United States Post Office

LOCATION

Street and Number:
High and Broad Streets

Town:
Westerly

Rhode Island, 02891

CODE COUNTY:

WASHINGTON

CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY

(Check One)

District
Site
Object

OWNERSHIP

District
Site
Object

PUBLIC
PUBLIC AWARD
Public Acquisition
Private
Private Residence

STATUS

District
Site
Object

Historic
Nonhistoric

USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

Residential
Industrial
Military
Religious
Educational

US:

United States Government: General Services Administration

ANOTHER USE:

Washington

DEPARTMENT

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

DESCRIPTION

WASHINGTON, D.C. GENERAL SERVICES ADMINISTRATION

WASHINGTON, D.C.

TOWN HALL

AND LOCATION:

Westerly

Rhode Island

PRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

SURVEY OF SURVEY:

FEDERAL

STATE

COUNTY

LOCAL

ACCOUNT: SURVEY RECORDS:

REPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:

REPOSITORY AND NUMBER:

FORM TOWN:

STATE:

CITY:

COUNTY:

STATE:

CITY:
Erected in 1913-1914 from designs by James Knox Taylor, the Westerly Post Office reflects the trend throughout the first decades of the XX Century for public buildings of neo-classic architectural style, with suavity and dignity in form and--as much as possible--monumentality in appearance. Steel-framed, the building is set upon a granite basement--itself upon a plateau above street level--and is faced on its principal elevations with (now coal-grey) veined Vermont marble. It is of truncated wedge-shape, the wider end of the wedge being a segmental curve in sympathy with the street curve which it faces. The building is covered by a flat-topped hip roof of dull green glazed tile of the Greek pan-and-cover pattern.

At the sidewalk, a set of wide granite steps projects convexly, echoing the façade approached, and, flanked by acanthus-leaved columnar bronze lamp standards, leads to the (west) entrance front of the post office. This curved front, of one tall and imposing storey in height, contains a shallow portico with eight fluted Doric columns set in antis between two wide terminating piers or pavilions. Within the portico are the central main entrance with bronze doors and eight very tall windows set in cast iron, mullioned frames. Above the portico runs a full entablature, with frieze and guttae, supporting a cornice made of coloured, matte-glazed terra-cotta ornamented with spaced lions' heads.

On its side elevations the building has six tall pilasters between wide piers, enclosing five window spaces. The rear of the building is without architectural character, having only a loading platform and necessary openings.

Within, the front portion of the building is occupied by a long, high public lobby--its inner wall also a segmental curve--taking up all the space behind the colonnade and tall windows. The end areas behind the guttae are filled at one end by offices and at the other by the registered-mail department. The outer curved wall has an oval glazed vestibule projecting inwards from the central entrance, and beneath two of the tall windows remain original writing-desks upheld by scrolled brackets. The inner wall, marked off into bays by a series of slightly projecting piers, has in its central portions the customer-service windows and at the ends banks of mailing slots and delivery boxes; above the sales windows etc. are tall, narrow-mullioned openings which help light the area filling up the rear of the building--a large mail-sorting room.

Adornment of the interior is confined to the lobby area. Here, the high ceiling is coffered and painted ivory, its mouldings picked-out in gold. A plaster frieze runs around the walls below it and has triglyphs with metopes containing flat discs. Below this the walls are of smooth plaster until they reach a marble wainscot. The lobby floor is

(See Continuation Sheet)
7. Description.

A combination of terrazzo and marble. The vestibule, sales-windows, grilles, mullions and writing desks are of cast iron elaborately ornamented with classical motifs and painted a verdigris colour. The office areas are very plainly treated with mahogamised birch woodwork.
This building is a most handsome structure, thoughtfully planned for its site and thereby dominating the curving intersection it overlooks. It is—to repeat—handsome, but in an expertly understated manner—partly due, perhaps, to governmental economies and partly due to the leaning away, by 1913, from the more florid types of Beaux-Arts design and towards simpler classical adaptations (as in the Lincoln Memorial). The medium-sized town of Westerly was very fortunate to receive such an example of good taste in the pre-World-War-I years and is fortunate still to have this building in unspoilt condition and setting to-day. In architectural quality it is vastly superior to the many pasteboard-colonial-style public buildings constructed during the 1920's-1940's: it has both complexion and muscle.
### MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES


### 10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

**LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CORNER</th>
<th>LATITUDE</th>
<th>LONGITUDE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NW</td>
<td>Degrees Minutes Seconds</td>
<td>Degrees Minutes Seconds</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NE</td>
<td>Degrees Minutes Seconds</td>
<td>Degrees Minutes Seconds</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SE</td>
<td>Degrees Minutes Seconds</td>
<td>Degrees Minutes Seconds</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SW</td>
<td>Degrees Minutes Seconds</td>
<td>Degrees Minutes Seconds</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LATITUDE</th>
<th>LONGITUDE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Degrees Minutes Seconds</td>
<td>Degrees Minutes Seconds</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11° 22' 36&quot;</td>
<td>71° 49' 50&quot;</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY:** Not more than one acre

**LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>STATE</th>
<th>CODE</th>
<th>COUNTY</th>
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</tbody>
</table>

**FORM PREPARED BY**

Richard B. Harrington, Consultant

**ORGANIZATION**

Rhode Island Historical Preservation Commission

**DATE**

March 2, 1971

**STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION**

As the designated State Liaison Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service. The recommended level of significance of this nomination is:

- National [x] State [ ] Local [ ]

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION**

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register.

Chief, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

Date

ATTEST:

Keeper of The National Register

Date
| COMMON: | United States Post Office |
| STREET AND NUMBER: | High and Broad Streets |
| CITY OR TOWN: | Westerly |
| STATE: | Rhode Island |
| PHOTO CREDIT: | Rhode Island Historical Preservation Commission |

**Date of Photo:** 1971

**Negative Filed At:**

Rhode Island Historical Preservation Commission,
State House, 90 Smith Street, Providence, Rhode Island

**Identification:**

**Describe View, Direction, Etc.:**

Cast iron writing-desk in lobby.
**United States Post Office**

**Location and Number:** 3rd and Broad Streets

**State:** Rhode Island

**Code:** RI

**County:** Washington

**Entry Number:** 903

**Date:** 1971

**Reference:** Rhode Island Historical Preservation Commission, State House, 90 Smith Street, Providence, Rhode Island

**Description:** Detail of ceiling and window in lobby.
**United States Department of the Interior**

**National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places**

**Property Photograph Form**

* (Type all entries - attach to or enclose with photograph)

| **STATE** | Rhode Island |
| **COUNTY** | Washington |

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**1. NAME**

- **COMMON:** United States Post Office

**AND/OR HISTORIC:**

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**2. LOCATION**

- **STREET AND NUMBER:** High and Broad Streets

- **CITY OR TOWN:** Westerly

- **STATE:** Rhode Island

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**3. PHOTO REFERENCE**

- **PHOTO CREDIT:** Rhode Island Historical Preservation Commission

- **DATE OF PHOTO:** 1971

- **NEGATIVE FILED AT:** Rhode Island Historical Preservation Commission, State House, 90 Smith Street, Providence, Rhode Island

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**4. IDENTIFICATION**

- **DESCRIBE VIEW, DIRECTION, ETC.:** View towards north-west, showing entrance colonnade and ornamental lamp-standard.
**UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR**  
**NATIONAL PARK SERVICE**  
**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES**  
**PROPERTY PHOTOGRAPH FORM**  
*(Type all entries - attach to or enclose with photograph)*

| 1. NAME | COMMON: United States Post Office |
| 2. LOCATION | STREET AND NUMBER: High and Broad Streets |
| | CITY OR TOWN: Westerly |
| | STATE: Rhode Island |
| | PHOTO CREDIT: Rhode Island Historical Preservation Commission |
| | DATE OF PHOTO: 1971 |
| | NEGATIVE FILED AT: Rhode Island Historical Preservation Commission, State House, 90 Smith Street, Providence, Rhode Island |
| 4. IDENTIFICATION | DESCRIBE VIEW, DIRECTION, ETC. | Exterior seen from the south-east. |
GEOGRAPHICAL COORDINATES.
Latitude: 41° 22' 36" N
Longitude: 71° 49' 50" W
**Property Map Form**

- **Type all entries - attach to or enclose with map**

1. **NAME**
   - COMMON: United States Post Office
   - AND/OR HISTORIC:

2. **LOCATION**
   - STREET AND NUMBER: High and Broad Streets
   - CITY OR TOWN: Westerly
   - STATE: Rhode Island
   - COUNTY: Washington

3. **MAP REFERENCE**
   - SOURCE: U. S. Geological Survey
   - SCALE: 1:24,000
   - DATE: 1953

4. **REQUIREMENTS**
   - **TO BE INCLUDED ON ALL MAPS**
     1. Property boundaries where required.
     2. North arrow.
     3. Latitude and longitude reference.