

FORM B - Building

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

Map and Lot # 113 43 USGS Quad Y Form Number 147

Town Groton
Place (neighborhood or village)
Groton Center

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 145 Main Street

Historic Name Prescott School
Uses: Present Elementary School
Original High School

Date of Construction 1928

Source Town Report

Style/Form Colonial Revival/Panel Brick

Architect/Builder Haynes and Mason, Architects

Exterior Material:

Foundation Concrete

Wall/Trim Brick

Roof Flat, not visible

Outbuildings/secondary structure

Modern playground equipment in rear

Major Alterations (with dates)

Windows replaced, 2005

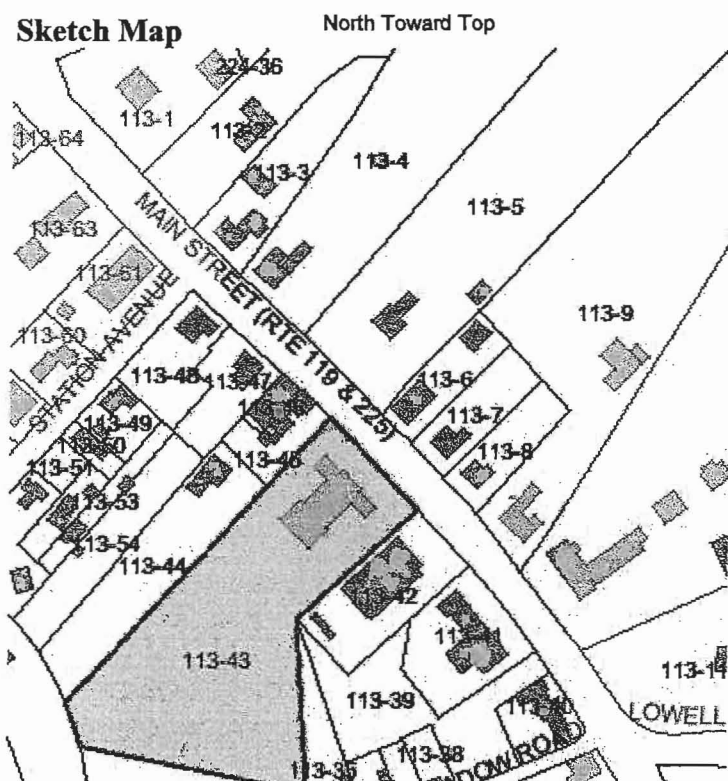
Condition Excellent

Moved no ☒ yes ☐ Date

Acreage 2.81

Setting Town Center

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 Prescott School is an institutional scaled brick, 2-story, 11x1-bay building with a flat roof; the central 3 bays project from the plane of the façade in a gabled pavilion; the rear of the plan is expanded by a 2-story section immediately behind the main block and a high 1-story block that contains the gymnasium
- * Decorative features on the main block include the brick parapet above the bold molded cornice, quoins, pilasters flanking the central bay and edges of the pavilion which has a cornice, architrave and frieze with building name below the lunette in the tympanum of the pavilion gable; fenestration in the façade is symmetrical; a large brick panel fills the field of the side elevations
- * Windows in the main block are modern double-hung sash with 9/9 pane configurations at the outer edges of the façade and beside the pavilion; 2 sets of paired 12/12 sash light the intermediate bays; paired 9/9 sash light the outer bays of the pavilion and a compass window lights the second story of the central bay in the pavilion; trim consists of flat arches in stone and stone sills; windows in the pavilion have flat arches augmented by keystones and springers; basement windows are fixed 4-pane sash that are paired under their paired counterparts above; these also have stone flat arches
- * The center entry has a double leaf door flanked by pilasters and surmounted by a tall broken swan's neck pediment
- * The rear sections of the school are lit by a variety of 6/6, 12/12 and paired 12/2 double-hung sash which lack the flat arches and stone sills; translucent fiberglass panels light the gymnasium in the rear
- * The Panel Brick and Classical Revival styles and institutional scale of the Prescott School are unique in Groton Center

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 parcel at 145 Main Street was occupied by the house of Reverend Caleb Trowbridge in the 18th century. This was followed by the Loring House now at 142 Main Street (MHC #9, later moved to accommodate the Butler High School)) The Loring House was followed onto the site by the Butler High School building, constructed in 1871 and damaged by fire in 1925. Repairs were made but the fire put in motion an effort to replace the aging brick High Victorian Gothic style school with a modern facility. After several negative votes at town meeting for a new school, Reverend Endicott Peabody, headmaster of the private Groton School, offered \$5,000 toward construction of a new building and suggested a door-to-door fundraising campaign to obtain the balance which, by June 15, 1927, raised \$36,500. Additional funds were voted at town meeting and the 1871 building was demolished to make way for the current school which opened in September, 1928. Other methods of fund raising included placing a clock on the old Butler School to register growth of donations, letters to the editor of the Groton Landmark, showing slides at local movie screenings and writing letters to Butler High School alumni. Final costs for the builders and architect were \$58,509.36. The Prescott School was built according to plans by architects Haynes and Mason of Fitchburg under the supervision of building committee members James T. Bennett, Charles L. Curtis (Superintendent of Schools), Clifford Griswold (Chairman of the School Committee), George E. Lawrence, Horace Rockwood, Stephen Sabine and Winthrop L. Sheedy. During construction, high school classes met in the Chaplin School (now Legion Hall, 75 Hollis Street, MHC #137), Grange Hall (80 Champney Street, MHC #179) and the Odd Fellows Hall (former fire station on Station Avenue). In the new school, teachers were paid \$1,400 annually for leading high school classes. For the early part of its existence, Prescott was one of three schools in town, the others being Tarbell Elementary in West Groton and Boutwell on Hollis Street.

BIBLIOGRAPHY and/or REFERENCES

☐ continuation sheet

Previous research by GHS member Isabel Beal; 1889 Walker atlas; Groton at 350, p. 89; 1882-1829 Butler field notes;

**** 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
Massachusetts Archives Building
Boston, Massachusetts 02125

Area(s)**Form No.****145 Main Street****Historical Narrative**

The building contained six home rooms, study hall, library, recitation rooms, laboratory, lecture room, cooking room, sewing room, typewriting room, manual training room, lunch room, auditorium/gym with seating for 450 and a stage. The statement by the building committee, composed after numerous votes at town meeting and ongoing possibility of settling for a rehabilitation of the old building, gave "thank[s to all] who by their public spiritedness and generosity enabled [the committee] to fulfill its duty to the town. May the new building long stand, a monument of personal pride to each one who has contributed to it, and may the children regard this gift to them as a pledge of confidence that they will be worthy citizens of a town which shall always stand steadfast for high educational ideals."

During WWII, at least 17 men were drafted or enlisted into military service prior to their graduations and were belatedly awarded diplomas in 2000. The building housed high school classes until a new school was built west of the town center in 1962 at which time Prescott became the junior high school. The name was changed from Groton High School to Prescott School in 1975 (the time the Groton Dunstable Regional School District was established) in honor of Colonel William Prescott, leader of American forces at the Battle of Bunker Hill in June of 1775, resident of the south end of Main Street (house demolished, 19th century) and subject of the Prescott Memorial at the corner of Main Street and Old Ayer Road.