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NAT. REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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NPS Form 10-900
(Rev. Aug. 2002)

OMB No. 1024-0018
(Expires Jan. 2005)

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

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 *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. 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. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name: Root School

other names/site number: Root District Schoolhouse, Norwich District School #5

2. Location

street & number: 987 Union Village Road not for publication N/A

city or town: Norwich vicinity: N/A

state: Vermont code: VT county: Windsor code: 027 zip code: 05055

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this X 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 X meets ____ does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant ___ nationally X statewide ____ locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Noelle Mackey 4/19/2013
Signature of certifying official Date

State or Federal Agency or Tribal government

In my opinion, the property ____ meets ___ does not meet the National Register criteria.
___ (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of commenting official or other official and title Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby certify that this property is:

	Signature of the Keeper	Date of Action
✓ entered in the National Register		6/10/2013
____ See continuation sheet.		
____ determined eligible for the National Register		
____ See continuation sheet.		
____ determined not eligible for the National Register		
____ removed from the National Register		
____ other (explain): ____		

5. Classification

Ownership of Property: (Check as many boxes as apply)

_x_ private
____ public-local
____ public-state
____ public-Federal

Category of Property: (Check only one box)

_X_ building(s)
____ district
____ site(s)
____ structure(s)
____ object(s)

Number of Resources Within Property:

	Contributing	Noncontributing
buildings:	1	
districts:		
sites:		
structures:		
objects:		
total:	1	

Number of Contributing Resources Previously Listed in the National Register: N/A

Name of Related Multiple Property Listing: Educational Resources of Vermont
(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions: (Enter categories and subcategories from instructions)

Category:	Subcategory:
EDUCATION	school

Current Functions: (Enter categories and subcategories from instructions)

Category:	Subcategory:
SOCIAL	meeting hall

7. Description

Architectural Classification: (Enter categories from instructions)
Colonial Revival
other:

Materials: (Enter categories from instructions)
foundation concrete
roof: asphalt
walls: weatherboard
other: brick

Narrative Description: (Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)
See continuation sheet for Section 7, pp. 1-4

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.
____ B. Removed from its original location.
____ C. A birthplace or a grave.
____ D. A cemetery.
____ E. A reconstructed building, object, or structure.
____ F. A commemorative property.
____ G. Less than 50 years of age or achieved significance with the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance: (Enter categories from instructions)
Education
Architecture

Period of Significance:
1937-1945
1937

Significant Person: (Complete if Criterion B is marked above)
N/A

Significant Dates:
N/A

Cultural Affiliation:
N/A

Architect / Builder:
N/A

Narrative Statement of Significance:
(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.) See continuation sheet for Section 8, pp. 1-6

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography:
(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.) See continuation sheet.

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 for the National Register.
____ Designated a National Historic Landmark.
____ Recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey No. _____
____ Recorded by Historic American Engineering Record No. _____

Primary Location of Additional Data:
____ State Historic Preservation Office.
____ Other state agency:
____ Federal agency.
____ Local government.
____ University of Vermont, Special Collections.
_x_ Other. Name of repository: Norwich Historical Society

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property .33+/- acre

UTM References (Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet). ____ See continuation sheet

	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
1.	18	0719175E	4848170N	2.			
3.				4.			

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.) See continuation sheet.

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.) See continuation sheet

11. Form Prepared By

Name / Title Lyssa Papazian, Historic Preservation Consultant; Organization: n/a Date: February 13, 2013

Street & Number: 13 Dusty Ridge Road Telephone: 802-387-2878

City or Town: Putney State: VT Zip Code: 05346

12. Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps
A USGS map (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
A sketch map for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs
Representative black and white photographs of the property.

Additional Items (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

13. Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)
name Root District Game Club

street & number c/o Brian Cook, 47 Bullock Road telephone (802) 649-0288

city or town Norwich state VT zip code 05505

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. 470 et seq.). A federal agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to, a collection of information unless it displays a valid OMB control number.

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including the 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 Keeper, National Register of Historic Places, 1849 "C" Street NW, Washington, DC 20240.

The Root School is a one-story, hipped roof, frame, Colonial Revival-style building that is sited about five miles from Norwich village near Goodrich Four Corners on Union Village Road in the northeastern portion of the town of Norwich. The one-room school building sits on a small plateau above the road with a steep short driveway. The rural setting includes a farm across Union Village road, nearby rural homes on large lots, and adjacent open fields. A stone retaining wall delineates the property boundary about 6' from the west wall of the building and runs along a small gravel parking lot. There are trees bordering the school property on the north and west sides. The 1937 building is remarkably well-preserved on both the exterior and interior and retains integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling and association.

The Root School is 32' by 38' with a hipped, pyramidal asphalt shingle roof. The clapboarded building has plain wood trim and frieze boards and sits on a high 1975 concrete and concrete block foundation that has basement windows on the south and east sides. It is a very simple building which is stylistically distinguished by its massing and a classically detailed, though simple, 5' by 8' entry porch. The main entry is on the east side bay of the south façade up a half flight of concrete steps. The steps have cast concrete side walls that support a gable-roofed porch embellished by a full pediment with molded cornice and a simple entablature resting on battered square Tuscan columns. The columns, made of nailed together boards, have a simple astragal band near the top and a plain abacus block at the top. There is a simple wood railing at either side of the concrete porch platform with square spindles. The porch ceiling is a narrow, varnished bead board. The front (south) façade has three six-over-six light, double-hung wood sash windows and a nine-light glazed and paneled wood door. There is a brick chimney on the front roof slope and a bulkhead cellar entrance at the western side of the front façade with metal doors added sometime after the 1980s.

The east elevation faces the road and has the characteristic bank of large schoolhouse windows. There are four, twelve-over-twelve light, double-hung wood sash windows in a bank covering the northern two thirds of this elevation and starting just under the eaves. A smaller, six-over-six light window, similar to those on the front façade, is located near the south end of the elevation and its sill aligns with the sills of the four larger windows. The foundation has five irregularly placed six-light fixed wood sash windows. Three are clustered near the northern side and are under, but not vertically aligned with, the bank of large windows above. The concrete foundation wall is badly cracked and is also buckling.

The north (rear) elevation has one six-over-six light double-hung sash window near the western end and a non-centered door that is well above grade as on the front façade but currently has no stair. The door is a wood, two-panel type that is similar to many interior doors of this era and currently has no door knob. The rear foundation wall is concrete block with no window openings

but a small screened vent near the western corner. It is also exhibiting cracking. A bathroom vent pipe comes out of the wall near this vent and extends up about ten feet.

The west elevation is bordered closely by the property line and a mortared stone retaining wall. The field beyond is about four feet higher in grade than the land upon which the school is built. There are three smaller six-over-six light, double-hung wood sash windows near the front (south) end of the elevation.

INTERIOR

The Root School is a one-room school building with a recessed stage alcove on one side flanked by a small kitchen area at the front that was most likely the original cloak room and two original toilet rooms at the rear. There is a full basement and the attic space is not accessible. It is remarkably intact historically and architecturally, although the foundation was replaced in 1975 and is in very poor and unstable condition today. There are many surviving original features throughout the building including the raised 8"stage platform and square, trimmed arch, window sash, door and window casings, slate black boards, two-panel plywood doors, low, framed, plywood wainscoting, strapped press board walls and ceilings, wood flooring, iron ventilation grates, schoolhouse pendant lights, and the two original enameled metal train station style toilet fixtures with pill box tanks.

The front door opens into a small vestibule which has a door to the west leading to the basement stair, a door straight ahead to the north leading into the one large classroom, and a window on the east wall. This front vestibule has plain, stained pine door and window trim, two panel, pine plywood doors, stained pine plywood wainscoting about three feet high with a simple, flat pine cap, and narrow hardwood flooring. The walls and high ceiling are finished with Homasote or some other type of cellulose-based fiber wall board with strapping over the seams made from more of the same material. The board and strapping are painted. The flat window and door surrounds have slightly projecting lintels.

The main classroom is about 20' by 30' and has the same trim, wall and ceiling details as the vestibule. The large bank of windows is on the east wall opposite the stage alcove. There is about 2' high pine plywood wainscoting below the windows. The front (south) wall of the classroom has a slate blackboard framed in stained pine trim and pine plywood wainscoting below. In the western corner of the room there is a door to the kitchen, which is a narrow space wrapping around the southwest corner of the building and may have been the cloakroom originally. The long western wall of the room has a pass-through window to the kitchen above three foot pine plywood wainscoting, the roughly 12' wide square arched stage alcove, a framed blackboard,

and a door to one of the toilets at the far (northern) end. The toilets are at the level of the stage so the door has a small step. The northern wall of the classroom has an exterior door on the west end and a long pine set of shelves and cupboards.

The kitchen area is about 5' wide and has simple counters built across the front two windows and wrapping around the corner in front of a west façade window. There is a wash basin but no running water or plumbing, and two counter-top gas burner units. There is a large set of pine plywood cupboards along the west wall and in front of the other two west façade windows. There is a door, up one step, leading to the stage.

The stage alcove is about 12' wide and 8' deep and has the same trim, wainscoting and wall board treatment of the rest of the interior. The wood floor is raised about 8" above the main classroom floor and ends flush with the alcove trim. There are ghosts of hinges in the jambs of the alcove opening and pintle holes in the front of the stage indicating that there were originally hinged doors that closed off the stage. This allowed the stage to be used as a flexible space which could be a small separate classroom if necessary. From the stage, there is a door to the kitchen space on the south wall as well as a door directly into one of the two toilet rooms north of the stage. There is a pendant schoolhouse light fixture as well as an old piano on the stage that may be part of the school's furniture.

The two toilet rooms are north of the stage and west of the main classroom and are raised on the same level above the main floor as the stage. One is entered directly from the stage/second classroom and the other directly from the main classroom which would allow for separate activities and groups of children to have bathroom access independently. The flanking toilet room and former cloakroom also provide space for a "green room" and stage "wings" so a theater production was more feasible. The toilet rooms each have the same plywood wainscoting and board walls and ceiling of the main classroom and matching two-panel doors. They are each one stall and about 3' by 8' in size. There are extant – though no longer usable – original toilets. These are a type known as the "train station" toilet with wooden seats that are spring loaded to activate the flushing mechanism. The hoppers or bowls are essentially round with a hole directly in the center rather than the offset drain of residential toilets. They appear to be enameled metal instead of porcelain. The tanks on these "train station" fixtures are also unusual round containers called "pill box" style that are mounted right above the spring device of the seat.

The full basement of the building has been used for recreation space in the past though at present the poor foundation and floor conditions have precluded any recent use. Access to the basement is by an exterior metal bulkhead which replaced an older one after the 1980s and by an interior stair. The interior stairs, which are entered from the front vestibule, have original plywood

wainscoting along them and at the bottom there is a small vestibule created by a wood board wall with a door to the bulkhead on the south and a door to the main basement on the north. There is an old pool table in the northern section lighted by east elevation windows. Nearer the front is a large furnace with forced air duct system and an old wood stove that is no longer attached to any chimney. The floor is a floating concrete pad that is very badly cracked and buckling. The present foundation wall on the west is largely cracked, original concrete with more recent (1975) concrete buttresses built against it. The northern end of this western wall is newer concrete replaced in 1975 and topped by concrete block above grade. The entire northern wall appears to be newer, 1975 concrete topped by concrete block. The eastern wall appears to be repaired original concrete that is now considerably out of plumb. It should be noted that in the 1950s, and again in 1974, the 1937 school building was having foundation problems similar to the 1925 school that preceded it on this site, which had foundation problems within 10 years of construction. The foundation was repaired and partially replaced in 1975 but is again quite deteriorated and unstable. This history suggests a site or drainage issue that has not yet been addressed.

The 1937 Root School on Union Village Road in Norwich, Vermont, is an example of the One-Room School property type and meets the registration requirements as stated in the *Educational Resources of Vermont* Multiple Property Documentation Form. The Root School is architecturally and historically significant at the state and local levels as a very good example of a one-room school built in the second quarter of the 20th century. It is not only rare as a relatively late example of a one-room schoolhouse but its level of architectural integrity – both exterior and interior – is outstanding. This is quite rare for a property type that was commonly sold as private homes, stores or offices after 1945, and as a result significantly altered to accommodate new uses. After educational use ceased in 1945, the Root School became a community clubhouse and is notable and significant as a one-room rural school that retains its original classroom interior. It is also architecturally significant as a very good example of the restrained Colonial Revival style that used only one or two small, stylistic elements and is typically seen in rural schools. At the Root School, for example, the classical entry porch highlights an otherwise plain building.

According to the Multiple Property Documentation Form for Educational Resources in Vermont, "*few one room schoolhouses survive in their original use and fewer survive in their original condition.*" Those still in use as schools had to meet stringent code changes of the later 20th century and those that were no longer schools were often heavily altered on the interior to accommodate new uses. The Root School is remarkably intact, with its original exterior and interior features unchanged.

The Root School building is representative of the one-room schoolhouses built to carry out Vermont's progressive 1777 Constitution, which made Vermont the first state in the nation to authorize public education. Norwich responded vigorously to this challenge, and by 1781 Norwich built its first school and in 1785 divided the town into districts. The first record of Town supervision of the schools appears in 1825. By 1836 there were twenty such school districts in Norwich, with 774 students being taught in these one-room schoolhouses and a town population of 2,316. In 1855, the Doton map of Norwich shows sixteen rural schoolhouses and two village schoolhouses. The 1869 Beers map of Norwich shows eighteen numbered school districts including the village with no numbers corresponding to 15 or 16 indicating some consolidation. The Childs Gazetteer for Windsor County reported that there were 17 districts in 1882. In 1888, the two village districts (#1 and #20) were consolidated[1].

In 1892 the district system was largely abolished by Vermont state law, and the town system put in place. Even after the 1892 law and the construction of new consolidated, graded schools such

[1] Goddard, M.E. & Henry V. Partridge, *A History of Norwich Vermont*. Hanover, N.H.: The Dartmouth Press, 1905, p.106.

as the Norwich Village School in 1898, schools in outlying districts, such as the Root District, also continued to serve their areas even well into the 20th century.

In 1904, the State Board of Health also became involved in school regulation and set standards for sanitation, lighting, plumbing, and ventilation in schools. Large banks of windows were added to older school buildings and those constructed new after this time - such as the Root District School - had banks of large windows as a distinguishing feature. The Board of Health established a school rating system based in part on the facilities.[2] By 1935, just before the Root School was built, requirements of achieving "standard" rating for a schoolhouse was a score of 150 out of 200 possible points with some items mandatory. One of the mandatory criteria was having natural light coming in only from the left or left and rear of the pupils. A criteria requiring a "3/4 score" was that the area of glazing (windows) had to equal to one fifth of the school's floor area. Other criteria included: adequate heating and ventilating such as a jacketed stove plus window ventilators or a ventilating heater, sanitary and well-appointed outhouses or toilets, and at least sixteen linear feet of blackboards. A "Superior" rating could only be achieved by attaining a score of 175 out of 200. The rating checklist went well beyond the building and facilities and included requirements for books, furniture, equipment, teachers, pupil attendance and appearance, and community factors such as salary and living conditions for the teacher.[3] In the early 1920s, considerably more state aid for school upgrade and new construction aided towns in "standardizing" their schools. This continued into the 1930s and 1940s with the bar rising ever higher to be eligible for the capital improvement funding. A regularly issued pamphlet by the Vermont Board of Education called "*Rural Schools of Vermont and Their Improvement*" illustrated the rating process, described recommended improvements, gave a sample score card and floor plans, and also provided examples of schools that were upgraded to "Standard" by the addition of banks of windows and other improvements. The pamphlet included extensive discussion about ventilation and heating systems and sanitary facilities. Root School's elaborate ventilation system is an example of the type suggested in the state's periodic bulletins on standardization of rural schools.

By 1936, twenty-three of the twenty-nine school buildings in the new union Orange-Windsor state school district, which included Norwich, were "standardized." The fact that the five towns of this district had twenty-nine school buildings is evidence that the rural schools were still very much in use. Though any child in Norwich could attend the village school after 1898, there were still eight one-room schoolhouses in operation in Norwich in 1935. By 1938 this had been

[2] The following information is from published rating sheets and bulletins on rural schools distributed by the Vermont State Board of Education for the years 1920-1953.
[3] Vermont State Board of Education, "*Rural Schools of Vermont and Their Improvement,*" Bulletin No. 2, 1922, Montpelier, Vt: Capital City Press, pp. 35-38.

reduced to only five and the trend would continue until 1951 when the last one-room school closed[4]. In 1952 a long-discussed addition was completed to the seriously over-crowded village school to accommodate all students.[5]

The last five one-room schools were Root, Beaver Meadow, Pompanoosac, Turnpike, and New Boston. Today only the Root and the Beaver Meadow schoolhouses – both used by community groups – remain with their original exteriors and interiors remarkably intact. The others are either private homes or were burned and lost. The Root schoolhouse's level of preservation is fairly rare according to the Educational Resources of Vermont Multiple Property Documentation Form.

History of Root School

Established as District #5 in the early 19th century, the location of the District 5 school changed over time. In maps from1855 and 1869, School #5 was shown about one half mile south of the Four Corners intersection down Goodrich Four Corners Road. According to a recent article by Peter H. Brink about the Beaver Meadow and Root schools:

> "The first reference to a Root District School House (District #5) is noted in the Town Report of 1865 to wit: *"School the worst Ever seen. No winter school, a dismal shell of a house on a public road..."* But the 1867 Report indicates real progress: *"...now a good school-house, well furnished...Both summer & winter terms were equally successful..."* Yet by 1874 the Report states, *"There can never be a Quiet, progressive school in this house, until the present desks are used for kindling wood, and more suitable ones put in their place."* Apparently students from this area attended other schools until 1908 when the Town Report clearly includes the "Root School." Later reports note ten students in 1909, grades 1st -6th, and 14 students in 1917."

School reports from 1921 noted the Root School's plaster was in poor condition and blackboards needed replacing. The 1924 report noted that the new school at Beaver Meadow was Norwich's first rural school to achieve a "standard rating and that "the people in the Root District have taken a great interest in their school and are working to have it standardized." Also mentioned in the same report was that the state had contributed considerably to the new school at Beaver Meadow and that there should be money available for next year. The state's increased funding and focus on bringing schools up to a "standard" level at this time likely spurred the Root

[4] Unpublished draft chapter on education in upcoming History of Norwich, Norwich Historical Society, 2012
[5] Ibid

District to build a new building instead of repairing the old one. A new school was built in 1925. According to a newspaper account of the dedication from October 8, 1925, the new Root District school building achieved the state's "standard" rating – becoming the second rural school in Norwich to do so. According to State Board of Education biennial reports, it was even upgraded the following year to a "Superior" school. According to Norwich resident Bob Ladd, whose grandmother taught in the Root School before 1924, the schoolhouse has been located on its current site on Union Village Road just northeast of the Goodrich Four Corners intersection since at least that time. As such, the present Root School is at least the third school building to occupy this site since the early 1900s.

In 1935, school directors noted in their annual report that the foundation and underpinning of the relatively new, ten-year-old, Root school building already needed repair. However, the school burned down in 1936 and school for the district students was held in makeshift locations for one year while a new building was constructed. The new school was finished in 1937 with the help of a $2,500 insurance settlement and a state contribution. It was a more modern, simple design with a square footprint, pyramid roof and clean Colonial Revival details.

The school directors' report of 1938 reported: "*The Root schoolhouse which was lost by fire has been replaced by a fine, modern school building from the plans and according to the specifications furnished by the State Department of Education. At the dedication exercises the Deputy Commissioner stated that he had received a request from a person in another state to name a school to visit which would exemplify the Vermont school improvement work. He went on to say that he had listed the Root school along with three or four others as being a fine example of this work.*"

The following year (1939) the school directors' report indicated that "*it should be said at the outset that the five one-room buildings are, on the whole, in excellent condition. With the work at the Root school completed, all are rated standard or superior. Three have modern classroom furniture, four have electric lights, and one has spring water and flush toilets.*"

When the rebuilt Root School opened in 1937 it was rated a "Standard" school and was the one with electricity, spring water and flush toilets. Soon thereafter it achieved the rating of "Superior" by upgrading its furniture. The 1940 report of the school directors noted for the year 1939: "*The provision of new universal desks and seats at the Root district completes the requirements for a state approved superior school. A superior plate has been granted from the State Department of education and has been attached to the building.*"

The new 1937 Root schoolhouse was quite different from the previous one, and its floor plan included a set of smaller spaces alongside the main classroom. This innovation allowed flexibility in accommodating separate groups of students if necessary and also provided space for interior flush toilets. The Beaver Meadow School, also in Norwich, had been built in the older style in 1922 was renovated in 1940 with a new addition on one side that provided the same set of smaller rooms (toilets and a stage) to the building. Both the Beaver Meadow and Root schoolhouses – which are both well-preserved today – have this unusual feature of a recessed stage on one side of the single large classroom. Stages were features usually only found in larger, graded schools. In the Root building, the stage is about 8" higher than the main floor and in a recessed alcove framed by a square archway. The stage can be accessed by side rooms and doors as well as from the main opening giving flexibility on using it as a separated space. This configuration was roughly copied in the 1940 addition to the Beaver Meadow School.

Despite the new "superior"-rated school building, enrollment at the Root District and several other rural districts in town declined substantially in the following several years. The phenomenon of school attendance shifting toward the village school and away from the one-room districts caused the school board to study the problem in the early 1940s. They looked at several options including transporting children into districts such as Root where the facilities were good but attendance was low. This was tried with little success in the Beaver Meadow district according to a school director's report. World War II also put pressure on the supply of teachers throughout the state which made maintaining schools with few pupils increasingly difficult. By 1945, with only four students enrolled, the Root School ceased operation and was closed.

The 1945 "*Preliminary Report of the Committee to Investigate the Future Needs of the School Facilities of the Town of Norwich*" listed lack of space in the village school and deteriorated physical condition of most school facilities as the main two problems. It was also noted that attendance at the rural schools had been falling over the past five years with Root recently closed due to low enrollment and the highest projected enrollment for 1946 in the rural schools was only thirteen at Pompanoosac. In fact, the two rural schools with the highest projected enrollment: Pompanoosac and New Boston (9) were also the two in the worst physical condition while the closed school (Root) was in excellent condition. The committee listed several alternatives for short term solutions: 1) force all students living near a rural school to attend that school regardless of grade and whether they had been attending the village school; to use the Root school for one or two grades from the village school and transport them to Root; to transport all Lewiston pupils to the Turnpike or Root schools; or 2) Transport 7th and 8th grades from village school to Hanover Junior High; to transport Lewiston pupils to Hanover regardless of grade; or 3) move the closed Root school to Lewiston or to the village; or 4) Provide another

school room in Tracy Memorial Hall on the present stage. Long term plans were to study the options of reconditioning and possibly enlarging the village school with or without the continued use of the rural schools. The committee's recommendations for the short term were to transport some pupils living near the Turnpike school to it and to transport some of the village pupils to Hanover. Root was apparently not re-opened or re-used as a school.

Over the decades several community groups have actively used the Root School. In 1952 the Root District Game Club secured the quit-claim deed from the School Board and used the school for pot-luck suppers and recreation. About 1960 the Riding Club made the School House a gathering place amidst family trail rides. In 1974 the Game club, which was no longer able to keep the building insured on its own, met with Root District neighbors who joined and raised the money for insurance and some needed repairs. Eventually this new group changed the name and focus to the Root District Community Club. They used the schoolhouse for practice square dances, weekly roller skating, suppers, holiday gatherings, and birthday parties such as Olympic Gold Medalist Hannah Kearney's 13th in 1999. It functioned as a community center for many years but its use and support faded by the mid-1990s. In 2000-05 the Club was revived and some repair and maintenance work was accomplished. The Preservation Trust of Vermont helped with a Condition Assessment; the Boy Scouts painted the exterior; and volunteers replaced the roof as well as sanded and refinished the floors. After a few more years the effort to maintain the building declined, but is now being reborn in 2012 by the current volunteer group.

The Root District School is a wonderfully well-preserved example of a 20th century "Superior" grade one room rural schoolhouse. Its interior and exterior integrity and its pristine rural setting are rare and significant in Vermont.

Bibliography

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Goddard, M.E. and Henry V. Partridge. *A History of Norwich, Vermont.* Hanover, N.H.: The Dartmouth Press, 1905.

Ladd, Bob, Email Interview by Bill Aldrich with help from Brenda Ladd, August, 2012

Norwich Historical Society: photographs and records, "*Schools in Norwich,*" a draft manuscript on schools for upcoming history.

Norwich Town Clerk's Office, various notes and documents on file, town reports, land records.

periodbath.com

Root District Game Club & Root District Community Club – archives and minutes

Vermont State Department of Education. *Biennial Report of the State Board of Education.* Rutland, Vt.: Tuttle Publishing Co., 1922, 1924, 1926, & 1938.

Vermont State Department of Education. "*Rural Schools of Vermont and Their Improvement*," a bulletin issued by the State Board of Education in 1922, 1925, and 1929.

Vermont State Department of Education. Unpublished records and "Rural School Rating Sheets" for 1922, 1925, 1929, 1935, and 1953.

Verbal Boundary Description

The Root District School is also known as 987 Union Village Road, located on the west side of Union Village Road a short distance north of the intersection with Goodrich Four Corners Road in Norwich, Vermont. The property contains 0.33 ± acres immediately surrounding the school and is known as tax parcel # 11-58-01.

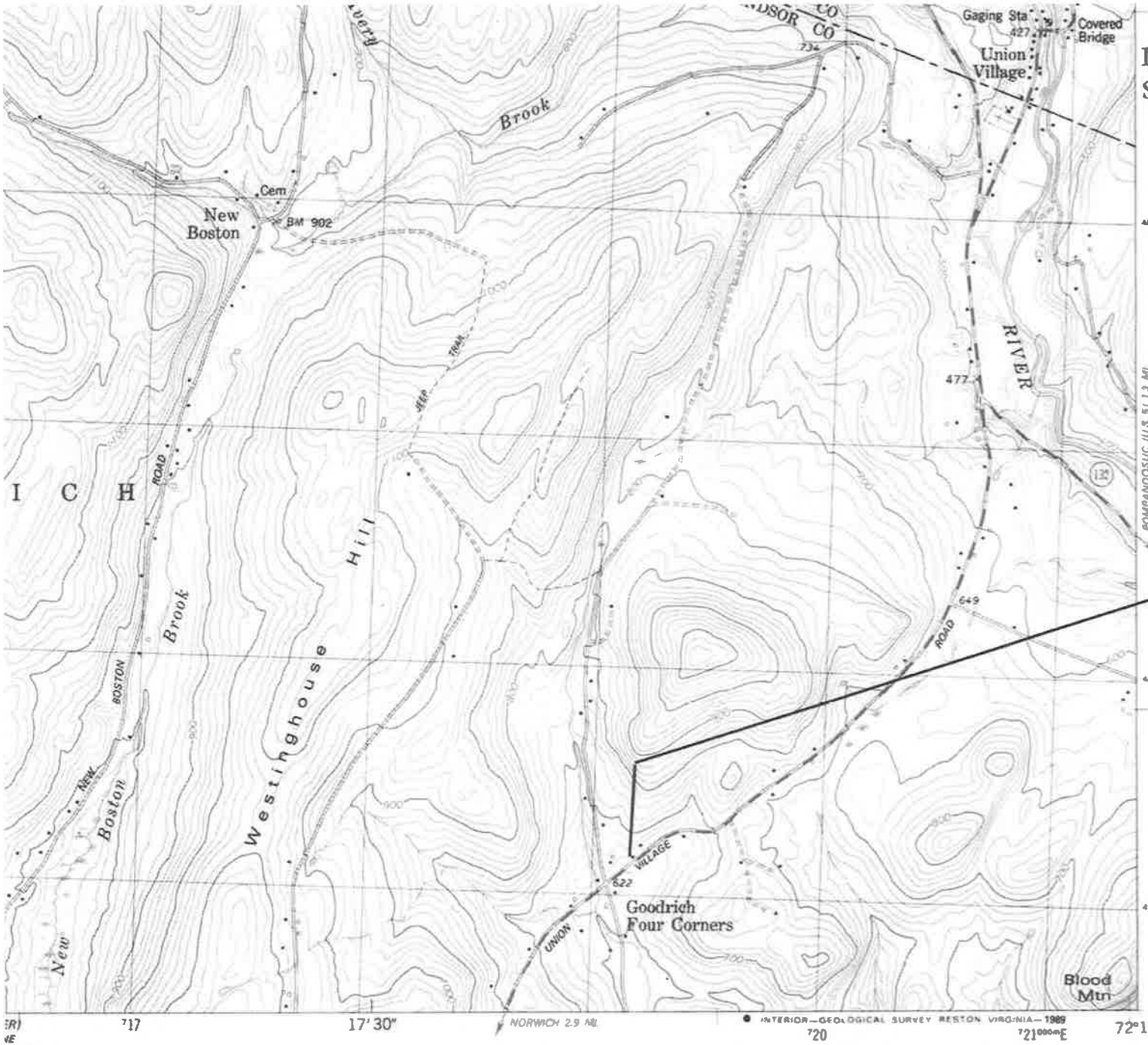
Boundary Justification

The present property boundary, used as the National Register boundary, is the original property boundary for the Root District School.

Location Map
Root School
987 Union Village Road,
Norwich, Windsor Co., Vermont

Lat.: 43° 45' 22.17" N
Lon.: 72° 16' 37.35" W

Detail: South Stafford Quadrangle
Scale 1:24,000; date: 1981/1983



Root School
Norwich, Windsor Co., Vermont
UTM: 18 0719175E 4848170N

USGS NMD HISTORICAL MAP
MAY 1 3 1989
REC'D FILE COPY

24 000

1 MILE

4000 5000 6000 7000 FEET

1 KILOMETER

VAL 20 FEET
ICAL DATUM OF 1929

ROAD CLASSIFICATION

Primary highway, hard surface

Light-duty road, hard or improved surface

Secondary highway, hard surface

Unimproved road

Interstate Route

U. S. Route

State Route

Photograph Labels

The following information is the same for all photographs:
Root School
Norwich, Windsor County, Vermont
Digital images are on file at the Vermont Division for Historic Preservation

Photograph Number	Description	Date	Credit
1 of 15	Goodrich Four Corners with Root School near center to right of road, view looking south	n.d.	*courtesy: Norwich Historical Society*
2 of 15	Root School with playground and open fields, view looking northeast	n.d.	*courtesy: Norwich Historical Society*
3 of 15	Root School view looking northwest	c.1940	*courtesy: Norwich Historical Society*
4 of 15	Root School and parking area with Union Village Road, view looking north	8/27/2012	L. Papazian
5 of 15	Goodrich Four Corners with Root School on far left, view looking northwest	8/27/2012	L. Papazian
6 of 15	Farm in Goodrich Four Corners, view looking Southeast from Root School	8/27/2012	L. Papazian
7 of 15	Root School front façade (south) and east elevation, view looking north	8/27/2012	L. Papazian
8 of 15	Root School east elevation, view looking northwest	7/09/2012	L. Papazian
9 of 15	Detail front (south) façade, view looking north	7/09/2012	L. Papazian
10 of 15	Root School rear (north) and west elevations, view looking southeast	12/03/2012	L. Papazian
11 of 15	Front vestibule, view looking north	7/09/2012	L. Papazian

Photograph Number	Description	Date	Credit
12 of 15	Classroom with stage, kitchen/cloakroom, and toilet room, view looking southwest	7/09/2012	L. Papazian
13 of 15	Classroom, view looking southeast	7/09/2012	L. Papazian
14 of 15	Classroom, view looking north	7/09/2012	L. Papazian
15 of 15	Detail of school/train station type toilet with pillbox tank	7/09/2012	L. Papazian

Root School, Norwich, Windsor Co., Vermont
Photograph #1 of 15
Goodrich Four Corners with Root School near center to right of road, undated historic view, looking south
(Courtesy Norwich Historical Society)

VT_Windsor Co_Root School_0001.tif

Root School, Norwich, Windsor Co., Vermont
Photograph #2 of 15
Root School with playground and open fields, undated view c. 1940, looking northwest
(Courtesy Norwich Historical Society)

VT_Windsor Co_Root School_0002.tif

Root School, Norwich, Windsor Co., Vermont
Photograph #3 of 15
Root School, undated historic view c. 1940, looking northwest
(Courtesy Norwich Historical Society)

VT_Windsor Co_Root School_0003.tif

Root School, Norwich, Windsor Co., Vermont
Photograph #4 of 15
Root School and parking area with Union Village Road, view looking north

VT_Windsor Co_Root School_0004.tif

Root School, Norwich, Windsor Co., Vermont
Photograph #5 of 15
Goodrich Four Corners with Root School on far left, view looking northwest

VT_Windsor Co_Root School_0005.tif

Root School, Norwich, Windsor Co., Vermont
Photograph #6 of 15
Farm in Goodrich Four Corners , view looking southeast from Root School

VT_Windsor Co_Root School_0006.tif

Root School, Norwich, Windsor Co., Vermont
Photograph #7 of 15
Root School front facade (south) and east elevation, view looking north

VT_Windsor Co_Root School_0007.tif

Root School, Norwich, Windsor Co., Vermont
Photograph #8 of 15
Root School east elevation, view looking northwest

VT_Windsor Co_Root School_0008.tif

Root School, Norwich, Windsor Co., Vermont
Photograph #9 of 15
Stair and porch block, view looking north

VT_Windsor Co_Root School_0009.tif

Root School, Norwich, Windsor Co., Vermont
Photograph #10 of 15
Root School rear (north) and west elevations, view looking southeast

VT_Windsor Co_Root School_00010.tif

VT_Windsor Co_Root School_0011.tif

VT_Windsor Co_Root School_0012.tif

VT_Windsor Co_Root School_0013.tif

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VT_Windsor Co_Root School_0015.tif

Root School, Norwich, Windsor Co., Vermont
Photograph #1 of 15
Goodrich Four Corners with Root School near center to right of road, undated historic view, looking south
(Courtesy Norwich Histroical Society)

Root School, Norwich, Windsor Co., Vermont
Photograph #10 of 15
Root School rear (north) and west elevations, view looking southeast

Root School, Norwich, Windsor Co., Vermont
Photograph #2 of 15
Root School with playground and open fields, undated view c. 1940, looking northeast
(Courtesy Norwich Histroical Society)

Root School, Norwich, Windsor Co., Vermont
Photograph #3 of 15
Root School, undated historic view c. 1940, looking northwest
(Courtesy Norwich Histroical Society)

Root School, Norwich, Windsor Co., Vermont
Photograph #4 of 15
Root School and parking area with Union Villlage Road, view looking north

Root School, Norwich, Windsor Co., Vermont
Photograph #5 of 15
Goodrich Four Corners with Root School on far left, view looking northwest

Root School, Norwich, Windsor Co., Vermont
Photograph #6 of 15
Farm in Goodrich Four Corners , view looking southeast from Root School

Root School, Norwich, Windsor Co., Vermont
Photograph #7 of 15
Root School front facade (south) and east elevation, view looking north

Root School, Norwich, Windsor Co., Vermont
Photograph #8 of 15
Root School east elevation, view looking northwest

Root School, Norwich, Windsor Co., Vermont
Photograph #9 of 15
Detail front (south) facade, view looking north

Root School, Norwich, Windsor Co., Vermont
Photograph #11 of 15
Front vestibule, view looking north

Root School, Norwich, Windsor Co., Vermont
Photograph #12 of 15
Classroom with stage, kitchen/cloakroom, and toilet room, view looking southwest

Root School, Norwich, Windsor Co., Vermont
Photograph #13 of 15
Classroom, view looking southeast

Root School, Norwich, Windsor Co., Vermont
Photograph #14 of 15
Classroom, view looking north

Root School, Norwich, Windsor Co., Vermont
Photograph #15 of 15
Detail of school/train station type toilet with pillbox tank