \$10,000 bequest from Charles Forbush, municipal funds, and private donations. The Upton School (11.8) was built in 1912 in the Colonial Revival style to replace a building constructed in 1855 and has served as both an elementary and high school.

Interspersed within the District are memorials to Westminster's war dead of the Civil War (71) veterans of the Spanish American War (32) and veterans of World War I (18).

The visual impact of Westminster Village-Academy Hill District testifies to the community's most prosperous years. The continued preservation and careful maintenance of these finely executed structures demonstrates the townspeople's pride in sustaining a physical statement of their history. National Register listing will provide both recognition and protection of their efforts.

The Westminster Village-Academy Hill Historic District should be considered to contain undisturbed archaeological deposits associated with its standing structure stock. As the site of the original town center, located on a major thoroughfare, and which experienced its most intensive development in the first half of the 19th century, the district possesses a significant potential to provide information, through archaeological research, on the past internal configuration of the village as well as on domestic and commercial activities which occurred there. A systematic testing strategy, designed to locate and evaluate subsurface historical features and artifactual deposits within a research framework would contribute significantly to our knowledge of static and dynamic components of early rural communities.

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

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

For NPS use only

received

date entered

Westminster Village-Academy Hill

Continuation sheet Historic District

Item number 9

Page 1

"Celebration of the 100th Anniversary of the Incorporation of the Town of Westminster", 1859, Press of T. R. Marvin & Son, Boston, Massachusetts.

Fitchburg and Worcester Registry of Deeds, Fitchburg and Worcester, Massachusetts.

Heywood, William S., History of Westminster, 1893, Vox Populi Press, H. W. Huse & Co., Lowell, Massachusetts (with map).

Hudson, Charles, History of the Town of Westminster, G. W. Stacy, Printer, 1832.

Maps of Westminster:

1791, Chart of the Town, Beaman, Silas, 1292, Massachusetts Archives, Maps & Plans.

1831, Plan of the Town of Westminster, 2154, Massachusetts Archives, Maps & Plans.

1855, Map including Buildings and Owners, Published by George Clark and pictures, and enlarged inserts, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

1870, Worcester County Atlas, Map with buildings and owners, Published by P. W. Beers and Company, Maiden Lane, New York.

1898, Worcester County Atlas, Map with buildings and owners, Published by P. W. Beers and Company, Maiden Lane, New York.

"One Hundred Fiftieth Anniversary Celebration of the Town of Westminster", 1909, Meals Printing Company, Gardner, Massachusetts.

"Procedures Manual for An Inventory of the Historical Assets of the Commonwealth", Part I, "Sites and Structures", Published by Keven White, Secretary of the Commonwealth, Chairman of the Massachusetts Historical Commission, 1966.

The Historic Architecture of the Montachusett Region, Chapter on Regional Context - predominant styles and beginning types - prepared by Montachusett Regional Planning Board, 1979.

Tolman, Newton, Ed., History of Westminster, 1893 to 1958, Published by Richard Smith, Peterborough, New Hampshire.

Westminster Assessors' Office, Westminster, Massachusetts.

Westminster Historical Society Books and Pamphlets:

Dupee Account book, 1839 to 1891

Auditor's Report for the Town of Westminster, together with the Valuation and Taxes, for the Year 1864, Printed by E. & J. Garfield, Fitchburg, Massachusetts, 1865.

Westminster Historical Society Files:

Papers written by members of W.H.S. for presentation at meetings - concerning their respective homes.

Papers written by Carlos and Addie Barron on Main Street, and Business Men of Westminster.

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

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

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received

date entered

Westminster Village-Academy Hill

Continuation sheet Historic District

Item number 9

Page 2

Westminster Historical Society Files (continued):

Papers written in preparation for writing of Tolman History 1960, by members and others.

Westminster Town Clerk - Vital Records, Valuation and Taxes, 1977.

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

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

For NPS use only

received

date entered

Westminster Village-Academy Hill

Continuation sheet Historic District

Item number 10

Page 1

Verbal Boundary Description (Continued)

- Northern: The northern property lines of the houses on the north side of Academy Street, Leominster Street, Pleasant Street, northern property lines of 19 and 18 Bacon Street (#40 and 41), 10 Adams Street (#48) and the house boundary lines on the north side of Main Street.
- Western: The western property lines of #1, 2, 58, 50, and 48. The western property lines of 6-18 Bacon Street (#41-47).
- Southern: The southern property lines of #1 and 3, the houses on south side of Academy, Leominster and Main Streets to #58, and #50-56 on Main Street.

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES

EVALUATION / RETURN SHEET

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

Westminster Village-Academy Hill Historic
District
Worcester County
MASSACHUSETTS

Working No. MAY 23 1983
Fed. Reg. Date: 2-784
Date Due: 6/23/83 - 7/7/83
Action: ☒ ACCEPT 6/23/83
Entered in the ☐ RETURN
National Register ☐ REJECT
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	Check one	Check one
☐ excellent	☐ deteriorated	☐ original site
☐ good	☐ ruins	☐ moved date _____
☐ fair	☐ unexposed	

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

☐ summary paragraph
☐ completeness
☐ clarity
☐ alterations/integrity

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

Acres of nominated property _____

Quadrangle name _____

UMT 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: 202 272 - 3504

Comments for any item may be continued on an attached sheet



The Eager House Looking Southeast

Westminster Village and Academy Hill
Westminster, Massachusetts
Worcester County
Kenneth Levine-Photo Credit
1978
Westminster Historical Commission

Description: The Eager House, 18 Dawley Road
front and side view, looking southeast

(Map #2) Photo one of 29



The Pound, Looking South

Westminster Village and Academy Hill
Westminster, Massachusetts
Worcester County
Kenneth Levine-Photo Credit
1978
Westminster Historical Commission

Description: The Pound, Dawley Road, front
view, looking south

(Map #3) Photo 2 of 29



The Parson's House 6 Dawley Rd. Looking Southeast

Westminster Village and Academy Hill
Westminster, Massachusetts
Worcester County
Kenneth Levine-Photo Credit
1978
Westminster Historical Commission

Description: The Parson's House, 6 Dawley Road
front and side view, looking southeast

(Map #4) Photo 3 of 29



Westminster Village and Academy Hill
Westminster, Massachusetts
Worcester County
Kenneth Levine-Photo Credit
1978
Westminster Historical Commission

Description: The Emerson Tavern, 34 Academy
Street, front view, looking northwest

(Map #5) Photo 4 of 29

*Front
Front View Looking Northwest*



Front View, Looking North

Westminster Village and Academy Hill
Westminster, Massachusetts
Worcester County
Kenneth Levine-Photo Credit
1978
Westminster Historical Commission

Description: Squire ^{*Dustin*}~~District~~ House, 22
Academy Street, front view, looking north

(Map #7) Photo 5 of 29



The Foster House 19 Academy St. - Looking Southwest

Westminster Village and Academy Hill
Westminster, Massachusetts
Worcester County
Kenneth Levine-Photo Credit
1978
Westminster Historical Commission

Description: The Foster House, 19 Academy
Street, front and side view, looking southwest

(Map #8) Photo 6 of 29



Deacon Peckham House, 12 Academy St. Looking East

Westminster Village and Academy Hill
Westminster, Massachusetts
Worcester County
Kenneth Levine-Photo Credit
1978
Westminster Historical Commission

Description: The Deacon Robert Peckham House,
12 Academy Street, front and side view, looking
east

(Map #10) Photo 7 of 29



~~Upton~~ School - Academy Street - Looking East

Westminster Village and Academy Hill
Westminster, Massachusetts
Worcester County
Kenneth Levine-Photo Credit
1978
Westminster Historical Commission

Description: The Upton School, front view,
looking east

(Map #11) Photo 8 of 29



Westminster Village and Academy Hill
Westminster, Massachusetts
Worcester County
Kenneth Levine-Photo Credit
1978

Westminster Historical Commission

Description: 3 Leominster Street, front view,
looking south

(Map #14) Photo 9 of 29

Front View, Looking South



Westminster Village and Academy Hill
Westminster, Massachusetts
Worcester County
Kenneth Levine-Photo Credit
1978
Westminster Historical Commission

Description: The Cracker Bakery, 1 Leominster
Street, front and side view, looking southwest

(Map #15) Photo 10 of 29

Looking Southwest The Cracker Factory



Westminster Village and Academy Hill
Westminster, Massachusetts
Worcester County
Kenneth Levine-Photo Credit
1978
Westminster Historical Commission

Description: to the left: 6 Leominster Street,
front and side view, looking northwest
To the right, the Issac Miles Inn, front and side
view

(Map # 16 and 17) Photo 11 of 29

6 Leominster St. Looking Northwest



Left, 3 Pleasant St, Right, 1 Pleasant St Both Looking North West

Westminster Village and Academy Hill
Westminster, Massachusetts
Worcester County
Kenneth Levine - Photo Credit
1978
Westminster Historical Commission

Description: Left: 3 Pleasant St., front and
side view, looking northwest. Right: 1 Plea-
sant St., front view, looking northwest

(Map #29 and 28) Photo 12 of 29



The Town Hall Looking Northeast, Bacon St

Westminster Village and Academy Hill
Westminster, Massachusetts
Worcester County
Kenneth Levine - Photo Credit
1978
Westminster Historical Commission

Description: The Town Hall, Bacon St.,
front and side view, looking northeast

(Map #33) Photo 13 of 29



Left: 11 Bacon St., Right: 9 Bacon St. - Both - Looking North

Westminster Village and Academy Hill
Westminster, Massachusetts
Worcester County
Kenneth Levine - Photo Credit
1978
Westminster Historical Commission

Description: Left: 11 Bacon St., front and
side view, looking north; Right: 9 Bacon
St.

(Map #36 and 35) Photo 14 of 29



16 Bacon Street, Looking West

Westminster Village and Academy Hill
Westminster, Massachusetts
Worcester County

Kenneth Levine - Photo Credit
1978

Westminster Historical Commission

Description: 16 Bacon St., front view,
looking west

(Map #42) Photo 15 of 29



Front View, Looking West

Westminster Village and Academy Hill
Westminster, Massachusetts
Worcester County
Kenneth Levine - Photo Credit
1978
Westminster Historical Commission

Description: 14 Bacon St., front view,
looking west

(Map #43) Photo 16 of 29



12 Bacon Street looking west

Westminster Village and Academy Hill
Westminster, Massachusetts
Worcester County
Kenneth Levine - Photo Credit
1978
Westminster Historical Commission

Description: 12 Bacon St., front and side
view, looking west

(Map #44) Photo 17 of 29



6 Adams Street - looking South West

Westminster Village and Academy Hill
Westminster, Massachusetts
Worcester County
Kenneth Levine - Photo Credit
1978
Westminster Historical Commission

Description: 6 Adams St., front and side
view, looking southwest

(Map #49) Photo 18 of 29



98 Main St. Looking Northwest

Westminster Village and Academy Hill
Westminster, Massachusetts
Worcester County
Kenneth Levine - Photo Credit
1978
Westminster Historical Commission

Description: 98 Main St., front and side
view, looking northwest

(Map #~~50~~) Photo 19 of 29



100 Main St. - Looking Northwest

Westminster Village and Academy Hill
Westminster, Massachusetts
Worcester County
Kenneth Levine - Photo Credit
1978
Westminster Historical Commission

Description: 100 Main St., front and side
view, looking northwest

(Map #53) Photo 20 of 29



The Josiah Page House, 110 Main St., Looking North west

Westminster Village and Academy Hill
Westminster, Massachusetts
Worcester County
Kenneth Levine - Photo Credit
1978
Westminster Historical Commission

Description: The Josiah Page House, 110 Main
St., front and side view, looking north-
west

(Map #56) Photo 21 of 29



Front and Side View, Looking Northwest

Westminster Village and Academy Hill
Westminster, Massachusetts
Worcester County
Kenneth Levine - Photo Credit
1978
Westminster Historical Commission

Description: 112 Main St., front and side
view, facing northwest

(Map #57) Photo 22 of 29



113 Main St. Looking Southwest

Westminster Village and Academy Hill
Westminster, Massachusetts
Worcester County
Kenneth Levine - Photo Credit
1978
Westminster Historical Commission

Description: 113 Main St., front and side
view, looking southwest

(Map #58) Photo 23 of 29



116 Main St The Baptist Parsonage Looking Northwest

Westminster Village and Academy Hill
Westminster, Massachusetts
Worcester County
Kenneth Levine - Photo Credit
1978
Westminster Historical Commission

Description: The Baptist Parsonage, 116 Main
St., front and side view, looking northwest

(Map #60) Photo 24 of 29



Forbush Library, Looking North west

Westminster Village and Academy Hill
Westminster, Massachusetts
Worcester County
Kenneth Levine - Photo Credit
1978
Westminster Historical Commission

Description: Forbush Memorial Library, Main
St., front view, looking north

(Map #62) Photo 25 of 29



Looking Southwest The Brick Store 121 Main St.
" " " " Baptist Church Main St.

Westminster Village and Academy Hill
Westminster, Massachusetts
Worcester County
Kenneth Levine - Photo Credit
1978
Westminster Historical Commission

Description: Left: The Brick Store, 121 Main
St., front and side view, looking southwest;
Right: The Baptist Church, Main St., front
and side view, looking southwest

(Map #63 and 59) Photo 26 of 29



123 Main Street, Looking South West

Westminster Village and Academy Hill
Westminster, Massachusetts
Worcester County
Kenneth Levine - Photo Credit
1978
Westminster Historical Commission

Description: 123 Main St., front and side
view, looking southwest

(Map #64) Photo 27 of 29



133 Main St. Looking S.E., Center 129 Main St., Universalist Church, Main
S.E.

Westminster Village and Academy Hill
Westminster, Massachusetts
Worcester County
Kenneth Levine - Photo Credit
1978
Westminster Historical Commission

Description: Left: 133 Main St., front and
side view, looking southeast; Center: The
Engine House, 129 Main St., side view,
looking southeast; Right: The Universalist
Church, Main St., side view, looking south-
east

(Map #68,67,66) Photo 28 of 29)

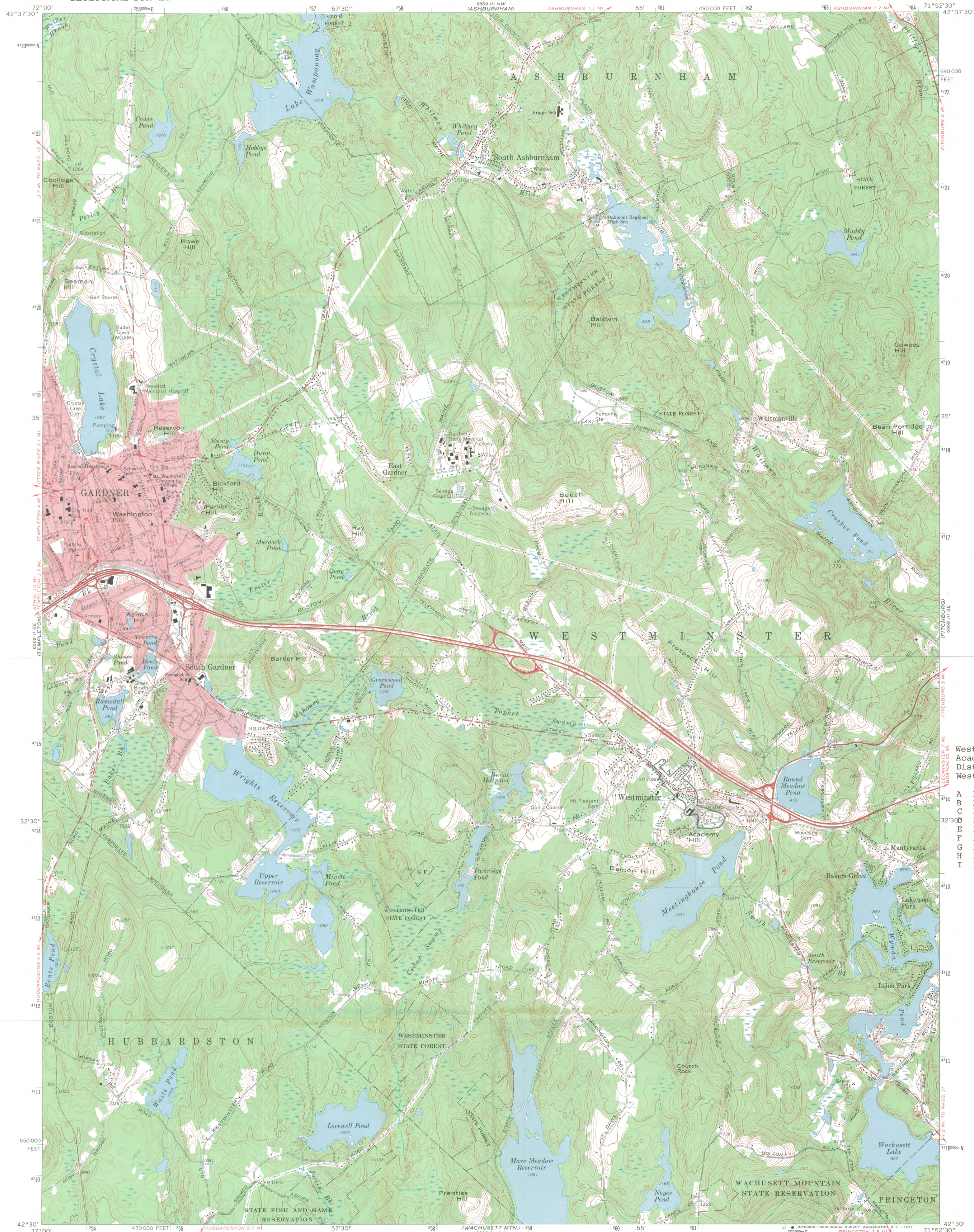


Westminster Village and Academy Hill
Westminster, Massachusetts
Worcester County
Kenneth Levine - Photo Credit
1978
Westminster Historical Commission

Description: Front view of 134 Main St.,
looking north

(Map #70) Photo 29 of 29

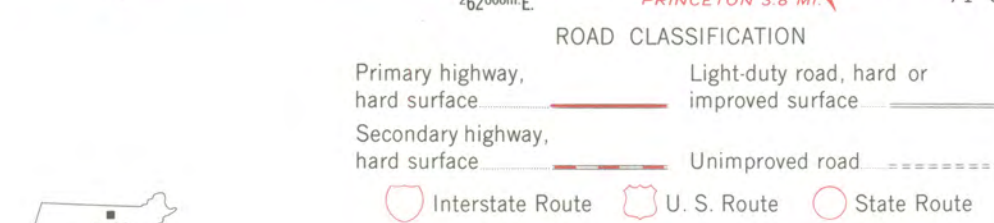
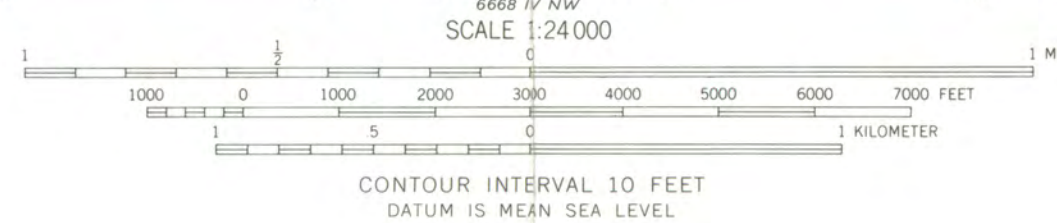
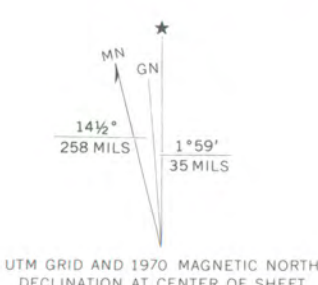
Front View Looking North



Westminister Village-
Academy Hill Historic
District
Westminister, MA

A 19/261000/4714380
B 19/260950/4714250
C 19/261020/4713940
D 19/261330/4713800
E 19/261020/4713680
F 19/260880/4713850
G 19/260600/4714380
H 19/260800/4714440
I 19/260840/4714280

Mapped, edited, and published by the Geological Survey
Control by USGS, USC&GS, and Massachusetts Geodetic Survey
Planimetry by photogrammetric methods from aerial photographs
taken 1939. Topography by planimetric surveys 1943 and 1944
Revised from aerial photographs taken 1968. Field checked 1970
Polyconic projection. 1927 North American datum
10,000-foot grid based on Massachusetts coordinate system,
mainland zone
1000-meter Universal Transverse Mercator grid ticks,
zone 19, shown in blue
Red tint indicates areas in which only landmark buildings
are shown



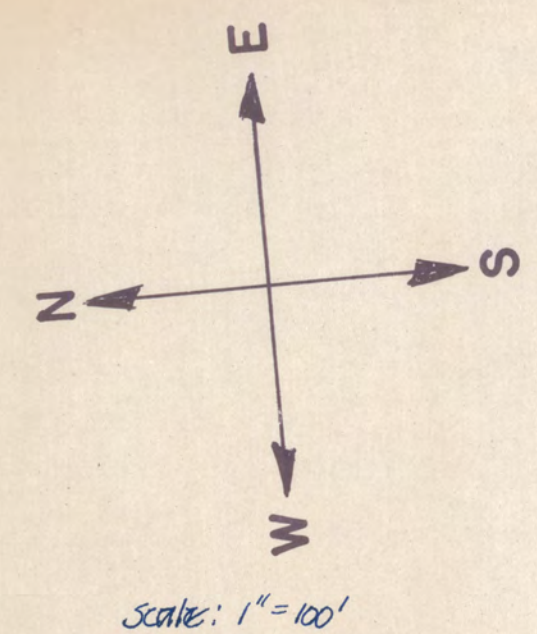
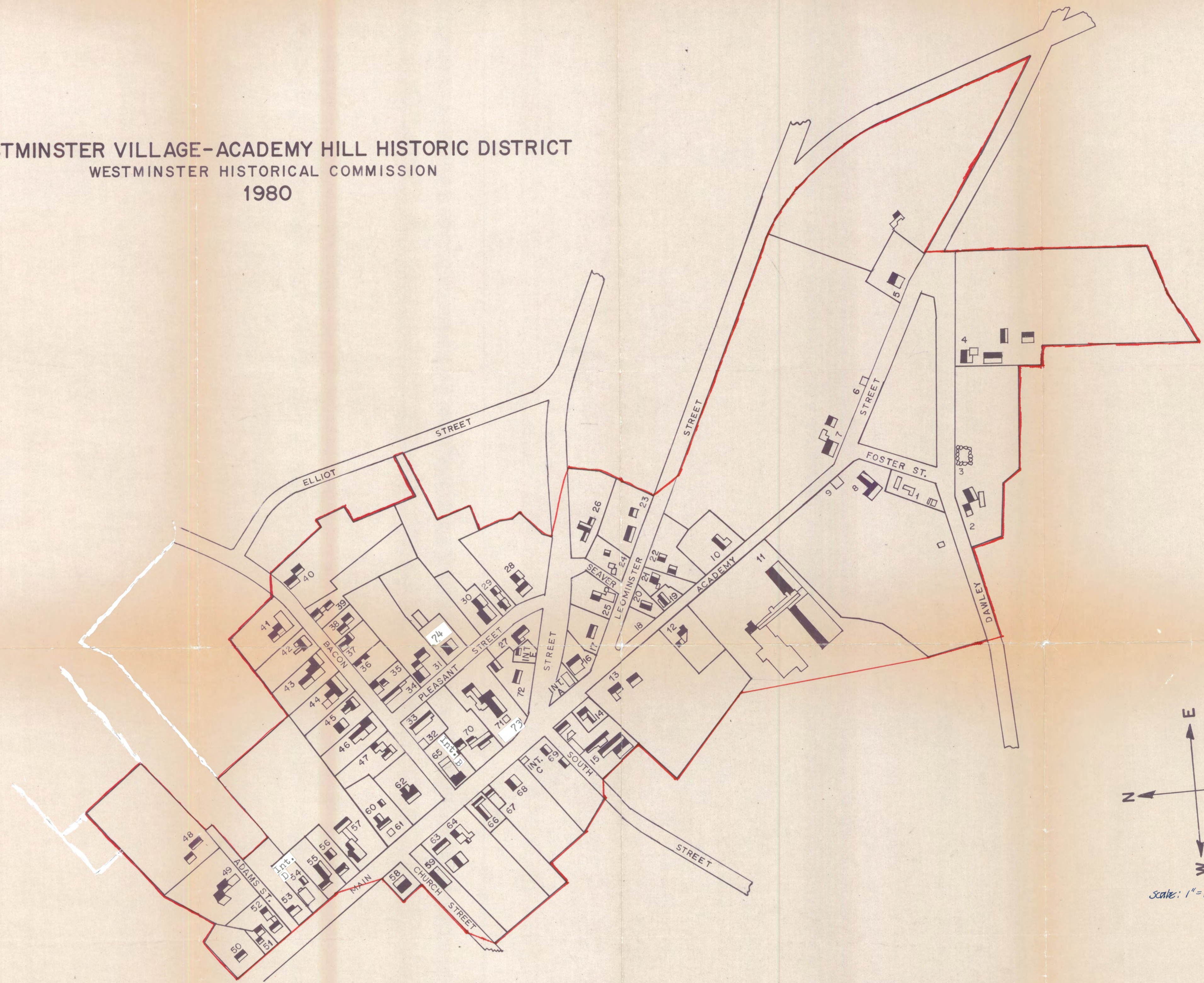
THIS MAP COMPLIES WITH NATIONAL MAP ACCURACY STANDARDS
FOR SALE BY U.S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY, WASHINGTON, D. C. 20242
A FOLDER DESCRIBING TOPOGRAPHIC MAPS AND SYMBOLS IS AVAILABLE ON REQUEST

GARDNER, MASS.
N4230—W7152.5/7.5

1970

AMS 6669 III SW—SERIES V814

WESTMINSTER VILLAGE-ACADEMY HILL HISTORIC DISTRICT
WESTMINSTER HISTORICAL COMMISSION
1980



NAME	ADDRESS	DATE
1.	3 FOSTER ST.	PRE-1855
2. EAGER HOUSE	18 DAWLEY RD.	1849
3. TOWN POUND	DAWLEY RD.	1810
4. PARSON'S HOUSE	6 DAWLEY RD.	1815
5. EMERSON TAVERN	34 ACADEMY ST.	1793
6. MEETINGHOUSE MARKER	ACADEMY ST.	EREC. 1935
7. SQUIRE DUSTIN HOUSE	22 ACADEMY ST.	1810
8. FOSTER HOUSE	19 ACADEMY ST.	1829
9. ACADEMY MARKER	ACADEMY ST.	EREC. 1923
10. DEACON ROBERT PECKHAM	12 ACADEMY ST.	1820
11. UPTON SCHOOL	ACADEMY ST.	1912
12.	5 ACADEMY ST.	1870
13. PENNIMAN TAVERN	5 LEOMINSTER ST.	C. 1776
14.	3 LEOMINSTER ST.	C. 1762
15. CRACKER BAKERY	1 LEOMINSTER ST.	1842
INTRUSION A GAS STA.	CORN. LEOM. ST. & MAIN ST	1920-1930
16.	6 LEOMINSTER ST.	1818
17. ISAAC MILES INN	8 LEOMINSTER ST.	1800
18. W. W. I MARKER	CORN. LEOM. & ACADEMY STS.	EREC. 1920

NAME	ADDRESS	DATE
19. ALBERT HOWARD COTTAGES	6 ACADEMY ST.	C. 1890
20.	11 LEOMINSTER ST.	1892
21.	13 LEOMINSTER ST.	C. 1890
22.	15 LEOMINSTER ST.	C. 1890
23.	16 LEOMINSTER ST.	C. 1827
24.	14 LEOMINSTER ST.	C. 1827
25.	10 LEOMINSTER ST.	POST-1870
26.	2 SEAVER ST.	PRE-1855
27.	4 PLEASANT ST.	1840
28.	1 PLEASANT ST.	1837
29.	3 PLEASANT ST.	1840
30.	5 PLEASANT ST.	1850
74	7 PLEASANT ST.	C. 1930
31.	11 PLEASANT ST.	1837
32. SPANISH AMERICAN MONUMENT	BACON ST.	EREC. 1946
33. TOWN HALL	5 BACON ST.	1839
34.	7 BACON ST.	1838
35.	9 BACON ST.	1837
36.	11 BACON ST.	1836

NAME	ADDRESS	DATE
37.	13 BACON ST.	1850
38.	15 BACON ST.	1849
39.	17 BACON ST.	1830's
40.	19 BACON ST.	C. 1836
41.	18 BACON ST.	1830
42.	16 BACON ST.	C. 1800
43.	14 BACON ST.	1850
44.	12 BACON ST.	1814
45.	10 BACON ST.	1834
46.	8 BACON ST.	1840's
47.	6 BACON ST.	C. 1830
48.	10 ADAMS ST.	C. 1845
49.	6 ADAMS ST.	1845
50.	90 MAIN ST.	1764
51.	94 MAIN ST.	1780
52.	98 MAIN ST.	C. 1820
53.	100 MAIN ST.	1829
54. Int. D	104 MAIN ST.	PRE-1855
55.	106 MAIN ST.	1841

NAME	ADDRESS	DATE
56.	110 MAIN ST.	1800
57.	112 MAIN ST.	1870
58.	113 MAIN ST.	C. 1820
59. FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH	117 MAIN ST.	1863
60. FIRST BAPTIST PARSONAGE	116 MAIN ST.	PRE-1855
61. DANIEL MILES MARKER	116 MAIN ST.	EREC. 1918
62. FORBUSH MEMORIAL LIBRARY	MAIN ST.	1901
63. THE BRICK STORE	121 MAIN ST.	1829
64.	123 MAIN ST.	C. 1830
65. Int. B	128 MAIN ST.	1825
66. "OLD" UNIVERSALIST CHURCH	127 MAIN ST.	1822
67. CENTRAL ENGINE HOUSE	129 MAIN ST.	C. 1840
68.	133 MAIN ST.	1814
INTRUSION C	135 MAIN ST.	1973
69.	137 MAIN ST.	POST 1885
70.	134 MAIN ST.	1823
71. CIVIL WAR MONUMENT	MAIN ST.	EREC. 1868
73. UNIT. CH. OF CHRIST	MAIN ST.	1942
72. JABEZ BIGELOW HOUSE	142 MAIN ST.	1766
INTRUSION E	144 MAIN ST.	1909

March 11, 1963

17 Bacon Street

Westminster, Mass. 02145

RECEIVED

MAR 14 1963

Valerie Talmage
Executive Director
Mass. Historical Commission

MASS. HIST. COMM.

Dear Valerie Talmage:

Regarding The Westminster Village, Academy Hill proposed
Historical District and the possibility of being governed by an
Historical Commission; We at 17 Bacon Street, Westminster, Mass.
Say NO.

In the first place you have not given enough information as
to what it means to be in such a district. What are the penalties
and or the benefits? Please send us all available literature.

Secondly there is not enough time between now and April 13 to
absorb and decide what steps to take. Very few people in this
area dare to go into the Boston area unless absolutely necessary
so our attendance will be negligible at any meeting in your area.

Finally people hate to write letters of this sort, so be sure
for every letter you do get there are 200 you did not get.

Awaiting information from you.

Frederick W. Proctor
June E. Proctor

Please also send information to
Westminster Planning Board
Att. Roland Rocheleau
___As well as myself___



**MASSACHUSETTS
HISTORICAL
COMMISSION**

**COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS
Office of the Secretary of State**

294 Washington Street
Boston, Massachusetts
02108
617-727-8470

MICHAEL JOSEPH CONNOLLY
Secretary of State

March 23, 1983

Fred W. Proctor
17 Bacon Street
Westminster, Mass 01472

Dear Mr. Proctor:

The Massachusetts Historical Commission has received your letter stating that you do not wish the structure located at 17 Bacon Hill to be listed on the National Register of Historic Places as part of the proposed Westminster Village, Academy Hill Historic District. Please be aware that according to the National Register regulations (36CFR 60) a majority of property owners within the district must object to prevent its listing. Please also be advised that according to the National Register regulations (36CFR 30) objections must be notarized to be valid. I refer you to page 2 of our original notification letter (copy enclosed) for further clarification.

Please allow me to address some common concerns of property owners about the implications of National Register listing. First the National Register is essentially a federal planning tool, designed to help the government identify and protect our historic buildings and archaeological sites from harm by federal projects such as highway or sewer construction. A second primary aspect of the National Register is to recognize and honor properties which reflect our past history; it is the nation's official list of such properties. Third, National Register listing allows certain tax incentives for the rehabilitation of commercial and income producing properties (but not for private homes).

These are the benefits of being in a National Register district; there are no penalties. I cannot over-emphasize this point. No restrictions are placed on the private property owner; you may do anything you like to your house as long as no public funds are involved. Furthermore, listing does not mean that the federal government wants to acquire the property or place restrictive covenants on the land. The majority of National Register property owners find that listing does not directly affect them in any way, but takes great pride in the recognition and preservation associated with being on the National Register.

I hope this discussion has answered some of your questions. I have also included some brochures which may be of interest to you.

If you continue to object to the listing of your property, you must submit a notarized statement before April 13, 1983. This statement should include the address of the property and affirm that you are the owner. We hope that you will consider withdrawing your objection, as we feel that as part of the proposed Westminster Village, Academy Hill District, your property is a significant asset to the community.

Sincerely,

Virginia Fitch

Virginia Fitch
Preservation Planner
Massachusetts Historical Commission

Enclosure

VF/1k



TOWN OF WESTMINSTER

MASSACHUSETTS 01473

FROM THE OFFICE OF THE
PLANNING BOARD

RECEIVED

MAR 31 1983

MASS. HIST. COMM.

Valerie Talmage
Executive Director
Mass. Historical Commission

Dear Valeri Talmage,

At a regularly scheduled meeting of the Westminster Planning Board on March 21, 1983, we were informed of a possibility of there being a historical district formed in Westminster, Mass. The Planning Board would like to receive a copy of the outline of the area, a copy of the nomination and the name of the person submitting the nomination.

We recommend local information hearings and that the subsequent vote be held in Westminster, Mass. so that the elderly, the handicapped and the workers could attend and make an intelligent decision.

Sincerely,

Roland G. Rocheleau, Chairman

lar:RGR

cc: Fred and June Procter



COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS
Office of the Secretary of State

MASSACHUSETTS
HISTORICAL
COMMISSION

294 Washington Street
Boston, Massachusetts
02108
617-727-8470

MICHAEL JOSEPH CONNOLLY
Secretary of State

April 5, 1983

Mr. Roland G. Rocheleau, Chairman
Westminster Planning Board
Office of the Planning Board
Westminster, MA 01473

Dear Mr. Rocheleau:

The Westminster Village Historic District was nominated to the National Register of Historic Places by the Westminster Historical Commission, with the assistance of the Montachusett Regional Planning Commission. The project was initiated in 1978, following a long-term effort by the local historical commission to record the town's historic resources.

The National Register is the nation's official list of important structures and areas which retain integrity and demonstrate some aspect of local, state or national history. Listing in the National Register places no constraints on what owners may do with their property when using private funds; neither does it set up a commission to regulate the district. The main purpose of the National Register is to recognize the value of historic properties and to protect listing properties from Federal undertakings. In Massachusetts, nominations to the National Register are usually made by local historical commissions which are town bodies charged with historic preservation.

In preparing this nomination, we have followed our normal procedure of working with the local historical commission. Our staff reviewed the appropriateness of the area for National Register listing, edited the nomination materials, then scheduled it for consideration by the State Review Board. On February 28, 1983 we sent formal notification letters to the Board of Selectmen and to all property owners whose addresses were provided by the local historical commission. That letter explained the National Register and invited responses; to date, both written and telephoned responses have been generally favorable.

We feel that public participation in the National Register process is very important, and make every effort to meet the needs identified by the local historical commission. In this case, the local historical commission requested that we send individual letters to all property owners rather than notifying them by public notice, as is allowed by Federal regulation. The local historical commission then planned to telephone owners to discuss the National Register personally. A meeting was not requested, although our staff is available for such events.

When the State Review Board considers this nomination on April 13, 1983, they will be informed of all responses. Unfortunately, they cannot meet in Westminster, since they are considering nominations from all over the state. Nevertheless, I or my staff will be happy to meet with representatives of your board beforehand to discuss the process further.

For your information, I have enclosed a copy of the National Register nomination form, a copy of the notification to the Board of Selectmen, a copy of our response to the Proctors' objection, and a copy of our brochure which explains the difference between National Register and local historic districts.

Sincerely,



Valerie A. Talmage
Executive Director
Massachusetts Historical Commission

cc: Thomas Malloy, Chairman
Westminster Historical Commission

VAT:mmnd
Enclosures