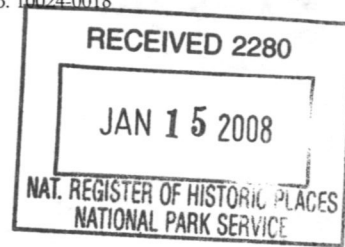


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United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service



National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If 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 Walden United Methodist Church

other name/site number _____

2. Location

street & town 125 West Main Street not for publication

city or town Village of Walden vicinity

state New York code NY county Orange code 067 071 zip code 12586
km

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.)

Arthur Perpoint DSHPO 12/21/07
Signature of certifying official/Title Date

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:)

Signature of the Keeper _____ Date of Action 2/28/2008

5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(check as many boxes as apply)

Category of Property
(check only one box)

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

public-local

private

public-State

public-Federal

district

building(s)

site

structure

object

Contributing

Noncontributing

1

3

buildings

sites

1

structures

objects

1

4

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**

6. Function or Use

Historic Function

(Enter categories from instructions)

RELIGION: religious facility

Current Function

(Enter categories from instructions)

RELIGION: religious facility

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions)

LATE VICTORIAN: Gothic

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation STONE

walls BRICK

roof ASPHALT

other GLASS, METAL

Narrative Description

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

See Continuation Sheets-

Property Name *Walden United Methodist Church*
Location *Walden, Orange County, New York*

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

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7. Narrative Description

Location and Setting

The Walden United Methodist Church is located at 125 West Main Street (New York Route 52) in the Village of Walden, Orange County, New York. This location places the nominated site one block east of the Wallkill River—which fostered and sustained the development of the hamlet—and two blocks west of the intersection of West Main Street and New York State Route 208, near the center of the village. The immediate setting consists of the Methodist church, an adjacent parsonage located on the corner immediately west of the church, and a church-owned rental property to the immediate east—the Crawford house—all of which front on the south side of West Main Street with their primary elevations facing northward. The immediate setting of this part of Walden is largely residential, with the church forming a strong focal point by virtue of its scale and masonry construction in relation to the surrounding architecture. The areas in front of the church are planted with grass and embellished with ornamental shrubbery. Walkways, laid with brick pavers, lead from the West Main Street sidewalk to entrances corresponding with the east wing and bell tower; walkways likewise align the east and west elevations, with that on the east elevation accommodating disabled access via a ramped approach. There is a second more prominent ramp for disabled visitor access, this one of wood construction, accessing the entrance porch on the façade's west side. A single mature deciduous tree is present on the north side of the building, located between the sidewalk and the curb. In addition to the church, the nominated parcel also includes a small playground and cement-block garage for the storage of site maintenance equipment, both located on the rear, south-side of the church; these have been deemed non-contributing to the nomination. The boundary has been drawn to exclude the parsonage and the Crawford House, both of which are located on separate tax parcels and which were deemed to not contribute to the significance of the nomination. The parsonage was excluded due to the denaturing of historic exterior materials including siding, roof cladding, and windows, altering the intended effect of its architecture.

Overview

The Walden United Methodist Church largely represents an 1893 building campaign that culminated with the completion of the present brick masonry edifice, the plan at that time incorporating a worship space, Sunday school area, bell tower and service wing. Subsumed within the east portion of the nominated building is an earlier c. 1840s frame meetinghouse that, during the 1893 campaign, was moved slightly to the east, placed on a new foundation, and incorporated into the present building to serve as the Sunday school. The church features an asymmetrical footprint and lively massing, the design rendered in red brick masonry with bluestone dressings. The architectural vocabulary is eclectic and largely defined by Gothic Revival, and to a lesser extent Romanesque, design elements. Large Gothic-arched fenestration, steeply pitched roofs and a prominent central bell tower are the primary character-defining exterior features. The interior is in large measure defined by a remarkably intact and generously scaled worship space, which features slip pews arranged in a semi-circular manner beneath a complex vaulted ceiling finished with narrow-width boards and decorative ribbing. Originally the church featured an Akron-type plan—whereby the worship space and adjacent Sunday school could be made to communicate by virtue of moveable enclosures—however this arrangement was subsequently discontinued and the Sunday school area now serves as the fellowship hall. Stained glass windows include those original to the 1893 building campaign as well as four memorial windows installed in 1906. The last change made to the building which can be deemed significant to the nomination was undertaken c. 1933, at which time a new classroom addition was erected.

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Exterior

The north-facing façade elevation of the Walden United Methodist Church features relatively complex massing, with a three-stage bell tower rising between the steeply-pitched gable elevations of the worship space and fellowship hall. A second smaller tower is present at the northeast corner of the fellowship hall. The facade will be described moving from this small tower westward. The easternmost section is the fellowship hall with corner tower; the hall has a steeply pitched gable roof with its ridge perpendicular to the street, while the tower has a pyramidal roof. Both are clad with asphalt, which is the current roofing material for the entire building—replacing an earlier slate roof. The broad gable-front elevation of the fellowship hall is divided into three bays by tall Gothic-arched windows with rough hewn bluestone sills, the sills forming part of a continuous belt course. A second bluestone belt course is present at the impost level of the arches, the arches themselves being formed of brick with bluestone keystones and impost blocks. Above the three arches, the center one being of larger proportion than those flanking it, is a third belt course formed of patterned brick work, and above that a tripartite window consisting of slender double-hung window units with a single rough-hewn bluestone sill. These smaller windows are fitted with multi-pane glazing. The lintel is also rough hewn bluestone and is incorporated into a fourth belt course in the gable field. The tower has an entrance bay fitted in a Gothic-arched opening, treated in a manner matching the three large windows, with a small lozenge-type window above. The entrance has paired batten doors with a stained glass transom above, the threshold approached by a flight of six stone steps flanked by iron railing. A belt course of patterned brick work is present above the small window, and the transition to pyramidal tower marked by corbelling; a decorative metal finial rises from the peak of the tower roof.

The central tower, which rises high above both flanking sections and consists of three distinct stages, is terminated by a tapered, octagonal-profiled spire that is flanked on each of the four corners of the tower by four smaller pyramidal towers. A cross rises from the apex of the spire. The first stage of the tower, that corresponding with the primary story of the church, is defined by corner buttresses and features an entrance treatment matching that of the northeast tower, with paired batten doors below a stained-glass transom. It is approached via three stone steps flanked by iron railing. The second stage of the tower begins above a bluestone belt course that corresponds with the height of the corner buttresses. This belt course also serves as a sill for a tripartite window with slender double-hung units, fitted with multi-pane glazing, corresponding with an interior stair well. The third stage of the tower is the bell stage, with large Gothic-arched openings fitted with wood louvers rising from a bluestone belt course. A second bluestone belt course defines the impost level of the arches, which like the large fellowship hall windows have brick heads and bluestone impost blocks and keystones. The transition from the brick wall to the spire is defined by brick corbelling.

The western portion of the façade elevation is the worship space, which features complex massing reflecting the disposition of interior space. A three-sided projection, which has a steeply-pitched gable roof rising in front of a pyramidal roof, defines this side of the façade elevation. The north-facing wall plane is punctuated by a large Gothic-arched window, the opening treated in polychromatic fashion like the other windows with bluestone impost blocks and a keystone, the impost blocks set above a bluestone belt course. The window is divided into two smaller lancets with a circular window above. The upper portion of the gable field contains two square-headed windows with multi-pane glazing spanned by brick jack arches, the sill formed by a

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bluestone belt course. The walls flanking this wall are pierced by two smaller Gothic-arched windows, the impost blocks of these windows corresponding with that of the larger window by virtue of the continuation of the bluestone belt course. There is a final large Gothic-arched window punctuating the extreme west side of the north elevation, in front of which is situated a gable-roofed "porch," or entrance vestibule, with double-leaf doors headed by a Gothic-arched stained-glass transom.

The church's east elevation, on the fellowship hall side facing the Crawford house, consists of an expanse of wall punctuated by five tall square-headed windows with bluestone sills and lintels. A comparison of this elevation with the historic image of the Scotch Covenanter church suggests the four northernmost bays correspond with the original openings of the east wall of that earlier building. Attached to the southeast corner is the gable-roofed office used for outreach programming. It has a rectangular-shaped footprint and is oriented with its gable facing northward so that its roof ridge is parallel to the roof ridge of the adjacent fellowship hall, and it extends southward at the rear of the complex.

The west elevation of the building, that which faces the parsonage, features a three-gabled profile that corresponds with the interior worship space. Two smaller gables flank a larger center gable; all three are steeply pitched with roof ridges that intersect at right angles with the roof that extends southward from the façade elevation. The two smaller gables are punctuated by a single lozenge-type window each, while the center section is pierced by three Gothic-arched windows, the central being the largest of the three—much like the gable arrangement itself. Two smaller trabeated windows are located near the center gable's apex. An exterior engaged brick chimney is present on this elevation; it rises as two sections before meeting to form a single chimney just below the gable windows, before rising through the cornice. The brick of the chimney is parged over with a tan-hued substance. Leaders are aligned downwards between the center and flanking gables, and would seem to be functioning improperly as the adjacent brick and mortar is suffering from deterioration. At the southwest corner of the building is a small two-story brick addition, c. 1933. This addition is two bays wide by two bays deep, with a flat roof concealed behind a parapet on the west elevation, and segmental-arched window openings with brick sills and one-over-one aluminum sash windows.

The south elevation—the rear of the building—fronts on a paved parking area, from which is accessed the garage and playground. Fenestration includes the two bays of the above addition; a glazed and paneled door and bricked-in window corresponding with a gabled projection; seven segmental-arched brick window openings—one now bricked in—corresponding with the choir alcove; and two second-story trabeated windows on the east side of this elevation that correspond with an interior classroom. There are likewise two vents that correspond with the kitchen, along with a shed-roofed projection between the south wall and the west wall of the office addition.

Interior: Plan & Circulation

The entrance on the east side of the north-facing façade leads into a vestibule that accesses, to the south, the fellowship hall, a large open meeting area with a kitchen area at its rear (south side). Above the kitchen there is a room known as the "craft room," which to the left (east) of the kitchen is the office contained in the small single-story addition on the building's southeast corner.

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The entrance from the tower, also on the north-facing façade, leads into a second vestibule area with doors on the right side (west) entering directly into the rear of the worship space. A hallway to the left connects with a stairs leading to the opposite vestibule that communicates with the fellowship hall. A flight of stairs accounts for the discrepancy in height between the fellowship hall and the worship space. Additional flights of stairs lead from the tower vestibule upwards in the tower and down into the basement—modified in the early 1960s—where there is the pastor's office, a nursery, multiple classrooms and a daycare center.

The worship is a large open area accessed from the tower vestibule. The dais and organ are located at the opposite, south side of the room, with slip pews arranged in circular fashion around it. There is no gallery. To the right of the dais and organ alcove is a door that leads into a classroom, with a second classroom located directly above—known as the Worker's and Bluebird classrooms, respectively, added c. 1933 as the brick addition to the building's southwest side. A door to the left of the dais leads into a hallway with a choir room to the right; this hallway connects to the rear of the fellowship hall and stairs that access the room above the kitchen.

Interior Finishes Overview

The church's worship space is handsomely finished and maintains most all of its Late Victorian-era treatments. The walls are plaster on sawn wood lath above beaded-board wainscoting; the wainscot is stained a slightly lighter tone than the chair rail that terminates it. The complexly vaulted ceiling is finished with thin-width board, deeply stained, with moulded wood ribs and paterae highlighting vault intersections. In those areas where the transition from the plaster walls to ceiling is flat the transition is marked by struck plaster cornice work. The roof framing is partially supported by columns that extend down into the worship space, expressed as fluted columns terminated by circular-shaped moulded capitals, above which rise groin vaulted units. Similar engaged capitals define the intersection of the vaults with the walls. Pews are of the slip type, curved, constructed of oak, the ends having scrolled armrests and the rears bible and hymnal racks. The floor is currently covered with replica Victorian wall-to-wall carpeting and as such the flooring could not be observed. Hanging electric light fixtures provide artificial light to the space, including a central one with upwards of thirty bulbs arrayed in a circular configuration; this large fixture is suspended with metal chain from an octagonal-shaped moulded medallion situated at the center of the ceiling. The semi-circular shaped dais is separated from the first rank of pews by a wood railing formed of turned balusters with a moulded handrail. The pipes of the organ are located in the recess in the rear wall of the dais. Doors are paneled with glazed transoms above.

The adjacent fellowship hall has plaster walls above beaded board wainscot; the ceiling is dropped and fitted with acoustic tiles. The window casings display flat moulding profiles that indicate they survive from the original c. 1840s meetinghouse, at that time when the Greek Revival-style remained in fashion. Four of the windows are of the memorial stained glass type and were installed in 1906; two are figural while the other two are more "architectural" and further embellished with religious iconography.

The remaining areas are finished in modest fashion and typically display characteristic finishes. The later basement areas—added in the early 1960s and including the pastor's office, nursery, and classrooms—have painted cinderblock walls and flagstone floors.

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Later Alterations and Changes Overview

The first recorded change to the church consisted of the installation of four memorial stained glass windows along the east wall of the fellowship hall in 1906. Five years later, in 1911, the current parsonage was erected immediately west of the church and it remains in use today. Subsequent construction campaigns included the brick classroom addition at the building's southwest corner c. 1933, and the erection of a small gable-roofed office at the southeast corner of the fellowship hall in 1952, this space today serving as an office for a church community outreach program. Among the more significant events in the later years was a 1960-62 engineering and construction campaign that resulted in the excavation of a new basement for rooms including a nursery, multiple classrooms, the pastor's office and rest rooms. During the 1990s wheelchair accessibility was addressed with the construction of a new ramp and access door on the east flank of the fellowship hall, and it was likely during this decade that the original slate roof was replaced with the current asphalt shingle covering.

The only significant physical alteration that requires additional investigation is the alteration of the original Akron-type plan to the current configuration.

8. 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.

Narrative Statement of Significance

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

Areas of Significance

(enter categories from instructions)

ARCHITECTURE

Period of Significance

c. 1840- c. 1933

Significant Dates

c. 1840; 1850; 1870; 1893; 1906; c.1933

Significant Persons

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

Cultural Affiliation

Architect/Builder

Edwin McWilliams, contractor (1893)

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: _____

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8. Narrative Statement of Significance

Significance Overview

The Walden United Methodist Church is a locally significant example of Late Victorian-era religious architecture in the Village of Walden, Orange County, and among the more recognizable and ambitiously conceived 19th century architectural resources in this Wallkill River hamlet. The nominated brick masonry building, completed in 1893, incorporated into its current configuration an earlier frame meetinghouse that had been acquired and used by the congregation since its purchase from the Scotch Covenantor Society in 1850. This earlier section was moved eastward as part of the new plan and modified to accommodate Sunday school activities, communicating with the adjacent worship space by means of moveable partitions in a variation of the Akron plan. The 1893 construction campaign culminated in a more substantial church complex indicative of the expanding programming of the Methodist church in the Walden community in the later 19th century, and the increasingly multi-purpose nature of American religious facilities in this era. The church features characteristically eclectic Late Victorian-era design features with lively and complex massing, and is predominately Gothic Revival in character. The definitive interior space is a noteworthy and highly intact auditorium, defined by a complexly vaulted ceiling, oak pews in a semi-circular arrangement, period stained glass windows, and elaborate lighting fixtures. The Walden United Methodist Church remains an important architectural resource in Walden, indicative of the hamlet's development and prosperity in the post-Civil War period and the flourishing of local industry.

Historical Background

The Village of Walden, incorporated in 1855, is located twelve miles west of Newburgh on the Wallkill River in the Town of Montgomery, Orange County. This situation along the northward-flowing Wallkill, near its confluence with the Tin Brook, afforded it a reliable source of hydraulic power that encouraged and sustained settlement and development, which began in earnest during the 19th century. At this location major north-south and east-west overland transportation routes met and, along with the Wallkill, made the hamlet a natural seat of local trade and commerce for surrounding farms. Walden was in its earliest days known as the High Falls of the Wallkill, as the fall of the Wallkill River here measures some forty feet. Another early name was Kidstown, named for James Kidd, who erected a grist mill on the east side of the Wallkill in the pre-Revolutionary War period. By the time of the formation of the Town of Montgomery in 1768 this mill site was in the possession of Mr. Johannes Decker, and in 1789 it was owned by Cadwallader Colden, Jr., the Colden's representing the most prominent family in this immediate region prior to the Revolution. The grist mill passed through several hands in succession, until it was modified to serve as a textile factory, foreshadowing the future industrial development of this locale.¹ The arrival of New York City merchant Jacob Tredwell Walden in 1812 helped signal this new era in Walden's history, as shortly thereafter Walden, along with entrepreneurs Jesse Schofield and Dr. Seth C. Capron, established the hamlet's first significant industrial enterprises.

¹ Samuel W. Eager, *History of Orange County* (Newburgh: S. T. Callahan, 1846-7), 14.

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Walden's center appears to have shifted several times, as it was first situated on the west side of the Wallkill River. As the 19th century progressed knife factories such as the New York Knife Company facility replaced the woolen mills of Jacob Walden as the key industry of the community, and farming, particularly post-Civil War dairying operations, intensified throughout the region. The establishment of the knife industry, in particular, helped spur local growth. Besides the manufacturing establishments mentioned, the extensive foundry and machine shops of Rider, Wooster & Company, and the Walden Steam Flouring Mills were likewise located in Walden. Development radiated outward along the overland transportation routes, and the center of the community shifted to the east side of the Wallkill River from its earlier location on the opposite side. Along present-day Main Street, particularly near its intersection with Ulster Avenue, large brick stores with cast-iron storefronts, hotels, banks, churches and an opera house were constructed, reflecting the general prosperity of the community and the flowering of its industry. Later the hamlet enjoyed a position along the route of the Montgomery & Wallkill Valley Railroad, another significant factor in the hamlet's continued economic vitality.

The early history of Methodism in the Walden area begins c. 1817, the year in which the first organized meetings were believed to have been held. Lacking a permanent house of worship, and served by an impermanent circuit rider, these meetings were conducted for some time in the ball room of a local tavern.² Sometime thereafter services were held in a school building erected on Ulster Avenue, until 1850, when it was decided that a permanent church should be established. On April 15, 1850, a board of trustees was established to that end, consisting of Christopher Briggs, John Bothroyd, Lyman Fairchild, Philip Evans, and Henry McElheny. Their exertions culminated with the purchase in May 1850 of the frame meetinghouse owned by the Scotch Covenanter Society—which was later subsumed within the nominated brick church—for the price of \$1,000. This meetinghouse had been built under the leadership of William Beatty, however due to the fracturing of the Scotch Covenanter Society the group dissolved and the church was put up for sale. In 1870, during the pastorate of E.E. Pinney, the meetinghouse was renovated and enlarged. The Walden Methodists enjoyed steady growth as the second half of the 19th century unfolded, so that by the time of the building of the new church the organization could count 376 members, a Sunday school of 335 members, and an Epworth League of approximately 140.³

The 1893 Building Campaign

The Walden United Methodist Church was built to meet the demands of the growing congregation, which had outgrown the earlier meetinghouse acquired at the mid point of the 19th century, and to support an expanding array of church-related programming. A photograph of this earlier building indicates it was of the characteristic early to mid-19th century gable-front meetinghouse type, its engaged tower reworked with a tall Mansard-type roof and iron cresting typical of the Second Empire style and the immediate post-Civil War period. As is often the case the society deliberated the need for a new facility for a number of years, until the pastorate of Reverend J.M. Cornish, at which time the plans begin to take definitive form. A subscription amounting to \$11,000 was secured, plans and other construction documents were drawn

² "Fair Bells, Ring Out the Old, Ring in the New," Vol. 1, No. 1, Walden, New York, December 13-15, 1893.

³ Ibid

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by an unknown party, and the contract for erecting the building was let to the contractor Edwin McWilliams of Middletown. Construction was initiated in the spring of 1893, and the cornerstone laying ceremony—conducted by Reverend W.H. Mickle, Presiding Elder of the district—was held on August 1. John Whitehead, a member of the church since 1850, was honored with the handling of the trowel during the cornerstone laying.

A contemporary description of the new church, published in 1893, follows:

The old church was removed to the east side of the lot and entirely remodeled for the Sunday school. It has been enclosed with a brick veneering. The pews will be placed length-wise of the room, facing the auditorium, with a reversible seat in every alternate pew for the teacher. The floor is three feet above the floor of the auditorium. By an ingenious contrivance large openings between the two rooms may be made, and thus the two rooms for practical purposes thrown into one. By this arrangement one thousand people can be accommodated to sittings.

The new church will contain seats for six hundred people. The organ loft is behind the pulpit. The seats are of antique oak, arranged in modern semicircular style, and are of the most approved pattern. The room is sixty by ninety feet in dimensions and the arched ceiling is thirty-six feet high. Two entrances are provided from each of the vestibules.

To our friends who have not seen our new church home the accompanying illustration will afford a good idea of its appearance. It is built of an excellent quality of brick, and like many people is handsomer than its picture. The top of the tower is one hundred feet high. The windows are of stained glass of delicate tints arranged artistically. The building is heated by steam.

At the rear of the chapel is a two-story addition, containing infant and Bible class rooms, and a culinary adjunct for the use of the church cook.⁴

Architectural Analysis

The new Walden Methodist Church's interior was conceived along the lines of the Akron plan model and its various permutations, which emerged in the post-Civil War period, characterized by direct communication between the worship space and an adjacent Sunday school area. Communication between these two areas could be controlled as needed, as sliding or folding partitions made it possible to segregate the two areas. The Akron prototype was conceived by Lewis Miller, who developed this efficient type of interior arrangement in relation to Sunday school building, erected as part of the First Methodist Episcopal Church of Akron, Ohio, 1866-72, from which the name is derived. Miller's innovation was soon employed by architects such as George Washington Kramer as part of a "combination plan church" based on the Akron Sunday school precedent, whereby the Sunday school was placed adjacent to the worship space, typically along one side of the auditorium, as it was in the case of the Walden church.⁵ This original arrangement, which likewise was effective in accommodating

⁴ Ibid

⁵ A. Robert Jaeger, "The Auditorium and Akron Plans: Reflections of a Half Century of American Protestantism," Master's Thesis, Cornell University, May 1984, 140-80.

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additional worshipers once all the auditorium seating was filled, was subsequently discontinued. The date for this change is still being investigated, however one church member, who has been attending services since the 1920s, could not recall this arrangement and as such it appears it was abandoned early in the building's history.

The Walden church likewise displayed another feature popular in American ecclesiastical design in the second half of the 19th century—an auditorium-plan worship space—featuring a semi-circular seating arrangement with aisles radiating outward from the liturgical center, not unlike the layout of an amphitheater. This plan proved a functional modification of the traditional linear meetinghouse arrangement, inspired by the increasing spatial needs of urban congregations and the influence of revivalism. Among the earliest deviations from the traditional meetinghouse arrangement in America was Robert Mills's Sansom Street Baptist Church in Philadelphia, c. 1812, however it was the Broadway Tabernacle in New York City, built for a Congregational society c. 1836, which is thought to have been the first American example utilizing an amphitheater-type arrangement.⁶ Notwithstanding examples such as the Plymouth Congregational Church in Brooklyn, 1849, this type of auditorium arrangement gained its greatest popularity in the post-Civil War period. Among those advocating for circular interior arrangements was the architect Lawrence Valk, in his 1873 book *The New Form of Plan for Churches*.⁷ Valk contended that regardless of the style chosen, the circular seating plan offered a functionally sound alternative to traditional and ritual-based plans. While the Walden Methodist church lacked the inclined floor that was often a feature of this type of arrangement, it nevertheless employed the curved seating arrangement standard to it. The auditorium plan provided for clear sight lines from most all seating positions, and was believed to represent a functional and cost-effective solution to the demand for larger church buildings, particularly where there were pre-existing site limitations such as in dense urban areas.

Stylistically the Walden United Methodist Church's exterior reflects a somewhat eclectic architectural vocabulary, largely of Gothic inspiration though not without Romanesque references, as expressed in the corbelling treatment of the bell tower's cornice. The vertical emphasis provided by the two towers, the large Gothic-arched windows, and the steeply pitched roof profiles all place the church firmly within the Gothic tradition, though here the design vocabulary is less archaeological than in the previous decades. Other distinctive features of the exterior design program include understated polychromy suggestive of the High Victorian Gothic movement inspired by Ruskin and the Venetian Gothic tradition, provided for by the bluestone belt courses in concert with the red brick, and the Gothic arched openings formed of brick with bluestone impost blocks and keystones. The tower is the central feature of the façade composition, terminated by a spire flanked at the corners by four smaller spires that mimic it, much like a broached spire though the smaller flanking units do not fully engage the central spire. Richardsonian Romanesque references are suggested in the treatment of the upper gable field of the fellowship hall façade. The exterior displays characteristic tendencies in American ecclesiastical Gothic design in the last decade of the 19th century in its tendency towards eclecticism,

⁶ Ibid, 58-59.

⁷ Lawrence B. Valk, *The New Form of Plan for Churches* (New York: Holt Brothers, 1873).

Property Name *Walden United Methodist Church*
Location *Walden, Orange County, New York*

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section Number 8 Page 5

originality and lack of archaeological “correctness”—moving away from the more literal work of the Gothic Revival of the previous generation. It was in the later decades of the 19th century that evangelical Protestant denominations abandoned from the Gothic plan popularized in large measure by the Gothic Revival movement of the 1840s and 1850s, during which time architects such as Richard Upjohn provided “liturgically correct” examples inspired by the Ecclesiological movement within the Episcopal church—examples that were eventually embraced by other Protestant groups. Instead a new emphasis was placed on function and interior spatial arrangement, and less emphasis on the correct nature of Gothic and other stylistic detail.

The interior of the Walden church, particularly the worship space, also reflects the design preferences of this era, in the rich decorative character meant to enhance the visual effect of the worship service. Large organ pipes form a backdrop for the dais, generously scaled and colorful stained glass windows—along with smaller lozenge-type windows— flood the space with mellow colored light, the natural light augmented with artificial lighting from suspended electric fixtures. The highlight of this auditorium, however, is the complex vaulted ceiling, rendered in a cruciform shape, finished with thin, deeply stained boards, roll moulded trim and decorative paterae, the loads from the roof framing transferred in part to fluted columns that support groin-vaulted units. The capitals of these columns, as well as the pendants at the bases of the engaged groin vaulted units that form a transition from the wall to the ceiling, are moulded and circular in shape. Walls are finished with plaster on lath above stained beaded-board wainscot, while the floor is covered with carpeting meant to replicate a Victorian-era pattern. The decorative nature of the Protestant church interior in the Late Victorian era arose, according to James White, as a consequence of the increasing realization of the need for church architecture to create what he termed the ideal “worshipful atmosphere,” and signified a departure from the earlier austerity of the non-ritual Protestant meetinghouse.⁸

Some elements of the earlier c. 1840s meetinghouse that was incorporated into the later building survive in the present fellowship hall; on the interior, this would seem to include the window architraves, which display broad moulding profiles characteristic of the Greek Revival style. The frame of the earlier Scotch Covenanter Society meetinghouse likewise remains intact, as does the roof and its framing—consisting of king-post roof trusses—beneath the roof of the later building within which it was subsumed.

Conclusion

The Walden United Methodist Church is an important local architectural landmark, one illustrating the growth, confidence and ambitions of this prominent Walden congregation. In the early years following formation, this religious group worshiped in informal circumstances without a house of worship of their own. By 1850 enough resources had been gathered, and the group had acquired sufficient membership, to justify the purchase of the Scotch Covenanter meetinghouse, which in 1870 they renovated—a reflection of their continued growth and the relative prosperity the village enjoyed as the 19th century

⁸ James White, *Protestant Worship and Church Architecture: Theological and Historical Considerations* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1964), 125.

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Section Number 8 Page 6

unfolded and local industry flourished. In 1893, as membership continued to swell, the Methodists erected for themselves a substantial brick masonry edifice of some architectural pretense, with a functional plan reflecting their growing role in the life of the community, and indicative of national trends in ecclesiastical planning and architectural design. In 1911 a new parsonage was built, and c. 1933 a new classroom addition was built—an indication of the church's need for yet more space to accommodate their programming. The Walden United Methodist Church remains a functional and visible reminder of Walden's history and one of the more recognized buildings in the village.

Property Name *Walden United Methodist Church*
Location *Walden, Orange County, New York*

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section number 9 Page 1

9. Major Bibliographical References

Eager, Samuel W. *History of Orange County*. Newburgh: S. T. Callahan, 1846-7.

"Fair Bells, Ring Out the Old, Ring in the New," Vol. 1, No. 1, Walden, New York, December 13-15, 1893.

Jaeger, A. Robert. "The Auditorium and Akron Plans: Reflections of a Half Century of American Protestantism," Master's Thesis, Cornell University, May 1984.

Valk, Lawrence B. *The New Form of Plan for Churches*. New York: Holt Brothers, 1873.

White, James. *Protestant Worship and Church Architecture: Theological and Historical Considerations*, New York: Oxford University Press, 1964.

Walden United Methodist Church
Name of Property

Walden, Orange County, New York
County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property Approximately 1 acre

UTM References

(Place additional boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

1 18 567394 4601307
Zone Easting Northing

2
Zone Easting Northing

3
Zone Easting Northing

4
Zone Easting Northing

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

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

Boundary Justification

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

11. Form Prepared By

name/title William E. Krattinger
organization NYS OPRHP, Field Services Bureau date December 2007
street & number Peebles Island State Park telephone (518) 237-8643 ext. 3265
city or town Waterford state NY zip code 12866

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/title Walden United Methodist Church Board of Trustees
street & number same as nomination address telephone _____
city or town _____ state NY zip code _____

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.

Property Name *Walden United Methodist Church*
Location *Walden, Orange County, New York*

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section number 10 Page 1

10. Geographical Data

Verbal Boundary Description

The boundary for the Walden United Methodist Church National Register of Historic Places nomination is shown as a solid black outline with crosshatching on the enclosed map, entitled "Walden United Methodist Church, 124 West Main Street, Walden, Orange County, New York."

Boundary Justification

The boundary for the nomination, which includes approximately one acre of land, has been drawn to coincide with the current legal tax parcel for the church. All of this land is historically related to the nominated resource and its cited period of significance. The parcels containing the parsonage and Crawford House have been excluded from the boundary.

Property Name *Walden United Methodist Church*
Location *Walden, Orange County, New York*

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Photographs & Illustrations

Photographs

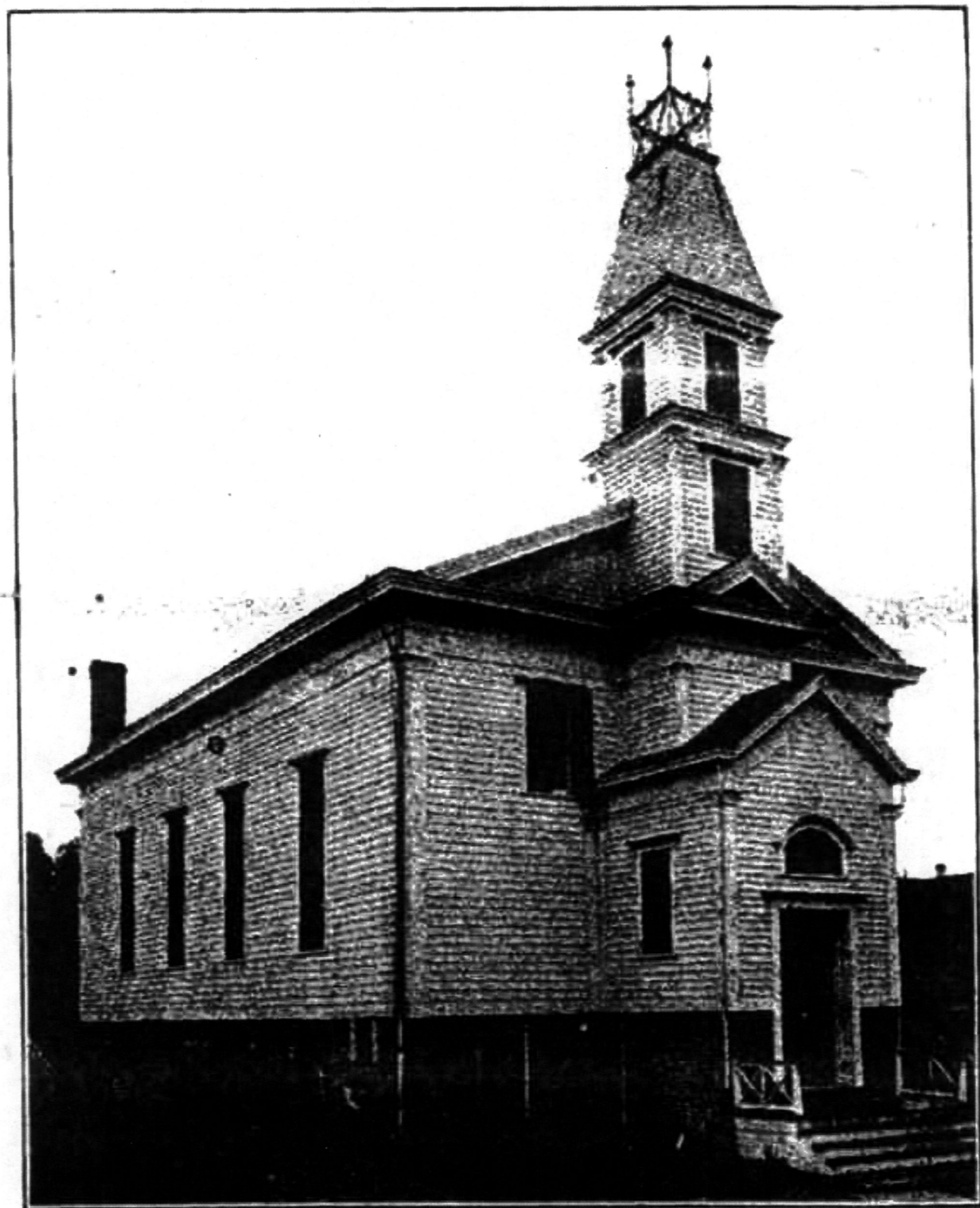
Photography by William E. Krattinger, October 2007

Negatives at NYS OPRHP, Field Services Bureau, Waterford, New York 12866

1. Exterior view, looking roughly southwest, façade elevation with east flank elevation on left
2. Exterior view, detail of window and masonry treatment, façade elevation
3. Interior view, worship space, view looking roughly south
4. Interior view, worship space, windows on west wall
5. Interior view, worship space, detail of ceiling treatment

Illustrations

1. Historic view, Scotch Covenanter Society Church, prior to being incorporated within present Walden United Methodist Church

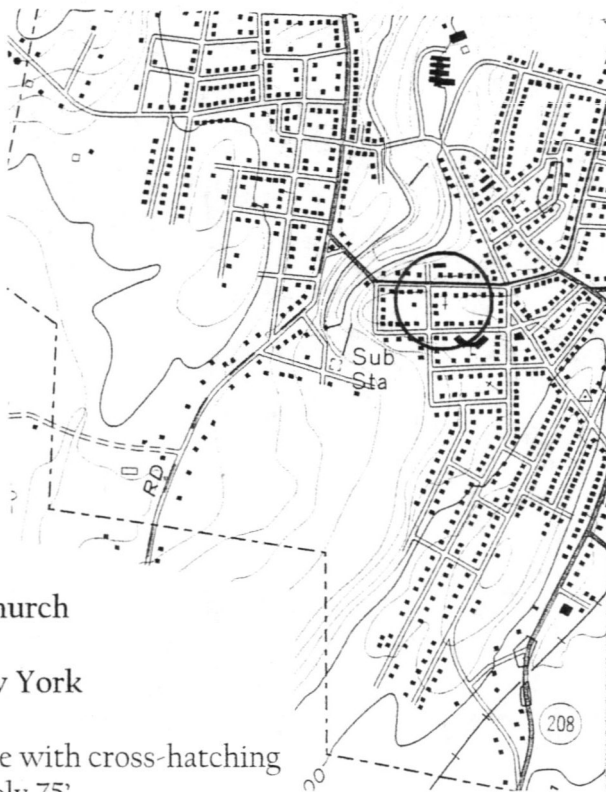
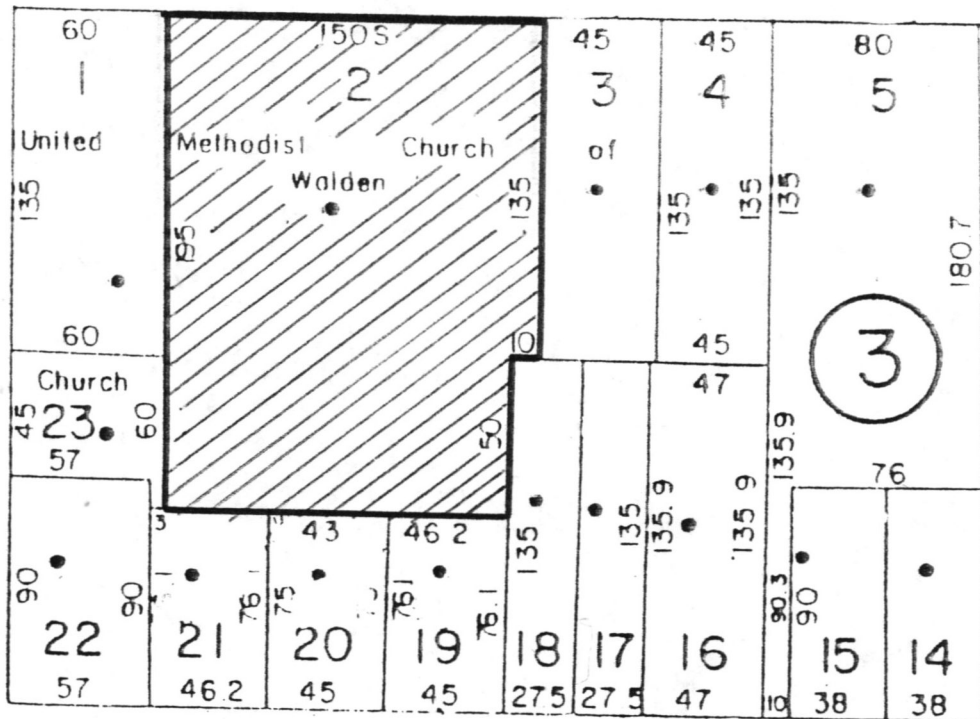


OUR CHURCH OF 1850

MAIN ——— N Y ——— STATE ———

62
6
145
62
135

STREET



Walden United Methodist Church
125 West Main Street
Walden, Orange County, New York

Boundary shown as solid outline with cross-hatching
Scale: 1" is equal to approximately 75'

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Name of Property

County and State

Section number _____ Page _____

Name of multiple property listing (if applicable)

SUPPLEMENTARY LISTING RECORD

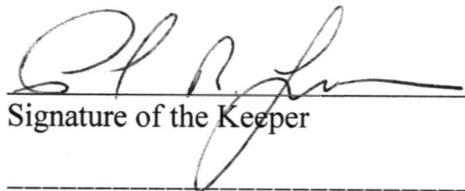
NRIS Reference Number: 08000103

Date Listed: 02/28/2008

Property Name: Walden United Methodist Church County: Orange State: NY

Multiple Name:

This property is listed in the National Register of Historic Places in accordance with the attached nomination documentation subject to the following exceptions, exclusions, or amendments, notwithstanding the National Park Service certification included in the nomination documentation.


Signature of the Keeper

02/28/2008
Date of Action

=====

Amended Items in Nomination: Section 8 of the National Register of Historic Places nomination for the Walden United Methodist Church, Orange County, NY has been changed to properly reflect the period of significance and significant dates. The present church was constructed in 1893. The exterior reflects this period.

The period of significance is 1893-c. 1933
Significant dates are 1893, 1906 and c. 1933

DISTRIBUTION:

- National Register property file**
- Nominating Authority (without nomination attachment)**

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: NOMINATION

PROPERTY NAME: Walden United Methodist Church

MULTIPLE NAME:

STATE & COUNTY: NEW YORK, Orange

DATE RECEIVED: 1/15/08 DATE OF PENDING LIST: 2/04/08
DATE OF 16TH DAY: 2/19/08 DATE OF 45TH DAY: 2/28/08
DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:

REFERENCE NUMBER: 08000103

REASONS FOR REVIEW:

APPEAL: N DATA PROBLEM: N LANDSCAPE: N LESS THAN 50 YEARS: N
OTHER: N PDIL: N PERIOD: N PROGRAM UNAPPROVED: N
REQUEST: N SAMPLE: N SLR DRAFT: Y NATIONAL: N

COMMENT WAIVER: N

ACCEPT RETURN REJECT 2/28/08 DATE

ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:

The ¹⁸⁹³ Walden United Methodist Church
is a good local example of late Victorian
Gothic church architecture

RECOM./CRITERIA E

REVIEWER Abernathy

DISCIPLINE Architectural History

TELEPHONE _____

DATE 2/28/08

DOCUMENTATION see attached comments Y/N see attached SLR Y/N

If a nomination is returned to the nominating authority, the nomination is no longer under consideration by the NPS.

Missing Core Documentation

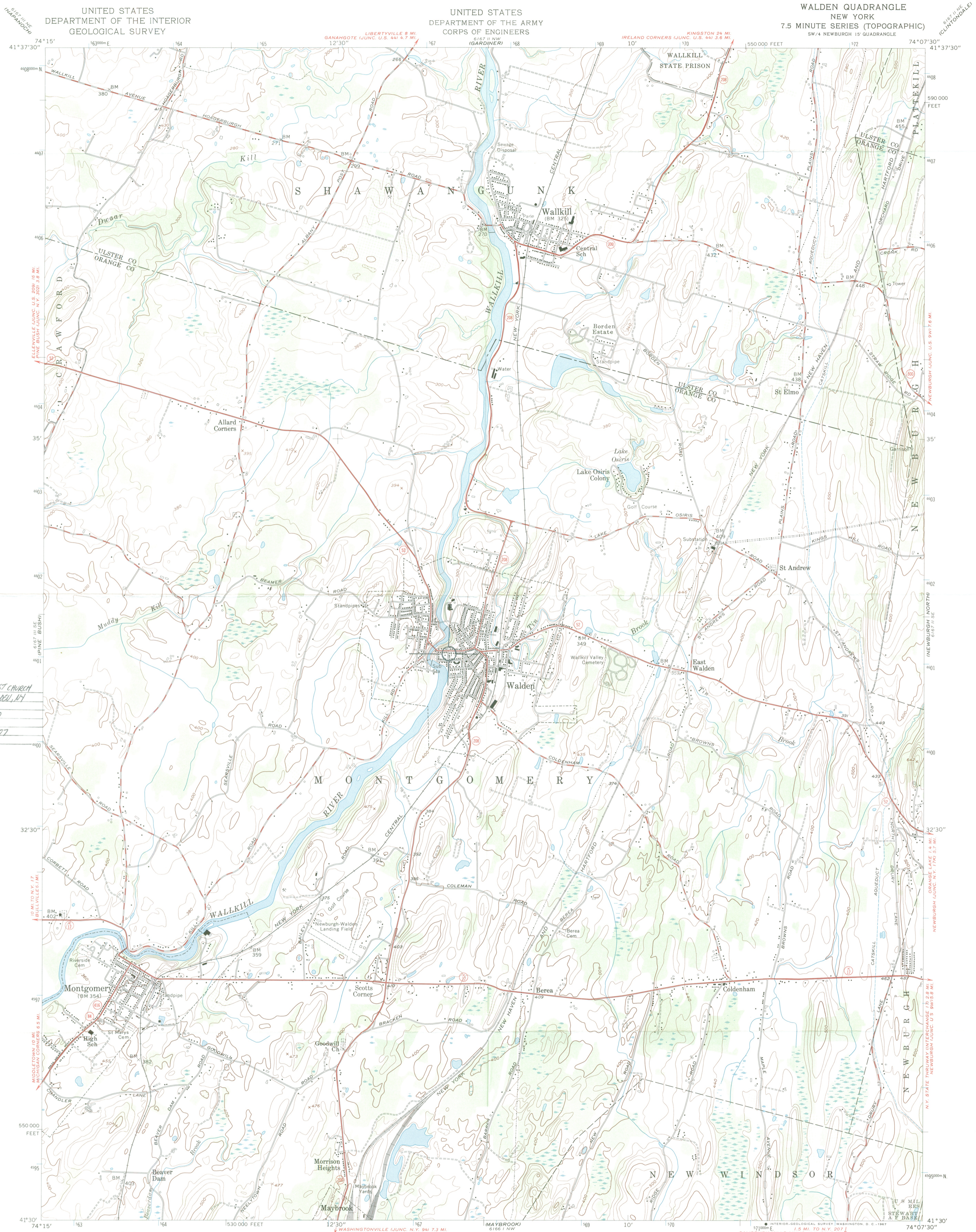
Property Name	County, State	Reference Number
Walden United Methodist Church	Orange, New York	08000103

The following Core Documentation is missing from this entry:

Nomination Form

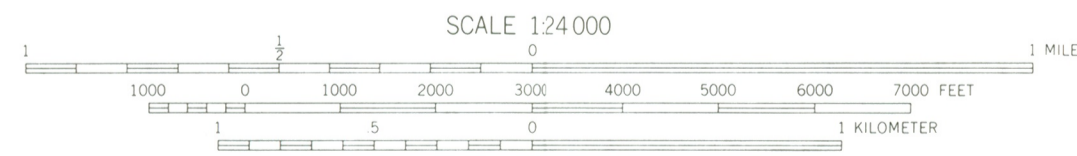
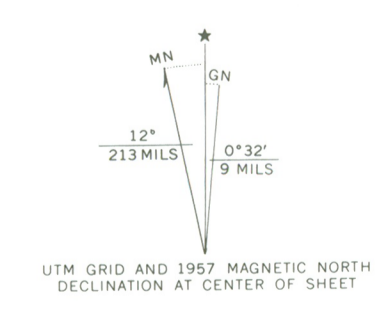
Photographs

USGS Map



WALDEN UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
125 W. MAIN STREET, WALDEN, N.Y.
WALDEN QUAD. 1:24000
18/567394 4601307

Mapped by the Army Map Service
Edited and published by the Geological Survey
Control by USC&GS
Topography from aerial photographs by multiplex methods
Aerial photographs taken 1942. Culture revised by the
Geological Survey 1956-57
Polyconic projection. 1927 North American datum
10,000-foot grid based on New York coordinate system, east zone
1000-meter Universal Transverse Mercator grid ticks,
zone 18, shown in blue
Unchecked elevations are shown in brown



SCALE 1:24000
CONTOUR INTERVAL 20 FEET
DATUM IS MEAN SEA LEVEL



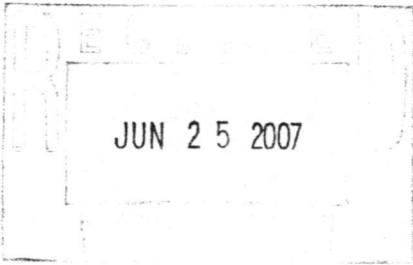
ROAD CLASSIFICATION	
Heavy-duty	Light-duty
Medium-duty	Unimproved dirt
○ State Route	

WALDEN, N. Y.
SW/4 NEWBURGH 15' QUADRANGLE
N4130-W7407.5/7.5

THIS MAP COMPLIES WITH NATIONAL MAP ACCURACY STANDARDS
FOR SALE BY U. S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY, WASHINGTON, D. C. 20242
A FOLDER DESCRIBING TOPOGRAPHIC MAPS AND SYMBOLS IS AVAILABLE ON REQUEST

1957

AMS 6167 II SW-SERIES V821



June 20, 2007
Mayor Becky Pearson
One Municipal Square
Walden, N.Y. 12586

Re: Walden United Methodist Church

Dear Mr Krattinger,

I was so pleased to receive notice of the New York State Review Boards possible nomination of the Walden Methodist Church to the National and State Register of Historic Places. I am in favor of this nomination. If the church is nominated I'm sure their recognition and pride of accomplishment will help motivate other land and property owners to follow in their footsteps. I personally know of at least 6 other very interested parties, a few more churches and a couple of homes, two of which you have seen, one of those being the Bradley Homestead. Please relay my excitement to the Review Board in the hopes that many of Walden's Historic structures and sites will be preserved for future generations to enjoy.

Sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Becky Pearson". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large, prominent loop at the end. It is positioned to the right of the typed name and title.

Becky Pearson
Mayor of Walden