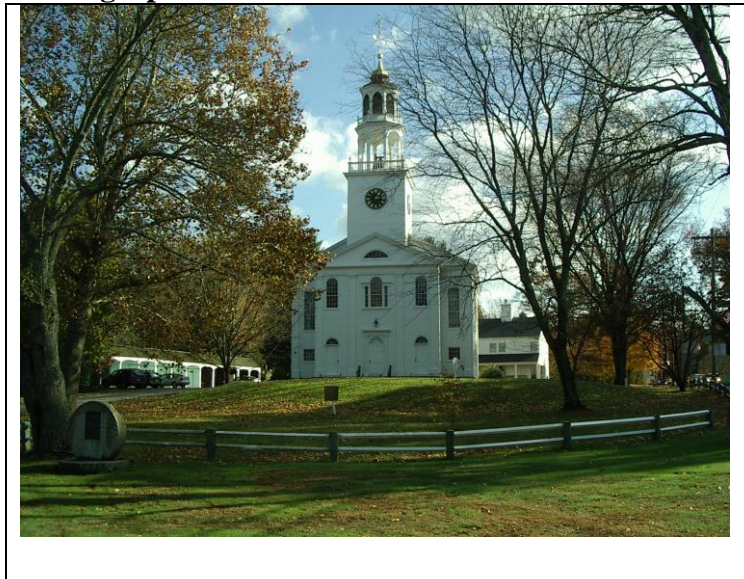


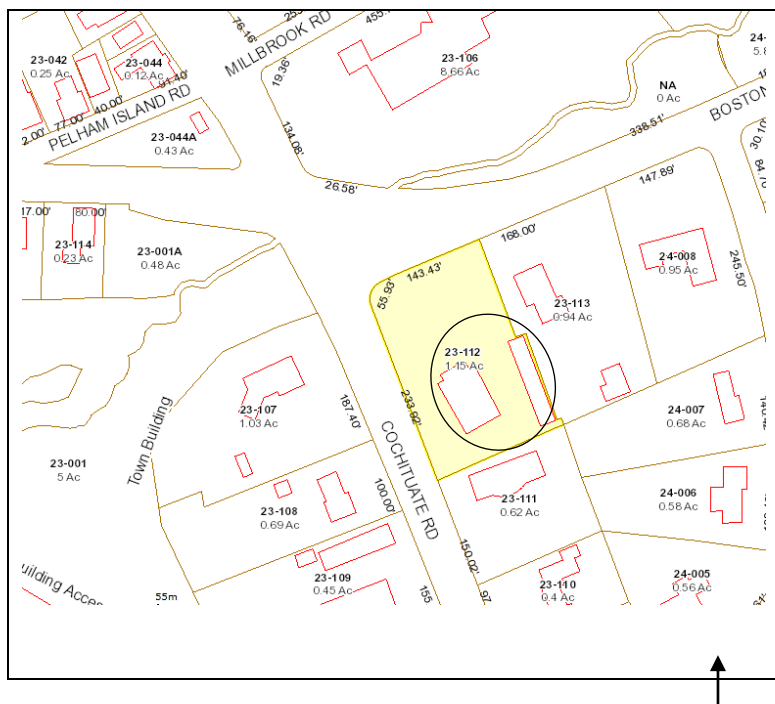
# FORM B – BUILDING

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION  
MASSACHUSETTS ARCHIVES BUILDING  
220 MORRISSEY BOULEVARD  
BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02125

## Photograph



## Topographic or Assessor's Map



Assessor's Number USGS Quad Area(s) Form Number

23-112

Natick

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WAY.74, 73

**Town:** WAYLAND

**Place:** (*neighborhood or village*)  
Wayland Center

**Address:** 225 Boston Post Road

**Historic Name:** First Parish Church

**Uses:** Present: religious

Original: religious

**Date of Construction:** 1814-1815

**Source:** Histories, East Sudbury Town Clerk Vol. II

**Style/Form:** Federal

**Architect/Builder:** Asher Benjamin Design/Andrews Palmer

## Exterior Material:

Foundation: granite block

Wall/Trim: wood clapboards

Roof: slate and asphalt shingles

**Outbuildings/Secondary Structures:** carriage sheds located on east side of lot on property line - 1815

**Major Alterations** (*with dates*): Windows changed from double-hung to triple-hung – ca. 1850; slate roof and gilding of cupola – 1850; addition at rear (1992); rebuilding of bell tower and re-gilding of cupola – 2003.

**Condition:** very good

**Moved:** no | x | yes | | **Date** n/a \_\_\_\_\_

**Acreage:** 1.15 acre

**Setting:** On southeast corner of Route 20/Boston Post Road and Route 27/126 Cochituate Road. Set back from Boston Post Road with low granite and wood rail fence framing front and side yard. Mature trees frame view of church from Route 20. A driveway passes along east boundary and in front of meetinghouse to Cochituate Road on the west side of the property.

**Recorded by:** Gretchen G. Schuler

**Organization:** for Wayland Historical Commission

**Date** (*month / year*): January 2013

# INVENTORY FORM B CONTINUATION SHEET

WAYLAND 225 BOSTON POST ROAD

## MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION

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☒ Recommended for listing in the National Register of Historic Places.

*If checked, you must attach a completed National Register Criteria Statement form.*

*Use as much space as necessary to complete the following entries, allowing text to flow onto additional continuation sheets.*

**ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION:** *Describe architectural features. Evaluate the characteristics of this building in terms of other buildings within the community.*

The First Parish Church property includes two parcels with the church building (WAY.74) and one extant twelve-bay horse/carriage shed (WAY.73) on one parcel and the 1983-84 parish hall (not part of this B-Form) on the other. The setting, at the corner of Boston Post Road (Route 20) on which it fronts and Cochituate Road (Routes 27/126) along the west side, is central to the town of Wayland. A broad lawn rises up to the meetinghouse from Boston Post Road and is set off from the road by a granite post and wood rail fence that arcs around the corner and lines the Cochituate Road side of this parcel as well. In front of the fence on the north side (Boston Post Road) is the 1932 George Washington Memorial Highway Marker (WAY.908), a bronze plaque set into a mill stone. Several well-trimmed deciduous trees dot the front lawn. A driveway on the east side of the property runs from Boston Post Road to the rear of the parcel between the east side of the church and the horse sheds that are set on the east property line and also arcs in front of the church building to exit onto Cochituate Road on the west side.

The First Parish Church is an iconic building at Wayland Center that displays the meetinghouse form with Federal-style elaboration. It is a two-story, five-bay gabled-front structure with a projecting enclosed portico of three entrance bays, and a four-stage bell tower that rises above the façade straddling the ridge of the main block and the projecting enclosed portico. The church building is five bays deep and has a small 1992 gabled-end rear addition attached to the south gable end of the building. The simplicity, yet elegance of design, of the façade has been maintained over its 200 years. The gabled-roof main body of the church is nearly square – five bays wide and five deep. It has five window bays on each side elevation and two on the façade, one on each side of the slightly projecting portico. First-story windows on the main body of the church are single 12-light sash; second story windows, which are perfectly aligned over the first-story windows, have triple 12/12/12 light sash set in slightly projecting casings. The gable front of the main body has a closed pediment with boxed eaves and a wide frieze that wraps around three sides of the church (not the rear elevation). The rear elevation of the main block is mostly covered by the 1992 addition.

Projecting forward on the façade as a separate volume is the three-bay entrance portico with a closed pediment that sits lower than and is framed by the gabled pediment of the main body. The bays of the portico are separated by monumental squared pilasters on high bases with unadorned capitals. These pilasters carry the templar pediment of the portico, which has a lunette centered in the pediment. Low granite steps lead to the entries. The hierarchy of entries is articulated by the casings. Each of the three recessed-paneled doors has a half-round transom with glazed sunrays in the end entries and a louvered fan in the center entry. Narrow pilasters carry narrow molded casings that form an arch over the fan of each entry. The center entrance has a more elaborate frontispiece with square pilasters on bases carrying a wide entablature with triglyphs and a deep projecting cornice with modillion blocks. Second-story windows are aligned with the entries. A Palladian-style window is centered over the main entry. It has a rounded arched center window with flanking narrow side windows, each of which has a cornice molding similar to the main entry. Rounded-arched windows over the two end entries have 12/12 lights with a glazed lattice fan in the arch.

A four-stage bell tower straddles the gable peak of the main body and spills onto the ridge of the portico. The bottom stage has a square footprint and has tall clapboard sides and a clock face in each wall. It is crowned

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WAYLAND 225 BOSTON POST ROAD

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with a projecting cornice and topped by a balustrade with turned balusters and attenuated finial urns on each corner. The next is open octagonal housing for the Paul Revere bell, which can be seen within. Square columns rise into arched openings on each of the eight sides. This stage also is topped with a projecting cornice and similar balustrade with eight urns – one on each corner post. The third stage is also octagonal with pointed arched blind openings filled with louvered shutters. A wide frieze wraps around this stage under the projecting cornice which is topped by the fourth stage – a copper turret top with gilded dome, spire and ball carrying a copper weathervane.

The rear addition, which is one-bay deep, carries forth the architectural details of the main body. It has a lunette window in the gable peak (which is not closed and has narrow returns), a modified Palladian-style window centered on the rear elevation, and two pairs of double hung 6/6 windows at the first-story level – one under the Palladian window and one in the left/west bay. The right/east bay has a door with an open entrance porch in front attached to the southeast corner of the building. On each side elevation of the addition is a double-hung, second-story 12/12 window over a single 12-light sash at the first story. A small low one-story shed-roof ell with standing seam metal roof is attached to the west side of the rear addition (the 12-light sash mentioned above is in the wall of this small ell).

Interior elaboration is elegant in its simplicity. The entries in the portico lead to a vestibule that spans the width of the building. On the first story is a large parish hall. Along the front wall of the vestibule are stairs on either side of the entries that lead to the second-story sanctuary. Above the end of the sanctuary is a choir loft that overlooks the pews.

The twelve-bay horse shed faces west to the driveway/parking area between the church and the shed building. It is a long side-gabled building with clapboard siding and a wood-shingled roof on the west side and asphalt on the east side which is not visible due to the screen of trees on the neighboring property. Of the twelve segmental arched openings, seven have paired vertical-board tongue-and-groove doors with a filled segmental arch above each set; five are open with no doors. The simplicity of design is an important feature. The horse sheds are viewed from both Boston Post Road and from Cochituate Road.

**HISTORICAL NARRATIVE** *Discuss the history of the building. Explain its associations with local (or state) history. Include uses of the building, and the role(s) the owners/occupants played within the community.*

This meetinghouse/church is the fifth meetinghouse of the first religious organization in Sudbury. The first was built in the Old Burial Ground, now known as the North Cemetery, in 1643 where the first Sudbury center had been established in 1638. The second and third meetinghouses replaced the first in the same location. A second meetinghouse, ten feet longer than the first, was built in 1653 to replace the first which the congregation had outgrown. The third was built in 1688 nearby. It was square in shape and had a bell turret. Men and women sat in separate pews and one's pew location was determined by the funding contributed to build this third meetinghouse. By this time early settlers were moving to parts of Sudbury west of the river and faced the challenge of having to cross the river when coming to worship. In the early 1700s unrest among those living on the west side of the river led to several petitions to the General Court to build a second meetinghouse. The result was the 1723 construction of a second meetinghouse in Sudbury Center, so that Sudbury now had two precincts – Sudbury and East Sudbury. East Sudbury would become a separate town in 1780, and would be renamed Wayland in 1835. At about the same time as the construction of the Sudbury precinct meetinghouse, 12 farmers in the Cochituate area petitioned to join the meetinghouse congregation located near the Old Burial Ground, (North Cemetery). After sometime this was granted, but it was followed by these same farmers wanting the meetinghouse to be closer to Cochituate. After meetings, committees, and petitions it was required to build a new meetinghouse one mile south of the existing third meetinghouse. The site for the fourth meetinghouse was selected after considering several spots at Wayland Center. It was

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erected in 1726 near the location of the much later George Smith House and Store and the First Town House (Collins Market).

In 1814 the East Sudbury precinct voted to build a new meetinghouse that would be used for religious purposes only. The debate between those living south of the town center and those living north had gone on for seven years and was focused on location, this time Mill Brook was the barrier. Finally it was resolved with the purchase of one-acre from William Wyman (south of Mill Brook). Andrews Palmer of Newburyport was the designer and builder and used an Asher Benjamin design. The bell was cast by Paul Revere and Sons and first lifted into the bell tower in 1814. The work on the full complex, which included the meetinghouse and two sets of horse sheds (only one survives), was completed in 1815. Transcription of Town Meeting articles and actions in the 1810s tell of the decisions and committees appointed to carry out the construction of the meetinghouse, the pews within and the "uniform row of sheds." Even the allocation of pews and sheds was prescribed in the town meeting actions.

When first built the sanctuary was at ground level and galleries were built around three sides. Windows were double hung and were aligned at two levels providing light into the floor where the seating was and into the galleries above. But a remodeling in the 1850s, brought about in part by changing tastes, led to relocation of the sanctuary on the second story by building a floor between the galleries. Windows had to be rearranged calling for triple-hung sash above and single sash below (one 12-light window). At the same time the pure white unelaborated interior was grain painted; the high pulpit was replaced with one of mahogany veneer; and a choir loft was built at the rear of the sanctuary and painted earth tones in color. Some molding also was added around the ceiling edge. In the same time period a town clock was installed in the bell tower, the cupola was gilded and a slate roof was added to the meetinghouse roof. Another change in taste brought restoration to the interior at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century when the woodwork was again painted white and the old pulpit, which had been stored in the basement, was returned to the sanctuary. In 1992 a small addition was built at the back of the church to accommodate an elevator for access to the second-story sanctuary, and some office space behind the altar. In 2002-2003 major structural work was done on the belfry which was lowered to the ground for restoration work and re-gilding of the cupola. Supporting posts were replaced and it was returned to its proper location in 2004.

As noted before the meetinghouse is an iconic structure and the center piece of Wayland's National Register and Local Historic District. It and the companion horse sheds are important historically and architecturally particularly because there are so few sheds that remain today built at the same time as the meetinghouse. Another row of horse sheds once lined the rear/south end of the property, behind the meetinghouse.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY and/or REFERENCES

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## National Register of Historic Places Criteria Statement Form

Check all that apply:

- ☒ Individually eligible      ☐ Eligible **only** in a historic district
- ☒ Contributing to a potential historic district      ☐ Potential historic district

Criteria:    ☒ **A**    ☐ **B**    ☒ **C**    ☐ **D**

Criteria Considerations:    ☐ **A**    ☐ **B**    ☐ **C**    ☐ **D**    ☐ **E**    ☐ **F**    ☐ **G**

Statement of Significance by \_\_\_\_\_ Gretchen G. Schuler \_\_\_\_\_  
*The criteria that are checked in the above sections must be justified here.*

The First Parish Church and Carriage Sheds are listed in the National Register of Historic Places as part of the Wayland Center Historic District for their architecture and association with the development of Wayland Center. The property retains integrity of location, setting, design, materials, craftsmanship, feeling and association.