

FORM B - Building

Massachusetts Historical Commission
Massachusetts Archives Building
220 Morrissey Boulevard
Boston, Massachusetts 02125

Map and Lot # 101-23 USGS Quad Area(s) W Form Number 268

Town Groton3
Place (neighborhood or village) West Groton

Photograph

(3"x3" or 3-1/2x5" black and white only) Label photo on back with town and property address. Record film roll and negative numbers here on form. Staple photo to left side of form over this space. Attach additional photos to continuation sheets.

Roll Negative(s)

Address 39 West Main Street
Historic Name Christian Union Church
Uses: Present Church
Original Church

Date of Construction 1885

Source Church records

Style/Form Stick Style

Architect/Builder

Exterior Material:

Foundation Brick

Wall/Trim Wood clapboard, wood shingle

Roof Asphalt shingle

Outbuildings/secondary structure

Major Alterations (with dates)

1950 rear addition, Holmes & Edwards, architects

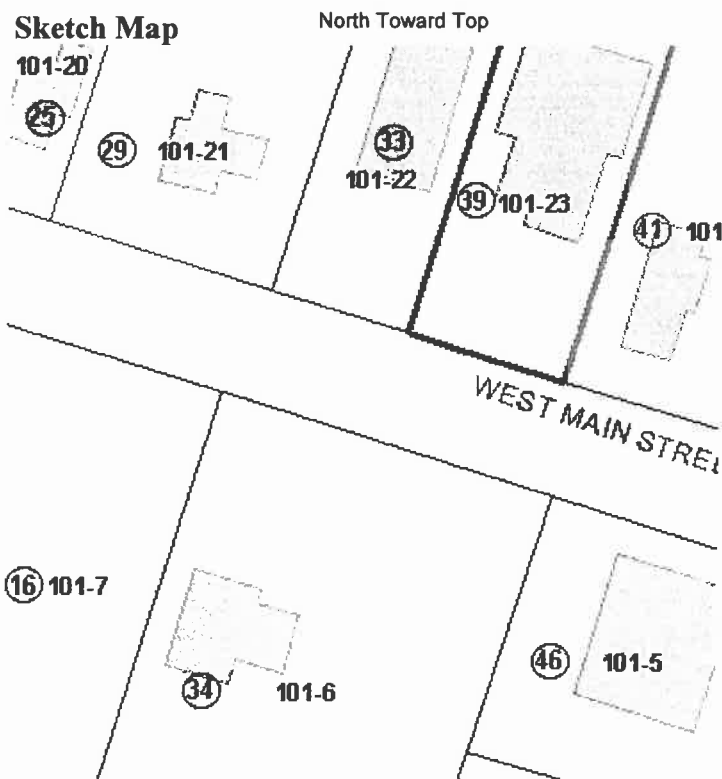
Condition Excellent

Moved no yes Date

Acreage .28

Setting Rural village

Sketch Map



Recorded by Sanford Johnson

Organization Groton Historical Commission

Date (month/year) 12/08

Follow Massachusetts Historical Commission Survey Manual instructions for completing this form.

BUILDING FORM

ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION

see continuation sheet

Describe architectural features. Evaluate the characteristics of this building in terms of other buildings within the community.

- * The highly ornate Victorian Eclectic style Christian Union Church at 35 West Main Street is a 3x3-bay, 2-story form with a tower rising from the interior corner of the L-shaped plan; an open gabled porch covers the entry in the base of the tower; one and one half story additions have been made to the rear of the plan, one with a wood frame clad in wood clapboards and the second built of brick
- * Decorative features include the scroll-cut gable ornament and patterned wood shingles in the front and side gable peaks and in the gable of the entry porch, bracketed eaves, spindle frieze in the cornice of the entry porch and open bell deck with balusters and pyramidal roof capped by a finial
- * Window types include the stained glass compass window in the façade gable peak, oculus in the west side gable peak, double-hung stained glass windows with pointed arched hoods in the front and side elevations at the first story as well as the western side of the tower base
- * The main entry has simple trim around a double leaf door
- * The first rear addition, built of wood, has a gabled roof with shed dormer and shed roofed porch projecting to the west; the second addition is brick and has a gabled roof with chimneys integrated into the side walls
- * The well-preserved Christian Union Church is more ornate than most other buildings in West Groton and is one the town's more well executed Victorian designs

HISTORICAL NARRATIVE

see continuation sheets

Discuss the history of the building. Explain its associations with local (or state) history. Include uses of the building, and the role(s) the owners /occupants played within the community.

Organization of the religious group that became the Christian Union Church started in 1865 with 15 members attending Sunday School in a private home. With increasing membership, meetings were held in the Dana District School on Pepperell Road. The Methodist minister J. T. W. Barnes from Boston was an occasional preacher at this time. By 1884, interest was sufficient to form the Christian Union Society of West Groton and plans were made to erect their church. With an initial appropriation of \$1,500, construction began on April 20, 1885 when the names of 85 members and historical records were placed in the cornerstone. The church opened in October of the same year. In 1907, the group purchased a house on Pepperell Road at Bixby Hill Road for a parsonage. Subsequent events in the church history included the formation of a Ladies Aid Society in 1912, installation of windows commemorating the service of Joseph Shepley and George and Mary Bixby, renovations in 1943 that included installing a gold cross behind the altar and arranging new pews with an aisle in the center of the sanctuary, a merger with the Union Congregational Society and a shared minister, Reverend Margaret Johnstone, in 1950, dedication of the Parish Hall in 1953, joining the United Church of Christ in 1963, installation of the Thompson Window and separation from the Union Congregational Society in 1970, the addition of stained glass memorials for Mr. and Mrs. Elliot Blood Sr. in 1975, addition of a window dedicated to Edna Durgis and Roland Sawyer in 1976 and redecorating the sanctuary in 1984. The Ladies Aid Society has sponsored Foster children from Indonesia and the Philippines and, in the 1980s, activities included a Youth Fellowship program, Sunday School, Choirs and missionary giving.

BIBLIOGRAPHY and/or REFERENCES

continuation sheet

Centennial Anniversary Brochure of the Christian Union Church, 1985; Groton at 350, pp. 128-129

**** All properties mentioned in bold type are individually inventoried resources**

- Recommended for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. If checked, you must attach a completed National Register Criteria Statement Form.

INVENTORY FORM CONTINUATION SHEET

Town
Groton

Property Address

Massachusetts Historical Commission
220 Morrissey Boulevard
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Boston, MA 02125

Photos Taken 3-6/08

Area(s)
Form No.



35 West Main St., Christian Union Church



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