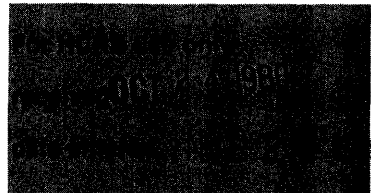


**United States Department of the Interior
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service**

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



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

1. Name East Providence Multiple Resource Area

Historic Resources of East Providence, Rhode Island;
historic Partial Inventory, Historic and Architectural Resources

and/or common

2. Location

street & number Incorporation limits of East Providence, Rhode Island ~~state~~ publication

city, town East Providence vicinity of #1 Hon. Fernand St Germain
-congressional district

state Rhode Island code 44 county Providence code 007

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture
<input type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input checked="" 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	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government
Multiple Resources	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input checked="" 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> transportation
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> other:

4. Owner of Property

name Multiple ownership see historic district owner's list and

street & number individual inventory sheets.

city, town vicinity of state

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. East Providence City Hall

street & number Taunton Avenue

city, town East Providence state Rhode Island

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Statewide Historic Preservation Report P-EP-1: East Providence, R.I.
has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date September 1976 federal state county local

depository for survey records Rhode Island Historical Preservation Commission

city, town Providence state Rhode Island

7. Description

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

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The city of East Providence, part of the heavily urbanized greater Providence metropolitan region, covers an area of 13.7 square miles in northeastern Rhode Island. It is bounded by the city of Pawtucket on the north, the Seekonk River on the northwest, the Providence River on the southwest, the town of Barrington on the southeast, and the town of Seekonk, Massachusetts on the east. A portion of the Seekonk boundary is formed by the Runnins River, a tributary of the Barrington River, while at the northeast corner of the city, the Ten Mile River is dammed to form Central Pond and the James V. Turner Reservoir. Below Turner Reservoir, the Ten Mile River turns east and flows into Omega Pond, a body of water created in the late nineteenth century by the damming of Seekonk Cove, an inlet of the Seekonk River. Watchemoket Cove and Bullock's Cove, located respectively in the central and southern sections of the city, are major inlets on the Providence River coast, the latter defined by a long, narrow peninsula called Bullock's Neck.

Topographically, East Providence comprises three distinct areas. The northern portion of the city is part of the Seekonk Plain, a plateau encompassing sections of Pawtucket and Seekonk as well. Most of this region ranges from 50 to 80 feet above sea level. This large, level plain adjacent to a fresh water stream and salt cove attracted the attention of Puritan settlers, who laid out the house lots and town common of Rehoboth, Massachusetts on this site in 1643. The southern portion of East Providence is part of the coastal plain surrounding Narragansett Bay and rises less than 50 feet above sea level. These lowlands extend upstream along the Runnins River to join those along the Ten Mile River, forming an arc along the city's eastern boundary which swings west along the Ten Mile to the Seekonk River. The central portion of East Providence, bracketed by these lowlands, is characterized by rolling terrain with several low peaks: one at Fort Hill (elevation about 110 feet), one in the Watchemoket section in the vicinity of 9th Street between Juniper Street and Mauran Avenue (elevation about 120 feet), and one bounded by Walmer, Dover, Atherton, and Clyde Avenues in the Kent Heights section (elevation about 150 feet). The latter is the highest point in East Providence and is the site of a 170-foot, 1-million-gallon water tank which is a major landmark. In several places these uplands rise steeply from the banks of the Providence and Seekonk Rivers. Between Fort Hill and Watchemoket Cove, the bluffs offer a fine view of Providence Harbor and the skyline of downtown Providence, while between Squantum Point and Silver Spring, they provide a panoramic vista of the Providence River and the adjacent west bay region.

The configuration of the land has been altered relatively little over the years. The creation of Central Pond and Turner Reservoir probably represents the greatest single change in the natural environment of East Providence. In some places the shoreline has been extended into the Seekonk and Providence Rivers by landfill: at Phillipsdale, Crook

(See Continuation Sheet #1).

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Point, the area between and including Bold and Kettle Points, and Silver Spring. Other earth-moving operations have been confined to excavation and grading associated with the construction of railroad lines and high-ways.

Transportation routes linking several southern New England commercial and industrial centers--Providence, Newport, Fall River, Taunton, and Boston--traverse East Providence. Most important today is Interstate Route 195, a 4- to 6-lane, limited-access, east-west highway that bisects the city. It is the most prominent man-made feature in East Providence, its Seekonk River crossing at Washington Bridge serving as the primary gateway to the city for travelers from the west. Near the Seekonk line, the East Shore Expressway branches off I-195 to join Wampanoag Trail, which runs south to Bristol County. In addition to these modern highways, East Providence is served by a network of main thoroughfares that have evolved largely from old Indian trails, colonial roads, and early nineteenth-century turnpikes. Among these are U.S. Routes 1A (Newport and Pawtucket Avenues), 6 (Warren Avenue), and 44 (Taunton Avenue) and State Routes 103 (Pawtucket and Willett Avenues) and 114 (Pawtucket Avenue and Wampanoag Trail). Three railroad lines also run through East Providence: one north-east from Bold Point across the city's northern plateau (originally the Boston and Providence Railroad, now part of Penn Central), one southeast from Bold Point along the Providence River shore (originally the Providence, Warren and Bristol Railroad, now part of Penn Central), and one north from Crook Point through Pawtucket to Valley Falls (originally part of the Providence and Worcester Railroad and still operated by that company). The first two of the above-named lines were important passenger routes at different times in the nineteenth century, but today all three are branch lines carrying only freight traffic.

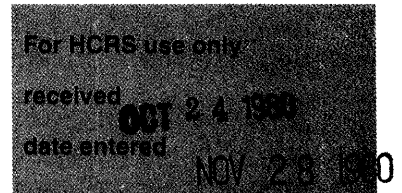
The existence of these transportation routes and East Providence's proximity to the core of the metropolitan area have encouraged the spread of industrial, commercial, and residential use throughout the community. Industrial development is concentrated along the Providence and Seekonk Rivers and the adjacent railroad tracks, with one major complex--the former Rumford Chemical Works--set back from the shore along the old Boston and Providence rail line. Other industrial concerns are located off Waterman Avenue near I-95 and along Wampanoag Trail.

A linear commercial district along Taunton Avenue from Washington Bridge to Six Corners contains a number of civic and institutional buildings as well and serves as East Providence's downtown. Other commercial activity is concentrated along Taunton Avenue east of Six Corners, Newport Avenue, and Warren Avenue, with shopping centers scattered along major roads such as Pawtucket and Willett Avenues. The remainder of the city contains a number of residential neighborhoods varied in age, density, and architectural character.

(See Continuation Sheet #2).

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Rumford, in the northeastern section of East Providence, is the site of the city's first permanent settlement by Europeans, which remained the community center from the 1640s until the mid-nineteenth century. It has the greatest number of eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century structures in East Providence, but twentieth-century single-family residences predominate. Several tracts of two-story, colonial-style houses were built here in the 1930s, while postwar plats have been built up with ranches, split levels, and Cape Cods. Though primarily residential, Rumford also contains the former Rumford Chemical Works, a string of modern shopping centers along Newport Avenue, and considerable open space occupied by the Newman, Lakeside, Carpenter, and Springvale Cemeteries and the golf courses of the Agawam Hunt Club and Wannamoisett Country Club.

Watchemoket, in the west-central portion of the city, began to develop as a suburb of Providence in the 1840s. Growth proceeded slowly, however, until East Providence was set off from Seekonk, Massachusetts and annexed to Rhode Island in 1862. Within the next decade, streetcar lines were constructed through Watchemoket and the neighborhood became the most populous in the community. Civic, social, religious, and educational institutions and commercial enterprises were established here to serve local residents, and the area assumed the role of community center about one hundred years ago, a status it still enjoys today. Watchemoket, today more commonly referred to simply as "East Providence," is the city's most urban neighborhood. Houses are set close together and close to the street, and while single-family residences predominate, the area also contains a substantial number of two- and three-family dwellings. Commercial structures, mostly one- and two-story, early twentieth-century buildings, are concentrated along Warren and Taunton Avenues. The latter street--with its churches, schools, Masonic Temple, and new City Hall--has the character of a downtown center, for the early twentieth-century commercial-strip buildings are set right on the sidewalk rather than behind parking lots, creating an urban streetscape. Most of the buildings in Watchemoket were erected before 1920. The most recent project to have an impact on the neighborhood was the construction of I-195 in the 1960s, which cut a divisive swath through the heart of the area.

Phillipsdale, in the northwestern part of the city, is adjacent to the Rumford area. Site of Roger Williams' first settlement in the Narragansett Bay region after his banishment from Massachusetts, it contains one of the oldest extant dwellings in East Providence, the Nathaniel Daggett House (ca. 1700). During the Colonial period, gristmills and sawmills were established here at the confluence of Ten Mile River and Omega Pond, and in the early nineteenth century a textile mill was opened near the same site. In the 1890s a few large factory complexes were constructed on the Seekonk River shore north of Omega Pond, and the adjacent area was built up with workers' housing. Phillipsdale is one of the densest

(See Continuation Sheet #3).

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neighborhoods in East Providence today. The physical fabric of the area is composed largely of mill operators' double houses erected between 1890 and 1920, with some single-family dwellings from earlier and later periods.

Riverside, occupying the southern portion of East Providence, contains two distinct subsections. The area along the Providence River began to develop in the 1860s as a series of summer colonies which started to evolve into year-round suburban communities by the turn of the century. The nature of development is responsible for the present street pattern of self-contained residential enclaves separated by main roads and waterways. Back from this older section with its closely set houses--many converted from summer cottages--is an area with numerous modern suburban plats, some dating from the 1920s and 1930s but most developed after 1945. The earlier plats generally contain single-family bungalows, colonial-style homes, or "English cottages." The postwar tracts are built up with ranches and colonial houses. There are few intrusions on the suburban residential character of Riverside. Commercial structures and apartment buildings have been constructed along Bullock's Point and Willett Avenues. The now-defunct Crescent Park amusement park--the last remaining evidence of the neighborhood's nineteenth-century resort function--and a large oil-storage tank farm on the site of a former Standard Oil Company refinery are other noteworthy neighborhood features.

Kent Heights, in the central portion of the city, is composed almost entirely of contractor-built subdivisions of single-family homes built after 1945. Some property in the neighborhood had been platted in the nineteenth century, but the area remained mostly farmland until the post-World War II suburban construction boom. In the past thirty-five years hundreds of Cape Cods, ranches, and raised ranches on spacious lots have been erected here, most of them built as speculative ventures by local landowners and developers. Some commercial buildings are located along Pawtucket Avenue, and light-manufacturing and service industries occupy sites along the eastern end of Wampanoag Trail.

The phenomenal increase in construction since World War II has had a tremendous impact on East Providence. The high proportion of twentieth-century dwellings gives the impression that the city is exclusively a modern residential suburb. Until recently, however, growth was slow and gradual, with successive developments occupying what had been fields or forests. The postwar building boom has followed the same pattern, filling in the remaining open land between older settlements. This process has left the products of earlier eras relatively undisturbed, so that practically all phases of the city's 336-year history are reflected in the community's existing building stock.

(See Continuation Sheet #4).

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 checked="" 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> social/ humanitarian
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> transportation
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> other (specify) Navigation Recreation
<input type="checkbox"/> invention				

Specific dates **Builder/Architect**

Statement of Significance (In one paragraph)

The properties included in the East Providence multiple resource nomination reflect the civic and architectural development of the city of East Providence and its parent communities, Rehoboth and Seekonk, over the past three-and-one-half centuries. While it may be said that the entire fabric of the city illustrates this process, the one district, three building complexes, and sixteen individual structures and sites nominated herein have been singled out because, together with their historical associations, the quality or integrity of their design or visual character make them particularly valuable resources. The judgement that these properties best represent significant aspects of the developmental, economic, social, and cultural history of East Providence is based on the results of a comprehensive historical and architectural survey of the city undertaken in 1975-1976 by the Rhode Island Historical Preservation Commission in conjunction with the East Providence Department of Planning and Urban Development.

EARLY SETTLEMENT

When Europeans first came to what is now East Providence in the fourth decade of the seventeenth century, they found a wilderness of forests, meadows, and swamps crossed by Indian trails. Early in the year 1636, Roger Williams and a small band of followers became the first white men to settle here after their expulsion from the Massachusetts Bay Colony. They located near a spring near the shore of what is now Omega Pond (then a saltwater inlet called Seekonk Cove). Williams and company were forced to leave a few months later when the governor of Plymouth asserted his colony's claim to the land. They went on to found a settlement--the nucleus of the present city of Providence--at another spring a few miles away on the left bank of the Moshassuck River. Some Puritans occupied the site of Williams' earlier settlement, known as Seekonk, but it never became an important village. All the man-made elements of this colonial hamlet have long since disappeared, but the spring that served as its focus still exists in a small public park at 89 Roger Williams Avenue.

In 1641 Plymouth Colony purchased a tract of approximately 100 square miles from Massasoit, sachem of the Wampanoags. This tract encompassed the present-day towns of Rehoboth and Seekonk, Massachusetts and most of East Providence and the eastern portion of Pawtucket, Rhode Island. First called Seekonk, the name of the township was changed to Rehoboth in 1645. A number of land purchases greatly increased the size of the town; most important in terms of this narrative was the Wannamoissett Purchase, a portion of which eventually became the Riverside section of present-day East Providence.

(See Continuation Sheet #59).

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In 1643 a party of about 200 Puritans came to Seekonk from the Bay Colony and Plymouth. They settled on a level plateau set in a bend of the Ten Mile River, a short distance east of Roger Williams' former settlement at the spring near Seekonk Cove. Six-, eight-, and twelve-acre home lots were laid out around an enormous 200-acre town common called the "Ring of the Town" or "Ring of the Green." The home lots were long, narrow parcels oriented so that one narrow end fronted on the Ring. The configuration of the village also gave many of the lots frontage on the Ten Mile River. Footpaths around and across the Ring evolved into roads that radiated beyond the village to link it with outlying farms and other towns. Near the center of the Ring were a meeting house, erected in 1646 (destroyed ca.1674), and a common burial ground, established before 1658. Grist mills, essential adjuncts to the agrarian life of the community, were built at an early date at the mouth of the Ten Mile River and upstream at Hunt's Mills. By 1680 goods were imported and exported at Seekonk Cove.

The village was devastated during King Phillip's War (1675-1678), when most if not all of the buildings were destroyed by belligerent Indians. Today the former central burial ground on the Ring, now part of Newman Cemetery, and the old common burial ground at Wannamoisett, now part of Little Neck Cemetery, are the only tangible relics dating from the earliest decades of the community's history.

THE RURAL TOWNSHIP

After the Indian war Rehoboth was resettled and rebuilt. It was a typical agricultural community, with farmsteads scattered across the countryside and the village at the Ring serving as a focus for social, civic, religious, and commercial activity. Rehoboth was a peripheral area, crossed by roads linking important regional centers such as Boston, Providence, Newport, and Taunton. One of the main postal routes from Boston to Newport ran through the town, following the alignment of present-day Newport, Pawtucket, and Willett Avenues.

A few remaining old dwellings evoke some sense of what late seventeenth-century Rehoboth was like. The Philip Walker House (1679) at 432 Massasoit Avenue, the oldest structure still standing in East Providence, is a fine example of a farmhouse of the period, with additions dating from the mid-eighteenth century. Also noteworthy are the Nathaniel Daggett House (ca.1700, altered ca.1900) at 74 Roger Williams Avenue, built near the shore of Seekonk Cove (now Omega Pond) not far from Roger Williams' spring, and the house at 1527 Pawtucket Avenue (ca.1700, with later alterations) in the Rumford Historic District, located just south of the site of the Ring on what had been the Boston-Newport post road.

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Rehoboth remained an agrarian community through the eighteenth century and on into the nineteenth, growing steadily but slowly as the descendants of the original settlers proliferated and as new residents moved into town. Subsidiary centers sprang up at the important river crossing at Pawtucket Falls in the northwestern corner of town and at Palmer's River in the eastern section. An ever-increasing number of farmsteads occupied the countryside, among them the Whitcomb Farm (ca.1800) at 36 Willett Avenue. New homes were also built around the Ring, among them the Abel Houses (ca.1760 and ca.1750, respectively) at 8 and 66 Greenwood Avenue, the Phanael Bishop House (ca.1770) at 150 Greenwood Avenue, and the Hyde-Bridgham House (1767) at 120 Pleasant Street (the first three properties are included in the Rumford Historic District). The continuing importance of Hunt's Mills was reflected in the construction of a new house there for John Hunt, Jr., about 1770, still standing at 69 Hunt's Mills Road.

THE ROOTS OF CHANGE

The late eighteenth century witnessed some occurrences that were to lead to significant changes in the town in the nineteenth century. In 1793 the Washington Bridge at India Point and the Central (later Red) Bridge were opened, strengthening the tie between Rehoboth and the neighboring town of Providence. Shortly thereafter, a turnpike was constructed from Providence to Taunton via Washington Bridge, running south of rather than through the village at the Ring. These events would eventually lead to the decline of old Rehoboth Center and the growth of the section of town nearest Providence. More important than this, however, was Samuel Slater's successful attempt at water-powered cotton-spinning at Pawtucket Falls in 1790. The impact of Slater's achievement went beyond the immediate area to influence the economic and industrial development of the entire nation.

EARLY INDUSTRIALIZATION

The wave of industrialization spawned by Slater's experiments focussed locally at Pawtucket, but other textile factories were also built in the region, some in Rehoboth. The Omega--later Clyde--Mills were opened at the head of Seekonk Cove about 1801, the Hunt family erected a cotton factory at Hunt's Mills about 1823, and by 1831 the Ten Mile River had been dammed above Hunt's Mills to provide water power for the Central Mills. These establishments continued to operate through the nineteenth century, but the relatively low power of the Ten Mile limited industrial expansion. The sites of Omega, Hunt's, and Central Mills all lie within present-day East Providence, but none of the early mill structures survive.

(See Continuation Sheet #61).

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THE CONSEQUENCES OF GROWTH

By the early nineteenth century the growth in the population of Rehoboth, both of farmers and of mill laborers, made division of the township necessary. In 1812 the western half of the town, though it contained the original settlement around the Ring of the Green, was set off as a new town called Seekonk. Sixteen years later, the phenomenal industrial and physical growth of the northwestern portion of Seekonk led to the chartering of that area as the town of Pawtucket.

The creation of Seekonk in 1812 was accompanied by an act that transformed the physical character of the town. At that time the selectmen of Seekonk voted to sell off the common lands of the Ring. With this decision the focus of the village shifted away from the open expanse of the Ring, with the Congregational society's fourth meetinghouse (built 1810; now Newman Congregational Church) and the common burial ground (now Newman Cemetery) at the center. The crossroads in front of the Baptist Church at the southern corner of the Ring became the hub of the village, now known as Seekonk Center. Subsequent decades brought development along the roads radiating from this important intersection, much of which still exists today. It is incorporated in the Rumford Historic District which, together with an eighteenth-century component of dwellings that formerly fronted the Ring, memorializes the morphological evolution and the ongoing political, social, and cultural importance of the former town center.

IMPACT OF THE RAILROADS

The construction of rail lines through Seekonk in the nineteenth century greatly improved transportation and stimulated new development trends. First to be built was the original main line of the Boston and Providence Railroad, opened in 1835. It ran northeast across the former Ring of the Green from a bridge to Providence at India Point. In 1848 traffic was rerouted to stop at Providence's new Union Station, but the original Boston and Providence right of way remained a branch line. The large bridge that carries the line over the Ten Mile River and Roger Williams Avenue, one of the best designed structures of its type in the state, was built in 1884 as part of a series of improvements to the line and is indicative of the continuing importance of this transport route. The Providence, Warren and Bristol Railroad, running southeast from India Point along the Providence River shore, was the second line to be opened, in 1855. In 1908 this line obtained a direct connection to Providence Union Station via a new bridge at Crook Point and a tunnel under Providence's East Side. The final line, opened in the 1870s, was a branch of the Providence and Worcester Railroad running north along the Seekonk River shore to Pawtucket. These railroads, together with the earlier Washington and Red Bridges and turnpikes such as the one to Taunton, made Seekonk an integral part of Providence's growing metropolitan area. Official recognition of this status came in 1862, when the westernmost

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portion of Seekonk was ceded to Rhode Island and was chartered as the town of East Providence.

LATE NINETEENTH-CENTURY INDUSTRIALIZATION

The railroads spurred the industrial development of East Providence's rural countryside. Factories were built chiefly in the northern end of town along the Providence and Worcester and Boston and Providence tracks. Most important was the Rumford Chemical Works, established in 1857 on the Boston and Providence rail line on a site that had been part of the Ring of the Green. The Rumford company, producers of world-famous food products such as Rumford Baking Powder, held large tracts of land in town and served as one of the community's chief employers. Until it ceased operations here in 1966, the company had a major impact on the economic and physical development of East Providence. The industrialization of Rumford and nearby Phillipsdale led to the establishment of a pumping station and water works at Hunt's Mills in the 1890s, primarily to serve the needs of the factories.

COUNTRY ESTATES AND SUMMER RESORTS

Residential and recreational development also came to East Providence with the construction of the railways. Much of this growth was related to Providence's evolution as the urban center of a densely settled, heavily industrialized metropolitan area. As Providence grew more populous and prosperous, people sought opportunities to get away from the hectic, crowded life of the city. The well-to-do established country estates in places accessible to but removed from the urban core. One of the prime areas for such development in the region was the high ground along lower Pawtucket Avenue in East Providence. Here house sites with splendid views of upper Narragansett Bay could be obtained near the Providence, Warren and Bristol Railroad. A number of country villas were built here in the middle and late 1800s. Today the only one to survive reasonably intact is the James Dennis House (ca.1880) at 3120 Pawtucket Avenue. A few exclusive social clubs were also started in the area. The most famous of these organizations and the last to survive is the Squantum Association at 947 Veterans Memorial Parkway. Founded in 1870, the Association has replaced almost all of its earlier buildings, and a large Colonial Revival clubhouse, (1899-1900) now serves as its headquarters.

The reliance on steam locomotives for transport to outlying areas of East Providence precluded suburban residential development for middle- or working-class individuals at this time, since the expense of daily fares was too great to permit commuting. However, a number of seasonal

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shore resorts were established in what is now the Riverside area in the late nineteenth century to permit people of modest means to spend some time in the country. These resorts were varied in character. Some were collections of tiny cottages, with or without a nearby hotel for transient visitors, in which people could spend a few weeks during the summer. Others were amusement parks, with or without associated hotels or dining halls, that catered primarily to clients on day trips. Among the latter was Crescent Park, an amusement park with hotel and shore dinner hall, opened by George B. Boyden in 1886. In the 1890s the park was one of the largest and most popular resorts of its type in New England, drawing as many as 50,000 to 75,000 visitors a day on summer weekends. A chief component of Crescent Park was a carousel constructed about 1895 by Charles I.D. Looff, one of America's earliest and foremost carousel builders. Though the park itself was shut down in 1975, the Crescent Park Carousel, still standing intact on Bullocks Point Avenue, is the object of a dedicated preservation campaign organized by local residents.

**WATCHEMOKET: EARLY SUBURBANIZATION AND THE EMERGENCE OF
A NEW TOWN CENTER**

The limitations of transport technology and the existence of undeveloped land within the city of Providence in the nineteenth century postponed the wholesale suburbanization of East Providence until the present century. However, intensive suburban residential growth did occur in one section of town in the 1800s. In the mid-1840s landowners in central East Providence began to plat portions of their property. The area, known as Watchemoket, was adjacent to commercial and industrial activity at India and Fox Points and only about two miles from downtown Providence via Washington Bridge. Its convenient location was an attraction to middle- and working-class families, who chose to move here in ever-increasing numbers. The opening of omnibus lines through the neighborhood in the 1870s and the inauguration of electric trolley service in the 1890s, together with the enormous influx of foreign immigrants to Providence, helped to promote Watchemoket's growth. Between 1865 and 1895 the population of the area rose from about 800 to over 6000. Downtown Providence was close enough to serve the special business needs of local residents, and consequently no major bank headquarters, department stores, or office buildings were built in Watchmocket. Commercial activity was for the most part limited to shops that provided the necessities of daily life, such as groceries, butcher shops, pharmacies, and hardware stores. At first these facilities were concentrated at Watchemoket Square at the eastern end of the Washington Bridge, but as the district expanded eastward, business followed to remain near their customers. This resulted in the

(See Continuation Sheet #64).

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linear spread of commercial development along Taunton and Warren Avenues. Taunton Avenue, with a number of religious, social, and civic institutions sited along it, became East Providence's "Main Street." The decline in the importance of East Providence (formerly Seekonk) Center and the ascendancy of Watchemoket was signalled by the construction of a new Town Hall at Taunton and Grove Avenues in 1888-1889 to replace the old Town Hall behind the First Baptist Church. This move marked the shift in East Providence's evolution from a diffuse agrarian community into a diverse, rapidly growing town of farms, factories, summer resorts, and suburban homes. Unfortunately, the second Town Hall, one of East Providence's most important historical and architectural landmarks, was destroyed by fire in 1976.

THE TWENTIETH CENTURY

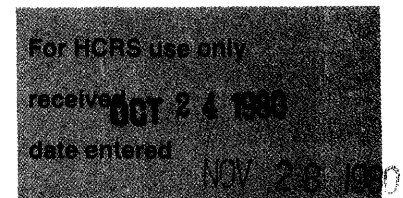
The construction of electric trolley lines in the early 1890s to Watchemoket, Riverside, Rumford, and East Providence Center served as an impetus to development, but growth was limited to certain areas due to the fixed location of their routes. Of far greater consequence were state-sponsored road improvement programs of the early twentieth century and the increasing use of automobiles at that time. The widening, straightening, and paving of roads such as Pawtucket, Newport, Willett, Waterman, Warren, and Taunton Avenues, Broadway, and Wampanoag Trail created a network of easily travelled highways that covered most of East Providence. This infrastructure, together with the flexibility of the automobile, made development possible in places that had previously been relatively inaccessible. Commercial structures could be erected along major traffic arteries and residential tracts could be sited on the farmland or woodland off these roads. Contractors began to build small-scale speculative subdivisions in Riverside and Rumford in the 1920s and 1930s. The Depression of the 30s curtailed this sort of development for a number of years. After World War II, however, economic prosperity, the abundance of young married couples and families, and the availability of mortgages underwritten by the FHA and the VA all contributed to a nationwide surge in suburban house construction. With its large expanses of open land close to the center of Providence, East Providence became one of the metropolitan region's prime areas for development. The years from 1945 to 1970 were East Providence's greatest period of growth. Over 5000 dwellings were erected, filling almost all of the open farmland then remaining in the community. The phenomenal rise in population brought expansion of municipal services such as a sewer system (1950s), a new water system (1960s), and more schools, and in 1958 East Providence was chartered as a city to enable local government to better meet the needs of its citizens.

The construction of Interstate Highway 195 and the connector to Wampanoag Trail in the 1960s had a tremendous impact on East Providence, cutting through the Watchemoket area and opening up the east-central section of the city to development. Most of the construction here has been limited to industrial parks with low-rise manufacturing and office buildings. No large shopping malls have been built adjacent to the highways in East Providence, but these

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routes have made the community's other commercial centers accessible to a substantial portion of the metropolitan region, and during the 1960s the city experienced the second-fastest growth in retail sales in Rhode Island.

The postwar boom has radically altered the physical character of East Providence. The city is no longer a community of villages set amid farm fields. However, for the most part growth has occurred in a fashion that has left the developments of earlier eras intact. The fabric of the city is a complex mix of buildings, structures, and districts varied in age and function. The historically and architecturally significant properties herein nominated are invaluable elements of that fabric, providing a tangible link to East Providence's past for present and future residents of the community.

The following buildings, structures, and sites are significant with respect to the themes checked above and cited below:

ARCHITECTURE: Many of the properties included in the East Providence multiple resource nomination are architecturally significant. The Philip Walker House, the Nathaniel Daggett House, the Hyde-Bridgham House, the Phanael Bishop House, and Whitcomb Farm are all rare survivors of the Colonial and Federal periods. A few later dwellings are fine examples of their respective styles and periods: The Nathaniel Judkins House of the Gothic Revival, the Dr. Thomas Aspinwall House of the Italianate, and the James Dennis House of the Stick Style. The Bicknell-Armington Lightning Splitter House is notable as one of several dwellings of this peculiar type to be found in the Providence area. Newman Congregational Church is a handsome example of a typical New England meetinghouse in the regional architectural tradition derived from the work of the English Baroque architects Wren and Gibbs, while the First Baptist Church is one of the finest Queen Anne-style structures in Rhode Island. The monocalcium phosphate plant at the Rumford Chemical Works, with its handsome corbelled brick cornice, and the pumping station at Hunt's Mills are both architecturally noteworthy industrial buildings. The District 6 Schoolhouse is a fine example of a one-room nineteenth-century schoolhouse with simple Italianate detailing. The Squantum Association is an impressive collection of late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century buildings of varied style spectacularly sited on a rocky peninsula overlooking the Providence River. The Pomham Rocks Light Station is a well preserved example of a standard lighthouse design used by the federal Lighthouse Board in the nineteenth century. The Crescent Park Carousel shed, with its onion-domed cupola, is an exceptional example among buildings of its type.

EDUCATION: The District 6 Schoolhouse, the oldest recognizable school building to survive in East Providence, reflects the increasing importance placed on public education in nineteenth-century American society and the growing demand for municipal services caused by the rise in the town's

(See Continuation Sheet #66).

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population. It also serves as an example of the standard practice of the time of utilizing small structures sited throughout the town to provide educational facilities for residents of rural areas.

ENGINEERING: The Boston and Providence Railroad Bridge over Roger Williams Avenue and Ten Mile River is an engineering site noteworthy for its high quality of design.

EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT: Roger Williams Spring is the site of the first European settlement within the limits of the present city of East Providence.

INDUSTRY: The Rumford Chemical Works was long the headquarters of a world-famous concern that manufactured scientifically formulated food products and additives. Hunt's Mills is also an important industrial site associated with a variety of enterprises, among them grist milling and cotton manufacturing. It currently contains a water works and pumping station that originally provided water to the factories at Rumford and Phillipsdale and later served as the basis of the municipal water system from 1928 to 1966.

RELIGION: The parish history of Newman Congregational Church shows the enormous role that the church played in the community in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. The first pastor of the congregation, the Reverend Samuel Newman, was the leader of the town's original settlers, and the importance of the minister is underscored by the provisions made by the town for his welfare and support. In addition to its function as a place of worship, the church also served as a social center and political meeting place. Newman Church also documents a change in the religious demography of the community. Though East Providence is now populated largely by ethnic immigrants and their descendants who belong to the Roman Catholic Church, it was founded by Anglo-Saxon Protestants, who long comprised the bulk of the population.

SCULPTURE: The figures on the Crescent Park Carousel are fine examples of the woodcarver's art and serve as an invaluable compendium of the work of Charles I.D. Looff, one of America's earliest and foremost carousel designers and manufacturers, who is recognized as one of the most distinguished practitioners of his field.

SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN: The Squantum Association, the sole survivor of several exclusive late nineteenth-century eating clubs founded in East Providence, provides an insight into the social life and customs of well-to-do, prominent Providence residents of the Victorian era.

TRANSPORTATION: The Boston and Providence Railroad Bridge is a key element in a major transportation artery that originally served as the main rail

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line between Boston and Providence. In later years, when this bridge was constructed, the route was an important branch line linking the Omega/Clyde Mills and the Rumford Chemical Works to Providence and Boston.

OTHER

NAVIGATION: Pomham Rocks Light Station was originally constructed to guide ships into Providence Harbor, a function it served for over 100 years until a new light tower was erected adjacent to it.

RECREATION: The Crescent Park Carousel and the Squantum Association are two types of facilities created to provide recreational outlets; the former in an amusement park setting that appealed and catered to a broad spectrum of the public, the latter serving a small, exclusive group of private members at a secluded location.

(See Continuation Sheet #68)

9. Major Bibliographical References

Statewide Historic Preservation Report P-EP-1: East Providence, R.I. (Providence: Rhode Island Historical Preservation Commission, 1976).

UTM NOT VERIFIED
ACREAGE NOT VERIFIED

10. Geographical Data

Acreege of nominated property see individual inventory forms

Quadrangle name _____

Quadrangle scale _____

UMT References

A	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
	Zone	Easting	Northing
C	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
E	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
G	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

B	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
	Zone	Easting	Northing
D	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
F	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
H	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

Verbal boundary description and justification

The Multiple Resource Nomination includes the entire city of East Providence; its boundaries are the incorporation limits of the city of East Providence. For boundaries of individual properties and districts, List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries see inventory forms.

state _____ code _____ county _____ code _____

state _____ code _____ county _____ code _____

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Robert O. Jones, Jr., Historic Preservation Planner

organization Rhode Island Historical Preservation Commission August 1980

street & number 150 Benefit Street telephone 401-277-2678

city or town Providence state Rhode Island

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national state local see individual inventory sheets

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 Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature Frederick W. Willmarson

title _____ date Sept. 30, 1980 ^{see phone report of 11/28/80}

For HCRC use only

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

Keeper of the National Register

Attest: Arthur Anderson 11/15/80

Chief of Registration

elbert
ogert
phung