NPS Form 10-900
United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service
National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

OMB No. 1024-0018

184

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NAT. REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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.

1. Name of Property

Historic name: Happy Hollow Recreation Center
Other names/site number: Happy Hollow Playground; Quarry House Playground
Name of related multiple property listing: N/A (Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing)

2. Location

Street & number: 4740 Wayne Avenue
City or town: Philadelphia State: Pennsylvania County: Philadelphia
Not For Publication: NA Vicinity: NA

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 ___ statewide X local

Applicable National Register Criteria: **___A ___B XC ___D**

Andrea MacDonald 3/10/2014

Signature of certifying official/Title: Date

Pennsylvania Historical & Museum Commission

State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

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

Signature of commenting official: Date

Title/State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:
✓ entered in the National Register
___ determined eligible for the National Register
___ determined not eligible for the National Register
___ removed from the National Register
___ other (explain:) _____

Joel Edson N. Beall 4.28.14

Signature of the Keeper **Date of Action**

5. Classification

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

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

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

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

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

Contributing	Noncontributing	
2		buildings
		sites
		structures
		objects
2	0	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions: RECREATION AND CULTURE/sports facility
Current Functions: RECREATION AND CULTURE/sports facility

7. Description

Architectural Classification

LATE 19TH AND 20TH CENTURY REVIVALS/Colonial Revival (recreation center)
No Style (1958 gymnasium)

Materials: (enter categories from instructions.)
Principal exterior materials of the property: Brick, Stone

Narrative Description

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

Summary Paragraph

Happy Hollow Recreation Center, located at 4740 Wayne Avenue in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, contains a one-and-a-half story recreation center built in 1911 and a one-and-a-half story gymnasium built in 1958. The buildings are located on over four acres of land, featuring a lower and upper level due to the unique topography that results from it being the site of a former quarry. The lower level contains the two buildings, basketball courts, ball field and playground. The upper level contains tennis courts and a community garden. The levels are connected by an original red brick walkway. The Colonial Revival 1911 recreation center and the 1958 gymnasium were built as recreation buildings and remain in use as a recreation center for the City of Philadelphia. The red brick three-part 1911 recreation center building with side wings features a main gable roof with hipped roofs on the wings, in addition to a prominent porch at the front entrance facing Wayne Avenue. The 1958 gymnasium sits southeast of the main recreation center building and connects via a covered walkway to the rear of the 1911 building. The gymnasium is a utilitarian-type rectangular structure, with exterior brick walls that are painted red, and one long row of connected windows on either side of the building at the roof line. The nominated boundary matches the legal parcel, occupying nearly an entire city block, stretching from Wayne Avenue in the north to Pulaski Avenue in the south. The location of Happy Hollow Recreation Center is urban, being located in the Germantown neighborhood of Philadelphia. Typical surroundings include row houses, churches and small businesses. Wayne Avenue is a major city street in the neighborhood and attracts a large amount of both vehicular and pedestrian traffic. Happy Hollow Recreation Center retains integrity, as the property and main building have not been significantly altered since opening in 1911, and have remained in constant use as a recreation center since opening day.

Narrative Description

The 1911 Happy Hollow Recreation Center building is of the Colonial Revival style, with a symmetrical façade and limited ornamentation, relying on the contrast between red brick and white woodwork for aesthetics. The building is visually separated into three sections, all built at the same time. For the

purpose of this architectural description, the center section of the building will be referred to as the main hall, and the sections of the building on either side will be referred to as the east and west wings. The entire building is constructed of red brick in a Flemish bond pattern with black headers, with projecting brick quoins on the front corners of the main hall. The red brick stands in contrast to the painted white window openings and pedimented front porch. The foundation is slightly projecting gray stone that rises about two feet from the ground around the entire building (Photo 1).

The prominent pedimented front porch features Tuscan order columns and pilasters with plain entablatures and unadorned capitals and bases, and a heavy modillion cornice. There are four concrete steps up from the sidewalk to the porch, and these steps have been carpeted over with a dark red utility material. The front door is six paneled with sidelights. The porch landing has slate edging with a diagonal herringbone brick pattern in the center. “Happy Hollow Playground” is spelled out in the center of the pedimented entry roof structure with slightly-raised letters (Photos 2, 3).

The roof of the one-and-a-half story main hall is gabled with end chimneys. The set-back one-story east and west wings have hipped roofs. All roofs are of red standing seam metal construction. There are six dormers on the roof of the main hall, with three in the front and three in the rear. They are all 12-light sash windows (in appearance) with low hipped roofs on top, except for the center dormer on the front of the building, which mimics the pedimented porch directly below it with a gabled roof and pilasters. The 12-light sash windows are actually painted onto pieces of plywood that have been fit into the window openings. They are painted to match the original window openings in appearance (Photos 4, 5).

The windows of the main hall are impressive 40-light sash windows with plain sills and stone splayed lintels with central keystones. There are six of these windows on the front of the main hall, with two on either side of the front door and one each where the main hall steps back to connect with the wings. There are four of these windows on the rear of the main hall, with two on either side of the rear exit door (Photo 4). The window frames are reportedly original to the building, with the glass panes replaced as needed over time. The windows found on the wings are much smaller to match the relative size of these wings, with 12-light sashes found in most of these window openings (Photo 6). The only deviation is a pair of 24-light sash windows in the rear of the east wing, which would have been mirrored on the west wing but has since been filled in (Photos 4, 7). There are nine window openings on the east wing, which match the architect’s drawing from 1910. The west wing had several window openings filled in over time, but the remaining windows and openings match those found on the east wing. Outside both of the wings is a bulkhead entrance to the below-ground cellar (Photo 6).

On the interior, the floor plan of the building remains relatively the same as the architect’s 1910 drawing, although the purpose of the rooms in either wing has changed in several cases. The main hall layout remains the same as it was designed, with one large open room used for recreational activities. Originally it was used as a basketball court, but currently there is a boxing ring occupying approximately one half of the room (Photo 8). On either side of the main hall are the wings, which were originally separated into the Boy and Girls wings. In both wings the location of the restroom remains the same as the original plan. Where there were originally showers in each wing, there is now a computer room (east wing) and kitchen (west wing). Where there were originally dressing rooms in each wing, there are now storage closets. The original attendant office in the east wing is still in use as an office. The original attendant office in the west wing is now used as a storage closet.

The appearance of the interior of the Happy Hollow Recreation Center remains similar to its original appearance. The ceiling in the main hall remains exposed with steel roof trusses (Photo 8), and the walls remain faced with white enameled bricks to a height of about eight feet, after which the walls are finished in plastered soapstone. The floor throughout the entire building is gray vinyl tiles, which were installed around 2000. A mural has been painted on the east wall. Much of the original chestnut woodwork remains; it has been painted a maroon color in some areas but left unpainted on the ceiling (Photo 9). The walls of both wings retain their original lining of white enameled bricks from floor to enameled steel ceiling (Photo 10).

The 1958 gymnasium is a utilitarian-type rectangular structure, with exterior brick walls in a running bond pattern that are painted red, and one long row of connected windows on either side of the building at the roofline (Photos 11, 12, 13). The footprint and scale of the building has not changed since its construction. The front of the gymnasium contains four square windows in a row near the roof and a grouping of 21 smaller, square glass block openings on either side. It appears that there was a row of square windows and additional glass block windows below the existing that have been filled in (Photo 14). The front door to the gymnasium connects to the rear of the 1911 recreation center building via a covered walkway (Photo 15). Either side of the gymnasium is unadorned aside from a row of 26 continuous windows in a row where the walls meet the roofline. The rear of the gymnasium also includes a section of the small glass block openings.

The interior of the gymnasium features a large open basketball court, with light provided by the rows of windows on either side of the space in addition to hanging ceiling lights. The ceiling remains exposed with steel roof trusses that are painted maroon. The walls are painted blue up to about eight feet in height and are then finished with white paint to the ceiling. The floor is a standard gymnasium/basketball court floor with a graphic design in the center of the court. There are two exit doors at the far end of the building (Photo 16). There is a small office for an attendant near the entrance to the gymnasium. There is also a set of stairs that leads up to a small landing with restrooms and a storage space.

The boundary of the nominated property includes the two recreation buildings and the rest of the parcel, including playing fields, playground and tennis courts (Figure 4). The justification behind this boundary is that the site itself was an important characteristic of the recreation center when it opened, and the grounds were themselves integral to the recreational opportunities offered.

There have been several changes to the buildings over time; however, these changes do not negatively impact the integrity of the buildings, and they still appear similar to their original appearance. It is believed that many of these alterations were made in the 1980s, but that cannot be confirmed because the the capital improvements records for this property were not available at the time of the nomination's preparation. In regards to the 1911 main building, a noticeable change when comparing a historic 1911 photograph (Figure 1) to the present-day building is the removal of the walls that originally enclosed the small front porch. The 1911 photograph shows an enclosed front porch, painted white with paired 12-light sash windows on either side and on the front door. These walls have since been removed to create an open-air pedimented porch, however the columns still remain. It is possible that that walls were a seasonal enclosure, not intended to be permanent.

The roof of the building, now of standing seam metal construction, was originally slate (*Philadelphia Real Estate Record and Builders' Guide*, 1910). A black iron fence now runs the length of the Wayne Avenue parcel frontage. There was a similar iron fence in the same location shown in the 1911 photograph; however the railing formerly did not run directly in front of the main building as it does now. Some portions of the red brick walls in the rear of the main hall and on the wings have been painted dark brown to cover over graffiti. Lastly, some of the windows have been changed to varying degrees. There is a thin security covering over some of the larger windows, added in 1972; however, the large windows themselves are original, with panes of glass replaced as needed over time. The dormers are actually plywood painted to look like the original windows; however, the original windows exist behind these plywood coverings, and the pulley system that would have been used to open these dormers still remains (Photo 9).

The 1958 gymnasium has also had some apparent alterations done to the exterior, including three spots suggesting filled-in window openings just below the row of four windows on the front of the building, and sections of filled-in glass block openings also on the front of the building. Changes have occurred over time to the landscape as recreation programming needs changed, with the most significant being the removal of the original wading pool, pergola and sandy beach, as seen in a historic photograph (Figure 2). This area, just outside of the east wing, is now used for playground equipment (Photo 17). The pergola and water area were removed some time after they appeared in a 1977 existing conditions architectural drawing, most likely in the 1980s. Outdoor flood lights were added in 1947. Chain link fencing was added to the perimeter of the property, where existing retaining walls did not already exist, in 1977 (Photos 18, 19, 20). Lastly, the original intention of the upper bluff overlooking the ball field below was for parents to be able to watch over their children while engaging in adult conversation; however today that view is heavily obstructed by trees and the area where the parents would have sat is now overgrown, which happened gradually as the land was reclaimed by trees and other plants. It would seem that this is not an intentional change (Photo 21). Several small sections of original wrought iron fence do remain in that area, indicating the “lookout” location.

Happy Hollow Recreation Center retains integrity. Although the buildings and site have been altered in the above-mentioned ways to adapt to changing recreational trends and the needs of the community, the buildings and site retains essential character-defining features and aspects of integrity necessary to convey significance. The strongest levels of integrity remain with location, setting, materials and association. Location and setting integrity are strong because the facility remains on its original site, that being a former quarry with unique topography, surrounded by dense housing on all sides. Materials integrity remains with the original brickwork on both the recreation building and the brick walkway leading to the elevated bluff (Photos 18, 22, 23). Lastly, integrity of association is strong, as the site is well-known by all neighbors as the local recreation center, and has served the recreational needs of multiple generations of residents for over one hundred years.

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.
- [ ] 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 grave
- [ ] D. A cemetery
- [ ] E. A reconstructed building, object, or structure
- [ ] F. A commemorative property
- [ ] G. Less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years

Areas of Significance Entertainment/Recreation

Period of Significance 1910-1963

Significant Dates 1910 (recreation center commissioned; architect's drawings completed)
1911 (recreation center opens to the public)
1958 (gymnasium built)

Significant Person NA

Cultural Affiliation NA

Architect/Builder Pearson, George T.; Rice, Norman; Stokes Bros. (builders)

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

Happy Hollow Recreation Center is significant under National Register Criterion A in the area of Recreation. The period of significance extends from 1910 to 1963, the 50-year guideline, as the property remained an important recreational resource into the 1960s. Happy Hollow Recreation Center is Philadelphia's oldest city-owned, continuously operating recreation center. Commissioned by philanthropist E.W. Clark and his wife, the recreation center and playground is a significant example of the progressive city playground movement of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Designed to offer relief for children from overcrowded streets, early recreation centers like Happy Hollow provided supervised activities and outdoor play equipment in an era before widespread municipal investment in urban parks. In its earliest years, the recreation center's indoor and outdoor spaces were considered a model for recreation centers that soon followed. The facility continued to respond to changing recreation trends over its 100+ year history, as it continued to play an important role within the recreation system by adapting building and land features to reflect changing needs of the community and recreational trends.

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

Happy Hollow Recreation Center, located at 4740 Wayne Avenue, is a significant historic recreation center due to its association with urban recreation in Philadelphia. The site has been known over the years as Happy Hollow Recreation Center, Happy Hollow Playground, and (in its first year of existence) the Quarry House Playground. For the purpose of this nomination, it shall be referred to as Happy Hollow Recreation Center, as "play" is something that children do, but "recreation" refers to activities that both children and adults take part in (Frost 2000, 106). Happy Hollow Recreation Center was built on 4.25 acres and opened to the public on April 29, 1911, making it the oldest still-operating recreation center owned and operated by the City of Philadelphia. At the time of its opening, Happy Hollow was considered to be "one of the finest in the United States" (Campbell scrapbook XVb 1911, 58), and "one of the finest gifts Philadelphia has ever received" (Annual Report of the Mayor of Philadelphia 1913, 704). The recreation center building and associated grounds were designed and donated to the Playgrounds Association by Mr. and Mrs. E. W. Clark, wealthy philanthropic Philadelphians who recognized the importance of recreation for urban youth.

The facility played a direct role in the early history of the playground movement in Philadelphia and continued to remain important as it modified its recreation offerings to fit the needs of the community. It offered all of the standard outdoor equipment and features as other urban recreation centers that

were opening around the same time, but it also included a baseball field, handball court, tennis courts, wading pool and sandy beach, and topography that allowed for parents or guardians to look out from an elevated section of the former quarry to watch over the children playing in the fields below. This land feature was unique to Happy Hollow, as most playgrounds and recreation centers were built on relatively flat land.

The 1911 recreation center building was also considered to be one of the best of the time. The building contained a large gymnasium and separate boys' and girls' wings with showers and changing rooms. It housed space for gymnastics and games for children, and other activities that were designed for adults in the evenings. A public school teacher in the neighborhood started evening classes for other teachers, so they could learn activities to use for recreation at local schools. Happy Hollow was one of the first recreation facilities in the city to recognize the importance of being open for extended hours and throughout the entire year, to allow both children and adults alike to use the land and recreation center as a safe area for supervised play, which was a key idea to the early playground movement (Board of Recreation of Philadelphia 1914, 12).

To remain relevant within the community, Happy Hollow Recreation Center expanded in 1958 by adding a gymnasium with a regulation-sized basketball court. Previously, indoor basketball had been played in the main recreation center building, but the building was not able to house a full-sized court so the investment was made to add the gymnasium for this reason.

Developmental history/additional historic context information

The playground movement began in Philadelphia in 1893, when the Culture Extension League, the City Parks Association, the Civic Club and the College Settlement met and decided that Philadelphia was to open a playground the following summer. Boston, Chicago and New York already had successful playgrounds that commonly featured sand gardens, and Philadelphia hoped to follow suit. The city already boasted numerous parks (defined here as public property where activities are unsupervised), but lacked any playgrounds (defined here as any place where organized supervised games are regularly conducted). The idea behind playgrounds in Philadelphia was encouraged by these private, philanthropic agencies whose main interest was to remove youth from the dangerous, crowded city streets and provide areas where youth could participate in supervised play and healthy outdoor exercise (Kadzielski 1977, 172).

The earliest playgrounds were on school yards and vacant lots, and contained only basic playground equipment. In 1894, the Board of Education was asked to keep some school yards open over the summer months for use as playgrounds by the neighborhood children. Although there was favorable response to this request, circumstances prevented it from happening that particular summer. However, two women from philanthropic agencies were able to work together to secure the school yard of the private Beck School and have it open as a playground in July and August of 1894. They received private donations that were used to pay the janitor's salary, and they arranged to always have at least one teacher on site. A church yard at 13th and Spruce Streets was also offered as a playground that summer, which was managed individually by an organization called the Princeton House Settlement. These first playgrounds were quite crude in nature. They were modeled after Boston's sand garden playgrounds, and therefore offered sand piles, along with common playground equipment such as swings and see-

saws. They were open from 8AM until 6PM during these initial years, and were used extensively by school-age children (Tsanoff 1897, 132-133).

During these early years of the playground movement in Philadelphia, there were guidelines prepared by the Culture Extension League for how playgrounds should be equipped. ("Playgrounds" in this context would be interchangeable with "recreation centers" today, as they were speaking about facilities that had buildings on site). According to an 1897 report from Philadelphia, there should be separate heated pavilions for boys and girls, both equipped with exercise equipment and shower facilities. The idea was that these areas would be able to offer sufficient play area when the weather outside did not allow for outdoor recreation. The indoor areas were also meant to allow for "personal contact between people of refinement and those who need these qualities." Additionally, there should be office and storage space in the recreation centers. The outdoor space should offer a circular open area used for games, surrounded by a track. Outside of the track should be more open space, trees, benches and water fountains (Tsanoff 1897, 18-19).

Two playgrounds that opened in Philadelphia circa 1900 were considered to mark the transition between a crude sand garden playground and a more sophisticated playground. The first was Dickinson Square Playground in South Philadelphia, which was operated by the Culture Extension League and had separate buildings for boys and girls, each with baths. In fact, the description of this playground is nearly identical to the "ideal" playground described above in Tsanoff's 1897 book. There was a small running track, sand garden, swings and other typical playground equipment, along with open space for games. This playground was open year-round, as one of the buildings had steam heat, and the fields were flooded in the winter to allow for ice skating. The land, surrounded by dense housing and congested streets, had been deeded to the city when a factory located on it had closed, and the chief of the Bureau of City Property was a supporter of the playground movement and was able to secure the property for playground use (The Friends of Dickinson Square Park 2012; Tsanoff 1897, 133; Kadzielski 1977, 172).

The second transformational playground was the Smith Memorial Playground and Playhouse, which was considered to be a model playground. It was privately funded by the Estate of Richard and Sarah Smith, who directed that the money be spent to erect a playhouse and playground on 6.5 acres of East Fairmount Park. The playhouse was designed by noted Philadelphia architect James H. Windrim, and contained a reception and reading room, office, private rooms and sleeping cots, and an aquarium in the basement. The grounds contained a small merry-go-round, wading pool, sand gardens, playing fields for basketball and baseball, and other standard playground equipment. The location of the Smith Memorial Playground was fairly unique for the time, as the playground movement was focused on providing recreation space in very congested areas of the city, whereas the location of Smith Memorial Playground was already designated park land (Smith Memorial Playground and Playhouse 2012; Kadzielski 1977, 172). Smith Memorial Playground and Playhouse remains under private management, and was never deeded to the City of Philadelphia. According to Meg Wise, the Executive Director of Smith Memorial Playground and Playhouse, the Smith family left a bequest that was managed by the trust department of a local bank and helped fund Smith's operating expenses. From 1899-2003, the bank managed operations and employed staff at Smith. In 2003, the bank wanted to close down the facility. A separate nonprofit organization was created to take responsibility for the site and separated from the bank. Capital funds were raised privately to restore the facilities and it remains in private ownership.

Philadelphia playgrounds remained under private leadership through 1907. That year, the Playground Association of America was founded, and in Philadelphia, the Children's Playground Association of Philadelphia was organized. The Children's Playground Association of Philadelphia took over operations from the Culture Extension League in 1908, and at that time they hired an executive director to oversee the eight playgrounds they were currently operating. A year later, City Council (then called Common Council) passed a resolution that recognized recreation as a municipal function, and $5,000 was given to a newly-formed Public Playground Commission so they could study Philadelphia's playground needs. In 1910, the results of the report were presented and a Playgrounds Commission was created in the Department of the Mayor, which would operate all existing city playgrounds. $100,000 was given by Council at this time to fund the Playground Commission. The results of the study acknowledged a need for cooperation of local government agencies to support recreation efforts in U.S. cities. In 1911, Philadelphia's City Council created the first Philadelphia Department of Recreation, which took over management of all city playgrounds that had been run by the Playgrounds Association (Kadzielski 1977, 174-175).

A list of the city "recreation parks and playgrounds" (as they were referred to in the report) was produced at this time in the 1914 *Report of the Board of Recreation of Philadelphia*, and included the following recreation centers in the following order:

1. Starr Garden Recreation Park: Seventh and Lombard Streets
2. Happy Hollow Recreation Park: Logan Street and Wayne Avenue, Germantown
3. Disston Recreation Park: Longshore and Ditman Streets, Tacony
4. Sherwood Recreation Park: Fifty-sixth and Christian Streets
5. Athletic Recreation Park: Twenty-seventh and Jefferson Streets
6. Waterview Playground: Haines and McMahon Avenue, Germantown
7. Weccacoe Playground: Fourth and Catherine Streets
8. Womrath Playground: Kensington Avenue and Adams Street, Frankford
9. Westmoreland Playground
10. Coxe Playground: Eighteenth and Bainbridge Streets
11. Funfield Playground: Twenty-second and Sedgley Avenue
12. Viaduct Playground: Ninth and Jefferson Streets
13. Belfield Playground: Beechwood and Nedro Avenue, Germantown
14. East Germantown Playground: Chelten Avenue and Anderson Street
15. Friends' Playground: Fourth and Green Streets
16. Kingsessing Recreation Park: Fifty-first and Chester Avenue
17. Pomona Playground: Germantown Avenue above Washington Lane
18. Point Breeze Playground: Twenty-eighth and Passyunk Avenue
19. Parkway Playground (temporary): Nineteenth and Vine Streets
20. Shot Tower Playground: Second and Carpenter Streets
21. Chestnut Street Recreation Pier (Delaware River)
22. Race Street Recreation Pier (Delaware River) (Board of Recreation of Philadelphia 1914, 12-18).

Starr Garden was named Recreation Center Number One on the list. It opened in 1912 on 1.4 acres in Center City. The land where Starr Garden Recreation Park was built was once filled with run-down housing surrounded by narrow alleyways and small side streets. Local philanthropist Theodore Starr, along with his coworkers, decided to open a small playground on the land to improve the quality of life

for the youth of the neighborhood. The playground was open day and evening, all year-round. The outdoor space contained a wading pool and sand beach, along with common playground equipment and space for ball games. The recreation center building, which is not the current building on the site, contained game rooms, a gymnasium used for classes and dances, and boys and girls showers (Board of Recreation of Philadelphia 1914, 12).

Opening the year prior to Starr Garden, and listed as Recreation Center Number Two on the list, was Happy Hollow Recreation Center. Built on 4.25 acres in Germantown, Happy Hollow contained all of the same outdoor equipment and features as Starr Garden, including the wading pool and sandy beach, in addition to a baseball field, handball court, tennis courts, and an elevated bluff where parents could watch their children play below. This land feature was unique to Happy Hollow, as most playgrounds and recreation centers were built on relatively flat land. Happy Hollow contained a recreation center building, designed in 1910 by noted Philadelphia architect George T. Pearson with Stokes Brothers Company as the contractors (*Philadelphia Real Estate Record and Builders' Guide,* 1910). The building contained a large gymnasium and separate boys' and girls' wings with showers and changing rooms. It housed gymnastics and games for children, and other activities that were designed for adults at night. A public school teacher in the neighborhood started the evening classes for other teachers, so they could learn activities to use for recreation at the schools (Board of Recreation of Philadelphia 1914, 12).

A similar recreation center to Happy Hollow was the Disston Recreation Park, located at Longshore and Ditman Streets on 1.25 acres. Disston Recreation Park opened in 1912 and was open year-round, day and evening. The recreation center building, which has since been demolished and replaced, contained a gymnasium, showers and clubrooms. Disston Recreation Park was commissioned and donated by a wealthy Philadelphia to the city. Mr. and Mrs. Jacob S. Disston, of the Disston Saw Works, bought, designed and donated the playground to the Playgrounds Association. Both a Disston Playground Association and a Disston Athletic Association were formed, the latter to compete against other sports teams of other playgrounds in games such as basketball (Board of Recreation of Philadelphia 1914, 14).

Happy Hollow Recreation Center, similar to Smith Memorial Playground, Starr Garden and Disston Recreation Park, is a prime example where a wealthy Philadelphian designed, purchased and presented a recreation center as a gift to the city. Happy Hollow was commissioned by Mr. and Mrs. E.W. Clark, who were considered early promoters of recreation in Philadelphia. They deeded the recreation center to the Playgrounds Association of Philadelphia, which transferred the title to the City of Philadelphia in 1932, on the condition that the city maintain it as a playground, under constant leadership. Mr. and Mrs. Clark also donated a large parcel of land adjacent to the Shot Tower in South Philadelphia, which became part of the Shot Tower Playground. After Mr. Clark's passing, his children donated his homestead at Wissahickon Avenue and School House Lane to the city for use as a park (City Parks Association of Philadelphia, 59). The corner of Wissahickon Avenue and School House Lane is still in use today as a park, known as Cloverly Park.

One of the first recreation centers to be built *by* the city was Athletic Recreation Park, located at 27th and Jefferson Streets on four acres. This was a switch from the previous pattern of recreation centers being private gifts to the city by others. Now the city itself saw the importance of opening these facilities for the people of Philadelphia. Athletic Recreation Park opened in 1913 and was open year-round from morning until 10:00PM. The recreation building, which is still standing today, contained a social lobby,

game and reading rooms, gymnasium, showers and dressing rooms, meeting rooms, kitchenette, and an auditorium that seated 500 people. The grounds contained wading pools and standard playground equipment. The presence of the recreation center was credited with having reduced the number of arrests of persons under 21 years old by one-half. A popular saying at that time was "a playground built today prevents the building of a jail tomorrow" (Board of Recreation of Philadelphia 1914, 7-8). The main recreation building at Athletic Recreation Park, now referred to as Athletic Recreation Center by the city, is still standing and appears to have integrity of location, setting, materials and association. Several window openings on the second floor of the front façade have been filled in with brick, but otherwise the exterior appears very similar to historic photographs that were taken during its opening celebration.

Playgrounds and recreation centers flourished in Philadelphia throughout the early and mid 20th century, with children of all ages, in addition to adults, taking part in the activities being offered at these neighborhood sites. In 1951, a new Home Rule Charter in Philadelphia created the Recreation Department. Their mission was for a "comprehensive and coordinated program of cultural and physical recreational activities to be instituted and conducted in all city recreational facilities." The following year, the Philadelphia Department of Recreation was officially formed. Under Fredric R. Mann as Commissioner and Robert W. Crawford as Deputy Commissioner and Superintendent, year-round programs were started that served all Philadelphia residents, ranging from pre-school children to senior citizens, women and men, handicapped and ethnically diverse. A cultural program that featured music, dance, arts and crafts, and drama was added (City of Philadelphia Parks and Recreation 2012).

Later in 1952, Crawford was appointed Commissioner and focused his energies for almost the next thirty years on ensuring that every neighborhood had a playground or recreation center. Before his tenure as Commissioner, the city had 95 recreational areas. By the time he retired in 1981, the city had 815, which included parks, playgrounds, swimming pools and community centers (Elliott 1995). Crawford implemented mandatory training for staff members of the city facilities in all fields of recreation. He created the offices of Performing Arts, Arts and Crafts, and Sports and Athletics to further the goals of the recreation facilities, which resulted in numerous programs such as The Junior Baseball Federation Program, Bike Rodeos, The Vogue Players and The Nutcracker Doll Contest. Many of these programs have continued through present-day (City of Philadelphia Parks and Recreation 2012).

Commonalities emerge when studying the earliest playgrounds and recreation centers. First, it is clear that early playgrounds were quite rudimentary and were supported (both financially and otherwise) by local philanthropists. As the playground movement gained support from local government, actions were able to be taken to create more playgrounds and recreation centers that were set apart from Philadelphia's existing parks by the fact that they were staffed by individuals who organized activities. Second, the earliest playgrounds were open only in the summer and during daytime hours. The shift to year-round accessibility occurred rather quickly, however, and the hours of operation were extended into the evening also quite willingly, to accommodate adults wishing to participate in evening activities. Third, those sites with recreation center buildings were purpose-built new construction and at the very least contained a gymnasium, meeting rooms, and separate boys and girls restroom facilities. Several recreation centers were demolished over time and replaced with larger buildings that could accommodate more activities. In the case of Happy Hollow, on the contrary, the relatively small recreation center building remains and a separate gymnasium, designed by Philadelphia architect

Norman Rice, was built behind it in 1958. The gymnasium was likely added because of the popularity of basketball and the need for a regulation-sized court at the facility. The original recreation building was too small in size for full-court basketball, but did work well for other activities. The addition of the gymnasium in 1958 provided the full court and also assured that the original recreation building would still be in use for most other recreational activities and community gatherings.

Despite the commonalities, there are also noted differences between the earliest playgrounds and recreation centers. First, although Happy Hollow and Smith Memorial Playground and Playhouse are exceptions, it was not the norm for noted architects to design recreation center buildings. While it certainly did occur – specifically with privately commissioned facilities – it was not the case for all of the early recreation centers. It is difficult, however, to thoroughly document this, as the architects are not known for several of the city's earliest recreation centers. There are very good records on the architects that made improvements to these buildings and sites in the 1960s and 1970s, when they were owned by the City of Philadelphia, but earlier records are not as complete. Second, the grounds where these playgrounds and recreation centers were built tended to vary to some degree. The earliest playgrounds, as described prior, were on small school yards. Once recreation centers started to be built, the lots needed to be larger. How large they were, however, varied considerably. Smith Memorial Playground and Playhouse was built on over 6 acres of parkland. Disston Recreation Park was built on just over one acre. Happy Hollow, built on 4.25 acres, was unique in that its topography was quite varied due to it being the site of a former quarry, with a steep upper level which contained tennis courts and the bluff for parents to watch over their children, and the lower level which contained the recreation center building, ball field, playground and wading pool.

In conclusion, Happy Hollow Recreation Center fulfills Criterion A as an important example of the progressive city playground movement in the early twentieth century in Philadelphia. Happy Hollow Recreation Center may be the oldest extant recreation center owned by the City of Philadelphia, but it is in good company with others such as Dickinson Square Park, Smith Memorial (privately owned and operated), Starr Garden, Disston Recreation Park and Athletic Recreation Park, among others. Across the board, each site offered both youth and adults a facility in which to play, exercise and learn. As the facilities were transferred to management by the city, the program offerings became more standardized but never lost sight of the goal of providing supervised play, exercise and learning opportunities to Philadelphia's youth. Happy Hollow continued to adapt to recreational trends over the years in order to stay relevant in the community, allowing the facility to continuously contribute to its mission since 1911, in the same building and on the same fields where the first activities took place over one hundred years ago.

9. Major Bibliographical References

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

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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 4.3 acres

Use either the UTM system or latitude/longitude coordinates

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

1. Latitude: 40.024385 Longitude: -75.165908

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property.)
The boundary of Happy Hollow Recreation Center is shown as the yellow dashed line on the accompanying map entitled "Boundary Map of Happy Hollow Recreation Center" (Figure 4). The boundary corresponds to the legal parcel for the property.

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)
The boundary of this nomination includes the entire parcel, including two contributing buildings, and all landscape features. The justification behind this boundary is that the site itself was an important characteristic of the recreation center when it opened, and the grounds were themselves integral to the recreational opportunities offered.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title: Kim Broadbent
organization: _____
street & number: 5440 Vicaris Street, Apt. 2
city or town: Philadelphia state: PA zip code:19128
e-mail: kim.broadbent@gmail.com
telephone: 215-527-7865
date: November 23rd 2013

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

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

Photographs

Photo Log

Name of Property: Happy Hollow Recreation Center
City or Vicinity: Philadelphia
County: Philadelphia County
State: PA
Name of Photographers: Kim Broadbent and Allison Weiss
Date of Photographs: February 24, 2012; March 22, 2012; April 9, 2012; June 24, 2013; August 25, 2013; November 1, 2013; November 2, 2013; November 3, 2013
Location of Original Digital Files: 5440 Vicaris Street, Philadelphia PA 19128

Photo #1 (PA_Philadelphia County_Happy Hollow_0001)
Front of main recreation center building, camera facing west.
Photographer: Allison Weiss
Date taken: March 22, 2012

Photo #2 (PA_Philadelphia County_Happy Hollow_0002)
Front porch of main recreation center building, camera facing west.
Photographer: Kim Broadbent
Date taken: February 24, 2012

Photo #3 (PA_Philadelphia County_Happy Hollow_0003)
Porch landing.
Photographer: Allison Weiss
Date taken: November 1, 2013

Photo #4 (PA_Philadelphia County_Happy Hollow_0004)
Rear of main recreation center building, camera facing northeast.
Photographer: Allison Weiss
Date taken: March 22, 2012

Photo #5 (PA_Philadelphia County_Happy Hollow_0005)
Rear dormers showing plywood painted to look like original windows, camera facing north.
Photographer: Kim Broadbent
Date taken: April 9, 2012

Photo #6 (PA_Philadelphia County_Happy Hollow_0006)
East wing of main recreation center building, camera facing northwest.
Photographer: Allison Weiss
Date taken: November 2, 2013

Photo #7 (PA_Philadelphia County_Happy Hollow_0007)
Rear corner of west wing of main recreation center building, camera facing northeast.

Photographer: Kim Broadbent
Date taken: February 24, 2012

Photo #8 (PA_Philadelphia County_Happy Hollow_0008)
Interior of main recreation center building, showing boxing ring, camera facing east.
Photographer: Kim Broadbent
Date taken: April 9, 2012

Photo #9 (PA_Philadelphia County_Happy Hollow_0009)
Looking up at ceiling in main recreation center building, showing original dormer windows with chains to open them, camera facing north.
Photographer: Kim Broadbent
Date taken: April 9, 2012

Photo #10 (PA_Philadelphia County_Happy Hollow_0010)
Original enameled steel ceiling located in both east and west wings; this particular photo is from the office in the east wing, camera facing south.
Photographer: Kim Broadbent
Date taken: April 9, 2012

Photo #11 (PA_Philadelphia County_Happy Hollow_0011)
Side elevation of the gymnasium, camera facing southeast.
Photographer: Kim Broadbent
Date taken: February 24, 2012

Photo #12 (PA_Philadelphia County_Happy Hollow_0012)
View from neighbor's property, showing side elevation of the gymnasium and basketball court, camera facing southeast.
Photographer: Allison Weiss
Date taken: August 25, 2013

Photo #13 (PA_Philadelphia County_Happy Hollow_0013)
Side and rear elevation of the gymnasium with rear of recreation center, taken from ball field, camera facing east.
Photographer: Allison Weiss
Date taken: November 3, 2013

Photo #14 (PA_Philadelphia County_Happy Hollow_0014)
Front of the 1958 gymnasium, camera facing west.
Photographer: Kim Broadbent
Date taken: February 24, 2012

Photo #15 (PA_Philadelphia County_Happy Hollow_0015)
Eastern half of the rear of the main recreation center building, showing covered walkway that connects to the gymnasium, camera facing northeast.

Photographer: Allison Weiss
Date taken: November 2, 2013

Photo #16 (PA_Philadelphia County_Happy Hollow_0016)
Interior of the 1958 gymnasium, camera facing southwest.
Photographer: Kim Broadbent
Date taken: April 9, 2012

Photo #17 (PA_Philadelphia County_Happy Hollow_0017)
Section of playground where pavilion and wading pool originally were located, camera facing east.
Photographer: Kim Broadbent
Date taken: February 24, 2012

Photo #18 (PA_Philadelphia County_Happy Hollow_0016)
Original brick walkway leading to upper level of parcel, camera facing southwest.
Photographer: Allison Weiss
Date taken: November 2, 2013

Photo #19 (PA_Philadelphia County_Happy Hollow_0019)
View of the side of the brick walkway and chain-link fencing, taken from the ball field, camera facing south.
Photographer: Allison Weiss
Date taken: November 2, 2013

Photo #20 (PA_Philadelphia County_Happy Hollow_0020)
Additional view of the side of the brick walkway, showing stone construction over quarry rocks, camera facing south.
Photographer: Allison Weiss
Date taken: November 2, 2013

Photo #21 (PA_Philadelphia County_Happy Hollow_0021)
Obstructed view from the elevated bluff, looking down onto ball field and rear of recreation center, camera facing north.
Photographer: Allison Weiss
Date taken: November 2, 2013

Photo #22 (PA_Philadelphia County_Happy Hollow_0022)
Playground equipment with brick walkway in background that leads to elevated level of land parcel, camera facing south.
Photographer: Allison Weiss
Date taken: November 2, 2013

Photo #23 (PA_Philadelphia County_Happy Hollow_0023)
Looking down the original brick walkway from the upper level, camera facing northeast.
Photographer: Allison Weiss

Date taken: November 3, 2013

Photo #24 (PA_Philadelphia County_Happy Hollow_0024)
View of the ball field, camera facing northeast.
Photographer: Allison Weiss
Date taken: November 3, 2013

Photo #25 (PA_Philadelphia County_Happy Hollow_0025)
View of the basketball courts in the distance when standing at the rear corner of the gymnasium, camera facing northwest.
Photographer: Allison Weiss
Date taken: November 2, 2013

Photo #26 (PA_Philadelphia County_Happy Hollow_0026)
View of the tennis courts, camera facing east.
Photographer: Allison Weiss
Date taken: June 24, 2012

Photo #27 (PA_Philadelphia County_Happy Hollow_0027)
Entrance from Pulaski Avenue, camera facing northeast.
Photographer: Allison Weiss
Date taken: June 24, 2012

Photo #28 (PA_Philadelphia County_Happy Hollow_0028)
Entrance from Pulaski Avenue, camera facing northeast.
Photographer: Allison Weiss
Date taken: November 2, 2013

Photo #29 (PA_Philadelphia County_Happy Hollow_0029)
Upper level looking towards the tennis courts, camera facing southeast.
Photographer: Allison Weiss
Date taken: November 2, 2013

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C.460 et seq.).
Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 100 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Office of Planning and Performance Management. U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Happy Hollow Recreation Center
Name of Property
Philadelphia County, PA
County and State
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Figure 1. Happy Hollow Recreation Center, shown opening year (1911). Source: Nolan, Thomas. "Some Recent Philadelphia Architecture: Group A - City Buildings." Architectural Record, v. XXIX. New York, NY: The Architectural Record Company, January – June 1911, p. 226.

Figure 2. Children playing in the sand at Happy Hollow Recreation Center, circa 1911. Source: Spector, Gus. Philadelphia Landmarks and Pastimes. Charleston SC: Arcadia Publishing, 2009, p. 22

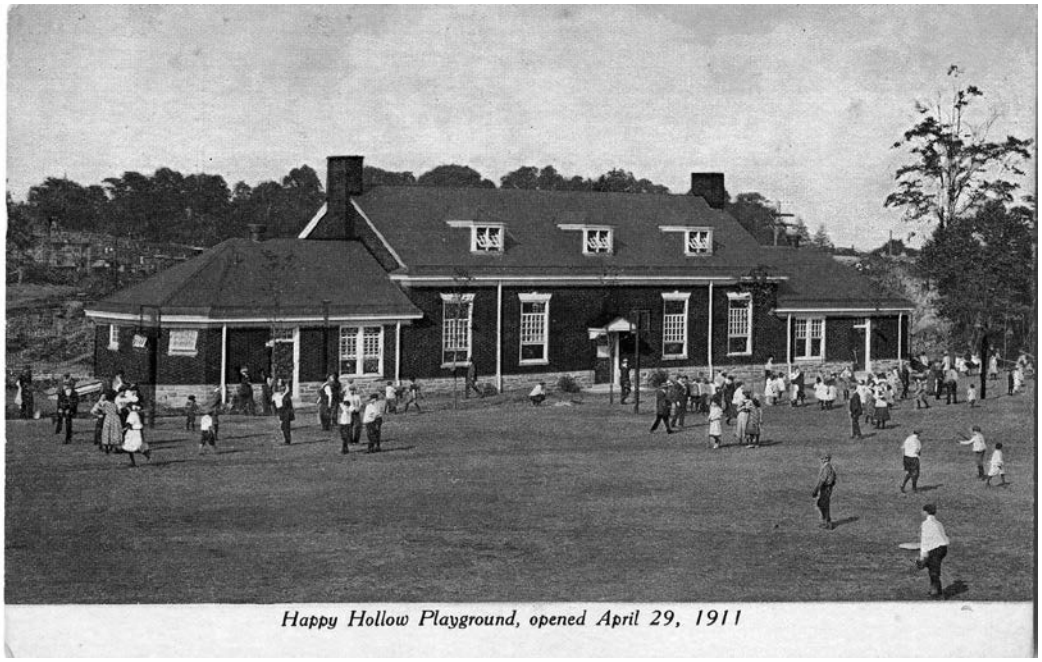


Figure 3. Rear of Happy Hollow Recreation Center, shown in 1911 postcard. Source: Germantown Historical Society, Catalog Number: 2010.294.1

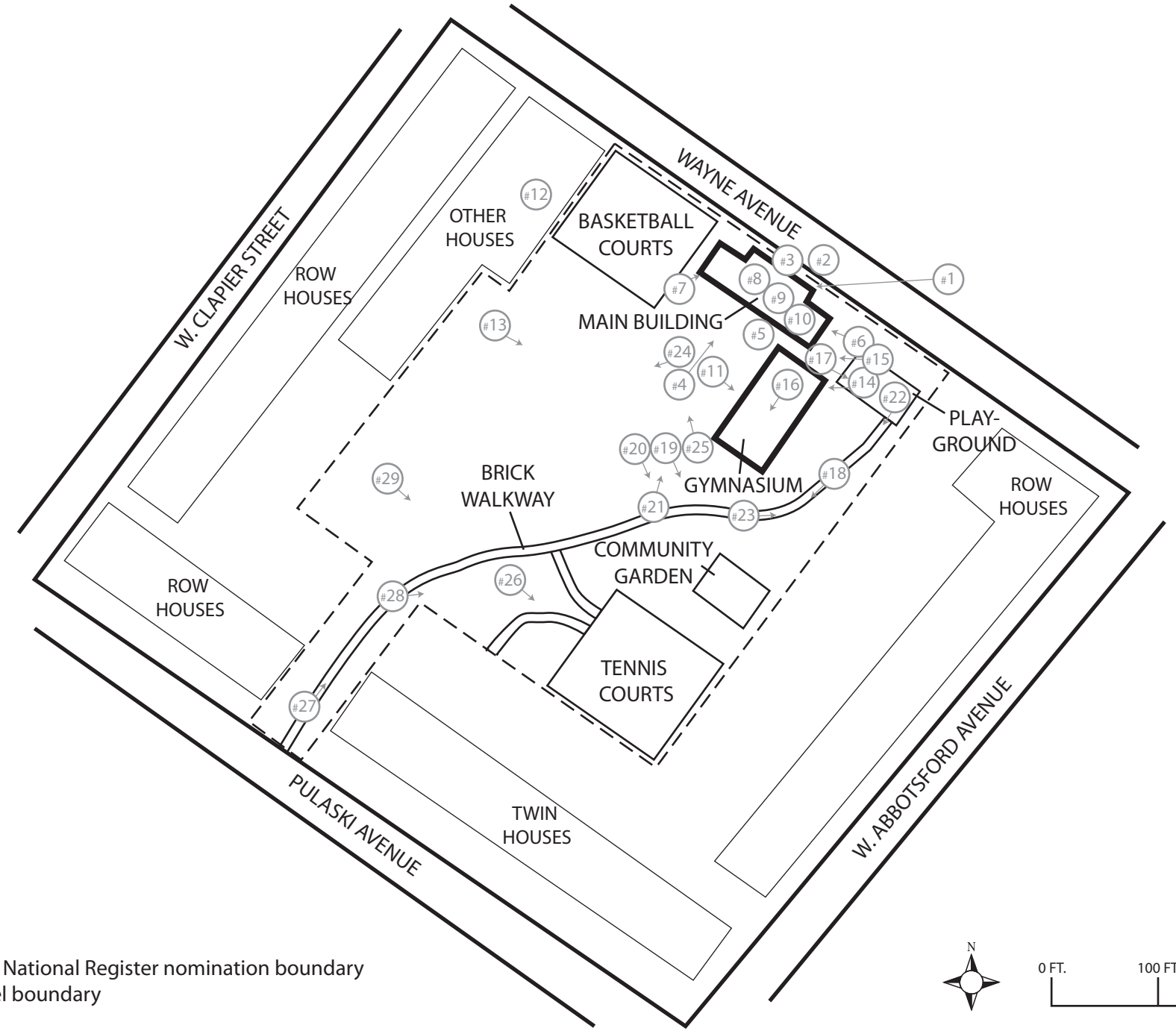
Figure 4. Boundary map of Happy Hollow Recreation Center. Aerial imagery source: Google Earth, 2010.

Happy Hollow Recreation Center
4740 Wayne Avenue – Site Plan

Philadelphia County, PA

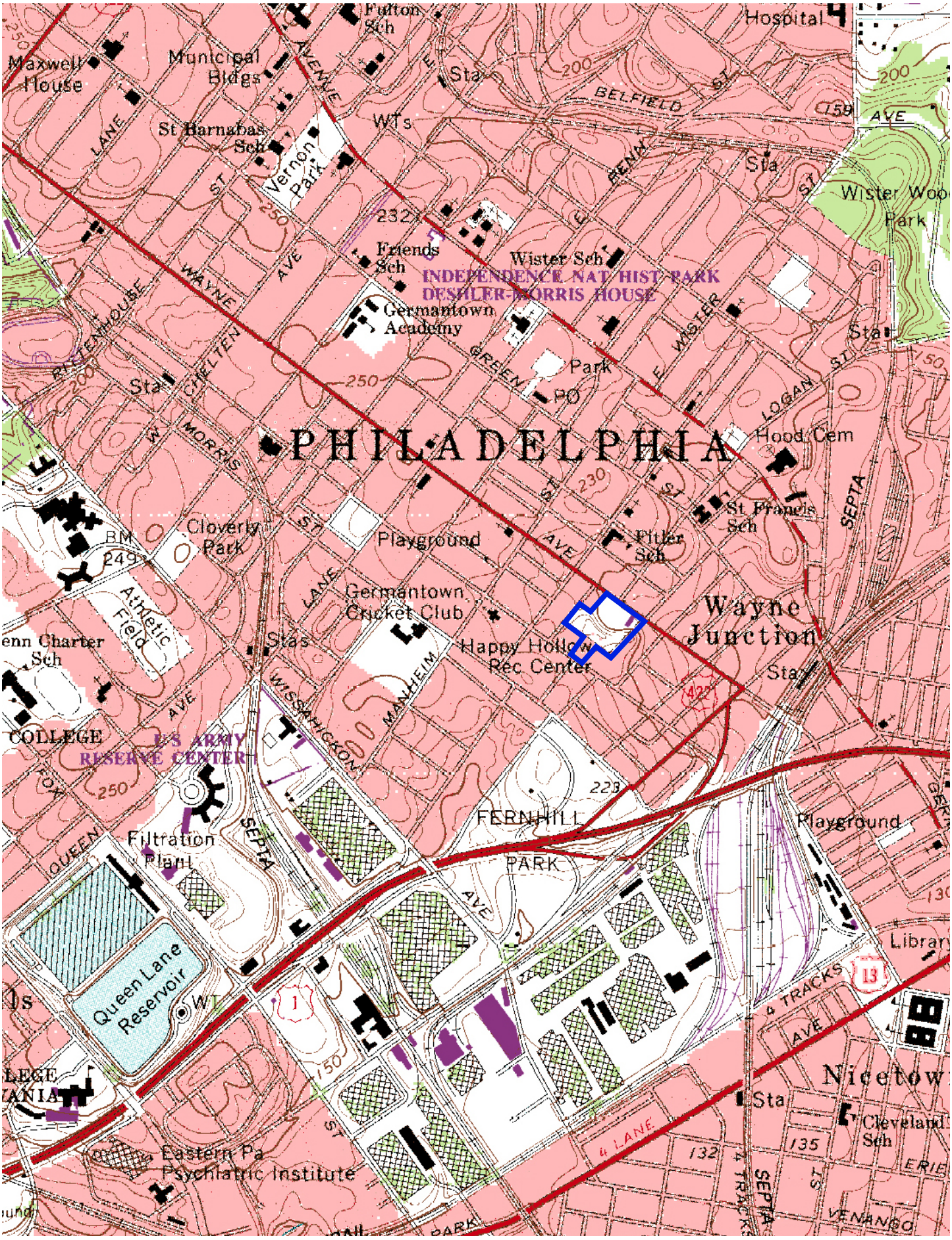
1. 1911 Recreation Building designed by George T. Pearson
2. Playing field (original location)
3. 1958 Gymnasium designed by Norman Rice
4. Basketball Courts
5. Site of wading pool and sand beach
6. Modern play equipment, site of original play equipment
7. Original pathway currently paved with brick and/or concrete
8. Bluff
9. Community Garden
10. Site of original and current tennis courts
11. Open grassy space

Happy Hollow Recreation Center 4740 Wayne Avenue, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania Philadelphia County
Site Plan with Photo Key



— — — Proposed National Register nomination boundary and parcel boundary

USGS Map of Germantown, showing Happy Hollow Recreation Center
Philadelphia County, PA
Latitude 40.024385 Longitude -75.165908



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HAPPY HOLLOW PLG'D.

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DOG WASTE
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IT'S REQUIRED BY LAW

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WE ARE THE BIRTH AND LIFE IS US WE ARE ONE
TILL THE RISE AND FALL OF THE SUN
ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES PROHIBITED

WE DONT HURT WHO WE ARE WE MAKE IT WORK NO ONES A STAR
WE ARE THE BIRTH AND LIFE IS US WE ARE ONE
TILL THE RISE AND FALL OF THE SUN

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