

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

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

Newington Junction Multiple Resource Area, Newington, CT

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Historic District

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Newington Junction West Historic District

Description:

The Newington Junction West Historic District consists of properties located in Newington, Connecticut on either side of West Hill Road, and on the west side of Willard Avenue between West Hill Road and the Amtrak railroad tracks. The district contains approximately eight acres, and of the 16 major buildings within it, 13 contribute to its significance (seven residences, four garages [one 19th-century, three 20th], a 19th-century farm-related building, and the old firehouse [now used as parking for adjacent senior citizen housing]). The land within the district slopes gently upward to the northwest, rising about twenty feet. West Hill Road is a heavily traveled thoroughfare connecting Newington and West Hartford, while the properties west of Willard Avenue are on lightly-used Chapman Street.

A strong visual and historical relationship among the district buildings is the basis for the district boundaries. Ten of the 16 buildings are in a cluster on West Hill Road. Although a senior citizen housing complex at the intersection of West Hill Road and Willard Avenue breaks the continuity of the district streetscape, the properties on the two streets are contiguous at their rear lot lines and close enough geographically to relate well visually to one another. The contributing buildings vary greatly in age (c. 1710-1922), but they are all considerably older than the newer residential and commercial development nearby. Their generally larger size, larger lots and higher architectural quality also set them apart. The district historically was part of the larger Newington Junction community, but changes over time, particularly the later commercial development, have cut this area off from the other parts of the Junction that retain historic integrity.

The district buildings exhibit several different architectural styles. While some are altered, most retain their original facades and only a few are covered with synthetic siding. The oldest structure, which is also thought to be the oldest extant building in Newington, is the John Camp House at 301-303 West Hill Road (c. 1710) (Photograph #17). This five-bay two-story Colonial saltbox is sheathed in clapboards and mostly intact outside. Its facade retains a few remnants of the framing for a wide, one-story front porch that is now gone. Most of the double hung sash windows have six-over-one lights. According to photographic evidence, one of the two front entrance doors is a 19th-century addition.

The next oldest house is at 272 West Hill Road, built c.1770 and in the continuous ownership of the allied Hunn and Whaples families (Photograph #18). A five-bay, center chimney Colonial, this house has experienced 19th and 20th-century alterations. The wide front entrance porch and its adjoining rectangular bay display Queen Anne detailing (e.g., decoratively turned and molded posts), while the side porch, with square chamfered posts,

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may well be earlier. One- and two-story wings project from the rear elevation. Despite changes, the house retains a strong sense of its original age and appearance. Near the house is a one-story, unpainted clapboard building that dates from before 1850, according to its owner, Thomas Whaples. Mr. Whaples believes that this small structure served at one time as the stripping and packing location for tobacco produced by his family farm (Photograph #19).

A large, c.1850, three-bay house that combines Greek Revival and Italianate features is located at 4 Chapman Street (Photograph #20), and is known as "The Pillars." Its plan (square central block, with a large rear ell and side porch) and roofline (low hipped, with broad overhang) are clearly Italianate. In other respects, its features are Greek Revival (frieze windows and entrance portico with Tuscan columns and pilasters), although their oversized proportions suit the Italianate elements. As the photograph illustrates, extensive rehabilitation has been done to the building (completed March, 1986) following a serious fire.

295-297 West Hill Road, a c.1880 residence with a cross plan, is Victorian Gothic in style. The one-story front entrance porch and two-story side porch are elaborate and typical of this style (molded and turned posts, arched trusses with centered pendants, and pierced screen skirts). The gable pediments are an uncommon device for this style. The first-floor side porch railing is a replacement in wrought iron.

A rather simple Queen Anne house is at 275 West Hill Road (c.1890, Photograph #21). Its Queen Anne-style combination of sheathings (clapboards and imbricated shingles) and a turned porch post highlight this cross-plan, one-bay residence. 269 West Hill Road (c.1900) is another late Queen Anne house that illustrates an entirely different program. Its rectangular plan is disguised by an asymmetrical roofline that flares outward and covers the front entrance porch. The original exterior sheathing, now partly covered or replaced with asbestos siding, appears to have been clapboards and wood shingles. The elliptical porch window reflects a Colonial Revival influence (Photograph #22).

Two buildings are very different examples of the Colonial Revival style. 285 West Hill Road, built c.1910, is a typical American Four Square house, a popular subtype of the style, as adapted to a duplex plan. Its basically square dimensions (here, with projecting side pavilions), broad hipped roof, and wide front porch are key features of this style. The slightly recessed front entrance doors add visual interest, and the pre-cast concrete block foundation is the only one of its kind in the district. The porch railing appears to be a replacement, and the house is covered in synthetic siding (Photograph #23).

The old firehouse, dating from 1922, is a rather plain, one-story brick

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building that is highlighted by a Colonial Revival, semi-elliptical, gable peak window and an open cupola that has a Tudor-arched hipped roof.

Inventory

Note: street numbers in the inventory correspond to those shown on the attached map #2(scale 1:2400). Contributing and non-contributing structures are indicated by the use of a "C" or "NC," as appropriate, before the description of each structure. ONLY those buildings that are National Register sites or within National Register districts are listed in the inventory.

Construction dates are a "best estimate" based on weighing several sources of information, including town assessor's records, historical documentation and visual examination. "(A)" following a date means that its source is the town assessor's office, and these dates were confirmed in each instance by at least a visual estimate. ("P #__") following a property description indicates a numbered photograph.

West Hill Road

- #269 C(2) Early 20th-century, Queen Anne-inspired residence, 1904(A, P#22), and three-car garage, c.1930.
- 272 C(2) Colonial residence, c.1770(A, P#s 18 & 19) and farm-related building, c.1840(P#19).
- 275 C(2) Late 19th-century, Queen Anne-inspired residence, 1899(A, P #21) and vernacular one-car garage, c.1890.
- 279 NC Modern residence, 1953(A).
- 285-287 C(2) American Four Square residence and two-car garage, 1913(A, P #23).
- 295-297 C&NC Victorian Gothic residence, 1880(A), and modern garage, c.1960.
- 301-303 C&NC Colonial residence, c.1710(A, P #17), and modern garage, c.1955.

Chapman Street

- #2 C Colonial Revival firehouse (Old Volunteer Fire Co. #3, now used as garage for adjacent senior citizen housing), 1922(A).
- 4 C(2) Greek Revival/Italianate residence, c.1860(P #20) and vernacular four-car garage, c.1915.

Significance

Criterion C (Architecture)

Each contributing residence is a good example of a period architectural style. Their degree of sophistication and detailing vary greatly, which adds considerably to the visual interest. The John Camp House at 301-303 West Hill Road (Photograph #17) has special importance as the oldest surviving house in Newington and its only extant saltbox. Its plan and sim-

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ple detailing, though altered over time, still clearly illustrate its age and style. The Hunn-Whaples House (Photograph #18), another 18th-century structure, is a fascinating study of the changing aesthetic tastes of one family over 200 years. Its juxtaposition of stylistic elements is quite appealing. "The Pillars" is an unusual and forceful house in a transitional Greek Revival/Italianate design that still has a commanding presence in spite of the intrusion of the railroad overpass (Photograph #20). The Junction's best surviving remnant of its long agriculture heritage is the completely intact, sturdy building at 272 Willard Avenue that dates from the mid-19th century (Photograph #19). The other contributing structures, though less distinguished architecturally, are all nicely detailed and create a harmonious setting.

Historical Background

The residents and institutions associated with the Newington Junction West Historic District have contributed to the history of the Multiple Resources Area in a variety of ways.

Together with being the first permanent resident of the Junction, Samuel Hun was a signer of the 1712 petition requesting creation of the Newington parish and thereafter served in various official functions, including collector of parish taxes. His descendant Albert Hunn farmed their property on West Hill Road (Photographs #18 & 19) and served on Newington's first board of selectmen following town incorporation in 1871. He later represented Newington in the state legislature. John Camp bought "Mile-in-Breadth" grant #5 in 1697. This property on West Hill Road contains the c.1710 saltbox that Camp or his son, Captain John Camp (1675-1747), thereafter built. Captain John headed Newington's first military company (1726).

From 1922 until its close in 1944, the Junction post office occupied one of the front rooms in The Pillars (Photograph #20). This structure also achieved some notoriety because its connections with Mrs. Amy Archer, whose "mercy killings," while she resided here and later in Windsor, Connecticut in the early years of this century, were the basis for the Broadway play "Arsenic and Old Lace." Next door, the old firehouse was the headquarters from 1929 to 1977 of Newington Volunteer Fire Company #3.

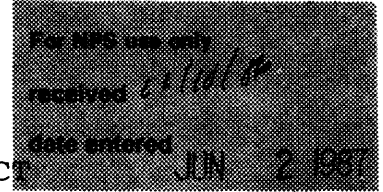
The wide range in the age of houses in this district is also of interest because these buildings document the great change in and appearance of the Junction from its early days until the mid-20th century.

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Acreage: eight acres

UTM References:	C	18/687900/4620630
	E	18/687840/4620350
	F	18/688140/4620150
	D	18/688390/4620470