

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

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section number _____ Page _____

SUPPLEMENTARY LISTING RECORD

NRIS Reference Number: 96000356

Date Listed: 04/12/96

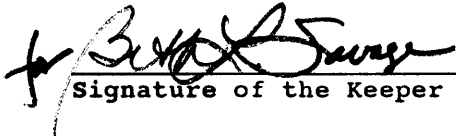
Simsbury Center Historic District
Property Name

Hartford
County

CT
State

N/A
Multiple Name

This property is listed in the National Register of Historic Places in accordance with the attached nomination documentation subject to the following exceptions, exclusions, or amendments, notwithstanding the National Park Service certification included in the nomination documentation.



Signature of the Keeper

4-12-96

Date of Action

=====

Amended Items in Nomination:

8. Statement of Significance: Period of Significance

The documented period of significance for the property is 1752-1933, which reflects the district's architectural significance as it relates to the construction dates of its buildings.

This information was confirmed with John Herzan, National Register Coordinator, CTSHP, by telephone.

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DISTRIBUTION:

- National Register property file
- Nominating Authority (without attachment)

PROPERTY NAME

Simsbury Center Historic District, Simsbury, CT

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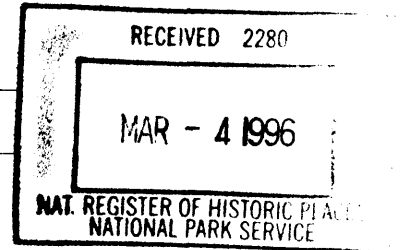
United States Department of the Interior

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

1. NAME OF PROPERTY

Historic Name: Simsbury Center Historic District

Other Name/Site Number: NA



2. LOCATION

Street & Number: 689, 690, 695, 700, 720 (partial), 725, 730, 731, 733, 736, 738, 741, 749, 750, 754, 755, 760, 765-767, 769-779, 776-782, 781, 783-789, 799, 800, 809, 835, 849, 863, 869-871, 880, 883-885, 894, Schultz Park, 920, 923-925, 927, 930, 932, 933, 940, 944, 946-948 Hopmeadow Street; Stables, Mall Way; 1, 5, 9 Phelps Street; Depot, Railroad Avenue; 6, 10-14 Station Street; 6, 7 Wilcox Street

Not for publication: NA

City/Town: Simsbury

Vicinity: NA

State: CT County: Hartford Code: 003 Zip Code: 06070

3. CLASSIFICATION

Ownership of Property
 Private: x
 Public-local: x
 Public-State:
 Public-Federal:

Category of Property
 Building(s):
 District: x
 Site:
 Structure:
 Object:

Number of Resources within Property

Contributing

48

Noncontributing

18 buildings

1 sites

 structures

 objects

19 Total

48

Number of Contributing Resources Previously Listed in the National Register: 9

Name of related multiple property listing: NA

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4. STATE/FEDERAL AGENCY CERTIFICATION

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, as amended, I hereby certify that this X 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 X meets does not meet the National Register Criteria.

[Signature]
Signature of Certifying Official
Director, Connecticut Historical Commission

February 29, 1996
Date

State or Federal Agency and Bureau

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria.

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
- Determined eligible for the
National Register
- Determined not eligible for the
National Register
- Removed from the National Register
- Other (explain):

for Betty L. Savage
Signature of Keeper

4-12-96
Date of Action

PROPERTY NAME

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6. FUNCTION OR USE

Historic: <u>DOMESTIC</u>	Sub: <u>dwelling, hotel</u>
<u>COMMERCE</u>	<u>business, financial institution</u>
<u>GOVERNMENT</u>	<u>city hall, fire station</u>
<u>EDUCATION</u>	<u>school, library</u>
<u>RELIGION</u>	<u>religious structure</u>
<u>FUNERARY</u>	<u>cemetery, funeral home</u>
<u>RECREATION AND CULTURE</u>	<u>auditorium, park</u>
Current: <u>DOMESTIC</u>	Sub: <u>dwelling,</u>
<u>COMMERCE</u>	<u>business, financial institution</u>
<u>GOVERNMENT</u>	<u>city hall, fire station</u>
<u>EDUCATION</u>	<u>school, library</u>
<u>RELIGION</u>	<u>religious structure</u>
<u>FUNERARY</u>	<u>cemetery, funeral home</u>
<u>RECREATION AND CULTURE</u>	<u>auditorium, park</u>

7. DESCRIPTION

Architectural Classification:	Materials:
<u>COLONIAL/Postmed. English</u>	Foundation: <u>STONE, BRICK</u>
<u>EARLY REPUBLIC/Adamesque</u>	Walls: <u>STONE, BRICK, WOOD</u>
<u>LATE VICTORIAN/Renaissance</u>	Roof: <u>Slate, ASPHALT, WOOD</u>
<u>20TH CENTURY/Colonial revival</u>	Other Description: _____

Describe Present and Historic Physical Appearance.

Simsbury Center Historic District extends for seven blocks along Hopmeadow Street, from West Street on the south to Massaco Street on the north. Hopmeadow Street has been the main thoroughfare since the community was settled in mid-17th century and continues in this role to the present time. The anchor buildings at the south are the First Church of Christ [Congregational] (Photograph 1) and the Joseph R. Ensign House, while at the north the anchor buildings are the Horace Belden School/Simsbury Town Office Building (Photograph 9) and St. Mary's Catholic Church complex (Photograph 11). The area in between displays an array of resources of various types, functions, and architectural styles, ranging in age from 1688 for Simsbury Center Cemetery (Photograph 4) to the 1987 St. Mary's Parish Center. Since the community was settled, the district has combined residential, mercantile, and institutional functions, and continues to do so at present.

While Simsbury Center Cemetery, 755 Hopmeadow Street, is the oldest resource in the district, it has experienced a number of changes over time. The ancient stones (the oldest dates from 1688) are complemented by Neo-Classical Revival mausoleums from the turn of the 20th century, while its brownstone and wrought-iron fence runs the full width of the street frontage. The gates of the fence are embellished by bronze eagles and plaques designed and

cast by the Gorham Company of Providence, Rhode Island, and New York City in 1922. The cemetery's expansion has extended to an area north of Library Lane and west of Hopmeadow Street which is not included in the district.

No buildings from the 17th century have survived in the nominated area, but several 18th-century houses are standing. The oldest is the 1752 Benejah Roots House, 930 Hopmeadow Street, which is a standard Colonial five-bay gable-roofed clapboard house with central entrance central chimney. Its unusual feature is the long sloping rear roof, making it a saltbox, the only one in the district. Like almost all buildings in the district constructed as residences, Benejah Roots House now fulfills a commercial function.

The Captain Elisha Phelps House, 800 Hopmeadow Street, 1771 (Photograph 7), is different both for its gambrel roof and elaborate front entry of paneled double-leaf door flanked by fluted pilasters with plant-motif capitals. The Phelps interior is largely original. The Phelps House is on the Massacoh Plantation (Massacoh was the Native American name for Simsbury), the Simsbury Historical Society's property on which it has assembled nine buildings illustrating the town's history. The nine include the frame Phelps Barn, a ca.1795 1 1/2 story frame gambrel-roofed building called the Henricks Cottage, the Watson-Wilcox Carriage House from ca.1880 featuring cupola and balcony, and the double-walled slate-roofed 1889 Ellsworth Icehouse.

A house from the next decade, the Ezra Pratt House, ca.1784, incorporates a 19th-century alteration, rectangular windows in the attic gable ends, within a typical gable-roofed Colonial frame (Photograph 5). The ca.1790 Captain Jacob Pettibone House, 741 Hopmeadow Street, has been more severely altered in the early-20th-century Colonial Revival style.

Early in the 19th century a brick house, unusual in the district for this time period, was built at 835 Hopmeadow Street for Ariel Ensign. It has the recessed central entrance with sidelights, four chimneys, and semi-elliptical attic windows of the Federal style. First Church of Christ, 689 Hopmeadow Street, built 1830, damaged by fire and rebuilt 1965, is transitional from the Federal to the Greek Revival styles. The shallow front pediment, fluted pilasters, and elliptical shield in the second stage of the tower are attenuated features typical of the Federal style, while the tower itself, with three square stages, reflects the severity of the oncoming Greek Revival. Next door, the 1839 Townhouse, 605 Hopmeadow Street, is an example of the fully developed Greek Revival style.

Examples displaying mid-19th-century architectural styles are rare in the district. The three extant buildings from this time period have been greatly altered. The 1851 original section of the frame store at 6 Wilcox Street is barely discernible among the later additions. The Adelaide Wilcox House, 880 Hopmeadow Street, a large and impressive red sandstone building dating from ca.1852, was made into a Neo-Classical Revival design at century's end, while the Methodist Episcopal Church Parsonage, 883-885 Hopmeadow Street, constructed ca.1860, was altered to the Queen Anne style ca.1890. Houses in the mid-19th-century Picturesque styles such as Italianate and Gothic Revival are not present. The brick Probate Court, 7 Wilcox Street, 1876, has the steeply pitched gable roof and roof-peak finial of the Gothic Revival but in a building of classically inspired symmetrical plan and round-arched entranceway.

After the Civil War, the arrival of railroads made an impact on the district. The New Haven and Northampton Railroad Depot, 1875, Railroad Avenue and Station Street, was built by the successor to the New Haven and Northampton [Canal] Company, in conjunction with the Connecticut Western Railroad. It is a rectangular brick Italianate structure with wide

overhang of its gabled roof. The Central of New England Railroad Station, 736 Hopmeadow Street, ca.1880, is a one-story frame rectangular building, with bracketed roof overhang.

Modest commercial and industrial development, perhaps aided by railroad transportation, occurred in the district late in the 19th century and early in the 20th century. The turn-of-the-century one- and two-story brick industrial building at 9 Phelps Lane features bays divided by pilasters and corbeled roof line in the district's only display of such brick-laying craftsmanship. The adjoining small frame gable-roofed house at 5 Phelps Lane, 1883, has a distinctive recessed porch at a front corner. The Welden Hardware Company's three-story brick building, 10-14 Station Street, 1900, is a vernacular but well-preserved commercial block representative of its time.

Accommodation for travelers brought by rail was provided at the Maple Tree Inn, 781 Hopmeadow Street, 1897, a gambrel-roofed frame building which is one of a row of three. To its south is 765-767 Hopmeadow Street, ca.1900, a frame house with first- and second-floor front porches. To its north is 783-789 Hopmeadow Street, ca. 1910, an American Four-Square house now with retail space at first floor. Its first-floor retail space has a front pent roof which extends along a 1920 rectangular cinder-block building, 775-779 Hopmeadow Street, located in front of two adjoining frame houses, 781 Hopmeadow Street and 765-867 Hopmeadow Street, which are set back farther from the street. The arrangement is an example of early adaptation to commercial use along Hopmeadow Street.

In early 20th century the dominant forces in the district's development were three prominent Simsbury families, Eno, Belden, and descendants of Joseph Toy. Amos Eno, son-in-law of Elisha Phelps, a Simsbury native who made a fortune in New York City real estate, owned the brick house at 731 Hopmeadow Street, built in 1822 in the Federal style, which underwent major Colonial Revival alterations. He was the donor of Simsbury Free Library, 749 Hopmeadow Street, 1887 (Photograph 2), an early example of work in the Colonial Revival style by Melvin H. Hapgood, architect. His daughter, Antoinette Eno Woods, made the extensive changes and additions to her father's house at 731 Hopmeadow Street at the turn of the century, at which time it assumed its present Colonial Revival-style appearance. Her philanthropy provided the funds for Eno Memorial Hall, 754 Hopmeadow Street, 1932, Smith & Bassette, architects (Photograph 3), which is an elaborate and skillful essay in the Colonial Revival style now in an excellent state of preservation.

Horace Belden supported the town in a variety of ways. In 1872 he was a founder of the Simsbury Water Company, now housed in a 1933 building at 6 Station Street. A notable philanthropy was his gift to the town of the Horace Belden School, now Simsbury Town Office Building, 933 Hopmeadow Street, 1907, Edward T. Hapgood, architect (Photograph 9). It is a one-story solid brownstone ashlar building designed in an eclectic combination of Richardsonian Romanesque and Gothic Revival styles. The Simsbury Grammar School, 1913, up the hill to the west, is also a brownstone building; it displays Renaissance Revival influence in its design.

Joseph Toy was a founder of the fuse-manufacturing company which became Ensign-Bickford Company, still the town's largest employer. Through marriages of his daughters, ownership of the company was continued in the Ensign, Ellsworth, and Darling families. Ralph H. Ensign donated \$50,000 for the 1909 Methodist Episcopal Church, 799 Hopmeadow Street (Photographs 5, 6). George Keller, Hartford's leading 19th-century architect, who received the commission, designed what he referred to as a "Modern Gothic" brownstone edifice in an example of the less angular and more unified work characteristic of the maturity that came toward the end of his career. Joseph R. Ensign built the large two-story brownstone house at 690 Hopmeadow Street, 1909, for which the architect is unknown. Its red

sandstone stable/garage stands across the street at 700 Hopmeadow Street. He also organized the Simsbury Bank & Trust Company, 760 Hopmeadow Street, 1917, Smith & Bassette, architects. The bank is a two-story Colonial Revival commercial building of red brick with two-story fluted pilasters and roof-line balustrade, which was also used for stores and offices.

The frame Darling house at 720 Hopmeadow Street burned in 1918, to be replaced by the existing Robert and Julia Darling House, 1927, architect unknown, again an example of the Colonial Revival in red brick with white trim. The earlier Darling stables on Mall Way, 1904-1914, are a large U-shaped two-story complex in red sandstone with gable roof, partially slate-covered. One stem of the U terminates in a house. The former Harry E. Ellsworth House is no longer standing, but is remembered by its frame caretaker's cottage, 740 Hopmeadow Street, 1900, distinctive for its square cupola, and by the Ellsworth icehouse, 1889, on Massacoh Plantation, 800 Hopmeadow Street. The Ellsworth family also gave to the town the memorial gateway to Simsbury Center Cemetery, 755 Hopmeadow Street, 1922, and Emmet and Annie Ellsworth Schultz Park, 1976.

The range of buildings in the district spans three centuries and a wide variety of types, functions, and architectural styles representative of Simsbury Center's development from colonial settlement to the present.

Inventory

C and NC in the first column indicate whether the resources are considered to be contributing or non-contributing to the historic and architectural significance of the district. Dates are taken from the Historic and Architectural Resource Survey of Simsbury Center and/or Assessor's field cards.

C/ NC	Address	Year	Description
C	689 Hopmeadow Street	1830	First Church of Christ. 2-story Federal/Greek Revival frame church with pedimented pavilion and 3-stage steeple. Isaac Damon, architect. (Photograph 1)
C	690 Hopmeadow Street	1909	Joseph R. Ensign House. Large 2-story brownstone Italianate asymmetrical structure with tile roof. William M. Ketchin, builder.
C	695 Hopmeadow Street	1839	Simsbury Townhouse. 1-story frame Greek Revival structure with tetrastyle portico under flush pediment. Listed on the National Register of Historic Places.
C	700 Hopmeadow Street	ca.1905	Joseph R. Ensign House Garage. 1-story rectangular brownstone gable-roofed building.
C	720 Hopmeadow Street	1927	Robert and Julia Darling House (part of parcel, see map). 2-story Colonial Revival brick 23-room house. Listed on National Register of Historic Places.

NC	725 Hopmeadow Street	1985	Simsbury Public Library. 2-story contemporary building of red brick with small-pane windows, suggesting minimalist interpretation of Colonial Revival style. Standing-seam metal gable roof.
C	730 Hopmeadow Street	ca.1890	Congregational Parsonage. 2-story frame Neo-Classical Revival house with steeply pitched pyramidal roof. Many alterations; large 2-story addition to south.
C	731 Hopmeadow Street	ca.1900	Amos Eno/Antoinette Eno Wood House. 2-story brick Flemish-bond house constructed in 1822, altered to present appearance ca.1900. Grounds landscaped by Olmsted Associates in 1903. Listed on National Register of Historic Places.
C	733 Hopmeadow Street	ca.1900	Antoinette Eno Wood House Carriage House. 1-story frame Colonial Revival building on high basement.
C	736 Hopmeadow Street	ca.1880	Central New England Railroad Station. 1-story frame rectangular building with bracketed roof overhang.
C	738 Hopmeadow Street	ca.1900	Henry E. Ellsworth House Caretaker's Cottage. 1-story frame gable-roofed building with square cupola. Altered and enlarged.
C	741 Hopmeadow Street	ca.1790	Captain Jacob Pettibone House. 2-story frame 5-bay central-entrance central-chimney house altered to Colonial Revival style.
NC		ca.1980s	Frame drive-in teller station on brownstone foundations
C	749 Hopmeadow Street	ca.1887	Simsbury Free Library. 2-story brick Colonial Revival building painted yellow. Large Palladian windows flank central entrance. Melvin Hapgood, architect. (Photograph 2)
C	750 Hopmeadow Street	ca.1890	A.T. Pattison House. 2-story frame Tudor Revival U-shaped house. Twin gable ends projecting toward street are half-timbered and diamond-glazed. (Photograph 3)
C	754 Hopmeadow Street	1932	Eno Memorial Hall. 2-story brick, limestone, and marble Colonial Revival community building with 2-story pedimented Corinthian tetrastyle portico. Smith & Bassette, architects. Listed on National Register of Historic Places. (Photograph 3)
C	755 Hopmeadow Street	1688	Simsbury Center Cemetery. Neo-Classical Revival-style mausoleums and 1922 Memorial Gateway complement gravestones from the colonial era. (Photograph 4)
C	760 Hopmeadow Street	1917	Simsbury Bank and Trust Company Building. 2-story Flemish-bond brick Colonial Revival commercial building

			with 2-story fluted pilasters and roof-line balustrade. Smith & Bassette, architects. Listed on National Register of Historic Places. (Photograph 3)
C	765-767 Hopmeadow St.	ca.1900	2-story gable-roofed frame house with enclosed first- and second-story porches.
NC		ca.1950s	Frame garage, in rear.
C	769-779 Hopmeadow St.	1920	1-story cinder-block 67' x 31' commercial building, essentially free-standing in front of 765-767 Hopmeadow Street and 781 Hopmeadow Street. Shingled pent roof at first floor of 783-789 Hopmeadow Street continues in front of 769-779 Hopmeadow Street.
C	776-782 Hopmeadow St.	ca.1900	2-story clapboarded and shingled American Four-Square house with pyramidal roof. Hipped-roof dormer in each roof slope.
C	781 Hopmeadow Street	1897	Maple Tree Inn. 2-story frame gambrel-roofed Colonial Revival-style building. Added retail space in front.
C	783-789 Hopmeadow St.	ca.1910	2-story frame American Four-Square building with added retail space to south. (Photograph 5)
C	799 Hopmeadow Street	1909	Methodist Episcopal Church. Gothic Revival brownstone church with castellated tower at corner and large stained-glass pointed-arch windows. George Keller, architect. (Photograph 5, 6)
	800 Hopmeadow Street	var.	Massacoh Plantation. Simsbury Historical Society property, including several buildings moved to site. (Photograph 7)
C			1. Captain Elisha Phelps House (1771); 2-story frame gambrel-roofed building with elaborate central doorway; listed on National Register of Historic Places.
C			2. Phelps Barn (ca.1890). Frame building.
C			3. Hendricks Cottage (ca.1795) 1 1/2-story frame gambrel-roofed building.
C			4. Watson-Wilcox Carriage House (ca.1880). Frame building with cupola and balcony.
NC			5. Fuse Manufactory (1967). 1-story red sandstone building with hipped roof from Ensign-Bickford Company, prominent local manufacturer of fuses.
C			6. Ellsworth Icehouse (1889). Double-walled frame building with slate roof. Capacity, 41 tons of ice.
NC			7. Twin-Pyramid [sic] Meetinghouse (1970). Replica of 1683 building constructed after long controversy as to site.
NC			8. Carriage House (1973). Frame building representative of essential 19th-century facility.

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C			9. Scotland North District Schoolhouse (1740). Originally located in what is now Bloomfield. Rehabilitated ca.1830.
C	809 Hopmeadow Street	ca.1784	Ezra Pratt House. 2-story frame 5-bay central-entrance central-chimney house with Greek Revival attic windows and Colonial Revival portico. (Photograph 5)
C	835 Hopmeadow Street	1812	Ariel Ensign House. 2-story frame Federal 5-bay central-entrance building with recessed doorway and semi-elliptical attic windows.
NC	849 Hopmeadow Street	1951	Southern New England Telephone Company Building. 1-story brick hipped-roof building in contemporary spare interpretation of Colonial Revival. 1957, 1969 additions.
NC	863 Hopmeadow Street	1954	Masonic Lodge. High 1-story 42' x 64' stucco building with low-pitched gable roof.
NC	869-871 Hopmeadow St.	1949	Simsbury Fire Department Firehouse. 2-story brick 34' x 70' building with three truck bays. Hipped roof has cupola.
NC		1984	Smaller maintenance building in rear.
C	880 Hopmeadow Street	ca.1852	Adelaide Wilcox House. 2 1/2-story brownstone building altered to Neo-Classical Revival style ca.1900. 2-story Ionic portico. Flanking 1-story wings.
C	883-885 Hopmeadow St.	ca.1860	Methodist Episcopal Church Parsonage. 2-story frame building altered to the Queen Anne style ca.1890s. Gable roof and asymmetric projecting cross gable.
NC		1988	2-story frame contemporary structure with twin cross gables, in rear.
C	894 Hopmeadow Street	ca.1920	Genevieve R. Curtis House. 2-story frame 3-bay Colonial Revival building with gable roof ridge line parallel with street.
NC	Hopmeadow Street	1976	Emmet and Annie Ellsworth Schultz Park. Open space improved with flower gardens, shrubbery, gazebo, and bandstand. On site of former Community Club.
C	920 Hopmeadow Street	1812	Titus Barber House. 2-story frame Federal 5-bay central chimney central-entrance building. (Photograph 8)
C	923-925 Hopmeadow St.	ca.1920	Shea Family House. 2-story frame American Four-Square building with wide front porch and pyramidal roof with hipped-roof dormer in front slope.
NC		ca.1950	1-story stone garage, in rear.

NC ca.1950 2-story frame contemporary building, in front.

C 927 Hopmeadow Street ca.1900 Shea Family House. 2-story frame building with wide front porch, cross gable at south, and gabled dormers. Owned by the same family who lived at 925 Hopmeadow Street, who were gardeners and also operated a meat market.

C 930 Hopmeadow Street 1752 Benejah Roots House. 2-story frame 5-bay central-entrance central-chimney Colonial building with extensive rear additions.

NC 932 Hopmeadow Street 1966 Post Office. 1-story brick gable-roofed 62' x 30' Colonial Revival building with louvered cupola. 62' x 65' flat-roofed extension to rear.

C 933 Hopmeadow Street 1907 Horace Belden School/Simsbury Town Office Building. 1-story, 144' x 38' brownstone building in Romanesque/Gothic Revival style, Edward T. Hapgood, architect. Listed on National Register of Historic Places. (Photograph 9)

1913 Simsbury Grammar/Central School. 1-story H-shaped rusticated brownstone ashlar building with roof-line parapets and slate roof. Listed on National Register of Historic Places. Large modern brick addition to west.

C 940 Hopmeadow Street ca.1912 Charles Edson Curtiss House/St. Mary's Rectory. 2-story frame Colonial Revival gable-roofed 3-bay house with radial fanlight over central door. Lower wing set back on north. (Photograph 11)

NC ca.1950s 1-story frame gable-roofed garage

C 944 Hopmeadow Street 1921 St. Mary's Church. 2-story brick-and-limestone Gothic Revival-style building with slate roof. Entrance under pointed-arch tripartite traceried window in gable end toward street. (Photograph 11)

NC 946-948 Hopmeadow 1987 St. Mary Parish Center. 1-story brick contemporary hall and school.

C Mall Way 1904-1914 Darling Estate Stables. Large 2-story brownstone U-shaped building with one stem terminating in house.

NC 1 Phelps Lane ca.1950s 1-story frame gambrel-roofed building with odd moat-like space between basement and 8' concrete retaining wall. Roof covered with wooden shingles. Paired gable-roofed dormers.

-
- C 5 Phelps Lane 1883, Assessor/ca.1910, Survey 1 1/2-story frame gambrel-roofed building with recessed porch at northwest corner.
- C 9 Phelps Lane ca.1890, visual/ca.1920, Survey Simsbury Glass Company. 1- and 2-story brick industrial building, each section with three bays divided by pilasters and with corbeled roof line.
- C Railroad/Station St. 1875 New Haven & Northampton Railroad Depot. 1-story brick Italianate building with wide roof overhang. Listed on National Register of Historic Places.
- C 6 Station Street 1933 Simsbury Water Company Office Building. Perhaps originally 1-story brick building with brick parapet, now with frame second floor. Gabled entry at first floor, oversized Palladian window at second. Continues as Water Company office.
- C 10-14 Station Street 1900 Welden Hardware Store. 1-, 2-, and 3- story frame and brick commercial building, still functioning in purpose for which built.
- C 6 Wilcox Street 1851 1- and 2-story frame commercial building constructed in sections from 1851. Groceries, general merchandise, lumber, and building supplies have been sold here.
- C 7 Wilcox Street 1876 Probate Court Building. 1-story small brick building in Gothic Revival style, but entrance has round-arched transom.

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8. STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties: Nationally:___ Statewide: x Locally:___

Applicable National Register Criteria: A___ B___ C x D___

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions): A x B___ C___ D___ E___ F___ G___

Areas of Significance:	Period(s) of Significance		Significant Dates
<u>ARCHITECTURE</u>	<u>1688</u>	<u>1933</u>	<u>NA</u>
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____

Significant Person(s): NA

Cultural Affiliation: NA

Architect/Builder: George Keller, Melvin P. Hapgood, Edward T. Hapgood, Smith & Bassette, Isaac Damon

State Significance of Property, and Justify Criteria, Criteria Considerations, and Areas and Periods of Significance Noted Above.

Simsbury Center Historic District includes the seven blocks of the community's main street, Hopmeadow Street, which is the location of town-center activities. The district has been a mix of residential, mercantile, and institutional buildings since 17th-century settlement. A distinguishing characteristic of the district is the high quality of the residential buildings which make up a significant portion of the area. While many changes have occurred, buildings have been lost, and new buildings have been constructed, the district has continued to be the activity center of the town. It is not, however, and never has been, the conventional commercial Main Street. Homes, churches, stores, town-government buildings, and railroad stations have contributed to the strong and continuing sense of diversity. The district's architecture well reflects the early residential use, continuing institutional presence, and commercial development, which is now the strongest component characterizing the streetscape. Many well-preserved good examples of various styles as they developed over the centuries are included in the district.

The earliest buildings were constructed as homes by the settlers who came westward from Windsor, Connecticut. The early link with Windsor is memorialized by a bronze plaque marking access to the Farmington River ferry, direct route to the mother town. (Photograph

10) The surviving colonial houses are in the standard design of five bays, central entrance, and central chimney, usually with gable roof, occasionally with gambrel roof, and in one case with saltbox rear roof slope. The Captain Elisha Phelps House, 1771, 800 Hopmeadow Street, now a museum, is the best-preserved. The others that remain, all currently serving commercial functions, have been altered, particularly on the interior.

The Captain Elisha Phelps House is the centerpiece of the Simsbury Historical Society property, Massacoh Plantation, on which the society has assembled a group of historic buildings which record and interpret the development of the community. The 1970 replica of the 1683 meetinghouse marks the resolution of the long controversy over selecting the first meetinghouse location. Early schooling is portrayed by the 1740 Scotland North District Schoolhouse, rehabilitated ca.1830, while the group of 18th-century buildings is completed with the 1 1/2-story Hendricks Cottage, ca.1795, which displays a gambrel roof on a house of modest pretensions. Another feature of domestic reality is depicted by the double-walled frame building with slate roof, the 1889 Ellsworth icehouse of 41 ton capacity.

Federal- and Greek Revival-style houses followed in the early 19th century, continuing the tradition of frame dwellings with stylistic changes in step with the fashionable attenuation of the Federal style and the formal strength of the Greek Revival. The Titus-Barber House, 1812, 920 Hopmeadow Street, is an example of Colonial five-bay central-chimney plan modified by the early Federal detail of doorway surround with semi-elliptical fanlight over sidelights under a skeletal Palladian window. The First Church of Christ, 1830, 689 Hopmeadow Street, is particularly important because it displays both Federal and Greek Revival features in a single transitional building, while the Townhouse, 1839, 695 Hopmeadow Street, is a statement of the mature Greek Revival style.

The middle decades of the 19th century saw little building activity, pending arrival of the railroads and the accumulation of wealth by Amos Eno, Horace Belden, and the descendants of Joseph Toy. These late-19th-/early-20th-century developments brought distinctive and skillfully designed commercial, residential, and institutional buildings. The two railroad stations, 736 Hopmeadow Street and Railroad Street, reflect the popularity of the Italianate style of the era, unmistakably characterized by broad bracketed overhanging roofs. The major Colonial Revival changes to the Eno House, 760 Hopmeadow Street, the Classical Revival Ensign House, 690 Hopmeadow Street, and the Colonial Revival Darling home, 720 Hopmeadow Street, all reflect the resurgence of interest in classical precedent and the Colonial Revival style; they set a high standard of architectural design and today maintain the sense of residential affluence within the district.

A brownstone Gothic Revival church was erected for the Methodist Church at 799 Hopmeadow Street in 1909 to plans drawn by George Keller (1842-1935), Hartford's leading 19th-century architect. Keller spent a lifetime working in his trademark "Modern Gothic" which, on occasion, tended to be rough and angular. (See Antoinette Phelps House, Hartford, 1880 (demolished), for the daughter of Simsbury's Guy Rowland Phelps.) But the maturing of his work is fully articulated in the Simsbury Methodist Church. The presence of the large pointed-arch stained-glass window by Louis Comfort Tiffany strengthened the aristocratic tone of the district.

Other institutional buildings early in the 20th century were designed by recognized well-trained architects whose work in Simsbury ranks with their best. For example, the district exhibits an early demonstration of the basic tenet of the Colonial Revival, which is to use colonial motifs but with modification. This national trend is well exemplified, at the very early date of 1887, in the Simsbury Free Library, 749 Hopmeadow Street, by Melvin P. Hapgood (1859-1899). When Charles Follen McKim and William R. Mead were on their

famous sketching tour along the New England coastline rediscovering American colonial architecture, Melvin Hapgood engaged in a similar sketching project in Wethersfield, Connecticut. Among Hapgood's sketches, which survive in the collections of Stowe-Day Library at the Center for Harriet Beecher Stowe Studies, Hartford, one is for the Simsbury Free Library, 749 Hopmeadow Street. In this building the Palladian windows of the front elevation are not only larger in proportion than archeologically correct but also used in a location never found in a colonial building in a manner typifying the Colonial Revival. The domestic scale of the library building maintained the residential character of the district. The district is strengthened by the presence of examples of the work of the two important 19th-century architects, Melvin P. Hapgood and George Keller.

Horace Belden School, 1907, 933 Hopmeadow Street, is an example of the less stereotyped work of Edward T. Hapgood (1866-1915), who outlived his cousin Melvin to engage in a practice primarily devoted to large Colonial Revival homes in the West End of Hartford and West Hartford. From time to time, however, he designed imaginative individual masonry buildings such as the Belden School and the 1903 addition to Asylum Hill Congregational Church, Hartford.

The Simsbury Bank & Trust Company Building, 1917, 760 Hopmeadow Street, for Joseph R. Eno is a commercial space given convincing Colonial Revival street elevations by Hartford's most prolific practitioners in the Colonial Revival style, H. Hilliard Smith (1871-1948), who trained with William C. Brocklesby, and Roy D. Bassette (1891-1965), a student of Paul Cret at the University of Pennsylvania School of Architecture. They practiced in the partnership of Smith & Bassette from 1910 to 1940. Their Eno Memorial Hall, 1932, at 754 Hopmeadow Street is a major statement with refined details and expensive materials such as marble and limestone. The elaborate colossal colonnade, elliptical windows and stairways, and well-thought-out cohesive details, now in a fine state of preservation, make Eno Memorial Hall one of Simsbury's major architectural resources. The Clinton (Connecticut) Town Hall by Smith & Bassette, 1938, closely resembles Eno Memorial Hall.

In mid- to late-20th century Simsbury Center Historic District has witnessed a gradual change in emphasis from predominantly residential usage to commercial activity. While the variety of functions continues, the proportions have changed. The architecturally significant homes, most of which continue standing, have been adapted for other use. Many of the institutional buildings continue their original functions, for example the churches. Others have been adapted to new uses, such as Belden School, now the town hall, while Eno Hall carries on as a community meeting place. The high quality of the architecture continues to contribute to the diversity of the historic activity center of the Town of Simsbury.

9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

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PROPERTY NAME

Simsbury Center Historic District, Simsbury, CT

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United States Department of the Interior

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

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: Simsbury Historical Society

10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

Acreege of Property: 75

UTM References: Zone Northing Easting Zone Northing Easting

A	<u>18</u>	<u>4638800</u>	<u>682640</u>	B	<u>18</u>	<u>4637210</u>	<u>682320</u>
C	<u>18</u>	<u>4637210</u>	<u>682070</u>	D	<u>18</u>	<u>4638670</u>	<u>682200</u>

Verbal Boundary Description:

The district boundary, as shown by dotted line on map with scale of 1" = 33", follows lot lines as drawn on map provided by Simsbury Planning Department, except that only portions of 720 Hopmeadow Street, 740 Hopmeadow Street, and the Depot's parcels have been included.

Boundary Justification:

The boundary of Simsbury Center Historic District is drawn to encompass those properties in the central section of Simsbury, along its main street, which is Hopmeadow Street. Simsbury Center is the site of historic large homes, churches, the Town Office Building, and commercial buildings which collectively form the hub of the community.

PROPERTY NAME

Simsbury Center Historic District, Simsbury, CT

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United States Department of the Interior

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

11. FORM PREPARED BY

Name/Title: David F. Ransom, Consultant, reviewed by John F.A. Herzan, National Register Coordinator

Org.: Architectural Historian

Date: July 1995

Street/#: 33 Sunrise Hill Drive

City/Town: West Hartford

State: CT

ZIP: 06107

Telephone: 203 521-3387

List of Photographs

Photographs were taken by D.F. Ransom in February 1995. Negatives are on file at Connecticut Historical Commission, 59 South Prospect Street, Hartford, CT.

Photograph 1

First Church of Christ
689 Hopmeadow Street
View northwest

Photograph 2

Simsbury Free Library
749 Hopmeadow Street
View northwest

Photograph 3

750-760 Hopmeadow Street
View northeast

PROPERTY NAME

Simsbury Center Historic District, Simsbury, CT

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United States Department of the Interior

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

Photograph 4

Simsbury Center Cemetery
755 Hopmeadow Street

Photograph 5

783-835 Hopmeadow Street
View northwest

Photograph 6

Methodist Episcopal Church
799 Hopmeadow Street
View northwest

Photograph 7

Massacoh Plantation
800 Hopmeadow Street
View east

Photograph 8

Titus Barber House
920 Hopmeadow Street
View northeast

Photograph 9

Horace Belden School/
Simsbury Town Office Building
933 Hopmeadow Street
View northwest

Photograph 10

Bronze plaque at Pent Road
View east

Photograph 11

St. Mary's Church
and Rectory
944, 940 Hopmeadow Street
View northeast