NPS Form 10-900 (Rev. 10-90)

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.

-soud). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete air terms.	
. Name of Property	
istoric name: Worcester Town Hall	
ther names/site number:	
======================================	==
treet & number 12 Worcester Village Road not for publication N/A vicinity N/A vicinity N/A tate Vermont code VT county Washington code 023 zip code 05682	
	==
as the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, as amended, I hereby certify that the 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 for a 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 _x_ locally. See continuation sheet for additional comments.) **Linear C. University National Register** Apacally 9-26-05 Bignature of certifying official Date **Vermont State Historic Preservation Office** State or Federal agency and bureau In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. See continuation sheet for additional comments.)	
Signature of commenting or other official Date	
State or Federal agency and bureau	
Indication I Park Service Certification	==
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 removed from the National Register other (explain):	<u></u> <u>T</u> 9/c

(Page 2)

5. Classification	
Ownership of Property (Check as many boxes as apply) private public-local public-State public-Federal	Number of Resources within Property Contributing Noncontributing buildings sites
Category of Property (Check only one box) X building(s) district site structure object	structures objects 0 Total Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register NA
Name of related multiple property listing (Enter-Historic Government Buildings in Vermon	
Historic Functions (Enter categories from instructions Cat: _GovernmentSub	
Current Functions (Enter categories from instructions Cat:Government Sub	
7. Description	=======================================
Architectural Classification (Enter categories from in Queen Anne Other: Neo-Greek Revival	
Materials (Enter categories from instructions) foundation <u>concrete</u> roof <u>asphalt</u> steel walls <u>weatherboard</u> other	

Narrative Description (Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.) See continuation sheets (7-1 through 7-4)

(Page 3)

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)	Areas of Significance (Enter categories from instructions)
X A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.	Architecture Politics/Government Period of Significance
B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.	1912
X_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	Significant Dates 1912 Significant Person (Complete if Criterion B is marked above) N/A
important in prehistory or history. Criteria Considerations (Mark "X" in all the boxes that apply.)	Cultural Affiliation N/A
A owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.	Architect/Builder unknown
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.	
G less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.	
Narrative Statement of Significance (Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)	
See continuation sheets (8-1 through 8-3)	
9. Major Bibliographical References	
(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more	continuation sheets.)
Previous documentation on file (NPS) _X 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 X State Historic Preservation Office Other State agency Federal agency X Local government University X Other :Name of repository: Worcester Historical Society

Worcester Town Hall Worcester, Washington County, Vermont Historic Government Buildings in Vermont (Page 4) 10. Geographical Data Acreage of Property __0.443 acre_ UTM References (Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet) Zone Easting Northing Zone Easting Northing 1 18 695199 4916252 _ See continuation sheet. 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 Lyssa Papazian, Historic Preservation Consultant organization_ street & number 13 Dusty Ridge Road telephone (802) 387-2878 _____ state_VT_ zip code _05346_ city or town Putney Additional Documentation Submit the following items with the completed form: X Continuation Sheets X 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. X Photographs Representative black and white photographs of the property. X Additional items (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items) – Copies of historic photographs, maps, and documents **Property Owner** (Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.) name Town of Worcester street & number_Drawer 161 telephone (802) 223-6942

USDI/NPS NRHP Registration Form

city or town Worcester

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.).

state_VT__ zip code _05682

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 the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.0. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Project (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

OMB No. 1024-0018

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NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 7 Page 1

Worcester Town Hall name of property Worcester, Washington Co., Vermont Town, County and State

<u>Historic Government Buildings in Vermont</u> name of multiple property listing

The Worcester Town Hall, a 2 ½ story gable front vernacular frame building with Queen Anne details, is sited close to and facing Route 12 (Worcester Village Road) – Worcester's main street - at the central village intersection with Calais Road. Along the rural village streets are several historic buildings dating primarily from the 19th century including residences, commercial properties, a school and a church. There are also a few modern structures notably the fire station/town offices next door to the Town Hall and the Doty Memorial School on Calais Road. Behind the Town Hall and many neighboring buildings south of it along the east side of Route 12 (Worcester Village Road), are very large flat fields, some used for recreation and some for agriculture. These extend eastward quite a distance. The openness of the Town Hall's setting allows it to be visually framed by the mountains several miles eastward behind it. The building continues to serve the town as a meeting hall, is unusually well-preserved and retains integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling and association.

The clapboarded 1912 Town Hall is architecturally simple with a few simple Queen Anne features such as its front porch, its oversized cornice returns and a triangular louvered vent in the gable. A simple, two part fascia extends around the gable rakes and continues along the eaves and the building has plain corner boards. There is a one story rear addition matching the width of the main block that has the same detailing as the main building but with a much shallower gable roof and a brick chimney on the north roof slope. The building is symmetrical and has formal paired windows on the front and side façades. A gray standing seam metal roof was installed in 1997 on the main block, addition and porch. The roof has metal snow fencing along the eaves. The building has a concrete foundation which shows very little above grade and below the clapboards.

On the front, west, façade, large cornice returns which have a small hipped section of roofing frame the top of the gable with a large triangular louvered vent centered within. Below the louver is an applied wooden sign reading "Worcester – 1912 - Town Hall." The second floor has symmetrical paired one over one double hung windows that appear original. Louvered shutters were recorded on this façade in the 1981 State Historic Sites and Structures Survey form but are no longer on the building. The first floor has no windows and a centered double leaf door with two panels below each large glazed top half. The window and door casings are simple with elegant, slightly projecting molded cornice caps. The first floor façade is sheltered by a simple, full width, Queen Anne style porch. The wood plank porch floor, one small step above grade, has been altered recently to accommodate a built-in accessible ramp on the north side with a simple wooden railing. The hipped porch roof is supported by four turned posts and a plain entablature.

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There is a very short concrete step in line with the front doors.

The north façade of the main block has four bays with paired one over one double hung windows in each bay vertically aligned on the two floors. The first floor extends another bay to the east on the rear addition with a paired set of windows that match those on the main block. The window trim on the first floor is similar to the front façade with simple, slightly projecting molded cornice caps. The second floor window casings are flat and instead of lintels, abut directly to a plain frieze band under the fascia that extends across the façade and wraps around the gable under the cornice returns. Between the third and fourth bays of the first floor there is an original four panel wood door.

The rear, east, façade has the same oversized cornice returns and triangular louvered vent of the front façade. The second floor also has two symmetrically placed paired one over one double hung windows. However, the inner sash on each pair is shorter to accommodate the slope of the addition roof. The first floor extends east in one story addition that matches the width of the main block and has a shallow gable roof that peaks between the second floor windows. On the east façade of the addition, there is a centered glazed panel door flanked by two small, high one over one double hung windows.

The south façade is similar to the north façade having four bays with vertically aligned pairs of one over one windows but has a pair of small, high one over one double hung windows in the first bay of the first floor corresponding with a kitchen on the interior and a modern glazed door replaces one of the pair of the windows in the third bay of the second floor. This door has a modern wooden exit stair and landing attached to it that crosses in front of first floor windows. On the one story rear addition, there are two windows – a single one over one double hung window that matches the size and dimensions of the main block windows and a small, high one over one double hung window. As with the north façade, the first floor windows have slightly projecting molded cornice caps while the second floor windows abut directly to a plain frieze band under the fascia that extends the length of the façade. The clapboards extend continuously from the main block to the addition. At the rear edge of the main block, a downspout carries rain water from the gutter that extends along the eave of this facade.

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INTERIOR

The plan of the Town Hall is symmetrical on both floors with a central hallway in the front section of the first floor flanked by rooms on either side and a large room in the rear that is open except for periodic structural columns. The second floor has the larger hall with a high ceiling and is served by two matching partially enclosed stairs from the front hall of the first floor. The rear of the second floor hall has a raised stage. There is no basement and the attic is only accessible through a hatch. There are many surviving original features throughout the building including hardwood flooring, plain wood door and window casings, four and five-panel doors, four foot high wainscoting, plaster walls, and beaded board ceilings.

The front entry hall has two doors immediately on either side that lead to matching partially enclosed stairs that each rise most of the way in a straight enclosed run to a landing at the outside wall and turn ninety degrees for the last step up to the second floor level. Further along the hall are two door openings opposite each other without doors that lead into matching kitchens. Beyond the kitchen doors, the hall ends in a pair of double leaf five-paneled doors leading into the large rear dining/meeting room. The hall has narrow wood flooring and is wainscoted with four foot high narrow "V"-groove board with a one and a half inch reveal capped by a four inch wide molded chair rail.

The two kitchens are very similar with doors onto the hall as well as doors into the large rear room near the outer walls. Each kitchen has one window on the outer wall and a large front closet under the stair case. On the south, the one window is high in the wall over the counter and the closet contains a hot water heater. On the eastern wall of each kitchen is a large pass through opening with a drop down counter on the dining room side. The kitchens have wainscoting.

The large rear dining/meeting room is open except for four steel posts. The painted wainscoting and chair rail continue on all walls with wallpapered pressed board paneling over plaster above. There are three window pairs on both the north and south walls. The windows are two and a half feet above the wood floor which is made up of varied width boards. The ceiling is covered in narrow "V" groove boarding with surface mounted fluorescent lights and exposed metal ducting along both the north and south sides. Towards the back wall there is a stove thimble in the ceiling. The rear, eastern wall has two four panel doors into the rooms of the rear addition. On the north wall, there is another four panel door between the easternmost two windows.

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The rear addition is divided into a north and south half. On the north, the door from the dining/meeting hall leads to a short hall in which two safes are installed along the south wall that were moved here from private homes where previous town clerks had kept them. One is an old iron safe adorned with cast decorative moldings on the doors imitating picture frame molding. On the eastern wall is a small high window and on the north wall there is a pair of windows. On the south half of the addition, the door from the dining room enters a coat room which has another door into a small rear hall that accesses two modern bathrooms. There are two windows on the south wall and one window on the rear wall in one of the bathrooms.

The second floor is accessed from twin, partially enclosed, staircases in the front of the building. These symmetrical staircases are open at the second floor level where a wainscoted railing surrounds the two stairwells which face toward the outer walls. Between the staircases there is a former chimney engaged on the front wall that is angled out from the bottom and has plaster above wainscoting like the walls. Above each staircase is a pair of windows on the front wall. The room is open with a roughly twelve foot high ceiling covered in varnished, narrow bead boarding. Unlike the first floor where it is painted, the wainscoting and all wood trim on the second floor is varnished. Above the wainscoting the walls are wallpapered plaster. The floor is a narrow maple strip and continues in the stage area. At the east end of the room a modern proscenium screen has been created with pressed wood paneling which also covers the riser of the stage. The screen, which has a wavy edge above the stage, has doorways on either side which lead to the original angled steps and rise of the platform stage. The original trapezoidal stage was a simple construction with three steps on each side fit around angled risers covered with varnished wainscoting. A modern rectangular stage extension has been added to the front and covered with pressed wood paneling connecting the original stage to the proscenium screen. The room has three pairs of windows on the north wall with another pair in the stage area and similar fenestration on the south wall except that one of the pair nearest the stage has been replaced with a modern exit door. On the eastern rear wall on the stage there are two pairs of unequal sized windows flanking a former chimney.

Overall, the building is a simple structure with minimal decorative details that have survived intact almost a century. Only the roofing materials and window sash have been replaced, a visually compatible addition added to the rear and a modern egress stair on the south side where a window has been replaced with a door. The Worcester Town Hall retains a high level of architectural integrity both inside and out.

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Worcester Town Hall name of property

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Historic Government Buildings in Vermont name of multiple property listing

The 1912 Worcester Town Hall on Route 12 (Worcester Village Road) and Calais Road in Worcester, Vermont is architecturally and historically significant at the state and local levels as an outstanding example of an early 20th century, rural town hall. The building is being nominated under the "Historic Government Buildings in Vermont" multiple property documentation form and easily meets the registration requirements for Town Halls.

The Worcester Town Hall was built in 1912, during the year when Vermont Progressive Republican Party politicians initiated a sweeping series of reforms including the establishment of the direct primary, worker's compensation laws, the institution of a state budget, educational and judicial system reforms, the establishment of state bureaus for farm labor and agriculture. This era brought an increased state role in local matters from schools to roads and bridges. Most town halls in Vermont built at the turn of the 20th century were simple vernacular buildings such as this one. Their lack of ornamentation reflected the frugal character of many Vermonters. The Worcester Town Hall is among the best in its class within the state due to its intact appearance both on the exterior and interior, which defines it as an early 20th century, rural town hall in Vermont. Its distinctive, character defining features include the two-story, wood frame, gable front form; a community dining room and kitchen with a low ceiling on the first floor; and a meeting room with a higher ceiling on the second floor, which also has a raised stage. Its significant and expected interior features include the varnished narrow board wainscoting, beaded board ceiling on the second floor, wood flooring, and double stair system. Other exterior features of note include the triangular louver in the gable peaks (a reference back to the building's Greek Revival style predecessor), molded cornice trim, one-over-one wood windows. and the hip roof front porch with turned posts. The one-story rear wing is a compatibly designed later addition, which in its small size and location on the rear elevation does not substantially detract from the overall architectural integrity of the building.

The Town of Worcester, roughly six square miles, was chartered June 8, 1763 by Benning Wentworth, Royal Governor of New Hampshire. However, by the census of 1800 only 25 families were listed as living there and these were all gone after 1816, the famous year with no summer. Only the family of Amasa Brown remained in town after the crop failures of 1816 drove off all the other inhabitants. Brown started a tavern in his house so that by 1821 when more families started to move back to Worcester, it was the logical place to hold the early town

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meetings. In 1821, a meeting of the legal voters of Worcester was held at Amasa Brown's home and the town was re-organized and record keeping which had been interrupted was resumed. Brown was one of the first Selectmen and the Town Clerk and town meeting continued to be held at his place until 1835. It continued to be held in private homes as was quite common in Vermont's smaller communities of the early 19th century until 1846 when after much controversy, the town decided to build a meeting space for both the Congregational Church, organized in 1824 and which had also met in private homes up till then, and for town meeting.

Like many Vermont towns in the mid-19th century, the small rural community of Worcester built a joint church and town meeting house in 1846 on land deeded from David Poor to Abel Whitney for \$28.12. The deed description states "containing seventy two rods for the purpose [of] building and holding a Meetinghouse and Town House thereon," (Book 4, Page 34). Whitney, who presumably built the structure, then deeded the first floor to the "Select men of Worcester' for \$300.00 the same year, (Book 4, page 35). The site was at the heart of the small village at the major crossroads of the "County Road" (now Worcester Village Road/ Route 12) and Calais Road. The two-story Greek Revival style building housed the First Congregational meeting on the second floor and the town meeting hall and a town wood shed on the first floor. From a historic photograph, the building was a gable front frame building with a two tiered belfry and had many earmarks of the classical Greek Revival style such as deeply molded cornice with prominent returns at the gable end supported by the capitals of corner pilasters, peaked window lintels, and a large triangular louvered vent in the gable peak. This building served the town until October 4, 1904 when it burned. After the fire, the Congregationalists who had dwindled in numbers joined the Methodist Church and the town had to find a new location for town meeting.

After several years of discussion and study, the present Worcester Town Hall was eventually constructed for about \$2000.00 on the same site. Starting in 1905, the annual town meeting discussed the options for providing a meeting hall for town including leasing another space called the Forester's Hall and building a new building. The Selectmen investigated securing the deed to the land the old church/hall had stood on while the Forester's Hall was used for several town meetings. In a special town meeting of April 29, 1911, the town voted "to build a hall suitable for the purposes of the town" on the same site as the old hall and a committee for the

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purpose was elected. Chester Ladd, Charles Tewksbury and Clinton Taylor were the building committee which was charged with developing plans. In 1912, the town voted to instruct the building committee to go ahead with their plans to erect a two story building as soon as possible with \$0.35 on the dollar of the grand list to pay for it. By the 1913 Town Meeting, the hall had been built based on a report by the committee of their work. The 1913 meeting also voted to lease the new structure for "a home and talent play and also to build a stage for same." The proceeds of the entertainment were to be used to furnish the new hall. The Committee's report stated "We have completed our task, with one or two small exceptions, expenditures as follows: Whole amount of bills paid \$2,321.82. We have received for supplies sold \$45.82, Received from M.P. Ladd (contributor) \$100.00 making whole cost to town of \$2,176.00 which sum was paid by Selectmen's orders."

In Worcester, the town offices were never located in town hall and were not included in the plans for a hall but continued to be located in the homes of elected officials such as the clerk or treasurer until a new fire station/ town office was constructed in 1990. The simple 1912 Town Hall was clearly built on a typically limited budget but nevertheless was built two stories high to include a meeting hall as well as a kitchen and dining hall which is an indication of how important the community meal was to a small agricultural Vermont town. Use as a high school may also have been in the minds of the builders as a 1906 state law required the town to provide a high school opportunity and by 1917, a photograph shows the building in fact being used that way. The small ornamental feature of the triangular louver in the gable appears to have been a sentimental reference to the earlier church/meeting house that burned which also had this decoration. It suggests how much tradition and the continuity of the past was important to the townspeople of Worcester. There is another building in the village with such a triangular louver vent – the c. 1850, Greek Revival Richardson residence on Calais Road.

Early 20th century historic photographs show the new Town Hall looking virtually the same as it appears today. A photograph of the 1917-1918 high school class on its porch commemorates this early use of the building. Local oral history adds that it was used as a high school only for a few years until a union high school district was formed. For a brief period (1965-75) it was also used to house the kindergarten which had overflowed the space available in the village school. The school regularly used the Town Hall space for graduation, performances, celebrations,

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pageants, and dances until the allowable capacity of the upstairs was limited to 49 for fire egress in 1993. Despite the building's continuous use for town meetings and a multitude of other civic functions, it has changed very little throughout its history. It is very unusual and especially significant in Vermont for its remarkable level of integrity. The only major changes to the exterior were the construction of a compatible new rear addition, the removal of two chimneys originally on the front and rear edges of the roof ridge and the recent addition of a modern fire egress stair on the south side. On the interior, the hall has had blown in insulation in the last year and its kitchens have been upgraded a bit. Two small salvaged town vaults were re-located to the addition from private homes when the town offices moved to the fire station and had constructed a large walk-in vault for town records. Two modern bathrooms were installed in the addition one of which is ADA accessible and the exterior porch floor was rebuilt with a ramp installed to meet ADA guidelines. In 1997, the town replaced the roof with the present standing seam metal roof.

The town meeting was moved to the Doty Memorial School in 1983 because of population size but the Town Hall still serves as the polling place and all other public meetings are held there as well as community suppers and luncheons. The downstairs kitchens and dining room are typical of the simple, town halls built in the early 20th century. Currently, the town rents out the hall for parties and occasions in addition to its regular use for various committee and board meetings.

The Worcester Town Hall has been a hub of community life in town for almost a hundred years and continues to fill this role for a community that is still quite rural with active agriculture. The setting of the hall with fields both agricultural and athletic surrounding it and the eastern hills behind it has not changed much in a century. The only change in setting is the front of the hall where an original small lawn has been replaced with a gravel parking area. The small village around the hall contains many historic nineteenth century homes and buildings that retain integrity and add to the historic context of the hall. The village has been evaluated in the Vermont Historic Sites and Structures Survey as a historic district eligible for listing on the State Register of Historic Places. In the context of historic town halls in Vermont, the Worcester Town Hall clearly stands out as an extremely well preserved example of the simple vernacular halls of the early twentieth century.

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Worcester Town Hall
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Verbal Boundary Description

The Worcester Town Hall is also known as 12 Worcester Village Road, located on the southeast corner of the intersection of Route 12/ Worcester Village Road and Calais Road in Worcester, Vermont. The boundary begins at the intersection of Route 12 and Calais Road and proceeds east along the south side of Calais Road 148.5 feet, then turns 90 degrees and proceeds south 132 feet, then turns 90 degrees and proceeds west 148.5 feet to Route 12, then turns 90 degrees and proceeds north on the east side of Route 12 132 feet to the place of beginning. The property contains 0.443 ± acres immediately surrounding the Town Hall.

Boundary Justification

The present property boundary, used as the National Register boundary, is the original property boundary for the present Town Hall as well as its predecessor, the Congregational Church/Town Meeting Hall. "

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Photograph Labels

The following information is the same for all photographs: Worcester Village School, Worcester, Washington County, Vermont. Digital images on CD-R are filed at Vermont Division for Historic Preservation. Credit: L. Papazian, 4/19/05

Photo, Number	<u>Description</u>
1	View looking southeast on Village Center
	Rd.(Route 12)
2	View looking southeast
3	View looking northwest
4	Detail: front facade
5	Detail: front doors
6	First floor dining hall, looking west
7	Second floor meeting hall, looking west