

## FORM B – BUILDING

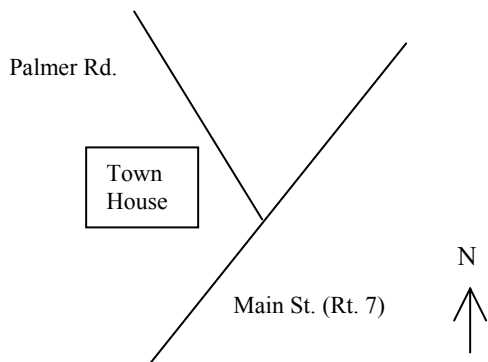
MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION  
MASSACHUSETTS ARCHIVES BUILDING  
220 MORRISSEY BOULEVARD  
BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02125

### Photograph



### Sketch Map

Draw a map showing the building's location in relation to the nearest cross streets and/or major natural features. Show all buildings between inventoried building and nearest intersection or natural feature. Label streets including route numbers, if any. Circle and number the inventoried building. Indicate north.



**Recorded by** Martha H. Lyon, & Gregory Farmer

**Organization** Plympton Historical Commission

**Date** January 2005

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

Parcel C3-1-16

Plympton

B

**Town** Plympton

**Place** (neighborhood or village)

Plympton Green

**Address** 5 Palmer Road

**Historic Name** Central School / Elementary School

**Uses: Present** Town House (Municipal Offices)

**Original** School

**Date of Construction** 1935

**Source** Plympton Annual Town Reports

**Style/Form** Colonial Revival/Georgian Revival

**Architect/Builder** Archt: Harry L. Meacham Assoc.  
GC: William F. Germain

**Exterior Material:** Masonry

**Foundation** Brick

**Wall/Trim** Brick & wood

**Roof** Asphalt shingles

**Outbuildings/Secondary Structures**

None

**Major Alterations** (with dates)

Fire damage repaired (1940)  
Rear wing added (1955)  
Converted to Town house offices (1974)  
Office renovations (1980 & 1985)

**Condition** Good

**Moved** ☐ no ☐ yes **Date**

**Acreage** approx. 4 acres (with Fire Dept.)

**Setting**     Main thoroughfare at north end of town center, located adjacent to fire station.

## **BUILDING FORM: Plympton, MA**

### **ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION** ☐ *see continuation sheet*

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

The Central School is situated on a graded terrace set above the level of Palmer Road. The building is set back from the roadway and the front door is approached by a set of stone steps. A large paved parking area on the south side provides direct access to the building. A wooden ramp on the north side provides some degree of barrier-free access.

In its original form, the school was designed as a one-story T-shaped structure with red brick walls, large multi-pane (6/6) windows, and intersecting hipped roofs with a louvered cupola centered on the ridge. The double-leaf front entrance is set within a double classical surround. The semi-elliptical main pediment extends through the roofline and is supported by engaged pilasters. The outer surround encloses a smaller broken pediment and pilasters that frame the main doors.

The original building measured 51 by 71 feet and had four main classrooms on the 1<sup>st</sup> floor. The finished basement was set half above grade with large multi-pane windows providing natural light to the basement playroom. The basement also held the lavatories, a kitchenette and mechanical equipment.

In 1955, the school was expanded to the west with two large gable-roofed additions with metal industrial-style windows. A one story flat-roofed addition at the southwest corner and a flat-roofed canopy over the south entrance were added later.

### **HISTORICAL NARRATIVE** ☐ *see continuation sheet*

*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.*

The Central School or Plympton Elementary School opened in 1935 and replaced the previous system of three smaller district schools (Shaw School, Town Hall School and Stevens School). It accommodated children in grades K-8 who were transported by bus from their homes throughout town.

A Special Town Meeting was called in December 1933 to consider whether to take advantage of a 30% grant for new school construction offered by the Federal government under the National Recovery Act. The application was not immediately successful, so the Town voted in April 1934 to proceed without Federal aid. The Plympton Library donated two acres of land and two more acres were purchased from Nellie Stedman and Eugene Wright.

The architect selected for the school was Harry L. Meacham of Worcester. Charles H. Curtiss served as consulting engineer. William F. Germain of Millbury (MA) was the general contractor. The WPA program provided assistance in grading the school site and preparing the playing fields. The local PTA donated playground equipment in 1940.

After World War II, the development of suburban housing and the nationwide Baby Boom resulted in a greater number of school age children. The Central School was enlarged with a sizable addition to the west. The continued increase in student population, the effort to accommodate special needs students and the introduction of mandatory kindergarten resulted in the need for a new school. The Central School was replaced by the newly-constructed Dennett School in 1973.

Rather than leave the old school vacant or try to rent it, the Town voted to move the municipal offices from the old Town House to the former Central School in 1975. The school was renovated in 1985, 1989 and 2000 to better suit the new use. The old Town House was rented to the Historical Society for a museum, archive and meeting hall.

### **BIBLIOGRAPHY and/or REFERENCES** ☐ *see continuation sheet*

Annual Reports of the Town of Plympton, 1930-2004

☐ Recommended for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. *If checked, you must attach a completed National Register Criteria Statement form.*