**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY – NOMINATION FORM**

*(Type all entries – complete applicable sections)*

### 1. NAME

**COMMON:**
Tallmadge Historic District

**AND/OR HISTORIC:**
Tallmadge Historical Area

### 2. LOCATION

**STREET AND NUMBER:**
Public Square

**CITY OR TOWN:**
Tallmadge

**STATE:**
Ohio

**CODE:**
039

**COUNTY:**
Summit

**CODE:**
153

### 3. CLASSIFICATION

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CATEGORY (Check One)</th>
<th>OWNERSHIP</th>
<th>STATUS</th>
<th>ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>District □ Building</td>
<td>□ Public</td>
<td>□ Occupied</td>
<td>□ Restricted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Site □ Structure</td>
<td>□ Private</td>
<td>□ Unoccupied</td>
<td>□ Unrestricted</td>
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<tr>
<td>□ Object</td>
<td>□ Both</td>
<td>□ In Process</td>
<td>□ No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>□ In Process</td>
<td>□ Being Considered</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**PRESENT USE** (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- □ Agricultural
- □ Commercial
- □ Educational
- □ Entertainment
- □ Government
- □ Military
- □ Museum
- □ Religious
- □ Park
- □ Private Residence
- □ Transportation
- □ Other (Specify)

**Comments**

### 4. OWNER OF PROPERTY

**OWNER'S NAME:**
City of Tallmadge and Tallmadge Congregational Church

**STREET AND NUMBER:**
Public Square

**CITY OR TOWN:**
Tallmadge

**STATE:**
Ohio

**CODE:**
039

### 5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

**COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.:**
None known to exist - Proprietary Grant

**STREET AND NUMBER:**

**CITY OR TOWN:**

**STATE:**

**CODE:**

### 6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

**TITLE OF SURVEY:**
Historic American Buildings Survey

**DATE OF SURVEY:**
1934

**DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:**
Library of Congress

**STREET AND NUMBER:**

**CITY OR TOWN:**
Washington

**STATE:**
D.C.

**CODE:**
011
The Tallmadge Historical Area is composed of an oval green originally designated as the "Public Square," and originally in that shape; and two buildings: The First Congregational Church and the Town Hall.

The Public Square and plan of the entire township (Town 2, Range 10) was laid out in unique form about 1807 by the Reverend David Bacon. Eight roads linking the farthest points of the township to the centrally located village center were designed in the form of spokes of a wheel running to the hub. The avowed purpose of this design was for all township roads to lead to the meeting house. The square was originally 7½ acres. Highway incursions have reduced the size to about 3 acres.

The church building is Connecticut-type Federal, with its typically frame, white painted clapboard construction. A high, classic portico supported by four large columns adorns the facade. The dominant feature of the structure is the 100 ft. high steeple, topped by a weathervane. The steeple is believed to have been inspired by the old Central Church of New Haven, Connecticut. The building measures forty feet wide by fifty-six feet long excluding the more recent addition. Three large doors welcome worshippers. Inside, many changes have occurred from the original which featured box pews, and a winding staircase to a wine glass pulpit. Interior alterations over the years included:
- 1849: pulpit moved from south to north end, box pews replaced;
- 1860's: heating system installed replacing individual stoves;
- 1888: addition placed on north end to accommodate organ;
- 1910: new hardwood floor laid; stained glass windows added
- 1925: stained glass windows replaced for type similar to original of clear glass; green blinds reinstalled.

The present condition of the church is fair, exterior trim has deteriorated, the steeple is in poor condition.

The town hall and academy, now abandoned for these purposes, is a 1859 Greek Revival structure of two stories. Pediments, both front and rear, support two-story high pilasters, the distinctive architectural features of the structure. The interior of the town hall has been remodeled many times over the years, and has been re-partitioned extensively for use as offices, academy, and high school. While basic elements of interior, simple trim remain, there is little resemblance to the original condition. The building is in poor repair. Dry rot has taken its toll of exterior trim, but the basic structure is essentially sound.

Both the church and town hall have been abandoned for their original purposes within the past two years. The former is slated to become a State Memorial; the latter a local history museum.
The Public Square of Tallmadge and its two original structures are the best examples in the Western Reserve of Ohio to illustrate the transplantation of New England architectural styles in governmental and religious structures to that area of Ohio during the early settlement period; and the close relationship of church and state among Congregation- alists who were the first and principal settlers of the Connecticut Western Reserve. It is the only central community green space in a commercial district of crass, modern buildings.

The Square with its eight highways leading to it was the religious-political-commercial idea of the Reverend David Bacon, a self-ordained minister, who in 1809 came to the wilderness area and devised the unusual township road and Square plan to conform to his radical religious beliefs for a self-contained "Commonwealth" which would be governed only by the Congregational clergy and laymen. The town and road plan are unique to Ohio and rare in the nation, and were first used in 1809 when the first settlers arrived.

The church was the first permanent fulfillment of Bacon's dream of an imposing edifice towering over all forms of human activity in the town- ship, although he had left the fledgling community in 1812 because landowners refused to consent to a tax to support his ministry and missionary efforts. The church was the design of Lemuel Porter, pioneer Ohio architect-builder from Waterbury, Conn. whose works, many remaining in Ohio, are among the best of the Federal style in the state. The church was completed in 1825 and is regarded to this day as a superlative example of its type. A color picture of it appeared on the Thanksgiving, 1955 issue of LIFE magazine.

The town hall is less distinguished architecturally and historically. The most famous instructor at the Academy was Sidney Edgerton who became Congressman, Chief Justice of the Idaho Supreme Court, and territorial governor of Montana by appointment of President Lincoln. Its location on the Square in proximity to the church, its simple but distinguished classic lines, completes the historical representation of the proximity and intertwining of church, state, and education in the old Connecticut Western Reserve.
9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

A Brief History of the First Congregational Church of Tallmadge, Ohio, Men's Fellowship, 1940.
Historical Pageant, Centennial Celebration, Tallmadge Meeting House, 1925.
The Congregationalist, CVII, 08, 1922.
Archives, First Congregational Church, Tallmadge.

10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CORNER</th>
<th>LATITUDE</th>
<th>LONGITUDE</th>
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<tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>SE</td>
<td>Degrees Minutes Seconds</td>
<td>Degrees Minutes Seconds</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: 34

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE: CODE COUNTY CODE
STATE: CODE COUNTY CODE
STATE: CODE COUNTY CODE
STATE: CODE COUNTY CODE

11. FORM PREPARED BY

NAME AND TITLE: Daniel R. Porter, Director
ORGANIZATION: Ohio Historical Society
STREET AND NUMBER: Ohio Historical Center
CITY OR TOWN: Columbus

12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION

As the designated State Liaison Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 86-666), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service. The recommended level of significance of this nomination is:

National [ ] State [x] Local [ ]

Name: Daniel R. Porter
Title: Ohio Historical Society
Date: October 19, 1970

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register.

Curtis C., Chief, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation
MAY 6, 1971

ATTEST:

William J. Burtchard
Keeper of the National Register
Date: FEB 21, 1971
January 23, 1984

Councilman Dennis Hood
Tallmadge Municipal Building
46 North Avenue
Tallmadge, Ohio 44278

Dear Councilman Hood:

The Tallmadge Town Square Historic District was listed on the National Register of Historic Places on September 28, 1971. The nomination is composed of the oval green originally designated as the "Public Square"; and two buildings: The First Congregational Church and the Town Hall.

Enclosed is a copy of the National Register nomination and a National Register of Historic Places fact sheet.

Please contact me if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Barbara A. Powers
National Register Coordinator

BAP: vb

Enclosures
Ohio Historic Preservation Office

National Register of Historic Places File Checklist

The following materials are contained in this file of the National Register form for:

Name: Tallmadge Town Square Historic District
County: Summit

☐ Original National Register of Historic Places nomination form
☐ Multiple Property Nomination form
☒ Photograph(s)
☒ Photograph(s) (copies)
☐ USGS map(s)
☒ USGS map(s) (copies)
☐ Sketch map(s)/figure(s)/exhibit(s)
☒ Correspondence
☒ Other research paper: 1975 news clips

CES: 9/01