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NPS Form 10-900 OMB No. 1024-0018

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

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Nat. Register of Historic Places
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 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: Assateague Beach Coast Guard Station

Other names/site number: United States Coast Guard Station No. 150

Name of related multiple property listing:

U.S. Government Lifesaving Stations, Houses of Refuge, and pre-1950 U.S. Coast Guard Stations Multiple Property Documentation Form

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

2. Location

Street & number: Beach Road

City or town: Unincorporated State: Virginia County: Accomack

Not For Publication: n/a Vicinity: n/a

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:

X national **___statewide** **___local**

Applicable National Register Criteria:

X A **___B** **X C** **___D**

Robert A. Mitchell, Deputy FPO 9/21/2015

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

National Park Service

State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

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

6.9.15

Signature of commenting official: **Date:**

Director **Virginia Department of Historic Resources**

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:) _____

Patrick Andrus 11/2/2015

Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

5. Classification

Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply.)

Private: ☐

Public – Local ☐

Public – State ☐

Public – Federal ☒

Category of Property

(Check only **one** box.)

Building(s) ☐

District ☒

Site ☐

Structure ☐

Object ☐

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

Contributing	Noncontributing	
4	0	buildings
0	0	sites
7	0	structures
0	0	objects
11	0	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

6. Function or Use
Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions.)
DEFENSE/coast guard facility

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions.)
RECREATION AND CULTURE/outdoor recreation
LANDSCAPE/conservation area

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions.)
LATE 19TH AND EARLY 20TH CENTURY REVIVALS/Colonial Revival
No Style

Materials: (enter categories from instructions.)
Principal exterior materials of the property: wood, concrete, metal, asbestos

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

Assateague Beach Coast Guard Station (United States Coast Guard Station No. 150) is an approximately 11.8-acre life-saving station complex sited on Fisherman's Point at the southern end of Assateague Island, a coastal island that straddles the Virginia-Maryland border. Established in 1922, the life-saving station is the second of two federal life-saving facilities at Assateague Beach. The present complex consists of 4 contributing buildings and 7 contributing structures relating to the historic function of the property: a station house and boathouse that follow U.S. Life-Saving Service (USLSS) and U.S. Coast Guard (USCG) standardized plans and incorporate Colonial Revival Style detailing; a second boathouse (now used as a garage); a lookout tower; and ancillary water collection, utility structures, and piers and walkways.

Assateague Island National Seashore was created for the purpose of "public outdoor recreation use and enjoyment" through Public Law 89-195 on September 21, 1965 (Bearss 1968:100–101; Mackintosh 1982:32–38). In 1972, the NPS submitted a draft National Register of Historic Places nomination for the Assateague Beach Coast Guard Station to the Virginia State Historic Preservation Office (VASHPO),

which entered the property in the Virginia Landmarks Register in 1973. On January 15, 1980, the Keeper of the National Register determined that the property was eligible for listing in the National Register (Keeper of the National Register 1985). As a result of a Cultural Landscapes Inventory (CLI) report prepared for the Station, the NPS determined that the Station is eligible for listing in the National Register. The VASHPO concurred with the findings of the CLI in September 2004. The VASHPO reconfirmed its opinion in April 2014, stating that the Station is eligible for the National Register at the national level under Criterion A in the area of Maritime History for its association with the life-rescue service and Criterion C as a significant representative example of early 20th century U.S. Coast Guard architecture (Kilpatrick 2004; Lee 2014).

Narrative Description

Setting

Assateague Beach Coast Guard Station is at the south end of Assateague Island, which is on the lower peninsula of the Eastern Shore of Chesapeake Bay in the Coastal Island physiographic region. This region is defined by its low, sandy islands that occur as a chain along the Atlantic Ocean and extend from New Jersey to North Carolina, roughly paralleling the mainland for 1.5–8 miles offshore. The islands vary in width from several hundred feet to about 0.5 mile and form an almost continuous barrier, broken only by narrow inlets leading into bays, channels, and salt marshes lying between the islands and the mainland. The geography of the region is highly dynamic due to the continuous action of natural forces. The tilted beds of the Coastal Plain extend offshore (east) from Assateague Island 50 to 75 miles to the edge of the North American continental shelf. The dynamic forces of littoral currents, winds, and westward-moving sands create the barrier island environment at the interface between the continental shelf zone and the coastal plain. Currently, Assateague Island extends approximately 36 miles from Ocean City Inlet at the north to Chincoteague Inlet at the south and is divided from the mainland by Sinepuxent Bay on the north and Chincoteague Bay on the south. In the past, the island was separated into multiple islands by inlets, which are now closed.

The Assateague Beach Coast Guard Station is on Fisherman's Hook, which is the southern tip of the island and approximately 6.9 miles off the Virginia mainland. Fisherman's Hook curves to the west to form Toms Cove behind on the west side of the island, and the station complex spans the arm of the hook on a north-south orientation for a distance of approximately 2,000 feet, with the station house centered on the arm and a boathouse on Toms Cove. A second boathouse, which formerly fronted the Atlantic Ocean, is now several hundred feet inland due to littoral currents that are depositing sands at the southeast corner of the island and gradually enlarging Fisherman's Hook (and the life-saving station's parcel) in the process. The immediate setting of the property consists of vegetated dunes and beach, with dunes reaching a maximum height of about 15 feet. Lands flanking the property to the north and south are owned and managed by the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service (USF&WS) as the Chincoteague National Wildlife Refuge.

Offshore seafloor conditions are an important component of the property's setting and relate to its historical function. About 2 to 4 miles offshore from the property is Chincoteague Shoal (aka Assateague Shoal) a long narrow bank about 0.25 mile wide and 5 miles long that is neighbored by additional smaller shoals and banks. Storms and littoral currents continuously shift these formations, opening and closing safe passages for ship almost continuously. During storms, the uneven and shallow banks and shoals create high and unpredictable surf.

The buildings and structures of the Assateague Beach Coast Guard Station are organized in a narrow, almost linear sequence moving longitudinally north-south through the property's parcel and oriented toward the Atlantic (south) and Toms Cove (north) shorelines. A boathouse and a former boathouse (now a garage) are at the north and south ends of the complex, respectively. Near the approximate midpoint and highest elevation of the property are the station house and lookout tower, the core of the property. Ancillary structures such as utility huts and instrumentation poles are clustered around the station house, and various wood and concrete walkways connect the different resources. A few electrical poles and concrete traces are also found throughout the property. An informal sand and grass open area, or yard, which likely served as an activity space for drills and possibly recreation, surrounds the core buildings. An entrance road (the most recent of many that have been built, destroyed by weather events, and reestablished) winds through the property; it enters from the west and then swings north past the station house, where a short spur leads to a parking area then runs to the northerly boathouse. The area is sparsely vegetated with dune grass and shrubs; there are no ornamental plantings.

Resource Descriptions[1]

The following resource descriptions are organized north to south through the historic district, beginning with the primary functional components of the property, then moving through the district again to discuss the ancillary components and features.

The **USCG Boathouse and Marine Rail Launchway (LCS No. 007744, contributing building)** anchors the north end of the life-saving station complex, where it is set on the shoreline of Toms Cove. A narrow, railed, wood plank walkway supported on wood piles runs around the west, south, and east sides of the building, and the marine rail launchway (the launchway) extends off the north side of the building, where it slopes down to the watersheet. The USCG Boathouse, built 1938–1939, is a one-story, hip-roofed, wood and steel frame, rectangular building that stands on pilings. It has a three-bay-by-five-bay (approximately 46-by-62-foot) rectangular plan and is in the Colonial Revival style. The building has two facades: the south facade oriented toward the station house and the north facade facing Toms Cove. The red, wood-shingled roof has three gabled dormers on its east and west slopes, a single dormer on the north slope, and a copper gutter set under the shallow overhanging eaves. Each dormer has shingle siding and a double-hung wood sash window with arched upper sash. The boathouse's main pedestrian entrance is

[1] Portions of the resource descriptions are adapted from *Assateague Beach Coast Guard Station Historic Structures Report: Station House, Garage, Boathouse*, Maureen K. Phillips, National Park Service, Historic Architecture Program, Lowell, MA, 2007 and *Cultural Landscapes Inventory for Assateague Beach Coast Guard Station*, Nancy J. Brown, Olmsted Center for Landscape Preservation, Boston, MA, 2004.

centered on the south wall and sheltered under a pedimented gable-roofed porch supported on pairs of posts. The entrance's four-panel wood door is flanked by half-height sidelights and topped by a paneled rectangular pediment. Three boat doors fill the north wall of the building and are flanked by paired pilasters and topped with rectangular pediments. Each door is a vertical-lift wood panel roll door with multiple lights in the upper panels. Two light sconces are set on the pilasters between the doors, and a blank sign panel is mounted above the center door. The boathouse's painted, wood-shingled walls terminate with paired pilasters at each corner, rest on a stepped plank water table, and are topped with a wide plank architrave. The regularly spaced windows utilize six-over-six double-hung wood sash set within plain wood plank surrounds and resting on a wood sill. Two caged metal light sconces are mounted on the east and west walls of the building. The boathouse interior consists of a single large boat room on the first floor with a pair of lockers built into the southwest and southeast room corners. The ceiling and walls are painted plywood with v-groove edges, the floor is heavy wood planking. The attic is unfinished and accessed via a steep metal stair.

The USCG Boathouse launchway extends north from the USCG Boathouse interior, out the boat doors, then down into the water of Toms Cove, where it continues for an unknown length below the watersheet. This launchway is a wood pile-supported, frame structure topped with three steel marine railway track systems bolted to timher stringers and surrounded by a wood plank deck. The rails continue below the boathouse's boat doors and into the building's interior, where three boat cradles are sheltered. A pair of narrow wood pile finger piers flanks the three railways and extends approximately 100 feet north from the level deck of the launchway.

The **Boathouse Cistern (LCS No. none, contributing structure)**, built circa (c.) 1943, is at the northern end of the USCG Boathouse's west elevation and rests on a cluster of wood piles. The cistern consists of a cylindrical tank, 8 feet in diameter and 10 feet high, constructed of white painted vertical staves held in place with metal compression rings and turnbuckles. The cistern tank is topped with a red painted, board and batten, conical roof with a decorative finial at its peak. The cistern is fed by the gutter downspout from the Boathouse drainage system. The cistern was removed before 1987, then reconstructed by NPS c.1992. Its design, location, and materials replicate those of extant original cisterns, and it continues to function as an important component of the Boathouse drainage and water collection system (Phillips 2007: 47-48).

The **USCG Station House (LCS No. 007742, contributing building)**, built in 1922, is approximately 700 feet south of the USCG Boathouse and oriented facing south toward the Atlantic coast. The Colonial Revival style building is two stories high, has a gahle-on-hip roof, a raised poured concrete basement, and a five-bay-by-two-bay (approximately 40-by-26-foot) rectangular plan. A small entry porch is centered on the south elevation and a hip-roofed porch extends across the west end of the huilding. The red, asbestos shingle-clad roof has a single brick chimney set off-center on the ridge line, plank gable rakes and deep soffits, and a copper gutter system. A single four-light wood-sash window with a peaked top is set in each gahle end. The wood clapboard-clad walls terminate at simple plank corner boards and are punctuated with regularly spaced windows. The wood windows, which are covered with aluminum storm units, incorporate six-over-six double-hung sash and have plain wood plank surrounds and sills. The south entry

porch has a metal-clad roof supported on a plank architrave and pairs of wood posts and pilasters. It rests on a poured concrete stoop with integrally cast concrete stairs. The entry's paneled wood door has a six-light window in its upper half and is set in a wood plank surround. A painted wood sign on the porch architrave reads "U.S. Coast Guard Assateague Beach Station." The west porch has a shallow, wood-shingle clad roof, square posts, wood steps, and a wood plank deck with its underside enclosed in diagonal lattice with plank trim. A wood door and surround similar to that of the south elevation are sheltered under the porch roof. A third entry is set off-center on the north elevation and consists of a paneled wood door and plank surround and is accessed with an open wood stair and deck. A fourth entry, now covered with plywood on the east elevation, formerly accessed the basement. The building is set on a high painted concrete water table that has regularly spaced wood six-over-six windows.

The Station House interior is organized on a cruciform plan with a center hall running longitudinally in the building, a winding staircase located toward the front (south) side of the building, and major rooms occupying the four quadrants of the building. The first floor's primary spaces include the kitchen, mess room, keeper's room, and office. The second floor has three sleeping rooms, a spare room, and a bathroom. The partially finished basement contains utility rooms for laundry, coal, the boiler, and storage. Historical finishes are retained in the major first and second floor spaces and consist of plaster ceilings, plaster walls with a plank chair rail and baseboard, and plank floors (now covered in modern sheet vinyl). Doors are of the wood horizontal panel type, and doors and windows are set in simple plank surrounds. Heat is provided by cast iron radiators. The basement is partially finished with stud and plaster interior partition walls and trim similar to that found upstairs. The floor and exterior walls of the basement are concrete.

The **Station House Cistern (LCS No. none, contributing structure)**, built at the same time as the Station House, is situated just off the north wall of the Station House. The cistern consists of a pair of cylindrical tanks, 8 feet in diameter and 10 feet high, constructed of white painted staves held in place with metal compression rings and turnbuckles and topped with red painted, board and batten, conical roofs with a decorative finial at the peak. The tanks are seated on timber bents that extend 12 feet above grade and are each composed of 12-inch-diameter piles reinforced with plank cross-bracing. The cistern is fed by a pair of gutter extensions from the Station House drainage system.

Approximately 75 feet southwest of the Station House is the **USCG Lookout Tower (LCS No. 007746, contributing structure)**. Constructed between 1922 and 1925, the 37-foot-high Lookout Tower consists of an open-frame steel tower seated on four concrete pads and topped with a 7-foot-square frame cabin with a wood platform.[2] The tower's steel frame is bolted together from rolled L-channel members. The cab at the top of the tower, providing 360-degree views of the surrounding ocean, is accessed by a wood ladder with two intermediate landings. The cabin, which is sheltered under an overhanging hipped roof clad in wood shingles, has clapboard walls, one-over-one, double-hung wood sash windows, and a paneled wood door. A galvanized pipe railing guards the perimeter of the cabin platform. The structure was raised to its current height of three stories in 1938–1939.

[2] The LCS entry for the Lookout Tower lists a construction date of 1922; however, the HRS documents that the structure was actually not completed until sometime around 1925–1928 (Phillips 2007:11, 42, 43).

The 1922 **USCG Garage/Boathouse (LCS No. 007743, contributing building)** sits approximately 450 feet southwest of the Station House.[3] The one-and-one-half story, three-bay-by-one-bay, rectangular, hip-roofed building is sheathed in white painted clapboards and the roof is clad in red asbestos tile; 1-foot deep soffits are enclosed with wood boards and copper half-round gutters. The wood frame building is seated on a wood-frame base supported by 6-inch diameter wood pilings; at one time the pilings were exposed 4 feet above the ground, but shifting sands have buried the posts and sill of the building. The Garage/Boathouse has entrances on the east and south elevations consisting of green-painted vertical board double doors. The southern entrance faces onto the entrance road and has two sets of doors, accessed by low concrete ramps with embedded metal traction rings; spalling concrete parging has exposed these rings in places. The eastern entrance, at the north end of the elevation, consists of one set of vertical board doors accessed by a low concrete ramp, which was likely used for smaller boats and pedestrian access. Window openings in the east, north, and west elevations are filled with green painted, six-over-six, double-hung, wood sash trimmed with plain board surrounds. The interior of the Garage/Boathouse is open except for a series of exposed wood support posts and an attic, which is accessed through a ceiling hatch in the south end of the room. The floor, which was likely originally wood, is poured concrete with traction rings embedded in the western portion of the floor. The Garage/Boathouse was converted to use as a garage after the completion of the USCG Boathouse in 1939; by 1975, following acquisition of the property by the National Park Service, the building was used as a maintenance shop.

The **Garage Cistern (LCS No. none, contributing structure)** was erected c. 1940 when the Garage was converted from a boathouse. This structure is situated at the southern end of the east elevation of the Garage/Boathouse. The cistern consists of a cylindrical tank, 8 feet in diameter and 10 feet high, constructed of white painted staves held in place with metal compression rings and turnbuckles. A red-painted conical roof, constructed of board and batten and accented with decorative finial, tops the structure. Gutter downspouts from the Garage/Boathouse drainage system supply water to the cistern.

The **USCG Wharf and Breakwater (LCS No. 007745, contributing structure)**, built 1931–1935, extends approximately 400 feet north into Toms Cove from the shoreline adjacent to the USCG Boathouse. The wharf is in the form of a finger pier with an attenuated "T" plan and is constructed in a typical early twentieth-century design with wood piles, caps, stringers, and plank decking. The breakwater, added along the east side of the USCG Wharf in the 1950s, is a wood sheet pile structure topped by a timber fender system and bolted to the east wharf stringer.

A 5-foot-wide **Wood Walkway (LCS No. none, contributing structure)**, constructed between 1931 and 1935, begins approximately 50 feet north of the Station House and runs north, connecting with the USCG

[3] According to the *Assateague Beach Coast Guard Station Historic Structure Report* (Phillips 2007), this building was constructed as a boathouse and converted to a garage in 1938–1939, when the current boathouse was built. The List of Classified Structures (LCS) entry for the Garage does not record the prior use of the garage. The resource is designated the Garage/Boathouse in this National Register document to recognize the original function of the building (Phillips 2007:11).

Wharf and Breakwater at its landward (south) end. The walkway is constructed of wood planking lying on wood stringers, which rest directly on the ground. A portion of the walkway, approximately one-third of the way to the ocean, is missing.

The **USCG Generator House (LCS No. none, contributing building)** is northeast of the Station House. Built in 1959, this utility hut has a shallow pitched shed roof with deep plank fascia boards, painted concrete block walls, and a concrete slab foundation. A pair of wood doors, accessed by a low concrete ramp, sits just off center in the south elevation. Window openings in the east and west elevations are covered over with plywood, and a pair of former window openings in the north elevation are filled with concrete block.

The **System of Concrete Sidewalks (LCS No. none, contributing structure)** consists of a 6-by-8-foot poured concrete landing at the base of the stairs for the south Station House entrance, a 3-foot-wide poured concrete sidewalk that wraps around the east side of the Station House, and a 3-foot-wide poured concrete sidewalk between the Station House and Generator House. The north entrance landing is stamped with "1934"; the remainder of the sidewalk system was completed by 1966. A portion of the Generator House walkway was removed in 1999 during work on the septic system.

Three small-scale features are set along the west side of the wood walkway on the western periphery of the district. Four square, concrete footings of a former U.S. Navy triangulation Tower, built before 1939, are near the shoreline of Toms Cove. This feature is unrelated to historic-period life-saving operations. A National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) weather instrument monopole was built after 1967 west of the walkway and entrance road, approximately 260 feet south of the Boathouse. The approximately 46-foot-high monopole is fitted with two receivers (a circular microwave receiver and a wire discone radio wave receiver) and two sets of small-scale solar panels and is not associated with life-saving operations on the property. A c. 1949 USCG pump house foundation sits just west of the southern end of the Wood Walkway and is visible as a square concrete perimeter footing that extends just above the surrounding grade. Threaded anchor bolts for a now-missing mud sill project at regular intervals from the top surface of the approximately 6-by-4-foot feature. The superstructure of the pump house is no longer extant; it is unknown at what point the pump house was removed/destroyed.

Statement of Integrity

The Assateague Beach Coast Guard Station retains overall integrity of workmanship, feeling, setting, design, materials, location, and association necessary to convey its significance. With the exception of an additional 6.48 acres added to the original 5.32 acres of the installation due to the shifting landmass of Assateague Island, the site retains its character as an oceanfront life-saving property on an undeveloped corner of Assateague Island. Minor additions in the form of late twentieth-century utility and instrumentation poles have also occurred. The property retains overall integrity of design, with nearly all of the functional elements of a life-saving station, with the exception of two missing small-scale features: a drill pole and a flag pole. The most important individual resources within the district—the USCG Station House, USCG Boathouse, USCG Garage/Boathouse, and USCG Lookout Tower—retain

sufficient integrity to convey their intended appearance and function from the period of significance and, in the case of the Station House and Boathouse, demonstrate their origins from standardized plans as well as their important Colonial Revival architectural details. Only minor interior and exterior changes have been made to the USCG Station House and Boathouse. The addition of vinyl flooring and the renovation of the kitchen are the greatest impingements to the Station House's integrity. The window shutters and a chimney have been removed from the Boathouse, and the original south door replaced.

HISTORIC DISTRICT DATA SHEET

CONTRIBUTING RESOURCES

RESOURCE NAME	LCS ID/ ASMIS ID	DATE(S)	PHOTO # (if applicable)
Buildings = 4			
US Coast Guard Station House	007742	1922	1, 2, 9, 10
US Coast Guard Boathouse and Marine Rail Launchway	007744	1938–1939	2–5
US Coast Guard Garage/Boathouse	007743	1922	13
US Coast Guard Generator House	None	1959	8
Structures = 7			
US Coast Guard Lookout Tower	007746	1922–1925	1, 12
Station House Cistern	None	1922	10
US Coast Guard Wharf and Breakwater	007745	1931–1935	2, 7
System of Concrete Sidewalks	None	1931–1935	8, 9
Wood Walkway	None	1931–1935	2
Garage Cistern	None	c. 1940	13
Boathouse Cistern	None	c. 1943 Reconstructed c. 1992	6

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. A 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.)
MARITIME HISTORY
ARCHITECTURE

Period of Significance
1922–1967

Significant Dates
1922: Station House and Garage/Boathouse constructed
1938–1939: Boathouse constructed
1967: US Coast Guard turns property over to National Park Service

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

Cultural Affiliation
N/A

Architect/Builder
Mindeleff, Victor

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 Assateague Beach Coast Guard Station (United States Coast Guard Station No. 150) is eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places under Criteria A and C at the national level as a resource that meets the registration requirements established under the U.S. Government Lifesaving Stations, Houses of Refuge, and pre-1950 U.S. Coast Guard Stations Multiple Property Documentation Form (MPDF). The property possesses significance under Criterion A in the area of Maritime History as an example of the federal life-saving station property type within the MPDF context Federal Government Lifesaving Programs, 1848–1950. Maritime life-saving has been a significant aspect of marine transportation in the United States, and the federal government has been involved in life-saving operations since the mid-nineteenth century. Assateague Beach Coast Guard Station is a federally constructed and operated life-saving station built before 1950 and planned as a component of the national system of life-saving stations. The U.S. Congress established Assateague Beach as a life-saving station in 1874 under the Life-Saving Stations Act. The current station was developed in 1922 by the U.S Coast Guard (USCG) during the organization's formative years and then expanded during the 1930s as part of a major effort to modernize shore stations in the early twentieth century. The property is significant under Criterion C in the area of Architecture for its representation of the design, materials, and workmanship that characterize the Station Complex and Chatham Design property types as defined in the MPDF. The property possesses additional significance under Criterion C as an example of the work of USLSS master architect Victor Mindeleff, as identified in the MPDF. Assateague Beach Coast Guard Station consists of a grouping of purpose-built buildings and structures that sheltered and supported the functional components necessary to perform life-saving missions. The Station House exemplifies the Chatham Design that was created by Mindeleff in 1914.

The period of significance for the Assateague Beach Coast Guard Station begins in 1922, when the station was completed and commenced life-saving activities, and extends through 1967 when life-saving operations ceased at the site.[4]

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

CRITERION A–MARITIME HISTORY

The Assateague Beach Coast Guard Station meets the registration requirements for national significance under Criterion A in the area of Maritime History as defined for the federal government life-saving station "Station Complex" property type in the U.S. Government Lifesaving Stations, Houses of Refuge, and pre-

[4] The Assateague Beach Coast Guard Station does not need to meet Criteria Consideration G because the majority of the period of significance is greater than 50 years old.

1950 U.S. Coast Guard Stations MPDF (Section F). The station's connection with national trends in the evolution of federal life-saving programs and its placement at a location along an Atlantic trade route with a notorious and lengthy history of shipwrecks make it of exceptional value in representing the importance of the protection of maritime commerce in the nation's history. The U.S. Congress established a federal life-saving service post at Assateague Beach in 1876, just 5 years after the service was established, and the Assateague Beach Coast Guard Station was constructed in 1922 to replace this post during the early years of the USCG's institutional life. The property represents the national concern for the protection of shipping and mariners' lives in coastal waters and the related significance of shipping and affiliated maritime trades in the country's history. The station possesses the requisite aspects of integrity necessary to convey its significance as defined in the MPDF. It specifically retains its feeling as an early twentieth century life saving station adjacent to Chincoteague Shoal and its association with federal life saving activities during the transition between the U.S. Life Saving Service and the early years of the U.S. Coast Guard. The property retains the historical location, maritime setting, materials, workmanship, and design that are essential to conveying this feeling and association. All of the physical elements, excepting the wreck pole, described by the MPDF Registration Requirements' "Hierarchy of Character-Defining Features" as being commonly associated with life-saving stations are represented at Assateague Beach Coast Guard Station.

Maritime History of Assateague Island and Offshore Environs

Assateague Island was historically sparsely populated with small communities whose primary economic activities were related to livestock herding, fishing and canning, and salt manufacturing. Famous Florentine navigator and explorer Giovanni da Verrazano is thought to have made landfall near Assateague Island while exploring the East coast of North America in 1524. Europeans first settled the lower peninsula of the Eastern Shore of Chesapeake Bay, encompassing present-day Accomack County and Northampton County, Virginia, and Worcester County, Maryland, about 1615, but did not establish themselves on the coastal islands until the third quarter of the seventeenth century due to the islands' remote and inhospitable nature. The Maryland-Virginia border at Assateague Island was established in 1668, and the survey and permanent settlement of the island began between 1687 and 1686. Spurred by new colonial regulations concerning livestock, particularly horses, small groups of livestock rangers raised horses and sheep on the island during the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries. As of 1764, there were only 25 residents on Assateague. During the 1770s, the first salt works were established on the island and was the only employment other than the raising of livestock until the mid-nineteenth century, when improved transportation and communication systems facilitated the development of small-scale tourism, fishing, and fish-packing enterprises on the island (Bearss 1968:3–5, 7–12, 12–16, 92–99; Langley 2002:17, 21).

By the early twentieth century—the apex of private community development on Assateague Island—there were several small, mostly seasonal communities on Assateague Island: North Beach, Green Run Inlet, and Assateague Village. Assateague Village, north of the Assateague Beach Coast Guard Station, was the largest of the three with a population of just over 200 at the turn of the century. Settlement at Assateague Village was encouraged by the establishment in 1912 of a factory on Toms Cove that produced fish oil

and fertilizer and provided an important market for watermen's catch and employment for islanders. The construction and operation of four federal life-saving stations in the late nineteenth century (described below), including the Assateague Beach Life-Saving Station, were also important sources of employment. In 1943, the federal government acquired the entire Virginia portion of Assateague Island, excepting the land of the Assateague Beach Coast Guard Station, for the development of Chincoteague National Wildlife Refuge, currently managed under the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service (USF&WS). There were sporadic attempts to develop the Maryland portion of the island into tracts of vacation homes. These were ultimately halted by the establishment of Maryland's Assateague Beach State Park in 1956–1962 and the Assateague Island National Seashore in 1965 (Bearss 1968:12, 80–90, 95, 96, 100–101; Langley 2002:32; Mackintosh 1982:32–38).

While Assateague Island itself was of little note in Virginia and Maryland's economic or community development, the coastal waters off Assateague Island were located along an important thoroughfare for ships sailing between major eastern United States ports such as Baltimore, Norfolk, Philadelphia, and New York, and for ships sailing international routes between these cities, the Caribbean, and Europe. The shifting, but ever-present Chincoteague Shoal and lesser shoals and banks were difficult to navigate and the region's powerful storms, particularly in late summer, autumn, and winter, increased the challenge. These conditions, which could easily cripple a sailing ship, began victimizing craft off Assateague Island almost from the beginning of European exploration and settlement. Consequently, the waters off Assateague Island rapidly developed a particular notoriety among maritime professionals as a hazardous area. The first recorded wreck at the island occurred in 1698, when the British ship *Princess Ann* broke up on Assateague Beach. Until 1875, when the original Assateague Beach Life-Saving Station opened, approximately 80 documented wrecks took place on the island's shoals or the island itself.[5] The coastal navigation guides and other tradebooks that were published beginning in the late nineteenth century soon included the hazards of Assateague in their directions for sailing the East coast (Blunt 1863:22; Furlong 1806:194; Langley 2002: 12–13, 44–46, 62–79).

The frequent wrecks on Assateague Island's coastline fostered early colonial and state efforts to aid ships wrecked in this area. A substantial illicit trade in wreck salvage had evolved among island and nearby mainland residents by the late eighteenth century. In one incident in 1750, the Spanish ship *La Galga* (The Greyhound) came ashore on Assateague Island in Maryland. Nearby residents from Virginia and Maryland cut up the ship and plundered the entirety of the vessel. The president of Virginia (as the leader of the colony was then called) and the governor of Maryland were both solicited for aid but proved powerless to rectify the situation. The notoriety of the region with respect to plundering was such that Virginia established a Commissioner of Wrecks post in 1782.[6] These commissioners were appointed to each coastal county and were empowered to assist vessels in distress by impressing constables, local residents, and nearby American ships into service. They were also responsible for protecting and disposing of wrecked vessels and goods therein. In 1799, the Maryland Assembly established the position

[5] This number is undoubtedly low, as many sailing ships disappeared without any trace or communication.
[6] The first commissioner observed that Accomack County was held in "great odium "on account of "robberies made on wrecked vessels" and specifically referenced the dangerous shoals of Assateague Island (Virginia Commissioner of Wrecks John Tackle, as quoted in Bearss 1968:34).

of wreck-master for Worcester County with similar responsibilities to those of the Virginia wreck-masters, noting, "from the exposure of the southeast bounds of Worcester County to the Atlantic Ocean many vessels have been and may hereafter be stranded on the seacoast of the county…and the goods and other property belonging to such vessels may be embezzled and stolen to the great injury of the owners and insurers" (Acts of the Maryland Assembly, as quoted in Bearss 1968:34 35; General Assembly of Maryland 1800; Langley 2002:60).[7]

The high volume of ship traffic and hazardous nature of the coastline also prompted calls for navigational aids at Assateague Island. The need for lighthouses along the Eastern Shore was evident since the Colonial Period, but no such aids were constructed until the 1830s, when the U.S. Congress appropriated $7,750 to the Lighthouse Establishment within the Department of the Treasury "for building of a light-house on one of the Chincoteague Islands in the State of Virginia" (Congressional Acts, as quoted in Bearss 1968:48). Government contractors completed this lighthouse on Assateague Island by January 1833. The Light-House Board, which succeeded the Lighthouse Establishment, found in 1852 that Assateague Island's lighthouse beacon was inadequate for reaching ships passing the dangerous shoals off Assateague Island's coast. Consequently, the Light-House Board recommended, and the U.S. Congress appropriated in 1860, $50,000 for construction of a first-class lighthouse at Assateague to replace the first structure. The Civil War delayed construction and, after an additional congressional appropriation, the lighthouse, designated Assateague Light, was completed and lit in 1867 (Bearss 1968:48–52, 56).

Despite their known hazards, Assateague Island and adjacent coastal islands were delayed in receiving life-saving stations. As described in the MPDF, the first federal appropriation for life-saving equipment or activities in the country was in 1847, and additional scattered appropriations for regional construction of life-saving boats and boat houses elsewhere along the Atlantic and Gulf Coasts would follow over the next 24 years, until the U.S. Congress created a federal life-saving service in 1871 with federally funded employees under the Department of the Treasury. This service was formally designated as the USLSS agency in 1878 (Koski-Karrell et al. 2013:E3–E5).

The waters off Assateague Island and off other Mid-Atlantic coastal islands were an almost immediate priority for new life-saving stations. In 1873, the congressional appropriation for the life-saving service funded 22 life-saving stations, including 3 in Virginia, and authorized a study to identify additional need for stations. The resulting study report, issued by a three-man life-saving service commission in 1874, recommended that fully equipped life-saving stations be established on the Delaware and Virginia coasts. Acting on the committee's recommendations, Congress passed the June 20, 1874, Life-Saving Stations Act, which appropriated funds for eight "complete life-saving stations," on the Atlantic Coast in Delaware, Maryland, and Virginia; two of these stations, the Assateague Beach Life-Saving Station and

[7] The Virginia act precedes by four years the first life-saving service established in the American colonies, the Humane Society of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, founded in 1786. However, Virginia's legislation was primarily concerned with the salvage of vessels and property on board, and only makes reference in general terms to assisting ships and their crew and passengers that have founded or are in danger of founding. It contains no direct reference to life-saving, and did not result in the establishment of life-saving infrastructure (General Assembly of Virginia 1782; Koski-Karell et al. 2013:E-2).

Green Run Inlet Life-Saving Station, were on Assateague Island and were put into operation during the winter of 1875–1876.[8] Two additional life-saving stations would be added later to the island to reduce the distance between stations: Pope's Island opened in 1878 and North Beach opened in 1884. In 1876, geographic life-saving districts were delineated and Assateague Island became part of District #5 of the U.S. Life-Saving Service. However, in 1900 the districts were re-configured and the island became part of District #6. Today, Assateague Beach Coast Guard Station is the last remaining complete life-saving station on the Assateague Island (Bearss 1968:36–37, 40–42; Langley 2002:31; Noble 1994:31).[9]

The Assateague Beach Life-Saving Station

The Assateague Beach Life-Saving Station, predecessor to the current station, was built at the southern end of Assateague Island, which is now about 2 miles north of the Assateague Beach Coast Guard Station. The Station's location was chosen for its proximity to an inlet, where ships were more likely to need assistance. The facility design was an "Integral Station" (as defined under the MPDF) that combined living quarters and space for boat and equipment storage within one building. Built to the standardized plan of Treasury Department Architect Francis War Chandler, this so-called Red House Design used a combination of the then-popular Stick and Gothic styles of architecture (Bearss 1968; Koski-Karell et al. 2013:F2, F10).

Station-master John A. Jones wrote the first entry in the daily operational logbook for the Assateague Beach Life-Saving Station on December 1, 1875. As was typical for life-saving stations, station staff, or "surfmen" as they were popularly referred to, kept watch at all hours, performed beach patrols to identify vessels in trouble, and maintained a log book of daily activity. Drills in various life-saving skills occurred weekly. Telephone communication was established between the lighthouse and the station in 1898. The Assateague Beach Life-Saving Station proved its value hundreds of times—from 1875 to 1915, the greatest period of activity for any of the four stations on Assateague Island, surfmen answered 261 calls for assistance from distressed vessels. The crew of Assateague handled 174 of these calls, far outpacing

[8] The full name of the legislation was "An Act to Provide for the establishment of life-saving stations and houses of refuge upon the sea and lake coasts of the United States and to promote the efficiency of the life-saving service." In addition to the construction of new stations, the legislation also introduced two noteworthy activities into the USLSS program: the statistical documentation of all US ship disasters and the awarding of life-saving medals for specific acts of heroism (reprinted in Smith and Powell 1929:153–154).

[9] The Green Run Station was decommissioned in 1937 and its buildings were sold. Many of the outbuildings and a portion of the station house were retained on the island and adapted as the Green Run Lodge, a sportsman's camp. After portions of the camp/lifesaving station burned sometime between 1952 and 1954, the station house or a portion thereof was moved to the current Green Run Lodge location and integrated into its lodge building as the "kitchen". Other portions of Green Run Station were moved to the mainland. The North Beach Station was decommissioned in 1952 and the station was burned by vandals in 1962. The Pope's Island Coast Guard Station was decommissioned in 1953; a fire destroyed its Station House and two outbuildings in 1970, and its coal house burned in 1981. The Pope's Island boathouse was moved to North Beach and restored (Bearss 1968:44; Eshelman and Russell 2004:59–60; Mackintosh 1982:138–139).

the activity of the other stations on the island.[10] Just two shipwrecks resulted in loss of life. Perhaps the most widely publicized wreck handled by the Assateague Beach Life-Saving Station was that of the Navy's U.S.S. *Despatch*, which was then-President Benjamin Harrison's official yacht, during a gale in the fall of 1891. Storm conditions and confused navigation resulted in the ship foundering on Assateague Shoals. The life-saving station's Captain James T. Tracy and his surfmen rescued 65 of the 75 men on board using the station's surfboat (Chicago Daily Tribune 1891:1). Despite the large numbers of rescues, however, Assateague Beach Life-Saving Station's surfmen did not earn any Gold Life-Saving Medals, the highest honor for a surfman (Bearss 1968:43, 48–52, 56; NPS 2004:2a/4).

In 1915, the U.S. Life-Saving Service and U.S. Revenue Cutter Service were merged into the new USCG, which took over operation of all USLSS stations. The stations were renamed as USCG stations and Assateague Beach Life-Saving Station was designated USCG Station No. 150 in the USCG's Sixth District, which encompassed portions of Delaware, Maryland, Virginia, and North Carolina (Koski-Karell et al. 2013:E–10; Smith and Powell 1929:120, 144).

Events of the early twentieth century brought new responsibilities to Assateague Beach Life-Saving Station. During World War I (1914–1918), the Navy had control of the USCG and gave life-saving stations a national defense mission to be on the lookout for hostile ships and submarines. German submarines were active in the Atlantic Ocean and captured or sank American ships near Assateague Island, but the life-saving crews were never involved in rescues of these ships. During the years of Prohibition (1920–1933), the USCG was responsible for policing the coast to prevent "rum-running," which was prevalent on isolated beaches such as Assateague Island's. The crew of the Assateague Beach Coast Guard Station assisted with this larger USCG mission (Bearss 1968:73–74; NPS 2004:2a/5).

Assateague Beach Coast Guard Station

United States Coast Guard Construction and Operation

During the early twentieth century, coastal geological processes formed new land at the south end of Assateague Island, creating Fishing Point and Toms Cove. The gradual extension of the point rendered the Assateague Beach Life-Saving Station's operations increasingly cumbersome as the station became farther and farther from the Atlantic Ocean. Eventually, the USCG constructed a small boathouse at Sheep Pen Hill at the "front" of the island, closer to the ocean. This measure was only temporary,

[10] The record of life-saving activity at Assateague Island reinforced that the location was of particular danger to shipping. The total number of rescues performed by Assateague Island's four life-saving stations during the period from 1875-1915 matched that of any four stations on the North Carolina Outer Banks, one of the most notorious and dangerous stretches of coastal waters in the country (Bearss 1968:43).

however, and in the early 1920s the USCG decided to build a new station on the ocean side of the island (Phillips 2007:11; NPS 2004:2a/5).[11]

The U.S. Congress allocated funds for a new station in 1921, and that same year the Secretary of the Treasury acquired on behalf of the USCG a 5.32-acre tract of land from Samuel B. Field, a large landholder at the south end of the island.[12] The USCG contract for the station's construction was awarded to William Russell of Lewes, Delaware, the same year. Russell completed construction (with USCG staff assistance) in November 1922. On November 27, 1922, John M. Richardson, Officer in Charge, received the keys to the new station and orders to move in. The old station was cleaned, repaired, and vacated and the new station was fully operational by December 1. On January 1, 1923, the station was designated Assateague Beach Station. Richardson served as officer in charge until 1936 when he retired after 20 years of service with the Assateague Beach Station (NPS 2004:2a/5, 2a/9; Phillips 2007:11).

The first two buildings constructed for the Assateague Beach Coast Guard Station were the **USCG Station House (LCS No. 007742, contributing building)**, which included the **Station House Cistern (LCS No. none, contributing structure)**, and the **USCG Garage/Boathouse (LCS No. 007743, contributing building)** completed in 1922. The Garage/Boathouse's original function was as a boathouse for the facility and the structure was oriented toward the south for launching surfboats directly into the Atlantic Ocean. The **USCG Lookout Tower (LCS No. 007746, contributing structure)** was completed from 1922 to 1925, owing to a delay in adding the tower cabin. A Drill Pole (aka Wreck Pole), a mast-like structure used by life-saving station crews to practice the operation of life-saving equipment, was also built, but is no longer extant (Phillips 2007:11–12).

Routine daily and weekly operations at the new station differed little from those at the old station, although the number of rescues was reduced. The morning and evening colors, or "sunrise" and "sunset," were recorded, and weather and surf conditions watched throughout the day. Surfmen inspected the station buildings, grounds, and equipment and participated in drills and regulation determined by the day of the week, including the international code of signals, motor boat laws, rules of road, general service signals, resurrection drill, occulting-light practice, wigwag practice, beach apparatus drill, and the semaphore drill. The beach apparatus drill using the Drill Pole and Lyle gun was performed until at least 1947 and was the main life-saving drill; it was timed and the elevation and angle of the rope shot from the Lyle gun was recorded. A watch was maintained in the USCG Lookout Tower and beach patrols were performed. At least two patrol poles with key boxes on them were at the north and south ends of the beach; the north patrol was halfway between the Assateague Beach Station and Pope's Island Station and

[11] The physical condition of the old station may also have been a factor in the decision to rebuild it. As early as 1891, a newspaper article had described the facility as the "old rickety life-saving station that is a disgrace to the government" (Chicago Daily Tribune 1891:1). USCG annual reports for 1920–1922, which contain brief discussions of new shore facilities, do not mention construction of the new Assateague Beach Coast Guard Station (USCG 1920, 1921, 1922).

[12] At the time of the land acquisition, the 200-foot-wide tract extended from the water line at the cove to the waterline at the Atlantic Ocean, a distance of approximately 1,200 feet. Because of ongoing land-making, this distance is now approximately 2,200 feet (Phillips 2007:11).

the south patrol was at the southern tip of the island. The men would carry a key and turn a dial when they reached the north or south patrol to signify that the patrol had been carried out (NPS 2004:2a/10).

In the late 1930s, the USCG made several improvements to the Assateague Beach Coast Guard Station as part of its national effort to modernize shore facilities. The Station House was given a one-story covered porch along its west elevation, and a new doorway was installed on the west wall of the building to access the porch. In 1931–1935, the substantial wood **USCG Wharf and Breakwater (LCS No. 007745, contributing structure)** and **Wood Walkway (LCS No. none, contributing structure)** were built to allow crews convenient access between the USCG Station House and Toms Cove and possibly for purposes of construction staging and access.[13] The **System of Concrete Sidewalks (LCS No. none, contributing structure)** was established in 1934 around the perimeter of the Station House and would be extended in the late 1950s or early 1960s to other structures in the complex. The USCG Lookout Tower was raised with a third level of framing. The most important improvement came 1938–1939, when the USCG added the **USCG Boathouse and Marine Rail Launchway (LCS No. 007744, contributing building)** to the shore of Toms Cove to take advantage of the cove's more protected location and stable shoreline, thus creating the station's unusual orientation to a sheltered cove, rather than the open ocean. When the new USCG Boathouse was completed, the USCG converted the old USCG Garage/Boathouse to its current garage function. The US Navy triangulation tower, of which only footings remain, was added at an unknown date before 1939. In July 1939, Congress merged the U.S. Lighthouse Service with the USCG, and the Assateague Beach Coast Guard Station crew took over the responsibility of maintaining the Assateague Light (Phillips 2007:11; NPS 2004:2a/11).

Beginning in 1941, the Navy took control of the USCG for the duration of World War II (1939–1945). The surfmen at the Assateague Beach Coast Guard Station continued to perform the same life- and property-saving duties that others at the old lifesaving station had provided, with additional responsibilities of surveillance for enemy ships, submarines, and saboteurs. Staff size was increased to as many as 50 and the beach patrol was expanded with horse, truck, and foot patrols. At Assateague Island, as at other coastal locations, the patrol was coordinated with activities of the Army, Navy, and Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI). A USCG picket boat patrolled Chincoteague Inlet and any information they acquired was reported to the Army and Navy. If any enemy combatants had been captured at Assateague Beach, the Army would have transported any prisoners to a German prison camp in Westover, Maryland. German submarines in U.S. coastal waters did sink at least one ship off Assateague Island, but the life-saving station crew was not deployed for this event. In mid-1944, the horses were taken away and the guardsmen went back to foot patrol. With the end of the war, the USCG was returned to the U.S. Treasury Department on January 1, 1946 (Bearss 1968:76; NPS 2004:1/16, 2b/1–2).

Assateague Beach Coast Guard Station's expanded World War II mission resulted in multiple temporary and permanent additions to the Station's infrastructure. Surviving resources and features from this period consist of the **Garage Cistern (LCS No. none, contributing structure)**, built c. 1940, the **Boathouse Cistern (LCS No. none, contributing structure)**, built c. 1943, and the pump house foundations,

[13] According to the Cultural Landscape Inventory, the stone Breakwater was added alongside the Wharf about 1950 (NPS 2004:2b/3).

completed by 1949. These were likely all designed to meet the water needs of the new staff. The additional staff were housed in the attic of the USCG Station House and in several temporary quarters (no longer extant) erected on pilings near the USCG Garage/Boathouse. Other temporary structures (no longer extant) included a temporary stable and corral, generator house, and towers for flags, lighting, signals, and triangulation tower (Phillips 2007:11–12).

After World War II, USCG Stations returned to their normal routine. The **USCG Generator House (LCS No. none, contributing building)** was added to the Assateague Beach Coast Guard Station in 1959. The Ash Wednesday Nor'easter of March 1962 flooded the Assateague Beach Coast Guard Station and caused minor damage to the facility; storm damage to private property on the rest of the island was even more severe. The station crew members eventually deactivated the station and were airlifted out of the facility. However, before their evacuation, the guardsmen rescued three men on foot who had been in a shipwreck just north of the station, found a fourth man to whom they gave artificial resuscitation for four hours, and found a fifth man on shore who was already deceased.

The storm pointed out the need for large-scale beach protection if there was to be permanent development on the island, and the USF&WS began sand fencing practices along the ocean shoreline of the wildlife refuge. The USF&WS is presumed to have created the man-made vegetated dunes that surround the Assateague Beach Coast Guard Station, possibly in cooperation with the USCG. The dunes are built outside the property lines of the station but are intended to protect the buildings. The present circulation road was also established in the 1960s. Until that time, roadways into the life-saving station were minimal and ephemeral due to the shifting geography of the island and because most of the access to the station was by boat. The current entrance road probably evolved in the late 1960s from truck roads that were established by 1949 and fixed in place after the USF&WS established the protective dunes (NPS 2004:2b/3, 3a/10).

The need for a boat-based life-saving service within the USCG gradually diminished after World War II because of the introduction of radar on commercial ships and improved rescue techniques that utilized helicopters. By the early 1960s, the USCG was using helicopters at Assateague Island and had added a helipad (no longer extant) to the west of the USCG Station House. On January 10, 1967, USCG Group Chincoteague ordered the Assateague Beach Coast Guard Station to close; the station was disestablished on January 16, 1967, after all guardsmen had transferred to other duty stations (NPS 2004:2b/4, 2b/8).

National Park Service Occupancy

On September 1, 1967, the USCG transferred the Assateague Beach Coast Guard Station to the National Park Service, creating an NPS enclave within the USF&WS holdings at the south end of Assateague Island.[14] Immediately after the acquisition, the NPS used the station for seasonal quarters and storage. The Station has also been used to house NPS visitors and for occasional interpretive and educational activities. The 1982 general management plan for Assateague Island National Seashore called for the rehabilitation

[14] The coastal waters adjacent to the Assateague Beach Coast Guard Station are also under the administrative jurisdiction of the NPS (Assateague Island National Seashore 2005:4).

of the Station structures for adaptive use as a residence, a classroom for environmental education, and for storage and maintenance, but the Station's remote location and limited funding limited these uses. Since 2002, the NPS has not used the Station regularly due to outstanding maintenance and repair needs and recurring problems accessing the location by land imposed by protections for the Piping Plover during its breeding season. An NPS Environmental Assessment conducted in 2005–2006 identified rehabilitation of the station for adaptive use for environmental research and education as the preferred alternative for future management of the property (Assateague Island National Seashore 2005: ii, 2; Mackintosh 1982:54, 126; NPS 2004:2b/6).

The NPS has made few physical changes to the Assateague Beach Coast Guard Station since 1967. At an unknown date after 1967, NASA erected its Weather Instrument Monopole to support rocket research at the nearby Wallops Research Station. The Boathouse Cistern, which had been removed at an unknown date before 1987, was reconstructed by the NPS c. 1992. Modest repairs and interior changes have been made to the USCG Station House, USCG Garage/Boathouse, and USCG Boathouse (NPS 2004:2b/3; Phillips 2007:32, 41, 47-48).

CRITERION C–ARCHITECTURE

The Assateague Beach Coast Guard Station meets the registration requirements of the U.S. Government Lifesaving Stations, Houses of Refuge, and pre-1950 U.S. Coast Guard Stations MPDF for national significance under Criterion C in the area of Architecture for its embodiment of the distinctive design characteristics of a Colonial Revival-style, Chatham-type life-saving station as designed by USLSS master architect Victor Mindeleff. It conforms to the federal government life-saving station "Station Complex" property type, which is defined in the MPDF as life-saving station that incorporated multiple buildings to accommodate Coast Guard personnel and the equipment required to conduct life-saving activities. The station gains additional significance from the fact that it contains two boathouses. These demonstrate the characteristics of two different standardized designs intended for different types of life-saving boats and also, through their different locations, demonstrate the USCG's site-specific adaptation of the property to the dynamic Coastal Island environment. The Station is remarkably intact, possessing all the aspects of integrity necessary to convey its architectural significance as identified in the MPDF. It retains all the major components of the Station Complex design, except the Drill Pole. The station house, boat house, and other resources in the district exemplify their respective types and functions through their standardized design, materials, and workmanship. The undisturbed beach setting and intact location of the resources contribute to the feeling and association of the property and obviously express its function historic life-saving station.

Assateague Beach Coast Guard Station's overall design follows typical practices of the USLSS (both before and after its incorporation into the USCG) and demonstrates the approach to such stations as established through USLSS studies and practical experience. The Station's location on Assateague Island, rather than the mainland coast, was dictated by the geographic conditions along the Mid-Atlantic Coast, specifically its long chain of low sandy coastal islands. Most life-saving stations in Delaware, Maryland,

and Virginia were located on the coastal islands because they provided the most practical locations for watching for and responding to ships in distress or warning them of dangerous shoals offshore. Additionally, the Station was near a navigable inlet—a location where ships were more likely to need assistance (NPS 2004:3a/2).

The first Assateague Beach Life Saving Station was a standardized "Integral Station" as described above. For the new Assateague Beach Coast Guard Station, the USCG elected to change to a "Station Complex," distributing the life-saving station's functions among multiple buildings and structures. The Assateague Beach Life Saving Station at first consisted of the USCG Station House, USCG Garage/Boathouse, USCG Lookout Tower, and a Drill Pole (no longer extant). These were standard components of a Station Complex for the period and were essential to its life-saving mission. The layout of these components was not fixed, but varied from station to station in response to site constraints such as the lot shape and size, topography, and shore line conditions (Bearss 1968; Koski-Karell et al. 2013:F2, F3–F6, F10).

The use of Station Complexes, rather than Integral Stations, was prevalent during the USCG era (1915-1967) but was typically predicated on the use of larger lifeboats rather than lighter surfboats. However, the decision to use a Station Complex at Assateague appears to have been a response to the island's highly variable geography, as the first USCG Garage/Boathouse was above the high tide line, not at the water line, and its small scale and lack of launchway indicate that it was designed for the smaller surfboats. The USLSS's and USCG's experience with the first Assateague Beach Life Saving Station demonstrated that shifting sands and water could render a station obsolete. The new USCG Station House and USCG Lookout Tower were therefore sited on the central and highest part of the island at approximately 12 feet above sea level, with the USCG Garage/Boathouse approximately 250 feet from the ocean. Siting the new USCG Station House at the center of the island while placing the USCG Garage/Boathouse at the water's edge ensured that the USCG Station House could continue to be used even if the shoreline shifted away from the Boathouse (Koski-Karell et al. 2013:F3 - F6; NPS 2004:3a/2).

The wisdom of the decision to separate the Boathouse and Station House was quickly confirmed. By 1932, the boathouse's distance from the ocean was 300 feet, and the USCG was considering an addition to the building. The addition was never built; instead the new USCG Boathouse, USCG Wharf and Breakwater, and connecting Wood Walkway were built extending into Toms Cove in the 1930s. This created the unusual circumstance in which the complex design placed the boathouse on a sheltered cove rather than on the open ocean. Toms Cove is more geologically stable, as evidenced by the persistence of the shoreline at the USCG Boathouse. Additionally, the siting on the cove allowed USCG rescuers to more easily launch their boats during an emergency, as the sheltered cove had calmer waters than the turbulent surf of the open ocean. The original USCG Garage/Boathouse was retained and converted to its current use as a garage, thus creating the atypical life-saving station complex with two boathouses (NPS 2004:3a/2).

The USCG Station House is an example of the Chatham Design, a standardized station house developed by USLSS architect Victor Mindeleff in 1914. This was Mindeleff and the USLSS's last standardized plan before the USCG took over. The USCG continued to use the Chatham Design in ensuing decades,

and USLSS and USCG built at least 29 Chatham Design life-saving stations in Maine, Massachusetts, New York, Virginia, North Carolina, Ohio, Michigan, California, and Oregon. Perhaps 14 of these survive today, although an exact count has not been established. The Chatham Design, named for the Chatham, Massachusetts, USLSS location where the design was first used, evidenced a strong Colonial Revival style influence. The two-story, two-bay-by-five-bay building had a gable-on-hip roof and a columned entrance porch. The early examples of the Chatham-type station had a large cupola perched on the roof ridge and double-hung, six-over-two window sashes. In some examples, hip-roof porches supported by columns extended across three bays of the facade. Water collection cisterns such as those retained at the USCG Station House were included in the standardized design. However, as the USLSS and USCG developed station-specific plans, variation in the details of the design was typical, making each station house unique to some degree. The USCG plans and historical photos of the USCG Station House at Assateague show that the cupola was eliminated, a narrower porch was substituted, the building was raised on a high water table, and windows used six-over-six sash (Koski-Karell et al. 2013:F17, G-33; Phillips 2007:12, Appendix A; Shanks et al. 1996:239, 241; York 1983:164–165).

Victor Mindeleff (1860–1948) is identified in the MPDF as a "master" USLSS architect (Koski-Karell et al. 2013:F22). After he concluded his schooling at the Emerson Institute in Washington, D.C., he embarked on a diverse career that included work with the Smithsonian Institution studying Native American architecture, with the USLSS within the Treasury Department, and as a private architect. His architectural work shows a strong preference for rustic and Colonial Revival design and he had a high reputation as a landscape designer. Mindeleff worked for the USLSS from 1897 until 1915, was its most prolific and long-lasting architect, and designed 11 different standardized station houses and 8 unique stations during his tenure (Koski-Karell et al. 2013:E26, F15–F17, York et al. 2013).

The USCG Garage/Boathouse and the USCG Lookout Tower, both important original components of the Station Complex, are likely standardized USLSS or USCG designs. Although published secondary works on the history of USLSS and USCG life-saving station architecture are silent on the subject, illustrations and photographs of other life-saving stations show nearly identical boathouses and lookout towers to those at Assateague. Historical architectural plans for the USCG Boathouse (dated 1921) and USCG Lookout Tower (date illegible) do not provide any information about the architect or engineer, but do use the same graphic conventions as those for the USCG Station House, demonstrating their origins within the USLSS or USCG design group. The USCG Lookout Tower at Assateague Beach Coast Guard Station was raised soon after construction, presumably to offer watchmen a better view of the sea. Whether this is an unusual modification to the standardized design is unknown (Phillips 2007:12, 19, Appendix A; York et al. 2013:233, 238).

The USCG Boathouse completed in 1939 follows a USCG standardized plan developed in the 1930s by the USCG's Office of Civil Engineering, in Washington, D.C. The plan was described and illustrated in a popular publication: Hickman Powell's 1941, *What the Citizen Should Know about the Coast Guard*:

> New stations, many of which have been built by the WPA in recent years, are larger than the old ones...They are of simpler architectural lines then the old ones, on a colonial

> style, still with a lot of dormer windows but with fewer gables. They are all painted alike—white, with red shingle roofs and green doors and shutters. . . . The boathouse is sometimes a part of the station building, and sometimes it may be on the inlet, several hundred yards away. It usually has three marine railways, or launching ways, on which boats are hauled out of the water into the house when not in active use . . . . Every station has a lookout tower, either on the station itself or nearby . . . (Powell 1941:95).

Larger and more elegant than its predecessor, the design includes Colonial Revival architectural detailing similar to that of the standardized Station Houses from the 1930s. The building's larger, three-stall plan and use of launching ways were designed to accommodate the increased numbers and size of boats in standard USCG life-saving stations. Life-saving service practice had moved away from the use of smaller "surfboats," which were hauled on a cart by life-saving crews from the boathouse to the beach, to larger and heavier motorized "lifeboats," which required the assistance of launching ways. A typical USCG life-saving station fleet consisted of a 38-foot motor lifeboat, one or two rescue boats, and a 26-foot motor surfboat (Koski-Karrell et al. 2013:E17–E18; Olausen 2003:4-4; Powell 1941:95).[15]

[15] According to Life-Saving Service historians, a "surfboat" was usually less than 26 feet long, weighed approximately 700 pounds, and was ideal for a crew of men to pull over sandy terrain via cart. In contrast, the "lifeboat" was a larger vessel, at least 27 feet long and approximately 1,000 pounds, that was self-bailing and self-righting. These heavier boats were launched via inclined "ways" or ramps. Motors were introduced to lifeboats c. 1906 and increased the weight of the craft. After the US Coast Guard assumed life-saving service responsibility, motorized lifeboats were designated "Motor Lifeboats" (MLBs) and became more common (Koski-Karrell et al. 2013:E17–E18).

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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
_x__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:

__x_ State Historic Preservation Office
____ Other State agency
_x__ Federal agency
____ Local government
____ University
____ Other
Name of repository: _Department of Historic Resources, Richmond, VA; National Park Service, Assateague Island National Seashore Archives, Berlin, MD

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): __VDHR 001-0172_____

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10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property ___11.18 acres_____

Use either the UTM system or latitude/longitude coordinates

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

A. Latitude: 37.86725	Longitude:-75.36840
B. Latitude: 37.86728	Longitude:-75.36807
C. Latitude: 37.86715	Longitude:-75.63805
D. Latitude: 37.86714	Longitude:-75.63817
E. Latitude: 37.86577	Longitude:-75.36805
F. Latitude: 37.86558	Longitude:-75.36775

G. Latitude: 37.86048 Longitude:-75.36703

H. Latitude: 37.85985 Longitude:-75.36770

I. Latitude: 37.86610 Longitude:-75.36856

J. Latitude: 37.86610 Longitude:-75.36848

K. Latitude: 37.86669 Longitude:-75.36854

L. Latitude: 37.86671 Longitude:-75.36825

M. Latitude: 37.86713 Longitude:-75.36828

N. Latitude: 37.86712 Longitude:-75.36838

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:

Assateague Beach Coast Guard Station Coordinate Map

	Latitude	Longitude
A	37.86725	-75.36840
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C	37.86715	-75.36805
D	37.86714	-75.36817
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F	37.86558	-75.36775
G	37.86048	-75.36703
H	37.85985	-75.36770
I	37.86610	-75.36856
J	37.86610	-75.36848
K	37.86669	-75.36854
L	37.86671	-75.36825
M	37.86713	-75.36828
N	37.86712	-75.36836

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

The 11.18 acre Assateague Beach Coast Guard Station is bounded on the east and west by US Fish and Wildlife Service lands, and on the north and south by Toms Cove and the Atlantic Ocean, respectively. The unit boundary conforms to the historical boundary of the 1922 Assateague Beach US Coast Guard Life-Saving Station, encompassing the original 5.32 acre parcel deeded in 1922 and extends to include land added through accretion on the north and south. On the north, the boundary extends into Toms Cove, conforming to the footprint of the Boathouse and Wharf/Breakwater built into the cove.

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The boundaries conform to the historical boundary of the US Coast Guard Life-Saving Station on the east and west and extend north and south to Toms Cove and the Atlantic Ocean, as described in the 1967 property deed (see Brown 2004: pt 1, p9). The boundaries encompass all known historic resources associated with the property as well as its historic setting.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title: John J. Daly, Sr. Industrial Historian; Gretchen Pineo, Asst. Architectural Historian
organization: Public Archaeology Laboratory, Inc. (PAL)
street & number: 26 Main Street
city or town: Pawtucket state: RI zip code: 02860
e-mail solausen@palinc.com
telephone: (401)728-8780
date: December 2014

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 he numbered and that number must correspond to the photograph number on the photo log. 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: Assateague Beach Coast Guard Station
City or Vicinity: Assateague Island, Chincoteague vicinity
County: Accomack State: VA
Photographer: Stephen A. Olausen
Date Photographed: October 2014

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

1 of 13. Assateague Beach Coast Guard Station, looking north.

2 of 13. US Coast Guard Boathouse and Wood Walkway, looking north.

3 of 13. US Coast Guard Boathouse and Marine Rail Launchway, looking southeast.

4 of 13. US Coast Guard Boathouse Marine Rail Launchway, looking north.

5 of 13. Interior of US Coast Guard Boathouse, looking northwest.

6 of 13. Boathouse Cistern, looking north.

7 of 13. US Coast Guard Wharf and Breakwater, looking north.

8 of 13. US Coast Guard Generator House, looking northeast.

9 of 13. US Coast Guard Station House and System of Concrete Sidewalks, looking northeast.

10 of 13. US Coast Guard Station House and Cistern, looking east.

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Figure 12. Historical photograph showing USCG Boathouse, February 16, 1939. View looking north/northwest (reproduced in Phillips 2007:55).

Figure 13. Historical photograph of USCG Boathouse, February 16, 1939. View looking south (reproduced in Phillips 2007:56).

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.

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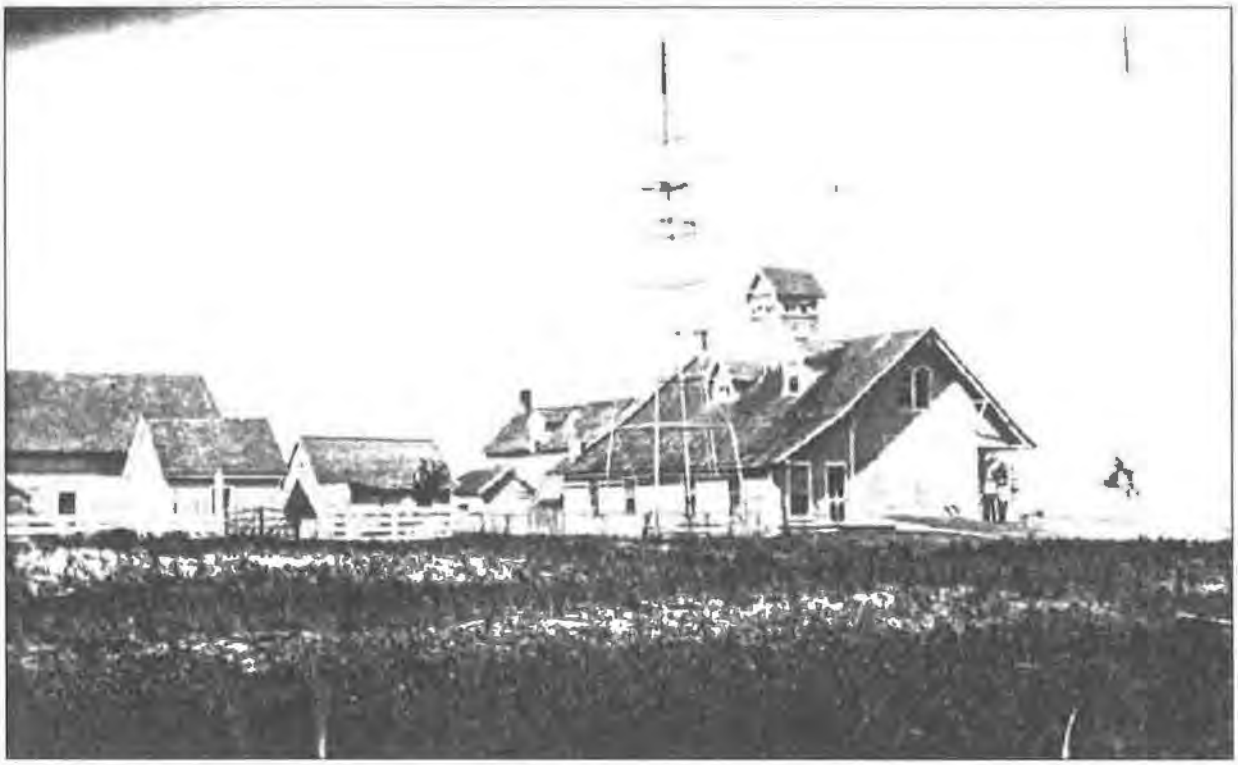

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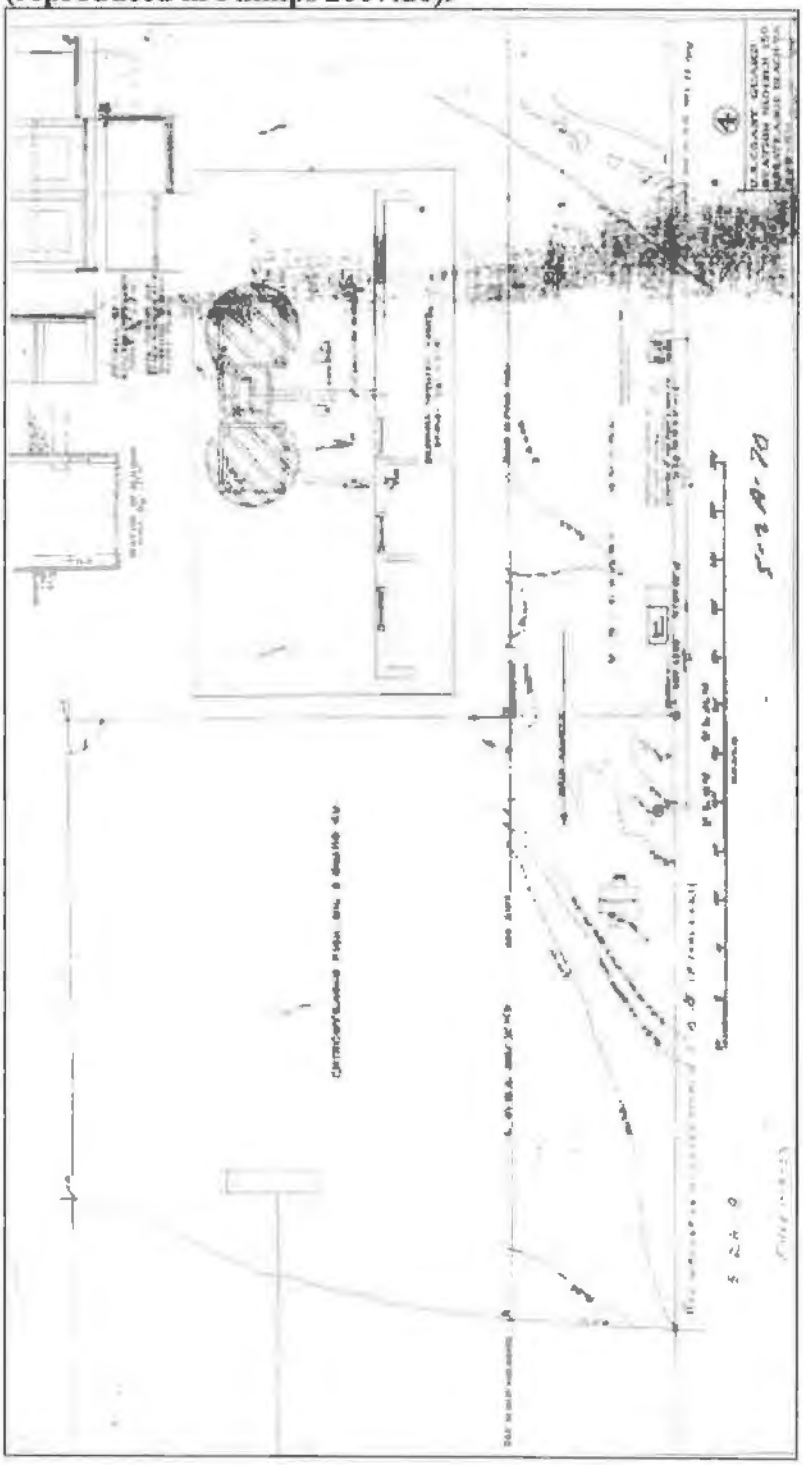

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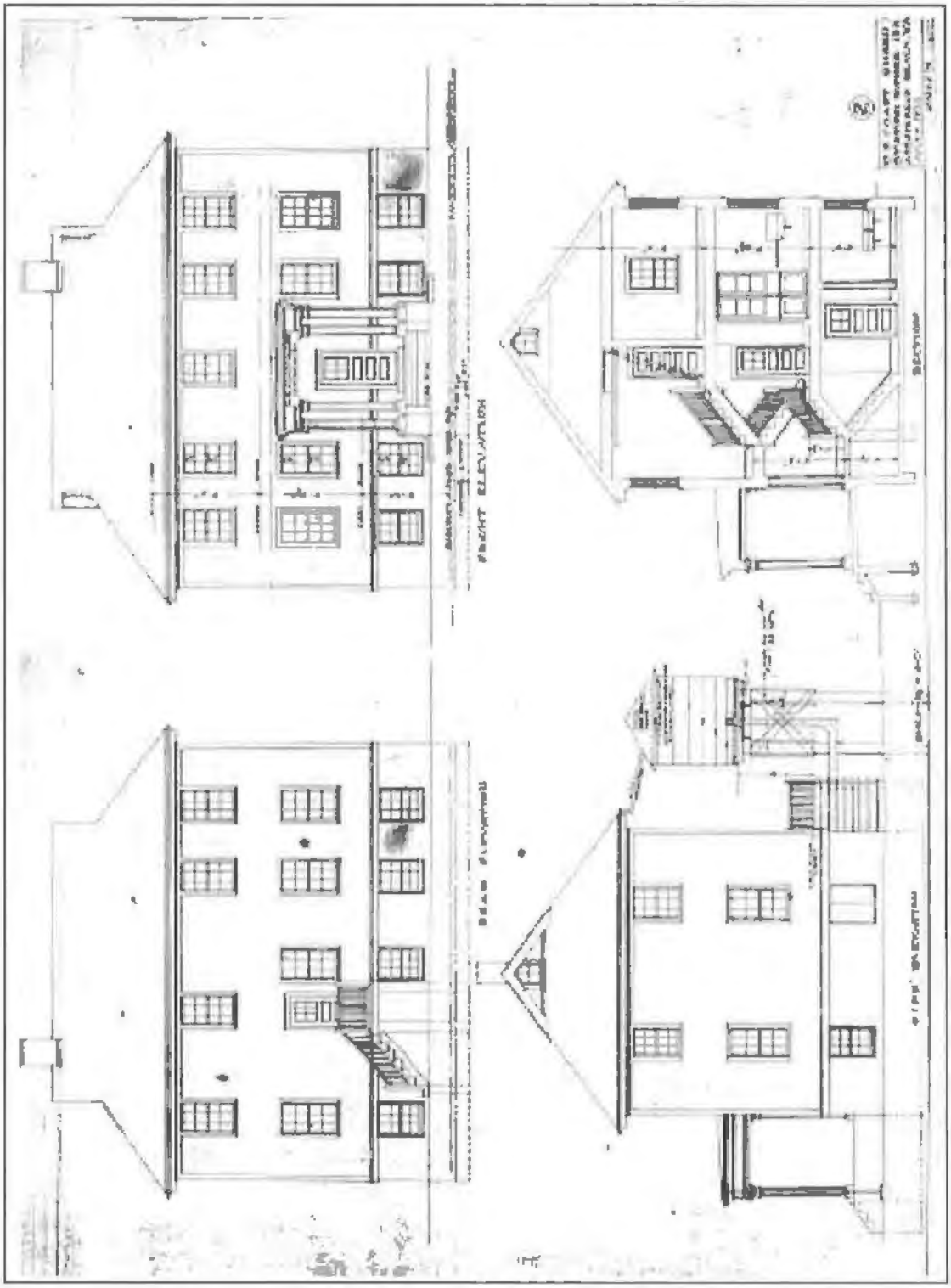

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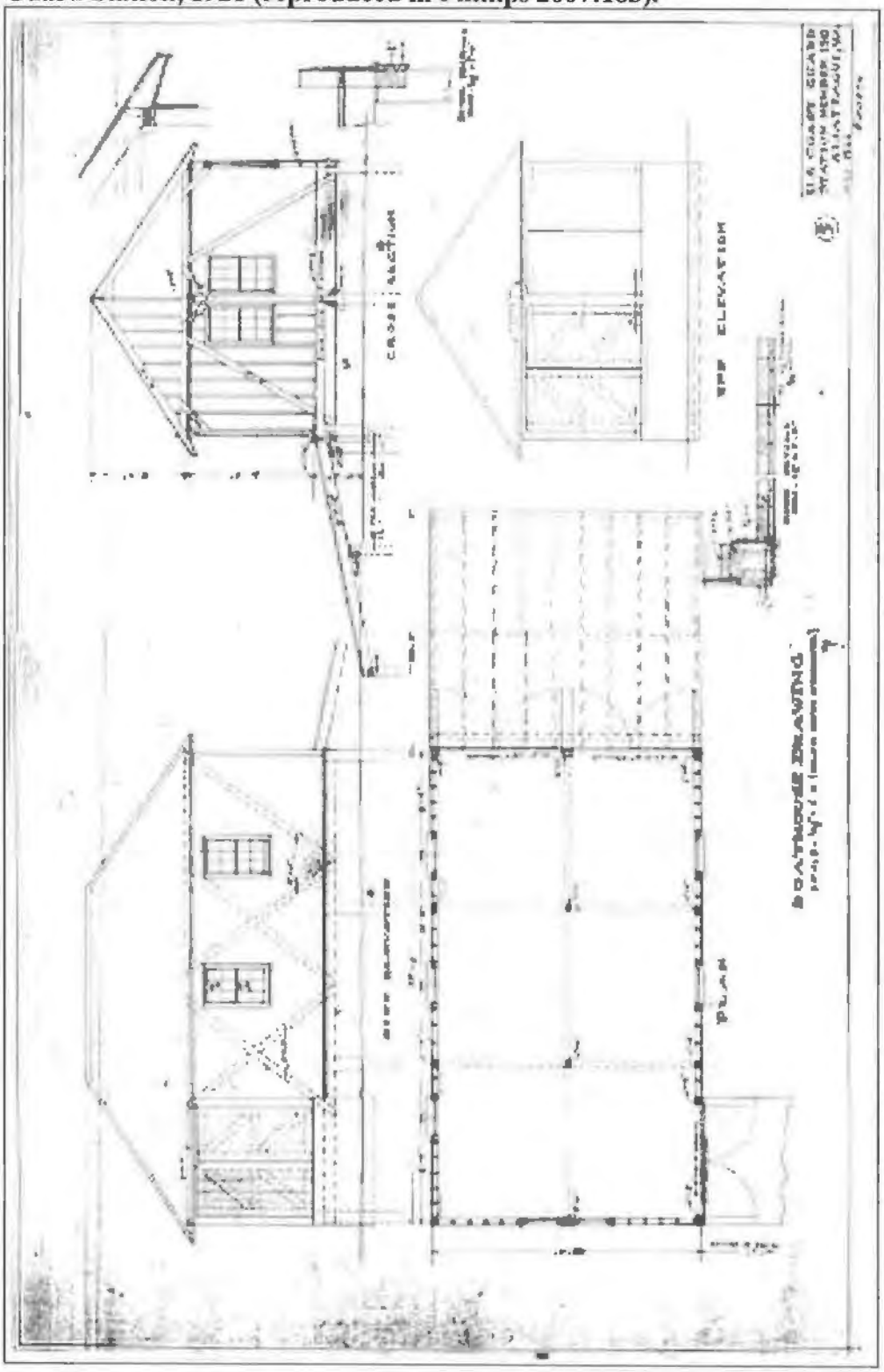

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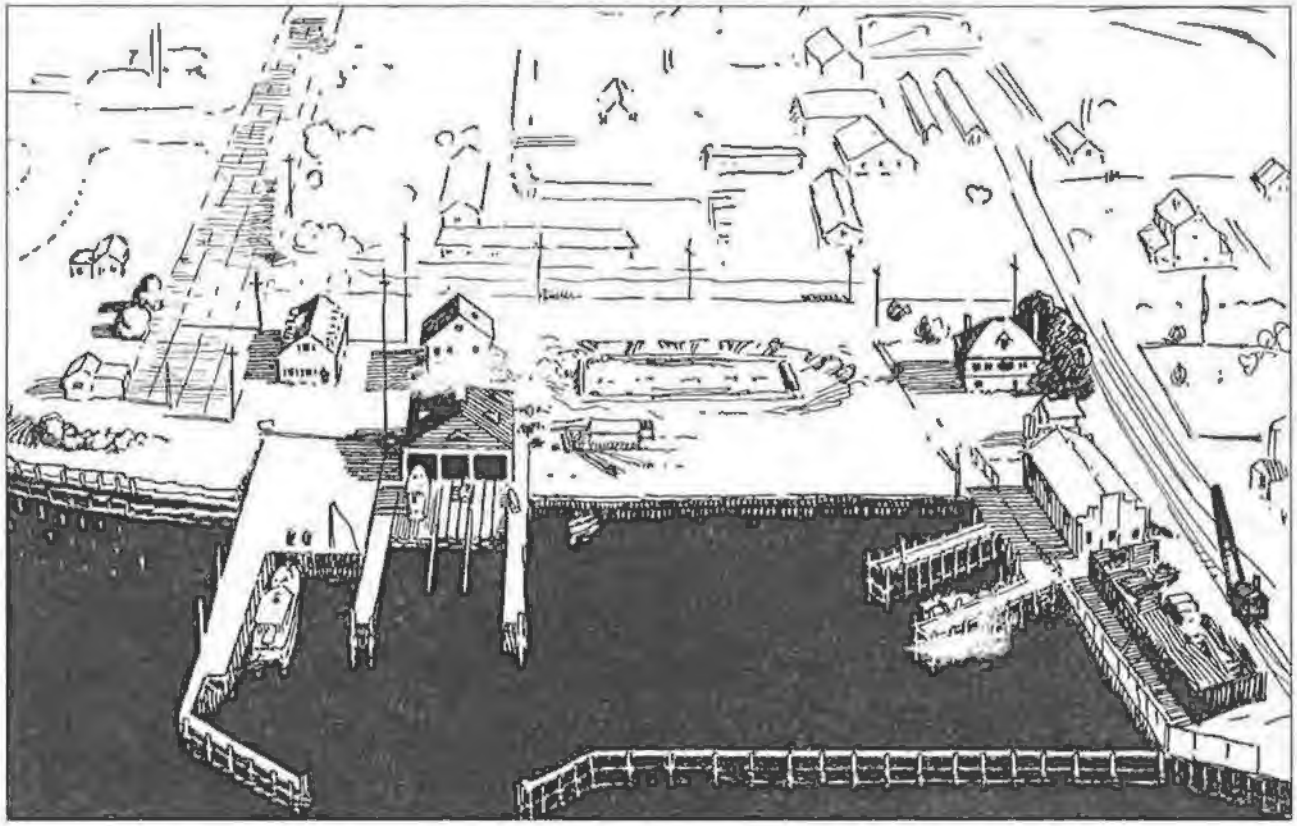

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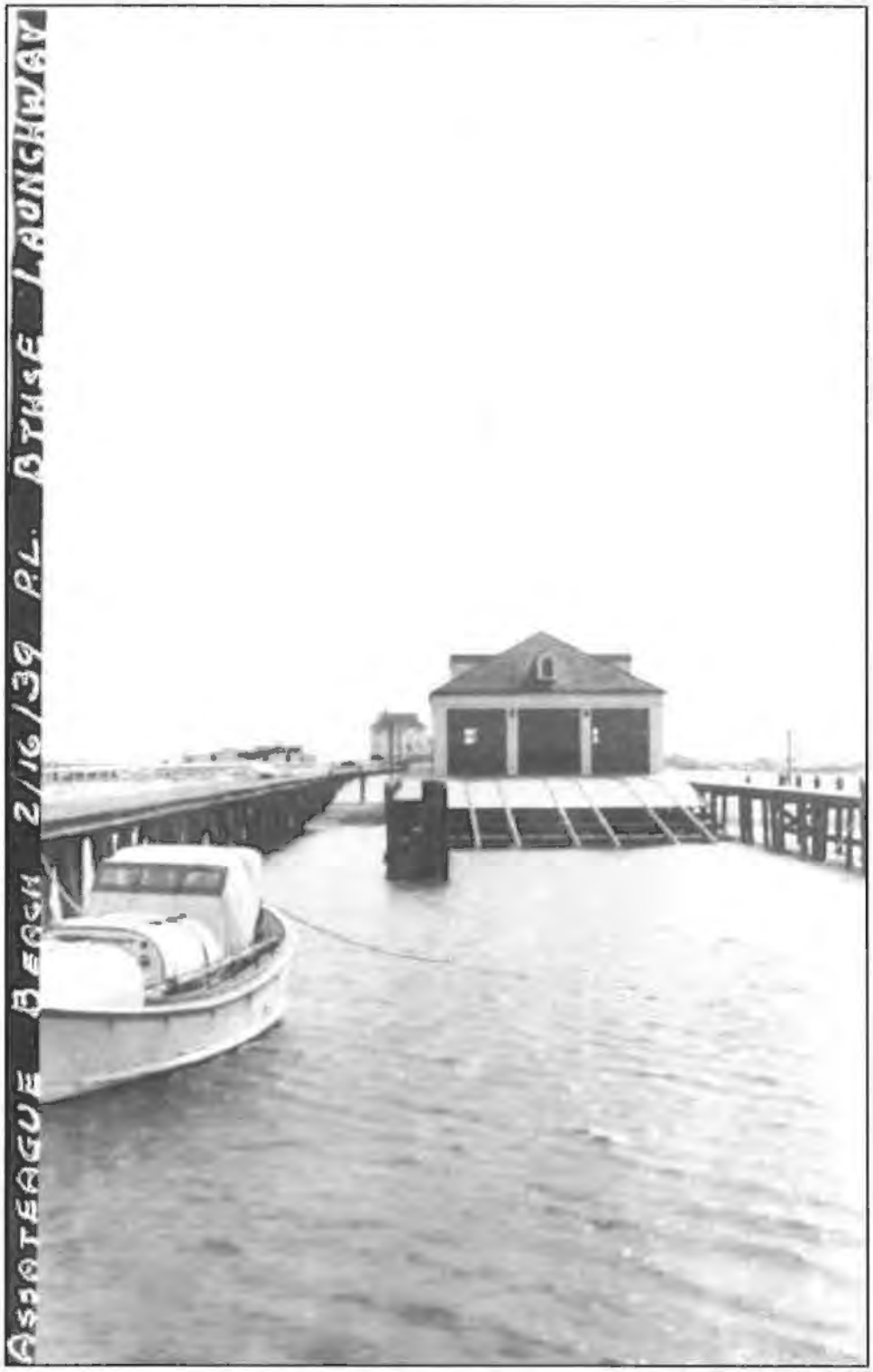
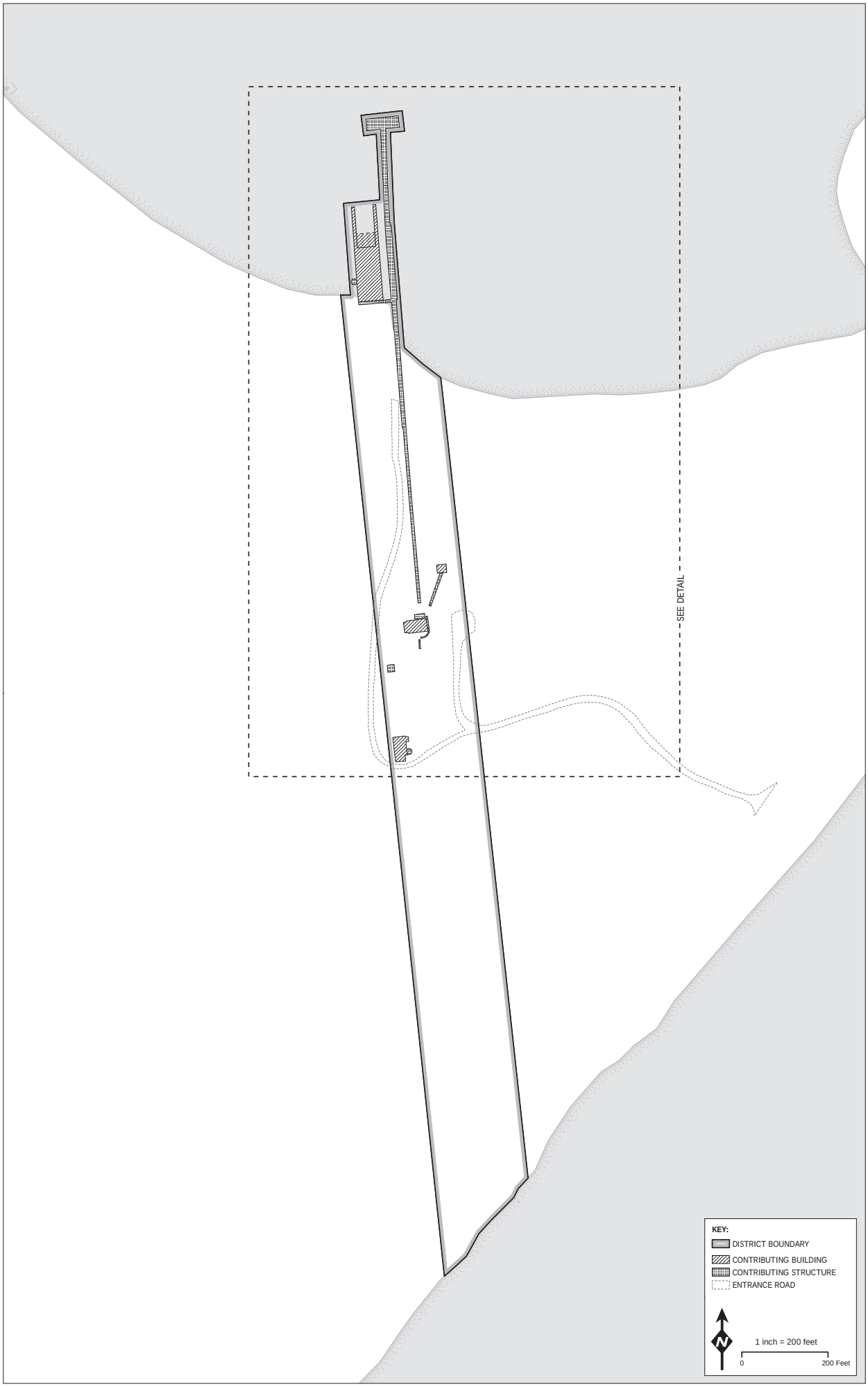
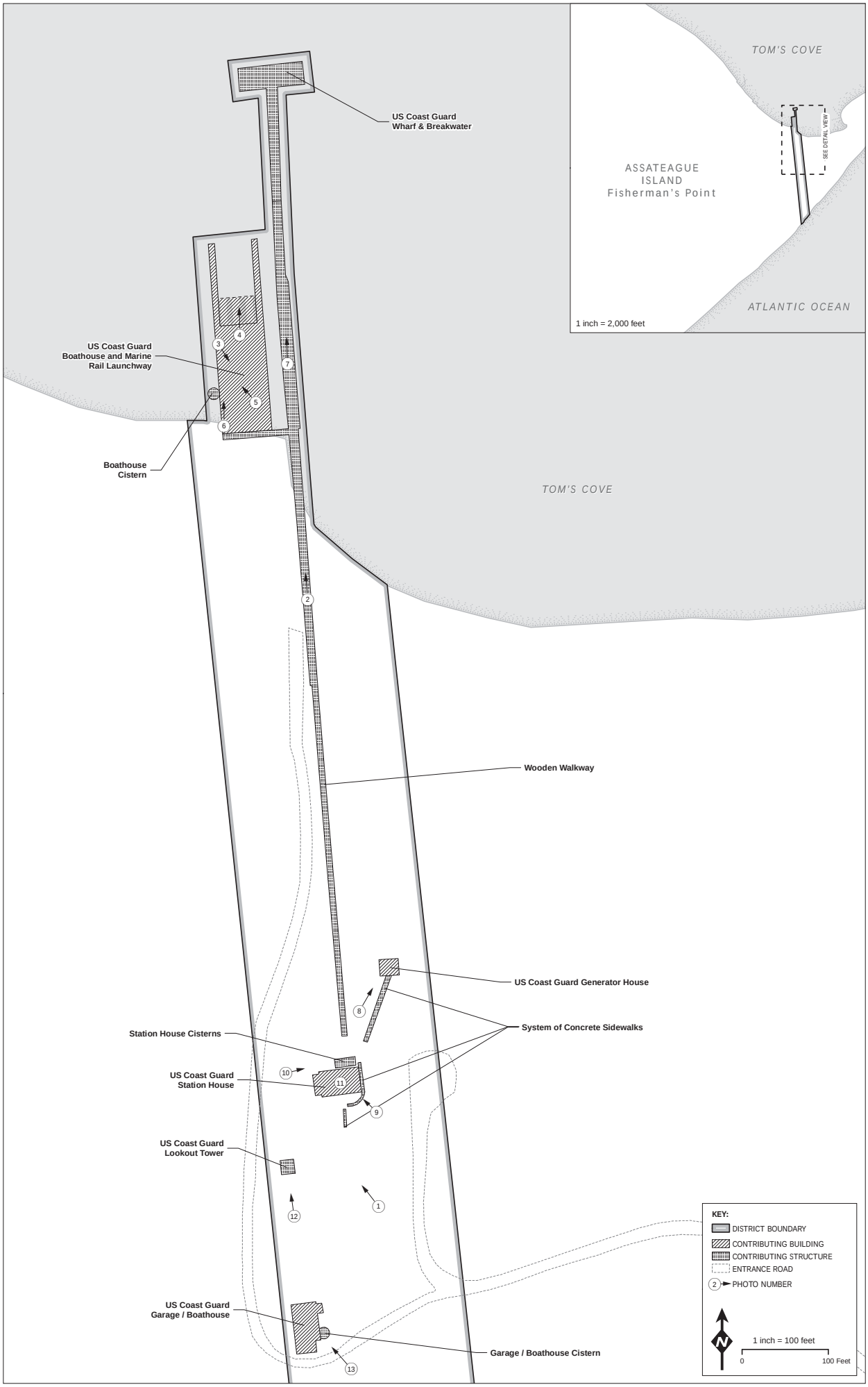




Assateague Beach Coast Guard Station Historic District Map



Assateague Beach Coast Guard Station Historic District Map - Detail

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Assateague Beach Coast Guard Station Coordinate Map

Assateague Beach Coast Guard Station
Accomack Co., VA
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