NPS Form 10-900 OMB No. 1024-0018

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

155

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form.* If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions.

RECEIVED
FEB 22 2013
NAT. REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

1. Name of Property

Historic name: Kensington Town House
Other names/site number: Kensington Town Hall
Name of related multiple property listing:
N/A
(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing

2. Location

Street & number: 95 Amesbury Road
City or town: Kensington State: NH County: Rockingham
Not For Publication: ☐ Vicinity: ☐

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,

I hereby certify that this ✓ nomination ___ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.

In my opinion, the property ✓ meets ___ does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:

___**national** ___**statewide** ✓**local**

Applicable National Register Criteria:

✓**A** ___**B** ✓**C** ___**D**

E.L. Murphy 1/28/13

Signature of certifying official/Title: **Date**

State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

In my opinion, the property ___ meets ___ does not meet the National Register criteria.

Signature of commenting official: **Date**

Title : **State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government**

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

✓ entered in the National Register

___ determined eligible for the National Register

___ determined not eligible for the National Register

___ removed from the National Register

___ other (explain:) _____

Joe Edson for Beall 4.9.13

Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

5. Classification

Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply.)

Private:	☐
Public – Local	X
Public – State	☐
Public – Federal	☐

Category of Property

(Check only **one** box.)

Building(s)	X
District	☐
Site	☐
Structure	☐
Object	☐

Number of Resources within Property
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1		buildings
		sites
		structures
		objects
1		Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register _____

6. Function or Use
Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions.)
GOVERNMENT – town hall

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions.)
GOVERNMENT – town hall

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions.)
MID-19TH CENTURY – Greek Revival

Materials: (enter categories from instructions.)
Principal exterior materials of the property: CONCRETE, WOOD/weatherboard, ASPHALT

Narrative Description
(Describe the historic and current physical appearance and condition of the property. Describe contributing and noncontributing resources if applicable. Begin with **a summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, type, style, method of construction, setting, size, and significant features. Indicate whether the property has historic integrity.)

Summary Paragraph

The Kensington Town Hall, built 1846, is an example of a small, mid-nineteenth-century, New Hampshire town house in the Greek Revival style. The rectangular wood-framed gable-front building rises one story to a gable roof. A two-story, hip-roofed rear addition which sits at a lower grade and extends under the rear gable end augments the main block. The clapboarded building exhibits characteristic Greek Revival detailing including corner pilasters, cornice returns, and transoms and pedimented lintels above the paired front entries. The entries flank a 15/15 double-hung sash window and the side elevations feature regularly spaced 12/12 double-hung sash windows. The majority of historic finishes on the exterior and interior are from the mid-nineteenth to early twentieth century. The interior plan includes the original meeting hall with its original exposed boxed flared wall and corner posts (reused from the 1770-1771 meetinghouse originally on this site). Other historic interior finishes include plaster-covered walls above horizontal board wainscoting, and suspended milk glass light fixtures. At the northwest end of the hall is the decorative trim added in 1916 around the new stage (now removed), including a proscenium with pilasters. The southeast-facing building is set back roughly twenty-five feet from the Amesbury Road/NH Route 150, opposite Osgood Road, at the northerly end of the linear town center.

Narrative Description

Location and Setting

The highly visible Kensington Town Hall, built 1846, is located on the northwest side of Amesbury Road/N.H. Route 150 in the center of the rural town of Kensington. Amesbury Road/N.H. Route 150 is the principal north-south road through Kensington. The town hall is located in a small grouping of buildings on a rise once referred to as Meetinghouse Hill, at the northwest end of the linear rural town center. The town hall and its two neighbors, the Greek Revival Union Meetinghouse/Universalist Church (built 1839-1840) and the Italianate Congregational Church (built 1865) constitute a highly visible trio of mid-nineteenth-century civic, ecclesiastical, and social buildings situated at one end of the linear town center.

The southeast-facing town hall is sited on a parcel level with the roadway, opposite the T-intersection of Osgood Road (or Fryingpan Lane), a route laid out in 1854 running to the Hampton Falls line. In Kensington Amesbury Road/NH Route 150 is the main road between Amesbury, Massachusetts, to the south and Exeter, New Hampshire, to the north. The road runs diagonally through the center of Kensington and was laid out in various segments in the eighteenth and nineteenth century. By 1739 it ran from Pevear Lane to Meetinghouse Hill; not until 1832 was the road extended northerly to the Brick School at the intersection of North Road/Moulton Ridge Road in the northerly part of Kensington (Sawyer 1946, 247).

The Kensington Town Hall is separated from the road by a small lawn. An asphalt driveway runs along the southeast side of the building, leading to a large paved parking area, and separating it from the Universalist Church to the southwest. A curving concrete walkway leads to each of the front entries. The southwest entry has single step while the walkway rises gradually to the northeast entry. A single granite post is situated along the edge of driveway southeast of the walkway. A short walkway leads to the stairs leading to the doorway on the southwest elevation. At the rear (northwest), a small lawn separates the building from the paved parking area; a concrete walkway provides access from the parking area to the rear entry. Short, random dry laid granite retaining walls (likely reused from the old foundation) flank the rear elevation. An additional one extends from the northeast elevation at the juncture of the main block and 1980 addition. The triangular area to the northeast of the building is lightly wooded, flanked by a paved area leading from the roadway to the parking area. The land directly northwest of the parking area drops off sharply down to Mill Brook and wetlands. The only other buildings in the immediate vicinity are the Universalist Church in the abutting lot to the southwest and the Congregational Church across the street at the intersection of Amesbury and Osgood roads.

Exterior

The Kensington Town Hall, built 1846, is an example of a small mid-nineteenth-century purpose-built town house in the Greek Revival style. The one-story, gable-roofed, wood frame structure is oriented with the gable end facing Amesbury Road. The three-bay wide, five-bay deep main block has several small additions, some done within the historic period. A hip-roofed enclosed porch located just beyond the fifth bay on the southwest elevation has

a secondary entry and is accessed by a pair of wood steps and landing leading from a short brick walkway. A matching porch and entry is located on the northeast elevation but is not readily accessible. An additional entry on the southwest elevation is at the fifth bay. A two-story, hip-roofed rear addition (added 1980) which sits at a lower grade and extends under the rear gable end augments the original three-bay wide, five-bay deep main block. The main block rests on a concrete block foundation, which replaced the original granite block foundation, at the time the main block was relocated roughly twenty-five feet back from the road. The clapboarded exterior walls are detailed with corner pilasters and cornice returns on the façade. The boxed eaves have a crown molding, plain fascia and soffit boards above an ogee bed molding and a frieze board with an astragal at the bottom edge. The entries at the first and third bays on the façade are fitted with wood six-panel doors under four-light transoms. Above the transoms the plain board architrave is capped with a flush-board sided pediment trimmed with a drip edge. Centered above in the gable end is a triangular insert sheathed with flush-board siding. A braced flag pole is attached to the center of the insert. Centered under the triangular insert is a plaque with "Kensington Town Hall" written in capital letters. A pair of glass enclosed message boards is located to either side of the southeast corner to allow for the posting of announcements. The rear addition has a ground-level center entry, flanked by pairs of windows.

The building has symmetrical fenestration on all elevations, all replaced within the historic period. On the façade is a centered window with 15/15 wood, double-hung sash and reverse ogee molded trim. The side elevations have smaller 12/12 wood, double-hung sash, also with ogee molded trim. Pintles remain on the surrounds, indicating the building once had shutters though they had been removed by the mid twentieth century. The rear addition has 8/8 sash windows. A single 6/6 sash window is centered above in the rear gable end. A brick stove chimney is set close to the rear wall of the main block, rising above the southwest roof slope. An historic photo shows a stove chimney set further forward, above the hall.

Interior

The interior of the original main block includes the original meeting hall. The finishes are a mix of predominantly of nineteenth and early twentieth-century finishes. The auditorium features boxed flared wall and corner posts (reused from the 1770-1771 meetinghouse originally on this site). Milk glass light fixtures are suspended from the plaster ceiling. The walls are plaster above horizontal board wainscoting. The flooring is maple floor boards, installed in the early twentieth century. At the northwest end of the hall is the decorative trim added in 1916 around the new stage, including a proscenium flanked by pilasters.

Changes Since Construction

The town hall underwent several additions and alterations within the historic period. As first built the hall consisted of a thirty-foot square room, with a partitioned-off space used by the selectmen (at the front of the building) and known as the "Selectmen's Room" (Sawyer 1946, 83). A low platform at one end accommodated the Town Clerk, Board of Selectmen, and Moderator during meetings. Settees were used for seating in the hall but during town meetings they were removed save along the walls where older residents could sit. Other voters had to stand (Sawyer 1946, 83). By the mid-1860s, the hall was deemed too small and there were calls for enlarging the space. An expansion was finally approved in April 1883 at

a cost of $300. The work was completed with a dedication in December of that year (Sawyer 1946, 83). In 1910 the town voted at town meeting to remove the seats along the side of the hall and to lay a new floor (Sawyer 1946, 136). A second addition, to house a kitchen and some back rooms, was made in 1916 (Preservation Company 1997:39). At the same time a raised stage seems to have been added, framed by a proscenium with pilasters.

Sheds, of unknown date, were located to the southwest of the town hall, between the town hall and church. They were removed sometime in the second half of the twentieth century. Further changes were made to the building in the late twentieth and early twenty-first century. At the time of the building's relocation in 1980 the Selectman's office in the main hall was removed and a smaller partition was built around the southeast front entry. The stairway to the basement was opened up, providing interior access to the new offices below. In 2011 additional interior alterations, all reversible and preserving the historic building fabric, were made at the rear of the hall, on the far side of the proscenium, which was enclosed. Walls were added in the southwest corner to screen the added exterior entry to the Town Clerk's office, the stage at the northeast end of the auditorium was removed, and the proscenium was filled in. Offices were constructed to the rear of the enclosed opening.

Integrity

The Kensington town hall retains integrity of design, materials, and workmanship. The town hall retains its original form and Greek Revival style trim including corner pilasters, cornice returns, molded cornice, window, and door trim, and plain board frieze with a single astragal. The replacement of the original granite foundation with a concrete block foundation compromises the integrity slightly. Two additions in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century occurred well within the historic period (before 1962). The 1980 rear addition is set at a lower grade than the historic main block and is minimally visible from the street so it does not significantly compromise the building's integrity of design. The town hall retains integrity of feeling and association as the only municipal property in the town of Kensington, in use for this purpose for more than 160 years. In addition to its long-time use for civic purposes, the hall was also used for community events up to the present time. Though the town has not held town meetings in the hall since the 1970s this does not compromise the building's feeling and association as the town's only civic building. The town hall continued to house the town departments, including that of the Police, Selectmen's Office, Town Clerk, and Tax Collector, until earlier this year (2012). The Kensington Town Hall retains integrity of location and setting as a small mid-nineteenth century town hall situated in a rural linear town center. The moving of the building approximately 25' back from the road in 1980 only minimally changed the location, as the building remains on its original lot and in close proximity to the two other buildings long associated with the town hall in historic views, the Universalist Church and the Congregational Church.

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria
(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

[x] A. Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.

[ ] B. Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.

[x] C. Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.

[ ] D. Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations
(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

[ ] A. Owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes

[x] B. Removed from its original location

[ ] C. A birthplace or grave

[ ] D. A cemetery

[ ] E. A reconstructed building, object, or structure

[ ] F. A commemorative property

[ ] G. Less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years

Areas of Significance
(Enter categories from instructions.)
Architecture
Community Planning and Development

Period of Significance
1846-1916

Significant Dates
1846 (Construction)
1883 (Addition)
1916 (Addition)

Significant Person
(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

Cultural Affiliation

Architect/Builder
Dearborn T. Blake
Josiah B. Sanborn

Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph (Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance, applicable criteria, justification for the period of significance, and any applicable criteria considerations.)

The Kensington Town Hall is nominated for listing in the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion C for significance in the Area of Architecture at the local level as a representation of mid-nineteenth century civic architecture in Kensington, New Hampshire. The Kensington Town Hall, built in 1846, is a purpose-built town house in the Greek Revival style. The building retains its historic Greek Revival design characterized by wood-frame construction, paired entries on the front gable end, corner pilasters and cornice returns, a rectangular footprint, and regular fenestration on the side elevations. These stylistic and architectural features likely reflect the work of Sanborn and Blake, well-known local builders active in the 1830s and 1840s who are known to have built two other similarly styled and detailed Kensington institutional buildings. The town hall is also nominated for listing under Criterion A for its historical associations in the Area of Community Planning and Development starting with purpose-built town halls. The Kensington Town Hall meets Criteria Consideration B because its primary significance is for its Greek Revival architecture characteristic of other institutional buildings of the same period in Kensington and other town halls in New Hampshire. In 1980 the town hall was moved back from the road on the same historic lot and continues to convey its architectural values. The Period of Significance for the property represents the years of construction and completion, 1846, through 1916, when the last historic addition was made to the rear of the building. The town hall retains integrity of location, design, feeling, materials, setting, association, and workmanship.

Narrative Statement of Significance (Provide at least **one** paragraph for each area of significance.)

Criterion C: Architecture

The Kensington Town Hall is significant for both building type and style as Kensington's only town hall. The property is significant at a local level, a recognized landmark in the Town of Kensington. The town hall is a characteristic example of a small municipal building built in the Greek Revival style in many rural New Hampshire communities in the second quarter of the nineteenth century. The construction of the town hall coincides with the height of popularity of the Greek Revival for a range of building types, especially in the 1830s and 1840s. Characteristics common to Greek Revival styled town houses, as they were commonly called at the time, include frame construction, single or paired entries on the gabled end, regular fenestration, and classically derived details such as corner pilasters, cornice returns, and frieze boards. This style and scale of public building was typically constructed at a time in a town's growth that required a public meeting space and a place for social activities.

The type, form, and style embody the characteristics of an architectural type and period, a mid-nineteenth-century rural New Hampshire town house. The building retains its original form and detailing. These include the three-bay gable front building with paired entries at the first and third bays, corner pilasters, cornice returns, frieze, transoms above the entries,

and pedimented door lintel. Two additions, in 1883 and 1916, occurred within the historic period. The Kensington Town Hall retains sufficient degree of integrity of design, materials, and workmanship. The one notable change to the historic main block is the replacement of the original foundation, the result of moving the building approximately 25' to the northwest in 1980. The relocation included construction of a two-story addition on the rear, set at a lower grade but extending into the rear of the main block. Nevertheless in spite of the relocation the building generally retains its relationship to the site and neighboring buildings. The addition is less visible from the roadway and does not impact the historic views shown in many old photographs of the town hall and the two nearby ecclesiastical buildings. These changes did not affect the overall massing and feeling of the building and should not preclude eligibility under Criterion C. The town hall remains a significant and integral part of the well-known rural linear town center.

There are no other comparable buildings in terms of use in the town of Kensington. The town hall is comparable in form to two religious buildings built in the same period and style and by the same building craftsman. They are the Universalist Church (built 1839-1840), located immediately southwest of the Town Hall and the Grange Hall (built 1838 as the "Christian Church"), located at the southerly end of the town center. All three buildings in the Greek Revival style feature pairs of entries on the façade, flanking a center window, clapboarded exteriors with pilasters, and symmetrical fenestration.

In contrast with the Kensington Town Hall, the majority of the comparable extant town halls feature a center entry (sometimes recessed) flanked by windows. Typically the interior includes a vestibule, an auditorium to accommodate town meetings, sometimes a stage with a proscenium, and a selectman's office walled off in one corner. Oftentimes the building gets expanded later in the century to house a kitchen.

Several of Kensington's better known building craftsmen are associated with the construction of the town hall. Of the five men on the committee that prepared a plan for the new town house, four were housewrights or carpenters and the fifth clearly had masonry skills.[1] Carpenters Josiah B. Sanborn (ca. 1805-1846) and Dearborn T. Blake (born 1810) had one of four carpentry shops in Kensington in the second quarter of the nineteenth century. The shop, one of "considerable size" was located on North Road (Sawyer 1946, 230). They had a role or hand in the design and likely construction of all 1830s and 1840s institutional buildings in Kensington, the 1838 Christian Meeting house (now the Grange Hall) and the 1839-1840 Union Meetinghouse (now the Universalist Church), just next door to the Kensington Town Hall (Sawyer 1926, 26, 82), and the 1846 Town Hall. This explains, in part, the strong resemblance of all three buildings in form and exterior detailing. These buildings all display their fine workmanship and common building characteristics, one-and-a-half story gable-front buildings in the Greek Revival style with paired entries on the facade.

[1] Occupations for the plan committee members were John W. Shaw, farmer; Dearborn T. Blake, carpenter; Jeremish Blake, carpenter; John Page, carpenter (1850 Census). Sanborn died in October 1846 so is not in the 1850 Census but he was a well-known carpenter, who had a shop with Dearborn Blake (Sawyer 1946, 230). Shaw was one of two men paid to lay the stone for the town hall so he clearly had masonry skills (Sawyer 1946, 83).

Criterion A: Community Planning and Development

The Kensington Town Hall represents and illustrates New Hampshire town government practices, embodied by its use for town meetings, a national symbol of democratic rule. This well-known town landmark has been a prominent site of local government and community activities for over 160 years and remains one of the few New Hampshire town halls of its type and from that period still in use until this year (2012). The building's construction by the town of Kensington in 1846 is representative of a process many New Hampshire towns underwent at that time. As populations increased during a time of relative prosperity many towns replaced earlier meetinghouses with newer buildings that served only as town halls or featured distinguishable sacred and municipal spaces under one roof. The nineteenth-century buildings were used not only for town purposes but also for community events, such as dances, plays, pageants, and lectures, to name just a few. The Kensington Town Hall housed annual town meetings for over 120 years until the population of the town surpassed the hall capacity in the early 1970s. The building, however, continued to be used for municipal purposes, and from 1980 until 2011 it housed the offices of the Selectmen, Police Department, Town Clerk, and Tax Collector. The Kensington Town Hall also represents and illustrates a town's cultural and community traditions and practices, serving throughout its history up to the present day as the site of a range of gatherings including church services, dances, socials, temperance meetings and lectures, square dances, and Christmas Fairs. While no longer a venue for large gatherings since the 1970s, the town hall continues to be available for use by individual town groups and social gatherings including birthday parties.

Many examples of mid-nineteenth-century, one-story frame town houses/town halls remain throughout New Hampshire, though few continue to house town offices or other municipal uses.

Developmental History/Additional Historic Context Information

When first laid out, the large town of Hampton included what would become North Hampton, Hampton Falls, Kensington, Kingston, East Kingston and Danville, as well as part of Seabrook. Kensington began to petition for status as a town as early as 1740, and in 1761 it was set off from Hampton Falls (Sawyer 1946, 57). In 1762 the first town meeting was held and the first representative was sent to the New Hampshire General Court in Exeter (Sawyer 1926, 48).

The town hall site has a long association with the civic, social, and sacred activities in the town of Kensington. The area developed as the town's ecclesiastical center, even before Kensington had been established as a separate parish from Hampton Falls. In 1733, to establish a more central and mutually agreeable location for a meetinghouse, Elihu Chase gave one acre of land near Hog Pen Meadow to the "inhabitants of the upper or westerly part of the Falls' parish in Hampton." This lot, called the Meetinghouse Acre, included the location of the present churches and town hall, the burying ground, and the Meetinghouse Parade where the road now is (Sawyer 1946, 282).

By the early 1770s the site was occupied by the town's second meetinghouse which had replaced the first meetinghouse (framed 1733), that stood on the site of the Universalist Church (Sawyer 1946, 156, 282). The new meetinghouse (built 1770-1771), a characteristic late eighteenth-century meetinghouse, was said to have resembled the still extant Rocky Hill

Meetinghouse located just over the border in Amesbury, Massachusetts (Sawyer 1946, 157). In characteristic New England fashion, the new meetinghouse housed sacred and civic activities. The space was used not only for Sunday services but also town meetings (Sawyer 1946, 161).

By the 1840s, however, the 1770-1771 meetinghouse was no longer used for ecclesiastical or sacred purposes owing to the inactivity of the Congregational church in town and the recent construction of two new "Christian" churches, the second Christian Meetinghouse in 1838 and the Union Meetinghouse in 1839-1840. The old meetinghouse continued to be used for civic business but residents deemed it too large to maintain and so discussions began about replacing it with a smaller town house. At a March 1845 town meeting it was voted that the town relinquish its rights in the meetinghouse to the pew owners with the provision that the building be removed within three months "'from the place where it now stands'" (Sawyer 1946, 161). The old meetinghouse was dismantled on 28 March 1846 by twelve or fifteen men using oxen to do so. The lumber was to be put up in piles (Sawyer 1946, 161).

In April 1846 a special Town Meeting was held to discuss the possible construction of a town house, determine what to do with the lumber piles remaining from the 1770-1771 Meetinghouse on the site, and "to authorize the Selectmen to hire a committee for the same" (Sawyer 1946, 82).[2] The meeting voted to appoint a committee of five to prepare a report for the plan of a town house immediately.[3] The appointed members (J. B. Sanborn, D. T. Blake, J.W. Shaw, Jere Blake, and J. Page) already had a plan prepared evidently and so the meeting voted to build the town house and to use as much of the timber from the old meetinghouse as proved suitable to the "building committee of Joiners" (Sawyer 1946, 82).[4] The building committee was comprised of Josiah T. Blake, Jonathan Palmer, and William Rowe, all Kensington residents (Sawyer 1946, 82; Census 1850). Stone from the old meetinghouse was to be used to underpin the new building. Kensington residents John W. Shaw and Stephen Brown were paid $16 for laying the stone (Sawyer 1946, 83). The voted also authorized the Selectmen to pay $300 towards the cost of the construction with the building was slated to be completed by 1 November 1846. Two stoves were purchased for heating the new building. Total cost of the new town hall was $700 (Sawyer 1946, 83).

The town hall underwent several additions and alterations, all within the historic period. By the mid-1860s, the hall was deemed too small and there were calls for enlarging the space. An expansion was finally approved in April 1883 at a cost of $300. The work was completed with a dedication in December of that year (Sawyer 1946, 83). In 1910 the town voted at town meeting to remove the seats along the side of the hall and to lay a new floor (Sawyer 1946, 136). A second addition, to house a kitchen and some back rooms, was made in 1916 (Preservation Company 1997, 39). At the same time a raised stage seems to have been added, framed by a proscenium with pilasters.

[2] The reuse of old meetinghouse framing members was not an uncommon practice. Other known New Hampshire examples include the 1863 town house in Bradford, New Hampshire.

[3] The town records initially described as a "town house" but by the late 1850s historical maps use the term "town hall" (Chace 1857).

[4] Occupations for the plan committee members were John W. Shaw, farmer; Dearborn T. Blake, carpenter; Jeremish Blake, carpenter; John Page, carpenter (1850 Census). Sanborn died in October 1846 so is not in the 1850 Census but he was a well-known carpenter, who had a shop with Dearborn Blake (Sawyer 1946, 230).

In 1980 the town hall was moved about 25' back from the road and a rear addition was constructed underneath the earlier rear addition. The lower level housed the Selectmen's Office, Police Department, Town Clerk, and Tax Collector. The upper level remained a meeting hall, used primarily for community social events such as square dances and meetings of different organizations. The Selectman's office in the main hall was removed and a smaller partition was built around the southeast front entry. The stairway to the basement was opened up, providing interior access to the new offices below. In 2011 additional interior alterations were made at the rear of the hall, all reversible and preserving the historic building fabric. Walls were added in the southwest corner to screen the exterior entry to the Town Clerk's office, the stage was removed and the opening was filled in. Offices were constructed to the rear of the enclosed opening.

In 2012 the town offices and police station were relocated to temporary facilities in order to address health issues due to mold that were created by drainage problems resulting from the move.

For the first seventy-plus years of the town hall's use, the town's government remained remarkably consistent. Selectmen, in characteristic fashion were elected for one-year terms, with the terms overlapping rather than being staggered. Admittedly many served more than one consecutive term. In 1921, however, a change the terms of selectmen was made from annual to three years. However the first group of three was compromised of individuals who served a one, two, or three-year term, to create a system of just one selectman term changing every year as opposed to all three (Sawyer 1946, 136). At the same time women were also allowed to vote.

Over the years the town hall was used by a variety of local groups for meetings and other group gatherings. Beginning in the mid-1850s, the Congregationalists met in the town hall, on the Sundays when the Union Church was in use, before building their own church in 1865 on the other side of the road (Sawyer 1946, 172). In the later nineteenth century dances were held regularly in the Town Hall in addition to an occasional Ball during the winter. Socials were popular and sometimes held at the town hall (Sawyer 1946, 115). The Temperance Movement was strong in Kensington between 1865 and 1895. The Hoosac Division of the Sons of Temperance, No. 25 was formed in 1867 and meetings and lectures were held in the Town Hall. By 1870 there were ninety members, and the group boasted that no liquor was sold in any store or tavern in the town (Sawyer 1946, 16, 119). In the twentieth century regular dances continued to be held at the town hall a popular community event (Preservation Company 1997:43). Various local groups continued to use the town hall for meeting purposes in the mid-twentieth century. In 1947-48 a group of forty-six local veterans founded the American Legion Post No. 105. Fifteen women formed the Auxillary. Meetings were held in the town hall and in the Brick School. Fundraising dances were held weekly to raise funds (Potts 1987:16). In the 1950s and 1960s square dances were held at the town hall, carrying on the long-time tradition of using the space for dances (*Community News* June 1997). The Annual Kensington Christmas Fair, established 1961, was held in the town hall until the early 1970s, when it moved to the new and larger American Legion hall (*Community News* November 1996).

By the 1970s, the size of the town's population dictated the need for a larger space for public meetings and events. The new American Legion Hall, built 1973, and located at the southerly end of the town center on Amesbury Road, became the new venue for annual town meetings. Town offices, however, remained in the town hall.

9. Major Bibliographical References

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1857 "Rockingham County, New Hampshire" wall map. Philadelphia: Smith & Coffin. Collection of the New Hampshire Historical Society, Concord.

Hurd, D.H.
1892 *Town and City Atlas of the State of New Hampshire*. Boston: D.H. Hurd & Company.

U.S.G.S.
1894 "Newburyport-Exeter, NH-MA" quadrangle, reprinted 1911.

U.S.G.S.
1932 "Newburyport-Exeter, NH-MA" quadrangle.

U.S.G.S.
1934 "Newburyport-Exeter, NH-MA" quadrangle, reprinted 1941.

Historic Photographs
Collection of the Kensington Public Library.

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

____ preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
____ previously listed in the National Register
____previously determined eligible by the National Register
____designated a National Historic Landmark
____ recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey #_____
____recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____
____ recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # _____

Primary location of additional data:
____ State Historic Preservation Office
____ Other State agency
____ Federal agency
____ Local government
____ University
____ Other
Name of repository: _____

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): _____

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10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property ___0.50 acre___

Use either the UTM system or latitude/longitude coordinates

Latitude/Longitude Coordinates
Datum if other than WGS84:_____
(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

1. Latitude: 42.931581° Longitude: -70.945163°
2. Latitude: Longitude:

3. Latitude: Longitude:

4. Latitude: Longitude:

Or
UTM References
Datum (indicated on USGS map):

☐ NAD 1927 or ☐ NAD 1983

1. Zone: Easting: Northing:

2. Zone: Easting: Northing:

3. Zone: Easting: Northing:

4. Zone: Easting : Northing:

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property.)
The boundary of the National Register nominated Kensington Town Hall is restricted to the building footprint. The portion of the property tax parcel (Map 11, parcel 2) including the paved roadway and parking area should be excluded from the eligible property boundary as they are later developments.

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)
The Kensington Town Hall footprint was selected as the boundary because that is the part that conveys the municipal context of the building. Though the building has always been on the same parcel of land it was originally located more to the southeast and closer to the road.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title: Laura B. Driemeyer, Lynne Monroe, Teresa Hill
organization: Preservation Company
street & number: 5 Hobbs Road
city or town: Kensington state: NH zip code: 03833
e-mail PreservationCompany@comcast.net
telephone: 603.778.1799
date: December 2012

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:** A **USGS map** or equivalent (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
- **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO, TPO, or FPO for any additional items.)

Kensington Town Hall
Name of Property

Rockingham, NH
County and State

Kensington Town Hall
Name of Property

Rockingham, NH
County and State

Photographs

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels (minimum), 3000x2000 preferred, at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map. Each photograph must be numbered and that number must correspond to the photograph number on the photo log. For simplicity, the name of the photographer, photo date, etc. may be listed once on the photograph log and doesn't need to be labeled on every photograph.

Photo Log

Name of Property: Kensington Town Hall
City or Vicinity: Kensington
County: Rockingham State: NH

Photographer: Lynne Emerson Monroe

Date Photographed: August 2012

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera:

Photo 0001
Southeast and façade (southeast) elevations, camera facing northwest

Photo 0002
Façade (southeast) and northeast elevations, camera facing west

Photo 0003
View of Town Hall in relationship to two churches, camera facing north

Photo 0004
Interior, meeting hall with cased posts reused from 1770-1771 meetinghouse, camera facing northeast

Photo 0005
Interior, meeting hall with 1916 proscenium, camera facing west

Photo 0006
Interior, meeting hall with settees and wainscoting, camera facing south

Photo 0007
Interior, detail of proscenium pilaster and reused 1770-1771 meetinghouse post.

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C.460 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 100 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Office of Planning and Performance Management. U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.

KENSINGTON TOWN HALL

KENSINGTON TOWN HALL

EXIT

PLEASE TAKE ONE
UNITED ALERT FLYER
INSTRUCTIONS ON HOW TO SIGN UP
KENSINGTON SAWYER FARM
BRICK FUNDRAISER FORMS
Annual Reports
Also available on our town website