

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

For NPS use only

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

received MAY 1 1984
date entered

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

1. Name

historic NA
and or common Parkside Historic District

2. Location

street & number 176-230 Wethersfield Avenue (east side) NA not for publication
city, town Hartford NA vicinity of
state Connecticut code 09 county Hartford code 003

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture
<input type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> commercial
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational
<input type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private residence
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> religious
	<u>NA</u> being considered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
		<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
			<input type="checkbox"/> other:

4. Owner of Property

name See continuation sheet
street & number
city, town _____ vicinity of _____ state _____

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Hartford Land Records, Municipal Building
street & number 550 Main Street
city, town Hartford state CT

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title See Continuation Sheet
has this property been determined eligible? yes no
date _____ federal _____ state _____ county _____ local _____
depository for survey records _____
city, town _____ state _____

7. Description

Condition		Check one	Check one
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins		<input type="checkbox"/> date
	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed		

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

Overview

The Parkside Historic District, so named because it adjoins Colt Park, is made up of 10 principal structures fronting on Wethersfield Avenue, south of the center of Hartford. Nine of the structures are large houses built in the Queen Anne style in the 1880s and 1890s. The tenth, a modern apartment house, is considered not to contribute to the historic and architectural character of the district.

Wethersfield Avenue is the principal highway running from the South Green, originally the southern limit of the city, through what is now the south end of Hartford to the Town of Wethersfield.

Boundary Justification

The boundary of the Parkside Historic District is a consequence of the Colt influence on Wethersfield Avenue. Colonel Samuel Colt, inventor of the Colt 45 revolver, built his large estate, Armsmead, on the east side of the avenue, below the South Green, in 1856-57. Large houses were built by others across the street in the next year or two, establishing this part of Wethersfield Avenue as a prestigious residential neighborhood.

The extensive grounds of Armsmead extended south of the mansion (a National Historic Landmark) to Wawarme Avenue, with the land along the avenue devoted to an orchard. The Colonel built a house for his brother, James B. Colt, at the north end of the orchard in 1856. This house, 154 Wethersfield Avenue, is individually listed in the National Register of Historic Places. Then, in the 1880s and 1890s the Colonel's widow, Mrs. Samuel Colt, developed the balance of the orchard frontage on Wethersfield Avenue. The estate grounds behind these front lots, at Mrs. Colt's death, became Colt Park.

During the 1880s and 1890s, the "orchard" land south of the James B. Colt House all the way to Wawarme Avenue was completely built up with a row of 12 Queen Anne houses, nine of brick and three frame. The northernmost two were demolished in 1927 and replaced with three apartment houses, which are excluded from the district and which form the northern limit of the district. (Photograph 1) Wawarme Avenue is the southern limit. South of Wawarme Avenue there is a large modern school.

At the turn of the century, eleven similar houses stood on the west side of Wethersfield Avenue between Alden Street and Wawarme Avenue on land that never had been part of the Colt property. Most of these structures now have been replaced with modern apartment houses and commercial buildings.

The district is defined as the group of ten structures facing west on Wethersfield Avenue, made possible by the development of Colt land, bounded on the north by modern buildings, on the east by Colt Park, on the south by Wawarme Avenue, and on the west by Wethersfield Avenue.

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Owners

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176-180 Wethersfield Ave.
Nicola Ferzacca et al
184 Wethersfield Ave.
Hartford, CT 06114

210 Wethersfield Ave.
Polish American
Republic Club
210 Wethersfield Ave.
Hartford, CT 06114

184 Wethersfield Avenue
Nicola Ferzacca et al
184 Wethersfield Ave.
Hartford, CT 06114

216 Wethersfield Avenue
Donald H. Kraft
129 Wellington Heights
Avon, CT 06001

190 Wethersfield Ave.
Nicola Ferzacca et al
184 Wethersfield Ave.
Hartford, CT 06114

220 Wethersfield Avenue
Harry S. Melnick
160 Steele Road
West Hartford, CT 06119

198 Wethersfield Ave.
John Lawrence and
Wladyslaw Jasinski
198 Wethersfield Avenue
Hartford, CT 06114

224 Wethersfield Avenue
Jeffrey R. Tishler and
Laurie Ann David

202 Wethersfield Avenue
Polish American Veterans
Association
202 Wethersfield Avenue
Hartford, CT 06114

230 Wethersfield Avenue, and
230 Wethersfield Avenue (Rear)
Joseph M. and
Grace M. Abbate
60 Crest St.
Wethersfield, CT 06109

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Hartford Architecture Conservancy's Survey of Hartford Architecture
1977-80 x local
The Stowe-Day Library, 77 Forest Street
Hartford Connecticut

State Register of Historic Places
1984 x state
Connecticut Historical Commission, 59 S. Prospect Street
Hartford Connecticut

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Description

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The Houses

Mrs. Colt built four houses in the 1880s, two of which have been demolished and two of which (176-180 and 184 Wethersfield Avenue) have not. In the 1890s she sold the remaining eight lots to others who built houses on them, all but one of which (220 Wethersfield Avenue) are standing. The surviving nine houses, two built by Mrs. Colt in the 1880s and seven by others in the 1890s (including 190 Wethersfield Avenue in 1900), display similarities and differences characteristic of the 1880s and 1890s.

The siting of the houses itself is homogeneous. They all are spaced approximately equal distances from one another and from the street on lots about 50 to 70 feet wide by 190 to 200 feet deep. (Photographs 2 and 3) All the houses are large, ranging from approximately 1500 to 2000 square feet per floor. Often the attic is high, providing almost a full third floor. Stylistically, the fundamentals shared throughout the district are asymmetrical massing, roofs that are important both as to volume and shape, and ornamentation that ranges from the medieval in precedent to the Colonial Revival.

Masonry is the predominant structural system for exterior walls. All the houses have brownstone ashlar foundations, often with chiseled brownstone water tables. In all houses but three, brick is used for exterior walls at least in part. The three frame structures are 190, 198 and 230 Wethersfield Avenue. Slate often was used to cover the roofs. The slate roof of 210 Wethersfield Avenue is intact. Elsewhere, slate is sometimes still in place, now covered by asphalt shingles, as at 176-180 and 184 Wethersfield Avenue. Great pieces of slate or bluestone also were used for front walks.

The properties do not have barns, or other significant outbuildings. While it would seem likely that barns would have been essential to the life style of the era in which the houses were built, none exist and there is no evidence that any ever did. The 1909 city atlas, which does show footprints of buildings, does not show any barns or carriage houses in the district. This anomaly is unexplained.

The development within the Queen Anne style during the 1880s/1890s that may be observed through examining the houses from the north to the south is the change from medieval precedent for the details and ornamentation to use of Colonial Revival trim. The three tall chimneys of 176-180 Wethersfield Avenue with corbeled tops, especially the front one that is paneled and built on the exterior of the building, are Jacobean in inspiration, as is the tile-hung dormer on the north elevation. The next house, 184 Wethersfield Avenue, also has three tall, corbeled chimneys,

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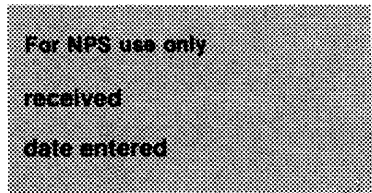
Continuation sheet

Description

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similarly placed; the front one this time partially projects with three recessed vertical channels, and with unusual partial quoining. (Photograph 4) Elsewhere there are chimneys but they are not as important in the design. 202 and 210 Wethersfield Avenue, for example, each has a single tall chimney.

The high hipped roofs also suggest medieval precedent, especially when used with towers. Gables and dormers, sometimes gable roofed, sometimes hip roofed, break up many of the principal roof slopes. 176-180 Wethersfield Avenue has a hipped roof with cross gables and a hipped gable, while at 184 Wethersfield Avenue a central hipped dormer balances the 3-sided bay with chimney that projects on the right. Similarly, the off-center dormer balances the tower at 216 Wethersfield Avenue. Slate roofs were common and several houses appear to have slate still in place under the present asphalt shingles. At 210 Wethersfield Avenue the slate roof is in its original condition. The massing of this house, primarily a large main block, is simple. Its high hipped roof has ridge line perpendicular to the street. There are copper ball finials at the ends of the ridge line; conjecture suggests that the finials once may have been connected by roof cresting running along the ridge line between them. Presently there is no roof cresting in the district. Several houses at the southern end of the district where the Colonial Revival influence is stronger have gabled rather than hip roofs, for example, 224 and 230 Wethersfield Avenue.

Towers and bays of all descriptions abound in the district. 176-180 Wethersfield Avenue has a 3-sided bay with 3-sided tent roof on the south elevation while 184 Wethersfield Avenue has a similar composition on the front. At 190 Wethersfield Avenue there is an octagonal tower with bell-shaped roof and at 202 Wethersfield Avenue the 3 1/2 story octagonal tower has a tent roof with copper ball finial at its apex. 216 Wethersfield Avenue has a round tower with conical roof. Several houses have 3-sided bays under heavy gables that project over them, sometimes supported by triangular brackets typical of the Queen Anne style. Other houses have oriels. For example, a 2-story, rectangular oriel is found at the north elevation of 210 Wethersfield Avenue and a 1-story rectangular oriel is located toward the rear of the first story of the south elevation of 203 Wethersfield Avenue.

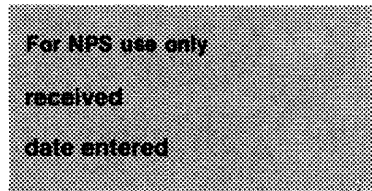
Front porches are, or were, an important part of the architectural designs. At 176-180 Wethersfield Avenue the front porch has been replaced with store fronts. At 184 Wethersfield Avenue the inverted chevron pattern of the porch pediment suggests Tudor half-timbering precedent. The turned posts of this porch do not match one another. The original character of the porch at 198 Wethersfield Avenue was obliterated when it was closed in but its original design appears in The Hartford Courant for August 27, 1896,

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showing coupled classical columns supporting an entablature with dentil course, and a balustrade. The front porch that ran across the width of 202 Wethersfield Avenue has been replaced with a brick and aluminum entry, but on the other hand the porches at 210, 216 and 224 Wethersfield Avenue are intact, all with classical detailing. (Photograph 5) Coupled columns on paneled pedestals support entablatures with rosettes and dentil courses, and the ends of the porches are treated as gazebos, round in plan with conical roofs. The porch at 224 Wethersfield Avenue has been closed in, but sensitively, with the columns, railing and entablature all left exposed.

Typical Queen Anne details found in the district include fish-scale shingles, for instance in the gable end of 210 Wethersfield Avenue, and the flare of shingled second story over brick first story, as at 216 Wethersfield Avenue.

In general, the houses toward the southern end of the district reflect stronger influence of the Colonial Revival Style. Gable ends are treated as pediments with cornices, raking cornices and dentil courses. Palladian windows and Adamesque ornamentation are used. At 198 Wethersfield Avenue, according to the Courant drawing, the front tripartite window originally had a central arch, making it Palladian; its keystone supported the 3-sided bay of the second floor. In turn, the balustrade of the bay was the railing for an attic balcony. With its porch of coupled columns and with the modillions supporting the roof-line cornice above the porch, this house had carefully thought out and integrated Colonial Revival ornamentation. At 210 Wethersfield Avenue, a Palladian window is recessed in the dormer under a projecting gabled roof and is flanked by projecting rounded piers, an unusual arrangement. Elsewhere, several houses have cornices with plain or dented fascias running completely around the structures, as at 230 Wethersfield Avenue.

Most windows have dressed brownstone blocks for sills. Some lintels are also brownstone, but many windows have relieving arches of brick laid vertically and splayed, either segmental or flat. The most common glazing pattern tends to be 1-over-1, but often with the upper sash divided into a diamond pattern by diagonal muntins, or with a large central pane surrounded by many small, square panes, sometimes colored. 184 Wethersfield Avenue has its original front door side lights, leaded in a curvilinear pattern. Stained glass was used in stair windows and bay windows, but much of it has been vandalized. Some colored glass remains in 176-180, 202, and 210 Wethersfield Avenue. There is a round window with muntins forming a star pattern in the north elevation of 224 Wethersfield Avenue.

Much of the architecture in the Parkside Historic District is eclectic, some of it to an extreme that can only be called eccentric. 190 Wethersfield Avnue is a chief case in point. The design of its roof includes on

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the front a projecting gabled dormer and the bell roof of the tower, on the south elevation a gambrel profile and on the north elevation a gabled roof, all flared. There is Palladian and Adamesque ornamentation (Photograph 6). On the south elevation at the third floor there is a 2-sided, pointed oriel supported by wooden corbeling. The house is covered with dark brown stained shingles; the front porch railing parapet and posts are shingled.

190 Wethersfield Avenue did not originally have its present appearance. A picture taken while the builder, William H. Scoville, still lived there (Photograph 7) shows that the porch pediment and the shingling of the porch posts are not original. Scoville added the porch pediment with raised embellishment, according to his daughter, during his lifetime, but did not enclose the porch posts with shingles. That was done by a later owner. In Photograph 7, second-story shutters prevent determination of whether raised embellishment between the windows was original or was companion to the added porch pediment embellishment. (Compare Photographs 6 and 7.)

Another mixture of details from different styles is the composition at 216 Wethersfield Avenue, south elevation, third floor, where Gothic arched windows are flanked by pilasters and surmounted by broken pediments. Another unusual feature in the district is the single corbeled brick bracket, one wythe wide, at the front of 224 Wethersfield Avenue. Also unique is the treatment of the attic tripartite window of 230 Wethersfield Avenue that is stepped to match the slope of the projecting gable in front of it. (Photograph 8)

While the interiors of the houses have been altered, the sense of the 19th century and many original details remain in most of them. Parquet floors and dark woodwork were common. Cherry and gumwood were used as well as oak. Fireplaces and stairways were important. Often the fireplace treatment consisted of small glazed tile for surrounds and hearth, slim colonnettes supporting a mantel shelf, and a beveled mirror. At 190 Wethersfield Avenue, the house that is outstanding for eccentricity, the immense fireplace surround is made of large, glazed, black tile with green terra cotta accents.

184 Wethersfield Avenue has its elaborate cherry staircase intact with runs and landings asymmetrically disposed. The elegant stairway of 202 Wethersfield Avenue has newels with rosettes and urns, each tread with three spindles, one smooth, one with vertical fluting and one with spiral fluting, the whole integrated with a window seat and stained glass windows. 190 Wethersfield Avenue, built by the same builder (Scoville), has a similar stairway. (Photograph 9)

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Inventory of the district follows:

All properties are considered to contribute to the historic and architectural character of the district except 220 Wethersfield Avenue and 230 Wethersfield Avenue (rear).

Dates of construction are taken from Hartford Architecture, Volume Two: South Neighborhoods, which in turn took them from city building permits or from study of city atlases. Dates for 176-180 and 184 Wethersfield Avenue came from study of city directories. After the date, the name of the architect is given, when known. Next is the name of the house, taken from the name of the family first known to have lived there. Name of the builder/developer, when known, is given at the end.

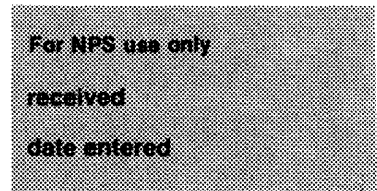
- 176-180 Wethersfield Avenue c. 1887. Grover House. 2½-story, Queen Anne, brick house with brownstone foundations, lintels and sills. High hipped roof with cross gables. Gable ends are shingled; sides of dormer hung with slate. A tall, panelled, exterior chimney is centered on the front gable. 1-story store fronts added.

- 184 Wethersfield Avenue 1888. Church of Good Shepherd Rectory. 2½-story, Queen Anne, brick house with brownstone foundations and sills and high hipped roof. Three unusually tall chimneys. Front chimney, centered on 3-sided bay, has brownstone quoins. Wooden front porch has non-matching turned posts.

- 190 Wethersfield Avenue 1900. Scoville House. Large, 2½-story Queen Anne/Shingle Style/Colonial Revival frame house on brownstone foundations. Gable roof has gambrel profile on south elevation. Octagonal tower at left front has bell shaped roof. Entire house covered by brown stained shingles, including porch parapet and posts. William H. Scoville.

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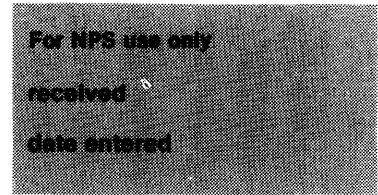
- 198 Wethersfield Avenue 1896. F. R. Comstock. Haskell House. 2½-story, Queen Anne/Colonial Revival frame house on brownstone foundations, covered with asbestos shingles siding. Has the asymmetrical massing, gables and bays of the Queen Anne with Colonial Revival detailing. Front porch altered.
- 202 Wethersfield Avenue 1897. Tracy House. 2½-story, Queen Anne, brick house with brownstone foundations and sills. Octagonal tower with tent roof at right front. Bold projecting gable over 3-sided bay on south elevation. Front porch that extended across the front of the house has been removed. William H. Scoville.
- 210 Wethersfield Avenue 1897. Hope House. 2½-story, Queen Anne/Colonial Revival, brick house with brownstone foundations and sills. Slate hipped roof with cross gables in simple massing. Unusually tall chimney. Front porch has coupled columns on panelled pedestals. William H. Scoville.
- 216 Wethersfield Avenue 1896. Brooks M. Lincoln. Lawrence House. 2½-story, Queen Anne, hipped-roof house with cross gable. First story is brick with brownstone foundations and sills. Upper floors are shingled. Round tower with conical roof at front left. Front porch is classically detailed. Attic windows have Gothic arches.
- 220 Wethersfield Avenue NC 1966. Parkside Manor. 3-story, vernacular brick-faced, concrete block apartment house.
- 224 Wethersfield Avenue 1896. Brooks M. Lincoln. Russell House. 2½-story, Queen Anne/Colonial Revival, brick, gable-roofed house, with brownstone foundations and sills. The dichotomy of styles is articulated by scrolled pediments over windows in the shingled gable ends and by the tent roof over a round portion of the porch that otherwise is classically detailed.

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230 Wethersfield Avenue

1897. Brooks M. Lincoln. Lux House. 2½-story, Queen Anne, frame, gable-roofed house on brownstone foundations. Wraparound porch and probably other details have been removed. House is covered with non-original synthetic siding. These are severe changes, but the house is considered still to contribute to the historic and architectural character of the district on the grounds that the asymmetrical massing, roofs, gables and bays are still in place, and the changes could be largely reversed. (Photograph 10)

230 Wethersfield Avenue
(rear)
(second building on
same parcel)

NC c. 1960. 1-story, masonry commercial building.

8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> other (specify) Social History

Specific dates See Item 7 Builder/Architect See Item 7

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

Criteria C (Architecture) and A (Social History)

The nine houses of the Parkside Historic District, c. 1880s and 1890s, individually and collectively are excellent examples of the Queen Anne style of architecture. The consistency of size, scale, siting, materials and style coupled with the lack of intrusions give the district unusual integrity. (Criterion C) Analysis of the development of the district under the sponsorship of Mrs. Samuel Colt and of the careers of the initial owners of the houses makes a valuable contribution to an understanding of Hartford's social history at the end of the 19th century. (Criterion A)

Criterion C (Architecture)

By the 1890s the Queen Anne style of architecture was reaching the end of its widely successful period of acceptance and popularity. The World's Columbian Exposition of 1893 at Chicago had brought classic revival eclecticism to the forefront of sophisticated and fashionable attention, reinforcing a trend that was to continue through the first decades of the 20th century. In the 1880s and 1890s when the houses of the district were built, the interface of the Queen Anne, on the decline, and classical revival eclecticism broadly known as the Colonial Revival, on the ascent, was the order of the day. The district's houses vividly reflect the dichotomy of the decade.

When Mrs. Colt built the first four houses on the east side of the avenue, south of the James B. Colt House, two of which remain, she continued the conservative approach, pre-Colonial Revival. 176-180 and 184 Wethersfield Avenue refer to medieval precedent in their tall corbeled chimneys and in the half-timbered motif of the porch pediments. The similarity of the plans and details of the two houses, both with an exterior chimney on a projecting front section and both with pedimented porches (a period picture of 176-180 shows such a porch pediment), suggests that the same architect may have designed both houses.

Architects are known for four of the houses. Frederick R. Comstock designed 198 Wethersfield Avenue and Brooks M. Lincoln 216, 224 and 230 Wethersfield Avenue (also 220 Wethersfield Avenue, demolished). The builder for three of the houses, 190, 202 and 210 Wethersfield Avenue, is known. He was William H. Scoville.

9. Major Bibliographical References

See Continuation Sheet

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property 2.6
Quadrangle name Hartford North and Hartford South Quadrangle scale 1:24000
UTM References See continuation sheet

A	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	B	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
C	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	D	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
E	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	F	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
G	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	H	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

Verbal boundary description and justification The district boundary is shown by the heavy line drawn on the accompanying map of scale 1" = 200'. For boundary justification, see Item 7.

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state	NA	code	NA	county	NA	code	NA
state	NA	code	NA	county	NA	code	NA

11. Form Prepared By

name title David F. Ransom, Consultant edited by John Herzan, National Register
organization Architectural Historian date July 13, 1983
street & number 33 Sunrise Hill Drive telephone (203) 521 2518
city or town West Hartford state Connecticut

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national state local

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature

title Director, Connecticut Historical Commission date 4/24/84

For NPS use only

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

Allen S. Ryan Entered in the National Register date 5-31-84
Keeper of the National Register

Attest: date

Chief of Registration

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The architects, Frederick R. Comstock and Brooks M. Lincoln, and the builder, William H. Scoville, all were professionals in the building trade and were in touch with latest trends. They added classical revival trim to asymmetrical masses to a far greater degree than had theretofore been the practice in the Queen Anne style, although the Queen Anne style itself was always to some degree eclectic and always had made use of some classical details. Now that trend became extreme. Classicizing the asymmetry became the order of the day. Eccentricity produced startling juxtapositions, such as the pointed-arch windows with pilasters and a broken pediment in 216 Wethersfield Avenue and the potpourri of gambrel roof line, bell-roofed tower, Palladian window, Adamesque festoons and Shingle Style influence in 190 Wethersfield Avenue, the last house to be built in the district.

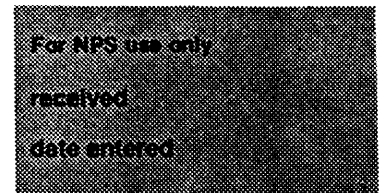
William H. Scoville (1862-1932) was the most successful builder-developer of his day in Hartford, probably constructing 200-300 houses in Hartford for re-sale. Again, he came from a family in the building trades, his father and brother being carpenters as was he, as a young man. As his business grew and prospered he advertised himself as an architect,¹ bought land, built houses, whole streets at a time,² financed their sale and continued to own and manage rental properties. One part of his business was the production of millwork in his shop located in the center of the block between Annawan Street and Alden Street. This shop, nearby, probably was the source of the staircases and other millwork in 180, 202 and 210 Wethersfield Avenue. Generally, Scoville built frame houses of transitional Queen Anne/Colonial Revival style in a fairly restrained design. 202 and 210 Wethersfield Avenue are unusual because they are brick, while for his own home, 190 Wethersfield Avenue, he apparently decided to have a show-piece and tour de force.

Frederick R. Comstock (1866-1942) worked in Hartford only from 1893 to 1898. While here, the house (demolished) that he designed for G. W. Pomeroy at 1 May Street, Hartford, was pictured and described in the American Architect and Building News. It was a Colonial Revival structure "exterior clapboarded and painted old red with ivory white trimmings and moss-green roof."³ His house in the district, 198 Wethersfield Avenue, as originally designed, was carefully thought out and perhaps was more Colonial Revival and less Queen Anne than any of the others. Comstock is best known for his Second Church of Christ Scientist, Central Park West, New York. He also did the Fenn House on Broad Street in Wethersfield (1897) and the flatiron building at the interesection of Ann and High streets with Main Street in Hartford (1896).

Brooks M. Lincoln (1853-1898) had a brief career, being only 45 years old when he died two years after building four houses in the district. His only other known works are a section of the Washington Street School (at

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the corner of New Britain Avenue) and the Masonic Building at 201 Ann Street. The Masonic Building, an important commission, is a brick and brownstone structure of Moorish character that through stained glass windows and masonry emphasizes Masonic symbols.

Criterion A (Social History)

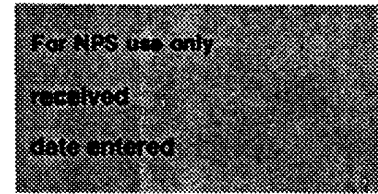
Unfortunately, there is no record of what transpired to motivate Mrs. Colt to develop the orchard along the east side of Wethersfield Avenue south of the James B. Colt House to Wawarme Avenue. For whatever reason, she built four houses, two of which remain standing. The fourth one, 184 Wethersfield Avenue, long was the rectory of the Church of the Good Shepherd.⁴ Mrs. Colt built these houses before the day of building permits and retained ownership after building them. Consequently, in the absence of building permits and entries in the land records, not only is her motivation uncertain, but the date of the construction of the four houses is uncertain. Not until Mrs. Colt's estate sold the first three houses in December 1906-January 1907 is it possible to associate family names with these three houses. Picking up the names of the buyers from these deeds, it is possible to trace back in city directories to see how long the families had lived in the houses, and thereby arrive at likely dates of construction. The buyer of the first house had resided there since 1886, while the buyers of the second and third are listed as living there from 1906 and 1901, so probably were not the original tenants. The Rector of the Church of the Good Shepherd, according to the directories, had lived in 184 Wethersfield Avenue since 1888. Thus it appears that the first house was built in 1886, the fourth in 1888, and, by extension of the postulate, the two in between not later than 1888.

It may be that Mrs. Colt built and retained ownership of the first four houses as a means of setting standards for and controlling the quality of the development. In 1895, 1896 and 1897 she sold the balance of the lots between the rectory and Wawarme Avenue, perhaps carefully selecting her buyers, to people who, with one exception, built houses on them.⁵ The exception was John Bernard Boucher, M. D., who re-sold his lot in January 1900 to William H. Scoville.

The resident of Mrs. Colt's first house (demolished), next door to the James B. Colt House, from 1886 was Theodore M. Lincoln of Lincoln and Company, the Phoenix Iron Works. The Phoenix Iron Works, Hartford's leading 19th-century architectural iron foundry, manufactured the cast-iron fronts for the Stackpole, Moore & Tryon store and the Goodwin Building, as well as components for the State Capitol and Trinity College.⁶ A successor firm, Taylor and Fenn, continues in the iron foundry business. Lincoln's next door neighbor to the south from 1906 was Irving C. Treat of Clapp & Treat, dealers in hardware and cutlery, carpenters' blacksmiths' and masons' tools. Clapp & Treat today are retailers of sporting

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goods. The tenant of the third house, 176-180 Wethersfield Avenue (standing) was Lewis C. Grover who, at the time he moved in, in 1901, was superintendent of Colt Patent Fire Arms. He later became president, probably the most prestigious position held by any resident of the district.

Unlike the first three houses, which were sold soon after Mrs. Colt's death, the fourth house, the rectory, was not sold to a private owner until 1948. In the intervening years it was owned by the Trustees of the Colt Bequest,⁷ established by Mrs. Colt's will. Rectors of the Church of the Good Shepherd continued to reside there until 1948. Charles B. Haskell at 198 Wethersfield Avenue was engaged in a mercantile business as a dealer in produce on State Street. At the time his Comstock-designed house was built on the lot he bought from Mrs. Colt, the intervening parcel between his house and the rectory was vacant.

D. Wallace Tracy at 202 Wethersfield Avenue was a druggist.

Norman L. Hope, who built 210 Wethersfield Avenue, was a salesman for Cheney Brothers Silk Mills⁸ of Manchester, Connecticut, across the Connecticut River from Hartford. The next two houses, 216 Wethersfield Avenue (standing) and 220 Wethersfield Avenue (demolished), were built by William J. and James Lawrence, presumably brothers, who together conducted a retail store selling boots and shoes on Main Street. They bought their lots from Mrs. Colt on the same day, July 1, 1896,⁹ and engaged the same architect, Brooks M. Lincoln.

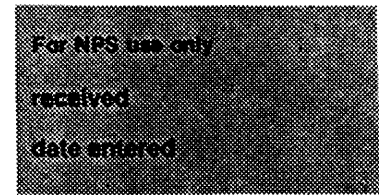
William Russell, bookkeeper at the Water Commissioners, City Hall, had only five years to enjoy his house at 224 Wethersfield Avenue before his death. The final house in the district, on the corner of Wawarme Avenue, was the home of George Lux, another retailer, whose store handled jewelry. Lux, Bond & Green, jewelers, continues in business.

The residents of the district were members of a new, emerging, middle stratum in the city's social hierarchy. They were managers and merchants and professional people economically able to live comfortably, but they were not members of the city's wealthy old families or powerful financial or political groups. The west end of Hartford in these years was the scene of domestic building for most prestigious homes. The Parkside District was a neighborhood of people somewhat less affluent and important in the community, an attractive neighborhood in its own right, on the Avenue, but not in the 400.

In general, the houses in the district were occupied as single family dwellings until the 1940s, when war-time pressures, post-war development and changes in life style, for example, difficulties in domestic staffing, brought changes in the traditional character of the district. The properties were sold, many of them to be converted to apartments. Fraternal and ethnic

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groups acquired two. The Polish-American Republic Club bought 210 Wethersfield Avenue in 1942, and continues to occupy the premises. 202 Wethersfield Avenue was sold to the Loyal Order of Moose in 1946, who seven years later sold to the present owners (and occupants), the Polish-American Veterans Association. 176-180 Wethersfield Avenue was fitted with store fronts, this commercial use of its first floor reflecting the down-grading of zoning for the district.

In 1982, 184 Wethersfield Avenue was rehabilitated by a firm of architects for use as their offices. Several houses are now vacant. Further constructive rehabilitation in the district appears to be likely.

In the history of this part of Hartford, the dominant influence of Colonel Samuel Colt has long been recognized through his construction of dikes to reclaim the former Connecticut River flood plain on which he built his large factory and through the establishment of his large and elegant mansion with surrounding estate, in the mid-19th century. The Parkside Historic District reflects the much later, end-of-the-century influence of Mrs. Colt, who developed her orchard on the east side of the avenue through the construction of large Queen Anne style homes that at the time balanced a similar row across the street. Nine of these structures remain, and form a valuable illustration of the architectural and social history of their era.

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1. Such practice was not unusual nor unethical. The distinction between architect and builder was blurred. Cook, Hapgood & Co., clearly architects according to today's usage, advertised their firm in the 1889 city directory as "arhcitects and builders." Scoville dropped use of the term architect in his advertisements in 1923.
2. For example, 33 houses on Edgewood Street, 10 houses on Kenyon Street.
3. American Architect & Building News, December 5, 1896, p. 84.
4. Mrs. Colt built the Church of the Good Shepherd in 1867-69, Edward Tuckerman Potter, architect.
5. The deeds include no restrictions or obligations. See Hartford Land Records 246/614, 239/334, 246/150, etc.
6. According to Margot Gayle, President of the Friends of Cast Iron Architecture, the Phoenix Iron Works' 1853 catalog of cast-iron balconies and fences is one of the earliest catalogs of architectural cast iron to appear in the United States, perhaps the earliest.
7. The Trustees of the Colt Bequest continue to own Armsmear, now a residence for widows of Episcopalian clergy, and the Church of the Good Shepherd.
8. Cheney Brothers Silk Mills is a National Historic Landmark.
9. Hartford Land Records 246/149 and 246/225.

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- B 18/693450/4624430
- C 18/693380/4624420
- D 18/693360/4624510

Hartford South


- A 18/693450/4624430
- B 18/693460/4624370
- C 18/693400/4624350
- D 18/693380/4624420



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Sketch Map

Scale: 1" = 200'

Photo key 

District boundary 

