

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

For NPS use only

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form

received SEP 26 1988
date entered

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

1. Name

historic Joslin Farm

and or common Joslin Round Barn Farm

2. Location

street & number Northeast side of the East Warren Road, 1.5 miles
east of the intersection with Bridge Street N/A not for publication

city, town Waitsfield vicinity of N/A

state Vermont code 50 county Washington code 023

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> commercial
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational
<input type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government
	N/A <input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial
		<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military
			<input type="checkbox"/> museum
			<input type="checkbox"/> park
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private residence
			<input type="checkbox"/> religious
			<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
			<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
			<input type="checkbox"/> other:

4. Owner of Property

name John and Doreen Simko

street & number East Warren Road

city, town Waitsfield N/A vicinity of state Vermont

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Waitsfield Town Clerk

street & number Bridge Street and Route 100

city, town Waitsfield state Vermont

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title VT Historic Sites & Structures Survey has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date 6/79 federal state county local

depository for survey records Vermont Division for Historic Preservation

city, town Montpelier state Vermont

7. Description

Condition

excellent
 good
 fair

deteriorated
 ruins
 unexposed

Check one

unaltered
 altered

Check one

original site
 moved date _____

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

See Continuation Sheets.

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The Joslin Farm, located on a tributary of the Mad River, consists of a c.1860 vernacular/Greek Revival farmhouse, a 1910 polygonal barn, a c.1930 field barn, a late 19th century ice house, and a c.1930 vegetable stand all set amidst rolling farmland. The 2 1/2 story, gable front, clapboarded house with north ell and attached carriage barn is highlighted by a noteworthy Greek Revival sidehall entrance and paneled corner boards. The 12-sided barn is the only survivor of the 5 "round" barns once found in Waitsfield. There are few exterior alterations to any of the buildings and their integrity is largely uncompromised. The farmhouse has undergone a rehabilitation in 1986-87 which has been generally sympathetic to the historic character. The polygonal barn is currently (1988) being rehabilitated. The 84 acre parcel also includes open fields and a sugarbush.

The Joslin Farm is located on the north side of the East Warren Road, 1.5 miles east of its intersection with Bridge Street. This site is approximately 2 miles southeast of the village of Waitsfield (Waitsfield Town, Washington County, Vermont) which has been designated as a National Register Historic District (August 11, 1983).

The farm is located in an open, agricultural setting and the two primary structures are positioned approximately 50 feet from the road. A branch of the Mad River cuts through the property to the south and east of the house, creating sloping embankments on both sides and separating the house from the surrounding fields. Beyond the stream (east and south of the house) are large meadows bounded by stone walls lined by trees. A meadow also extends north of the polygonal barn stretching along East Warren Road; woods bound this on the north and east. Across the road is additional pasture land bordered on the southwest by a stone wall lined with trees and by forest land to the west. Mature maple trees line much of the road through the farm.

The Joslin farmhouse is a 2 1/2-story, 3 x 4 bay, gable front house featuring Greek Revival style elements. A 1 1/2-story, vernacular, multi-bay ell and carriage barn extending to the northwest, slightly predate the larger main block.

The main block has original granite facing on a new concrete foundation (which replaced a rubblestone foundation), a rear,

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brick, endwall chimney and clapboard exterior. A c.1920 dormer on the northwest roof slope has been removed in 1987 and the original roof profile restored. Windows are 6/6 sash with plain surrounds and drip molds. Second story windows on the southeast and northwest elevations abut the eaves. Full 6/6 sash windows light the attic in the front and rear. Two sets of paired, 4/4, narrow windows light the stairhall from the northwest eaves side (The pair furthest rear is a sympathetic replacement of a picture window.). Greek Revival trim includes a wide frieze, 12" wide paneled corner boards and a notable Greek revival sidehall (left front) entrance with a paneled door, 4/5 length sidelights, paneled reveals and flanking, paneled pilasters which support a full entablature with a molded, projecting cornice.

A one-story, shed roof porch off the rear gable elevation (added c.1940) has been removed in 1987. The c.1920 porch has been reconstructed according to a historic photo and enclosed.

The 1 1/2 story, gabled ell and carriage barn join the main block at the latter's northwest corner. The ell consists of a 4-bay living area with two 2/2 sash windows southeast of and one 2/2 window northwest of a single leaf pass door. (The latter window is a 1986 replacement of a modern casement window.) A rear, interior, brick chimney with corbelled cap and two, front, gable dormers penetrate the roof. Dormers feature 2/2 sash and all windows are topped by peaked lintels. The rear elevation kneewall windows with six and nine-pane lights have been replaced (1986) by two banks of four 4-pane windows. Two skylights have been added to the rear roof slope in 1986. A 3-bay porch spans the front of this section of the ell. The porch features elliptical, arcaded bays with wooden keys, paneled posts and a clapboard apron. The porch was added c.1915 and obscures window and door trim. A four hole privy of c.1860 is attached to the rear of this ell.

The carriage barn section of the ell originally featured two carriage bays with sliding, paneled doors, two paneled pass doors and four 6/6 sash windows. The door to the southeasternmost carriage bay has been removed and replaced with paired 6/6 sash windows during recent restoration. Consistent with the rest of the ell, peaked window lintels

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and door surrounds repeat a Greek Revival motif. Two hayloft doors and a sash window break the kneewall while three gable roof dormers light the upper story. The two northwesternmost dormers have 6/6 sash while the other has a 2/2 sash window. The rear wall of the carriage barn has 9/6 sash with plain surrounds. There are several new windows and doors on the rear basement level of the barn ell. The gable end features paired 9-pane windows in the peak and two, small, 9-pane windows on the first story. Formerly, wooden posts provided the foundation for the ell. Due to deterioration they have been replaced with a poured concrete foundation.

The interior plan of the main block has remained largely intact and retains a moderate amount of trim. The front entry stairhall features paneled doors with molded architraves and peaked lintels. A slender, curved stair rail with turned newel post and turned balustrade graces the stairs and upstairs hallway. Wide plank flooring and baseboards remain in most rooms. Circular plaster medallions remain in the dining room and living room.

The interior of the 4-bay ell section has been altered. The room arrangement was altered in the 1940's, creating a large kitchen area with modern casement windows across the rear eaves. During the 1986 restoration, this area was gutted and reframed in a new configuration and casement windows replaced. A new family room is now found in the section of the ell which served as a barn before 1940; framing members are still exposed as they were historically.

The wood-frame, duodecagonal (12-sided) dairy barn was built in 1910. It was built into an embankment allowing utilization of three levels. The basement level is exposed on the north and east elevations with large, sliding entry doors for machinery access. The first story is at ground level on the south and west elevations. A dairy room addition (c.1955) on the southwest has been removed in the current restoration and is being stored in the pasture across East Warren Road pending a determination for its future use. This first story level is still furnished with approximately 32 cow stanchions, a chicken coop area and equipment room. This level has a pedestrian walkway around the perimeter and stanchions face the interior where hay is fed in through doors opening onto the hay mow. Trap doors open to the

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basement for removal of animal manure and urine to the basement. This level is lit by 2/2 sash, symmetrically arranged with two windows in each wall section. Whitewashed walls and ceilings increase the light quality.

The second floor is reached by a gable roofed high drive extending toward the house from the southwesterly elevation of the barn. The covered ramp has vertical wood slat walls and swinging, double leaf doors opening onto the circular drive in the barn. This drive bay level is open to the roof and is lit by single-pane windows along the walls and by the central, 12-sided cupola with a 2/2 sash window on each face. The circular drive surrounds the hay mow and central silo. This concentric arrangement allows easy unloading of hay, distribution of feed to animals and good ventilation through this core and the cupola.

The frame barn is sheathed with clapboard painted white. The gently sloping roof, covered with wood shingles, radiates from the cupola with two moderate breaks in the roofline. These breaks, seen on the exterior, reflect the polygonal "rings" of the interior framing. The innermost polygon defines the central core, a cylinder containing the interior silo and extending up to the perimeter of the cupola. The roof was damaged years ago but has been rebuilt to match the initial construction.

A modern milk room was added to the southwest elevation c.1955. It has a gable roof, poured concrete foundation and clapboard exterior. The interior is tiled and some of the equipment remains in place. As mentioned previously, this addition was recently removed.

At present, the barn is undergoing a total rehabilitation: the foundation is being rebuilt and the entire structure trued and restored.

To the northwest of the polygonal barn and across East Warren Road is a c.1930 field barn. This barn is 1 story with the horizontal eaves of its gable roof parallel to the road. The frame is rough-cut dimensional lumber with small log rafters. The sheathing is flush horizontal planks and the roof is sheet metal. The major entrance is on the southwest elevation with an additional pass door on the northwest.

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There are two, small boarded windows on the northeast elevation.

Southeast of the polygonal barn is a c.1900 ice house. This 1 story, gable roofed building has flush, horizontal, plank sheathing both inside and out. The roof is sheathed with wood shingles and features exposed rafter tails. In each gable peak is a fixed 9-pane window. The plank door on the southwest gable end and both windows have plain board surrounds. A plain frieze board distinguishes the gable ends. This ice house had sunk somewhat on its boggy site and tilted; it was recently (c.1987) jacked up and placed on a new stone foundation. It is currently being used as a pig house.

North of the polygonal barn and across the meadow at the edge of the woods is a building apparently constructed as a vegetable stand (c.1930) which is now unused. On the west elevation is a large window opening with a top-hinged flap (now nailed shut), presumably for customer access. The building is shed roofed with a rolled asphalt covering and novelty siding. An entrance is set in the south elevation (door missing) and a small, 2-pane window on the north.

The architecturally important polygonal barn in conjunction with the well-preserved farmhouse, outbuildings and intact rural setting is a fine example of a Vermont dairy farm operation.

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 checked="" 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900–	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		

Specific dates Barn, 1910 **Builder/Architect** James Julian "Jules" Joslin, designer

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

See Continuation Sheets .

9. Major Bibliographical References

See continuation sheet.

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property 84+/- acres

Quadrangle name Waitsfield

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

UTM References

A

1	8
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6	7	5	5	1	0
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4	8	9	2	7	8	0
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B

1	8
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6	7	5	9	0	0
---	---	---	---	---	---

4	8	9	2	1	8	0
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C

1	8
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6	7	4	3	6	0
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4	8	9	2	7	1	0
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D

1	8
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6	7	4	7	3	0
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4	8	9	3	2	5	0
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E

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F

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G

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H

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Verbal boundary description and justification

See Continuation Sheet.

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

I/A state	code	county	code
state	code	county	code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title See Continuation Sheet.

organization _____ date _____

street & number _____ telephone _____

city or town _____ state _____

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 *Eric Roberts*

title Director, Vermont Division for Historic Preservation date 9/23/88

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

10/27/88

date _____

for Melissa Byrne
Keeper of the National Register

Attest:

date _____

Chief of Registration

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The Joslin Farm is eligible for inclusion on the National Register of Historic Places based on criterion A and C for its historical and architectural significance. The 84 acre farm contains two principle structures: a 12-sided barn (commonly referred to as a "round" barn) built in 1910 and a 2 1/2 story, vernacular/Greek Revival style farmhouse built c.1860. Also included are a c.1900 ice house, a c.1930 field barn, and a c.1930 vegetable stand. The integrity of the farmhouse remains intact with little alteration to the original massing of the exterior form and fabric. The polygonal barn stands as one of approximately 15 "round" barns in Vermont and the only survivor of the 5 "round" barns once in the Waitsfield area. The unaltered rural setting and well maintained structures represent a fine example of Vermont dairy farming, agricultural innovation and significant architectural styling.

Early maps of Waitsfield (1858 and 1878) and the History of Waitsfield (1908) by M. Bushnell Jones show the three major areas of early settlement in the town as Waitsfield Village, Waitsfield Common and the area surrounding the Joslin Farm. Today Waitsfield Village, retaining its historic character, is a commercial and residential area frequented by tourists. The Waitsfield Common, losing its status as a community center in the late 19th century, is now largely an area of scattered residences. The central common area and cemetery remain. The Joslin Farm area no longer supports the variety of structures alluded to in 1908 by Matt Bushnell Jones.

About halfway across lot 88, a grass grown way leads down to the Roxbury Road at the Cyrus Joslin farm on lot 99. Just where it leaves the North Road there stood in early days the store of Elias Taylor, jr., and the blacksmith shop of Captain Richard Gale. Indeed this spot was quite the business section of the Southeast District at that time. The Joslin place just spoken of is the farm first settled by Eliphalet Bates after whom came John English, jr. and after him the Joslin, who still own it.

Cyrus Joslin had purchased the property on November 1, 1831. There he lived with his wife and ten children until 1866,

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when he died. His will, in essence, allowed for division of the property as provided for an intestate estate. For this reason a full inventory was conducted for division of the estate. At that time, 93 acres were considered the "Home Farm" (valued at \$3,200) and 75 acres were considered the "Mountain Lot" (valued at \$250). Cyrus' widow petitioned to waive the provisions of the will and claimed her "widow's dower and other benefits of the estate." As the physical limits of her "homestead" (which was 1/3 of the house and yard) were delineated, the first reference is made to structures on the property. By this reference it is clear that both the house and ell were built before February 19, 1867. In setting out the widow's homestead, the plan of the house is described.

...the Parlor, Bedroom, clothes press, and Pantry on the lower floor, also an unfinished chamber as originally planned over the Dining Room, together with an undivided right in and to the Front Hall and Stairs, all in the front or upright part of the house, with the right or privilege of entering at any and all time the Dining Room and Stairway for the purpose of going to and from the Cellar- also the right or privilege of at all times passing through the other part of the house for water from the cistern from which water is used by those occupying the remainder of the house - We further set off as above the stable, and the scaffold over the same, and over the Granary, all in the northerly end of the Horse Barn.

The Joslin Farmhouse predates the polygonal barn by approximately fifty years. It incorporates a vernacular structure with local interpretations of Greek Revival styling. The 1 1/2-story ell predates the larger, 2 1/2-story block by only a short period; it also features moderate Greek Revival influences as seen in the trim on window and door openings. This process of additive architecture, expanding a small structure through more stylish additions, and the continuous architecture seen in the connected barn are typical of New England architecture.

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It is difficult to determine if another barn was on the property apart from the attached barn mentioned in the window's dower, but an inventory at the time of Cyrus Joslin's death indicate livestock, barn equipment and milled lumber on the property.

Cyrus Joslin's daughters bought the estate in 1867 for \$2790 excepting their mother's homestead. In 1878, Beer's Atlas lists David Osgood Joslin as the owner of the property. He was Cyrus' son and possibly lived there with his sisters. In 1901, his son, David Clement "Clem" Joslin bought part of the property from his aunt and in 1910, he acquired the other half of the Home Farm. It was during Clem's ownership that the barn was built. A 1911 inventory of the estate shows that the family had a sizable number of livestock including the following:

1 pair oxen, 2 yearling heifers, 13 cows, 1 bull, 2 two year old steers, 3 hogs, 2 horses.

The barn was either completed or under construction at that point. It was built with approximately 32 stanchions. Clement Joslin was well known in Waitsfield as a town selectman for 23 years and for serving in the state legislature for one term. He initially raised Guernsey cows.

The polygonal barn is 12-sided, measures 77 feet in diameter and has been well maintained with few alterations to the original plan. In 1963, the barn was one of 24 "round" barns described and photographed in a statewide survey. Of the twenty-four round barns, only nine were polygonal (as opposed to circular) ranging from eight to twenty sides. In January of 1986, the total number of round barns had decreased dramatically and was reported as approximately fifteen. (No breakdown was provided for circular vs. polygonal.) Clearly the structures are threatened, not only due to disrepair, fire and deterioration, but due to change in the factors that were the initial impetus for their construction. Dairy farming and commercial agriculture are waning. The Joslin barn has not been used since the farm's cattle were sold in the 1970's. The efficiency of a round barn

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is not viable today due to mechanization; the last round barn in Vermont was built in 1917 and subsequent plans were rectilinear. Generally considered as a "novelty", there is little understanding of the agricultural reforms and innovations that inspired them.

The concept of round plans is not all that new. The Dutch of the Hudson River Valley in New York had transported octagonal church construction from Holland, building approximately 20 octagonal churches between 1680 and 1750. In Richmond, Vermont, the Round Church was built in 1813. The earliest precedent for a circular barn is the stone Shaker Barn in Hancock Massachusetts, constructed in 1826. Apart from these early examples of round construction, the most widely accepted impetus for the octagon fad was New York phrenologist, Orson S. Fowler. In his book, A Home For All, published in 1854, Fowler advocated the advantages and aesthetic appeal of an octagonal structure, be it a house or outbuilding. By replicating nature's spherical forms ("an inseparable combination of art and nature") and consolidating the functions and activities of farm or home under one roof, one could increase efficiency and save money in building materials. The polygonal or circular form encloses more floor area per outside wall than square forms, thereby requiring less lumber. Coupled with balloon framing techniques, the barns would be cheaper to build. The round structures provide less wind resistance, exposed more area to the warmth of the sun and less square footage to the cold than rectilinear barns.

Those that chose to build round barns were either individualists who could afford the folly of a novelty or bold experimenters realizing a need to advance the traditional ideas of agriculture. The Joslin Barn was built during Clem Joslin's ownership of the farm. It was reportedly designed by his second cousin, James Julian Joslin. Jules Joslin had previously designed another 12-sided barn for Bert Joslin. That barn was also located in Waitsfield but has since been dismantled. A third round barn in Waitsfield was a 90 foot, octagonal barn built in 1904 by Dan Bisbee.

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As the Joslin Barn stands today with stanchions and stalling encircling the central mow on the first floor, a threshing floor and wagon drive on the upper level and with manure storage in the basement, it adheres well to Fowler's original plans.

In them especially we need some common center in and around which to work. This form will turn the heads of all the horses and cattle, and openings to all the bays and bins toward the center, so that one can pass from bay to stall, and from every part to every other, with half the steps required in a square one.

If of an average size this form will enable you to turn around in this center or drive wagon and cart around in a circle, and close to the inner end of each bay, thereby reaching all and turning round so as to pass out where you entered. This consumes less wall room for entrances and saves backing out, besides furnishing just the shape floor for threshing with the flail.

Fowler advocated a steep, banked entry employing the help of gravity for pitching down hay instead of up. Bins for produce were put in the basement. Manure and urine were funnelled in to the basement to be kept under cover for optimal retention of nutrients until needed in the fields.

The 1963 survey suggests that the last round barn built in Vermont was in 1917.* The 18 year span during which the 24 recorded round barns were built was relatively short compared to the history of Vermont dairy farming. The barns, in theory, were a model for efficiency and cost less to build, yet they never met with full acceptance. For whatever reason, the barns are no longer built. What might have been an agricultural innovation is seen today as a novelty. Those that remain standing today represent a significant contribution to agriculture as well as the historical and architectural resources of Vermont.

* See bibliographical references for a more complete description of the 1963 survey mentioned above.

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Inventory—Nomination Form**

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received

date entered

Continuation sheet

Item number 9

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REFERENCES

Bressor, James E., "Round Barns An Endangered Species", Sunday Rutland Herald and Sunday Times Argus, January 26, 1986.

Fowler, Orson, A Home For All or The Gravel Wall and Octagon Mode of Building; New York, Fowlers & Wells Publishing, 1854; pp. 66, 174-175.

Jones, Matt Bushnell, History of the Town of Waitsfield, Vermont 1782-1908; Boston, George E. Littlefield, 1909.

Whitney, Stephen T., "Polygonal Barns", Vermont Life, XXVII:2 (Winter 1972).

Whitney, Stephen T., "Round Barns", Vermont Life, XXV:4 (Summer 1971).

Ziegler, Philip C., Storehouses of Time, Historic Barns of the Northeast; Maine, Down East Books, 1985.

Unpublished Works

Map- Vermont's Circular and Polygonal Barns; survey and photographic documentation of circular and polygonal barns performed by Don Merchant and Milo Reynolds; printed by Rural Vermont; 1963.

National Register Nominations for the Harlie Whitcomb Farm in Orange, Vermont and the Robinson Barn in Strafford, Vermont.

Probate Records, County Courthouse in Montpelier, Vermont.

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The nominated property contains 84 acres +/- and 5 buildings. The boundaries are depicted on the attached survey map and include most of the original Joslin "Home Farm" (93 acres in 1866). The land and buildings have maintained their integrity and together convey the sense of a historic Vermont dairy farm operation.

The deed to the property is conveyed in Deed Book 48, pages 542-44, April 28, 1986, of the Town records.

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Draft prepared by:

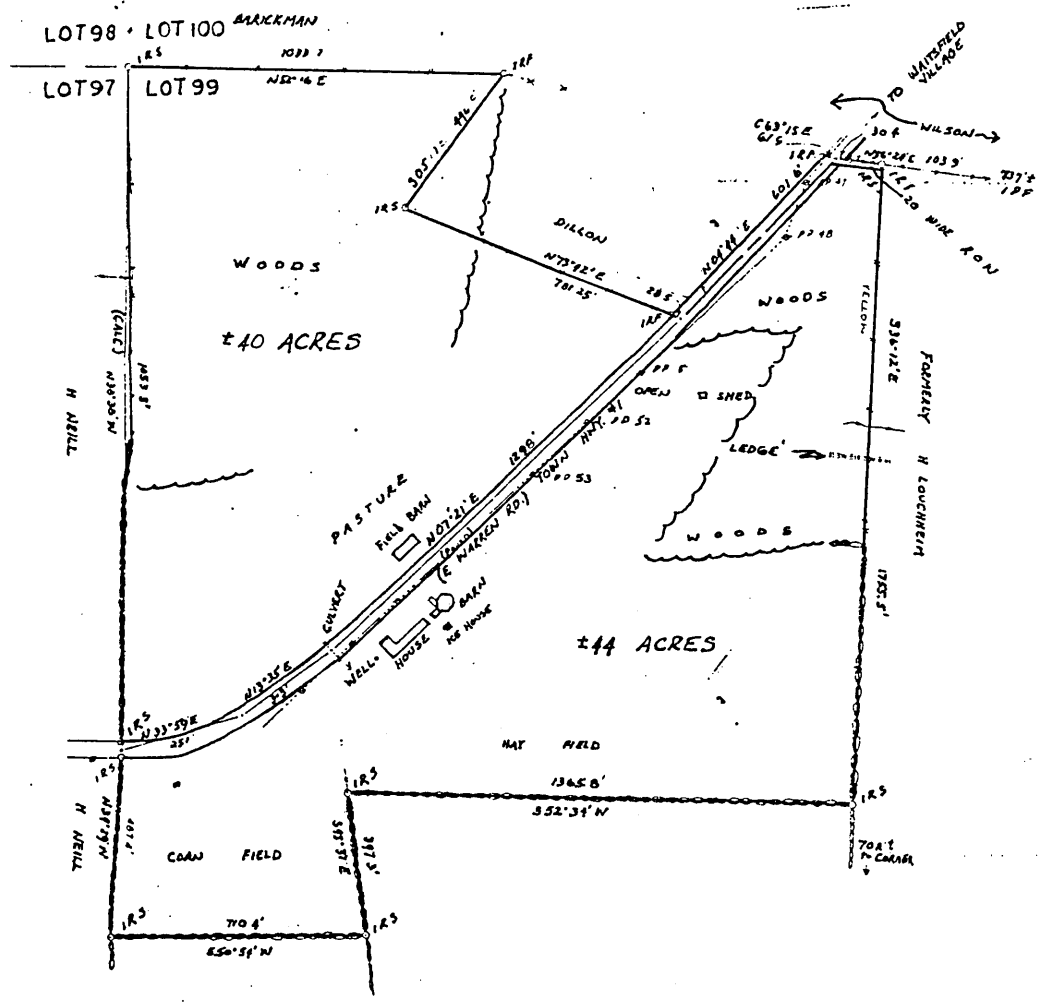
Trish Bensinger
146 West Main Street
Newark, Delaware 19711

September, 1986

Revised and edited by:

David Tansey
Vermont Division for Historic Preservation
58 East State Street
Montpelier, Vermont 05602
(802) 828-3226

September, 1988



- LEGEND**
- PROPERTY LINE
 - CENTERLINE ROAD
 - IR3
 - IRP
 - IRF
 - IRP
 - WIRE FENCE/BLAKES
 - BROOK
 - POWER POLE
 - STONE WALL

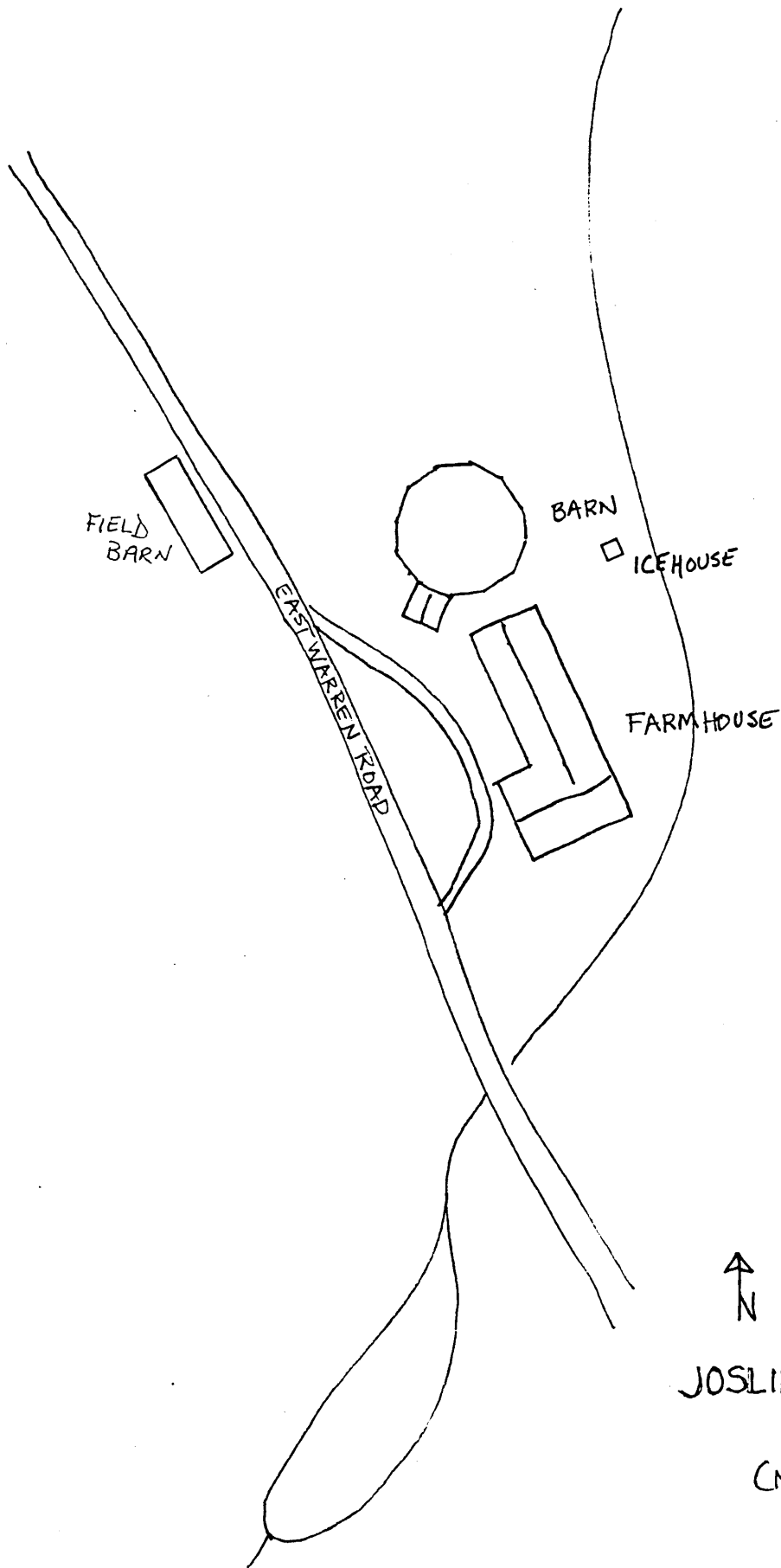
**RALPH JOSLIN PROPERTY
WAITSFIELD, VERMONT**

SCALE 1 INCH = 200 FEET DATE OCTOBER, 1983
 0' 200' 400' 600' 800' 1000'

**DROWN & MARSH, INC.
WAITSFIELD, VERMONT**



H. N. Marsh
 PROJECT # 1874-A



JOSLIN POLYGONAL BARN
AND FARMHOUSE
(NOT TO SCALE)