

FORM A - AREA

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
294 Washington Street, Boston, MA. 02108

Form numbers in this area	Area letter
S-22-7	77

Photo (3x3" or 3x5")
Staple to left side of form

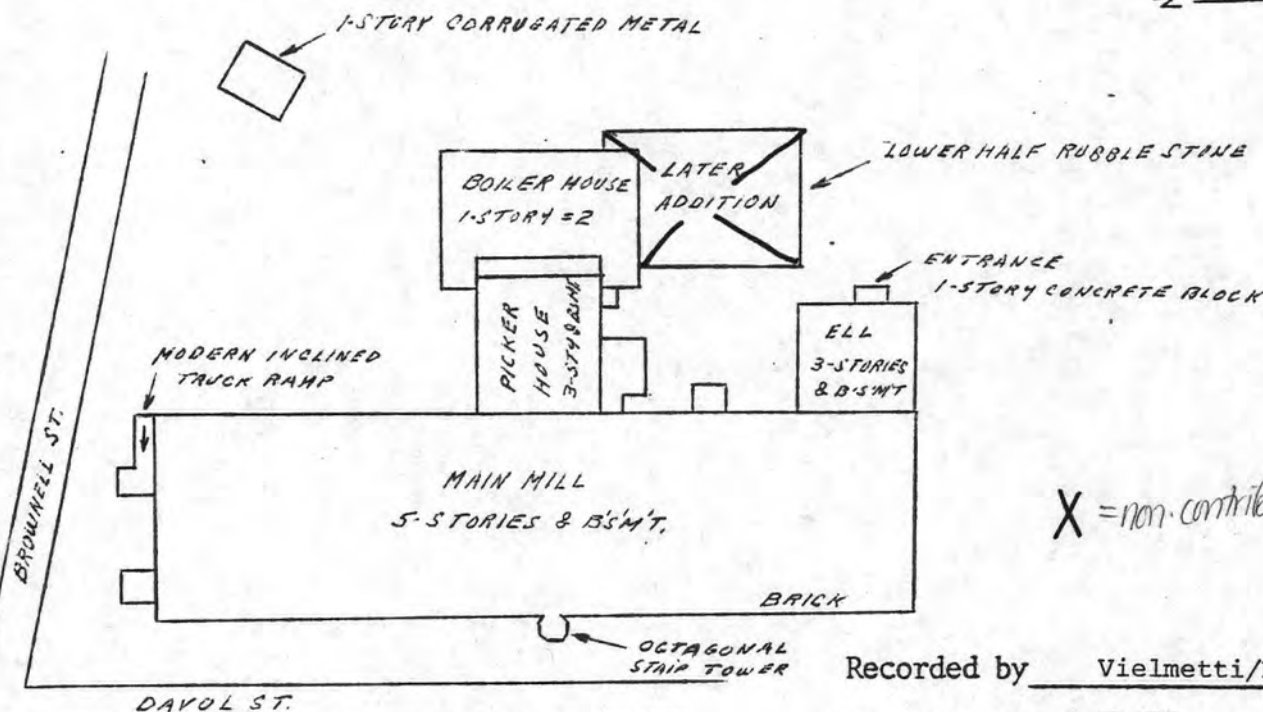
Photo number MP II - 32/30

Town Fall River, Mass.

Name of area (if any) Mechanics Mill
1082 Davol Street

General date or period 1868-1889

Sketch map. Draw a general map of the area indicating properties within it. Number each property for which individual inventory forms have been completed. Label streets (including route numbers, if any) and indicate north. (Attach a separate sheet if space here is not sufficient)



Recorded by Vielmetti/Pereira/Fox

Organization FROHP

Date 7/31/81

ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE of area. (Describe physical setting, general character, and architecturally significant structures).

The 1868 Mechanics Mill is located in the northern section of the city on a 5.5-acre strip of land between Interstate 79 and the Taunton River. The single brick mill with rear ells is the earliest in Fall River to be built with a flat roof and also stands out because of its prominent siting, monumental design quality and center tower, and unity of style and materials. The mill measures 392' X 92' and was constructed of Taunton brick with granite trim. Brick transported by rail or water was more economical for northern mills than granite hauled over several miles from local quarries. Credit for the design has been given to D. Hartwell Dyer because he was a well-known local mill designer and served as the treasurer of the Mechanics Mill. Traditionally, the rough plans and drawings for a new mill were often prepared by the treasurer, who then consulted a builder. Among the original organizers of the Mechanics Mill were three other men also associated with local mill design--Stephen Davol, Lazarus Borden and Thomas J. Borden--any one of whom could also have been responsible. Original engravings show a handsome, 5-story, flat-roofed structure clearly influenced by the French Second Empire style popular (Continued)

HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE of area. (Explain development of area, what caused it, and how it affected community; be specific).

The Mechanics Mill of 1868 is historically significant as the first to be constructed in the northern section of the city and the first to take water from a source--in this case a well--other than a river or stream. Because the northern area had been completely rural and was located some distance from the rest of the city, the mill had to be self-sufficient. The mill site included 126 tenements, a mill store, some transportation via the Old Colony and Newport Railroad, and a wharf to handle shipments of raw cotton, cloth and coal. The village which formed around the mill came to be known as Mechanicsville. Mechanics Mill was constructed during the so-called "expansion period" of post-Civil War mill development. The list of organizers represented the leading businessmen and industrialists of the day, including Thomas J. Borden, the first president, and D. Hartwell Dyer, first treasurer. The capital stock of \$750,000 was distributed among 328 shareholders, most in small holdings of up to \$2,500. For this reason, the company was noted in early histories as one of the first to attract funds from a large number of persons of moderate means. In 1870 the mill had a capacity of 53,712 spindles and 1,248 looms, a number which increased to a peak of about 65,000 spindles and 1,580 looms at the turn of the century. The print cloth was sold directly and also through agents of Coffin, Altemus and Co. The company was the first in the country to provide slashers for dressing warps, an innovation which greatly reduced costs. Mechanics Mill continued in business until 1926, when the property was purchased by the Weetamoe Mill, which used it for only a few years. Subsequently, the building has been used for a foundry and machinery company as well as for textile production.

BIBLIOGRAPHY and/or REFERENCES

- History of Bristol County, p. 218
- Phillips' History of Fall River, Fascicle II, p. 127
- Fall River and Its Industries, p. 128-131 (includes early engraving)
- 1920 Corporate Millyard Plans
- Textile World's Official Directory (1901)
- "Mill Architecture in Fall River," p. 191-192
- Barlow Insurance Plan No. 5859, 1879.

INVENTORY FORM CONTINUATION SHEET

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
Office of the Secretary, Boston

Community:

Fall River, Mass.

Form No:

S-22-7

Property Name:

Mechanics Mill

Indicate each item on inventory form which is being continued below.

ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE (Continuation)

during the Civil War period. The dominant feature is a 6-level octagonal center stair tower with a granite bracketed cornice and open belfry terminating in a polygonal mansard cap. The high convex mansard was repeated on the center entrance pavillion of a two-story front office building which has unfortunately been demolished. The tower roof and original bracketed wooden cornice have also been removed. The property presently consists of the mill, picker house (1868), boiler house (1868), ell (c.1873), and a modern addition.

Distinctive for its prominent siting, monumental design quality, center tower and unity of style and materials, the 1868 Mechanics Mill complex is also historically significant as the first to be constructed in the northern section of the city and the first to take water from a source other than a river or a stream; as such it meets Criteria A and C of the National Register of Historic Places.

Staple to Inventory form at bottom

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form

For NPS use only

received 1/5/67

date entered

Continuation sheet

Item number

Page 6 of 10

Multiple Resource Area
Thematic Group

Name Fall River Multiple Resource Area
State MA

Nomination/Type of Review

Date/Signature

51. Kennedy Park

Substantive Review

Keeper

2/16/83 *Ann MacDonell*

Attest

52. Kerr Thread Mill

Substantive Review

Determined Eligible

Keeper

2/16/83 *Ann MacDonell*

DOE/OWNER OBJECTION

Attest

53. King Philip Mills

Entered in the
National Register

for Keeper

2/16/83 *Delores Byers*

Attest

54. Laurel Lake Mills

Substantive Review

Determined Eligible

Keeper

2/16/83 *Ann MacDonell*

DOE/OWNER OBJECTION

Attest

55. Lindsey, William, House

Entered in the
National Register

for Keeper

2/16/83 *Delores Byers*

Attest

56. Massasoit Fire House #5

Entered in the
National Register

for Keeper

2/16/83 *Delores Byers*

Attest

57. Mechanics Mill

Entered in the
National Register

for Keeper

2/16/83 *Delores Byers*

Attest

58. Narragansett Mills

Entered in the
National Register

for Keeper

2/16/83 *Delores Byers*

Attest

59. North Burial Ground

Entered in the
National Register

for Keeper

2/16/83 *Delores Byers*

Attest

60. North Christian Congregational
Church

Entered in the
National Register

for Keeper

2/16/83 *Delores Byers*

Attest

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

Mechanics Mill (Fall River MRA)
Bristol County
MASSACHUSETTS

Working No. 115/83-15

Fed. Reg. Date: 2.7.84

Date Due: 2/3/83 - 2/19/83

Action: ☒ ACCEPT 2/10/83

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	☐ unaltered
☐ good	☐ ruins	☐ altered
☐ fair	☐ unexposed	☐ moved 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

Acresage of nominated property _____

Quadrangle name _____

UNIT 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



NAME: Mechanics Mill Complex

LOCATION: 1082 Davol Street
Fall River, ^{MA} Mass.

PHOTO CREDIT: Pamela Shields (1981)

NEGATIVE FILED AT: Fall River Office of Historic
Preservation
One Government Center
Fall River, Mass. 02722
(PSNR-4-12)

IDENTIFICATION: Mechanics Mill
looking east

Photo # 1 of 2



Fall River MRA, Ma

Mechanics Mills

Dart St.

Side View w/Tower

MP II-32



Fall River MRA, Ma

Mechanics Mills

Dart St.

(Tower)

MP II -30

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

Multiple Property Cover Sheet Reference Number: 64000279