

HISTORIC PRESERVATION PROGRAM - STRAFFORD ROCKINGHAM REGIONAL COUNCIL  
One Water Street, Exeter, New Hampshire 03833 Phone: (603)778-0885

TOWN: Rochester COUNTY: Strafford

SURVEY NUMBER: 73

COMMON NAME: Rochester Public Library

HISTORIC NAME: Rochester Public Library

LOCATION: South Main Street

OWNER: City of Rochester

ADDRESS: 31 Wakefield Street  
Rochester, NH

MAP & PARCEL #: 51/158 120-342

DATE: C. 1905

SOURCE: Inspection

STYLE: Georgian Revival

UTM: Z 19 /E 339825 /N 4795025

USGS QUAD: Berwick Quad 15' series

FUNCTIONAL TYPE: Library

PRESENT USE: Library

ARCHITECT/BUILDER: Unknown

CONDITION: Exc. ☒ Good ☐ Fair ☐ Poor ☐ Ruins

INTEGRITY: Original Site ☒ Moved ☐  
Date

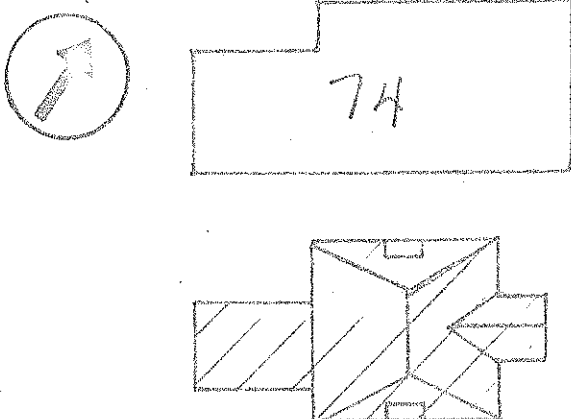
Major Alterations & Date:

LEVEL/SIGNIFICANCE: Natl. ☐ State ☐ Local ☒

GENERAL DESCRIPTION: Structural System

- # Stories: 2 <sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> # Bays: 3X3 Approx. Dimensions: 44' X 55' Window Sash: diamond pattern  
Roof Style: Gable ☐ Hip ☒ Gambrel ☐ Flat ☐ Shed ☐ Mansard ☐ Jerkinhead ☐  
Monitor ☐ Sawtooth ☐ Other ☐  
Appendages: Porches ☐ Towers ☐ Dormers ☐ Bay Windows ☐ Ells ☐ Chimneys ☒  
Wings ☐ Cupolas ☐ Sheds ☐ Garage ☐ Other ☒ central partition  
Entry Location: Center ☒ Sidehall ☐ Other ☐
- FOUNDATION: Random Rubble ☐ Cut Granite ☒ Brick ☐ Concrete ☐ Concrete Block ☐  
Other ☐
- WALL STRUCTURE:  
Wood Frame: Post & Beam ☐ Balloon Frame ☐ Other ☐  
Load Bearing Masonry: Stone ☐ Brick ☐ Concrete Block ☐ Other ☐  
Metal: Iron ☐ Steel ☐ Other ☐
- WALL COVERING: Clapboard ☐ Wood Shingle ☐ Board & Batten ☐ Shiplap ☐  
Aluminum ☐ Novelty ☐ Stucco ☐ Stone ☐ Brick ☒ Sheet Metal ☐ Asphalt Shingles ☐  
Vinyl ☐ Asphalt Sheeting ☐ Composite Board ☐ Other ☐
- ROOF SHEATHING: Wood Shingle ☐ Asphalt Shingle ☐ Standing Seam Tin ☐ Slate ☒  
Pressed Metal ☐ Sheet Metal ☐ Rolled Asphalt ☐ Gravel ☐ Other ☐
- ENGINEERING STRUCTURE:

MAP (Indicate North in circle):



PHOTO



Description of View: Facade looking west

Negative File Number: RO/81/R6 30

Photographer:

Negative on file with: SRRC

## ADDITIONAL ARCHITECTURAL AND STRUCTURAL DESCRIPTION:

The Rochester Public Library illustrates the ornamentation and symmetrical design of formal Georgian Revival architecture. The facade is dominated by a projecting pedimented entry pavillion featuring pairs of engaged Corinthian columns, and quoins of white glazed brick. Centered between the columns is a round-headed window set within a surround of white glazed brick. The columns rise from a base of coursed granite which contains the entry. The entry has paired glass panel doors.

In the flanking bays of the 3-bay facade, and the three bays of the side elevations, the first story features round headed windows, and the second story has rectangular windows, all in frames of white glazed brick. This same white brick is also used for quoins on the corners of the main block and as a second story sill course, providing a color contrast between the red brick walls.

The building, which sits on a rock-faced granite foundation is topped by a truncated hip roof with slate sheathing and copper flashing caps. The eavline is highlighted by a fully articulated classical cornice executed in copper.

## RELATED STRUCTURES AND CONTEXT:

## STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE (Evaluation & Historical Associations):

The Rochester Public Library was constructed c.1905. It was financed by a gift of \$20,000 from Andrew Carnegie as part of the Carnegie Institute.

The Carnegie Institute was set up by Andrew Carnegie to provide Libraries throughout the United States and Great Britain. A town council could apply for funds to build a library, as long as it met certain specifications. The town must provide a site for the building which was easily accessible and centrally located, and set aside a yearly appropriation of at least 10% of the gift for books and maintenance. The size of the gift was determined by the population of the community usually \$2 per capita. Though there was some controversy about small towns receiving these gifts it was of special personal interest to Carnegie to provide libraries for small communities. In the beginning the design of the library was left to local choice. However, many of these libraries were poorly designed and the librarians complained so later he gave plans as well and the style came to be known as Carnegie Classical.

## REFERENCES:

Personal notes of Gladys Redlon, Rochester Historian

## MAP DATA:

SURROUNDING ENVIRONMENT: Open Land ☐ Woodland ☐ Scattered Bldgs. ☐ Moderately Built Up ☐  
Densely Built Up ☐ Residential ☐ Commercial ☒ Industrial ☐ Agricultural ☐  
Roadside Strip Development ☐ Other ☐

## BOUNDARY AND ACREAGE DESCRIPTION:

Recorded By: Roger Brevoort

Date: 11/25/80

CONTINUATION SHEET

Significance

The Library is a handsome example of Georgian Revival architecture designed by Randlett and Griffin of Concord, NH and built by Kelley Bros. of Haverhill, Mass.

Built of cut faced brick it features contrasting white brick and granite ornamentation and a slate roof. The interior is elegantly finished in golden oak and cypress with birch flooring. It is strikingly similar to the public library in Dover.

Description

The interior is finished with oak wainscoting and woodwork, and features carved Corinthian columns and classical cornices.

