360

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.

RECEIVED 2280
MAY 2 1 2014
NAT. REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

1. Name of Property

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

2. Location

Street & number: 1133 Main Street
City or town: Lovell State: Maine County: Oxford
Not For Publication: N/A Vicinity: N/A

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:

x **A** _____ **B** x **C** _____ **D**

SHPO 5/19/14

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

MAINE HISTORIC PRESERVATION 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:

X 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:) _____

for Alexis Abernathy 6/27/14

Signature of the Keeper **Date of Action**

5. Classification

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

Private ☐
Public – Local ☒
Public – State ☐
Public – Federal ☐

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

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

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

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1		buildings
1		sites
		structures
		objects
2	0	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register None

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions.)
RELIGION / Religious Facility
GOVERNMENT / City Hall

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions.)
GOVERNMENT / City Hall

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions.)

COLONIAL/Georgian
LATE VICTORIAN / Stick/Eastlake
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

Materials: (enter categories from instructions.)
Principal exterior materials of the property: WEATHERBOARD clapboards, WOOD SHINGLES, METAL roof, GRANTE foundation.

Narrative Description

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

Summary Paragraph

The Lovell Meeting House, also known as the Lovell Town House or Town Hall, is a wood-frame public building located in the village of Center Lovell, Maine. First constructed in 1796 as a two story meeting-house, the height of the five-bay long by two-bay wide building was reduced by three feet in 1827. It is essentially a vernacular building with wood shingle and clapboard siding, but remarkably it also has wooden quoins on each of the corners. Additional remodeling in the second half of the nineteenth century was responsible for modest Eastlake ornamentation in the gable and a decorative window, both installed on the west elevation of the building, facing the road. The interior contains one large room with an elevated stage occupying the eastern quarter of the space. Adjacent to the Meeting House is the historic town Common.

Narrative Description

The Lovell Meeting House is located on the east side of Route 5, in Center Lovell, Maine. This is one of three principal villages in the Town of Lovell, a rural community currently of just

over 1,100 residents, in the foot hills of Oxford County. As the name suggests, this village is located near the geographical center of the town, and most of the year-round buildings are stretched along the north-south running Main Street (Route 5), on relatively large lots. The town owned Meeting House is elevated on a slight rise on the east side of the road and faces south. It shares an irregularly shaped 1.5 acre lot with the town's historic parade ground, which is located across a dirt parking area to the south. Immediately east of the parade grounds, but on a separate parcel no longer owned by the town, is the Center Lovell cemetery, a burying ground also established in 1780. The boundaries of the cemetery are marked by a wood post and rail fence and a two-track lane extends south from the Meeting House parking area to separate the cemetery from the parade grounds. Hardwood trees planted along Main Street screen the southwest corner of the Meeting House, and a tree-line to the north marks the location of the north property line. The parking area extends to the east side of the building, beyond which the remainder of the parcel is wooded. One nineteenth-century house is located on the next lot south of the Common and another is located north beyond the tree line.

In plan, the Lovell Meeting House is rectangular and measures 34 feet wide by 46 feet long. The building's height from ground to eaves, is approximately 18 feet and reads as one, high-posted story. Attached to the south corner of the east façade is a brick enclosure containing the town vault. The ridge of the side-gable peak is perpendicular to the road. The building has a new, full, concrete foundation topped with original granite capstones. There are two brick chimneys: one raises against the exterior of the east wall, and the other pierces the metal roofing south of the ridge near the west gable wall. The south, west and north walls have painted clapboards and the east wall has painted wood shingles.

The primary five-bay façade faces south and contains four widely-spaced two-over-two single-hung wood sash windows. At the center of the elevation is a set of matched, six-panel metal doors, set under a projecting hood. The hood has a pediment with a clapboard face and cornice returns, and it is supported by a truss of wood brackets. Directly in front of this entry are three wooden steps and a ramp that extends to the east; both the steps and ramp have unpainted post and rail railings. A moderately wide frieze board tops the wall just under the boxed cornice and both the corners of this elevation, as well as the west and north elevations, are ornamented with wooden quoins.

Because of the height of the building the windows appear under-sized and the double-door appears to be proportionately too wide. It is possible that when the height of this building was reduced by three feet in 1827 that second story windows (or window bays) were eliminated and their locations covered with clapboard.

The west elevation has features characteristic of the fourth quarter of the nineteenth century. There is only one window bay, located at the center of the building. Within this bay are four narrow, one-over-one sash which share a common window surround. Although the sill and the vertical trim are unexceptional, above the windows is a triangular wooden panel on which is affixed a carved wooden symbol consisting of a Coptic cross, a stylized horseshoe and what look like eyebrows. In the gable peak a Stick-Style decorative truss connects the front and rear eaves. On the wall behind the truss are three, wide, flush sheathing boards. On the lowest board is more decorative carved relief – in this instance it is composed of a stylized

mortar set between floral motifs. At the bottom of this board is a wood trim board with a rounded fringe pattern: this board is applied over the uppermost clapboards creating a three-dimensional wall treatment. The final ornamental details are a pair of carved spandrels with floral designs which are positioned between the cornice returns and the edge of the roof. The wooden ornamentation on this wall is evocative of Eastlake designs.

The north elevation has five window bays and has essentially the same attributes as the south façade, minus the center entrance. The east elevation is two bays wide and probably reflects the configuration of the west elevation prior to later nineteenth century remodeling. The two window bays contain two-over-two sash and are positioned quite high in the wall, directly under the tie-beam. A louvered opening is located between the windows and is positioned directly below the ridge. This wall is covered with painted wood shingles, and unlike the other elevations, does not feature quoins on the corner boards. The rake trim is very narrow, and the eaves barely project between the plane of the wall.

Affixed to the north side of this elevation is a short, gable-roof entry containing only a staircase to the basement. Constructed in 2013, this small appendage replaced a slightly larger, two-hole privy that had been attached in the same location. Attached to the south edge of the elevation is a roughly square brick structure with gable roof. Within this structure, and accessible only from the building's interior, is the town's vault. A chimney rises from the north side of the vault's roof and extends upwards along the exterior of the former Meeting House's east wall.

Interior

The interior of the former Lovell Meeting House consists of one large room with an elevated stage occupying the eastern most quarter of the building and an assembly floor filling the remaining space. Cased floor to ceiling posts are exposed on the south and north walls and in the corners. The walls below the window sills are clad with very wide pine wainscot. Above the window sills the walls and the ceiling are covered with an early gypsum wall board, held in place with narrow battens. Originally, the ceiling was coved where it intersected the north and south walls, but due to the wall-board and battens the arc is now somewhat less smooth. Additional small battens are applied to the wall board at plate level to create ornamental panels – this feature is highlighted by the use of contrasting paint colors above the windows. The floor of the assembly space is hardwood, probably oak, lain in 3 ½ inch strips, while that on the stage consists of painted, 2" boarding.

The stage occupies the entire eastern end of the building, and is accessed by two sets of stairs, one at the north wall and another at the south wall. Each staircase has turned balusters and hand rails that continue for a short distance along the front edge of the stage. Between the stairs the wall below the front of the stage is covered with vertical beaded boarding. Aligned with the edge of the stage, a high, cased beam extends the width of the building. The casing of the beam is decorated with applied, simple modillions and the beam is supported by two posts rising from the stage. Above the beam is a partition wall extending to the ceiling, forming a proscenium arch. A wood table and long wooden desk are positioned between the two center posts at the edge of the stage. Six wooden voting booths are positioned against the

back wall of the stage, and the door to the vault and one of the wood stoves are located in the southeast corner of the stage.

Scars on the floor of the stage suggest that the flooring has been partially replaced in this space and the perhaps at one point in time it had contained one or more small rooms. It is also worth noting that all the windows in the building have architraves of corner blocks and moulded trim, except for the four-light windows on the west wall and the eastern most windows on the north and south walls. Perhaps when the current two-over-two windows were installed the stage area had already been partitioned from the remainder of the hall, and thus as they were "back stage", these windows only received plain trim.

The town vault was manufactured by the Victory Safe & Lock Company of Cincinnati, Ohio, and installed in 1905/06. The "Town of Lovell" is painted on the exterior of the steel door (as is the name of the manufacturer) and on the interior are plaster walls, wooden shelves and a concrete floor. Both of the two stoves were manufactured by Round Oak, Style E20, manufactured in Dowagiac, Michigan in 1906. The stove on the stage has a vertical stove pipe that bends at a right angle towards the east before attaching to the exterior chimney on the east wall. The stove located towards the southwest corner still has its decorative finial on top, and connects via a vertical stove pipe through what is probably a hanging chimney in the attic of the building.

In the attic the roof system consists of a king-post truss with a central or middle chord that runs below, but not quite parallel to, the rafters. In the basement, under the stage, it is possible to see the original patina of the unpainted wainscot and cased posts. Many of the joists and sleepers of the floor have been replaced over the years, and the original floor under the stage is missing.

Common

Established in 1780 as a "training ground", the Common occupies roughly an acre of the lot and is characterized by a relatively flat lawn interspersed with several mature hardwood trees. A dirt two-track road bisects the Common and provides access to the main gate of the cemetery from the road. This portion of the site resembles a park.

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.)

☒ 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 (Enter categories from instructions.)
POLITICS / GOVERNMENT

Period of Significance
1796-1964

Significant Dates
1796
1827
1852
c. 1890

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

Cultural Affiliation

Architect/Builder

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.) (Refer to photographs)

The Lovell Meeting House in the Oxford County town of Lovell is a building erected between 1796 and 1798 to serve as the town of Lovell's religious and secular assembly space. The site was first set aside in 1780 as the location for a meeting house, a training ground and a cemetery for the nascent community. Originally built as a two-story building with a high pulpit and gallery, the building was reduced in height by at least three feet in the 1820s. In 1852 the local Congregational body built a new structure and the Meeting House shed its religious association and evolved into a civic structure. At times referred to as the Lovell Town House or Town Hall, this is still the present day building in which the local community gathers for town meetings, which are the semi-annual events that are the political backbone of small town democracy in Maine. In addition to serving as a polling place, the former Meeting House was outfitted with a stage at the turn of the twentieth century, and has been the location of various forms of entertainment and recreation. The Lovell Town House is eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A, in the area of politics and government. The period of significance commences in 1796, when the building was erected and continues until 1964, which is fifty years before the present. By virtue of the building's former use as a religious structure Criterion Consideration A also applies.

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

The term 'Meetinghouse' as used in New England is often associated with two related concepts. The first is that of a square, or nearly square, two story post and beam building erected from settlement through the early 19th century. The second concept is rooted in the colonial and early post-colonial link between church and towns. In 18th century Massachusetts (and the Province of Maine) part of the terms for establishing a township included the construction of a meeting house and settling an Orthodox (or Protestant) minister. These meeting houses were to be utilized both for religious services and for town business.[1] This requirement may not have been strictly enforced in the early 19th century in Maine (the establishment of any official church met with some significant resistance in parts of the Province of Maine) and it was not included in the Constitution of the state, adopted in 1820.[2] While there only needed to be one meetinghouse in a town, there could be additional churches.

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[1] William D. Williamson, The History of the State of Maine. (Hallowell: Glazier, Masters & Co., 1832), 180.

[2] The Maine Constitution states: "all persons demeaning themselves peaceably as good members of the State shall be equally under the protection of the laws, and no subordination nor preference of any one sect or denomination to another shall every be established by law, nor shall any religious test be required as a qualification for any office or trust, under this State". Maine Constitution 1819, Article 1 Section 3. Official disestablishment did not occur in Massachusetts until 1832.

Historian William Shipman, in Maine Forms of American Architecture also addresses the evolution of the dual function of these buildings:

> As in colonial times, the meetinghouse was a focal point for the community. It was customary, at least in the 1790's for public business as well as religious services to take place in the local meetinghouse. Even so, these years can be said to mark an increasing differentiation of function in the larger communities of Maine, and it is not unusual for the single "public" place to be superseded by multiple structures, each with its own specific purpose, by the 1820's. (Page 87.)

The Lovell Meeting House is a building that illustrates the transition between the 18th century "meeting house" and the "town house" or "town hall" form of civic structure that evolved through the 19th century. Numerous town-owned town houses or town halls survive in the rural communities and small town villages of Maine. During the 1830s, 1840s and 1850s there was a flurry of town house construction throughout the older, more settled parts of the state as the earlier Meeting Houses either aged or were superseded by purely civic structures. Most of these were one-story wooden building with rectangular footprints and gable roofs, often with simple Greek Revival detailing. After the Civil War it was less likely that a town would build a simple town house in favor of a more elaborate, and multi-functional town hall, a type of building that often included multiple rooms and accommodations for dinners or performances. In Lovell the remodeling of the building in the late nineteenth century shifted the building's function from that of a meeting house to a more contemporary hall, while preserving its function as the town's location for governmental functions.

When first built this large, two story building was intended for use as a religious structure and as a public assembly space. The building had high box pews, an elevated pulpit located at the center of one of the walls (presumably the east wall) and a gallery along at least one wall. The Congregational Church was established in 1798, two years after the Meeting House was started, and the religious body met in the Meeting House. The building was not finished all at once, as there were town warrant articles relative to finishing or repairing the building in 1805, and it also appears that not all the pews were sold until the late 1820s. In the meantime there were complaints about the draftiness of the building and in 1819 the town voted to lower the roof. However, this vote seems not to have been acted on as in 1827 the town again considered lowering the roof by three feet, which was accomplished thereafter by a local carpenter, Philip Johnson. In exchange for this work Johnson was to be compensated by the sale of the remaining pews.

According to local histories the Congregational Church ceased to use the building in 1852; however the pews, gallery and pulpit were not removed until the 1890s. This is presumably when the building was remodeled. Sometime thereafter, perhaps as late as 1920, the town authorized the local carpenter W.O. Brown " to have charge of the repairs on the interior of the town house such as the putting up of doors, curtains, & other fixtures required by societies & individuals in the holding of entertainments and dramas."[3] This was to allow the building to be rented to the public, however the extent to which this intended function was fulfilled is not known.

[3] Town Report & Meetings, Vol. I and II., Lovell Historical Society, Lovell, Maine.

This pattern of civic and religious use, accompanied by renovations to the town building is not unusual in Maine. In the Sedgwick Historic District, (NR: 94001550) in Hancock County, the Sedgwick Town House underwent a similar evolution. First constructed in 1793 as a meetinghouse for the Congregational Church, the building was located on a lot that also included the Town Common and the earliest part of the adjacent Burying Ground. Thought to have been a two story building measuring 50 by 40 feet with a gallery, in 1849 the building was most likely remodeled for use solely as a town house. This remodeling removed the gallery and shortened the building approximately ten feet.

The Lovell Town House was used during the 20th century primarily as the location for town meetings, selectmen's' meetings and polling, but the large meeting space may have also been used for special occasions and gatherings. In small rural towns such as Lovell, it is not uncommon for a building like the Lovell Meeting House to be a focal point for community events and activities. Although a new municipal building was constructed south of the Meeting House in recent years, the historic building continues to be used as the town's polling place and as the venue for town meetings.

Little is known about the portion of the lot referred to by current residents as the "parade ground". This is most certainly part of the original Common, or training ground, that was set aside in 1780. These public spaces had a long history in New England and were used for everything for militia exercises to grazing animals. In the seventeenth century the "town common" was defined by a number of underlying factors including traditional English land use law, spatial organization inspired by the Puritan religious vision of an ideal town plan, and egalitarian political and social opportunities made possible in the new world. However, the term and the space which it defined evolved significantly during subsequent waves of settlement, thus transforming the idea of the town common from a large outlying agricultural district to a small village open space. It is this latter space which, during the 19th century, was often "improved" and began to take on the ornamental appearance that is associated with that landscape type today. A survey of Maine's designed public landscapes completed in 1992 by the Maine Olmsted Alliance reveals that these Commons were the first such designed public landscapes created in the State. These Commons had several distinguishing characteristics: 1) they were typically associated with the Congregational (or first) meeting house; 2) they were relatively small, but centrally located; and 3) they may have been leveled for the purposes of public gatherings, but were not otherwise improved until the late nineteenth century - if at all. In 1829 two warrant articles that concerned the Common in Lovell appeared on the warrants for special town meetings. The first, in June, was to "choose an agent to lay the common open whereon the meetinghouse in said town now stands" and the second, in August, asked if the town would "choose a Committee to lay the land Common belonging to the Town at the Meeting House in Lovell". Although the language is archaic and vague, this appears to suggest the town was clearing or altering the Common in some way.[4]

Historic photographs in the collection of the Lovell Historic Society include images of neighboring children playing croquet on the grounds – but more importantly also record a

[4] Town Report & Meetings, Vol. I and II., Lovell Historical Society, Lovell, Maine. Warrants for special town meetings, posted June 8, 1829 and August 31, 1829.

formal parade, perhaps that of the Grand Army of the Republic during a Memorial Day event, taking place on the grounds. Although the adjacent cemetery is the third leg in this early-designated historic space, it is not included in this nomination at this time. The documentation may be amended in the future to include the cemetery.

Developmental history/additional historic context information (If appropriate.)

The town of Lovell was first known as New Suncook and settled by residents of Suncook, New Hampshire in 1788. Twelve years later the town was incorporated as Lovell, Maine, with a population of 698 residents.

The following history of the Lovell Meeting House was prepared by the historian at the Lovell Historical Society, Cathy Stone, in 2008. Portions of this information have also appeared in *Yesterday's News*, the quarterly newsletter of the Lovell Historical Society. The parenthetical statements are those of Cathy Stone.

> The Massachusetts grant to the Proprietors stipulated that the grantees had "within six years... (to) build a meeting house..." This was resolved in 1779 and on March 23, 1780 they voted to approve a town layout which "allowed five acres of Land at the West End of Lot No 22 for to build a meeting house or for the Public worship of God and for a training field and a Burying Place." The grantees later received an extension, recorded in 1784.
>
> At a proprietor's meeting on April 1, 1794 they voted to build a Meeting House, voted to choose a Committee of three to build the Meeting House (made up of Isaac Stearns, Benjamin Stearns and Josiah Health), and voted "a Tax of five Dollars on Each Proprietors Right to Build the meetinghouse and repair the Roads". On December 22, 1795, they voted "that the Committee chosen to build the meeting house in Newsuncook build it fourty five feet long and thirty five feet wide agreeably to the request of the settlers".
>
> When was it built? Pauline Moore in *Blueberries and Pusley Weed* wrote: "Probably it was built and used in a rather unfinished stage by 1796". The bronze plaque in front, which the town purchased for $175 in 1847, says it was built in 1796. I can't find any firsthand evidence to support that claim. It was definitely built by 1798 because the first church was organized on October 6, 1798 and they held services in the Meeting House. I would argue it is more likely to have been built in 1798, at the same time the church was organized. It is interesting to note that the Lovell Congregational Church held the 150th anniversary (Sesquicentennial) of the Church and the Meeting House on October 3, 1948, even though the plaque disagreed.

What is the building's name? The plaque says it is the "Lovell Town House". It was named the "Meeting House" when it was built. From 1838 to 1850 the Town Clerks referred to it as the "Centre meeting house". On September 2, 1850 Town Clerk E.G. Kimball referred to it as the "Town House". That name remained in 1947 when it was referred to as the "Town Hall". I would suggest the building be referred to as the Meeting House.

The following actions were taken at town meetings in the first thirty years. On March 4, 1805 the town "voted to raise sixty dollars to repair the meeting house". On April 1, 1805 they then "voted that Stephen Heald shall have the meeting House to finish the back said and East End for sixty three dollars in cents provided he doth finish it as well as the other part of said House is don outside". (Lovell Clerk's Records, p. 70). On April 5, 1819 the town voted to lower the roof of the Meeting House, board and shingle it anew and lay a "Dubble floor", and raised $100 for that purpose. The next reference to the Meeting House was on March 5, 1827 when it was voted to choose a committee of seven persons (Joseph Kilgore, Nathan Bryant, Josiah Heald, Stephan Barker, James Eastman, Daniel Howe, Phineas Eastman). The committee was charged with disposing of "all the pewground in the meeting house in said town, excepting six to be reserved for the benefit of the town, and to be layed out in the finishing the endside of the meeting house". (Lovell Clerk's Records, p. 497) They also voted to raise one hundred dollars to repair the outside of the building.

According to Pauline Moore, "the meeting house was originally two and one-half stories high and faced the lake. It had two doors and no windows on the front". *(I have not located the source of this information.)* There is no doubt that the building was two storied, because the 1827 town warrant asked if the town would consent to have the meeting house reduced to one story if there was no expense to the town. The article was passed over. Pauline Moore wrote that "records indicate that at this time (1827) the house was cut down to its present height." (I have not located the source of this information). According to Rev. Fred Pottle in his speech delivered at the Lovell Congregational Church centennial celebration in 1898, the work was accomplished in the following way: "People in those days could not be accused of lack of simplicity in their methods. For instance, the old meeting house was considered too high-posted, and to lower it men were stationed at the corners with axes to cut off some three feet from the posts, and the building was allowed to come down of its own accord."[5] (I have not located the source of this information).

In regard to the building, Pauline Moore references William Kimball's written account to his nephew Sumner Kimball. She wrote:

> He said that the Meeting House was too high because it was designed for a church. "After standing quite a number of years without much inside conveniences, the owners gave it to Mr. Philip Johnson, then a resident of Lovell, with the agreement that, if he would lower the roof to one story and finish the

[5] Research by the author, Cathy Stone did not reveal the sources of many of the descriptions of the Meeting House as published in Moore's book.

inside suitable for church services, building pews, pulpit etc., for said labor he was to receive such sums as might be derived from the sale of pews for his compensation."

Mr. Johnson was a good business man and did very well under this contract. In 1828 he was ready to sell the pews at auction. Mr. Kimball relates that Zacheus McAllaster had saved some especially wide white pine boards which he sent down with instructions to have them used in making a front pew. He intended this for his own use but "when the day set for the sale came round, a goodly number gathered at the house and competition was rife to see who would be the owners of the front pews, thereby causing Esq. Zacheus McAllaster to pay liberally for the privilege of owning and occupying the pew for which he donated the lumber".

Years later, according to the same source, the meeting house was sold back to the town of Lovell to be used as a town house. We know that it was not used as a church after 1852, but that the old pulpit and balcony were not taken down until sometime near 1890 when the building had to be remodeled to comply with the law concerning the Australian method of balloting. [6]

In regard to the interior, Pauline Moore gives the following description: "The pews were high, so high that no one could see over them when seated. They were boxed in with high doors that hooked on the inside. People brought their own heaters consisting of small metal boxes filled with hot stones or coals to put at their feet. There was a high circular pulpit with curved stairs on either side and a circular chancel below the pulpit. Here the deacons sat during the Sunday service and the dignified town officials during the semi-annual Town Meetings. There was a gallery for the 'singers' or choir... ."[7]

By 1852 the Meeting House was no longer used as a church. The Village and Center Congregational Churches had been built. According to Pauline Moore, in April 1852 the town voted to accept a proposal that read: "If the pew holders in the Meeting House will sign a quittance of the pews to the town, the selectmen will see that the house is shingled at the expense of the town." The Lovell Clerk's Records make no mention of this vote, but the records do report that on May 15, 1852 the town voted to shingle the Meeting House.

[6] The author notes that she was unable to find evidence of the real estate transaction in the Lovell Clerk's Records, or find Kimball's written account.

[7] After this history was written in 2008 the source for this description was subsequently identified as Joseph Andrews, formerly of Lovell but sending letters to the Norway Advertiser from South Dakota. Moore's description is based on a letter from Andrews that was published by that newspaper on September 27, 1912.

9. Major Bibliographical References

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

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Mohney, Kirk. National Register of Historic Places nomination for the "Sedgwick Historic District," (1994). Copy on file at Maine Historic Preservation Commission, Augusta, Maine.

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Shipman, Willam D. "Part I. the Federal Style: from about 1790-1825." In *Maine Forms of American Architecture*, Deborah Thompson, editor, 67-94. Camden, Maine: Downeast Magazine, 1976.

Williamson, William D. *The History of the State of Maine, Volume II.* Hallowell: Glazier, Masters & Co., 1832.

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: Lovell Historical Society

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): _____

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 1.5 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: Longitude:
2. Latitude: Longitude:
3. Latitude: Longitude:
4. Latitude: Longitude:

Or

UTM References
Datum (indicated on USGS map):

☒ NAD 1927 or ☐ NAD 1983

1. Zone: 19	Easting: 349183	Northing: 4894030
2. Zone:	Easting:	Northing:
3. Zone:	Easting:	Northing:
4. Zone:	Easting:	Northing:

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

The boundaries of the nominated property conform to the Town of Lovell tax map U33, lot 2.

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

This boundary encompasses all the property currently owned by the town and associated with the Lovell Meeting House, and its adjacent Parade Ground. The cemetery located north of the Parade Ground is no longer owned by the town and has not been included within the boundaries of this nomination.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title: Christi A. Mitchell, Architectural Historian
organization: Maine Historic Preservation Commission
street & number: 55 Capitol Street, State House Station 65
city or town: Augusta state: Maine zip code: 04333-0065
e-mail: christi.mitchell@maine.gov
telephone: (207) 287-1453
date: 17 April 2014

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

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

Photo Log

Name of Property: Lovell Meeting House

City or Vicinity: Lovell

County: Oxford State: Maine

Photographer: C. Mitchell

Date Photographed: 25 February 2014

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

1 of 10 ME_Oxford County_Lovell Meeting House_0001.tif
Façade of Meeting House; facing north.

2 of 10 ME_Oxford County_Lovell Meeting House_0002.tif
Street view of west and south elevation; facing northeast.

3 of 10 ME_Oxford County_Lovell Meeting House_0003.tif
East and north elevations; facing southwest.

4 of 10 ME_Oxford County_Lovell Meeting House_0004.tif
Detail of wooden quoins, soffit, fascia at southwest corner of building; facing north.

5 of 10 ME_Oxford County_Lovell Meeting House_0005.tif
Trim detail and ornamental features on west gable end; facing east.

6 of 10 ME_Oxford County_Lovell Meeting House_0006.tif
Interior view of stage, voting booths and woodstove/vault (on right); facing east.

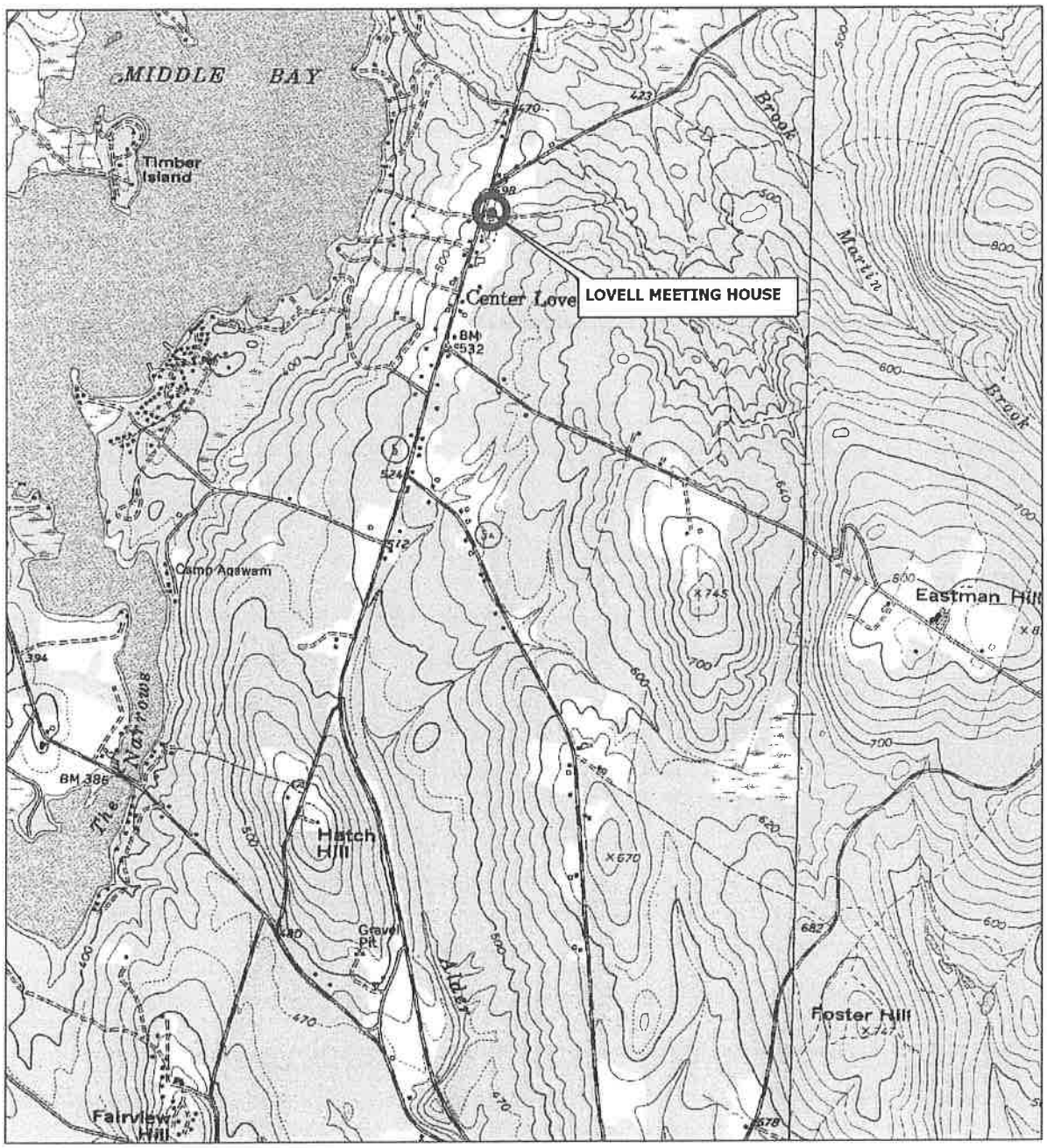
7 of 10 ME_Oxford County_Lovell Meeting House_0007.tif
Interior of assembly space; facing northwest.

8 of 10 ME_Oxford County_Lovell Meeting House_0008.tif
Detail of interior finishes and folding chairs; facing northwest.

9 of 10 ME_Oxford County_Lovell Meeting House_0009.tif
Cove ceiling at south corner of stage area; facing east.

10 of 10 ME_Oxford County_Lovell Meeting House_0010.tif
Stage platform, town officials' desks and voting booths, facing north.

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.

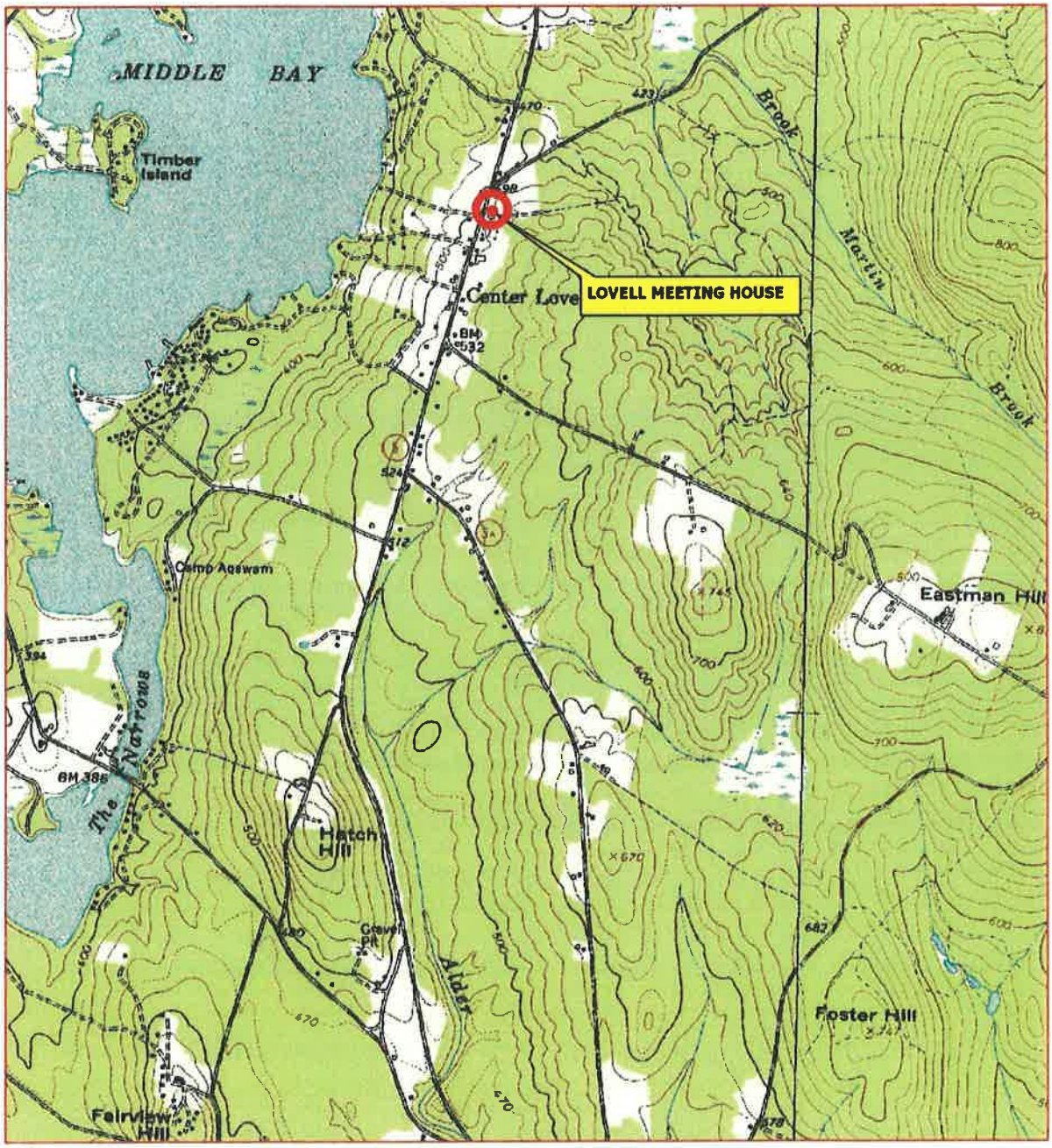


LOVELL MEETING HOUSE
OXFORD COUNTY, MAINE
24 FEBRUARY 2014

UTM Coordinates, NAD 27: 19 / 349183 / 4894030

200 0 200 400 600 Feet

N



LOVELL MEETING HOUSE
OXFORD COUNTY, MAINE
24 FEBRUARY 2014

UTM Coordinates, NAD 27: 19 / 349183 / 4894030

200 0 200 400 600 Feet

N

CONTELL
WOODHOUSE
1796

LOVELL
TOWN HOUSE
1796

LOVELL
TOWN HOUSE
1
2
3
4
5

LO
TOWN
1
1
2
3
4