

SEAMAN COTTAGE, 441 Clarke Avenue, formerly 218 Center Street, Staten Island
Built c.1836-37; Henry I. Seaman, developer

Landmark Site: Borough of Staten Island Tax Map Block 4441, Lot 1, in part consisting of the land on which the described improvement is situated.

On October 26, 2004, the Landmarks Preservation Commission held a public hearing on the proposed designation of the Seaman Cottage and the proposed designation of the related Landmark Site at 218 Center Street (Staten Island Tax Map Block 4438, Lot 80). The hearing had been duly advertised in accordance with the provisions of law. Two speakers, representing Councilman James S. Oddo and the Historic Districts Council, testified in favor of the designation. A representative of the owner spoke in opposition to the designation and presented a petition he had drafted in opposition to the designation that had been signed by eighteen neighbors expressing concern that the designation of a vacant building would devalue property in the neighborhood. The Commission received letters in support of the designation from the Preservation League of New York and from Staten Island architect David J. Carnivale. One neighbor, who also signed the petition, sent a letter in opposition to the designation. In July 2005 the building was moved to the next block to its present site within Historic Richmond Town. On December 13, 2005 the Landmarks Preservation Commission held a public hearing on the proposed designation of Seaman Cottage and the related Landmark Site (Item No. 2). The hearing had been duly advertised in accordance with the provisions of law. Three speakers testified in favor of the designation, including John Guild, Executive Director of Historic Richmond Town, who spoke about his organization's plans for the future restoration of the building.



Summary

Seaman Cottage, constructed c. 1836-37 by developer Henry I. Seaman is a well preserved example of a modest Greek Revival cottage and a significant reminder of the early history of Richmondtown, the historic governmental center of Staten Island. Henry Seaman was an instrumental figure in the development of Richmondtown in the 1830s and this is the best preserved and most intact of the five houses that Seaman built on Center Street that came to be known as the “Seaman Cottages.” The term cottage was used in the 1830s to describe a newly

fashionable building type, a small scale house with up-to-date amenities and modish detailing intended for middle class occupants. This two-and-one half-story side hall plan gable-roofed frame house retains its historic form and most of its historic detailing. Its design exhibits the simple forms and planar surfaces characteristic of the Greek Revival style and includes such notable features as a one-story portico, flush clapboarding, an eared and pedimented entry surround, simple molded window surrounds and a low dormerless gabled roof. Although many small, simple detached wood frame and clapboard Greek Revival Style houses were erected in the villages of Staten Island in the 1830s and 1840s, relatively few have survived in a good state of preservation making the Seaman Cottage an unusual survivor.

DESCRIPTION AND ANALYSIS

Henry Seaman and the Development of Richmondtown¹

Richmond County, encompassing all of Staten Island, was established in 1683 as one of the twelve original counties of New York, with Stony Brook, now Egbertville, its official county seat. Previously, the residents of Staten Island had relied on the Court of Sessions at Gravesend, Brooklyn, for the administration of laws, while the center of political activity on the island was at Oude Dorp, near present-day South Beach. In 1711, the county government built a prison in the tiny village of Coccles Town. This was considered a superior location for conducting governmental business due to its location at the center of the island near the convergence of several major roads and the head of the navigable Fresh Kills. In 1729, Coccles Town was officially chosen as the new county seat and was renamed Richmondtown. A new county court house was constructed there that year.

British troops occupied Richmondtown during the Revolutionary War, establishing quarters in many of the village's buildings. They burned the court house and many other buildings on their departure. Little development occurred in the village during the next thirty years; however, the second county courthouse was constructed on Arthur Kill Road in 1793. Richmondtown began to grow again around 1800 and was incorporated as a village within the Town of Southfield in 1823. By 1828, the first County Clerk's and Surrogate's Offices were constructed. A first-class hotel, Richmond County Hall, was built around 1829 and soon became a popular gathering place for political and social events. The village's first public school opened about 1830. By 1836, according to the *Gazateer* for New York State, Richmondtown had three taverns, two churches, two stores, a small brick jail, the ancient county court house and twelve dwellings. That year, Henry I. Seaman, a New York City businessman with strong ties to Staten Island, hatched an ambitious development scheme that would more than double the village's size.

Born in Marshland, now Greenridge, Staten Island, Henry John Seaman (1805-61; usually known as Henry I. Seaman but sometimes as Henry J. Seaman) was a descendent of the Billopp and Seaman families that had been prominent in Staten Island affairs since the early eighteenth century. He became a merchant with a warehouse on Pearl Street in Manhattan and married his second cousin Katherine Sarah Seaman, daughter of the sugar merchant Billopp Seaman and Hester Mary Kortwright Seaman. Katherine Seaman was a putative heir to the extensive Seaman-Kortwright family real estate fortune.² This enabled Henry Seaman to obtain capital for a number of business ventures. In addition to his development project at Richmondtown, these included real estate investments in Manhattan and in New Brighton, Staten Island. The Seamans resided in Manhattan until c.1840-41, when they settled on a family farm in Greenridge, Staten Island. Henry Seaman became a leader in the Whig political party on the island and was elected to Congress as the Representative for Richmond and Kings Counties in 1846. He was a director of the Staten Island Railroad (founded 1851), secretary of Port Richmond & Fresh Kills Plank Road Company (active in the early 1850s), and private secretary to Governor John Alsop King (1856-57).

At Richmondtown, Seaman purchased ninety acres of farmland to the east of the town center in 1836.³ Seaman had the land laid out into two new streets, Center Street and Court Place, and 119 building lots measuring twenty-five feet by 110 feet. By October 1836, he had sold six lots at the corner of Moore Street and Richmond Road. In March 1837, he sold two corner lots to Austin Burk and shopkeeper Stephen D. Stephens, Sr., who constructed their own residences which remain standing. (The Burk House was later sold to John Bennett.)⁴ In April 1837, Seaman donated a large plot on Center Street opposite Court Place to the county on condition that a new courthouse was to be constructed on the site "without reasonable delay."⁵ His gift provided an anchor for his development

and ensured that the county government with its attendant jobs would remain in Richmondtown for some years to come. Seaman himself built a group of five small houses, which were referred to in contemporary sources as “cottages,” on the west side of Center Street between Moore Street and St. Patrick’s Place. In August 1837, the *Richmond County Mirror* commented on the recent opening of Center Street on which “seven pretty little houses have been erected” observing that they and “the new court house give a business appearance to the place.”⁶

In 1838, as the nation was gripped by the recession that followed the financial panic of 1837, Henry Seaman, found himself in financial difficulties. In May 1838, he sold a half interest in his remaining Richmondtown lots (most of the lots were still unsold) to Farnham Hall.⁷ The following year, Hall purchased the remaining half interest in Seaman’s Richmondtown lots.⁸ As the economy recovered in the early 1840s, Farnham Hall began to find purchasers for his Richmondtown lots. In 1842 he sold three of the five original Seaman cottages (210 Center Street, this house, then at 218 Center Street, and the former house at 224 Center Street) to Nicholas G. Kortwright, a relative of Henry Seaman’s wife. Kortwright retained the three cottages for four years, selling them back to Henry Seaman in 1846. Two years later, in August 1848, Seaman sold this house (then at 218 Center Street) and 224 Center Street (demolished) to brothers Lawrence H. and Peter Lockman Cortelyou. This house (then at 218 Center Street) became Lawrence’s property, No. 224 passed to Peter Cortelyou. Judge Lawrence Cortelyou retained ownership of this house until 1860. Although Henry Seaman owned the five cottages for only a short time, they continued to be known by the nickname “Seaman Town” according to several local histories.⁹

The Design of Seaman Cottage

In the late eighteenth century and early nineteenth century English architects, notably John Nash in his designs for Regent Park, had developed a new type of residential building to house the growing class of merchants and professional men who chose to live on the outskirts of town accessible to the city’s amenities and their businesses, but surrounded by nature. In looking for suitable models for such buildings architects turned to the vernacular architecture of the English countryside, particularly rural cottages which were admired for the dwellings’ picturesque charm, “intimacy with nature, employment of locally available materials, and lack of pretension.”¹⁰ Designs for “ornamental cottages” and suburban villas aimed at middle-class clients began to proliferate and were published in English design books such as John Buonarotti Papworth’s *Rural Residences, Consisting of a Series of Designs for Cottages, Decorated Cottages, Small Villas, and Other Ornamental Buildings* (1818) and John Claudius Loudon’s *Encyclopedia of Cottage, Farm, and Villa Architecture* (1833) which were widely disseminated in the United States. By the 1830s, these new ideas about housing were taking root in America after winning wide acceptance in England. Thus when Seaman marketed his newly built houses as “cottages,” potential lessees would have understood that they were modern, up-to-date residences, somewhat modest in scale, suitable for rental by middle-class tradesmen or perhaps someone connected with the courts. While the pattern books illustrated cottages in a variety of styles, Seaman opted for a simple version of the Greek Revival Style for his new buildings. The Greek Revival style, which “dominated American architecture from the late 1820s to the late 1840s”¹¹ had been popularized by a number of nationally-circulated journals and architectural handbooks such as Asher Benjamin’s *American Builder’s Companion* (6th edition, 1827) and Minard Lefever’s *Modern Builders’ Guide* (1833) and *The Beauties of Modern Architecture* (1835).¹² The style was widely represented on Staten Island in both domestic and public buildings. Noteworthy examples include the main buildings at Sailor’s Snug Harbor designed by Minard Lefever (Administration Building, 1831-33; dormitories, 1831-41); the Main Building at Seaman’s Retreat, now Bayley-Seton Hospital designed by Abraham P. Maybie (1834-37, additions 1848, 1853, and 1911-12), the Henry P. Robertson House at 404 Richmond Terrace (c. 1835); and the Caleb T. Ward House at 141 Nixon Avenue, designed by Seth Geer (1845).¹³

In the village of Richmondtown, the new (Third) County Courthouse (1837) was a Greek Revival building, distinguished by its pedimented portico with giant Doric columns and square tower enriched with pilasters. Both the Austin Burk (later Bennett) and Stephen D. Stephens (Stephens-Black) Houses were designed in the Greek Revival style. They were somewhat larger and more elaborately detailed than Seaman Cottage but similar enough in plan and design to suggest that they may be the work of the same carpenter-builder. The house formerly at 284 Center Street, built by Lewis Marsh c. 1841 and now greatly enlarged and moved to the property of St. Andrew’s Church, was also similar in design and proportions to Seaman Cottage.

Seaman Cottage exhibits the simple forms and detailing characteristic of Greek Revival design. It has a side passage double parlor plan, typical of town houses and village houses. In keeping with houses of the period, it has a relatively wide, shallow footprint. As was common for town and village houses and some country houses of the period, it had a high masonry basement that contained the original kitchen. This arrangement, according to Loudon, had the virtues of keeping the principal living rooms “drier and consequently warmer and healthier” as well as giving the house “greater dignity of effect.” It was, also, according to the architectural pattern book of Samuel Sloan somewhat more economical to build. The modesty of these cottages is also evident in the incorporation of a relatively low second story, in comparison with the full second stories of the Burk and Stephens Houses. Nevertheless, the house is distinguished by its wide porch with square posts extending across the front façade. In keeping with the Greek Revival taste for simple, planar surfaces, the primary façade is faced with flush horizontal siding. (The side walls and rear elevation are clad in less expensive lapped clapboards.) The entry at the north corner of the parlor floor level is set off by a simple molded surround with an eared pedimented lintel, a characteristic Greek Revival motif. The windows have wide molded surrounds and the upper story windows are set off by louvered shutters which were a popular feature for suburban and village houses during this period. The house is crowned by a heavy molded cornice and a low gabled dormerless roof typical of Greek Revival houses of the period.¹⁴

Like the Seaman Cottage most of the houses erected in villages during the 1830s and 1840s were small, simple, detached wood frame and clapboard Greek Revival Style buildings with low gable or gambrel roofs. Many had porch entrances and simple ornament, concentrated at the entry. Examples survive on Swan Street and St. Paul’s Avenue in Tompkinsville, on Van Duzer, Beach, Targee, and Grove Streets in Stapleton, on Alaska Street and Woodruff Lane in West New Brighton, and on Winter Street in Port Richmond, but in most cases the houses have been considerably altered. The well preserved frame Greek Revival houses from this period tend to be grand houses such as the colonnaded house at 364 Van Duzer Street built for ferry captain Robert M. Hazard (a designated New York City Landmark), the temple-fronted house at 404 Richmond Terrace and the row of houses on Richmond Terrace in Mariner’s Harbor known as Captain’s Row. Thus, the survival of the generally well-preserved Seaman Cottage at 441 Clark Avenue (formerly 218 Center Street) is important both as a representative example of the modest village houses of this period on Staten Island and as an important earlier survivor from the initial development of Richmondtown, the governmental center of the island.

Later History

During the 1840s and 1850s, the village of Richmondtown continued to develop. The construction of the County Clerk’s and Surrogate’s Office (now the Historical Museum, a designated New York City Landmark) in 1848 solidified the village’s position as Staten Island’s governmental center. When court was in session, lawyers, litigants, and others having business in the county seat filled the village’s taverns and the new Washington Hotel on Arthur Kill Road, (built 1840, no longer extant). By 1860 the village also had three stores, two blacksmith shops, one or two shoe makers, five taverns, a vineyard and three churches. There were also a number of new houses, including the Stephens-Prier House (c. 1857-59; a designated New York City Landmark) and the Parsonage of the Reformed Dutch Church (c. 1855; a designated New York City Landmark).

During the 1840s and 1850s, this house was a rental property. Census records suggest that it was probably leased to artisans or tradesmen. (During this period, some of the other Seaman cottages were occupied by blacksmiths, carpenters, and shoemakers.) In 1860, this house was purchased by Eliza Jane Butler, wife of Henry H. Butler. The Butlers and their seven children occupied the house from 1860 to 1868. Henry Butler initially earned his living as a clerk, but the 1865 New York State Census indicates that he was employed as a “stage starter,” perhaps for the stage that began running between the New Dorp railroad station and Richmondtown in 1864. A locally based stone mason and builder, Martin B. Connelly purchased the house in 1868. He later conveyed the property to his wife Margaret who owned it until her death in 1901 when the house was purchased by Louise Schaefer. She owned the house for about ten years after which it was acquired by house carpenter Henry Kreissen. It remained in the Kreissen family until 1975. It then passed to George H. Wilton, Jr. and his wife. From 1988 to 2004 it was owned by Donald and Shirley Brooke. It was moved to its present site in July 2005.

While the Seaman Cottage at 441 Clarke Avenue (formerly at 218 Center Street) has remained relatively intact, the other buildings in the group have fared less well. Two of the group

have been entirely demolished. The house that formerly was at 236 Center Street was moved to 175 Cedarview Street by the mid-1930s and was significantly altered, losing its basement story and its original porch. No. 210 Center Street remains in situ but was significantly altered in the early twentieth century so that it reads more as an early twentieth century house than a nineteenth century structure.

Description

Seaman Cottage was moved in July 2005 to a site on the north side of Center Street between Court Place and St. Patrick's Place (aka Richmond Hill Road) within Historic Richmond Town. The landmark site now is the part of Staten Island Tax Map Block 4441, Lot 1.

The house is a two-and-one-half-story gable roofed frame structure resting on a newly constructed masonry basement. Designed in a simple version of the Greek Revival Style, it retains most of its historic clapboard siding, corner boards, and moldings. Basically rectangular in plan, it is three bays wide and two bays deep. A one-story wood porch resting on non-historic wood piers extends across the length of the façade at the first story. A smaller porch at the northeast corner of the rear façade was enclosed sometime after 1940.

Primary Façade

Front Porch and Steps: The historic wood porch steps were removed when the house was moved. The porch posts and railings are non-historic replacements. The form of the porch's shed roof, flat fascia board frieze, and molded spandrel panels on the sides of the shed roof appear to be original. The molded gutter and asphalt shingles are non-historic.

Areaway and Basement: The house is supported by a non-historic cinder block basement that replaces the house's original brick and rubble basement. Beneath the porch is a cinderblock-lined areaway set below grade level. The areaway has non-historic concrete sidewalls and flooring. The areaway provides access to a basement entry that is currently open.. Adjacent to the entry is a small extension that projects from the basement beneath the porch.

Parlor Story: The parlor story is sheathed with flush clapboards framed by narrow corner boards. The entry at the north corner of the façade is set off by a molded surround with an eared pedimented lintel typical of the Greek Revival Style. The paneled wood and glass door within the entry is more characteristic of the Arts and Crafts Style and probably dates from the first part of the twentieth century. The aluminum and glass storm door is non-historic. The first story windows retain their historic heavy wood molded surrounds that retain hardware for shutters that are no longer extant. The window frames are historic but the six-over-six muntins were installed in the 1980s. (The original sashes would also have been six-over-six). The one-over-over aluminum storm windows are non-historic.

Second Story: The second story is faced with narrow wood siding that is laid flush, rather than lapped. The windows have heavy wood surrounds and have six-over one wood sash. The lower sashes were installed after 1940; the upper sashes may be historic. Originally these windows had six-over-six sashes.) The window openings are framed by historic wood louvered shutters.

South elevation

The south elevation is faced with historic lapped wood clapboards above the basement. A number of window openings on this wall have been modified. At the first story, a horizontal window with a heavy molded surround was introduced near the west corner of the façade, probably in the 1890s or early 1900s. This window contains a single clear light. At the east corner of the façade the paired window openings were probably created in the early twentieth century. They have historic six-over-one wood sashes and non-historic aluminum storm windows. The second-story window is probably original to the façade. It has a molded surround and six-over-one wood sash. Its aluminum storm window is non-historic. A centrally placed full-height attic window contains a one-over-one sash and also has non-historic aluminum storm windows.

North elevation

The north elevation is faced with historic lapped wood clapboards above the basement. The parlor story window has a historic molded wood surround and contains six-over-six wood sash. Its aluminum storm window is non-historic. The two second-story windows are original to the building. They have molded surrounds, six-over-six wood window sash, non-historic aluminum storm sash, and historic wood louvered shutters. The small rectangular attic window opening was probably installed in the late nineteenth-early twentieth century. It has a historic molded wood surround and contains a single pane window (operation undetermined).

Rear (eastern) elevation

Above the masonry basement, the main portion of the rear facade is faced with historic lapped wood clapboards. The clapboard covered porch was enclosed sometime after 1940 and presently lacks its windows and door. The shed roofline and placement of the porch match that of the porch shown in the tax photo and it seems likely that this facade always had some sort of rear porch entrance. The double windows at the first and second story probably date from the early twentieth century. They have molded wood frames and contain six-over-six wood sash windows at the first story and six-over-one sash windows at the second story. The northern second-story also has a six-over-one window. All of the windows on this façade are protected by non-historic aluminum storm windows,

Roof

The house is crowned by low sloping gabled roof which is covered with non-historic shingles. The long eaves at the front and rear of the house retain their original molded cornices that are carried on to the corners of the gable walls. The brick chimney is non-historic.

Report researched and written by
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Research Department

NOTES

¹ This information about the development of Richmondtown is based on Landmarks Preservation Commission, *(Former) Public School 28 Designation Report*, prepared by Donald Presa (LP2021), (New York: City Of New York, 1998); Mesick-Cohen-Waite Architects, "Historical Survey," in Richmondtown Restoration Comprehensive Site Restoration and Development Plan: Project Report, Vol. II" (prepared for NYC Department of General Services, NYC Department of Cultural Affairs, and the Staten Island Historical Society, 1990), pp. 2.4-2.19 [Copies available in the LPC "Richmondtown" Research file and at the Staten Island Historical Society}New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission, "An Archaeological Planning Model of Richmondtown Restoration, Staten Island, New York," (prepared for the NYC Dept. of Cultural Affairs, NYC Dept. of General Services, and the National Endowment for the Arts, 1989) [Copies available in the LPC Environmental Review Dept. files and at the Staten Island Historical Society}; Charles W. Leng and William T. Davis, *Staten Island and Its People: A History, 1609-1929* (New York: Lewis Historical Publishing Co., 1930), v. 1, 227, 271, 337, 348, 423, v. 2, 536, 544, 711, 712-715; Harlow McMillen, "Richmondtown: the First 160 Years," *Staten Island Historian* v. 22, no. 1 (Jan.-March 1961), 3-5; v. 22, n. 2 (Apr.-June 1961), 13-14; v. 22, n.3 (July-Sept. 1961), 20-22; Dorothy Valentine Smith, *Staten Island, Gateway to New York* (Philadelphia: Chilton Book Co., 1970), 40-44, 211-215; Henry G. Steinmeyer, *Staten Island, 1524-1898*, (rev. edition, Staten Island: Staten Island Historical Society, 1987), 109; Barnett Shepherd, "Richmondtown," in Kenneth Jackson, ed., *The Encyclopedia of New York City* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1995), 1004.

² Because her interest in the estate was derived through her maternal grandmother, Catherine Livingston, who suffered from dementia, Katherine Seaman had to wait several years for the courts to arrange a partition of this property. During that time she and several of the other heirs, borrowed money from one another and outside investors against their future expectations.

³ This information on Henry I Seaman's real estate transactions at Richmondtown is from Richmond County, Office of the Register, Liber Deeds and Conveyances, Liber Z, pp 198-201; Liber 3, p.15; Liber 3, p. 188; Liber 3, p. 280, Liber 4, p. 98; Liber 4, p. 313, Liber 6, p. 593

⁴ The former Stephen D. Stephens House, now the Stephens-Black House is a designated New York City Landmark and is within Historic Richmond Town; the Burk house was sold to Captain James H. Bennett in 1853. The Bennett House is also a designated New York City Landmark and within Historic Richmond Town. On the Stephens House see Loring McMillen, "The Stephens House and Store," *Staten Island Historian* v. 31, no. 9 (Jan.-March 1972). For the Bennett House, Phyllis Odiseos, "Preliminary Report on Research Done on the History of the Bennett House, Richmondtown Restoration," in the Bennett House file, Staten Island Historical Society.

⁵ Conveyances, Liber 3, p. 188.

⁶ “A New Street,” *Richmond County Mirror*, Aug 20, 1837, p.12.

⁷ Conveyances, Liber 5, p. 434.

⁸ Conveyances, Liber 6, p 598.

⁹ Leng and Davis, v. 2, 949; Ira K. Morris, *Morris’s Memorial History of Staten Island, New York* (New York: Memorial Pub. Co, c. 1898-1900), v. 1, 414.

¹⁰ Maynard, 28.

¹¹ Charles Lockwood, *Bricks & Brownstone* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1972), 55. For a discussion of the Greek Revival style see *ibid*, 55-97; William H. Pierson, Jr. *American Buildings and Their Architects*, v. 1, *The Colonial and Neo-Classical Styles* (Garden City, NY: Anchor Books, Doubleday, 1976), 430-432; Talbot Hamlin, *Greek Revival Architecture in America* (1944; Rpt. New York: Dover, 1964); Virginia and Lee McAlester, *A Field Guide to American Houses* (New York: Knopf, 1997), 178-195; Robert K. Sutton, *Americans Interpret the Parthenon*; Morrison H. Heckscher, “Building the Empire City: Architects and Architecture,” in *Art and the Empire City: New York, 1825-1861* (New Haven and New York: Yale University Press for the Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2000), 169-183.

¹² On the influence of architectural handbooks see Sutton 51-62; Dell Upton, “Pattern Books and Professionalism: Aspects of the Transformation of Domestic Architecture in America, 1800-1860,” *Winterthur Portfolio* 19 n. 2/3 (Summer/Autumn 1984), 128-150; Sally Ann McMurry, *Families and Farmhouses in Nineteenth-Century America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1988) also examines the impact of the building plans and designs published in the agricultural journals of the period.

¹³ The main buildings at Sailor’s Snug Harbor, the Main Building at Seaman’s Retreat, now Bayley-Seton Hospital, and the Caleb T. Ward House are designated New York City Landmarks. The Henry P. Robertson House at 404 Richmond Terrace is within the St. George/ New Brighton Historic District.

¹⁴ Dormer windows fell out of favor in the Greek Revival period as witnessed by an 1833 newspaper article that spoke of “these ugly projections from the roofs, called dormant [sic] windows, which in many streets disfigure almost every private building , have been generally banished from the new edifices.” quoted in Lockwood, p 60.

FINDINGS AND DESIGNATION

On the basis of a careful consideration of the history, the architecture, and other features of this building, the Landmarks Preservation Commission finds that Seaman Cottage has a special character and special historical and aesthetic interest and value as part of the development, heritage, and cultural characteristics of New York City.

The Commission further finds that, among its important qualities, Seaman Cottage, constructed c. 1836-37 by developer Henry I. Seaman, is a well preserved example of a modest Greek Revival cottage and a significant reminder of the early history of Richmondtown, the historic government center of Staten Island; that Seaman was an instrumental figure in the development of Richmondtown in the 1830s; that this is the best preserved and most intact of the five houses that Seaman built on Center Street that came to be known as the "Seaman Cottages;" that the term cottage alluded to a newly fashionable building type, a small scale house with up-to-date amenities and modish detailing intended for middle-class occupants; that this two-and-one-half-story side hall plan gable-roofed frame house retains its historic form and most of its historic detailing; that its design exhibits the simple forms and planar surfaces characteristic of the Greek Revival style and includes such notable features as a one-story portico, flush clapboarding, eared and pedimented entry surround, simple molded window surrounds, and low dormerless gabled roof; that although many small, simple, detached wood frame and clapboard Greek Revival Style houses were erected in the villages of Staten Island in the 1830s and 1840s relatively few have survived in a good state of preservation making the Seaman Cottage an unusual survivor.

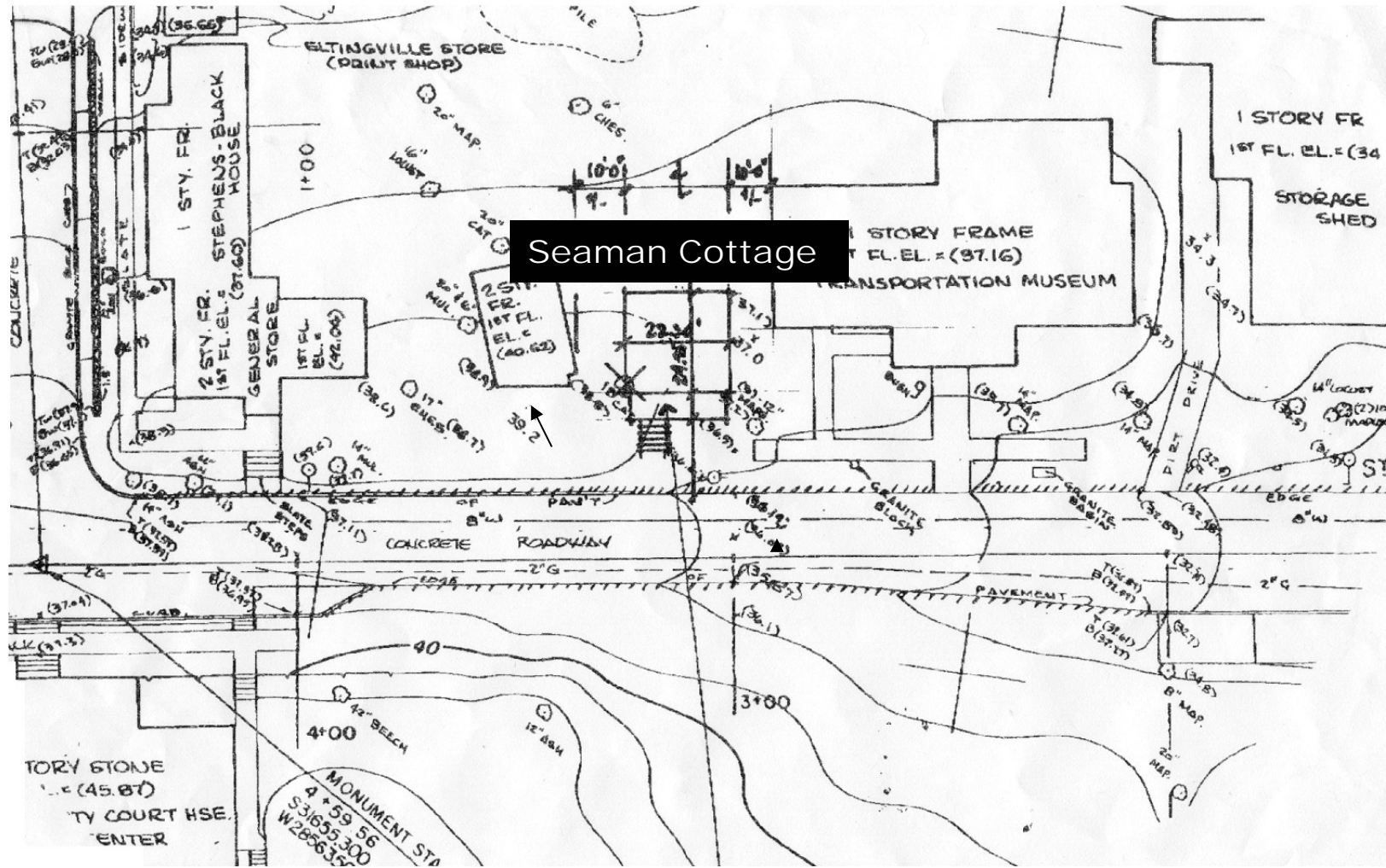
Accordingly, pursuant to the provisions of Chapter 74, Section 3020 of the Charter of the City of New York and Chapter 3 of Title 25 of the Administrative Code of the City of New York, the Landmarks Preservation Commission designates as a Landmark the Seaman Cottage, 441 Clarke Avenue, Borough of Staten Island and designates Borough of Staten Island Tax Map Block 4441, Lot 1, in part consisting of the land on which the described building is situated as its Landmark Site.



Seaman Cottage, 441 Clarke Avenue, formerly 218 Center Street, Staten Island
Photo: Carl Forster



Seaman Cottage
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Seaman Cottage, 441 Clarke Avenue, formerly 218 Center Street, Staten Island
 Landmark site: Borough of Staten Island Tax Map Block 4441, Lot 1 in part consisting of the land
 on which the described building is situated. Site map: Courtesy Staten Island Historical Society