

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 How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. 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. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name Beacon Engine Company No. 1 Firehouse

other names/site number _____

2. Location

street & number 57 East Main Street _____ not for publication

city or town Beacon _____ vicinity

state New York code NY county Dutchess code 027 zip code 12508

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, as amended, I hereby certify that this ☒ 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
☒ meets ☐ does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant
☐ nationally ☐ statewide ☒ locally. (☐ See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

William E. Carter, SHPO
Signature of certifying official/Title

9/21/04
Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property ☐ meets ☐ does not meet the National Register criteria. (☐ See continuation sheet for additional Comments.)

Signature of certifying official/Title

Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby certify that this property is:

- ☒ entered in the National Register
☐ See continuation sheet.
☐ determined eligible for the
National Register
☐ See continuation sheet.
☐ determined not eligible for the
National Register
☐ removed from the
National Register
☐ other (explain): _____

for
Signature of the Keeper

12/6/04
Date of Action

Edson H. Beall

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

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National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Beacon Engine Company No. 1 Firehouse
Beacon (Dutchess County), New York

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Narrative Description

The Beacon Engine Company No. 1 Firehouse is a two-and-one-half story tall, three bay wide brick building constructed in 1889 in the Second Empire style. The characteristic mansard roof is distinguished at the front (north) slope by a tall center projection that provides a base for a Stick-style wooden belfry topped by an ogee-curved roof. A brick hose-drying tower with a slate-covered hip roof extends from the ground to above the mansard near the front corner of the west elevation. Two corbelled chimneys rise out of the roof at the east and west sides of the mansard. The building's handsome two-story front elevation includes a center pavilion, arched door and window openings, inset brick panels, and sandstone lintels, belt courses, and sills. A wide wooden cornice with brackets, modillions, and a paneled frieze runs beneath the roof along the front elevation. The interior of the building has been altered substantially to accommodate the functions of a modern fire department, but the large second floor meeting room retains two marble mantels as well as an elaborate ceiling medallion composed of three-dimensional plaster representations of winged cherubs and 19th century fire fighting equipment. A two-story flat-roofed brick annex that was built in 1924 as a garage for the company's fire engine is attached to the east elevation of the original building.

The firehouse is located two blocks east of Fishkill Creek on a low rise at the base of 1,539-foot-high Mount Beacon. It stands on the south side of East Main Street facing the T-intersection of Liberty Street, at the edge of a densely-built residential neighborhood comprised of modest one- and two-family frame houses dating primarily from the mid- to late-19th century, and a few larger brick houses from the same era. The surrounding residential neighborhood has not been evaluated for its eligibility for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. The firehouse also is located one block east of a 19th century commercial area known as Fountain Square, which runs for one block along both sides of East Main Street between Fishkill Creek and Leonard Street. Fountain Square is included within the proposed Upper Main Street/Fountain Square National Register Historic District. Several mid-20th century commercial buildings and 19th century residential buildings stand along East Main Street immediately to the east of Fountain Square on the block between Leonard and Liberty Streets, effectively excluding the firehouse from the boundaries of the proposed National Register historic district.

The firehouse encompasses nearly the entire width of its relatively small lot along East Main Street, with narrow side yards separating the building from the small frame houses adjacent to the east and west sides of the property. The original firehouse and its 1924 annex have rectangular footprints that measure approximately 30 x 60 feet and 25 x 55 feet respectively, each oriented with its narrow north elevation fronting onto East Main Street. The north elevation of the firehouse is built flush to the front property line, with no setback from the sidewalk. The two-story annex abuts directly onto the east elevation of the firehouse and obscures that elevation almost completely below the mansard roof. The north elevation of the annex is set back five feet behind the north elevation of the firehouse, with concrete pavement spanning the area between the sidewalk and the annex's front garage door. The building's full basement is below grade at the front property line along East Main Street, but is completely above grade at the rear because of a steep downward slope from the street to the rear property line.

The two-story front elevation of the 1889 firehouse is organized into three distinct bays, including a wide center pavilion flanked by narrower side bays. It is clad primarily with red face brick set in stretcher bond

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with narrow mortar joints. Sandstone lintels, sills, and beltcourses provide a handsome contrast to the red brick. The first and second stories of the front elevation are separated by a heavy ashlar sandstone sill course that projects out from directly beneath the second story windows. At the ground floor, the center pavilion contains a wide segmental arched bay that originally held an opening into the building for the company's fire fighting vehicles. The side-hinged double wooden doors that originally enclosed the opening are no longer extant and the center opening was infilled with brick c. 1970. A segmental arched lintel comprised of a single piece of sandstone spans the center opening and is edged with a raked cornice of molded sandstone along its gabled top. Either end of the arched lintel is set into an angled sandstone impost block, each of which is incised with a circular medallion. Large bronze letters applied to the face of the sandstone lintel spell out the word "BEACON." Infill within the center opening is composed of common brick in a header bond that is recessed slightly from the plane of the north elevation, allowing the outline of the original opening to remain clearly evident. The center section of the infilled bay is deeply recessed and holds a wide three part window that contains two narrow wooden one-over-one sash windows on either side of a large square picture window. Four rows of brick corbelling are set above the three-part window and a brick flower box with a concrete sill is built into the wall below the window.

Each of the two narrow bays that flank the center pavilion contains a tall segmental arched opening enclosed with a single half-light wooden door with an arched glazed transom above. The narrow door openings are topped by segmental arched lintels, each comprised of a single piece of sandstone set on rectangular impost blocks. The ends of the arched lintels above the doors are incised with circular medallions matching those at the impost blocks of the center arched lintel. Stone lintels above the doors are topped by arched brick hoodmolds comprised of three rows of brick, with the outer rows laid in header courses and the inner row laid in a dogtooth pattern. The door within the east opening of the front elevation continues to serve as the main entrance into the firehouse, while the door in the west opening has been fixed shut and the glazing replaced with a wooden panel. The door opening at the west bay is set above a stone threshold to compensate for the rather steep incline at East Main Street, while the door at the east bay has no threshold.

Other masonry details at the ground floor of the front elevation include two stone beltcourses comprised of large ashlar blocks of sandstone that run across the brick facade between the three door openings. The lower stone beltcourse is at knee level and the upper beltcourse supports the stone impost blocks at the arched lintels that top each opening. Narrow vertical panels of corbelled brick measuring eight bricks high and one brick wide are inset between the two stone beltcourses. A rectangular panel of dogtooth brick that measures five bricks tall and eight bricks wide is set above each of the arched brick hoodmolds at the side bays. Long narrow panels of corbelled brick laid in header bond and measuring two bricks high and nine bricks wide are set immediately beneath the stone sill course on either side of the raked cornice at the center pavilion.

The second story of the front elevation contains four tall window openings: a pair of segmental arched openings at the center pavilion and a single round arched opening at each of the side bays. The four window openings contain one-over-one wooden sashes, each with an arched upper sash. The two segmental arched center windows are recessed deeply into the projecting brick pavilion and are topped by a double-arched sandstone lintel. Like the wide center stone lintel at the ground floor, the center lintel at the second floor is composed of a single piece of sandstone set into angled sandstone impost blocks, with each impost incised with a circular medallion. A single sandstone column stands between the two windows as support for the

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wide lintel. The column is composed of a rectangular pier with chamfered sides set between a small rectangular base and a larger rectangular capital. A large bronze number "1," representing Engine Company No. 1, is attached to the center of the lintel above the pier. The windows at the side bays of the second story are topped by round arched lintels, each composed of three stone sections. The top edge of these arched lintels are bordered by arched brick hoodmolds in the same dogtooth pattern as the arched hoodmolds above the first story doors. A sandstone belt course runs across the second story just beneath the arched lintels at the second story. The brick piers between the second story windows are ornamented with narrow inset panels, either long vertical panels of corbelled brick or short horizontal panels of dogtooth brick.

The building's mansard roof originally was clad with slate, but presently is covered with asphalt shingles and is flashed with copper around the perimeter of the flat deck above the mansard. A wide wooden cornice with long fluted brackets, large modillion blocks, and frieze panels runs immediately beneath the roofline along the front elevation, and continues on the west elevation for five feet from the northwest corner. At the front slope of the mansard, the center section projects out from the main roof over the center brick pavilion at the two-story front elevation below. The center projection of the mansard also rises two feet above the main roof deck and holds the distinctive Stick-style wooden belfry that crowns the building. A small gabled dormer with a one-over-one wooden sash window is situated in the front slope of the center mansard projection to provide natural light into the garret beneath the belfry. The open structure of the belfry consists of four chamfered wooden posts set in a square, with a tall four-sided ogee curved roof above. The belfry roof is clad with asphalt shingles. The flat peak of the belfry roof once held a siren, but presently is capped simply with copper sheathing. Two wooden brackets at the top of each corner post support the eaves under the wide flanges of the roof. A simple wooden balustrade with squat spool-shaped balusters encloses the lower portion of the belfry. X-shaped wooden struts with decorative bargeboard infill support the top half of each side of the belfry immediately below the eaves. A large bronze bell with its original yoke, clapper, and side wheel intact sits on a thick granite slab at the base of the belfry.

A tall hose-drying tower dominates the west elevation of the firehouse. Constructed of face brick, the shaft of the tower rises from the ground to four feet above the mansard roof deck. It is topped by a steeply pitched hip roof that is covered with slate shingles and is flashed with copper. The tower is set back five feet from the northwest corner of the building, projects two and one-half feet out from the west elevation, and is six feet wide. The brick shaft rises unadorned up to the height of the top of the roof deck, where a narrow sandstone beltcourse runs along the north, west, and south faces of the tower. The shaft continues for another four feet above the beltcourse, where a small round-arched opening with a brick hoodmold is situated in the west elevation of the tower. This opening, which originally held a wooden louver that ventilated the hose-drying tower, presently is infilled with a wood panel. A plain wooden frieze and wide eaves wrap around the four sides of the tower beneath the slate roof. The five-foot wide area of the west elevation in front of the tower, immediately around the northwest corner from the front elevation, also is constructed of face brick and is spanned below the roofline by a continuation of the wide wooden cornice from the front of the building. A single rectangular window opening with a sandstone sill and a straight sandstone lintel is situated at the second story in front of the tower.

The secondary elevations of the firehouse are constructed of common brick set in stretcher bond. A narrow wooden frieze and plain fascia boards run under the roof at the west elevation to the rear of the hose-drying

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tower, as well as along the entire south elevation. Fascia boards are intact at the east elevation, but the wooden frieze was removed to accommodate the two-story garage annex built in 1924. Two tall corbelled brick chimneys rise from out of the building at the base of the mansard roof at the mid-points of the west and east elevations. A large inset panel in a diamond shape ornaments the outer face of each chimney. The wide expanse of the west elevation behind the tower contains two rectangular window openings at each floor, with sandstone sills and lintels and one-over-one wooden sashes. At the rear (south) elevation, a two-story frame addition built in the 1920s to hold a new interior stair covers the entire width of the exposed basement and first story. The addition extends five feet out from the rear elevation and is clad with wood clapboards. The original brick elevation is exposed at the second story above the frame addition and contains two rectangular window openings with stone sills and lintels.

The east elevation of the original firehouse is obscured almost entirely by the abutting brick garage annex. The two-story annex is set back five feet from the sidewalk and extends to just beneath the eaves at the mansard roof. The front elevation of the annex contains a wide garage door opening at the first story and a tripartite window at the second story. Although utilitarian in design and function, the annex complements the more ornate firehouse with sandstone lintels and beltcourses at its front elevation. At the first story, a shaped stone lintel with a low-pitched gable top is set above the garage opening, although the stone lintel no longer serves a structural function. When the garage opening was widened in the 1960s to accommodate a larger fire engine, a steel lintel was set above the new opening to bear the load and the stone lintel was inserted into its original location as a decorative element. A metal roll-up garage door encloses the front opening into the annex. Two sandstone beltcourses are set into the brick piers at either side of the garage opening, at the same height as stone beltcourses at the first story of the firehouse. The tripartite window at the second story of the annex contains a wide one-over-one wood window flanked by narrower wood windows of the same configuration. A thick rectangular stone lintel spans the window opening at the second story and a stone beltcourse extends out from either side of the window opening just below the lintel. A stone sill is set below the window. A soldier course of bricks runs across the front elevation above the stone lintel at the second floor and continues around to the east and south elevations of the annex. Concrete coping tops the low brick parapet that wraps around the flat roof of the annex. The east elevation of the annex contains three window openings at the first story and four at the second story, all with stone sills and straight stone lintels. The second window opening from the front at the second story has been extended downward to create an emergency egress enclosed with a steel door. A metal fire stair runs diagonally from the egress opening to the ground. There are no window openings at the south elevation of the annex.

Two rectangular granite plaques have been inserted into the front elevation of the firehouse and a bronze plaque is attached to the front elevation of the annex. One granite plaque is located at the brick pier to the left of the front door at the easternmost bay of the firehouse. The plaque is dated 1986 and honors the 100th anniversary of Beacon Engine Company No. 1, which was established three years before construction of the present firehouse. The plaque is inscribed with the following words:

Beacon Engine Co. No. 1
Founded Aug. 4, 1886
100 Years of
"Efficiency in Fire Service"
To Our Community

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The second granite plaque is set into the brick pier at the east side of the center pavilion at the first story. This plaque is undated and is inscribed as follows:

On March 4, 1959 Beacon Volunteer
Ambulance Corps. Responded From This
Location On Its First Emergency Call.
BEACON ENGINE CO. NO. 1
ORIGINAL SPONSOR

The bronze plaque on the annex is attached onto the brick pier to the east of the garage door between the two stone beltcourses. The plaque is in the shape of a shield and is topped by an eagle with spread wings. It is dedicated to the members of Beacon Engine Company No. 1 who "gallantly gave their lives in the service of our country." Two names are listed on the plaque under the heading of World War I and three names under World War II. A free-standing monument of polished marble sits under the bronze plaque. The monument, which is three and one-half feet tall and is rectangular in shape, is inscribed as follows:

Beacon Engine Co. #1
In Memory of Those Men
Who Served in This Company
With Untiring Loyalty

A fire helmet within an inset oval is carved in bas relief into the face of the marble above the inscription. A semi-circular brick flower box extends out from the base of the marble monument. At the west side of the garage door, a low brick bench with a concrete seat runs along the bottom of the exposed east elevation in front of the annex. A tall metal flagpole is attached to the front elevation of the annex near the northeast corner of the second story.

The interior of the original firehouse has been altered substantially over the years at the first floor, while the second floor has retained much of its historic character. The large open first floor space that originally housed the company's fire wagons, and later provided garage space for fire trucks and ambulances, has been subdivided into several smaller rooms. A security vestibule with an interior door is now located behind the front door at the east bay of the firehouse. A narrow glass-enclosed communications room extends to the west of the vestibule across the remainder of the front perimeter wall, including the area immediately behind the original portal in the center bay. A large community room with a high ceiling extends across the width of the building behind the vestibule and communications room, and suggests the large garage space that once encompassed most of the first floor interior, although the area of the community room is much diminished from the original space and the room now is fitted out with linoleum flooring, plywood paneling, and ceiling tiles. One small but important interior space at the first floor has been preserved in part: the open shaft at the base of the hose-drying tower is still apparent as a tall rectangular niche in the west wall of the community room near the front corner of the building. A tall glass case displaying trophies, citations, and artifacts now stands prominently within the niche. At the rear of the community room, a center hallway leads back to the frame addition at the south elevation of the building. Two small rooms off of the hallway hold a kitchen and sleeping room within the original firehouse. The rear addition holds an enclosed stair with simple wood railings attached to the wall.

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The finest interior space in the firehouse is the large meeting room at the second floor, which is distinguished by tall arched windows at the north perimeter wall, marble mantels, and ornate molding and plasterwork at the ten foot high ceiling. Black and red marble mantels surround the two fireplaces that stand opposite one another at the east and west walls. The mantels are ornamented with fluted marble panels, etched floral designs, and marble pilasters and brackets under the overhanging mantel shelf. Decorative cast iron grills cover the firebox openings. At the high plaster ceiling, wide wood cornices wrap around the perimeter wall junctions and heavy wood molding creates four long rectangular panels at the surface of the ceiling. The interior corner of each molded panel is curved to create a large circle at the center of the ceiling. The molded circle borders a whimsical plaster ceiling medallion that features elaborate filigree surrounded by winged cherubs and 19th century firefighting equipment. The medallion is roughly oval in shape, with a pair of cherubs at either of the long ends of the oval holding up firemen's helmets. Ladders, axes, hooked poles, loud-speaking trumpets, ropes, and other tools, all in plaster, are placed around the edge of the oval. A large hydrant surrounded by a coil of fire hose protrudes straight down from the center of the medallion. The plaster filigree, cherubs, and tools are highlighted with gold paint, while the center hydrant is painted bright red. Elsewhere in the room, modern intrusions such as plywood wainscoting, linoleum flooring, and widened openings into adjacent rooms do not significantly detract from the room's historic character.

Above the second floor at the attic under the mansard roof, a modern climate-controlled room lined with cedar paneling holds the company's large collection of vintage and present-day dress uniforms that are worn by fire fighters at parades and other formal occasions. The timber structure of the mansard is visible in the small garret at the front of the attic, which appears to have provided access at one time to the fire bell in the belfry above. At the east side of the original firehouse, the first floor of the 1924 annex contains a narrow garage that houses the company's 1986 Pierce Arrow fire engine. A single door leads into the garage from the community room at the first floor of the firehouse. The garage is an unadorned single-volume space with painted brick walls and a concrete floor. Shelves and hooks line the walls for storage of fire hoses, tools, helmets, protective clothing, and other gear. A concrete platform at the rear of the garage formerly was partitioned to hold an office and sleeping room, but has since been opened up as part of the garage space. The large room at the second floor of the annex is used as an extension of the second floor meeting room in the firehouse. The two rooms are connected through wide passages on either side of the mantel at the east wall of the meeting room, where windows had once been located in the original firehouse. The wide tripartite window at the front perimeter wall at the second floor of the annex provides ample natural light into this room, but the room is otherwise unadorned.

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.)

- ☒ **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.
- ☒ **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.)

Property is:

- ☐ **A** owned by religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- ☐ **B** removed from its original location.
- ☐ **C** a birthplace or grave.
- ☐ **D** a cemetery.
- ☐ **E** a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- ☐ **F** a commemorative property.
- ☐ **G** less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Narrative Statement of Significance

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

9. Major Bibliographical References

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

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 # _____

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

Architecture

Community Planning and Development

Period of Significance

1889-1954

Significant Dates

1889

1924

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Schuyler Tillman, mason

Benjamin Hall, carpenter

Primary location of additional data:

- ☐ State Historic Preservation Office
- ☐ Other State agency
- ☐ Federal agency
- ☒ Local government
- ☐ University
- ☐ Other

Name of repository:

Beacon Cultural Arts Center

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Statement of Significance

Beacon Engine Company No. 1 Firehouse is the oldest active firehouse in Beacon, New York, and continues to house its original namesake fire fighting company, the oldest of the three volunteer companies in the Beacon Fire Department. Built in 1889 by the former village of Matteawan, the firehouse, along with its volunteer company, became part of the Beacon Fire Department when Matteawan and the neighboring village of Fishkill Landing merged to form the city of Beacon in 1913. The firehouse is locally significant under National Register Criterion A for community planning and development for its importance to the development of public services in Beacon. It also is significant for architecture under Criterion C as a fine local example of the Second Empire style. The building is distinguished by skilled masonry work at the front elevation, a center belfry that rises high above the mansard roof, a tall hose-drying tower, and intricate plasterwork at the second floor interior. The period of significance extends from 1889 through 1954, which is fifty years before the present.

The city of Beacon (population 16,073: 2000 census) is situated on the east bank of the Hudson River sixty miles north of New York City. Beacon has a rich fire fighting heritage that is well-represented by three historic firehouses, all of which pre-date the incorporation of the city. Besides Beacon Engine Company No. 1 Firehouse, these include the former Lewis Tompkins Hose Company Firehouse at 116 Main Street and the Willard H. Mase Hook and Ladder Company Firehouse at 425 Main Street. The Italianate-style Tompkins Firehouse was built in 1889 by the village of Fishkill Landing and is a contributing building in the Lower Main Street Historic District (NRHP 1987). Deactivated as a firehouse in 1982 when the city built a more modern facility on nearby South Avenue, the former Tompkins Firehouse retains its architectural integrity and today functions as offices for a local non-profit organization. The Renaissance Revival-style Mase Firehouse was built in 1911 by the village of Matteawan and is a contributing building in the proposed Upper Main Street/Fountain Square Historic District. The Mase Firehouse continues to serve as an active firehouse and also is used as headquarters for the Beacon Fire Department.

The villages of Fishkill Landing and Matteawan developed separately during the first half of the nineteenth century, but began to grow together along their shared Main Street after the Civil War. Fishkill Landing had served as a supply base for the Continental Army during the American Revolution and then emerged as a busy Hudson River port and railroad depot during the nineteenth century. Matteawan, located about one mile east of the river at the base of Mount Beacon, developed as a thriving industrial community beginning in the 1820s as local entrepreneurs built numerous mills along the falling rapids of Fishkill Creek. By the 1880s, manufacturing concerns in Matteawan included the Groveville Mills carpet factory, Schenck Machinery Works, the New York Rubber Company, the Rothery File Works, and the enormous hat factories of the Matteawan Manufacturing Company and the Tioranda Hat Company. Matteawan's two hat manufacturers, along with the Dutchess Hat Factory in Fishkill Landing, earned the two villages the collective sobriquet of "Hat Capital of New York State," second only to Danbury, Connecticut, in production of men's hats in post-Civil War America.

Rapid industrial, commercial, and residential development made fire protection an important community concern in Fishkill Landing and Matteawan during the nineteenth century. Each village had mustered a

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series of volunteer fire fighting companies from at least the 1840s and the two villages often cooperated in their fire fighting efforts. Two long-standing volunteer companies served the villages from the 1860s through the 1880s: Protection Engine Company No. 3 of Matteawan, formed in 1859, and Excelsior Engine Company No. 1 of Fishkill Landing, formed in 1868. For reasons no longer apparent, Excelsior Engine Company had disbanded by 1881 and Protection Engine Company had disbanded in early 1886, leaving the two villages without organized fire service.

Continuous community fire protection within the present-day city of Beacon began on August 4, 1886, when a group of eleven citizens in Matteawan, concerned over the loss of old Protection Engine Company, formed Beacon Engine Company No. 1. A major fire at the Rothery File Works during the intervening months, which apparently destroyed the roof and upper story of that large brick factory, may have added to the community's sense of urgency. The charter members of the new company first met at the home of Jacob F. Weinstein, a Main Street merchant, who was selected as foreman and served in that position until 1889. The members chose to name the company in honor of nearby Mount Beacon, which eventually would lend its name to the city itself upon incorporation in 1913. The men submitted a petition to the village board of trustees requesting recognition of the new company and proposed to "take charge of old Protection Engine house and apparatus therein and have same put in first class condition and protect the village at all times." After the company enlisted eleven additional members, the board of trustees formally approved the petition on October 5, 1886.

Fishkill Landing followed Matteawan by a matter of a few months to replace old Excelsior Engine Company in December 1886. Lewis Tompkins, at the time one of the most prosperous hat manufacturers in the country and owner of both the Tioranda Hat Company and the Dutchess Hat Factory, donated substantial funding toward the formation of a new volunteer company in Fishkill Landing. Named for its chief benefactor, the Lewis Tompkins Hose Company built and occupied a small frame facility on South Street until the village completed its fine brick firehouse on lower Main Street in 1889. In the fall of 1887 a second volunteer company was formed in Matteawan, financed by Willard H. Mase of the Matteawan Manufacturing Company. During the early years of its existence the members of the Mase Hook and Ladder Company purchased and stored their own equipment. In 1894 the village board declared the Mase Company to be part of the village fire department and in 1897 built the company's first firehouse located on the north side of Main Street at Schenck Avenue, two blocks from the boundary line between the two villages. The Mase Company moved into its present firehouse on the south side of Main Street between Schenck Avenue and Teller Avenue in 1911. The Tompkins and Mase volunteer companies, along with Beacon Engine Company No.1, formed the new Beacon Fire Department upon the city's incorporation in 1913.

Beacon Engine Company originally occupied the old wood frame quarters of Protection Engine Company, located on a village-owned lot on Fountain Street, now known as East Main Street. The new company's only apparatus was Protection Engine Company's old hand-drawn pumper wagon and forty feet of leather hose. The company's first fire was at what is now St. Luke's Episcopal Church on January 15, 1887. Not having sufficient hose to fight the blaze, the firemen abandoned their pumper and set up a bucket brigade, using snow in place of water. This became known as the "fire extinguished with snowballs." The old frame firehouse had space only to store the pumper wagon and other equipment, so company meetings were held at

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National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Beacon Engine Company No. 1 Firehouse
Beacon (Dutchess County), New York

Section number 8 Page 3

Weinstein's place of business. Benjamin J. Hubbell, a village trustee, soon convinced the village board to appropriate \$5,000 "to erect a more modern and attractive home" for the company. Members Schuyler Tillman, a mason, and Benjamin Hall, a carpenter, designed the building and supervised its construction. Protection Engine Company's firehouse was demolished and the present firehouse was constructed on its site in the fall of 1889. The company took possession on January 1, 1890, on which date a grand public opening was held in celebration. John B. Whitson, chairman of the village board, commemorated the occasion by presenting the company with a silver loud-speaking trumpet, which is still on display in the firehouse. Benjamin Hubbell was elected foreman of the company in the same year that the new firehouse opened.

The Beacon Engine Company No. 1 Firehouse, like many neighborhood firehouses of its day, is a grand structure that reflects the prestige of its company and continues to serve as an emblem of civic pride. Its stately Second Empire design, with an imposing central belfry and ornate brickwork, stands prominently among its modest neighbors of one- and two-story frame residential buildings. The firehouse is situated on a commanding rise that provides strategic views of the Upper Main Street commercial district and the mills along Fishkill Creek. The belfry holds an original bronze bell that once called the company's volunteers to duty and alerted the community to emergencies. An article in the *Fishkill Standard* published on September 7, 1889, proclaimed the firehouse to be one of the "handsomest buildings in our town . . . and will afford the brave men of the company with outstanding quarters for years to come." According to Rebecca Zurier in *The American Firehouse: An Architectural and Social History*, such buildings typically combined the functions of both garage and fraternal lodge. The spacious first floor of the Beacon Engine Company Firehouse provided the company with ample room to store and maintain its apparatus. The handsomely appointed private quarters at the second floor, on the other hand, served as a kind of clubhouse for the members, providing both meeting hall for business affairs and ballroom for their many social events. Most notable is the large second floor room today known as the library, which boasts tall windows, large marble fireplaces, and an elaborate plaster ceiling medallion decorated with whimsical representations of fire fighting equipment.

Despite its fine new firehouse, Beacon Engine Company No. 1 continued to use its outmoded hand-drawn pumper wagon until 1904, when the village replaced it with a horse-drawn chemical-and-hose wagon at a cost of \$905. The installation of fire hydrants and underground water mains throughout Matteawan and Fishkill Landing c. 1910 further improved the company's ability to protect lives and property and necessitated another upgrade in apparatus. In 1912, the village purchased a new Webb pumper truck for the company at a cost of \$5,900, to which the members themselves donated \$1,000. The Webb pumper is believed to be the first motorized fire engine in Dutchess County. The village also authorized the engine's driver to be the first paid position in the company, hiring Bob McCarroll at a salary of \$750 per year for the 24-hours-a-day job. The Webb pumper was replaced in 1924 by the city of Beacon with the purchase of a new Seagrave engine at a cost of \$13,000, which necessitated construction of the garage addition onto the east elevation of the original firehouse to accommodate the greater length of the new truck. The city again purchased new Seagrave engines in 1947 and 1967. The company presently uses a 1986 Pierce Arrow engine that pumps 1500 gallons of water per minute and fits snugly into the 1924 garage addition.

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

**Beacon Engine Company No. 1 Firehouse
Beacon (Dutchess County), New York**

Section number 8 Page 4

Throughout its history, Beacon Engine Company No. 1 not only has played a pivotal role in the protection of the community but also has sponsored many civic organizations, including a soapbox derby, boxing exhibitions, a fife and drum corps, and Little League Baseball teams. Perhaps most notably, the company founded the Beacon Volunteer Ambulance Corps in 1959, which it operated out of a renovated building located across East Main Street from the firehouse on the east side of Liberty Street. The ambulance corps became self-supporting in the 1970s, at which time the building on Liberty Street was demolished and the site converted into a parking lot for the firehouse. Beacon Engine Company also has enjoyed great success on parade and participated in its first competition in October 4, 1888, in Middletown, New York. The company's long tan coats, white helmets, and precise parade drills have become their trademark and tradition. They won New York State Championships in 1906, 1920, and 1923, along with many Hudson Valley and Dutchess County awards over the years. A cedar-lined room has been installed at the third floor of the building to enable the company to store and protect its large collection of vintage and present-day dress uniforms used for parades. The Ladies' Auxiliary, founded in 1933, has steadfastly supported the company. Through their fund raising activities the Ladies' Auxiliary has helped to establish the company treasury, has furnished the firehouse kitchen and living quarters, and has sponsored numerous firemen's balls and other festivities. The Ladies' Auxiliary also has helped with the purchase of the Jaws of Life rescue tool for the company and turns out for major fires in the city to provide coffee and sandwiches to the firefighters.

Beacon Engine Company No. 1 Firehouse has served the community and its own volunteer fire fighting company for nearly 115 years. The building receives meticulous care from the company and is in an excellent state of preservation. Alterations to the building have allowed it to remain in active service but have not diminished its historical significance or architectural integrity. These include the construction of the garage annex in 1924, which has gained significance in its own right, and the masonry enclosure of the main front portal that once led into the original apparatus storage area. The installation of modern electronic communications equipment has allowed the building to meet the sophisticated requirements of modern fire fighting and to function efficiently into the twenty-first century.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Beacon Engine Company No. 1 Firehouse
Beacon (Dutchess County), New York

Section number 9 Page 1

Bibliography

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Beacon Engine Company No. 1. 1989 Annual Yearbook. Beacon, New York: n.p., 1989.

Beacon News. July 29, 1983.

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Coppola, William J. *Beacon Engine Company No. 1, 1886-1976: Efficiency in Fire Service.* Beacon, New York: unpublished manuscript, 1976.

Hudson Valley Volunteer Firemen's Convention, 68th Annual, Souvenir Journal. Beacon, New York: n.p., 1957

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Murphy, Robert J., and Denise Doring VanBuren. *Images of America: Historic Beacon.* Charleston, South Carolina, 1998.

Newburgh-Beacon Evening News. November 27, 1985; June 21, 1986.

Zurier, Rebecca. *The Firehouse: An Architectural and Social History.* New York: Artabras Publications, 1991. (Originally published as *The American Firehouse: An Architectural and Social History.* New York: Abbeville Press, c. 1982.)

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property less than one

UTM References See continuation sheet.

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

1. 18 586692 4594905
Zone Easting Northing

2.
Zone Easting Northing

3.
Zone Easting Northing

4.
Zone Easting Northing

 See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Jeffrey Shrimpton (contact: Peter Shaver, NY SHPO)

organization Historic Preservation Consulting date January 21, 2004

street & number 14 Beachcroft Road telephone (978) 281-0683

city or town Gloucester state MA zip code 01930

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A **sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative **black and white photographs** of the property.

Additional items (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)

name City of Beacon

street & number 1 Municipal Plaza telephone (845) 838-5010

city or town Beacon state NY zip code 12508

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. 470 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including the 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 Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Project (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503. NPS Form 10-900 OMB No. 1024-0018
(Rev. 10-90)

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

**Beacon Engine Company No. 1 Firehouse
Beacon (Dutchess County), New York**

Section number 10 Page 1

Verbal Boundary Description:

The boundaries of the property addressed in this National Register nomination are those shown as Parcel 186702 on Section 6054-38 of the assessor's maps of the City of Beacon, New York. A copy of the assessor's map is included with this nomination and the parcel is marked with a bold line.

Boundary Justification:

The boundaries of the property addressed in this nomination encompass the land occupied by the Beacon Engine Company No. 1 Firehouse, which was built in 1889, and its garage annex, which was built in 1924. The firehouse parking lot at Parcel 204702, which is located across from the firehouse on East Main Street at the east side of Liberty Street, is not included within the boundaries of the nominated property.

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

**Beacon Engine Company No. 1 Firehouse
Beacon (Dutchess County), New York**

Photograph Key

Beacon Engine Company No. 1 Firehouse
57 East Main Street
Beacon (Dutchess County), New York

Photographer: Jeffrey Shrimpton
Historic Preservation Consulting
14 Beachcroft Road
Gloucester, MA 01930
(978) 281-0683

Original negatives filed with photographer.

1. North elevation. View facing south.
2. North and east elevations. View facing west.
3. Streetscape and west elevation. View facing east.
4. North elevation, first story. View facing south.
5. North elevation, roof and tower. View facing south.
6. Interior, second floor. View facing south.
7. Interior, second floor, plaster ceiling medallion. View facing west.

Beacon Engine Company No. 1 Firehouse
57 East Main Street
Beacon, New York
Parcel 186702

6054-38



ALL RIGHTS RESERVED
NO PART OF THIS
MAP MAY BE REPRODUCED

SPECIAL DISTRICTS

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38	39	40	41	42	43	44	45	46	47	48	49	50	51	52	53	54	55	56	57	58	59	60	61	62	63	64	65	66	67	68	69	70	71	72	73	74	75	76	77	78	79	80	81	82	83	84	85	86	87	88	89	90	91	92	93	94	95	96	97	98	99	100
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LEGEND

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38	39	40	41	42	43	44	45	46	47	48	49	50	51	52	53	54	55	56	57	58	59	60	61	62	63	64	65	66	67	68	69	70	71	72	73	74	75	76	77	78	79	80	81	82	83	84	85	86	87	88	89	90	91	92	93	94	95	96	97	98	99	100
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SCALE

1" = 100'

1" = 200'

1" = 300'

1" = 400'

1" = 500'

1" = 600'

1" = 700'

1" = 800'

1" = 900'

1" = 1000'

CITY OF BEACON
DUTCHESS COUNTY, NEW YORK

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: NOMINATION

PROPERTY Beacon Engine Company No. 1 Firehouse
NAME:

MULTIPLE
NAME:

STATE & COUNTY: NEW YORK, Dutchess

DATE RECEIVED: 10/26/04 DATE OF PENDING LIST: 11/19/04
DATE OF 16TH DAY: 12/04/04 DATE OF 45TH DAY: 12/09/04
DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:

REFERENCE NUMBER: 04001341

REASONS FOR REVIEW:

APPEAL: N DATA PROBLEM: N LANDSCAPE: N LESS THAN 50 YEARS: N
OTHER: N PDIL: N PERIOD: N PROGRAM UNAPPROVED: N
REQUEST: N SAMPLE: N SLR DRAFT: N NATIONAL: N

COMMENT WAIVER: N

☒ ACCEPT ☐ RETURN ☐ REJECT 12/6/04 DATE

ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:

Entered in the
National Register

RECOM./CRITERIA _____

REVIEWER _____ DISCIPLINE _____

TELEPHONE _____ DATE _____

DOCUMENTATION see attached comments Y/N see attached SLR Y/N

If a nomination is returned to the nominating authority, the
nomination is no longer under consideration by the NPS.



1 Beacon Engine Company
No. 1 Firehouse
Dutchess County, NY



2 Beacon Engine Company
No. 1 Firehouse
Dutchess County, NY



3 Beacon Engine Company
No. 1 Firehouse
Dutchess County, NY



4 Beacon Engine Company
No. 1 Firehouse
Dutchess County, NY

TFI 0802<####>002BN
4636 11 N N N N-19 2073/100



5 Beacon Engine Company
No. 1 Firehouse
Dutchess County, NY



6 Beacon Engine Company
No. 1 Firehouse
Dutchess County, NY



7 Beacon Engine Company

No. 1 Firehouse

Dutchess County, NY

TEL 0802<##_##>002 EN
4769 11 N N N-39 2873-188

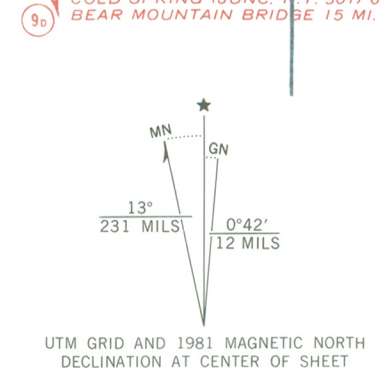
UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
GEOLOGICAL SURVEY

WAPPINGERS FALLS QUADRANGLE
NEW YORK
7.5 MINUTE SERIES (TOPOGRAPHIC)



Beacon Engine
Company No. 1
Firehouse
Beacon, Dutchess
County, N.Y.
Wappingers Falls
quad Zone 18
1:24,000
Easting 586692
Northing 4594905

Mapped, edited, and published by the Geological Survey
Control by USGS and NOS/NOAA
Topography by photogrammetric methods from aerial photographs
taken 1955. Field checked 1956
Hydrography compiled from NOS charts 282 (1954) and 283 (1954)
This information is not intended for navigational purposes
Polyconic projection. 10,000-foot grid ticks based on New York
coordinate system, east zone. 1000-meter Universal Transverse
Mercator grid ticks, zone 18, shown in blue. 1927 North
American Datum. To place on the predicted North American
Datum 1983 move the projection lines 6 meters south
and 35 meters west as shown by dashed corner ticks
Fine red dashed lines indicate selected fence and field lines where
generally visible on aerial photographs. This information is unchecked
Red tint indicates area in which only landmark buildings are shown
There may be private inholdings within the boundaries of
the National or State reservations shown on this map



SCALE 1:24 000
CONTOUR INTERVAL 10 FEET
NATIONAL GEODETIC VERTICAL DATUM OF 1929
DEPTH CURVES AND SOUNDINGS IN FEET—DATUM IS MEAN LOW WATER
THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE TWO DATUMS IS VARIABLE
SHORELINE SHOWN REPRESENTS THE APPROXIMATE LINE OF MEAN HIGH WATER
THE MEAN RANGE OF TIDE IS APPROXIMATELY 2.9 FEET
THIS MAP COMPLIES WITH NATIONAL MAP ACCURACY STANDARDS
FOR SALE BY U.S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY
DENVER, COLORADO 80225 OR RESTON, VIRGINIA 22092
A FOLDER DESCRIBING TOPOGRAPHIC MAPS AND SYMBOLS IS AVAILABLE ON REQUEST



ROAD CLASSIFICATION
Primary highway, hard surface
Secondary highway, hard surface
Unimproved road
Light-duty road, hard or improved surface
Interstate Route
U.S. Route
State Route

WAPPINGERS FALLS, N.Y.

N4130—W7352.5/7.5

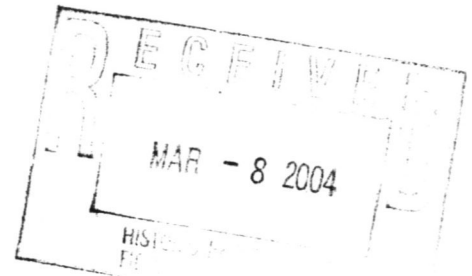
Revisions shown in purple and woodland compiled from
aerial photographs taken 1981 and other sources. This
information not field checked. Map edited 1981
Purple tint indicates extension of urban areas

1956
PHOTOREVISED 1981
DMA 6267 III SW—SERIES V821



CITY OF BEACON NEW YORK

MAYOR
Clara Lou Gould



Ruth L. Pierpont
Director, Historic Preservation
Field Services Bureau
NYSOPRHP
Peebles Island
POBox 189
Waterford, New York 12188-0189

March 4, 2004

RE: Beacon Engine Company No. 1 Firehouse

Dear Ms Pierpont,

Thank you for your letter with the very welcome news that this property will be considered by the State Review Board at its next meeting for nomination to the National and State Registers of Historic Places.

This building has been a very important part of our community and our history since it was constructed in 1889. We wholeheartedly support its nomination to the National and State Registers.

Sincerely,

Clara Lou Gould
Clara Lou Gould