

1024

RECEIVED 413

JUL 10 1995

INTERAGENCY RESOURCES DIVISION
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties in the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name The Seaside

other names/site number Seaside Sanatorium; Seaside Regional Center

2. Location

street & number 36 Shore Road not for publication

city or town Waterford vicinity

state Connecticut code CT county New London code 011 zip code 06385

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant nationally statewide locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

John W. Shannahan June 29, 1995
Signature of certifying official/Title Date
John W. Shannahan, Director, Connecticut Historical Commission
State of Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official/Title Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:

- entered in the National Register.
 See continuation sheet.
- determined eligible for the National Register
 See continuation sheet.
- determined not eligible for the National Register.
- removed from the National Register.
- other, (explain:)

Edson H. Beall Signature of the Keeper Date of Action
8.15.95

The Seaside
Name of Property

New London, CT
County and State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(Check as many boxes as apply)

private
 public-local
 public-State
 public-Federal

Category of Property
(Check only one box)

building(s)
 district
 site
 structure
 object

Number of Resources within Property
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
9	8	buildings
		sites
		structures
		objects
9	8	Total

Name of related multiple property listing
(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

N/A

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

HEALTH CARE/sanatorium

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

HEALTH CARE/mental retardation facility

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions)

LATE 19TH AND 20TH CENTURY REVIVALS/
Tudor Revival/Colonial Revival

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation granite
walls brick
tile
roof tile/slate
other

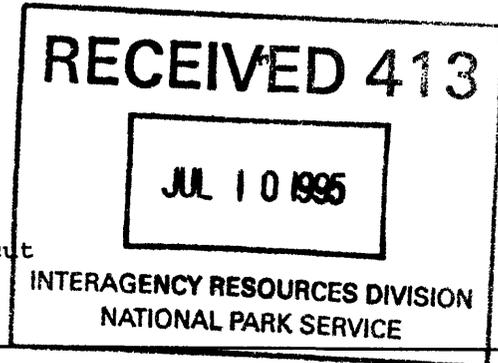
Narrative Description
(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

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

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

The Seaside, Waterford, New London County, Connecticut

Section number 7 Page 1



Seaside Sanatorium is located directly on Connecticut's eastern coast in the Town of Waterford. Occupying approximately 36 acres of the south end of Great Neck peninsula, the property is bordered on the south by Long Island Sound, on the north by Shore Road, and on the east and west by suburban developments, which contain private residences dating from the mid- to late twentieth century. A service road from Shore Road joins a campus system of roadways and paths that connects all of the buildings and structures. Along the shore is a granite seawall, which separates an extensive, generally level lawn area from the beach, and two stone breakwaters extend into the Sound there. Although the bounds of the complex are not defined by a fence, a few sections of fencing delineate some of the residential lots from the institutional property.

The complex consists of four widely spaced contributing historic buildings that overlook Long Island Sound and 13 associated contributing and non-contributing support buildings, which are generally located to the rear and north (see attached site plan; Photograph #1). Of these, five are contributing, built prior to 1945 during the period when the facility was a children's tuberculosis sanatorium. The remainder were constructed after 1965 when it had become Seaside Regional Center, a facility of the Connecticut Department of Mental Retardation. Some of the buildings currently considered obsolete are vacant, while others, including the two principal historic contributors, have been rehabilitated to code for new purposes.

These two major buildings at the center are located in the southeast quadrant. Known historically as the Stephen P. Maher Building, the original hospital at the sanatorium, and the Nurses' Residence, a staff dormitory, they are now known as the Main Building and Employees Building #1. Both large, basically rectangular brick structures, they were built in the Tudor Revival style in the mid 1930s (Inventory #s 1, 2; Photograph #s 2, 3). Several floors of both buildings are utilized by clients and staff of the Department of Mental Retardation and there has been some interior and exterior renovation, particularly to the Maher Building.

There are two smaller contributing buildings of the same style and vintage on the western edge of the complex. The one nearer the waterfront is the Superintendent's Residence, a two-story Tudor Revival cottage constructed of brick, stone, and slate, which now contains offices (Inventory #15; Photograph #4). Duplex House, a companion piece to the rear, is, as its name suggests, a double brick and stone residence (Inventory #13, Photograph #5). Once used to house medical staff at the sanatorium, it is now vacant.

Several of the auxiliary buildings are Colonial Revival in style or exhibit some of its features. They include the greenhouse and workshop (Inventory #s 9, 6), the two oldest contributing support buildings erected in 1936, and three small brick structures, also contributing, which were part of the earliest water and sanitation system here. Septic waste was first treated in the greenhouse, which was used as an indoor drying bed. The system was upgraded with a new septic treatment plant nearby in 1971. Built in the Colonial Revival style and used to house the filtration system, it resembles a small colonial house with integral end chimneys (Inventory #10, Photograph #6) and is situated next to a more recent sewage treatment plant, a modern one-story structure (Inventory #11). The other two small buildings are pump houses. Pump House #1 near Shore Road, built in 1942, has a suggestion of brick quoining at its corners and a relatively tall chimney stack (Inventory #7, Photograph #7). Once used to pump water from an elevated watertank nearby, since demolished, it is no longer in use. Pump House #2 was part of the sewage system and is located near the waterfront in the middle of the open lawn (Inventory #16, Photograph #1). None of these sanitation buildings have been used for their original

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

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

The Seaside, Waterford, New London County, Connecticut

Section number 7 Page 2

purpose since 1989. At that time Seaside Center was connected to the local municipal sewer system and the Town of Waterford constructed a new wood-frame pumping station near the shore next to the older structure (Inventory #17; Photograph #1).

Other modern additions to the complex include the Activity and Therapy Center to the rear of the Maher Building and a client residential cottage at the entrance on Shore Road (Inventory #s 3, 8; Photograph #8). With their shed roofs and low profiles, both reflect the influence of the California Ranch style of the 1960s and were built near the end of that decade. The long two-story Employees Building #2 is similar in scale to the historic dormitory across the road to the east, but it has a flat roof and a much lower profile, with the second level projecting over the first floor (Inventory #12; Photograph #9). Two frankly utilitarian buildings complete the complex: the 1967 maintenance building, a prefabricated steel and aluminum structure, and an adjacent wood barn, recently resided, which was built c. 1950 (Inventory #s 5, 4).

The present appearance of the Maher Building is the result of almost 20 years of remodeling (c. 1970-1990) but its original form and remarkably extensive surface detailing are still readily apparent. (For the original appearance of facade, see Exhibit A.) Originally designed and constructed in a U plan (300' x 150'), it has stepped wings that extend towards the water from the cross-gabled ends of the main block (Photograph #s 10, 11). The basic plan remains but the open terraces on the roofs of these wings are now partially enclosed at the second floor and completely covered at the third floor with a glass and steel structure. In addition, there are new brick towers at their outside corners.

Several more permanent alterations and additions include extending the wall of the south elevation forward about 15 feet at the second and third floors, obscuring most of the original facade between the wings (Photograph #12). Originally displaying serial round-arched windows with brick voussoirs at each floor, the new fenestration consists of alternating fixed four-part plate glass windows interspersed with paired "psychiatric" windows (an institutional type which has small horizontal sash, of which only the bottom sash is operable). By 1985 the first cylindrical brick tower, resembling a lighthouse, was added to house a fire escape at the southeast corner. Since that time the matching tower for the same purpose was added at the southwest corner. Several brick additions on the rear elevation include one with a stack which was built to house a heating plant.

Surface detailing includes the general use of patterned brick, stone, or polychrome tile to highlight some of the architectural features. Each gable is elaborated with multi-colored tile and has a wood finial with drop at the peak. The main gabled roof, also sheathed with polychrome tile, is surmounted by a tall, slim octagonal cupola with arched louvered openings and a needle spire. The pyramidal roof of the spire and its walls are sheathed with tiles. The first level of the building consists of a series of round-arched openings with rusticated granite voussoirs, a pattern continued along the wings. These openings contain doors or three-part windows, some of which are modern replacements. The main entrance at the west end is located under a brick and wood porte cochere, which is surmounted by a balustraded balcony with flat sawn balusters.

Interior remodeling has generally hidden any historic fabric or finishes. There are dropped acoustical tile ceilings throughout and walls have been relocated or covered. New concrete-block corridor walls were installed on every floor. Arched facade openings were retained where the walls were opened up to add space at the front of the building and some of the original exterior brick there is still visible (Photograph # 13).

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service****National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

The Seaside, Waterford, New London County, Connecticut

Section number 7 Page 3

Unlike the Maher Building, the Nurses' Residence has two principal facades, with nearly identical 15-bay elevations and a narrow extended rectangular plan (200' x 35'; Photograph #s 14, 15). Built of load-bearing brick on a granite block foundation, it has a polychrome slate roof which displays 15 dormers on each slope, alternating in size. On the south side of the ridge, there are three tall brick chimneys, which are stepped at the corners. The dormers are gabled with projecting hoods, which are bracketed and arched. The larger ones display a wood finial and all contain six-over-six double-hung sash flanked by slate walls. The main entrances in the center of each facade have arched doorways with smooth granite-block voussoirs. Granite is also used for the lintels and sills at the first floor and the sills on the floors above. The end gables, which are similar to those of the main building, are covered with decorative tile. There is an enclosed one-story porch at the west end and a three-story porch on the east. The latter porch is partially enclosed and rests on an exposed full-height foundation detailed with round-arched openings that match the main doorways. An open steel fire escape is located at the rear corner there. The interior is quite plain and, except for dropped ceilings, remains intact. Only the fourth (attic) floor is in use as office space.

The Superintendent's Residence, built in 1936, also has two facades, but they are quite dissimilar. Asymmetrically designed with a variety of gables and pavilions, they display contrasting surfaces of brick, stone, or slate (Photograph #s 16, 4). The bracketed main roof and all the gable peaks are sheathed with slate. The same material is used on the truncated gable roof over the main entrance on the north elevation. This doorway, with its original raised-panel door, is recessed in a random ashlar granite wall and flanked on the right by a small diamond-paned casement window. There is a larger window of this type directly above. The all-copper collectors and downspouts, which have decorative heads, are special exterior features. Original double-hung four-over-four sash remain in place and are grouped in transomed banks of three or four on the south elevation and the sun porch on the west end. All of the windows are covered with aluminum storm sash.

The interior displays fine casework and panelling, of what appears to be cherry wood. Between the principal first-floor rooms are round-arched openings, framed with fluted pilasters and heavy molded surrounds above the imposts, a pattern repeated on the recessed bookcase in the southeast corner room (Photograph #17). The fireplaces in two first-floor rooms are typical Tudor Revival style with slanted plastered chimney breasts above wood mantels. The balustrade of the main staircase has unusual newel posts capped with a tier of flattened spheres (Photograph #18). Although the entire building is utilized for office space, the only real change was a minor structural one. A wall was added on the second floor to create a corridor at the back of the stair hall, but it was held back from the balustrade there. Also, half of the attached garage has been converted to interior use.

Duplex House, built the same year, utilizes similar materials and features but has a balanced facade (Photograph #5). The two main entranceways, located in slightly projecting pavilions, are set within basket-arched openings, detailed with alternating brick and granite voussoirs. There are three-part windows above the doors which project from the wall plane and have cross-braced faux balustrades of wood below. Identical sun porches are recessed at either end of the house. The small associated garage to the immediate northeast has a simple design, but one that reflects the style of the house (Inventory #14). The interior of the house was not viewed by the consultant. It is reputed to have all of its original detail, which is less lavish than that of the other residence.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

The Seaside, Waterford, New London County, Connecticut

Section number 7 Page 4Inventory List of Contributing and Non-Contributing Resources

Inv. #	Historic name/current name/style/date	C/NC	Photo. #
1.	Stephen J. Maher Building (Main Building) Tudor Revival, 1934; Architect: Cass Gilbert	C	1, 2, 10 11, 12, 13
2.	Nurses' Residence (Employees Building #1), Tudor Revival, 1935, attributed to Cass Gilbert	C	3, 14, 15,
3.	Education and Training Building, 1968-1969	NC	8
4.	Barn, c. 1950	NC	
5.	Maintenance Building, c. 1967	NC	
6.	Workshop, 1936	C	
7.	Pump House #1, c. 1942	C	7
8.	Client Cottage, 1969-68	NC	
9.	Greenhouse (Septic system drying bed), Colonial Revival, 1936	C	
10.	Treatment Plant (septic filter system), (Electric Generator Building), Colonial Revival, 1971	NC	6
11.	Sewage Treatment Facility, c. 1970	NC	6
12.	Employees Building #2, c. 1970	NC	9
13.	Duplex House, Tudor Revival, 1936; Attributed to Cass Gilbert	C	5
14.	Duplex House garage, Tudor Revival, 1936	C	
15.	Superintendent's Residence, Tudor Revival, 1936; attributed to Cass Gilbert	C	4, 16, 17, 18
16.	Pump House #2, 1945	C	
17.	Town of Waterford Pumping Station, 1989	NC	

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- A** Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B** Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C** Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D** Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- A** owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B** removed from its original location.
- C** a birthplace or grave.
- D** a cemetery.
- E** a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F** a commemorative property.
- G** less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

HEALTH/MEDICINE

ARCHITECTURE

Period of Significance

1934 - 1945

Significant Dates

1934, 1935, 1936

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Gilbert, Cass

Narrative Statement of Significance

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Name of repository:

Connecticut State Library

The Seaside
Name of Property

New London, CT
County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreege of Property 36

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1

1	8
---	---

7	3	9	9	8	0
---	---	---	---	---	---

4	5	7	5	8	2	0
---	---	---	---	---	---	---

Zone Easting Northing

3

1	8
---	---

7	4	0	0	8	0
---	---	---	---	---	---

4	5	7	6	3	8	0
---	---	---	---	---	---	---

Zone Easting Northing

2

1	8
---	---

7	3	9	9	2	0
---	---	---	---	---	---

4	5	7	6	2	0	0
---	---	---	---	---	---	---

4

1	8
---	---

7	4	0	4	0	0
---	---	---	---	---	---

4	5	7	5	9	4	0
---	---	---	---	---	---	---

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

11. Form Prepared By Reviewed by John Herzan, National Register Coordinator

name/title Jan Cunningham, National Register Consultant

organization Cunningham Associates Ltd. date 11/19/94

street & number 37 Orange Road telephone (203) 347 4072

city or town Middletown state CT zip code 06457

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative **black and white photographs** of the property.

Additional items

(Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of SHPO or FPO.)

name Department of Mental Retardation

street & number 90 Pitkin Street telephone _____

city or town East Hartford, state CT zip code 06108

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service****National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

The Seaside, Waterford, New London County, Connecticut

Section number 8 Page 1

The Seaside Sanatorium, especially designed for the heliotropic treatment of children infected with tuberculosis, has national historic significance as the first institution of its kind in the United States. Considerable architectural significance is expressed in the superior design and craftsmanship of its historic buildings, which together comprise an exceptional collection of fully realized and generally well-preserved Tudor Revival-style institutional architecture. The collection achieves further distinction because of its attribution to Cass Gilbert (1858-1934), a nationally renowned architect. Although there is a range of scale and massing and each building is individually expressed, together they comprise an architecturally coherent group, stylistically linked by the repetition of forms and materials, and displayed in a historical shorefront setting of exceptional beauty and integrity. Although a number of the secondary structures are non-contributing and some are quite modern in their design, none intrude to diminish the historic architectural appearance of the main grouping.

Historical Background and Significance

An infectious disease that has existed in world populations since the Neolithic period, tuberculosis did not reach epidemic proportions until the Industrial Revolution produced the crowded living conditions that were favorable to its spread. By the mid-nineteenth century the disease accounted for one-quarter of the adult deaths in Europe and by the last decades of the century it had become epidemic in many American cities and was the leading cause of death. The contagious nature of the disease was well understood by 1865 and the tubercle bacillus was identified by 1882.

The need to isolate patients from the general population to slow the spread of the disease led to the founding of private and public isolation hospitals in the late nineteenth century. By the twentieth century a belief in the efficacy of climate fostered the sanatorium movement. Although no cure was possible, bed rest and proper nutrition in a healthy outdoor atmosphere, and often more dramatic surgical treatment, such as pneumothorax, did cause remissions. By 1930 the state had established four sanatoriums, first known as county homes. They were Cedarcrest in Hartford, Uncas-on-Thames in Norwich, Laurel Heights in Shelton, and Undercliff in Meriden. Although all treated outpatients and some maintained regional clinics outside their institutions, the combined resident patient capacity of both adults and children was only 925, and all had a long waiting list for admission.

Although commonly situated in the lungs, because it is a blood-borne disease, the tubercle bacillus can infect almost every organ in the body. In the case of children, a particularly virulent form was tuberculosis spondylitis, a crippling disease which attacks the vertebra and the long bones. A glandular form, often involving the lymphatic system, was then also common in children. As early as 1905, Dr. Stephen P. Maher, head Connecticut's State Tuberculosis Commission, started his campaign to remove children with these non-pulmonary forms from the contagious atmosphere of existing treatment centers. Since both bone and glandular tuberculosis seemed to respond to prolonged exposure to the sun, a treatment called heliotherapy, plans were first made in 1912 to have a special institution of this type just for children with these diseases. A waterfront site was considered ideal for these purposes. In 1918 the state purchased the vacant White Beach Hotel in East Lyme to house the first children's sanatorium, but it soon proved to be inadequate to treat the numbers who needed this type of care. Since the hotel was situated on only 2.5 acres, there was no room for expansion; abutting property owners

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

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

The Seaside, Waterford, New London County, Connecticut

Section number 8 Page 2

refused to sell. Defeated in its efforts to take property by eminent domain, the Tuberculosis Commission began to look elsewhere for a new site.

In 1930 the Smith-Grimes estate, which had been in probate for a number of years, became available on the coast in Waterford. The Commission purchased two parcels totalling 28 acres from heirs of the estate after the state appropriated funds in 1931. Two additional parcels were added in 1936, the larger one along the west side, which extended the site to its present boundaries and encompassed 36 acres. The total cost of the property was \$125,000. ¹

Plans were underway to build this specialized institution even before the land sales were final. Hearing of a similar contemporary institution in Hayling, England. Connecticut officials visited there to inspect the institution and observe the treatment methods. The Commission was fully aware that it was breaking new ground and building the first institution devoted exclusively to the heliotropic treatment of tubercular children in the United States. No expense would be spared in building the finest sanatorium in the state, one, which, incorporating the most up-to-date methods of construction and newest theories of treatment in its design, would be a model for the rest of the country.

To this end the Tuberculosis Commission deliberately sought an architect of national stature, one worthy of the beauty of the site and the importance of its mission and Cass Gilbert was retained. In selecting Gilbert the Commission broke several precedents. Up to that time, few if any state agencies had utilized an architect of his stature and, even though he maintained a seasonal home in Ridgefield, Gilbert lived and had his practice outside the state. Since his signed rendering of the sanatorium hospital on site appeared in the state report of the Commission published in 1932, it can be assumed that he was retained as soon as the location was chosen in 1930. The rendering differs very little from the building completed in 1934.

The hospital was specially designed for heliotherapy by siting the building to the south for maximum exposure and incorporating extensive open terraces (Exhibit A). In order to make them accessible from every patient floor, the second terrace was stepped back from the first. The modern heating system allowed for independent control of the temperature of every room. Almost five miles of pipe were laid to bring water to the site where a pumping station and a 100-foot water tower were erected. Other buildings planned for the institution, which were presumably designed by Gilbert, included separate houses for medical staff, two dormitories, and a garage. Despite efforts to reduce costs by using Federal Emergency Relief Administration (FERA) workers from New London to drain and grade the site, the construction budget of more than \$500,000 was exhausted before the dormitory for male employees could be built. In 1938 the existing seawall was built here by Works Progress Administration (WPA) funds expressly to create a sand beach for the patients. Reports of the State Tuberculosis Commission in this period contained photographs of the children at Seaside, who were always shown in bathing suits, which it was claimed they wore year round to get the full benefit from the sun. The only apparent concession to winter weather was hats and gloves.

The need for tuberculosis sanatoriums for both children and adults declined dramatically after the advent of drug therapy. The first antibiotics were used to treat the disease in 1947. By 1953 it became medically curable for the first time using a combination of drugs, and several proved very effective in children. Although the last decade has seen a resurgence of other forms because of drug-resistant strains, today tuberculosis spondylitis is a rare disease in the United States. Since drug therapy required only

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

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

The Seaside, Waterford, New London County, Connecticut

Section number 8 Page 3

limited bed rest and could take place in a regular hospital setting, treatment was mainstreamed into the wider medical community and Seaside, like most sanatoriums, closed its doors.

The Department of Mental Retardation, officially established in 1959 by Governor Abraham Ribicoff, took over the vacant sanatorium in 1961 in order to serve this part of the state. Its other major facilities are located at Southbury and Mansfield, both listed on the National Register of Historic Places. After modernizing with remodeling and new construction and using the center to its full capacity for almost 20 years, history is repeating itself here because of the departmental mandate to deinstitutionalize its clients. There have been no new admissions throughout the department since the late 1980s. Many clients have been privately placed or located in group homes and the client population at Seaside is down to 47 individuals, with 27 in the Main Building and 20 in the client cottage, an intermediate care facility. Plans have been made to close the Main Building when funds are available. ²

Architectural Significance

Nationally acclaimed as a designer of monumental buildings, Cass Gilbert was born in Zanesville, Ohio, in 1858 and later moved to St. Paul, Minnesota. He attended the Massachusetts Institute of Technology for one year before beginning his architectural career in 1876 at McKim, Mead, and White in New York City. The personal assistant of Stanford White, he worked on residential commissions for the firm. After completing his apprenticeship there, Gilbert returned to St. Paul in 1882, where he received a major commission, the Minnesota State Capitol, one of three state capitol buildings that he designed. Gilbert returned to New York in 1905 where he maintained a practice until his death in 1934, producing an impressive body of work, primarily for the federal and state governments. One of the most distinguished was his design for the U. S. Customs House on the Battery in New York City, now restored as a museum of Native-American culture. Among his other noteworthy commissions during this period were the U. S. Supreme Court Building in Washington, D. C. (completed by his son after his death), and the Federal Court House in New York City. The 1913 Woolworth Building there, a Gothic skyscraper fully clad in ornamental glazed terra cotta tile, considered one of his masterpieces, was a prototype of its kind and an exception to his usual preference for revivals of Classical, Colonial, or Renaissance architecture.

Similar commissions were carried out in Connecticut. Gilbert designed several buildings in New Haven, the 1918 Union Station and the 1908 New Haven Free Public Library, and worked with Frederick Law Olmsted, Jr. (1870-1957), on a development plan for that city. His most acclaimed work in the state, however, was the Waterbury Municipal Center, a group of buildings designed and built between 1913 and 1924 and listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Although the complex centered on the City Hall, a Georgian Revival building on a monumental scale, his plan for the complex also incorporated commercial buildings of his design: the Waterbury National Bank and the headquarters of Chase Brass Company, the latter a Renaissance Revival structure even larger than the city hall. ³ According to the nomination "they were exemplars of their era and style...there are no other complexes designed by Gilbert of the caliber of the Waterbury one, and few others of this caliber designed by a single architect." ⁴ What is of particular interest here is that these distinctive buildings were designed in the formal monumental styles in which Gilbert excelled. And, with the exception of herringbone patterned brick panels at City

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service****National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

The Seaside, Waterford, New London County, Connecticut

Section number 8 Page 4

Hall, a detail used to such good effect at Seaside, there is nothing here that resembles or anticipates the later work.

Thus, for Gilbert, the designs for Seaside were a departure from a genre that he had cultivated throughout his career. His demonstration of how the Tudor Revival could be interpreted in an institutional setting expanded the range of institutional architecture. In fact, the sanatorium he designed was quite a departure from the accepted architectural norms of the period. With the exception of the use of the Gothic Revival on college campuses, most public institutional complexes at that time were universally designed in the then generally accepted Colonial or Classical Revival styles. Although the Tuberculosis Commission may have expected a more traditional approach because of his background, Gilbert's plans were well received and at the dedication of the Maher Building, the first to be completed, "rapturous encomiums of the beauty and suitableness of the handsome structure came from all who attended..."⁵ Seaside may have been the last commission of his career, since the dedication took place a few weeks after his death.

This exceptionally picturesque collection, which resembles a seaside estate rather than a state institution, demonstrates Gilbert's stylistic versatility and range. Although the use of the Tudor Revival on a domestic scale was quite common in this period, the Superintendent's House with its complex massing, elaborated, contrasting surfaces, and fully integrated interior, is an exceptional example, almost equalled by the design of Duplex House. It is in the larger buildings, both rare examples of institutional Tudor Revival, that his flair for the picturesque is fully displayed. While meeting the requirements of the sanatorium to have a self-contained hospital for the children and a large separate dormitory for the nursing staff, Gilbert adapted an essentially domestic architectural style to deinstitutionalize their appearance through the use of applied, decorative detail and an extraordinary wealth of materials. Both utilize the variety of gable treatment more common to residential buildings and in the case of the Nurses' Residence, the use of repetitive decorative dormers seems to be a deliberate effort to make it appear less utilitarian. The central towering spire of the Maher Building is also clearly decorative but in serving the same purpose as the more standard dome, still identifies the structure as the main building in the complex. Alterations to the Maher Building have somewhat compromised the integrity of its design, but the original concept is still clear and much of the exterior historic fabric remains.

While the architectural synthesis achieved here tends to confirm that the entire original complex was built to Gilbert's designs, the case for attribution is limited primarily to the architectural evidence. The interplay of similar forms and details, especially the repeated use of the round arch and elaborated gables, strongly suggests that these buildings were designed as a thematic group by one architect. Because the plans are still extant, there is no question that Gilbert designed the Stephen B. Maher Building at Seaside, which was named for the long-time chairman of the Tuberculosis Commission. These plans were complete, apparently to the level of construction drawings and specifications. State reports and newspaper accounts often refer to him as the architect for this building and, in the absence of other named architects, it could be inferred that no others were involved. However, no specific references to him as the designer of the other individual buildings were made in the reports and no other plans or records have been uncovered that directly substantiate Gilbert's input into the rest of the complex, most of which was constructed after his death. Some indirect evidence is found in the case of the Nurses' Residence and Duplex House, where there is a record that a local architect was hired to

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

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

The Seaside, Waterford, New London County, Connecticut

Section number 8 Page 5

complete plans for the mechanical systems so that construction could move forward, a strong indication that at least basic design-level plans already existed. ⁶

Although there has been more site development in recent years, the historic integrity of the Gilbert campus has been respected. The historic inter-relationship between the primary buildings and the service and support buildings has been maintained. Newer construction is generally located in the rear service area and does not intrude upon the plan and layout of the original sanatorium, which was oriented towards Long Island Sound. The exceptions are the modern dormitory (Inventory #12) and the two small pump houses near the shore (Inventory #s 16, 17). However, the dormitory, which is similar in scale to its historic counterpart (Inventory #2), occupies the planned position of a second historic dormitory that was never built and thus effectively and unobtrusively completes the original design of the site. Although the pump houses were not part of the original plan, one is contributing in that it is associated with the late historic development of the sanatorium. Furthermore, because of their very small scale, the pump houses have a limited visual impact on the broad sweep of lawn that links the main historic buildings of the complex. Because they do not intrude upon or compromise the vista of the Sound or interfere with sight lines between historic buildings, the essential open historic character and integrity of the site is preserved.

End Notes:

1. According to a plan drawn in June 1931 to accompany the distribution report, the remainder of the estate along the west side was retained by the heirs in individual parcels.
2. Telephone interview with Kathryn DuPree, Regional Director, Department of Mental Retardation, November 11, 1994.
3. The complex, which was largely funded by the Chase family, founders of the brass company of the same name (the largest of its kind in the state), also included two smaller buildings used primarily to house public and private social services and charities.
4. "Waterbury Municipal Center Complex," National Register of Historic Places Inventory-Nomination form, 8:2.
5. *Report of the State Tuberculosis Commission to the Governor for the Period Beginning July 1, 1932 and ending July 30, 1934* (Hartford: State of Connecticut, 1934), p. 15.
6. The plumbing plan for Duplex House and the plans for the heating system for the Superintendent's House were drawn by Fred S. Langdon, a New London architect, both dated 8/31/33.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

The Seaside, Waterford, New London County, Connecticut

Section number 9/10 Page 1

9. Major Bibliographic References

Jordy, William H. *American Buildings and Their Architects: Progressive and Academic Ideals at the Turn of the Twentieth Century*, Vol. 3. New York: Anchor Press, Doubleday, 1976.

Report of the State Tuberculosis Commission to the Governor for the Period Beginning July 1, 1930 and ending June 30, 1932. Public Document No. 53. Hartford, Connecticut, State of Connecticut, 1932.

Report of the State Tuberculosis Commission to the Governor for the Period Beginning July 1, 1932 and ending June 30, 1934. Public Document No. 53. Hartford, Connecticut, State of Connecticut, 1934.

Staye, Marion Grabowitz. *Cultural Resource Survey of State-owned Historic Buildings in Connecticut, Volume 1.* Hartford, Connecticut Historical Commission, 1990.

Whiffen, Marcus. *American Architecture Since 1780: A Guide to Styles.* Cambridge, Massachusetts: M. I. T. Press, 1969.

Withey, Henry F. and Elsie Rathburn Withey. *Biographical Dictionary of American Architects (Deceased).* Los Angeles: Hennesey & Ingalls, Inc., 1970.

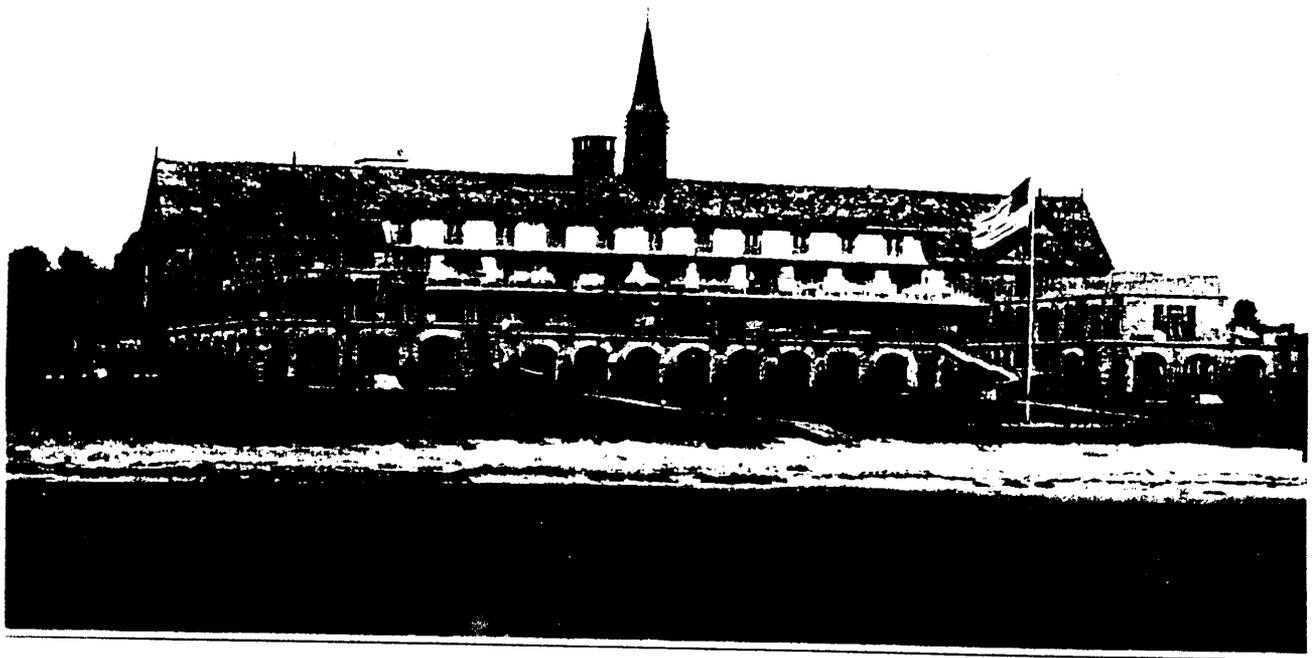
10. Geographical Data

Verbal Boundary Description:

The boundaries of the nominated property are shown on the attached site plan drawn to scale from a Facilities Map of Seaside Regional Center provided by its maintenance department and conform to the boundaries of the parcels purchased by the State of Connecticut in 1931 and 1936, which are recorded and described in the Waterford Land Records (50:77, 112; 52:180, and 54:236 and Map Book 1: 30-31)

Boundary Justification:

The boundaries of the nominated site encompass all the property and buildings associated with the present-day Seaside Regional Center, which are the same boundaries of the complex during its period of significance as Seaside, a children's tuberculosis sanatorium.



THE MAHER INFIRMARY - THE SEASIDE

EXHIBIT A: Stephen J. Maher Building
The Seaside, Waterford, CT

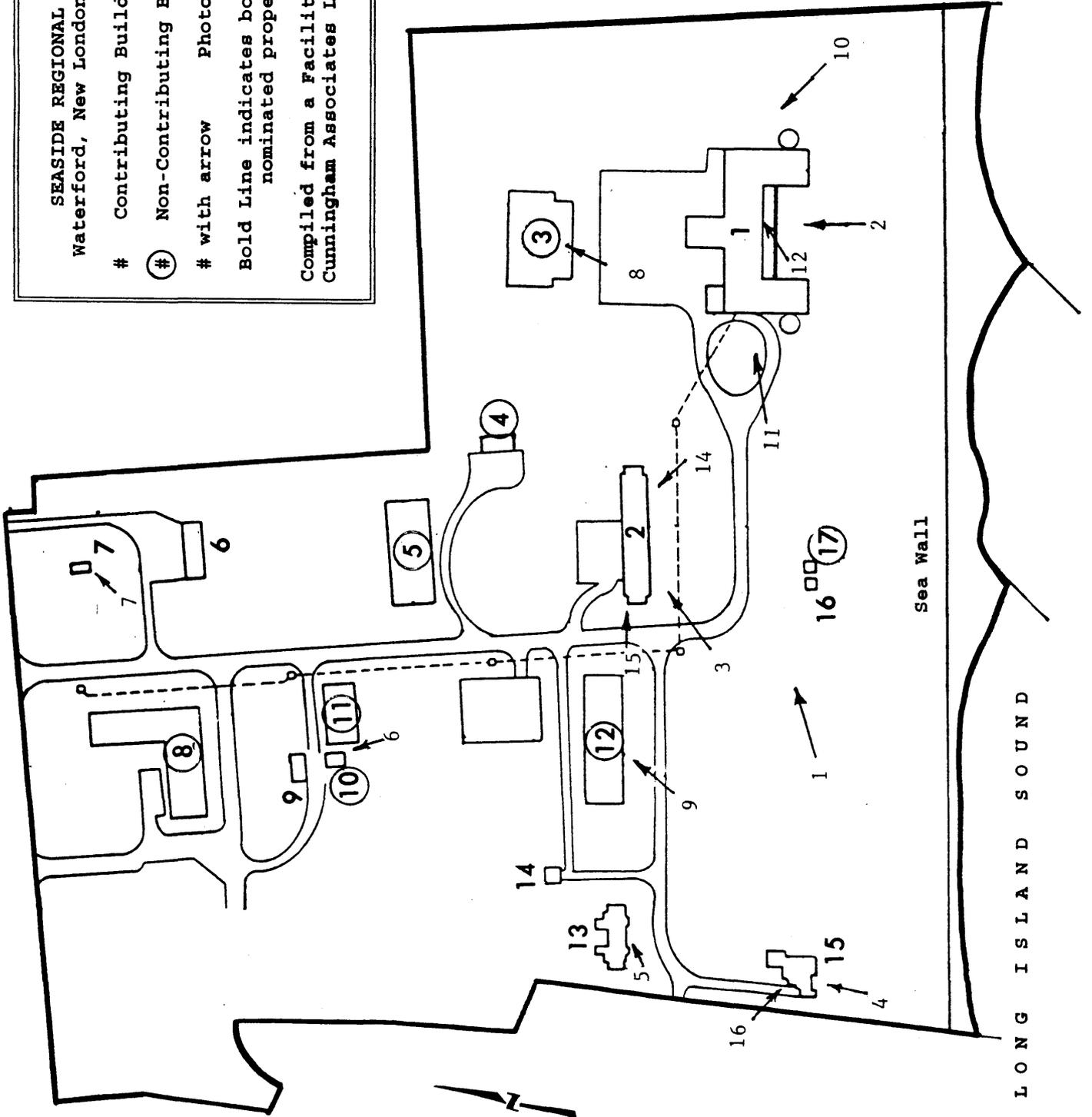
Photocopy of historic photograph, c. 1934

From Report of the Tuberculosis Commission, 1934

SEASIDE REGIONAL CENTER
 Waterford, New London County, CT

- # Contributing Buildings
- Ⓝ Non-Contributing Buildings
- # with arrow Photograph view
- Bold Line** indicates boundary of nominated property

Compiled from a Facilities Base Map
 Cunningham Associates Ltd. 11/94



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

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

The Seaside, Waterford, New London County, Connecticut

Section number Photos Page 1

List of Photographs

Photographer: Cunningham Associates Ltd.

Date: 11/94

Negatives on file: Connecticut Historical Commission

1. General view of site, facing E
2. Stephen J. Maher Building, facade, facing N
3. Nurses' Residence, south facade, facing NE
4. Superintendent's House, south elevation, facing NE
5. Duplex House, facade, facing N
6. Septic treatment and sewage treatment plants (l-r), facing NW
7. Pump House #1, facing N
8. Activity and Therapy Building, facing NE
9. Employees Residence #2, facing NE
10. Maher Building, east elevation, facing NW
11. Maher Building, west elevation, facing E
12. Maher Building, facade, facing NE
13. Maher Building, interior, 2nd-floor cafeteria, facing SE
14. Nurses' Residence, south and east elevations, facing NW
15. Nurses' Residence, west and north elevations, facing NE
16. Superintendent's House, north elevation, facing SE
17. Superintendent's House, interior 1st floor from southeast room, facing E
18. Superintendent's House, interior upstairs hall, facing N