

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

FOR NPS USE ONLY
RECEIVED DEC 13 1976
DATE ENTERED AUG 10 1977

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

1 NAME

HISTORIC
Town Hall

AND/OR COMMON
Old Town Hall

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER
40 East Main Street

CITY, TOWN
Moorestown,

STATE
New Jersey

VICINITY OF

CODE
34

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

6th District

COUNTY

Burlington

CODE

005

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE
<input type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT	<input type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC	<input type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE <input type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL <input type="checkbox"/> PARK
<input type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> BOTH	<input type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL <input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE RESIDENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> SITE	PUBLIC ACQUISITION	ACCESSIBLE	<input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT <input type="checkbox"/> RELIGIOUS
<input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT	<input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES: RESTRICTED	Local <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT <input type="checkbox"/> SCIENTIFIC
	<input type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: UNRESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRIAL <input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
		<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER:

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME
Township of Moorestown

STREET & NUMBER
Town Hall Complex, 2nd and Church Streets

CITY, TOWN
Moorestown

VICINITY OF

STATE

New Jersey

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC. Burlington County Clerk's Office

Early records State
Archives, Trenton

STREET & NUMBER
County Office Bldg. 49 Rancocas Road

CITY, TOWN
Mt. Holly

STATE

New Jersey

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE
New Jersey Historic Sites Inventory

DATE
1976 FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS Labor and Industry Building

CITY, TOWN
Trenton STATE
New Jersey

7-DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED
<input type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		DATE _____

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Old Town Hall, in Moorestown, is a 2 story, 3 bay, Romanesque, building of brick. The building takes the form of a steep pitched roof pavilion, with an extended one story wing out back. The pavilion is entered from the street, on the north side, through a brick arch. The central entrance bay is surmounted by a foward gable, which mathches the side gables. Much of the interior is the result of modern remodeling. The central entrance steps lead up through the arch, to a wide central corridor, which runs most of the length of the building. Immediately left of the entrance, is a half turn stair with landings which leads to the 2nd story meeting hall. The hall occupies the entire upper floor of the frontal pavilion. The staircase is formed in the northeast corner of the building. Most of the ground floor corridor is flanked by offices. There is also a small kitchen, and a stair leading to the basement. The rear of the wing (east corner) has an appended one room jail which dates from 1876. The "L" shaped jail encompasses both walls of the corner. The jail is only accessible from the exterior.

The 2nd floor meeting hall is divided by a railing which runs north south. This railing separates the hall into a large spectator space on the left, and a smaller town council stage on the right.

The exterior is articulated as follows. The entrance facade is divided into 3 bays. The central entrance bay is twice as wide as the flanking side bays. This central bay is surmounted by a gable of approximately 45 degree pitch. The ground floor of the center bay has a tunnel arch main entrance, which is articulated as follows. The arch is set within a shallow projecting sub-pavilion. This sub-pavilion is surmounted by a wide entablature which is articulated by a brick corbel table and architrave. The corbel table and architrave are formed of raised and recessed bricks in several layers, yielding a checker board pattern. The entrance arch rests upon brick impost blocks. The arch it self is formed of several concentric brick arches. The outer most brick arch is distinguished by protruding brick denticulars resembling voussoirs. The second story of the central bay has a tripartite arch window, in which the center window is wider and taller than the flanking windows. The upper rounded portions of the triple arch are decorated with brick denticulars in imitation of voussoirs. This 3 part arch motif is repeated on both side gables (second floor). The frontal gable is decorated with end returns which are raised approximately one foot above the cornice line of the rest of the building. All of the gables have a samll round arch window near the peak, with brick denticular ornaments similar to the tripartite windows below.

The side bays of the entrance facade each have a round head windows on the ground floor and a large one over one windows upstairs. The round floor arch window have voussoir decorations (already described). They are also set approximately 3 feet higher than the entrance arch.

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The sides of the frontal pavilion (ground floor) each have 3 separate round head windows with voussoir decorations. In this case, a brick denticular cornice runs between the windows, connecting them at the springing line. In effect, this cornice forms a continuation of the voussoir decoration.

8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES 1810, 1889

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The delicate denticular brick arches, the steep pitch roof, the wide entrance way with its many concentric arches, and the brick corbel table, mark the Old Town Hall as a good (if belated) example of the Romanesque Revival or Norman Style, as it was called. It is a significant example of a style which, never terribly popular, seldom ventured from the realm of church architecture.

Moreover, the building is a fine example of the 19th Century town hall. From 1810 to 1972 the building was the focus of Moorestown politics. As such, it embodies much of the town's history and growth.

Until the early 1800's, Moorestown felt no need to have a special building for Town Meetings. The population was relatively small, and the officers of the civil organization met in individual homes, hotels, taverns, or similar buildings. Minute notes read, "at the dwelling of John Adams, Thomas Lippincott, etc.", or "Held at John Ward's August 4, 1719; at Joseph Stokes', November 19th, 1742". Earliest civil records date back to 1692.

As Moorestown grew, the need for a larger permanent building, for Township purposes, became apparent. At the meeting on March 13, 1810, it was "resolved that the committee of William Roberts, Dr. John H. Stokes (sr.).

Benhamin Hollishead, Samuel Haines and John Haines be a committee to purchase a lot of land and build a house suitable for the transaction of the business of the Township and the expense to be paid out of a tax to be levied therefore." The purchase was made on May 14, 1810 from Thomas Hooten for \$138 for a lot on Main Street. Stipulations laid down for the building at the March 12, 1811 Town Meeting be as follows: the Town Hall was, to be built, to be one story high, to have a cellar under it, it was also stipulated that the "House be finished in a strong plain style". Proudly, Moorestonians attended their first Town Meeting in the new building on March 10, 1812.

Until 1859, the building size and accommodations were considered adequate for the township needs. In the mid-1850's, the Moorestown Literary Association became joint owners with the Township; and by joining forces, they added a new portion which doubled the original size and seating capacity. A stage was included to facilitate lectures and performances. To meet the expense of the new addition, 200 shares were issued with the value of five dollars per share.

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

See additional sheet for references

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

Moorestown Tax Map #41
Block 272 Lot 6

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY less than 1 A

UTM REFERENCES

A

1	8	5	0	4	7	0	0	4	4	2	3	5	8	0
ZONE				EASTING				NORTHING						

B

ZONE				EASTING				NORTHING					

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

See additional sheet for verbal boundary description

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
New Jersey	34	Burlington	005
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Nan Pillsbury, Ph.D.

ORGANIZATION

Historical Society of Moorestown

DATE

June, 1976

STREET & NUMBER

401 Mill Street

TELEPHONE

(609) 235-6080

CITY OR TOWN

Moorestown

STATE

New Jersey, 08057

12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

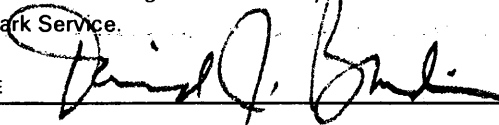
NATIONAL

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


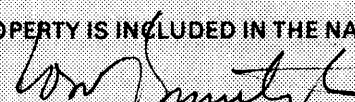


TITLE Commissioner, Department of Environmental Protection

DATE Dec. 1, 1976

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

ATTEST:  

DATE

8/10/77

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE

8.10.77

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

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In 1876, the Town Meeting voted to build a small "lock-up" jail for offenders of the law. Accordingly, the jail was built, adjoining the main building at the rear. It was used as late as the early 1940's for a passing vagrant or "tramp".

The final addition to Old Town Hall was made in 1888. The old building was in need of repairs, but few funds were available. Stockholders transferred all their stock to the Women's Christian Temperance Union, with the agreement that they would improve the building, receive a lease for ten years, and at the end of that time, sell the title back to the Township for a sum of \$3000. The Union built a new two-story Romanesque front, and made other improvements to the earlier building. In 1898, Moorestown regained title, and from then until the present, the Township of Moorestown has been sole owner of the old building.

Beside Town Meetings, Literary Association lectures and WCTU meetings, religious services, flower shows, and other exhibits were held at Old Town Hall. During the Civil War, it quartered soldier recruits, before they left for active service. Later part of the building became the 1st police headquarters, and when motion pictures arrived, the first movie theater. Finally, as the Township expanded and municipal departments required fulltime space to function, the interior was remodelled entirely for office space except the second floor "Meeting Room". This room was used for Town Meetings and gatherings until 1975 when all offices and personnel moved to the new Township Complex.

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CONTINUATION SHEET

1

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9. Major Bibliographical References

1. Purdy, James C. "Moorestown Old and New". (1st Ed. 1886)
2nd Edition, 1976. Historical Society of Moorestown, Pubs.
2. DeCou, Goerge. "Moorestown and Her Neighbors". 1973
3rd Edition. Historical Society of Moorestown, Pubs.
3. Woodward and Hageman, Editors. "History of Burlington and
Mercer Counties. 1883. C. XXIII Chester Township.
4. Gilbert Aitken, 1945 article from the New Chronicle (based
on Town Minutes)
5. Notes from "Town minutes" Book Volume I, 1882-1898.
6. Convery, Frank. Notes from old issues New Jersey Mirror.
7. Title search of property in county records in Mt. Holly, New Jersey.

10. Geographical Data. VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

BEGINNING at a stone in the Southwardly line of the main road or street of Moorestown, corner to the siad Thomas Hooten's other lot, thence (1) along the adge of the said street S 62⁰ and 30 minutes West 83 1/2 links (55.11 ft) to a stone corner to the siad Thomas Hooten's other land, thence (2) by the same South 27⁰ 25 minutes East one chain and 36' 1/2 links (100.19 ft) to a stone corner to siad Hooten's other land, thence (3) by the same North 62⁰ 37 minutes 83 1/2 links (55.11 ft) to a stone in the line of one other lot belonging to said Hooten, thence(4) by the same North 27⁰ 25 minutes West one chain 36 1/2 links (100.19 ft) to the place of the beginning.

Containing 18 square perches (0.45 acres)