

TOWN OF ALFORD HISTORIC DISTRICT EXTENSION PRELIMINARY STUDY REPORT

SEPTEMBER 30, 2020



SUMMARY

ALFORD HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION

Alice Halsted, Chair
Robin Ban
Tricia Bevan
Ellen Bairstow
Ruth Littlechild
Shirley Mueller
Margareta Thaute
Julie Scott (Alternate)

CONTACTS

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DATE OF PUBLIC HEARING: Early December 2020 to January 2021

DATE OF TOWN MEETING: Late June 2021 (Tentative due to Covid-19)

TOTAL NUMBER OF PROPERTIES REQUESTED TO BE INCLUDED IN EXTENDED HISTORIC DISTRICT: 3

CURRENT NUMBER OF PROPERTIES INCLUDED IN THE HISTORIC DISTRICT AS OF JUNE 1975: 3

INTRODUCTION

The Town of Alford, MA is a rural community located on the western edge of south Berkshire County. West Stockbridge lies to the north, Egremont to the south, Great Barrington to the southeast, and Hillsdale and Austerlitz, NY to the west. Alford is the smallest town in Berkshire County, covering 7,374 acres or 11.56 square miles. Each of these towns in Massachusetts has a historic district.

The town was originally settled in 1750 as a farming community, and was bought from the Stockbridge Indians, the Shawanon Purchase of 1756. Joseph Quiniquant and Shauanum Stockbridge Indians conveyed the land to Timothy Woodbridge and others. Alford was designated a town on August 23^d, 1775 by the general act under which districts became towns. The town was named for Colonel John Alford of Charlestown who was known for his work in preaching Christianity to Native Americans, and for sponsoring a theology professorship at Harvard College's Divinity School. It had archaic names of Podunke, Podunkville, Shawanon Purchase.

The first gristmill was erected in Alford in 1763. A second purchase called the Green Land Grant added 15,000 acres the same year. The town, originally part of Great Barrington, separated in 1769 and was officially incorporated in 1773. Around New Year's Day, 1776, General Henry Knox passed into Massachusetts through the town, bringing cannons from Fort Ticonderoga eastward to help end the Siege of Boston. The route is known as the Knox Trail, and a marker is located at the state line.

Great Barrington annexed another area west of Long Pond in 1778. The primary occupation of the early settlers was agriculture; yet Alford had grown and had two sawmills, two grist mills, a forge with trip hammer, a furnace for casting hollow ware, and a tannery.

Marble became Alford's major export in the early 19th century. Quarries were run by Sanford and Frederick Fitch, James Cook, and lastly, by the Alford Marble works until 1872. When the railroads were laid elsewhere, the industries in Alford became unprofitable. Marble quarried in Alford was used in construction of New York City's old city hall, and some marble from Alford may have been used for the monuments in Washington, DC.

Alford's Town Center consists of the Alford Union Church built in 1817, the Alford Town Hall built in 1855 and the Alford Center School, also built in 1855. The School House closed in 1992 and currently houses town offices. The Center also includes the Center Cemetery, established in 1800's and is adjacent to the School House. The earliest recorded death was in 1825, but older stones and burials were moved to the site from other burial grounds.

The AHDC believe that the town's unique rural character and mostly preserved historic town center is worthy of protection for current and future generations to enjoy. We consider it a significant asset to the community and state.

In 1975, the historic town center was made a historic district and added to the MHC register. Included in this district is the Alford Union Church, The Alford Center School House and Town Hall. Extending the district to include #7 Alford Center Road, once serving as the parsonage for the Alford Union Church, Botham Park and The Triangle, all integral and contiguous pieces of this small-town center will maintain the integrity of this small historic and unique New England town.

JUSTIFICATION OF BOUNDARIES

The boundaries as noted on Exhibit A Map provided herein, show clearly delineated boundaries by roads, deed descriptions or assessor plot maps.

The boundaries of an expanded Alford Historic District that would include Botham Park, “the Triangle” and the “Parsonage” and excluding Center Cemetery, secures the furthest East-West and South boundaries of this unique New England Town. The boundaries are easily discerned by the roads they abut: East Road and Alford Center Road.

EXPERT ASSISTANCE

The Alford Historic District Commission engaged the services of preservationist Jim Harwood (J. Harwood Architect) of Lenox to review the proposal and advise us on requirements for the MHC. In addition, a member of Alford’s Conservation Commission and a Consultant Forester, Peter W. Tucker produced the map noted above and contained herein as Exhibit A.

SIGNIFICANCE

The Town of Alford is in an enviable position. Unlike many Massachusetts communities, its town center is largely preserved and unencumbered by modern construction.

Alford's Historic Town Center was designated an historic district and added to the MHC register in 1975 (inv ALF A&B). It currently consists of the Alford Union Church (aka Alford Village Church), the School House, used as town offices, and Town Hall and their surrounding grounds in which these buildings stand. The pristine layout of these three historic New England buildings are nestled close to homes built in the same era, uninterrupted by any commercial buildings within the District, or indeed, within the town. We believe the requested expansion is supported by the township based on informational meetings and a Special Town Meeting where the majority voted to purchase the parsonage house from private ownership and ultimately be considered for inclusion in the historic district. In today's world, this Town Center is a rarity. Many older homes in Alford and the surrounding towns are being purchased, demolished and replaced by modern structures. Alford wishes to guard against such changes in the historic town center.

The significance of the expansion is to further protect the current historic District. The expansion to be undertaken includes:

1. BOTHAM PARK AND THE TRIANGLE

Both are adjacent to the Alford Union Church and both are grassy lots with no structures, owned by the Town of Alford; These two properties are highly visible upon entering the town from any of its three streets: Alford Center Road, East Road or West Road. Protecting these small parcels of land will preserve the extraordinary beauty of the landscape and setting surrounding two of the historic district's buildings – the Alford Union Church and the Alford School House. Land is a most precious asset of our community and this is all that is left of our historic town center to protect.

The omission of Botham Park and "the Triangle" at the time of Alford Town Center's designation as a historic district was an error that the Alford Historic District Commission seeks to correct by adding them to the district. By expanding the District to include these two small lots, neither of which includes any structures, Alford will be assured of protecting the historical integrity of the town center and its current park-like setting.

2. THE BUILDING AND LOT KNOWN AS "THE PARSONAGE" (#7 Alford Center Road).

Although the original parsonage house in Alford burned down (there is no photo or record of the date), a replacement was constructed in 1937. For a period of time it continued to serve as a parsonage to the Alford Union Church and eventually passed into private ownership in the 1990's. There are a few buildings in Alford of similar vintage and while not historically significant, it blends comfortably into the fabric of the town center. Including it in the historic center will maintain the integrity of the historic town center and protect it from inappropriate expansion or change in character. The Town of Alford purchased this property in April 2020 after a majority vote by residents at a Special Town Meeting supported the expenditure of funds to acquire and preserve this property for the town and its residents.

Although the pace of development is still much slower than in many communities, Alford could change dramatically in character unless protections are put in place. We believe that the protection of our unique historic town center is an important step in protecting our community for future generations.

Alford is considered a beautiful town and a picturesque area whose quiet, scenic roads are popular locations for walking and bicycling. For touring bicyclists, the Town Center is often used as a stopping point to refresh and enjoy the historic ambience.

Since a local historic district is an area which may include vacant land and historic or important structures that are recognized as significant to the town's cultural, visual or historic fabric and protected by public review, we are hopeful that an extension to our historic district will be positively considered.

HISTORY*

“The earliest European settlers came to the Alford Valley to homestead around 1750, probably moving north from Connecticut. A large part of the southern Housatonic region had been sold to the Europeans in 1724 for 460 pounds, 3 barrels of cider and 30 quarts of rum by Chief Konkapot and members of his tribe. However, earlier transactions had sold much of this same territory to the Dutch, and the area claimed by the state of New York. The region included the land containing Alford, and in part because of the dispute, the area remained unsettled by Europeans. In 1756, another transaction, this time between the Mohican Stockbridge Indians and a small group of settlers, transferred the southern and central portions of Alford for 20 pounds. At the time of the purchase, much of what we now know as Alford was called Shawenon, from the Algonquin meaning either ‘forest’ or ‘many waters.’ The eastern strip of Alford was considered part of the Great Barrington township. In 1769, several local families tried to separate Alford from Great Barrington, and in 1773, they won legislative approval. Great Barrington, however, retained long wood lots in the eastern portion of Alford until 1818. In 1847, West Stockbridge transferred land to Alford too, giving the town its current boundaries. In spite of these subsequent land transactions, Alford was officially incorporated in 1773. The name Alford has three possible sources – either a reference to a place in Scotland or England, or in honor of Colonel John Alford, a wealthy Charlestown man, who was famous at the time for his philanthropy and piety.

By the time of the American Revolution, Alford had a gristmill, a sawmill and 375 residents. By 1800, the population had soared to 600, thanks to the discovery of a rich deposit of high grade marble in 1799. Several other rich marble deposits were found later, and between 1800 and 1872 more than a dozen quarries operated in town. The quarries were run by Sanford and Frederick Fitch, James Cook, and lastly, by the Alford Marble Works. The beauty of the marble and its soundness made it ideal for building. Among the places it can be seen are the old City Hall in New York City and the State House in Albany.

When the quarries were going full-tilt, Alford was bustling. There were blacksmith shops, tanneries, cooper shops, a reed factory, two grist mills, two sawmills, a forge with a trip hammer and a furnace for casting hollow ware. The manufacture of charcoal was also a big business during the 1800’s. The Alford Meeting House (historically known as the Union Meeting House), still stands next to the School House. It was built in 1817 and served as the gathering house for the community’s diverse religious needs: Congregationalists, Baptists and Methodists all worshiped there. It is now called the Alford Union Church.

The laying of the railroad in Great Barrington – and not in Alford – had a profound effect on the future of the town. Without a railroad, the quarries in Alford were hard pressed to compete with the quarries in towns with the rail service. Increased use of cement and labor disputes led to the closing of the marble quarries, and as they folded, workers left and the other businesses closed too. Agriculture, once again, became the backbone of the local economy. But there was another change afoot. Around this same time an influx of “summer people” arrived. Many of them renovated former farmhouses and a few actually began to farm the land. In recent years many formerly seasonal visitors have retired to Alford as their permanent home. Today, the town’s population includes a mix of full-time and seasonal residents.

Unlike most communities, Alford's population is still recovering from a high around 1800. As the quarries were abandoned in the 19th century, Alford's population declined from a high of 600 to just below 200 in the early 1940's. During the last 70 years, Alford's population has slowly and steadily crept upwards. The 1990 census showed 418 residents, and by the 2000 census the figure had increased to 460. The census data indicate that roughly half of Alford's residents have arrived since 1987.

After the collapse of the quarry industry, Alford's economy shifted back to its agricultural roots. In 1874 Alford included 62 farms, but a century later, only 6 farms remained. Today just three farms remain, two of which are dairy. Other land is considered agricultural and is used for hay and pasture of row crops. In spite of the dwindling number of farms, 20% of Alford is still considered agricultural. The farms are struggling because of the depressed market for milk, the aging farmer population, and the rising value of real estate. "

Aside from three farms, the only other businesses in town are home-based operations. There are no stores or gas stations in town, so residents travel to Great Barrington or other nearby towns to shop. As there is no longer a public school in town, children attend public schools in the local school district.

* (History from Alford Community Development Plan Advisory Committee with assistance from Laurie Sanders and Kasey Rolih, UMass Extension in cooperation with the Berkshire Regional Planning Commission)

TO SUMMARIZE

A local historic district may include vacant land and historic or important structures that are recognized as significant to the town's cultural, visual or historic fabric and protected by public review. We believe the two grassy vacant parcels along with #7 Alford Center Road, known as "the parsonage," fall within this definition and hope that an extension to our historic district of these three properties will be positively considered.

Since the original designation of the Alford Historic District, there was concern to protect the furthest boundaries of town-owned property (excluding Center Cemetery). This would include "the parsonage," a 1400 sf, two story, wood framed single family residence, then owned privately and on the market for sale for many years and now owned by the town. The parsonage abuts privately owned wetlands and is on the westernmost section of the Town Center. Botham Park and "the Triangle" are on the eastern boundaries of the Town Center. Taken together, the current District and the proposed extension complete the center of this historic village and provide the hub and focus for all community gatherings, meetings, and larger outdoor events. It is pride in our Town Center that has garnered community support for the District's extension and the continued protection of each of these properties.

COMMUNITY SUPPORT AND INVOLVEMENT

In December 2018, the Alford Historic District Commission met with the Select Board regarding the purchase of the parsonage house and its inclusion in the historic district. At the suggestion of the Select Board, we put together an Ad Hoc Committee which included members of the Select Board, Planning Board, Conservation Commission, Finance Committee and the Alford Historic District Commission. This committee met with the Highway Department, members of various committees or commissions (Conservation Committee, Planning Board, etc.), elected or hired position holders, community members, and more. After approximately a year, the AHDC along with the Select Board organized two information meetings at our Town Hall to garner support of the purchase of the parsonage house at 7 Alford Center Road to protect our historic district. A Special Town Meeting was held on February 18, 2020 and a majority voted to support the purchase of the land and building known as "the parsonage." Residents agreed it was important to protect the integrity of the town center by controlling a parcel of land and building that ran the risk of being purchased and altered in a way that would negatively impact the historical integrity and uniqueness of our historic New England Town Center. The purchase of the parsonage was concluded in April 2020. All the properties we are seeking to include in the extended historic district are owned by the Town of Alford.

The omission of Botham Park and "the Triangle" at the time of Alford Town Center's designation as a historic district was an error that the town now seeks to correct by adding them to the district. By expanding the District to include these two small lots and the long wet-land lot adjoining the parsonage, Alford will be assured that the historic buildings are maintained in a way to protect the historical integrity of the town and its current park-like settings.

PROPERTY INDEX

#7 Alford Center Road, 1937 structure, Plot #130 on Alford Assessor's Map No. 403

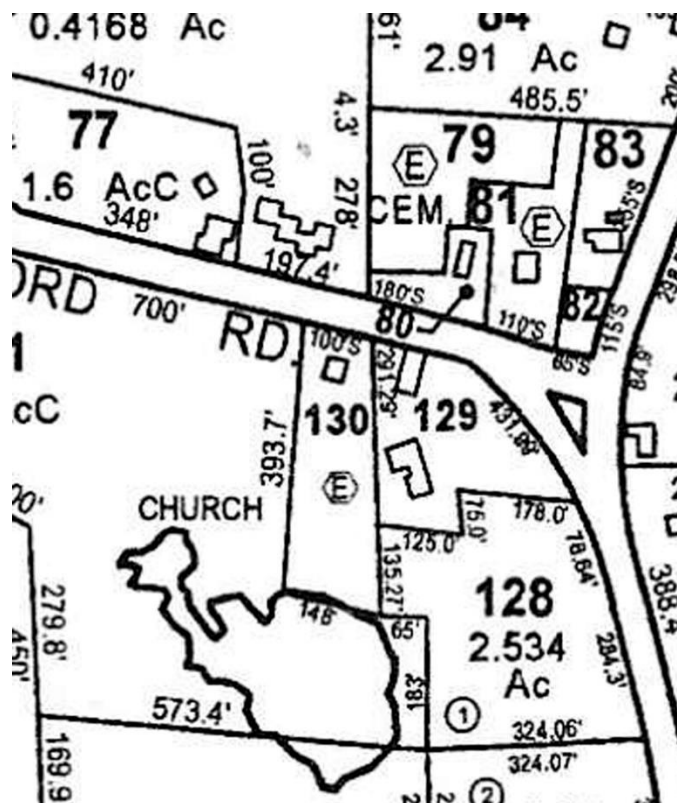
Botham Park, Plot #82 on Alford Assessor's Map No. 403

The Triangle, noted on Alford Assessor's Map No. 403 as a triangle shape at the intersection of East Road and Alford Center Road (no number associated).

Alford Union Church, built in 1817, Plot #81 on Alford Assessor's Map No. 403

Alford School House, built in 1855, Plot #80 on Alford Assessor's Map No. 403

Alford Town Hall, built in 1855, Plot #129 on Alford Assessor's Map No. 403





Botham Park (above); The Triangle (below)





School House



Alford Union Church



Town Hall



Parsonage House

THE ALFORD CENTER HISTORIC DISTRICT BY LAW

Note: This is Alford's current Historic District By-Law (MHC Register 1975) except for three paragraphs set in all caps which will be proposed at Alford's Special Town Meeting to be scheduled in June of 2021, depending on the ability to hold such meeting due to Covid-19 health concerns.

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1. Name. The by-law shall be known and may be referred to as the Alford Center Historic District Bylaw.
 2. Purpose. The purpose of this by-law is to promote the educational, cultural, economic and general welfare of the public through the preservation and protection of the distinctive outward appearance and characteristics of buildings and places significant in the history of the town of Alford or its architecture, through the maintenance and improvement or settings for such buildings and places and the encouragement of design compatible therewith.
 3. Historic District. There is hereby established pursuant to the provisions of Chapter 400 of the General Laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, as amended, an Historic District bounded and described as follows: The land shown on a plan entitled Alford Historic District, dated February 13, 1975, filed in the office of the Town Clerk, and comprising properties labeled on said plan, "Church," "Town Hall" and "School House."

PROPOSED ADDITION TO FOLLOW THE ABOVE PARAGRAPH: THIS HISTORIC DISTRICT WAS AMENDED ON (DATE) TO INCLUDE THREE ADDITIONAL PROPERTIES: #7 ALFORD CENTER ROAD, ALSO KNOWN AS THE PARSONAGE HOUSE, BOTHAM PARK, ABUTTING THE ALFORD UNION CHURCH AND "THE TRIANGLE," A GRASSY OPEN AREA LOCATED AT THE JUNCTION OF EAST ROAD AND ALFORD ROAD AND IN FRONT OF BOTHAM PARK, ALL SHOWN ON A PLAN FILED WITH THE ALFORD TOWN CLERK.

4. Alford Historic District Commission. There is hereby established pursuant to the provisions of Chapter 400 of the General Laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, as amended, an Historic District Commission which shall be known and may be referred to as the Alford Historic District Commission.
5. Commission Membership. The commission shall consist of seven members appointment by the Board of Selectmen, including one member, where possible, from two nominees

submitted by the Berkshire Historical Society, one member, where possible, from two nominees submitted by the Massachusetts Chapter of the American Institute of Architects, and one member, where possible, from two nominees submitted by the Board of Realtors concerning the area. Nominees, where possible, should be residents of Alford.

When the commission is first established, one member shall be appointed for a term of one year, three shall be appointed for a term of two years, and three shall be appointed for a term of three years, and their successors shall be appointed in like manner for terms of three years.

The Selectmen may appoint one alternate member for a term of one year and two alternate members may be appointed for a term of three years, and their successor shall be appointed in like manner for terms of three years. No member may serve on the Commission more than six consecutive years.

PROPOSED THAT ABOVE PARAGRAPH BE AMENDED TO REMOVE LAST SENTENCE TO CONFORM WITH MASS GENERAL LAWS WHICH DOES NOT LIMIT MEMBERSHIP TERMS ON THE COMMISSION AS ABOVE.

PROPOSED NEW PARAGRAPH: IN FURTHERANCE OF THEIR MISSION TO PROTECT, PRESERVE AND MAINTAIN THE HISTORIC ALFORD TOWN CENTER, ALFORD HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION MEMBERS WILL:

a) cooperate with and advise the Planning Board and other town departments in matters involving historic buildings, sites and historic district boundaries.

b) cooperate with and enlist assistance for Alford from the Massachusetts Historical Commission, the National Register, the National Park Service, the National Trust for Historic Preservation, or any other agency concerned with historic preservation.

6. Severability. The provisions of this By-Law shall be deemed to be severable. If any of its provisions shall be held to be invalid or unconstitutional by any court of competent jurisdiction, the remaining provisions shall continue in full force and effect.

Current Alford Historic District Commission By-Law

THE TOWN CLERK

Article 7.

To see if the Town will vote to enact the following by-law establishing the Alford Historic District and the Alford Historic District Commission, or take any other action relative thereto:

PROPOSED BY-LAW ESTABLISHING THE ALFORD HISTORIC DISTRICT
AND THE ALFORD HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION

1. Name. This by-law shall be known and may be referred to as the Alford Center Historic District B-Law.
 2. Purpose. The purpose of this by-law is to promote the educational, cultural, economic and general welfare of the public through the preservation and protection of the distinctive outward appearance and characteristics of buildings and places significant in the history of the Town of Alford or its architecture, through the maintenance and improvement of settings for such buildings and places and the encouragement of design compatible therewith.
 3. Historic District. There is hereby established pursuant to the provisions of Chapter 40C of the General Laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, as amended, an Historic District bounded and described as follows: The land shown on a plan entitled Alford Historic District, dated February 13, 1975, filed in the office of the Town Clerk, and comprising properties labeled on said plan, "Church", "Town Hall" and "School House".
 4. Alford Historic District Commission. There is hereby established pursuant to the provisions of Chapter 40C of the General Laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, as amended, an Historic District Commission which shall be known and may be referred to as the Alford Historic District Commission.
 5. Commission Membership. The Commission shall consist of seven members appointed by the Board of Selectmen, including one member, where possible, from two nominees submitted by the Berkshire Historical Society, one member, where possible, from two nominees submitted by the Massachusetts Chapter of the American Institute of Architects, and one member, where possible, from two nominees submitted by the Board of Realtors concerning the area. Nominees, where possible, should be residents of Alford.
- When the Commission is first established, one member shall be appointed for a term of one year, three shall be appointed for a term of two years, and three shall be appointed for a term of three years, and their successors shall be appointed in like manner for terms of three years.

The Selectmen may appoint one alternate member for a term of one year and two alternate members may be appointed for a term of three years, and their successors shall be appointed in like manner for terms of three years. No member may serve on the Commission more than six consecutive years.

d. To cooperate with and advise the Planning Board and other town departments in matters involving historic buildings , sites and historic district boundaries.

e. To cooperate with and enlist assistance for Alford from the Massachusetts Historical Commission, The National Register, The National Park Services, of the National Trust for Historic Preservation, or any other agency concerned with historic preservation .

7. Severability. The provisions of this By-Law shall be deemed to be severable. If any of its provisions shall be held to be invalid or unconstitutional by any court of competent jurisdiction, the remaining provisions shall continue in full force and effect.

At the Special Town Meeting held on Friday, February 21, 1975
a quorum was present.

The result of the voting on Article 7 is as follows:

for----- 44 or 73 %

against--12 or 27 %



I, PAULA H. DOYLE, DEPOSE AND SAY THAT I HOLD THE OFFICE OF TOWN CLERK IN
THE TOWN OF ALFORD, COUNTY OF BERKSHIRE AND COMMONWEALTH OF
MASSACHUSETTS; THAT THE RECORDS OF BIRTHS, MARRIAGES AND DEATHS REQUIRED
BY LAW TO BE KEPT IN SAID TOWN AND IN MY CUSTODY, AND THAT THE ABOVE IS A
TRUE EXTRACT FROM THE RECORDS OF IN SAID TOWN, AS CERTIFIED BY ME.

WITNESS MY HAND AND SEAL OF SAID TOWN ON THIS DATE,

October 2, 2014

TOWN CLERK

Paula H. Doyle

FORM B – BUILDING

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

Photograph



Locus Map

SEE CONTINUATION SHEET

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

Egremont40 A 34

Town/City: Alford MA

Place: (neighborhood or village): Village Center

Address: 7 Alford Center Road

Historic Name: "The Parsonage"

Uses: Present: Residential- Vacant

Original: Parsonage

Date of Construction: 1937

Source: Assesors Card

Style/Form:

Architect/Builder:

Exterior Material: Clapboard

Foundation: STONE

Wall/Trim: PAINTED

Roof: ASPHALT SHINGLE

Outbuildings/Secondary Structures:

Major Alterations (with dates): Rear deck and Shed
Date Unknown

Condition: Exterior- good; Interior- Poor

Moved: no ☒ yes ☐ Date:

Acreage: 1 AC

Setting: Rural Town Center

Recorded by: Jim Harwood- Architect

Organization: for Alford HDC

Date (month / year): 05/20 2020

INVENTORY FORM B CONTINUATION SHEET

TOWN

ADDRESS

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
220 MORRISSEY BOULEVARD, BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02125

Area(s) Form No.

A	34
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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 Parsonage" is a 1400 sf, two-story, wood framed single family residence. It is a simple craftsman's cottage, sympathetic in size, scale, proportion and detail to the surrounding buildings. Built in 1937 after the original parsonage was destroyed in a fire, it abuts the Town Hall (A1) and is across the street from the Alford Union Church (A2) which it historically served.

The exterior condition of the building is good, with simple trim, painted clapboard siding, double hung windows, and asphalt shingle roof. There is a later deck and shed addition (date unknown) at the back of the building, but the majority of the original exterior materials and details remain.

The interior of the building is in poor condition. A renovation was started but not completed. Fortunately, many original materials and details remain intact.

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.

Our goal is to protect the integrity and uniqueness of the historic Alford Town Center. #7 Alford Center Road, AKA "The Parsonage" (A34) was recently purchased by the town in an effort to protect it, while it explores options to rehabilitate the building for community use. The Historic District Commission would like to extend the historic district to include "The Parsonage". The Historic Town Center was made a historic district and added to the MHC register in 1975 (inv ALF A&B).

#7 Alford Center Rd. served as the parsonage for the Alford Union church (A2). The original parsonage was destroyed in a fire. Its replacement was constructed in 1937. The building is an integral part of the small-town center which in which it sits. It abuts the Town Hall (A1) and is across the street from the Alford Union Church (A2) whose minister it housed. Extending the district to include this parcel of land will maintain the integrity of Alford's historic town center.

Without inclusion in the historic district, a renovation or demolition of this property, could significantly alter the physical appearance of the historic town center. Although not currently designated historic, the proximity of the parsonage to Town Hall and its prominent position in the historic town center requires us to protect it.

BIBLIOGRAPHY and/or REFERENCES

Massachusetts Cultural Resource Information System
Alford Town Assessor

Continuation sheet 1

INVENTORY FORM B CONTINUATION SHEET

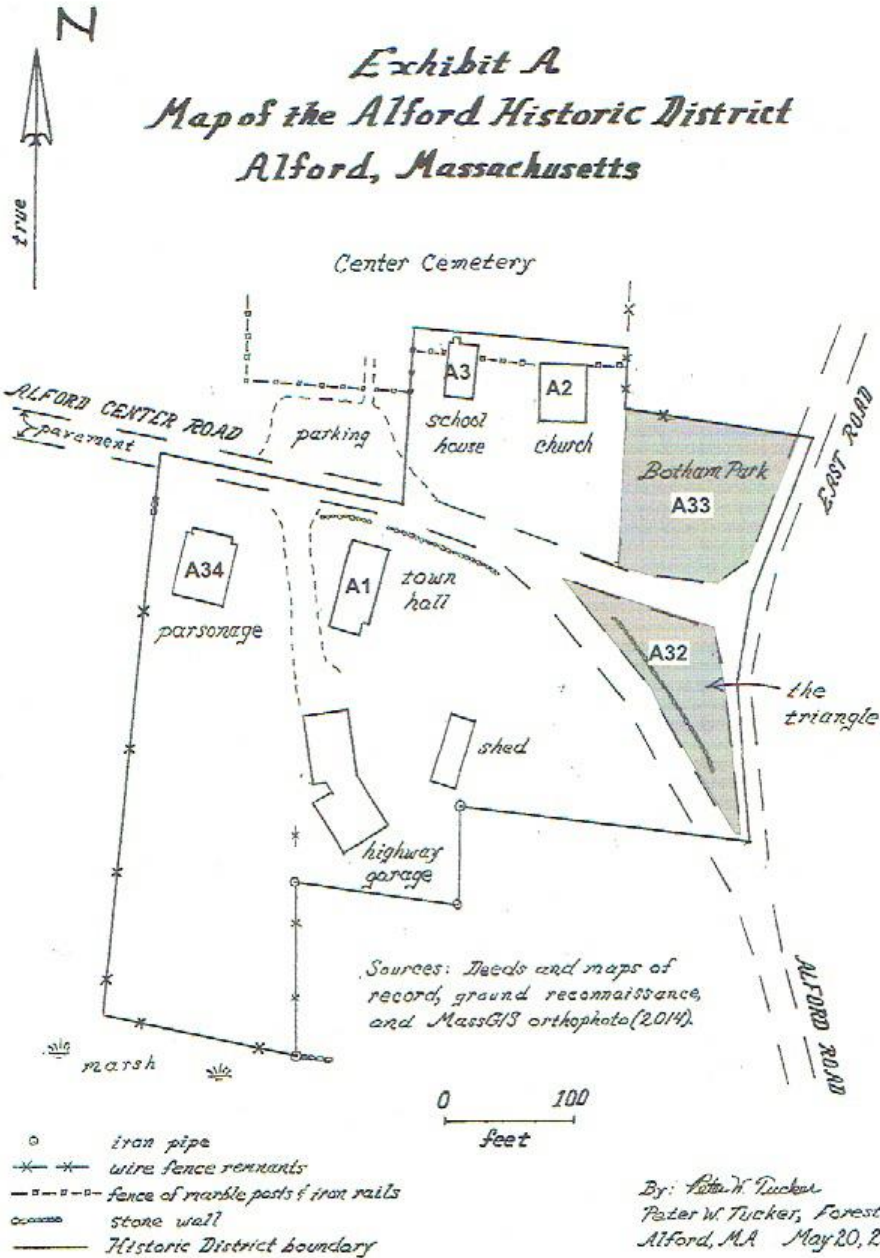
TOWN

ADDRESS

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
220 MORRISSEY BOULEVARD, BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02125

Area(s) Form No.

A 34



FORM A - AREA

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

Assessor's Sheets USGS Quad Area Letter Form Numbers in Area

	Egremont 40	A	32-33
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Photograph



Town/City: Alford MA

Place (neighborhood or village): Alford Center

Name of Area: "Botham Park" & "The Triangle"

Present Use: Open Space

Construction Dates or Period: 1800-1855

Overall Condition: Excellent

Major Intrusions and Alterations: None

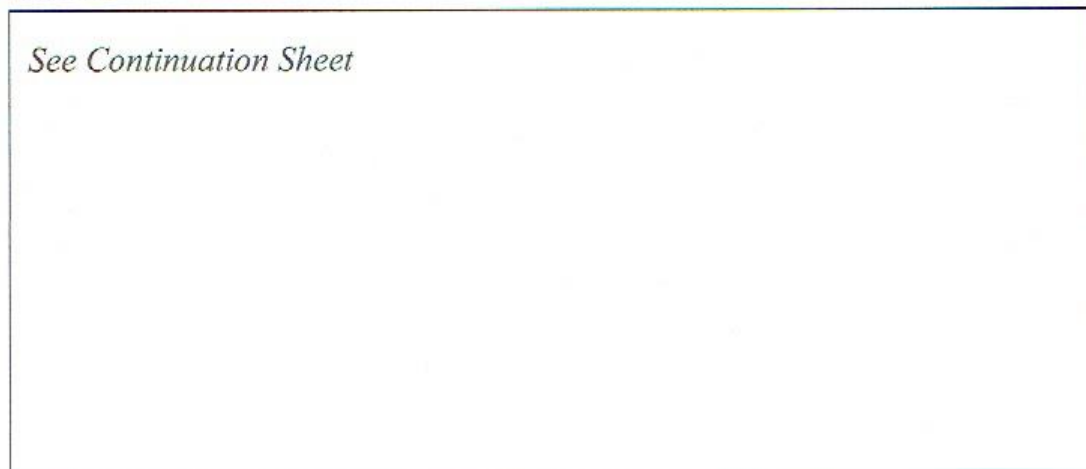
Acreage: Approximately .16 (Botham) & .3 ac (Triangle)

Recorded by: Peter w. Tucker, Forester

Organization: Alford Historic District Commission

Date (month/year): May 20 2020

Locus Map



☒ see continuation sheet

INVENTORY FORM A CONTINUATION SHEET

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
220 MORRISSEY BOULEVARD, BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02125

TOWN

NAME OF AREA

Area Letter Form Nos.

A	32 & 33
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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, structural and landscape features and evaluate in terms of other areas within the community.

Our goal is to protect the integrity and uniqueness of the historic Alford Town Center.

The Alford Historic District lies in the center of the village, encompassing the Town Hall, the Schoolhouse and the Alford Church. The Historic District Commission would like to extend the district to include Botham Park (A33), and "The Triangle" (A32) both areas adjacent to the current district.

Botham Park is a small but prominent rectangular open space at the intersection of East Rd, Alford Rd, and Alford Center Rd in Alford MA. It is a grassy parcel abutting Alford Union Church (A2), across the road from and in sight of Alford Town Hall (A1), and down the street from and in sight of Alford Center School (A3).

"The Triangle" is a small but prominent triangular open space at the intersection of East Rd, Alford Rd, and Alford Center Rd in Alford MA. It is a grassy parcel with an old stone wall along its South-Western Edge. The Triangle is across the road from and in sight of Alford Town Hall (A1), Alford Union Church (A2), and Alford Center School (A3).

HISTORICAL NARRATIVE

Explain historical development of the area. Discuss how this relates to the historical development of the community.

Botham Park and The Triangle are open spaces at the main intersection in the historic town center of Alford MA. Together they form an iconic small-town New England Cross Road. These properties are directly adjacent to the Alford Center Historic District are an important part of its view shed, and require protection as part of the historic district.

The Historic Town Center was made a historic district and added to the MHC register in 1975 (inv ALF A&B). The omission of Botham Park and "the Triangle" at that time was an error that the town now seeks to correct by adding them to the district.

BIBLIOGRAPHY and/or REFERENCES

Massachusetts Cultural Resource Information System

Continuation sheet 1

INVENTORY FORM A CONTINUATION SHEET

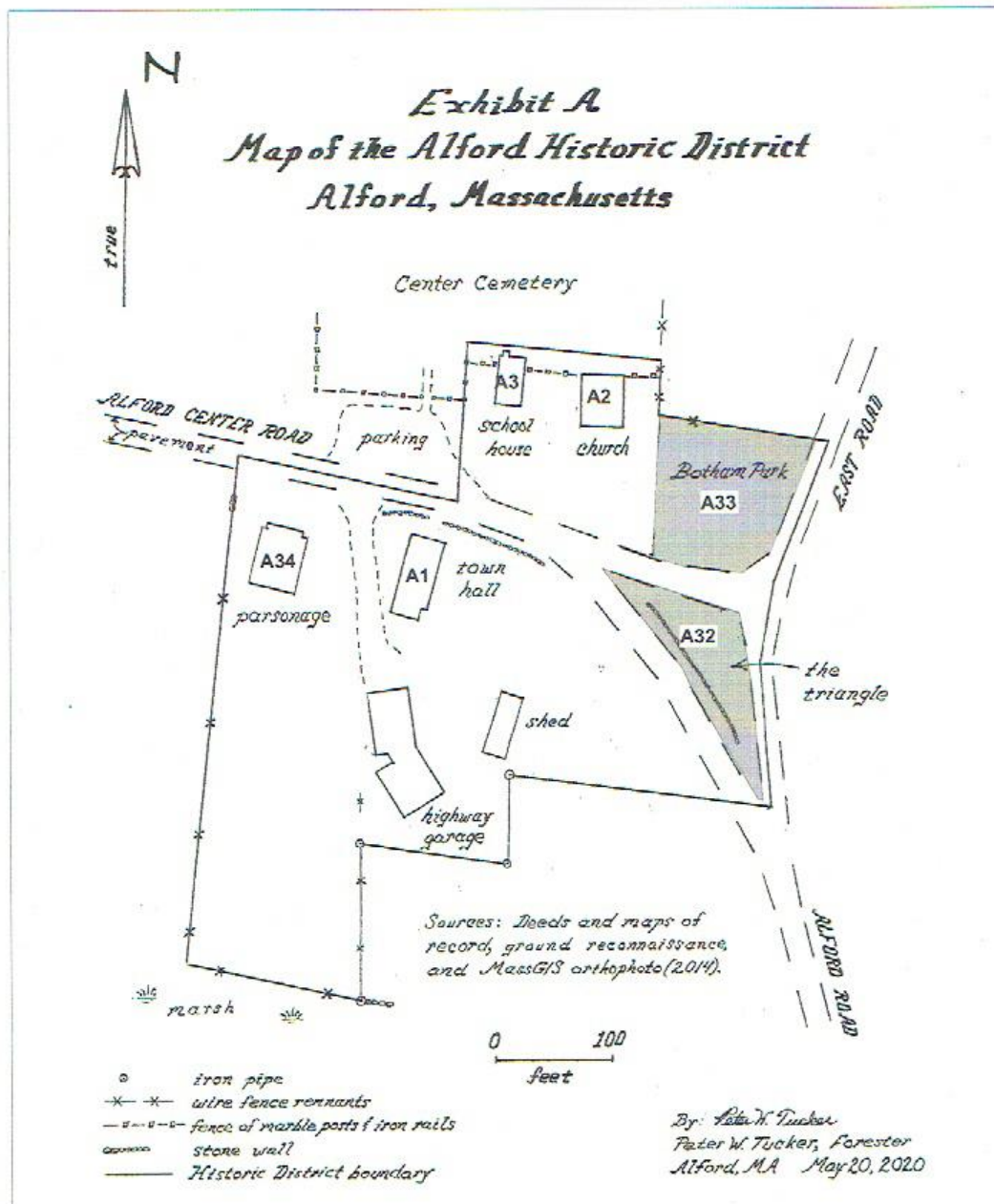
MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
220 MORRISSEY BOULEVARD, BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02125

TOWN

NAME OF AREA

Area Letter Form Nos.

A 32 & 33



INVENTORY FORM A CONTINUATION SHEET

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
220 MORRISSEY BOULEVARD, BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02125

TOWN

NAME OF AREA

Area Letter Form Nos.

A	32 & 33
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"The Triangle" (above); Botham Park (below)



Continuation sheet 3

Town of Alford Historic District Extension Preliminary Study Report
September 30, 2020

Completion Status Letter

Dated October 13, 2020

Chris Skelly
Director of Local Government Programs
Massachusetts Historical Commission

October 13, 2020

From: Skelly, Christopher (SEC) <christopher.skelly@state.ma.us>
To: Peter Tucker <tuckerforestry@gmail.com>; Alice Halsted <ebhalsted@yahoo.com>; Shirley Mueller <shirleymueller@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, October 13, 2020, 3:52:38 PM EDT
Subject: Alford Historic District

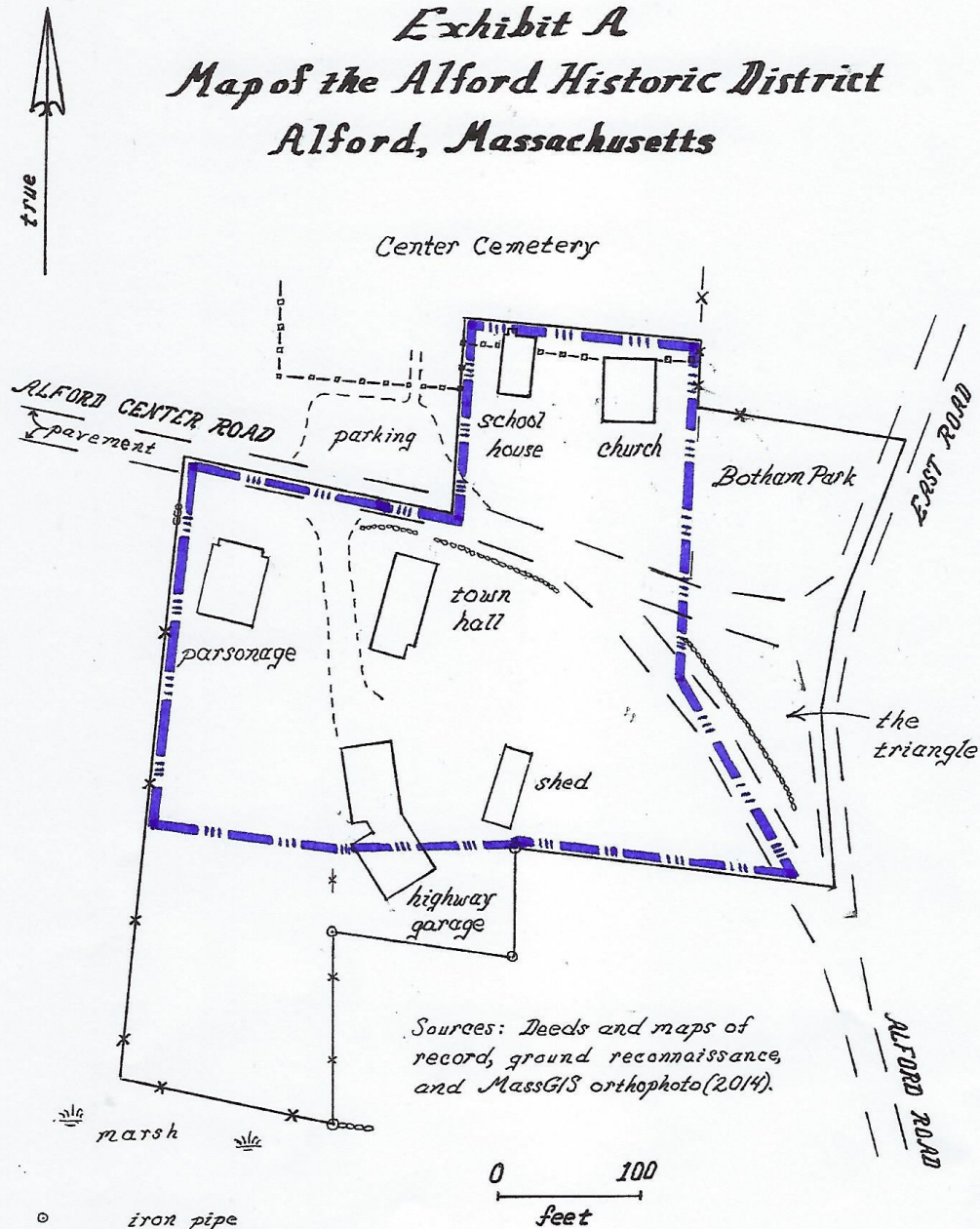
The following Local Historic District Preliminary Study Report has been received by the Massachusetts Historical Commission:

Alford Historic District expansion

For submittal purposes under M.G.L. Chapter 40C, this report is considered **COMPLETE**. Your complete report was received by the Massachusetts Historical Commission on October 12, 2020. According to M.G.L. Chapter 40C, the local historic district study committee (or historic district commission) must hold the public hearing at least 60 days from the date received by MHC. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me. I look forward to hearing from you.

Chris Skelly
Director of Local Government Programs
Massachusetts Historical Commission
Christopher.Skelly@state.ma.us

Exhibit A *Map of the Alford Historic District* *Alford, Massachusetts*



- iron pipe
- *-* wire fence remnants
- fence of marble posts & iron rails
- stone wall
- Historic District boundary as proposed in 2020
- Historic District, as shown approximately on 1975 map

By: Peter W. Tucker
 Peter W. Tucker, Forester
 Alford, MA May 20, 2020
 Revised Oct. 12, 2020 to show
 existing A.H.D. per 1975 map. P.W.T.