

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM**

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

STATE: NEW JERSEY	
COUNTY: MERCER	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER 718.34 0010	DATE 8/12/71

**1. NAME**

COMMON: (present) **MERCER STREET FRIENDS CENTER (a settlement house)**

AND/OR HISTORIC: **CHESTERFIELD FRIENDS MEETING HOUSE (Orthodox)**

**2. LOCATION**

STREET AND NUMBER: **151 Mercer Street**

CITY OR TOWN: **Trenton**

STATE: **New Jersey** CODE: **34** COUNTY: **Mercer** CODE: **021**

**3. CLASSIFICATION**

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
<input type="checkbox"/> District <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Building <input type="checkbox"/> Site <input type="checkbox"/> Structure <input type="checkbox"/> Object	<input type="checkbox"/> Public <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private <input type="checkbox"/> Both	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Occupied <input type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress	Yes: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Restricted <input type="checkbox"/> Unrestricted <input type="checkbox"/> No
PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)			
<input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural <input type="checkbox"/> Commercial <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Educational <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> Government <input type="checkbox"/> Industrial <input type="checkbox"/> Military <input type="checkbox"/> Museum	<input type="checkbox"/> Park <input type="checkbox"/> Private Residence <input type="checkbox"/> Religious <input type="checkbox"/> Scientific	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation <input type="checkbox"/> Comments <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) <b>Social Service; Visiting Homemaker Service; Citizenship Training</b>

**4. OWNER OF PROPERTY**

OWNER'S NAME: **Mercer Street Friends Center (a N.J. non-profit Corporation)**

STREET AND NUMBER: **151 Mercer Street**

CITY OR TOWN: **Trenton** STATE: **New Jersey** CODE: **34**

**5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.: **Mercer County Court house, Bureau of Taxation Page 48 City Atlas Lot #24**

STREET AND NUMBER: **209 South Broad Street**

CITY OR TOWN: **Trenton** STATE: **New Jersey** CODE: **34**

**6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

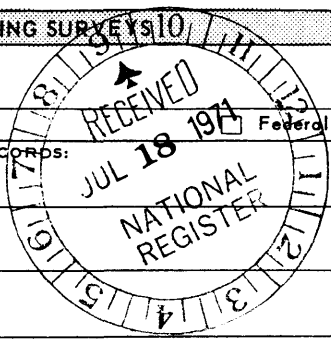
TITLE OF SURVEY: **none**

DATE OF SURVEY: \_\_\_\_\_

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS: \_\_\_\_\_

STREET AND NUMBER: \_\_\_\_\_

CITY OR TOWN: \_\_\_\_\_ STATE: \_\_\_\_\_ CODE: \_\_\_\_\_



SEE INSTRUCTIONS

718.34 0010  
8/12/71

STATE: New Jersey  
COUNTY: Mercer  
ENTRY NUMBER: 718.34 0010  
DATE: 8/12/71  
FOR NPS USE ONLY

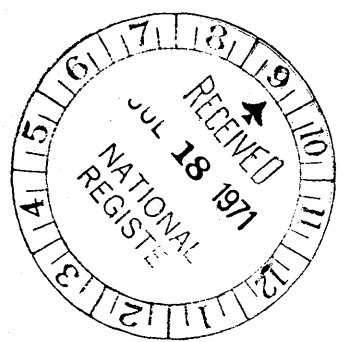
CONDITION	(Check One)					
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> Good	<input type="checkbox"/> Fair	<input type="checkbox"/> Deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> Ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> Unexposed
	(Check One)			(Check One)		
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Altered	<input type="checkbox"/> Unaltered	<input type="checkbox"/> Moved	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Original Site		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (if known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

The external appearance of the original building was as now (See Property Photograph Form) except for a small one-storey addition at the rear. The shape of the site is unchanged since the beginning. A carriage shed - - since decayed and removed - - ran along the north wall of the 50-foot jog at the rear. The inside of the building was originally all one large room, with a ceiling-high partition running east and west down the middle, to separate the women's from the men's areas of worship. Facing benches on a slightly raised dais ran along the west wall on both sides. The only access to the basement originally was an outside cellar door at the rear of the building. In 1956-1957 an arcaway and outside stairs to the basement were installed, the center partition and facing benches were removed, the dirt floor in the basement was concreted, a new heating plant was installed in the basement, a stove, sink, kitchen cupboards and counters were installed on the south side of the large room and a partition built to enclose the kitchen. At that time a balcony was erected on the south side, with stairs to it from just inside the front (street) door. In 1963-1964 a ground-level-and-basement addition was erected at the rear of the building for a nursery school (now a youth center), and an office was built within the original building, leaving a passageway between it and the kitchen, for access from the south door. At this time inside stairs were installed from the kitchen to the basement. . . In April, 1966 an arsonist gutted the interior of the building. The repairs included widening of the balcony, rearrangement of office space both at the street level and on the balcony, moving the kitchen to the basement, reconstruction of the basement under the 1964 addition to make it suitable for serving group meals and storage of activity equipment and improvement of the sanitary facilities. Some central and local air conditioning was installed at the same time. Brick walls were built around the upper level playground and on the street side of the site. The original iron picket fence along the street was re-mounted on top of the new brick wall. Chain-link fencing has been installed around the other three sides of the property. Both playground levels have been paved to protect neighbors from dust and to simplify maintenance. Playground equipment has been added from time to time.

See continuation Sheet



PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- Pre-Columbian
- 16th Century
- 18th Century
- 20th Century
- 15th Century
- 17th Century
- 19th Century

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known)

1858

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- |  |                                       |   |  |
|--|---------------------------------------|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal              | <input type="checkbox"/> Education    | <input type="checkbox"/> Political                      | <input type="checkbox"/> Urban Planning  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Prehistoric             | <input type="checkbox"/> Engineering  | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Religion            | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Historic                | <input type="checkbox"/> Industry     | <del>Religion</del>                                     | _____                                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture             | <input type="checkbox"/> Invention    | <input type="checkbox"/> Science                        | _____                                    |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Landscape    | <input type="checkbox"/> Sculpture                      | _____                                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Art                     | <input type="checkbox"/> Architecture | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Social/Humanitarian | _____                                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Commerce                | <input type="checkbox"/> Literature   | <input type="checkbox"/> Theater                        | _____                                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Communications          | <input type="checkbox"/> Military     | <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation                 | _____                                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Conservation            | <input type="checkbox"/> Music        |   | _____                                    |

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

While Mercer Street Friends Center is a non-profit corporation of the State of New Jersey, and completely non-sectarian in its operation, it is sponsored by Chesterfield Monthly Meeting of The Religious Society of Friends which was organized during or before 1684 in Trenton and 1692 in Crosswicks. Owing to a doctrinal division of Friends in the Philadelphia area in 1828, two separate groups were established in Trenton, one of which, in 1858, built this Meeting House by authority of the Minute recited in Section 9 of this Application. The doctrinal rift was healed in 1955, so this Meeting House was no longer needed or used as a place of worship. In 1957 the Chesterfield Monthly Meeting of Friends recognized the need for a community center and settlement house in the Mercer-Jackson area of Trenton where there was no available open space for recreation, nor facility for community activities. The Meeting also welcomed an opportunity to sponsor a project which would express and implement its social testimonies, and in which all of its members could participate. Therefore, after investigation and study, the Meeting authorized the assignment of this no-longer needed Meeting House for this purpose, and allotted funds for structural changes. At that time the Meeting set up a governing committee with instructions that activities were to be conducted in the spirit of Friends, without discrimination of any sort, with no proselytizing nor religious implication, and with a complete community service, embracing various programs complementing and supplementing each other, to benefit entire families, and people of all ages and conditions. The committee is now the Board of Directors of the non-profit corporation, and the original ~~minutes~~ <sup>minutes</sup> is recited among the purposes stated in the Certificate of Incorporation. . . The Center opened in the Spring of 1958 with volunteers from the Meeting. Later that year a young Director was employed. For three years he was the only staff. The first year's budget was \$7000. Growth in line with the original purposes has been steady and consistent since then, both in staff and activities, with some programs out-stationed. The current budget is over \$400,000 and the staff includes close to a hundred people on full or part-time pay. More than a hundred volunteers provide service from time to time in the various programs and on the Board of Directors and its committees.

See enclosed descriptive brochure of present activities.

See also continuation sheet

SEE INSTRUCTIONS



9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

SEE ATTACHED CONTINUATION SHEET

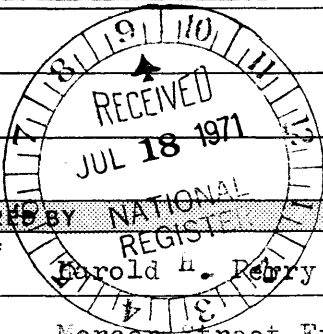
10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY			OR	LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES		
CORNER	LATITUDE	LONGITUDE		LATITUDE	LONGITUDE	
	Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds		Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds	
NW	° ' "	° ' "		40° 13' 03"	74° 45' 40"	
NE	° ' "	° ' "		(per geodetic survey map)		
SE	° ' "	° ' "				
SW	° ' "	° ' "				

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: 0.3445 acres (15000 sq ft)

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

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
<u>NO OVERLAP</u>			
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE



11. FORM PREPARED BY

NAME AND TITLE: Carol H. Reby, Chairman

ORGANIZATION: Mercer Street Friends Center DATE: April 2, 1971

STREET AND NUMBER: 151 Mercer Street

CITY OR TOWN: Trenton STATE: New Jersey (08611) CODE: 34

12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION

As the designated State Liaison 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. The recommended level of significance of this nomination is:

National  State  Local

Name: Richard J. Sullivan  
RICHARD J. SULLIVAN

Title: COMMISSIONER, Department of Environmental Protection

Date: April 7, 1971

NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION

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

Ernest A. Connolly  
Chief, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

AUG 12 1971

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

ATTEST:

William J. Montez  
Keeper of The National Register

Date: JUL 28 1971

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Continuation Sheet) 2

STATE	
New Jersey	
COUNTY	
Mercer	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE
718.34.0010	8/12/71

(Number all entries)

Mercer Street Friends Center  
Trenton, N.J. 34  
Mercer County 021



7. Description

Erected in 1858 this building was a meeting house for the Society of Friends. In order to best meet the new requirements of its diversified programs, alterations to the interior spaces and some modifications to the exterior have been required.

The symmetrical facade (or Eastern elevation) disposed about a brick panel on axis has two single, wood panelled doors; by which it was originally intended that the separate sexes entered for worship; and two, tall, wood, double-hung, many paned windows with shutters. This elevation has remained unaltered. A modest porch, supported by simple wood posts, shelters the doors under its tin, standing-seam roof.

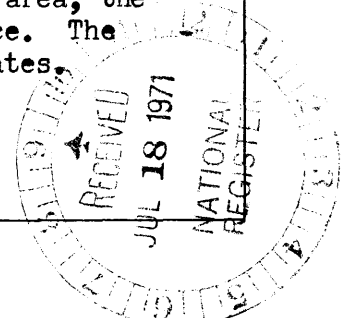
North and South elevations are simple brick gable ends which have been modified to provide additional windows and basement exit areaway. These were in part required by local building codes and safety ordinances.

A brick "lean-to" with fully excavated basement and generous area-way stairs has been added across the rear or West elevation. This addition accommodates two classrooms (with individual toilet facilities) for the Center's pre-school program, at grade, and a warmly panelled multi-purpose room at the lower level, for senior citizens' activities.

It was necessary, several years ago, to lay the irreplaceable and fragile tomb stones flat and bury them atop the graves to prevent vandalism and theft. A new red brick enclosure defines the area of the former graveyard and when additional monies are available, it will become a quiet garden for contemplation, as this neighborhood undergoes an extensive urban renewal program.

8. Significance

Architecture - The building stands out in the neighborhood as a simple, distinctive, semi-classical brick structure as shown in the photograph submitted with the application, surrounded by old shade trees, one of which is a noble specimen copper beech tree. There are attractive brick walls along the street front and surrounding the upper level area, the street wall being surmounted by the original iron picket fence. The driveway and front entrance steps also feature iron picket gates.



NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Continuation Sheet) 3

STATE	
New Jersey	
COUNTY	
Mercer	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE
118,34,0010	8/12/71

(Number all entries)

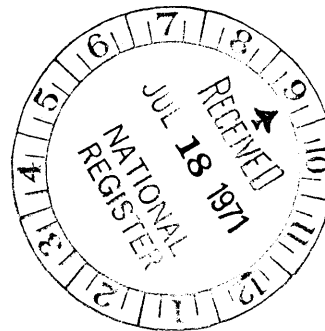
Mercer St. Friends Center  
Trenton, N.J. 34  
Mercer County 023  
8. Significance:  
Religion

From 1858 until 1955 the site was used as the place of worship for the (Orthodox) Trenton Friends' Meeting. It was also the principal meeting place of the several component local Meetings of Chesterfield Monthly Meeting of Friends, consisting of Friends Meetings in Trenton, Crosswicks and Stony Brook (Princeton, New Jersey. On the same property was a simple Friends' burying ground, mentioned elsewhere in this application. At the rear was a carriage shed which subsequently disintegrated and was removed.

After the 1955 merger of the Orthodox and Hicksite branches of the Philadelphia Yearly Meeting of Friends which cured the 1827-1828 doctrinal division, the Mercer Street Meeting House was closed, and worship in it was discontinued, since the Hicksite Meeting House at Hanover and Montgomery Streets was adequate for the worship of Trenton Friends, and its appointments were more complete than those in the Mercer Street Meeting House.

During the 97 years of its service as an important place of Friends' worship, the Mercer Street Meeting House was of religious importance in the City and neighborhood.

- 11. G. Thomas Brooks, jr., R.A.  
Kramer, Hirsch & Carchidi  
A.I.A. Architects  
42 West Lafayette St.  
Trenton, N.J.



NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Continuation Sheet)

STATE New Jersey	
COUNTY Mercer	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER 71.8.34.0010	DATE 8/12/71

(Number all entries)

MERCER STREET FRIENDS CENTER; 151 Mercer Street; Trenton, N.J. 08611

9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES:

MINUTES OF CHESTERFIELD MONTHLY MEETING OF FRIENDS (ORTHODOX), authorizing purchase of land and erection of Meeting House March 2, 1858, March 18, 1858, April 6, 1858, May 4, 1858 and June 8, 1858: Three pages attached hereto. Originals filed in Department of Records, Philadelphia Yearly Meeting of Friends; 302 Arch Street; Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19106; Microfilm copies at Haverford College, Haverford Pa.

The Orthodox Quaker Meeting House of The Religious Society of Friends on Mercer Street in Trenton, New Jersey is mentioned in the following references:

"History of the City of Trenton, New Jersey" by John C. Raum, 1871, p 53

"History of Trenton, New Jersey" by Francis Bazley Lee, 1895 p 168

"The Trenton Story" by Eleanore N. Shuman, 1958 p 366

The following from the Vertical File in the Trenton Free Public Library:

Churches, Quaker: Page from the Trenton Sunday Times Advertiser September 11, 1932, with photograph of the Mercer Street Meeting House

From Scrapbook of Newspaper Clippings: "Houses of Worship in and near Trenton, New Jersey", Sketch by Harry Ludeke (1938) of Mercer Street Meeting House, page 39

T 280

H 81 Trenton Free Public Library

Congressional Correspondence:

Rep. Frank Thompson, Jr. (4th Dist.)

Sen. Clifford P. Case

Sen. Harrison A. Williams



**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
PROPERTY MAP FORM**

(Type all entries - attach to or enclose with map)

STATE New Jersey	
COUNTY Mercer	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER 718-340010	DATE 8/12/71

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

**1. NAME**

COMMON: (present) MERCER STREET FRIENDS CENTER (a settlement house)  
AND/OR HISTORIC: CHESTERFIELD FRIENDS MEETING HOUSE (Orthodox)

**2. LOCATION**

STREET AND NUMBER: 151 Mercer Street

CITY OR TOWN: Trenton

STATE: New Jersey	CODE: 34	COUNTY: Mercer	CODE: 021
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**3. MAP REFERENCE**

SOURCE: Ezra Golub, Professional Engineer; Levittown, Pennsylvania

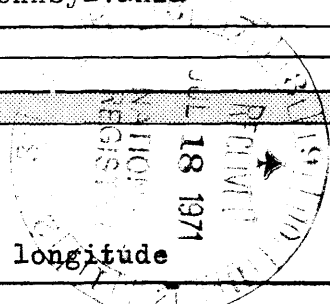
SCALE: 1" = 20'

DATE: March 28, 1967

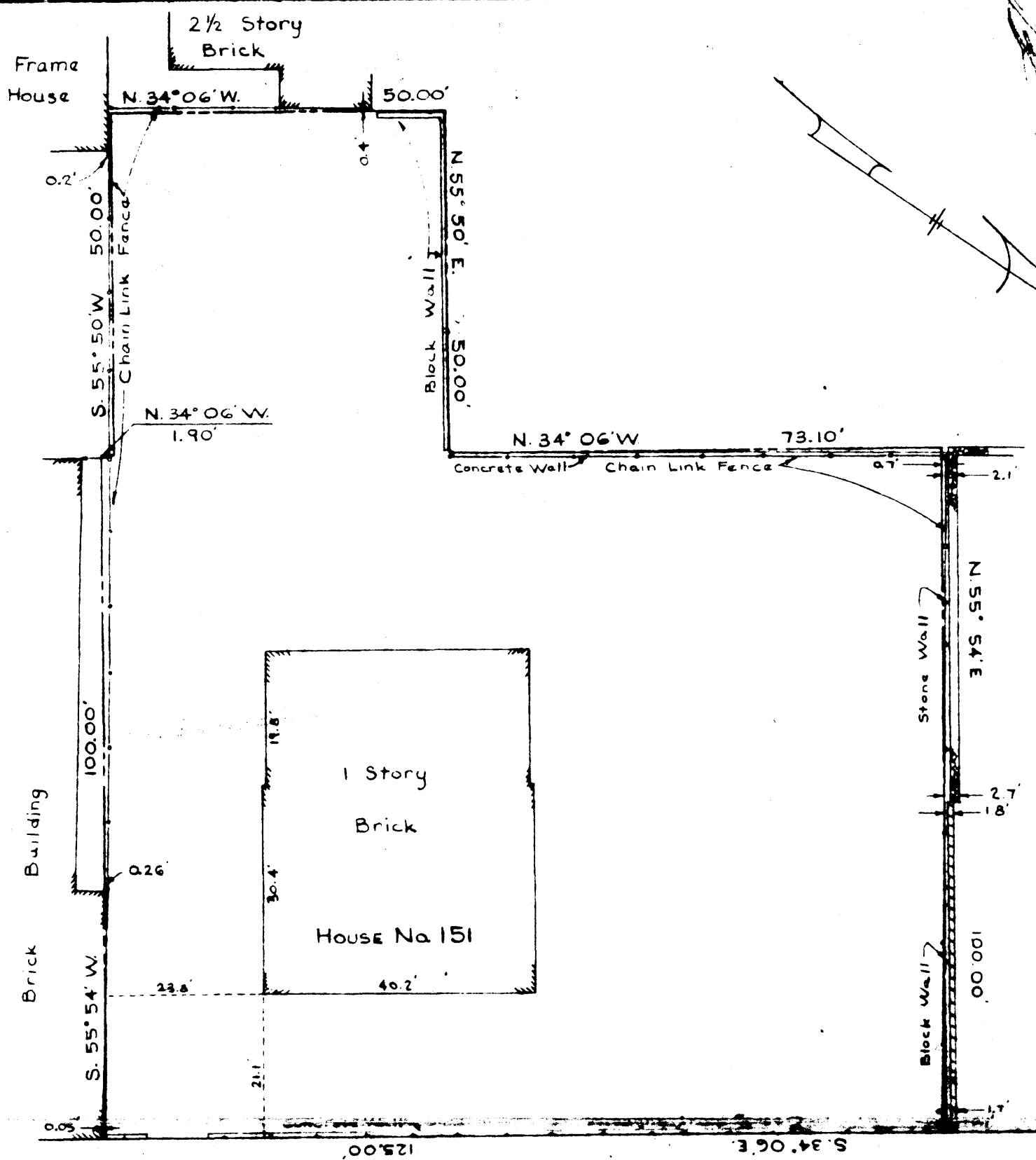
**4. REQUIREMENTS**

TO BE INCLUDED ON ALL MAPS

- Property boundaries where required.
- North arrow. See map
- Latitude and Longitude reference.  
North 40° 12' 30" latitude; West 74° 46' longitude







MERCER

STREET

NO.	DATE	BY	DESCRIPTION
<b>REVISIONS</b>			
<b>EZRA GOLUB</b>			
<b>PROFESSIONAL ENGINEER</b>			
4141 WOERNER AVE.		LEVITTOWN, PENNA.	
PLAN OF SURVEY FOR MERCER STREET FRIENDS CENTER TRENTON, NEW JERSEY			
DRAWN BY D.L.F.		JOB NO. 513-1	DRAWING NO. B5130101
CHECKED BY E.G.		DATE March 25, 1997	
APPROVED BY E.G.		SCALE 1"=20'	

*Ezra Golub*