January/February 2022 Volume XLV, No. 1

PRESERVATION CONNECTICUT NEWS

C. Wigren

Rethinking monuments

A statue of Captain John Mason will remain on the State Capitol, at least for now. On December 14, the State Capitol Preservation and Restoration Commission voted against a recommendation to remove the statue from the north front of the building. The Commission's legislative mandate says "There shall be no changes to the exterior structure, surfaces, or finishes without approval of the Commission on Preservation and Restoration of the State Capitol or its designated subcommittee." As a leading military commander during the Pequot War of 1637, Mason is held responsible for mass killings of Native Americans, which prompted the proposal to take down his statue.

continued on page 5

Legislators are considering a proposal to remove a statue of Captain John Mason from the state Capitol in Hartford. A prominent leader in 17th-century Connecticut, Mason commanded English and native forces in a massacre of Pequots during the Pequot War.

IN THIS ISSUE: 2– Diversity in the National Register 8– Around the state 12 – Historic Prtopertyies Exchange 20– Olmsted heritage

Recognizing diversity in the National Register of Historic Places

Jenny Fields Scofield, AICP, National Register and Architectural Survey Coordinator, Connecticut State Historic Preservation Office

National Register of Historic Places, C. Brilvitch

The Deacon's Point historic district was recognized for its changing ethnic composition as succeeding waves of immigrants moved to Bridgeport. By the first half of the 20th century, the area was the center of Connecticut's largest Armenian community.

National Register of Historic Places, Cunningham Associates, Ltd.

Wilfred X. Johnson was the first Black candidate endorsed by the Democratic party anywhere in Connecticut; he served four terms as the first Black state representative while living in this house in Hartford.

A broad range of properties can be listed on the National Register of Historic Places, well beyond single buildings recognized as examples of early construction. While some resource types and specific historical themes are disproportionately represented in the total numbers of designated places, the existing National Register framework allows for diversity in terms of why places are considered significant. Writing a National Register nomination involves connecting a place to at least one of the four National Register Criteria, which are subdivided into significance categories. These constructs are used as ways to organize information, to help a nomination author shape a compelling significance argument and are not intended as exclusive.

With an ongoing goal to enhance the diversity of resource types, communities, and historical themes recognized through the National Register program, let's take a look at the significance categories used in Connecticut over time. Approximately one-quarter of Connecticut's National Register listings include architecture as the primary reason for historic significance. Many of these nominations date to the first twenty years of the National Register program, and considering the state's distinctive design history, it's not surprising that our architectural masterpieces and historic downtowns were among the places easiest to identify.

That is not to say that other areas of significance don't apply to those properties, but they weren't documented or understood at the time of National Register listing. Keep in mind that early designation efforts were more limited in terms of the amount of time spent on the documentation. The original National Register form, developed in 1968, had only four pages and included 23 categories of significance. As early as 1976, Connecticut listings referenced many of these, including Agriculture, Architecture, Art, Black History, Commerce, Community Planning & Development, Economics, Education, Engineering, Health/Medicine, Historic Non-Aboriginal, Invention, Landscape Architecture, Literature, Military, Performing Arts, Politics/Government, Science, Social History, and Transportation. Among the areas of history not represented in this first group of listings are places associated with indigenous history, ethnic groups, and many places with significant archaeological deposits. In the subsequent decade, other common areas of significance included Maritime History, Industry, Recreation, and Settlement (European).

Currently, about eighteen percent of Connecticut's National Register listings include Social History as an area of significance, and additional nominations are focused on specific communities, without naming this category. Social History can encompass many topics, including Women's History, although topics like Women's History are also accepted as their own categories. The Dr. Mary B. Moody house in New Haven (listed in 2017), which served as a female-run medical facility, was recognized under Women's History as

continued on page 18

FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Welcome 2022!

New for this year, in partnership with the State Historic Preservation Office, we welcome **Stefon Danczuk** to our field service team. Stefon will bring much needed archaeology expertise to Preservation Connecticut and provide assistance to the State Historic Preservation Office. In the spirit of the Circuit Rider program, Stefon will provide on-site technical assistance regarding archaeological issues, promote awareness, and advocate for archaeological preservation. Stefon did his undergraduate work at University of Connecticut in History and Anthropology and graduate work at Central Connecticut State University in Public History. He has been working as a field technician on archaeological surveys in New York, Connecticut, and other New England states.

In other field service news, Circuit Rider **Stacey Vairo** is now full-time with Preservation Connecticut. Stacey will be lending her expertise to support SHPO review and update the nearly 1,700 National Register of Historic Places listings in Connecticut. Of course, she is still on call for site visits and consultations.

Our travelling photography show, **Picturing History: Historic Barns of Connecticut**, is at its fifth and final stop after making its way around the state. You can find the exhibit on display at the Pequot Library in Southport through January 20. Then, get your cameras out and start snapping landscape pictures! Entries for the next contest, **Picturing History: Historic Cultural Landscapes of Connecticut**, are being accepted from January 9 to April 23. Check our website for details or go directly to https://www.gogophotocontest.com/preservationconnecticut.

Many thanks to **Marissa Gibbs** of Tolland, who worked remotely throughout the fall semester as a social media and data intern for us, Zooming in weekly from the Historic Preservation Graduate Program at the University of Vermont.

And heartfelt thanks to trustee **Gregory Waterman** of Wethersfield for four years of service on the board. His leadership and guidance as chair of the Development Committee is greatly appreciated. During his tenure, we created a strong development plan with Vineyard Consulting and formalized a planned giving society

—Jane Montanaro

Upcoming Meetings

Connecticut Historic Preservation Council

February 2, 2022 at 9:30 a.m.
— Virtual Meeting
March 2, 2022 at 9:30 a.m.
— Virtual Meeting
To participate contact Jonathan Kinney
(860) 500-2380; Jonathan.Kinney@ct.gov

State Historic Preservation Board

March 25, 2022, at 9:30 a.m.
— Virtual meeting
To participate, contact Jenny Scofield
(860) 500-2343; Jenny.Scofield@ct.gov

For more information call (860) 500-2343

Preservation Connecticut is a statewide nonprofit membership organization established as the Connecticut Trust for Historic Preservation 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.

Preservation Connecticut News
Editor: Christopher Wigren
Editor, Historic Properties Exchange: Kristen Hopewood
Advertising: Christopher Wigren
Design: David Wolfram, *Middletown*
Printing: Kramer Printing, *West Haven*

Preservation Connecticut News is published bimonthly by the Connecticut Trust for Historic Preservation, doing business as Preservation Connecticut, 940 Whitney Avenue, Hamden, Connecticut 06517. Publication is made possible by support of the members of Preservation Connecticut and by funds provided through the Community Investment Act in the State of Connecticut. The contents and opinions stated herein do not necessarily reflect the views and policies of the State of Connecticut. Advertisements do not necessarily reflect the views or opinions of Preservation Connecticut. Preservation Connecticut does not endorse advertisers and assumes no liability for advertisements.

 ISSN 1084-189X

Connecticut
still revolutionary

Connecticut Preservation Awards 2022

Nominations are open for the 2022 round of Connecticut Preservation Awards, presented by Preservation Connecticut to recognize outstanding achievements in revitalizing historic places to enhance the quality of life for the people of Connecticut.

Parkville Market Management

Parkville Market, Hartford—2021 award recipient.

Awards of Merit honor outstanding efforts in the preservation and enhancement of historic places throughout Connecticut, with the goal of inspiring others to take similar action. In particular, we are looking for projects that:

- bring **new life to distressed historic places**—buildings, districts, neighborhoods, landscapes or other
- revitalize sites associated with the history of **minority or overlooked communities**
- make significant contributions to **sustainability**—environmental, economic, or social
- develop innovative **new perspectives or methods** to historic preservation

*Note: Projects that are primarily architectural in focus should be nominated for the **Elizabeth Mills Brown awards**, jointly presented by Preservation Connecticut and AIA Connecticut. Watch for an announcement in the summer.*

The Mimi Findlay Award for Young Preservationists recognizes individuals aged 35 or younger, or groups whose members are predominantly 35 or younger; who have demonstrated interest, involvement, and achievement or potential achievement in the restoration, maintenance, preservation or adaptive use of historic buildings, structures, complexes, neighborhoods, communities, and cultural landscapes or landscape features in Connecticut.

Nominations must be made by members of Preservation Connecticut.

Nominations are due by 4:00 p.m., Friday, March 4, 2022.

Awards will be presented Wednesday, May 4, 2022. Public health permitting, the ceremony will be held at the New Haven Country Club in Hamden.

Nomination materials and instructions are available at PreservationCT.org. For more information, call Christopher Wigren at (203) 562-6312 or email cwigren@preservationCT.org.

Rethinking monuments, cont'd from page 1

The debate over Mason comes at a time when communities across the country are re-evaluating monuments, memorials, and public art depicting historical figures or events which proponents consider inconsistent with present-day beliefs and values. The trend has been most visible in the South, concerning monuments commemorating the Confederacy or proponents of slavery. However, Connecticut monuments have also come under scrutiny. Of course, many people disagree with this trend, causing controversy in communities across the country.

The preservation movement has largely devoted its energies to the surviving places where history happened and has considered erecting monuments or memorials as of secondary importance. This is why eligibility criteria for the National Register of Historic Places exclude most properties that are primarily commemorative in nature.

On the other hand, monuments and memorials are often prominent elements of our built environment. In addition to honoring events and people from the past, they can be significant as works of art and focal points in public spaces. Furthermore, monuments can provide insights into how the people who erected them understood history or what values they wished to instill in their children or their fellow citizens.

Monuments to Christopher Columbus are an example. Many were erected around 1892, the 400th anniversary of Columbus' first voyage to the Americas. At the time, the monuments were seen as a recognition of Columbus' courage and leadership and as a celebration of the spread of European civilization to other parts of the world, considered as a sign of progress.

At the same time, monuments to Columbus were a source of pride for Italian immigrants. As new arrivals often subjected to discrimination, they could point with pride to Columbus, who was recognized as a hero by the dominant White Anglo-Saxon Protestant culture, as one of their own. So, when knowledge of Columbus' conquest and enslavement of native peoples in the Spanish colonies sparked efforts to remove Columbus monuments, Italian Americans saw those efforts as an attack on their heritage and place in American society.

John Mason played many roles in 17th-century Connecticut. He was a founder of the towns of Windsor, Old Saybrook, and Norwich; commander of the Saybrook fort at the mouth of the Connecticut River; Commissioner of the United Colonies of Massachusetts Bay, Plymouth, Connecticut, and New Haven; and Deputy Governor of the Connecticut Colony. In that last office, he helped create the Connecticut Charter of 1662, which gave the colony a unique degree of autonomy from English government and continued to serve as Connecticut's constitution until 1818.

Wikipedia

When a statue of John Mason was moved from Mystic to Windsor, it was given a new plaque which explained the move.

During the Pequot War, Mason was a captain of the colonial forces. A horrific moment in the war was the attack on a Pequot installation in what is now Mystic (variously characterized as a village or a fort) by colonists along with Mohegan and Narragansett allies. Encountering fierce opposition, the colonial forces set the village/fort aflame. As it burned, English, Mohegans, and Narragansetts formed a circle and killed more than four hundred fleeing Pequot—not only warriors, but women, children, and elderly noncombatants as well. After the war, Mason helped create the treaty, which enslaved all surviving Pequots and eliminated the Pequot tribe as a legal entity.

The Mystic battle was a defining blow in the war, which is considered as forever changing the relations of native and settler peoples in what is now the United States. Natives remember it as genocide.

As early as the 1990s, Mason's involvement in the Mystic massacre caused the re-evaluation of a statue of him erected at Mystic in 1889. At the urging of Native Americans, the statue was moved in 1995 to the Palisado Green in Windsor—near the site of Mason's homelot—and given a new interpretive plaque recognizing his other contributions. By 2021, however, the Town of Windsor along with the State of Connecticut agreed to move the statue again, to the Windsor Historical Society, where it could be displayed with additional interpretive panels.

Mason's legacy came to the fore again in 2021, when the General Assembly approved a budget that included funding for removing a statue of Mason from the exterior of the State Capitol, where it had been installed in 1910. State Sen. Cathy Osten (D-Sprague, and a Trustee of Preservation Connecticut) introduced a bill calling for the statue to be removed and relocated to the Old State House Museum.

continued on next page

Rethinking monuments, cont'd from page 5

The Mashantucket Pequot tribe supported the proposal, issuing a statement that said, "John Mason's historical significance to the Pequot Massacre is a defining moment in American history and an early example of the hostile and shameful treatment of tribes nationwide that has marred the history of the United States…Mason's statue is a constant reminder of that bloody morning on May 26, 1637—384 years ago, when Pequot men, women, children, and the elderly were attacked and murdered while they slept; an attack meant to annihilate our people."

However, members of the State Capitol Preservation and Restoration Commission questioned the move. At a hearing in November, State Historian Walter Woodward, a member of the commission, pointed out that the history of the event was more complicated than a one-sided massacre, that the very survival of the young Connecticut colony was at stake.

"It was an ugly, complicated, conflicted past," Woodward said. "There was enough atrocity on both sides to make your head spin…In our desire to correct for centuries of injustice to indigenous people we have adopted an interpretation of much of the past events that downplays one side of the stories and mollifies another side of the story."

Woodward suggested retaining the Mason statue on the Capitol and adding statues of the Mohegan and Pequot sachems Uncas and Sassacus to empty niches on the building. He also recommended enhanced educational programming, including material for group tours to discuss the 1637 battle, maintaining that doing so at the Capitol would generate greater public engagement than a statue "in a poorly attended museum."

Woodward's position garnered six votes in the commission, while three members voted to remove the statue and three voted to take no action at this time. The next move is up to legislative leaders.

It is often said that those seeking to remove monuments are "erasing history." However, there is a difference between *reporting* history on one hand and *celebrating* history on the other. It's parallel to the distinction between reporting and opinion in journalism. Reporting involves collecting facts, analyzing them, and disseminating the information to increase understanding. Opinion involves value judgements, which must be based on facts but are more prone to change.

Monuments are statements of values, indicating persons or events that contributed something to our development that we are proud of or that we want now and for our posterity to emulate. To the extent that they transmit historical information, they do so to bolster the case for their celebratory purpose. As a result, they usually are not good at expressing nuanced or complex messages.

So, removing monuments is not "erasing history" in the sense of removing the people or events they represent from the historical record. The reporting is still going on, but the subjects are no longer to be presented as worthy of celebration and emulation.

What to do, then, with monuments that convey troublesome messages? The solutions proposed typically fall into a few categories.

Remove it and dispose of it. This radical approach is rarely taken, but it does occur. In Charlottesville, Virginia, the statue of Robert E. Lee that was taken down in 2017, prompting violent demonstrations, will be melted down by the Jefferson School African American Heritage Center to create a new work of public art.

Create or modify monuments to make clear that they commemorate significant contributions to history but do not endorse all of a person's actions. No historical figure is completely blameless. So, how do we recognize people whose legacies are flawed—who contributed something of value to our history, but also committed deeds or promoted attitudes that we now reject?

In one example, the Revolutionary traitor Benedict Arnold is recognized, after a fashion, with a monument at Saratoga,

continued on next page

C. Wigren

The statue of Christopher Columbus was removed from this pedestal in New Haven's Wooster Square in 2020.

Please remember Preserevation Connecticut in your will or estate plan. We are incredibly grateful to the visionary donors who have given to us.

New York, where he suffered a leg wound while commanding American forces at the Battle of Saratoga. The monument depicts Arnold's wounded leg but never mentions his name. But, at what point are any positive contributions so outweighed by negatives that any public celebration or acknowledgement becomes impossible?

Leave it but add new material to reinterpret the story. Monuments aren't particularly good for teaching history. Their main function is to say, "This is important"—perhaps with a few bullet-point phrases like "Founder of Windsor." Then it's up to viewers to do the homework to understand why.

Since a lot of people don't stop to read lengthy texts, adding written material to monuments may have only limited ability to communicate new interpretations. A better tactic in some cases might be a more expressive artistic intervention. One could, for instance, leave a Confederate memorial in place but surround it with statues of joyous, freed African Americans celebrating their victory. Similarly, the Mason statue might be left on the Capitol, but turned face-in or covered with a pall—some visible modification that would prompt discussion.

Move it to another place where the context changes the message. This was the approach used in moving the statue of John Mason from Mystic, where he was honored as an Indian fighter, to Windsor, where he was a town founder. The appropriateness of this tactic depends on how well the monument conveys a different message, or whether the subject is considered to have any redeeming value at all.

Move it to a place where it can be treated as an historical artifact rather than a memorial. This is the most common approach being taken in 2021, as seen with treatment of the Mason statue in Windsor and the proposal for the statue at the Capitol. However, as Walter Woodward pointed out, taking a monument out of the public eye can reduce the likelihood that people without a direct interest in history will see it. In that case, the story isn't heard at all.

A corollary action is to replace the removed memorial with another that recognizes similar historical themes in a different way. For instance, a statue of Christopher Columbus in New Haven's Wooster Square was taken down in 2020. Work is underway to replace it with a new memorial commemorating Italian immigrants to the city, to reaffirm the underlying message of the Columbus monument.

Leave it in place but dilute its impact by erecting a wider diversity of monuments. The vast majority of monuments around the state cover a narrow range of subjects: for people, early settlers, military leaders, and statesmen (nearly always *men*); for events, early settlement or battles. A cursory reading of history will suggest a rich variety of people, movements, and events that might be commemorated to tell ourselves and the world what we value. The State Capitol still has a number of empty niches created for statuary; the most recent addition was a statue of Governor Ella Grasso, in 1987.

In the end, the monuments question becomes a part of the broader question continually facing the preservation movement: What is our history, what does it mean for our lives today, and how do we want to recognize and perpetuate its memory in the present? It's a question that requires some degree of agreement about community values. In a time of deep social divisions, coming to a community consensus is not going to be easy. It requires, more than anything else, a commitment to listening carefully and respectfully to the views of others, and a willingness to reexamine our own values.

—Christopher Wigren

National Park Service

A monument at Saratoga, New York, recognizes contributions by Benedict Arnold without mentioning his name.

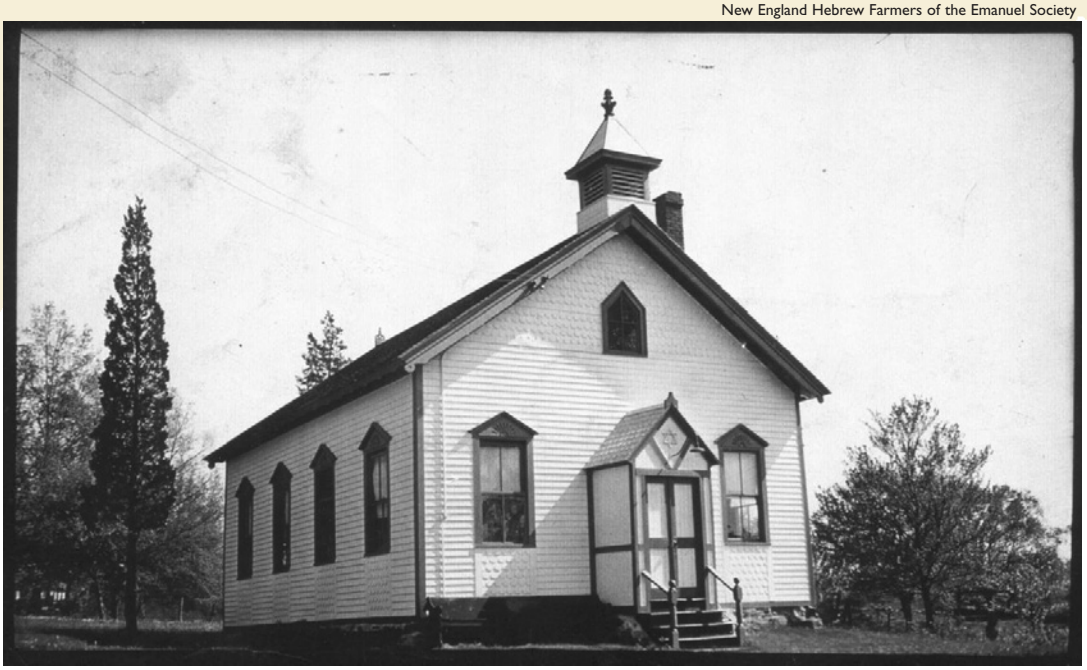
Briefly noted

C. Wigren

Bridgeport. ▶

The City of Bridgeport and the Connecticut Department of Transportation unveiled a bust of Frederick Law Olmsted in Beardsley Park (NR) on November 30. Olmsted created the initial design for the park in 1884, and Olmsted Brothers, the firm headed by his son and stepson, added another layer of design in 1903. The bronze bust, by sculptor Louise Wiley (shown, with DOT Commissioner Joseph Giulietti) and mounted on a granite plinth, was commissioned as partial mitigation for a DOT road improvement project which took a narrow strip of land from the park. The project improved sightlines along East Main Street, which is a State road, as well as adding sidewalks. Plantings consistent with those in the historic park also were added, to designs by DOT staff. The State Historic Preservation Office reviewed the project and worked with DOT to minimize harm to the historic park and determine appropriate mitigation efforts. In conjunction with the event, the Connecticut chapter of the American Society of Landscape Architects offered a tour of the park.

New England Hebrew Farmers of the Emanuel Society



Chesterfield (Montville). ▶

In October, the New England Hebrew Farmers of the Emanuel Society (NEHFES) signed an agreement to donate the synagogue parcel of the NEHFES Synagogue and Creamery Site (NR) to The Archaeological Conservancy. Chesterfield was settled by Russian-Jewish immigrants beginning in the 1890s, one of the first immigrant communities created in Connecticut with support from the Baron de Hirsch Fund. The synagogue was built in 1892, closed in 1953, and burned in 1975; the parcel is one of the few American Jewish archaeological sites in the country, and the donation insures its protection in perpetuity. The preserve will be maintained as an open-space research preserve and protected against any future development. The Archaeological Conservancy, established in 1980, is the only national nonprofit organization dedicated to acquiring and preserving significant archaeological sites.

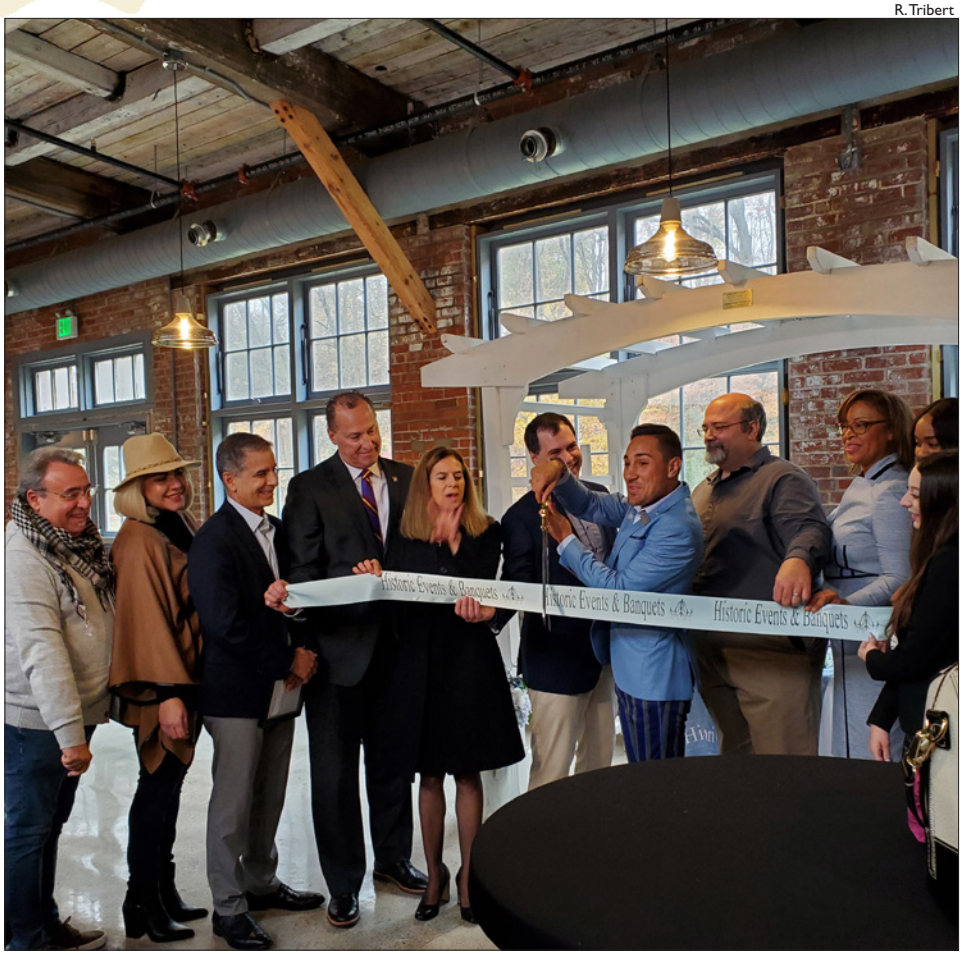
continued on next page

C. Wigren

◀ East Windsor.

One of Connecticut's biggest surviving tobacco farms is poised to become one of the biggest solar farms in the Northeast. In March, the Connecticut Siting Council approved the construction of Gravel Pit Solar, a 485-acre solar farm. The site includes what was until recently the Markowski farm, located along Plantation Road. According to ConnecticutBarns.org, the farm included 26 tobacco sheds of various ages, many with unusual tall roof vents. In October, the owner posted demolition notices for sixteen tobacco sheds, two barns, 1 retail building, and two single-family houses. Plans indicate that some sheds, primarily those located near the main roadways are slated to remain for visual screening. GPS plans to continue discussions with SHPO regarding the barns in order to reach an agreement.

R. Tribert



◀ Manchester.

Lamps hanging from the whitewashed timber roof framing illuminated the brick and concrete floors below which hint at the trenches, vats, and scales once housed here. The smiles of those assembled spoke of enthusiasm and progress. The occasion was the soft opening in November of the former brick dye house at the center of the Hilliard woolen mill complex (SR) as an event venue for Historic Events & Banquets, an LGBTQ-owned gender-neutral wedding planning business. Members of both state and local government were present, including Lieutenant Governor Susan Bysiewicz and Manchester Mayor Jay Moran. The building was in serious disrepair when owner Peter Bonzani began rehabilitation: a collapsed wall was rebuilt with existing brick, a new wall had to go up to close the east end of the building, new windows and doors were fabricated, and all of the work has met the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation. Preservation Connecticut has assisted the owner with the Historic Rehabilitation Tax Credit application to the State Historic Preservation Office.

continued on next page

New Canaan Preservation Alliance

New Canaan. ▶

In December, the town Planning and Zoning Commission approved a scheme to preserve a portion of the 1913 Library as a 'legacy building' next to a new library. A 1,200-square-foot section of the stone structure would be moved to the western side of the campus, leaving room for a public open space described as a 'town green.' The library, a private institution that receives some town funding, planned to demolish the historic structure entirely but encountered opposition from the New Canaan Preservation Alliance and other residents. The alliance proposed an alternate design in which the 1913 building would be left in situ, with glass folding doors toward the green for flexible programming. The organization was not allowed to present this design to the commission and is pursuing appeals.

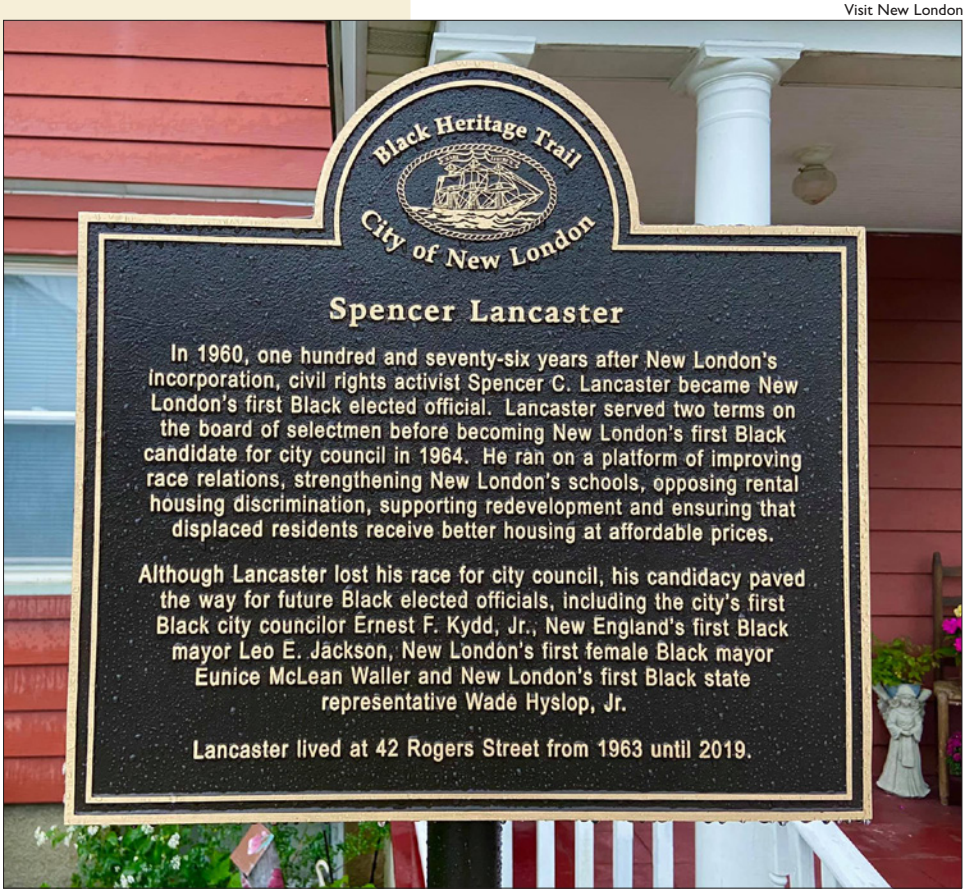
Fairfield.

Two oversized and poorly planned residential developments threaten to overwhelm the park-like setting of the Merritt Parkway, according to the Merritt Parkway Conservancy. Fairfield's Town Plan and Zoning Commission approved a 94-unit residential building at Black Rock Turnpike, and a 120-unit development at Park Avenue. Both applications were made under the state law known as 8-30g, which allows affordable housing projects to override local zoning regulations except for public health or safety. The Conservancy actively participated in the deliberations over the developments and managed to modify one of them: the Commission did require that the Park Avenue project be reduced two stories in height, be changed in color, and have additional plantings to screen it from the Parkway—all as promoted by the Conservancy. However, as Wes Haynes, the organization's executive director, writes, "Our time is better used to ensure excellence in the Parkway's continued revitalization rather than fighting oversized development."

continued on next page

S. Godshall

Visit New London



New Haven. Four of five remaining buildings of the H. B. Bigelow Company factory were demolished in September, on orders from the City building official. The company was a national leader in the manufacture of steam boilers and spun off a number of related companies to create a thriving industrial district along River Street, which was listed on the National Register in 1989. The Bigelow buildings have been vacant for years and were in increasingly fragile condition; building official Jim Turcio cited loose bricks and rotted timber framing, and said it was impossible to secure them properly. However, the destruction came just as the City Plan department was meeting with contractors for stabilization work on the structures, under a grant from SHPO. The usual procedure is for the building official to issue a demolition order calling for repair or demolition within seven days, but in this case it appears that no order was issued, and no advance notice given to City or State officials, even though the buildings were listed on the National Register. Local preservationists are asking what the procedure is for a City department to order the demolition of a City-owned structure—what checks and balances are there?—as well as the possible interest of a neighboring property owner.

New London. Crowning a multi-year effort, the City of New London unveiled its new Black Heritage Trail on October 7. The self-guided trail consists of fifteen bronze plaques marking sites connected with the history of African Americans in New London. According to the associated website, "Some of the trail's fifteen sites explore nationally known people or incidents. Others honor people who have been nearly forgotten… Together, the sites tell a story about Black life in New London while tying into larger stories about enslavement, the Great Migration and the struggle for civil rights." The City contracted with New London Landmarks to create the trail; Nicole Thomas, Tom Schuch, Lonnie Braxton II, and Laura Natusch researched sites. In addition to the physical plaques, the trail can be viewed at https://visitnewlondon.org/black-heritage-trail.

continued on page 16

PRESERVATION CONNECTICUT

Historic Properties Exchange

Threatened Buildings and Easement Properties Available — January/February 2022

Preservation easements protect the historic character of old buildings, structures and landscapes and require approval of proposed changes. When one of the many properties throughout the state on which Preservation Connecticut holds easements is on the market, we may list it here. To learn how to safeguard your property for future generations through an easement, explore Stewardship on our website, preservationct.org/steward, or contact Christopher Wigren, Deputy Director.

136 East Main Street, Meriden (1870)

$995,000

Gothic Revival brownstone church available in downtown Meriden. Currently operating as St. Andrew's Episcopal Church, but parish is looking to relocate. Located on 2-acre lot, church is 22,724 square feet and includes vaulted ceilings, stained glass windows, and Austin Organ. Space also has multiple classrooms, cafeteria, and commercial kitchen. May be eligible for listing on the State or National Register of Historic Places to obtain historic rehabilitation tax credits.

Contact: Tess Cullen, Chozick Realty, Inc. (860) 247-7400, tess@chozickrealty.com

EXP Commercial

Wauregan Mills (1853, 1858, 1868)

51 South Walnut Street, Plainfield
$4,250,000

Redevelopment opportunity for one of Connecticut's classic historic textile mills located on over 79-acre property. Constructed in phases over the fifteen-year period between 1853 and 1868. Operated as Wauregan Mills until closure in 1957 due to overseas competition of fine cotton goods production. Exterior is plastered fieldstone, and façade includes two matching stair towers crowned with Italianate belfries. Building area is 375,491 square feet, and purchase includes water rights to both river banks and pond. This property is listed in Preservation Connecticut's Mills: Making Places of Connecticut industrial survey and located in the Wauregan National Register district, which makes it eligible for both State and Federal historic rehabilitation tax credits.

Contact: Michael Beaudry, EXP Commercial, (860) 990-3229, michael.beaudry@expcommercial.com

continued on next page

Polish National Home (1930)

60 Charter Oak Ave, Hartford
$775,000

After over 90 years of operation, a Harford landmark is for sale. Designed by local architect Henry F. Ludorf in the Art Deco style, the Polish National Home was a focal point for community activities of the local Polish population, and bears the symbol of Polish nationalism, an eagle, throughout. Ludorf linked the interior and exterior with repeating themes of octagons (windows, door panels, lighting fixtures) and abstract classical motifs. The first floor includes grand ballroom, adjacent dining area, and large modern kitchen. Second floor has traditional auditorium with balconies overlooking the stage. Listed on the National Register of Historic Places and may qualify for State and Federal historic rehabilitation tax credits. Building area is 24,570 sq. ft.; 1.25 acres.

Contact: Helen Krzyczynski, Coldwell Banker, (860) 205-7063, helen.krzyczynski@coldwellbankermoves.com

556 East Main Street, Norwich (c. 1849)

$495,000

Redevelopment opportunity of historic industrial building. Constructed c.1849 for the Norwich Fishline Company which occupied the plant until 1872. Later occupants included the Willimantic Silk Company, the Reliance Worsted Company (woolen and worsted goods), the Reliance Yarn Company and the final occupant, Trinacria Specialty Manufacturing Company (textile mill supplies). Preservation Connecticut's Making Places industrial heritage project identified the property as potentially eligible for listing on the State Register of Historic Places, which would allow it to qualify for State historic rehabilitation tax credits. Building area is 25,000 sq.f.t; 0.85 acres; in Opportunity Zone.

Contact: James McCall, Coldwell Banker Commercial, james.mccall@cbcnrt.com, (203) 376-9650

Deadline for the next issue is February 20, 2022

Historic Properties Exchange is published to advertise endangered properties in Connecticut by Preservation Connecticut, a statewide nonprofit organization located at 940 Whitney Avenue, Hamden, Connecticut 06517. Real estate advertised in this publication is subject to the Federal Housing Act of 1968.

Neither advertisers nor Preservation Connecticut are responsible or liable for any misinformation, misprints, or typographical errors contained in Historic Properties Exchange. To list a property or learn about properties listed, contact Kristen Hopewood, at khopewood@preservationct.org, or call (203) 562-6312.

Norwich. ▶

The Norwich Historical Society received one of six Herbert and Louise Whitney Fund Community Preservation Grants from Historic New England in November. The grant will be used to hire an intern to research Haitian connections to the Diah Manning house (c.1750; NR). According to WalkNorwich.org, "During the Haitian Revolution in the late eighteenth century, the Manning family housed Haitian prisoner and refugee, Jean Pierre Boyer (1776-1850), in their home from 1800-1801… Years later, Boyer went on to serve as President of the Republic of Haiti from 1818–1843. While president, Boyer reunited the north and south sections of Haiti and brought all of Hispaniola under one government." Each year, Historic New England awards one grant to a small- to medium-size heritage preservation organization in each New England state for projects that save and expand community stories.

Norwich Historical Society

Storrs (Mansfield). ▶

The University of Connecticut is planning projects that will affect two historic campus resources, Mirror Lake and Faculty Row, both located within the University of Connecticut National Register district. Mirror Lake needs repairs to its dam plus dredging and other modifications to improve water quality and reduce runoff. Although not identified as a contributing resource in the National Register nomination, the lake has been a prominent campus feature for a century and was created in accordance with the 1910 campus plan that forms one area of significance in the listing.

A principal segment of the 1910 campus plan was Faculty Row, a group of Colonial Revival houses for faculty and staff. In 2017 the University reached an agreement with the State Historic Preservation Office and PCT to allow the demolition of seven of the Faculty Row houses. In exchange, U.Conn. promised to maintain the remaining two houses and renovate them by January 1, 2022. That date will not be met; in fact, no renovation work has been done at all. Now, the University is proposing to build a new residence hall on the site of one of the two houses. The fate of that house under the proposal is not yet clear; University officials have indicated in private conversations that moving might be an option, provided that funding and a new use can be identified. PCT and SHPO are working with local preservationists to hold the University to its commitments.

M. Forino

significant for the promotion of women's health and advancement of women in the medical profession. Sometimes, Social History involves acknowledging difficult history; the narrative for the Connecticut Valley Hospital Cemetery (2018) addresses the history of stigma related to people with mental illness.

Social History and Ethnic Heritage can relate to the lifeways, treatment of, achievements, and contributions of people. Immigration is not a named category but can fit under either theme. The Whistleville Historic District in Norwalk was listed in 2021 under Ethnic Heritage, for its association with Hungarian and Italian immigrants. The Deacon's Point Historic District in Bridgeport (1992) includes Ethnic Heritage for its changing demographics, but particularly the Armenian community in the early 20th century.

Hartford has several properties listed under Ethnic Heritage for their associations with influential African American community leaders. These include the Boce W. Barlow, Jr., house (Ethnic Heritage and Politics/Government, 1994), Marietta Canty house (Ethnic Heritage and Women's History, 2000), and Wilfred X. Johnson

continued on next page

Preservation Circle

☐ Chairman's Circle	$ 1,000
☐ Preservation Patron	$ 500
☐ Circuit Rider Sponsor	$ 250
☐ Heritage Partner	$ 100

Basic Membership

☐ Business	$ 100
☐ Non-profit/Municipal	$ 75
☐ Family	$ 50
☐ Individual	$ 40

PRESERVATION CONNECTICUT

You can join the Preservation Connecticut online too, at
www.preservationct.org

JOIN PRESERVATION CONNECTICUT!

Name ☐ Mr. ☐ Mrs. ☐ Ms. ☐ Miss _____

Street _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Telephone (_____) _____

Email _____

Employer (for matching gift program) _____

☐ Check enclosed (payable to "Preservation Connecticut") Charge my: ☐ Mastercard ☐ Visa ☐ American Express

Card Number _____ Exp. Date _____/_____

Signature _____

Mail to: 940 Whitney Avenue, Hamden, CT 06517-4002 Telephone: (203) 562-6312 All contributions are tax deductible.

house (Ethnic Heritage and Politics/Government, and Architecture, 1994). Each person achieved significant minority rights and advancement work, while residing at these properties. Indigenous history (both for Pre-Contact and Post-Contact Periods) remains underrepresented among Connecticut listings, as are many other communities who are part of our local history.

If a place with substantial intact historic features (which may include natural features when relevant) has significant historic associations, it is possible to recognize it on the National Register with good archival documentation, even if it doesn't fit neatly into one of the suggested categories. Other historical themes may be justified. Not all nominations for National Register-listed resources meet present-day ideals for equity and inclusiveness or use the language considered appropriate today, but a key takeaway is that you can use the existing program to highlight areas of significance most relevant now. Contact the State Historic Preservation Office for more information about new or updated National Register nominations.

Collinsville, cont'd from page 20

in the century. Barton's church burned in 1857 but was rebuilt and probably looks much the same. The town green was still just an open field.

Yet, the bones of the place remain much the same: factory by the river, with houses and community buildings climbing the hills on either bank and laid out on a rough grid. Collinsville's natural setting also remains much the same—centered on the swift flowing river and framed by high hills to the north and south. In Olmsted's day the hillsides had largely been cleared for farming, and remaining trees were rapidly being stripped for firewood and charcoal; today the forests have grown back.

David Leff writes that the "urban" engineering and surveying lessons with Barton, along with the visible growing pains of factory and town, gave the young Olmsted opportunities to observe building and infrastructure solutions in the making. Leff argues that the time spent in Collinsville constituted the only professional training of this type that Olmsted received before launching his career in landscape architecture.

Even more important to Olmsted's future career was the memory of Collinsville as a hard-working factory village in the midst of the countryside. The easy escape from the clink of anvils to the rush of water, the lofty mountains, the sweeping willow and waving elms, must have helped shape his commitment to creating parks and public places that would offer the same rejuvenating landscapes to harried city workers that the hills of Collinsville offered to the young student.

Leff concludes, "Hard labor at nature's edge might have remained nothing more than a romantic notion to Olmsted had he not been in a place where woods and fields were being purposefully transformed, changed into a community that would sustain not just the workman's effort but his free hours and family as well. Here was a landscape re-formed with a social purpose… The notion of creating such an exception, of infusing sanity in a place of bustle, was essential to Olmsted's faith in his ability to transform marginal urban lands and integrate them into a city's fabric as calming green space. That balance between bustle and calm, between nature and culture, is still part of life in Collinsville."

Editor's note: In 2022 each issue of Preservation Connecticut News features a Connecticut site associated with Frederick Law Olmsted and the Olmsted landscape firm. Material is drawn from the Olmsted in Connecticut landscape documentation project being carried out by Preservation Connecticut, the Connecticut State Historic Preservation Office, and consultants from the Red Bridge Group in observance of the 200th anniversary of Olmsted's birth. For more about the Olmsted bicentennial visit olmsted200.org.

Patrick L. Pinnell

Collinsville's Main Street, looking south toward the Collins axe factory, the Farmington River, and, in the distance, Sweetheart Mountain.

PRESERVATION CONNECTICUT

940 Whitney Avenue
Hamden, CT 06517-4002

Phone: (203) 562-6312
Email: contact@preservationct.org
Web: www.preservationct.org

Address Service Requested
Forwarding and Return Postage Guaranteed

OLMSTED 200

Connecticut's Olmsted Heritage

Early influences: Collinsville

How I long to be where I was a year ago: midst two lofty mountains, pursuing the uneven course of the purling brook, gliding among the fair granite rocks, & lisping over pebbles; meandering through the lowly valley, under the sweeping willows, & the waving elms, where nought is heard save the indistinct clink of anvils & the distant roar of water as it passes gracefully over the half natural dam of the beautiful Farmington…then & there to be—up to knees in mud & sand chasing mush-squash.

—Frederick Law Olmsted, letter to his stepmother, 20 March 1841

John Warner Barber, *Connecticut Historical Collections* (1836).

Western view of Collinsville, in Canton.

Only 19 years old, and still a decade and a half away from his first landscape design commission for Central Park in New York, Frederick Law Olmsted already showed a sensitivity to landscape and place. And Collinsville, as local author and historian David Leff writes in *The Last Undiscovered Place* (2004), was an early and important influence for the future landscape architect.

The young Olmsted came to Collinsville in late 1838 and stayed about 18 months to study surveying, civil engineering, and mathematics with the newly appointed Congregational minister, Frederick Augustus Barton. For a curious student, Collinsville, a bustling industrial village named for Samuel Collins' axe-making company, offered as many lessons as Barton himself. Established only a dozen years earlier, the village was expanding rapidly, with new buildings and infrastructure enlarging the factory beside the Farmington River while worker housing and community buildings climbed adjacent slopes.

Successfully siting this new construction to take advantage of the river's waterpower and to fit the steep topography demonstrated the importance of engineering and drainage, underlying principles that would eventually shape the form and aesthetics of Olmsted's parks and landscapes.

Few of the buildings that Olmsted knew in Collinsville survive. The oldest remaining factory buildings date to the late 1840s, and the stores and hotel and school to even later

continued on page 19

Collinsville in 1836, just before Frederick Law Olmsted arrived there.