

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

For NPS use only

National Register of Historic Places Inventory—Nomination Form

received JUL 14 1987
date entered AUG 25 1987

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

1. Name

historic

and/or common Chelsea Multiple Resource Area

2. Location

street & number

not for publication

city, town Hamlet of Chelsea vicinity of

state New York

code 36

county Dutchess

code 027

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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational
<input type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment
<input type="checkbox"/> object	NA in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government
	NA being considered	<input 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> private residence
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> religious
			<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
			<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> other: community center

4. Owner of Property

name various: see component forms

street & number

city, town

vicinity of

state

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Dutchess County Court House

street & number Market Street

city, town Poughkeepsie

state New York

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title New York Statewide Inventory has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date Sept. 1984 federal state county local

depository for survey records NYS Division for Historic Preservation

city, town Albany

state New York 12238

7. Description

Condition		Check one	Check one
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved date <u>n/a</u>
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed		

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

SURVEY AREA AND METHODOLOGY

The historic resources of Chelsea, Dutchess County, New York were identified as part of a broader architectural survey conducted by Scenic Hudson, Inc. of Poughkeepsie under the direction of the New York State Historic Preservation Office staff and with funding assistance from the Area Fund of Dutchess County. The total survey area covered the coastal zone on the east side of the Hudson River north of the city of Beacon (multiple resource area nomination in process) and south of the village of Wappingers Falls (MRA listed; 29 September 1984) and Bowdoin Park, a Dutchess County-owned recreational area. Based on the criteria of the Coastal Zone Management Program of the U.S. Department of Commerce, the eastern limit of the survey area was determined to be the properties on the east side of the north-south state highway, Route 9D. The western boundary was the county line, which bisects the Hudson River.

The survey area included portions of three towns: Fishkill, Wappinger and Poughkeepsie, but, because of topography, historical, social and economic associations and the survival of traditional land-use patterns, it emerged as a distinguishable entity. The recent subdivision of upland agricultural areas east of the river has steadily encroached on the historic built environment of the coastal zone with the demand for additional housing generated by an expanding network of IBM assembly plants and the suburban growth of the cities of Beacon and Poughkeepsie.

The physical character of the survey area retains an essentially intact late nineteenth century appearance and, generally, contains two small river hamlets, New Hamburg and Chelsea, an upland crossroads hamlet, Hughsonville, and an intervening riparian zone once dominated by large residential estate holdings. The period of historic development begins with the appearance of the hamlets as shipping ports for agricultural goods in the mid-eighteenth century. It continues in the Romantic era, when large country seats began to populate the river slope here at the northern end of the Newburgh Bay, with its dramatic scenery, and elsewhere throughout the Hudson Valley and it culminates with the railroad/industrial age, which radically transformed the activity of the hamlet areas and precipitated their decline. Architectural features in the survey area are largely residential in nature as most of the industry- and transportation-related buildings have succumbed to deterioration and disuse as the local economy shifted away from the river corridor in the twentieth

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century. The hamlets are characterized by small-scale, modest architecture reflecting the changing tastes in the river vernacular in the nineteenth century. The collection of estates illustrates the more sophisticated regional and national architectural trends that influenced the conception of this significant group of related properties during the same period. The preservation of these hamlets and estates within the relatively undisturbed survey area provides important visual and material information about their historic interrelationships and constitutes a rare intact fragment of the historic Hudson River environment in southern Dutchess County.

Although the boundaries of the entire survey area encompass that portion of the coastal zone that retains historic and physical integrity, in developing contexts for evaluating significance based on the National Register criteria, the SHPO determined that the area was better divided into smaller units. No buildings of historical or architectural merit were identified in the area within the town of Fishkill except Mount Gulian and Stonykill, both of which are already listed on the National Register (19 November 1982 and 20 March 1980, respectively). Chelsea and Hughsonville are located in the town of Wappinger but share little functional relationship in a coastal context. New Hamburg, which is more directly linked to Hughsonville in the historic transportation network, is located in the town of Poughkeepsie. New Hamburg shares a more important association with the factory village of Wappingers Falls, which was the subject of an independent multiple resource area nomination (listed 29 September 1984). The estates have a more compelling association with broader regional architectural themes than with the river hamlets and their vernacular traditions. A coherent, unifying context did not reveal itself for the survey area. As a result, nominations for the river hamlets of Chelsea and New Hamburg have been developed as small, separate multiple resource areas and other significant properties, notably the Picturesque country seats, will be evaluated and nominated individually.

CHELSEA - GENERAL DESCRIPTION

Chelsea is located on the eastern shore of the Hudson River in the town of Wappinger approximately two and one-half miles south of the hamlet of New Hamburg at the mouth of the Wappinger Creek and three and one-half miles north of the mouth of the Fishkill Creek and what is today the city of Beacon. The Hudson

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River begins to constrict at this point from its mile-plus width at the Newburgh Bay (the city of Newburgh is located on the west side of the Hudson River opposite Beacon--see: East End Historic District, Newburgh, Orange County, National Register listed October 1985) and Chelsea enjoys a distinctive waterside location in one of the valley's most significant cultural and economic centers. Danskammer Point is almost directly across the river, located slightly north about mid-way between Chelsea and New Hamburg. Danskammer, "the dance chamber," was named in Robert Juet's log of Henry Hudson's 1609 voyage up the river. It was the subject of much lore and the destination for many pilgrimages by nature-lovers in the nineteenth century. A major house was erected there in the early 1800's but the point eventually succumbed to industrial interests, first to quarrying and later to electricity; Danskammer is today the site for two large power generating plants. The view south from Chelsea is dominated by the broad expanse of Newburgh Bay with the Hudson Highlands enclosing the scene in the distance (See: Hudson Highlands Multiple Resource Area, Dutchess County and others, National Register listed 23 November 1982). The aesthetic and economic advantages of the Newburgh Bay contributed to a prominence and a prosperity for the city of Newburgh that rivaled other major centers in the Northeast. Tiny Chelsea's share of the Hudson River's flow of commerce and ideas was commensurate to its size and peripheral location; however, it nevertheless benefitted from its fortuitous situation, and the physical character and social structure was shaped accordingly.

The Chelsea site was attractive as a landing because of the flat point of land that projected out into the river there and provided easy access to the deep shipping channel. Chelsea was known as "Low Point" throughout the nineteenth century in contrast to the nearby hilly landing area, "High Point," now New Hamburg (see: New Hamburg Multiple Resource Area, nominated to the National Register, 5 January 1987). From the shoreline, the land rises gradually to a series of ridges three to four hundred feet in elevation within a mile of the river. Verplanck Ridge and Van Wyck Ridge embrace Chelsea's eastern limits, both named for the long-standing landholding families that figured prominently in the hamlet's history and both containing homes associated with those families (see listings for Stonykill and Mount Gulian noted above and in section 6). The location had little to offer as an inducement for settlement other than excellent wharf facilities for the transshipment of local agricultural goods. Chelsea lacked proximity to creeks with industrial poten-

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tial and to overland routes connecting with population centers. The hamlet of Chelsea coalesced around the landing attracting modest river trade and developing small-scale maritime industries such as ship building, flour milling, freighting, ferrying and fishing.

Chelsea is approximately _____ acres in area and contains fewer than seventy-five buildings. The hamlet is concentrated around the intersection of two roads with the wharf: a north-south road linking the hamlet with New Hamburg and Wappingers Falls to the north and with other small communities to the south (a U.S. Veteran's Administration hospital at Castle Point has altered the road system south of Chelsea) and a road originating at the wharf and extending east to meet the old post road (now Route 9D) more than a mile away. Buildings in the hamlet are arranged in three linear tiers parallel to the river retreating along Front, Market and Liberty Streets respectively. Most of the buildings occupy lots of less than one acre with short east-west streets connecting the three main streets allowing for denser subdivision. A few houses trail off from this mini-grid plan along the river road, the extension of Market Street, but, generally, Chelsea is contained in a small compact area.

BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION AND JUSTIFICATION

The boundaries for the Chelsea Multiple Resource Area were established to encompass the limits of the riverine community as it existed in the late nineteenth century. Specifically, the area is defined as beginning at the northern boundary of the Karen Lane subdivision at the southern limits of the historic hamlet extended in a westerly direction to a point in the Hudson River where it meets the boundary between Dutchess and Orange Counties; from this point, the multiple resource area boundary line extends north along the county border to a point where it meets the westerly extension of the northern property line of Dutchess County tax map parcel number 034676, the northernmost building lot on the Chelsea River Road in the concentrated hamlet area; the boundary then turns in an easterly direction and follows this and other property lines to tax map parcel number 076595, which contains the easternmost building in the hamlet and thence follows the east lines of properties fronting the Chelsea Road and River Road South to the northern boundary of the Karen Lane subdivision and thence the beginning.

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ARCHITECTURAL CHARACTER

The first range of buildings is located within the original wharf area on what is today known as Front Street; these buildings are the remains of the hamlet's commercial structures on Low Point. Most of the historic buildings in this area have been either renovated or replaced by the present occupant of the waterfront, a marina. The railroad, which sliced through the landing in 1848, effectively divided the wharf from the rest of the hamlet and brought an end to many maritime occupations. The subsequent decline and decay has left no surviving buildings of historic significance.

The residential core of the hamlet begins east of the point and the railroad tracks along two parallel north-south streets. Market and Liberty Streets are fronted by older frame buildings, largely nineteenth century in origin and reflecting the modest vernacular traditions of regional village architecture. They are small, single family residences, one and one-half to two stories tall, generally narrow, with side passage plans and three-bay facades. A few larger-scale houses have center passage plans and five-bay facades. Earlier house types, those predating the Civil War, have roof ridge lines parallel with front facades in spite of other Greek Revival characteristics. Later houses have ridge lines perpendicular to facades reflecting the influence of the Gothic taste in the latter half of the nineteenth century. Ornamentation is minimal on these houses. Unlike the larger and more cosmopolitan population centers, Chelsea does not contain prominent examples of brick houses or reflect the design trends of the Greek Revival or Picturesque tastes. The effects of economic and stylistic periods are not graphically evident, as they are in nearby villages like New Hamburg or cities like Newburgh. The siting and interrelationships of these buildings are intact; however, alterations to the buildings have compromised their historic integrity. Later houses, built within the last seventy-five years, mostly in a catalog design Bungalow style, have filled in voids within the grid and further eroded the overall visual historic cohesiveness of the area.

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NOMINATED RESOURCES

There are four individual components nominated within the Chelsea Multiple Resource Area. None of the buildings is concentrated in a group that either architecturally or contextually has historic district qualities. Thematically, the resources in Chelsea are diverse; possible themes related to the river commerce or industry were not represented in the surviving resources. Archeological potential in the area was not evaluated. The four components reflect no particular distribution pattern. Each is situated on a lot of small to moderate size and within a village setting.

The nominated properties are distinguished as exceptional architectural resources that reflect the progression of building types and styles in the Hudson Valley and evince the hamlet's participation in broader cultural phenomena. None of the resources is unique to Chelsea, yet they are all notable representations of regional architectural taste, building technology and materials. There are two residences nominated, one from either end of Chelsea's period of significance: 1820 - 1910. The earlier example, dating from the 1830's, embodies the characteristics of eighteenth-century ethnic vernacular traditions in Dutchess County but also reflects the transition occurring in the 1820's when active river commerce thrust isolated rural communities into the larger mass society. The later example is a well designed village house built in an informal, eclectic style in 1910 that is emblematic of Chelsea's eventual assimilation into the expanded cultural network.

Two other building types are included in the nomination: a church built in 1866 and a school built in 1875. The church is a design-book example of a rural church in the Gothic Revival style. Its association with the organization of the community and the growth of denominational religion in the Hudson Valley in the period contributes to its significance. The brick school provides a particularly distinctive display of brick craftsmanship characteristic of the region during the period in which it was known as a brick-making center. It is unusual that the school is Chelsea's only surviving brick edifice.

The four properties contain seven contributing buildings. There are no intrusions or other types of features on the nominated parcels. No other properties in the multiple resource

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area have been previously evaluated or listed on the National Register.

Chelsea was laid out and developed in the early 1800's when river trade was booming and communities were blossoming at every available landing site. No physical remains of the commerce or boat industry are evident on the waterfront, but on the river road south of the landing, the Cornelius Carman House survives as an exceptional example of late Federal period architecture and the home of one of the more inventive boat builders of the early nineteenth century. Built in 1833, the house embodies a transitional design reflecting the evolution of both form and style from the very localized vernacular traditions of the eighteenth century to more general regional tastes prompted by the expanded interaction of inter-regional and international trade. A frame building, one and one-half stories tall, the five bay facade is dominated by a central Doric portico. Later wings extend the length of the house and emphasize the balance inherent in the design. Double chimneys and compound gable fenestration give the end elevations a distinctive appearance. Its low, linear form embodies the persistent regional house image established by the Dutch in lower Dutchess County, yet changing patterns of house use and lifestyle stretched the limits of the old plan, adding new spaces in symmetrical organization and fashionable Greek Revival style ornament that was linked to the social and economic change rampant in the region. Like the sleepy landing pulled, not entirely unwillingly, into the swift currents of the main-stream, the Carman House represents the meeting of Colonial and post-Revolutionary values in the Hudson Valley.

As the region prospered artists, intellectuals and taste-makers began to reflect on the disorder that had been wrought and the naive world that had been lost. The ensuing romanticism inspired a picturesque taste codified and promoted heavily in the region by Andrew Jackson Downing, Calvert Vaux and Frederick Withers, all from Newburgh. The little Gothic church in Chelsea, St. Mark's Chapel, built in 1866, is a distinguished example of the architectural trends of the period. The frame, board and batten structure is based in the country church architecture of England and represents the effort to dignify the river environment with time-honored building forms and elevate the consciousness of its citizens. This substantial yet restrained edifice is a benchmark socially as well as architecturally, embodying the growth of a wealthy class, of an increasingly organized community structure and of municipal planning.

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This latter phenomenon is further illustrated by the appearance of the Chelsea Grammar School in 1875. The substantial brick building housing one classroom illustrates the persistence of the Picturesque taste into the Victorian period and the importance of the institutional presence in communities. As Chelsea's only surviving brick building, the school is an important example of the area's fascination with the material. By this time, there was a brick manufactory located just south of the hamlet as well as others near New Hamburg, Fishkill Landing (now Beacon) and Roseton on the opposite side of the river. The precise brickwork evident on the school building, with the restrained ornament of arched windows, window hoods and corbelling, is indicative of the masonry skill expressed in the vernacular. The success and stature of nineteenth-century towns was, in no small part, measured by the scale, quality and number of public buildings. During this period, little hamlets like Chelsea raised funds and built schools to register the value placed on education and the independence and sophistication of their communities.

By the 1880's, small landings had retired from competing in the regional commerce, largely driven out by the monopoly of the large shipping interests and the railroad. The railroad severed the small towns' ties to the river both physically and economically. Captain Moses W. Collyer, builder of Driftwood in 1899, was the last of a long line of Collyers and captains on the Hudson River. Built in his retirement, as Collyer shifted from navigating the Hudson to writing about the history of the boats he captained, Driftwood represents the final stage in Chelsea's maritime history. The house is a remarkably intact and distinctive example of a village house type of the period with certain ironic twists, such as a gambrel roof, that may be the inspiration of its eccentric builder. Its restraint is characteristic of Chelsea's limited economy and essentially vernacular perspective of regional architectural trends, and its subtle individuality reflects the inventiveness of Collyer as its earlier neighbor reflects that of Cornelius Carman. It is not a self-conscious building like St. Mark's Chapel or the Chelsea Grammar School but, rather, indicates a return to the modest localism of an earlier age. Asymmetrical in form and informal in layout, Driftwood is well-appointed but unpretentious. It is situated on a village-sized lot landscaped in a typical village fashion with most of the lot in lawns, sparse plantings and garden beds at the rear of the house. Outbuildings survive and enhance the period setting.

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In the twentieth century, Chelsea entered a period of dormancy and insularity. Although the location of clubs for sailing, motor boating and ice boating, the hamlet grew little and maintained its modest character and conservative self-image. Nothing that was built in this century acquired the distinction of the four nominated properties nor was any activity associated with broader regional trends to a significant degree. Chelsea's particular charm today is that it has remained small and relatively unspoiled in so prominent a riverside location. Its limited architectural base has, perhaps, discouraged the revivals experienced in other river towns in the region. Today, much of Chelsea's history is obscure; its role in the excitement of Hudson River trade in the early nineteenth century is not very evident in its surviving cultural resources. The four prominent properties in the hamlet hint at a prosperity and a civic pride that links Chelsea with significant architectural trends and historical events. They are the physical remains of a small Hudson River landing's history, the legacy of the rise and fall of a maritime community.

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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input checked="" 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 c1826 - 1932

Builder/Architect see component forms

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

SUMMARY

The history of Chelsea is directly linked to the course of maritime commerce in the Hudson Valley during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. The hamlet is a surviving representation of the small localized port facilities that appeared at suitable landing points along the river and subsequently prospered in the expanding regional economy. These small upstate centers were active transshipment points for agricultural goods and raw materials destined for New York City and for manufactured commodities in demand in the countryside. Even though the railroad supplanted waterborne vessels as the carrier of goods and people after 1850, the Hudson River remained the transportation corridor and the coastal hamlets enjoyed continued economic vitality.

Architecture in these communities during the first half of the nineteenth century was generally modest in design, small in scale and vernacular in its building traditions. Brick was frequently used as a building material in the region due to the abundance of clay and limestone, yet frame construction was the norm, particularly in Chelsea where only one brick building survives. The sloping terrain with limited level areas encouraged compact hamlet plans. This feature of coastal communities was also a factor of the entrepreneurial nature of their origins: they were often surveyed and laid out by individuals owning the wharves seeking to develop a town and capitalize on their land investment. Chelsea was founded in just this way.

With its emergence as a landing in the 1820's, the basis for architectural style in Chelsea was the Greek Revival taste. Later Picturesque forms and ornament were incorporated into the vernacular at mid-century; however, a decided tradition of form, scale and plan was maintained throughout the first century of architectural development. As a whole, the surviving resources in Chelsea show this continuity less clearly than the larger hamlets and villages in the region due to its modest size, less active history and later changes. Nevertheless, the four nominated properties reflect continuity and change in the hamlet's vernacular architecture in residential, religious and civic categories and

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provide a representative cross-section of variations in regional architectural themes from c1830 to c1900.

The train prompted an economic and social reorganization along with the inevitable shift in locus from river wharf to trackside. River commerce gradually declined and the diversified local maritime economy was soon monopolized by the common carriers. Landings like Chelsea became less distinguishable (and less distinguished) in the endless rail network. The highway transportation systems of the twentieth century further decentralized the commercial activity and bypassed Chelsea altogether. Physical growth and architectural development became static in this phase. Essentially built-up and increasingly remote, Chelsea maintained its nineteenth-century patterns of life, but its architectural integrity suffered with the constant alteration and modernization of historic buildings. The major commercial activity in this period was still related to the river but involved the change of the wharf facilities to a marina for recreational boating. Chelsea had evolved from an independent commercial center to a service adjunct for the growing suburban class. Thus, it is as a small Hudson River trading center reflecting the maritime age in the period c1830 to c1900 that Chelsea reveals its distinctive historic identity. The four properties that are nominated here embody significant characteristics of this legacy.

Like the rest of the larger survey area, Chelsea was within the Rombout Patent granted in 1682 to Francis Rombout and others. The land was divided and sold by the heirs of the original patentees with the Verplanck family acquiring large tracts along the Wappingers Creek and the Hudson River. Until about 1800, when Abram Gerow built a house there and set up a cooper shop, the area known as Low Point was uninhabited. Gerow and his ten children provided the beginning of a community. In 1812, inspired, no doubt, by the favorable docking potential at the point, a would-be developer named Robert W. Jones had the site surveyed into eighteen uniform blocks and dubbed his "city" Carthage. Nothing materialized from his scheme; however, the name stuck. Residents complained about mail being sent to another Carthage in Jefferson County in northern New York so Low Point was used by most of the locals until the railroad named its station stop "Chelsea" after the turn of the twentieth century.

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The real beginning of Chelsea, or Low Point, as a river landing started when Cornelius Carman established a shipyard there in 1820. Carman proved to be innovative in his craft, building the first steam ferry in the region in 1828, the Plow Boy, that replaced the horse powered boat between Newburgh and Fishkill Landing (now Beacon). In 1830, he built another steamboat, the William Young, which was one of the pioneer passenger and freight boats on the Hudson. He later became famous among boatmen by being the first American shipbuilder to install a moveable centerboard on his sloop Freedom. Whether he invented the device or adapted a European prototype is not clear, but the moveable centerboard became a standard feature on shallow draft river boats.

In 1833, Carman purchased a fifteen-acre parcel on the southern edge of Low Point and built a distinctive house there overlooking the Hudson River. The Cornelius Carman House is unique in the multiple resource area and the broader survey area because of its effective combination of the local Federal period vernacular form and elegant Greek Revival style details. The core of the house is characteristic of large, pretentious homes in the vernacular tradition in its low one and one-half story form, its wide proportions and its linear arrangement of rooms and wings. The southern part of Dutchess County has numerous examples of this frame house type dating from the Federal period. What particularly distinguishes the Carman house from the others is its late building date and the incorporation of Greek Revival style trim, notably the monumental Doric portico and cornice. The Cornelius Carman House is an outstanding example of vernacular residential architecture from the transitional period in the Hudson Valley when increased commerce and communication began to radically transform the traditional cultural patterns and compositions in the region.

By 1840, Low Point had about thirty dwellings, several stores and a freighting business using the steamer William Young under Captain Charles Adriance. The primary business of the landing was to transport goods produced on farms farther east. Farmers came from as far away as Connecticut to ship grain, pork, butter and other farm products to markets in New York City, sometimes backing up their wagons for a mile or more waiting to unload. The farmers would trade their goods for supplies and commodities at the landing stores.

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During the following decades, Low Point showed signs of healthy commercial development. Gilbert Collins opened a brick yard south of the hamlet in the late 1840's that was still employing 30 men in the 1880's. When the railroad was built through Low Point in 1848, it both helped and hurt the town. The depot attracted more business to the commercial core, but the tracks divided the town in two and, especially in conjunction with the Harlem Valley Railroad in the eastern part of the county, diverted a good portion of the farmers' trade away from the docks. An indicator of this was the conversion, in 1856, of the storehouse to a steam flour mill. Starr B. Knox's mill was an added attraction to convince the inland farmers to bring their grain to Low Point. It prospered at first, but soon after it was plagued by structural problems caused in the old building by the vibration of machinery. It finally closed in the 1880's under the competition from newer mills and grain arriving from the west on the railroad.

During these years (1850 - 1880), however, Low Point was at the peak of its commercial development. In addition to the small fishing craft, at least eight sloops and schooners were based there. Three freight lines were listed in an 1867 directory with ranges from New York City on the south to Troy on the north, including that of Captain John L. Collyer, who was part of a renowned sailing family. The Greek Revival taste had a tremendous impact on the architecture of Low Point and other Hudson River towns. The preference for the form and designs of the style persisted well into the latter half of the nineteenth century. After 1850, however, the primary architectural influence in the region was from the romantic revivals championed by Andrew Jackson Downing and his coterie. While none of the small frame houses with Picturesque detailing survives with sufficient integrity to warrant nomination, two institutional buildings are included in the nomination that aptly reflect the architectural taste and its distinctive qualities.

St. Mark's Church was built in 1866 with the backing of some of the area's most prestigious families. Both the leading townspeople -- the Collyers, Charles Adriance, Starr B. Knox, for example -- and some of the wealthy landholders, such as William H. Merritt and three generations of the venerable Verplanck family, descendants of the original patentee and patriarchs of Mt. Gulian (National Register listed 19 November 1982), were counted as church members. The design of St. Mark's is a strikingly pure version of the stone English Gothic Revival style parish church

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as it was reinterpreted in wood by American architects, notably Frederick Withers and Richard Upjohn. As no architect is recorded for the church, St. Mark's was most likely designed and constructed by local carpenters according to plans published in church publications or design books. It is a simple frame board-and-batten building with pointed arch windows and Gothic detailing including wooden pseudo-buttresses at the corners. A small bell cot tops the roof ridge in place of a more substantial tower. The church is an excellent example of rural church design in the region and an indicator of the prosperous and self-conscious position of the hamlet in the mid-nineteenth century.

The second significant institutional building from this period included in the multiple resource nomination is the Chelsea Grammar School located just north of St. Mark's Church on Liberty Street. Together with a Methodist Church that is not eligible for nomination, the buildings form the nucleus of a civic center. (A recent fire station located opposite the old school further defines this area as the hamlet's core today.) Built less than a decade later than St. Mark's in 1875, the school also represents the peak of Chelsea's prosperity and is a symbol of its community image. Although designed in a Picturesque manner with an emphasis on the gable roof, a consistent use of arched, rounded and concave shapes, the ornamentation of rooflines with deep overhanging eaves, and the conscious use of natural materials and colors, the school is also significant for its representation of the prominent role achieved by education in nineteenth-century society, even on the small scale of Chelsea.

From the waning years of the 1870's to the turn of the century, Chelsea's history becomes more ambiguous as river commerce declined. The last venture in commercial development was the transformation of the flour mill into a cement mill in 1878. A miller was brought from England to operate the facility and, after some experimentation, the Walkkill Cement Company produced the first portland grade cement in America at the site. Its entire production was used in the piers constructed to support the Poughkeepsie Railroad Bridge (National Register listed). The company moved to nearby Port Ewen soon after, however, and, in 1895, the dock and mill were demolished.

Captain Moses W. Collyer was Chelsea's most prominent citizen. One of the Hudson River's great sailing masters, Captain Collyer made the successful transition to steam vessels and became legendary in piloting them as well. He captained his

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Continuation SheetSection number 8 Page 6Chelsea Multiple Resource Area
Chelsea, Dutchess County, New York

first sloop in 1878 and later owned several steamers, which he operated out of Chelsea. In his later years, he became interested in the maritime history of the river and, in 1908, he co-authored the definitive work on the Hudson River sailing traders, The Sloops of the Hudson, with William E. Verplanck. The Captain Moses W. Collyer House (Driftwood), built in 1899, is the last nominated property in the multiple resource area and is significant as a distinctive example of late nineteenth century architecture in the hamlet and for its association with one of the Hudson's most colorful boatmen. The ornate decoration popular in the Picturesque era had evolved, by the 1880's, into the more informal and eclectic arrangement of materials, textures and details that is commonly associated with the Queen Anne style. Driftwood displays variously shaped shingles intermingled with linear siding, particularly in the spaces within the raking edges of the complex gambrel roof. Colonial Revival motifs, like Palladian windows, reflect a nostalgia for the past, an apt association with Captain Collyer, as was its siting near river's edge opposite Collyer's private dock. Stylistically, the house reflects architectural trends that moved increasingly out of the local context and symbolized the hamlet's new place in the larger economy. Unable to retain its individuality, Chelsea lost its vitality. Moses Collyer also moved from an active to a passive role in river life presaging the final days of the maritime era.

Chelsea's nineteenth-century history is almost exclusively linked with commercial activities on the Hudson River. As a river landing, it never grew to be as populous as nearby Newburgh or Poughkeepsie, or even to the scale of communities like Fishkill Landing or New Hamburg. Although it had deep water near the shore, Chelsea lacked a large harbor or substantial stream that could provide power for factories. The hamlet thrived through most of the 1800's because the magnitude of river commerce was such that small landings were still competitive. Overland transportation was not yet advanced enough to concentrate shipping points in major cities. Also, independent sloop owners based in small towns could easily compete on the open river.

It is, therefore, as a representation of the localized nature of the entrepreneurial phase of the Hudson River maritime economy that Chelsea has a cultural interest. The four nominated properties, two residences, one school and one church (total of seven contributing buildings), characterize the hamlet's historical pattern of development which, in turn, relates to the course of the region as a whole.

9. Major Bibliographical References

see continuation sheet

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property MRA = approx. 225; also see continuation sheet

Quadrangle name Wappingers Falls, N.Y.

Quadrangle scale 1:24,000

UTM References for MRA; also see continuation sheet

A	1,8	5,8,6	3,0,0	4,6	0,0	5,7,0
	Zone	Easting		Northing		

B	1,8	5,8,6	0,4,0	4,5	9,9	9,1,0
	Zone	Easting		Northing		

C	1,8	5,8,4	9,6,0	4,6	0,0	2,0,0
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D	1,8	5,8,5	5,6,0	4,6	0,1	1,6,0
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E						
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F						
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G						
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H						
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Verbal boundary description and justification

See boundary description in section 7 and overall maps for multiple resource area and in appropriate sections and maps for component forms.

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state	n/a	code	county	code
-------	-----	------	--------	------

state	n/a	code	county	code
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11. Form Prepared By

name/title Neil Larson (also see continuation sheet)

organization NYS Division for Historic Preservation date June 1987

street & number Agency Bldg. 1, Empire State Plaza telephone 518-474-0479

city or town Albany state New York 12238

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

title Deputy Commissioner for Historic Preservation

date 7/2/87

For NPS use only

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

See continuation sheet for listings date
Keeper of the National Register

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

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Chelsea Multiple Resource Area
Chelsea, Dutchess County, New York

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Chelsea Multiple Resource Area
Chelsea, Dutchess County, New York

The research for this nomination and the survey that preceded it was conducted by field consultants contracted to Scenic Hudson, Inc. of Poughkeepsie, New York, notably John Clarke of Poughkeepsie and Jane Carpenter Kellar of Kingston. Ms. Kellar compiled preliminary data. Mr. Clarke prepared expanded inventory forms on significant properties and formulated working drafts for nomination narratives. Photography was done by John Clarke and State Historic Preservation Office staff. Negatives are repositied both at Scenic Hudson, Inc. and the Division for Historic Preservation in Albany.

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Section number _____ Page _____

Multiple Resource Area
Thematic Group

Name Chelsea MRA
State Dutchess County, NY

Nomination/Type of Review

Date/Signature

Cover

~~Submitted for Review~~

for Keeper Patrick Andrews 8/25/87

1. Carman, Cornelius, House

~~Submitted for Review~~

for Keeper Laura McChesney 12/1/87

Attest Patrick Sarge 12-30-87

2. Chelsea Grammar School

**Entered in the
National Register**

for Keeper Melvin Byers 8/25/87

Attest _____

3. Collyer, Capt. Moses W.,
House

**Entered in the
National Register**

for Keeper Melvin Byers 8/25/87

Attest _____

4. St. Mark's Episcopal Church

**Entered in the
National Register**

for Keeper Melvin Byers 8/25/87

Attest _____

5.

Keeper _____

Attest _____

6.

Keeper _____

Attest _____

7.

Keeper _____

Attest _____

8.

Keeper _____

Attest _____

9.

Keeper _____

Attest _____

10.

Keeper _____

Attest _____