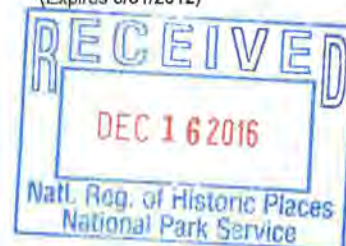


United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

56-614



National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. **Place additional certification comments, entries, and narrative items on continuation sheets if needed (NPS Form 10-900a).**

1. Name of Property

historic name BLAUVELT-CROSEY FARM

other names/site number CROSEY FARM; RIPPOON BARN

2. Location

street & number 230 SOUTH LITTLE TOR ROAD

city or town NEW CITY

state NEW YORK code NY county ROCKLAND code 087 zip code 10965

not for publication

vicinity

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, 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. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:

national statewide X local

Ruth A. Purpura
Signature of certifying official/Title

D8HPO

12/2/16
Date

State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

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

Signature of commenting official

Date

Title

State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

X

entered in the National Register

determined eligible for the National Register

determined not eligible for the National Register

removed from the National Register

other (explain):

Ruth A. Purpura
Signature of the Keeper

1-31-17
Date of Action

BLAUVELT-CROPEY FARM

Name of Property

ROCKLAND CO., NEW YORK

County and State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply.)

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	private
<input type="checkbox"/>	public - Local
<input type="checkbox"/>	public - State
<input type="checkbox"/>	public - Federal

Category of Property

(Check only **one** box.)

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	building(s)
<input type="checkbox"/>	district
<input type="checkbox"/>	site
<input type="checkbox"/>	structure
<input type="checkbox"/>	object

Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
2	1	buildings
0	0	sites
1	0	structures
0	0	objects
3	1	Total

Name of related multiple property listing

(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing)

N/A

**Number of contributing resources previously listed
in the National Register**

N/A

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

DOMESTIC: single dwelling

AGRICULTURE/SUBSISTENCE: processing, storage,
agricultural field

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

DOMESTIC: single dwelling

AGRICULTURE/SUBSISTENCE: processing, storage,
agricultural field

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions.)

EARLY REPUBLIC

LATE VICTORIAN

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions.)

foundation: STONE

walls: STONE, WOOD CLAPBOARD, WOOD
SHINGLE

roof: ASPHALT

other: BRICK, METAL, GLASS

BLAUVELT-CROPSEY FARM

Name of Property

ROCKLAND CO., NEW YORK

County and State

Narrative Description

Summary Paragraph

The Blauvelt-Cropsey Farm is located on the east side of South Little Tor Road in the Town of Clarkstown, Rockland County, New York. The nominated property consists of 24 acres of associated land, a large portion of which is used presently to sustain agricultural endeavors. This nomination includes two principal architectural resources: the Blauvelt-Cropsey house, a gambrel-roofed sandstone dwelling built ca. 1800, with two frame additions added subsequently to its east elevation; and a historically related barn, the structural core of which is the center aisle framing of a New World Dutch barn, a once prevalent but now exceedingly rare vernacular building type in Rockland County. The house is an exceptionally well maintained example of turn-of-the-nineteenth-century sandstone domestic architecture in Rockland County which maintains original Federal-style interior finish work in addition to incorporating features expressive of later periods, namely the frame wings added to the house's east elevation and a wraparound verandah and other features added during the Late Victorian era, during the Cropsey ownership period. The original plan of the main section consisted of an unfinished basement, a first-floor with four rooms—two each to either side of a center passage—and an upper-story that appears to have been finished in its present configuration later in its history. At first-floor level the staircase, offset and enclosed, has doors which open into both the hallway and northeast room. Foremost among the house's finish work is the Federal-style mantel in the southwest parlor; crafted from wood, it features a five-part frieze with delicate chip-carved fans and a central ellipse. This side of the first-floor, west of the hallway, is now a single open volume, the partition between the front and rear rooms having been removed earlier in the building's history. The barn, located northeast of the house, presents as a clapboarded gable-roof building with a compact L-shaped plan, the principal point of access being via a large opening on the south elevation. Although suffering from significant deterioration, the eastern portion of the barn retains four anchor-bents from a three-aisled New World Dutch barn, which was reconfigured to function as a flank entrance three-bay English barn. It is not known whether this early barn frame was original to the site or if the bents were moved here at an early date and used to build a flank-entrance construct; regardless, it is an important and rare survival of regional building practices in Rockland County. The nominated farmland remains a vital expanse of open space in what has otherwise become a very densely developed suburban quarter in the New City area of Rockland County.

Narrative Description

Location & Setting

The nominated property is located on the east side of South Little Tor Road in the New City area of the Town of Clarkstown, Rockland County, New York. Rectangular in shape, the property is partially bounded to the east by house lots situated on the west side of Carolina Street; to the north by house lots situated on the south side of Hall Avenue East; to the west by the north-south course of South Little Tor Road; and to the south by house lots situated on the north side of Williams Street. The house and barn maintain a position towards the western boundary of the property, near its center point; open fields extend from there to the north and south, representing a considerable expanse of open space in what is otherwise a densely developed suburban corridor on the periphery of the greater New York City area. The overall character of the immediate area is that of a built-out suburbanized residential quarter, excepting the route of South Little Tor Road, which is lined with commercial properties. Nevertheless, the Blauvelt-Cropsey house, which is located close to the road, remains set amidst a largely untrammelled setting characterized by expanses of manicured lawn, ornamental plantings, and towering locust and other mature hardwood trees. Although the house was built with its façade and principal entrance oriented to face southwards, it is now instead principally accessed from a door on the north elevation, where the main point of vehicular access and associated parking is maintained. As for the barn, it is located northeast of the house site, with vehicular access being by means of the road that extends eastward from South Little Tor Road, past the north side of the house, and which also provides access to more recent agricultural infrastructure.

BLAUVELT-CROPSEY FARM

Name of Property

ROCKLAND CO., NEW YORK

County and State

Blauvelt-Cropsey House, ca. 1800 & later (contributing building)

EXTERIOR: The principal section of the Blauvelt-Cropsey House is a one-and-one-half story construct erected above a roughly 41' by 19' plan. Built with load-bearing walls of red sandstone, it is covered by a high-breaking gambrel roof which is punctuated on its north and south lower slopes by three evenly spaced dormers. This main block is five bays wide with central entrance on its south-facing elevation, the original principal one (which is now relegated to a secondary position as the house is typically approached and entered from the north); one bay wide on its west elevation; and three bays wide on its north elevation, where a central door is also located. The east elevation is now all but concealed behind a frame wing; although the wing is a later construct, the lack of accommodation for a kitchen within the original main block indicates that the house either had an earlier wing, subsequently rebuilt, or otherwise an out-kitchen. The south, west and north elevations are now shielded beneath a broad wraparound verandah. This verandah, along with the glazed and paneled front and rear doors and the fish-scale shingles in the west elevation above the roof of the verandah, represent Late Victorian era modifications made to the original house and larger kitchen wing. The stonework of the main block varies from elevation to elevation, with that on the south façade being the most finished—it is fully dressed and laid in regular courses. The frame kitchen wing, roughly square in plan, is a one-and-one-half story construct, the north and south elevations of which are shielded beneath porches, like the main section. It is three bays wide on both the north and south elevations. Abutting its east wall is the third and smallest section of the building, a one-story wing which was erected in more recent times.

The south elevation of the main block, with its carefully laid walls and five-bay configuration, is now partially concealed beneath the later verandah, which is sustained by elaborately turned posts, above which is a bracketed frieze and concealed cornice gutters. The floor framing is in part supported by brick piers, between which are aligned decorative wood screens, with wood steps being present on both the north and south elevations; the porch railing is of a rectilinear type and includes a band of spherical motifs. In comparing the current appearance of the verandah with historic images maintained by the Cropsey family, the only missing detail are the decorative screens that were once aligned between the posts, just below frieze level; otherwise it remains as built. The verandah is of the wraparound type and extends the full width of the south, west and north elevations. The first-story windows on this elevation, like those on the west and north sides, are fitted with paired, inward-swinging three-light casements and have moulded wood casings and louvered blinds. The central entrance is fitted with a divided, or Dutch door, which is set behind a storm door and has an 18-light glazed upper leaf. A distinctive Federal-style surround, attenuated in character and consisting of fluted pilasters, a denticulated frieze, and moulded cornice, frames this entrance. The roofline is punctuated by the dormers, each of which is fitted with paired inward-swinging casements, three lights per unit, and flanked by louvered blinds.

The west elevation has a single central window fitted with a casement window. There is a noticeable decrease in the quality of the stonework on this elevation, when compared with the façade; while coursed, it has not been fully dressed into ashlar units, and the stones instead exhibit a rougher-hewn face. Above the roof of the porch rises the west end of the gambrel roof, which is fitted with wood fish scale shingles. Two windows bring natural light into the upper story; although smaller than those at principal floor level, they, too, are fitted with paired inward-swinging casements in a three-light configuration, like the dormers. A brick chimney with corbelled top rises from the roof ridge. As for the north elevation, centered within it is a glazed and paneled door which is flanked to either side by windows; these, like the dormers which punctuate the roofline, follow the format of the opposite elevation. The stonework on this elevation is the roughest of the three fully exposed ones; it consists of roughly laid and coursed stone which may have been reused from an earlier construct. The east elevation is all but concealed behind the frame wing. Evident are a bricked-in window, its original extent being partially concealed beneath the raking roof of the wing, and two small attic windows fitted with four-light casements, the tops of these windows corresponding with the location where the gambrel

BLAUVELT-CROSEY FARM

Name of Property

ROCKLAND CO., NEW YORK

County and State

“breaks.” This upper part of the gambrel is fitted with wood clapboard. A brick chimney with corbelled top rises from the ridge.

The frame kitchen wing is gable roofed and corresponds in depth with the main block, the east elevation of which it abuts. As with the main section, it also has Late Victorian-era porches fronting its north and south elevations, the roofs of which were built over, and thus form a continuation of, the main roofline. These are sustained on the north side by turned posts matching those used on the other section but have a simpler, bracket-less frieze, concealed cornice gutters, and vertical board sheathing with saw-tooth detail; simple square posts sustain the porch on the south elevation, which shields a door and two windows fitted with six-over-six wood sash. Fenestration on the north elevation consists of a window and two doors; the westernmost door serves a stair that aligns the east stone wall of the main block and provides communication from the exterior to the upper stories of the main block and wing. Single dormers fitted with six-light sash punctuate the north and south rooflines, and a brick chimney additionally rises from the north roof slope near its mid-point. The east elevation, which exhibits a number of conspicuously wide wood weatherboards, has three windows at half-story level, each of which is fitted with six-over-six wood sash. Approximately half of this elevation, the northernmost half, is obscured behind the small one-story frame wing that was added to it. That wing, accessed by means of doors on the north and south elevations, also has two windows on the east elevation, both fitted with six-over-six sash.

INTERIOR: The stone section was erected above a fully excavated basement; the remaining sections lack corresponding basements. The floor framing, consisting of hewn and squared timber joists, is aligned front to back; the joists span only half the depth of the basement and bear on a central girder mid-span. The masonry hearth supports, one at each end, are of stone construction, arched, and match the present fireplace dimensions; neither is suggestive, in width, of a kitchen fireplace and thus it is presumed that cooking was originally accomplished in an earlier wing or freestanding construct.

The principal floor was originally divided into four rooms separated by a central passage. Finishes include those dating to the early nineteenth century and portray a regional interpretation of the Federal style, including five-panel doors with horizontal top panel, two fireplace mantels, and other moulding and trim. Walls and ceilings are finished in plaster, with moulded baseboards, a later picture rail, and in the hallway a moulded chair rail. The two front rooms at first-story level, the southeast and southwest rooms, have end wall fireplaces which are centered within projecting chimney breasts. Both fireplaces (that in the southeast room has been closed off with decorative tile) retain Federal-style wood mantelpieces. That in the southeast room has a five-part frieze with a moulded architrave defining the original firebox opening, simplified dentil detailing, and a moulded shelf. The mantel in the southwest room exhibits a higher level of craftsmanship and is more fully articulated, its five-part frieze embellished with chip-carved detail and capped by a moulded shelf; this fireplace, though rebuilt, remains functional and is surrounded by a decorative tile skirt and has an encaustic tile hearth. Flooring on the first floor consists of hardwood strip flooring. The staircase, which provides vertical communication, is not set within the central passage but is instead located east of it, within the northeast room, with two pairs of doors, one opening into this room and the other directly into the hallway. The door that opens into the hallway is of a batten type and hung on surface-mounted HL hinges.

The upper level exhibits evidence that suggests it was finished into its present configuration at a later date, or otherwise substantially reworked. Most of the woodwork, such as the four and six-paneled doors, is of mid-nineteenth century date and the partitioning is formed of narrow vertical bead-board; ceilings are plaster on wood lath, and the flooring is the original wide plank. Conspicuous is the expressed structure of the roof framing, namely the posts and associated braces which are part of the gambrel roof framing; these appear to be the posts and associated braces which support purlin plates, indicating that the roof was likely framed in a manner more consistent with English building practices. The posts and braces, where exposed, are boxed and

BLAUVELT-CROPSEY FARM

Name of Property

ROCKLAND CO., NEW YORK

County and State

beaded. The bed chambers on this level are arranged in double-loaded corridor fashion, to the north and south of a central east-to-west hallway that also leads to the half-story of the frame kitchen wing; from there, an enclosed staircase which aligns the east stone wall of the main block leads downwards to this section's north porch and also opens directly into the kitchen wing.

At first-floor level the kitchen wing is divided into a front (south) and rear (north) room; the staircase from the upper level opens into the rear room. Of note here are the cupboards along the west wall of the front room, which were crafted from narrow bead-board and as such might be contemporary with present wall finish of the upper section of the main block.

Blauvelt-Cropsey Barn ["Rippon Barn"], ca. 1790 & later (contributing building)

The Blauvelt-Cropsey Barn evolved over multiple building campaigns to arrive at its present L-plan configuration. The building is composed of two distinct sections: a longer gable-ended section, aligned on an east-to-west axis, the easternmost portion of which represents the earliest part of the building, which was extended laterally to the west to bring it to its current extent; and, extending southwards from this longer section at its westernmost extreme, a gable-ended section which engages it at a right angle and thus creates the L-plan. Additionally, the area south of the longer section and east of the south wing is now occupied by an open shed feature, which provides shelter for motorized and other farm equipment. The exterior of the building exhibits significant deterioration and is characterized by worn clapboard siding, asymmetrical fenestration and rolled asphalt roofing; the north wall of the longer section, near the northwest corner, has fallen away and is temporarily shored.

The earliest section of the barn is entered via a large bay on the south elevation, which is fitted with sliding doors set on runners. Immediately visible are four large H-bents, the structural core of a scribe-rule New World Dutch barn. It is evident that these bents have been rearranged, given one of the two interior ones exhibits mortises for studding that doesn't correspond with that beam's present location. This provides clear indication that this framing was reused from an earlier construct in one of two likely scenarios: either a traditional New World Dutch barn on site was built, using salvaged material, and later reworked into a so-called Dutch-Anglo barn (in essence an English three-bay barn form erected using large H-bents to define the center threshing and drive bay, reoriented for flank, and not gable, entry); or otherwise the H-bents of an earlier barn were employed to construct a Dutch-Anglo barn, perhaps at the time the stone house was constructed ca. 1800. Further analysis will be required to establish a precise account of the barn's earliest history and whether the four H-bents do in fact represent the core of what would have been a roughly 38' by 30' three-bay New World Dutch barn built on site, the H-bents representing the center aisle or "nave" of this construct. Examples of so-called Dutch-Anglo barns, inspired by an increasing familiarity with English three-bay barns, have been identified in both Rockland County and New Jersey. Some represent the modification of traditional New World Dutch barns, while others were purpose-built as hybrids, using familiar framing methods to achieve the desired three-bay form with flank entrances. The anchor beams which connect to the posts to form each of the four H-bents have tenons which protrude beyond the posts in characteristic fashion, though they were not wedged, a typical treatment for protruding tenons in New World Dutch barns.

This original section, regardless of its precise chronology, was expanded westwards; the rafters and shingle lathing that support the roof of this entire longer section appear to represent a single construction phase. The south wing, which was not inspected closely due to its deteriorated condition and concerns for safety, appears to incorporate within its physical fabric portions of an earlier frame.

On the south side of the kitchen wing is a well (contributing structure), which is presently covered by a gable-roofed well head.

BLAUVELT-CROPSEY FARM

Name of Property

ROCKLAND CO., NEW YORK

County and State

Other Resources (non-contributing)

The remaining resources located on the property are not historic and generally relate to contemporary agricultural activities, which are being undertaken by the Rockland Farm Alliance. These include greenhouses and small buildings of recent construction.

BLAUVELT-CROSEY FARM

Name of Property

ROCKLAND CO., NEW YORK

County and State

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

☒ A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.

☐ B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.

☒ C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.

☐ D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

☐ A Owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.

☐ B removed from its original location.

☐ C a birthplace or grave.

☐ D a cemetery.

☐ E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.

☐ F a commemorative property.

☐ G less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions.)

AGRICULTURE

ARCHITECTURE

Period of Significance

ca. 1790- 1966

Significant Dates

ca. 1800; ca. 1825; ca. 1860; ca. 1900

Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

N/A

Period of Significance (justification)

The period of significance for this NRHP nomination, ca. 1790- 1966, begins with the construction of the barn and ends at the 50-year cutoff, given the property's continuing use in an agricultural capacity to that terminal date.

Criteria Considerations (explanation, if necessary)

N/A

BLAUVELT-CROPSEY FARM

Name of Property

ROCKLAND CO., NEW YORK

County and State

Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph

The Blauvelt-Cropsey Farm, located in the New City area of the Town of Clarkstown, Rockland County, New York, is an architecturally and historically significant property that reflects a number of salient themes in the town and county's history. Erected for the Blauvelt family near the turn of the nineteenth century, the Blauvelt-Cropsey house is a highly intact and impressively maintained example of sandstone domestic construction which portrays the regional melding of Dutch and English building traditions in Rockland County and adjacent Bergen County, New Jersey, in the post-Revolutionary War era. The house, erected above a rectangular plan, has a center hall plan and distinctive high-breaking gambrel roof. It retains original features in addition to those chronicling later periods of occupancy, notably the Late Victorian period. While by some accounts built ca. 1769, physical features suggest the present house was erected later, perhaps using stone and wood framing components from an earlier Blauvelt house located on site. In addition to the stone dwelling, which was built for the Blauvelt family and which has been associated since the 1890s with the Cropsey family—members of which still reside there to this day—the nominated property includes what is a considerable expanse of agricultural land and open space for this part of heavily developed Rockland County. Also included is a barn, the earliest portion of which illustrates the once prevalent New World Dutch building practices characteristic of this region's architecture. The house, barn and associated land serve as complements to one another and preserve the core of a working farmstead that was first put under cultivation in the eighteenth century, prior the American Revolution. The farm is being nominated in association with National Register of Historic Places Criterion A, in the area of Agriculture, given its longstanding agrarian history and continued agricultural use and additionally under Criterion C, in the area of Architecture, as both the house and barn document the development of the region's vernacular building traditions during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

Narrative Statement of Significance

Historical Context

The Town of Clarkstown, within which the nominated property is situated, derives its name from Daniel DeClarke, who in 1716 was among a group of buyers who purchased lands located within the Kakiat Patent; during a subsequent sale, in 1764, lands contained therein were described as being at "Clarke's Town."¹ Formed in 1791, Clarkstown was one of the four original towns in existence at the time Rockland County was partitioned off from Orange County in 1798, a division in large measure driven by the presence of the Ramapo Mountains, which separated these two areas geographically and thus hindered effective governance. The property is located on the outskirts of New City, which came to replace Tappan as the original seat of county government, given its more central location in an age where overland transportation remained at times arduous. Horatio Spafford, in his 1824 gazetteer of New York State, noted the following about Clarkstown and its cultural complexion at that date:

This town is principally occupied by Dutch farmers of ancient lineal possession, and is pretty well cultivated... The honest simplicity of manners which characterize the Dutch population of this County, is entitled to notice, and to cordial commendation.²

The nominated property's earliest history is associated with the Blauvelt family, which enjoys longstanding ties to this region of New York State. The Blauvelt family's North American lineage is believed to have been established by Gerrit Hendricksen—Hendricksen denoting "son of Hendrick"—who arrived at Swede's Landing, Delaware, from Holland in March 1638. Then a teenage boy, Gerrit Hendricksen traveled northward to New Amsterdam and then up the Hudson River to the Manor of Rensselaerswyck, where he worked as a

¹ Frank B. Green, *The History of Rockland County* (New York: A.S. Barnes, 1886), 414.

² Horatio Spafford, *A Gazetteer of the State of New-York* (Albany: B.D. Packard, 1824), 116.

BLAUVELT-CROPSY FARM

Name of Property

ROCKLAND CO., NEW YORK

County and State

field hand cultivating tobacco. In 1646 he married Marretje Lamberts Moll in the New Amsterdam Dutch Reformed Church; he received a grant of farmland on Manhattan Island, on what is now Broadway near Maiden Lane, and became known as the “Blau Boer,” or Blue Farmer, his farm being known as the “Blau Veldt.” All but one of Gerrit’s children became shareholders in the Tappan Patent in Rockland County. The adoption of the surname “Blauvelt” by the family remains a point of speculation. The original settlers of this family appear initially in local records with the surname Gerritse or Gerretse, the first name of their father; shortly thereafter they added the surname Blauvelt. Around this time Elisabeth Gerritse, who remained in the New York City area and thus away from those family members who settled in Rockland County, likewise became known in records as Elisabeth Blauvelt.³ The Blauvelts were prominent in the early affairs of Clarkstown and also the Town of Orangetown to the south, where a hamlet continues to bear the family’s name. In the 1800 federal census, 23 households headed by a Blauvelt were recorded in Clarkstown alone, a testament to their importance in the earlier settlement of this part of the lower Hudson Valley.

Most of the first settlers in this region were farmers who had immigrated to the New World from Holland. The cultural complexion of the area, from the earliest years of European settlement starting in the later seventeenth century onward, was thus predominately Dutch, and it remained that way in many regards to the time of the American Revolution. James Thacher, a Massachusetts-born surgeon’s mate with the Continental Army who traveled through the lower Hudson Valley area with his regiment late in 1778, offered the following observations of the region’s Dutch population and their physical environment at the time of the Revolution:

These towns are inhabited chiefly by Dutch people; their churches and dwelling houses are built mostly of rough stone, one story high. There is a peculiar neatness in the appearance of their dwellings, having an airy piazza supported by pillars in front, and their kitchens connected at the ends in the form of wings. The land is remarkably level and the soil fertile; and being generally advantageously cultivated, the people appear to enjoy ease and happy competency. The furniture in their houses is of the most ordinary kind. . . They despise the superfluities of life, and are ambitious to appear always neat and cleanly, and never to complain of an empty purse.⁴

Tradition maintains that the nominated house was one of two built ca. 1769 for Blauvelt brothers; the second house, once located to the southwest on the same road, has since been destroyed. Both the complex nature of early land records and the great number of Blauvelt households in Clarkstown in the early nineteenth century have hindered documentary analysis, but it nevertheless appears the present house was erected a generation later and likely replaced an earlier and more modest construct. Deed research has thus traced the property back to the end of the Blauvelt ownership period and a land transaction executed in 1848 between members of the family. Among those cited as parties in this transaction were Abraham I. O. Blauvelt (1786-1860) and his wife, Maria Blauvelt (1791-1877). Two years later, at the time the 1850 federal census was recorded, Abraham I.O. and Maria Blauvelt were residing in separate but adjacent households; the former, then 65 years of age, was residing in a dwelling headed by Abram/Abraham A. Blauvelt, 28. Maria, meanwhile, was noted as the head of household of the adjacent dwelling. Given the likely date of construction of the house, ca. 1800, it does not appear to have been erected for Abraham I.O. and Maria Blauvelt, but instead by the previous generation. Although in his mid-60s at the time of the census and no longer a head-of-household, Abraham I.O. Blauvelt nevertheless indicated his occupation as farmer and claimed \$5,000 in real estate assets.

³ Background history on the Blauvelts in North America was derived from a history compiled at a website maintained by the Association of Blauvelt Descendants.

⁴ Appendix in Rosalie Fellows Bailey, *Pre-Revolutionary Dutch Houses and Families in Northern New Jersey and Southern New York* (reprint: New York: Dover, 1968); Thacher traveled from King’s Ferry across the Hudson River into Bergen County, New Jersey, and noted his experiences in his *Military Journal of the American Revolution*.

BLAUVELT-CROPSEY FARM

Name of Property

ROCKLAND CO., NEW YORK

County and State

The nominated property was subject to a series of real estate transactions beginning in the mid-point of the nineteenth century. During the 1850s it left the Blauvelt family and was obtained by the Rippons; thus, the barn has in the past been referred to as the Rippon Barn.⁵ The Rippons sold it to the Heyers but reacquired it shortly thereafter, and it was next owned, in succession, by members of the Andrews, Meeker and Pye families. The 1865 New York State census indicates Charles and Phyllia Andrews, of English birth, residing with their family in Clarkstown in a stone house valued at \$700; the adjacent dwelling, also of stone construction and valued at \$1,000, was owned by Charles H. Meeker. Given that the Andrewses were farming the land—son Henry Andrews, 19, noted his occupation as farmer—it is presently assumed that this household represents the nominated house. It was next purchased by John Blauvelt, who sold it to Aaron Jackman in July 1870. Aaron Jackman is shown as the co-resident of the house on the 1876 F.A. Davis map of Clarkstown, along with “B.W. Spears”—Barton W. Spears—and this represents the same household configuration as depicted in the 1875 New York State census. The Jackman portion of the household consisted of Aaron and his wife, Louisa, both 60 years of age, in addition to a 25-year-old son, Aaron Jr., all natives of Maine, and a Norwegian-born servant. Spears, 50 years old, was listed as a boarder and farmer who presumably worked these lands jointly with the Jackmans and resided there with his wife, Emma Spears, a native of Maine and in all likelihood a daughter of the Jackmans. Barton Spears took ownership from Jackman in 1882 but sold the farm the following year. In 1889 it was acquired by the Cunningham family and in 1893 by the Cropseys, descendants of which continue to reside there today.

In May 1893 the Cropsey ownership period was initiated, as it was then that Andrew G. Cropsey and his wife, Lizzie, became owners of what was then a roughly 50-acre farm. Andrew Cropsey, a New York City based lawyer, tended to the property as a gentleman farmer while commuting to his workplace, prior to moving permanently to the farm in 1897 from Cropsey Avenue in Brooklyn.⁶ Andrew and Lizzie Cropsey are shown as occupants of the house at the time of the 1900 federal census, along with their teenage children, Carrie and Wallace, and a Swedish-born farm laborer; Andrew Cropsey indicated his profession at that time as law.

Andrew Cropsey died in 1911, at which time his son, Wallace, assumed oversight of the farm operation with his sister, Carrie, then both in their early twenties. Fresh produce was the focus of the farming operation at that time and it was shipped to markets in New York City, first via the Hudson River, from Haverstraw, and in later years by truck via Route 9W. In 1928 Wallace Cropsey wed Winifred Berry and in 1929 Jim Cropsey, who continues to reside in the nominated house, was born. Lizzie Cropsey died in 1937, at which time Wallace and Carrie assumed ownership. The family continued farming this land until Wallace Cropsey’s death in 1943, at which time his widow, Winifred, took employment as a secretary. During this period the land did not lay fallow but was instead rented out to local farmers.⁷

In 1955, after attending the Cornell School of Agriculture and serving in the United States Air Force, Jim Cropsey returned to the farm in Clarkstown and reestablished the family’s languishing agricultural business.⁸ It was a struggle at first, as the farm worked to be profitable with only the bare minimum of equipment and resources; at first strawberries were sold in the family’s living room, a practice which was subsequently replaced by a roadside farm stand. This soon gave way to a dedicated store—“about the size of a two-bay garage”—

⁵ The ownership chronology for the property between 1848 and 1889 is drawn from a deed for what was then the Cunningham Farm; John Scott Collection, Historical Society of Rockland County, New City.

⁶ Pat Cropsey, “The History of the Cropsey Farm, New City,” in *Rockland County: Century of History*, Linda Zimmerman, ed. (Historical Research Repository, 2002), 174.

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ Ibid.

BLAUVELT-CROPSEY FARM

Name of Property

ROCKLAND CO., NEW YORK

County and State

which was later doubled in size as new farm infrastructure, such as greenhouses and a peach orchard, were established. By the early 1970s, the family's efforts had coalesced into a large and successful produce store.⁹

The property's agricultural history mirrors the larger trends that reshaped regional agriculture from the time of initial settlement into the twentieth century. In general terms, from settlement period and throughout most of the eighteenth century, subsistence agriculture and the raising of cereal grains, centering on rye, wheat and corn cultivation, was the norm. Livestock was raised on a limited basis, typically for family use and consumption, and fruit trees such as apples cultivated; as noted by Cole in his county history, "...it was not an unusual thing to see the floor of the farmer's ample Dutch barn, in the autumn, covered with from 500 to 1,000 barrels of apples, which represented just so many dollars."¹⁰ The proximity to the New York City market offered a willing and dependable market for surplus farm products, which could be shipped via the Hudson River from Nyack and other river landings to the south. Rockland County's farms, many well established by the time of the Revolution, were devastated by the events of the war:

Peace found this County devastated and scathed. Where once had been great fields of waving grain or grass or tasseled corn, now lay a waste rankly o'ergrown with weeds; where once capacious barns had stood, filled to bursting with the glad earth's produce and giving shelter to lowing kine, and bleating sheep, and well-fed swine; there now could be found a few charred, blackened fragments of the buildings, while the cattle had been long since taken by one or the other army...¹¹

After the conclusion of the war, considerable effort was required to rebuild the region's agricultural economy, a task executed, in the words of historian Frank B. Green, "With wonderful rapidity, considering the exhausted conditions of the people..."¹² The introduction of the Merino sheep to the county in 1813, credited to Joseph Dederer, opened up a new phase of agriculture, which remained profitable before declining steeply in the ensuing decades.¹³

The arrival of the railroad brought with it both opportunity and competition, and by Cole's account had a marked effect on the Rockland County farmer, and the nature and structure of its communities:

With the extension of railroads to the west and intermediate points, the farmers of Rockland County found that they were obliged to compete with those whose lands were nearer and cheaper, and which yielded more abundantly. The means of communication becoming more rapid and frequent with the great city, the sons and daughters became restless and dissatisfied with their quiet mode of life, and sought vocations and homes that were more exciting, so that we find now [1884] in most cases the fine old homes occupied by emigrants from Germany or Ireland, working the farms on shares, and the sons and daughters living gorgeously in a French or Irish flat in some neighboring city. In order to stem this tide of drifting from the old homes, agricultural societies were organized, and for a few years there was a contest among the farmers as to who could raise the best cattle, horses, grains, fruits and vegetables, make the best butter, the best bread, and do the most elaborate fancy work. At last the race track and the horse race took the place of these, and the work of ruin was complete.¹⁴

The condition that Cole describes is in part visible in analyzing the occupancy of the Blauvelt-Cropsey House, which, after leaving family ownership, was resided in at times by a series of transitory owners who worked the

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰David Cole, *History of Rockland County, New York* (New York: J.B. Beers & Co., 1884), 99.

¹¹Green, *Rockland County*, 128.

¹²Ibid., 129.

¹³Cole, *Rockland County*, 99.

¹⁴Ibid.

BLAUVELT-CROPSEY FARM

Name of Property

ROCKLAND CO., NEW YORK

County and State

land for a time prior to moving on. Also relevant are observations made by Cole about Rockland County agriculture in the later nineteenth century and Andrew G. Cropsey's interest in the property as a gentleman's farm. The high price of labor, competition with Southern farms, and cheap freighting costs had done much to hamper the continuation of regional agriculture; "...the final result of farming in this county must be fancy farming, that is, the lands will naturally fall into the hands of those who have the means and love the pursuits of farming, not so much for the return in money, as the return in health and pleasure."¹⁵

Architectural Overview

The Blauvelt-Cropsey House, constructed with load-bearing walls of locally quarried red sandstone, relates to a tradition of masonry domestic architecture in Rockland County and adjacent Bergen County, New Jersey, fostered in the pre-Revolutionary War period. This material, readily available and easily worked, was extensively used for domestic construction and has come to share strong associations with the early Dutch population of these two counties. Quarries such as those opened up by the Onderdonk family in Nyack and Piermont provided an abundant supply of stone to satisfy local needs and perhaps accounted for the limited use of brick in the region at an early date. Stone walls were typically laid up in clay mortar with straw binding and pointed with lime putty on the outside to protect the inner clay bedding, prior to the proliferation of lime-based mortars. Sandstone walls—in the early eighteenth century laid up in rubble, but in later years built with more carefully shaped, dressed and coursed units, particularly for primary elevations—with apertures typically spanned by splayed brick or cut-stone lintels, and steeply pitched gable and high-breaking gambrel roofs with flared eaves, largely characterize the exterior of the New World Dutch house in this region in the Colonial and immediate post-Colonial periods. The exteriors of these houses in the pre-Revolutionary period were largely devoid of aesthetic elaboration and instead derived their principal character-defining aspects from their materials, construction, and form.

The earliest identified houses—those dating from the early eighteenth century—were often erected as single-cell buildings with roughly square-shaped rooms heated by open jambless fireplaces, this principal room serving a variety of functions for the family. Additions to the original construct were commonplace, and expansion was typically made by lateral additions, although in some instances an earlier house was subsumed within a more expansive footprint. As with New World Dutch frame houses, the H-bent framing of which dictated their form, stone houses in this region were typically of the story-and-a-half type. Unfinished garrets provided storage space, a work area, sleeping space for children and, in some instances, for laves and were often finished off subsequently into bed chambers. Basements, typically accessible from grade for matters of convenience, provided storage space, and in the later eighteenth and early nineteenth century sometimes contained a kitchen; otherwise cooking was done on the primary floor, in an adjacent frame or stone wing, or in a detached summer kitchen in the warmer months. Interior aesthetics were typically restrained, with houses relying on their interior wood framing in part for effect at first-floor level; there the exposed ceiling beams were smoothly planed and sometimes beaded on their lower edges, their exposure being expressive of the straightforward and honest structural nature of these building's construction. After the Revolution plaster ceilings became increasingly common, at which time the taste for exposed beams—and the use of the relatively inefficient jambless fireplace—fell quickly from favor. Wall finish was often rendered directly on the interior face of the stone using clay-based plaster before lime-based plasters became more readily available; wainscot and plank partition walls were not unusual. Divided or "Dutch" doors were common.

Although the English had assumed control of New York State by the third quarter of the seventeenth century, Dutch culture in the Hudson Valley flourished well into the eighteenth century and provincial building practices remained strong in many areas. However, by the early nineteenth century, the influence of English

¹⁵Ibid., 100.

BLAUVELT-CROPSEY FARM

Name of Property

ROCKLAND CO., NEW YORK

County and State

building practices and fashions had become pronounced, as seen in the broad adoption of center hall plans, the use of jambed fireplaces, and the concealment of ceiling beams underneath lath and plaster. The gambrel roof, an iconic feature of Hudson Valley Dutch architecture, was not of Holland origin, but instead appropriated from English building traditions and often used in concert with flared eaves, which projected beyond the masonry walls. Many of the older stone houses in Rockland County were updated in the early nineteenth century, either with additions or modifications to existing plans, at which time older finishes were replaced with more current ones, namely mantels, doors, and mouldings expressive of the Federal style. Facades, which in traditional representations of the type often featured multiple doors, had by this time become more refined, characterized by the adoption of a central door with symmetrical-placed windows, which foreshadowed the balanced interior spatial arrangement. Once laid in rubble, stone walls by this time were often carefully dressed and coursed and, in some instances, laid in bond mimicking Flemish-bond brickwork.

The Blauvelt-Cropsey House is largely reflective of the mature phase of regional sandstone construction practices, at which time this longstanding craft tradition had been increasingly informed by new influences. The high-breaking gambrel roof, center hall plan and jambed fireplaces all speak to the increasing formality of Rockland County stone houses by the time of construction and the permeation of English building methods and practices. The stonework is also expressive of a higher level of craftsmanship, and it varies considerably on the various elevations. On the principal south-facing façade, the stone is laid in regular courses and is fully dressed; on the adjacent west elevation, the stone is laid in regular courses but rock-faced; and on the rear, or north elevation, the stone is rock-faced and laid in irregular courses.

The significance of the nominated site and its value as a depiction of early regional vernacular building methods—and also its significance in relation to Rockland County agricultural history—is enhanced by the survival of the barn, which has been modified many times during its history to arrive at its present form. This region's early settlement history and large Dutch population accounted for the widespread use of the New World Dutch barn type, a three-aisle barn entered via the gable end, which was used for grain storage and processing, hay storage, and for animal quarters. Precedents for this type are to be found in Holland and other parts of Lowland Europe. The structural core of this type was the massive H-bents that defined the center aisle or nave, which served as a drive floor and threshing surface. While the chronology has not yet been precisely defined, the core of the nominated barn consists of four H-bents from such a barn, which was subsequently reworked into a flank entrance barn with end gables. This modification represents an increasing familiarity with the English three-bay barn type, a gable ended building entered via the longer side elevations (and not the gable end); this was accomplished by rotating the H-bents to accommodate side entry. This type, often referred to as a Dutch-Anglo barn, represents the melding of these two spatial and framing concepts and led to the reworking of existing New World Dutch barns in addition to new constructs built to these specifications. In the case of the nominated barn, it is clear that the H-bents have been rearranged, indicating their reuse from an earlier application. It is not yet known whether this was a traditional New World Dutch barn which was erected using salvaged material and later reworked into a Dutch-Anglo barn, or if the H-bents of an earlier barn were employed to construct a Dutch-Anglo barn, perhaps when the house was built. The anchor beams exhibit a characteristic aspect of New World Dutch barn framing, that being the extension of the tenons beyond the posts, though in this instance they were not wedged. The barn's continued expansion, both laterally and to the south, should at some point be viewed against the larger backdrop of the farm's history and the evolution of the agricultural endeavors undertaken there.

Developmental history/additional historic context information (if appropriate)

BLAUVELT-CROPSEY FARM

Name of Property

ROCKLAND CO., NEW YORK

County and State

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography

Bailey, R.F. *Pre-Revolutionary Dutch Houses and Families in Northern New Jersey and Southern New York*.
New York: Dover, 1968 (reprint).

Cole, David. *History of Rockland County, New York*. New York: J.B. Beers & Co., 1884.

Green, Frank B. *The History of Rockland County*. New York: A.S. Barnes, 1886.

Spafford, Horatio. *A Gazetteer of the State of New-York*. Albany: B.D. Packard, 1824.

Zimmerman, Linda ed. *Rockland County: Century of History*. Historical Research Repository, 2002.

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 # _____
☐ recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # _____

Primary location of additional data:

☐ State Historic Preservation Office
☐ Other State agency
☐ Federal agency
☐ Local government
☐ University
☐ Other
Name of repository: _____

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): _____

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 23.98 acres

(Do not include previously listed resource acreage.)

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1	<u>18</u> Zone	<u>584096</u> Easting	<u>4554075</u> Northing	4	<u>18</u> Zone	<u>583755</u> Easting	<u>4554015</u> Northing
2	<u>18</u> Zone	<u>584054</u> Easting	<u>4553769</u> Northing	5	<u>18</u> Zone	<u>583778</u> Easting	<u>4554093</u> Northing
3	<u>18</u> Zone	<u>583787</u> Easting	<u>4553782</u> Northing		<u> </u> Zone	<u> </u> Easting	<u> </u> Northing

Verbal Boundary Description

The boundary for this NRHP nomination is shown on the enclosed mapping (3 total), which was drawn at a scale of 1:24,000, 1:12,000 and 1: 6,000. All maps are entitled "Blauvelt-Cropsey Farm, Clarkstown, Rockland Co., NY."

Boundary Justification

The boundary, consisting of just under 24 acres of land, represents all the remaining land which was historically associated with the Blauvelt-Cropsey Farm. No additional or "buffer" land has been included.

BLAUVELT-CROPSY FARM

Name of Property

ROCKLAND CO., NEW YORK

County and State

11. Form Prepared By

name/title William E. Krattinger
organization NYS Division for Historic Preservation date July 2016
street & number PO Box 189 telephone (518) 268-2167
city or town Waterford state New York zip code 12180
e-mail William.Krattinger@parks.ny.gov

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:** A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.
- **Continuation Sheets**
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items.)

Photographs:

Photographs by William E. Krattinger, May 2016; TIFF file format, original files at NYS Division for Historic Preservation, Waterford.

001 EXTERIOR, Blauvelt-Cropsey House, view looking to southwest showing north elevations of the three sections
002 EXTERIOR, Blauvelt-Cropsey House, view looking to northwest
003 EXTERIOR, Blauvelt-Cropsey House, view showing difference in stone between main block's south (right) and west walls
004 EXTERIOR, Blauvelt-Cropsey House, view showing difference in stone between main block's west (right) and north elevations
005 EXTERIOR, Blauvelt-Cropsey House, detail view showing entrance frontispiece, south elevation
006 INTERIOR, Blauvelt-Cropsey House, view looking from first floor southeast room towards hallway
007 INTERIOR, Blauvelt-Cropsey House, view showing mantel in first floor southeast room
008 INTERIOR, Blauvelt-Cropsey House, view showing mantel in first floor southwest room
009 INTERIOR, Blauvelt-Cropsey House, view upstairs showing mid to later-nineteenth century paneled doors and expressed purlin post (to right of six-paneled door)
010 EXTERIOR, Blauvelt-Cropsey Barn, view looking to northeast showing added sections
011 INTERIOR, Blauvelt-Cropsey Barn, view looking north through early section showing H-bents
012 INTERIOR, Blauvelt-Cropsey Barn, view looking to northeast showing rear of H-Bents with protruding tenons

Property Owner:

(Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)

name Rockland County, c/o Rockland County Executive Edward Day
street & number _____ telephone _____
city or town _____ state _____ zip code _____

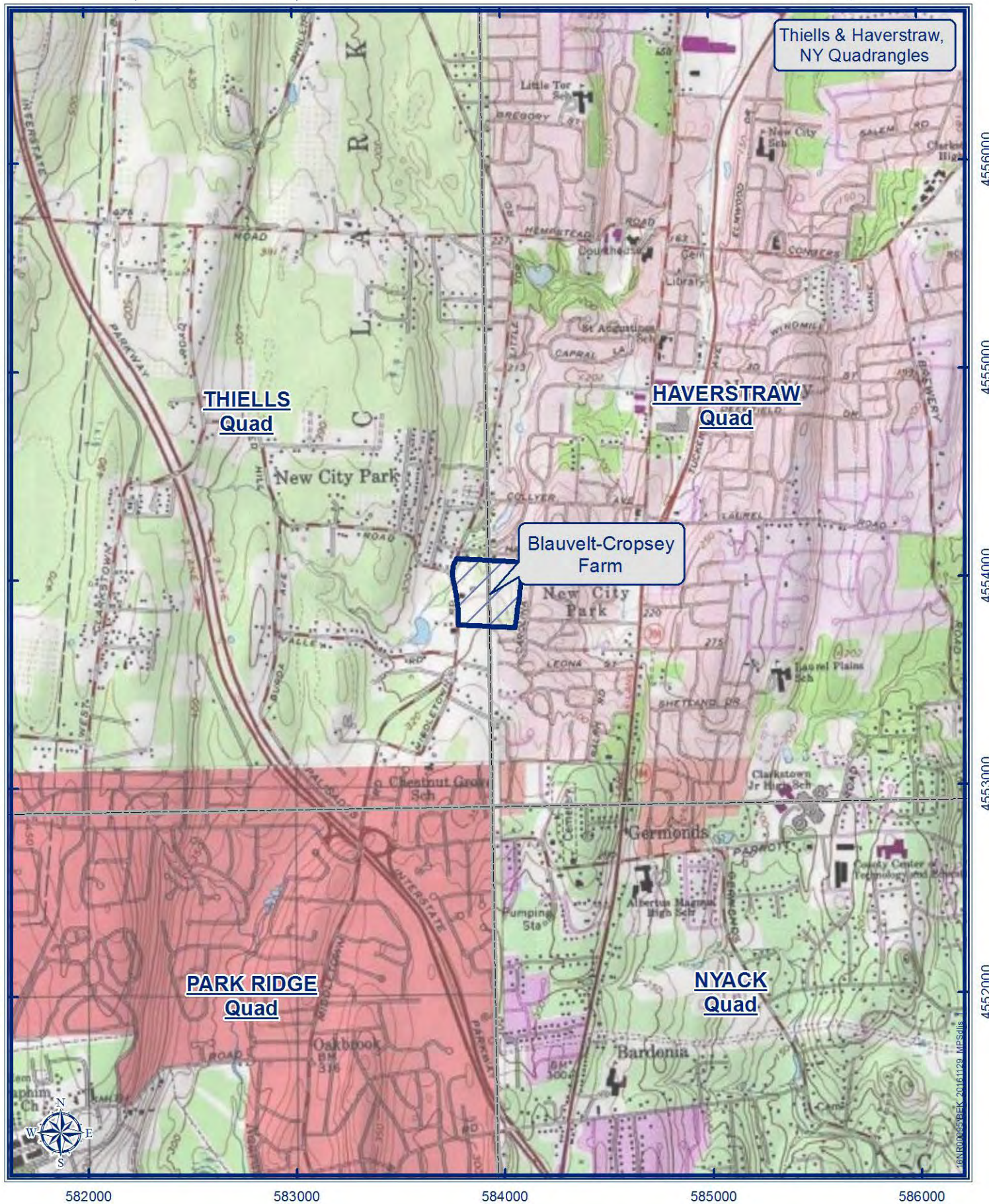
Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C.460 et seq.).

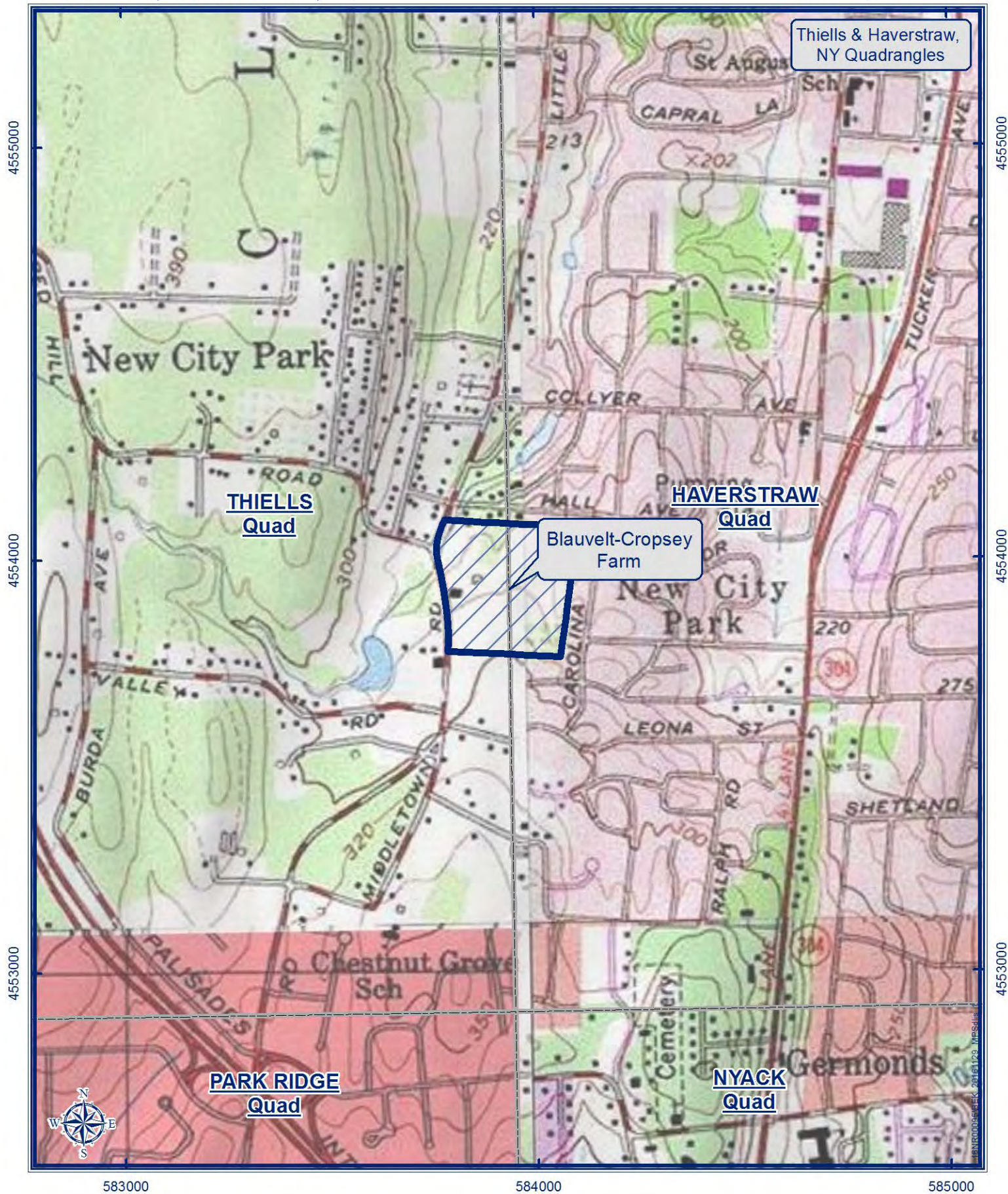
Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Office of Planning and Performance Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.

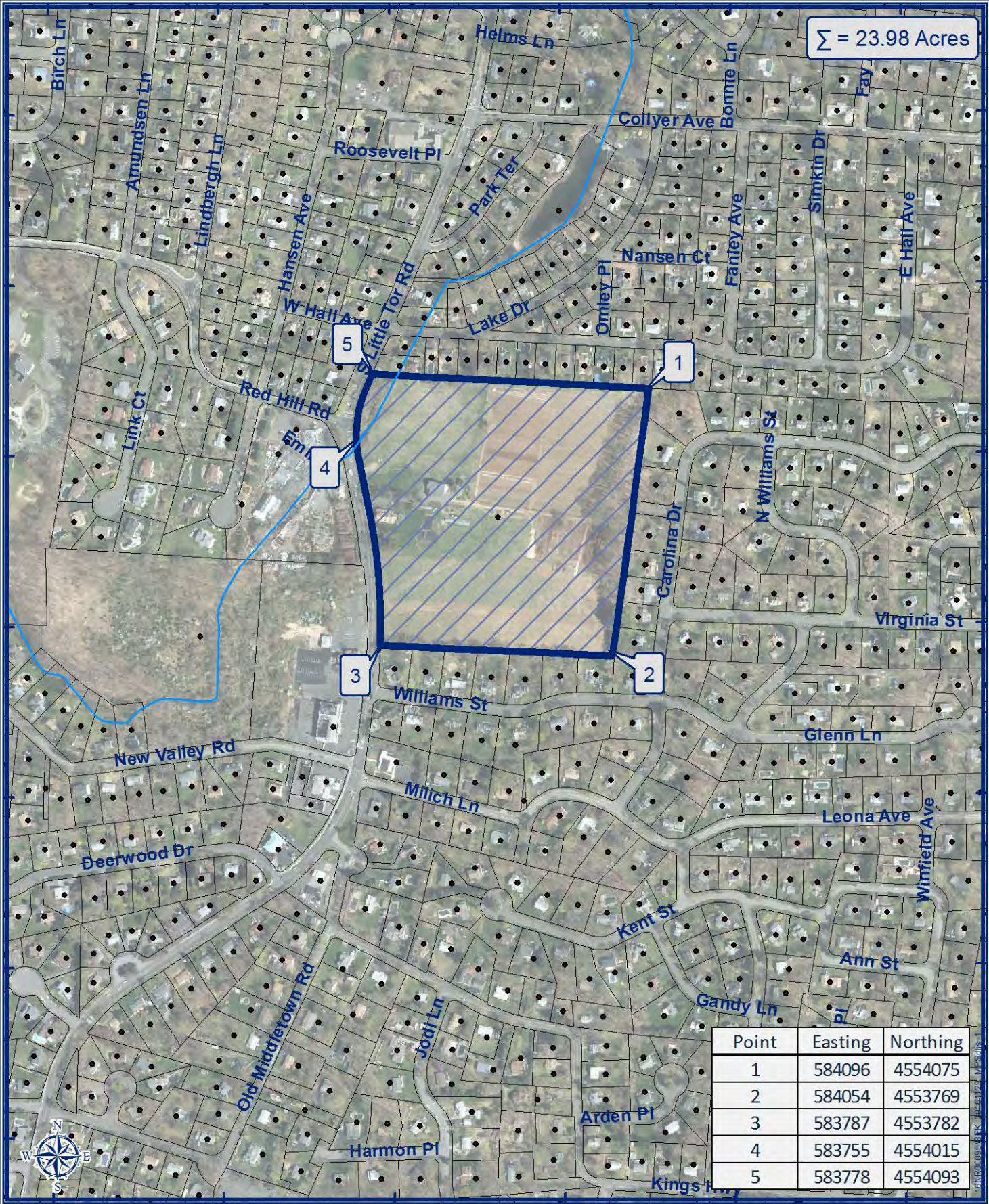
ROCKLAND CO., NEW YORK

County and State

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DOOR UP THE
PATH FROM THE
MAILBOXES.















NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

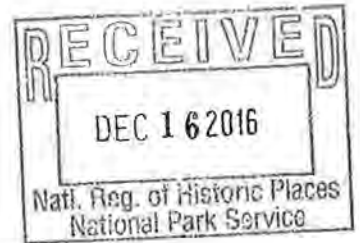
If a nomination is returned to the nomination authority, the nomination is no longer under consideration by the National Park Service.



**Parks, Recreation
and Historic Preservation**

ANDREW M. CUOMO
Governor

ROSE HARVEY
Commissioner



9 December 2016

Alexis Abernathy
National Park Service
National Register of Historic Places
1201 Eye St. NW, 8th Floor
Washington, D.C. 20005

Re: National Register Nomination

Dear Ms. Abernathy:

I am pleased to submit the following six nominations, all on disc, to be considered for listing by the Keeper of the National Register:

LeRoy Downtown Historic District, Genesee County
John Green House, Rockland County
St. John's Episcopal Church, Westchester County
Jewell Family Homestead, Chenango County
Blauvelt-Cropsey Farm, Rockland County
Cornwallville Cemetery, Greene County

Please feel free to call me at 518.268.2165 if you have any questions.

Sincerely:

Kathleen LaFrank
National Register Coordinator
New York State Historic Preservation Office