

HISTORIC RESOURCES RECONNAISSANCE SURVEY
EAST PROVIDENCE, RHODE ISLAND

FINAL REPORT

Submitted to the City of East Providence
Department of Planning and Development
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By

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INTRODUCTION

This report presents the findings and recommendations of a Historic Resources Reconnaissance Survey, conducted by historic preservation consultant Kathryn J. Cavanaugh on behalf of the City of East Providence and the R.I. Historical Preservation & Heritage Commission (which funded the project with a Certified Local Government grant). The primary goal of the project was to provide preliminary recommendations regarding individual properties and/or historic districts that merit consideration for listing on the National Register of Historic Places.

The survey covered three study areas, containing a total of 1,055 properties:

- A triangular area bounded by Taunton Avenue, Waterman Avenue, and Valley Street, containing 572 properties (Figure 1).



- A 1-1/2 mile stretch of Pawtucket Avenue, from Warren Avenue to the Silver Springs Golf Course, containing 172 properties (Figure 2).

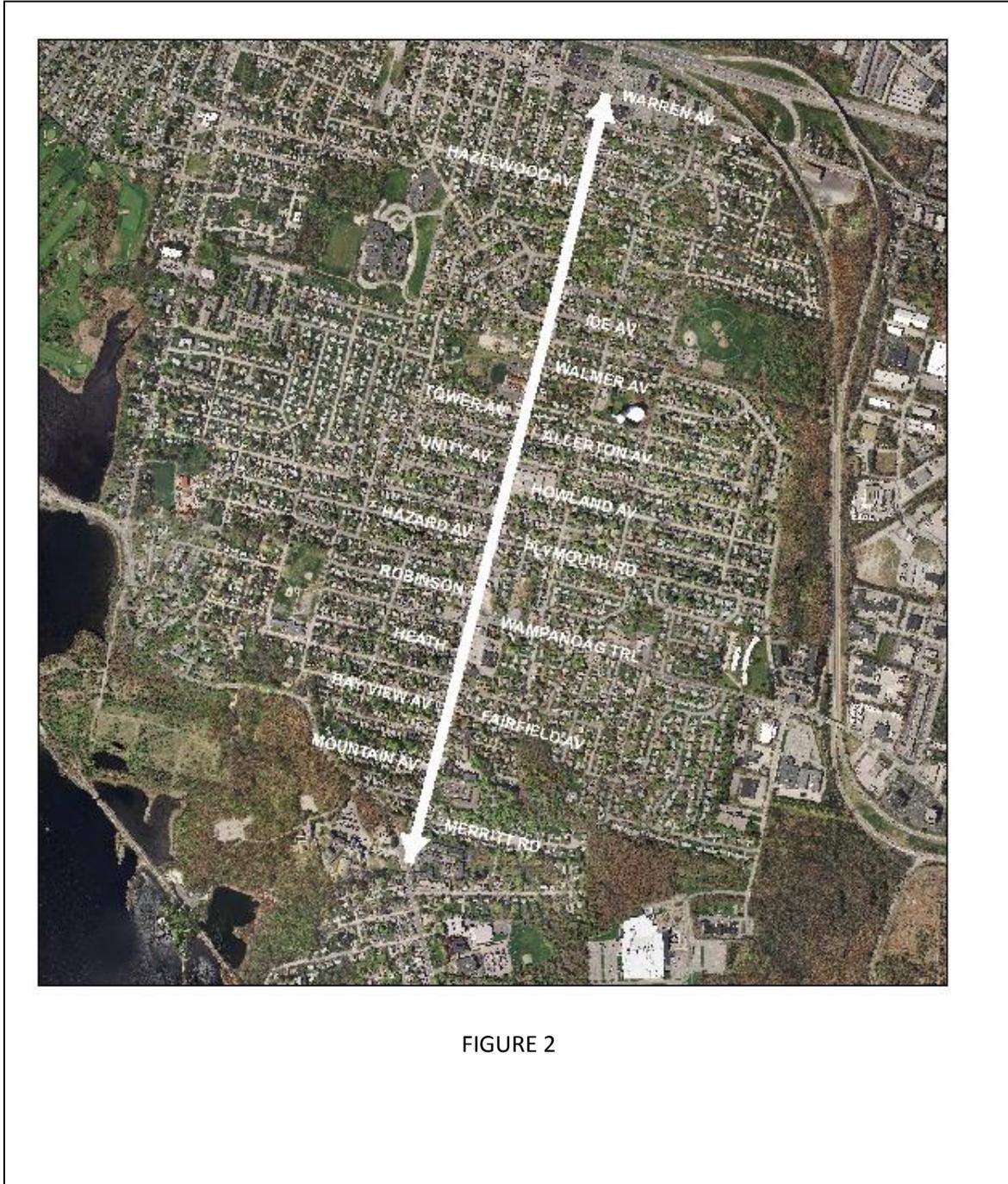


FIGURE 2

- A 1-1/2 mile stretch of Willet Avenue, from Pawtucket Avenue to Crescent Park Avenue (Figure 3), plus three adjacent sub-areas corresponding to the boundaries of three early 20th century development plats: the Whitcomb Farm Plat of 1913, the Elm Tree Plat of 1924, and the Rose Land Park Plat of 1928 (Figures 4, 5, and 6). This study area contained 311 properties.

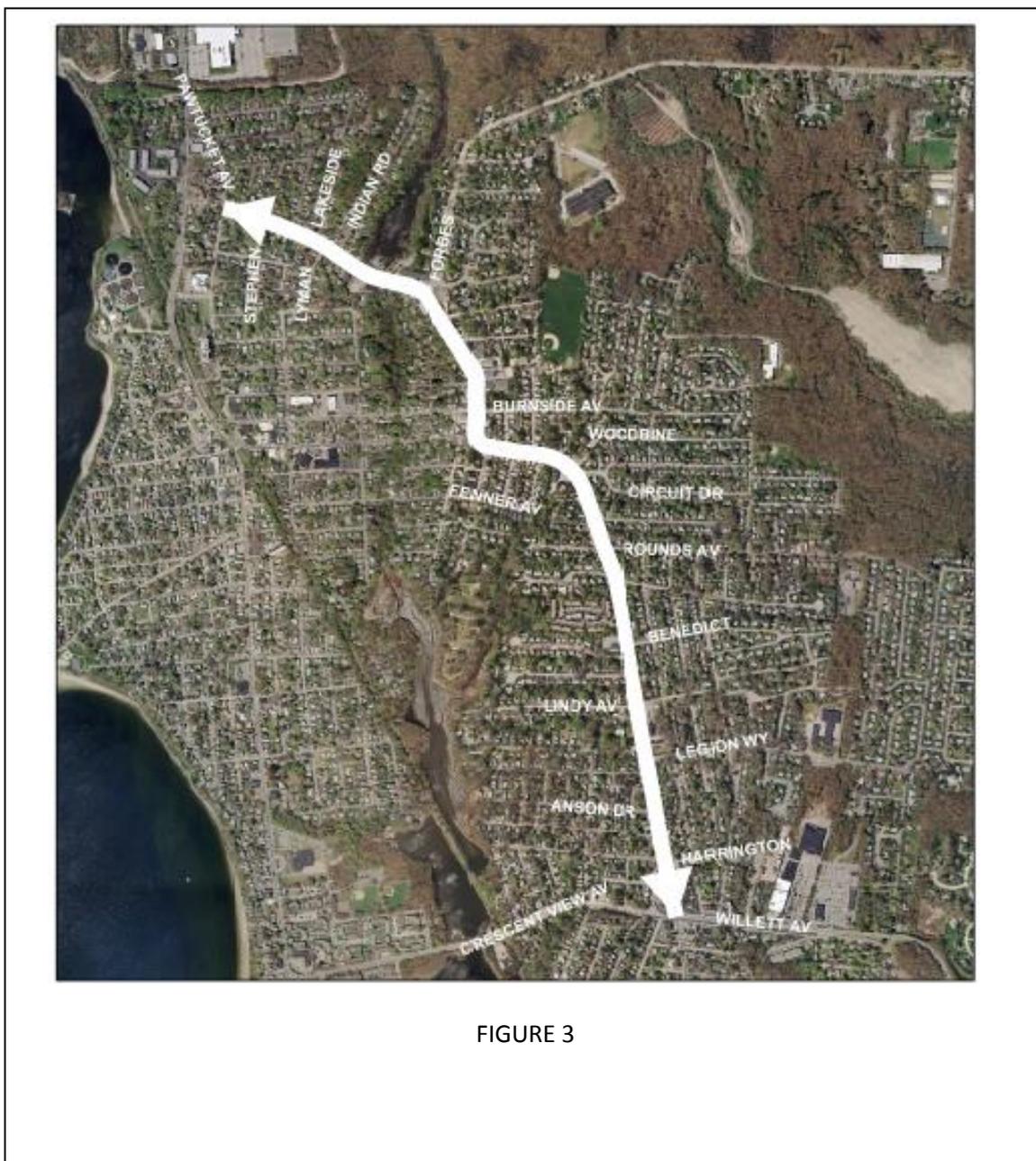


FIGURE 3

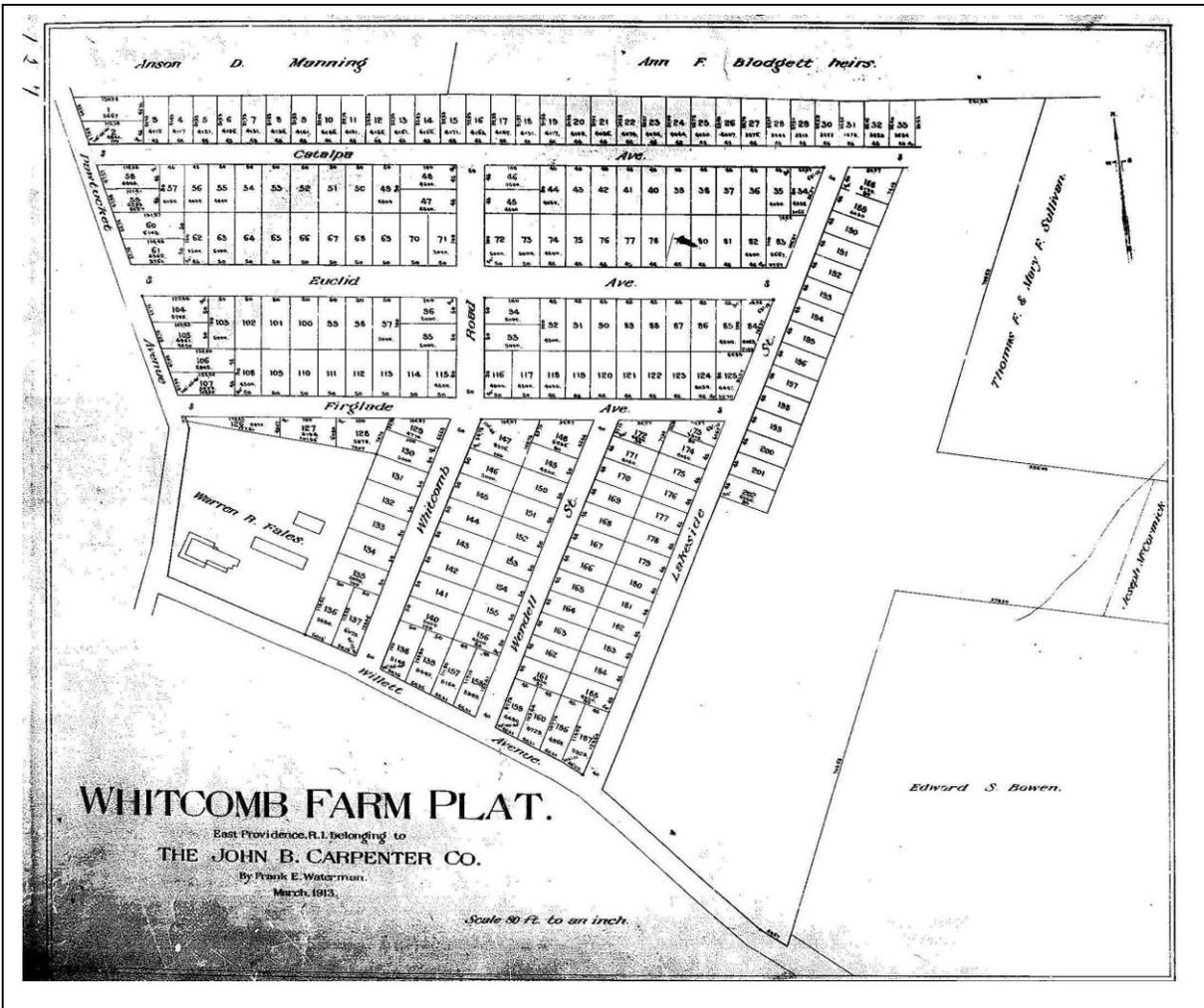


FIGURE 4

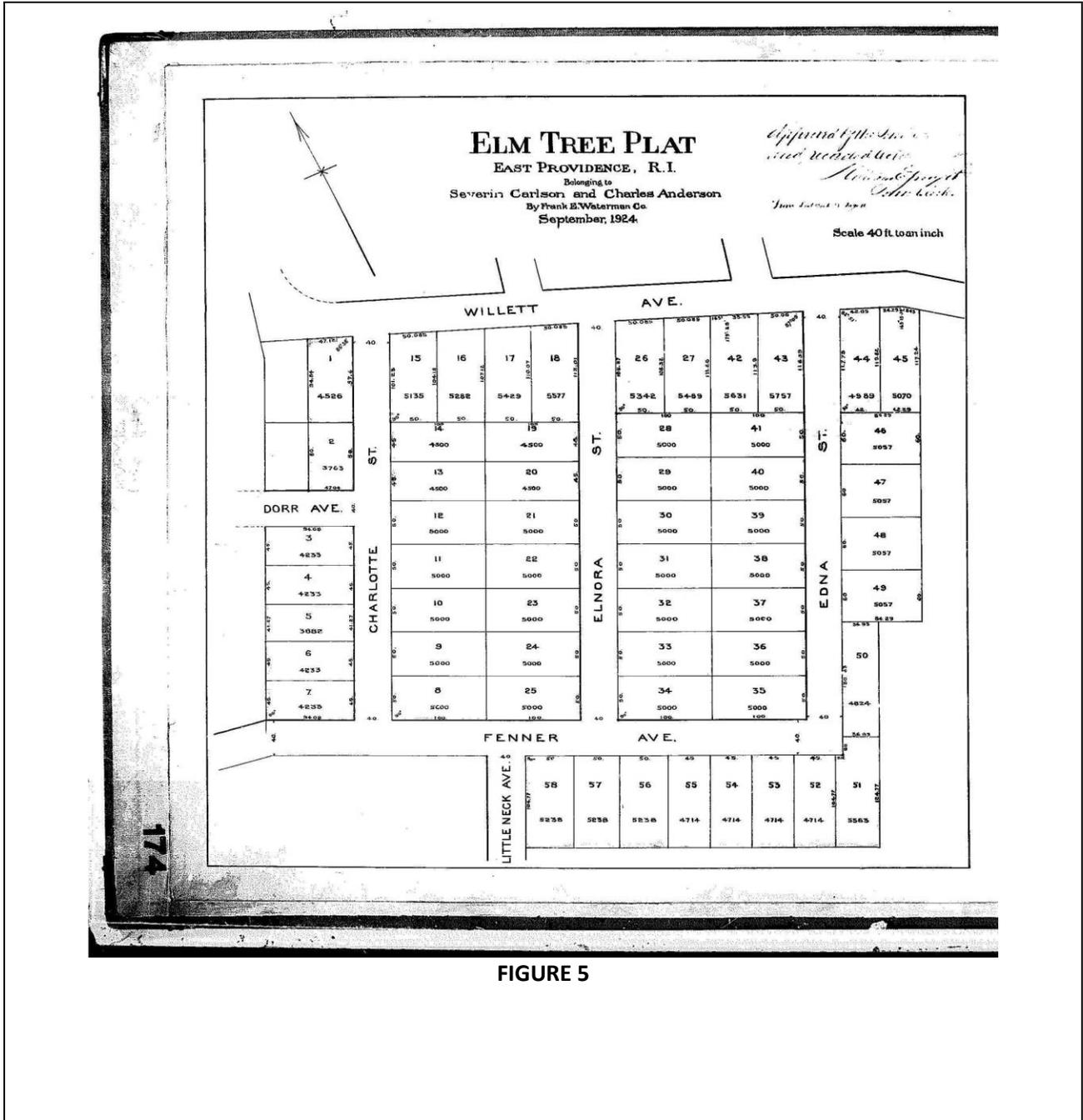


FIGURE 5

PREVIOUS DOCUMENTATION

RIHP&HC conducted a preliminary survey of the entire City of East Providence in 1975, and published a Preliminary Survey Report in 1976. This earlier survey included a total of 206 properties located within the three current study areas:

- Taunton Avenue, Waterman Avenue, and Valley Street “Triangle:” 97 properties
- Pawtucket Avenue Corridor: 29 properties.
- Willett Avenue Corridor: 80 properties.

In 1980, the National Register of Historic Places listed the “Historic Resources of East Providence,” a citywide multiple properties nomination that included in its inventory three properties located within two of the current study areas:



CAPT. PEARCE S. ALLIN HOUSE (ca. 1805),
Later WHITCOMB FARM
36 WILLETT AVENUE



JAMES DENNIS HOUSE (ca. 1880)
3120 PAWTUCKET AVENUE



DISTRICT 6 SCHOOL (ca. 1883-1895),
Later RIVERSIDE GIRL SCOUT HOUSE,
351 WILLETT AVENUE

METHODOLOGY

When the project began, the total number of properties within the three study areas was unknown, and the scope of work had not yet been finalized. Once the grand total of 1,055 properties had been confirmed, the scope of work had to be revised to fit the available grant funding.

The first step was to do a windshield survey to identify potential National Register-eligible individual properties or historic districts that would merit a more in-depth survey effort, and to eliminate non-historic properties and unbuilt lots from further study.

Windshield Survey

In the Fall of 2012, a windshield survey was conducted for the 1,055 total properties in the three study areas. For each individual property, addresses and assessor's plat and lot numbers were confirmed (using the City Assessor's online plat maps and database); a master list of all 1,055 properties and working maps were prepared. Then, field observations were recorded, including building type, current use, approximate construction date or period, and architectural style, all based on a visual assessment (supplemented, as applicable, by data from the 1975 survey). For all buildings that appeared to be 50 years old or older, notes were made about visibly apparent changes to five specific architectural features: wall materials, trim elements, windows, porches, and additions (especially, to the primary façade or roof). Non-historic buildings (which would be non-contributing in an NR district) were also noted. All of this data was then analyzed to develop a preliminary assessment of integrity for the purposes of potential National Register eligibility. Properties were ranked very good/good, fair, or poor depending on the number of changes observed, and these findings were color-coded on working maps of each study area. A spreadsheet table indicating the preliminary integrity rankings was also prepared.

In addition, 18 previously surveyed properties were found to have been demolished since 1975: 6 in the Taunton Ave.-Waterman Ave.-Valley St. Triangle, 9 in the Pawtucket Ave. Corridor, and 3 in the Willett Ave. Corridor. (These are noted in the "Master List" of properties appended to this report.) The net number of previously surveyed properties thus dropped from 206 to 188.

All unbuilt lots (vacant lots, parking lots, and side or rear yards that were on separate lots from primary buildings) were also identified, and eliminated from further study.

The results of the windshield survey were presented to the East Providence Historic District Commission as well as the City's Planning Department and to RIHP&HC. (See interim progress report dated November 1, 2012.) The windshield survey only eliminated about 10% of the total properties from further study (unbuilt lots, non-historic buildings, demolished historic buildings). For the remaining 900+, the scope of work had to be revised again to stay within budget.

With the agreement of the City and RIHP&HC, the focus of the project narrowed to an in-depth survey of just the three development plats adjacent to Willett Avenue that appeared to have good potential for National Register eligibility, plus three lots on Roseland Court, immediately north of the Roseland Park Plat, which were to be studied for their potential to be included in an NR district (total 252 properties, including 77 previously surveyed). In addition, updated architectural data and current photographs were to be provided on all other previously surveyed properties in the three study areas (121 total); new research data was only to be provided if research had not been done in the 1975 survey.

The revised scope of work thus included 363 total new survey forms, this final report with findings and recommendations, and a public presentation that has yet to be scheduled.

In-Depth Survey

Field work, photography, and research were conducted between December 2012 and March 2013. RIHP&HC Historic Property Data Forms were then prepared for 363 properties, and 845 digital photographs were labeled according to RIHP&HC standards, between April and June 2013. A Master List of the 363 properties, organized by study area, was also prepared in spreadsheet format. These work products are submitted along with this report.

Specific methodologies used for preparing the Historic Property Data Forms were as follows:

Assessor's plat/block/lot numbers: Numbers were obtained from the Assessor's online database. (Note: these numbers have changed since the original survey was done in 1975-76.)

Address: Where a discrepancy was found between a street number posted on a building and the address noted in the assessor's database, the field address was used on the front of the form, and the discrepancy noted. (Note: some addresses have changed since the original survey was done in 1975-76.)

In several instances, address numbers are out of order on the street. These are noted on the back of the survey forms and on the Master List.

In a few cases, two or more houses with separate addresses occupy the same lot; this was also the case back in 1975 even though only one of the buildings on a given lot was documented at that time. (E.g., the James Dennis House at 3120 Pawtucket Ave. has two additional houses on the property, at 3124 and 3126 Pawtucket Ave.) Photographs and brief descriptions of all primary buildings on the same lot were included on the updated survey forms.

Setback: Estimated setbacks were obtained using a measuring tool on Google Maps to identify the approximate linear distance from the public sidewalk (or street, if no sidewalk) to the elevation of the building facing the street, not including any porch, bay window, or other projecting architectural feature. Where a building was sited at an angle to the street, a rough midpoint was chosen for the measurement, and a note was made on the form.

Lot Size: These numbers were obtained from the Assessor's online database.

Architectural Data/Alterations/Assessment of Integrity: Beyond the "fill in the blank" architectural data on the front of each survey form, a more comprehensive description was provided in "Comments."

The survey form requests information for alterations to porches, windows, trim, and "overall," in terms of both materials and configuration. Typically, any building that had no visible alterations was ranked "Excellent;" one or two alterations was ranked "Good;" three or four alterations was ranked "Fair;" and more than four alterations was ranked "Poor." Efforts were made to make these rankings as consistent as possible.

Photography: Digital photos were shot in ¾ view (front and both sides) wherever possible; in some cases a building was set so far back from the street that only limited views of its façade or side elevations were available from the public sidewalk. Garages and carriage houses were photographed in context with the primary building wherever possible, but in some instances separate photos were provided. Sheds and other structures lacking a foundation were not photographed and not included in the survey data.

For St. Mary's Academy Bay View (3070 Pawtucket Ave.) and for Bradley Hospital (1011 Veterans Memorial Parkway), both of which have multiple primary buildings, individual photos of each building and contextual photos were provided (including aerial photos of Bradley Hospital from www.bing.com and GoogleMaps).

Research Data: Historic maps and city directories were used to identify historic names and construction dates for buildings that had not previously been surveyed, and for those in the earlier survey where no research had been done.

- All maps consulted are named on the back of each updated survey form; these include city atlases dated 1870, 1882, 1895, and 1917; as well as Sanborn maps dated 1899, 1900, 1921, and 1956. (Not all maps showed the entirety of each study area, and not all maps were relevant to each building.)
- East Providence directories began publication in 1890, but did not list properties by street address until the 1925-26 edition. Prior to 1925, the directories listed residents and businesses by name.

- Directory research began with current (or previous) addresses found in 1925-26. In some instances it was possible to trace the names of persons or businesses back to earlier years occupying the same building. In addition, the entire directories of 1894-95 and 1896 were reviewed page by page, noting relevant addresses.
- In many instances, address numbers changed over time (most streets in the Taunton/Waterman/Valley triangle were renumbered ca. 1900, and all of Willett Avenue was renumbered ca. 1930). Some street names have also changed. Where previous addresses could be matched with current addresses in directories and/or maps, those changes were noted on the survey forms.
- Neither the Weaver Library in East Providence nor the R.I. Historical Society Library in Providence has a complete run of directories since 1890; research was done in both locations.

Historic Names. Since no deed or chain of title research was done as part of this survey, historic names noted on the survey forms are those person(s) first listed in a directory as occupying the building. Where the building is first listed as “vacant,” or was depicted on a map a year or more prior to appearing in a directory, a name was not assigned.

Further primary source research (chain of title cards, limited deed research) is recommended to confirm historic names for many properties, especially in the three proposed National Register historic districts (see Recommendations).

Construction Dates. The first year that a building appeared in a city directory or on a map was chosen as the construction date. If the exact year could not be identified, then a date was estimated (e.g., “ca. 1895,” “after 1956”).

Architects/Builders. Where this information was indicated on the earlier survey forms, it was included in the updated forms on the same line as “Style.” Further primary source research (building permits) is recommended to confirm builders in the Elm Tree Plat and Rose Land Park Plat, where there are large numbers of similar house designs (see Recommendations).

Previously Surveyed Properties. Changes to a building’s exterior materials and features, and/or its use, since 1975 were noted in Comments.

Re-doing map and directory research that had been done in 1975 was not part of the scope of work for this project. However, in reviewing the earlier survey forms, enough questions were raised that this additional task was deemed necessary for all 188 previously surveyed properties. Problems encountered in the earlier survey forms included misidentified directories in which the address first appears; unidentified maps

cited as documentation for a date, which could not always be verified; typographical errors; and the occasional incorrect photo.

Note that the project consumed over 460 hours of the consultant's time – over three times as much time as originally estimated, despite the reduced scope of work. This highlights how difficult it is to predict with any accuracy how much time and effort will be required to complete a research project of this nature, especially when a fixed budget has been established before any work has begun.

FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Taunton Avenue-Waterman Avenue-Valley Street “Triangle” Study Area

Historical Summary. This study area is part of the Watchemoket section of East Providence, which began to develop as a suburb of Providence in the late 1840s, emerged as the town center in the late 19th century, and continued to grow into the 1930s. A total of 28 development plats were recorded for various parts of the study area between 1848 and 1959: the street pattern was established by the 1850s through several large plats recorded by different owners; later, multiple additional smaller subdivisions established building lots within that framework. No single planning effort drove development in the study area, but this was (and remains) a densely developed neighborhood of primarily late 19th and early 20th century buildings.

That development was facilitated by the introduction of public transit on Taunton Avenue (a horse-drawn streetcar line in the 1870s was electrified by 1895), as well as by a large influx of middle class, working class, and immigrant families drawn to Watchemoket by its proximity to Providence (a mere 2 miles away across the Washington Bridge over the Seekonk River). Taunton Avenue, which dates back to the 17th century settlement of East Providence, has historically been the primary thoroughfare in Watchemoket, and it developed with a mix of residential, small-scale commercial, social, civic, and institutional uses. Waterman Avenue, originally a residential street, gained some small-scale commercial uses beginning in the early 20th century. Valley Street, which forms the base of the study area triangle, is in a primarily industrial/large-scale commercial section that developed in the early-mid 20th century, bordering a former railroad line and the Seekonk River.

Survey Findings. The initial windshield survey included 572 buildings (see the report dated November 1, 2012). The residential streetscapes were found to be relatively intact, with very few historic buildings demolished since the 1975 survey (only 6 of 97 previously surveyed properties), and little recent new construction (29 buildings). The historic housing stock ranges from small single-family dwellings to larger 2-families and triple deckers. When first built – and when first surveyed 38 years ago – these represented a variety of late 19th and early 20th century architectural styles including Italianate, Queen Anne, Colonial Revival, and Bungalow. However, in the nearly 4

decades since the original survey, the architectural integrity of most buildings in this study area has been compromised. Vinyl siding, vinyl trim (or removal of trim), and replacement windows predominate; in addition, many porches have had railings and posts replaced, or been partially or fully enclosed. The study area also has three churches, all within a few blocks of each other: Second Baptist Church, 80 Taunton Ave. (ca. 1882); Sacred Heart Roman Catholic Church, 116 Taunton Ave. (1950); and Haven United Methodist Church, 200 Taunton Ave. (1929-31), as well as several early 20th century commercial buildings on Taunton and Waterman Avenues. Of these, only the Sacred Heart and Haven churches have experienced little or no change.

Following the windshield survey, only 20% of buildings in this study area were ranked Very Good/Good; 63% were ranked Fair; 11% were ranked Poor. Based on these observations, the study area did not readily appear eligible for National Register historic district nomination.

Therefore, in-depth survey work was conducted only on the 91 surviving properties that had been surveyed back in 1975. Of these, 53 were built between ca. 1870 and 1900; 35 between 1901 and 1930; and 3 between 1931 and 1965. While some revisions to the initial integrity assessments were made following a closer study of historic maps and the 1975 survey photos, the overall rankings remained much the same.

Below are two examples of houses (historic names could not be identified through directory research) that originally had a similar Late Victorian design with front gable roof, bay windows, and an open front porch; but while the house at 75 Anthony Street is fairly well preserved and has good integrity, the house at 81 Summit has undergone significant alterations and has only fair integrity.



75 ANTHONY STREET (ca. 1895)



81 SUMMIT STREET (ca. 1901-1917)

In another example, on the west side of Ivy Street is a cluster of four houses, all built between 1913 and 1919, which were once nearly identical, very simple 1-1/2 story, front-gable roofed dwellings with a bay window and a small porch over the front door. The basic house type is still recognizable, but each of them has been altered, in some cases significantly, and their integrity now ranges from good to poor:



CHARLES H. & ISABELLE
SIMMONS HOUSE (1919)
72 IVY STREET



PETER J. KEENAN HOUSE (1913)
76 IVY STREET



FREDERICK L. HUMISTON HOUSE (1913)
82 IVY STREET



JOHN TAYLOR HOUSE (1913)
86 IVY STREET

Recommendation: No potentially eligible National Register historic districts were identified for the Taunton Ave.-Waterman Ave.-Valley St. "Triangle" Study Area.

Pawtucket Avenue Corridor Study Area

Historical Summary. This study area covered a 1.5 mile section of Pawtucket Avenue from Warren Avenue south to the Silver Spring Golf Course. Pawtucket Avenue has been a major thoroughfare through East Providence since the town's original settlement, and until the mid- 19th century the land surrounding the Pawtucket Avenue Corridor was primarily farmland. The study area contains one early farmhouse, originally in the Cape Cod style with Greek Revival detailing, which has had some later alterations and is now in multi-family use:



TIMOTHY A. LEONARD HOUSE (ca. 1850)
2672 PAWTUCKET AVENUE

In 1855 the Providence, Warren, and Bristol Railroad line opened along the Providence River shoreline, spurring the development of a number of country estates for the wealthy on the high ground along lower Pawtucket Avenue, where splendid views of upper Narragansett Bay could be had. The study area contains one well preserved example of a Queen Anne style country estate:



JAMES DENNIS HOUSE (ca. 1880)
3120 PAWTUCKET AVENUE
NR, 1980

The railroad line also provided access to the Riverside section of East Providence, where summer resorts were established in the late 19th century to provide recreational amenities that could be enjoyed by people of modest means: amusement parks, shore dinner halls, hotels, and small rental cottages. The Silver Spring Golf Course, at the southern end of the study area, includes the site of the former Vanity Fair amusement park.

Although suburban development along Pawtucket Avenue was anticipated as early as the post-Civil War era – portions of Pawtucket Avenue were included in 24 different development plats that were recorded by various landowners between 1872 and 1948 – for most of the 19th century the area lacked the inexpensive public transportation that would encourage middle class and working class commuters to live there. Electric streetcars were introduced on Pawtucket Avenue by 1895, and suburban development finally, if slowly, followed in the early and middle decades of the 20th century, both on Pawtucket Avenue itself and on adjacent side streets.

Survey Findings. The Pawtucket Avenue Corridor has 172 properties, 140 of which are 19th and early-mid 20th century buildings, most of them single-family houses that originally exhibited a variety of typical styles of that period, including Late Victorian, Queen Anne, Bungalow, Arts & Crafts, and Colonial Revival. However, this Corridor has had more demolition (9 properties, one of which had been lost prior to 1975) and more recent new construction (31 buildings) than either of the other two study areas. In addition, the architectural integrity of many individual buildings has been compromised by the all-too-common alterations of the past 30 or so years (e.g., vinyl siding and trim, replacement windows, and changes to porches). Moreover, some houses are now in multi-family, mixed, or commercial use, which in some cases has resulted in additional alterations that further undermined their integrity.

The Pawtucket Avenue Corridor also has some large-scale non-historic commercial development clustered at the Warren Ave. end of the study area, and in the several blocks on either side of the intersection with the Wampanoag Trail (R.I. Route 114). Two large institutional campuses, for Bradley Hospital and St. Mary's Academy Bay View, are located near the intersection with Veterans Memorial Parkway, and between the Parkway and the Silver Spring Golf Course are several large mid- and late- 20th century apartment complexes, which have a very different scale and architectural character than the earlier housing stock.

In the initial windshield survey, 25% of buildings in the study area were ranked as having Very Good/Good integrity; 45% were ranked Fair, 11% were ranked Poor. (See the November 1, 2012 report.) These rankings plus the disjointed architectural character of the Pawtucket Avenue Corridor precluded any further consideration of the study area as a whole for potential National Register historic district nomination.

Therefore, in-depth survey work was conducted only on the 20 surviving properties that had been surveyed back in 1975. (Two additional historic sites located within the Silver Spring Golf Course were not re-examined: the Sowams Marker Site, and the Vanity

Fair Site). Of these 20 buildings – which constitute approximately 1% of the entire study area – 2 were built before 1870; 5 between 1870 and 1900; 10 between 1900 and 1930 (reflecting the suburbanization of this part of East Providence in the early 20th century); and 3 between 1931 and 1965.

After a close study of maps as well as the 1975 survey photos, 75% of these 20 buildings were ranked as having Good integrity; 15% Fair, and 10% Poor. This would seem like a very good ratio for a potential NR historic district, except for the fact that the properties are, for the most part, spread out along the entire length of the Pawtucket Avenue Corridor; only a few are situated adjacent to one another. Furthermore, 14 of the 20 have had a change of use since their original construction, 2 of them have been moved from their original locations, and 2 are institutional campuses with recent new construction, and presumably have also upgraded their building interiors in response to changing needs in education and health care. All of these factors likely preclude most of these properties from eligibility for individual NR nomination, although further research would need to be done (specifically, interiors would need to be examined) before a formal determination of eligibility could be made.

A few examples of individual properties with good integrity and still in their original single-family use are shown below. All were built in the early 20th century, and exhibit the variety of architectural styles in vogue at that time: Arts & Crafts, Bungalow, and Colonial Revival.



GUSTAVUS R. IDE HOUSE
(1915-16)
2502 PAWTUCKET AVENUE



NAPOLEON L. AND DELIA M. TETREULT HOUSE
(1919-20)
3059 PAWTUCKET AVENUE



ETHEL PIERCE HOUSE (1916-17)
3191 PAWTUCKET AVENUE

Recommendation: No potentially eligible National Register historic districts were identified for the Pawtucket Avenue Corridor Study Area.

Willett Avenue Corridor Study Area

Historical Summary. This study area covered a 1.5 mile section of Willett Avenue (R.I. Route 103) from Pawtucket Avenue south to Crescent Park Avenue. Like Pawtucket Avenue, Willett Avenue contains a mix of residential and small-scale commercial uses. Unlike Pawtucket Avenue, which follows a relatively straight line for most of its length within that study area, Willett Avenue runs along a winding, zigzag course that eventually connects with County Road in Barrington.

Along with Taunton and Pawtucket Avenues, Willett Avenue also dates back to the 17th century settlement of East Providence; the surrounding Riverside neighborhood was rural, agrarian, and sparsely settled until the late 19th and early 20th centuries. This study area contains several surviving Colonial, Federal, and Cape Cod/Greek Revival style farmhouses:



JESSE MEDBERY HOUSE (ca. 1730; 1882)
319 WILLETT AVENUE



BENJAMIN VIALL HOUSE (ca. 1720-30)
787 WILLETT AVENUE



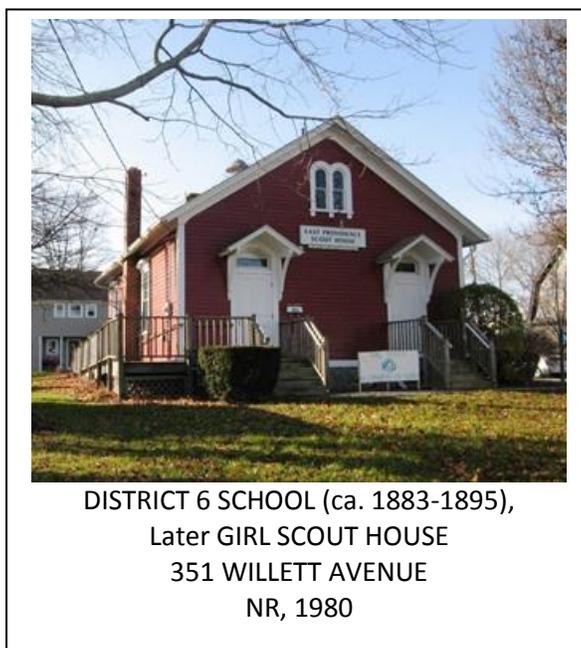
CAPT. PEARCE S. ALLIN HOUSE (ca. 1805),
later WHITCOMB FARM
36 WILLETT AVENUE
NR, 1980



NATHANIEL VIALL HOUSE (ca. 1840s)
887 WILLETT AVENUE

Riverside began to develop as a summer resort after the railroad line along the Providence River shoreline came through in the 1850s. Most of the development associated with summertime recreation – campsites, small cottages, boarding houses, hotels, shore dinner halls, clambake houses, wharves, amusement parks – was concentrated on and around Bullocks Point Avenue, west and south of Willett Avenue.

As was true in Watchemoket and in the areas surrounding Pawtucket Avenue, year-round residential development in Riverside was anticipated, and facilitated, by proximity to public transportation. By 1895 the Pawtucket Avenue electric streetcar line had a station on Bullocks Point Avenue, and several development plats creating new streets and blocks of house lots had been recorded nearby, south and west of Willett Avenue. By the late 19th century Riverside had enough people living there year round that a district school was constructed on Willett Avenue; today this is one of the few remaining one-room schoolhouses in East Providence (sources vary as to the exact date – see updated survey form; further research is needed).



By the early 20th century, with the automobile gaining prominence and commuters less dependent on public transit, three new plats were recorded in areas directly adjacent to Willett Avenue:

Whitcomb Farm Plat (1913). This plat was bounded by Willett Avenue on the south, Pawtucket Avenue on the west, Catalpa Avenue on the north, and Lakeside Street on the east. In addition to introducing Catalpa Avenue and

Lakeside Street, other new streets were Euclid Avenue, Firglade Avenue, Whitcomb Road, and Wendell Street. (See Figure 4, page 4.)

Later replats of several small areas included the Whitcomb Farm Plat No. 2 (which introduced Fales Street, 1927); the Willett Park Plat (reconfigured Lakeside Street and created Lakeside Circle, 1946); and the Whitcomb Farm Replat (of certain lots on the north side of Catalpa Avenue near Lakeside Street, 1949).

Elm Tree Plat (1924). This plat was bounded by Willett Avenue on the north, Charlotte Street on the west, Fenner Avenue on the south, and Harvey Avenue on the east; it also included Elinora Street. (See Figure 5, page 5. Note that some street names have changed.)

Rose Land Park Plat (1928). This plat was bounded by Willett Avenue on the east, Florence Avenue on the north, Dartmouth Avenue on the south, and a small brook on the west; it also included Princeton Avenue. (See Figure 6, page 6. Note that some street names have changed.)

Survey Findings. The windshield survey for the Willett Avenue Corridor included a total of 311 properties along the entire 1.5 mile length of the study area and in the three adjacent development plats. As noted in the November 1, 2012 report, all three plats appeared to be good candidates for National Register nomination as historic districts: the residential streetscapes of predominantly 1 to 2 story, wood frame, single-family housing stock are very intact, with little or no demolition or recent new construction. Each plat represents architectural styles prevalent in the first half of the 20th century, particularly Bungalow, Cape Cod, Colonial Revival, and English Cottage. The Rose Land Park Plat had the best integrity, in the initial assessment (74% ranked Very Good/Good, 26% Fair), but while common late 20th century alterations like vinyl siding, vinyl windows, and changes to porches were more prevalent in the Whitcomb Farm Plat (49% Very Good/Good, 47% Fair) and the Elm Tree Plat (42% Very Good/Good, 53% Fair), all three plats visibly retain an early to mid 20th century architectural character and were significant to the development of Riverside as a suburban residential neighborhood in the early 20th century.

The in-depth survey revealed similar integrity assessments, as well as the following additional findings.

The Whitcomb Farm Plat, anchored by the ca. 1805 Capt. Pearce S. Allin House (36 Willett Avenue, at the intersection with Pawtucket Avenue) which stands at the southwest corner of the plat, developed steadily after the plat was first recorded in 1913, achieving nearly full build-out in a little more than half a century, with mini-building booms prior to 1925 (34 houses), between 1925-1935 (53 houses) and again in the 1940s-1950s (43 houses, many of them in the two areas replatted in the 1940s, Catalpa Avenue near Lakeside Street, and Lakeside Street/Lakeside Circle). The plat has 145 houses, most of them single family, 1 to 2 stories tall, and wood-frame, predominantly in

early and mid-20th century types and styles such as Bungalow, Colonial Revival, Four Square, English Cottage, Cape Cod, and Ranch. Only 6 buildings were constructed after 1965 and would be considered non-contributing in a NR historic district. Revised integrity rankings are as follows: 55% Excellent/Good, 41% Fair, 4% Poor.

Some examples of buildings in this plat are illustrated below:



HENRY J. READ HOUSE (ca. 1915)
14 CATALPA AVENUE



GEORGE AND ESTHER BRASSEAU HOUSE (1929-30)
50 EUCLID AVENUE



CYRIL L. AND HELEN W. JOHNSON HOUSE (1931-32)
21 FALES STREET



JOSEPH D. AND FLORA CORREIA, JR. HOUSE (1949)
60 LAKESIDE STREET

The Elm Tree Plat is a virtual bungalow museum: of its 54 buildings, 46 are bungalows, representing at least four different types of this quintessential early 20th century house design: side gable roof with integral, full-width front porch; hip roof with integral, full-width front porch; hip roof with integral front corner porch; and jerkinhead roof with no porch, as in the examples below:



CARL W. AND HELEN E. MORLEY HOUSE (1927-28)
14 CHARLOTTE STREET



RAYMOND A. MAGRATH HOUSE (1937-38)
14 ELINORA STREET



JAMES H. AND GRACE G. COPELAND HOUSE (1933)
189 FENNER AVENUE



HOUSE (1929-30)
10 HARVEY AVENUE

Other architectural styles the Elm Tree Plat include Cape Cod and English Cottage; the plat also contains one ca. 1840 farmhouse, now much altered, at 521 Willett Avenue, and another ca. 1910 house at 7 Charlotte Street (which may have been moved to its current site from nearby on Willett Avenue). Aside from these two houses that pre-date the recording of the plat in 1924, 47 houses were built between 1925 and 1935 – a remarkably rapid rate of development – and 5 more were built between 1937-1953; there are no non-contributing buildings. Despite the common alterations to individual buildings as have been seen elsewhere (vinyl siding, vinyl windows, enclosure of porches), the unique architectural character of this plat as a whole is still readily evident. Revised integrity rankings are as follows: 46% Excellent/Good; 50% Fair; 4% Poor.

The Elm Tree Plat also abuts the Rose Land Park Plat, which was recorded 4 years later by the same developers: Severin Carlson and Carl Johnson. The 1975 survey

credited Carl Johnson as the builder of many of the houses in Rose Land Park Plat, as well as some in the Elm Tree Plat. While his actual involvement would need to be verified (if possible) for a NR nomination, this common thread might be grounds for combining the two plats into a single historic district nomination, in which case the overall ratio of Good/Excellent to Fair to Poor will likely improve

The Rose Land Park Plat, with 36 houses, is the smallest and best preserved of the three plats included in this study. Like the Elm Tree Plat, Rose Land Park experienced very rapid development in the first decade after the plat was recorded in 1928: 29 houses were built between 1919 and 1939 (one was demolished ca. 1980 and replaced with a new house); 4 in the 1940s, and 3 in the 1950s. This plat is predominantly characterized by English Cottage, Cape Cod, and Colonial Revival style houses. The plat's developer, Carl Johnson, built two houses here as his personal residence, one at 39 Dartmouth Avenue (1931-32) and a later one at 54 Dartmouth Avenue (1953).

The housing stock here is all single family, 1-1/2 to 2 stories tall, and mostly wood frame, although several of the English Cottage style houses have brick or stone accents around their entryways; a few of them also have a rolled edge to their rooflines, simulating a thatched roof. Some examples are shown below:



HOUSE (1931-32)
665 WILLETT AVENUE



CARL E. AND HULDA JOHNSON HOUSE I (1931-32)
39 DARTMOUTH AVENUE



FRANCIS X. AND MARGARET M. DODD HOUSE (1935)
9 FLORENCE STREET



HOMER HERRICK HOUSE (1937)
28 FLORENCE STREET

Note that as part of the in-depth survey of this plat, three additional houses just north of the plat were also examined to determine if they should be included in a proposed NR historic district. These houses were not included in the original plat but are of similar vintage, all of them Cape Cod style houses constructed in 1939: 617 Willett Avenue (formerly 2 Roseland Court), 6 Roseland Court, and 10 Roseland Court. All three are clad in either vinyl or aluminum siding; two were ranked Fair and one Good in terms of integrity. They could be included in a historic district nomination for Rose Land Park Plat (or in a district combining both Rose Land Park and Elm Tree Plats), but would not particularly enhance the district's NR eligibility.

The Rose Land Park Plat has one non-contributing building (5 Florence St., ca. 1980) but otherwise is intact and in a generally good state of preservation. Revised integrity rankings are as follows: 78% Excellent/Good; 22% Fair; 0% Poor.

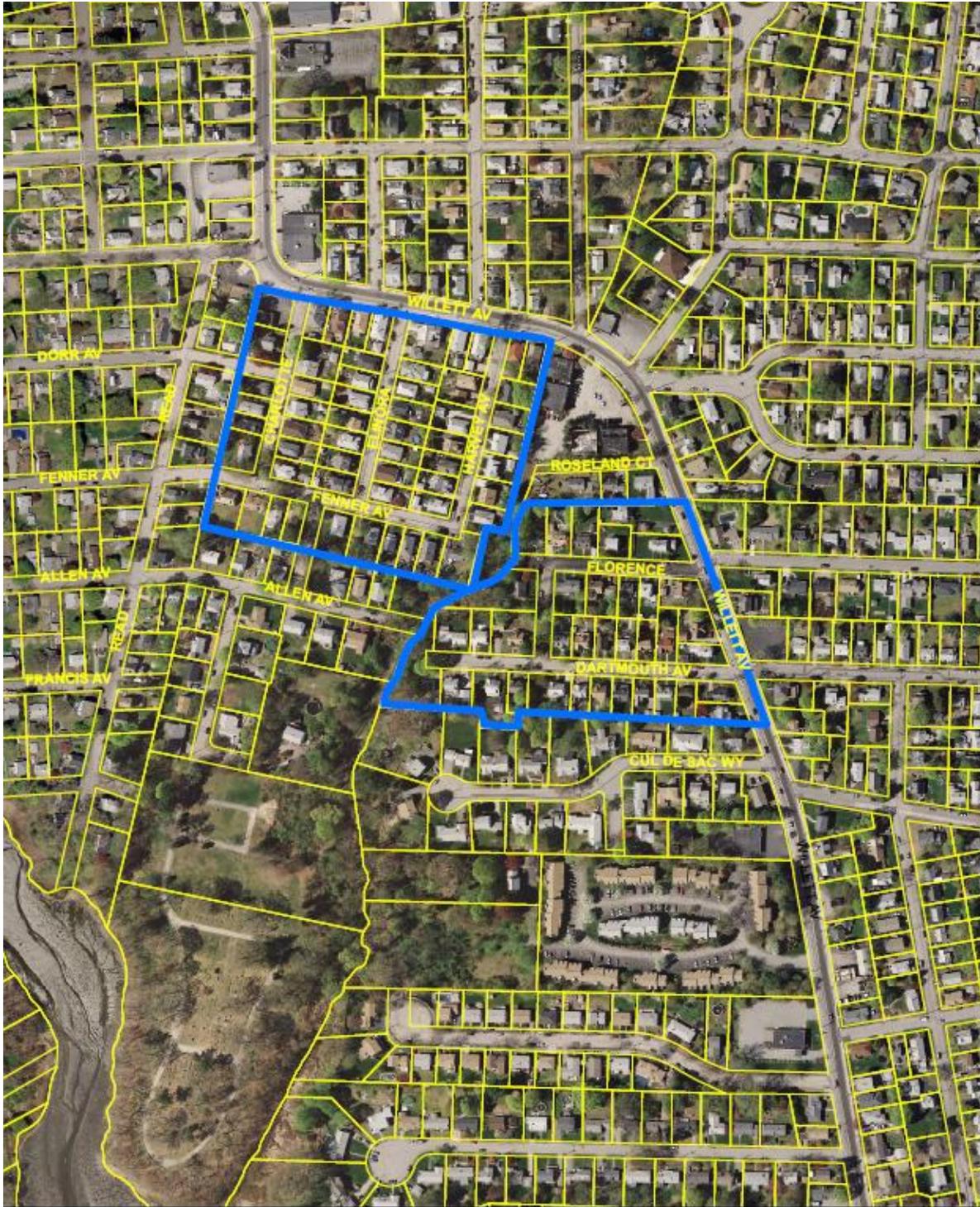
Other Willett Avenue Properties. The other 14 previously surveyed properties in the Willett Avenue Corridor Study Area are situated in mostly non-contiguous locations along the entire 1.5 mile length of the street. Most of these are single-family houses, constructed between the early 18th century (see p. 19) and the early 20th century, but there are also a late 19th century schoolhouse (see p. 20), two mid-late 20th century commercial buildings, and a conservation area around Willett Pond. All but two of these were found to still be in a good or excellent state of preservation.

Recommendations: The Whitcomb Farm Plat, Elm Tree Plat, and Rose Land Park Plat all merit nomination to the National Register as historic districts. The proposed boundaries, shown on the maps on the following pages.



Whitecomb Farm Plat

PROPOSED WHITCOMB FARM PLAT HISTORIC DISTRICT



Elm Tree Plat and Rose Land Park Plat

**PROPOSED ELM TREE PLAT HISTORIC DISTRICT
AND
ROSE LAND PARK PLAT HISTORIC DISTRICT**