

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED SEP 18 1979

DATE ENTERED MAY 13 1980

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS  
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

**1 NAME** Rumford Commercial Multiple Resource Area  
 HISTORIC (Partial Inventory)  
 Historic Resources of Rumford Commercial District  
 AND/OR COMMON

**2 LOCATION**  
 STREET & NUMBER Area bounded by Portland, Lowell, Canal,  
 Bridge and River Streets  
 CITY, TOWN Rumford  
 STATE Maine  
 VICINITY OF  
 COUNTY CODE  
 Second  
 Oxford 017

**3 CLASSIFICATION**

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE
<input type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT	<input type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE
<input type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	<input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE	<input type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL
<input type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BOTH	<input type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL
<input type="checkbox"/> SITE	<b>PUBLIC ACQUISITION</b>	<b>ACCESSIBLE</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT
<input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT	<input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: RESTRICTED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Multiple Resources	<input type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES: UNRESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRIAL
		<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY
			<input type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM
			<input type="checkbox"/> PARK
			<input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE RESIDENCE
			<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGIOUS
			<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENTIFIC
			<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
			<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER:

**4 OWNER OF PROPERTY**  
 NAME Multiple Ownership  
 STREET & NUMBER  
 CITY, TOWN  
 STATE  
 VICINITY OF

**5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**  
 COURTHOUSE,  
 REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC. Oxford County Registry of Deeds  
 STREET & NUMBER  
 CITY, TOWN South Paris,  
 STATE Maine

**6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**  
 TITLE  
 DATE  
 DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS  
 CITY, TOWN  
 STATE  
 FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCAL

# 7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED DATE _____
<input type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

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## DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Rumford Commercial District is located on what is virtually an island, separated from the residential section of the town by the Androscoggin River on the west and from South Rumford by the Middle Canal on the south and east. To the northeast lies a complex of undistinguished paper and pulp mill buildings with Androscoggin River beyond. This unusual geographic situation renders its delineation as a district for a multiple resource nomination logical. This section of the town is virtually exclusively commercial and features a variety of stores and shops, business blocks, commercial hotel and municipal buildings. The entire area was built up within less than two decades (see Item 8-Significance).

Architecturally, the significant buildings are extremely homogeneous owing to the short span of construction and feature prevailing early 20<sup>th</sup> century styles, most notably Beaux Arts and Colonial Revival. Owing to the small size of the district, the nominated structures are all within sight of each other. The very rapid growth of the town evidently created something of a boom town atmosphere so that the commercial and municipal architecture evidenced by these properties is more decorative and opulent than would be expected in a typical Maine industrial community.

No known archaeological resources exist in this district.

The survey of this small area was conducted by members of the Maine Historic Preservation Commission staff in an informal manner. It was easily possible to inspect the entire area in a relatively short space of time, there being only eight city blocks involved and the number of significant structures few.

In a very real sense this part of Rumford was a planned area with the streets laid out in 1892 much as they are today. At the same time lots were delineated and the same lot and numbering system is in use today. Rumford in the 90's was still a relatively unambitious small town and these lots provided only 25 feet of street frontage. Most of the early wood frame buildings of the period conformed to this plan and a goodly number of these narrow, deep and unimpressive structures remain today as a reminder of "pre-boom" Rumford. One result of this early planning effort is that the larger structures, like those nominated, occupy several lots as noted in the assessor's map references.

# 8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

## STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The historic resources in the Rumford Commercial District reflect the almost meteoric rise of the community in a span of twenty years from rural village to large industrial town.

In the area of Rumford Falls, the Androscoggin River drops 165 feet in the course of one mile. Hugh J. Chisholm and his associate, Waldo Pettingill in 1882 purchased large tracts of land in the area and began to harness this enormous power potential. The first industrial building at Rumford Falls was constructed in 1892 and the Rumford Falls Power Company was founded.

Within the next twenty years a growth so phenomenal took place that national attention was attracted. What had been a remote rural countryside now reverberated with the noise of machinery. The Oxford Paper Company was founded and a small city grew almost overnight. Rumford was a boom town and the burgeoning mills and shops drew into the area a flood of population to serve them. This in turn attracted suppliers of goods and services who concentrated their operations on the island-like area nearest the original mills.

Perhaps no other building better conveys the ambition and optimism of the period than the Rumford Falls Power Company Building with its ultra modern (for its time) exterior and its richly classical interior.

The fact that Rumford, like many single industry towns, has suffered over the years from exploitation and air pollution and the fact that it has perhaps not lived up to the potential that these structures tried to represent, in no way detracts, however, from their quality or the aspirations they reflected.

Owing to the small size of the area and the great variation in quality of construction, no historic districts were deemed appropriate for inclusion.

# 9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Leane, John J., History of Rumford. Portland, 1936.  
 The Industrial Journal, 1901-1908. Bangor

**ACREAGE NOT VERIFIED**

# 10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

**UTM NOT VERIFIED**

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY See inventory sheets

QUADRANGLE NAME Rumford

QUADRANGLE SCALE 1:24000

UTM REFERENCES

A	1,9	37,7	2,7,0	4,9	3,3	8,5,5	B	1,9	37,7	2,6,0	4,9	3,3	2,0,0
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING		ZONE	EASTING		ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING		ZONE	EASTING
C	1,9	37,7	1,9,0	4,9	3,3	1,2,0	D	1,9	37,7	1,9,0	4,9	3,3	2,4,0
E	1,9	37,7	0,3,5	4,9	3,3	6,7,0	F						
G							H						

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

See inventory sheets

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

# 11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME/TITLE

Frank A. Beard, Historian/Robert L. Bradley, Architectural Historian

ORGANIZATION

Maine Historic Preservation Commission

DATE

July, 1979

STREET & NUMBER

242 State Street

TELEPHONE

207/289-2133

CITY OR TOWN

Augusta,

STATE

Maine 04333

# 12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL

STATE

LOCAL

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

*Carol S. [Signature]*

TITLE

S.H.P.O.

DATE

9/10/79

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE

5/13/80

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE

5/12/80

ATTEST:

*Patricia [Signature]*  
CHIEF OF REGISTRATION