

PRESERVATION CONNECTICUT NEWS



Historic preservation and affordable housing in Connecticut

Seaside Village in Bridgeport is one of nine developments built in Connecticut during World War I by the United States Housing Corporation. The USHC was created to meet a severe shortage of housing for workers in war-related industries, but the architects and planners who staffed it—including many leaders in their fields—had an ulterior motive. They wanted to provide examples of high-quality affordable housing for the postwar market. As late as 1940, housing advocates pointed to USHC projects as models worth emulating.

Seaside Village, Bridgeport: still affordable and well preserved after 100 years.

One hundred years later, rising costs and, more recently, rising interest rates, as well changing demographics and work patterns rising from the Covid-19 pandemic, have created what many have dubbed a crisis in affordable housing. Historic preservation is often cited in discussions, sometimes to support affordable housing proposals, sometimes to oppose them—and sometimes on both sides of a single proposal. What is the role of historic preservation in meeting this need?

continued on page 4

C. Wigen



Industry and health care in the 20th century

Public Archaeology Laboratory, Inc.

While Connecticut's industries continued to innovate and flourish in the first half of the 20th century, military conflicts abroad created a population of veterans who needed health care. Three sites newly listed on the National Register of Historic Places help tell these stories.

The **Landers, Frary & Clark Ellis Street plant historic district**, in New Britain, represents one of the few producers of electrical appliances in Connecticut. The company patented the first electrical socket for a percolator in 1908 and subsequently invented numerous other electronic components for irons, ranges, percolators, and other household electrical appliances in the 1920s and 1930s. They also invented a filter for gas masks that was effective against poisonous mustard gas and designed the machinery that manufactured them during World War I, thereby helping to save countless lives.

Landers, Frary & Clark was incorporated in 1865 in New Britain to manufacture cutlery and metal products. During the 19th and early 20th centuries, it shifted to making housewares. Maintaining earlier plants in downtown New Britain, the company constructed the Ellis Street Plant starting in 1908 specifically for the manufacture of electrical wares, including percolators, irons, waffle irons, and major appliances. During both World Wars, production shifted from housewares to military items including gun mounts during World War II. After the war,



From 1908 to 1965, Landers, Frary & Clark produced electrical appliances at its Ellis Street plant in New Britain.

Landers, Frary continued to operate at the site until 1965.

The Ellis Street plant is a collection of brick industrial buildings built between 1908 and 1962 in a linear fashion, reflecting the evolution of industrial production technology at the time. It is a remarkably intact large early-20th-century industrial complex, of which only four (including the Ellis Street plant) remain extant in New Britain. They typify factory architecture and construction methods associated with this period in industrial building.

Two **Veterans' Administration hospitals**, in Newington and West Haven, also were added to the National Register, in conjunction with the 75th anniversary of the Veterans' Health Administration, in 2021.

The federal government has been providing medical facilities for veterans since the end of the Civil War. Historians have identified three generations of hospital building. The

Farm Security Administration—Office of War Information photograph collection (Library of Congress)



During World War II, this photograph by Gordon Parks showing two Black welders at Landers, Frary, and Clark—probably the Ellis Street plant—was used to recruit women to work in war industries.

first generation, lasting between 1866 and 1930, were built for the care of Union Civil War veterans as residential communities that provided lifelong care. Conceived as miniature communities, they comprised multiple buildings in picturesque landscapes, included burial grounds, and were the first racially integrated federal civilian institutions.

Second-generation hospitals, built between 1919 and 1940 for World War I veterans, focused on rehabilitation rather than lifelong care and were divided into three types of facility: tuberculosis, neuropsychiatric, or general medical and surgical. Typically characterized by Colonial Revival or Classical Revival design using standardized plans developed in-house, they were located on large tracts of land—for open-air treatment programs or expansion. Socially, they represented a step backward by being racially segregated.

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MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Happy new year! At Preservation Connecticut, we are looking forward to a year filled with promise and progress.

Please join us at the remaining stops of our popular **Picturing History: Historic Landscapes of Connecticut** photography tour. We will be at the Norwich Arts Center from January 6 through January 28, Kent Art Association from March 2 through March 20, and then finally at The Loos Center at Woodstock Academy from late March to mid-May.

It's **Preservation Awards** time again. One of the most satisfying events of the

year is when we recognize outstanding achievements in preservation across the state and the people who make them possible. See page 7, or our website for nomination materials, and note that we've eliminated the application fee, to encourage more submissions. Show us what's great in your community!

We're welcoming two interns, **Daniella Occineri** from Southern Connecticut State University and **Cecilia Puckhaber** from Central Connecticut State University, for a special project to research Connecticut sites from the *Negro Traveler's Green Book*, a

publication for African American travelers. Operating from 1938 to 1967, it identified hotels, restaurants, service stations and other places where African Americans could be served without fear of harassment. Results will be shared with the Connecticut Freedom Trail as well as The Architecture of the Negro Travelers' Green book, a nationwide website. Thanks to Trustee Jonathan Wharton for helping to shape the project.

We are hopeful that our revised application to the state's **Community Investment Fund 2030** for a grant to support capital improvements for eight churches in the Washington Park National Register district in Bridgeport will be accepted. Our updated budget puts the project over \$6,000,000, much of which will go directly to critical building repairs that will help the organizations better serve the needs of their community. If successful, PCT will administer the grant and oversee the rehabilitation work.

Also relating to Bridgeport, we offer enthusiastic congratulations to our friends at the **Mary and Eliza Freeman Center for History and Community** who were awarded a \$1M grant from the Mellon Foundation through the Foundation's Humanities in Place program. The grant will support organizational capacity, a planning and feasibility study, and related public cultural heritage programming.

In October, Board chair Caroline Sloat and I attended the **Historic New England Summit** in Worcester, along with Trustee Ed Gerber, who also sits on HNE's board, and enjoyed networking and stimulating conversation on strengthening livability and resilience for our region. The 2023 summit is slated for Providence, but Caroline has begun lobbying for Hartford in 2024.


—Jane Montanaro
Executive Director

Upcoming Meetings

Connecticut Historic Preservation Council

February 1, 2022, at 9:30 a.m.

—Virtual meeting

March 1, 2023, at 9:30 a.m.

—Virtual Meeting

To participate, contact Jonathan Kinney (860) 500-2380; Jonathan.Kinney@ct.gov

State Historic Preservation Board

March 24, 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 or visit portal.ct.gov/DECD/Services/Historic-Preservation/About-the-State-Historic-Preservation-Office

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.

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Connecticut
still revolutionary



The Tyler: the former East Haven high school was converted to a mix of market and affordable housing using historic rehabilitation tax credits.



Seven houses in Greenwich's Fourth Ward historic district were threatened with demolition for an apartment building with affordable units, but the proposal was withdrawn.

Preservation and affordable housing, cont'd from page 1

First of all, what exactly is 'affordable?' The *Connecticut Mirror* (22 October 2022) explains, "Housing is typically considered affordable if people are spending up to a third of their income on housing costs." Of course, that could apply to millionaires or welfare recipients. Usually, the term means *low-cost housing*, such as units that receive government assistance for construction or rehabilitation of low- to moderate-income housing, housing occupied by people getting rent assistance, and deed-restricted properties, among other categories.

Preservation incentives can offer valuable assistance for affordable housing development. Adaptive use of large schools or mill complexes, such as the conversion of the Montgomery Mill in Windsor Locks and the East Haven high school to apartments, often gets a boost from state and federal historic rehabilitation tax credits. Some nonprofit developers like NINA in Hartford and Neighborhood Housing Services of New Haven also use rehabilitation tax credits to create affordable housing and increase homeownership in cities. These credits are often the final piece of financing needed to make reuse of historic places feasible.

Creating affordable housing is more difficult in smaller-scale historic districts in prosperous communities where high real estate prices can strain budgets and residents often fear such development will reduce property values. Objections

tend to cite increased density, traffic, and noise in quiet neighborhoods, scarce parking, crowded schools, or the loss of neighborhood character. These tend to be communities where teachers, fire and police personnel, retail workers, and other moderately paid jobs cannot afford to live.

Section 8-30g

Perhaps the most controversial tool for creating affordable housing in Connecticut is the state law known as Section 8-30g, enacted in 1990. The law was conceived to encourage affordable housing by allowing developers to challenge local zoning decisions. If a local zoning board turns down a project in which at least 30 percent of units are set aside as affordable, the developer can appeal the denial in court. The burden then is on the town to show that the denial met certain criteria—for instance that it would harm public health or safety. Towns and cities where at least ten percent of housing is designated as affordable—currently, 31 out of 169—are not subject to 8-30g, and municipalities that can show progress toward reaching that goal can qualify for a four-year moratorium from the law.

Section 8-30g does not give developers free rein to override local zoning; rather, it forces towns to demonstrate that an affordable housing project is inappropriate for objective reasons and not rely on ill-defined criteria like "community character" that have been used to avoid

any affordable housing at all.

In historic areas, 8-30g sometimes has supported development incompatible with existing scale, style, and historic integrity. In 2021 a developer proposed demolishing seven houses in Greenwich's Fourth Ward National Register district to build a seven-story apartment building containing 192 units, with 58 (30.2 percent) designated as affordable. The project was eventually withdrawn in the face of active local opposition, including a potential lawsuit under the Connecticut Environmental Protection Act, which allows legal action to prevent the unreasonable demolition of buildings listed on the National Register.

Critics of 8-30g argue that it sets up an adversarial approach to affordable housing development, and that it gives too much power to developers. Calls for repealing or modifying the statute come from both ends of the political spectrum: in 2022 Republican gubernatorial candidate Bob Stefanowski made repealing 8-30g a key plank of his platform, while the zoning reform organization Desegregate Connecticut has proposed alternate measures to encourage affordable housing.

On the other hand, proponents of 8-30g argue that that the law is needed to overcome resistance to affordable housing and has succeeded in creating such housing. As evidence, they point to complaints about projects that would never have happened without the law. A study by the General Assembly's Office of Legal Research found that, as of 2011, there were at least 27 cases in which a local planning or zoning



In New Canaan a developer has proposed an affordable housing project in a local historic district.



The Foundation for Norfolk Living created affordable rental units in these houses in the Norfolk National Register district.

decision was overturned under 8-30g. As a result of these cases, at least 1,400 affordable units were approved (the study was not able to determine how many of these projects actually were built).

Opportunities and tools

Historic preservation and affordable housing don't have to be in conflict. Indeed, a variety of housing options is needed for thriving, sustainable communities that can support maintenance and revitalization of historic resources. Offering to help developers can achieve better results than flat opposition. Preservationists can help identify preservation-related funding or zoning incentives, offer guidance in negotiating unfamiliar preservation bureaucracy, and publicly support projects that preserve and enhance historic places. Here are some specifics.

Promote preservation tools

Preservation incentives can help create affordable housing that respects historic places and ensure that preservationists have a voice in determining what is developed and where.

Connecticut's state historic rehabilitation tax credit provides a higher level for affordable housing projects—30 percent rather than the 25 percent offered to other work. It might be worth considering making the affordable-housing bonus even bigger, at least in high-cost communities. Rehabilitation work must meet preservation standards to qualify for the credit.

Another tool is local historic district or property designation, in which a municipal

historic district commission must approve the design of new construction or alterations to existing buildings to preserve historic character. Since LHD provisions are different from zoning, it may be that the power to reject proposals that are out of character with a district could stand outside 8-30g, forcing preservationists and developers to work together.

Currently, the town of New Canaan is considering an application for affordable housing within the God's Acre local historic district. The developer proposed to move an historic house closer to the street and add a five-story apartment building onto the rear. While the project has not yet applied for historic district commission approval, the commission—at the request of the planning and zoning commission—indicated that it likely would not approve the project because of proposed changes to the house and the streetscape. Since then, the developer has modified the plans to make fewer changes to the house and make the addition into a separate building behind the house. The size of the project remains unchanged. This proposal is still working its way through the approval process.

Municipal preservation ordinances also can ensure preservation of historic resources. While specifics vary, ordinances in Hartford, Milford, and New Britain require that a municipal historical commission approve any demolition of historic structures. In Milford, the commission denied a developer's application to demolish a house in a National Register

district for a new apartment building. Eventually, the developer agreed to incorporate the house into the new development. While this proposal did not specify affordable housing, the proposed apartments are small and might qualify.

Another idea might be to revisit a pilot project that the City of New Haven and the National Trust for Historic Preservation carried out in the 1990s to reinterpret the Secretary of the Interior Standards for affordable housing projects. That pilot was developed in response to the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation policy statement "Affordable Housing and Historic Preservation," which stressed flexibility, encouraged community involvement, and emphasized the treatment of exteriors. Could this approach make renovating historic buildings for affordable housing more feasible by reducing costs? (However, the approach would have to be carefully designed to avoid creating a two-tier system of preservation for the rich and preservation for the poor.)

Adopt planning provisions

Aside from provisions specifically for preservation, towns and cities can have a bigger say in where and how affordable housing is developed within their boundaries by adopting planning provisions that allow, and even encourage, affordable development in ways that fit each community's character.

continued on next page

Preservation and affordable housing, cont'd from page 5

Desegregate Connecticut promotes a number of measures for more equitable, affordable, and sustainable development, many of which have precedents in historic development patterns. These include:

- allowing accessory dwelling units as of right (legislation mandating this passed the General Assembly in 2021);
- encouraging transit-oriented development at transportation hubs, including affordable set-aside units;
- creating small-scale multifamily housing in and near commercial districts;
- increasing flexibility in parking requirements to save costs; and
- adopting form-based zoning, which focuses on building type and size, to promote development in keeping with local character.

DesegregateCT and its partners have not succeeded in mandating all these provisions, but towns and cities are free to adopt them on their own. In fact, it may be preferable to do that, so that each town can create measures that reflect its own history and development.

Who develops affordable housing?

A major issue in communities like Greenwich and New Canaan is that the high cost of real estate makes development an expensive proposition, and for-profit developers claim that only big multifamily projects—ones that are out of scale with historic development—can succeed financially. In such communities, affordable housing in historic settings may need to rely more on public funding or philanthropy.

In Norfolk, the Foundation for Norfolk Living has created twelve rental units in the town center (a National Register district) using an affordable housing grant from the Connecticut Department of Housing plus Connecticut state historic rehabilitation tax credits. According to the foundation's website, the units are fully occupied and have a waiting list.

Rethink "character"

"Historic character" remains an important concept for historic preservation, but vague use in the past has led to charges that it can be used to keep out members of different ethnic, racial, or economic groups. Preservationists need to define the term with more precision and provide clear examples. Local historic district guidelines that closely analyze the development patterns in an area can provide more objective models.

In the past, districts now considered historic often were characterized by a greater variety of uses and building types than modern zoning allows. Residential neighborhoods might contain single- and multifamily housing, as well as corner stores, schools, churches, even industrial uses. Modern development and regulatory practices have ironed this variety into greater uniformity. Zoners and residents might look at local history for models that would allow other types of development.

Preservation and affordable housing

The Foundation for Norfolk Living website suggests why affordable housing is important to the community: "Our goals include



Upper floors, rear buildings, and side streets in historic commercial districts can offer opportunities for walkable and affordable housing development.

assuring affordable housing opportunities for first time home buyers and renters, for younger adults and families, who are the source of volunteers for important community services, such as the fire department and the ambulance service, as well as senior citizens, who no longer have the means or ability to maintain their homes."

The need for a wider variety of housing in Connecticut, and for more affordable options in all parts of the state, is clear. It's in the interest of the preservation community to play an active and constructive role in meeting those needs, and preservation has much to offer. 🌱

For more information...

Office of Legislative Affairs Issue Brief on 8-30g, <https://cga.ct.gov/2017/rpt/pdf/2017-R-0013.pdf>

Desegregate Connecticut, www.desegregatect.org

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Connecticut Preservation Awards 2023

Nominations are open for the 2023 round of Connecticut Preservation Awards, recognizing outstanding achievements in revitalizing historic places to enhance the quality of life for the people of Connecticut.

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** for 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 are due by 4:00 p.m., **Friday, February 3, 2023.**

Awards will be presented Thursday, May 4, 2023, at the New Haven Country Club in Hamden.

Find instructions and nomination form at preservationct.org/nominate. New this year: there is **no fee** to submit nominations.

Courtesy of Canyon Sharits



Norwalk Art Space—2022 award recipient.

For more information, call Christopher Wigren at (203) 562-6312 or email cwigren@preservationCT.org. 🌿

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"My entire life, I've been passionate about preserving historic buildings and places. I felt compelled to join Preservation Connecticut's Legacy Society, as well as contribute during my lifetime, because Preservation Connecticut is the only statewide preservation organization and it needs individuals like me to support it. The Legacy Society allows me to be flexible in my estate planning by donating outright today and from my estate further down the road."

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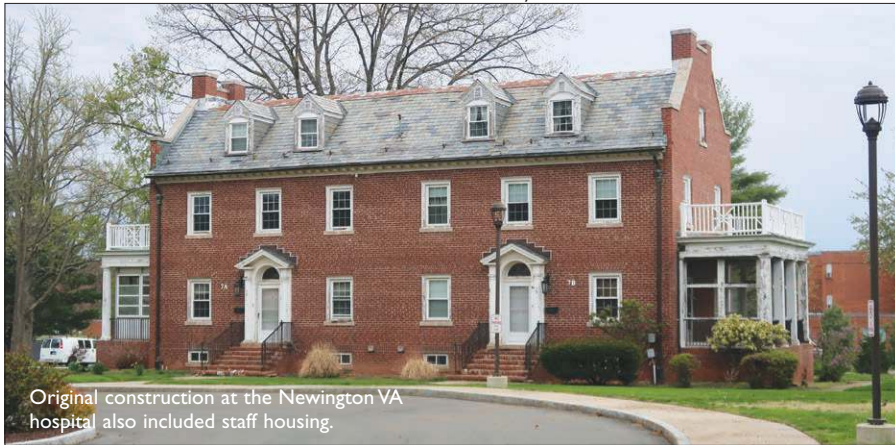
Lindsay S. Hannah, Row 10 Historic Preservation Solutions, LLC

Imposing Colonial Revival design was typical of second-generation VA hospitals like the one in Newington.



Lindsay S. Hannah, Row 10 Historic Preservation Solutions, LLC

Original construction at the Newington VA hospital also included staff housing.



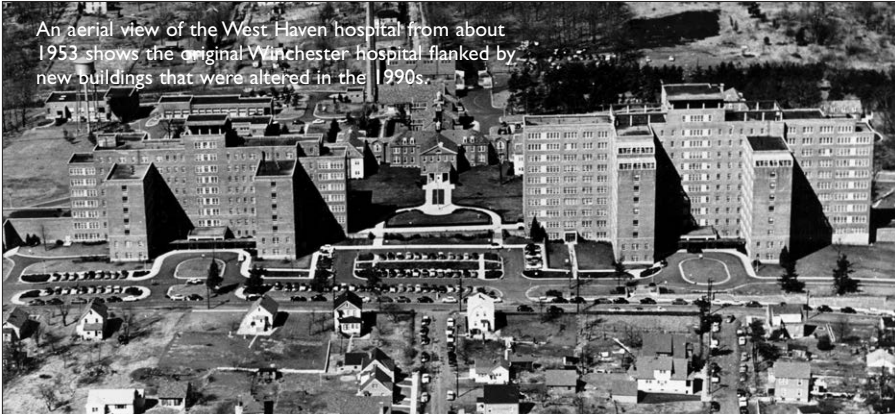
Lindsay S. Hannah, Row 10 Historic Preservation Solutions, LLC

The West Haven VA hospital was originally the William Wirt Winchester Memorial Hospital, completed in 1919.



U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs

An aerial view of the West Haven hospital from about 1953 shows the original Winchester hospital flanked by new buildings that were altered in the 1990s.



Industry and Health Care, cont'd from page 2

Third-generation hospitals were built between 1946 and 1958 to treat veterans of World War II. By 1950, the VA had the largest hospital network in the country, with 136 hospitals. Continuing the threefold classification, they focused on rehabilitation and returning veterans to civilian life while devoting more space and energy to medical research and innovation. Consequently, third-generation facilities tended to be located in populated areas and near major medical schools. The larger numbers of veterans and expanded areas of activity were reflected in much bigger buildings. Racial segregation ended in 1954.

Representing a second-generation facility, the **Newington VA Hospital** opened in 1931 in a largely rural area that was also near the population center of Hartford and only a half mile from a railroad station. Originally consisting of an imposing 250-bed Colonial Revival hospital building plus support structures and staff housing, the hospital was expanded several times beginning as early as 1935. Much of the original 208-acre parcel was sold off in the 1960s, leaving 32 acres today; nonetheless by 1975 Newington was one of the largest outpatient facilities in the VA hospital system.

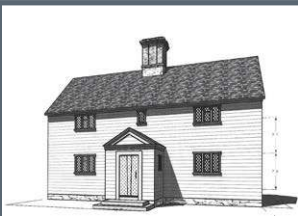
The history of the **West Haven VA Hospital** is more complicated. It began as the William Wirt Winchester Memorial Hospital, a private tuberculosis treatment facility founded by Winchester Arms heiress Sarah Winchester in memory of her husband, who died from tuberculosis. As soon as the initial buildings were completed, in 1919, the hospital was leased to the United States Army to care for soldiers returning from World War I with TB.

From 1927, when the Army's lease expired, until 1940 the hospital operated privately. The Army leased the property again beginning in 1943 and transferred it to the Veterans Administration after the end of the war.

Between 1945 and 1953, the VA bought the property and constructed two large third-generation hospital buildings on the site, a 400-bed tuberculosis hospital (now containing outpatient facilities and nursing home), and a 500-bed general medical and surgical unit. Older structures continued in use, as well as support facilities. The two hospital buildings were altered in the 1990s, when their brick construction was covered by new metal clad-

ding, and do not contribute to the significance of the hospital complex, but the Winchester buildings and later auxiliary buildings remain. 🌱

For more about the Veterans Health Administration, visit <https://vha75.com/>.



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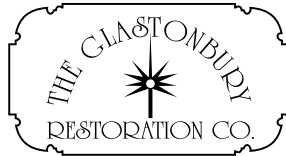


Suggested Restoration of
1698 Goodwin House

Save the 1698 John Goodwin House

- Colonial Hartford's oldest surviving house
- Date proved by dendrochronology
- In 1781 & 1782 the entire French Land Army stayed in the East Society of Hartford twice, on the way to Yorktown and back
- Dismantled and ready for preservation with our plans to restore as a museum in East Hartford
- Saved from demolition by the Glastonbury Restoration Co. Photos of actual dismantling on website
- Support this superb cultural gem and support the East Hartford Historical Society in saving our cultural heritage. Additional historical data on website

Details for donations
on our website
www.GlastonburyRestoration.com
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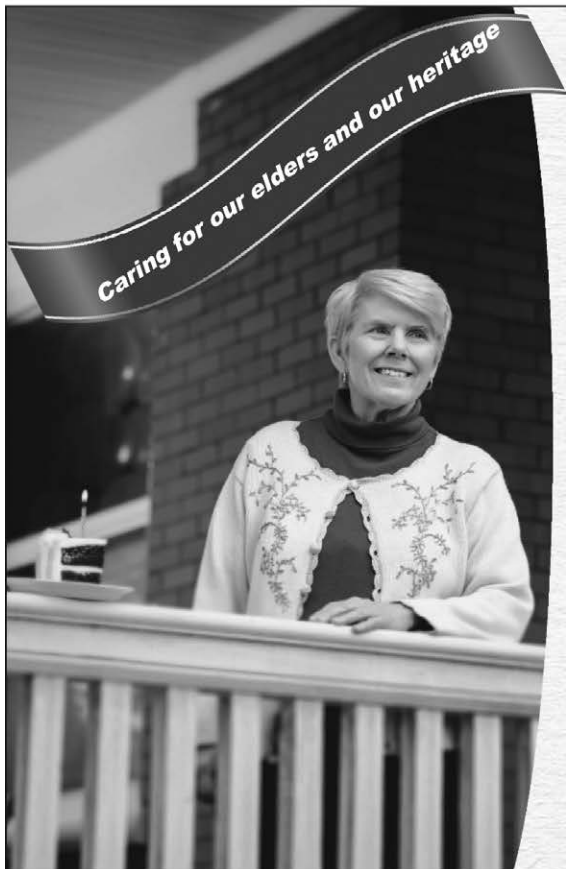
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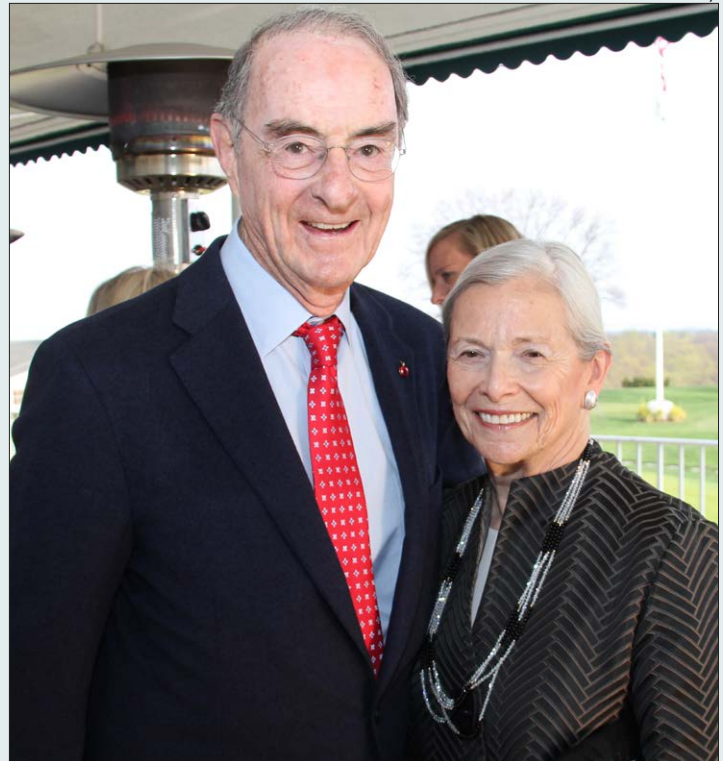
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Briefly noted

Nationwide. ►

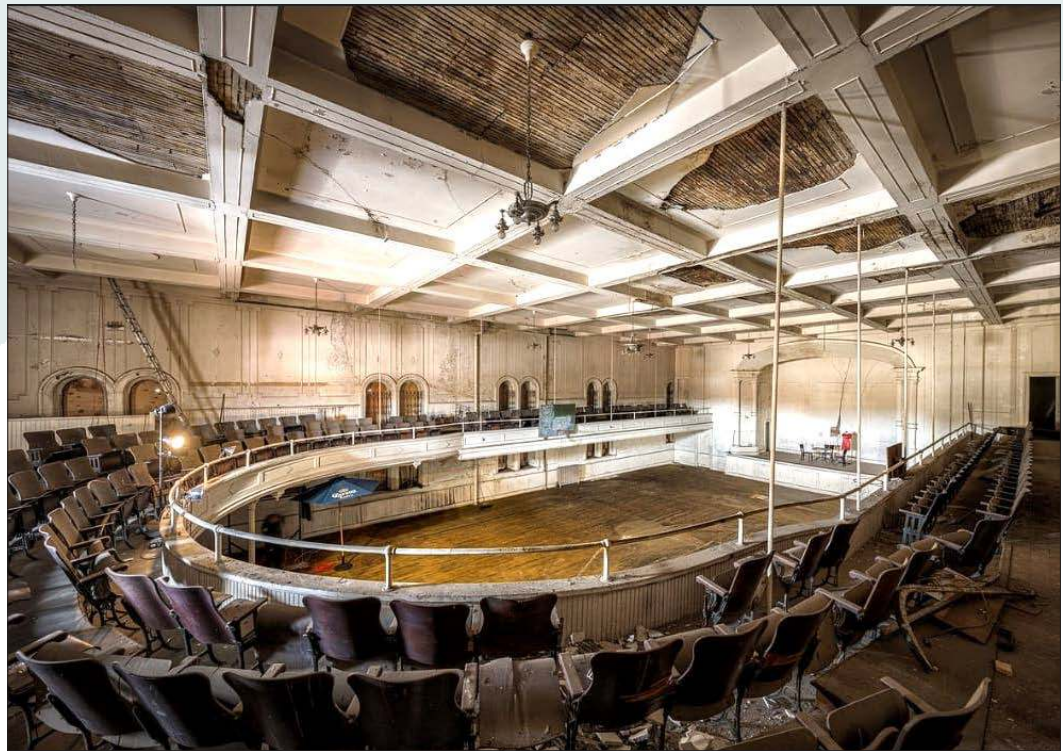
The National Trust for Historic Preservation presented its Louise du Pont Crowninshield Award to Peter and Isabel Malkin of Greenwich in November. According to the Trust's website, "Peter and Isabel Malkin spent decades preserving some of the most iconic structures and landscapes in the United States, including Connecticut's Merritt Parkway, the Empire State Building, ... Lyndhurst, the Bush-Holley House, and many other historic places in Greenwich, Connecticut, New York City, and elsewhere. Their impressive real estate development work, quiet yet profound philanthropy, talent for uniting donors with preservationists and the public, and stalwart support of preservation organizations have demonstrated their lifelong commitment to the preservation of historic places, with an impressive track record of preservation successes." The Crowninshield Award is the National Trust's highest recognition, presented "only when there is indisputable evidence of superlative achievement in the preservation and interpretation of our historic, architectural, or maritime heritage." Peter Malkin is a member of Preservation Connecticut's Advisory Council.



Greenwich Historical Society

Ansonia. ►

The City has leased the historic Ansonia Opera House (1870; NR) for 30 years and is working with an advisory committee to explore options to renovate the building and put it back to use for entertainment, educational, or community purposes. The building's owner, Walt Kendzierski, remains committed to returning it to its historic use but sees government involvement as crucial to meeting regulatory requirements and obtaining grant funding. While the advisory committee is considering events to raise awareness and money, the City economic development officer is looking into grant possibilities. The first phase is envisioned as including structural and environmental assessments and work on windows facing Main Street. Fuller restoration would follow in subsequent phases. The opera house has



www.facebook.com/Ansoniaoperahouse/

been vacant for 50-odd years, but City officials hope that recent development activity on Main Street will provide momentum to support reuse.

Edward F. Gerber



◀ Bridgeport.

Historic New England awarded its first grant from the Edward F. Gerber Urban Preservation Fund for restoration work at Graynook, the Charles B. Parker house (1891), in the Marina Park National Register district. The owner, Mary Allison Waggener, is using the \$10,000 grant to restore elaborate cast-iron porch railings and wooden porch doors, both prominent elements of the Queen Anne-style house's façade. Ms. Waggener was chosen from among about 50 applicants. Edward F. Gerber, a trustee of both Historic New England and Preservation Connecticut, established the annual grant to support preservation work by homeowners in Connecticut cities. The next round will be announced in the spring. For more information, visit www.historicnewengland.org and search for "Gerber fund."

Historic Properties of Greenwich



◀ Greenwich.

Local historic property designation is under consideration to protect the Samuel Ferris house, in Riverside (c.1760 and later; NR). The house was recently bought by Historic Properties of Greenwich, a nonprofit dedicated to working with owners to protect older houses in Greenwich from demolition. Because of its small size and location on the busy Boston Post Road, the house would be a likely target for demolition. Once the local historic property process is complete, the organization will put the house back on the market. According to its website, Historic Properties of Greenwich has placed protections on four individual properties as well as three historic districts. For more, visit www.historicpropertiesofgreenwich.org.

continued on next page

Hartford. ►

Invoking the Connecticut Environmental Protection Act, the state Historic Preservation Council voted in December to ask that the Attorney General take legal action to prevent the demolition of the Deborah Chapel (1886; NR). The chapel's owner, Congregation Beth Israel of West Hartford, claims that it has no use for the long-vacant and deteriorating structure. However, preservationists and Jewish scholars have urged that the building, funded by a Jewish women's organization, is of extraordinary significance and could be put to a new use. In June 2022, the National Trust for Historic Preservation included the chapel in its list of 11 Most Endangered Historic Places in the nation—chosen from among 120 entries. The Trust noted that the chapel is “a rare and early American example of an intact Jewish funerary structure which embodies the strong leadership of women within 19th-century Jewish and communal organizations.” The Attorney General's office is reviewing the request and has asked to meet with the congregation, according to the Hartford Courant.

**Norwalk. ►**

City officials are pursuing strict penalties after the Thomas Hyatt house, said to date to 1677, was torn down in October, without a demolition permit and without complying with the city's delay of demolition process, which mandates a 120-day waiting period before demolishing historic structures. The owner-contractors, Kemberry Mora and Cesar Diaz, had a permit to renovate and add to the house, but not to tear it down. The house was not listed on the State or National Register, although it did bear a plaque from the Norwalk Historical Society identifying its name and date. Coincidentally, Tod Bryant of the Norwalk Historic Preservation Trust had been working with the City to amend the ordinance to extend the waiting period and strengthen the penalty for unauthorized demolition. Provisions under consideration include increased fines and a two-year construction moratorium. To see a model demolition delay ordinance, visit www.preservationct.org/demodelay.



Tod Bryant

Regan Miner



▲ Norwich.

City officials hope to encourage investment in historic buildings located within special flood hazard areas located primarily along the Thames River, thanks to adoption of a new local historic inventory. Ordinarily, the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) mandates that any renovation of a structure in a special flood hazard area which costs or exceeds 50 percent of market value be considered a “substantial improvement” requiring mandatory flood improvements, a costly requirement that often poses a barrier to development. However, inventoried structures in a community with a certified historic preservation program, along with those structures listed on the State or National Register of Historic Places, can qualify for an exemption, although they still must meet building safety code requirements. In August, the City Council approved the local inventory containing 11 properties created by Director of Planning and Neighborhood Services Deanna Rhodes and the late President of the Norwich Community Development Corporation, Jason Vincent, with historical research by Regan Miner, Executive Director of the Norwich Historical Society (and a PCT Trustee). All the buildings identified are potentially eligible for National Register listing. The local historic

inventory could provide a valuable model for other communities where the high cost of flood protection measures hampers redevelopment of historic properties. (Photo: Norwich Cutlery Company, 1 Terminal Way, c.1865-1899.)

▼ Torrington.

Preservation Torrington, formerly known as the Torrington Historic Preservation Trust, announced that it has identified a site on which to re-erect Skee's Diner (NR), a local landmark manufactured in the 1920s and

moved in 1945 to Torrington, where it operated until 2001. In April 2013, Preservation Torrington moved the diner to save it from demolition. Since then, the organization has kept the small structure protected and restored several key elements, and in November it entered into a lease agreement with an option to purchase a property at 57 East Main Street. Next steps include environmental studies, planning, and fundraising. For more information visit www.skeesdiner.com.

Preservation Torrington



continued on page 19



HISTORIC PROPERTIES EXCHANGE

Threatened Buildings and Easement Properties Available — January/February 2023

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.

850 Main Street, East Hartford (1939)

Former United States Post Office available for redevelopment. Colonial Revival building with brick and granite façade and cupola. Listed on Preservation Connecticut Creative Places survey; inside, it houses Alton Tobey WPA mural, "The Stop of Hooker's Band in East Hartford before Crossing the River" (1940). Located in Central Avenue-Center Cemetery National Register Historic District which makes it eligible for historic rehabilitation tax credits. Building area is 16,561 sq. ft ; 0.73 acres; in Opportunity zone.

Contact: Shawn P. McMahon, Jones Lang LaSalle Americas, Inc., shawn.mcmahon@am.jll.com, 860-702-2833



82 Mechanic Street, Stonington \$595,000

Redevelopment opportunity for historic textile mill (c. 1878) on Pawcatuck River. Built by Moss Manufacturing Company for cotton goods production. Later occupants include Crefeld Mills Corporation, Lorraine Manufacturing Company (both manufacturing textiles), Hamilton Propellor, Boston Wire Stitcher Co. (staplers), and the final occupant, Yardney Electric Corporation (batteries). This property is listed in Preservation Connecticut's Mills: Making Places of Connecticut industrial survey and located in the Mechanic Street National Register district, which makes it eligible for both State and Federal historic rehabilitation tax credits. Building area is 35,000 sq. ft.; 1.49 acres.

Contact: Heather Gianacoplos, Pequot Commercial, (860) 447-9570 x 153, heatherg@pequotcommercial.com





390 Church Street, New Britain (1911) \$780,000

Romanesque Revival church, including four car garage and rectory, on 0.62-acre lot. Former St. Andrew's Catholic Church, built in 1911 to serve New Britain's Lithuanian population, continued to operate until closure in January 2022 due to parish consolidations. Church is 9,715 sq. ft., rectory 4,235 sq. ft. May be eligible for listing on the State Register of Historic Places to qualify for historic rehabilitation tax credits.

**Contact: Dan Garofalo, Reno Properties Group,
860-666-7400**

13 Summit Street, East Hampton (1880, c. 1910, c. 1914, c.1950) \$325,000

Redevelopment opportunity for historic textile mill. Built by Merrick and Conant Manufacturing Company for production of silk and other textiles. Eureka Silk Manufacturing Company purchased in 1882 and operated the facility until 1894 when transferred to the Summit Thread Company. In late 1930s Summit was purchased by Belding, Heminway, Cortecelli Silk Mills Company and moved to Putnam, CT. In 1941 plant purchased by Artistic Wire Products Company which remained until 1960. Plant subsequently housed a variety of light industrial and commercial uses through 1980s. This property is listed in Preservation Connecticut's Mills: Making Places of Connecticut industrial survey and located in the Belltown National Register district, which makes it eligible for both State and Federal historic rehabilitation tax credits. Building area is 61,553 sq. ft.; 2.1 acres.

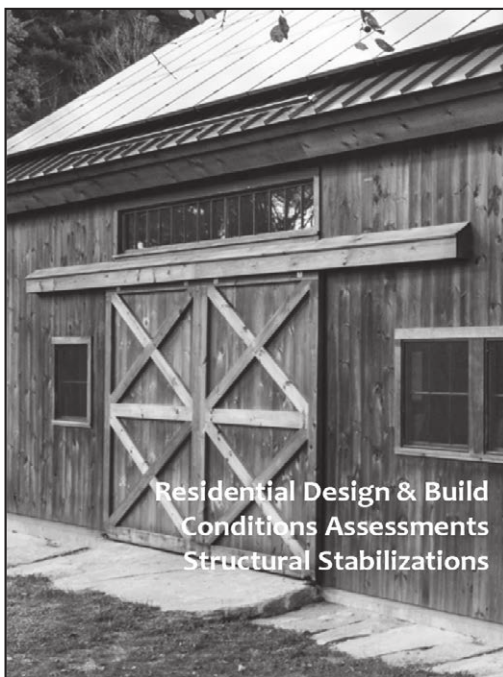
**Contact: Michael Beaudry, EXP Commercial,
860-990-3229, Michael.beaudry@expcommercial.com**



Deadline for the next issue is February 20, 2023

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.

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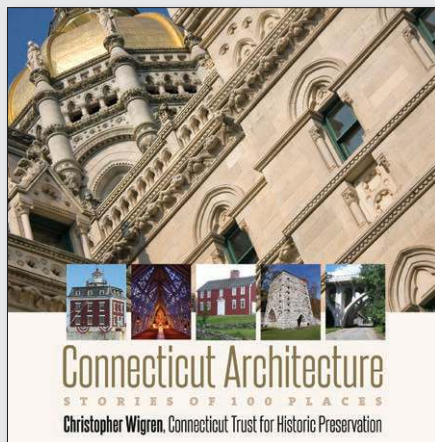
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Ukrainian Heritage in Connecticut, cont'd from page 20

at the time, immigrants were identified as Russians, Poles, Slovaks, or Hungarians.

Although Ukraine was primarily rural and agricultural in the 19th century, most immigrants to Connecticut found work in the state's factories. Consequently, places associated with Ukrainian Americans tend to be in manufacturing cities like Ansonia, New Britain, Stamford, and others. Even in smaller communities like Glastonbury and Terryville, clusters are associated with industry. Some did manage to settle on farms, though, including Jews fleeing pogroms in the Russian-controlled portion of Ukraine who received assistance from the Baron de Hirsch fund.

Like many other immigrants, Ukrainians in Connecticut often used buildings originally constructed for other groups. As later generations prospered and were able to erect their own buildings, it was churches that were the most likely to be built new and reflect the culture of the homeland.

Ukrainian churches belong to two main religious divisions: Eastern Orthodox and Catholic. The population of Ukraine is primarily Orthodox, but many early immigrants came from Catholic areas, so the relative numbers are different in Connecticut than in Ukraine. Note also that while the Ukrainian Catholic Church is part of the Catholic Church headed by the Pope, its worship and many other practices follow Eastern Orthodox traditions.

Saint Mary Ukrainian Orthodox Church

in New Britain is a small building with a typical onion dome. Dual dates on the cornerstone reflect the struggles that immigrants often faced in becoming established in their new home: the basement was begun in 1910, but the upper church was not built until 1915.

Organized in 1897, Ansonia's **Saint Peter and Saint Paul Ukrainian Catholic Church** is one of the oldest Ukrainian Catholic churches in the United States. Its current building was begun in 1915 with plans sent from Lviv, according to church histories. Ukrainian American historian Myron Stachiw points out that the building very closely resembles work by the Lviv-based architect Vasyi Nahirny (1848-1921). The Greek cross plan with four small domes clustered around a bigger central one is common to both Orthodox and eastern Catholic churches.

Significantly, Stamford is the seat of the Ukrainian Catholic Eparchy (or diocese) for New York and New England, created in 1956. The Eparchy is based at **St. Volodymyr's Cathedral** and operates **St. Basil College Seminary**, established in 1933 to train priests. Initially housed in the former Quintard mansion (c.1870), the school also includes a gymnasium/library (a former stable, c.1860) and a classroom building (1936), plus a later main building (1962).

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Ukrainian National Home of Hartford

In addition to churches, Ukrainian immigrants founded social and mutual assistance organizations such as the **Ukrainian National Home of Hartford**, established in 1942, which functions as a cultural and social center. In Colebrook, is **Bobriwka**, a recreational facility established in 1955 to promote Ukrainian American culture, scouting, camping, and recreation.

Other cultural resources include **The Ukrainian Museum and Library of Stamford** opened in 1935 on the campus of St. Basil College Seminary. It claims to be the oldest cultural institution established by

Ukrainians in North America, dedicated to the collection, documentation, preservation and exhibition of artifacts and publications dealing with Ukrainian culture and heritage.

Ukrainian Americans connected to Connecticut include **Robert Brackman** (1898-1980). A native of Odesa, he immigrated to the United States with his family at age eleven and became a respected painter best known for portraits and still lifes. Brackman taught at the Art Students League in New York before moving to Noank in about 1928. There he worked and

taught painting at several locations, including his final home at 27 Smith Court.

Immigration from Ukraine continued throughout the 20th century, with new waves after World War II and after the collapse of the Soviet Union in the 1990s. These have reinforced ties between successive generations of Ukrainian Americans and the homeland, and kept Connecticut's Ukrainian heritage a living tradition. 🌿

Thanks to former PCT Trustee Myron Stachiw who provided information for this article.

Around the state; cont'd from page 13

Waterbury. ►

The Abbott Towers Apartments, historically known as the George S. Abbott building (1899; NR), has recently been renovated using state and federal historic rehabilitation tax credits. Work included updated interior fixtures and finishes in all 54 units, new mechanical systems, window replacement, and masonry repointing. It incurred over \$2.5 million in eligible expenditures and earned a \$726,645 historic tax credit. The state Department of Housing also provided a loan to Enterprise Abbot Limited Partnership for the project to support affordable housing. A speculative apartment building with ground-floor shopfronts, the Abbott building was first renovated as housing in the 1980s. The Enterprise Apartments, in the Waterbury Clock Company complex (NR), were rehabbed at the same time. 🌿



Eryn Boyce, Architectural Historian, PAL

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TOP LEFT: St. Mary Ukrainian
Orthodox Church, New Britain
TOP RIGHT: Saint Peter and
Saint Paul Ukrainian Catholic
Church, Ansonia

Ukrainian heritage in Connecticut

As the Russian invasion of Ukraine drags on despite valiant opposition and broad international support, it's worth reflecting on the heritage of Ukrainian immigrants and Ukrainian Americans in Connecticut.

Along with other Eastern Europeans, Ukrainians began arriving in the state in significant numbers in the final decades of the 19th century. It's difficult to know exact numbers, because official records listed which countries people came from rather than nationality. Since Ukraine did not exist as an independent country

continued on page 18

C. Wigren



Saint Peter and Saint Paul Ukrainian Catholic Church



C. Hitchcock, Creative Place



Robert Brackman house and studio, Noank