NPS Form 10-900 OMB No. 1024-0018 (Expires 5/31/2012)

RECEIVED 2280
JAN 10 2014
NAT. REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

21

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 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. **Place additional certification comments, entries, and narrative items on continuation sheets if needed (NPS Form 10-900a).**

1. Name of Property

historic name Sirna, Anthony and Allison Studio

other names/site number

2. Location

street & number 60 Way #4 ☐ not for publication

city or town Wellfleet ☐ vicinity

state Massachusetts code MA county Barnstable code 001 zip code 02667

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 at the following level(s) of significance:

___ national X statewide X local

Signature of certifying official/Title: [illegible], County FPO

Date: January 10, 2014

State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government: National Park Service

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

Signature of commenting official: Brona Simon

Date: 9/20/12

Title: SHPO

State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government: Massachusetts Historical Commission

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:)

Signature of the Keeper: Patrick Andrus

Date of Action: 2/25/2014

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:) _____

_____ _____

Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

5. Classification

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

- [ ] private
- [ ] public - Local
- [ ] public - State
- [X] public - Federal

Category of Property
(Check only **one** box.)

- [X] building(s)
- [ ] district
- [ ] site
- [ ] structure
- [ ] object

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

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1	0	buildings
0	0	district
0	0	site
0	0	structure
0	0	object
1	0	**Total**

Name of related multiple property listing
(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing)

Mid-Twentieth-Century Modern Residential Architecture on Outer Cape Cod 1929 - 1979

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions.)

DOMESTIC – single dwelling

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions.)

DOMESTIC – single dwelling

7. Description

Anthony and Allison Sirna Studio
Name of Property

Barnstable County, MA
County and State

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions.)

MODERN MOVEMENT

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions.)

foundation: CONCRETE

walls: WOOD: weatherboard, shingle

roof: OTHER: Tar and gravel

other:

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance of the property. Explain contributing and noncontributing resources if necessary. Begin with **a summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, setting, size, and significant features.)

Summary Paragraph

The Sirna Studio (LCS No. 787470) is a compact, recreational cottage and art studio designed in the Modern style by architect Victor Civkin for Anthony and Allison Sirna of New York in 1960 and completed in 1961. The studio is located in a remote section of Wellfleet and is within the boundaries of the Cape Cod National Seashore. It has a simple one-story, flat-roofed form that is notable for its convex, glazed facade wall, which opens the building toward the ocean and provides panoramic views. The structural system consists of a wood platform frame set on a concrete block foundation and an informal aesthetic is conveyed through unpainted wood plank and shingle sheathing. The mass of the building is pulled forward by a deep, angled awning and patio with a curved edge that echoes the convex wall. Multi-colored flagstone flooring inside the house continues past the glazed wall to an outdoor patio, creating a seamless transition between the interior and exterior.

Narrative Description

Setting

The Sirna Studio property is a 1-acre waterfront lot located at the end of a private dirt road in the northeast corner of Wellfleet, which is lightly developed with single family seasonal homes of mid- to late-twentieth-century vintage. The house is sited atop a high bluff and faces northeast to maximize sweeping views of the Atlantic Ocean below. Dense scrub vegetation, including native dune plants, pitch pine and salt spray roses, covers the property and surrounding landscape. The natural brush is cut back approximately 2 feet from the building. The property is accessed by a narrow sand driveway that curves 200 feet east from the terminus of Way No. 4 toward the northwest side of the studio. A footpath on the opposite side of the studio extends about 300 feet east down to the beach.

Exterior

The Sirna Studio is an informal cottage constructed with a common wood-frame structural system and locally available building materials, which Civkin combined to produce a dynamic form through the incorporation of the curved facade curtain wall. Local builder Edward Whiting erected the studio according to Civkin's specifications in 1961. It has an unusual trapezoidal plan, with the long, curved (northeast) elevation measuring 48 feet in width and its rear (southwest) rectangular elevation measuring 27 feet long. The angled side walls are 18 feet deep. The flat roof is covered by a rolled asphalt surface and the exterior walls are sheathed with unpainted, vertically laid pine tongue-and-groove boards on the facade, northwest, and southwest elevations. Wood shingles cover the southeast elevation.

The convex facade wall is defined by a band of floor to ceiling glazing that consists of nine vertical bays containing a fixed, plate glass window and awning transom above. A glazed wood door of identical dimensions to the plate glass

windows is located in the third southeast bay and the window in the sixth bay has a higher sill than the others. The glazed band has visually prominent horizontal and vertical divisions, created by wide window and door frames. Bright white paint on the glazed portion of the facade contrasts with the natural-colored wood sheathing and surrounding landscape, and brings attention to the open quality of the window wall. A 6-foot-deep roof awning angles up away from the house above the glazed band and is supported by exposed 4-inch by 8-inch rafters that are aligned between each window bay. The awning is constructed of pine plank covered with asphalt paper and is tied in to the main roof of the house. Its outer edge is curved to match the shape of the facade wall and patio below. The open, flagstone patio spans the full width of the facade and extends more than 9 feet from the wall, providing 192 square feet of outdoor living space. The patio is constructed at the same level and of the same material as the floor inside the house. Two wood steps provide access to the northwest side, but the majority of the patio is flush with the surrounding terrain. A single, plank door is located near the steps at the northwest end of the facade.

The three secondary elevations are plain and incorporate limited glazing in the form of asymmetrically placed awning and one-over-one double-hung wood windows. A compact, approximately 2-foot by 9-foot shed addition is attached to the northwest elevation. It is covered by an asphalt-shingled shed roof that terminates several feet below the roofline of the house and is sheathed with vertically laid pine plank. The shed is accessed by a pine plank door that is centered on the northwest elevation and is blended with the plank sheathing. A brick and concrete block chimney on the exterior is flush with the southwest elevation wall and rises a few feet above the roof.

Interior

The interior of the studio contains 746 square feet and is organized as an open concept plan with efficiency-sized utility and sleeping spaces on the periphery. A trapezoidal-shaped central living room fills the majority of the studio and is defined by the glazed window band that forms its northeast wall. Multi-colored flagstone covers the floors throughout the house and the walls consist of drywall with simple, stained plank trim. The living room features exposed 4-inch by 8-inch rafters that appear to extend continuously past the facade wall. The lower ceiling height of the peripheral rooms is repeated in a slightly cantilevered ledge at the top of the three non-glazed walls, which is expressed as a thin horizontal plane. Pine accordion doors in these walls provide access to the peripheral closets and compact rooms. The southwest (rear) wall of the living room contains a wide brick hearth flanked by accordion doors that open into a closet and an approximately 5-foot-wide kitchenette. The kitchenette contains original formica countertops and a bank of wood cabinets painted turquoise blue. Pine board-and-batten on the living room wall flanks the kitchen door. The sides of the house include a bedroom and storage area to the southeast, and a bathroom and small closet to the northwest. Utility systems include a water heater within the kitchen cabinet, electric wall heaters, and electric outlets located in the floor and at the bottom of the walls. Artwork, including ocean landscapes, abstract images, and a portrait are hung in the living room.[i]

Alterations

Alterations to the Sirna Studio consist of slight modifications to exterior building elements completed during or after the late 1970s. The angled facade awning was originally a full shed roof that intersected with the main roof near the back (southwest) side of the house. When this portion of the roof was rebuilt, the same angle and overhang were maintained, achieving a similar aesthetic effect. The southeast elevation was altered through the removal of a vertical wood-slat privacy screen flanking the side of the patio, re-cladding with wood shingle, and the installation of two double-hung windows in new openings at the east corner of the house. The plate-glass window in the third northwest bay of the facade, which has a higher sill than the others, likely originally served as a glazed door. Alterations to the remaining two elevations include the small shed addition on the northwest wall of the house and the completion of cement parging on the portion of the brick chimney that extends above the roof. The outer wall of the chimney that is visible on the southwest (rear) elevation has been rebuilt with concrete block.

Integrity

[i] The artist of the original images hung in the house is unknown.

The Sirna Studio retains its original design concept as a compact, Modern style cottage and art studio planned to maximize ocean views. It remains on its original site high on a Cape Cod bluff above the Atlantic Ocean in a secluded natural setting. The unique trapezoidal plan of the building and its simple volume, which appears to burst open toward the waterfront, is intact. The studio retains its original interior layout and the majority of its original materials such as the accordion doors and flagstone flooring. Civkin's characteristic convex wall and visibly defined, white-painted window wall is intact and distinctly recognizable. The exterior alterations to the studio do not detract from its feeling as a mid-twentieth-century Modern efficiency cottage designed by Victor Civkin.

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.)

Property is:

- [ ] A Owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- [ ] 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.
- [X] G less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance
(Enter categories from instructions.)

RECREATION
SOCIAL HISTORY
ARCHITECTURE

Period of Significance
1961-1979

Significant Dates
1961: House constructed

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

N/A

Cultural Affiliation
N/A

Architect/Builder
Civkin, Victor (architect)
Whiting, Edward (builder)

Period of Significance (justification)

The period of significance for the Sirna Studio begins in 1961 when the house was erected, and extends to 1979, the end of the Mid-Twentieth-Century Modern Residential Architecture on Outer Cape Cod 1929 – 1979 MPDF. This timeframe encompasses the Sirna family's ownership of the property from 1961 to 1974 and continued occupancy through 1979.

Criteria Considerations (explanation, if necessary)

The end date of the period of significance meets Criteria Consideration G as part of the exceptional significance of the development of mid-twentieth-century Modern architecture on Outer Cape Cod, as discussed in the MPDF.

Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph (Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance and applicable criteria.)

The Sirna Studio is eligible for individual listing in the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A at the local level and Criterion C at the state level for its associations with the development of recreational residences, cultivation of a progressive social network, and dissemination of Modern style architecture on Outer Cape Cod during the mid-twentieth century. The building possesses significance under Criterion A in the areas of Recreation and Social History for its associations with the postwar, progressive, intellectual community that commissioned the construction of single-family, Modern style vacation houses in the underdeveloped peripheries of the Outer Cape towns. Under Criterion C, the building possesses significance in the area of Architecture as a distinctive representation of accomplished Eastern European émigré architect Victor Civkin's residential designs during the last decade of his career. Civkin influenced domestic design throughout the United States during his tenure as General Electric's chief architect and through his completion of approximately 500 private residential commissions. The Sirna Studio is a rare example of his limited work in Massachusetts and is one of six known residences he designed in the state.

The Sirna Studio meets the requirements for listing under the Mid-Twentieth-Century Modern Residential Architecture on Outer Cape Cod, 1929 – 1979 and Mid-Twentieth-Century Modern Residential Architecture in Massachusetts, 1929 – 1979 historic contexts; and property type Number F.2 Geometric as defined in the Mid-Twentieth-Century Modern Residential Architecture on Outer Cape Cod 1929 – 1979 Multiple Property Documentation Form (MPDF). The building exhibits the Geometric property type through its subtly dynamic, grounded form with obtuse-angled and convex walls and its visually contrastive pattern of bright white window muntins set against darker, natural colored wood sheathing. The house satisfies the registration requirements of the Geometric type through its association with nationally influential architect Victor Civkin and his application of Modern design principles. The house retains its original woodland setting with sweeping ocean views, form, structure, materials, plan, and finishes.

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

Area of Significance: Criterion A
Recreation and Social History

The construction of Anthony and Allison Sirna's studio exemplifies Cape Cod's thriving post-war seasonal housing market and an appreciation for Modern style design fostered by the community of urban professionals who vacationed there. Cape Cod's convenient regional access, scenic natural environment, and inherent recreational opportunities led to its establishment as a leisure destination in the late nineteenth century. In the following decades, the sublime, isolated qualities of the Outer Cape landscape made it an increasingly popular summer retreat among artists and urban intelligentsia with year-round residences in greater Boston or New York City, who formed a progressive seasonal community. The preexisting reputation of this industrious community, coupled with the national post-war building boom and emergence of tourism as the region's leading industry encouraged the development of approximately 160 Modern style single-family vacation houses on the Outer Cape in the mid-twentieth century.

Anthony and Allison Sirna's seasonal occupancy of the Outer Cape demonstrates the regional tourism patterns that contributed to the massive increase in postwar residential development. The Sirnas lived year-round in New York City, where Anthony Sirna (1924–1994) had a successful career as a financial advisor. His wife, Allison Sirna, pursued artistic interests (Halstead 2010; *New York Times* 1968). They simultaneously developed two separate properties in Wellfleet for their private recreational use. On October 12, 1960, the Sirnas commissioned architect Victor Civkin to design a vacation house (extant) fronting Long Pond and a nearby painting studio overlooking the Atlantic Ocean (Halstead 2010).[ii] Some earlier generation members of the mid-twentieth-century Outer Cape community considered the pond area a more suitable scenic location for a dwelling than the exposed wild landscape along the shoreline, and held the sentiment that one could visit the beach but live within the more tranquil, stable pond setting (Kohlberg 2010). The Sirnas and their Wellfleet neighbors, John H. Porter III (b. 1925) and Joyce K. Porter (1927–2004) of Newton, Massachusetts followed this practice

[ii] Information originated from review of the architect's project logbook.

by building their more primary vacation home on the pond and using the studio essentially as an outbuilding perched at the ocean's edge (Burke and Crisson 2004). John H. Porter III was Allison Sirna's brother (*The Herald of Randolph 2011*).[iii]

The pristine landscape of the coastline and forested kettle ponds provided ideal sites for Modern style houses designed to integrate interior and exterior living spaces. Much of this previously unimproved land was subdivided into residential parcels by former Cape Cod Chamber of Commerce president, Arthur L. Sparrow between 1946 and 1953 and individually developed during the 1950s and 1960s (Barnstable County Registry of Deeds 1950). The Porters purchased the land for their ocean view studio on September 1, 1960 and the Sirnas bought their studio property, located three lots north of the Porters, on November 3, 1960 (Barnstable County Registry of Deeds 1960). A few months later on March 6, 1961, the Sirnas purchased land on Long Pond immediately adjacent to the Porters for their main house. The Porters and Sirnas hired local contractor Edward T. Whiting to construct all four Modern style buildings in 1961. Building permits were filed consecutively beginning with the Sirna Studio on February 3, 1961 followed by the Porter Studio on March 14, and the Sirna and Porter houses on April 18 (Wellfleet Building Department 1957-1971).

A network of influential Modernist designers and several Modern vacation houses already existed on the Outer Cape when the Sirnas chose to build their residence and studio in the style. Long Pond was the site of a house designed by master architect Marcel Breuer in 1948 for his friend, painter and MIT professor, Gyorgy Kepes. Walter Gropius reportedly occupied or rented a preexisting house across the pond from Kepes during the period. The area between the ponds and coastline in Wellfleet included local designer-builder Jack Phillips' experimental Phillips-Kesselman House known as the "Paper Palace" (1936); Serge Chermayeff's Wilkinson House (1953); Olav Hammarstrom's own house (1952) and Tisza House (1960); and the Techbuilt Maserian/Wilkinson Cottage (1960). Anthony Sirna attended Harvard College where he may have become familiar with some of the patrons or architects developing Modern houses on the Outer Cape (*New York Times* 1968). Marcel Breuer opened his architectural firm in New York City in 1946, around the same time that Anthony Sirna graduated. Breuer lived year-round in the Modernist enclave of New Canaan, Connecticut from 1947 to 1980, which was in close proximity to Victor Civkin's Fairfield, Connecticut office. Civkin did not frequent Cape Cod but designed the Sirnas's houses there because of a preexisting relationship with them. Civkin had family ties to the Sirnas and previously worked on their house in Hastings, New York.

Construction of mid-twentieth-century Modern houses continued after the Sirna Studio was completed, placing it amidst a cluster of similarly conceived recreational residences. It sits adjacent to the Kohlberg House, designed by local builder Luther Crowell in 1961 for Harvard psychology professor Lawrence Kohlberg and his wife, Lucille, of Cambridge, Massachusetts. Ernest and Jane Vanderburgh of Westchester, New York originally owned the Modern house constructed on the lot located diagonal from the Sirna Studio, which was designed by their son, then Rhode Island School of Design (RISD) student Lawrence Vanderburgh in 1964. A model home designed by Hammarstrom and featured in *Women's Day Magazine* was constructed in close proximity to the Sirna Studio in 1967 and his Lifton House was constructed along Ocean View Drive south of the Sirna house in 1970. Three other Modern style houses were also erected around Long Pond by 1964, including developer/builder Luther Crowell's Howard House (1960), a Techbuilt house for the Hughes family (1961), and Harry Portnoy's Coser House (1964).

Area of Significance: Criterion C

Architecture

The Sirna Studio represents the residential work of nationally notable Modern architect Victor Civkin (1898–1968). Civkin's architecture reflects his interest in utilitarian efficiency influenced by his experience as a kitchen designer for General Electric and by Le Corbusier's design principles. The Sirna Studio is an exemplary expression of Victor Civkin's design paradigm late in his architectural career, when he was experimenting with curved forms. It incorporates his

[iii] John H. Porter III and Allison Sirna were born in St. Louis, Missouri to John H. Porter II and Frances Allison Porter. John Porter III had a successful Massachusetts –based career in psychology after graduating from Harvard University in 1948 and the School of Medicine at Washington University in 1952.

affinity for curvilinear contours in the convex facade wall and portrays his characteristic fenestration treatment, in the expansive window band defined by thick white-painted muntins arranged in a grid. The simple structural system of the house creates flexibility in the design as Le Corbusier advocated for, enabling the open floor plan and the creation of the glazed wall with uninterrupted views to the outdoors. Civkin's desire to design a welcoming, but functional interior is achieved through the use of informal materials and the arrangement of small sleeping and service-oriented spaces around the edges of an open central living room. The Sirna Studio is one of the smallest residences designed by Civkin and is one of 15 commissions he completed throughout Massachusetts before he died in 1968. His Massachusetts work consists of three industrial buildings, six residential renovations, and six houses. The two Sirna houses in Wellfleet represent Civkin's full collection of work on Cape Cod, although several vacation homes designed by Civkin are extant on Long Island in New York. A substantial collection of Civkin's work also remains throughout Fairfield County, Connecticut, including his home and studio.

Civkin achieved widespread success as the chief architect and lead kitchen designer for General Electric Corporation's (GE) Home Bureau. He is credited with developing the "triangle plan" concept for kitchen workspaces and with managing the design of approximately 50,000 technologically and functionally innovative kitchens in the United States during his employment at GE from 1932 and 1952 (Westport Preservation Alliance 2010). Civkin completed at least 900 private architectural commissions throughout his career including more than 500 houses, and reached the pinnacle of his independent portfolio after establishing a practice in the Modern architecture-rich Fairfield County area of Connecticut in 1941.

Victor Civkin grew up in Kiev, Ukraine where his father worked as a jewelry manufacturer and encouraged him to cultivate artistic interests. He studied at the Riga Polytechnic Institute, Ukrainian Academy of Art and the Military Academy in the late 1910s, before graduating from the Kiev Polytechnic Institute (KPI) in 1921 (AIA 1956:95; *New York Times* 1968; Westport Preservation Alliance 2010). KPI, a national university with a historic educational concentration in science and electrical/mechanical engineering, provided Civkin with a strong industrial design background. Civkin simultaneously served in the Imperial White Russian Army from 1917 to 1922, but escaped to Poland with his wife Bertha Voronchuck near the end of the Russian Civil War.[iv] In 1922, he immigrated to Chicago, Illinois where his mother-in-law lived, and began his professional architectural career as a draftsman for Gottchalk and Friedman (Westport Preservation Alliance 2010). Civkin remained in Chicago and gained experience working as the chief draftsman at the firm Dubin and Eisenberg from 1923 through 1932, while supplementing his income through private graphic art and design commissions (AIA 1956:95; 1962:118; *New York Times* 1968). His Chicago portfolio included contributions to several theaters, hotels, apartment houses, and storefronts (Whelan n.d.).

GE hired Civkin in 1932, at a critical moment in the corporation's development as a household product name. The GE Credit Corporation was established in the same year, offering long-term financing to mass consumers for the first time. Just two years prior, GE created a technologically progressive plastics department to explore the household uses of moldable plastic beyond electric insulation (General Electric 2010). GE's credit option increased attainability of newly invented electric appliances in high demand such as the Hotpoint stove (1926), electric range with automatic timer (1930), refrigerators (popular after 1945), and automatic washing machines (1947) (Ierley 1999:230, 245–247). GE sponsored a Young America Home competition in 1932 as part of their marketing campaign for new home amenities and Civkin served as a judge for the "best home of the future." Civkin's high profile GE assignments included designs for the interior of GE's displays at the Chicago and New York World's Fairs in 1933 and 1939 and redesign of the White House kitchen for President Franklin D. Roosevelt in 1935. Civkin moved with GE to Cleveland, Ohio in 1933, before relocating to the company's Bridgeport, Connecticut headquarters in 1937. During his 20-year tenure as GE's principal architect, Civkin designed several houses for GE executives and many of the company's buildings (*Architectural Forum* 1942a; FHDC 2008:6).[v] His designs for the GE Institute (1940) and Dispensary (1948) buildings involved accommodations for the spatial separation of employees and job applicants, and large groups of consumer-visitors (*Architectural Forum* 1940, 1945). The GE Institute included a 400-seat seat auditorium featuring an on-stage kitchen, exhibit space with model kitchens and equipment, and classrooms.

[iv] Victor and Bertha Civkin later had two daughters, Lora (Civkin) Alkon and Reina (Civkin) Schine

[v] Civkin also designed the GE Phenol Plant (1942) in Pittsfield, Massachusetts; GE Warehouse and Display Building (1950) in Cambridge, Massachusetts; GE Institute building in Ohio; and GE Wiring Plant (1941) in Maryland (Halstead 2010; *New York Times* 1968; Whelan n.d.).

Civkin's experience at GE elevated his architectural influence and placed him among the leaders of progressive mid-century design. Many of his building and interior planning designs were published in local newspapers and period journals such *Architectural Forum*, *American Home*, *House and Garden*, *American Builder*, *Better Homes and Gardens*, *Living*, and *Women's Home Companion* (AIA 1956:95; *Architectural Forum* 1940, 1942a, 1942b, 1945; *Bridgeport Post* 1958; *Bridgeport Sunday Post* 1960; Civkin 1948). He began his domestic design work at GE arranging kitchen layouts, but when the company grew and increased marketing, Civkin designed several demonstration homes. In 1942, the same year that GE developed the first American jet engine, Civkin contributed to an article on the contemporary house. He noted that ". . . the major difference between previously built small houses and the house of 194x is that the latter will be supplied complete with accessories and equipment. The kitchen area is comparatively large. We found, as a result of many surveys, that the housewife does many things in the kitchen besides cooking, and that a great many families want eating space in the kitchen" (*Architectural Forum* 1942a). He advised home consumers that kitchens should have a "homey atmosphere," but also accommodate easily accessible laundry facilities, work rooms, and reachable storage space (*New York Times* 1968).[vi] In 1948, GE tasked Civkin with developing a design for an all-electric "dream houses" nicknamed after the movie *Blandings Builds His Dream House*. Civkin designed the dream homes in both the Modern and Colonial Revival styles to appeal to a broad national consumer base. He noted in his project logbook that the houses were constructed in 73 towns across the United States (Halstead 2010).

While working for GE and accepting independent commissions, Civkin also served as a consultant on prefabricated housing for Houses Inc. (*Architectural Forum* 1942a). Like many of his Modernist colleagues, Civkin pursued an interest in small house planning throughout his career and strove to develop a construction system ". . . flexible enough to supply the client with desired variations and still have correlated designs." He published a small house design based on spatial modules with regular grids in the *Architectural Record* in 1948 that incorporated standardized prefabricated closet units as one method of decreasing construction costs. He explained that "The architect, using some system like this, could afford to supply the builder with variation of plans without excessive drafting, thus removing the builder's temptation to design variations by himself" (Civkin 1948:122–123). Civkin also created groundbreaking handicapped-accessible designs decades before acceptance of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) building codes. He planned wheelchair-accessible kitchens for GE from 1949 to 1950, and achieved recognition of his Modern style Horizon House design in 1960, built on the campus of New York University's Medical Center as a model home for the physically disabled (*Bridgeport Sunday Post* 1960). Civkin authored two books about domestic design, *Today's Woman Prize Kitchens* (1952) and *Homes you can Build* (1953) (AIA 1956:95; 1962:118). In his role as a member of the Home Builders Association of Fairfield County, Connecticut in 1958, Civkin designed a model "Home of Progress" to ". . . acquaint future homeowners with new building features" (*Bridgeport Post* 1958). The 1,780 square-foot building was constructed in Trumbull, Connecticut, one-half mile from the Merritt Parkway that extends toward New York City. It featured a large living room ". . . with a fireplace and glass sliding doors leading to a curved patio overlooking a scenic area," an insulated concrete slab, garage, cathedral ceiling, built-in bookcases, and channel (track) lighting (*Bridgeport Post* 1958).

Shortly after relocating to Bridgeport, Connecticut with GE, Civkin built his own house in Fairfield, Connecticut in 1941 where he lived until his death. Civkin situated himself in a prime location for professional networking. The town of Fairfield is adjacent to Bridgeport, in commuting distance to New York City, and in close proximity to established concentrations of Modernist enclaves surrounding New Canaan and New Haven. Ukrainian native and KPI alumnus Igor Ivan Sikorsky (1889–1972), lived in the town of Easton, Connecticut, on the north border of Fairfield.[vii] Sikorsky is internationally recognized as an aviation pioneer who invented the first airliner in 1914, Pan-American flying boat in the 1930s, and American helicopter in 1939. He founded the Sikorsky Aircraft Corporation in 1923 in Roosevelt, New York in 1923 and located his Sikorsky Manufacturing Company in Stratford, Connecticut (on the east of Bridgeport) in 1929.

Civkin became a member of the New York chapter of the American Institute of Architects in 1938 and was a registered architect in eight states, including Connecticut, Massachusetts, New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Ohio, Illinois and Kentucky. He worked from his home on Ermine Street in Fairfield during the latter half of his career. Civkin's buildings

[vi] Civkin received two patents while working for GE on January 28, 1947 and October 31 1950, presumably for his kitchen layout concepts (USPTO 2010).

[vii] Sikorsky attended KPI from 1907–1908, earlier than Civkin, and immigrated to the United States in 1919.

display Le Corbusian International style origins through compositions of compact blocks, horizontal emphasis, right angles with occasional curved walls, and dematerialized corners (Morgan 2004:350–361). The C.W. LaPierre House in Niskayuna, New York, designed by Civkin in 1937 exhibited an additive Cubist form noticeably punched by corner window bands.

Civkin's Modern style houses typically consisted of long, low rectangular sections covered by a variety of low roof forms with deep overhangs forming thin horizontal planes, as expressed in the board-like roof of his Wolovnick House (1952) in Neponsit, New York. The houses often incorporated a cantilevered upper floor or interplay of awnings, porte-cochères and covered decks. These features are clearly demonstrated in the design of Civkin's own house (1941) and Levin House (1948) in Fairfield, Connecticut. Civkin innovatively manipulated the traditional porte-cochère in his 1965 design for an "aero plantation" in Sandy Ridge, North Carolina, in which the form of individual houses built for owners of private planes continued seamlessly into a wide "planeport." Civkin expressed windows as a highly visible exterior feature by arranging them in groups or bands and creating prominent grids of muntins and surrounds, painted white in contrast to darker cladding. Deck railings typically matched the color and regular grid of the window bands. Civkin used a variety of economic and regionally prevalent building materials such as stone, brick and vertical or horizontal plank siding. He met Le Corbusier's founding principles by designing houses with uninterrupted views to the outdoors, flexible floor plans, and facades unrestricted by the structural system. He believed that:

> Functional architecture is the architecture of the future in America because it is utilitarian. An intelligent architect should fit his design to his material. A modern house need not be built of block concrete to be modern. A modern functional factory can be as beautiful as a palace and a theater as beautiful as a church (Civkin quoted in Whelan n.d.).

Civkin designed his own house with staggered floor levels allowing for a ground-floor 'built-in' garage; and a long shed roof that eliminated 'wasted' attic space (*Architectural Forum* 1942b:186–187). The interior featured a serpentine display wall separating a living room and foyer, a galley kitchen, and magnets rather than latches on the doors (*Architectural Forum* 1942b:186–187; FHDC 2008:7).

The forms of Civkin's Modern style houses grew further from the International style as his career progressed, becoming less cubist and more elongated toward the end of his career. He also elaborated on the idea of curved corners or compact architectural elements frequently expressed in the 1930s. Civkin's Fox House (1948) in Hewlett Bay, New York is a low, narrow building with a slight gable roof, dramatized by a curved facade wall and continuous, thin cantilevered awning. Civkin initially conceived the design for his daughter's, Reina Schine's, house in Westport, Connecticut with a long concave facade and circular central living room protruding from the opposite elevation. When the house was completed in 1962 Civkin retained the curved line of the facade, but shortened its length and altered the shape of the living room to a rectangular form.

Developmental history/additional historic context information (if appropriate)

The Sirna family maintained ownership of their two Wellfleet properties through the 1970s. On June 10, 1974, they sold the Sirna Studio property to the National Park Service, but retained a 25-year use and occupancy agreement (Barnstable County Registry of Deeds 1960, 1974; NPS 2010). Anthony and Allison Sirna's daughter Meredith A. Sirna (b. 1949) of New York spent many summers in Wellfleet throughout her life (Sirna 2010). Anthony Sirna continued his financial career in New York City, serving in executive positions for the WUI-Xerox Corporation in 1979 and Ametek Incorporated and the American Securities Corporation of New York in 1986. He was widowed and remarried in 1986 to a financier from New Canaan, Connecticut (*New York Times* 1986).

The Sirnas sublet the use of the Sirna Studio to Rick Reinkraut of Waban, Massachusetts, on October 6, 1980 and to Rick Reinkraut and Jay Shapiro on October 21, 1999 (Barnstable County Registry of Deeds 1980). Reinkraut and Shapiro, now of Cambridge, Massachusetts continue to use the house today (NPS 2010).

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography (Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form.)

American Institute of Architects (AIA)

1956 American Architects Directory. R.R. Bowker, New York. Retrieved February 2010 from http://communities.aia.org/sites/hdoaa/wiki/Wiki%20Pages/1956%20American%20Architects%20Directory.aspx.

1962 American Architects Directory. R.R. Bowker, New York. Retrieved February 2010 from: http://communities.aia.org/sites/hdoaa/wiki/Wiki%20Pages/19626%20American%20Architects%20Directory.aspx.

Architectural Forum

1940 General Electric Institute, Bridgeport, Conn., Victor Civkin, Architect. *Architectural Forum* 72:360–362.

1942a The New House 194X. *Architectural Forum* 77:65–152.

1942b House in Fairfield, Conn. *Architectural Forum* 76:186–187.

1945 G.E. Dispensary. *Architectural Forum* 83:106.

Barnstable County Registry of Deeds

1950 Subdivision Plan of Land in Wellfleet, Arthur L. Sparrow, Engineer, December - 1950. Wellfleet Plan Number 17293-K. Barnstable County Registry of Deeds, Barnstable, MA.

1960 Deed from Eldridge E. Sparrow and Lillian Edwards to Anthony and Allison Sirna, November 3, 1960. Wellfleet Land Record Number 66944. Barnstable County Registry of Deeds, Barnstable, MA.

1974 Deed from Anthony Sirna to the United States of America, June 10, 1974. Wellfleet Land Record Number 186557. Barnstable County Registry of Deeds, Barnstable, MA.

1980 Sublease from Anthony Sirna to Rick Reinkraut, November 17, 1980. Wellfleet Land Record Number 271471. Barnstable County Registry of Deeds, Barnstable, MA.

Bridgeport Post

1958 Home Builders to Erect Model. *Bridgeport Post* 13 August. Bridgeport, CT.

Bridgeport Sunday Post

1960 Fairfield's Victor Civkin Designs Unique Model Home for Handicapped. *Bridgeport Sunday Post* 18 September:C5. Bridgeport, CT.

Burke, William, and Richard Crisson

2004 Massachusetts Historical Commission Building Inventory Form, Porter Cottage, Wellfleet, MA. On file, Massachusetts Historical Commission, Boston, MA.

Civkin, Victor

1948 A Simplified Small House Planning System. *Architectural Record* 101:122–123.

Fairfield Historic District Commission (FHDC)

2008 The Fairfield Historic Properties Report, March 2008: Victor Civkin Home and Studio, Fairfield, Connecticut, 1940. On file, Connecticut Commission on Culture and Tourism, Hartford, CT.

General Electric Company (GE)
2010 Innovation Timeline. Retrieved August 2010 from: http://www.ge.com/innovation/timeline/index.html.

Halstead, Mark
2010 Personal communication with Jenny Scofield, September 3, 2010.

Ierley, Merritt
1999 *The Comforts of Home: The American House and the Evolution of Modern Convenience*. Three Rivers Press, New York, NY.

Kohlberg, Lucille
2010 Personal communication with Jenny Scofield, September 3, 2010.

Morgan, William
2004 *The Abrams Guide to American House Styles*. Harry N. Abrams, Inc., New York, NY.

National Park Service (NPS)
2010 Land records and administrative files for Modern Style properties within the Cape Cod National Seashore. National Park Service, Waltham, MA.

New York Times
1968 Victor Civkin, 69, An Architect Dies. *New York Times* 15 April:43. New York, NY.

1986 Barbara Cushman Marries Executive. *New York Times* 21 December. New York, NY.

Sirna, Meredith
2010 Online book review post. Retrieved August 2010 from: http://www.amazon.com/Ptown-Art-Money-Outer-Cape/product-reviews.

The Herald of Randolph
2011 Dr. John H. Porter III. Obituary. *The Herald of Randolph*. Randolph, VT. Retrieved February 2011 from: http://www.ourherald.com/news/2010-11-18/Obituaries/o01.html.

United States Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO)
2010 Patent No. 2,528,211 (434/80) and 2,414,929 (312/296). Retrieved August 2010 from: http://www.patft.uspto.gov.

Wellfleet Building Department.
1957-1971 Building Permit Logbook. Town of Wellfleet Building Department, Wellfleet, MA.

Westport Preservation Alliance
2010 Victor Civkin Rediscovered 1898-1968. Exhibit curated by Morley Boyd and Michael R. Halstead AIA at Westport Historical Society, Westport, CT.

Whelan, Anne
n.d. Former Aide to Kerensky Heads G.E. Home Bureau. News clipping on display by Westport Preservation Alliance in "Victor Civkin Rediscovered 1898-1968" exhibit. Westport, CT.

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): _____

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 1.02
(Do not include previously listed resource acreage.)

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

	Zone	Easting	Northing
A	19	0417601	4645272
B			
C			
D			

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property.)

The property boundaries encompass the legally recorded lines of Lot 7, shown on Map 5, containing 1.02 acres.

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The boundaries include the house and full extent of the associated landscape features that contribute to the setting and appearance of the property.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Jenny Fields Scofield AICP/Architectural Historian and Virginia H. Adams/Sr. Architectural Historian
organization PAL date February 2011
street & number 210 Lonsdale Avenue telephone (401) 728-8780
city or town Pawtucket state RI zip code 02860
e-mail jscofield@palinc.com; vadams@palinc.com

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **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. Key all photographs to this map.

- **Continuation Sheets**

- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items.)

Photographs:

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map.

Name of Property: **Anthony and Allison** Sirna Studio

City or Vicinity: Wellfleet

County: Barnstable **State:** Massachusetts

Photographer: Virginia H. Adams

Date Photographed: December 10, 2009

Description of Photograph(s) and number:

Photo 1 of 5. View looking west at facade and southeast elevation.
Photo 2 of 5. View looking east at the Atlantic Ocean from the facade patio.
Photo 3 of 5. View looking southwest at facade.
Photo 4 of 5. View looking southeast at northwest elevation.
Photo 5 of 5. View looking southwest through facade wall at interior of house.

Property Owner:

(Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)

name National Park Service, Cape Cod National Seashore

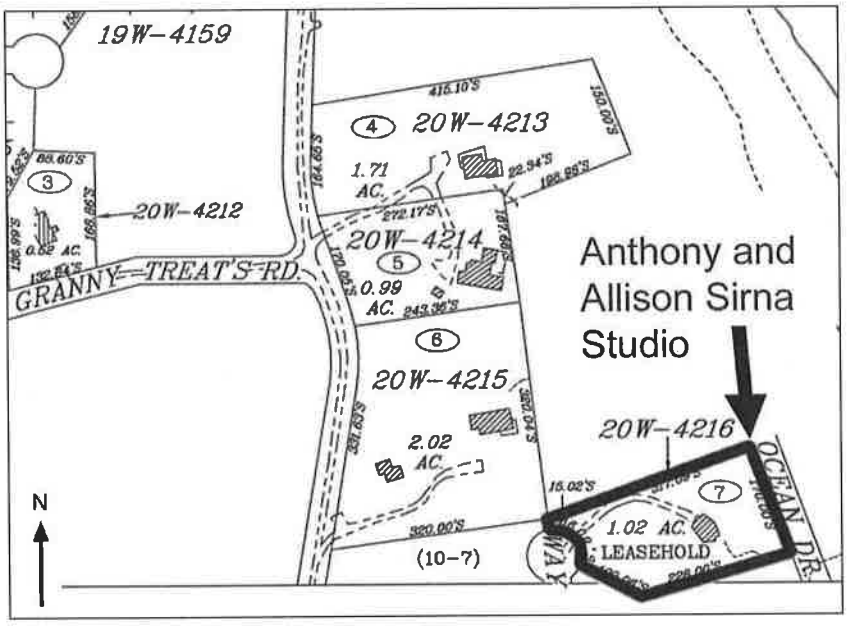
street & number 99 Marconi Site Road telephone (508) 349-3785

city or town Wellfleet state MA zip code 02267

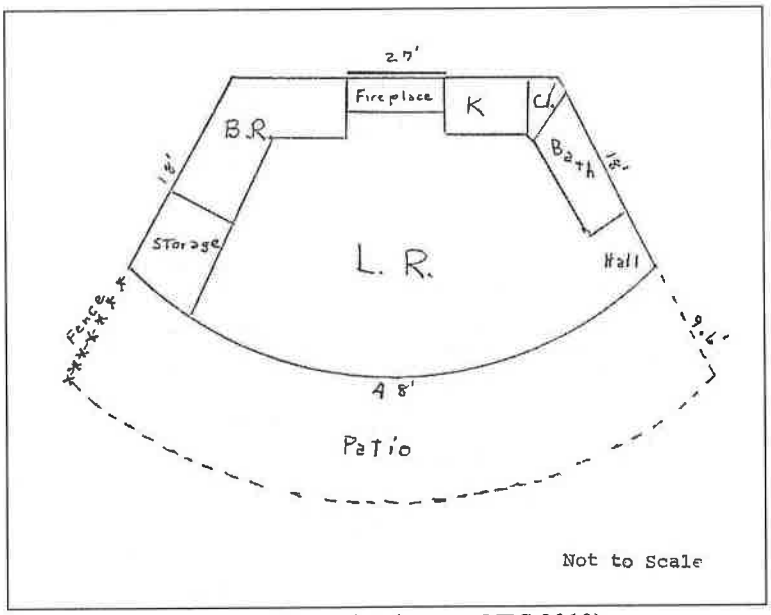
Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain 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 18 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.

Town of Wellfleet Assessor's Map Number 7

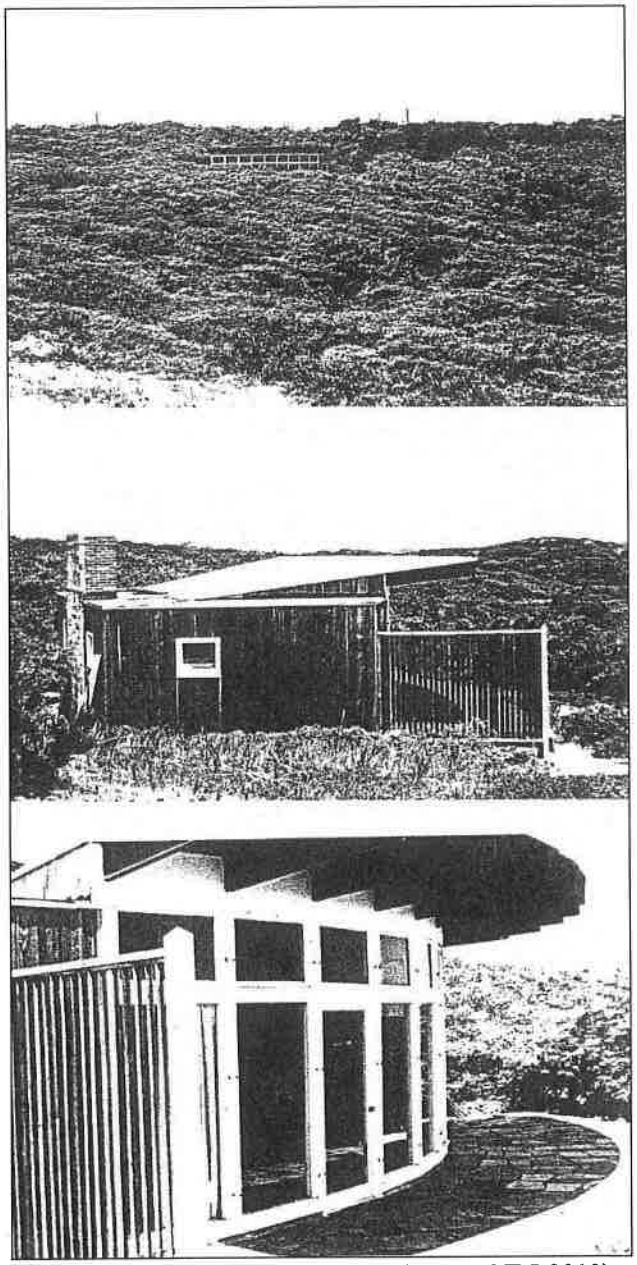


Floor Plan



Floor Plan (source: NPS 2010)

Historic Photographs



Historical photographs circa 1972 (source: NPS 2010).

UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
GEOLOGICAL SURVEY

COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS

WELLFLEET QUADRANGLE
MASSACHUSETTS—BARNSTABLE CO.
7.5 MINUTE SERIES (TOPOGRAPHIC)

Sirna, Anthony & Allison Studio
Wellfleet, Barnstable County, MA

UTM References
A. 19 0417601E 4645272N

Mapped, edited, and published by the Geological Survey

Control by USGS, USC&GS, and Massachusetts Geodetic Survey

Planimetry by photogrammetric methods from aerial photographs taken 1938. Topography by planetable surveys 1941. Revised from aerial photographs taken 1971. Field checked 1972

Selected hydrographic data compiled from USC&GS Charts 580 (1972), 581 (1971), and 1208 (1972). This information is not intended for navigational purposes

Polyconic projection. 1927 North American datum
10,000-foot grid based on Massachusetts coordinate system, mainland zone
1000-meter Universal Transverse Mercator grid, zone 19

UTM GRID AND 1972 MAGNETIC NORTH DECLINATION AT CENTER OF SHEET

SCALE 1:25 000

CONTOUR INTERVAL 10 FEET
DATUM IS MEAN SEA LEVEL
DEPTH CURVES AND SOUNDINGS IN FEET—DATUM IS MEAN LOW WATER
SHORELINE SHOWN REPRESENTS THE APPROXIMATE LINE OF MEAN HIGH WATER
THE MEAN RANGE OF TIDE IS APPROXIMATELY 7 FEET IN ATLANTIC OCEAN AND 10 FEET IN WELLFLEET HARBOR

THIS MAP COMPLIES WITH NATIONAL MAP ACCURACY STANDARDS
FOR SALE BY U. S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY
DENVER, COLORADO 80225, OR RESTON, VIRGINIA 22092
A FOLDER DESCRIBING TOPOGRAPHIC MAPS AND SYMBOLS IS AVAILABLE ON REQUEST

QUADRANGLE LOCATION

ROAD CLASSIFICATION
Primary highway, hard surface
Secondary highway, hard surface
Light-duty road, hard or improved surface
Unimproved road
Interstate Route · U. S. Route · State Route

CONVERSION SCALES

Feet	Meters
1	.3048
2	.6096
3	.9144
4	1.2192
5	1.5240
6	1.8288
7	2.1336
8	2.4384
9	2.7432
10	3.0480

To convert feet to meters multiply by .3048

To convert meters to feet multiply by 3.2808

WELLFLEET, MASS.
N4152.5—W6957.5/7.5

1972

AMS 6967 I NE—SERIES V814

ISBN 0-607-23403-2