CITY, TOWN

New York

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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CONDITION

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CHECK ONE

CHECK ONE

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DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The New Brighton Village Hall is located on a small corner lot two blocks from the Kill Van Kull. Built in 1868-71 by the local architect James Whitford, the structure is a simple brick interpretation of the French Second Empire style of architecture.

The village hall is a three-story brick building with mansard roof. The raised basement walls are of grey, coursed ashlar. The front steps were demolished in 1976. Double doors set in an arched opening form the main entrance. The doorway is emphasized by a recessed border or reveal, as are the windows throughout the building.

The three-bay facade has a central bay which extends forward approximately twelve feet from the main mass to afford a vestibule. The bays on either side of the central bay contain single windows. The first floor windows are very high with arched heads. The second floor windows are smaller than the first floor windows and have segmentally arched heads. The attic windows, piercing the mansard roof, are smaller and also have arched heads similar to those of the first floor.

Beneath the windows of the first and second floor are recessed panels in the same plane as the recessed borders. They also appear above the first floor windows. The panel above the doorway commemorates the building of the village hall. The corners of the front elevation are marked with slender brick pilasters one stretcher in width. A belt course crosses the building dividing the first and second floors. A broad cornice crosses at the base of the mansard roof supported by pairs of massive brackets, typical of the French Second Empire style of architecture.

The mansard roof is sheathed with grey slate shingles and projects forward to cover the center bay. The mansard is capped by a smaller bracket cornice and a gently sloped flat-seam metal roof above. On the front bay a center dormer contains a pair of windows. The dormers on either side of the center contain single windows as do those along the side-elevations.

The side elevations are five bays, with brick pilasters marking the bays. The windows are of the same proportions and detailing as the front. A twentieth-century, steel, free-standing fire stair ascends the full three floors at the rear.

The structure is basically intact on the exterior, except for the missing entrance stairs. It is a simple but elegant Second Empire style structure with a strong, straight-forward visual appeal. Because the building is vacant, it has been sealed at the basement level. Form No. 10-300a (Rev. 10-74)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

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DATE ENTERED	DEC 15 1978

New Brighton Village Hall, Richmond County

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER

PAGE 2

7

The interior of the building is in very poor condition, having been vacant and unheated for several years. Much of the ceiling plaster has fallen. Vandals have torn down some wall dividers and much original woodwork is now gone.

The main entrance opens to a vestibule which leads to the main hall extending toward the rear of the building. The openings onto the hall are distinguished by high arches which are partially glazed at the top. The stairway is at the front of the building on the south side of the hall. The stairs are divided into two flights for each floor. Further down the hall, doors lead to small rooms on either side and at the rear of the hall, double doors lead to a large room extending the full width of the building. The space of this room is broken by four supporting columns which are undecorated. The ceiling is partially covered with tin in a coffer pattern and with a deep cove.

Window moldings throughout the building are very plain: a three-quarter round molding set into the wall surface. The second floor offers a similar room arrangement to that of the first. The third floor is distinct. The stairway leads to a foyer across the front of the building affording access to two large rooms - on the southern side, a court room, the largest space in the building. The plaster decoration of this room is very rich with cove moldings and rosettes along the border. The ceiling decoration is heavily deteriorated and the roof is open to the sky in one place. A smaller room, very long and marrow is on the north side of this floor.

The basement contains a central hall. The south side of the basement provides four jail cells; the north side has two small rooms and a furnace room.

PERIOD

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW

PREHISTORIC	_ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	COMMUNITY PLANNING	_LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	RELIGION
_1400-1499	_ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	CONSERVATION	_LAW	SCIENCE
_1500-1599	AGRICULTURE	ECONOMICS	LITERATURE	SCULPTURE
_1600-1699	X ARCHITECTURE	EDUCATION	MILITARY	_SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
_1700-1799	_ART	ENGINEERING	MUSIC	THEATER

 X 1800-1899
 _COMMERCE
 _EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT
 _PHILOSOPHY
 _TRANSPORTATION

 _1900 _COMMUNICATIONS
 _INDUSTRY
 _POLITICS/GOVERNMENT
 _OTHER (SPECIFY)

__INVENTION

SPECIFIC DATES

1868-1871

BUILDER/ARCHITECT James Whitford

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The New Brighton Village Hall stands today as a strong reminder of the expansive post-Civil War era in Staten Island's history when New Brighton was home to many prominent New Yorkers and one of New York's earliest commuter suburbs. It is an example of municipal architecture in the French Second Empire style and an important work by the local architect, James Whitford.

The village hall is one of only two village halls constructed on Staten Island. The other is the Edgewater Village Hall, built in 1889. Other villages were formed on Staten Island but they did not erect municipal buildings. The Flushing Town Hall (1862) is the only other village hall which stands today within the boundary of greater New York.

The New Brighton Village Hall is an example of the French Second Empire style in a restrained format. The simple detailing of the New Brighton Village Hall, its pilasters, antae and sunken panels indicate a knowledge of the decoration typical of the style.

The New Brighton Village Hall is the largest Second Empire structure on Staten Island. The architect of the Village Hall, James Whitford (d. 1894), arrived in this area in 1852 from his native England. His earliest work on Staten Island is said to be at Sailors' Snug Harbor, although he was not the architect of any of the major builidngs there. Whitford was the first of three generations of Staten Island architects. James Whitford, his son, designed numerous Staten Island buildings including the Ritz and St. George Theaters and the Police Headquarters on Richmond Terrace. James Whitford, his grandson, (d. 1976) also enjoyed a busy architectural practice.

The modern history of the New Brighton area began in 1834, when Thomas E. Davis, a real estate developer from New York City, purchased several hundred acres along Staten Island's north shore. Davis sold the property two years later to a group of businessmen who formed a real estate company called "The New Brighton Association." They named the area after the English resort of Brighton, divided the land into lots and advertised them for sale. Although the lots were not sold quickly, annumber of Greek Revival style houses were constructed along the shore in the 1830's. The Pavilion Hotel, also in the Greek Revival style, was established in that decade. Throughout the nineteenth century, this hotel and others that developed around it, became

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

See Continuation Sheet

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New Brighton Village Hall, Richmond County

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER

PAGE

2

the center of an upper class summer resort, acclaimed far and wide for its elegant accommodations and panoramic view of New York harbor. In 1831, the trustees of Sailors' Snug Harbor purchased one hundred fifty acres adjoining to the west of the New Brighton Association land and built here its splendid home for aged seamen. The Winsor Plaster Mills built a waterside factory in the mid-century period; it was the only industry that was established near the village center.

New Brighton developed by the mid-century as a year-round commuter suburb. During the 1830's, regular ferry service was established and by the 1870's the North Shore Ferry Company had a fleet of large ferry boats offering thirty minute trips between Manhattan and New Brighton. By the time of the Civil War, the area was well established as a community of prosperous men who did business in New York City.

New Brighton was incorporated as a village by an act of the state legislature in 1866, when the older township form of government and services proved inadequate to its expanding population. The village was composed of a rectangular area approximately four miles along the shore and two miles inland.

New Brighton's progressive development occurred at a time when Staten Island suffered a general loss of prestige in the wider New York metropolitan area. In 1870, when the village had been underway only four years, the Staten Island Improvement Commission was set up to study the future development of the island.

Frederick Law Olmsted, a resident of the island, was one of several distinguished men who served on the commission to recommend improvements on Staten Island's transportation, roads, drainage and land use.

The village of New Brighton, besides being noted for its municipal services, was considered the island's center of culture and entertainment. During the summer months, the hotels offered a continual round of social events. New Brighton's athletic organizations were outstanding. The Staten Island Cricket and Baseball Club achieved national recognition and lawn tennis was introduced to the United States public on its New Brighton courts. Boat houses dotted the shore and rowing clubs offered frequent competitions.

Form No. 10-300a

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NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

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RECEIVED NOV 1 1978

DEC 1 5 1978

PAGE 3

New Brighton Village Hall, Richmond County

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 8

The Staten Island Academy was founded in New Brighton in 1884. The National Science Association was begun there in 1881. It continues today as the Staten Island Institute of Arts and Sciences, the island's leading cultural institution. The Association met in the village hall from 1882 to 1896. William T. Davis (1862-1947), a distinguished entomologist was appointed its first curator and the Insitute's collections were stored in a bookcase on the third floor of the village hall.

The village government was abandoned when Staten Island was incorporated into the municipality of New York City in 1898. The hall served as a municipal court house thereafter until c. 1950 when it was used as a health insurance office. Since 1968, it has been vacant. In 1971, it was purchased by the Martin Luther King Heritage House, but is now owned by the City of New York, Department of Real Estate.

Form No. 10-300a (Rev. 10-74)

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NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

New Brighton Village Hall Richmond County

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER

PAGE

1

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National Register Write-up Send-back Entered DEC 15 1978

Federal Register Entry Re-submit INT:2106-74



New Brighton Village Hall Staten Island, Richmond County Photo by: E. Spencer-Ralph Neg. at: NYS Parks and 1976

and Rec., Div. for
Historic Preservation
View: from the south,
looking northwest at
facade and side elevation
#1



New Brighton Village Hall Staten Island, Richmond County Photo by: E. Spencer-Ralph Neg. at: NYS Parks and 1976

and Rec., Div. for Historic Preservation View: facade

#2

MON T 1918



New Brighton Village
Hall, Staten Island,
Richmond County
Photo by: E. Spencer-Ralph
Neg. at: NYS Parks and 1916

and Rec., Div. for
Historic Preservation
View: detail of exterior
#3

NOV 1 1978



New Brighton Village Hall Staten Island, Richmond County Photo by: E. Spencer-Ralph Neg. at: NYS Parks and /974

Rec., Div. for Historic Preservation
View: Exterior, looking at rear (north side) and west side NOV 1 1978

DEC 15 1978



New Brighton Village
Hall, Staten Island,
Richmond County
Photo by: Heritage House
Neg. at: Heritage House
1978

View: Interior, corner of main room on main floor #5.015

NOV 1 1978

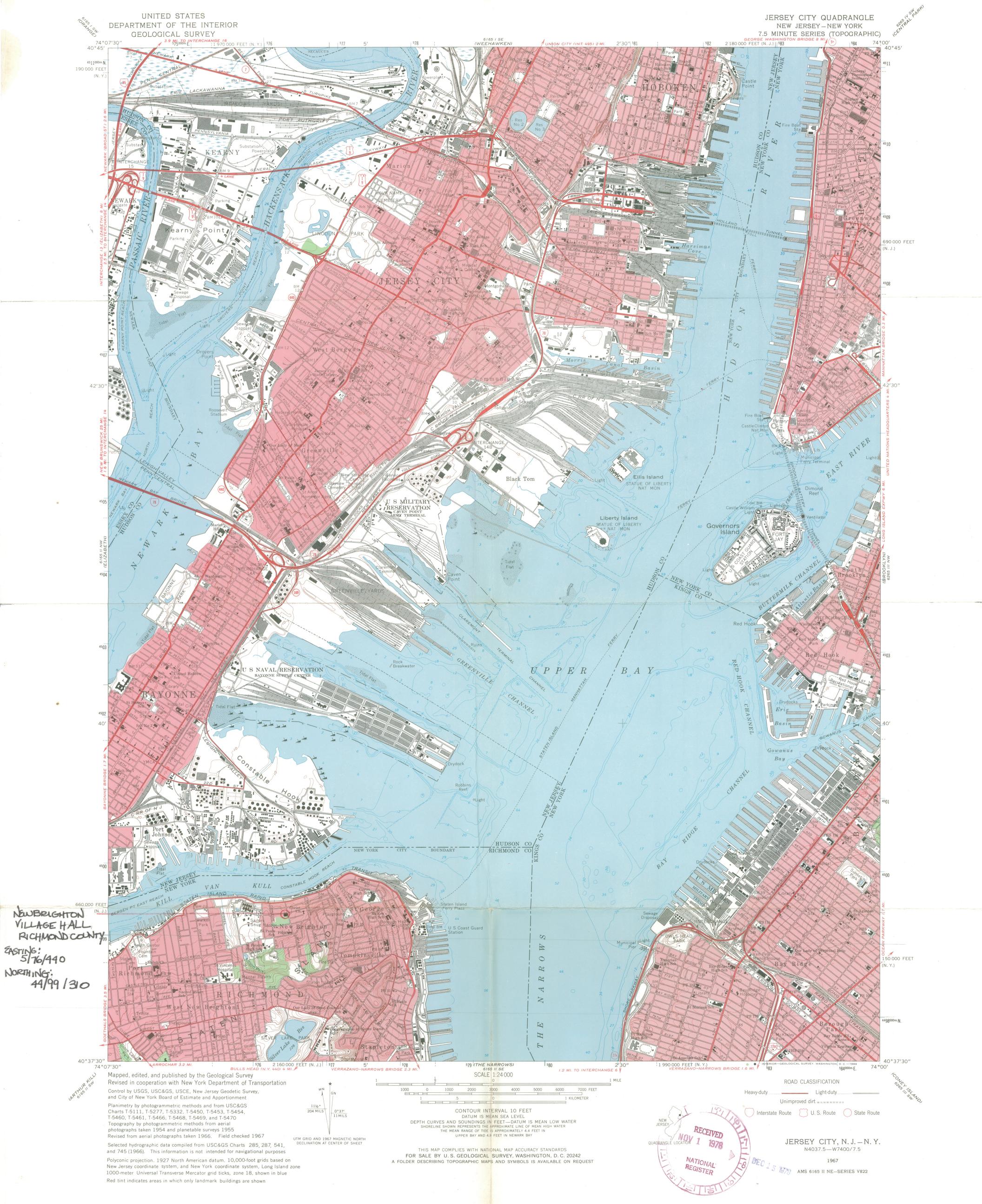


New Brighton Village Hall, Staten Island, Richmond County Photo by: Heritage House Neg. at: Heritage House 1978

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View: Interior, corner of main room on main floor #6

NOV 1 1978



ENTRIES IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

STATE NEW YORK

Date Entered JECIS 1178

Name

Staats, Joachim, House and Gerrit Staats Ruin

Fort Brown Site

New Brighton Village Hall

Fort Haldimand Site

Location

Castleton-on-Hudson vicinity Rensselaer County

Plattsburgh Clinton County

Staten Island Richmond County

Jefferson County

Also Notified

Honorable Jacob K. Javits
Honorable Daniel P. Moynihan
Honorable Gerald B. Solomon
Honorable Robert C. McEwen
Honorable John M. Murphy

State Historic Preservation Officer
Mr. Orin Lehman
Commissioner
Parks and Recreation
Agency Building #1
Empire State Plaza
Albany, New York 12238

NATIONAL REGISTER DATA SH (4) county code: NAME as it appears on federal register: BEC 1 5 1978 085 Martin Luther King Heritage House New Brighton Village Hall 5 LOCATION street & number city / town vicinity of state county Richmond NF. Staten Island NY 66 Lafavette Ave. OWNER PRIVATE STATE MUNICIPAL COUNTY MULTIPLE FEDERAL (agency name) BADMINISTRATOR: (9) EXISTING SURVEYS HABS HAER HALL (10) FUNDED? TYES NO (11) CONGRESS. DISTRICT 12 SOURCE of NOMINATION FEDERAL STATE if state who prepared form? MO WITHIN WATIONAL HISTORIC LANGUARK? WWITHIN NATIONAL REGISTER HISTORIC DISTRICT? LOCAL C 88 Dis PRIVATE ORGANIZATION DYES, NAME CT YES, MAME CONDITION Original site deteriorated altered 17 features: SUBSTANTIALLY INTACT-1 SUBSTANTIALLY INTACT - 3 Dexcellent Pruins unaltered moved PO NOT INTACT-O ONOT INTACT-O O DNOT INTACT - O good E UNKNOWN-4 nunexposed Dreconstructed Dunknown UNKNOWN-5 5 UNKNOWN - 6 **Ofair** unexcavated excavated ≥ NOT APPLICABLE-7 MO NOT APPLICABLE-8 NOT APPLICABLE - 9 (19) ADAPTIVE USE YES NO 20 BACCESS YES-Restricted YES-Unrestricted □ No Access □ Unknown SAVED? TYES IS PROPERTY A HISTORIC DISTRICT? yes no AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE : CLAIMS: explain ☐ LANDSCAPE ARCH.- 15 □ POLITICS / GOVT . - 21 RECREATION -28 ☐ ENGINEERING - 11 'first' ARCHEOLOGY - prehistoric - 2 COMMERCE - 6 ☐ ENTERTAINMENT - 26 ☐ LAW - 16 C RELIGION - 22 SETTLEMENT-29 ARCHEOLOGY - historic - 1 COMMUNICATIONS - 7 ☐ LITERATURE - 17 ☐ EXPLORATION - 12 SCIENCE- 23 ☐ URBAN PLANNING-31 'oldest' □ ☐ AGRICULTURE -3 CONSERVATION - 8 ☐ HEALTH - 27 MILITARY - 18 □ SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN-24 □ OTHER (SPECIFY) ☐ ARCHITECTURE-4 ☐ MUSIC - 19 ☐ ECONOMICS - 9 ☐ INDUSTRY-13 SOCIAL / CULTURAL - 30 'only' C ART-5 EDUCATION-10 ☐ INVENTION - 14 ☐ PHILOSOPHY - 20 □ TRANSPORTATION - 25 ETHNIC GROUP 23 functions adates of initial construction: ASSOCIATION major alterations : WHEN HISTORICALLY SIGNIFICANT: historic events: CURRENTLY: architect: architectural style(s): master builder: engineer: 33 artisan: alandscape architect / garden designer: minterior decorator: builder/contractor: artist: NAMES give role & date PERSONAL: EVENTS:

reviewers initials.

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