

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

1. Name of Property

historic name: District Four School

other name/site number: Old Warwick School

2. Location

street & number: 1515 West Shore Road

not for publication: N/A

city/town: Warwick vicinity: N/A

state: RI county: Kent code: 003 zip code: 02889

3. Classification

Ownership of Property: public-local

Category of Property: Building

Number of Resources within Property:

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>	buildings
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	sites
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	structures
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	objects
<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register: 0

Name of related multiple property listing: N/A

Property name District Four School, Kent County, Warwick, Rhode Island

4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, as amended, I hereby certify that this X nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property X meets does not meet the National Register Criteria.

 See continuation sheet.

T. Deuck C. Williamson
Signature of certifying official

15 Feb 1997
Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria.

 See continuation sheet.

Signature of commenting or other official

Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

5. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

✓ entered in the National Register
 See continuation sheet.

 determined eligible for the National Register
 See continuation sheet.

 determined not eligible for the National Register

 removed from the National Register

 other (explain):

Bobby A. Savage

4-14-97

[Signature]
Signature of Keeper

Date of Action

6. Function or Use

Historic: Education

Sub: School

Current: Vacant

Sub: Vacant

Property name District Four School, Kent County, Warwick, Rhode Island

7. Description

Architectural Classification:

Late Victorian

Other Description: _____

Materials: foundation Brick roof Asphalt
walls Wood Shingle other _____

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

X See continuation sheet.

8. Statement of Significance

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties: local

Applicable National Register Criteria: C, A

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions): _____

Areas of Significance: Education
Architecture

Period(s) of Significance: 1886 _____

Significant Dates: 1886 _____

Significant Person(s): N/A

Cultural Affiliation: _____

Architect/Builder: Walker, William R., and Son

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.

X See continuation sheet.

Property name District Four School, Kent County, Warwick, Rhode Island

9. Major Bibliographical References

See continuation sheet.

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested.
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

Primary Location of Additional Data:

- State historic preservation office
- Other state agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other -- Specify Repository: _____

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of Property: less than one

UTM References:	Zone	Easting	Northing	Zone	Easting	Northing
A	<u>19</u>	<u>301625</u>	<u>4619760</u>	B	_____	_____
C	_____	_____	_____	D	_____	_____

See continuation sheet.

Verbal Boundary Description: See continuation sheet.

Boundary Justification: See continuation sheet.

11. Form Prepared By

Name/Title: Nancy C. Tinker

Organization: The Public Archaeology Laboratory, Inc. Date: 4/19/96

Street & Number: 210 Lonsdale Avenue, Pawtucket, RI 02860 Telephone: (401) 728-8780

City or Town: Pawtucket State: RI ZIP: 02860

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Property name District Four School, Warwick, Kent County, Rhode Island

Section number 7

Page 5

Description

The District Four School, a 2-1/2-story, wood, Late Victorian building, was constructed in 1886. The building is rectangular in plan and features a gable-on-hip roof. Building detailing includes grouped, 1/1 double hung sash topped with 15-light transoms, shingled gables, and facade entries located beneath flat-roof, simply detailed entrance porches.

The District Four School is located at the intersection of West Shore Road and Sandy Lane and fronts on West Shore Road, a busy, two-lane thoroughfare. The building's north elevation stands approximately 20 feet from Fire Company No. 4 (1501 West Shore Road), a flat-roof, brick-and-glass fire station built in 1965. The building's lot contains modest shrubbery, poured concrete walks, a grassed lawn, and a rear, asphalt paved parking lot. Once less intensely developed, the area has changed as commercial, municipal, and residential development have occurred around the property.

The District Four School foundation and single, plain chimney stack are built of brick laid in common bond. Rectangular, 3-light hopper style basement windows are found across the foundation's face. A poured concrete bulkhead is attached directly to the building's foundation on the east (primary) facade. The bulkhead stands approximately 3' in height, is topped with a flat concrete cap, and reaches the top of the building's brick foundation. Asbestos shingles have been installed directly over the building's original clapboard siding. The building's gables retain original fishscale shingles. In addition to these shingles, the building's east facade gable bears a decorative inscription which reads, "District No. 4, 1886."

The building's two primary entrances are located on the north and south elevations in the angled corners of the main block and pavilions. The identical entries comprise original multi-panel double-leaf doors beneath flat-roof porches supported by square posts. Decorative molding, turned balusters, and molded handrail remain on the southern entrance. The northern entry retains original paired doors, posts, and porch molding. The porch's balusters and handrail have been covered with plywood sheets. Both entries are reached by poured concrete steps and entrance porch. On the building's south elevation, a straight-run steel fire escape (ca. 1970) leads from ground level to windows located on the second floor.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Property name District Four School, Warwick, Kent County, Rhode Island

Section number 7

Page 6

Additional modest, single-door entrances are also located on the building's north and south elevations. Original doors have been replaced with single-light hollow core metal doors (ca. 1970) beneath shed-roof coverings supported by decorative brackets. In both instances, original door framing has been infilled to accommodate the present small doors.

On the building's rear (west) elevation is a single 4-light, multi-panel wood door opens onto basement space. This entrance is located within a projecting, rectangular plan, flat-roof vestibule which houses an enclosed, straight run of concrete stairs.

Original double-hung 1/1 wood sash is found on both floors of the building's east and west elevations. Windows are grouped in sets of three with each window topped with a 15-light transom. Windows located on the building's north and south elevations consist of original 1/1, 2/2, and 6/1 double hung sash. Grouped 2/2 double-hung sash is located in the gable ends of the north and south elevations. Sash located in gable-fields are surrounded with original fishscale shingles. All window openings (except gable-end lights) have been fitted with aluminum storm windows.

The building retains broad eaves and a simply molded cornice. Roofing surfaces are covered in asphalt shingles. Copper gutters and downspouts, though poorly patched, have also been retained.

Originally, District Four School's floor plan contained three large classrooms, a second-floor library, and second-floor office space. Two of the building's classrooms were located on the first floor while the third classroom was found on second-floor space. Classrooms on both floors opened onto a center transverse hall which cut through the building on a north-south axis. Both hallways terminated on the north and south at double-run stairs with half-landings.

About 1920 classroom space located on the east side of the first floor was divided into offices when recessed panelling and opaque glass partition walls were installed. The first floor central hall was also disrupted ca. 1920 as offices were also constructed in that location. Classroom space located on the west side of the second floor was also divided ca. 1920 when frame and glass partition walls created two offices on the south end of this space. Changes to second floor library space may have occurred at that time as a newly erected wall divided the formerly L-shape library into two rectangular-shape rooms.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Property name District Four School, Warwick, Kent County, Rhode Island

Section number 7

Page 7

Plaster walls patched with drywall or fiberboard are found throughout the building. Tongue-and-groove wainscoting (installed ca. 1920) is located in first floor inner office space. Chair rail molding (ca. 1920) is found throughout the remainder of the first floor.

Ceilings throughout the building retain their full height and are covered with plaster or decorative pressed tin. Pressed tin ceilings are located in first and second floor classroom space and second floor offices. Plaster ceilings are in good condition. All plaster and pressed tin ceilings retain simply molded plaster or decorative pressed metal cornices.

The building retains original pine flooring throughout. Although original multi-panel wood doors, door framing, and baseboards have been retained, the building also features hollow core wood doors (ca. 1970, second floor hallway) and single panel wood doors with opaque glass (ca. 1920, first and second floor offices). Former transom spaces located above second floor hollow core wood doors have been infilled with drywall. Original window architraves with cornerblocks have also been retained throughout the building.

The two main entrances open into vestibules panelled with tongue and groove wainscoting and molded chair rail. Both vestibules open onto stairways and lead to the building's first floor central hall. Stairway design consists of a low-rise tongue-and-groove partition wall topped with a molded handrail. Original treads and risers remain. Both stairways retain original chamfered newel posts and original finishes.

The building's basement has scored concrete flooring, cast iron columns, and concrete walls. Attic space remains undivided.

The District Four School experienced major interior alterations ca. 1920 and is in good to fair condition. Asbestos shingle siding was attached directly over the building's clapboard siding ca. 1950. It has recently been removed to reveal the clapboards. Although the building has lost some original building fabric, much of the building's original interior and exterior detailing remains. District Four School retains a large modestly landscaped lot. The lot's depth, the building's size and distance from the road set this property apart from nearby commercial, residential, and municipal properties. The District Four School retains integrity of location, most materials, design, workmanship, feeling, and association.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

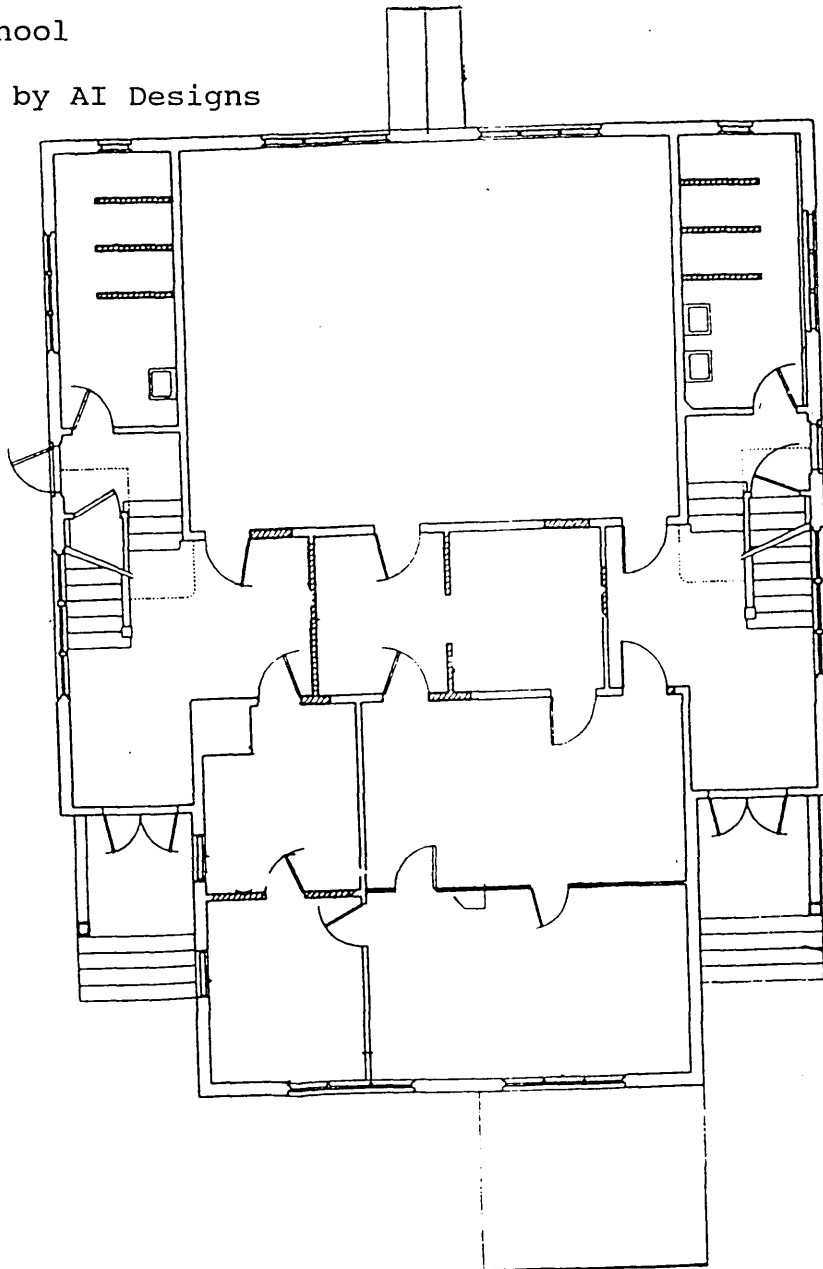
National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Property name District Four School, Warwick, Kent County, Rhode Island

Section number 7

Page 8

District Four School
First Floor Plan
Drawing provided by AI Designs



United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

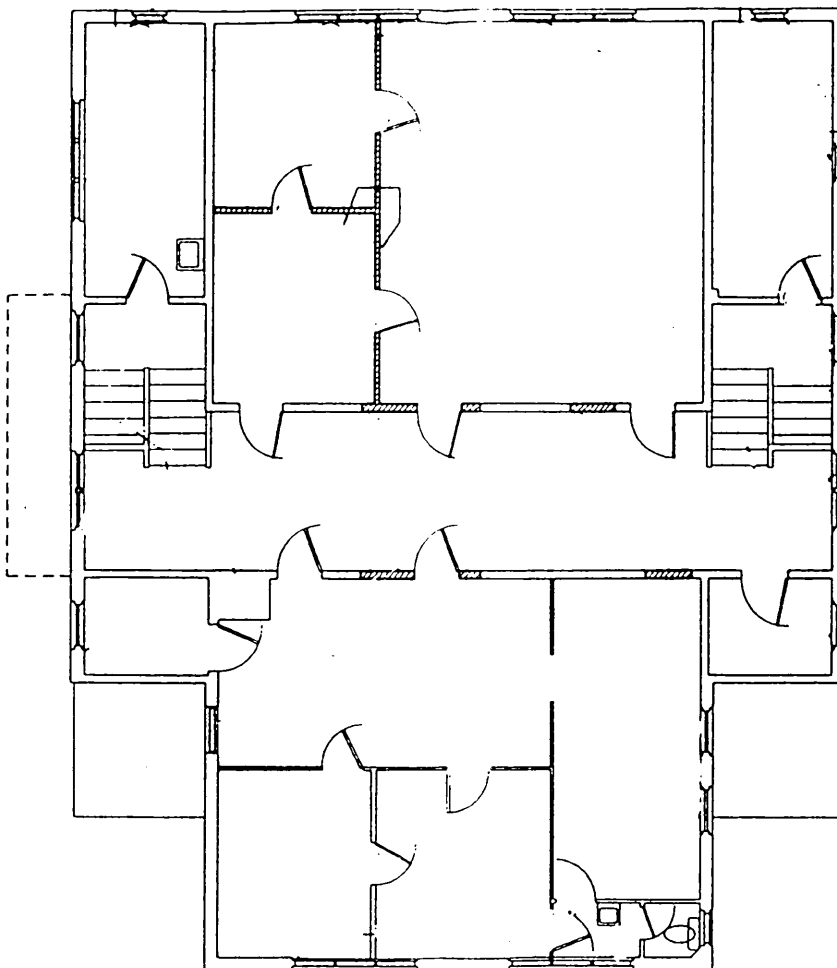
National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Property name District Four School, Warwick, Kent County, Rhode Island

Section number 7

Page 9

District Four School
Second Floor Plan
Drawing provided by AI Designs



United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

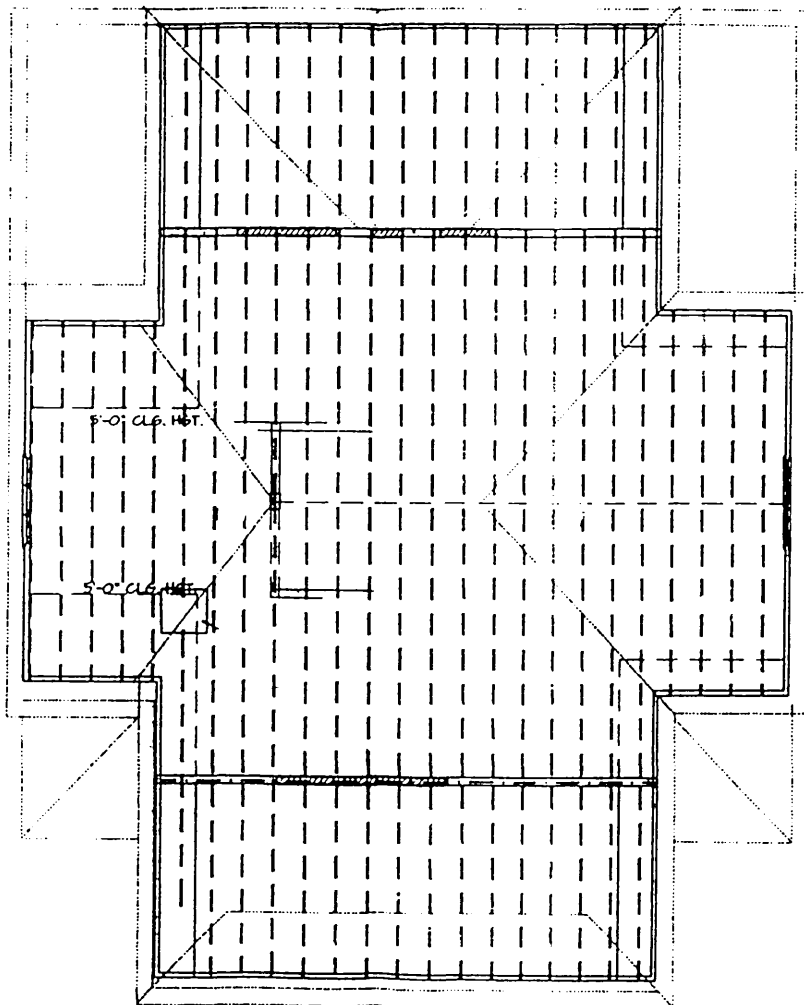
National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Property name District Four School, Warwick, Kent County, Rhode Island

Section number 7

Page 10

District Four School
Attic Plan
Drawing provided by AI Designs



United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

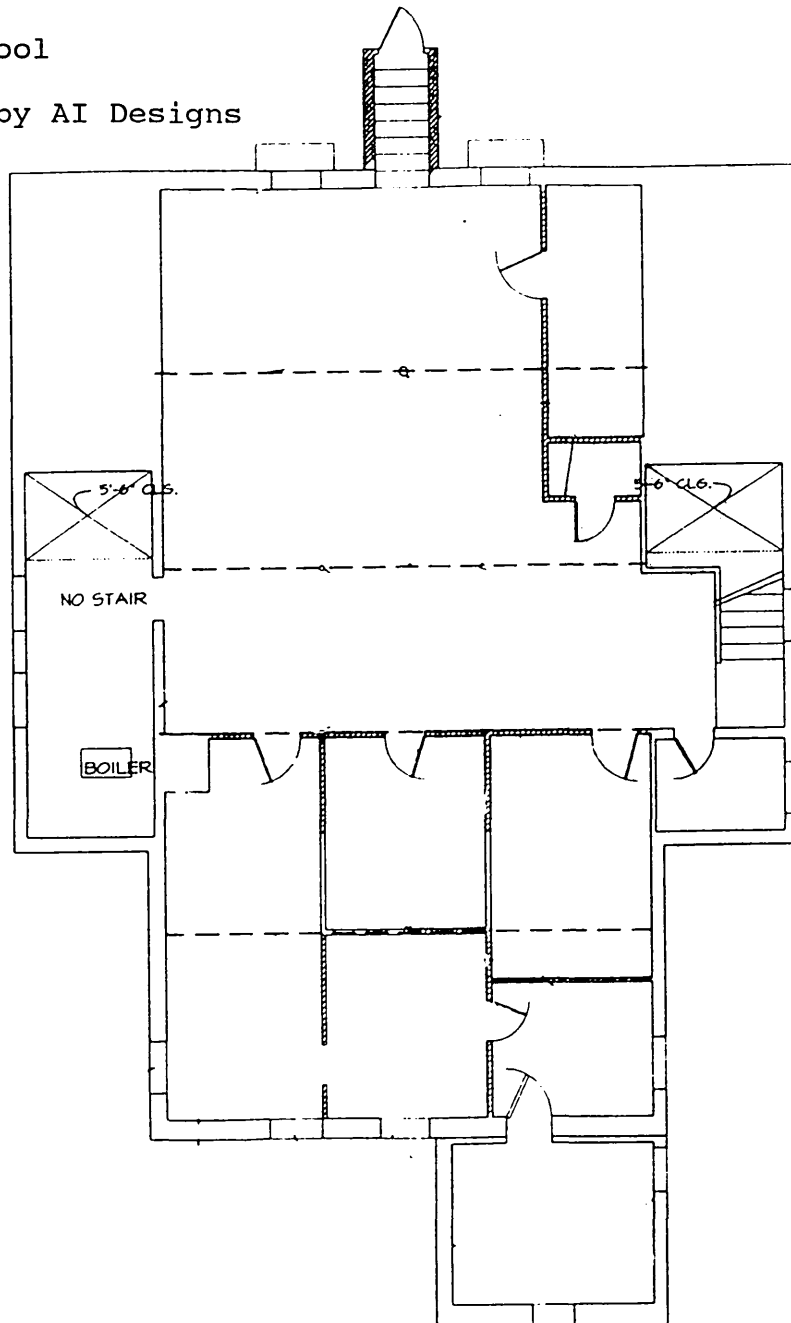
National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Property name District Four School, Warwick, Kent County, Rhode Island

Section number 7

Page 11

District Four School
Basement Plan
Drawing provided by AI Designs



United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

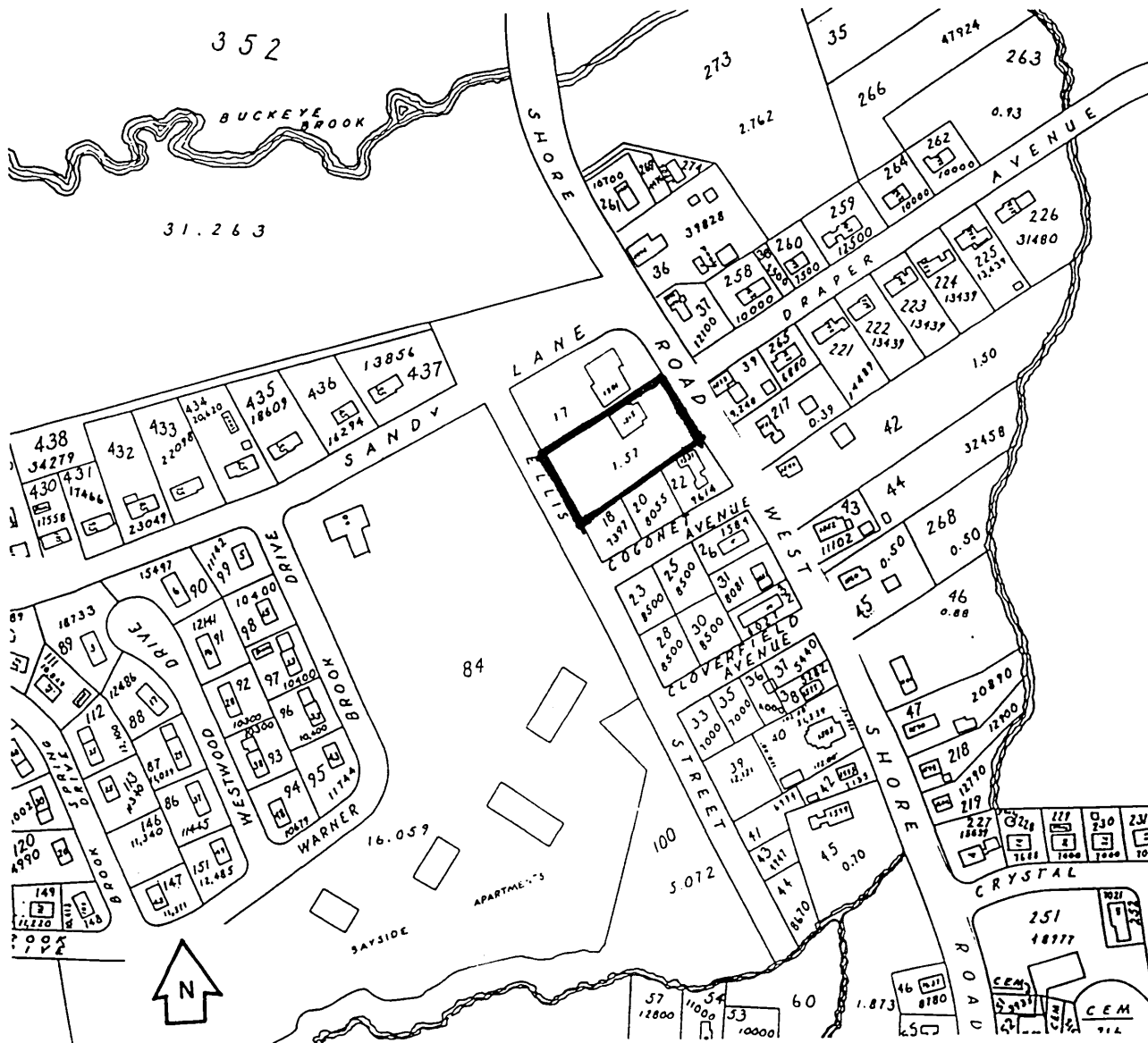
Property name District Four School, Warwick, Kent County, Rhode Island

Section number 7

Page 12

District Four School Assessor's Map
Plat 353, Lot 17
Warwick, Rhode Island

Property Bounded In Black



United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Property name District Four School, Warwick, Kent County, Rhode Island

Section number 8

Page 13

Significance

The District Four School is historically significant for its association with civic life and public education in the Town of Warwick and for its ability to document late 19th-century school buildings. This building was designed in 1886 by the architectural firm of William R. Walker and Son, a prominent Providence-based company. The present facility is the oldest remaining school building within the city of Warwick. District Four School continued to meet educational needs until its closing ca.1940.

There was a school building constructed on this site in 1716 which provided space for both schooling and public meetings. This site was also the original location for a public orchard (ca. 1716) and, later, a Baptist meetinghouse. The occupation of this lot in 1886 by the District Four School continued the lot's traditional public use.

In its early years Warwick was an agricultural community. Chartered in 1647, Warwick's geographic diversity promoted a decentralized pattern of settlement and growth. The wide range of settlement opportunity encouraged the establishment of small villages rather than the formation of a single, large commercial center. The village of Warwick received designation as the town's first town center. Development occurred, however, in the town's western section, and in 1834-1835 a new Town Hall and Town Clerk's Office were built at Apponaug. Throughout the nineteenth century, settlement concentrated at several nodes, clusters of development each anchored by an industrial center.

Stuckley Westcott was among Warwick's earliest settlers. In 1638 Westcott was named one of the original 13 Proprietors of Providence Plantations and co-founded the First Baptist Church in America the same year. In 1677 he acquired a home lot in the town of Warwick (where District Four School now stands) and, in 1716, permitted a single-story school building to be constructed there. In time, the parcel was also occupied by a Baptist meetinghouse and public orchard.

Throughout Warwick's history educational institutions were created to meet community growth. The incorporation of the Warwick North School Society in 1794, the Warwick West School Society in 1803 and the development of the Warwick Central School Society in 1804 reinforced local educational opportunity. Ten schools had been established in Warwick by 1828, when the General Assembly passed a law providing for the

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Property name District Four School, Warwick, Kent County, Rhode Island

Section number 8

Page 14

establishment of a statewide free public school system. In compliance with the act, Warwick was divided into eleven school districts (a twelfth district was created in 1830, sixteen districts were in place in 1874-5), each of which was responsible for maintaining and staffing a schoolhouse built with the aid of state and local funds. The District Four School was established in response to this legislation and constructed on the parcel traditionally used by the village of Warwick for educational needs.

The building was designed by William R. Walker and Son, a prolific and long-lived Providence-based architectural firm. The firm was started in 1881 by William Russell Walker who was later joined by his son William Howard Walker, and his grandson William Russell Walker, II. William R. Walker and Son was responsible for designing many residential, industrial, and commercial properties, but the firm is best known for its public buildings, city and town halls, courthouses, armories, schools and police and fire stations.

The District Four School is a good example of a modest late nineteenth-century school building, and reflects late Victorian design. The building is similar in scale and massing to school facilities constructed in Providence by Walker during the last years of the nineteenth century. The Vineyard Street School (1882-1883, 1-33 Vineyard Street); the Smith Street School (1885, 396 Smith Street, listed in the National Register 2/23/84); and the Beacon Avenue School (1885, 104-106 Beacon Avenue) were all designed by Walker.

In 1931 the United States Department of the Interior published a survey assessing Warwick's existing school buildings. The report identified problems in current facilities and proposed action which would occur over the next seven years.

By June, 1930, the District Four School was the oldest facility in Warwick's school system. The building was now known as the "Old Warwick School," and was deemed by a Department of the Interior survey to be "the worst school building in Warwick." The report identified inadequate classroom space, the building's frame construction, and age as problems. The District Four School was closed ca. 1940. The building stood vacant for some years and was later occupied by the Department of Social and Rehabilitative Services which remained in the facility until ca. 1990. It will soon be converted to residential use.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Property name District Four School, Warwick, Kent County, Rhode Island

Section number 10

Page 15

Major Bibliographical References

- Barrows, Alice. School Building Survey and Program for Warwick, Rhode Island. Washington, D.C.: United States Government Printing Office, 1931.
- Carroll, Charles. Public Education in Rhode Island. Providence, Rhode Island: E. L. Freeman Company, Printers, 1918.
- Field Card Records (unpublished) located at Assessor's Office, Warwick, Rhode Island City Hall.
- Fuller, Oliver Payson. The History of Warwick, Rhode Island. Providence, Rhode Island: Angell, Burlingame & Co., Printers, 1875.
- Jordy, William H., and Christopher P. Monkhouse. Buildings on Paper, Rhode Island Architectural Drawings. Providence, Rhode Island: Brown University Press, 1982.
- Land Evidence Records (unpublished) located in Archives of City Hall, Warwick, Rhode Island.
- Pierson, Rachel. Rhode Island Architecture: The Walker Dynasty. Unpublished report (located at the Rhode Island Historical Preservation and Heritage Commission), no date.
- Rhode Island Historical Society. The Early Records of the Town of Warwick. Providence, Rhode Island: E. A. Johnson Company, 1926.
- Rhode Island Historical Preservation Commission. Providence: A Citywide Survey of Historic Resources. Providence, Rhode Island: Rhode Island Historical Preservation Commission, 1986.
- Rhode Island Historical Preservation Commission. Warwick, Rhode Island: Statewide Historical Preservation Report K-W-1. Rhode Island Historical Preservation Commission, Providence, Rhode Island 1981.
- Withey, Henry F. and Elsie Rathburn Withey. Biographical Dictionary of American Architects (Deceased). Los Angeles: Hennessey & Ingalls, Inc., 1970.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Property name District Four School, Warwick, Kent County, Rhode Island

Section number 10

Page 16

Geographical Data

Verbal Boundary Description:

Beginning at the southeast corner of Plat 353, Lot 17, the boundary follows the north course of West Shore Road where the boundary turns west along a line of convenience and runs twenty feet south of Fire Company No. 4 to the west lot line. Upon reaching the west lot line the boundary turns south and runs to the lot's southwest corner. When reaching the southwest corner, the boundary follows the southern boundary until reaching the point of beginning.

Boundary Justification:

Plat 353, Lot 17 was originally set aside and is historically associated with Warwick's educational and civic tradition. A line of convenience has been drawn to exclude Fire Company No. 4, constructed in 1965 and located on the northern portion of Lot 17.