

5-31-73

PH 0006092 HB No 4TM
REC'D 73 4-2-73

Form 10-300
(July 1969)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

STATE:	Massachusetts
COUNTY:	Essex
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE
	APR 11 1973

1. NAME

COMMON:
Boxford Village Historic District

AND/OR HISTORIC:
Same

2. LOCATION Cong. Dist. #6, Michael J. Harrington

STREET AND NUMBER:
Middleton Road, Main Street, Elm Street, Topsfield Road

CITY OR TOWN:
Boxford

STATE: Massachusetts CODE: 025 COUNTY: Essex CODE: 009



3. CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> District <input type="checkbox"/> Site <input type="checkbox"/> Object	<input type="checkbox"/> Public <input type="checkbox"/> Private <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Both	Public Acquisition: <input type="checkbox"/> In Process <input type="checkbox"/> Being Considered	Yes: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Restricted <input type="checkbox"/> Unrestricted <input type="checkbox"/> No

PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

<input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Government	<input type="checkbox"/> Park	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation	<input type="checkbox"/> Comments
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Commercial	<input type="checkbox"/> Industrial	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private Residence	<input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify)	
<input type="checkbox"/> Educational	<input type="checkbox"/> Military	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Religious		
<input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Museum	<input type="checkbox"/> Scientific		

4. OWNER OF PROPERTY

OWNER'S NAME:
Private and public

STREET AND NUMBER:
Middleton Road, Main Street, Elm Street, Topsfield Road

CITY OR TOWN:
Boxford

STATE: Massachusetts CODE: 025

5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.:
Essex County Registry of Deeds

STREET AND NUMBER:
Federal Street

CITY OR TOWN:
Salem,

STATE: Massachusetts CODE: 025

6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE OF SURVEY:
Inventory of the Historic Assets of the Commonwealth

DATE OF SURVEY: 1971 Federal State County Local

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:
Massachusetts Historical Commission

STREET AND NUMBER:
State House, Beacon Street

CITY OR TOWN:
Boston

STATE: Massachusetts CODE: 025

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

STATE: Massachusetts

COUNTY: Essex

ENTRY NUMBER: APR 11 1973

FOR NPS USE ONLY

DATE:

7. DESCRIPTION

CONDITION	(Check One)					
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> Good	<input type="checkbox"/> Fair	<input type="checkbox"/> Deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> Ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> Unexposed
	(Check One)			(Check One)		
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Altered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unaltered	<input type="checkbox"/> Moved	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Original Site		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (if known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Boxford Village Historic District contains 180 acres and extends from the village center about three-fourths of a mile to the northwest along Middleton Road and Main Street and approximately the same distance to the southeast along Elm Street and Topsfield Road. The district boundaries are set back about 350 feet on either side of these roads.

This district, which has as its focus the First Church (Congregational), grew out of the original six lots laid out in 1667. Of the 43 structures in the district, 14 are 20th century, 5 are 19th century post-Civil War, 16 are 19th century pre-Civil War, 6 are 18th century and 2 are 17th century. The Village has been described by a well-known planning consultant, Dr. Charles W. Eliot, as a "rare and near perfect example of the old New England village street style, with the broad, tree-shaded street, the common, church, old houses and single country store," all the more remarkable for its situation 21 miles from a major metropolitan city and less than two miles from an interstate highway (Route 95).

Elm Street, the backbone of the Village, is anchored at its south end by the 1760 Holyoke-French House (on the National Register), on Topsfield Rd. This fine 2½ story, gambrel-roof country dwelling, with a later rear ell (c.1890), is preserved largely in its original state. Across from the house is a small triangular green.

The north end of Elm Street is dominated by the First Congregational Church and its handsome carriage sheds, former parish house and cemetery. This Third Meetinghouse was built in 1838. Typical of the Greek Revival style of New England churches of that period, it is distinguished by an unusual Greek key motif in the cornice, which is repeated in the belfrey detail.

Elm Street, which extends between these structures for about ½ mile, is shaded by large elms and maples. On the same side of Elm Street across Middleton Road from the church are the Town Hall/Grange (1890) and the general store (1840), the latter operating on the same site for 132 years. The library is opposite the store on the east side of Elm Street and was converted from an 1841 Greek Revival dwelling. Beyond these structures on both sides of the street stand several dwellings representing the late colonial and Greek Revival, one combined with elements of Gothic Revival. They are all spaced well apart by at least 50 feet.

To the northwest, tree-shaded Main Street runs between stone walls bordering open fields whose fine soil was no doubt a factor in the siting of the Village in the 1660's. At the edge of these fields on the northerly side stand four homes, each in its own setting on its original lot. Three of them - 1683, 1840 and 1774 - are built in the traditional pitched roof "colonial" style, the earliest with a rear lean-to. The fourth (1826) is a hipped roof federal house, which is owned today by descendants of the original land grantees.

To the southeast, one leaves the Village on Topsfield Road, passing by

(continued)

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM**

(Continuation Sheet)

STATE Massachusetts	
COUNTY Essex	
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ENTRY NUMBER	DATE
	APR 11 1973

(Number all entries)

Boxford Village Historic District, Boxford

7. DESCRIPTION (Cont.)

wood lots and small fields which contain, among others, a small Greek Revival dwelling, a symmetrical center chimney house (1843), whose barn is capped by an octagonal cupola, and three colonial houses, the oldest dating from 1688. These last three were all built by various members of the prominent Dorman family.

The combination of symmetry and asymmetry, and the blending of architectural styles, gives the Historic District at once a harmony which pleases the eye and a diversity which dramatically illustrates the varying tastes and resources of those who built the structures in it. All the structures including the store are inhabited and all are in good repair. Both house lots and open spaces are well-cared for and landscaped in an appropriate manner.



3. SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- | | | | |
|--|--|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Pre-Columbian | <input type="checkbox"/> 16th Century | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 18th Century | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 20th Century |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 15th Century | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 17th Century | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 19th Century | |

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known) 1667, 1685, 1838, 1854

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- | | | | |
|--|---|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Education | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Political | <input type="checkbox"/> Urban Planning |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Prehistoric | <input type="checkbox"/> Engineering | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Religion/Philosophy | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Historic | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Industry | <input type="checkbox"/> Science | |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Agriculture | <input type="checkbox"/> Invention | <input type="checkbox"/> Sculpture | |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Landscape Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Social/Humanitarian | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Art | <input type="checkbox"/> Literature | <input type="checkbox"/> Theater | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Commerce | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Military | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Transportation | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Communications | <input type="checkbox"/> Music | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Conservation | | | |



STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The settlement of Boxford came gradually, as an expansion of the town of Rowley. English settlers came to Salem in the winter of 1638 and in spring moved to what is now Rowley, on part of a large tract of land bought by John Winthrop from the Agawam Indians. Gradually these settlers pushed inland through the heavy forest and settled an area which they named Rowley Village. It was first composed of six lots of 30 acres each, laid out in 1667 as the nucleus of the new town. Six proprietors built their homes here, caused roads to be built and developed the area into a primarily agricultural community. However, many of the early settlers plied trades in addition to farming and were housewrights, carpenters, millwrights, joiners, cabinet makers, blacksmiths, coopers, basket makers, etc., answering the needs of the community. In c. 1670 the manufacture of iron was begun but was discontinued ten years later. From 1770 to 1805 iron smelting was carried on. The smelting mill was then converted, in turn, to a cotton mill, a grist mill, wooden bowl and tray factory and finally a match factory (1867) which was bought by the Diamond Match Company in 1883. For a short time Boxford also contained factories for the production of boxes, silver polish and shoes.

By 1685 as many as 48 families had settled here. Wishing to have their own minister and meeting house, they requested to be chartered as the town of Boxford, which was done by the General Court in August of 1685. In 1701 Winthrop's early deed was disputed by the Indians but was settled for a few pounds plus "vittels and drink." In this same year the meeting house was completed on land given by Abraham and Thomas Redington "for to set their first Meeting House on." The year 1701 also saw a public school established, with the Town Clerk as teacher and classes held in private homes. In 1738 District schoolhouses were built; by 1888 there were six districts.

The first burial ground (1693) was on Main Street; then in 1717 the Harmony Cemetery on Ipswich Road was used. In 1807 Asa Peabody gave land for a Village Cemetery where a Hearse House was built in 1841.

The second meeting house was built in 1742. For years the only means of travel was by horse or on foot. Wheeled vehicles did not come into use much before 1788. By 1799, a number of parishioners were assessed for a chaise and chaise house, and owned sheds at the meeting house for carriages.

In 1770, in protest against unjust British duties, the town voted that no

(continued)

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
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(Continuation Sheet)

STATE	Massachusetts	
COUNTY	Essex	
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ENTRY NUMBER		DATE
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(Number all entries)

Boxford Village Historic District, Boxford

8. SIGNIFICANCE (cont.)

citizens were allowed to use any products from Great Britain, especially tea-- "cases of sickness excepted." When the Revolution broke out, the Boxford inhabitants took an active part; eight from the town were killed at the Battle of Bunker Hill.

The first postal service, established in 1804, was handled by tavern owner Deacon Spofford, who took the mail to church on Sunday to distribute. By 1826 a post office was opened in Boxford Village in Whittemore's store.

A new meeting house (the present structure) was erected in 1838; it was "58' by 48', finished in the Modern style with a Pediment end", with new horse sheds on the north and west sides. The pews were auctioned off and deeded to buyers in perpetuity. The basement story was finished to accomodate town meetings and other public gatherings, and was so used until the Town Hall was built across the street in 1891. In 1885 Boxford celebrated its Bicentennial anniversary.

A chapel was annexed to the rear of the meeting house in 1895, enabling the town to expand activities under one roof. The north row of horse sheds were removed to make room for the new structure.

One of the greatest changes in the town occurred when railroad service began in 1854. It meant not only facilities for transportation of freight and express, but also regular mail service, a means of travel and shipping of Boxford products, such as shoes, matches, lumber and agricultural commodities. The coming of the railroad made it possible for business and professional men and their families from as far away as Boston to establish summer homes here, Boxford being considered a very "healthful resort." By 1903, ten trains a day passed through town. However, by 1941, there was insufficient patronage to warrant continuing service.

In 1952 the town celebrated not only the 250th anniversary of the church but also the 300th anniversary of the first road laid out through Boxford.

Boxford Village was voted a Chapter 40C Historic District by the town of Boxford on March 1, 1971.



9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

History of Boxford, Sidney Perley, 1880
 The Essex Memorial for 1836, James Newhall, Salem, 1836
 Commonwealth History of Massachusetts, Albert B. Hart, New York, 1930
 History of the First Congregational Church, Winnifred Parkhurst, Topsfield, 1952
 History of Essex County, D.H. Hurd, Philadelphia, 1888

Lat/Long reversed here WPC 5.23.74

10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY			LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES		
CORNER	LATITUDE	LONGITUDE	LATITUDE		LONGITUDE
	Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees	Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds
NW	71 ° 00 ' 38 "	42 ° 40 ' 06 "	°	' "	° ' "
NE	70 ° 59 ' 07 "	42 ° 39 ' 49 "			
SE	70 ° 59 ' 18 "	42 ° 39 ' 20 "			
SW	71 ° 00 ' 49 "	42 ° 39 ' 37 "			

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: c. 180 acres

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE

11. FORM PREPARED BY

NAME AND TITLE:
 Anne Wardwell (by Elizabeth R. Amadon)

ORGANIZATION: Massachusetts Historical Commission DATE: 8/29/72

STREET AND NUMBER:
 State House, Beacon Street

CITY OR TOWN: Boston STATE: Massachusetts CODE: 025

12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION

NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION

As the designated State Liaison Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service. The recommended level of significance of this nomination is:

National State Local

Name: John F. X. Davoren
 JOHN F. X. DAVOREN
 Secretary of the Commonwealth
 Title: Chairman of the Massachusetts Historical Commission

Date: September 20, 1972

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register.

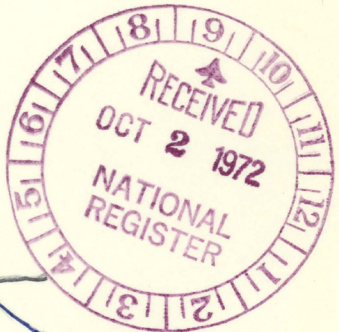
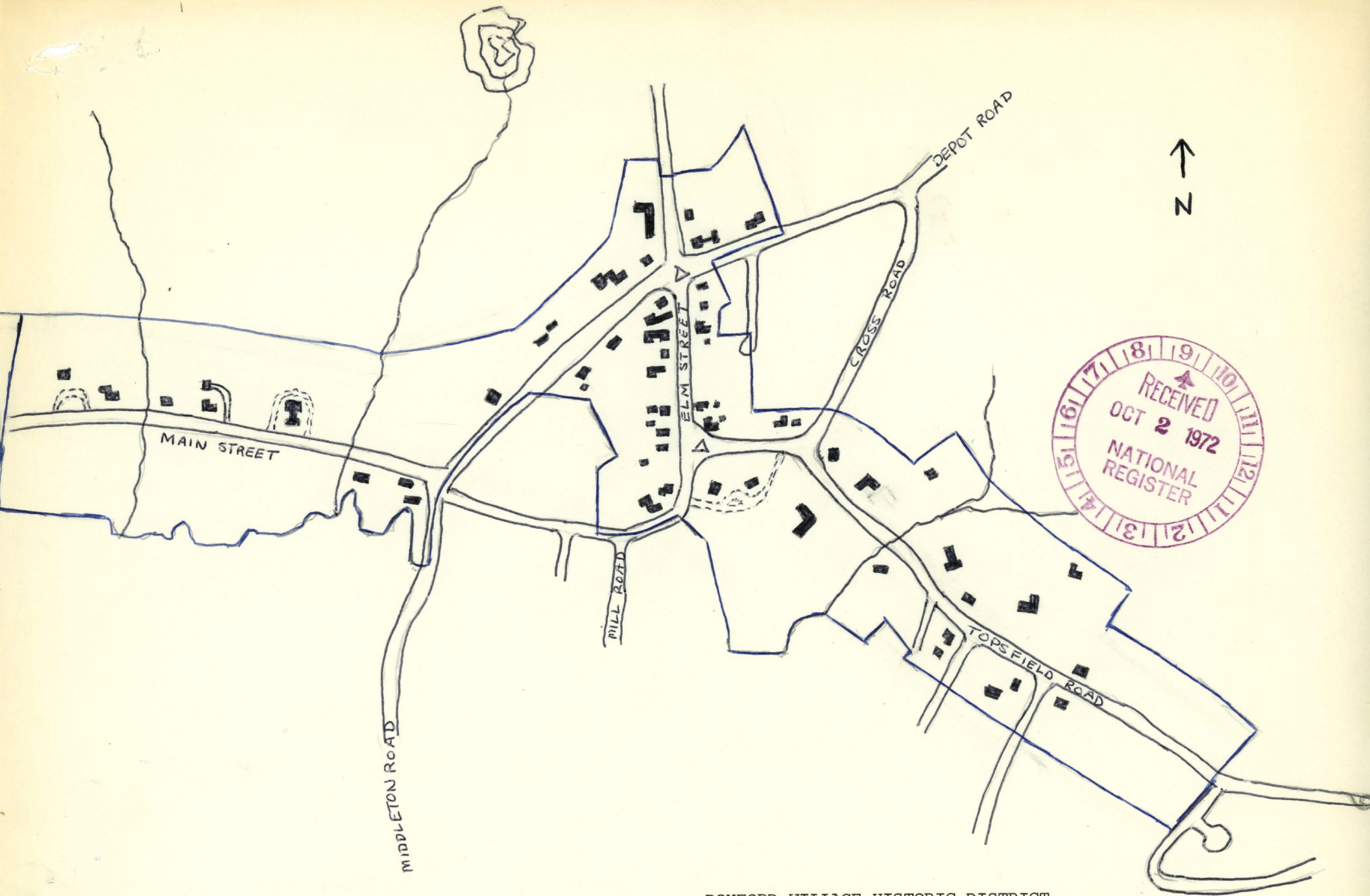
Robert M. Utley
 Chief, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

Date: 4/11/73

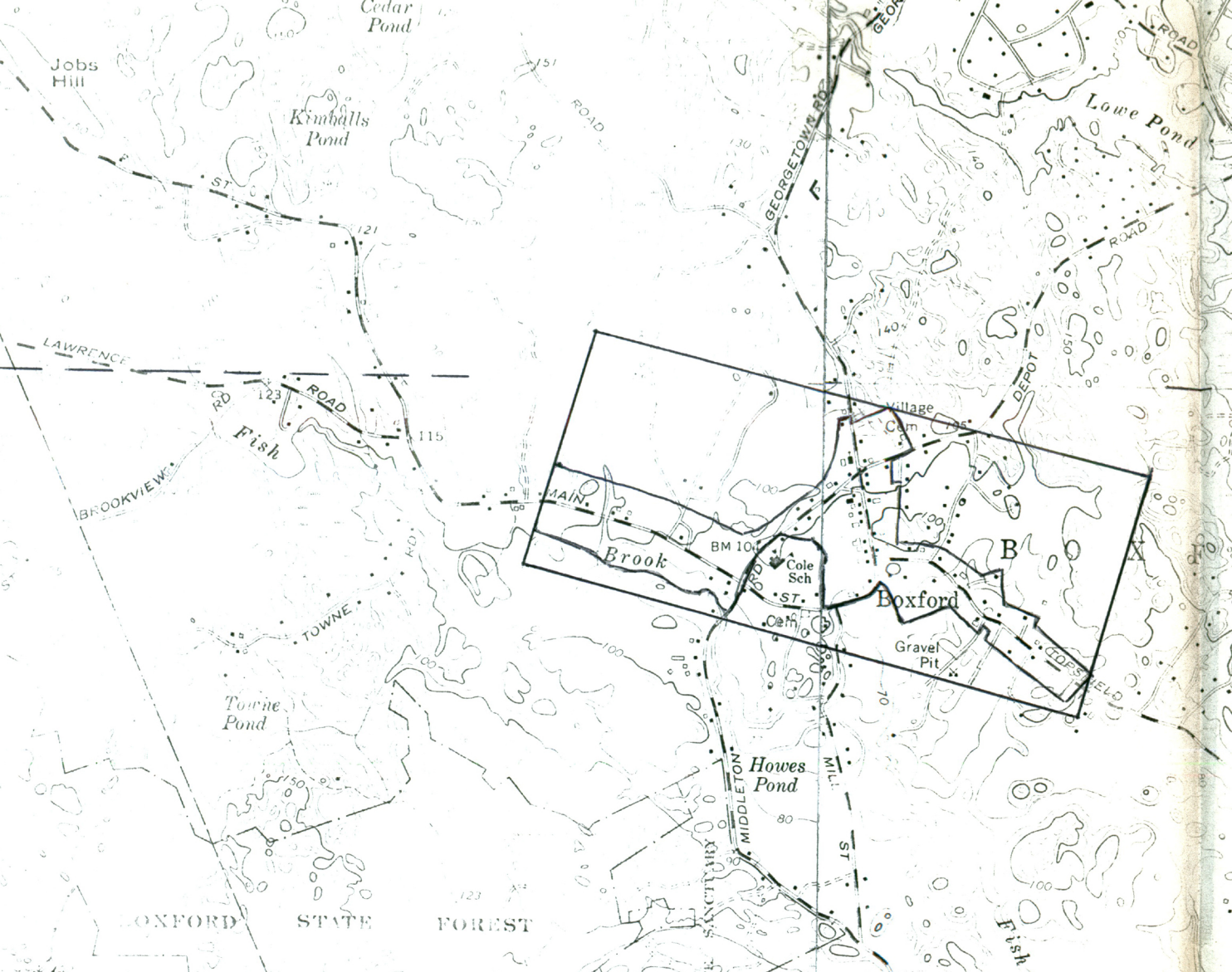
ATTEST: Wm. J. [Signature]
 Keeper of The National Register

Date: 4-3-73

SEE INSTRUCTIONS



BOXFORD VILLAGE HISTORIC DISTRICT



Boxford Village Historic District

SOUTH GROVELAND, MASS

N4237.5 - W7100/7.5

1966

AMS 6769 II NE - Series V814

GEORGETOWN, MASS

N4237.5 - W7052.5/7.5

1966

AMS 6869 III NW-Series V814

Long. NW	71° 00' 38"	Lat.	42° 40' 06"
NE	70° 59' 07"		42° 39' 49"
SE	70° 59' 18"		42° 39' 20"
SW	71° 00' 49"		42° 39' 37"



MIDDLETON



1. Main Street, looking southeast toward village. (Photograph: Boxford Historic District Commission, April 1972)