

**HISTORIC RESOURCES INVENTORY
BUILDING AND STRUCTURES**

HIST-6 REV. 6/83

STATE OF CONNECTICUT
CONNECTICUT HISTORICAL COMMISSION
59 SOUTH PROSPECT STREET, HARTFORD, CONNECTICUT 06106
(203) 566-3005

Rec'd 1-15-85

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY	
Town No.:	Site No.: 15
UTM:	
QUAD:	
DISTRICT	IF NR, SPECIFY
<input type="checkbox"/> S <input type="checkbox"/> NR	<input type="checkbox"/> Actual <input type="checkbox"/> Potential

IDENTIFICATION	1. BUILDING NAME (Common) NA (Historic) Newington Junction Railroad Depot	
	2. TOWN/CITY Newington	VILLAGE NA COUNTY Hartford
	3. STREET AND NUMBER (and/or location) 160 Willard Avenue and 200 Francis Avenue	
	4. OWNER(S) Peggy H. Bond (160 Willard Ave.) and Cashway, Inc. (200 Francis Avenue), P.O. Box 370, Plainville, CT <input type="checkbox"/> Public <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private	
	5. USE (Present) Retail (Historic) Railroad stations	
	6. ACCESSIBILITY TO PUBLIC: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	EXTERIOR VISIBLE FROM PUBLIC ROAD <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
	INTERIOR ACCESSIBLE <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No IF YES, EXPLAIN Used for retail purposes	
	7. STYLE OF BUILDING Stick style	DATE OF CONSTRUCTION c. 1870
	8. MATERIAL(S) (Indicate use or location when appropriate)	
	<input type="checkbox"/> Clapboard <input type="checkbox"/> Asbestos Siding <input type="checkbox"/> Brick <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Wood Shingle <input type="checkbox"/> Asphalt Siding <input type="checkbox"/> Fieldstone <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Board & Batten <input type="checkbox"/> Stucco <input type="checkbox"/> Cobblestone <input type="checkbox"/> Aluminum Siding <input type="checkbox"/> Concrete Type: _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Cut stone Type: _____	
9. STRUCTURAL SYSTEM		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Wood frame <input type="checkbox"/> Post and beam <input type="checkbox"/> balloon <input type="checkbox"/> Load bearing masonry <input type="checkbox"/> Structural iron or steel <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) _____		
DESCRIPTION	10. ROOF (Type)	
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Gable <input type="checkbox"/> Flat <input type="checkbox"/> Mansard <input type="checkbox"/> Monitor <input type="checkbox"/> sawtooth <input type="checkbox"/> Gambrel <input type="checkbox"/> Shed <input type="checkbox"/> Hip <input type="checkbox"/> Round <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) _____ (Material)	
	<input type="checkbox"/> Wood Shingle <input type="checkbox"/> Roll Asphalt <input type="checkbox"/> Tin <input type="checkbox"/> Slate <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Asphalt shingle <input type="checkbox"/> Built up <input type="checkbox"/> Tile <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) _____	
	11. NUMBER OF STORIES 1 APPROXIMATE DIMENSIONS 200 Francis Avenue: 50 x 84 160 Willard Avenue: 25 x 15, with 11 x 8 ell	
12. CONDITION (Structural) <input type="checkbox"/> Excellent <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Good <input type="checkbox"/> Fair <input type="checkbox"/> Deteriorated		
(Exterior) <input type="checkbox"/> Excellent <input type="checkbox"/> Good <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Fair <input type="checkbox"/> Deteriorated		
13. INTEGRITY (Location) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> On original site <input type="checkbox"/> Moved	WHEN? (Alterations) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No IF YES, EXPLAIN Windows altered/blocked, doors changed	
14. RELATED OUTBUILDINGS OR LANDSCAPE FEATURES		
<input type="checkbox"/> Barn <input type="checkbox"/> Shed <input type="checkbox"/> Garage <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other landscape features or buildings (Specify) Other commercial buildings in close proximity on same lots		
15. SURROUNDING ENVIRONMENT		
<input type="checkbox"/> Open land <input type="checkbox"/> Wood-land <input type="checkbox"/> Residential <input type="checkbox"/> Scattered buildings visible from site <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Commercial <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Indus-trial <input type="checkbox"/> Rural <input type="checkbox"/> High building density		
16. INTERRELATIONSHIP OF BUILDING AND SURROUNDINGS Situated on either side of the Amtrak railroad tracks, just to the east of Willard Ave. overpass. The buildings sit amidst gravel/asphalt parking areas, scattered brush and storage areas.		

(OVER)

DESCRIPTION (Continued)

17. OTHER NOTABLE FEATURES OF BUILDING OR SITE (interior and/or exterior) The Depot consists of two (16) buildings, one to the north and the other to the south of the Amtrak railroad tracks (see photographs #1-5).

The northern of the two buildings, at 160 Willard Avenue, originally was a passenger station for the railroad. This one-story, three-bay rectangular building has a steeply pitched gable roof. The wide roof overhang is supported by large, scissor-like, chamfered brackets and purlins on all elevations, and it also features exposed rafters with carved ends. Simple cross bracing, composed of large wood members (the bracing on the north elevation retains its original turned knob at the intersection of the truss) decorates the gable peaks. Old photographs indicate that the building retains its original board and batten sheathing; most of the long, 6/6, double hung sash windows are either replaced with smaller ones (e.g., a small bay window on the north elevation) or blocked with boarding. The projecting bay on the east elevation facing the tracks (continued)

18. ARCHITECT	unknown	BUILDER	unknown
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19. HISTORICAL OR ARCHITECTURAL IMPORTANCE

The Newington Junction Railroad Depot is historically important because of its intimate connections with the development and existence of the Newington Junction community and the two railroads that gave the community its name and prominence. The buildings are also significant architecturally because they are pleasing examples of the Stick Style and are fine, mostly intact, components of a typical, mid-19th-century village railroad depot.

Newington Junction was a locally important commercial and residential center during the period 1840-1935. Its growth began with the Town of Wethersfield's "Mile-in-Breadth" grants in 1670 covering this area. Following this land distribution, named for the east/west dimension of the lots, the new owners farmed this fertile valley, and farming remained the principal land use and local occupation until well into the 20th century.

Newington Junction gained its name and became a distinct entity in the mid-19th century. In 1838, three prominent local men, General Martin Kellogg, Daniel Willard III and John M. Belden, built a factory on the (continued)

SOURCES

Baxter, Elizabeth S., Centennial History of Newington (1971)
Newington Town Crier, November 20, 1975, p.4 (article on Junction by Jean Weatherbee)
 Photographs from the collection of the Newington Historical Society
 1979 historic resources survey of Newington

PHOTO	PHOTOGRAPHER	DATE	Place Photograph Here
	VIEW	NEGATIVE ON FILE	
COMPILED BY	NAME	DATE	
	ORGANIZATION		
	ADDRESS		

Gregory E. Andrews 9/85
 see accompanying photographs CHC
 Gregory E. Andrews 9/19/85
 1643 Boulevard, West Hartford, CT 06107

20. SUBSEQUENT FIELD EVALUATIONS

21. THREATS TO BUILDING OR SITE

None known Highways Vandalism Developers Other commercial encroachment
 Renewal Private Deterioration Zoning Explanaton _____

STATE OF CONNECTICUT

CONNECTICUT HISTORICAL COMMISSION

59 South Prospect Street, Hartford, Connecticut 06106

HISTORIC RESOURCES INVENTORY FORM

For Buildings and Structures

Newington Junction Railroad Depot

CONTINUATION SHEET #1 Newington, CT

Item number 17 Date: 9/19/85

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY			
TOWN NO.:	SITE NO.:		
UTM: 18/	/	/	/
QUAD:			
DISTRICT:	S	NR:	ACTUAL POTENTIAL

originally had windows on all sides, according to photographs, whereas now its only window is a modern, 6/6 double hung sash on its east face. An 11 x 8 brick ell projects from the rear (west) elevation and is covered by an extension of the main roof. This ell in plan appears to be part of the original building, although the brick exterior may not be. The interior consists of one, large, main room and a much smaller room in the ell. A chimney rises from the center of the main room, and a second, smaller stack rises from the ell. The interior detailing is very plain and may perhaps be original (note: access to the interior is restricted and has not been obtained). The building presently is occupied by a retail outlet selling antennae and satellite receiver dishes.

The southern of the two buildings, at 200 Francis Avenue, appears originally to have been a freight depot for the railroad. This one-story building is taller than the first, has a pitched gable roof and also board and batten sheathing. Unlike its neighbor, this building has battens that are molded into a cluster of three vertical beads. Its wide roof overhang is supported by six large brackets, and the rafters are exposed behind eaves molding. The building has a number of openings on its elevations, some of which are boarded up and others of which are altered. The west and east elevations have large, almost square, centered wood doors that are of a size suitable for freight access. The north and south side elevations each have two openings that are now boarded up. From the interior, one can see that one of these, on the south elevation, is a doorway and retains its door, while the others have been altered with new structural framing. The north elevation has a modern, centered, overhead sliding door. The roof on the east elevation is altered to extend now over an added open shed that extends the full width of this side. On the north elevation is a large, modern, raised wood platform for storage and access to the building.

The interior of the Francis Avenue structure is unfinished and its original framework is in full view. The only alterations of consequence are a large, open storage loft on the east wall and a plywood floor that covers much, though not all, of the original floor of wide boards. Large wood posts form five bays of framework on the east and west walls, and are strengthened by bracing. Six large wood trusses, with centered metal support rods rising to the roof, frame and support the roof. The floor is raised above ground level for easier access to the trains.

Adjacent to this building is a modern(c.1960?), corrugated metal storage shed.

Acreage: approximately three acres
UTM Reference: I 18/688260/4620440

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59 South Prospect Street, Hartford, Connecticut 06106

HISTORIC RESOURCES INVENTORY FORM

For Buildings and Structures

Newington Junction Railroad Depot

CONTINUATION SHEET #2 Newington, CT

Item number 19 Date: 9/19/85

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY			
TOWN NO.:	SITE NO.:		
UTM: 18 / - / - / - / - / -			
QUAD:			
DISTRICT:	S	NR:	ACTUAL POTENTIAL

south side of the Wood River (now known as Piper Brook), which runs through the center of the Junction area, to manufacture satinet, a strong cloth of cotton and wool used to line clothing. In 1839, the Hartford-New Haven Railroad laid its tracks in this vicinity, a bit north of the Wood River (on the location of the present tracks). In 1850, the Hartford, Providence and Fishkill Railroad laid separate tracks for its line from Bristol to Hartford, and these two lines joined several hundred feet south of the modern intersection of Willard Avenue and West Hill Road. This railroad junction soon became known as "Newington Junction", and the increase in commercial activity generated by these developments helped to make the Junction a recognizably separate entity within the town of Wethersfield. Within a few years, the Junction had its own general store, post office (1868) and church (Grace Episcopal, built in 1874).

The Junction had two railroad stations facing each other across the wide tracks. The surviving passenger station building, built c. 1870 for the Hartford, Providence and Fishkill Railroad, stands on the west side, and the other passenger station building, probably built c. 1845, served the Hartford-New Haven Railroad and stood on the east side. The extant structure on the east side is of the same vintage as the building on the other side, and its greater size and configuration indicates that it served as a freight depot. During 1858, records show that thirteen trains stopped daily at the Junction (seven for the west station, six for the other). Trains dropped off the mail here for townwide distribution. This traffic increased in 1896 with the electrification of the tracks for commuter cars traveling to Hartford and New Britain. Thereafter, commuter cars stopped every half hour.

The Junction also played a significant role in Newington's incorporation in 1871 as a separate town. Frustration among area residents with the failure by Wethersfield officials to approve a new bridge over the Wood River to facilitate access to the Junction led to a meeting at the depot (apparently in the station building now demolished) and unanimous agreement to proceed with the successful effort for separate incorporation.

Newington Junction continued to exist as a cohesive village and community center until the mid-20th century, although its commercial fortunes waned sooner. The satinet factory, which boomed during the Civil War as a supplier of linings for military uniforms, burned in the 1890s and was not rebuilt. The gradual decline of railroad traffic during the first part of this century further reduced the Junction's importance. Construction in the 1930s of a large railroad overpass on Willard Avenue split the community down the middle visually, and the closing of the post office branch in 1944 symbolically marked the end of its existence. In the 1930s, the southern depot building was closed and moved to Churchill Park for use as a Girl Scout cabin.

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HISTORIC RESOURCES INVENTORY FORM

For Buildings and Structures

Newington Junction Railroad Depot.

CONTINUATION SHEET #3 Newington, CT

Item number 19 Date: 9/23/85

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY			
TOWN NO.:		SITE NO.:	
UTM: 18	/	/	/
QUAD:			
DISTRICT:	S	NR:	ACTUAL
			POTENTIAL

The Newington Junction Railroad Depot contains the most important surviving structural links to the history and development of the two railroads that played such a key role in the Junction's history. These buildings were at the geographical and economic heart of the village. Though they are dwarfed today by the overpass and adjacent commercial structures, they still stand out visually as significant historical reminders of the existence of the Newington Junction community.

The importance of the Depot buildings architecturally arises both from their stylistic features and use. They are restrained, though very attractive, examples of the Stick Style, of which there are very few examples today in Newington and neighboring communities. Their board and batten sheathing, gable roofs and exterior brackets and gable trusses typify the use of this style in less sophisticated, village settings. As a fine, largely intact village railroad depot, one of the few in the Hartford area, this cluster has added architectural significance; the size, plan and appearance of these two buildings are important documentations of the characteristics of such typically 19th-century structures.