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United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

JUN 13 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 SOUND BEACH RAILROAD STATION  
other names/site number Old Greenwich Railroad Station

2. Location

street & number 160 Sound Beach Avenue N/A  not for publication  
city, town Greenwich  vicinity Old Greenwich  
state Connecticut code CT county Fairfield code 001 zip code 06870

3. Classification

Ownership of Property	Category of Property	Number of Resources within Property	
<input type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	Contributing	Noncontributing
<input type="checkbox"/> public-local	<input type="checkbox"/> district	1	_____ buildings
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> public-State	<input type="checkbox"/> site	_____	_____ sites
<input type="checkbox"/> public-Federal	<input type="checkbox"/> structure	_____	_____ structures
	<input type="checkbox"/> object	1	0 Total

Name of related multiple property listing: N/A  
Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

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]* 6/7/89  
Signature of certifying official Date

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):

*[Signature]* 7/28/89

## 6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)

TRANSPORTATION: rail-related

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)

TRANSPORTATION: rail-related

## 7. Description

Architectural Classification  
(enter categories from instructions)

LATE VICTORIAN: Stick/Eastlake

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation Stone

walls Wood

roof Asphalt

other \_\_\_\_\_

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

Sound Beach Railroad Station (Photographs 1 through 3), known since 1932 as Old Greenwich Railroad Station, is a 1 and 1/2-story wood-frame passenger station located on the north (west-bound) side of the Metro North shore line route in Greenwich, Connecticut. Situated just to the north of Old Greenwich's small commercial area, the station is surrounded on three sides by extensive commuter parking. There is no station for the east-bound platform.

The station measures 71' x 26' in plan and is sited with its seven-bay longer sides parallel to the tracks. Its gable roof has an unusual profile: because the ridge is located only about four feet back from the south or track-side wall, the front slope of the roof is much shorter than the rear slope (Photograph 3). The roofline reflects the loss of the original wooden platform shelter, which was formed in part from a continuation of the front slope of the roof. The present metal canopy, as well as the high-level concrete platform, dates from the upgrading of the rail corridor in the late 1960s.

The roof forms a pronounced overhang on all sides, supported (except on the south side) by simple chamfered braces (Photographs 3 and 5). At the west end of the south side, the overhang is partly framed in (Photograph 2), probably reflecting an early enlargement of the structure over the original gable-roofed platform shelter. One small brick chimney emerges from the roof behind the ridge about one-third in from the east end of the station.

The exterior of the station is clapboarded. Windows have plain-board frames and most are fitted with six-over-six sash. On the west elevation, there is a small attic-story window with a peaked head repeating the shape of the roof, and there is a similar louvered opening on the east side (Photographs 1 and 2). Near the center on each long elevation is a transomed doorway with a door of five recessed panels (Photograph 4). A small projection extends outward from the south wall; entirely glazed on the first story, it was intended to provide a good view up and down the tracks. The east end of the station formerly served as a baggage area, and there remain three sets of larger double doors; that at the east end of the north

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Description (continued):

side opens to a small loading platform. Other exterior architectural features include a simple molding circling the building at the level of the window sills, a wide band of diagonal clapboards above the first story of the south elevation, and a series of vertical boards interrupting the clapboarding on the upper part of the south elevation.

The interior retains its historical appearance and features hardwood floors, board ceilings, simple cornice moldings, paneled doors, molded window and door surrounds with circular bosses in the corner blocks, and walls of narrow-board sheathing (Photograph 6). The east part of the station was a baggage and office area, the middle part is open and serves as a waiting room, and small rooms in the west half accommodate restrooms. Other than the replaced platform shelter, the station has undergone few changes and retains a high degree of integrity.

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View showing original track shelter in front of station, from Tone,  
1966.

**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

TRANSPORTATION

Period of Significance

c.1894-c.1945

Significant Dates

c.1894

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Significant Person

N/A

Architect/Builder

Unknown

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

Sound Beach Railroad Station, known today as Old Greenwich Station, is significant as a symbol of the important role played by railroad passenger service in the historical development of Greenwich, as an artifact of the upgrading in the 1890s of the state's most important railroad, and as a well-preserved example of late 19th-century small-town railroad-station architecture. As soon as the railroad went through Greenwich in 1848, the town began experiencing an influx of well-to-do commuters who worked in New York City. After the Civil War, the trend accelerated, and Greenwich underwent a transformation from a rural, maritime community to an upper-class suburb linked by rail to the country's metropolis. Yacht clubs, mansions, and estates soon followed, and even today the character of the town is closely bound up with the role established in the late 19th century. Eventually there were four separate stops within the boundaries of Greenwich. Commuting by rail remained the town's major mode of getting to work until limited-access highways changed travel patterns in the years following World War Two. Sound Beach is one of only two remaining 19th-century station buildings in Greenwich.

The first station at Old Greenwich was reluctantly allowed by the railroad around 1875 and was constructed, furnished, and operated at the expense of the area's residents. The name "Sound Beach" was assigned because the railroad disliked having similar names for nearby stations, and "Greenwich" was already in use for a stop further to the west. The present building was built about 1894 when the New York, New Haven and Hartford Railroad undertook a massive rebuilding of its main line. From New York to New Haven, the railroad straightened curves, raised the rail line above the grade of intersecting roadways, rebuilt drawbridges, and doubled the number of tracks to the present four. As a consequence of the extra tracks, and the policy of providing separate structures for each direction, a series of new stations was needed for the north or west-bound side of the line. These physical improvements, the near-total consolidation of the state's rail service under New Haven control, and the

**9. Major Bibliographical References**

Connecticut Railroad Commissioners. Annual Report, 1892-1894.

Holland, Lydia, and Margaret Leaf. Greenwich Old and New. Greenwich: The Greenwich Press, 1935.

Tone, John C. New Haven Railroad Station and Line Improvements: Preliminary Plans and Cost Estimates. New York: Tri-State Transportation Commission, 1966.

Turner, Gregg M. and Melancthon W. Jacobus. Connecticut's Railroads, An Illustrated History. Hartford: Connecticut Historical Society, 1986

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:**

Connecticut Historical Commission  
59 South Prospect St., Hartford CT

061

**10. Geographical Data**

Acreage of property Approximately 1 acre

**UTM References**

A 

1	8
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6	2	0	3	8	0
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4	5	4	3	2	4	0
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Zone      Easting      Northing

C 

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B 

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Zone      Easting      Northing

D 

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See continuation sheet

**Verbal Boundary Description**

The boundary of the nominated property includes a 25' perimeter on the east north and west sides of the station and the railroad tracks on the south.

See continuation sheet

**Boundary Justification**

The boundary includes the stations and their immediate surroundings, but excludes the facility's extensive parking areas.

See continuation sheet

**11. Form Prepared By**

name/title Bruce Clouette, Reviewed by John Herzan, National Register Coordinator

organization Historic Resource Consultants date August 29, 1988

street & number 55 Van Dyke Avenue telephone (203) 547-0268

city or town Hartford state Connecticut zip code 06106

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## Significance (continued):

electrification of the main line in the early 1900s enabled the New Haven Railroad to become one of the nations's largest carriers, accounting at one time for nearly 10% of America's passenger traffic. At the same time, railroad development contributed to the growth of all the shore line towns of Fairfield County, transforming many of them into residential suburbs of the greater New York area. Over the decade 1885-1895, the number of passengers carried by the New Haven Railroad increased from 7,582,213 to 43,838,676.

The Sound Beach station stands as an excellent example of the New Haven Railroad's 1890s stations. In order to build a large number of stations quickly and economically, the railroad adopted a single design concept for all the stations, used wood construction, and limited the stylistic details and interior finishes to a few variations. Sound Beach Station is a well-preserved example: it has the characteristic frame construction, asymmetrical roof profile, simple Victorian stylistic details, and wood-paneled interior which together define the type. Although the concept, form, and detailing of these stations was standardized for the entire four-tracking project, no two are exactly alike. Their size varies according to the amount of baggage, waiting-room, and office space needed at each location, and they differ in their combination of details. For example, Sound Beach Station's roof braces, diagonal clapboards, and peaked gable window are found in all surviving stations of the period; the corner-block interior window trim was one of two different moldings; and the plain wall sheathing and track-side projecting bay are found in few if any of the other surviving examples.

In a larger context, the station at Old Greenwich (the name was restored in 1932) embodies the distinctive characteristics of small-town railroad architecture common in the period. While building grandiose stone and brick terminals as urban showplaces, railroads in the late 19th century chose modest, utilitarian designs for their ordinary stations. By the 1890s, most companies had turned away from the picturesque Gothic-cottage depots of the previous decades. Instead, they used simple, straightforward designs to accommodate the essential waiting room, baggage space, ticket window, and offices needed in a small station, and one way or another they provided sheltered platform and entrance areas as part of the station. Sound Beach is typical, with only a hint of specific architectural style: the vertical boards demarcating the attic-story bays on the south elevation and the roof brackets are Stick-Style elements similar to those in contemporary residential architecture, while the variegated siding materials are found in many Victorian styles and reflect the period's interest in intricate detailing. Like the interior sheathing

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Significance (continued):

and moldings, these features also reflect the availability of mass-produced building supplies in the period. Although the platform has been modernized, Sound Beach Station's plain form, restrained Victorian ornament, overhanging roof, baggage doors, and highly original interior make it a significant example of small-town station architecture.



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Photographs \_\_\_\_\_ Sound Beach (Old Greenwich) Railroad Station  
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All photographs:

1. SOUND BEACH RAILROAD STATION (Old Greenwich Railroad Station)
2. Greenwich, CT
3. Photo Credit: HRC, Hartford, CT
4. August, 1988
5. Negative filed with Connecticut Historical Commission  
Hartford, CT

Trackside (south) elevation, camera facing northeast  
Photo 1 of 6

Trackside (south) elevation, camera facing northwest  
Photo 2 of 6

Rear (north) and east elevations, camera facing southwest  
Photo 3 of 6

Detail of doorway, north elevation, camera facing south  
Photo 4 of 6

Detail of cornice brackets, east elevation,  
camera facing northwest  
Photo 5 of 6

Interior, camera facing south  
Photo 6 of 6