



JUL 26 2019

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

William Francis Galvin, Secretary of the Commonwealth
Massachusetts Historical Commission

July 22, 2019

Douglas J. Kelleher
Principal
Epsilon Associates
3 Mill & Main Place, Suite 250
Maynard, MA 01754

RE: Clarke School for the Deaf, Northampton

Dear Doug:

Thank you for providing MHC with an updated Area form for the Clarke School for the Deaf. The new form provides information on the current buildings occupying the campus and recommends boundaries for a proposed National Register institutional district. As you know, in 2012, it was the opinion of MHC staff that the Clarke School for the Deaf was eligible for listing in the National Register, fulfilling Criteria A and C at the local and possibly state level for its contribution and major role played in the education and development of technologies, therapies, and teaching practices for the hearing impaired. The campus has undergone several changes since the 2012 evaluation, and the 2019 form reflects those changes.

MHC has reviewed the changes to the campus since 2012 and has reevaluated the campus based on the revised area form that you submitted. Two buildings have been lost. First, Rogers Hall at 49 Round Hill Road, formerly a mansard-roofed house moved to the campus ca. 1906 and connected to Hubbard Hall ca. 1928, suffered a devastating fire and was demolished in 2016, along with the connector that joined it to Hubbard Hall. It has been replaced by a landscaped grassy area and by parking lots. It was located at the northeast end of the campus, on the eastern side of Round Hill Road. The Galbraith Center at 52 Round Hill Road, at the northern edge of the campus on the west side of Round Hill Road, a gymnasium built in 1965, was also demolished in 2016. A parking lot now stands in its place.

Several questions arose in the recent staff reevaluation. A large portion of the property that was formerly the Clarke School is now in the process of rehabilitation under new ownership. The Clarke School itself has reconsolidated as the Clarke School for Hearing and Speech located in a single building, Bell Hall, built in 1980 on the site of the 1880 Lyman Williston House. Williston House was an Eastlarkian/Queen Anne-style building designed by Peabody and Stearns that served as a Clarke School dormitory. Bell Hall stands southeast of the historic campus on the eastern side of Round Hill Road. The historic institutional buildings formerly part of the Clarke School are now in two parcels, Parcels 1 and 2. Bell Hall stands alone on a third parcel, Parcel 3. All three parcels are proposed for inclusion within the proposed Clarke School for the Deaf Historic District. Given the recent construction date of Bell Hall, it would be noncontributing to the significance of the National Register district. There appear to be no historic remnants of the Williston House present. It is not apparent why Parcel 3 was included, other than that Bell Hall is the only building now associated with the actual Clarke School. As a noncontributing element at the end of the former campus, it would seem more appropriate to exclude this property, unless further justification can be provided.

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The 2012 land survey map for the City of Northampton shows a building at 36 Round Hill Road, just south of the proposed boundary on the west side of Round Hill Road. This building is labelled as "Infirmery." It is not clear whether this building is historic (likely not, although city assessors records identify it as having been built in both 1900 and 1970). What is this building? When was it built? Was it ever associated with the Clarke School? Did it serve or does it now serve as the school's infirmary?

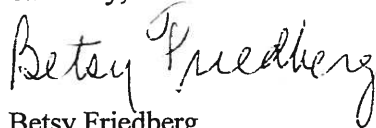
Historic maps from 1915 and 1930/1950 submitted with the area form show a building north of Rogers Hall identified as Dudley Hall. What was this building, was it part of the Clarke School, what purpose did it serve, and when was it demolished? It appears that its site is now part of the parking lot that was installed in place of Rogers Hall.

The campus has a network of paths and winding roadways, and a number of imposing trees. Are there playgrounds or playing fields? Was there a landscape plan for the school, and if so, is the landscape architect or designer known? Is the landscape plan intact?

With additional information addressing these questions, MHC staff will be able to complete our evaluation of the Clarke School for the Deaf for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. When submitting additional information, please include it in the area form prepared for the school. We would appreciate receiving the revised area form on a CD as well as in hard copy.

Thank you.

Sincerely,



Betsy Friedberg
National Register Director
Massachusetts Historical Commission

Cc: Michael Siddall, Historic Round Hill Summit, LLC
James Hebert, 1924 LLC
David Drake, Chairperson, Northampton Historical Commission