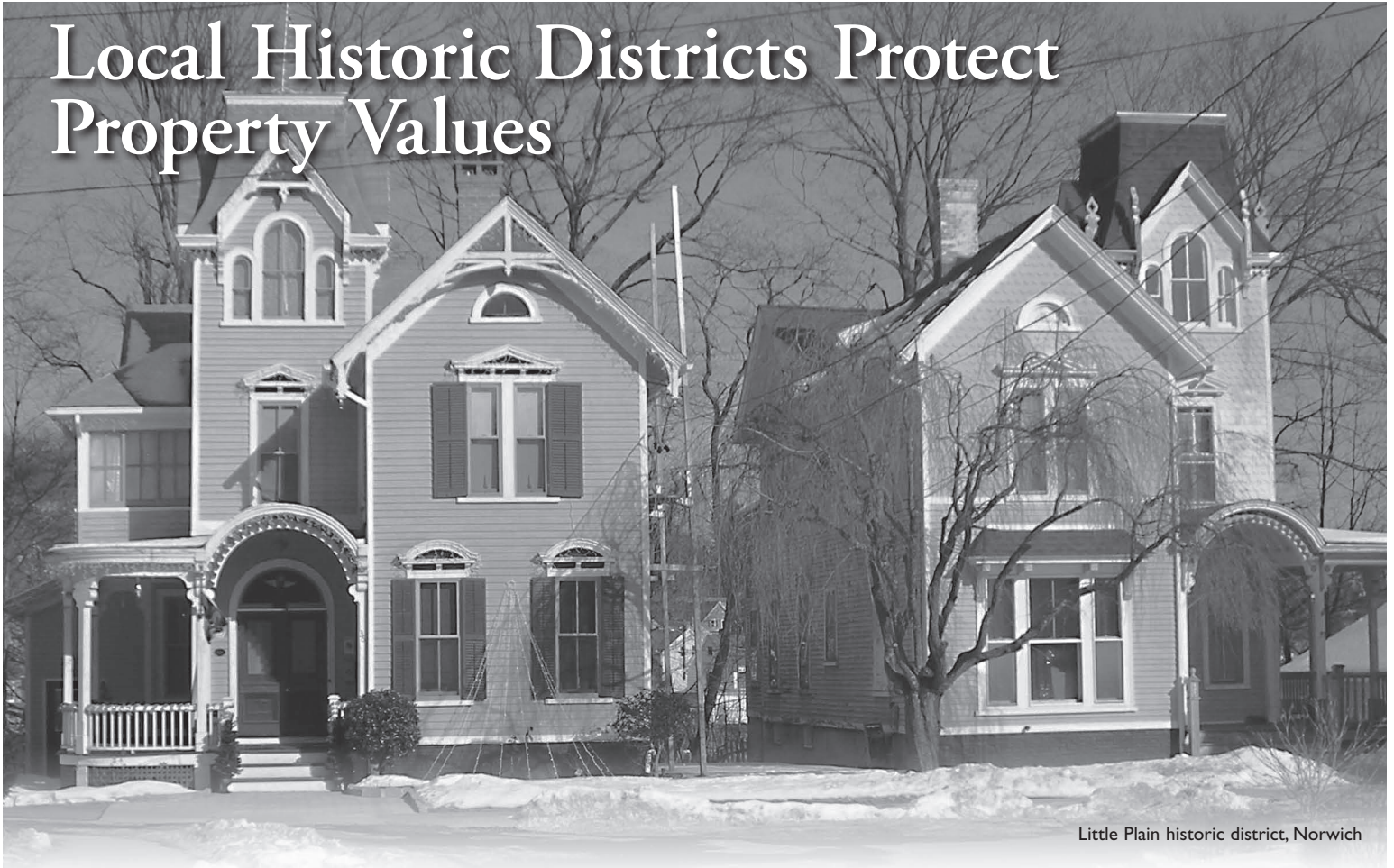


Local Historic Districts Protect Property Values



Little Plain historic district, Norwich

What are the benefits of historic preservation? For years property owners in existing or proposed local historic districts (LHDs) have asked this question, and for years preservationists have answered in terms of protecting the appearance of significant neighborhoods.

It turns out that local historic districts also protect property values, according to a study released by the Connecticut Trust for Historic Preservation. The study, “Connecticut Local

Historic Districts and Property Values,” was conducted by PlaceEconomics, a real estate and economic development consulting firm based in Washington, D.C. Donovan Rypkema, the firm’s principal, is the nation’s leading authority on the economics of historic preservation.

In local historic districts, which are established by municipalities under a state enabling statute, property owners must obtain a Certificate of Appropriateness from the town’s historic district commission before making any alterations to the building that would be visible from a public right-of-way, including demolition or new construction. The purpose of the review is to ensure that proposed changes are in keeping with the overall historic character of the district.

The goal of the study was to analyze what effect (if any) local historic district regulations have on residential property values. Similar studies in other states had found that LHDs

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From the Executive Director

October saw a new addition to the Trust's staff and the departure of an old friend. We welcomed Terry Grady to our staff as Development Director. Originally from Michigan, where he honed his fund raising skills, Terry recently worked for the Nature Conservancy here in Connecticut. His first job has been to meet all trustees and members of the Advisory Council and he is quickly becoming very familiar with our operations. We look forward to great fund raising success under his leadership.

At the same time, the National Trust for Historic Preservation announced significant changes to their regional organization. The Northeast Office of the National Trust, in Boston, was disbanded, as were the other five regional offices. Most sadly, Wendy Nicholas, long-time director of that office, lost her position. Wendy was a mentor to me in my early years here. Her support for our work, especially our Circuit Rider program, was unwavering. Across the Northeast region Wendy has been recognized as a dedicated, passionate and very savvy preservation professional. We wish her all the best as she approaches new career paths.

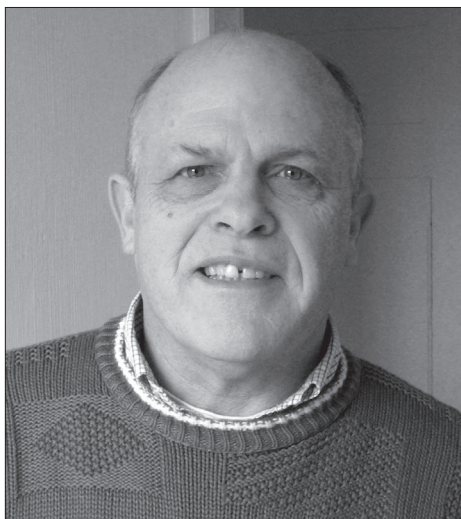
In the past several months, the Connecticut Trust has been exploring an exciting new way of extending our work to preserve and enhance Connecticut's historic places. In June 2011, the Trust engaged DLJ Consulting, from Washington, D.C., to conduct a feasibility study for a new revolving fund. A grant for this study

came from The 1772 Foundation, which is leading an initiative to stimulate revolving funds in local and statewide preservation organizations. Six New England statewide preservation organizations are at various stages of developing and implementing such funds. We will work together, along with two well established funds in Boston and Providence, as the New England Consortium for Revolving Funds, sharing models, best practices and staff training.

For the Trust, the multiple-phase study started with an analysis of the Trust's existing programs, especially two of its grant programs, Historic Preservation Technical Assistance Grants and Vibrant Communities Initiative, as well as the bi-monthly listing of endangered properties in *Historic Properties Exchange*. Subsequent phases of the study consisted of: a comparison of four revolving funds that represented best practices in historic preservation revolving funds; a needs survey; a Board and staff retreat; and three case studies.

In December, the Board discussed the final report of the study and clarified what type of fund the Trust might want. There was consensus that, at the start of a fund, the Trust would focus on one specific area, most likely a second-tier city like New London or Norwich. The Trust would actively engage partners, from Department of Economic and Community Development to local groups including the municipality, community development organizations, local preservation groups and potential funding partners. The two models for a fund that emerged were an options-based fund—meaning the Trust would take an option on an endangered or keystone historic property in a downtown and try to sell it for more than the option—or a pre-development loan fund for developers in downtown areas. The next step for the Trust is to develop clear goals, a business plan, and a capitalization plan. We'll keep you informed of our progress.

—Helen Higgins



Terry Grady, the Connecticut Trust's new Development Director

The Connecticut Trust for Historic Preservation is a nonprofit statewide membership organization established by a special act of the State Legislature in 1975. Working with local preservation groups and individuals as well as statewide organizations, it encourages, advocates and facilitates historic preservation throughout Connecticut.

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Trust Awards Technical Assistance Grants

The Connecticut Trust awarded \$215,608 in Historic Preservation Technical Assistance grants in December, which will make possible a total initial investment of \$465,002 in these historic places. The grants are part of a comprehensive historic preservation technical assistance program of the Trust, in collaboration with and with generous funding from the Connecticut General Assembly, the Connecticut Humanities Council, and the State Historic Preservation Office, Department of Economic and Community Development, through the Community Investment Act. The grants are intended to encourage and support community efforts in planning for the preservation, restoration, and rehabilitation of historic buildings and places. (In the list, "NR" indicates sites on the National Register; "SR" means State Register.)

Guilford, Dorothy Whitfield Historic Society: \$2,500 for strategic planning for the Hyland house (NR)

Hamden, Habitat for Humanity of Greater New Haven: \$20,000 for plans and specifications for restoration of the Maselli Farm house

Hartford, Connecticut Landmarks: \$20,000 for construction documents for renovation of and an addition to the Amos Bull house and Butler-McCook carriage house (NR)

Village for Families and Children



Village for Families and Children, Hartford: main campus

Hartford, Village for Families and Children: \$15,000 for needs assessment and preservation plan of main and satellite campuses (all NR)

Killingly, Westfield Congregational Church: \$9,890 for construction documents for repairs to the steeple (NR)

Middlebury, Middlebury Historical Society: \$3,150 for conditions assessment and preservation planning for the Curtiss-Nichols house

New London, New London Landmarks: \$3,869 to create a guidebook for downtown New London and adjacent historic neighborhoods (NR)

Norwich, Spirit of Broadway Theater: \$19,930 for plans and specifications for rehabilitation of upper floors of the Chestnut Street firehouse (NR)

Old Lyme, Lyme Academy of Fine Arts: \$20,000 for plans and specifications for exterior restoration of the John Sill house (NR)

Plainville, Congregational Church of Plainville: \$5,000 for a capital needs assessment

Southbury, Southbury Historic Buildings Commission: \$6,599 for a conditions assessment and remediation plan for the Bullet Hill School (NR)

continued on page 14

Upcoming Meetings of the Connecticut Historic Preservation Council

February 1, 2012, at 9:30 a.m.
March 7, 2012, at 9:30 a.m.

State Historic Preservation Board

March 8, 2012, at 9:30 a.m.

All meetings take place at the State Historic Preservation Office Department of Economic and Community Development Main Conference Room
1 Constitution Plaza, 2nd Floor
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Fairfield County. The Connecticut Department of Transportation is undertaking a \$1.3 million study to evaluate the feasibility of a multi-use trail along the Merritt Parkway, funded in part by a grant of \$1.1 million from the National Scenic Byways Program.

The study will consider a trail running the entire 37.5-mile length of the parkway from Greenwich to the Sikorsky Bridge in Stratford. The trail would be located primarily in the wide right-of-way along the south side of the roadway and would be buffered by woods from both the parkway and abutting properties.

Proposals for a trail along the Merritt date almost to the beginning of construction, in the 1930s. The roadway is located in the northern half of the 300-foot right-of-way, leaving a wide swath of land undeveloped. This area was originally intended for future expansion, but DOT has made a commitment not to widen the parkway.

Early brochures mention bridle trails like the ones along some of the parkways in Westchester County, New York. However, the Merritt trails never were built, although

walkers and hikers have been known to use existing pathways in the woods.

Another proposal came in 1993, when the tri-state Regional Plan Association (RPA) presented a recommendation for a pedestrian and bicycle trail along the parkway. Again, nothing came of the plan.

Since 2000, a new organization, the Merritt Parkway Trail Alliance, has advocated actively for a trail, with support from the Connecticut Forest and Park Association, RPA, and the Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection.

The alliance says that a trail would ease traffic congestion and air pollution by permitting bicycling and walking as alternate methods of transportation and provide connections to other trails as a part of the East Coast Greenway. The organization notes that the Sikorsky Bridge, at the northern end of the Merritt, was rebuilt in 2006 with a bicycle/pedestrian lane. Another advantage of a trail, according to alliance materials, would be the opportunity to view the parkway's landscape and bridges up close and at a slower speed than is

possible from moving autos.

However, building a trail would present a number of difficulties. In the past, DOT engineers have expressed concerns about the wisdom of building a pedestrian trail so close to high-speed traffic. Abutting property owners are worried about their security and privacy. And, of course, there is the cost of construction and maintenance. Alliance members say that Stamford has offered to pay for upkeep along its portion of the trail, but there is no indication that other towns would offer similar support.

For preservationists, the chief concern is the potential impact on the Merritt's historic landscape. The parkway passes through hilly terrain and crosses numerous streams, wetlands, and side roads. A trail, particularly a fully accessible trail as is being discussed, would require many cuts and fills to create manageable grades. Bridges would have to be built over roads that cross the Merritt and over streams and wetlands. There might have to be fences or other barriers to separate trail traffic from vehicles. Certainly, many trees would be cut, and it is not certain that the trail actually would be screened from the roadway and adjoining properties.

While preservationists recognize that it may be possible to do all this without harming the parkway's historic character, they want to be sure. In meetings of the Merritt Parkway Advisory Committee and in a letter to the Commissioner of Transportation, the Connecticut Trust has urged DOT to have detailed plans in place and reviewed by the State Historic Preservation Office before committing to any construction.

As part of the study, DOT will meet with town officials and hold public information sessions in the eight towns along the parkway. This input will be used to develop a conceptual design for the trail. Citizens who are interested in the preservation of the Merritt are urged to participate in these meetings. 🌿

For more information, contact William Britnell at the Connecticut Department of Transportation, (860) 594-3274 or by email to William.Britnell@ct.gov. For information on the Merritt Trail Alliance, visit <http://www.ctwoodlands.org/merritt-parkway>.

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Merritt Parkway Trail Alliance



EXISTING MERRITT PARKWAY RIGHT OF WAY



PROPOSED BICYCLE AND PEDESTRIAN TRAIL

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Merritt Parkway Trail
Photo Simulation
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The Merritt Parkway Trail Alliance commissioned this rendering of a proposed pedestrian/bicycle trail along the Merritt, in Stamford.

New London. City voters rejected a proposal to sell part of Riverside Park to the Coast Guard Academy. The park, established in 1893 and enlarged in 1908, occupies a stretch of the Thames River bank between I-95 and the academy. Little used and located in East New London, a neighborhood cut off from the rest of the city by highway construction and urban renewal, the park has been neglected for many years, overgrown and littered with trash.

The academy offered to buy 9.14 acres—about half the park—for \$2.9 million, in order to expand its campus. Those in favor of the sale said that the Coast Guard would take better care of the park than the city had, and that the purchase money could be used by the city to improve and maintain the remaining parkland.

Opponents of the sale, including New London Landmarks (NLL), the city’s preservation organization, organized a friends group for the park. They argued that the purchase would take the most usable portion of the hilly park and would rob East New London of an asset that if properly treated could be a catalyst for neighborhood revitalization—a focus of NLL activity even before the sale issue arose.

The vote was very close. In the first count the sale passed by thirteen votes, 2,117 to 2,104. But a mandatory recount produced a final result of 2,098 to 2,079

against. Mayor-elect Daryl Justin Finizio complicated the situation by announcing, before the recount was completed, that the sale was off anyhow, because the purchase agreement had expired. However, since the proposal was defeated, this ceased to be an issue.

The voters’ decision not to sell Riverside Park is only the first step. The Day of New London reports that the new mayor and city council members are committed to ending the neglect of the park, and the newspaper called on those who opposed the sale to continue to show interest in it.

They are doing just that, according Sandra Chalk, NLL’s executive director. There is a five-year plan in place, created

by proponents with the city parks commission as an argument for not selling the park. The Friends group is applying for 501(c)(3) status, based on the successful model at Ocean Beach, the city’s public beach, where a friends group has overseen restoration and redevelopment work since a proposal to sell that city property also was defeated.

“Riverside Park will never be a playground like Ocean Beach,” says Chalk. “There will be a playground, but it also will be a place for people to have a picnic, or go on a long walk, or simply enjoy its quiet natural beauty.” 🌿

For more on Riverside Park, visit <http://newlondonlandmarks.org/>.

New London Landmarks



Riverside Park, New London

Ridgefield. On December 6, voters approved \$7 million for the town to buy the vacant Schlumberger-Doll complex in the center of town. Passed by a margin of 1,364 to 881, the vote authorizes the First Selectman to complete negotiations with Schlumberger, a multinational corporation that provides technology for the petroleum industry, and to complete due diligence, including environmental assessment of the property. The selectmen will have to approve a final deal.

The vote ensures the preservation of an important Modernist office building designed by Philip Johnson and built in 1952 for Schlumberger's research operations. The building, in Johnson's Miesian brick-glass-and-steel mode, was built with a skylighted corridor surrounding a central courtyard and library. Architectural publications made much of the building's lighting, by lighting engineer Richard Kelly, and its innovative radiant heating and cooling system.

The property has been vacant since 2006, when Schlumberger moved its research center to Cambridge, Massachusetts. With the recession, the company has

been unable to sell the 40-acre campus, and in late summer it announced that it would demolish everything on the prop-

erty, including the Johnson building, in order to reduce carrying costs until the real estate market improved.

Even more than the Johnson building, townspeople were concerned




Schlumberger research building, Ridgefield

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John F. Kennedy - October 26, 1963

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Once threatened with demolition, the former American Legion building, in Wallingford, will become a bed-and-breakfast.

preserve the house's historic character reportedly tipped the balance in her favor. The other proposal was to divide the building into four or five condominiums.

Last year, a Superior Court judge ruled against the town's efforts to demolish the house, in a lawsuit filed by the State of Connecticut (see CPN, May/June 2011). That Wallingford received two credible proposals for redeveloping the property confirms the state's arguments in the case that there were prudent and feasible alternatives to demolition. The once-threatened building will be returned to the town's tax rolls and will house a new business. 🌸

about the future of the property, fearing development that would overburden the town's infrastructure and its character. Controlling the parcel's future was a deciding factor for many.

The town has found potential buyers for more than half of the property, including someone who wants to buy the Johnson building to house a private art collection. A portion would remain as open space. 🌸

Wallingford. On November 29, the town council voted to sell the former American Legion building to Jeanine Connelly for \$125,000. The building, located on Main Street in the Wallingford National Register district, was built in about 1890 as a private home.

Connelly was one of two bidders for the property. She plans to invest about \$500,000 in the house, converting it to a bed-and-breakfast. Her intention to



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tend to moderate the ups and downs of the real estate market—the highs are less high and the lows, less low. There was no direct comparative information about Connecticut, until the Connecticut Trust received a grant to commission this study, from the State Historic Preservation Office, Department of Economic and Community Development.

The researchers chose six local historic districts located in four towns—Canton, Milford, Norwich, and Windsor—where they compared property values recorded in the most recent revaluation with those from the previous revaluation, either five or six years earlier. They compared the percentage change in the average value of residential properties within the historic districts with the percentage change for properties outside the historic districts. The results were striking:

- There was no evidence that being located within a local historic district reduced residential property values. Instead, values in every LHD studied saw average annual increases ranging from four percent to more than nineteen percent.
- In three of the four communities, the value of residential properties within the local historic districts increased at a greater rate than properties with no such protection.



- In “head-to-head” square-foot comparisons based on age and style, properties within the local historic districts were worth more than similar properties not within the districts.
- Overall, there appears to be a two to four percent value premium resulting

from location within a regulatory local historic district.

One town, Norwich, showed some anomalies, with property values within its two local historic districts rising more slowly than outside the districts. This may be due to different demographics.

What local historic districts do is maintain the character and quality of the neighborhood—the major reason people bought there to begin with.



Norwich has a lower median household income and lower rate of homeownership than the other communities studied, and its LHDs—particularly Little Plain—have higher numbers of multifamily or commercial properties. Despite these differences, property values in Norwich’s LHDs did in fact increase. Furthermore, the commercial and multifamily properties saw value increases greater than the city-wide average.

Moreover, properties in Norwich’s local historic districts fared better than the rest of the city in another way: foreclosure rates within the districts were significantly lower—19.9 per thousand properties, as opposed to 28.9 per thousand in the city as a whole. Historic districts in the other study towns reported similar foreclosure rates; on average, the rate of foreclosures in LHDs was about half that of undesignated neighborhoods.

What accounts for the economic differences between local historic districts and other, similar neighborhoods? The study concludes that the difference is the greater level of stability with a regulatory historic district. As the authors point out, neighborhood character is an important component of property value, and the reason for hav-

ing LHDs is to maintain the character and quality of neighborhoods. In other words, buyers can trust that the neighborhood around them won’t change for the worse—and that can be a valuable consideration.

“In some cases,” the study says, “sophisticated buyers may consciously pay more simply due to having the confidence that the character of the neighborhood they are buying into will not be subject to dramatic, adverse changes because there is a public body that reviews and then approves or denies proposals.”

Of course, this study covers only six districts in four towns, out of a total of 133 LHDs in 72 towns across Connecticut. But the authors include a description of the method they used to collect and analyze data, so that other communities can reproduce the study for their own LHDs.

Despite the economic benefits of local historic districts—to say nothing of the historical benefits—only a tiny fraction of historic buildings in Connecticut have the protection of local historic district regulations. In the four study towns, between 75 and 95 percent of houses more than 100 years old lie outside the LHDs.

continued on page 10

C. Wigen



Palisado historic district, Windsor

Making Local Historic Districts More Effective

In addition to studying the quantitative side of Local Historic Districts (LHDs), the consultants looked at the qualitative side—how LHDs and historic district commissions (HDCs) are perceived and how they can be more effective. They found that LHDs and HDCs often operate in isolation from the community and the rest of town government, and therefore often aren’t well understood by the broader community, especially their potential for economic benefits.

The consultants recommend that HDCs devote more effort to better and more sophisticated communication of historic preservation results. Specifically:

Better communication is the key.

- Be polite: start meetings on time; stay with the agenda; keep the discussion focused; end meetings on schedule.
- Be respectful: treat other people’s property as you would want them to treat yours; talk about the benefits of preservation; create an atmosphere of partnership and cooperation.
- Be reasonable: assist the owners in determining how to care for properties; be open to new ideas and changing needs; remember that the standard for approving changes is that they be “not incongruous with the character of the district.”
- Be consistent: distribute all rules and guidelines in print and online; don’t make assumptions, but ask questions; explain your thinking and your decisions; trust all applicants as you would your grandmother.

In town hall...

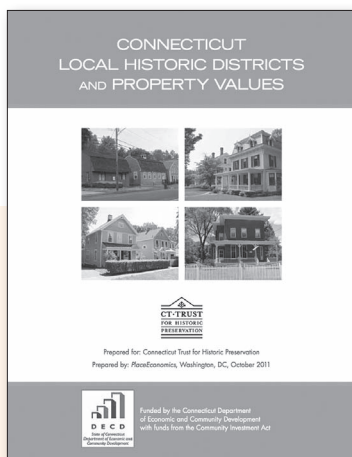
- Introduce yourself to municipal officials, department heads, other board chairs and commissioners.
- Get to know the building official and his concerns.
- Talk about the goals and benefits of preservation.
- Share the credit for successful projects.

In the community...

- Celebrate the boundaries of the historic district.
- Introduce yourself to property owners, businesses, and realtors.
- Partner with other community organizations.
- Highlight the benefits of the district through community activities.

For more information, visit www.historicdistrictsct.org.

As the authors conclude: "It isn't that every one of these houses can, or even should, be preserved forever. But unless and until more communities take advantage [of LHDs], much of the architectural wealth of Connecticut remains at risk. Local historic districts have proven their worth, socially, culturally, and economically. But if the historic resources of Connecticut are to be available to tomorrow's citizens, the work of those historic district commissions has only just begun." 🌿



Local Historic Districts studied

Canton

Canton Center historic district, 1975
Collinsville historic district, 1988

Milford

Milford historic district, 1976
[South of the Green historic district, 2007, not studied due to lack of data]

Norwich

Norwichtown historic district, 1968
Little Plain historic district, 1970

Windsor

Palisado historic district, 1963

To read the entire study:
<http://www.historicdistrictsct.org/documents/2460>



A New Inventory of Local Historic Districts and Properties

Local Historic Districts and Local Historic Properties have proved to be among the most effective tools for preservation. These designations offer the maximum protection to historic building fabric and ensure that any exterior alterations are consistent with and appropriate for the existing character of the district or property.

But sometimes it can be difficult to know whether a property is actually in a Local Historic District. This can pose a challenge, both to the regulatory authority and to homeowners, prospective owners, real estate agents, and others. This ambiguity can lead to inappropriate alterations causing the loss of a building's historic significance and integrity. It also can curtail the preservation opportunities offered to historic buildings in the development process.

To address this problem, the Connecticut Trust, with support from the State Historic Preservation Office, Department of Economic and Community Development (SHPO), is creating a web-based comprehensive inventory of Local Historic Districts and Properties in Connecticut. Manjusha Patnaik, of the Trust, is project manager, and website consultant John Harmon is providing technical expertise. This will include the huge inventory of more than 8,000 historic properties listed in 133 Local Historic Districts and the 92 Local Historic Properties across the state. Information for most districts has been retrieved from study committee reports or district ordinances filed with the SHPO. For others, information has been collated from town offices, district commissions, or GIS maps available online.

The outcome of the project is envisioned to be an interactive statewide map indicating the approximate boundaries of Local Historic Districts and Properties, supported by a list of designated properties or parcels. For easy navigation within the website, the user will have the choice of browsing the interactive statewide map or using town-by-town index. The maps of the districts will include the point loca-

tions of listed properties noting the street address, historic names, the parcel IDs and providing a link to an aerial view which allows the user to have a virtual tour of the district. Another major highlight of the website will be a property-wise search engine to determine at the very outset whether a particular street address is included in any LHD or LHP.

For each Local Historic District or Property, an overview page will offer a general description of the district or property, its significance, architectural style, era, present use, and notes on its establishment. It also will include links to the respective district/property authority, town website, district maps, GIS information, and other online resources like district ordinances or historic district handbooks.

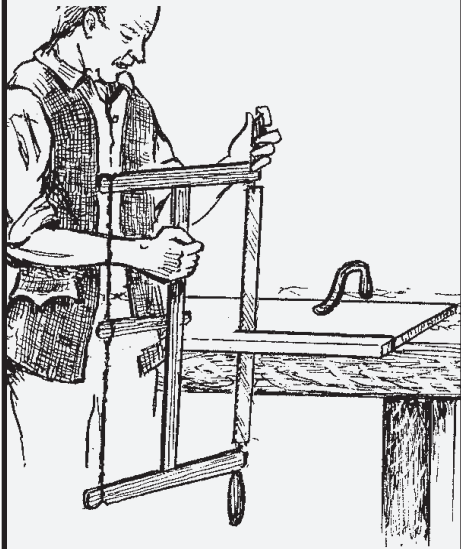
Local Historic Districts established under the state enabling act are often confused with National Register historic districts, which do not have the same preservation regulations but may or may not share the same boundaries. To make clear the distinction between the two designations, each district overview page will discuss the boundary of the LHD with respect to the corresponding National Register historic district.

The project is expected to be live by spring 2012 with the maps and the online register hosted in www.historicdistrictsct.org, the Trust's website for Local Historic Districts and Properties. 🌿

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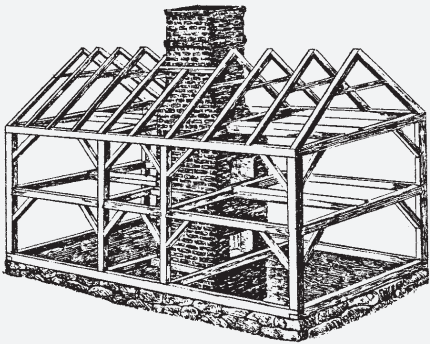
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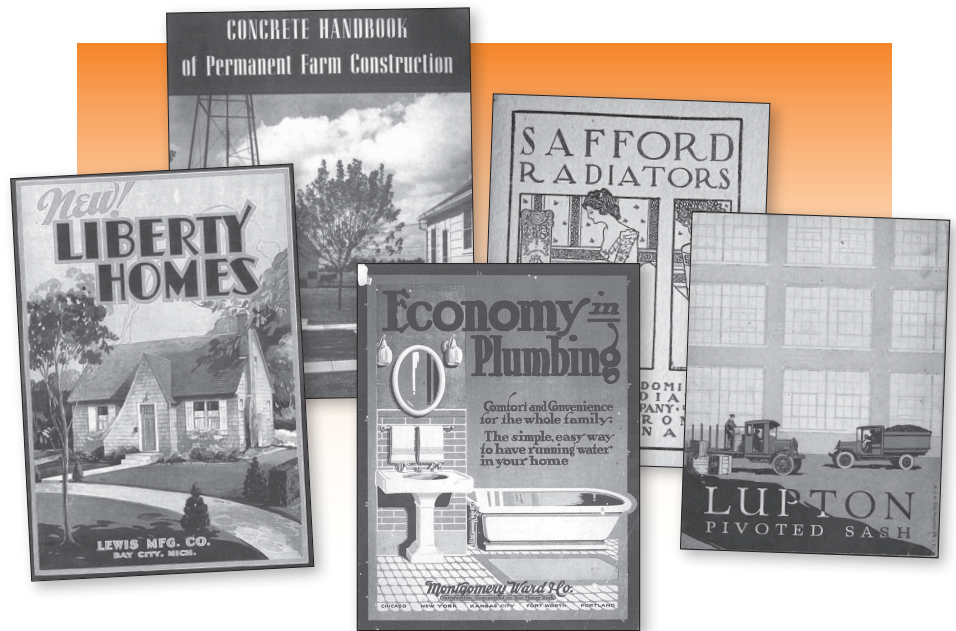
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New Library of Historic Building Technology

Ever wonder how old buildings were put together—what materials or products went into them? If you're looking for real, nitty-gritty details, period catalogs can be a valuable resource.

During the 19th and 20th centuries, trade literature aimed at both the commercial and residential markets proliferated as manufacturers developed building materials and equipment for structures of all types, from high-rises to farm sheds. Catalogs offered "kit houses" from many companies such as Sears, Roebuck & Co. Well into the 20th century companies such as the Garlinghouse Company published catalogs of house plans. Catalogues of kitchen plans, cabinets, and furnishings provide evidence of the great popularity of kitchen renovation, and a guide to the never-ending parade of styles and technological advances.

Documents like these can provide valuable information for understanding, interpreting, and preserving historic places. Unfortunately, they are not easy to find.

To make these materials more easily available, the Association for Preservation Technology International (APT) has launched the Building Technology Heritage Library (BTHL), a web-based digitized collection of archival architectural and construction trade catalogs, house plan books, and related publications. This

online collection will provide generations of design professionals, building owners, historians, preservationists, and curious homeowners with an in-depth look at early building construction.

The collection contains materials printed and published before 1964, which are now in the public domain. The materials come from various library, museum and private collections. The Canadian Centre for Architecture, in Montreal, is the first major collection contributor. To date, the BTHL contains 1,135 items, and more are being added.

Design and construction professionals, building owners, and preservationists will find BTHL useful. Owners of older homes will be interested because of the significant number of early house-plan and home decorating catalogs. Historians, city planners, and environmental consultants will find it a valuable resource. 🌿

The Building Technology Heritage Library is found at www.archive.org/details/building-technologyheritagelibrary. The Association for Preservation Technology International is a multi-disciplinary, membership organization dedicated to promoting the best technology for conserving historic structures and their settings; for more information visit www.apti.org.

Historic Places in Fairfield County

Rachel Carley

Three new listings in the National Register of Historic Places highlight historic sites in Fairfield County.

The **David and Sarah Webb, Jr., house**, in New Canaan, parallels the town's development from a post-Colonial farming community to one of the most sophisticated commuter towns in Connecticut. The house was built in 1785 for David Webb, Jr., and his wife, Sarah, who was a member of New Canaan's prominent Davenport family. With the decline of local farming, the property was bought in 1892 by Henry and Flora Davenport of New York (he was another member of the family). They and the following owner, Ralph B. Semler, expanded and updated the house the Colonial Revival style and added landscaping intended to enhance the architecture.

In the Black Rock section of Bridgeport, the **Cassidy house** is a well preserved example of an Italianate-style farmhouse. Built in 1849 for John Plumb, a farmer, the house is better known in association with the Cassidy family, who lived in it



David and Sarah Webb, Jr., house, New Canaan

from 1893 to 2002. The house, with its T-shaped plan, its flat roof and wide eaves, and its wraparound veranda, shows how picturesque influences were changing the shapes of Connecticut houses, providing more visual interest than the boxlike Colonial or Greek Revival structures. In addition, the house retains its original board-and-batten siding and lacy, scroll-sawn porch supports.

Stamford's **Long Ridge Village historic district** has been enlarged with a new section that reinforces the existing district's themes of shoemaking and residential development from the 18th to the 20th centuries and adds sites related to industrial and commercial activity at the town's only surviving mill, and an historic ice house. Orient Lodge, an outstanding Arts-and-Crafts house built in 1904, adds



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Christina M. Roush

a new architectural style to the district, while Colonial Revival dwellings, including farm buildings converted to residences, reflect the district's distinction in the 20th century as a haven for prominent politicians, artists and musicians, such as bandleader Benny Goodman. In between, are vernacular houses and outbuildings that witness to the district's 19th-century architectural conservatism. 🌸



Cassidy house, Bridgeport

Cynthia L. Russell



Orient Lodge, Long Ridge Village historic district, Stamford

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Stafford, Connecticut Retirement Colony: \$20,000 for a feasibility study for converting the Borough Elementary School to affordable housing

Stratford, Stratford Historic District Commission: \$7,500 for a conditions assessment of the John Benjamin house (NR)

Vernon, Rockville Public Library: \$5,000 for specifications for window restoration (NR).

Wallingford, Wallingford Historic Preservation Trust: \$12,000 to study exterior and interior surfaces of the Nehemiah Royce house (NR), in preparation for restoration

Town of Waterford: \$1,400 for a conditions assessment of the Nevins tenant cottage (NR)

Town of Weston: \$20,000 for a conditions assessment and feasibility study of the Lachat Farm

Town of Willington: \$7,500 for a capital needs assessment of the Old Town Hall (NR)

Windsor, Grace Episcopal Church: \$16,270 for construction documents for repairs to the church roof and a conditions/feasibility study of the Ruel Hotchkiss Tuttle house (NR)



Deadlines for Historic Preservation Technical Assistance Grants

Winter Funding Round

Pre-Applications due: February 1, 2012
Final Applications due: March 1, 2012

Spring Funding Round

Pre-Applications due: March 15, 2012
Final Applications due: May 1, 2012

For more information, contact Jane Montanaro, Preservation Services Officer, at jmontanaro@cttrust.org.



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Olmsted Award to Mary Donohue

The Connecticut chapter of the American Society of Landscape Architects presented its Olmsted Award to Mary Donohue, Survey and Grants Director at the State Historic Preservation Office of the Department of Economic and Community Development.

The Olmsted Award, named after Connecticut native Frederick Law Olmsted, who founded the modern landscape architecture profession in the 19th century, is given annually to an organization or person from Connecticut whose work is guided by the principle of stewardship of the land.

With a 30-year career in historic preservation, Donohue has been an active advocate for historic landscapes in Connecticut. She was instrumental in get-



Mary Donohue, left, receives the Olmsted Award from Phil Barlow, who made the nomination, and Jeff Olszewski, ASLA, CTASLA Chapter president.

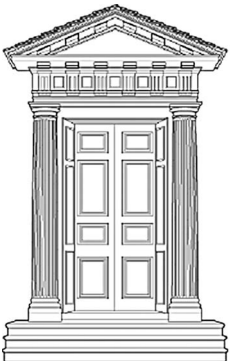
ting historic landscapes added to the state's historic resource survey, leading to comprehensive surveys of town greens, municipal

parks, and outdoor sculpture. These surveys are an important resource for municipal officials, design professionals, preservationists, planners, and property owners. Information garnered in a survey often leads to a landscape's being nominated to the National Register of Historic Places; more than one dozen municipal parks in Connecticut have now received that honor.

Donohue also oversees the state's historic preservation grant programs, which fund planning studies and restoration projects. Recent initiatives have included a master plan for Old North Cemetery, in Hartford, resulting in an investment by the City of more than one million dollars in

rehabilitation work. 🌿

For more information, visit www.ctasla.org.



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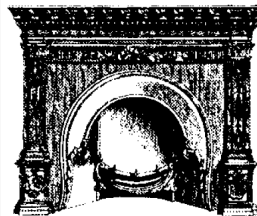
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Framed! The Saville Dam and the Barkhamsted Reservoir, Barkhamsted

Between the 1910s and the 1940s, the Hartford Metropolitan District Commission bought up thousands of acres of land in northwest Connecticut, cleared it, and flooded it for a system of reservoirs to provide water to the rapidly growing city and its even more rapidly growing suburbs.

Barkhamsted Reservoir, built between 1936 and 1940, is a part of that regional water supply system. To create the reservoir, the MDC built the Saville dam, an earthen structure, 135 feet high and 1,950 feet long, designed by, and named for, chief engineer Caleb Mills Saville. Curving gently and carrying a state road (CT 318, Saville Dam Road) along its top, the dam is a massive presence.

But the dam isn't merely big; it's also handsomely designed. The mindset of the time was that civic infrastructure should be attractive as well as useful. Just as the Civilian Conservation Corps provided well-designed facilities to enhance state parks, just as the Connecticut Highway Department built the Merritt Parkway "to enjoy as we go" (in the words of its namesake, Schuyler Merritt), so the MDC planned the Saville Dam to enhance its new reservoir.

To do this, the MDC hired one of the nation's most distinguished landscape architects, Arthur A. Shurcliff (1870-1957). Best known for his recreations of colonial gardens (at Colonial Williamsburg, for

instance), Shurcliff also designed many parks, dams, and reservoirs.

For the Saville dam, Shurcliff lined the road, on the side toward the water, with a stone wall punctuated by clumps of cedar trees. At each end, the wall turns in to form a gateway, and at the dam's midpoint stands a gatehouse for the mechanical equipment—a small, circular building of stone with a tall conical roof, reached by a stone-arch bridge and looking as though it had been lifted from a French chateau.

But the walls and the plantings and the gatehouse aren't the point. You're not supposed to say "what a lovely road" or "what a lovely gatehouse." Instead, they exist to provide a human-scaled place

CONNECTICUT *Snapshots*



from which to view the eight-mile-long reservoir, to experience the vast expanse of water under a vast expanse of sky—a sense of openness that is rare in the steep, wooded valleys of northwestern Connecticut—without feeling lost in it. It's a frame for the picture in front of you, intended to increase your appreciation of the picture without capturing too much of your attention. It's a good designer who knows how to stay in the background, and Shurcliff did just that.

—Christopher Wigren

To read more about the construction of the Barkhamsted Reservoir, visit <http://www.hogriver.org/issues/v04n01/flooded.htm>.

