

FORM B - Building

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

Map and Lot # 112 85 USGS Quad Area(s) Y Form Number 154

Town Groton
Place (neighborhood or village) Groton Center

Address 264 Main Street
Historic Name Old Baptist Church
Uses: Present Residential
Original Church
Date of Construction 1841

Source Butler, p. 153
Style/Form Greek Revival

Architect/Builder
Exterior Material:
Foundation Granite
Wall/Trim Wood clapboard
Roof Asphalt shingle
Outbuildings/secondary structure

Major Alterations (with dates)
Rebuilt (raised), 1874; Remodeled as residence, additions to east side, late 20th c.

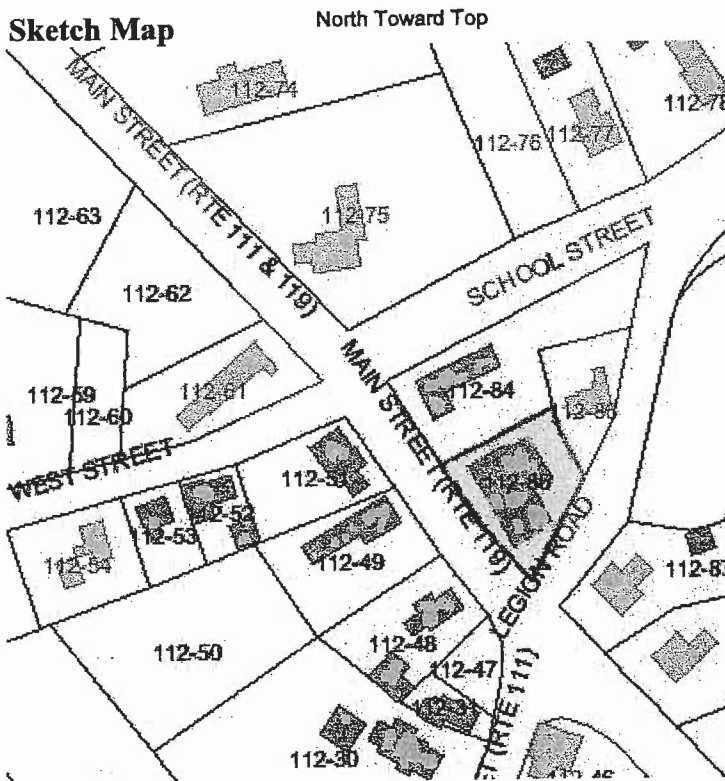
Condition Excellent
Moved no yes Date
Acreage .3
Setting Town center-Main Street

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)

Sketch Map



Recorded by Sanford Johnson

Organization Groton Historical Commission

Date (month/year) 6/06

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 former Baptist Church, now in use as a residence, is a front-gabled, 3x5-bay, 2 1/2-story form with steeple above the south-facing façade; a Victorian entry porch with jigsaw brackets, turned posts and entablature covers the center entry
- * The steeple rises from the roof on a square wood clapboard base with cornice and contains a clock on three sides; the second story of the tower is a narrower square block with corner pilasters and has louvered panels that may conceal a carillon; the spire is a hexagonal pyramid capped by a round finial and weathervane
- * Decorative elements include the closed gable in the façade, molded cornice, frieze board at the eaves and paneled pilasters
- * Windows in the façade include a multiple-pane lunette trimmed with a wood keystone in the gable, compass window with bold hood in the second story and 16-pane fixed sash flanking the center entry; the second story of the side elevations are lit by 16/16 double-hung sash; those on the first are paired 4/4 units; the center entry has a double leaf door and plain trim
- * A modern addition has been made to the east side elevation and contains a garage
- * The former church is the only one of three Pre-Industrial churches in Groton Center in use as a residence

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.

The former Baptist Church is located on the former site of the garrison house of Reverend Gershom Hobart from the late 17th century. Reverend Hobart was the father of two children kidnapped by Native Americans in 1694. By the early 19th century Richardson's Tavern, a former stage stop and gathering place, occupied the site. A group of 15-24 (sources conflict) Baptists, including deacons David Fosdick and Thomas Hutchins, formed a religious society in Groton in 1831 and began construction of the church in 1841. The building was dedicated February 2, 1842 according to Butler's history of the town. The 1889 Walker atlas depicts the adjacent buildings at 274 Main Street (the parsonage according to the Tercentenary Booklet) and 8 School Street as part of the church property and labels 274 Main Street "Baptist Society". Historic photos of the church indicate the building had a dark color of paint in the late 19th century, light or white paint in the early 20th, that the building had been raised by half a story and clocks had been added to the steeple by 1932. These changes were part of the 1873-4 reconstruction noted in the centennial brochure from 1932. The clock, built by the E. Howard Watch and Clock Co. of Boston, was a gift of Dr. Samuel A. Green, author of The Groton Historical Series from 1890-1899, Groton Native and former Mayor of Boston in 1882. The clock was put in running order between three and four o'clock pm on Thursday, November 18, 1897. Henry M. Whiting did the carpentry preparatory to placing the timepiece in position. Sanborn fire insurance maps from 1906 depict the steeple as 80' high and an attached horse shed at the northeast corner. The church remained active until the late 20th century, after which time it was sold and adapted for use as a residence, a purpose it continues to serve.

BIBLIOGRAPHY and/or REFERENCES

continuation sheet

Butler's Groton history, p. 153, 206-207; Green, Vol. 2, p. 59, Vol. 4, p. 417; 1889 Walker atlas; Tercentenary Booklet, p. 21-22; May, "Groton Houses", p. 206-209; Sanborn fire insurance maps, 1896-1906;

**** 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.
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INVENTORY FORM CONTINUATION SHEET

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

Town
Groton

Property Address

Area(s)

Form No.

264 Main Street



Massachusetts Historical Commission

Community Groton

Property Address

264 Main Street

Massachusetts Archives Building

220 Morrissey Boulevard

Boston, Massachusetts 02125

Area(s) Y

Form No.

National Register of Historic Places Criteria Statement Form

Check all that apply:

Individually eligible X

Eligible only in a historic district

Contributing to a potential historic district X

Potential historic district

Criteria: A B C D

Criteria considerations: A B C D E F G

The Greek Revival Style former Baptist Church at 264 Main Street is potentially eligible for the National Register of Historic Places as an individual resource at the local level. The former Baptist Church is located on the former site of the garrison house of Reverend Gershom Hobart from the late 17th century. Reverend Hobart was the father of two children kidnapped by Native Americans in 1694. By the early 19th century Richardson's Tavern, a former stage stop and gathering place, occupied the site. A group of 15-24 (sources conflict) Baptists, including deacons David Fosdick and Thomas Hutchins, formed a religious society in Groton in 1831 and began construction of the church in 1841. The building was dedicated February 2, 1842 according to Butler's history of the town. The 1889 Walker atlas depicts the adjacent buildings at 274 Main Street (the parsonage according to the Tercentenary Booklet) and 8 School Street as part of the church property and labels 274 Main Street "Baptist Society". Historic photos of the church indicate the building had a dark color of paint in the late 19th century, light or white paint in the early 20th, that the building had been raised by half a story and clocks had been added to the steeple by 1932. These changes were part of the 1873-4 reconstruction noted in the church's centennial brochure from 1932. The clock, built by the E. Howard Watch and Clock Co. of Boston, was a gift of Dr. Samuel A. Green, author of The Groton Historical Series from 1890-1899, Groton Native and former Mayor of Boston in 1882. The building's associations with religious activity establish its significance under Criterion A. The refined Greek Revival design with Victorian Eclectic accents and the surviving historic exterior materials including the 80' steeple make the property eligible under Criterion C. The church retains integrity of design, materials, setting and workmanship.