

FORM F - STRUCTURE

USGS Quad

Area(s)

Form No.

Forms within

Marlboro

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Assessor's # 68-80



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Town Marlborough

Place (neighborhood or village) _____

Sligo Hill

Address Belmont Street Extension

Historic Name Sligo Hill Water Tank

Ownership: private public

Type of STRUCTURE (check one):

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> bridge | <input type="checkbox"/> powderhouse |
| <input type="checkbox"/> canal | <input type="checkbox"/> carousel |
| <input type="checkbox"/> dam | <input type="checkbox"/> training field |
| <input type="checkbox"/> fort | <input type="checkbox"/> street |
| <input type="checkbox"/> gate | <input type="checkbox"/> tower |
| <input type="checkbox"/> kiln | <input type="checkbox"/> tunnel |
| <input type="checkbox"/> lighthouse | <input type="checkbox"/> wall |
| <input type="checkbox"/> pound | <input type="checkbox"/> windmill |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> other <u>water tower tank</u> | |

Date of Construction 1894-1895

Source Marlborough Annual Reports

Architect, Engineer, or Designer _____

B.R. Felton

Construction Material(s) cast iron

Alterations (with dates) late-20th-century

antennas attached to upper section

Condition good

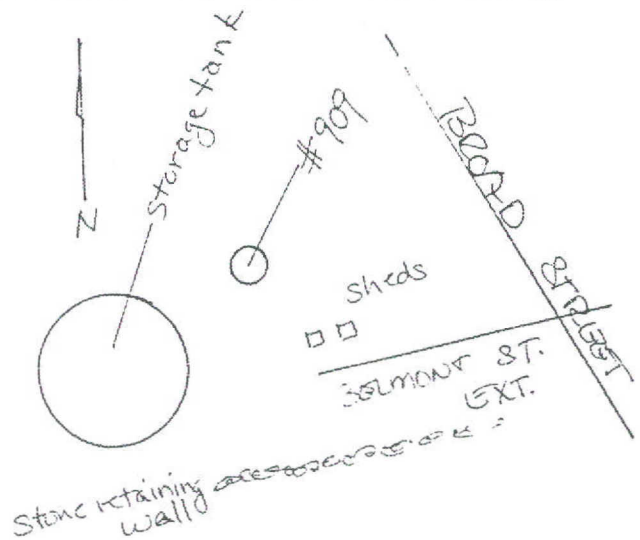
Moved yes no Date _____

Acreage 5.2 acres

Setting On summit of Sligo Hill in

open, grassy area. Modern steel water tank

water tower and modern tank to north



Recorded by Anne Forbes, consultant

Organization for Marlboro Hist. Comm.

Date 8/30/94

STRUCTURE FORM

DESIGN ASSESSMENT *see continuation sheet*

Describe important design features and evaluate in terms of other structures within the community.

The Sligo Hill water tank is a rare surviving cylindrical, riveted cast-iron tank, with conical roof, of 200,000-gallon capacity. It is raised up on eight diagonally-braced, riveted iron legs. A walkway rings the top edge of the cylinder, and the entire upper section of the tank now bristles with modern antennas. Two small one-story modern utility buildings stand directly south of the structure, and a large sheet-metal storage tank to its southwest has long-since taken over the old tank's function.

At the west end of the Belmont Street Extension, three square granite gate posts, with a short remnant of iron picket fence between them, remain from a gate or fence that once stood there.

HISTORICAL NARRATIVE *see continuation sheet*

Discuss history of the structure, and how it relates to the development of the community.

The Sligo Hill Water Tank is a striking reminder of the first major municipal project undertaken by Marlborough after it became a city--the substantial upgrade of the community's water-supply system. Its presence today remains as a symbol of the age of the shoe-factories, which both drove the demand for progress in Marlborough's municipal systems, and inspired the residential development of the French Hill and West Village neighborhoods.

After a ten-year effort to establish a public water supply system for Marlborough, the original Marlborough Water Works, with a 5,000,000-gallon reservoir here at the top of Sligo Hill, (demolished) was completed in 1883, at a cost of \$165,174.48. Water was pumped up from Lake Williams; the capacity of the reservoir together with the watershed was 175,000,000 gallons. By the time Marlborough became a city in 1890, its public water supply system was serving 1,500 homes and businesses, and water usage was up to 364,242 gallons a day. Lake Williams was becoming extremely low, however, and under the administrations of the first five mayors of the city, a major upgrade of the water system was undertaken. In 1893 an additional source, Milham Reservoir, was opened in the western part of the city, and that same year the city acquired 56 more acres of land around Lake Williams to protect the original watershed.

An essential aspect of the 1890's effort, undertaken at the urging of former Mayor S.H. Howe and the other shoe-manufacturers of the West Village, where the greatest concentration of factories and the densest neighborhoods were located, was the establishment of a state-of-the-art fire-protection system for that part of the city. The use of steam fire engines was rejected in favor of a high-pressure standpipe system. The city engineer, B.R. Felton, designed this 200,000-gallon water tower to be located here at the highest point in Marlborough. Under Mr. Felton's supervision, the Water Department also built three miles of pipe and hydrants, completing the system in 1895.

BIBLIOGRAPHY and/or REFERENCES *see continuation sheet*

Centennial '90: Marlborough the City. 1990.

Hurd, Hamilton. History of Middlesex County, Mass. 1890.

Stacy, George A. "The Marlborough Water Works: a History." 1941(?).

Report of the Waterworks Construction Committee, and First Annual Report of the Water Commissioners. Marlboro, 1884.

Sanborn maps.

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

Massachusetts Historical Commission
80 Boylston Street
Boston, Massachusetts 02116

Community

Property Address

Marlborough

Belmont St. Extension
Sligo Hill Water Tank

Area(s)

Form No(s).

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909

National Register of Historic Places Criteria Statement Form

Check all that apply:

- Individually eligible Eligible only in a historic district
 Contributing to a potential historic district Potential historic district

Criteria: A B C D

Criteria Considerations: A B C D E F G

Statement of Significance by A. Forbes
The criteria that are checked in the above sections must be justified here.

As a rare and, in spite of the antennas bristling from its surface, intact surviving example of a vanishing type of late-nineteenth-century engineering structure, the Sligo Hill Water Tank meets Criterion C. of the National Register. As the embodiment of the state-of-the-art water-supply and fire-fighting system that was installed as one of the first major municipal projects undertaken after Marlborough became a city, it also illustrates the evolution of community services, especially as instigated by Marlborough's influential shoe-manufacturers, and thus meets Criterion A as well..