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United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

JUL 12 1989

National Register of Historic Places  
Registration Form

NATIONAL  
REGISTER

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in *Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms* (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries.

1. Name of Property

historic name Orange Center Historic District  
other names/site number NA

2. Location

street & number See continuation sheet  not for publication  
city, town Orange  vicinity  
state CT code CT county New Haven code 009 zip code 06477

3. Classification

Ownership of Property	Category of Property	Number of Resources within Property	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> building(s)	Contributing	Noncontributing
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> public-local	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> district	<u>40</u>	<u>16</u> buildings
<input type="checkbox"/> public-State	<input type="checkbox"/> site	<u>2</u>	_____ sites
<input type="checkbox"/> public-Federal	<input type="checkbox"/> structure	_____	_____ structures
	<input type="checkbox"/> object	_____	_____ objects
		<u>42</u>	<u>16</u> Total

Name of related multiple property listing: NA  
Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register NA

4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this  nomination  request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register criteria.  See continuation sheet.  
Signature of certifying official John W. Shannahan, State Historic Preservation Officer Date July 7, 1989  
State or Federal agency and bureau \_\_\_\_\_

In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register criteria.  See continuation sheet.  
Signature of commenting or other official \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_  
State or Federal agency and bureau \_\_\_\_\_

5. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this property is:  
 entered in the National Register.  See continuation sheet.  
 determined eligible for the National Register.  See continuation sheet.  
 determined not eligible for the National Register.  
 removed from the National Register.  
 other, (explain:) \_\_\_\_\_  
Alvina Byers 8/10/89  
Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

**6. Function or Use**

Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Domestic: Single dwelling  
Religion: Religious structure  
Education: School  
Agricultural: Agricultural  
Outbuildings

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Domestic: Single dwelling  
Religion: Religious Structure  
Education  
Agricultural: Agricultural  
Outbuildings

**7. Description**Architectural Classification  
(enter categories from instructions)

Early Republic: Federal  
Mid-19th Century: Greek Revival  
Late Victorian: Stick style, Queen Anne  
20th-century Revival: Colonial  
Revival

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation Brick  
walls Wood: weatherboard  
Wood: shingle  
roof Asphalt  
other Wood  
Concrete

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

The Orange Center Historic District lies near the geographical center of Orange, Connecticut, approximately one mile south of Route 34, the historic turnpike connecting New Haven and Derby (see attached topographical and district boundary maps). The historic and architectural resources, dating from the late 18th to the early 20th centuries, are clustered in a village around the town green (1791, photograph #1) at the top of a small hill in an area of gently rolling land. The district extends several hundred feet north and south of the green on Orange Center Road, a main thoroughfare. To the east and the west, it includes large farms whose pastures and cultivated fields, demarcated in part by stone walls and rows of trees, recall the predominant historic use of the land in Orange. Much of the town has been subdivided for residential use in this century. Most district buildings are residential, although Orange Center's historic role in town commerce (Stone-Otis House, photograph #6), education (Academy, photograph #8, and Mary L. Tracy School, photograph #11) and religious life (Orange Congregational Church, photograph #5) is also well represented.

58 major structures, buildings and sites are in the district, of which 42 (72%) contribute to its significance. These include two sites, the town green and Orange Cemetery (1804, photograph #16), and three barns. The contributing buildings and structures range widely in age from c.1800 to 1937. Many of the resources are stylistically ambiguous, although there are examples of several formal architectural styles, including the Federal, Greek Revival, Queen Anne and Colonial Revival. Among the otherwise plain and functional outbuildings is a mid-19th century barn embellished with Stick-style gable braces and shed window hoods (Photograph #9). Alterations and additions are common, investing some buildings with features of more than one style and masking original construction dates of others. In one instance, 590 Orange Center Road (photograph #2), built in 1876, later changes transformed an Italianate house into an example of the

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List of Properties in the Orange Center Historic District

Street numbers are given below, where they exist, for district properties. Otherwise, parcels are listed by their lot number on town assessor's maps.

Meetinghouse Lane

205, 209, 218, and 226

Orange Center Road

555, 559, 561, 562, 567, 570, 575, 580, 584, 585, 586, 589, 590, 593, 602, 603, Orange Town Green (Map 41, block 3, lots 17 and 18), 605, 607, 609 and the small parcel behind it (Map 52, block 4, lot 5B), 615, the large town-owned parcel comprising a square block between Tyler City Road and Schoolhouse Lane (Map 52, block 2; the parcel contains the Town Hall, #617, the Orange Volunteer Fire House, #625, and the Mary L. Tracy School, #637 ), 630, 636, 643, 647, and the Orange Cemetery (Map 51, block 3)

Schoolhouse Lane

647

Tyler City Road

Map 52, block 4, lot 3A

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Colonial Revival. The non-contributing principal buildings are less than 50 years old and, with one exception, are modern interpretations of the Colonial Revival style (photographs 12, 13, and 14).

Most of the contributing buildings are wood-framed, and the prevalent exterior wall cladding is clapboards. Wood shingles and modern applications of synthetic sidings are present to a lesser degree. Among the institutional buildings, those dating from this century are brick. Two stories is the prevalent building height throughout the district. Uniform building setbacks and wide well-tended lawns with mature trees are also the rule (Photograph #3).

The houses at 586 and 603 Orange Center Road, which both appear to date from c.1800, may well be the oldest buildings in the district (note 1). Their 5-bay facades with central entrances and gable roofs with two chimneys are similar, and each in different ways illustrates the influence of the Federal style. The roofline frieze at 586 is embellished with a delicate swag and triglyph motif, while the highlight of 603 (photograph #4) is its front entrance, an elaborate composition of a leaded fanlight and pilasters supporting a shallow gabled hood. Like most buildings in the district, these have received additions, which include a late 19th-century, two-story side bay at 586 and an elaborate Italianate side porch at 603.

David Hoadley, the builder of the Congregational Church (1810, photograph #5), is often credited with its design. Rising from the center of the gable-front facade is a tall square tower surmounted by an arcaded octagonal belfry. Typical Federal-style embellishments of the time include the Palladian window over the entrance and the Ionic pilasters in the belfry. The church is a prominent landmark at the north end of the green, and its 20th-century additions to the rear and west are sympathetic in design and materials.

The c.1830 Stone-Otis House (photograph #6), the headquarters of the Orange Historical Society, reflects the transition from the Federal to the Greek Revival style. The Federal-style raking cornice with small block modillions in the gable-front facade and the tripartite

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window, similarly detailed, in the gable peak are juxtaposed with an entrance porch displaying Greek Revival-style columns, pilasters, and pediment. A large front display window was added c.1840 for a store.

Of the several houses built in the Greek Revival style, only 562 Orange Center Road (c.1825, photograph #7) remains largely unaltered. Its Greek Revival features include the pedimented front gable and front entrance surround characteristically articulated with pilasters and a wide molded entablature. While basically similar to 562, 607 (1838) and 630 (c.1840) Orange Center Road, in contrast, each has acquired wood shingle siding and later, stylistically different front porches (Colonial Revival at 607, late 19th-century Victorian at 630).

Most of the 19th-century buildings from after 1850 are stylistically ambiguous, the notable exception being 584 Orange Center Road (1900). Its cross-gabled plan, multiple sheathing materials and irregular massing are Queen Anne in style. Complex detailing characterizes several buildings from the period. Heavy sawn brackets and elaborate pierced gable screens are Stick-Style elements of the Academy (1879, photograph #8), but its wood-shingled gables suggest the influence of the oncoming Queen Anne style. The front gable of 643 Orange Center Road (c.1875, photograph #10) has board-and-batten sheathing above a sawtooth band and a pierced gable screen.

Among the largest buildings in the district are four in the Colonial Revival or Neo-Colonial style, all built after 1900, on the east side of Orange Center Road: the Mary L. Tracy School (1910, photograph #11), the Orange Volunteer Fire House (1935), the Orange Town Hall (1967, photograph #12), and the Orange Public Library (1961, photograph #13). The school, fire house and town hall occupy a block together just off the town green. The Tracy School has heavy, classically-inspired embellishments while the adjoining fire house is more restrained. The most elaborate of the three is the Neo-Colonial town hall, with its 2-story portico, front entrance under a swan's neck pediment, and cupola. The library and two residences of 1940 and 1953 (602 Orange Center Road, photograph #14), all Neo-Colonial, are the only non-contributing buildings facing the green.

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Two small early 20th-century cottages (photograph #15), flanking a house of similar age that was extensively altered in 1983, mark the southern boundary of the district. Relatively plain with the suggestion of a Bungalow influence in their plans and exposed roof rafters, the houses terminate the continuous row of district buildings.

The Orange Cemetery (photograph #16), at the district's northern border, was founded in 1804 and is still in use. Lining its roadways, oriented east to west forming long rectangular blocks, are grave markers in a variety of shapes and materials. Most are in good repair. Segmental-headed marble slabs from the early 19th century are common, as are tall, multistage granite monuments with the incised foliated detailing typical of the late 19th century. Three of the most ornate from this period are manufactured monuments made of stamped zinc plates.

Notes.

1. The size and shape of the 1-1/2-story house at 218 Meetinghouse Lane suggest that it may be even older, but changes in its fenestration, among other alterations, leave the matter unresolved. Prior to 1850, Meetinghouse Lane ran past the building's south elevation, which helps to justify its deep setback from the present course of the street, now located to its north.

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Inventory of Historic District Resources

The inventory includes all resources of any consequence on each parcel of real property within the historic district. Contributing ("C") and non-contributing ("NC") resources are indicated in the inventory by the use of C or NC, as appropriate, before the description of each. For those properties without clear street addresses, town assessor's map/block/lot information is supplied. Construction dates are derived from visual analysis or the town assessor's records. Dates of major alterations are listed if known. Photograph references appear at the ends of entries.

<u>Meetinghouse Lane</u>		<u>Style, Use, Date and Architect (if known)</u>
205	C	Orange Congregational Church, Federal, 1810, David Hoadley (builder); with additions in 1905 (rear), 1927 (parish hall), and 1957 (brick parish house). Photographs #1 and 5.
209	NC	Colonial Revival-inspired house, 1940, with 1952 addition
218	C	House, c.1800, with non-original wood shingle siding and windows
	NC	Garage, 20th century
226	C	House, vernacular, 19th century, with aluminum siding and non-original porch and rear addition

Orange Center Road

555	C	House, vernacular, c.1920
	NC	Garage, 20th century. Photograph #15

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- 559 NC House, early 20th century, with second story and aluminum siding, 1983. Photograph #15
- 561 C House, vernacular, c.1920. Photograph #15  
C Garage, early 20th century
- 562 C Greek Revival house, c.1820, with non-original wood shingle siding and exterior chimney, 20th-century attached garage. Photograph #7
- 567 C House, early 19th century, with non-original aluminum siding and additions  
C Garage, early 20th century
- 570 NC House, mid-20th century
- 575 C House, c.1800, with non-original wood shingle siding
- 580 C House, 19th century. Originally a barn that was moved to this site in 1930 and converted to a residence, with alterations, 1969, 1973
- 584 C Queen Anne house, 1900  
C Garage with attached shed, 1900
- 585 C House, 19th century, with 1983 front porch  
NC Garage, 20th century  
NC Garage, 1983
- 586 C Federal house, c.1800, with non-original windows and side bay window  
NC Garage, 1949



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589	C	Colonial Revival house, 1908; rear additions, 1980s
	C	Garage, 1920
		Orange Center Historic District
590	C	Italianate house, 1876, altered to Colonial Revival style, 1926, with 1974 additions Photograph #2
	C	Garage, early 20th century
	C	Barn, late 19th century
	C	Farm outbuilding, early 20th century
593	NC	House, 1958
	NC	Garage, c.1958
602	NC	House, 1953 (Congregational Church Parsonage), Henry Kelly. Photograph #14
603	C	Federal house, c.1800, with non-original windows and late 19th-century side porch
	C	Barn, late 19th century. Photograph #9
	C	Barn, late 19th century. Photograph #9
605	NC	Orange Public Library, Neo-Colonial, 1961; rear addition, 1973. Photograph #13
609	C	Academy, Stick style, 1879, with non-original synthetic siding; now houses Orange Board of Education. Photograph #8
Orange Town Green (site)	C	Town green, 1791, 1830, with two 20th-century memorial boulders. Photograph #1
607	C	Greek Revival house, 1838, with non-original wood shingle siding and c.1900 wrap-around porch

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615	C	Stone-Otis House, Federal/Greek Revival, c.1830, with non-original wood shingle siding. Photograph #6
	C	Large shed, 19th century
617	NC	Orange Town Hall, Neo-Colonial, 1967. Photograph #12
625	C	Orange Volunteer Fire House, Colonial Revival, 1935, with addition (1963)
630	C	Greek Revival house, c.1840, with front entrance porch (c.1875), non-original wood shingle siding and modern glass porch (1979)
	NC	Barn/outbuilding, mid-20th century
	C	Garage, late 19th century
636	C	Southern New England Telephone Company Building, Colonial Revival, 1937, with 1952 and 1962 additions
637	C	Mary L. Tracy School, Colonial Revival, 1910. Photograph #11
	C	Colonial Revival classroom building, 1925
	NC	Neo-Colonial classroom building, 1950
643	C	House, c.1875. Photograph #10
647	C	House, c.1880, with synthetic siding
Orange Cemetery	C	Town cemetery, 1804. Photograph #16

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School House Lane

647 C Victorian house, c.1880. Originally located on south side of Schoolhouse Lane and moved to this site in 1934, with non-original front entrance.

Tyler City Road

Map 52, block 4,  
lot 3A C Garage, early 20th century  
C Garage, early 20th century  
C Garage, early 20th century  
NC Large shed, mid-20th century

**8. Statement of Significance**

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:

nationally  statewide  locally

Applicable National Register Criteria  A  B  C  D

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions)  A  B  C  D  E  F  G

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)

Architecture

Period of Significance

1791-1937

Significant Dates

1810

Cultural Affiliation

NA

Significant Person

Architect/Builder

Hoadley, David

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.

The Orange Center Historic District is architecturally significant because it is a cohesive village of well-preserved buildings and their surroundings that convey a strong sense of the area's historic appearance and role in town life. Present are fine examples of the Federal, Greek Revival, Queen Anne, and Colonial Revival architectural styles, together with vernacular buildings typical of small New England villages. The Orange Congregational Church is notable as an early example of the work of David Hoadley, an influential builder of 19th-century Connecticut meetinghouses.

Historical Background

European settlement of Orange began after 1687, when the area was laid out for farm land by the town of Milford. Orange Center was part of the tract granted to Richard Bryan and known as Bryans' Farms. The rolling land was well-suited for cultivation. By 1791, the small community of widely scattered farmhouses had set aside a green for public use and grazing (part of the present Orange Green) and on it had constructed a meetinghouse for "winter preaching." In 1804, the state legislature granted the area separate religious privileges as the North Milford Ecclesiastical Society. The construction of the present Orange Congregational Church occurred soon thereafter.

During the 19th century, Orange Center became a focus for community life, although it grew slowly. A schoolhouse was built around 1821 near the site of the present Academy building. When the town of Orange was incorporated in 1822, the first town meeting was held here. Small shops and businesses operated out of homes near the

See continuation sheet

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Stone-Otis House. Improved turnpikes from New Haven westward ran north and south of the village, however, keeping heavy commercial traffic at a distance. The village of West Haven near Long Island Sound, a part of the town of Orange until 1921, was larger and more commercially active. Agriculture, including raising livestock and dairy farming, remained the chief activity around Orange Center.

Orange Center has changed relatively little in this century despite the town's substantial residential and commercial growth. The green and surroundings assumed much of their present appearance before World War II. Larger buildings for town facilities have risen on Orange Center Road, but their placement has kept the 19th-century ambience of the green intact. While post-war residential subdivisions have claimed much of the town's farm land, the district includes a large open parcel west of the green that is still agricultural. A local historic district, created in 1978 with boundaries similar to those of the National Register district, has helped to maintain the area's appearance.

Architectural Significance

The Orange Center historic district's strong sense of time and place is a product of many factors, both built and natural. Most of the architectural resources date from the village's long period of significance. Their diversity in age and style is evidence of the community's gradual development. Non-contributing principal buildings fit well into this historic fabric because they are few in number (6) and tend to imitate the older styles (e.g., the Congregational Church Parsonage, 1953, photograph #14). The district is also physically cohesive. Its street pattern, established by the mid-19th century, is little changed (note 1). The age and concentration of the buildings and the district's organization around a central green set the area apart from the more recent residential neighborhoods outside the district.

The cultivated fields and pastures along the the district's western border and the well-preserved farm-related buildings on at least two

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properties (590 and 603 Orange Center Road) maintain a significant link to the agricultural pursuits that were historically central to Orange Center's economic life. The rows of trees and old stone walls lining Meetinghouse Lane and delineating the fields typify the historic appearance of rural New England farms.

Architecturally, the Orange Center Historic District displays the stylistic diversity and range in quality that characterizes small, largely rural Connecticut communities of its age. The houses at 603, 562 and 584 Orange Center Road are fine examples of the Federal, Greek Revival, and Queen Anne styles, respectively, each illustrating the defining features of its style. Other buildings incorporate certain high-style elements into overall vernacular designs. The Stick-style gable bracing and gable screens of the Academy are an example, as are the front gable sheathing and ornamentation at 643 Orange Center Road. Many buildings, not surprisingly, were altered over time and acquired features of later styles, such as the Italianate side porch on the Federal-style house at 603 Orange Center Road. These changes have acquired value in their own right, and inappropriate alterations have not compromised the integrity of the district.

Key aspects of Orange Center's historic civic and cultural role in town life are embodied in the district buildings. The evolution of the community from theocracy to democracy is represented by the Orange Congregational Church (1810). The Academy building (1879) and the Mary L. Tracy School (1909) are evidence of the district's important place in town education. Orange Center's continuing role as town center is demonstrated by the Academy building (1879), where town meetings were held during the 19th century and which served as town hall during part of the 20th, and by the construction here of the Volunteer Fire House (1935), the town library (1961) and the present town hall (1967).

The Congregational Church (1810) is of high architectural importance because it is a well-executed Federal-style example of an early 19th-century New England meetinghouse. Its position as one of the first religious buildings associated with David Hoadley (1774-c.1840), a

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master builder of Connecticut churches, adds to its interest. Hoadley was involved in the construction of some of Connecticut's finest churches during the first quarter of the 19th century (note 1). His most important commission as builder was the United Church (1813-1815) on the Green in New Haven. The Orange church is less imposing and sophisticated than the later works associated with him (note 2), but its fine construction, proportions and detailing help trace the development of Hoadley's career.

Notes.

1. Atlas of New Haven County, Connecticut (1869).

2. No specific evidence exists to assign Hoadley the role of architect in any churches of the period, although he is mentioned in records as the joiner or contractor for several. Some commentators, however, suggest his central artistic contribution in these designs and others, in part because of the many similarities among them. See, e.g., Sinnott, Meetinghouse and Church in Early New England, pp.102-106.

2. The Congregational Church in Avon, Connecticut (1818), for example, built by Hoadley, has a shallow projecting entrance pavilion supporting a multi-stage tower that rises to a slender spire.

**9. Major Bibliographical References**

See continuation sheet

See continuation sheet

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

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

Primary location of additional data:

- State historic preservation office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Specify repository:

Orange Historical Society  
Orange Public Library

**10. Geographical Data**

Acreage of property Approximately 195

UTM References

A 

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Zone Easting Northing

B 

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Zone Easting Northing

C 

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D 

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

The district boundaries are delineated on the accompanying map, which is based on the Orange Town Assessor's and Engineer's maps (1" = 400 ft.). Boundaries follow property lines and the middle of roads.

See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification

See continuation sheet

**11. Form Prepared By**

name/title Gregory E. Andrews and David F. Ransom, Reviewed by John Herzan, National organization \_\_\_\_\_ date JUNE 1, 1989 Register Coordinator  
 street & number 1643 Boulevard telephone (203) 561-3841  
 city or town West Hartford state CT zip code 06107



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Atlas of New Haven, County, Connecticut. New York: F.W. Beers, A.D. Ellis & G.G. Soule, 1869.

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Placzek, Adolf K., ed. Macmillan Encyclopedia of Architects, vol. 2 ("David Hoadley," p.396, by Elizabeth Mills Brown). New York: The Free Press, 1982.

Rockey, J.L., ed. History of New Haven County. New York: W.W. Preston & Company, 1892.

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Boundary Justification:

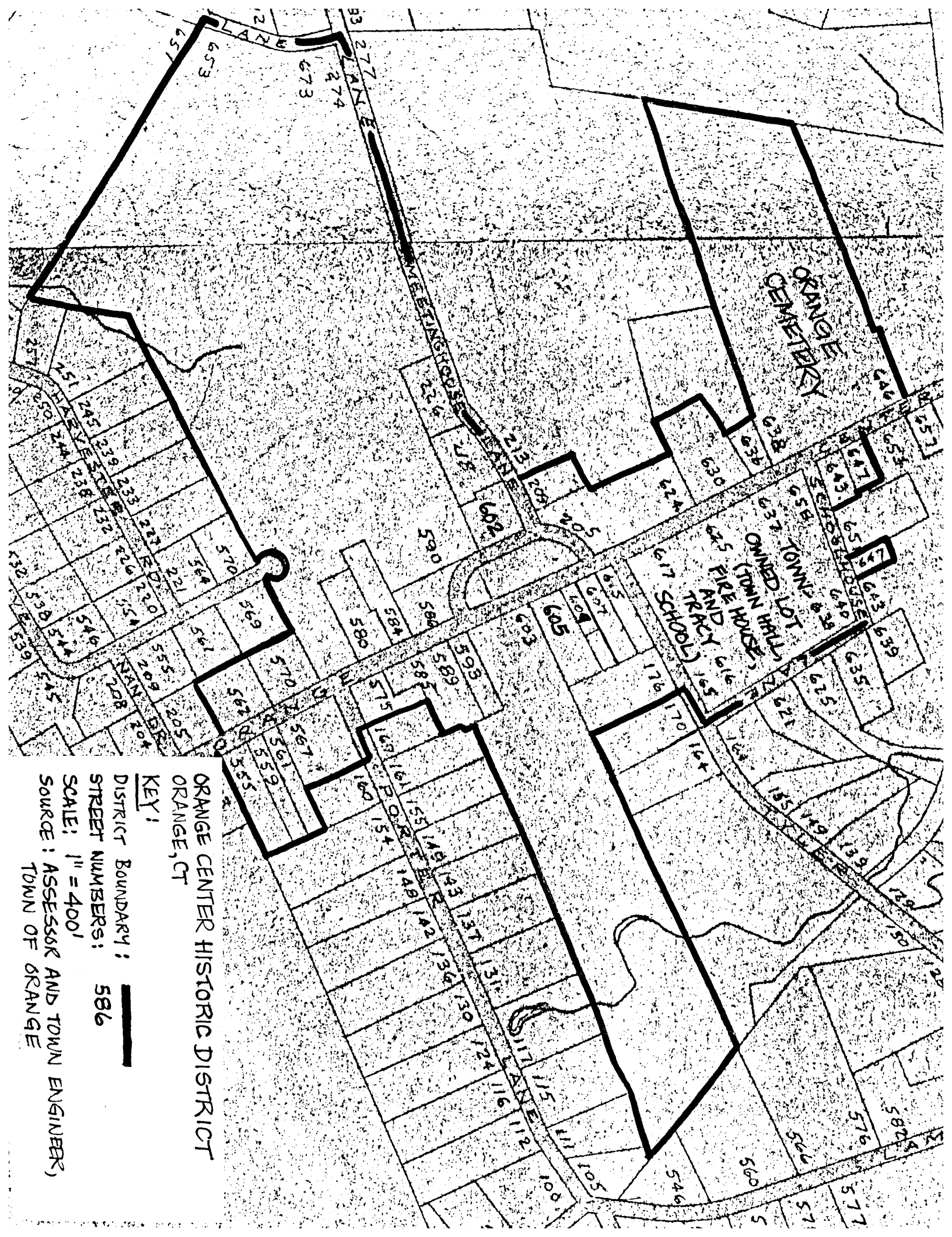
Property lines of district resources, as set forth in the current town assessor's maps, form the exact delineation of the district's borders.

The boundaries of the historic district mark the visual extent of the buildings, structures, and sites most closely associated with the district's theme of importance: the historic development of the village of Orange Center.

Residential subdivisions from the mid-20th-century or later surround the district at its borders. A group of new commercial buildings also helps define the northern border on Orange Center Road. At the southern end on Orange Center Road, the open land around the High Plains Community Center, a 20th-century school building, terminates a nearly continuous row of contributing district buildings. Delineating the eastern border is a mixture of modern homes and a few 19th-century residences that have been extensively altered.

UTM Coordinates

A: 18/665190/4571720  
B: 18/665250/4571610  
C: 18/665400/4571670  
D: 18/665530/4571410  
E: 18/665820/4571530  
F: 18/665960/4571320  
G: 18/665550/4571090  
H: 18/665620/4570960  
I: 18/665410/4570820  
J: 18/665350/4570910  
K: 18/665000/4570650  
L: 18/664620/4570860  
M: 18/664650/4571080  
N: 18/665130/4571250  
O: 18/665090/4571410  
P: 18/664730/4571270  
Q: 18/664790/4571570



ORANGE CENTER HISTORIC DISTRICT  
ORANGE, CT

KEY:

DISTRICT BOUNDARY: **—**

STREET NUMBERS: 586

SCALE: 1" = 400'

SOURCE: ASSESSOR AND TOWN ENGINEER,  
TOWN OF ORANGE

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Orange Center Historic  
District

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Photographs

All photographs of buildings in the Orange Center Historic District were taken by Gregory E. Andrews in January and February, 1989. Negatives for all photographs are on file with the Connecticut Historical Commission, Hartford, CT

Number      Description & View

1.            Orange Green, north view
2.            590 Orange Center Road, west view
3.            Orange Center Road, southeast view
4.            603 Orange Center Road, north view
5.            Orange Congregational  
              Church, northwest view
6.            Stone-Otis House, east view
7.            562 Orange Center Road, southwest view
8.            Academy building, east view
9.            Barns at 603 Orange Center  
              Road, east view
10.           643 Orange Center Road, northeast view
11.           Mary L. Tracy School, northeast view
12.           Orange Town Hall, northeast view
13.           Orange Public Library, northeast view
14.           602 Orange Center Road, southwest view
15.           561, 559 & 555 Orange Center Road, southeast view
16.           Orange Center Cemetery, south view