

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number _____ Page _____

SUPPLEMENTARY LISTING RECORD

NRIS Reference Number: 05000948

Date Listed: 8/26/05

Bennington High School

Bennington

VT

Property Name

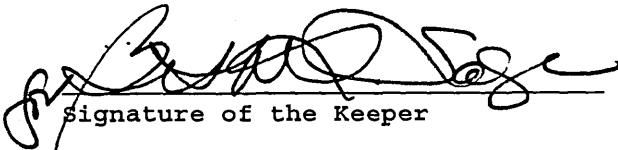
County

State

N/A

Multiple Name

This property is listed in the National Register of Historic Places in accordance with the attached nomination documentation subject to the following exceptions, exclusions, or amendments, notwithstanding the National Park Service certification included in the nomination documentation.


Signature of the Keeper

8/26/05
Date of Action

=====
Amended Items in Nomination:

8. Statement of Significance: Period of Significance:

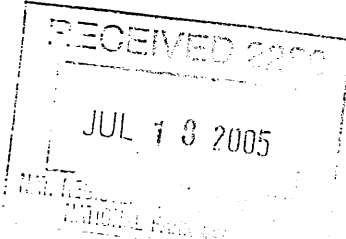
The justified period of significance for this property's historical and architectural significance under criteria A and C is 1913-1958, corresponding with the dates of construction of the earliest part of the building and concluding with that of the 1958 addition. As well, 1958 has been added as a significant date.

This information has been confirmed with Suzanne Jamele, National Register Coordinator, VTSHPO, by telephone.

DISTRIBUTION:

- National Register property file
- Nominating Authority (without attachment)

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**



**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 *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "X" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. 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 entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name: Bennington High School
other names/site number: Mount Anthony Middle School, Longwood at Bennington (proposed name)

2. Location

street & number: 650 Main Street Not for publication N/A
city or town: Bennington vicinity N/A
state: Vermont code: VT county: Bennington code: 003 zip code: 05201

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 ___ nationally X statewide ___ locally. (___ See continuation sheet for additional comments.)
Luzanne C. Gamble National Register Specialist 7-15-05
Signature of certifying official Date
Vermont State Historic Preservation Office
State or Federal Agency or Tribal government

In my opinion, the property ___ meets ___ does not meet the National Register criteria. (___ See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of commenting official/Title Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby certify that this property is:
 entered in the National Register ___ see continuation sheet.
 determined eligible for the National Register ___ see continuation sheet.
 determined not eligible for the National Register ___ see continuation sheet.
 removed from the National Register ___ see continuation sheet.
 other (explain): _____

Signature of Keeper Date of Action
[Signature] 8/26/05

5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(Check as many boxes as apply)
 private

Category of Property:
Building

Number of Resources within Property

Contributing	Noncontributing
1	_____ buildings
_____	_____ sites
_____	_____ structures
_____	_____ objects
1	0 Total

Name of related multiple property listing
Educational Resources of Vermont

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register
0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions:

EDUCATION/School

Current Functions:

Work in progress

7. Description

Architectural Classification

Beaux Arts

Materials

foundation: concrete

roof: rubber
copper

Narrative Description

See continuation sheet

walls: concrete

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.)

- A** owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B** removed from its original location.
- C** a birthplace or a grave.
- D** a cemetery.
- E** a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F** a commemorative property.

Areas of SignificanceEducation
Architecture**Period of Significance**

1913 - 2003

Significant Dates

1913, 1939

Significant Person n/a**Cultural Affiliation** n/a**Architect/Builder**Architect: Cooper and Bailey of Boston
Builder: Duff, John W. of Boston**Narrative Statement of Significance**

See continuation sheet

9. Major Bibliographical References**Bibliography** (Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)**Previous documentation on file (NPS):**

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

Primary Location of Additional Data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Name of repository: Bennington Free Library

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 2.29 Acres

UTM References

18-647814-4748880

Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title: Laura Gresh, Historic Preservation Consultant

date: February 2005

street & number: 1 Monument Avenue telephone: 802-440-9600

city or town: Bennington state: VT zip code: 05201

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets**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.

Photographs

Representative **black and white photographs** of the property.

Additional items

(Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner

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

name: Green Mountain Senior Living, LLC

street & number: P.O. Box 1454 telephone: 802-442-4300

city or town: Bennington state: VT zip code: 05201-1164

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. 470 et seq.). A federal agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to a collection of information unless it displays a valid OMB control number.

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including the 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 Keeper, National Register of Historic Places, 1849 "C" Street NW, Washington, DC 20240.

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**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Bennington High School
Bennington, Bennington County, Vermont
Educational Resources of Vermont

Section 7 Page 1

NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION

Built in 1913 Bennington High School is an excellent example of early 20th century Beaux Arts-style architecture – the French equivalent of “Fine Arts” architecture. Situated on a 2.29-acre parcel of land at 650 Main Street in downtown Bennington, Vermont, the building is surrounded by houses, small businesses, and professional offices. From the time it opened its doors on November 2, 1914 until June 2004, the school building was used as an educational facility. While the interior of the building retains little original historic fabric, the exterior retains most of its original fabric and architectural features. The Bennington High School building is an important part of history and source of pride for the Bennington community. The building retains its integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling and association.

By the early 1900s the first Bennington High School building (c. 1875) on School Street saw signs of overcrowding and town officials began planning a new high school to meet the needs of the growing student population. On November 2, 1914 the new Bennington High School located on Main Street opened its doors to students and on January 1, 1915 the building was formally dedicated.

In the 1967 – over four decades later – in an effort to meet the continued demands of an expanding student population, a new high school opened its doors at 301 Park Street and the Bennington High School became The Mount Anthony Middle School. By the early 2000s, the town saw the need for a larger and more modern middle school. During a two-year period between 2002-2004, a new middle school was built on East Road. Since June 2004, the former school building on Main Street has been vacant. The building was recently purchased by Green Mountain Senior Living, LLC with plans of converting the school building to senior housing. The group also plans to lease the gymnasium wing to a community group to be used as a teen center.

Bennington High School is an example of early 20th century Beaux Arts-style architecture – the French equivalent of “Fine Arts” architecture - an eclectic neoclassical style. Designed by the architectural firm of Cooper and Bailey and built by John W. Duff – both of Boston – the brick, concrete, and steel building displays Beaux Arts elements including a flat pitched roof; decorative shields, floral motifs, and patterns on wall surfaces; and paired columns with Corinthian capitals. Along with features of Beaux Arts-style architecture, the building also displays distinctive characteristics of typical early 20th century schools in Vermont – large scale structure, brick and stone exterior, high-style symmetrical architectural façade with grand colonnaded entrance, large banks of windows; interior central floor plan with vestibule, central hallways and classrooms, and a large meeting space on the first floor.

The 1913 Bennington High School building is a seven bay, two-story, flat roofed structure with a symmetrical south-facing front façade, and a broad central entrance flanked by forward-projecting wings on the east and west ends. The 1913 building is rectangular-shaped with a central projection at the north end and runs parallel to the street. The exposed concrete basement story is capped by a stone water table

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that encircles the building. The basement windows are 3-over-3-light windows with painted wood sash. Many of the lights are blocked and/or painted. The south, east, and west facades of the original 1913 main structure are brick and mortar set in English bond with alternating rows of headers and stretchers. The south, east, and west facades are fenestrated by banks of large windows. Several of the windows have been blocked with panels and/or louver vents. A stone cornice, frieze band, and a surmounting brick parapet encircle the original building. The brick between the cornice and frieze band-parapet are set in soldier course.

Modifications over the years include three additions (in 1939, 1958 and 1975) partitioning large classrooms into smaller spaces, covering wood floors, changing doors, covering plaster ceiling with acoustic tile, and plumbing and electrical updates.

South Façade

The south façade with its colossal projecting entrance portico is flanked with pairs of fillet – fluted columns (concrete composite and aggregate) with elaborate Corinthian-style capitals. A large single rectangular pedestal (concrete composite and aggregate) forms the base at each pair of columns. The fluted columns support a full entablature inscribed with “Bennington High School” on the frieze. Above the entablature is a stone and brick parapet with a central niche, within which is a carved stone globe flanked by torches on a pair of brackets. A central staircase (6 treads and 7 risers) leads to the entrance. The original concrete composite staircase has deteriorated and the staircase is now encased in wood. Flanking either side of the stairs are deteriorated rectangular pedestals (concrete and aggregate). Each pedestal once supported a metal torch-like light fixture with a glass globe.

A concrete architrave with flanking square pilasters and a bracketed cornice surround the entry door. The entablature has a central crest and banner inscribed with the date “1913”. The circa 1970 metal-framed glass light double-door is topped with a single light metal-framed transom. A photo from a 1943 yearbook indicate the original door was a double wood door with multiple clear glass lights flanked on either side by multiple-paned sidelights.

The first-story has six windows – a window on each side of the door within the portico area and two windows at either side of the portico area. All first story windows are 3-over-3-light windows with painted wood sash, stone sills, and brick lintels with keystones. The 3-over-3-light windows have patterned glass at the top lights and clear glass at the lower lights.

The second-story has three banks of four windows – a bank at the east and west ends of the wall plane and a bank within the portico area above the door. These 3-over-3-light windows have painted wood sash and 3 glass light transoms above. The 3-over-3-light windows have patterned glass at the top lights and clear glass at the lower lights. A stone sill with cornerblocks runs continuous under the three banks of windows, beneath which is a row of decorative bricks set in soldier course.

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The blind front projecting two-story east and west wings each has a two-story recessed rectangular brick wall panel with marble corner blocks. At the center top of each panel is a large circular medallion with a

pendant post. The medallion on the east end is inscribed with "Bennington High School - District 1870". The medallion on the west wing is inscribed with "edom and unity - Vermont" – it appears the "fre" of "freedom" has eroded away.

East Façade

The window configuration on the first and second stories consists of three banks of windows. At the south end and center are banks of five windows. At the north end is a bank of four windows. The windows are 3-over-3-light painted wood sash windows with stone sills. The 3-over-3-light windows have patterned glass at the top lights and clear glass at the lower lights. Below all three banks of windows is a continuous stone sill, a horizontal rectangular inter-story area with brick panels set in soldier course and a diamond-shaped marble medallion at the center. To the left of the medallions is a rectangular ventilation opening covered with a decorative metal grate.

Between the first and second banks of windows is a one-bay entrance portico with a shouldered segmental-arched, flat-seamed copper roof overhang, corbelled brick piers, concrete pedestals, and a stone lintel inscribed with "Girls". Brick pilasters are behind each brick pier. The stairway (2 treads, 3 risers) and landing are concrete composite and aggregate. The stairs and pedestals are chipped and cracked. A stone lintel and keystone heads the doorway. Above the entrance portico, a recessed rectangular wall panel with marble corner blocks surrounds a paired, 2-over-2-light, painted wood sash window with a brick lintel and keystone. The circa 1970 painted flush metal double doors each have a clear wire glass light. The main roof parapet is slightly higher over the entrance portico. Within the elevated parapet area is a central round metal grate flanked by decorative brick panels set in soldier course.

A circa 1939 two-story, flat roofed, U-shaped addition is annexed at the north end. The English bond brick wall panels of the 1939 addition are modeled after the 1913 building.

At the north end of the east façade – the wall plane is angled to the east. The angled façade connects the 1913 building with the 1939 addition. A circa 1970 plate glass light metal-framed double-door with single plate-glass metal-framed transom at the north end is surrounded by a carved stone architrave and bracketed cornice. Above the door is a rectangular 10-over-15 light painted wood sash window with stone sill and impost blocks. The ten top lights are intact and the bottom 15 lights are blocked with a painted wood panel. The window is topped with a 9 light fan-shaped window with stone sill and keystone.

West Façade

The west façade window configuration consists of six banks of windows at the first-story and five banks of windows at the second-story. At the north end of the first-story is the sixth bank of four windows (there is no second-story). At the south end (first and second-stories) the first three banks are the 1913 original

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building and subsequent banks of windows are at the 1939 addition. (The 1939 window banks replicate the 1913 windows.) At both the first and second-stories – the two south end windows are five-bank windows, a four-bank window is at the center, and two four-bank windows are at the north end. The 3-over-3-light windows have patterned glass at the top lights and clear glass at the lower lights. Below all banks of windows is a continuous stone sill, a horizontal rectangular inter-story area with brick panels set in soldier course and a diamond-shaped marble medallion at the center. To the left of the medallions is a rectangular ventilation opening covered with a decorative metal grate. The same elevated parapet and metal grate found on the east façade is here.

The west façade entry portico and doorway is parallel in location and identical to the east façade entry portico and doorway, with the exception of the inscription of “Boys”. The concrete stairs and pedestals are also chipped and cracked.

North Façade

Most of the 1913 north facade is obscured by the two additions – the two-story 1939 addition and the two-story 1958 addition. At the second-story north facade are six 12-over-3 light windows (smaller than those on the south, east and west facades). Blocked by the 1939 hallway addition these windows are not visible from the street.

Interior

Floor plans indicate the original 1913 interior floor plan was a front facing U-shaped symmetrical plan with a central entrance, staircase, foyer, central hallways, classrooms and central large meeting room at the first floor. The north hallway was added in 1939 with the gymnasium addition.

The first floor central main entrance at the south end has a staircase ascending to the north and leading to a foyer and south hallway that is oriented east-to-west. The original 1913 building had four large rooms at the south end, a large classroom at the east and west wings and the central large meeting rooms at the first floor. The current square-shaped plan includes the circa 1939 additions – the east hallway, east-wing elevator and lavatories west passageway through west wing classrooms, north hallway, and north exit.

On the first floor a large meeting room – the school library – is located at the center of the plan. A room north of the library and elevated above the library floor is a portion of the original stage area. On the second floor – above the first floor library – there are three rooms elevated above the second floor level.

Basement

The basement level has ascending staircases at the south end of the east and west wings (the Boys and Girls entrances). Currently basement rooms are partitioned to form a classroom, offices, locker rooms, connecting hallways, storage areas, and a boiler room. There is access to the 1939 addition basement area at the north end.

At the basement level there are some examples of wood stile and rail doors with glass light transoms.

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These doors may have been relocated to the basement area with renovations. Windows on the south, east, and west facades are double hung 3-over-3-light with painted wood sash. The lights are patterned glass and many of the windows are blocked with painted wood panels. The floors surfaces vary and are concrete, terrazzo, resilient, steel, and 2¼" tongue and groove wood. The walls are cinderblock and/or painted plaster and some areas have been partitioned with painted sheetrock. A few finished spaces have baseboard moldings that are flat profile painted wood. The ceilings display exposed beams and ceiling of finished spaces are covered with painted plaster, painted drywall and/or painted plaster covered with acoustic tile.

First Floor Plan

The entrance at the central south-end of the building has a wide staircase that ascends north to a central foyer. The foyer intersects with the south hall that is oriented east-to-west. The south hallway connects the "Girls" and "Boys" entrances at the east and west ends of the building. At the east end a staircase descends to the "Girls" entrance and at the west end a staircase descend to the "Boys" entrance. The south hallway intersects perpendicularly at the east wing with the east hallway (oriented north-to-south). Currently a door opening at the northwest end of the library provides access to the north end of the building. An original west hallway oriented north to south has been removed as part of expanding the library area. The result of this expansion is that access to the north end of the building is though adjoining classrooms. Hanging studs above the acoustic tiles ceiling reveal the location of former partitions. At the northwest end of the building a mechanical and storage room were created – perhaps as a boiler modification – at the original stage area.

The cornice detail above acoustic tiles and a cut in the floor indicate that the former stage area extended to the west. The 1939 north hallway oriented east to west completes the current square-shaped floor plan.

A large central room that was formerly the school library is located opposite the central entrance and staircase. A room north of the library with elevated floor was formerly a performance stage. A drywall partition separates the former stage area from the library. The stage area is flanked by staircases at the east and west end. Access to the former stage area is from a door at the east end of the north wall of the library and a door at the north end of the west wing.

On the south end of the building on either side of the central foyer are office spaces. Painted drywall partition walls define these offices. A large classroom is on the east wing and two classrooms are on the west wing. The two west wing classrooms were formerly one large classroom. The three additional classrooms at the north end of the west wing were added in 1939.

First Floor Architectural Details

The first floor central foyer, staircases (south, east, and west ends) treads and risers are covered with resilient material. Carpeting covers the original 2¼" tongue and groove wood floors in the offices, library area, classrooms, and hallways. Most original baseboards have been replaced with newer resilient baseboard or flat profile painted wood baseboard. Only a few examples of original baseboard remain on the first floor. The original baseboard profile from top-to-bottom is fillet, ovolo, fillet and fascia. Few original painted plaster walls remain. Newer partition walls are painted drywall. Suspended acoustic tile ceilings are below the original plaster ceilings in offices, hallways, classrooms, and meeting rooms.

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Original doors have been replaced with flush wood doors. The windows are original 3-over-3 painted wood sash, double rope-hung. At many windows the top sash are fixed in place. Window hardware includes a thumb-sweep latch and handles or pulls on most windows. The top lights are patterned glass and the lower lights are clear glass.

Second Floor Plan

The second floor plan is similar to the first floor with a long south hallway connecting the east and west staircases, an east wing hallway and west passageway through adjoining classrooms connecting to the north hallway. Four classrooms are at the south end, and a classroom is at the east and west wings. Like the first floor, the three additional classrooms at the north end of the west wing, east wing hallway, and north hallway reflect the 1939 addition and complete the current square-shaped floor plan. Unlike the first floor where rooms on the south side are partitioned to form offices, the south side of the second floor has four large classrooms (Rooms 207, 208, 209, and 210).

At each second floor landing at both the "Girls" and "Boys" staircases there is a window alcove flanked with curved masonry walls. A 2-over-2-light, painted wood sash window is located at each stair landing. Non-historic circa 1970 dark-stained wood paneling is at the bottom half of the stairwell walls.

The area above the first floor library is partitioned to form three rooms – a vestibule at the south end and rooms at the east and west end. The three rooms are elevated above the second floor level and are accessed from an entrance and staircase (6 stairs and 7 risers) at the east and west ends. Each staircase has wood handrails, balustrades, and newel posts. The east room has a large built-in bank of drawers and shelves at the east end of the south wall. The north wall of the east room has four windows and the north wall of the west room has two windows. The windows are 12-over-4 painted wood sash double-hung.

A small vestibule is at the south end of the east room. The vestibule door is on the east wall and a bank of three windows on the north wall provides a view of the room to the north. The windows are painted wood, fixed-sash with six lights each. A closet is on the west wall.

Second Floor Architectural Details

Second floor hallways, classrooms, and the large meeting room floors have 2¼" wood tongue and groove floors covered with carpeting. Some original baseboards, moldings, and door architraves are visible in the second floor classrooms and meeting room. Original walls are painted plaster and painted drywall partition walls divide many original spaces. Suspended acoustic tile ceilings are below the original plaster ceilings in hallways, classrooms, and the large meeting rooms. Most of the doors are flush wood doors. Only a few original stile and rail wood, fielded panel doors with brass ball-tip hinges and knobs remain (see Rooms 207, 208, 209 and in the former large second floor meeting room). Windows in all the second floor classrooms at south, east, and west sides are 3-over-3-light painted wood sash, double rope-hung. The top lights are patterned glass and the lower lights are clear glass. At many windows the top sash are fixed in place. Window hardware includes a thumb-sweep latch and handles or pulls on most windows.

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The south side windows have 3-light patterned glass transoms above.

Rooms 207, 208, and 209 – Notable Spaces

Room 207 is in the southeast corner of the building and Rooms 208 and 209 are located at the central south wing. These three rooms display original baseboards on the outside walls, some original moldings and door architraves, slate blackboards with wood chalk trays, closet partitions, and painted cast iron radiators. Room 208 and 209 was originally one large classroom or seminar room. A painted drywall partition separates Room 208 and 209 and flat profile painted wood baseboards and door moldings are at this partition. Rooms 208 and 209 are the most intact classrooms in the building.

Additions to Building

1939 Addition

A 1939 two-story, flat roofed, U-shaped addition angles to the east and is the length of the original 1913 north façade. With brick and mortar wall panels and 3-over-3 light wood sash windows, the addition replicates the construction of the 1913 building.

The interior plan includes a two-story gymnasium, three classrooms on the west end at both first and second floors, connecting staircases, hallways, and a basement level.

1958 and 1975 Additions

Two additions were made to the building in 1958. These areas include a flat-roofed two-story addition at the north side of the gymnasium and a flat-roofed one-story east wing at the east side of the gymnasium. Both additions display the same brick and mortar wall panels set in English bond, plate-glass metal sash windows, painted flush metal doors, painted aluminum panels, and Tectum™ roofing material.

The 1958 rectangular-shaped two-story north addition adds another layer the length of the 1939 north façade. The wall panels are brick and mortar set in English bond. A continuous band of plate-glass metal sash windows are at the first and second floor of the north façade. A band of painted aluminum panels is between the first and second-story windows and another narrower band of panels is above the second-story windows. Doors are painted flush metal. This addition has three brick infill panels (about the size of a garage door) on the west facade another infill brick panel on the west end of the north facade.

The 1958 north addition interior plan includes three classrooms on the north end at both first and second floors, connecting staircases, hallways, and a basement level.

The 1958 rectangular-shaped east wing addition is adjacent to the east side of the gymnasium. The east wing was originally one-story with north and south wall panels of brick and mortar to replicate the wall panels of the 1913 building. In 1975 a second story was added to the east wing and a flat-roofed one-story south wing was annexed at the southeast end of the east wing. The 1958 east wing and 1975 south wing both have plate-glass metal sash windows and painted flush metal doors. The 1975 second-story and south

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wing addition has cinderblock and mortar walls.

The east wing first and second story interior floor plan each includes a long central hallway oriented west-to-east with classrooms on the north and south ends, central lavatories, and staircases at the east and west ends. The first floor east end of the west-to-east hallway intersects with two perpendicular hallways to connect with the 1975 one-story south wing. The south wing is comprised of a cafeteria with an elevated stage area at the east end and three classrooms at the west end that are currently partitioned into smaller rooms.

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STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Bennington High School, built in 1913 is on a 2.29-acre parcel of land at the north side of Main Street at the east end of the downtown area in Bennington, Vermont. The school is a fine example of an early 20th century school property type detailed in the Educational Resources of Vermont multiple property listing and exemplifies a “modern” urban school built during this period. Bennington High School meets the registration requirements for an urban school property type and is associated with Education in Vermont historic context. The school is significant under Criteria A for its illustration of the development of Vermont Schools from the years 1890 to 1948. It is an excellent example of an early 20th century school building meeting the standards set for public high schools by the State of Vermont during this period. The building also meets National Register Criteria C as a significant example of an important public building displaying Beaux Arts style architecture.

Bennington is situated in the southwest corner of Vermont between the Taconic and Green Mountain regions. Bennington High School is located at the east end of the downtown area and is surrounded by houses, small businesses, and professional offices. Built in 1913, the school displays distinctive characteristics of a typical early 20th century schools in Vermont – a large central entrance, high-style brick and stone construction, and large windows.

The first Bennington High School building (c. 1875) on School Street had begun to outgrow its quarters in the early 1900s and between the years 1909 to 1912 the Bennington High School student population grew very rapidly. On June 1912 the district authorized its trustees to explore the construction of a new high school building. With a favorable decision to move ahead with construction, the Benton-Cushman site on Main Street was purchased. Work was begun in 1913, and the school was occupied on November 2, 1914. On January 1, 1915, the building was formally dedicated and a little over a year later on January 16, 1916 the building was partially destroyed by a fire. The damage amounted to \$10,000 and was fully covered by insurance.

The *Directory of the Bennington High School Alumni Association, 1878-1930* documents the addition of courses at the new high school, “since the new high school became available there has been a gradual expansion of courses. Home economics and manual training work have increased their usefulness and value many times.” Additional courses were added to the school curriculum and in the fall of 1919 French, Latin, and physical training were introduced and in 1921, art and drawing were reintroduced.

By June of 1922, the high school established a chapter of an honorary scholastic society known as the *Pro Merito Society*. The *1878 to 1930 Alumni Directory* indicates that the High School was rated “Standard” by the State Board of Education in the spring of 1926 and by 1927 the school received a “Superior” rating. It was noted in the *1878-1930 Alumni Directory* that since 1927 the school held and maintained a “superior rating.”

In 1929 a full time Supervisor of Physical Education and a Supervisor of Music were hired. With the addition of a music instructor to the faculty, a small band was organized. About this time a campaign was

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launched to construct an addition to the high school building to include a gymnasium and additional space for the junior high school students. Larger quarters were also recommended to meet the needs of the expanding curriculum. Sanborn Insurance maps indicate that a two-story addition was annexed in 1939. The addition included a two-story gymnasium, connecting hallways, classrooms and lavatories.

The construction of the original Bennington High School building, subsequent modifications and additions reflect the style of architecture, needs of the student population and parallel the trends of education in Vermont public high schools during the early 20th century. In 1900 it became obligatory for Vermont towns with a population of 2,500 or more to maintain a public high school. By 1904 Vermont State Law set standards for schools pertaining to improvements in sanitation, ventilation (large banks of windows became common), lighting, plumbing, and ventilation. In 1906 Vermont law mandated free high school instruction for all students. In the early 1900s an annual report was published to rate the schools that met these standards. By 1912 Vermont formed the Carnegie Commission to investigate the state of public education in Vermont and in 1914 this Commission made recommendations for improvements. Schools provided a source of employment, revenue, prestige and local pride for towns. The school buildings that emerged during this period were grand, high style, and multiple-story brick structures distinguished by significant architectural elements with focal points such as oversized central doorways, columns, large windows, and other distinguishing ornamental features. The architectural elements were typically symmetrically positioned and in buildings constructed after 1904 large banks of windows were common. Often designed by architects or master builders in the style popular at the time of their construction, they employed architectural styles including Beaux Arts, Greek Revival, Italianate, French Second Empire, Queen Anne, Romanesque, and Colonial Revival. Interior features usually included a large central hallway or vestibule, with classrooms off this hallway. The plans for a two-story structure often had both floors identical in plan or the second floor may have had an open space for a meeting place or assembly hall for the student body. Over time, heating, ventilation, plumbing, and lighting systems were altered and modernized to keep up with trends. Dropped ceilings and interior stairs often were added. Large classrooms were divided into smaller rooms.

The Beaux Arts style of architecture was at the peak of its popularity in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. The Bennington High School building displays the classical design elements associated with the Beaux Arts style of architecture with its strong axial plan, grand central entry portico, paired columns with Corinthian capitals, flat pitched roof, and eclectic neoclassical style elements including decorative shields, floral motifs, and patterned brick wall surfaces.

Modifications over the years include annexing three additions (in 1939, 1958 and 1975) partitioning large classrooms into smaller spaces, covering wood floors, changing doors, covering plaster ceiling with acoustic tile, and plumbing and electrical updates. In 1967 due to the expanding needs of the student population, a new high school opened its doors at 301 Park Street and Bennington High School became The Mt. Anthony Middle School.

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To meet demands of an expanding student population in the 1960s, a new high school building was constructed on Park Street, and the former high school on Main Street became The Mount Anthony Middle School.

After serving the community as a high school and middle school for ninety-one years, The Mount Anthony Middle School graduated its last class in 2004. Purchased by Green Mountain Senior Living, LLC, there are current plans to convert the building to senior housing and lease the gymnasium wing to a community group to be used as a youth center.

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MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHIC REFERENCES

Bennington High School Yearbook, 1943.

Directory of the Bennington High School Alumni Association 1878 – 1930 with additions of 1931, 1932, 1935, and 1942, Bennington Museum Library.

Multiple Property Listing, Educational Resources of Vermont, 1777 to 1943.

Scrapbook of Bennington Banner news clips, Bennington Museum Library, not dated.

Vermont Historic Site and Structure Survey, Town Offices, Bennington, Vermont.

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GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

Boundary Description

The property is located at 650 Main Street on the north side of Main Street at the east end of the downtown – three blocks east from the intersection of Route US 7 and North - South Streets.

Tax Map & Parcel ID: 51-53-58-00

Boundary Justification

The nominated property includes the land and the building historically associated with the Bennington High School.

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Section number **Photograph Identification**

The following information is the same for all photographs:

Bennington High School
Bennington, Bennington County, Vermont
Photos by Laura Gresh
February 2005
Electronic images on CD filed at Vermont Division for Historic Preservation

- VT Bennington County BennHigh1.tif – Bennington High School, south façade, facing north
- VT Bennington County BennHigh2.tif – Bennington High School, east & south façades, facing northwest
- VT Bennington County BennHigh3.tif – Bennington High School, west & south façades, facing northeast
- VT Bennington County BennHigh4.tif – Bennington High School, south façade 1958 and 1971 additions, facing north
- VT Bennington County BennHigh5.tif – Bennington High School, south façade, entry, columns, facing north
- VT Bennington County BennHigh6.tif – Bennington High School, south façade, entablature, frieze, facing north
- VT Bennington County BennHigh7.tif – Bennington High School, north & façades, 1958 and 1971 additions, facing southwest
- VT Bennington County BennHigh8.tif – Bennington High School, west façade, facing southeast
- VT Bennington County BennHigh9.jpg – Bennington High School, interior west stair landing, facing west
- VT Bennington County BennHigh10.tif – Bennington High School, west and north facades, 1958 and 1971 additions, facing southeast
- VT Bennington County BennHigh11.tif – Bennington High School, east facade, 1958 and 1971 additions, facing southwest
- VT Bennington County BennHigh12.tif – Bennington High School, interior north hall, looking north
- VT Bennington County BennHigh13.tif – Bennington High School, interior, 2nd floor classroom, looking west

Bennington High School
Bennington County, Bennington, VT

Digital Photography Description

Developed processed:	Vermont Color Labs, Bennington, VT
Paper type:	Konica QA Archival
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