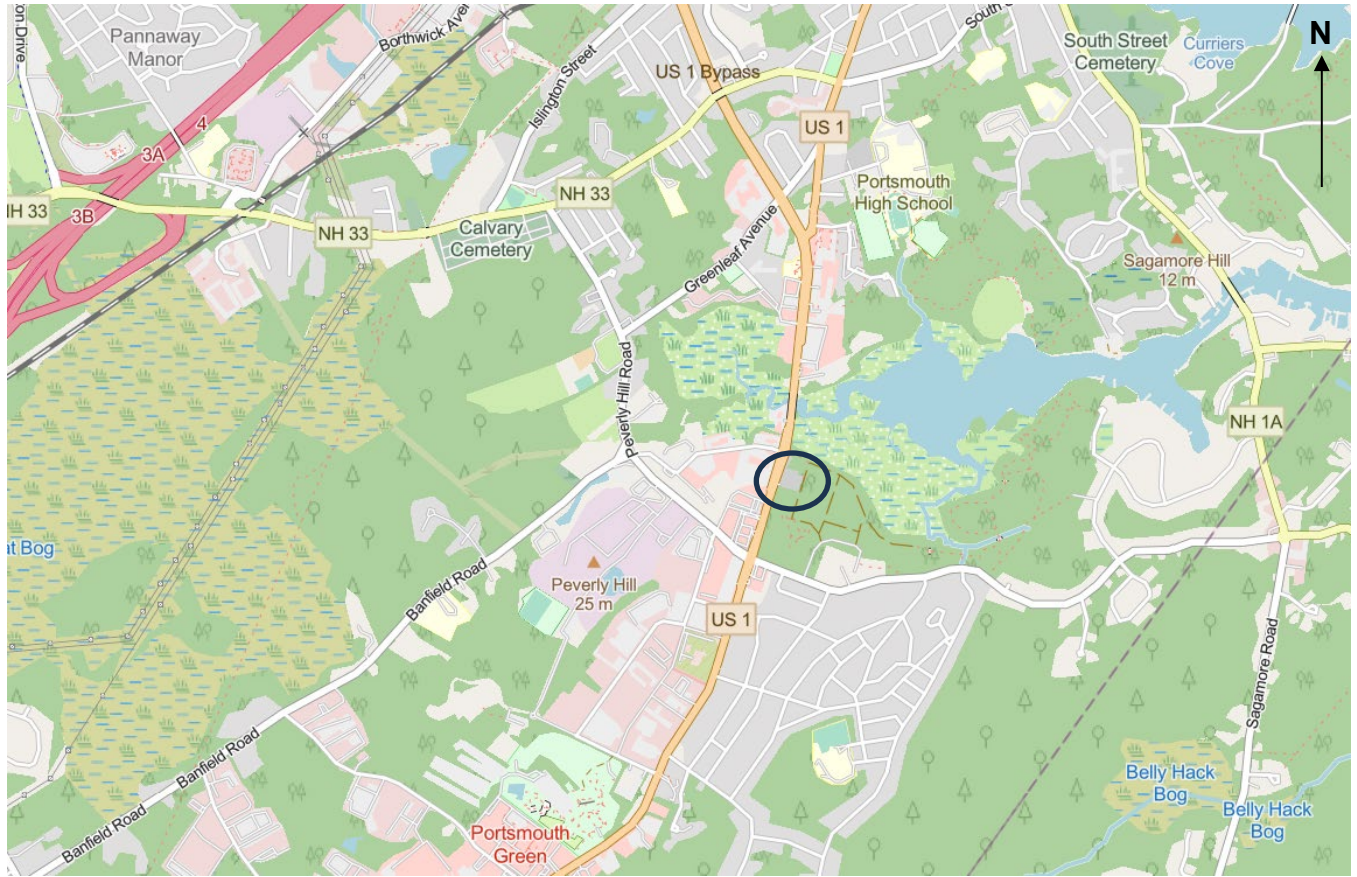


**INDIVIDUAL INVENTORY FORM****NHDHR INVENTORY POR0192****Name, Location, Ownership**Historic name: Christ Episcopal ChurchStreet and number: 1035 Lafayette RoadCity or town: PortsmouthCounty: RockinghamCurrent owner: Christ Church Parish**Function or Use**Current use(s): ChurchHistoric use(s): Church**Architectural Information**Style: Colonial RevivalArchitect/builder: Hoyle, Doran and BerrySource: Portsmouth Herald, 1964Construction date: 1966Source: Portsmouth Herald, 1965-66Alterations, with dates: N/AMoved? no  yes  date: N/A**Exterior Features**Foundation: Concrete, pouredCladding: BrickRoof material: Asphalt shinglesChimney material: BrickType of roof: GableChimney location: One end, single exteriorNumber of stories: 2½Entry location: Façade, centerWindows: Double-hung and round arch,  
30/25Replacement? no  yes  date: N/A**Site Features**Setting: Commercial artery/stripOutbuildings: House-rectory; sheds, storageLandscape features: Burial ground; cemetery;  
mature trees; walkways; stone wallsTax map/parcel: 0246-0001Acreage: 3.13 acresState Plane Feet (NAD83): X:1223672.671821; Y: 201117.837178Photo 1: FaçadeDirection: ESEDate: March 2024Image file: DD11047**Form prepared by**Name: Kari Laprey, Reagan RuedigOrganization: Preservation CompanyDate of survey: March 2024

**INDIVIDUAL INVENTORY FORM**

**NHDHR INVENTORY POR0192**

**Location Map**



*Figure 1: © Open Street Map contributors 2024*

**INDIVIDUAL INVENTORY FORM**

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**Property Map 1**

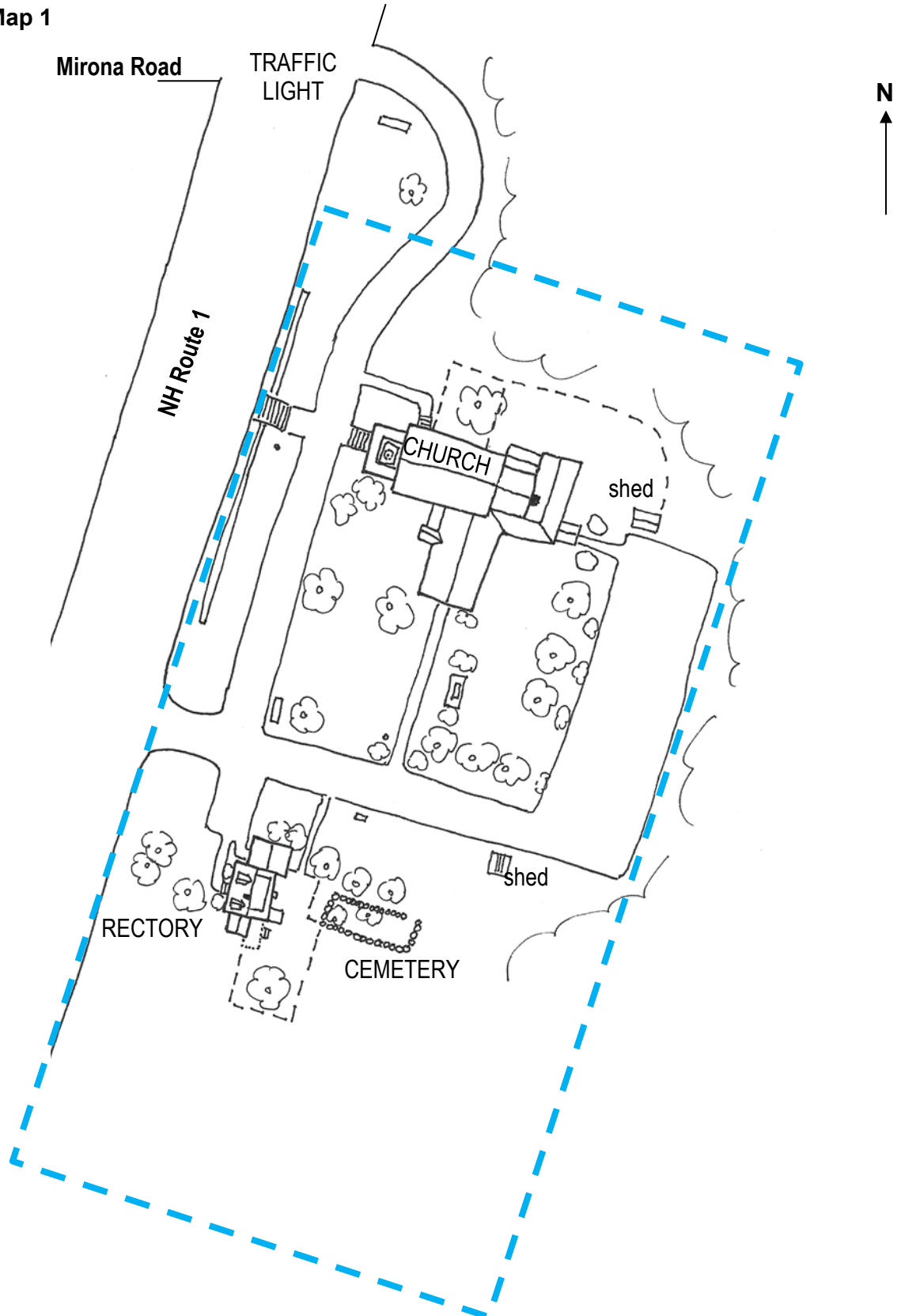


Figure 2: Property Map 1 showing parcel boundary and overview of resources

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Property Map 2

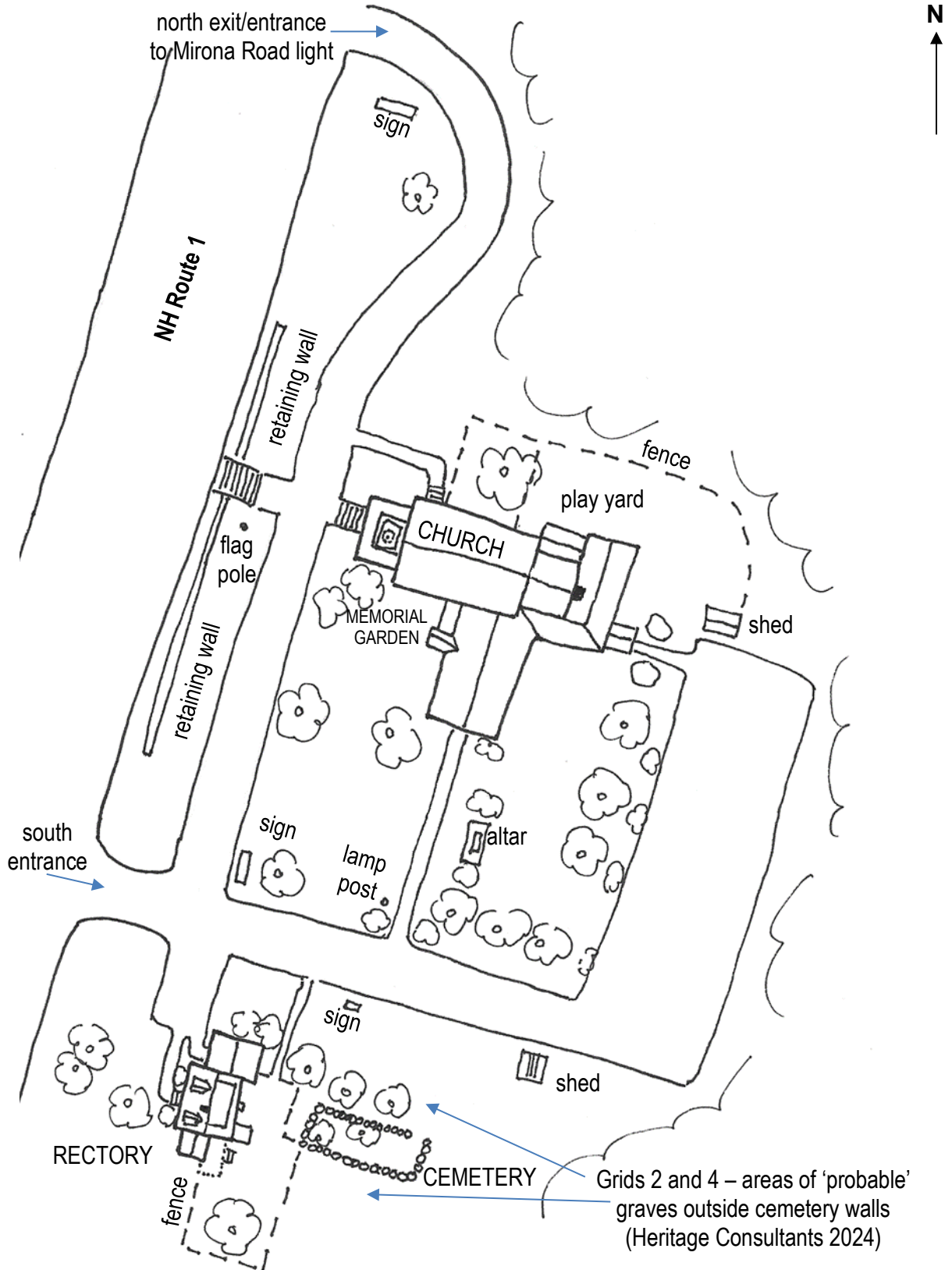


Figure 3: Property Map 2 showing details of property and resources

**INDIVIDUAL INVENTORY FORM****NHDHR INVENTORY POR0192****Historical Background and Role in the Town or City's Development**

Christ Episcopal Church and its rectory were built in the mid-1960s on Lafayette Road/US Route 1 south of Portsmouth's downtown. The parish relocated from the West End neighborhood after a fire destroyed its original church in 1963. The previously rural area on Route 1 near Sagamore Creek was developing as a suburban and commercial strip at that time. The land was given to the church by John Elwyn Stone, who owned the adjacent Langdon-Elwyn Farm, now the Urban Forestry Center. The parcel contains a stone walled enclosure and simple stone markers believed to be the burial ground for the enslaved people who lived and worked on the farm in the eighteenth century.

*Langdon-Elwyn Farm, 1650-1964*

The so-called Langdon Slave Burial Ground has uninscribed fieldstone markers. The identification of this site as the burial ground of the enslaved African and African Americans associated with the Langdon Farm is oral history without written documentation. The source was presumably John Elwyn Stone, the last descendant of the family to live on the property. It was reported in the newspaper in 1964 when he deeded land to the church (*Portsmouth Herald* 06.18.1964). Recently, confirmation of graves within and outside the walls was made by remote archaeological sensing. Whether the burials are of African descent has not been determined, but given the common practice of segregated burials there is no reason to doubt that these were slaves or later free Black servants. The Langdon family's documented history of enslaved workers is based on a family and legal papers from the 1690s to the 1770s. Four individuals directly associated with this branch of the family were identified by name or age. The record is incomplete, so the number of people involved is unknown. There are fourteen possible burials in and around the stone walls (Heritage Consultants 2024). This suggests a long period of use or use by several branches of the Langdon family (Sammons and Cunningham 2004).

Slavery was practiced in New Hampshire from its settlement. The first known enslaved African arrived in Portsmouth in 1645. Settlement of the Langdon-Elwyn farm happened around that time. Tobias Langdon (1660-1725) inherited the farm when he came of age, and it was his home when he married Mary Hubbard in 1686. They had a large family of nine children. He was a farmer and wheelwright and militia captain. The first document of slave ownership dates to 1699, when Captain Langdon purchased an unnamed teenaged boy. In 1718, he purchased a woman named Hannah. Around that time, New Hampshire's population included seventy enslaved people according to a governor's report. Tobias Langdon's 1724 will referenced "all my slaves," which he bequeathed to his son with his other property. John Langdon (1708-1780) lived on the farm and in downtown Portsmouth. Slaves and servants probably moved seasonally with the family. In 1742/43 John Langdon bought "a Negro Servant Slave named Pomp" about 14 years of age. Pomp is mentioned in papers of the 1750s and Pomp was still with him in the 1770s according to family papers. His wife, Mary Langdon, bought a woman named Violet in 1773 (Cunningham 1999). At that time, there were 674 African and African American slaves in New Hampshire, including one hundred men and sixty women in Portsmouth (State of New Hampshire 1877).

Langdon family members were buried in a small private cemetery, which was typical of rural property owners. The Langdon Cemetery behind the house on Elwyn Road contains engraved stones and large monuments of several generations. As written on the Black Heritage Trail Marker, it was common practice in slave owning societies to maintain separation but accommodate the enslaved people within the boundaries of the family land. The Langdons provided a site at the far edge of the fields. The slave burial ground is about a quarter mile from the farmhouse and the Langdon family cemetery. It occupies a high point of land in the northwestern corner of the farm, just above the salt marshes along Sagamore Creek. During the eighteenth century when the cemetery was in use, Lafayette Road and the crossing of Sagamore Creek was not yet built. The site would have offered expansive views to the west and north. The stone walls and layout of the stones suggests an east west orientation that was confirmed by the remote sensing.

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From the 1780s, the farm was the country estate of John Langdon (1741-1819), merchant, shipbuilder, and Revolutionary War patriot, who was the first governor of New Hampshire in 1785. He built a mansion on Pleasant Street in downtown Portsmouth in 1784. The practice of slavery declined sharply when the New Hampshire state constitution was adopted in the 1780s. In 1786 there were forty-six individuals “called slaves” in the state, twenty-one of whom lived in Rockingham County. In Portsmouth, at the time of the census in 1790, twenty-six people were still held in slavery, while there were seventy-six free people of color, mostly still living with and working for white families. John Langdon had a free Black person, presumably one of the family’s former slaves, living in the in 1790 and as late as late as 1810 (United States Census 1790-1810).

Subsequent generations of the family maintained connections with the farm and an interest in history. The property passed from John Langdon’s only child, Elizabeth Elwyn, to John Langdon Elwyn (1801-1876), who wrote about history and literature and was an active member of the Portsmouth Athenaeum. After a period of summer home use by the Elwyn family, the homestead was acquired by Elizabeth Elwyn Langdon who owned the Governor John Langdon mansion on Pleasant Street, which was acquired by the Society for the Preservation of New England Antiquities (now Historic New England) after her death.

Farming was carried out continuously by hired farmers and caretakers. The physical and remote sensing evidence suggests that the burial sites are relatively undisturbed. The persistence of the fieldstone markers shows that any historic plowing of the fields avoided the area. At an unknown date, the marked graves were enclosed by stone walls. Aerial photographs before the church was built show the historic Langdon/Elwyn farm was still mostly cleared land, with the farmstead in the southeast corner, a wood lot in the angle of Lafayette Road and Elwyn Road, and saltmarsh along Sagamore Creek. A small visible anomaly in the location of the current burying ground site suggests a small grove of trees and possibly the walls (Heritage Consultants 2024).

Around 1950, John Elwyn Stone (1922-1974) inherited his ancestral homestead, which he later bequeathed to the State of New Hampshire to become the Urban Forestry Center in 1976 (POR1047). Stone lived in New York after graduating from Yale with a degree in English literature and serving in the Army Air Corps during WWII. He worked as a freelance writer. The old cape on the Langdon Farm was renovated for his use in the 1950s and he also maintained a Manhattan apartment. Stone was the last person to be buried in the Langdon family cemetery. A caretaker farmed the property for Stone, haying the fields and salt marsh. The fields remained open until the 1970s when Stone established tree plantations.

*Christ Episcopal Church on Madison Street, 1880-1963*

Christ Episcopal Church dates to the 1880s when it was funded by a bequest from a longtime Portsmouth resident to serve Portsmouth’s growing neighborhoods west of the downtown. Portsmouth had an Episcopal church since it was first settled. St. John’s Church, rebuilt in 1807 after the 1806 fire, is located near the waterfront between Bow and Daniel streets. St. John’s also had a chapel on State Street east of Pleasant Street built in the 1830s. George Massey Marsh (1805-1878) who lived nearby (now 214 State Street) was a retired merchant without wife or children. His will established a fund to build a stone or brick church for a new Episcopal parish in the west part of the city.

Christ Church served the working class neighborhoods near Portsmouth’s factories and breweries, which included many English immigrants. Land was acquired on Madison Street between Middle Street and State Street, which was the westernmost edge of the neighborhood at that time. The corner stone was laid in 1881 and construction continued through 1882, with a formal dedication in 1883. The church was a large stone Gothic Revival style building with a tall bell tower and a slate roof. The church gained national

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prominence when services were held there during the 1905 Russo-Japanese War peace treaty negotiations at the Portsmouth Naval Shipyard.

In June of 1963, the 80 year old building was destroyed in a fire. It was started by an electrical failure at the base of tower and fueled by the open tower construction and the interior woodwork encased by the stone and slate exterior. The church was not fully covered by insurance. The priest Rev. John D. Swanson was determined to carry on. Within days of the fire, services were held in the rectory, pledges of funding were made, and the Vestry began plans to rebuild. At the time of the fire, the normal Sunday congregation averaged sixty-five at the early service and eighty-five for the second service (*Portsmouth Herald* 06.20.1963).

The church was under the leadership of the Rev. Swanson from 1960 until 1970. John D. Swanson (1932-2021) came from Wisconsin after graduating from Carleton College in Minnesota and ordination in 1957. While in Portsmouth, Rev. Swanson was active in local affairs. He acted in early productions at the Theatre by the Sea and became involved in the anti-Vietnam War protests. After moving to New York in 1970, he founded Seminary of the Streets, a year-long program of ministerial preparation based in the Lower East Side and focused on social justice and advocacy training. He was later known as the Rev. John-Julian Swanson, OJN, the founder of the Order of St. Julian of Norwich.

*Christ Episcopal Church construction, 1963-1966*

The Christ Church Disaster Relief Fund held fundraising events during the fall of 1963, including an auction and a radio fund drive. Plans for the new church were discussed at the annual parish meeting held at the Rockingham Hotel in January 1964 (*Portsmouth Herald* 01.17.1964). A temporary chapel was established in a large house on Lafayette Road on the corner of South Street where a professional office complex is now (Dozier 2024).

Rev. Swanson led the effort to find a new location outside the downtown area that would have more room for parking and serve the growing suburban neighborhoods. In the 1960s, Route 1/Lafayette Road was the location of commercial development including Yoken's and the Dinnerhorn restaurants south of Sagamore Creek, and the first shopping plazas. South of Elwyn Road, construction of the large Elwyn Park subdivision began in the 1950s. A new Catholic parish built St. James Catholic Church farther south on Route 1 in 1958. Rev. Swanson is credited with identifying the Route 1 site and approaching John Elwyn Stone, who lived on the Langdon homestead on Elwyn Road. Stone agreed to subdivide a lot out of his family land and donate it to the church.

The 1964 deed from John Elwyn Stone to the Christ Church Parish was for a 600' x 300' parcel. There was no mention of a burial ground or other features on the property (Deed 1720:0453). The rectory was built during 1964. John Elwyn Stone is said to have specified that the church be a colonial style brick building. Rev. Swanson secured the services of the prominent Boston architectural firm Hoyle, Doran & Berry, which prepared plans in the summer of 1964 (Dozier 2024). An architect's sketch was printed in the newspaper in July. The red brick building with white spire and trim was designed to be in keeping with Portsmouth's architectural traditions (*Portsmouth Herald* 06.18.1964, 07.03.1964).

The architectural firm of Hoyle, Doran & Berry was the successor to Cram and Ferguson, the partnership of Ralph Adams Cram, Bertram Grosvenor Goodhue, and Frank Ferguson, originally founded in 1889 and known as Cram and Ferguson from 1913. Cram and Ferguson were particularly known for their Gothic Revival style collegiate and ecclesiastical buildings. They also designed in the Colonial Revival and Art Deco styles. Ferguson was a structural engineer, making them one of the earliest architecture and engineering firms. Their work included Modern office buildings and skyscrapers. Alexander E. Hoyle (d. 1969) commenced employment in 1908 and was a partner from 1926. Maurice A. Berry (1900-1981) worked for the firm from 1923 and became a partner in 1954. John T. Doran (1899-1979) joined in 1927.

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The firm was renamed and continued as Hoyle, Doran & Berry from 1957. Hoyle, Doran & Berry was one of the most prolific Boston architecture firms of the mid-twentieth century. They designed well-known Boston buildings including the Prudential Center and the original Hynes Convention Center (both in 1965), and the McCormick and Saltonstall State office buildings (1972 and 1965). During the period when Christ Episcopal church was built, Hoyle retired and new partners were Nisso T. Aladjem (1919-2004), an architectural engineer who joined the firm in 1950; Frank De Bruyn (1910-1972), who was employed from 1927; Robert W. Hadley, with the firm from 1945-1964; and Charles P. Harris from 1955. Austin J. Cribben Jr., who became a partner in 1965, was with the firm from 1946. Hoyle, Doran & Berry, Inc., was incorporated in 1968 by Doran, Berry, Aladjem, and De Bruyn. In 1990, Ethan Anthony Associates merged with Hoyle Doran & Berry Inc. Hoyle, Doran & Berry, Inc. was dissolved in 2010 and reincorporated as Cram and Ferguson Architects, LLC, in 2012, specializing in church and academic work.

The builders of the church, E.L. Paterson & Son, was one of Portsmouth's largest contracting companies. Founded by Edward L. Paterson (1869-1956) in 1898, the business was carried on by his son, Frank Paterson (1898-1977), and grandsons, John E. Paterson (1930-2012) and David C. Paterson (1931-2009). It was later called Paterson Construction Company. They also owned Patco, providing wood turning and finish work. E.L. Paterson & Son was the contractor for the Middle Street Baptist Church in the 1950s. With Erminio Ricci, E.L. Paterson & Son was involved in development of residential subdivisions, including Hampshire and Sheffield roads and parts of Elwyn Park. They built the former North Church Parish House on Spinney Road in 1964. According to mentions in the *Portsmouth Herald*, other projects included the Portsmouth Hospital Administrative section in 1964, the First National Bank on Lafayette Road, and the restoration of the Chase House and Goodwin Mansion at Strawberry Banke in 1965. Frank E. Paterson was a member of the Portsmouth Housing Authority from 1954.

The ground breaking for the new church was in the spring of 1965. The foundation was built during the summer. In the spring of 1966, the steeple was placed on the roof.

*Christ Episcopal Church, 1966-present*

The newly finished church was dedicated in May of 1966. The Bishop of New Hampshire presided over the ceremonies, assisted by other area clergymen from Episcopal, Catholic, Lutheran, and Congregational churches. The sanctuary seating capacity was 250. The building included a chapel, meeting space, offices, and Sunday school rooms (*Portsmouth Herald* 05.09.1966). Construction of the education wing was not completed until after the congregation moved into the new building (Dozier 2024). The old Madison Street property, now the site of apartment buildings, was sold in August 1966 (Deed 1831:191).

Rev. Swanson led the church until 1970, when he resigned over his anti-war convictions, when the Episcopal Diocese of New Hampshire failed to adopt a resolution regarding pacifism and conscientious objection as Christian duties (*Portsmouth Herald* 05.11.1970). A plaque was dedicated to Rev. John D. Swanson in 1977, to be installed on an outdoor altar built of stones from the old Christ Church (*Portsmouth Herald* 08.13.1977). Rev. Canon Gordon Gillette (1911-1986) came from Illinois in 1971 and was the rector for about five years. The next interim priest, Julian Victor Langmead Casserley (1909-1978), was a retired theologian, professor, and author, originally from England. He and his wife were active in Christ Church after they moved to the area in 1975. The stained glass window in the chapel is in his memory. It was made by his daughter, then of California, and is based on an English design from Our Lady of Walsingham (Dozier 2024).

A daycare center and preschool has been located in the basement level of the building since the 1980s. The church took over the business in 1992, and it was named Little Blessings. The board of directors includes the priest and church members. The driveway around the north side of the church was replaced

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by a playground area. The Langdon Slave Burial Ground was marked in 1995 by the Black Heritage Trail along with other Portsmouth historic sites reflecting the presence of African people in New Hampshire since 1645. The church has maintained and preserved the site. Trees and flowering shrubs were planted over time in the church yard as gifts or memorials. A labyrinth was designed and built ca. 2005 by church member Gary Dozier. A memorial garden in the front corner of the building contains about forty cremains. A small pet cemetery is located in the back corner of the building. A series of highway projects have impacted the Route 1 frontage. There was an earlier roadside retaining wall, and the first sidewalk installed in the 1970s was on the church lawn on the uphill side of the wall. The road was widened in the 1980s and again ca. 2000. The northern church entrance was shifted onto the state-owned land to intersect with the Mirona Road intersection. A new retaining wall and sidewalks are within an easement on the church parcel.

The rectory has often been vacant when a priest opted for other housing arrangements. It has not housed a rector since 2016. The house was occupied for over a year by a family of refugees from Afghanistan but is again vacant (Dozier 2024). Church membership declined over time and suffered during the Covid pandemic here and elsewhere. Portsmouth also has St. John's Church in the historic downtown, and there are six or seven other Episcopal churches within a fifteen-mile radius. In recent years, Christ Church has shared the services of a part-time priest with another parish.

**Applicable NHDHR Historic Contexts**

903. Architecture in New Hampshire, 1623-present

1300. Religion in New Hampshire, 1623-present

1401. The African Americans in New Hampshire

1507. Public and private cemeteries and burials

**Architectural Description and Comparative Evaluation***Christ Episcopal Church*

Christ Episcopal Church is a brick Colonial Revival style church located on the east side of US Route 1/Lafayette Road south of Sagamore Creek. The large, 2½-story, gable front building is brick, with white painted wood trim, and a wooden steeple. The rectory is a small twentieth century Cape that stands south of the church. Behind the rectory, there is a rectangular stone walled enclosure around a grouping of stones that mark burials, as well as unmarked burials under the lawn nearby.

The church has a red brick exterior in a common bond and a Flemish bond header course pattern. The foundation is poured concrete. The main block of the building is 39' x 70', and the front vestibule is 33' x 20', according to the tax assessment. The rear section is 21' deep. The side wing is 53' long. The symmetrical three bay façade has a center entry. The building is seven bays deep overall (Photos 1-4). The façade of the 3 x 1 bay vestibule features four wooden pilasters with molded capitals and a full entablature beneath the pedimented gable. The projecting eaves have molded cornices. There are gable end returns, and a pedimented front gable. The roofs are sheathed in asphalt shingles. The cornices have a variety of bed and crown moldings. The triangular front gable is clad in wide, painted wood boards.

The central front entry is recessed, with paneled reveals (Photo 3). The frontispiece has a molded wooden casing and entablature with a pulvinated frieze. The windows are original, double-hung wooden sash set in molded wooden casings. The sills are cast concrete. The façade and front bays have 6/6 and 9/6 sash windows. The lintels are splayed brick, jack arches. The full-height, double-hung windows on the side

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elevations are 30/25 topped by a fanlight. The semi-circular arched openings have brick voussoirs with a concrete keystone. The sanctuary windows are textured glass. The four-stage steeple has a square wooden base, a smaller square lantern with ocular windows, both clad in horizontal flat board siding (Photos 1, 2, 4). The octagonal louvred belfry contains the bell that was relocated from the original church. The tapered octagonal wooden spire is topped by a metal Celtic cross.

The rear of the church is one story with a hip roof. Windows are 6/9 with concrete sills. The back entry, facing the parking lot, is sheltered by a gable roof on square posts. The glass door is new (Photo 8). A large brick chimney is centered on the exterior of the main block. The lower level is exposed on the northern side (Photo 5). The basement level or undercroft has 10/10 windows in the concrete foundation walls on the northern and eastern elevations. The windows have wooden frames. A few of the sashes have been replaced. The double doors on the north side of the vestibule bay are the original wood doors with two panels below and 9 lights above, reached by concrete steps with an iron railing.

The education wing projects south from the main block. It is one story, with a gable roof. The brick walls and finishes are the same as the church, including concrete window sills and molded cornices at the eaves (Photos 2, 6, 7). The wing is five bays long, with 12/12 windows. A gable roofed projection at the front of the chapel contains a stained glass window installed in the late 1970s. The south gable end of the wing is sheathed in clapboards. The entry has molded trim and a transom light. The glass door on the southern gable end is new.

*Interior*

The church interior has had few changes since construction was complete. The sanctuary walls have paneled wainscoting and molded cornice with dentils (Photos 11, 12). The doors and windows have molded casings (Photo 14). The doors are three- and six-panel, painted wooden doors. The slip pews are original. They were placed on casters for flexibility ca. 2015. Vinyl plank flooring was installed at that time. The rear pews were removed. The ceiling was repaired around the same time and the interior painted. The chandelier light fixtures are original with new LED lights (Dozier 2024). The chancel rail has turned balusters. The altar, pulpit with suspended sounding board, and the lectern are original. The balcony choir loft has a railing of turned balusters. The organ is older than the church, purchased used (Photo 13).

The back rooms include the sacristy, other storage areas, and the kitchen. There is original built in storage and kitchen cabinets. The floors are linoleum tile. The doors are painted 6-panel wooden doors. Doors and windows have wooden casings. The side wing contains meeting/Sunday school rooms, the chapel, and offices. The wing was part of the original design, and the foundation was laid, but construction was not complete until sometime after the sanctuary was occupied. The chapel has box pews, chancel rail, and altar like those in the main sanctuary. The walls are finished with paneling and cornice molding. A stained glass window on the front wall dates to the late 1970s (Photo 15).

*Setting*

The church is sited on a natural high point, built up with additional fill, above the east side of Route 1. The church is set back about 70' from the road. A modern stone retaining wall defines the edge of the front lawn. A paved driveway parallels the road in front of the building (Photo 9). The main entrance driveway is in the middle of the lot between church and rectory. It wraps around behind the church to the parking lot. The rectangular asphalt parking lot is parallel to the back of the building. There are two small modern, prefabricated storage sheds, one at either end of the lot.

The driveways create a square church yard on the south side of the building. It is divided by a central paved walkway from the side entrance toward the rectory. The open lawn is shaded by mature trees and shrubs (Photos 7, 9). An outdoor altar is mortared stone on a concrete slab and a granite plaque with

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inscription to Rev. John D. Swanson. A memorial garden, created in recent decades, has flat stones on the ground marking cremains burials. It is located in the front, southwest corner between the church and chapel (Photo 6). A memorial garden for pets is in the back yard to the left of the back door (Photo 8). The northern side of the church is a playground area enclosed by chain link fencing (Photo 5).

The northern entrance driveway was changed ca. 2000 when the Mirona Road intersection was rebuilt. The northern entrance is located on a separate parcel, acquired by the church at that time from the state-owned Urban Forestry Center land. The driveway curves up to the church, and there is modern signage on the front lawn for both the church and day care (Photo 10). The front stone retaining wall, built ca. 2000, and the sidewalk at the roadside are on an easement within the church parcel. The wall is mortared stone topped by a metal pipe railing. Concrete steps are located in front of the church.

The church parcel is wooded at both ends and surrounded by the Urban Forestry Center land. The salt marsh of Sagamore Creek is about 300' north of the church. Across the road, large buildings include an auto dealership and a series of chain stores and restaurants.

*Rectory*

The rectory, built in 1964, is a 1½-story cape (Photos 16-18). It is about 150 feet south of the church, on the south side of the driveway. The rectory is set back from the road and the front yard is shaded by mature trees. It is a four-bedroom house with two small wings and second story dormers. The wood-frame building is supported by a concrete foundation. The walls are sheathed in clapboards and trimmed with narrow corner boards and frieze. The gable roof is asphalt shingled and has two gable dormers on the front and a long shed dormer on the back slope. A brick fireplace chimney is centered in front of the ridge. The front entry has an original six-panel wooden door framed by simple pilasters and entablature. The front steps are concrete. The storm door is new. The windows have tall, double-hung, 6/6 vinyl replacement sash. The flat trim and wooden shutters on the front windows are original. The rear elevation has a modern deck and sliding glass doors. The office has a three-part picture window. The wood and glass front and back doors appear to be original. A back yard is surrounded by a modern privacy fence. It backs up to the western wall of the burying ground. The cemetery is located at the edge of the open lawn, shaded by mature trees. The property backs up to the woods of the Urban Forestry Center.

*Burial Gound*

Behind the rectory is a fieldstone cemetery identified as the burying place for the Langdon slaves of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. The rectangular stone-walled enclosure is approximately 44' x 14', oriented east-west (Photos 19-24). The date of the wall has not been identified. It predates the 1960s when the parcel was transferred. The wall is field stone. The markers are small, un-inscribed, locally available stones (Tallman 1983). There are nine stones visible. Heritage Consultants completed a ground penetrating radar (GPR) prospection survey of the Langdon Slave Burial Ground for the Portsmouth Housing Authority in February 2024. The survey covered approximately 0.22 acres. Four grids were laid out within a 50' buffer around the stone walled area. Remote sensing located six probable marked burials and two unmarked graves within the wall and five possible unmarked burials in the yard to the north and one south (Heritage Consultants 2024).

**Comparative Evaluations***Christ Church*

The Colonial Revival was an important architectural trend in Portsmouth during a period when a number of new churches were constructed. The Colonial Revival style and brick construction was the nearly universal choice for churches in Portsmouth during the twentieth century. The first was the Little Harbor Chapel built in 1902 (POR1017). The only variation was in the two Catholic churches. Immaculate Conception on Summer Street near the downtown is a brick Gothic Revival style building of 1933-34.

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St. Catherine's on Woodbury Avenue (1952) has the buff colored brick popular for mid-twentieth century Catholic buildings. Portsmouth had older brick churches including St. John's Episcopal Church building in 1807, the first brick church in New Hampshire. North Church, built in the 1850s, is a brick Italianate style building with originally painted and sanded wood trim. The trim was stripped and painted white ca. 1925 to create a more classical appearance.

The 1941 Advent Christian Church (1941) at 624 State Street was determined eligible for the National Register in 2002 as an example of Colonial Revival in twentieth century Portsmouth (POR0009). Arland A. Dirlam of Marblehead, Massachusetts, was the architect. It has a modern wide gable form, but characteristic red brick exterior, white wooden trim, Georgian entry, large 24/24 windows with fanlights, and a wooden steeple (Howry 2002). The 1955 Middle Street Baptist Church, located in the Portsmouth Downtown Historic District, was designed by local architect Maurice Witmer. It has a pedimented open porch, Georgian entry, ocular windows, and a three stage tower. St. James Catholic Church, demolished in 2018, was a brick Colonial Revival style church built in 1958, south of Christ Church on Lafayette Road. The only comparable church outside of Portsmouth, previously documented for NHDHR, is the Brookside Congregational Church in Manchester (MAN0574), a brick Colonial Revival style church built in 1959. The architect William Levi White was formerly of Cram and Ferguson. There are similar churches in Massachusetts and elsewhere in New England.

The brick Colonial Revival style was considered suitable for Portsmouth, while elsewhere in the state modern church designs were popular. Modern, Art Deco, and International styles were used for churches built in the 1950s-60s, including circular and octagonal buildings, and modern materials like cast concrete and laminated wood. Examples include: the Concord Unitarian Church, (1959); St. James Church in Laconia (1964), St. George's Greek Orthodox Church, Manchester (1964); Our Lady of the Lakes Roman Catholic Church, Lakeport (1965); and Abbey Church, St. Anselm College, Manchester (1965) (Mausolf 2012). Christ Episcopal Church in Exeter, also built in 1965, is a modern octagonal building.

There are relatively few identified examples of the Cram and Ferguson firm's work in New Hampshire. Gothic Revival style buildings included the Phillips Church at Phillips Exeter Academy in Exeter (1893), the Hunt Memorial in Nashua (1903), and All Saint's Episcopal Church in Peterborough (1913). St. Andrew's Church in Hopkinton has a Cram and Ferguson steeple from 1930. Mid-twentieth century New Hampshire projects attributed to Cram and Ferguson are the New Hampshire Fire Insurance Company in Manchester, and the National Grange Mutual Company in Keene, both built in 1950.

No other New Hampshire buildings by Hoyle, Doran & Berry have been recorded on NHDHR inventory forms. Among the Massachusetts Historical Commission survey forms for Hoyle, Doran & Berry buildings, one Colonial Revival style church designed in 1957 is similar to the Portsmouth church. St. Peter's Episcopal Church in Weston is brick with white trim, a temple front and a wooden steeple with octagonal belfry and spire.

### *Cemetery*

The Langdon Slave Burial Ground has few known comparables. A few African Americans have inscribed gravestones in the Old North Cemetery on Maplewood Avenue. Most had burials unmarked by permanent stones. The large public "Negro Burying Ground" in downtown Portsmouth in use from around 1705 until the early 1800s was not maintained and was covered over by later development. Its exact location was unknown until ca. 2004 when city workers encountered wooden coffins beneath Chestnut Street. DNA testing proved the remains to be of African descent. The full extent of the Portsmouth African Burying Ground has not been determined, but there may be about 200 burials.

**INDIVIDUAL INVENTORY FORM****NHDHR INVENTORY POR0192****National or State Register Criteria Statement of Significance**

Criterion A: Christ Episcopal Church is not significant under Criterion A for representing historic trends and events. It does not meet Criteria Consideration A for religious properties under Criterion A, because it does not represent a particular theme in the history of religion or other contexts. It was part of a trend in new church construction in Portsmouth in the mid-twentieth century, but in this case was built by an existing congregation to replace an earlier building. It relates to the mid-twentieth century development of Route 1 but does not specifically represent that theme.

The so-called Langdon Slave Burial Ground on the church property is a rare, if not unique, resource in New Hampshire. Identified by oral tradition as an African American burial site and marked by a walled enclosure with multiple regularly placed stone markers intact, it contains undisturbed graves recently located by remote sensing evidence. The Langdon Slave Burial Ground is eligible for the National Register under Criterion A. The site meets Criterion Consideration D for cemeteries because it is significant for illustrating broad patterns of history. The site is important for its associations with Black ethnic heritage. It is significant in the area of social history for representing the history of slavery in New Hampshire, in which Portsmouth played a major role. The site illustrates burial customs and contributes to an understanding of the treatment of segregated burying places in Colonial New Hampshire. It is one of a very small number of traditionally identified African American cemeteries. This burying ground could contain the graves of at least fourteen individuals. Without disturbing the remains for testing, their ethnicity must be assumed based on tradition.

Criterion B: The church does not have specific historic associations with individual personages to make it eligible under this criterion.

Criterion C: Christ Episcopal Church is significant under Criterion C for its architectural distinction and therefore meets Criteria Consideration A for religious properties. Christ Episcopal Church is a largely unaltered example of Colonial Revival style architecture, designed by a prominent Boston architectural firm noted for their religious and academic buildings. It represents a significant architectural trend, the continued popularity of Colonial Revival style through the mid-twentieth century in Portsmouth where its brick construction was considered appropriate. This is the only identified example of Hoyle, Doran & Berry working in New Hampshire during the height of the firm. It has strong similarities to other Colonial Revival style churches of the period designed by various architects. The contractor was E.L. Patterson & Son, who built many of Portsmouth's mid-twentieth century houses and public buildings. Character defining features are brick walls on concrete foundation, gable front façade topped by a steeple with pointed spire, white wooden trim, and tall multi-pane windows, topped by arched fanlights. The symmetrical façade and regular fenestration, 3 x 5 bay form, pedimented gable front, center entry with large doors and classical surround are all typical. The Christ Episcopal Church interior has original woodwork including paneled wainscoting, turned railings, pews, altar, and pulpit with sounding board. The rectory is a characteristic feature of the church grounds. It is not separately eligible, but the twentieth century cape contributes to the setting and feeling of the church property.

Criterion D: The Langdon Slave Burial Ground may be eligible under Criterion D. It has the potential, through additional remote sensing and other non-invasive methods, to yield information about demography and burial practices in Portsmouth's Black community. This is important information that is not available in extant documentary evidence.

**INDIVIDUAL INVENTORY FORM****NHDHR INVENTORY POR0192****Periods of Significance**

ca. 1699-ca. 1810 The period of significance for the cemetery spans the eighteenth century during which time African Americans were known to be living on the Langdon estate.

ca. 1965 The architectural period of significance is defined by the construction date of the church.

**Statement of Integrity**

Christ Episcopal Church retains integrity from its construction in the 1960s. The Colonial Revival style building has integrity of design, materials, and workmanship. The walls, windows, doors, and wooden trim are all original. The completion of the wing took place shortly after the original construction. The only exterior changes within the past fifty years were the installation of a stained glass chapel window in the 1970s and new doors in the side and rear entries. The interior has had few alterations. The sanctuary has new flooring. The feeling of the building and its associations as a mid-twentieth century church are unchanged. The rectory retains integrity aside from the new window sash and back deck. The setting of the church yard has not changed substantially. Trees have grown large and small memorial gardens with ground level stones have been added in the past few decades. The front stone retaining wall and steps are recent and the road right of way has encroached on the parcel, but the overall relationship between the church and its surroundings is unchanged. The Urban Forestry Center preserves the land immediately around the church, while the setting elsewhere on Route 1 developed with large commercial buildings.

The Langdon Slave Burial Ground has integrity of location. Recent remote sensing archaeology indicates the burying ground retains marked and unmarked graves. The site is relatively undisturbed within the walled area and in the yard nearby. The rough stones and markers appear to be undisturbed.

**Boundary Description and Justification**

The inventoried property is the parcel currently owned by Christ Episcopal Church, on which the historic church and its rectory are located. The parcel also contains the small stone wall enclosure and other unmarked graves that are believed to be a cemetery. The rectangular 600' x 300' parcel is listed in the tax assessment as 3.13 acres. The boundary is as shown on current Portsmouth GIS tax maps. There is an easement along the frontage on US Route 1/Lafayette Road and sidewalk and retaining wall within the parcel.

The boundary of the National Register eligible property encompasses the whole parcel on which the historic church and burial ground are located. The parcel contains both resources as well as the rectory. The outer property lines were established when the lot was subdivided for church construction in 1964. The parcel includes the semi-circular front drive, lawn, and parking lot. The burial ground identified by remote sensing lies entirely within the church parcel. The burial ground is marked by a stone wall, but its boundaries are larger, extending north and south of the walled area, according to the 2024 remote sensing results.

**INDIVIDUAL INVENTORY FORM**

**NHDHR INVENTORY POR0192**



*Figure 4: 2023 aerial photo overlaid with parcel boundary from City of Portsmouth GIS map*

**INDIVIDUAL INVENTORY FORM****NHDHR INVENTORY POR0192****Bibliography and/or References**

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**INDIVIDUAL INVENTORY FORM**

**NHDHR INVENTORY POR0192**

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**Historic Maps**

NETROnline

1962, 1973, 1978 Historic aerials views, <https://www.historicaerials.com/viewer>

**Historic Photographs**

Portsmouth Athenaeum

**Interviews**

Benge Ambrogio, Episcopal Diocese of New Hampshire, March 2024.

Gary Dozier, Christ Episcopal Church member, March 2024.

**Surveyor's Evaluation**

NR listed: individual   
 within district

Integrity: yes   
 no

NR eligible:  
 individual   
 within district   
 not eligible   
 more info needed

NR Criteria: A   
 B   
 C   
 D   
 E

**INDIVIDUAL INVENTORY FORM**

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**Historic Images**



*Figure 5: 1952 aerial view appears to show a tree and vegetation or walls in vicinity of burial ground (Heritage Consultants 2024)*

**INDIVIDUAL INVENTORY FORM**

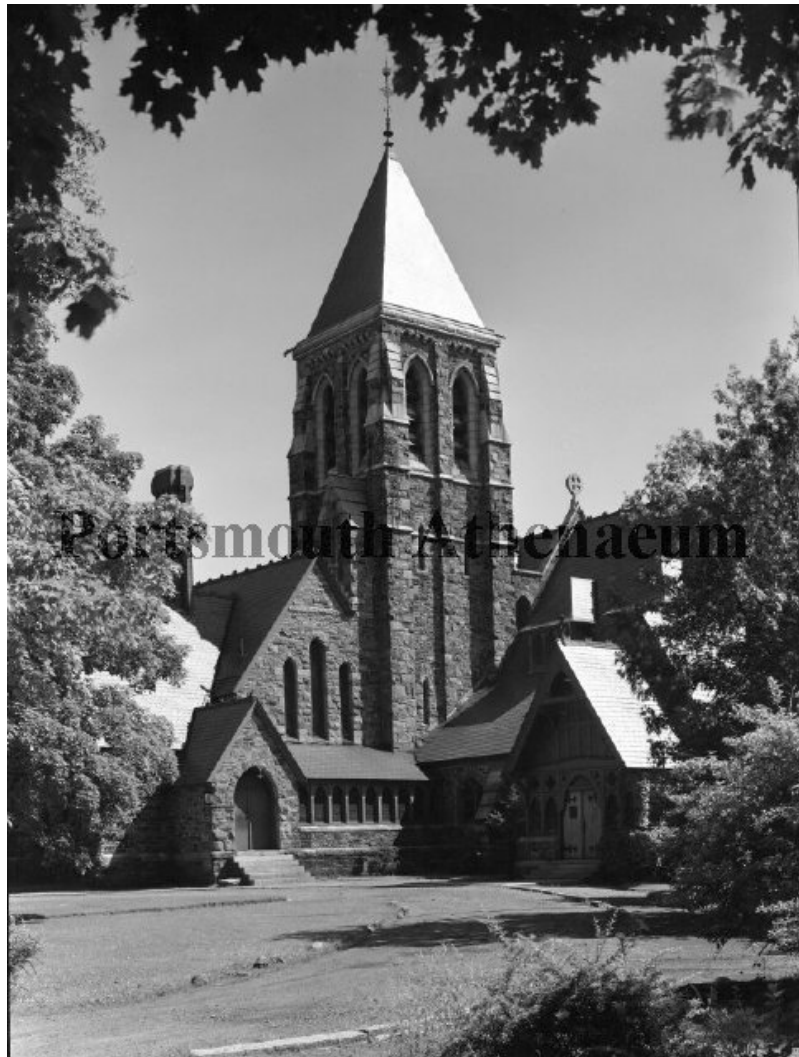
**NHDHR INVENTORY POR0192**



*Figure 6: 1962 aerial shows trees in vicinity of burial ground (Heritage Consultants 2024)*

**INDIVIDUAL INVENTORY FORM**

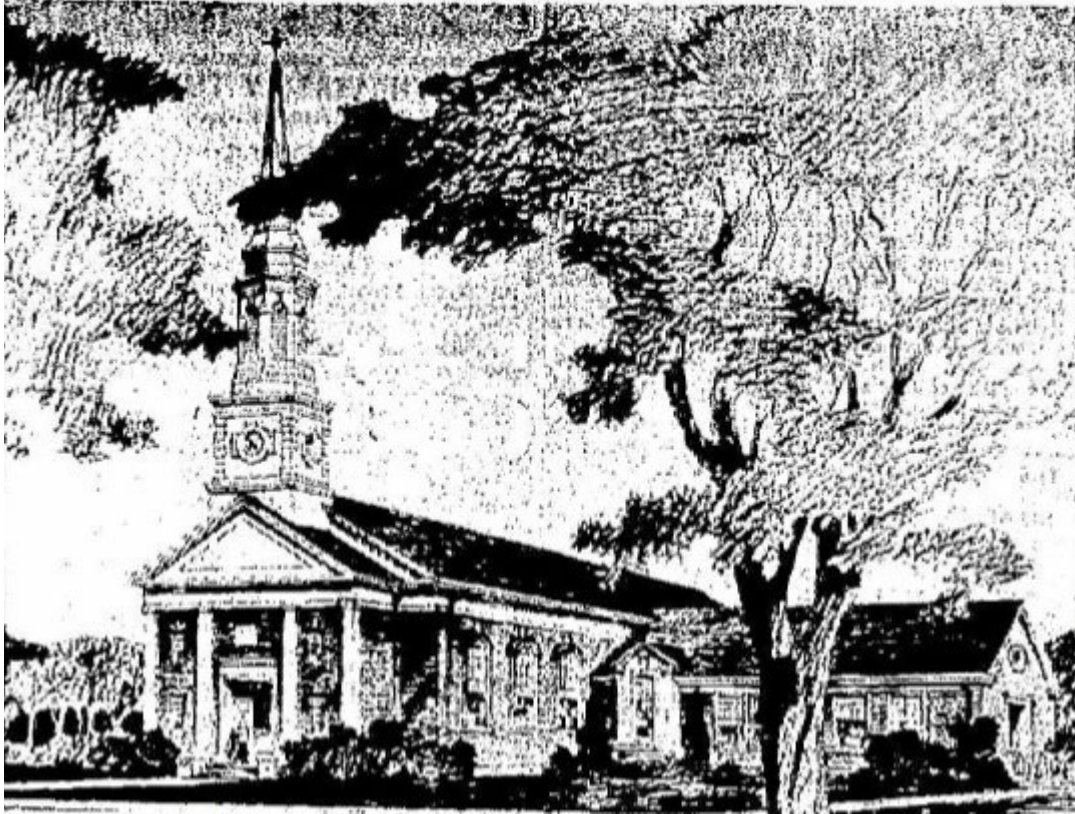
**NHDHR INVENTORY POR0192**



*Figure 7: The original Christ Church on Madison Street, ca. 1940 (Portsmouth Athenaeum)*

**INDIVIDUAL INVENTORY FORM**

**NHDHR INVENTORY POR0192**



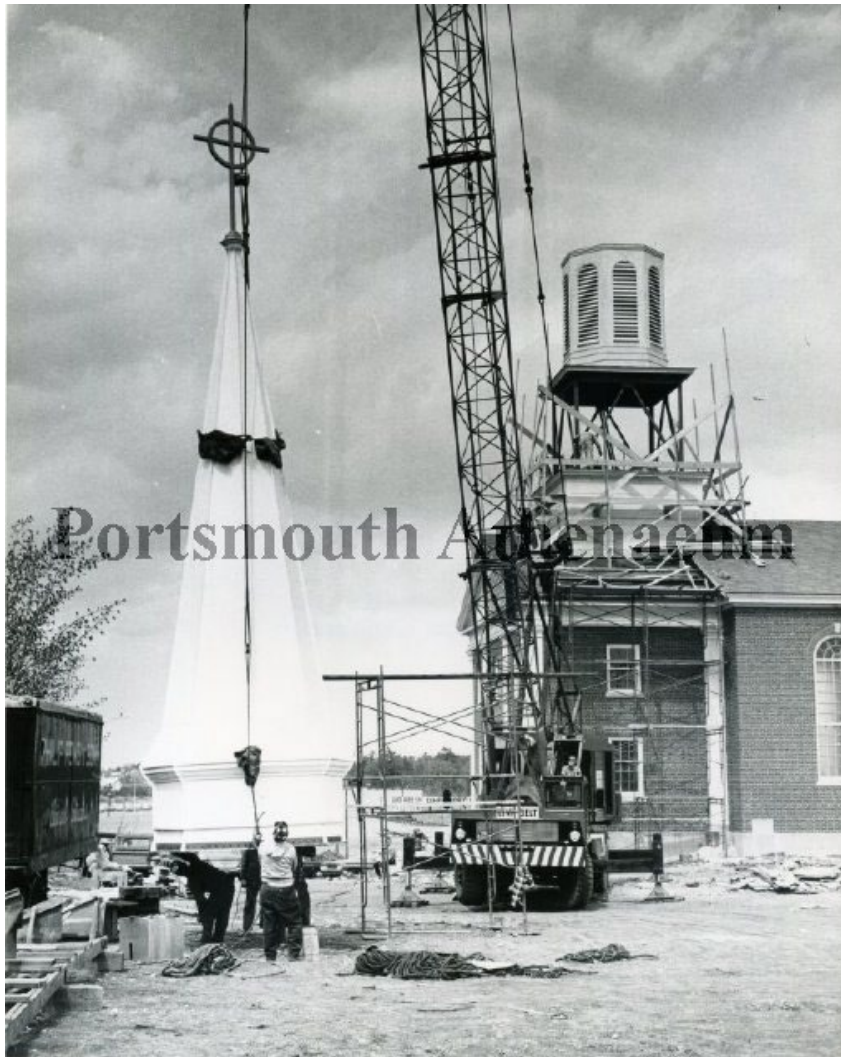
*Figure 8: Artist's sketch, Portsmouth Herald, May 29, 1965*



*Figure 9: Foundation under construction 1965 (Portsmouth Athenaeum)*

**INDIVIDUAL INVENTORY FORM**

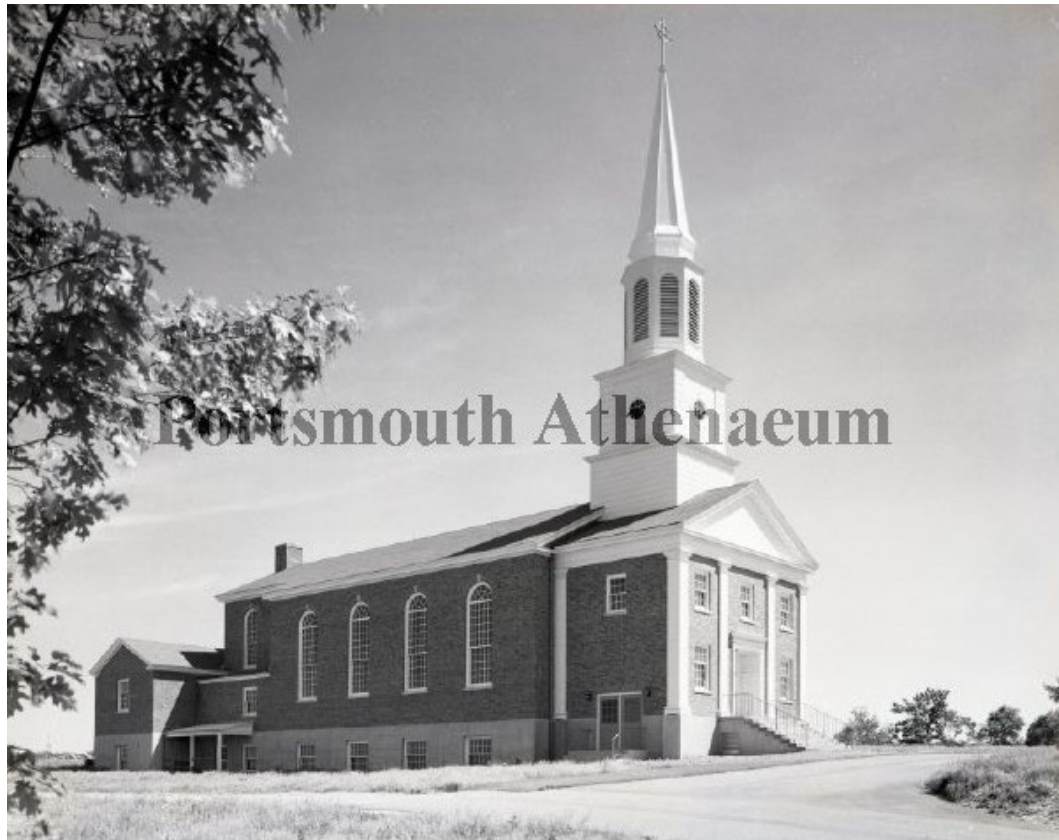
**NHDHR INVENTORY POR0192**



*Figure 10: Steeple assembly, probably spring 1966 (Portsmouth Athenaeum)*

**INDIVIDUAL INVENTORY FORM**

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*Figure 11: 1967 photo shows the northern elevation (Portsmouth Athenaeum)*

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**NHDHR INVENTORY POR0192**



*Figure 12: 1973 slide shows chapel before stained glass window installed (Portsmouth Athenaeum)*

INDIVIDUAL INVENTORY FORM

NHDHR INVENTORY POR0192

Photo Keys

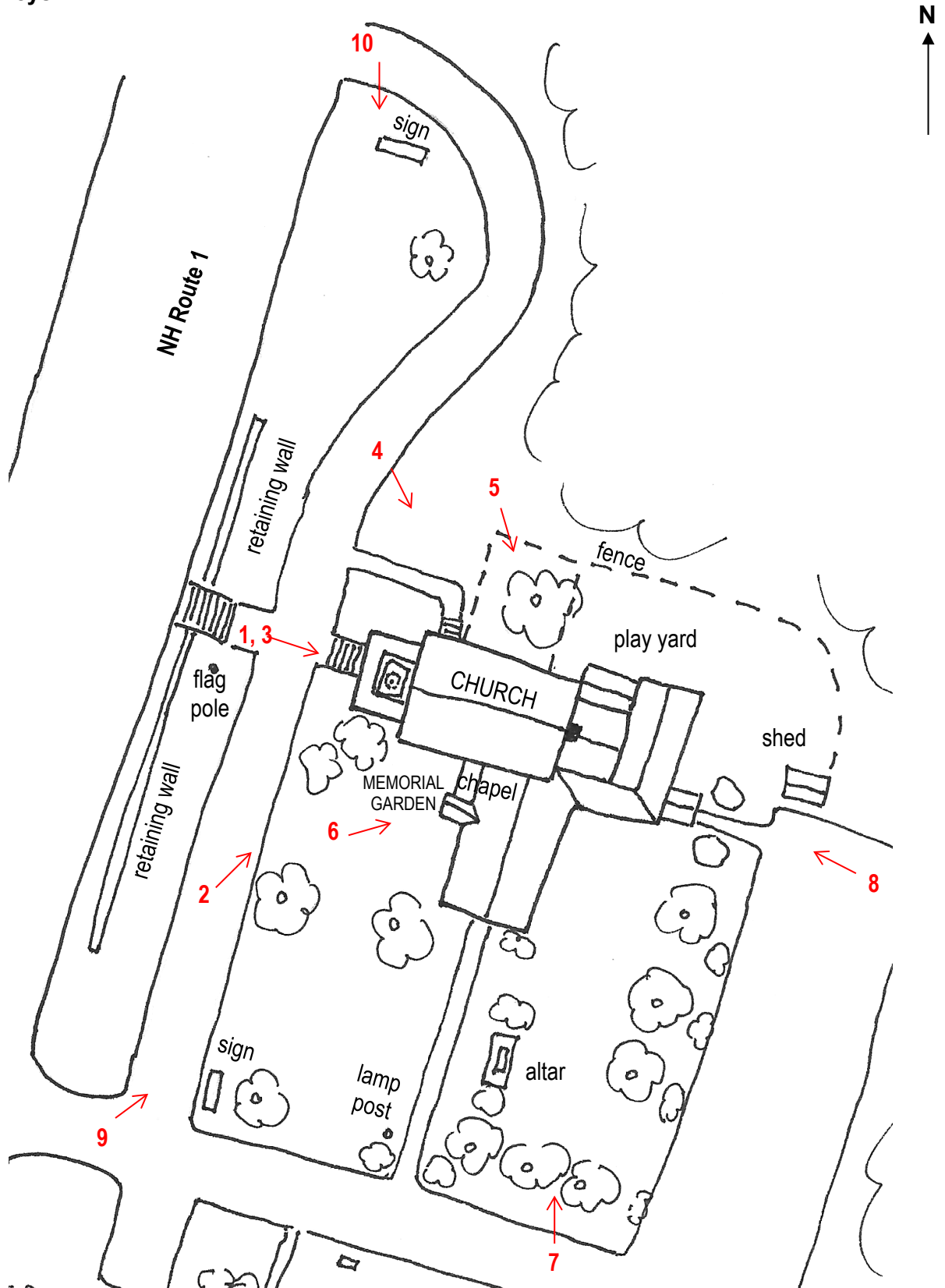


Figure 13: Church exterior, photos 1 – 10

INDIVIDUAL INVENTORY FORM

NHDHR INVENTORY POR0192

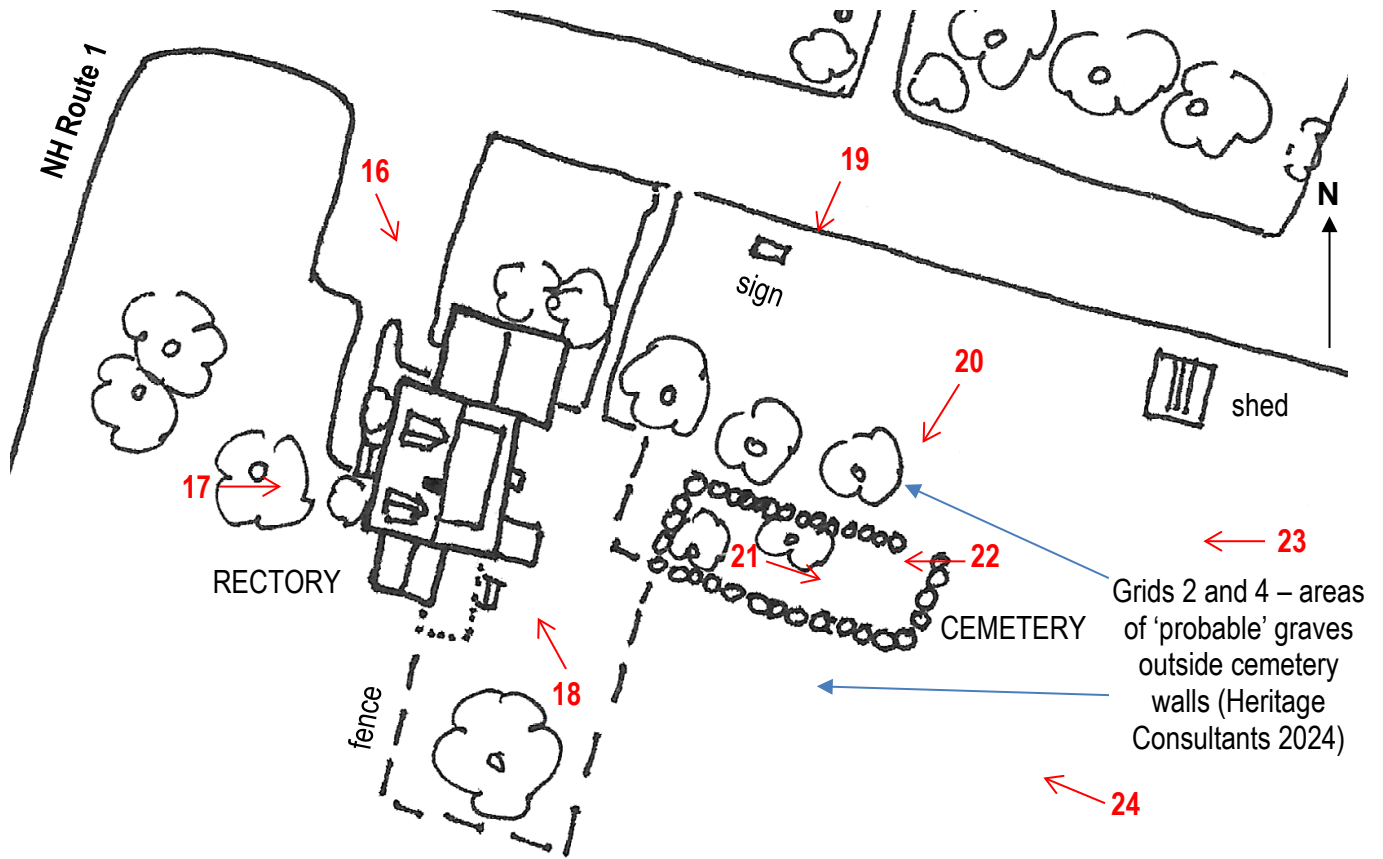


Figure 14: Rectory and cemetery, photos 16 – 24

**INDIVIDUAL INVENTORY FORM**

**NHDHR INVENTORY POR0192**

**Current Photographs**

Date taken: March 2024



Photo 2) Church and chapel, facing northeast



Photo 3) Façade detail, facing east-southeast

**INDIVIDUAL INVENTORY FORM**

**NHDHR INVENTORY POR0192**



Photo 4) Three-quarter view, facing southeast



Photo 5) North elevation, facing south-southeast

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Photo 6) South elevation, chapel detail and memorial garden, facing east-northeast



Photo 7) Rear elevation and back lawn, outdoor stone altar, facing north

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Photo 8) Rear elevation from parking lot, shed to right, facing west-northwest



Photo 9) Southern entrance and driveway, sign, flagpole, facing northeast

**INDIVIDUAL INVENTORY FORM**

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Photo 10) Northern entrance, sign, facing south



Photo 11) Interior sanctuary, facing southeast

**INDIVIDUAL INVENTORY FORM**

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Photo 12) Interior balcony, facing west-northwest



Photo 13) Organ in the loft, facing west

**INDIVIDUAL INVENTORY FORM**

**NHDHR INVENTORY POR0192**



Photo 14) Interior window detail, facing northwest

**INDIVIDUAL INVENTORY FORM**

**NHDHR INVENTORY POR0192**



Photo 15) Interior chapel, facing southeast



Photo 16) Rectory, facing southeast

**INDIVIDUAL INVENTORY FORM**

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Photo 17) Rectory façade, facing east



Photo 18) Rectory, rear elevation, facing northwest

**INDIVIDUAL INVENTORY FORM**

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Photo 19) Black Heritage Trail marker, facing southwest



Photo 20) Burying ground, facing south-southwest

**INDIVIDUAL INVENTORY FORM**

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Photo 21) Burying ground, facing east-southeast



Photo 22) Burying ground, facing west

**INDIVIDUAL INVENTORY FORM**

**NHDHR INVENTORY POR0192**



Photo 23) Photo showing relationship of Grid 2 to rectory and church buildings, facing west (Heritage Consultants 2024)



Photo 24) Photo showing relationship of cemetery to the rectory building and church; flag marks approximate location of Grid 4 from archeology report, facing northwest (Heritage Consultants 2024)