

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

FOR NPS USE ONLY	
RECEIVED	MAR 23 1982
DATE ENTERED	APR 27 1982

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN *HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS*  
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

**1 NAME**

HISTORIC  
Marina Park *Historic District*  
AND/OR COMMON  
Marina Park Historic District

**2 LOCATION**

STREET & NUMBER  
66 and 82 Marina Park (see Continuation Sheet) NOT FOR PUBLICATION  
CITY, TOWN  
Bridgeport N/A VICINITY OF Fourth CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT  
STATE CODE COUNTY CODE  
Connecticut 09 Fairfield 001

**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"/> MUSEUM
<input type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE	<input type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL <input type="checkbox"/> PARK
<input type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> BOTH	<input type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE RESIDENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> SITE	<b>PUBLIC ACQUISITION</b>	<b>ACCESSIBLE</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> RELIGIOUS
<input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT	<input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES: RESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT <input type="checkbox"/> SCIENTIFIC
	<input type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: UNRESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRIAL <input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
	N/A	<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER:

**4 OWNER OF PROPERTY**

NAME  
Multiple--see attached list  
STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN STATE  
" " " N/A VICINITY OF "

**5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE,  
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.  
STREET & NUMBER  
CITY, TOWN STATE  
Bridgeport Town Clerk  
45 Lyon Terrace  
Bridgeport Connecticut

**6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE  
State Register of Historic Places  
DATE  
1980 \_\_FEDERAL  STATE \_\_COUNTY \_\_LOCAL  
DEPOSITORY FOR  
SURVEY RECORDS  
CITY, TOWN STATE  
Hartford Connecticut

# 7 DESCRIPTION

## CONDITION

EXCELLENT  
 GOOD  
 FAIR

DETERIORATED  
 RUINS  
 UNEXPOSED

## CHECK ONE

UNALTERED  
 ALTERED

## CHECK ONE

ORIGINAL SITE  
 MOVED DATE \_\_\_\_\_

### DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Marina Park National Register District is a 14-building late-Victorian/Edwardian residential neighborhood extending along lower Park Avenue in the South End of Bridgeport. It is suburban in character and encompasses some 11 acres northwest of Seaside Park, approximately 1 mile south of the city's downtown area. The terrain slopes upward gradually from the Park's north boundary and offers a view of adjoining Long Island Sound from nearly every vantage point.

The area contained within the district constitutes the surviving intact portion of what was an 80-acre wealthy residential section in the late-19th century. The neighborhood once extended from Seaside Park north to Atlantic Street and west to Iranistan Avenue. Beginning in the late-1940s, most of the large houses with their capacious grounds were acquired by the newly-chartered University of Bridgeport, which demolished many of them for parking areas and modern classroom buildings. Today roughly a half-dozen remain outside of the district boundaries, each of them isolated from a complementary environment by large-scaled 20th-century structures. Within the district, however, the Victorian streetscape as well as much of the landscape is still relatively unscathed.

The south boundary of the district is formed by Seaside Park, a narrow peninsula which separates Long Island from Cedar Creek and Black Rock Harbor for a distance of some 2 miles. The park is approximately 300 yards wide at this point. It contains mature plantings and winding drives and was designed by Frederick Law Olmsted<sup>1</sup>. At the foot of Park Avenue, just inside the park, is the William H. Perry Memorial, a 60-foot-high double granite archway which serves as a ceremonial entryway as well as the focal point of the Marina Park neighborhood.

The remainder of the boundary has been drawn to incorporate what survives of the genteel turn-of-the-century suburb while excluding later, more intensive urban developments. The east boundary is formed by Park Avenue from Atlantic Street south to Linden Avenue. The side of this street opposite the district contains large-scaled university buildings almost exclusively, including the 8-story Wahlstrom Library (right background. Photo 2). At the southeast corner of Atlantic Street and Park Avenue are two early-20th-century houses which were not considered to be of sufficient architectural importance to be included. Below Linden Avenue, the east boundary takes in both sides of Park Avenue while excluding an undistinguished row of World War I-era two-families on Myrtle Avenue.

<sup>1</sup>At this writing Seaside Park has been accepted for study for possible future listing in the National Register of Historic Places. It is not included with this district because it represents a differing theme, that of post-Civil War rural park design as opposed to late-19th--early-20th-century suburban residential architecture.

FHR-8-300A  
(11/78)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
HERITAGE CONSERVATION AND RECREATION SERVICE

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PAGE 1

36, 56, 59, 72, 85, 115, 135, 149, 185, 219, 239, 255, 277, and 285  
Park Avenue and 250 Waldemere Avenue.

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1

C 36 Park Avenue (lot)	University of Bridgeport 219 Park Avenue
C 56 Park Avenue	Genevieve B. Ordner 56 Park Avenue
C 59 Park Avenue	University of Bridgeport 219 Park Avenue
C 72 Park Avenue	Mary C. Sproviero 72 Park Avenue
C 85 Park Avenue	University of Bridgeport 219 Park Avenue
C 115 Park Avenue	The Boardman-Beardsley Home 115 Park Avenue
C 135 Park Avenue	University of Bridgeport 219 Park Avenue
C 149 Park Avenue (lot)	University of Bridgeport 219 Park Avenue
C 185 Park Avenue	James Mangan 185 Park Avenue
C 219 Park Avenue	University of Bridgeport 219 Park Avenue
C 239 Park Avenue	University of Bridgeport 219 Park Avenue
NC 255 Park Avenue (lot)	University of Bridgeport 219 Park Avenue
C 271 Park Avenue	University of Bridgeport 219 Park Avenue
C 285 Park Avenue	University of Bridgeport 219 Park Avenue

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C 250 Waldemere Avenue

The Bridgeport Roman Catholic  
Diocesan Corporation  
250 Waldemere Avenue

C 66 Marina Park

University of Bridgeport  
219 Park Avenue

C 82 Marina Park

University of Bridgeport  
219 Park Avenue

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The west boundary is formed in part by Marina Park itself, a 2-acre grassy oval that slopes upward from Seaside Park to the former site of "Marina", residence of P.T. Barnum (located outside the district limits, it was demolished in 1964). Above Marina Park the boundary includes all properties facing Park Avenue and eliminates the area to the west, which was almost entirely rebuilt in the post-World War II-era (it contains 4-story brick dormitories, a cafeteria, athletic complex, and extensive parking area). The north boundary is at Atlantic Street, which has historically been the dividing line between the estate district around the park and the South End tenement district. Park Avenue above Atlantic Street shows an immediate change in character and is lined with early-20th-century multi-unit dwellings situated on smaller lots with considerably less setback than the houses to the south.

The dwellings of Marina Park were built for the most part by members of the city's industrialist aristocracy. As a whole they represent the highest achievement of Bridgeport's domestic architecture from the late-1880s almost to the beginning of World War II. Included are highly-developed examples of the Shingle Style and later academic revival styles, as well as Bridgeport's first "modern" (International Style) house.

The first house to be built in the Marina Park development (1887) was the George Comstock House. It is typical of Queen Anne villas found throughout Bridgeport, of wood frame construction, clapboarded, with a Chateausque corner tower and wrap-around veranda. There is half-timber detailing in its numerous gables. The front entry leads into a large central hall which contains a fireplace and a three-turn staircase lighted by colored leaded glass. The rooms are informally laid out and the entire structure is informally massed. The next three houses to be constructed--the Lavinia Parmly House (1890), "Greynook" (1891) and the William A. Grippin House (1891)--repeated this formula on an elaborated scale. Evidently the work of the same architect, their first stories are of stone or brick, with wood shingling above. In this manner they conform to the popular late-19th century ideal of the "English manor-house" popularized by Norman Shaw and first brought to the attention of Americans in the mid-1870s. All are fitted with partially-encircling verandas across the front and south side, apparently constructed to take advantage of breezes emanating from Long Island Sound.

The next house to be built in chronological order, the 1892 Charles B. Bead House, is a very unusual design in the context of Bridgeport architecture of this period. A low-slung, ground-hugging shingled cottage; its style relates more to the shore resorts of New Jersey and Rhode Island than to the suburbs of a Connecticut industrial city.

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The Waldo C. Bryant House, constructed 1895, bears a strong similarity to the Parnly and Grippin Houses and "Greynook" with its granite first story and shingled upper floors. However, its formal plan and Palladian detail reveal the impending demise of Shingle Style plasticity in favor of the symmetrical forms of academic revivalism.

The William Beardsley House (1902) is the last Marina Park residence to use the informal Shingle Style plan with a rough-faced stone first floor and wood shingles above. Its contemporary, the John G. Howland House, is a much more sedate work of architecture in a correct Tudor Revival style and seems to have set a precedent for subsequent building. The Charles Pettigrew House (1904), the Judge George Wheeler House (1906) and the Eugene Smith House (1911) were all built of wood in a rigid Colonial Revival style with formal massing. The William J. Grippin House (1908) and the Lewis B. Curtis House (1909), both masonry structures, utilized French Chateausque and Italian Renaissance detail respectively on equally academic designs.

The Marina Park district is an open, residential greensward in the midst of a heavily urbanized university campus. The wide setbacks from the streets--a standard 70 feet along Park Avenue between Atlantic Street and University Avenue, varying between 40 and 200 feet elsewhere--and the ample grounds surrounding each structure place it in direct contrast to its environs. Its houses all retain much of their outward integrity.

Following is an inventory of the buildings in the district beginning at Marina Park itself and the entrance to Seaside Park and extending northward:

WILLIAM A. GRIPPIN HOUSE, 82 Marina Park (Photo 3)--Shingle Style with Richardson Romanesque and Colonial Revival overtones, 1891, 2½ stories, hip roof covered with scalloped red slates, round corner tower on north side of facade; first story yellow brick with brownstone quoins and lintels, second story sided with scalloped wood shingles; attic dormer windows have broken scroll pediments and are sheathed with copper; circular stairbay on south side wall at second story level, north side wall contains projecting octagonal bay; twisted columns on front veranda; wrought-iron chimney brace, tower surmounted by bronze finial. Similar in form to the P.T. Barnum Institute of Science and History in downtown

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Bridgeport; George Longstaff, probable architect<sup>2</sup>.

CHARLES B. READ HOUSE, 66 Marina Park (not illustrated)--Shingle Style, 1892, 2 stories plus attic, front-gabled gambrel roof (top portion re-roofed with asphalt shingle; lower part original wood shingle); first story clapboarded, upper stories wood-shingled; plate glass windows on first floor, upper floors contain multipane-over-one sash; flank entrance on south side with portico having squared Ionic columns--glassed-in conservatory to rear with fanlight transoms; one-story turret on north side of facade; massive yellow-brick chimney tops.

LEWIS B. CURTIS HOUSE, 250 Waldemere Avenue (Photo 2)--Italian Renaissance/California Style, 2½ stories, hip roof with glazed Spanish tile covering, stuccoed; formal entrance portico with curved staircase, raised terrace across entire facade; porte-cochere on east side, west side contains one-story conservatory, the windows of which have translucent leaded-glass transoms. Contemporary rear automobile garage converted to use as a chapel.

EUGENE H. SMITH HOUSE, 56 Park Avenue (not illustrated)--Colonial Revival, 1911, 2 stories plus attic, side-gabled roof (triple pedimented dormers across front); glassed-in full front veranda, wood-shingle siding--attic gables finished as pediments with contrasting flush-board siding; asphalt shingle roof. Rear automobile garage of contemporary date.

CHARLES PETTIGREW HOUSE, 59 Park Avenue (not illustrated)--Colonial Revival, 1904, 2 stories plus attic, hip roof with Palladian-motif dormer windows, open veranda across front with Doric-order columns, wood-shingle siding, asphalt roof. Rear automobile garage of contemporary date.

"GREYNOOK" (DR. CHARLES B. BAKER HOUSE), 72 Park Avenue (not illustrated)--Shingle Style, 1891, 2½ stories, side-gabled roof (asphalt shingle covering) with projecting front gable; first 1½ stories of granite construction quoined with brick, remainder wood-shingled; one-story turret on north side with copper-sheathed dome roof; octagonal bay on second

<sup>2</sup>This house, together with P.T. Barnum's "Marina" (demolished), "Greynook", the Parmly House and the Bryant House all appear to be variations on the Shavian manor-house theme--see page 2, paragraph 3



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story above front entrance fitted with triple floor-to-ceiling windows of colored leaded glass in abstract pattern; veranda across front with paired Doric-order columns surmounted by proto-Art Nouveau wrought-iron balustrade; recessed third-story balcon-fenetre. Contributory early-20th-century rear automobile garage. George Longstaff, probable architect; essentially this is a more modest version of the Lavinia Parmly House at 219 Park Avenue (see below).

WILLIAM J. GRIPPIN HOUSE, 85 Park Avenue (Photo 4)--French Chateausque/California Style, 1908, 2 stories plus attic, buff-brick construction with limestone highlights, hip roof covered with glazed green tiles; asymmetrically massed with slightly-projecting ell on north side; original front portico removed, south side veranda has modern wood enclosure; porte cochere on north side. Contemporary automobile garage extensively enlarged for use as a medical clinic.

JUDGE GEORGE W. WHEELER HOUSE, 115 Park Avenue (Photo 5)--Colonial Revival, 1906, 2½ stories, side-gabled gambrel roof, central front projection with second-story Palladian window over front entry, wood-shingle siding, asphalt roof; retains operable exterior blinds. Contemporary automobile garage at rear.

WILLIAM N. BEARDSLEY HOUSE, 135 Park Avenue (Photo 6)--Shingle Style with Colonial Revival overtones, 1902, 2½ stories, hip roof (asphalt-shingled); first story constructed of rough-faced Ohio sandstone blocks with polished limestone trim, upper stories wood-shingled; rounded front bay on north pavilion surmounted by triangular attic pediment which encloses Palladian window; Ionic-order porch across front. Notable leaded glass, both clear and colored, installed throughout. Ernest G. Southey, architect.

ALBERT J. ERSLEW HOUSE, 185 Park Avenue (Photo 7)--International Style, 1937, 2 stories, flat roof, concrete- and glass-block construction; Frederick Jenkins Wallis, architect. A contemporary description is contained in the article "Park Avenue Houses, Meet the Newcomer Moderne" published in the Bridgeport Post 27 May 1938.

LAVINIA L. PARMLY HOUSE, 219 Park Avenue (Photo 8)--Shingle Style with Queen Anne and Richardson Romanesque overtones, 1890, 3 stories plus attic, side-gabled roof (asphalt-shingled) with front projection and rear ell; brick first story highlighted by brownstone, wood-shingle siding on upper floors (square shingles on second story, scalloped in

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attic gables); considerable half-timbering and other wood detail; wrap-around veranda on front and south sides supported by square brick piers; two-story brick turrets on either side; porte-cochere on north side, 1½-story carriage barn of similar design at rear. Original multipane-over-one window sash replaced with plate glass. George Longstaff, architect; Photo 8 shows the similarity of its north side elevation to the facade of H.H. Richardson's Watts-Sherman House at Newport, Rhode Island.

GEORGE COMSTOCK HOUSE, 239 Park Avenue (left background, Photo 1)--Queen Anne, 1887, 2½ stories, Chateausque tower at south front corner with bronze finial; wrap-around veranda (currently glass-enclosed); clap-board and wood-shingle siding with half-timber detailing. Joseph Northrop, architect; an early description is contained in Installment No. 8 of the "Our Attractive Homes" series, published in the Bridgeport Standard 7 March 1891.

WALDO C. BRYANT HOUSE, 277 Park Avenue (Photo 9 and center, Photo 1)--Shingle Style with Colonial Revival overtones, 1895, 2½ stories, dormered hip roof covered with scalloped grey slates; first story constructed of rough-faced light granite blocks highlighted by red composite sandstone, second story sided with scalloped wood shingles; large round projections at either corner of the facade; Ionic-order piazza across front (has terrazzo floor inlaid with mosaic) extending to porte-cochere on north side; very large L-shaped 2½-story carriage barn at rear of similar design to main house. George Longstaff, probable architect.

JOHN G. HOWLAND HOUSE, 285 Park Avenue (Photo 10 and foreground, Photo 1)--English Tudor, 1902, 2½ stories, front- and side-gabled roof (asphalt-shingled), stuccoed with extensive half-timbering; porte-cochere on north side.

Of all Marina Park's structures, only four--"Greynook", the Charles Pettigrew House, the Eugene Smith House and the Albert Erslew House--serve their original use as single-family dwellings. One other--the Judge George Wheeler House--has been divided into multi-unit housing. The remainder have been unobtrusively converted to office, classroom and dormitory space. Their present uses are as follows:

William A. Grippin House

Dormitory, University of Bridgeport  
School of Law

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Charles B. Read House

University of Bridgeport Student  
Personnel Offices

Lewis B. Curtis House

Chancery, Roman Catholic Diocese  
of Bridgeport

William J. Grinnin House

University of Bridgeport Health  
Center

William W. Beardsley House

classrooms, Park City Alternative  
High School

Lavinia L. Parmly House

Offices of University Relations,  
University of Bridgeport

George Comstock House

Graduate Center for Family Clinical  
Studies and the Huxley Institute for  
Holistic Medicine

Waldo C. Bryant House

University of Bridgeport Counseling  
Center

John G. Howland House

Fairfield County Legal Aid Society

# 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/HUMANITARIAN	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)	
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION			

Criteria B and C

SPECIFIC DATES 1887--1937 BUILDER/ARCHITECT N/A

## STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Marina Park is the last uncompromised concentration of monumental late-19th-century domestic architecture in Bridgeport. It slopes upward from Seaside Park and forms a fitting, almost integral complement to that important Olmsted-designed landmark. Its buildings are among the finest the city produced during what was perhaps its heyday of residential development on a grand suburban scale.

Marina Park's history is associated with the lives of persons significant in both local and national history (Criterion B). Its progenitor was P.T. Barnum, the 19th-century showman, who had been instrumental in obtaining Seaside Park for the city in 1865. Barnum built his own home "Waldemere" adjoining the park in 1869 on land which encompassed the present area of Marina Park. By 1886 he was working on plans to replace the stylishly-outmoded Waldemere with a more modern, Richardsonian-style structure which he named "Marina". The 30-acre grounds were subdivided into house lots for Bridgeport's fast-rising industrialist and merchant class.

Following are brief biographical sketches of the individuals who constructed homes in Barnum's development:

WILLIAM A. GRIPPIN (c. 1851-1911) was the president and principal owner of the Bridgeport Malleable Iron Company, president of the Vulcan Iron Works and the North and Judd Manufacturing Company of New Britain as well as a director of the Century State Bank of New York. He was born in Saratoga Springs, New York and came to Bridgeport in 1884 (see obit., Bridgeport Post 2 March 1911).

CHARLES B. READ (1858-1912) was the secretary of the D.M. Read Company, a major Bridgeport department store. He was prominent socially, and at one time was president of both the Seaside Club and the Brooklawn Country Club (obit., Bridgeport Post 5 July 1912).

LEWIS B. CURTIS (1863-1938) was the president of the People's Savings Bank of Bridgeport; Curtis, Curtis & Company, manufacturers of pipe-cutting machines and geared die stocks, and the Beers Realty Company of New York. He was the inventor of the Curtis Pipe-Cutting and Threading Machine (Who's Who in Engineering, 1938; obit., Bridgeport Post 25 October 1938).

EUGENE H. SMITH was the president and treasurer of the E.H. Smith Silver Company (Bridgeport City Directory, 1912).

# 9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

News clipping file, Historical Collections, Bridgeport Public Library  
 Real Estate records, Bridgeport Town Clerk's office

# 10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 11

QUADRANGLE NAME <u>Bridgeport</u>			QUADRANGLE SCALE <u>7.5 minute</u>				
UTM REFERENCES							
A	1,8	6,5,16,0,0	4,5,5,8,6,6,0	B	1,8	6,5,17,9,0	4,5,5,8,3,8,0
C	1,8	6,5,18,2,0	4,5,5,8,3,9,0	D	1,8	6,5,18,7,0	4,5,5,8,3,1,0
E	1,8	6,5,18,8,0	4,5,5,8,2,6,0	F	1,8	6,5,17,5,0	4,5,5,8,2,0,0
G	1,8	6,5,16,6,0	4,5,5,8,3,3,0	H	1,8	6,5,17,4,0	4,5,5,8,3,6,0

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

--continued

See Continuation Sheets 2 and 3

## LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

# 11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Charles W. Brilvitch Consultant  
 ORGANIZATION DATE  
 Bridgeport Architecture Conservancy October 1978  
 STREET & NUMBER TELEPHONE  
 128 Walnut Street 203-336-5737  
 CITY OR TOWN STATE  
 Bridgeport Connecticut

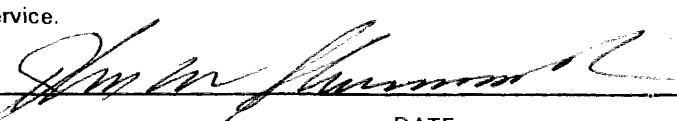
# 12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

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 March 3, 1982

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

ATTEST:  KEeper OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER  
 Entered in the National Register DATE 4/27/82  
 CHIEF OF REGISTRATION DATE

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CHARLES PETTIGREW was a consulting engineer (Bridgeport City Directory, 1905).

DR. CHARLES B. BAKER (1858-1902) was a prominent Bridgeport dentist, a member of the State Dental Commission, city alderman and member of the Board of Education (obit. Bridgeport Post 22 December 1902).

WILLIAM J. GRIPPIN, son of William A. Grippin, succeeded his father as president of the Bridgeport Malleable Iron Company (Bridgeport City Directory, 1913).

JUDGE GEORGE W. WHEELER (1860-1932) was a justice of the Connecticut Supreme Court from 1910 to 1927 and was one-time Democratic Party chairman of Bridgeport (obit., Bridgeport Post 27 July 1932).

WILLIAM N. BEARDSLEY was a prominent local real estate agent (Bridgeport City Directory, 1903).

ALBERT J. ERSLEW was a sales engineer with the Dahler Die-Casting Company of New York (see Item 7 page 8).

LAVINIA L. PARMLY (?-1894) is known only as a wealthy New York widow who used her Marina Park home as a summer residence. Upon her death it was bequeathed to her 22-year-old grandson Parmly S. Clapp, who was later to become a prominent New York City stockbroker (Bridgeport Post articles "Lucky Parmly Clapp", 5 May 1894 and "Departure of the Clapps", 14 March 1900).

GEORGE COMSTOCK (1849-1923) was chairman of the board of the Comstock-Willett Company, wholesale grocers. He also served as first vice-president of the People's Savings Bank (obit. Bridgeport Post 21 January 1923).

WALDO C. BRYANT (1863-1930) was chairman of the board of the Bryant Electric Company; president, treasurer and general manager of the Perkins Electric Switch Manufacturing Company, and inventor of the Bryant push-and-pull switch (obit., Bridgeport Post 6 July 1930).

JOHN G. HOWLAND was president of the Howland Dry Good Company, a major Bridgeport department store (Bridgeport City Directory, 1903; also article "Building Operations" Bridgeport Post 17 February 1902).

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With its monumental architecture combined with park and ocean views, Marina Park in its prime was probably one of the more impressive residential districts in the state. Even in the 1940s, a time when appreciation for late-Victorian architecture was generally considered to be in eclipse, Anne Whelan was moved to write:

Marina and Seaside, with its verdued lawns, and its unrivaled sea view, which Barnum had transformed from vast virgin acres, was Bridgeport's Faubourg St. Germain. Its superb beauty reminded one of Charleston's Battery, with the added charm of woods. In its exclusiveness it took rank with Boston's Louisbourg Square, with less tradition, however. It had grown up through the industrialists, who supplanted in the social realm the old colonial families, who even then, in the late-eighteen-eighties and early-nineties, had begun to fade from the scene, for they had only distinguished lineage and little cash.

During his development of Marina, Barnum imposed such restrictions as would ultimately characterize it as one of the most beautiful residential sites in America<sup>1</sup>, with its combination of woods and sea and remoteness from the urban center less than a mile away. No houses could be built over three stories high, and no barns...could be built on the property.<sup>2</sup>

Marina Park is representative of the characteristics of late-19th and early-20th century domestic architecture as well as the work of a master architect, George Longstaff (Criterion C). The succession of large houses extending up Park Avenue from the Perry Memorial Arch is unique on such a scale in Bridgeport, which is otherwise lacking in well-preserved enclaves of such buildings solely from this period (Marina Park's only counterparty in the city at the turn of the century was Fairfield Avenue, which has since been overtaken by commercial development).

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<sup>1</sup>These restrictions have not been in force since the early part of the present century.

<sup>2</sup>"The Park' Becomes a Students' Haven", a brief historical sketch of the neighborhood, published in the Bridgeport Sunday Post 7 December 1947.

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George Longstaff, whom the Whelan article credits as being "the Barnum architect who planned all Marina", had many important commissions throughout Connecticut and much of the Northeast.<sup>3</sup> Locally he was responsible for the P.T. Barnum Institute of Science and History (now the Barnum Museum, enrolled in the National Register of Historic Places), the Bishop Arcade (enrolled N.R.H.P.), the tower and chapel of St. John's Episcopal Church, and the Edinburgh Block (both of these buildings have been accepted for study for the N.R.H.P.). In Hartford he was the architect of the 1892 addition to the Wadsworth Atheneum<sup>4</sup>.

The Marina Park District today is a landmark of wide local recognition, accessibility and appreciation. Its mainly institutional ownership has, within the past several years, begun to realize the intrinsic value of the area to the community as a whole. The University of Bridgeport in particular has initiated steps to assure that what remains of Marina Park be ultimately preserved in a manner befitting its status by sympathetic reuse, maintenance of existing fabric instead of uncomplimentary remodeling, and cessation of further demolition.

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<sup>3</sup>A partial list is contained in the article "A Busy Firm", Bridgeport Standard 8 February 1887.

<sup>4</sup>Article entitled "Built by a Bridgeport Firm", Ibid. 5 January 1893.



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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
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J 18/651540/4558530  
K 18/651560/4558560  
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The Marina Park National Register District contains the area in the City of Bridgeport bounded as follows:

Beginning at the point of intersection of the south street line of Atlantic Street and the east street line of Park Avenue;

Thence southerly for a distance of 1018.57 feet, more or less, to a point of intersection with the north street line of Linden Avenue;

Thence easterly for a distance of 120 feet, more or less, to a point opposite the point of intersection of the south street line of Linden Avenue and the east property line of land now or formerly of Mary Sproviero;

Thence southerly for a distance of 239 feet, more or less, to a point of intersection with the north property line of land now or formerly of Francis & Rona Saltrusaitis;

Thence westerly for a distance of 35 feet, more or less, to a point of intersection with the west property line of land now or formerly of Francis & Rona Saltrusaitis;

Thence southerly for a distance of 151 feet, more or less, to a point of intersection with the north street line of Waldemere Avenue;

Thence westerly for a distance of 487.27 feet, more or less, to a point of intersection with the west street line of Marina Park;

Thence northerly for a distance of 403.50 feet, more or less, to a point of intersection with the west street line of Linden Avenue;

Thence easterly for a distance of 252 feet, more or less, to a point of intersection with the west property line of land now or formerly of the Boardman-Beardsley Home Inc.;

Thence northerly for a distance of 115 feet, more or less, to a point of intersection with the south property line of land now or formerly of the University of Bridgeport (Bates Hall);

Thence westerly for a distance of 18 feet, more or less, to a point of intersection with the west property line of land now or formerly of the University of Bridgeport (Bates Hall);

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Thence northerly for a distance of 164.42 feet, more or less, to a point of intersection with the south property line of land now or formerly of Sarah M. Taylor;

Thence easterly for a distance of 87 feet, more or less, to a point of intersection with the west property line of land now or formerly of Timothy Dills;

Thence northerly for a distance of 175.5 feet, more or less, to a point of intersection with the north street line of University Avenue;

Thence westerly for a distance of 160.20 feet, more or less, to a point of intersection with the west property line of land now or formerly of the University of Bridgeport (Cortright Hall);

Thence northerly for a distance of 129.2 feet, more or less, to a point of intersection with the north property line of land now or formerly of the University of Bridgeport (Cortright Hall);

Thence easterly for a distance of 50.67 feet, more or less, to a point of intersection with the west property line of land now or formerly of the University of Bridgeport (Park Hall);

Thence northerly for a distance of 168 feet, more or less, to a point of intersection with the south property line of land now or formerly of the University of Bridgeport (Bryant Hall);

Thence westerly for a distance of 157 feet, more or less, to a point of intersection with the west property line of land now or formerly of the University of Bridgeport (Bryant Hall);

Thence northerly for a distance of 187 feet, more or less, to a point of intersection with the south street line of Atlantic Street;

Thence westerly for a distance of 534.62 feet, more or less, to a point of intersection with the east street line of Park Avenue.