United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form.* If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions.

1. Name of Property

Historic name: The Dunes Club

Other names/site number: _____

Name of related multiple property listing**:**

NA _____

(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing

2. Location

Street & number: 137 Boston Neck Road

City or town: Narragansett State: Rhode Island County: Washington

Not For Publication: ☐ Vicinity: ☐

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,

I hereby certify that this x nomination ___ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.

In my opinion, the property x meets ___ does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:

___national **___statewide** **x local**

Applicable National Register Criteria:

x A **___B** **x C** **___D**

Signature of certifying official/Title: **Date**

RI Historical Preservation & Heritage Commission

State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

In my opinion, the property ___ meets ___ does not meet the National Register criteria.

Signature of commenting official: **Date**

Title : **State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government**

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

___ entered in the National Register

___ determined eligible for the National Register

___ determined not eligible for the National Register

___ removed from the National Register

___ other (explain:) _____

Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

5. Classification

Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply.)

Private: [X]

Public – Local [ ]

Public – State [ ]

Public – Federal [ ]

Category of Property

(Check only **one** box.)

Building(s) [X]

District [ ]

Site [ ]

Structure [ ]

Object [ ]

Number of Resources within Property
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
5	4	buildings
		sites
1	3	structures
		objects
6	7	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

6. Function or Use
Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions.)
SOCIAL: clubhouse
RECREATION AND CULTURE: sports facility
DOMESTIC: institutional housing

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions.)
SOCIAL: clubhouse
RECREATION AND CULTURE: sports facility
DOMESTIC: institutional housing

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions.)
LATE 19th AND EARLY 20th CENTURY REVIVALS: Mediterranean Revival, Colonial Revival
MODERN MOVEMENT: Art Moderne

Materials: (enter categories from instructions.)
Principal exterior materials of the property: Wood, stone, stucco, asphalt, brick

Narrative Description
(Describe the historic and current physical appearance and condition of the property. Describe contributing and noncontributing resources if applicable. Begin with **a summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, type, style, method of construction, setting, size, and significant features. Indicate whether the property has historic integrity.)

Summary Paragraph

The Dunes Club is a complex of recreational buildings occupying 32 acres on a spit of land fronting the Atlantic Ocean, with the entrance to the Pettaquamscutt River (also known as the Narrow River) immediately to the east. The complex faces south toward the sea and is arranged on a roughly east/west axis at approximately 14 feet above sea level. The Dunes Club is located in a residential part of Narragansett, about a mile north of the town center. Large seasonal homes, most dating to the early 20th century, are located to the north and west.

The Dunes Club's primary buildings are connected by an extensive wood deck and terrace system arranged linearly along a stretch of beach and sand dunes. The most significant component of the complex is the clubhouse (1939), a rambling 1½-story building with a massive cross-gable roof accented by a large lantern cupola. The wood-frame building is sheathed in weathered, gray-stained, vertical cedar siding. The clubhouse was designed by the architect Thomas Pym Cope of Philadelphia and, while its overall form reflects the Colonial Revival style, its minimal, stylized ornamentation shows the influence of the Art Moderne movement.

Immediately to the east of the clubhouse, arranged on a connecting and continuous wood deck, is a swimming pool (1928) and a series of wood-frame, 1-story, flat-roofed, enclosed bathhouses (1939) that are separated by narrow aisles. To the east of the bathhouses, shielded from the sea by high dunes, are three U-shaped sets of wood-frame, 1-story, flat-roofed, open-sided cabanas (1939, 1955). To the north of the clubhouse, behind vegetative screening, is a wood-frame, 1-story, gable-roofed staff housing complex (1939, 1993), comprised of four connected buildings clustered around an open courtyard. The bathhouses, cabana circles and staff housing are all part of Cope's design for the complex. A hipped-roof, stucco, turreted gatehouse (1928) is located at the west end of the property, at the entrance from Boston Neck Road. The gatehouse is the only building that survives from the original Dunes Club, which was largely destroyed by the Hurricane of 1938. It was designed by the architect Kenneth Murchison of New York in the Mediterranean Revival style. All of these buildings, in addition to the clubhouse, are contributing resources.

The Dunes Club property also includes a large parking lot to the north of the Clubhouse, a small guard house (ca. 1965) to the east of the gatehouse, and two asphalt tennis courts, to the north and east of the cabanas, with an associated pro shop and shed (mid-1960s). A 1-story, hip-roofed house (1968) is located to the east of the cabanas, at the mouth of the Narrow River. These are all non-contributing resources.

Alterations to the Dunes Club complex include the expansion of the clubhouse to the west, with an architecturally compatible, gable-roofed office wing, and to the east, with an expanded food service wing. The core of the original building, however, in terms of its spatial configuration, materials and finishes, remains remarkably intact. In addition, the bathhouses and cabanas have been partially reconstructed following storm damage caused by major hurricanes, including those in 1944, 1954 and 1960, but were rebuilt to their original form and configuration. In 1993, the staff housing complex was expanded from three buildings to four. Overall, the Dunes Club complex, as well as its individual components, retains a high level of integrity in terms of location, setting, design, materials, workmanship, feeling and association.

Narrative Description

Clubhouse (1939)

The clubhouse, the principal building of the Dunes Club complex, is a 300-foot long, 1½ -story, wood-frame building constructed in 1939 and designed by the Philadelphia architect Thomas Pym Cope. Its exterior walls are clad in vertical cedar siding, stained gray and weathered, and its gable roof is sheathed in asphalt shingles. The clubhouse has a rectangular-plan, east-west main block intersected by a hipped-roof, north-south block that presents a 1-story entry portico on the north elevation and a 2-story portico on the south-facing, ocean-side elevation. An oversized lantern cupola with multi-paned glazing and a large, copper weather vane with a

seahorse motif is located on the ridge of the roof, where the two blocks intersect. The building exhibits extensive glazing on the south elevation, taking advantage of ocean views and breezes.

The clubhouse's low, gabled form reflects New England vernacular traditions and the building may broadly be considered Colonial Revival in style, though many details are Art Moderne in character. The plain, yet boldly scaled wood-faced piers that support the front and seaside porticos form stylized elements with a classical overture. Panels beneath the window openings on the north elevation include wood siding arranged in a chevron pattern. Perhaps most notable is the use of a stylized wave motif at the north-facing entry portico, in a frieze – now painted white, but originally polychrome – over the entrance and in a narrow band, in natural wood finishes, that wraps around the portico.

The interior of the clubhouse contains space for socializing and dining, as well as support functions, like a large kitchen and staff offices. Interior finishes are almost entirely wood – rough vertical or horizontal boarding and exposed, heavy-timber framing, pickled or stained to allow the grain to be visible. This not only harmonizes with the barn-like, exterior character of the building but is also a practical choice for a stormy, seaside location where plaster would be susceptible to moisture. Cope specified nautical and seaside themes for decorative elements throughout the building; these include wood trim fashioned to resemble rope and decorative panels featuring dolphins and shells.

The entry portico leads through a small lobby to an impressive room known as the loggia, which provides a reception and gathering space. The room soars to a height of two stories and features a cross-beamed, wood ceiling supported by massive, square-cut, oak posts and beams. Here a massive granite block and brick fireplace with exposed brick chimney breast conveys a sense of understated style; it is both dramatic and grand and also sheltering on a stormy day. Cope outlined in a prospectus on the new clubhouse sent to the membership that there would be "occasional ornament in bold relief with gold and other coloring done with the weather-beaten look of old ships' figureheads." In keeping with the general nature of Cope's vision, a striking ship's figurehead has been mounted over the fireplace in the loggia.[1]

A screen of wood and glass French doors leads directly from the loggia to the south-facing, two-story rotunda. This was originally an indoor-outdoor space open to the elements on the ocean side, but its south elevation is now glazed with massive triple-hung windows, which can be opened to provide the outdoor effect. From these spaces one can enter the bar and its enclosed porch to the east or the 100 ft.-long dining room to the west, with its banks of multi-paned windows that open onto the ocean. The original simple wood dining room chairs and

[1] The Dunes Club Archives, The Dunes Club, Narragansett, RI. Historical photos of 1928 and 1939 clubhouses; Purves, Cope and Stewart blueprints, specifications, and published renderings and promotional materials for the 1939 clubhouse; minute books of The Dunes Club board meetings, 1928 to present.

serving tables are still in use. A large kitchen is located immediately behind (north of) the dining room.

A barrel-vaulted, east-west corridor running parallel to and north of the kitchen terminates in an octagonal hall at its west end. Off this hall is a suite of special-purpose rooms of great charm – the club room and the card room. The club room, with high vaulted ceilings with wood trusses, a granite-block-and-brick chimney, and bay windows, features French doors leading to an ocean-side deck. The card room features wood-paneled walls, a beamed ceiling with wide crown moldings, and French doors leading to a southeast-facing, ocean-side deck. It is primarily used as a small reception room and for the playing of card games. The club room and card room have a connecting door and are also accessible from the dining room.

Gatehouse (1928)
This small, 2½ -story, hipped-roof, stucco-clad, wood-frame building with a round conical tower is located at the Boston Neck Road entrance to the Dunes Club property. Designed by Kenneth Murchison in the Mediterranean Revival style, the gatehouse is the only surviving structure from the original Dunes Club complex, built in 1928 and largely destroyed by the hurricane of 1938. The building was restored in 2001 to its 1928 appearance and is currently used as a residence for the Club's executive staff.

Swimming Pool (1928)
A roughly 25 feet by 75 feet, rectangular swimming pool is located immediately to the east of the clubhouse, set into a wood deck that connects the pool area to the clubhouse. The pool was constructed in 1928, survived the Hurricane of 1938 and was incorporated into the 1939 Dunes Club design. Originally filled with saltwater, in the 1980s the pool was converted to fresh water and the concrete surface was lined with gunite and a tile border was added. The dimensions of the pool remain as originally built.

Bathhouses (1939)
Part of Thomas Pym Cope's design for the Dunes Club, the bathhouses are located to the east of the pool and connected via wood decking to the clubhouse. The bathhouses are comprised of five simple, utilitarian, wood-frame, 1-story, flat-roof buildings arranged on a north-south axis and parallel to one another. The bathhouses contain enclosed changing rooms.

Cabana Circles (1939, 1955)
Originally constructed in 1939 as part of Thomas Pym Cope's design for the Dunes Club, the cabana circles are 1-story, wood-frame, flat-roofed structures with a U-shaped plan facing the ocean. There are currently three cabana circles, each of which contains approximately 15 cabanas. Each cabana consists of a changing room, a small lounge area, and a deck. The cabana circles are connected to each other and to the clubhouse by the deck system. The spatial arrangement and form of the cabana circles date to the original 1928 Dunes Club design by Kenneth Murchison, which included three cabana circles. The original cabana circles were

destroyed in the 1938 Hurricane and rebuilt with vertical cedar siding in 1939, to designs by architect Thomas Pym Cope. A smaller, fourth cabana circle was added at this time. Three cabana circles were rebuilt again, in a simplified form, in 1955, after suffering damage in Hurricane Carol in the fall of 1954; the smaller, fourth cabana circle was not rebuilt. Two cabanas in the first cabana circle were rebuilt in-kind in 2013, following damage caused by Hurricane Sandy.

Staff Housing (1939, 1993)

The staff housing, part of Thomas Pym Cope's design for the Dunes Club, is comprised of four connected, 1-story, gable-roofed, wood-frame buildings with vertical board sheathing. The buildings are clustered around a small, square, central courtyard, and set upon a deck. The original staff housing dates to 1939 and consists of the three buildings on the west, north and south side of the courtyard; the complex was enlarged in 1993 with the construction of the fourth building, on the east side of the courtyard.

The Dunes Club property also includes several non-contributing resources that have been significantly altered or that fall outside of the period of significance (1928-1955), described below.

Bulkhead (1939; NC)

An approximately 350 feet-long bulkhead (i.e., seawall) is located to the south of the clubhouse. Designed to hold back storm surges and to serve as a retaining wall, the bulkhead creates a terrace upon which the clubhouse sits. The steel-sheet bulkhead was designed by Colonel Earl Ivan Brown of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and was built immediately after the Hurricane of 1938. Damaged by Hurricane Bob in 1991, the ocean-side face of the bulkhead was sheathed in concrete soon after. Concrete footings and a concrete cap were also constructed at this time. The original steel material, though still present, is no longer visible.

Guard House (ca. 1965; NC)

The guard house is a small, 1x2 bay, 1-story, wood-frame, gable-roofed building near the gatehouse that is used as shelter for the gate guards. A swing-arm gate is nearby to regulate traffic into the club complex.

Tennis Courts, Pro-shop Building, Shed (mid-1960s; NC)

Hard-surface tennis courts were built in two locations, to the north and northwest of the cabana circles, in the early- to mid-1960s together with a small, 1-story, gable-roof, wood-frame building used for the pro-shop and refreshments. A small, gable-roof storage shed stands nearby.

Arthur Little House (1968; NC)

The Arthur Little House is 1-story, wood-frame, wood-shingled residence topped with a low-pitched, hipped roof. It was built in 1968 on the eastern edge of the Dunes Club property, on a

dune above the entrance to the Narrow River. The south-facing house, which was designed by prominent Rhode Island architect Rockwell King DuMoulin (1906-1983), has a “dumbbell”-shaped plan, with two wings linked by a central hyphen. The hyphen, which houses an entry stair hall and kitchen, has glass doors on its southern elevation, leading to a wood deck facing the ocean. The northern wing houses a living room and dining room separated by a large chimney stack with a fireplace on either side. The larger southern wing houses three bedrooms, each with its own bath. Garages and additional bedrooms are located in the basement level, which is built into the dunes.

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria
(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

[x] A. Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.

[ ] B. Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.

[x] C. property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.

[ ] D. Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations
(Mark “x” in all the boxes that apply.)

[ ] A. Owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes

[ ] B. Removed from its original location

[ ] C. A birthplace or grave

[ ] D. cemetery

[ ] E. A reconstructed building, object, or structure

[ ] F. A commemorative property

[ ] G. Less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years

Areas of Significance
(Enter categories from instructions.)
ENTERTAINMENT/RECREATION
ARCHITECTURE

Period of Significance
1928 -1955

Significant Dates
1928, 1938, 1939, 1954, 1955

Significant Person
(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

Cultural Affiliation

Architect/Builder

Kenneth MacKenzie Murchison
Thomas Pym Cope

Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph (Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance, applicable criteria, justification for the period of significance, and any applicable criteria considerations.)

The Dunes Club, an excellent example of the private American beach club facility of the early- to mid-20th century, is significant at the local level under Criterion A in the area of entertainment/recreation for its capacity to illustrate the history of Narragansett, Rhode Island

as a resort community. The Dunes Club was founded in the late 1920s, at which point recreational activities for the wealthy in Narragansett – as at other resort locations in the United States – had shifted away from resort hotels and toward summer colonies comprised of private residences. Membership-only clubs were established in many American resort communities in the early 1900s, providing facilities for summer residents to socialize; the Dunes Club was founded primarily by families from New York and Philadelphia who summered in Narragansett.

The Dunes Club is also significant at the local level under Criterion C in the area of architecture. It is a highly intact complex consisting of a clubhouse (1939), bathhouses (1939), cabanas (1939, 1955), staff housing (1939, 1993) and a gatehouse (1928), fronting the Atlantic Ocean. The complex's primary building is the clubhouse, designed by Thomas Pym Cope of Philadelphia. The clubhouse is broadly Colonial Revival in style, with a low-slung, gable-roof form and natural materials that reflect the New England vernacular. It represents a dramatic shift away from its predecessor, a Mediterranean Revival-style clubhouse built on the same site in 1928 that was destroyed by the Hurricane of 1938. (The gatehouse, which still stands at the west end of the property, and the pool are the only surviving structures from this earlier complex.) The clubhouse also incorporates stylized ornamentation and stripped-down architectural elements reflective of the Art Moderne style. Its design embodies a national trend toward a newly refined and modern American architectural classicism growing out of the Great Depression and influenced by the federal WPA programs.

Period of Significance Justification

The period of significance begins in 1928, when the gatehouse was constructed as part of the original Dunes Club complex, and extends to 1955, when the cabanas were rebuilt to their original design after suffering extensive damage from Hurricane Carol the previous year. The period of significance encompasses the design and construction of the clubhouse, the bathhouses, the original cabanas and the staff housing complex, all built in 1939, in addition to the earlier gatehouse.

Narrative Statement of Significance (Provide at least **one** paragraph for each area of significance.)

Resorts, leisure time, summer vacations, enjoying the beach – these ideas are creatures of post-Civil War America and late-19th-century Britain and Europe, when industrialization and urbanization created wealth, expendable income, and the desire to escape on hot summer days to more healthy, cooling, natural surroundings free of pollution and stress. In the American Northeast, notable destinations for summer vacations included Saratoga Springs as well as the Catskill and Adirondack mountains and lakes of New York State; the White Mountains of Vermont and New Hampshire; the Berkshires of Massachusetts; and the Atlantic seaside from New Jersey to Maine, including Rhode Island.

At first the resort hotel – typically a large building with room for many visitors, and which also included common facilities like verandas and dining rooms – provided accommodations for visitors to the seashore, the mountains, and the health spa. By the turn of the 20th century, however, the resort hotels were perceived by wealthier vacationers as too pluralistic, too democratic, and, with concern for sanitary conditions increasing, unhealthy. Large wooden hotels were also prone to life-threatening fires. When land became available, building lots were subdivided and clusters of summer cottages were designed and built.[2]

Summer cottages offered greater privacy and seclusion, but lacked the social spaces of the resort hotels. Consequently, private clubs for summer residents were established at resort communities along the eastern seaboard in the early- to mid-20th century, providing members with exclusive spaces for dining, drinking and socializing. Clubs in seaside communities also offered private access to the beach at a time when salt water bathing was becoming increasingly popular and beaches were becoming accessible to day-trippers traveling by automobile. Amenities such as changing rooms, showers and, sometimes, a pool allowed members to recreate at the beach away from the crowds.

Like many seaside communities in Rhode Island, Narragansett's development as a resort destination followed this familiar pattern. Visitors, generally arriving by train, initially stayed at resort hotels; ten such hotels were constructed in Narragansett between 1866 and 1871. In the late 19th century, private summer homes were being constructed in Narragansett, supplanting the resort hotels. Construction of summer cottages on Central Street and Ocean Road, for example, got underway in the 1880s. The fire of 1900, which destroyed the Rockingham Hotel (ca. 1870), several business blocks, and much of the Narragansett Casino (McKim, Mead & White, 1883-1886), a sprawling facility that housed a restaurant and various recreational activities, also contributed to the hotels' demise. Finally, with the rise of the automobile in the early 20th century, the role of the hotels was further diminished, with increasing numbers of day-trippers who did not require overnight accommodations.[3]

The loss of the Casino, which was the center of social life for the New York and Philadelphia families who summered in Narragansett, spurred the founding of the Dunes Club. Members of the old Casino initially sought social opportunities at the nearby Hotel Carleton (not extant), but found it insufficiently exclusive. A former Casino member donated a large, oceanfront parcel about a mile north of the Casino, off Boston Neck Road, and in 1928 shares of stock were sold to finance the construction of a new facility. The Dunes Club opened in June of 1929. In

[2] Jon Sternglass, *First Resorts: Pursuing Pleasure at Saratoga Springs, Newport & Coney Island* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2001).
[3] Rhode Island Historical Preservation Commission, *Narragansett Pier, Narragansett, Rhode Island: Statewide Historical Preservation Report W-N-1* (Providence, RI: Rhode Island Historical Preservation Commission, 1978):7-18.

addition to a clubhouse, the Dunes Club included three U-shaped sets of cabanas to the north of the clubhouse, facing the ocean, as well as more communal dressing facilities at the club and a saltwater swimming pool.[4]

The 1928-29 Dunes Club complex was the work of the New York architect Kenneth M. Murchison (1872-1938), a Dunes Club member, who freely combined elements of Norman and Spanish architecture into the eclectic design. Stuccoed walls, veneer brick in-lays, small wooden balconies, faux half-timbering, open eating porches, topped with a variety roof forms, all contributed to a fanciful, stage-set character.[5] Though seemingly out of place in coastal Rhode Island, which was more in tune with the gray texture of the Shingle Style, Murchison's Dunes Club was in keeping with the prevailing design idiom of other beach clubs of the period, including examples in Florida and California. The Bath and Tennis Club and Everglades Club, both in Palm Beach, Florida, incorporated Spanish, Mexican, Moorish, and Renaissance-influenced elements. Clubs in California, like the Bel Air Bay Club in Santa Monica, the San Clemente Beach Club, and the Capistrano Beach Club, followed suit. Murchison himself completed another, similarly eclectic design for the Sands Point Bath Club at East Egg on Long Island.[6]

Such gaiety as the first Dunes Club expressed was not universally admired in staid New England. Indeed, the club was called "pretentious" by *Country Life* magazine in 1931.[7] The Hurricane of September 21, 1938, which wreaked havoc on the Rhode Island coast, destroyed nearly the entire Dunes Club complex. It also provided an opportunity to rebuild in a style more in keeping with the New England vernacular, and more aligned with other clubs of the 1930s. Newport's venerable Spouting Rock Beach Association clubhouse at Bailey's Beach was rebuilt in a conservative Colonial Revival theme following the 1938 Hurricane. The Clambake Club in Middletown, Rhode Island was executed as a low, shingled barn with exposed rafters, wood-sheathed walls, and stone fireplaces in 1939.[8] The Bar Harbor Club on Mt. Desert Island is another club of the same period that is more New England than Floridian in character, while clubs like the Piping Rock Club in Locust Valley, Long Island likewise employed more proper and subdued Colonial Revival and Shingle Style themes.

After the Hurricane of 1938, only the Dunes Club gatehouse, swimming pool and an adjacent laundry building survived, and the Dunes Club Board resolved to rebuild. Colonel Earl Ivan Brown (U.S. Army Corps of Engineers), a noted civil engineer and an authority on coastal wave

[4] William H. Jordy with Christopher Monkhouse, *Buildings on Paper: Rhode Island Architectural Drawings 1825-1945* (Providence, RI: Brown University, 1982):129.
[5] Jordy, *Buildings on Paper*:129; William H. Jordy with Ronald J. Onorato and William McKenzie Woodward, contributing editors, *Buildings of Rhode Island* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2004).
[6] R.W. Sexton, "The Beach Club Achieves Popularity," *Country Life*, July 1931.
[7] R.W. Sexton, "The Beach Club Achieves Popularity," *Country Life*, July 1931.
[8] Martha Werenfels, *National Register of Historic Places Registration Form for the Clambake Club of Newport, Middletown, RI*, 1995.

and erosion issues, was hired to design a steel sheet bulkhead (sheathed in concrete in the 1990s) to protect the site.[9] In the fall of 1938, at the suggestion of Board member Rush Sturges, a juried competition, sanctioned by the American Institute of Architects (AIA), was held to select an architect to design a new clubhouse. The three-person jury was headed by Helen Metcalf Danforth, the President of the Rhode Island School of Design (1931-1947), and also included William Davis Miller, a scholar of local history, and J. Banigan Sullivan. They were assisted by a paid architectural advisor, F. Ellis Jackson, who was also associated with the Rhode Island School of Design.

Four architectural firms were invited to submit designs: Kenneth M. Murchison of New York, Albert Harkness of Providence, Alexander Douglas Knox of LaFarge & Knox of New York, and Thomas Pym Cope of Purves, Cope & Stewart of Philadelphia. All were connected either to the Dunes Club or to one of Rhode Island's other summer enclaves. Murchison, who had designed the first Dunes Club, was a club member. Harkness was a close friend of jury member William Davis Miller.[10] Knox's partner, Grant LaFarge, was part of the summer colony in nearby Saunderstown. Cope's mother also had a summer home in Saunderstown and, being from Philadelphia, Cope undoubtedly knew families who summered in Narragansett. In addition, in 1933 Cope had designed Shepherd's Run (now The Prout School), a sprawling stone mansion, for Dunes Club Board member Rush Sturges in Wakefield, Rhode Island. Cope's sister, Anne, was married to Thomas Pierrepont Hazard of Peace Dale, Rhode Island, who was President of the Dunes Club Board at the time of the competition.[11]

The design competition was "blind" – that is, the jury was not told which architects submitted which plans, and hence was able to choose the design based upon suitability and quality only, not the reputation of the architect or firm involved. The jury reviewed the design submissions on December 3, 1938, selecting as its first choice Cope's design; that of Knox was second. The committee did not express a third or fourth preference.[12] Within two weeks Murchison was dead from a sudden heart attack in New York City.

In selecting Cope's design, the jury chose to rebuild the Dunes Club in a style that more closely followed the New England architectural vernacular. This new clubhouse would harmonize with its rocky shore and sandy beach location and the Shingle Style and Colonial Revival-style summer homes of its members. Unlike Murchison's design – a sort of fantasy stage set with whimsical details that connoted a measure of impermanence – the new clubhouse would be a more solid, durable, weathered building, stylistically at home with the colonial barns and summer cottages of Rhode Island. The new design was also more in tune with the conservative taste of post-Depression austerity. It could be built quickly of local pine and oak felled by the

[9] The Dunes Club Archives, The Dunes Club, Narragansett, RI.
[10] Interview with Judith Harkness Taft, Summer 2014.
[11] Thomas P. and Anne F. (Cope) Hazard Papers, 1893-1979, Manuscript Division, Rhode Island Historical Society Library, Providence, RI.
[12] The Dunes Club Archives, The Dunes Club, Narragansett, RI.

recent hurricane (known as "hurricane pine"), and for comparatively little money. The new facilities were built within six months at a cost of approximately $125,000 in 1939 dollars; in contrast, the Murchison-designed clubhouse had cost $250,000 in 1928.[13]

Cope's design for the Dunes Club hewed to that of Murchison in terms of its siting and its program: the new complex included a large clubhouse, bathhouses, staff housing, four cabana circles (previously, there were three), and incorporated the swimming pool and gatehouse that had survived the 1938 Hurricane.[14] It was vastly different from Murchison's, however, in terms of style. A low, solid building constructed of heavy timber, Cope's clubhouse was subdued and restrained where Murchison's had been whimsical. Cope's goal was to create "a building which would look thoroughly at home along the Rhode Island shore line, and which, through a certain freshness of character, would attain a distinguished appearance."[15] To that end, he employed the New England vernacular, with a barn-like form, a cross-gable roof with a cupola, and weathered exterior wood siding. Stylized, Art Moderne-inspired details, many with a nautical theme, were used sparingly but effectively. Wood siding was laid in a chevron pattern beneath the windows and at the cupola, which is topped by a seahorse weathervane. A wave motif – originally polychrome, now painted white – graces the north portico. In the entrance vestibule, wood trim is carved to look like rope and dolphins are incorporated into decorative wood panels. The plan of the clubhouse, with expansive wood decks and extensive glazing, was designed to take advantage of views to the ocean.

Created in the aftermath of the 1938 Hurricane, Cope's design addressed the everyday environmental conditions of a seaside site as well as the threat of future storms. Almost all the interior surfaces, including interior walls as well as many ceilings, are wood rather than plaster and thus less likely to retain moisture or exhibit water damage. At the south portico, Cope designed the ocean-facing wall with large, unglazed openings (since filled with triple-hung sash); this created a strong connection between the indoors and outdoors, and also may have been intended to protect the building by allowing a storm surge to wash through.

The clubhouse has been altered only minimally since its original construction. The deck off the bar was enclosed and roofed in 1984, but the original exterior wall was preserved as an interior feature. The deck was restored after being damaged by Hurricanes Bob (1991) and Sandy (2012). The dining room received new window sash within the same openings and in the same multi-pane configuration (although not in casement form as the originals) in 1999. Sash in others parts of the building were replaced at the same time. The original red cedar-shingled

[13] The Dunes Club Archives, The Dunes Club, Narragansett, RI.
[14] Some remnants of the original 1928 clubhouse remain at the basement level, such as the original tower base and some interior foundation walls and piers under the dining room. The original laundry building also survived, at least in part, and was incorporated into the east wing of the new clubhouse.
[15] "Winner of Competition Held Under AIA," *Building News*, March 1940.

roof is now asphalt. The east end of the clubhouse, which housed a snack bar, was enlarged and renovated in 2003. At the west end, the card room was expanded to the south in 2007. The extension retained the original character of the room and its southern exposure of doors, but the wood-paneled walls, originally naturally-finished, were painted. Also in 2007 a small 2-story wing was added to the west end of the building at a southwest angle to the main structure, increasing service garage and staff office space. This addition carries a gable roof to connect architecturally with the clubhouse.[16] The historic core of the clubhouse, however, is intact.

Other contributing resources have also experienced minor alterations. The staff housing complex was expanded in 1993, with the construction of a fourth building that enclosed the courtyard on the east, though the three original buildings remain. The bathhouses and cabana circles have been repaired and reconstructed after hurricane damage; most notably, the cabana circles were rebuilt in 1955, to their original form but to a slightly simpler design.

A few new structures were built at the Dunes Club property in the 1960s, but they do not impede on Cope's 1939 site plan. In the mid-1960s, two tennis courts (NC) were added to the north and northwest of the cabana circles, and in 1968 the Arthur Little House (NC) was built at the far eastern end of the property. Commissioned by Royal Little, a member of the Dunes Club board, for his son, the house was designed by Rockwell King DuMoulin (1906-1983), a noted Rhode Island architect. After training at Columbia's School of Architecture in the 1930s, DuMoulin established a specialization in seasonal houses and beach facilities, with a particular facility for Modernist design.[17] In keeping with many of his other commissions, DuMoulin's design for the Little House exhibits a strong horizontality and natural materials, so that the building harmonizes with its setting.

The Dunes Club complex as a whole, as well as individual resources within it, retains a high level of integrity. Seventy-five years after its construction, the Dunes Club continues to illustrate the history of Narragansett as a resort community and remains an excellent example of early-20th-century beach club architecture.

Thomas Pym Cope (1897-1977)

Thomas Pym Cope was the son of noted Philadelphia architect Walter Cope, known for his academic buildings at Princeton University, Bryn Mawr College, the University of Pennsylvania, and Washington University in St. Louis. Thomas Pym Cope was educated at Middlesex School and the University of Pennsylvania, and trained in the St. Louis office of Thomas G. Holyoke from 1916 to 1917. From 1918 to ca. 1920, during World War I, Cope served with the Society of Friends' Reconstruction Unit in France. He joined his deceased father's firm, Stewardson & Page, in 1923 and stayed until 1927. From 1929 to 1930 he worked with the firm of Charles

[16] Interview with Stephen Sterling, The Dunes Club General Manager, Narragansett, RI, Spring and Summer, 2014.
[17] Jordy, *Buildings of Rhode Island; R.R. Bowker, American Architects Directory, Third Ed*. (R.R. Bowker, LLC, 1970).

Adams Platt. Cope worked independently in Philadelphia from 1931 to 1937, at which point he formed a partnership with Edmund Purves and Harry Gordon Stewart, creating the firm Purves, Cope & Stewart. The partnership continued until 1943, when all three men became involved in the war effort. Cope served with the United Nations War Relief and Rehabilitation Association in Europe, North Africa, and Asia until 1947, when he returned to private architectural practice in Philadelphia. In the 1950s he worked with Childs & Smith in Chicago, later joining the prestigious Boston firm of Shepley, Bulfinch, Richardson & Abbott (the successors to Henry Hobson Richardson). As of the early 1960s, he was again in private practice in Lincoln, Massachusetts. Cope was a part-time design critic at the Rhode Island School of Design in Providence between 1962 and 1964.[18]

Possibly due to his Quaker roots, which tied him to Philadelphia's early historical development, Cope exhibited a strong interest in historic preservation. Cope's ancestor and namesake Thomas Pym Cope (1768-1854) was a leading member of Philadelphia's merchant aristocracy who made a fortune in the China Trade. Awbury (now the Awbury Historic District and Awbury Arboretum), the Cope family compound, was established in Germantown by Henry Cope (1793-1865), the architect's great grandfather. Cliveden, the finely executed Georgian home of the Chews, is nearby; Cope undertook renovation work on a service wing at Cliveden in 1931. Cope was active in historic preservation work in Philadelphia from the late 1920s until World War II, chairing the Philadelphia AIA chapter's Committee on the Preservation of Historic Monuments, supervising WPA restoration projects, and working on Independence Hall.[19]

Cope's background suggests a deep knowledge of the New England vernacular and the seaside Shingle style. As a child, following his father's sudden death in 1902, Cope likely spent summer vacations at his mother's cottage in Saunderstown, Rhode Island. Known as "Crowfield," the home was designed in 1906 by architect James Jamieson, who had worked with Walter Cope at his firm, Cope and Stewardson. Nearby is the large, barn-like, shingled, Colonial Revival-style summer cottage of Owen Wister, Philadelphian and author of *The Virginian.* Built between 1905 and 1910, the home was designed by architect Christopher Grant LaFarge, son of the famous artist and stained glass designer John LaFarge.[20]

In addition to the Dunes Club, Cope's local work includes Shepherd's Run (now The Prout School founded by the Sisters of the Cross and Passion) in Wakefield, a sprawling stone mansion based upon the Norman farmhouse type, designed for Rush Sturges in 1933. Cope also

[18] Thomas Pym Cope and Purves, Cope & Stewart in *American Architects and Buildings* database, at www.americanbuildings.org.
[19] "Awbury Historic District," at www.livingplaces.com; Nancy E. Richards, "Cliveden: The Chew Mansion in Germantown," December 1993, at www.cliveden.org; Thomas Pym Cope in *American Architects and Buildings* database, at www.americanbuildings.org.
[20] Thomas Pym Cope in *American Architects and Buildings* database, at www.americanbuildings.org; Charlene Roise, *National Register of Historic Places Registration Form for the Historic Resources of North Kingstown, Rhode Island*, 1985.

likely designed the renovations to the early-19th-century Hazard family houses known as The Homestead and Stepping Stones in Peace Dale in 1927, which were owned by his sister, Anne, and brother-in-law Thomas Pierrepont Hazard.[21] In 1969, Cope designed renovations and additions for the historic mid-19th-century George E. Rose, Jr. House, garden, and barns on Rose Hill Road and Route 138, for Alexander J. Dimeo.[22] All of the local renovation commissions concerned historic properties and their sensitive adaptation for modern life in a restrained and tasteful Colonial Revival mode.

Kenneth MacKenzie Murchison (1872-1938)

Kenneth MacKenzie Murchison graduated from Columbia University in 1894 and the École des Beaux-Arts in 1900. He is known for his designs of railway stations for the Pennsylvania Railroad, including the Pennsylvania Station in Baltimore, Maryland (1911), and for the Lackawanna Railroad. He designed the Delaware Lackawanna & Western Terminals in Hoboken, New Jersey and Buffalo, New York (ca. 1906), as well as the Havana Central railway station in Havana, Cuba (1912). In addition, Murchison is known for his apartment houses in the New York City area. Examples of his recreational clubhouses include the Sands Point Bath Club in East Egg, Long Island and the West Side Tennis Club in Forest Hills, New York, as well as the original Dunes Club (1928), of which only the gatehouse remains. Murchison also designed several stuccoed summer residences in Narragansett, Rhode Island, adjacent to the Dunes Club property, of which several survive.[23]

[21] Thomas P. and Anne F. (Cope) Hazard Papers, 1893-1979, Manuscript Division, Rhode Island Historical Society Library, Providence, RI.
[22] Thomas Pym Cope in *American Architects and Buildings* database, at www.americanbuildings.org.
[23] Jordy, *Buildings On Paper*:225; Kenneth MacKenzie Murchison, at www.wikipedia.org.

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Previous documentation on file (NPS):

____ preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
____ previously listed in the National Register
____previously determined eligible by the National Register
____designated a National Historic Landmark
____ recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey #_____
____recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____
____ recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # _____

Primary location of additional data:

____ State Historic Preservation Office
____ Other State agency
____ Federal agency
____ Local government
____ University
__x_ Other
Name of repository: The Dunes Club Archives, The Dunes Club, Narragansett, RI

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): _____

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 32 acres

Use either the UTM system or latitude/longitude coordinates

Latitude/Longitude Coordinates (decimal degrees)
Datum if other than WGS84:_____
(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

1. Latitude: 41.439382 Longitude: -71.451063
2. Latitude: 41.440400 Longitude: -71.449258
3. Latitude: 41.441219 Longitude: -71.448993
4. Latitude: 41.442329 Longitude: -71.446278
5. Latitude: 41.442120 Longitude: -71.443163
6. Latitude: 41.441745 Longitude: -71.442870
7. Latitude: 41.439088 Longitude: -71.449015

Or

UTM References
Datum (indicated on USGS map):

☐ NAD 1927 or ☐ NAD 1983

1. Zone: Easting: Northing:
2. Zone: Easting: Northing:
3. Zone: Easting: Northing:
4. Zone: Easting: Northing:

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property.)

The nominated property encompasses just over 32 acres and is contiguous with Narragansett Assessor's Map A, Lot 33.

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The boundaries of the nominated property contain the entirety of the original lot acquired by Dunes Club in 1928 and which continues to be owned by the Dunes Club. The boundaries encompass all of the historic resources associated with the Dunes Club – the clubhouse, the gatehouse, the bathhouses, the cabana circles and the staff housing.

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11. Form Prepared By

name/title: Richard C. Youngken
organization: Youngken Associates
street & number: P.O. Box 326
city or town: Peace Dale state: RI zip code: 02879
e-mail: Youngken.Associates@yahoo.com
telephone: 401-789-6237
date: March 17, 2015

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:** A **USGS map** or equivalent (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
- **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO, TPO, or FPO for any additional items.)

Photographs

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels (minimum), 3000x2000 preferred, at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map. Each photograph must be numbered and that number must correspond to the photograph number on the photo log. For simplicity, the name of the photographer, photo date, etc. may be listed once on the photograph log and doesn't need to be labeled on every photograph.

Photo Log

Name of Property: The Dunes Club
City or Vicinity: Narragansett County: Washington State: Rhode Island
Photographer: Deborah Stallwood (photos 1-7, 9-19); Richard Youngken (photos 8, 20-21)
Date Photographed: May and June, 2014

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera:

1 of 21 View of clubhouse, looking northwest.

2 of 21 View of clubhouse, looking east.

3 of 21 View of clubhouse, looking northeast.

4 of 21 View of beach and cabana circles from clubhouse, looking northeast.

5 of 21 View of clubhouse and cabana circles, looking west.

6 of 21 View of cabana circles, looking south.

7 of 21 View of clubhouse, north entrance portico, looking south.

8 of 21 View of clubhouse, north entrance portico, looking southeast.

9 of 21 View of clubhouse interior, lobby, looking northwest.

10 of 21 View of clubhouse interior, loggia, looking west.

11 of 21 View of clubhouse interior, loggia, looking south toward the oceanside portico.

12 of 21 View of clubhouse interior, oceanside portico, looking south.

13 of 21 View of clubhouse interior, barroom, looking west.

14 of 21 View of clubhouse interior, dining room, looking west.

15 of 21 View of clubhouse interior, club room, looking west from octagon hall.

16 of 21 View of clubhouse interior, club room, looking north.

17 of 21 View of clubhouse interior, club room, looking southeast.

18 of 21 View of clubhouse interior, card room, looking northwest.

19 of 21 View of clubhouse interior, kitchen, looking west.

20 of 21 View of gatehouse, looking east.

21 of 21 View of staff housing, looking southeast.

Aerials:
Google Maps
Date: March, 2015

Additional Information:
Historic photos of the Dunes Club by Gottscho-Schleisner, Inc. Collection of the Library of Congress. Available at www.loc.gov/library/libarch-digital.html.

Photo 1 of 5 The Dunes Club, view looking northwest, 1939.

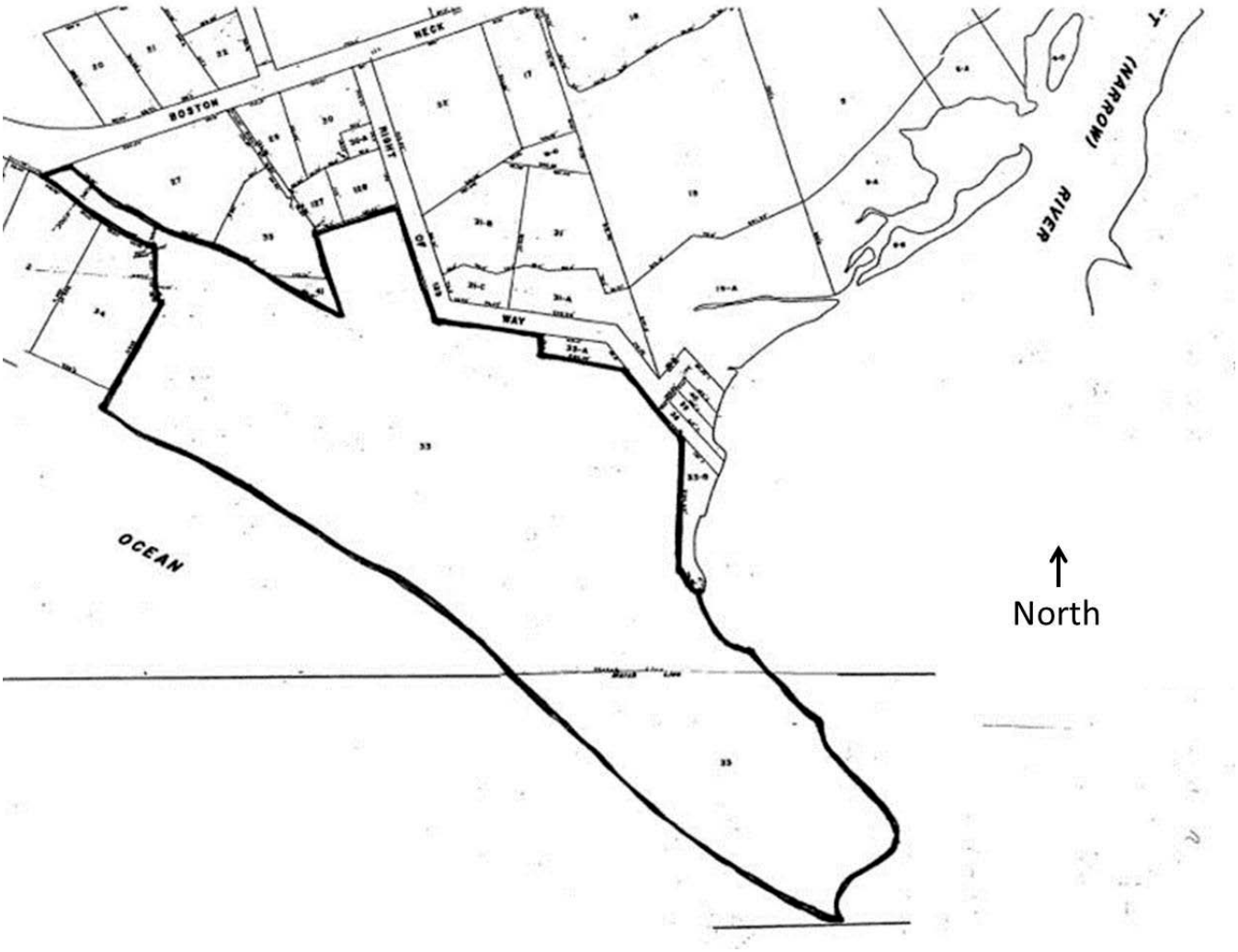
Photo 2 of 5 The Dunes Club, view looking east, 1939.

Photo 3 of 5 The Dunes Club, view of clubhouse, north entrance portico, 1939.

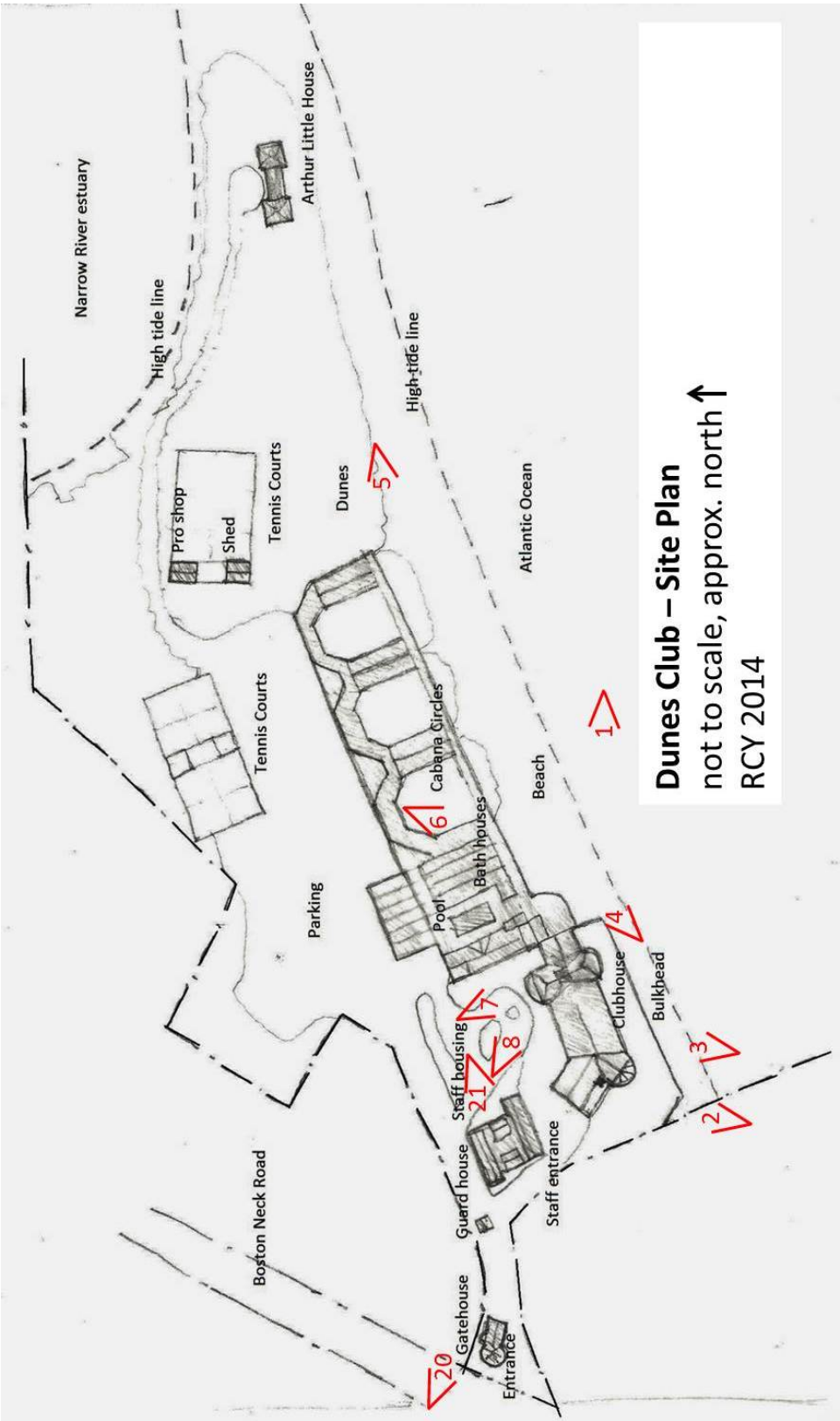
Photo 4 of 5 The Dunes Club, view of clubhouse interior, lobby, looking northwest, 1939.

Photo 5 of 5 The Dunes Club, view of clubhouse interior, loggia, looking south, 1939.

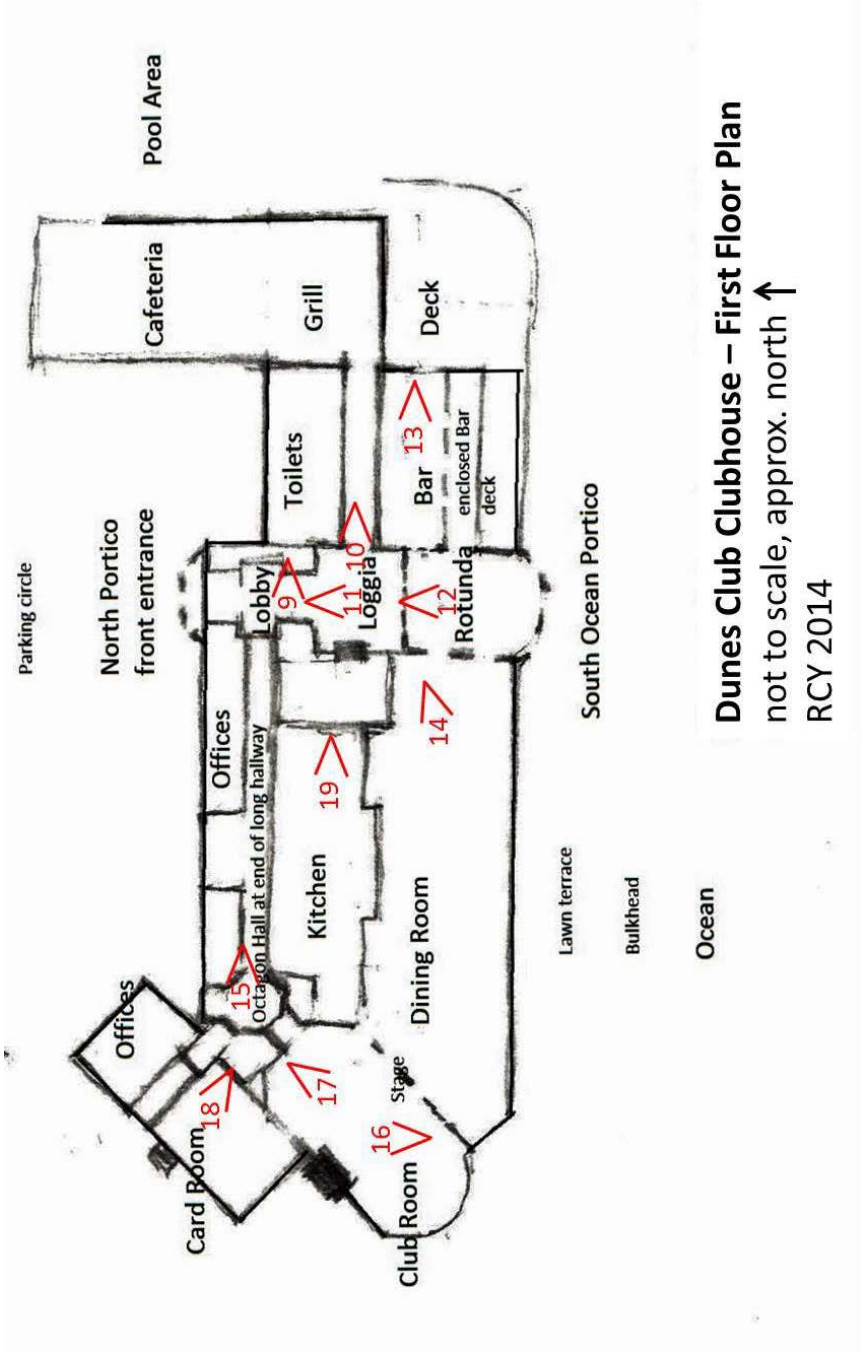
Narragansett assessor's map A, showing boundaries of the Dunes Club property



The Dunes Club – Site Plan Keyed to Photographs



The Dunes Club Clubhouse – First Floor Plan Keyed to Photographs



Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C.460 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 100 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Office of Planning and Performance Management. U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.

Additional Information

Photo 1 of 5 The Dunes Club, view looking northwest, 1939.

Photo 2 of 5 The Dunes Club, view looking east, 1939.

Photo 3 of 5 The Dunes Club, view of clubhouse, north entrance portico, 1939.

Photo 4 of 5 The Dunes Club, view of clubhouse interior, lobby, looking northwest, 1939.

Photo 5 of 5 The Dunes Club, view of clubhouse interior, loggia, looking south, 1939.