

138 Root Trail



DESIGNATION REPORT

January 17, 2018

Landmark Preservation Commission

Palm Beach, Florida

DESIGNATION REPORT

138 Root Trail

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Report produced by Murphy Stillings, LLC

I. General Information

Location: 138 Root Trail
Palm Beach, Florida

Date of Construction: circa 1900-1915

Architect: Unknown; Likely Contractor Designed and Built

Present Owner: Sadeca Realty LLC

Present Use: Residential

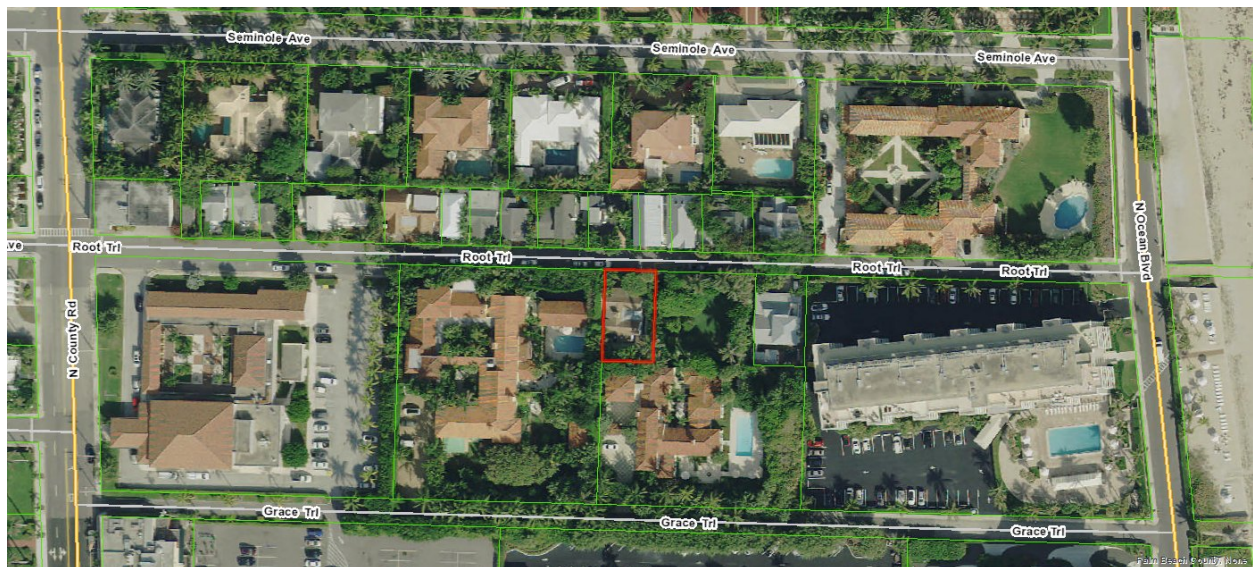
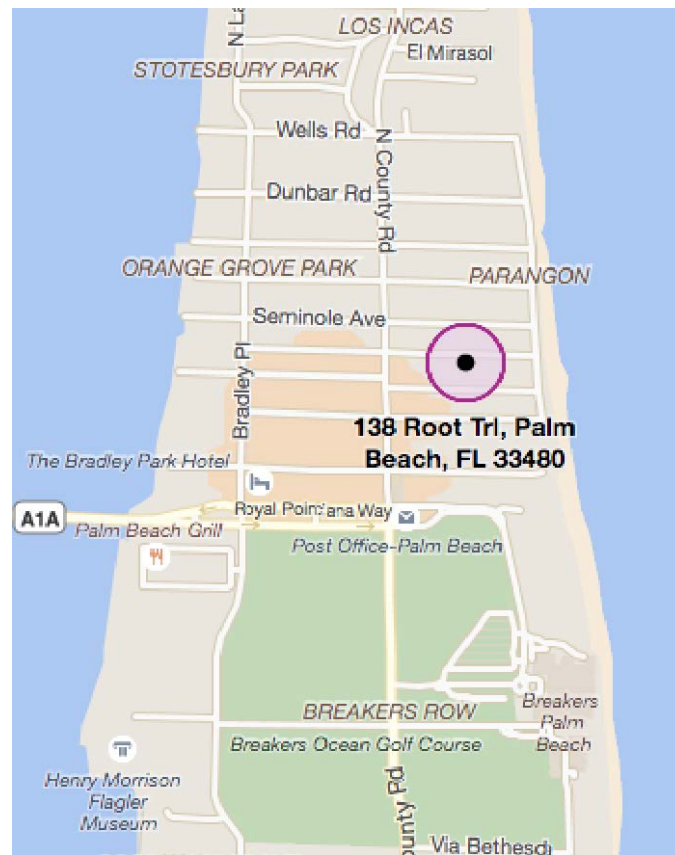
Present Zoning: R C

Palm Beach County Tax Folio Number: 50-43-43-14-00-002-0060

Current Legal Description: A parcel of land in Government Lot 2, Section 14, Township 43 South, Range 43 East, being more particularly described as follows:

Commencing at the point of intersection of the center line of the County Road with the Southline of Root Trail, as shown on Plat of Root's Subdivision on file in the Public Records of Palm Beach County, Florida, in Plat Book 1, Page 22; thence Easterly along the South line of said Root Trail as platted, a distance of 528.7 feet to a point, thence Southerly, of 10 feet to the Point of Beginning and the Northwest corner of the parcel of land herein described, being also the Northeast corner of the certain parcel of land described in deed from Gurney Munn and his wife to Frederick S. Wheeler, dated March 29, 1924 and recorded in Deed Book 207, Page 162, Palm Beach County records; thence Southerly along the East line of the land of said Wheeler a distance of 88.88 feet to a point in the North line of Grace Trail Addition according to the plat on file in the Public Records of Palm Beach County, Florida, in Plat Book 7, Page 13; thence Easterly along the North line of said Grace Trail Addition, a distance of 50 feet to a point, being the Southwest corner of that certain parcel of land described in deed from David R. Calhoun and wife to Jean M. Cudahy, dated March 25, 1922 and recorded in Deed Book 134, Page 167, Palm Beach County records; thence Northerly along the West line of the land of said Cudahy, a distance of 88.88 feet to a point 10 feet South of the South line of said Root Trail; thence Westerly parallel to and 10 feet South of the South line of the said Root Trail, a distance of 50 feet to the point of the Beginning.

II. Location Map



III. Architectural Information

The house located at 138 Root Trail is a one-story frame vernacular dwelling built between 1900 and 1915. Frame Vernacular buildings represent the most typical method of construction used by South Florida's early pioneers. This form of architecture does not adhere to a particular school of design. It utilizes the builder's experience, locally available materials, the local environment and traditions to create the dwellings. Large overhanging eaves, porches, brackets, rafter tails, vents in gable ends, wood siding and wood double-hung sash windows are common features found in frame vernacular buildings.



Main Façade (Looking Southwest)

138 Root Trail is a good example of an early 20th century South Florida frame vernacular residence. The house, located on the south side of Root Trail, is an irregularly shaped house that was constructed of wood framing on block piers and surfaced with wood clapboard siding. The roof is comprised of two side-facing, steeply pitched gabled roofs surfaced with composition shingles. The gable ends of the roofs are also surfaced with wood clapboard siding with vents. The front entrance of the home is sheltered under a covered three bay entry porch that is

screened on the east and west ends with wood louvers.¹ The roof of the porch is a shed extension off of the northern most gable roof. The residence's multiple masses and roof lines are characteristic of turn-of-the-century houses in South Florida.



Side View of Double Gables



Front Porch and Entrance

The entrance to the house is a wood paneled door with a wood screen door. Also within the front porch are two wood six-over-six sash windows with wood shutters and a smaller six-pane window. Most of the windows in the house appear to be the original wood, double-hung, six-over-six sash windows.²

A brick driveway and white picket fence leads to the residence. On the east side of the house a wood fence encloses the rear of the property. Behind the wood fence is a one-story accessory structure. The accessory structure has a steeply pitched front facing gable roof and is surfaced with wood siding.



East Side of House and Property

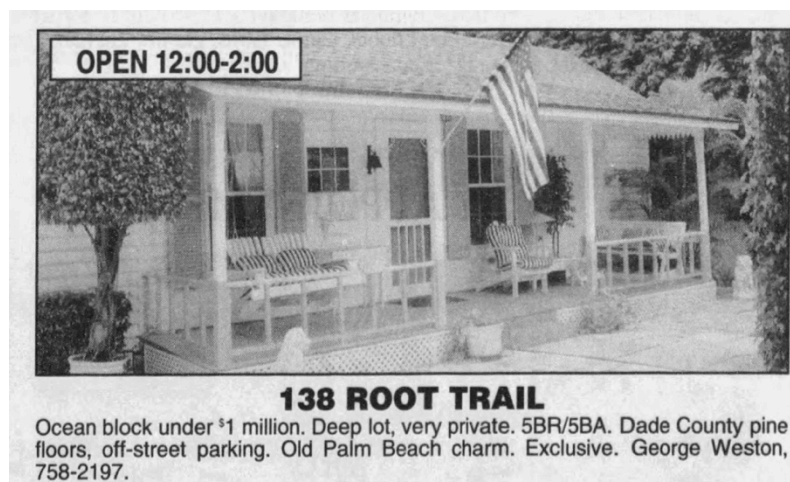


Accessory Structure

¹ The louvers were added to the porch at some point after 2002. Previously the porch had a simple wood railing with four columns supporting the roof. A building permit in 2004 called for the "replacement of rotted wood at the front porch" so this may have been when the louvers were installed.

² The only record of changes to windows in the residence is a building permit from 1989 to change a window in the kitchen.

138 Root Trail has had very few alterations since its construction. While the house was constructed in the early years of the twentieth century, the first building permit for the property on file with the Town of Palm Beach wasn't until 1970 for the installation of fencing. Other building permits for exterior alterations include roof repairs, roof replacement, and repair of rotted wood at the front porch in 2004. It is likely that the louvers were added to the porch at this time. The louvers are a feature that could be removed in the future to return the porch to its original design. In 2010, a demolition permit was granted for an accessory structure at the rear, southwest corner of the property. The residence appears to be in good condition and has maintained the attractive and simple character of the area's early frame vernacular dwellings.



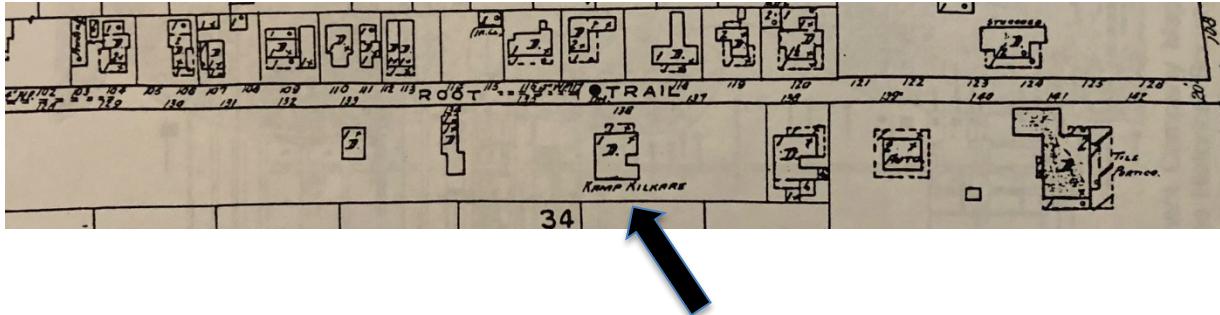
An advertisement from the Palm Beach Post on January 20, 2002 showing the porch before the louvers were installed

IV. Historical Information

The history of all buildings is intrinsic to their location and the houses on Root Trail are distinctive in Palm Beach in relation to the street and the way it was developed. Root Trail is a narrow block long street with mostly small frame vernacular cottages built side by side on small lots often close to the street. It is a unique enclave known for its resident artists, surfers and tight knit community. This is particularly important since it is located in a Town known for its grand estates and not always its early vernacular houses.

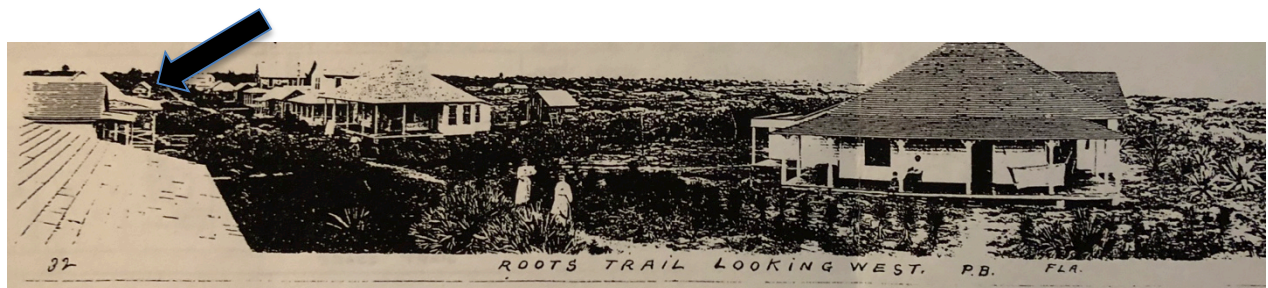
138 Root Trail was built prior to 1916 and possibly before 1905. The house, which was known as “Kamp Kilkare”, appears on the 1919 Sanborn Insurance Company

map and is listed in the City Directories starting in 1916.³ House names were very popular on Root Trail and in Palm Beach especially before the Postal Service assigned numbers to the houses ca. 1926.



1919 Sanborn Insurance Map of Root Trail
Arrow points to the house at 138 Root Trail

By the 1890s, Palm Beach was beginning to attract winter visitors who were attracted to the “tropical splendor” of the area. In addition to the prominent society members who spent the winter season at the Island’s hotels, pioneering families were creating a permanent community and local businesses were being established.



Historical Photograph of Root Trail by E.W. Hazard – Circa 1905
Palm Beach Panorama, published by the Henry Morrison Flagler Museum
Arrow points to house believed to be 138 Root Trail

Root’s Subdivision, which originally consisted of 18 lots on the north side of Root Trail, is one of the oldest subdivisions in Palm Beach. The first recorded transaction in Root’s subdivision took place in 1903 when Palm Beach was still part of Dade County and eight years before the Town of Palm Beach was incorporated. Root’s

³ The 1916 City Directory is the earliest version available.

Subdivision and Root Trail were both named for Enoch Root, an early Pioneer of Palm Beach.⁴

Born in Canaan, Connecticut, Enoch Root moved to Moline, Illinois, at the age of fourteen. Five years later he traveled to Europe to spend two years in art galleries. Upon returning to America he spent two years with his brothers as a gold miner in Colorado. In 1862, Root enlisted in the Third Colorado Infantry and was promoted to Captain of Company H, 68th Regiment, U.S. Infantry. He stayed active in service until the end of the Civil War. In 1867, Root enrolled in the Chicago Academy of Design, became a student of Conrad Dehi, for a year and then went back to Europe for more study and travel. He returned to America in 1873 and that August married Victoria Adelaide Ward in Providence, Rhode Island. They settled in Chicago and Root started an art school in the Art Institute Building. He closed the school when the Academy of Design reopened, and Root became affiliated with the academy, serving in several capacities, including Secretary and President. Enoch and Victoria wintered in Palm Beach starting in 1889 and in 1892 they purchased a tract of land extending from the lake to the ocean near present day Oleander Way and built a house for themselves near the Lake Trail. This became their permanent home and they resided there except for short summer visits to Chicago and Connecticut. Later they built cottages for artists on their property and laid out Root Trail.⁵

While the house at 138 Root Trail is not officially a part of Root's subdivision, which is on the north side of Root Trail, it's design, siting on the lot, and overall character are consistent with the architecture of this unique Palm Beach street and community. From 1916 to the mid-1950s, 138 Root Trail was a residence for the Greenleaf and Crosby Company, the oldest fine jewelry house in Florida. Originally started in Jacksonville in 1868, Greenleaf and Crosby opened a location in the Royal Poinciana Hotel in 1894. In later years the store was located in the original Breakers Hotel, then Whitehall, and then in 1933 they moved to Worth Avenue where the business continues today. The residence was typically occupied by the store's manager but some years by other employees. The residence is currently owned by Sadeca Realty LLC, who purchased the property in 2002.

V. Statement of Significance

⁴ Records of the County Clerk indicate Enoch Root was involved in the initial transactions on Root Trail and The Lake Worth Pioneer Association Records indicate Root Trail was named after Enoch Root. A May 2, 1988, Palm Beach Post Newspaper Article, "Root Trail: A Neighborhood Unto Itself," quotes a resident stating that Root Trail was named after Root's Pineapple Farm., however there is no evidence supporting this claim.

⁵ Francis Gilmor, "History of Palm Beach County Art Club One of Fascinating Chapters in the Annals of the City," Palm Beach Times 17 February 1924.

The residence located at 138 Root Trail is significant as one of the oldest remaining examples of frame vernacular architecture in Palm Beach. It is also significant for its location on a street renowned for its early frame vernacular buildings. While frame vernacular residences were widespread in South Florida, its scarcity in the Town of Palm Beach and its location in an enclave of frame vernacular residences along Root Trail increases the property's historic significance. The residence provides a glimpse into the early history of Palm Beach.

VI. Criteria For Designation

Section 54-161 of the Town of Palm Beach Landmarks Preservation Ordinance outlines the criteria for designation of a landmark or landmark site and suggests that at least one criterion must be met to justify the designation. Listed below are criteria, which relate to this property and justification for designation:

(1) “Exemplifies or reflects the broad cultural, political, economic or social history of the nation, state, county or town.”

The residence located at 138 Root Trail, constructed by 1915 and possibly before 1905, exemplifies the early development of the Town of Palm Beach. Built during the Pioneer Era, as the Island was becoming the winter destination for rich and prominent there was a growing permanent community of pioneering families and a growing contingent of local businesses to serve the Island's needs. 138 Root Trail and the other cottages constructed along Root Trail exemplify an important part of Palm Beach's early history.

(3) “Embodies distinguishing characteristics of an architectural type or is a specimen inherently valuable for the study of a period, style, method of construction or use of indigenous materials or craftsmanship.”

138 Root Trail is a very good example of the frame vernacular structures that are representative of the early development of the area at the beginning of the 20th Century. Frame vernacular architecture is noted for its simplicity and modest origins. The design and construction is based on the builder's experience, available materials, and the local environment. The residence embodies numerous features that are characteristic of frame vernacular structures from the turn-of-the century, including simple forms, steeply pitched roofs, porches, and wood siding. The scarcity of frame vernacular residences from Palm Beach's early history and the

house's location along Root Trail makes 138 Root Trail a significant historic resource.

VII. Selected Bibliography

Curl, Donald. Palm Beach County: An Illustrated History. Northridge, California: Windsor Publications, Inc., 1987.

From Wilderness to Metropolis: The History and Architecture of Dade County (1825-1940). Second Edition. Metropolitan Dade County, Historic Preservation Division, 1992.

The Historical Society of Palm Beach County. Enoch Root File. Lake Worth Pioneers' Association Files.

The Lake Worth News. Articles in the Historical Society of Palm Beach County Files.

Palm Beach County Clerk of Court Records. Root's Subdivision, 1903-

The Palm Beach Daily News. Archived Articles Online

The Palm Beach Post. Online Articles and Articles in the Historical Society of Palm Beach County Files.

The Palm Beach Times. Online Articles and Articles in the Historical Society of Palm Beach County Files.

Pollack, Deborah C. Laura Woodward: The Artist Behind the Innovator Who Developed Palm Beach. Singapore: Blue Heron Press, 2009.

Sanborn Insurance Map of Palm Beach. New York: Sanborn Map Co., 1919 and 1926. City of West Palm Beach Public Library, Florida Room.

Town of Palm Beach. Building Permits, 1920 – 1999.

The Tropical Sun. Articles in the Historical Society of Palm Beach County Files.

West Palm Beach City Directories. Asheville, NC: Florida-Piedmont Directory Company, 1918-1966.

VIII. Florida Master Site File Form



HISTORICAL STRUCTURE FORM

Electronic Version 1.1.0

Site # PB06662
 Recorder # Jane S. Day
 Field Date 7/1/2010
 Form Date 1/17/2011
 Form No 201007
 Form No = Field Date (YYYYMM)

First Site Form Recorded for this Site? NO

GENERAL INFORMATION

Site Name (address if none) Sadeca Realty, House Multiple Listing (DHR only) _____
 Other Names _____ >> _____
 Survey or Project Name Palm Beach Historic Sites Survey, Phase V Survey# _____
 National Register Category Building(s)

LOCATION & IDENTIFICATION

Address

Street No.	Direction	Street Name	Street Type	Direction Suffix
<u>138</u>		<u>Root</u>	<u>Trail</u>	

Cross Streets (nearest) between N. Ocean Blvd. & N. County Rd.
 City / Town (within 3 miles) Town Of Palm Beach In Current City Limits? YES
 County Palm Beach Tax Parcel #(s) 50-43-43-14-12-002-0060
 Subdivision Name Roots Subdivision Block _____ Lot _____
 Ownership Private-Corporate-for Profit
 Name of Public Tract (e.g., park) _____
 Route to (especially if no street address) On the south side of Root Trail between North Ocean Blvd. and North County Rd.

MAPPING

USGS 7.5' Map Name _____ Publication Date _____ >> PALM BEACH;1986
 Township: _____ Range: _____ Section: _____ 1/4 section: _____ >> 43S ;43E ;14;UNSP
 Irregular Section Name: _____
 Landgrant _____
 UTM: Zone _____ Easting _____ Northing _____
 Plat or Other Map (map's name, location) _____

DESCRIPTION

Style Frame Vernacular Other Style _____
 Exterior Plan Irregular Other Exterior Plan _____
 Number of Stories 2
 Structural System(s) _____ >> Wood frame
 Other Structural System(s) _____
 Foundation Type(s) _____ >> Piers
 Other Foundation Types _____
 Foundation Material(s) _____ >> Concrete Block
 Other Foundation Material(s) _____
 Exterior Fabric(s) _____ >> Clapboard
 Other Exterior Fabric(s) _____
 Roof Type(s) _____ >> Gable
 Other Roof Type(s) _____
 Roof Material(s) _____ >> Composition shingles
 Other Roof Material(s) _____
 Roof Secondary Structure(s) (dormers etc) _____ >> _____
 Other Roof Secondary Structure(s) _____
 Number of Chimneys _____
 Chimney Material _____
 Other Chimney Material(s) _____
 Chimney Location(s) _____

HISTORICAL STRUCTURE FORM

8PB06662

DESCRIPTION (continued)

Window Descriptions 6/6 DBS, fixed

Main Entrance Description (stylistic details) on the north side through a front porch

Porches: #open 1 #closed #incised Location(s) entry - n, 2nd floor - n

Porch Roof Type(s) under main roof of house

Exterior Ornament shutters

Interior Plan Unknown

Other Interior Plan

Condition Good

Structure Surroundings

Commercial: SOME of this category

Residential: MOSTly this category

Institutional: SOME of this category

Undeveloped: NONE of this category

Ancillary Features (Number / type of outbuildings, major landscape features)

Archaeological Remains (describe): none observed

If archaeological remains are present, was an Archaeological Site Form completed?

Narrative Description (optional)

HISTORY

Construction year 1900

Architect (last name first): unknown

Builder (last name first): unknown

Changes in Locations or Conditions

Type of Change	Year of Change	Date Change Noted	Description of Changes
>> <u>Altered-not to standards;2004;;</u>			

Structure Use History

Use Year Use Started Year Use Ended >> Private residence;1900;

Other Structure Uses

Ownership History (especially original owner, dates, profession, etc.)

RESEARCH METHODS

Research Methods >> Examine local property records

Other research methods tax records, windshield

SURVEYOR'S EVALUATION OF SITE

Potentially Eligible for a Local Register? YES

Name of Local Register if Eligible Town of Palm Beach Landmark

Individually Eligible for National Register? INSUFF. INFO

Potential Contributor to NR District? INSUFF. INFO

Area(s) of historical significance >> Architecture

Other Historical Associations

Explanation of Evaluation (required) This house is an element in one of the oldest streets in Palm Beach. It is worthy of further study.

HISTORICAL STRUCTURE FORM

8PB06662

DOCUMENTATION (Photos, Plans, etc.)

Photographic Negatives or Other Collections Not Filed with FMSF, Including Field Notes, Plans, other Important Documents.

Document type: _____ Maintaining Organization: _____
File or Accession #: _____ Descriptive Information: _____
>> _____

RECORDER INFORMATION

Recorder Name (Last, First) Day, Jane S.
Recorder Address / Phone 728 Granada Dr., Boca Raton, FL 33432 561-362-4473
Recorder Affiliation Research Atlantica Other Affiliation Town of Palm Beach
Is a Text-Only Supplement File Attached (Surveyor Only)? _____

***** MASTER SITE FILE USE ONLY *****

Cultural Resource Type: <u>SS</u>	SHPO's Evaluation of Resource _____ Date _____
Electronic Form Used: <u>S110</u>	
Form Type Code: <u>NRHM</u>	
Form Quality Ranking: <u>NEW</u>	
Form Status Code: <u>SCAT</u>	
Supplement Information Status: <u>NO SUPPLEMENT</u>	FMSF Staffer: _____
Supplement File Status: <u>NO SUPPLEMENT FILE</u>	Computer Entry Date: <u>11/14/2004</u>
Form Comments: _____ _____ _____	

REQUIRED PAPER ATTACHMENTS

- (1) USGS 7.5" MAP WITH STRUCTURE PINPOINTED IN RED
- (2) LARGE SCALE STREET OR PLAT MAP
- (3) PHOTO OF MAIN FACADE, B&W, AT LEAST 3"X5"