

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

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

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NAME: Apponaug Historic District (Warwick MRA)
LOCATION: 3376, 3384, 3387, 3391, 3397-3399, and 3404 Post Road

OWNERS: Landing A, Inc.
375 Arnold's Neck Drive
Warwick, RI 02886
(Assessor's Plat 244, lots 118, 119, 120, 124)

Urban Realty Company
333 Chestnut Street
Warwick, RI 02888
(Assessor's Plat 244, lot 109)

City of Warwick
City Hall
3275 Post Road
Warwick, RI 02886
(Assessor's Plat 244, lot 110)

Frank H. Christoph, Jr.
3387 Post Road
Warwick, RI 02886
(Assessor's Plat 244, lot 111)

Babins B.W. Young
3404 Post Road
Warwick, RI 02886
(Assessor's Plat 244, lot 125)

CONDITION: Fair, Deteriorated; Altered; Original Site

DESCRIPTION:

The Apponaug Historic District is a group of seven buildings clustered around the intersection of Post Road and Arnold's Neck Drive just south of Apponaug Bridge. It contains five colonial and Federal dwellings in various states of preservation and repair, the largest concentration of such structures in a former seaport and mill village founded in 1696. Modern development pressures since the 1920s have effected many deleterious changes in the fabric of this historical community, and this small district is now surrounded by a disjointed, visually chaotic mix of gas stations, commercial buildings, and occasional nineteenth-century structures interspersed with paved parking areas.

The buildings within the district are arranged along a stretch of Post Road which rises and bends slightly east as it runs south from Apponaug

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Bridge. The houses at 3376 and 3384 Post Road, on the east side of the street, are set back slightly from the curb and sidewalk and are fronted by patches of lawn, with a few mature trees and overgrown shrubs planted randomly about the grounds. A modern, non-contributing structure--a low, rambling one-story building--is sited northeast of number 3376 and extends over Apponaug Cove, which bounds the house lots of numbers 3376 and 3384 at the rear. North of these structures, adjacent to the bridge, is a small empty lot. Some distance south of number 3384, separated from it by Arnold's Neck Drive and another empty lot (which contained a Colonial dwelling destroyed by fire in 1966), is 3404 Post Road. This dwelling is also set back from the street and has a well maintained little garden of shrubs and trees in front. The dwelling at 3391 Post Road, opposite Arnold's Neck Drive, is set right on the sidewalk. Further south, the house at 3397-3399 Post Road is set above street level on a terrace with a rubble stone retaining wall. The grounds are planted with mature evergreen and deciduous trees which partly obscure its facade from view.

Intrusions in the Apponaug Historic District in addition to the modern building include electric and telephone poles and wires; some signs; and the generally unkempt appearance of the street, building grounds, and empty lots. However, the district's contributing structures all two-and-one-half-story, gable-roofed dwellings, are formally and visually differentiated from their surroundings, and the antiquity of the best preserved buildings, 3376 and 3384 Post Road, is readily perceived. The vintage of the other structures here is less evident, but some restoration and maintenance could greatly enhance their evocative quality making this a more important historical focus for the community.

INVENTORY OF CONTRIBUTING STRUCTURES

POST ROAD

3376 Henry Remington House (ca 1800): A rectangular, two-and-one-half-story, gable-roofed, timber-framed Federal dwelling with a five-bay facade (west side), a brick center chimney, clapboard-sheathed walls, and a one-story rear ell. Windows have splayed lintel caps and Victorian two-over-two sash. The main entrance, centered in the facade, has a Victorian single-leaf door topped by a semicircular fanlight with leaded panes in a sunburst-and-garland pattern, surrounded by a reeded strip with a keystone at the top and framed by fluted pilasters, impost blocks, and a pediment enriched with dentils and modillions. A Victorian bay window with a bracketed cornice has been added to the south side. The house was built for Henry Remington (1764-1841), a judge in the Rhode Island Supreme Court, who purchased this land from Thomas Arnold in 1799.

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Post Road (cont.)

- 3384 Harrison House (18th century?, altered ca 1800): A rectangular, two-and-one-half-story, timber-framed, gable-roofed dwelling with an irregular five-bay facade (west side); a brick center chimney; clapboard-sheathed walls; a stone foundation; and a one-story, shed-roofed ell at the northeast corner. The exceptionally heavy framing and narrow proportions of some windows seem to indicate this may be a Colonial structure enlarged or altered about 1800. The house is now Federal in character, with six-over-six windows topped by splayed lintel caps and an elaborate pedimented fanlight entrance at the center of the facade. This doorway contains an eight-panel door and a semicircular fanlight with gothic-arch mullions, framed by fluted Ionic pilasters, impost blocks with carved floral bosses, and a pediment with dentil ornamentation.

The early history of the house is difficult to document. Land adjacent to and perhaps including this lot was owned at different times by the Arnold, Brayton, and Greene families. An 1805 map of Apponaug indicates the owner of the house on this site as T. Warner, but no deeds can be found which corroborate this information. By 1816 the house was owned by William Harrison (1781-1863), a one-time sea captain who later served as Warwick's Town Clerk and became a partner and agent of the Roger Williams Manufacturing Company, owners and operators of the textile mill at what is now Phenix village, West Warwick. By 1870 the property was owned by Harrison's sons William H. and Thomas W. Harrison. Thomas died in 1871 and his brother inherited full interest. William H. Harrison was also Town Clerk and Justice of the Peace for many years. His heirs sold the property in 1920, ending a century of family ownership.

- 3391 House (early 19th century): A rectangular, two-and-one-half-story, gable-roofed structure with a rear ell, a gabled front dormer, and two brick end chimneys, one to the rear of the south end, the other to the front of the north end. The north end wall is of brick topped by a gable sheathed with vertical wooden planks. The facade (east side) is sheathed with clapboards at first-floor level and asbestos shingles above, and asbestos shingles over the other wall surfaces. The facade has five symmetrical bays on the upper level while those on the lower level do not correspond exactly with those above. The first and fourth bays (reading from the south) contain doorways, the former with a flat-top enframingent with consoles, the latter framed with plain boards. First-story windows have splayed

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Post Road (cont.)

lintel caps. The house, now abandoned, is in extremely poor condition and its first-floor openings are all boarded up. Its early history is unknown, but it appears to have been constructed about 1810 or 1820 and used as a combination store and residence at some point. It was owned by J.R. Card in 1870.

3397-3399 House (early 19th century): A rectangular, two-and-one-half-story, timber-framed, gable-roofed Federal dwelling with an entrance portico, two brick end chimneys, shed-roofed front and rear dormers, shingled walls, and a two-story rear ell. Once a very fine single-family residence, perhaps the most elaborate of its period in Apponaug, it has been divided into apartments and is poorly maintained. The front entrance, in the center of the symmetrical five-bay facade (east side), is surmounted by a semicircular fanlight and a gabled hood. The hood is probably original but the turned posts supporting it are an early twentieth-century addition. The eaves cornice is ornamented with dentils. The house is set above street level on a terrace fronted by a rubble stone retaining wall, but the rise of Post Road puts the house lot nearly at grade at its south end. Some mature evergreen and deciduous trees are planted on the terrace, partly obscuring the house from view. The early history of the structure is unknown. It was apparently constructed about 1810 or 1820 and was owned in 1870 by Benjamin W. Vaughn, owner of Apponaug's gristmill, sawmill, and planing mill and a dealer in coal, grain, flour, feed, and building materials.

3404 House (early 18th century): A cubical, two-and-one-half-story, timber-framed, gable-roofed dwelling with a small brick center chimney (late nineteenth or early twentieth century in vintage), an irregular facade (west side), and exterior walls sheathed with asbestos shingles. Though well maintained, the house has suffered extensive, unsympathetic alterations, among them the addition of the asbestos wall covering, the installation of some modern sash, and apparent relocation of some windows. In spite of these changes, the house is historically noteworthy. The heavy framing and narrow proportions of some of the windows, especially those on the north side, seem to indicate a construction date between 1720 and 1750, which would make this the oldest extant structure in Apponaug.

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INVENTORY OF NON-CONTRIBUTING STRUCTURES

The Boat House (20th century): A low, rambling, one-story wooden structure extending out over Apponaug Cove. It is topped by a series of shallow hip and gable roofs and is covered with plywood sheathing articulated with vertical batten strips. It appears to be a conglomeration of old sheds linked together by modern additions. Now empty, it once housed a restaurant and bar.

PERIODS: 1700-1799, 1800-1899
AREA OF SIGNIFICANCE: Architecture
SPECIFIC DATES: 18th and 19th centuries
BUILDER/ARCHITECT: Unknown

SIGNIFICANCE:

The contributing structures in the Apponaug Historic District are architecturally significant as the only extant group of Colonial and Federal structures in the village and are historically significant for their association with prominent local figures. Apponaug, established in 1696, was one of the earliest areas to be settled within the present city of Warwick. It experienced spurts of growth in the eighteenth century, as a seaport involved in the coastal and West Indies trade, and in the early nineteenth century, following the construction of textile mills and the shift to a manufacturing economy. Growth continued through the nineteenth and early twentieth century, as industry expanded and the village became the civic center of Warwick (see National Register nomination for Warwick Civic Center Historic District). By the early twentieth century, Apponaug was a picturesque village of Colonial, Federal, and Victorian dwellings set along narrow, tree-shaded streets. Increasing automobile traffic from the 1920 to the present has necessitated the widening of streets, eliminating most of the trees, and development pressures have led to the demolition and alteration of earlier buildings (for example, a Colonial/Federal dwelling with Victorian alterations at 3337 Post Road was demolished in 1977 to enlarge the parking lot of a trailer sales agency). There are perhaps nine remaining Colonial and Federal dwellings in Apponaug (the condition of some buildings makes it impossible to give a definitive count). Four are scattered throughout the village, and of these the Caleb Greene House is the only one whose original character is apparent (see National Register nomination for the Greene House, 15 Centerville Road, Warwick). The five contributing structures in the Apponaug Historic District are among the very few early structures remaining in this old village, and are even more significant by virtue of their contiguity. Though the ambience of their environs has

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changed, and even the character of some of the structures themselves, this group constitutes an important historical nucleus for the community, the significance of which could be enhanced through selective restoration and some simple maintenance. These buildings are also notable for their association with local historical figures. Henry Remington, a state judge; William and William H. Harrison, a father and son who served successively as Town Clerk; and Benjamin W. Vaughn, a local merchant, all lived in houses here at various times. These structures are thus intimately linked with the ongoing life of the community.

ACREAGE: c. 2 acres
QUADRANGLE NAME: East Greenwich, R.I.
UTM: A 19 296520 4612880
B 19 295880 4611400
C 19 295310 4611720
D 19 295560 4613080

BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION AND JUSTIFICATION:

Beginning at a point on the southern bank of a stream flowing into Apponaug Cove, at a point under the eastern curb of Post Road; thence southeasterly and southwesterly along the shore of said stream and Apponaug Cove to its intersection with the southeasterly lot line of lot 120, Assessor's Plat 244; thence southwesterly along the southeasterly lot line of lot 120 to its intersection with the east curb of Post Road and the northerly curb of Arnold's Neck Drive; thence crossing Arnold's Neck Drive to the intersection of the southerly curb of Arnold's Neck Drive and the east curb of Post Road; thence southeasterly along the southerly curb of Arnold's Neck Drive to its intersection with the eastern (rear) line of lot 124; thence south along the eastern lines of lots 124 and 125; thence westerly along the southern line of lot 125, continuing across Post Road to the intersection of the west curb of Post Road and the southern line of lot 111; thence westerly, southerly, and westerly along the southern side of lot 111 to the eastern bank of a brook; thence northerly along the eastern bank of said brook to its intersection with the southern curb of Meadow Street; thence easterly along the southerly curb of Meadow Street to its intersection with the west line of lot 109; thence southerly along the line between lot 109 and lot 111; thence easterly along the line between lots 109 and 110, continuing across Post Road to the eastern curb; thence northerly along the eastern curb of Post Road to a point over the southern bank of a stream flowing into Apponaug Cove.

The boundary is drawn to encompass the immediate surroundings of the cultural resources that contribute to the architectural and historical significance of this small district, excluding as much as possible non-contributing development in the area.

LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE: LOCAL

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