

**DRAFT**

Roswell Beckwith, Sr. House  
Name of Property

**DRAFT**

Madison County, NY  
County and State

## 5. Classification

### Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply.)

- |                                     |                  |
|-------------------------------------|------------------|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | private          |
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | public - Local   |
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | public - State   |
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | public - Federal |

### Category of Property

(Check only **one** box.)

- |                                     |             |
|-------------------------------------|-------------|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | building(s) |
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | district    |
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | site        |
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | structure   |
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | object      |

### Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing	Noncontributing
1	buildings
	sites
	structures
	objects
1	<b>Total</b>

### Name of related multiple property listing

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

N/A

### Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

N/A

## 6. Function or Use

### Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

DOMESTIC/single dwelling

### Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

DOMESTIC/single dwelling

## 7. Description

### Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions.)

EARLY REPUBLIC/Federal

LATE nineteenth AND twentieth CENTURY  
REVIVALS/Colonial Revival

### Materials

(Enter categories from instructions.)

foundation: Stone, Concrete

walls: Wood

roof: Asphalt

other:

Roswell Beckwith, Sr. House  
Name of Property

**DRAFT**

Madison County, NY  
County and State

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### **Narrative Description**

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance of the property. Explain contributing and noncontributing resources if necessary. Begin with a **summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, setting, size, and significant features.)

#### **Summary Paragraph**

The Roswell Beckwith Sr. House is located at 4622 Syracuse Road in the Town of Cazenovia. It is positioned roughly half-way down a hill that slopes to Cazenovia Lake. The house is situated in a rural, suburban, lakeside community of roughly 7,000 residents, comprised of homes on what were once large farmsteads around the lake. Situated on 1.7 acres, the house faces south alluding to the property's original boundary which extended to the lake shoreline.

Built in 1804, the main part of the house is a 1 ½ story, center-chimney, timber-frame house with walls of wood clapboards and an asphalt-shingled, gabled roof. The house is an example of an early vernacular farmhouse with Federal style features constructed in the first years of Cazenovia's settlement. The interior of the house retains integrity to its initial 1804 plan and appearance, with much of the original 1804 Federal features and detailing intact. A significant feature is a large, center chimney 1804 cooking hearth and bake oven. Three fireplaces of the original construction remain. Three south-facing dormers, a covered a patio and two small porches are twentieth century additions, as is a detached garage with attached shed. The house is a rare example of an early timber-framed vernacular farmhouse with Federal style features constructed only 11 years after John Linklaen came to the area with plans to found a settlement named Cazenovia in honor of his benefactor de Cazenove who had purchased the land in 1792.

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### **Narrative Description**

#### ***Siting and Location***

The Town of Cazenovia is located in the western part of Madison County bordered by the Towns of Sullivan (north), Fenner and Nelson (east), DeRuyter (south,) and Pompey (west). The Village of Cazenovia is located on the eastern side of Lake Cazenovia, while the Town surrounds the lake and extends south to the hamlet of New Woodstock. The Roswell Beckwith Senior House is sited on 1.7 acres on the west side of the lake at 4522 Syracuse Road. The house is accessed by a straight driveway from Syracuse Road that ends at the behind the north elevation (rear) of the house. However, the house faces south alluding to the property's original boundary which extended to the lake shoreline. The property currently is lawned, bordered by native species vegetation and wooded areas.

#### ***Exterior***

The primary rectangular mass of the Roswell Beckwith Senior House is a 1 ½ story center chimney dwelling measuring 34 feet wide by 29 feet deep, sited on northeast-southwest line, on a roughly coursed stone foundation that has been parged and remains in place (Photo 0002). The house includes a one-story shed roof extension measuring 12 feet by 18 feet that has been overbuilt within a two-story, 30 x 18 feet east addition added in the second quarter of the nineteenth century (likely by son Roswell Beckwith Junior – photo 0003). Walls are wood clapboard and the roof is asphalt shingle. A gravel driveway leads straight from Syracuse Road to the rear of the house where a detached, non-contributing twentieth century garage-workshop of wood frame construction stands.

There are wood clapboards on the entire exterior, with a mix of original 1804 construction and replacements to match. The broad roof slopes over the elevations with a brick center fireplace chimney extending through the peak. The projection of the shallow cornice on the north and south roof eaves retains its 1804 appearance

Roswell Beckwith, Sr. House  
Name of Property

**DRAFT**

Madison County, NY  
County and State

(Photo 0001). On each of the north and south slopes of the roof are single gabled dormers of twentieth century construction. On the east and west gable end of the main house, a flat board raking gable trim remains in place.

A small entry porch stands on the south elevation of the house. The porch appears to have been added in the early twentieth century and later embellished with Corinthian columns in the mid-twentieth century. The 1804 Federal style front doorway has a six-panel door with a narrow overhead transom. The exterior trim has molded flat pilasters, and the head of the exterior door surround is concealed in the roof of the later porch. The front door rests on top of the raised foundation and likely would have had steps leading to it in the area now occupied by the porch decking.

The façade (south elevation) of the 1 ½ story retains a symmetrical five-bay configuration with the doorway in the center and two windows flanking either side. The windows are six-over-six pane windows, typical of the 1830s and likely replacing original twelve-over-twelve pane windows at the time of construction. Several of the original exterior blinds (shutters) are present (Photo 0001).

On the west gable elevation, the 1804 window configuration consists of two windows on the first floor and two windows on the upper level, each retaining six-over-six pane, sashed (Photo 0002). The west elevation retains evidence (ghosting) of a former porch and a center doorway that appear to have been added late nineteenth/early twentieth century and have since been removed.

On the north side, the elevation structurally is the same as the south façade, except that the window arrangement is not symmetrical. On the first floor east, there is an original 1804 twelve-over-twelve sashed window and two other windows with a six-over-six pane configuration. Under the roof eave is a small frieze window. A late nineteenth century/early twentieth century cellarway is in the center at the foundation. On this side of the house, the grade comes up to the top of the foundation (Photos 0003 and 0004).

On the northeast corner of the main house is a twentieth century porch with re-purposed Gothic Revival style columns (Photo 0003). There is a mid-nineteenth century 1 ½ story timber-framed addition. Concealed behind the non-historic porch and within the mid-nineteenth addition is the 1804 framed shed. The shed is completely built over within the addition. Evidence of the original shed structure is visible in the crawl space where the adjusted timber sill appears to be the older and original one. Access ends where the end of shed would have been. The massing of the current dining room (shed section) is the exact size of the shed. The rest of the overbuild was attached to the shed beyond the kitchen. Also, on the second story, the "Open Room" flooring changes direction where the end of the shed would have been, providing further evidence that the original 1804 shed was incorporated into the addition.

On the east wall of the east addition is a twentieth century covered patio (Photo 0004). On the south wall of the east addition is a one-story shed roof projection. The south wall contains one re-purposed twelve-over-twelve window, along with mid-twentieth century Colonial Revival style windows and detailing on the first story.

## ***Interior***

### Basement:

The foundation of the full-height basement consists of large, irregular sedimentary stones. At the center of the basement is a large stone pier for the home's center chimney. Under the 1804 shed is an inaccessible crawl

Roswell Beckwith, Sr. House  
Name of Property

**DRAFT**

Madison County, NY  
County and State

space retaining the timber framing structure as far as can be seen. Overhead hewn and flattened log timber from 1804 remains in place. The five-bay timber-frame is visible from below.

At the southeast corner of the basement, a rear cellarway entry has been filled in, possibly at the time of the East Shed modification in the second quarter of the nineteenth Century.

First Floor [see Figure 01: Field Sketch of 1804 Rooms; sketch labeling is used in descriptions below]:

At the front entrance, there is a small passageway entry room (Entry) that serves as circulation space, roughly 6 feet by 6 feet. It has two Federal period doorways with typical flat board trim having a bead and small back band. In the north side of the entry are two cupboards built into the wall with 1804 panel doors and trim (Photo 0008). This passageway entry room is open to a west parlor on the left and to the Kitchen on the right.

The southwest corner of the house is a 1804 room (SW Parlor), likely a former parlor, that has three windows, two on the south wall and one on the west wall. It measures roughly 14 feet by 15 feet. The room has a chair rail, baseboard, and original wide plank pine flooring. On the east wall is a fireplace and brick hearth with a well-articulated Federal wood mantelpiece of simple design with twin colonettes on each side, a deep flatboard section over the hearth, and a deep molded top shelf.

Between the windows on the south wall are two mirror rails to support a former mirror. A Federal style architrave trim remains. There are Federal style window moldings throughout.

Occupying the northwest corner of the 1804 building is a small room (NW Bedroom) roughly 10 feet by 14 feet and entered by a doorway from the Southwest Parlor. The room retains a window, flooring, trim, and chair rail consistent with an 1804 construction (Photo 0009).

Directly east and in the center of the north side is the Dining Room, roughly 12 feet by 14 feet. Changes in wood and nail provide evidence of what was likely a thin west plank wall and a north-south plank wall on the east side of the room that have since been removed, probably when the staircase to the basement was enlarged (see below). The dimensions (6 feet by 10 feet) of this formerly enclosed space indicate possible former use as a Pantry or other storage area. The Dining Room has one twelve-over-twelve sash window centered on the north wall and two additional windows to the east. On the south wall is a diminutive Federal style fireplace with a well-articulated wood mantel (Photo 0010). A pair of built in cupboards are in the south wall. There are two boxed vertical posts on north wall. Evidence suggests a former doorway from the Dining Room to the kitchen.

On the east end of the Dining room is an enclosed stairway to the second floor with basement stairs underneath. The stairway enclosed by a vertical board wall has been altered, likely in mid-twentieth century, repurposing many of the 1804 elements in the stairs' current construction. The doorway to the enclosed basement stairs is a mid-twentieth century Colonial Revival style plank door. This area appears to have been a "back of the house" area with simple finishes and trims.

To the south of this room is the former kitchen (Photos 0005 and 0006). The room has two six-over-six windows on the south wall which remain and one doorway in the east wall leading to the former 1804 East Shed (now enclosed). On the west wall of the former kitchen in the center of the building is a large brick cooking hearth with cranes and a brick beehive bake oven. The door covering the brick beehive bake oven has been removed. An extensive wood mantelpiece of simple Federal design remains. In the twentieth century, the north end of the hearth was partially filled in to accommodate a new boiler flue in the basement. The posts in the

Roswell Beckwith, Sr. House  
Name of Property

**DRAFT**

Madison County, NY  
County and State

southeast corner of the kitchen are boxed. Horizontal wainscoting is in place along the southeast corner with the top cap integral with the windowsills. The simple window trim and doorway to the Entry remain in place. Plaster and lathe walls remain. Flooring in the kitchen is hard wood – chestnut or ash.

To the east of the 1804 Kitchen is the former 1804 East Shed (12 feet by 18 feet). Construction details of the frame section of the shed indicate it was built in a single phase with the house. The timber frame space was overbuilt in the second quarter of the nineteenth century with a gabled east wing. The north end of this room was plastered during the mid-twentieth century. It currently contains a re-purposed Federal style mantelpiece (no fireplace) with a diagonal plane window sash over it (Photo 0011). There is also a fifteen-light exterior doorway that has been added in the mid-twentieth century on the north side. The south end of room was extended in the early twentieth century and made into an Inglenook with a large, multipaned Colonial Revival style window (Photo 0012). The room retains its original plank floors, plaster work, and basic 1804 configuration.

The three Federal period panel doors on the first story retain their Norfolk thumb latches.

Further east of this room are a present-day kitchen (R107), sitting room (R108), rear side entry and stairway (R109), and Toilet (R107A) – all twentieth century additions [Figure 03].

#### Second Floor: [Figure 02]

The second story is characterized by sloping ceilings down to the north and south walls of the main house. A large brick chimney is in the center (Photo 014). This space was originally divided with two bedrooms on the furthest west end, each measuring roughly 15 feet by 15 feet, and an open room on the east side of the main house. It remains unchanged from its original configuration.

The Southwest Bedroom has a sloped ceiling, one window on the west wall, and a twentieth century dormer on the south wall (Photo 0016). A wide plank floor, and simple board trim exist. The wall and ceiling plaster work has been covered with hardboard. The room retains boxed corner posts, simple board trim, plank door, and particularly wide plank flooring. The Northwest Bedroom is identical in construction, with a window on the west wall. Doors into both of these rooms are vertical plank doors.

The east open room of the second story main house continues the boxed corner posts, and contains a detailed chair rail, simple baseboard trim, plank door, and wide plank flooring. Walls are plaster and lathe. The room measures about 15 feet x 20 feet including the stairway from the first story. The altered 1804 stairway is open with board railings/balusters. The room includes a small mid-nineteenth century eave window on the north wall. A modern bathroom has been installed on the southeast corner of the east open room. The bathroom door and door from the open room to the east addition are plank doors likely dating to 1804.

East of the open room is the second story of the two story, timber-frame gable addition extended over the first floor east shed extension, adding two large rooms to the second story within the gable roof. The space currently contains two large bedrooms, a stairway, and trim representative of mid-twentieth century Colonial Revival style (Photo 0019).

Throughout the house, on both floors, the window and door casings contain no ornamental corner blocks but use mitered corners.

Roswell Beckwith, Sr. House

**DRAFT**

Madison County, NY

Name of Property

County and State

## 8. Statement of Significance

### Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- ☐ A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- ☐ B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- ☒ C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- ☐ D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

### Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- ☐ A Owned by 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.)

Architecture

### Period of Significance

1804

### Significant Dates

1804

### Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

N/A

### Cultural Affiliation

N/A

### Architect/Builder

Unknown

### Period of Significance (justification)

The period of significance is the year of construction of the Roswell Beckwith Senior House, indicating the importance of the building as a representative example of the local expression of domestic center chimney Federal architecture.



Roswell Beckwith, Sr. House

**DRAFT**

Madison County, NY

Name of Property

County and State

**Criteria Considerations (explanation, if necessary)**

N/A

**Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph**

(Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance and applicable criteria.)

The Roswell Beckwith Senior House at 4622 Syracuse Road in Cazenovia, New York northwest of Cazenovia Lake is eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion C in the area of Architecture as an early example of a locally popular timber-frame, center chimney, farmhouse dwelling constructed in the settlement period of Cazenovia. The home was expanded with an addition in the second quarter of the nineteenth century reflecting broader historical development in Cazenovia. The mass of the 1804 house remains remarkably true to its original construction, plan, and appearance. Much of this integrity can be attributed to the continuous and uninterrupted ownership of the house for 70 years by three generations of the Beckwith family, from 1804 into the 1870s [Figure 05].

Roswell Beckwith Senior moved from Coeymans, New York after having bought 179 acres in 1802 and 1803 in the new establishment of Cazenovia, New York. One of the earliest settlers, he built a 1½ story house during 1804 in the early Federal style, as indicated particularly in the exterior south elevation, the interior features, cooking hearth, and spatial layout.

His son, Roswell Beckwith Junior, is likely responsible for additions during 1825-1850 including a second floor over the original 1804 shed extension and converting the shed space into a new kitchen and dining area. On Roswell Beckwith Junior's death in 1870, his son George inherited the property. In 1873, recognizing change and opportunity, George Beckwith sold the property to the Syracuse & Chenango Valley Railroad Company. This seventy-year period of familial ownership saw minimal changes and allowed the integrity of the early Federal vernacular home to survive well into the twentieth century. It is likely the most intact early nineteenth century center chimney Federal dwelling in Cazenovia.

**Narrative Statement of Significance**

**Brief History of Cazenovia**

In 1790, John Lincklaen, a young naval officer, was sent to Philadelphia to work for Theophilus de Cazenove, who was serving as the principal agent for a group of bankers in the Netherlands speculating in American land investments. Acting as a field representative, Lincklaen explored and evaluated tracts of land in the New York and Pennsylvania wilderness for purchase by what would become the Holland Land Company.

In 1792, de Cazenove purchased 55,000 acres of land containing the present Towns of Cazenovia and Nelson. Lincklaen was sent to explore the "Road Township" and "Township No. 1" as two of the "Twenty Township" tracts of land were known. He was impressed with the quality of the soil, availability of timber, and abundant water sources. Lincklaen was instructed to make additional purchases and succeeded in acquiring a total of 120,000 acres in what became known as the "Cazenovia Establishment" in honor of de Cazenove. Lincklaen was appointed resident agent of the Cazenovia Establishment and given a share of the property. In the spring of 1793, Lincklaen set out again to begin settlement and sale of the land.



Roswell Beckwith, Sr. House

**DRAFT**

Madison County, NY

Name of Property

County and State

A formal plan was created in 1794 for a village in which initial residential and commercial development would occur. The Village was bound on the west by Owahgena Lake (today's Cazenovia Lake) and Chittenango Creek on the east; today's Seminary Street on the north; and extending about one mile south. Concurrently, settlement of the surrounding Town was plotted. Farms of predominantly 100 and 150 acres were offered at favorable terms. Lincklaen advertised extensively and attracted buyers and settlers, including Roswell Beckwith Senior.<sup>1</sup>

Roswell Beckwith, Sr. was born 21 October 1753 in Lyme, Connecticut.<sup>2</sup> He became a Baptist minister and purchased 100 acres in 1802 and another 79 in 1803 in Lot 42 while he and family were still living in Coeymans, New York.<sup>3</sup> He moved with his family and constructed his dwelling (the subject of this application) in 1804 on the west side of Cazenovia Lake.<sup>4</sup> Roswell and his wife Lydia were among the earliest settlers of Cazenovia who had come in response to Lincklaen's advertisements for good farming land at reasonable prices and the opportunity to help build a new community. Roswell Beckwith Senior continued to acquire acreage through 1813, purchasing all of Lot 42 and much of Lot 43, ultimately reaching 319 acres, and including what is still known as Beckwith Bay.<sup>5</sup>

These farms would initiate the Agrarian period of Cazenovia's development, from its settlement to roughly the 1860s. Cash crops of wheat, corn, barley, oats, and hops were produced. Farmers also raised livestock of sheep, hogs, and cattle. The farms would become a vital factor in the local economy, allowing Cazenovia to move from subsistence farming to market-based commerce and trade, aided by completion of the Erie Canal in 1825. Agricultural schedules taken with the 1860 Federal Census show the Beckwith farm producing predominantly wheat and oats; dairy products from cattle, including 600 pounds of butter per year; sheep and wool. In addition to farming, Roswell Senior also built and sold wooden plows.

## Architectural Context

Within the Village, there are a few buildings of the eighteenth century, though lacking much of their historic integrity. Most of the earliest extant historic buildings within Village are from the first two decades of the nineteenth century, displaying pre- and later-Federal style.

Federal style was the new and increasingly popular Post Colonial expression of American architecture after the Revolutionary War and into the second quarter of the nineteenth century. It was characterized by

<sup>1</sup> Extracts of historical family history information in this application are taken from Anne Beckwith Ferguson, *The Beckwiths of Cazenovia, New York, Vol I* (Cazenovia NY: n.p., 2021) and *The Beckwiths of Cazenovia, New York, Vol II* (Cazenovia NY: n.p., 2022) with permission of author

<sup>2</sup> Roswell Beckwith Pension Record #10358, Revolutionary War Pension and Bounty-Land Warrant Application Files (NARA microfilm publication M804, 2670 rolls). Records of the Department of Veterans Affairs, Record Group 15. National Archives, Washington DC; accessed via ancestry.com 18 Aug 2018

<sup>3</sup> J. H. French, *Gazetteer of the State of New York* (Syracuse NY: R. P. Smith, Publisher, 1860), p 167; accessed via archive.org 08 Aug 2018. "Cazenovia Establishment Land Books, 1793-1816, Holland Land Company" (Vol 3: page 256); microfilm at Lorenzo State Historic Site, Cazenovia NY. *Second Census of the United States, 1800*; Census Place: Coeymans, Albany, New York; Series: M32; Roll: 22; Page: 112; Image: 118; Family History Library Film: 193710; accessed via ancestry.com 08 Aug 2018

<sup>4</sup> Year: 1810; Census Place: Cazenovia, Madison, New York; Roll: 28; Page: 737; Image: 00142; Family History Library Film: 0181382; accessed via ancestry.com 23 Dec 2019

<sup>5</sup> Deeds of 1802, 1803, 1806, and 1811 from "Cazenovia Establishment Land Books, 1793-1816, Holland Land Company" (Vol 3: page 256); microfilm at Lorenzo State Historic Site, Cazenovia NY. Deeds, County Clerk's Office, Madison County, Wampsville NY: Year, Book #/Page # as follows: 1806 T/484; 1818 T/485

Roswell Beckwith, Sr. House

**DRAFT**

Madison County, NY

Name of Property

County and State

restrained detailing and volumetric symmetry, evolving and ultimately departing from the British Georgian precedence. It was influenced by Roman classical design as documented by British archeologists and architects, such as Robert Adams.<sup>6</sup> It remained a dominant style until generally about 1825 when it began to be supplanted by the Greek Revival style.<sup>7</sup>

The Roswell Beckwith, Sr. House reflects the center chimney expression of Federal style residence. Abbot Lowell Cummings has meticulously documented a century and a half of central chimney houses in New England predating and surviving into the Federal period.<sup>8</sup> The Fairbanks House in Dedham, Massachusetts stands as the iconic American example of the center-plan type. By mid-1700s, massed-plan houses dominated New England, and early Federal residences were typically a simple box, one or two-rooms deep, having a center chimney, with doors and windows arranged in strict symmetry<sup>9</sup>.

The new Federal style in coastal New England was rapidly engaged from 1780 onward by architects Charles Bulfinch and Asher Benjamin.<sup>10</sup> With prosperity in trade and artifice, residences would become larger, more elaborate, with more delicate features than the one and two-room houses of the early Massachusetts Bay colony.

### **The Center Chimney House in Cazenovia**

One of the first structures built after Lincklaen founded Cazenovia in 1793 was a sawmill in 1794 and from the beginning of settlement, frame homes were the norm, with that of his assistant Samuel Forman, being the first completed that year.<sup>11 12</sup>

The immediate use of frame houses – both the multitude and all of the same basic design -- appears to be distinctive to Cazenovia early settlement. Arriving from New England, the settlers drew on architectural precedence; the majority of the earliest working settler dwellings were frame houses, having plank exterior walls, simple timber frame, and three first-story fireplaces, enabled by a large center chimney. In an initial “window survey,” there are well over fifty of these center chimney houses remaining in Cazenovia, however most with significant subsequent alterations.

Typically, an eight-post house had the center chimney at the rear interior of the main house with a one-story shed addition across the back of the main house. The centered front entrance opened into a small entry hall with equally sized parlors on each side; a fireplace was located in each space within the center chimney. The central kitchen provided a cook hearth and bake ovens in the center chimney.

<sup>6</sup> [Unauthored], “Federal Style Architecture, U.S. National Parks Service,” <https://www.nps.gov/articles>; accessed 19 Jul 2025

<sup>7</sup> [Unauthored], “Federal Style 1780-1820,” Pennsylvania Historical & Museum Commission, Field Guides, <https://www.phmc.state.pa.us>; accessed 18 Jul 2025

<sup>8</sup> Abbott Lowell Cummings, *The Framed Houses of Massachusetts Bay, 1625-1725* (Cambridge MA: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1979), 22-27

<sup>9</sup> McAlester, Virginia Savage, *A Field Guide to American Houses* (New York, NY: Alfred A. Knoff, 2024), 122-126

<sup>10</sup> Roth, Leland M., *A Concise History of American Architecture* (Boulder CO: Westview Press, 1980), 64-66

<sup>11</sup> Evans, Gurdon, *A General View and Agricultural Survey of the County of Madison* (Albany NY: Charles Van Benthuysen, 1852) p. 672 and Hammond, Luna M., *History of Madison County, State of New York* (Syracuse NY: Truair, Smith & Co., 1872), 223

<sup>12</sup> Weiskotten, Daniel H., “Historical Synopsis of the Principal Structures within the Village of Cazenovia,” 1987 and “History of the Fire Department Property,” n.d., Weiskotten Historical Research Papers, Cazenovia Public Library Archives, Cazenovia NY 20 Jul 2025

Roswell Beckwith, Sr. House

**DRAFT**

Madison County, NY

Name of Property

County and State

These houses were soon often modified with the addition of a full second story by cutting the timber posts above the second level floor and raising the upper portion of the house by four feet. This created a full, finished second story. The enclosed stairway remained in place, often with modifications.

In the 1830s, many of the early center chimney houses had a new, two-story gable roof of Greek Revival style added to the front.<sup>13</sup> The center chimney house became the back wing with kitchen of the full house. Three examples are the NRHP-listed houses at 9 Mill Street, 17 Mill Street, and 21 Chenango Street in Cazenovia.

The collection of houses built in the first twenty-five year settlement period is distinctive for their collective similarity of design and early alterations. Existing documentation appears to suggest that only two properties in Cazenovia retain both exterior and interior center chimney plan and circa 1800 interior design: 4652 Syracuse Road (NRHP-listed Beckwith Farmhouse) and 4622 Syracuse Road, the proposed Roswell Beckwith, Sr. House.

Within the town, there are few extant farmhouses of the first two decades of settlement. Those that do remain include the farmhouse of Roswell Beckwith's son Barack Beckwith (ca. 1810 NR #87001862), the Niles Farmhouse (ca. 1807, NR #87001871), and Tall Pines (since dated as ca 1810, NR #87001874). Others of the third and fourth decade reflect the vernacular Federal style, such as Annas (ca. 1832, NR #87001861) and Chapell (ca. 1835, NR #87001864) farmhouses. Thus, it is fortunate that the Roswell Beckwith Senior House remains as a significant and important example of the Agrarian period of Cazenovia's economic development and of rural residential farm architecture of the settlement period.

### The Beckwith Family

The Beckwiths were a family known for their conservative Baptist principles, and also for their patriotic stance. Roswell Beckwith, Sr. was a Baptist minister and fought in the Revolutionary War.<sup>14</sup> Sons Roswell, Jr. and James fought in the War of 1812.<sup>15</sup> Son Barak, who became a County Judge and Commissioner of Deeds, led the creation of a Moralistic Society in Cazenovia in 1815 and the creation of the Madison County Temperance Society with abolitionist Gerritt Smith in 1830.<sup>16</sup> Roswell Beckwith Senior and his sons were instrumental in creating the Baptist Church of Cazenovia in 1823, which split off from the Baptist Church in New Woodstock. Roswell Beckwith, Jr. was a Deacon of the Cazenovia Baptist Church, acting to purchase land for the church's physical building.<sup>17</sup> The Beckwith family had a significant public and moral influence on the community.

<sup>13</sup> McAlester, Virginia Savage, *A Field Guide to American Houses* (New York, NY: Alfred A. Knopf, 2024), 122

<sup>14</sup> Roswell Beckwith Pension Record #10358, Revolutionary War Pension and Bounty-Land Warrant Application Files (NARA Microfilm publication M804, 2670 roll). Records of the Department of Veterans Affairs, Record Group 15. National Archives, Washington DC; accessed via ancestry.com 18 Aug 2018

<sup>15</sup> Sergeant Roswell Beckwith Bounty-Land Warrant Application, Warrant #55-120-7616 & 50-40-78227 and James Beckwith Bounty-Land Warrant Application, Warrant #55-80-21181 & 50-80-11324 (6815?), "Index of Applications for Soldiers Who Fought Post-Revolutionary War, 1795-1855"; both accessed via fold3.com 11 May 2022

<sup>16</sup> William Tuttle, *Names and Sketches of the Pioneer Settlers of Madison County, New York* (Interlaken, NY: Hearts of the Lakes Publishing, 1984), p 18. Also, *Pilot*, Cazenovia NY, 03 Jan 1816 [scanned as 08 Jan], p. 2 col 1. Also, *Republican Monitor*, Morrisville NY, 22 Sep 1829, p 3 col 2; the latter two accessed via cazenovia.advantage-preservation.com 19 Dec 2019

<sup>17</sup> James H. Smith, *The History of Chenango and Madison Counties, New York* (Syracuse, NY: D. Mason & Co., 1880), p 675. Also, *Cazenovia Republican*, Cazenovia NY, 17 Aug 1870, p 2 col 7; accessed via cazenovia.advantage-preservation.com 11 May 2022

Roswell Beckwith, Sr. House

**DRAFT**

Madison County, NY

Name of Property

County and State

Roswell Beckwith, Sr.'s large agricultural holdings were typical of the period and Cazenovia area, containing woodlands, orchards, and farmlands on which were raised wheat, sheep, pigs, cows, and chickens. In 1823, Roswell Senior sold the property to his son Roswell Junior who continued to farm crops and raise sheep.<sup>18</sup> Roswell Senior and his wife Lydia moved nearby to the Cobblestone house of son James, a half mile south, where Lydia died in 1834 and Roswell, Sr. in 1836 at age eighty-three.<sup>19</sup>

Under Roswell, Jr., the farm continued to prosper. In addition, Roswell, Jr. established a cooper business and cabinetmaking at the farm and deployed initial industrial farming tools, such as a mowing machine.<sup>20</sup> Roswell Junior married in 1825 and subsequently had three children who were raised to adulthood in the house. Roswell Junior is likely responsible for converting the 1804 shed space during 1825-1850 into a new kitchen and dining area and created a second floor over the original 1804 shed. During this period, several extant six-over-six windows appear to have replaced what were likely twelve over twelve windows.

Roswell Junior, wife Olive, daughter Eliza, and son George continued to reside at the farmhouse into the 1860s. After serving with the Ellsworth Avengers in the Civil War, George Beckwith, son of Roswell Jr., returned to Cazenovia.<sup>21</sup> He married in 1866 and the family lived at the farm with his parents.<sup>22</sup> Two subsequent children joined the household. Olive Beckwith died in 1865 and when Roswell Beckwith, Jr. died in 1870, his son George inherited the house and most of the land.<sup>23</sup>

At that time, Cazenovia was beginning to transition to a destination as a summer resort community. This, combined with growth in business and industry, made Cazenovia an attractive prospect for a railroad service. In 1870, recognizing both change and opportunity, George sold the property to the Syracuse & Chenango Valley Railroad Company so that it could construct a tunnel and track through his land. In anticipation, he created a public recreational area, Beckwith's Grove, for picnics and day visitors from Syracuse, New York. George and his family nonetheless continued to live on the farm until 1872 when he sold his personal property and moved to Silver Creek, New York where he operated a hotel for a few years.<sup>24 25</sup> He and his family then

<sup>18</sup> Deeds, County Clerk's Office, Madison County, Wampsville NY. Year, Book #/Page # as follows: 1807 BY/322; 1813 AH/105; 1815 BY/323; 1819 AP/364; 1823 AP/363; 1823 AH/107; 1823 BY/326

<sup>19</sup> Interment Records of Roswell and Lydia Beckwith, Evergreen Cemetery, Clerk's Office, Village of Cazenovia NY, p 6

<sup>20</sup> Herman W. Smith, "Family History," 03 Feb 1918, pages 2 and 6, transcribed May 2001 by and in Collection of Phil Smith, copy in possession of A. Ferguson. Mary Jane Beckwith Journal, Cazenovia Public Library, Cazenovia NY, entry of 30 Jul 1860

<sup>21</sup> New York State Archives; Albany NY; *Civil War Muster Roll Abstracts of New York State Volunteers, United States Sharpshooters, and United States Colored Troops [ca. 1861-1900]*; Box #1026-1027; accessed via ancestry.com 11 May 2022

<sup>22</sup> *Cazenovia Republican*, Cazenovia NY, 21 Feb 1866, p 3 col 1; accessed via [cazenovia.advantage-preservation.com](http://cazenovia.advantage-preservation.com) 20 Feb 2021. Also, Year: 1870; Census Place: Cazenovia, Madison, New York; Roll: M593\_967; Page: 48B; accessed via ancestry.com 11 May 2022

<sup>23</sup> Interment Records of Deacon Roswell Beckwith, Evergreen Cemetery, Clerk's Office, Village of Cazenovia NY, p 6. Also, Probate of Roswell Beckwith, Surrogate of Madison County, Surrogate's Court, Wampsville NY, File # 2983

<sup>24</sup> *Cazenovia Republican*, Cazenovia NY, 11 Jan 1871, p 2 col 3 and 18 Apr 1872, p 3 col 3; both accessed via [cazenovia.advantage-preservation.com](http://cazenovia.advantage-preservation.com) 09 Sep 2021

<sup>25</sup> Census of the State of New York, for 1875. Microfilm. New York State Archives, Albany, New York; accessed via ancestry.com 11 May 2022. Also, *Chautauqua County Business Directory for 1873-1874*, (Syracuse NY: Child, Hamilton (?), 1873 (?)), p 388; accessed via ancestry.com 11 May 2022

Roswell Beckwith, Sr. House  
Name of Property

**DRAFT**

Madison County, NY  
County and State

moved to Montana, where he became a successful hotel owner and ultimately, manager of the *Boulder Hot Springs Resort* in Boulder, Montana.<sup>26</sup>

## Architectural Integrity

When the railroad later went bankrupt in 1873, the house and property were sold to a private family that held them until 1951. As with many of the large farm and/or family tracts around Cazenovia, the property was periodically divided and sold leaving roughly 1.7 acres.<sup>27</sup> The house nonetheless continued mostly unmodified, with only two changes: a temporary porch and entry added to the Southwest parlor and subsequently removed, probably in the late nineteenth/early twentieth century; and an Inglenook added to the Dining Room around 1926. Other than those minor modifications, the house remained unchanged until the 1950s and 1960s.

During that time, a small front porch, kitchen and bathroom upgrades, open east roofed patio, north porch, dormers, and interior knotty pine paneling and other treatments of the mid-twentieth Century Colonial Revival Style were added. Additionally, the 1804 enclosed narrow and steep interior stair was modified to a safer stair size and rise. The 1804 board walls and treads were re-used to retain the appearance of the enclosed stairway. Likely at that time, the board walls of the 1804 Pantry were removed, opening up the space between the 1804 Kitchen and Dining Room. Despite these mid-twentieth century additions, the integrity of the 1804 house is evident and one of the most intact early nineteenth century Federal dwellings in Cazenovia.

Characteristic features of the period and style evident in the Roswell Beckwith Senior House include the rectangular, gable-roofed form, the narrow frieze, slender corner boards, and twelve-over-twelve double hung sash windows with simple wood moldings. The small-scale, one and one-half story, five bay rectangular house is sheathed in clapboard and has symmetrical fenestration, simple detailing, and overall, restrained decoration.

The primary mass of the house retains most of its 1804 spatial layout and features on both the first and second floors. The 1804 front entry, parlor, bedroom/birthing room, dining room, and kitchen on the first floor retain all of the simply articulated details of early Federal style. In particular, the large brick cooking hearth with cranes and beehive oven of the former kitchen dominates the interior southeast space. The extensive wooden mantelpiece of unembellished Federal design remains. An 1804 shed directly east likely provided storage. Upstairs, the original construction of two rooms (bedrooms) on the west side remain intact. The east side of the second floor of the original main house contains a large open space that also has not been altered other than adding a small bathroom. The three fireplaces of the original house survive. The layout and purpose of the rooms reflect a socio-economic status and purpose typical of the era.

<sup>26</sup> *Butte Semi-Weekly Miner*, Butte MT, 10 Mar 1886, p 4 col 2; accessed via genealogybank.com 14 Apr 2022; *Anaconda Standard*, Anaconda MT, 03 Jan 1893; accessed via genealogybank.com 14 Apr 2022

<sup>27</sup> Deeds, 1924 – 1947, County Clerk's Office, Madison County, Wampsville NY, illustrative: Book/Page # as follows: 274/72; 285/140; 347/380; 394/38



Roswell Beckwith, Sr. House

Name of Property

**DRAFT**

Madison County, NY

County and State

### **Conclusion**

The Roswell Beckwith, Sr. House is architecturally significant as an early example of the typical timber-frame, center chimney dwelling as constructed in the Town and Village during the first twenty years of settlement. The farmhouse retains historic integrity to its initial 1804 plan and appearance. Its Federal style features of the main section remain remarkably intact. The nineteenth-century two-story gable addition on the east and later nineteenth-century alterations have minimal impact to the integrity and design of the first and second stories. The nineteenth century dining room and later inglenook extension remain in place within the former 1804 east shed-roofed addition. On the exterior, the simple, 1804 main section detailing and form remain in place, with additions to the east carried out in a similar manner.

The 1804 Roswell Beckwith, Sr. house retains its rural site and setting, with the farmhouse situated on wooded surrounding lands. It represents the locally standardized early-nineteenth-century Federal style dwellings built by pioneers in the Town of Cazenovia, as one of the best remaining examples.

Roswell Beckwith, Sr. House  
Name of Property

**DRAFT**

Madison County, NY  
County and State

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Roswell Beckwith, Sr. House  
Name of Property

**DRAFT**

Madison County, NY  
County and State

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Roswell Beckwith, Sr. House

**DRAFT**

Madison County, NY

Name of Property

County and State

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p 6.

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Roswell Beckwith, Sr. House

**DRAFT**

Madison County, NY

Name of Property

County and State

**Previous documentation on file (NPS):**

☐ preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67 has been requested)  
☐ previously listed in the National Register  
☐ previously determined eligible by the National Register  
☐ designated a National Historic Landmark  
☐ recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # \_\_\_\_\_  
☐ recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # \_\_\_\_\_  
☐ recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # \_\_\_\_\_

**Primary location of additional data:**

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

Name of repository: \_\_\_\_\_

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): \_\_\_\_\_

**10. Geographical Data**

**Acreage of Property** 1.7 acres

(Do not include previously listed resource acreage.)

**Latitude/Longitude Coordinates**

Datum if other than WGS84: \_\_\_\_\_  
(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

1. Latitude: 42.946168

Longitude: -75.885239

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

The boundary is indicated on the enclosed map.

**Boundary Justification** (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The boundary reflects the current property configuration, which was created in 1951 by the purchase of the property by the Moon family from Sara Durston.

**11. Form Prepared By**

name/title Anne Beckwith Ferguson, President; Ted Bartlett, Vice President, editing D. H. Boggs SHPO

organization Cazenovia Heritage, Inc.

date July 8, 2025

street & number 4573 Syracuse Road

telephone 315-655-4717

city or town Cazenovia

state NY

zip code 13035

e-mail annefcaz@gmail.com

Roswell Beckwith, Sr. House

Name of Property

**DRAFT**

Madison County, NY

County and State

---

**Additional Documentation**

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Submit the following items with the completed form:

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

A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.

- **Continuation Sheets**
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items.)



Roswell Beckwith, Sr. House  
Name of Property

**DRAFT**

Madison County, NY  
County and State



1:2,400

0 100 200 ft

Projection: WGS 1984 UTM Zone 18N



Nomination Boundary (2.93 ac)

New York State Orthoimagery Year: 2021



New York State  
Parks, Recreation and  
Historic Preservation

Mapped 07/03/2025 by Matthew W. Shepherd, NYSHPO

Roswell Beckwith, Sr. House

**DRAFT**

Madison County, NY

Name of Property

County and State



1:2,400

0 100 200 ft

Projection: WGS 1984 UTM Zone 18N



Nomination Boundary (2.93 ac)



Tax Parcels

Madison County Parcel Year: 2024



New York State  
Parks, Recreation and  
Historic Preservation

Mapped 07/03/2025 by Matthew W. Shepherd, NYSHPO



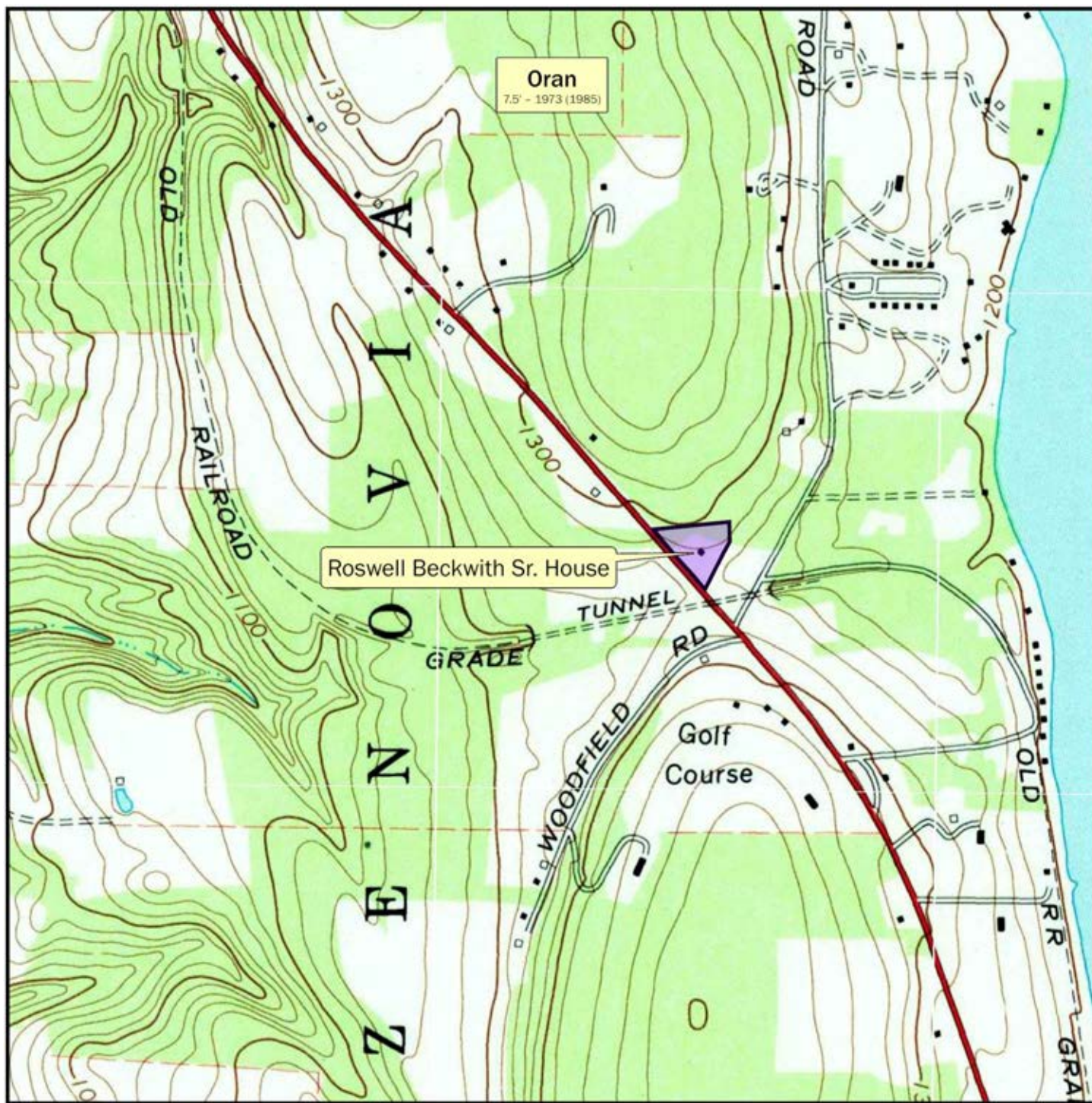
Roswell Beckwith, Sr. House

**DRAFT**

Madison County, NY

Name of Property

County and State



1:12,000

0 500 1000 ft



Roswell Beckwith Sr. House



New York State  
Parks, Recreation and  
Historic Preservation

Projection: WGS 1984 UTM Zone 18N

Mapped 07/03/2025 by Matthew W. Shepherd, NYSHPO



Roswell Beckwith, Sr. House

**DRAFT**

Madison County, NY

Name of Property

County and State

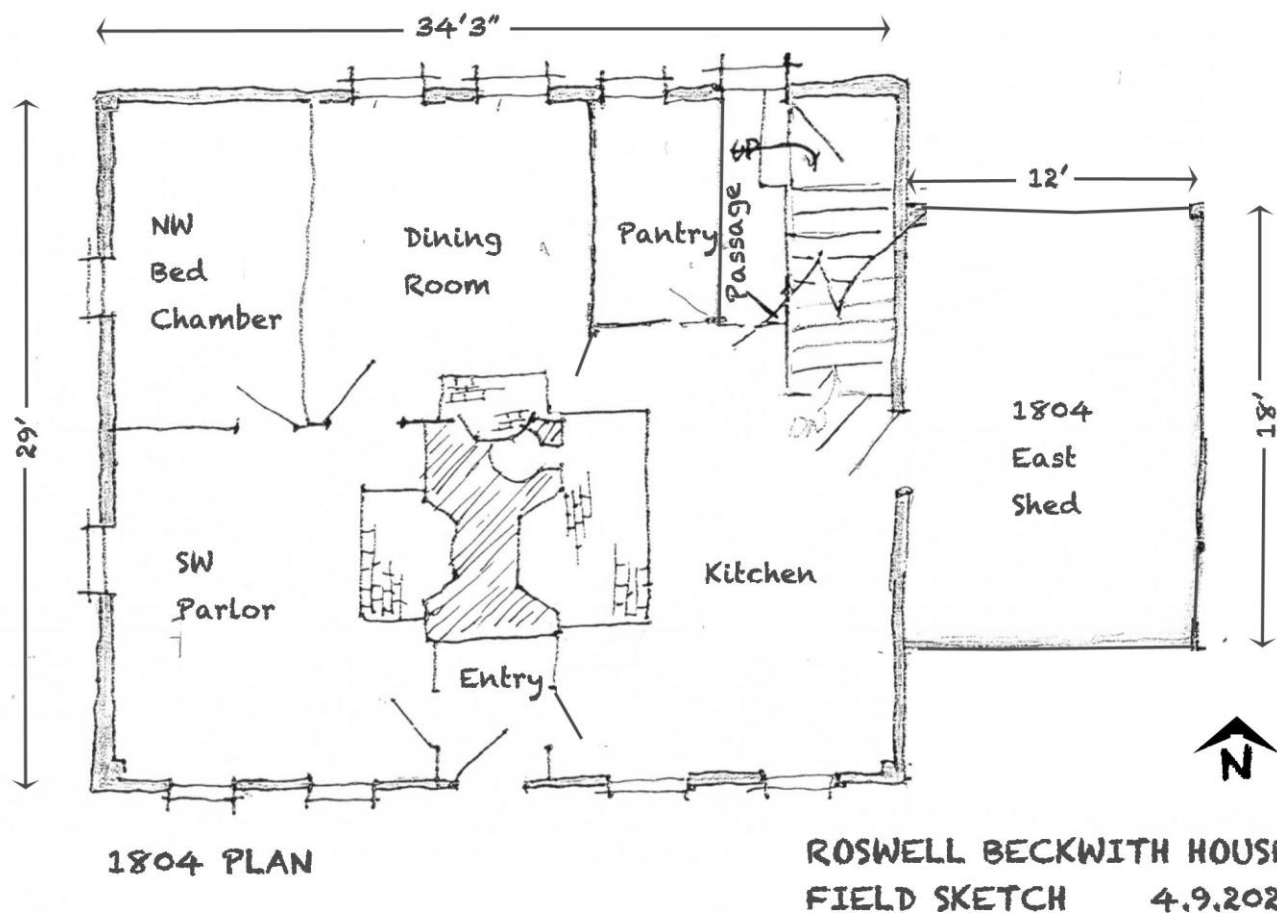


Figure 01: Plan of Roswell Beckwith, Sr. House First Floor as it appeared in 1804 by Ted Bartlett

Roswell Beckwith, Sr. House

**DRAFT**

Madison County, NY

Name of Property

County and State

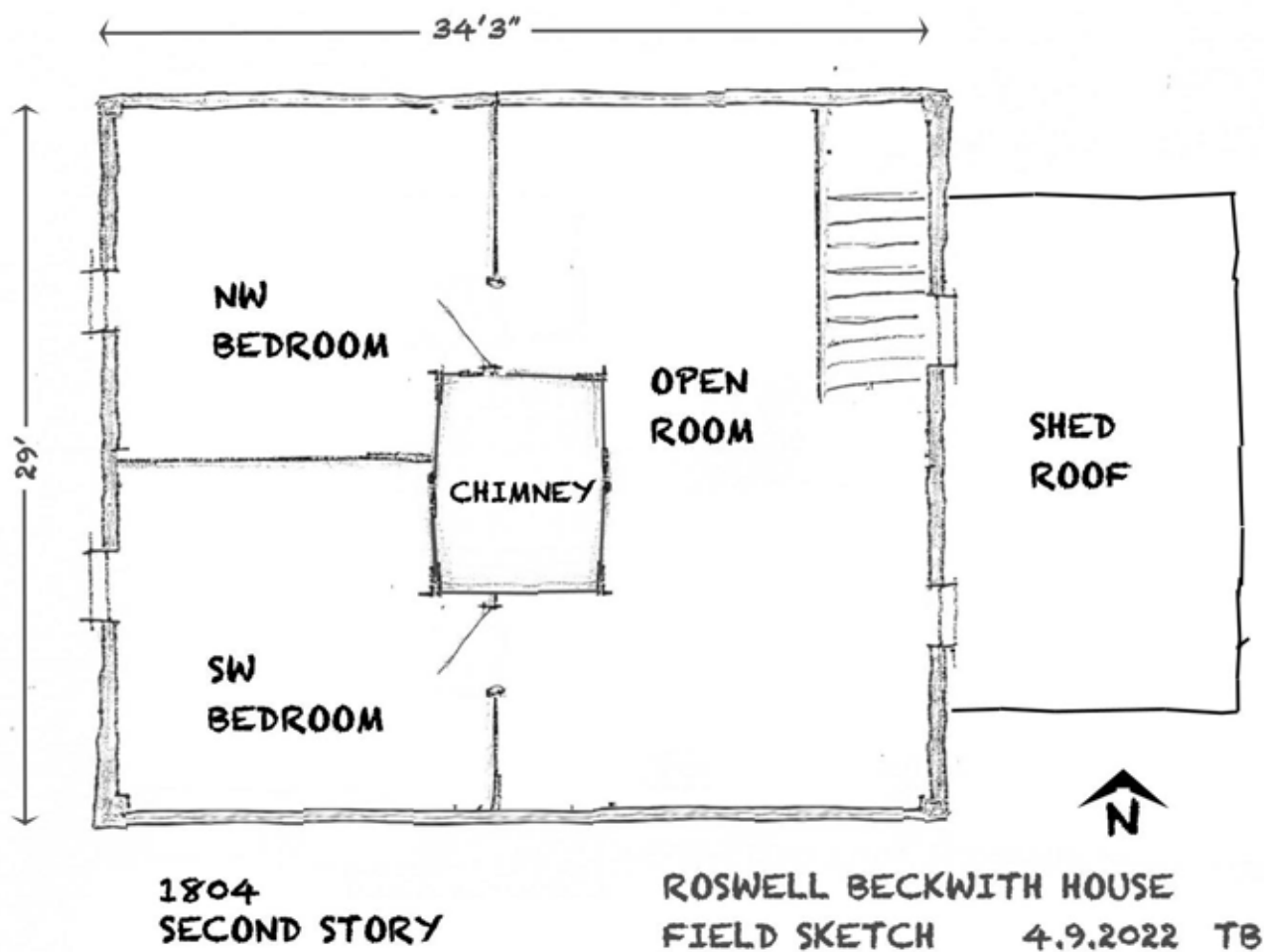


Figure 02: Plan of Roswell Beckwith, Sr. House as it appeared in 1804 by Ted Bartlett

Roswell Beckwith, Sr. House

**DRAFT**

Madison County, NY

Name of Property

County and State

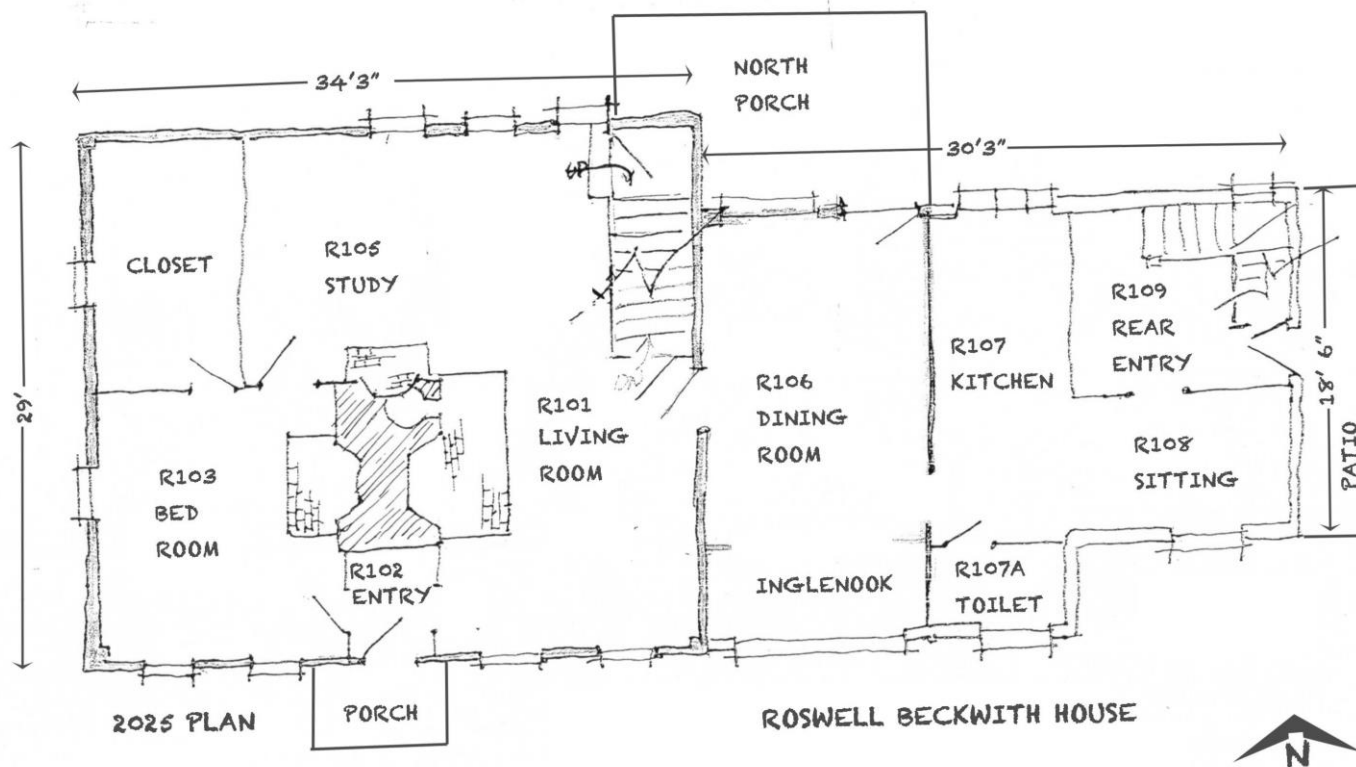


Figure 03: Plan of Roswell Beckwith, Sr. House First Floor, as it appeared in 2025 by Ted Bartlett

Roswell Beckwith, Sr. House

**DRAFT**

Madison County, NY

Name of Property

County and State

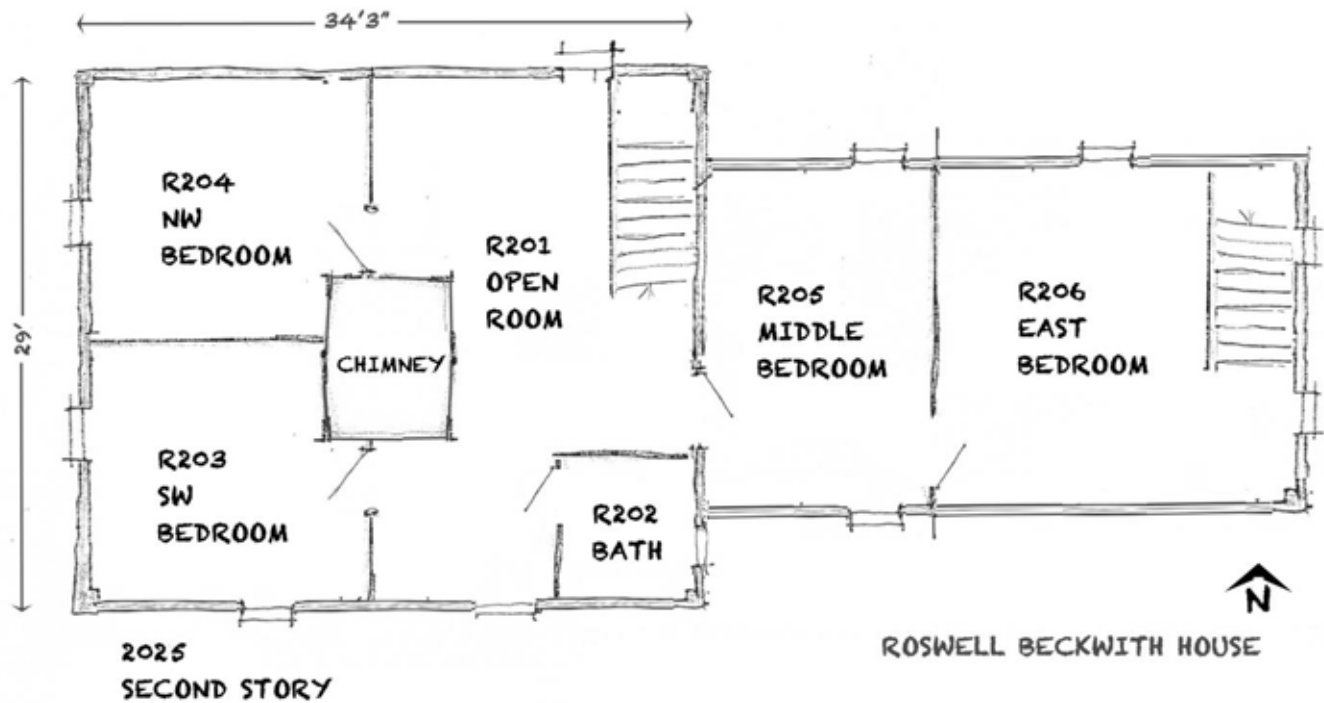


Figure 04: Plan of Roswell Beckwith, Sr. House Second Floor, as it appeared in 2025 by Ted Bartlett

Madison County, NY

County and State



27

Roswell Beckwith, Sr. House

**DRAFT**

Madison County, NY

Name of Property

County and State

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**Photographs:**

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map.

Name of Property: Roswell Beckwith Sr. House

City or Vicinity: Cazenovia

County: Madison

State: NY

Photographer: Ted Bartlett

Date Photographed: May 2022

Description of Photograph(s) and number:

- 0001 of 0020 Roswell Beckwith House: View, south side, front, looking northwest
- 0002 of 0020 Roswell Beckwith House: View, west gable end and rear elevation in rural setting, looking southeast
- 0003 of 0020 Roswell Beckwith House: View, north side, rear, looking southeast
- 0004 of 0020 Roswell Beckwith House: View, east gable, looking northwest
- 0005 of 0020 Roswell Beckwith House: 1804 kitchen looking south
- 0006 of 0020 Roswell Beckwith House: 1804 kitchen, looking north
- 0007 of 0020 Roswell Beckwith House: 1804 front entry looking west into the parlor
- 0008 of 0020 Roswell Beckwith House: 1804 doorway trim into small entry from kitchen, looking northwest
- 0009 of 0020 Roswell Beckwith House: 1804 NW bedchamber, looking north through doorway
- 0010 of 0020 Roswell Beckwith House: 1804 Dining room looking west.
- 0011 of 0020 Roswell Beckwith House: 1804 shed extension, nineteenth century dining room looking north
- 0012 of 0020 Roswell Beckwith House: View within 1804 shed extension, nineteenth century dining room looking south
- 0013 of 0020 Roswell Beckwith House: View within the east gable addition, looking north
- 0014 of 0020 Roswell Beckwith House: View within 1804 second story large room, looking west
- 0015 of 0020 Roswell Beckwith House: View within 1804 large second story room looking southeast
- 0016 of 0020 Roswell Beckwith House: 1804 second story southwest bedroom, looking west
- 0017 of 0020 Roswell Beckwith House: 1804 second story northwest bedroom, looking west
- 0018 of 0020 Roswell Beckwith House: View within the second story middle bedroom looking west
- 0019 of 0020 Roswell Beckwith House: Second story east gable bedroom looking east
- 0020 of 0020 Roswell Beckwith House: Garage, looking east from drive with house porch on right



Roswell Beckwith, Sr. House

**DRAFT**

Madison County, NY

Name of Property

County and State



0001 of 0020 Roswell Beckwith House: View, south side, front, looking NW showing 1804 section at left with later porch and dormers and two-story nineteenth century east addition in foreground.



0002 of 0020 Roswell Beckwith House: View, west gable end and rear elevation in rural setting, looking SE showing 1804 section in foreground with later additions to the left



Roswell Beckwith, Sr. House

**DRAFT**

Madison County, NY

Name of Property

County and State



0003 of 0020 Roswell Beckwith House: View, north side, rear, looking SE showing 1804 section at right with two-story nineteenth century east addition and covered patio to left and twentieth century porch in foreground.



0004 of 0020 Roswell Beckwith House: View, east gable end of nineteenth century addition with twentieth century covered patio. twentieth century garage visible to the north of the house.

Roswell Beckwith, Sr. House

**DRAFT**

Madison County, NY

Name of Property

County and State



0005 of 0020 Roswell Beckwith House: R101, 1804 Kitchen looking south with 1804 features, cook hearth and ovens to right, and 1830's 6/6 sash in the windows.



0006 of 0020 Roswell Beckwith House: R101, 1804 Kitchen looking north with 1804 features, cook hearth to the left, enclosed stair in the center, and dining room to the right. Back section of the room had a board wall separating it with space to left as probable dining room.



Roswell Beckwith, Sr. House  
Name of Property

**DRAFT**

Madison County, NY  
County and State



0007 of 0020 Roswell Beckwith House: R102, 1804 small front entry with front door to left, doorway to Parlor in center, and built-in cupboards at chimney wall to right.



0008 of 0020 Roswell Beckwith House: R102, 1804 small entry from Kitchen, showing 1804 doorway trim, plaster, and cupboards in entry at upper section of chimney wall.

Roswell Beckwith, Sr. House

**DRAFT**

Madison County, NY

Name of Property

County and State



0009 of 0020 Roswell Beckwith House: R104, 1804 NW small bedroom with window, chair rail, and corner post visible.



0010 of 0020 Roswell Beckwith House: R105, 1804 probable Dining Room as opened up to the Kitchen to the left. 1804 fireplace in center chimney with mantelpiece, overhead cupboards, chair rail, flooring, and window to the right. SW Parlor through the doorway beyond the fireplace.



Roswell Beckwith, Sr. House

**DRAFT**

Madison County, NY

Name of Property

County and State



0011 of 0020 Roswell Beckwith House: R106, within 1804 shed extension, nineteenth century dining room looking north with twentieth century alterations (decorative mantelpiece is not from this house).



0012 of 0020 Roswell Beckwith House: R106, within 1804 shed extension, nineteenth century dining room looking south with twentieth century alterations and inglenook. 1804 Kitchen is to the right.

Roswell Beckwith, Sr. House

**DRAFT**

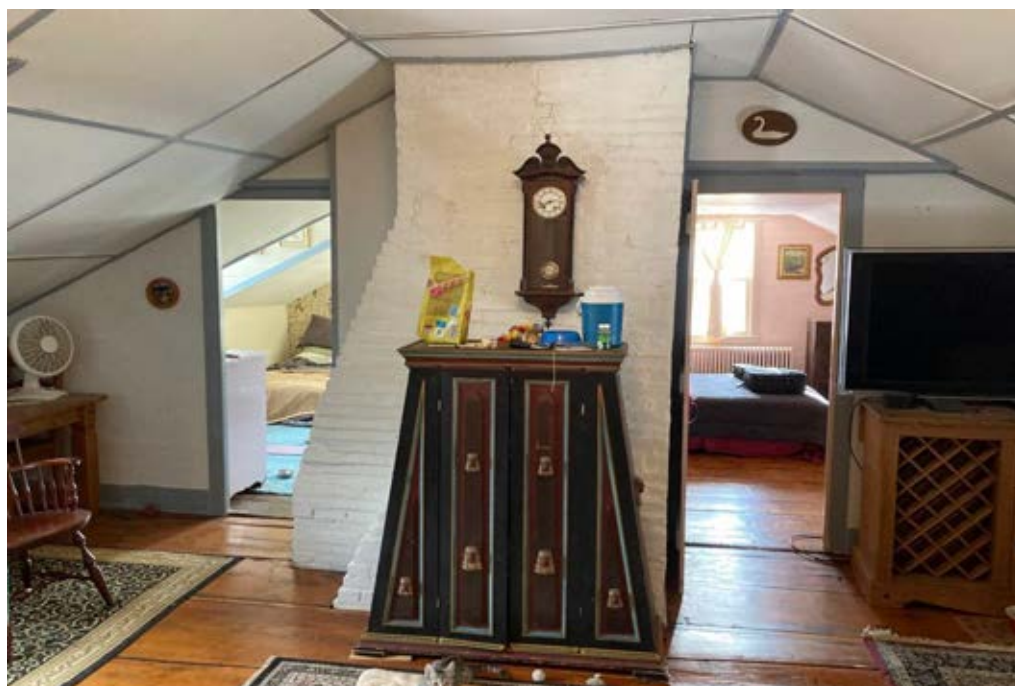
Madison County, NY

Name of Property

County and State



0013 of 0020. Roswell Beckwith House: R107, looking north within the nineteenth century two-story gable east addition, a mid-twentieth century kitchen extends from the north to the south wall of the addition with toilet room at the south end.



0014 of 0020 Roswell Beckwith House: R201, 1804 large room occupying the east half of the 1804 second story. View is looking west with center chimney in the center, two bedrooms flanking the chimney, sloped ceiling, and wide 1804 floor boards.



Roswell Beckwith, Sr. House

**DRAFT**

Madison County, NY

Name of Property

County and State



0015 of 0020 Roswell Beckwith House: R201, 1804 large second story room looking SE with stairway at the very left, doorway to the nineteenth century east second story and twentieth century bathroom in the center. The twentieth century south dormer window and 1804 flooring are visible.



0016 of 0020 Roswell Beckwith House: R203, 1804 SW bedroom within the gable roof structure with 1804 features and trim and twentieth century dormer to the left.



Roswell Beckwith, Sr. House  
Name of Property

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Madison County, NY  
County and State



0017 of 0020 Roswell Beckwith House: R204, 1804 NW bedroom within the gable roof structure with 1804 features and trim and nineteenth century dormer to the left.



0018 of 0020 Roswell Beckwith House: R205, Middle bedroom in the west end of the mid nineteenth century east addition view looking west from the bedroom into R201.

Roswell Beckwith, Sr. House

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Madison County, NY

Name of Property

County and State



0019 of 0020 Roswell Beckwith House: R206, east gable bedroom in the mid nineteenth century addition second story with twentieth century knotty pine features, nineteenth century flooring and stairway hidden behind the desk to the first story.



0020 of 0020 Roswell Beckwith House: Garage, 1950's one-story "Colonial" rectangular two-car garage with shop on left; north of the 1804 house. Looking east from drive with house porch on right showing setting.

Roswell Beckwith, Sr. House

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Madison County, NY

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**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 18 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.