

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

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

For NPS use only

received

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Continuation sheet 51

Item number 7

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NAME: Caleb Gorton House
LOCATION: 987 Greenwich Avenue
OWNER: Kent County Board of Realtors
987 Greenwich Avenue
Warwick, R.I. 02886
CONDITION: Good; Altered; Original Site

DESCRIPTION:

The Caleb Gorton House is set close to heavily traveled Greenwich Avenue (State Route 5) in a suburban residential neighborhood containing mostly twentieth-century dwellings. It is a rectangular, two-and-one-half-story, gable-roofed, timber-framed structure of the Federal period with a brick central chimney, a fieldstone foundation, and a rear ell. ✓ It is now covered with aluminum siding but door and window frames have been left intact and the building for the most part retains its original character. Its five-bay facade (east side) contains a central entrance trimmed in the Greek Revival mode, with paneled pilasters and an entablature, apparently a later addition. This entrance opens into a small entry and stairhall containing a tight staircase with winders and a closed string ornamented with flat, Federal-style moldings. The most notable interior feature is the chimney, which is oriented with its sides at a 45-degree angle to the walls and partitions and is placed slightly off-center in a manner which allows for corner fireplaces in three of the first-floor rooms (southeast parlor, southwest dining room, and west-central kitchen) and one of the second-floor rooms (southeast chamber). These fireplaces all have one-story Federal mantels; the one in the kitchen, with an angled face, also has a bake oven and wood-box to one side. There are now five rooms within the main block of the house on the first floor. This may be the original configuration but it seems more likely that the house followed a four-room plan and that what was the northwest room was later subdivided. The kitchen presently extends beyond the rear wall of the main block into the ell. The ell also contains a laundry room, a hallway, and a garage. The part of the ell containing the rear of the kitchen and the front of the garage appears to be contemporary with the construction of the main block or an early addition to it, while the laundry room and rear of the garage are a later addition extending north from the ell to the north wall of the main block. The second floor has four rooms in the main block. It is fitted as a separate flat and has an exterior staircase providing access to a rear door in the southwest chamber (now a kitchen). In the attic, the chimney twists so that its sides are parallel to the walls of the house above the roofline. The house, originally a single-family residence, was used as a two-family residence until 1979. It is now used for office space.

(See Continuation Sheet #52)

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PERIODS: 1700-1799
AREA OF SIGNIFICANCE: Architecture
SPECIFIC DATE: ca 1790
BUILDER/ARCHITECT: Unknown

SIGNIFICANCE:

The Caleb Gorton House is a locally significant example of Federal domestic architecture notable for its unusual chimney configuration and interior plan.

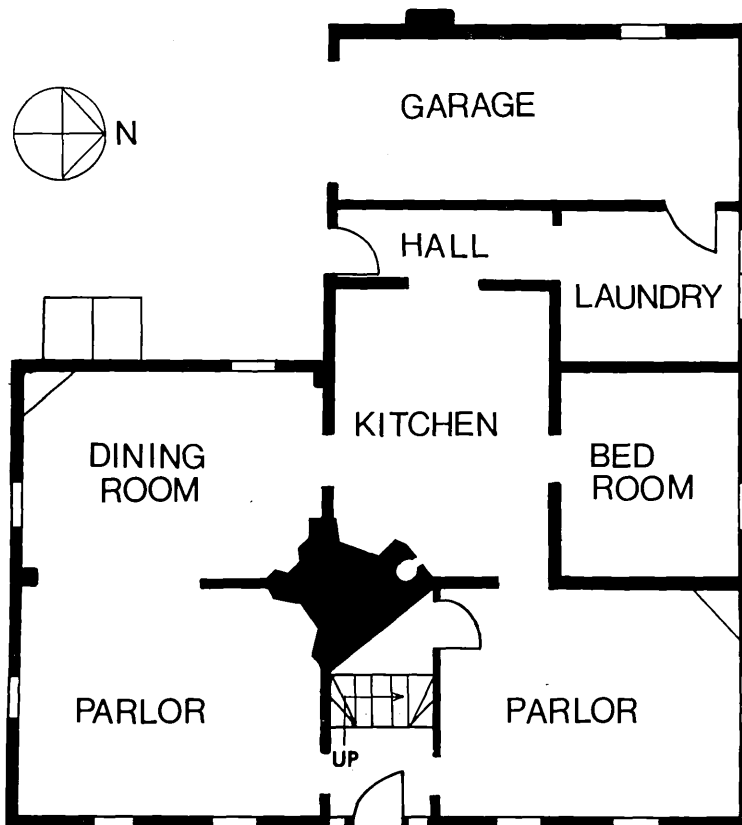
ACREAGE: less than one acre
QUADRANGLE NAME: East Greenwich, R.I.
UTM: 19 294940 4620130

BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION AND JUSTIFICATION:

The nominated property is coextensive with lot 8 in Assessor's Plat 257, as defined by the City of Warwick, and measures 14,005 square feet. This parcel includes the cultural resource and its immediate surroundings.

LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE: LOCAL

(See Continuation Sheet #53)



Caleb Gorton House

987 Greenwich Avenue
Warwick, Rhode Island

no scale

R.I. Historical Preservation Commission 1983