

United States Department of the Interior
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service

National Register of Historic Places Inventory—Nomination Form

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

For HCRS use only

received MAR 3 1982

date entered APR 1 1982

1. Name

~~historic~~ ~~Watson-Steiger-Loomis House~~

~~and/or common~~ Octagon House (preferred)

2. Location

street & number 28 King Street

N/A not for publication

city, town Westfield

N/A vicinity of

congressional district First

state Massachusetts

code 025

county Hampden

code 013

3. Classification

Category

☐ district

☒ building(s)

☐ structure

☐ site

☐ object

Ownership

☐ public

☒ private

☐ both

Public Acquisition

☐ in process

☒ being considered

Status

☒ occupied

☐ unoccupied

☐ work in progress

Accessible

☐ yes: restricted

☐ yes: unrestricted

☒ no

Present Use

☐ agriculture

☐ commercial

☐ educational

☐ entertainment

☐ government

☐ industrial

☐ military

☐ museum

☐ park

☒ private residence

☐ religious

☐ scientific

☐ transportation

☐ other:

4. Owner of Property

name Anna Czarnecki

street & number 26 King Street

city, town Westfield

N/A vicinity of

state Massachusetts

5. Location of Legal Description

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

street & number 50 State Street

city, town Springfield

state MA

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Inventory of the Historic Assets
of the Commonwealth

has this property been determined eligible? ☐ yes ☒ no

date July 8, 1977

☐ federal ☒ state ☐ county ☐ local

depository for survey records Massachusetts Historical Commission

city, town Boston

state Massachusetts

7. Description

WESTFIELD: Octagon House, 28 King Street

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 Watson-Steiger-Loomis house faces north on King Street in a densely developed later nineteenth century neighborhood on the western edge of downtown Westfield. Its main components consist of a two story octagon built between 1858-1864, and a two story rear ell added in the 1870's. Both sections are of wood frame construction, sheathed with clapboards and trimmed with cornerboards and friezes. The foundation below grade is granite while above grade it is brick.

Each plane of the octagonal section is symmetrically designed with a single window lighting each floor. The windows have simple frames with slightly projecting caps and most contain original 6/6 double hung sash, although a few contain decorative Queen Anne replacements. The octagon is enclosed by a low pitched metal roof supported on paired carved brackets at each corner. The roof is pierced by a central belvedere, which echoes the design of the house, and two interior chimneys.

On the interior, in keeping with a typical plan of an octagon house, is a central spiral staircase which leads not only to the second floor, but to the cupola as well.

Alterations to the facade include the addition of a Queen Anne style porch, marked by decoratively turned porch posts and balusters, a frieze of spindles under the eaves, and a turreted projection at the Northeast corner. As already noted, the fenestration has been somewhat altered by the use of 9/1 sash on the first floor of the three front elevations.

The rear ell, ca. 1870, is a two story, four bay rectangular extension whose construction materials and fenestration correspond to that of the main structure. It terminates with a two story shed outhouse which is believed to have been added in the late 19th century.

8. Significance

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/ humanitarian
☐ 1700–1799	☐ art	☐ engineering	☐ music	☐ theater
☒ 1800–1899	☒ commerce	☐ exploration/settlement	☐ philosophy	☐ transportation
☐ 1900–	☐ communications	☐ industry	☐ politics/government	☐ other (specify)
		☐ invention		

Specific dates c. 1861 **Builder/Architect** Unknown

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The Watson-Steiger-Loomis House possesses integrity of design, location, materials, and setting, and is a fine example of an unusual style of 19th century architecture. It also has associations with a past prominent businessman of the area, and therefore the house meets criteria B and C of the National Register of Historic Places.

This octagonal house, built for Joseph Watson, ca. 1861, represents an interesting aspect of experimentation in domestic design which occurred during the 19th century. It clearly displays the characteristics of the octagon style developed by Orson Squire Fowler in his design book, A Home for All, and is representative of the less ornate type which evolved in Massachusetts. This is one of three octagonal cottages which originally existed in Westfield, and is the only one that stands intact today.

Although the period of popularity for this residential type was short-lived, 1848-1862, the design appeared throughout the United States. New York and Massachusetts in particular had a high concentration of the style, and to this day approximately twenty such structures exist in Massachusetts.

Orson Squire Fowler, the major proponent of this plan, felt the octagon mode was preferable to others for both aesthetic and practical reasons. In his pattern book, A Home for All, first printed in 1848, he exposed the virtues of this architectural design. Among its positive qualities, he noted that it provided substantially more floor space than a square house with the same size walls. He also felt it was more attractive since it closely approached a spherical shape, a form he believed was the predominant one in nature. In addition he propounded that this was an economical building type as well since it let in more sunlight and therefore was less expensive to heat. In many ways Orson Squire was a progressive thinker and designer of his day.

In addition to its architectural significance, the Watson-Steigers-Loomis House also possesses significance in its association with a regionally prominent late 19th century businessman. Mr. Albert Steiger, who lived here in the 1880's-90's, was the founder of the Steiger Department Stores which continue to be a leading retail firm in Massachusetts. From 1908 through the 1970's, the house has been owned by the Loomis family.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Assorted maps, 1855, 1870, 1875, 1894, 1912

Deeds, Hampden County Registry of Deeds, Springfield, Massachusetts.

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property .25

Quadrangle name Southwick

UMT References

A 18 685560 4665490
Zone Easting Northing

C

E

G

B
Zone Easting Northing

D

F

H

Verbal boundary description and justification

See attached topographical map of City of Westfield

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

state	code	county	code
N/A			
state	code	county	code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Kathryn Kubie, Program Assistant Dept. of Community Develop.
Candace Jenkins, Register Director with Lee David Hamber, Administrative Assistant,

organization Massachusetts Historical Commission date February 8, 1980

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

city or town Boston state Massachusetts 02108

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 Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature *Patricia L. Weslowski*

title Executive Director, Massachusetts Historical Commission date 2/17/82

For HCRS use only

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

Silvana Byers
Keeper of the National Register

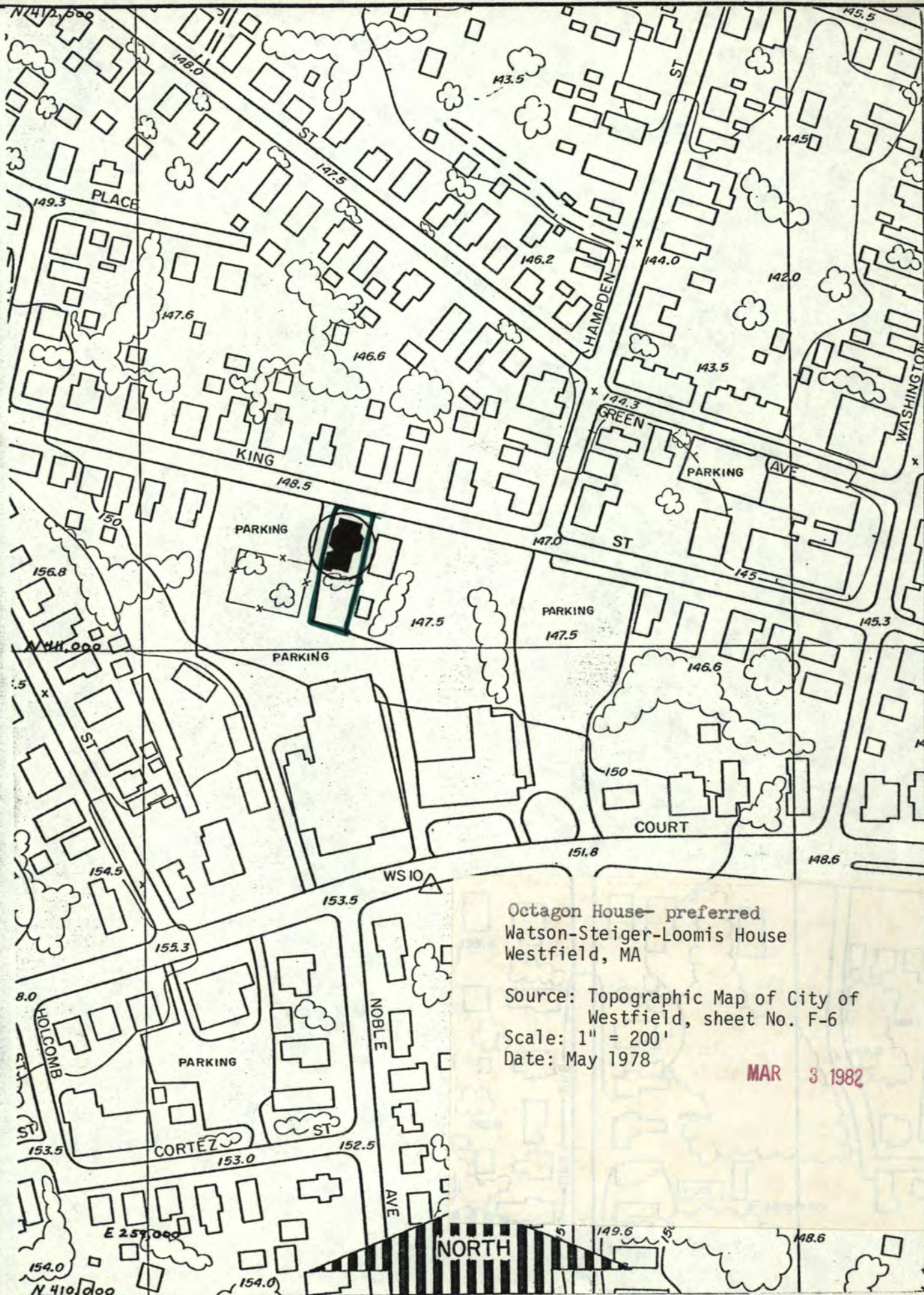
Entered in the
National Register

date 4/1/82

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration



Octagon House- preferred
Watson-Steiger-Loomis House
Westfield, MA

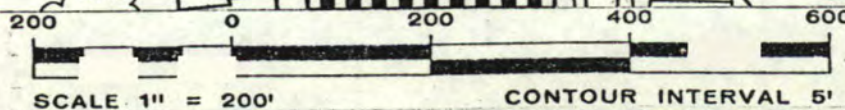
Source: Topographic Map of City of
Westfield, sheet No. F-6

Scale: 1" = 200'

Date: May 1978

MAR 3 1982

UTM ZONE 18



NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service 82004967

EVALUATION / RETURN SHEET

Property: Octagon House
State, County: MA, Hampden
Federal Agency: _____

Working No. 3/3/82-607
Fed. Reg. Date: 2.1.83
Date Due: 4-1-82 / 4-17-82

Action: ☒ ACCEPT 4/1/82
Entered in the _____
National Register _____
RETURN _____
REJECT _____

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

photos 2
maps 4

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. Name2. Location3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
	Public Acquisition	Accessible	

4. Owner of Property5. Location of Legal Description6. 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
____ fair	____ unexposed	____ 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 _____

USIT 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



Octagon House
Watson-Steiger-Loomis House
Westfield
Hampden County
MA

Photo Credit: Lee David Hamberg
Negative Filed: Community Development
Office, Westfield, MA
Identification: View from Northeast
Date: October 1979

MAR 3 1982



Octagon House
Watson-Steiger-Loomis House
Westfield
Hampden County
MA

Photo Credit: Lee David Hamberg
Negative Filed: Community Development
Office, Westfield, MA
Identification: West Elevation
Date: October 1979

MAR 3 1982

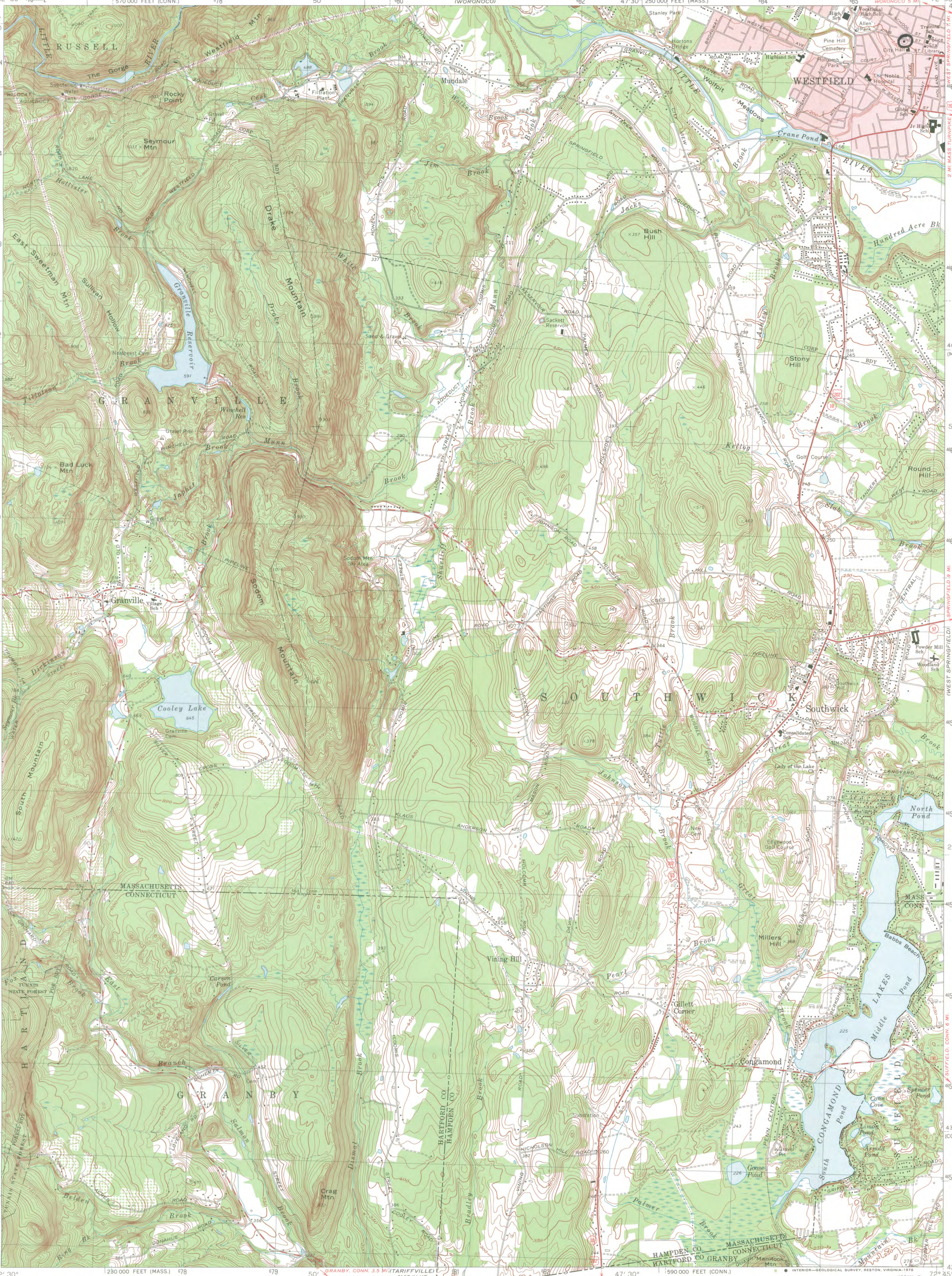
UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
GEOLOGICAL SURVEY

COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS

SOUTHWICK QUADRANGLE
MASSACHUSETTS-CONNECTICUT
7.5 MINUTE SERIES (TOPOGRAPHIC)

Octagon House- preferred
Watson-Steiger-Loomis House
28 King Street
Westfield, MA

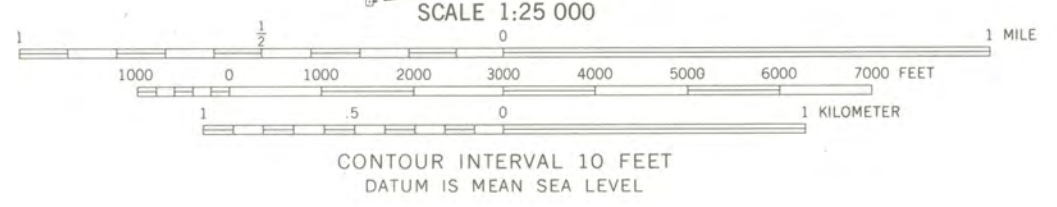
UTM REFERENCES:
18/685560/4665490



To convert feet to meters
multiply by 3.2808

To convert meters to feet
multiply by 3.2808

Mapped, edited, and published by the Geological Survey
Control by USGS and USC&GS.
Topography by planetable surveys 1937 and 1944. Revised from
aerial photographs taken 1971. Field checked 1972
Polyconic projection. 1927 North American datum
10,000-foot grids based on Massachusetts coordinate system,
mainland zone, and Connecticut coordinate system
1000-meter Universal Transverse Mercator grid,
zone 18
Red tint indicates areas in which only landmark buildings are shown



THIS MAP COMPLIES WITH NATIONAL MAP ACCURACY STANDARDS
SALE BY U.S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY, RESTON, VIRGINIA 22092
PRINTING TOPOGRAPHIC MAPS AND SYMBOLS IS AVAILABLE ON REQUEST



ROAD CLASSIFICATION
Primary highway, hard surface
Secondary highway, hard surface
Unimproved road
Interstate Route
U.S. Route
State Route
Light-duty road, hard or improved surface
Unimproved road

SOUTHWICK MASS.-CONN.
N4200-W7245/7.5

1972
AMS 6468 III SE-SERIES V814



City of Westfield, Massachusetts

— DEPARTMENT of COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT —

Patrick M. Condon
Director

January 20, 1982

Ms. Patricia Weslowski
State Historic Preservation Officer
Executive Director
Massachusetts Historical Commission
294 Washington Street
Boston, Ma. 02108

RECEIVED

JAN 25 1982

MASS. HIST. COMM.

Dear Ms. Weslowski:

Please accept our department's endorsement of the two pending Westfield nominations for National Register status: The Loomis Octagon House, and the Landlord Fowler Tavern.

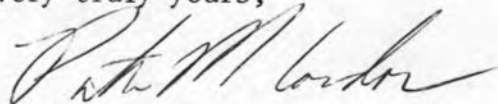
As you may know, the Landlord Fowler Tavern has been carefully restored through a concerted effort that involved Block Grant funds from this office.

The original doorway, which is now on display at the New York Metropolitan Museum for its significance as an exemplar of Georgian period design, has been accurately restored. With this restoration and others, the building is, we feel, the single most important area example of the Georgian style, both from an architectural and a historic point of view.

The Loomis Octagon House is one of a handful of such homes remaining nationwide and is the only one in our region. National Register status for this building, which is now showing significant decay, would make its future restoration far more likely.

In conclusion, the Westfield Office of Community Development heartily endorses the inclusion of these two structures into the National Register of Historic Places.

Very truly yours,



Patrick M. Condon
Director

PMC/lm





Westfield Historical Commission

WESTFIELD, MASSACHUSETTS 01085

RECEIVED

1982

MASS. HIST. COMM.

January 18, 1982

Ms. Patricia L. Weslowski
State Historic Preservation Officer
Executive Director
Massachusetts Historical Commission
294 Washington Street
Boston, MA 02108

Dear Ms. Weslowski:

Your letter to Mayor McDermott dated December 23, 1981, was turned over to the Historical Commission.

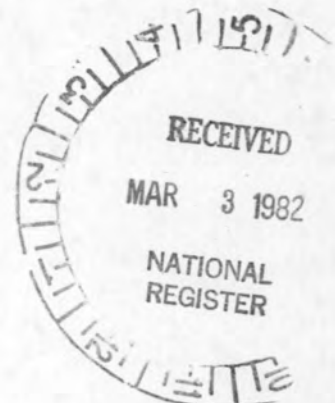
The Commission voted at its January 4, 1982 meeting, to inform the State Commission of our desire to have the Landlord Fowler Tavern and the Octagon House formally presented for nomination to the National Register of Historic Places. It is our understanding that the nominations will be presented to the State Review Board soon for nomination to the National Register.

We have been working on this nomination for sometime, and trust that they will be accepted.

Very truly yours,

Carl E. Walker
Chairman

48 Westwood Drive
Westfield, MA 01085



ENTRIES IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES

STATE MASSACHUSETTS

Date Entered APRIL 1, 1982

<u>Name</u>	<u>Location</u>
Mausert Block	Adams Berkshire County
Armory Block	Adams Berkshire County
Simmons Block	Adams Berkshire County
<u>Octagon House</u>	Westfield Hampden County

Notified

Honorable Edward M. Kennedy
Honorable Paul E. Tsongas
Honorable Silvio O. Conte

Mid-Atlantic Regional Office, NPS
North Atlantic Regional Office, NPS

State Historic Preservation Officer
Mrs. Patricia L. Weslowski
Executive Director, Massachusetts
Historical Commission
294 Washington Street
Boston, Massachusetts 02108