

BUILDING-STRUCTURE INVENTORY FORM

DIVISION FOR HISTORIC PRESERVATION
NEW YORK STATE PARKS AND RECREATION
ALBANY, NEW YORK (518) 474-0479

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY
UNIQUE SITE NO. <u>103-04-0339</u>
QUAD _____
SERIES _____
NEG. NO. _____

YOUR NAME: NYS PARKS & RECREATION DATE: _____
 YOUR ADDRESS: AGENCY BLDG. #1 TELEPHONE: _____
EMPIRE STATE PLAZA
ALBANY, NY. 12238
 ORGANIZATION (if any): _____

IDENTIFICATION

1. BUILDING NAME(S): Prime-Octagon House
 2. COUNTY: Suffolk TOWN/CITY: Huntington VILLAGE: Huntington
 3. STREET LOCATION: 41 Prime Avenue
 4. OWNERSHIP: a. public b. private
 5. PRESENT OWNER: George D. Buck ADDRESS: same
 6. USE: Original: residence Present: same
 7. ACCESSIBILITY TO PUBLIC: Exterior visible from public road: Yes No
 Interior accessible: Explain by appointment only

DESCRIPTION

8. BUILDING MATERIAL: a. clapboard b. stone c. brick d. board and batten
 e. cobblestone f. shingles g. stucco other: _____
 9. STRUCTURAL SYSTEM: (if known) a. wood frame with interlocking joints
 b. wood frame with light members
 c. masonry load bearing walls
 d. metal (explain) _____
 e. other _____
 10. CONDITION: a. excellent b. good c. fair d. deteriorated
 11. INTEGRITY: a. original site b. moved if so, when? _____
 c. list major alterations and dates (if known): _____

original porch removed, c. 1950
modern garage wing on north, c. 1950

12. PHOTO:

13. MAP:

See attached

See attached

14. THREATS TO BUILDING: a. none known b. zoning c. roads
d. developers e. deterioration
f. other: _____
15. RELATED OUTBUILDINGS AND PROPERTY:
a. barn b. carriage house c. garage
d. privy e. shed f. greenhouse
g. shop h. gardens c, NON-CONTRIBUTING
i. landscape features: _____
j. other: _____
16. SURROUNDINGS OF THE BUILDING (check more than one if necessary):
a. open land b. woodland
c. scattered buildings
d. densely built-up e. commercial
f. industrial g. residential
h. other: Heckscher Park and Museum across street
17. INTERRELATIONSHIP OF BUILDING AND SURROUNDINGS:
(Indicate if building or structure is in an historic district)

See attached

18. OTHER NOTABLE FEATURES OF BUILDING AND SITE (including interior features if known):

See attached

SIGNIFICANCE

19. DATE OF INITIAL CONSTRUCTION: circa 1859

ARCHITECT: unknown

BUILDER: unknown

20. HISTORICAL AND ARCHITECTURAL IMPORTANCE:

See attached

Ownership: before 1862-Ezra C. Prime; 1862-65-Algernon J. Higgins; 1865-67-Willemene Lang Webber; 1867-1879-Martin Whelan; 1879-1893-Michael Prendergast; 1893-1896-James Stillwell; 1896-1908-Henry Stillwell; 1896-1945-Georgiana Stillwell

21. SOURCES:

See item 9 on nomination form

22. THEME:

Huntington Multiple Resource Area
Suffolk County, New York

Prime-Octagon House, 41 Prime Avenue

17. The Prime-Octagon House occupies a small village lot (less than one acre) along Prime Avenue, a secondary street in the unincorporated village of Huntington. Prime Avenue is bordered on the west by early twentieth century homes and Heckscher Park on the east side. The nominated dwelling has an attached, non-contributing modern garage.
(1 contributing building)
18. The Prime-Octagon House is a two-story, octagonal structure with stucco walls and a nearly flat hipped-roof. The building is distinguished by a projecting denticulated cornice with brackets and a square cupola with ventilator panels. The paired six-over-six double-hung sash windows have heavily molded surrounds and bracket-supported window sills. The side entrance has a simple but heavily molded surround.

The original porch was removed in the mid-twentieth century and replaced by a smaller gable roof entrance porch with square columns. An interior chimney was built on the south side. In the 1950s, a modern garage was connected to the northwest side of the house by a gable roof breezeway. The house's interior is relatively unaltered and retains its wall and ceiling finishes, trim, flooring, and overall plan.

20. The Prime-Octagon House is architecturally significant as Huntington's only example of the popular mid-nineteenth century octagon style of architecture. Built c.1859, the Prime-Octagon House, a well-crafted and representative example of its type, reflects the innovative architectural concepts of Orson S. Fowler, the designer and promoter of the octagon style. Built for Ezra C. Prime, a prosperous thimble manufacturer, the octagon house is associated with one of Huntington's prominent manufacturing families.

The popularity of employing the octagon shape for residences was stimulated by the writing of Orson Squire Fowler, noted phrenologist. The Octagon House: A Home for All, first published by Fowler in 1848, spread his philosophy throughout the United States. Fowler promoted the octagon house, with its economy of materials, functional interior and ample fenestration, as the perfect house for the working-class family. Fowler's book furnished complete instructions for the individual wishing to construct an octagon, thus alleviating the financial burden of employing an architect and/or builder. The octagon style of building was particularly popular in New York State, where at one time there were well over a hundred examples of the type. The number has dwindled in recent years, making each remaining octagon dwelling all the more significant. The Prime-Octagon House is the only example of its type in the town of Huntington and at this time, one of two known examples in Suffolk County (the Andrew Gildersleeve Octagon House in Mattituck was National Register listed, 1976).

20. Built c.1859, the Prime-Octagon House is loosely patterned after the plans of the John J. Brown Residence in Williamsburgh, New York as shown in Fowler's book. The first floor was built with Rosendale cement and gravel dug from the cellar. The second floor is composed of brick with a stucco-coating. The walls are 18" thick. The projecting bracketed cornice and paired windows with bracket-supported sills were copied from the Brown Residence plans. Although lacking its original porch, the Prime-Octagon House remains virtually unaltered as a fine, representative example of its type.

The dwelling is associated with Ezra C. Prime, the prosperous local thimble manufacturer. Born in Huntington, Prime worked in the silver business in New York City and started producing thimbles. By 1860, he had opened Prime Avenue from Main Street to Mill Lane and owned land on both sides. He proceeded to build a dam on his property and used the water power to operate his factory. By 1859, Prime had the octagon house built, although it is not known whether it was for his own use or that of an employee. Prime's business flourished until the 1880s. Today, Heckscher Park occupies the site of Prime's thimble factory and the octagon house remains as one of two unaltered structures (see Prime House) associated with Huntington's nineteenth-century industrial development and the locally prominent Prime family.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form

For NPS use only
received 8/16/85
date entered

Continuation sheet

Item number

Page 6

Multiple Resource Area
Thematic Group

Name Huntington Town MRA
State NEW YORK

Nomination/Type of Review

Date/Signature

51. Potter--Williams House

Entered in the
National Register

for Keeper
Attest

Melona Byrum 9/26/85

52. Prime House

Entered in the
National Register

for Keeper
Attest

Melona Byrum 9/26/85

53. ~~Prime~~--Octagon House

Entered in the
National Register

for Keeper
Attest

Melona Byrum 9/26/85

54. Remp, Michael, House

Entered in the
National Register

for Keeper
Attest

Melona Byrum 9/26/85

55. Rogers House

Entered in the
National Register

for Keeper
Attest

Melona Byrum 9/26/85

56. Rogers, John, House

Entered in the
National Register

for Keeper
Attest

Melona Byrum 9/26/85

57. Sammis, Silas, House

Entered in the
National Register

for Keeper
Attest

Melona Byrum 9/26/85

58. Seaman Farm

Entered in the
National Register

for Keeper
Attest

Melona Byrum 9/26/85

59. Shore Road Historic District

Entered in the
National Register

for Keeper
Attest

Melona Byrum 9/26/85

60. Smith, Daniel, House

Entered in the
National Register

for Keeper
Attest

Melona Byrum 9/26/85

REF #
85002569

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

Prime--Octagon House (Huntington Town MRA)
Suffolk County
NEW YORK

AUG 16 1985

Working No. _____
Fed. Reg. Date: 2/4/86
Date Due: 9/12/85 — 9/30/85
Action: ACCEPT 9-26-85
 RETURN _____
 REJECT _____
Federal Agency: _____

- resubmission
- nomination by person or local government
- owner objection
- appeal

Entered in the _____
National Register _____
Federal Agency: _____

Substantive Review: sample request appeal NR decision

Reviewer's comments:

Recom./Criteria _____
Reviewer _____
Discipline _____
Date _____
_____ see continuation sheet

Nomination returned for: _____ technical corrections cited below
_____ substantive reasons discussed below

1. Name

2. Location

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
	Public Acquisition	Accessible	

4. Owner of Property

5. Location of Legal Description

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

Has this property been determined eligible? yes no

7. Description

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

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

- summary paragraph
- completeness
- clarity
- alterations/integrity
- dates
- boundary selection

8. Significance

Period Areas of Significance—Check and justify below

Specific dates Builder/Architect
Statement of Significance (*in one paragraph*)

- summary paragraph
- completeness
- clarity
- applicable criteria
- justification of areas checked
- relating significance to the resource
- context
- relationship of integrity to significance
- justification of exception
- other

9. Major Bibliographical References

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property _____

Quadrangle name _____

UTM References _____

Verbal boundary description and justification

11. Form Prepared By

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

____ national ____ state ____ local

State Historic Preservation Officer signature

title date

13. Other

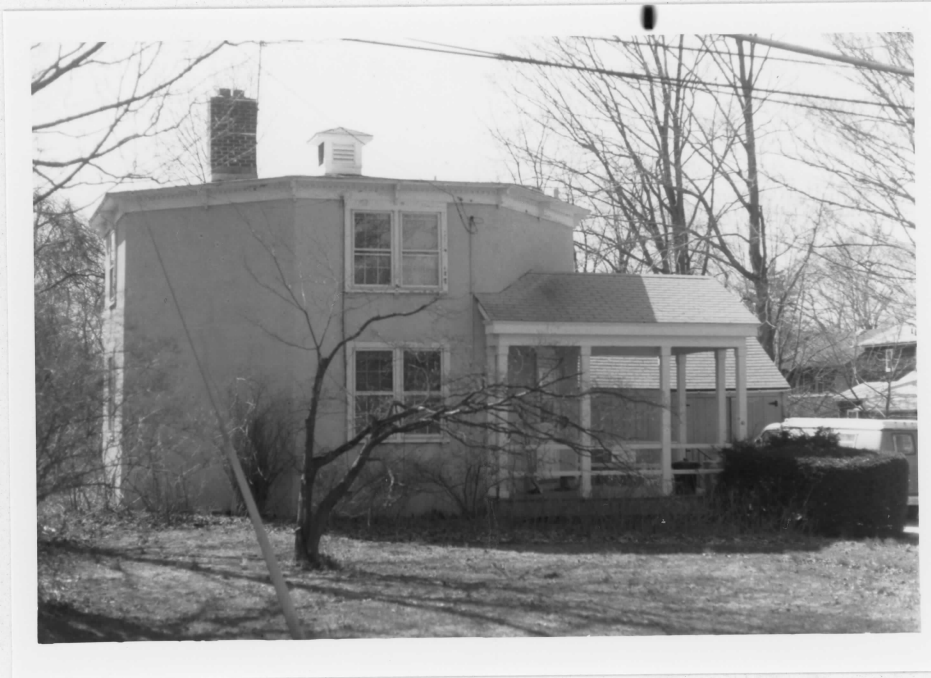
- Maps
- Photographs
- Other

Questions concerning this nomination may be directed to _____

Signed _____ Date _____ Phone: _____

Comments for any item may be continued on an attached sheet

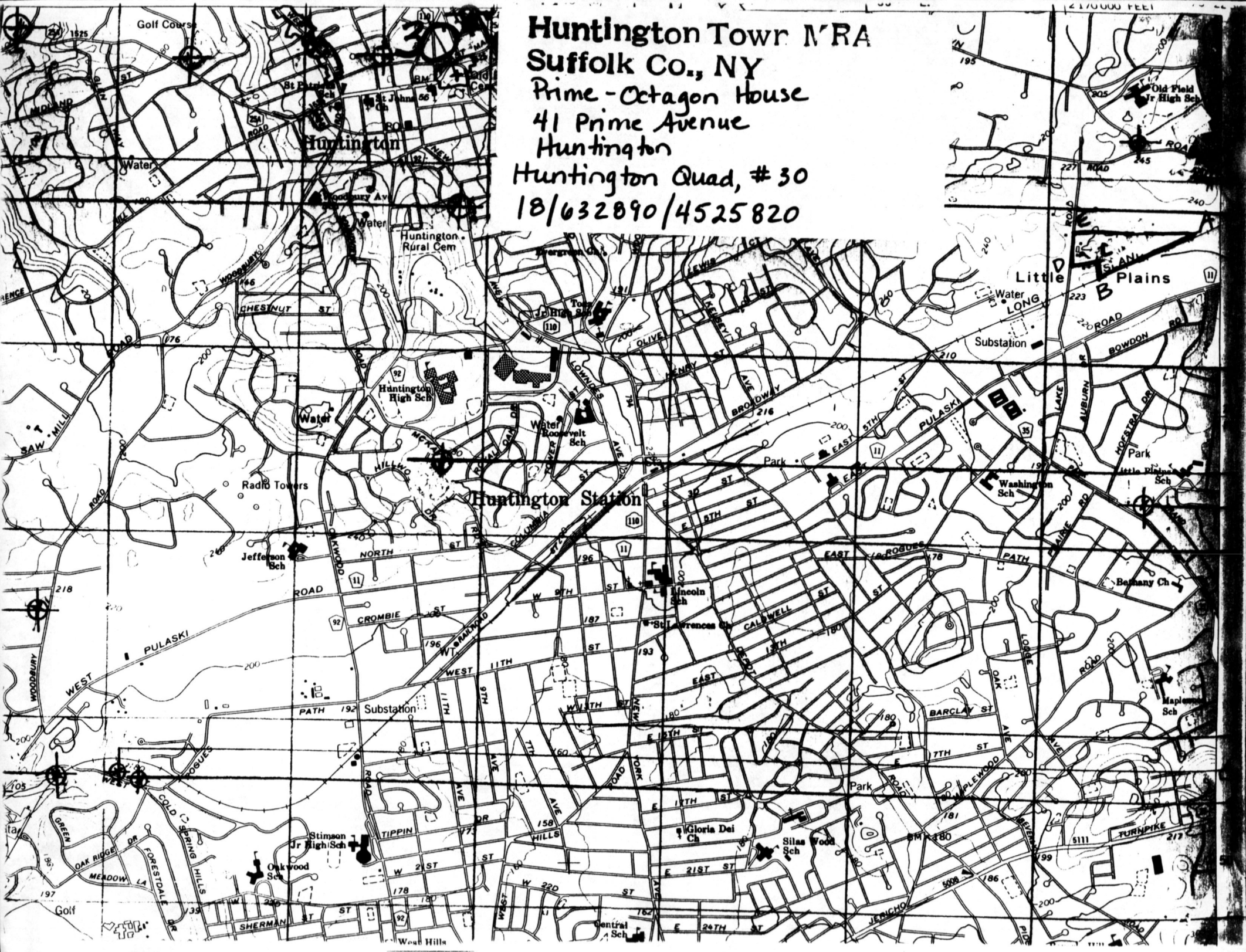
HUNTINGTON TOWN MULTIPLE
RESOURCE AREA
SUFFOLK COUNTY, NEW YORK
PHOTOS: A.O'BRIEN, 1984
NEGATIVES: OPRHP
PRIME-OCTAGON HOUSE
41 PRIME AVENUE
HUNTINGTON



View from east



View from southeast



Huntington Town MRA
 Suffolk Co., NY
 Prime - Octagon House
 41 Prime Avenue
 Huntington
 Huntington Quad, # 30
 18/632890/4525820

Golf Course
 1925
 Huntington
 St. John's Sch
 Huntington Rural Cem

217000 FEET
 Old Field Jr High Sch
 205
 245
 227 ROAD
 240

Water
 Chestnut St
 176
 Huntington High Sch
 Water
 Huntington Rural Cem

Huntington Station
 Olive St
 Broadway
 216
 200
 210

Little Plains
 Water
 Long
 Substation
 223
 Bowdon Rd
 220 ROAD

Radio Towers
 Jefferson Sch
 218
 West
 Pulaski
 200
 192

Huntington Station
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Huntington Station
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