

MAY 15 1989

591

SOUTHBRIDGE MASS
MRA

FORM B - BUILDING

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
80 BOYLSTON STREET
BOSTON, MA 02116

AREA	FORM NO.
C	303

Roll # 2-1

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

Town SouthbridgeAddress 61 ELM St.Historic Name Congregational ChurchUse: Present churchOriginal church

DESCRIPTION

Date 1885Source local historyStyle Victorian GothicArchitect unknownExterior Wall Fabric brickOutbuildings noneMajor Alterations (with dates) steeple

demolished in hurricane (1938), 1 story rear addition (ca. mid-20th c.)

Condition ExcellentMoved no Date n/aAcreage less than one acreSetting civic, institutional commercial area

UTM REFERENCE 18/745 300/4661 930
USGS QUADRANGLE Southbridge, Mass-Conn
SCALE 1:25,000

Recorded by E. Woodford, S. Ceccacci
ed. S. Ceccacci
Organization Southbridge Historical Com-
mission
Date May 1986

NATIONAL REGISTER CRITERIA STATEMENT (if applicable)

The Congregational Church is significant for its association with the expansion and development of Southbridge's commercial and institutional center late in the 19th century, and for its impressive brick High Victorian Gothic design. It meets National Register criteria A and C at the local level and retains integrity of setting, location, materials, workmanship, design, feeling, and association. The boundaries indicated on the attached assessors map are those of current ownership.

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

This Victorian Gothic church, although somewhat altered by the 1938 destruction of its tall slim steeple, still retains the irregular silhouette and complex massing typical of its style. Less vertical in appearance than it originally was, the building still retains its characteristic high pitched roofs, pinnacle ornaments, ornamental brickwork and tall stained glass windows. Unusual in its plan, the church has its main entrance in the transept rather than on the portion of the facade which is closest to the street. The only truly Victorian Gothic style church in Southbridge, it is much more complex in its design than the 1869 Evangelical Free Church (form #A-115) which contains some Victorian Gothic elements but is less vertical and more symmetrical. Because of the compatibility of the style and materials of the Congregational Church with that of the Town Hall (form #C-302) and the Samuel Hartwell House (form #C-304) on either side of it and with the nearby Elm Street Fire House (form #D-401), it is an integral part of the architectural setting of the symbolic heart of the community.

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

In 1816, when Southbridge was incorporated, the Congregationalists became the first group to break away from the interdenominational meeting house of the poll parish. "The Ministerial House" built on the site of the Dr. Samuel Hartwell House, on the southeast corner of Elm and Park Streets, was built in 1818 to serve as a parsonage for the church and as a hall of worship until a meeting house could be erected. It was built by Calvin Ammidown and deeded to the church. In 1822 a meeting house was built on the site of the present building on Elm Street. After a storm in 1884 sent the steeple crashing through the roof, it was decided to build a new church. The old building was moved down Elm Street, where it later burned. The new church, built and furnished at a cost of \$17,500, was dedicated September 4, 1885. The tower of the present building was destroyed in the 1938 hurricane and never rebuilt.

BIBLIOGRAPHY and/or REFERENCES

Southbridge. Quinebaug Historical Society Leaflets, Vol. 3, #7 & Vol. 1, #2, p. 16

United States Department of the Interior
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number _____ Page _____

Multiple Resource Area
Thematic GroupName Southbridge MRA
State Worcester County, MASSACHUSETTS

Nomination/Type of Review

Date/Signature

21. Comins--Wall House ~~Substantive~~ ReviewKeeper Beth L. Sarge 6-22-89
Attest _____22. Congregational Church Entered in the
National RegisterKeeper Delores Byers 6/22/89
Attest _____23. Cummings, E.B., House Entered in the
National RegisterKeeper Delores Byers 6/22/89
Attest _____24. Dani and Soldani Cabinet Makers and
Wood Workers Factory Entered in the
National RegisterKeeper Delores Byers 6/22/89
Attest _____25. Dennison School House Entered in the
National RegisterKeeper Delores Byers 6/22/89
Attest _____26. Dresser, Sylvester, House Entered in the
National RegisterKeeper Delores Byers 6/22/89
Attest _____27. Dunbar--Vinton House Entered in the
National RegisterKeeper Delores Byers 6/22/89
Attest _____28. Durfee, Henry E., Farmhouse Entered in the
National RegisterKeeper Delores Byers 6/22/89
Attest _____29. Elm Street Fire House Entered in the
National RegisterKeeper Delores Byers 6/22/89
Attest _____30. Evangelical Free Church Entered in the
National RegisterKeeper Delores Byers 6/22/89
Attest _____

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: NOMINATION

PROPERTY Congregational Church
NAME:

MULTIPLE Southbridge MRA
NAME:

STATE & COUNTY: MASSACHUSETTS, Worcester

DATE RECEIVED: 5/15/89 DATE OF PENDING LIST: 5/31/89
DATE OF 16TH DAY: 6/16/89 DATE OF 45TH DAY: 6/29/89
DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:

REFERENCE NUMBER: 89000591

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: N NATIONAL: N

COMMENT WAIVER: N

☒ ACCEPT ☐ RETURN ☐ REJECT 6/22/89 DATE

Entered in the
National Register

ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:

RECOM./CRITERIA _____
REVIEWER _____
DISCIPLINE _____
DATE _____

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
☐ UTMs ☐ boundary justification

ACCOMPANYING DOCUMENTATION/PRESENTATION

☐ sketch maps ☐ USGS maps ☐ photographs ☐ presentation

OTHER COMMENTS

Questions concerning this nomination may be directed to

Signed _____ Phone _____

Date _____

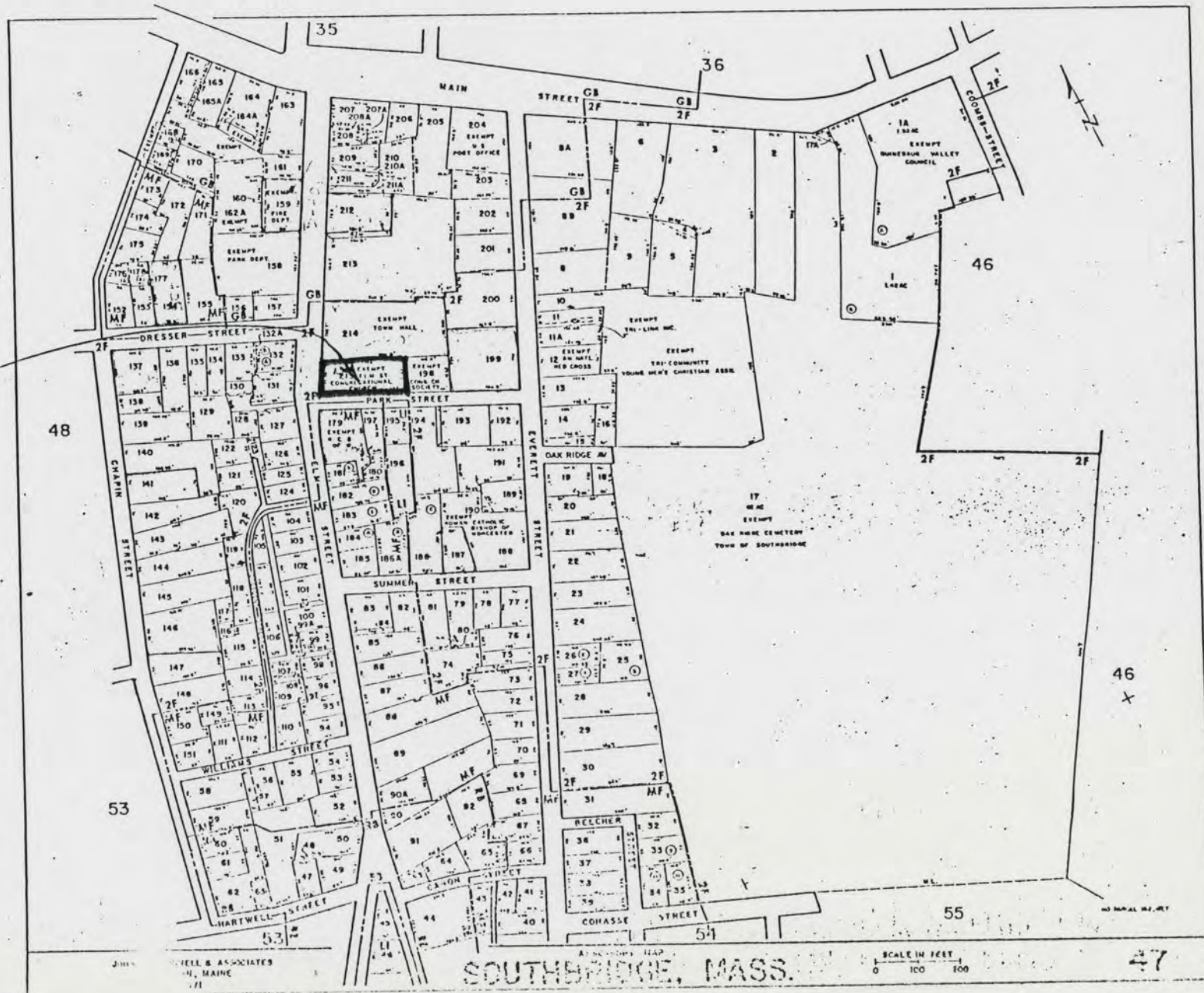


Congregational Church, (C-303) 61 Elm St.
Southbridge, MA ~~MA~~
Southbridge Historical Society
Roll # 2.9

elm Street, Congregational Church

C-303

SOUTHRIDGE MASS
MRA



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

Multiple Property Cover Sheet Reference Number: 64000294