



United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
REGISTRATION FORM**

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1. Name of Property

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historic name: CLINTON VILLAGE HISTORIC DISTRICT

other name/site number: N/A

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2. Location

street & number: Cemetery Road; Church, East Main, Liberty Streets;  
Old Post Road; Waterside Lane

city/town: Clinton not for publication: N/A  
vicinity: N/A

state: CT county: Middlesex code: 007 zip code: 06413

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3. Classification

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Ownership of Property: private, public-local

Category of Property: district

Number of Resources within Property:

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>144</u>	<u>51</u>	buildings
<u>2</u>	<u>0</u>	sites
<u>2</u>	<u>2</u>	structures
<u>6</u>	<u>0</u>	objects
<u>154</u>	<u>53</u>	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register: 0

Name of related multiple property listing: N/A

4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, 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. See cont. sheet.

Signature of certifying official: John W. Shannahan, Director, Connecticut Historical Commission; Date: 06/22/94

State or Federal agency and bureau

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

Signature of commenting or other official; Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

5. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby certify that this property entered in the National Register

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 Signature of Keeper; Date of Action

6. Function or Use

Historic: DOMESTIC, COMMERCE/TRADE, RELIGION, EDUCATION; Sub: single dwelling, specialty store, religious structure, school, library; Current: DOMESTIC, COMMERCE/TRADE, RELIGION, EDUCATION; Sub: single dwelling, professional, business, religious structure, school, library

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7. Description  
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Architectural Classification:

- Colonial
- Federal
- Greek Revival

Other Description: N/A

Materials: foundation	<u>STONE</u>	roof	<u>ASPHALT</u>
walls	<u>WOOD</u>	other	<u>N/A</u>
	<u>BRICK</u>		

Describe present and historic physical appearance. X See continuation sheet.

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8. Statement of Significance  
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Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties: state.

Applicable National Register Criteria: A,C

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions) : \_\_\_\_\_

Areas of Significance: ARCHITECTURE  
COMMUNITY PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

Period(s) of Significance: c.1720-c.1940 \_\_\_\_\_

Significant Dates: See item 7

Significant Person(s): N/A  
\_\_\_\_\_

Cultural Affiliation: N/A

Architect/Builder: See item 7  
\_\_\_\_\_

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.  
X See continuation sheet.

9. Major Bibliographical References

X See continuation sheet.

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 ADAM STANTON HOUSE

X recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # CT-137

   recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # \_\_\_\_\_

Primary Location of Additional Data:

X State historic preservation office Connecticut Historical Commission

   Other state agency 59 South Prospect Street

   Federal agency Hartford, Connecticut 06106

   Local government

   University

   Other -- Specify Repository: \_\_\_\_\_

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of Property: approx. 120 acres

UTM References: Zone Easting Northing    Zone Easting Northing

A    \_\_\_\_\_    B    \_\_\_\_\_  
C    \_\_\_\_\_    D    \_\_\_\_\_

X See continuation sheet.

Verbal Boundary Description:    See continuation sheet.

The boundary is shown on the accompanying map, scale 1" = 200'.

Boundary Justification: X See continuation sheet.

11. Form Prepared By

Name/Title: Bruce Clouette and Maura Cronin, reviewed by John Herzan,

Conn. Hist. Commission  
Organization: Historic Resource Consultants Date: March 25, 1994

Street & Number: 55 Van Dyke Avenue Telephone: 203-547-0268

City or Town: Hartford State: CT Zip: 06106

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**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Geographical Data      Clinton Village Historic District      10-1  
                                 Clinton, Middlesex County, CT

UTM REFERENCES:

- 1: 18.707290.4572640
- 2: 18.707550.4572620
- 3: 18.707620.4572560
- 4: 18.707680.4572480
- 5: 18.707680.4572360
- 6: 18.707820.4572340
- 7: 18.707870.4572460
- 8: 18.707980.4572740
- 9: 18.708120.4572760
- 10: 18.708180.4572710
- 11: 18.708040.4572660
- 12: 18.708120.4572640
- 13: 18.708120.4572560
- 14: 18.708070.4572410
- 15: 18.708220.4572320
- 16: 18.708420.4572130
- 17: 18.708430.4572120
- 18: 18.708500.4572140
- 19: 18.708480.4572110
- 20: 18.708420.4572080
- 21: 18.708140.4572180
- 22: 18.708140.4572120
- 23: 18.707910.4572160
- 24: 18.707840.4571800
- 25: 18.707720.4571580
- 26: 18.707640.4571530
- 27: 18.707540.4571630
- 28: 18.707540.4571680
- 29: 18.707650.4572200
- 30: 18.707480.4572170
- 31: 18.707300.4572200
- 32: 18.707240.4572440
- 33: 18.707250.4572510

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CONTINUATION SHEET**

Description                      Clinton Village Historic District                      7-1  
   Clinton, Middlesex County, CT

The Clinton Village Historic District is a grouping of approximately 100 major buildings, most of which are 18th or early 19th-century houses, ranged along both sides of East Main Street (U.S. Route 1) east of the Indian River in the town of Clinton, Connecticut. The houses are set close to the street and are quite densely grouped, creating a distinctive streetscape of historic architecture (see as an example Photograph 6). In addition to East Main Street, which continues as Old Post Road at the eastern end, the district includes a long street, Waterside Lane, that leads from the main concentration of buildings south to the harbor. Only a little less densely built than East Main Street, Waterside Lane is similarly characterized by 18th and early 19th-century houses, particularly on the west side. Another grouping of similar houses extends north along Liberty Street.

The district's 18th-century houses (Photographs 5, 9, and 14) mostly have five-bay facades, clapboarded exteriors, small-pane sash, and large center chimneys of brick; they are about equally divided between 1 1/2 and 2 1/2-story examples. Some show evidence of being updated in the 19th century with Greek Revival doorways and pilasters, and two were even redone in the Gothic Revival style. A number of these early buildings are known to have accommodated stores or artisan shops at one time.

The district has several c.1800 houses that embody the Federal style with porticos on slender columns and elaborate cornice moldings (Photograph 12). Later 19th-century houses exhibit the bolder proportions of the Greek Revival (Photograph 10) and range from houses whose only stylistic references are corner pilasters and a simple pilaster-and-lintel doorway (Photograph 4) to the Dibbell House, with its full-width two-story portico on freestanding Ionic columns (Photograph 8).

Scattered among the predominantly pre-Civil War architecture of the district are a few houses from the Victorian period and early 20th century (Photographs 11 and 13). The latter, in particular, fill in previously unbuilt-upon land on the east wide of Waterside Lane.

Because this area is part of Clinton's town center, the district also includes buildings that serve civic, educational, and religious institutions. The town's Greek Revival-style Congregational meetinghouse (Photograph 1) occupies a prominent location on a short loop off East Main Street known as Church Street, and not far away is the Gothic Revival-style Episcopal Church of the Holy Advent. Also nearby are the Town Hall (Photograph 2), Clinton's 1801 Academy

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Description                      Clinton Village Historic District                      7-2  
   Clinton, Middlesex County, CT

(Photograph 3), and the Abraham Pierson School, the latter two of which are Colonial Revival-style structures erected in the 1930s.

Two distinctive landscapes are included within the boundaries of the district: the Clinton Cemetery, a mostly Victorian-period cemetery that grew up around the town's colonial burying ground, and Liberty Green, a vestige of Clinton's 17th-century common. The cemetery includes several dozen 18th-century markers with soul effigies and other decorative carving (Photograph 15). Liberty Green is a park-like triangle between Liberty Street and East Main Street. It was the site chosen for the town's Civil War monument, as well as a small cannon from the War of 1812 (Photograph 16). There are also numerous other monuments in the district, including two statues to locally prominent people, another cannon at the water's edge said to have once been a prize of John Paul Jones, and a memorial to the early students of Yale College.

The district exhibits a high degree of integrity, both as a whole and in its constituent properties. Recent development has mostly occurred on the interior of the blocks, where it is less visible from the street. Of the district's noncontributing buildings, most are modern garages associated with historic houses; garages that clearly have been made over from small barns or other historic outbuildings have been counted as contributing (Photograph 4), as have garages associated with early 20th-century houses if they appear to be from the same period. Major noncontributing buildings are limited to fire and police department complexes from the 1970s, one brick apartment building on Waterside Lane, two motels (Photograph 7), and a few modern houses and cottages near the waterfront.

Although a few of the houses have been sided, most retain the characteristic form and features that identify their period of origin.

In the Inventory that follows, the count of contributing buildings (C) includes houses, barns, and other outbuildings that retain their historic appearance; conversely, the count of noncontributing buildings (NC) includes houses and outbuildings that appear to be of relatively recent construction. "Siding" indicates either aluminum or vinyl siding, and "composition" indicates shingles of molded wood particles, asbestos, or other composites. Historic names and dates were compiled from the local historic district study report, the historic house files at Clinton's public library, and signs and names placed on houses by the Clinton Historical Society. Other dates are estimates by the preparers of this form, based primarily on architectural features.

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CONTINUATION SHEET**

Description                      Clinton Village Historic District                      7-3  
   Clinton, Middlesex County, CT

INVENTORY: BUILDINGS

ADDRESS	STORIES	DATE	STYLE	MATERIALS	C	NC
45 Church Street	1 1/2	c.1800	Colonial	clapboards	1	0
55 Church Street CLINTON CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH - Photograph 1	2	1837	Greek Revival	siding	1	1
59 Church Street	2 1/2	c.1820	Federal	siding	1	2
37 East Main Street Clinton Fire Station	1 1/2	1971	no style	brick	0	1
48 East Main Street Clinton Police Station	1 1/2	1973	no style	brick	0	1
49 East Main Street Clinton Tercentenary Building	1	1985	Colonial (reprod.)	weatherboards	0	1
50 East Main Street	1 1/2	c.1710	Colonial	clapboards	1	0
54 East Main Street CLINTON TOWN HALL - Photograph 2	2	1930		brick	1	0
61 East Main Street THE ACADEMY - Photograph 3	2 1/2	1801	Greek Revival/ Italianate	clapboards	1	0
62 East Main Street GEORGE ELIOT HOUSE - Photograph 4	2	c.1783	Colonial/Greek Revival	clapboards	3	0
63 East Main Street STANTON HOUSE - Photograph 5	2	c.1780	Colonial	clapboards	2	0
68 East Main Street MILLSTONE HOUSE	2 1/2	c.1739	Colonial	clapboards	2	0
69 East Main Street	1 1/2	c.1870	Gothic Revival	clapboards	1	0
75 East Main Street ABRAHAM PIERSON SCHOOL	3	1932	Colonial Revival	brick	2	0
78 East Main Street Clinton Antique Center	2	c.1920	no style	stucco	1	0
80 East Main Street Swan Funeral Home	2	c.1890	no style	siding	1	0
81 East Main Street HOLY ADVENT EPISCOPAL CHURCH	1 1/2	c.1870	Gothic Revial	shingles	1	1
83 East Main Street	2 1/2	c.1790	Colonial	siding	1	1
84 East Main Street	2 1/2	c.1890	no style	shingles	1	0
85 East Main Street Photograph 6	2 1/2	c.1820	Federal	siding	1	0
86 East Main Street	1	c.1950	no style	siding	0	1

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Description                      Clinton Village Historic District                      7-4  
   Clinton, Middlesex County, CT

INVENTORY: BUILDINGS

ADDRESS	STORIES	DATE	STYLE	MATERIALS	C	NC
88 East Main Street	2	c.1900	no style	siding	1	0
89 East Main Street Photograph 6	2	c.1820	Federal	clapboards	2	0
90 East Main Street former shop for making shoes, melodeans	2	c.1820	no style	siding	1	0
91 East Main Street antique shop - Photograph 6	1	c.1920	no style	clapboards	1	0
92 East Main Street JOSIAH KELSEY HOUSE	1 1/2	c.1760	Colonial/Gothic Revival	clapboards, matched boards	1	0
93 East Main Street	2	c.1840	Greek Revival	clapboards	1	0
95 East Main Street GEN. HORATIO G. WRIGHT HOUSE	2 1/2	1807	Federal	siding	1	0
96-98 East Main Street ELI KELSEY HOUSE	2 1/2	c.1790	Colonial	siding	1	0
97 East Main Street	2	c.1820	Federal	siding	1	0
100 East Main Street LEMUEL WELLMEN HOUSE	2 1/2	c.1792	Colonial	siding	1	0
101 East Main Street WRIGHT HOUSE	2 1/2	1819	Federal	clapboards	2	0
103 East Main Street CAPT. ELISHA WHITE HOUSE (Clinton Historical Society)	2 1/2	c.1750	Colonial	brick	1	1
104 East Main Street NATHANIEL WILLIAMS HOUSE	2 1/2	c.1763	Colonial	siding	1	1
108 East Main Street former bank	1	c.1980	no style	siding	0	1
109 East Main Street	1 1/2	c.1850	no style	clapboards	1	0
110 East Main Street CAPT. W. H. WILLIAMS HOUSE	1 1/2	c.1710	Colonial	clapboards	1	0
114 East Main Street	2 1/2	c.1890	Victorian	clapboards, shingles	1	0
125 East Main Street	1	c.1787	Colonial/Gothic Revival	composition	1	1
127 East Main Street	2 1/2	c.1840	no style	siding	1	0
129 East Main Street	1 1/2	c.1790	Federal	clapboards	2	1
130 East Main Street BEN MERRILL HOUSE	2 1/2	c.1735	Colonial	clapboards	1	0

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Description                      Clinton Village Historic District                      7-5  
Clinton, Middlesex County, CT

INVENTORY: BUILDINGS

ADDRESS	STORIES	DATE	STYLE	MATERIALS	C	NC
131 East Main Street	1 1/2	c.1765	Colonial	clapboards	1	1
137 East Main Street	2 1/2	c.1840	no style	siding	1	0
138 East Main Street	2 1/2	c.1800	Federal	clapboards	1	0
143 East Main Street Village Motel: includes house, barn and three modern motel units (Photograph 7)	2 1/2	c.1875	Italianate	clapboards	2	3
142 East Main Street	1 1/2	c.1950	"Cape"-type	siding	0	1
144 East Main Street	2	c.1900	no style	siding	2	0
145 East Main Street	2 1/2	c.1860	no style	siding	2	0
146 East Main Street	1 1/2	c.1810	no style	clapboards	2	0
147 East Main Street	2 1/2	c.1870	Italianate	clapboards	2	0
149 East Main Street	1 1/2	c.1800	no style	clapboards	1	1
153 East Main Street includes outbuilding, 155-157 East Main Street, now the "Corn Crib" basket shop	2 1/2	c.1800	Federal	clapboards	2	0
159 East Main Street	1 1/2	c.1720	Colonial	composition	3	0
163 East Main Street Clinton Motel	1 1/2	c.1950	no style	brick	0	1
170 East Main Street DIBBELL HOUSE - Photograph 8	2 1/2	c.1860	Greek Revival	brick	1	0
3 Liberty Street JOHN ROSSITER HOUSE	2	c.1734	Colonial	clapboards	1	1
5 Liberty Street Photograph 9 - right	1 1/2	c.1725	Colonial	clapboards	1	1
6 Liberty Street	2	c.1840	no style	clapboards	1	0
7-9 Liberty Street Photograph 9 -left	2 1/2	c.1800	Colonial	clapboards	1	1
11 Liberty Street	1 1/2	c.1750	Colonial	clapboards	3	0
15 Liberty Street Photograph 10	2 1/2	c.1830	Federal/Greek Revival	clapboards	2	0
17 Liberty Street attrib. to JOHN ROSSITER	1 1/2	c.1750	Colonial	shingles	2	0
18 Liberty Street	1 1/2	c.1780	Colonial	composition	1	0
22 Liberty Street J. LANE HOUSE	1 1/2	c.1750	Colonial	clapboards, shingles	1	0

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**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
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Description                      Clinton Village Historic District                      7-6  
Clinton, Middlesex County, CT

INVENTORY: BUILDINGS

ADDRESS	STORIES	DATE	STYLE	MATERIALS	C	NC
23 Liberty Street	1 1/2	c.1750	Colonial	siding	2	0
24 Liberty Street DAVIS PIERSON HOUSE	2	c.1840	Greek Revival	siding	2	0
25 Liberty Street	1 1/2	c.1780	Colonial	clapboards	2	0
26 Liberty Street	1 1/2	c.1800	Colonial	siding	2	0
29 Liberty Street	2	c.1850	no style	siding	1	1
37 Liberty Street DISTRICT SCHOOL, moved from Liberty Green in 1847	1 1/2	c.1800	Colonial	clapboards	1	0
5 Long Hill Road	2 1/2	c.1840	Greek Revival	clapboards	1	0
8 Old Post Road	2 1/2	c.1760	Colonial	composition	1	0
9 Old Post Road	2 1/2	c.1780	Colonial	clapboards	1	0
8 Waterside Lane	2	c.1950	no style	shingles	0	1
9 Waterside Lane	2	c.1970	no style	brick	0	1
11 Waterside Lane Photograph 11	2 1/2	c.1890	Gothic Revival	clapboards	1	0
12 Waterside Lane	1	c.1930	no style	shingles	1	0
12A Waterside Lane	1	c.1955	"Ranch"-type	clapboards	0	1
13 Waterside Lane	2	c.1900	Victorian	clapboards	1	1
14 Waterside Lane	1	c.1930	no style	shingles	1	1
16 Waterside Lane	1 1/2	c.1925	Bungalow	clapboards, shingles	2	0
17 Waterside Lane RICHARD BUELL HOUSE - Photograph 12	2 1/2	c.1785	Federal	clapboards	2	0
18 Waterside Lane Photograph 13	1 1/2	c.1930	Bungalow	siding, shingles	1	1
20 Waterside Lane	2	c.1930	Colonial Revival	clapboards	1	1
21 Waterside Lane	1	c.1800	Colonial	clapboards	2	0
22 Waterside Lane	2	c.1950	no style	clapboards	0	2
23 Waterside Lane WILLIAM GRINELL HOUSE	1 1/2	c.1785	Colonial	siding	1	1
25 Waterside Lane	2 1/2	c.1890	Queen Anne	clapboards, shingles	1	0

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**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Description                      Clinton Village Historic District                      7-7  
   Clinton, Middlesex County, CT

INVENTORY: BUILDINGS

ADDRESS	STORIES	DATE	STYLE	MATERIALS	C	NC
26 Waterside Lane	2 1/2	c.1850	no style	clapboards	2	0
29 Waterside Lane	2 1/2	c.1870	Italianate	clapboards	2	0
32 Waterside Lane	2 1/2	c.1870	no style	clapboards	1	1
34 Waterside Lane	1 1/2	1969	no style	siding	0	1
35 Waterside Lane	2 1/2	c.1790	Colonial	clapboards	1	0
36 Waterside Lane BUELL HOUSE, moved from West Main Street	1 1/2	c.1810 c.1950	Federal	siding	1	1
37 Waterside Lane	1 1/2	c.1850	no style	composition	1	0
38 Waterside Lane	1 1/2	c.1820	no style	clapboards	2	0
39 Waterside Lane JOHN WELLMAN HOUSE	2 1/2	c.1800	Federal	clapboards	2	0
42 Waterside Lane	2 1/2	c.1890	no style	siding	1	2
43 Waterside Lane CHARLES K. ROSSITER HOUSE	1 1/2	c.1790	Colonial	clapboards	2	1
44 Waterside Lane	2 1/2	c.1840	Greek Revival	clapboards	1	1
50 Waterside Lane	2	c.1800	Colonial	clapboards	3	0
51 Waterside Lane	2 1/2	c.1890	Victorian	clapboards	2	0
54 Waterside Lane	1 1/2	c.1960	"Colonial"-type	siding	0	1
56 Waterside Lane	1 1/2	c.1960	"Colonial"-type	siding	0	1
60 Waterside Lane	1 1/2	c.1950	"Colonial"-type	shingles	0	1
61 Waterside Lane CAPT. NATHANIEL FARNHAM HOUSE	1 1/2	c.1800	Colonial	clapboards	1	1
62 Waterside Lane	1 1/2	c.1797	Colonial	clapboards	2	0
64 Waterside Lane SILAS WILCOX HOUSE	1 1/2	c.1780	Colonial	clapboards	2	0
65 Waterside Lane THE ARSENAL - Photograph 14	1 1/2	c.1675 (traditional date)	Colonial	siding	2	0
67 Waterside Lane Morgan Meadow Lane Cottages	1 1/2	1965	no style	shingles	4	0
69 Waterside Lane CAPT. JAMES FARNHAM HOUSE	1 1/2	c.1785	Colonial	siding	2	0
73 Waterside Lane FARNHAM HOUSE	2	c.1820	Federal	clapboards	1	0

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Description                      Clinton Village Historic District                      7-8  
   Clinton, Middlesex County, CT

INVENTORY: BUILDINGS

ADDRESS	STORIES	DATE	STYLE	MATERIALS	C	NC
75 Waterside Lane	2 1/2	c.1890	no style (barn)	board siding	1	1
76 Waterside Lane	2 1/2	c.1735	Colonial	siding	1	1
77 Waterside Lane	2 1/2	c.1800	Federal	clapboards	1	0
78 Waterside Lane	1	c.1950	no style	shingles	0	3
80 Waterside Lane GIDEON KELSEY HOUSE	2 1/2	c.1790	Colonial	clapboards	1	0

CONTRIBUTING STRUCTURES

Bridge No. 1888, Route 1 (East Main Street) over Indian River, 1876 stone arch originally built as part of the Shoreline Railroad, converted to highway use when railroad was relocated to north; ornamental stone railings, c.1940.

Bridge No. 97.04, AMTRAK railroad over Indian River, 1884 stone arch.

NONCONTRIBUTING STRUCTURES

Bridge No. 97.10, AMTRAK railroad over Cemetery Road, 1949 I-beam bridge.

Bridge No. 97.49, AMTRAK railroad over Liberty Street, 1993 concrete bridge.

CONTRIBUTING SITES

Clinton Cemetery, Cemetery Road (north of East Main Street and Church Street), mostly Victorian-period cemetery with the center part containing Clinton's colonial burying ground, with several dozen 18th-century markers with soul effigies and other carvings (Photograph 15).

Liberty Green, part of the original common laid out in 1685, now a small triangular park between East Main and Liberty streets; planted with shade trees and furnished with benches, it also has a flagpole and two monuments (Photograph 16).

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Description                      Clinton Village Historic District                      7-9  
   Clinton, Middlesex County, CT

CONTRIBUTING OBJECTS

Civil War Monument, Liberty Green, granite soldier on tall pedestal (Photograph 16).

Cannon, Liberty Green, War of 1812 period (Photograph 16).

Cannon, foot of Waterside Lane, 18th-century, said to have been captured by John Paul Jones.

Monument to Yale College Graduates of 1701-1707, in front of Congregational Church, 55 Church Street;  
books atop obelisk, granite.

Statue of Charles Morgan, on grounds of Abraham Pierson School, 75 East Main Street, granite, 1874, Launt  
Thompson, sculptor.

Statue of Abraham Pierson, on grounds of Abraham Pierson School, 75 East Main Street, granite, 1874, Launt  
Thompson, sculptor.

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Significance                      Clinton Village Historic District                      8-1  
   Clinton, Middlesex County, CT

Summary

The Clinton Village Historic District is significant because its many historic buildings embody the distinctive characteristics of several styles of architecture, including the vernacular architecture of 18th-century New England, the Federal style, and the Greek Revival style, each of which is represented by numerous well-preserved examples (Criterion C). The district also has significance as an example of a coastal town center, a particular settlement pattern associated with the development of Connecticut towns along Long Island Sound in the 18th and 19th centuries (Criterion A). The district illustrates many of the key features of such town centers: a green with community monuments, the Congregational meetinghouse and other churches, the town hall, educational institutions, the oldest town cemetery, and a dense concentration of houses dating from colonial times to the early 20th century.

Architectural Significance

Many of the buildings in the Clinton Village Historic District embody the distinguishing characteristics of particular periods and styles of architecture. The district's oldest houses exhibit the clapboarded exteriors, gable roofs, and five-bay center-chimney form that characterized the domestic architecture of colonial-era Connecticut. In addition to numerous examples of this general type, the district also illustrates a range of variations. For example, the c.1780 Stanton House, 63 East Main Street (Photograph 5), shows the transition to a two-chimney center-hall plan that occurred at the end of the 18th century. The Arsenal, 65 Waterside Lane, traditionally dated as 1675 (Photograph 14), has a slightly asymmetrical three-bay facade with the center entry opening into a larger main room on the right; this arrangement is less common than the balanced plan found in the district's other colonial-era houses, but it was used throughout Connecticut and elsewhere in New England in the period, particularly for small houses.

The district's houses also illustrate the essential characteristics of the Federal style, both through houses built in the period and in the porticos that were added to many older houses (Photograph 14). The Richard Buel House, 17 Waterside Lane (Photograph 12), is typical: its sunburst-glazed elliptical entry transom is an example of the geometric designs favored in the period, while the small scale of the entry

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cornice's mutules, the multiplicity of thin moldings, and the slender flanking pilasters epitomize the style's elegant proportions.

The more boldly proportioned Classicism introduced in the Greek Revival period is reflected in the district's many houses with wide corner pilasters, pilaster-and-lintel entries, and an entablature encircling the building (Photograph 4). The house at 15 Liberty Street is especially notable, since it retains some features of the earlier Federal style (the gable fanlight and the "Palladian" window over the entry) but incorporates them completely into the newer fashion. Although of the traditional five-bay form, the house makes clear reference to the Classical ruins that were the inspiration for the Greek Revival movement. Its fluted Doric columns and entablature form a distinctly temple-like frame for its deeply recessed entry. The Ionic order also seems to have made a particularly strong impression on Clintonites, since it is found not only on this house's front window but also on the belfry on the 1837 Congregational Church (Photograph 1) and the portico of the Dibbell House (Photograph 8). The latter represents the full flowering of the Greek Revival in that it not only incorporates elements of Classical architecture, but fully seeks to recreate the appearance of an ancient Greek building with its more shallow pitched roof, gable-end-to-the-street orientation, and full portico on freestanding columns. Taken together, the district's buildings thus illustrate the full range of the Greek Revival movement.

The Italianate style is represented in the several vernacular houses that include the characteristic round-arched window in their gables, as well as by the remodeling of the Academy, 61 Main Street (Photograph 3), which included paired round-arched gable windows and a bracketed cupola. These features were thought to recall the rural architecture of Italy and introduced elements that remained in Victorian architecture for many years after the style had peaked. Similarly, the Gothic Revival, with its stick bracing, bargeboard, and steeply pitched roofs, found in two remodeled 18th-century houses and two houses of the period, continued to influence Victorian architecture through the 1890s. The house at 11 Waterside Lane (Photograph 11) illustrates this point particularly well, combining a Gothic pendant, ornamental peak panel, and porch with an Italianate-inspired bracketed bay window and round-arched gable windows.

Finally, Clinton's 1930 Town Hall represents an outstanding example of the early 20th century's Colonial Revival style of architecture (Photograph 2). As was typical of the style, particularly as employed

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for public buildings, it draws on the colonial period's most elaborate buildings for its details. By including features such as the cupola and portico with arched openings, along with its red-brick materials, it recalls such 18th-century icons as the Virginia Capitol at Williamsburg, Boston's Faneuil Hall, and the Old State House in Hartford. Such references were seen as fitting expressions of the community's patriotism, its sense of history, and the serious public purpose underlying such a municipal building.

Community Development Significance

The European settlement of Clinton began in the 1660s when Bryan Rossiter of Guilford surveyed the land and laid out houselots and pastures along the road between New Haven and Old Saybrook, reserving some of the area embraced by this district as common land for a burying ground and meetinghouse site. By 1667 several families had moved in, enough to form a church society, and that year the town, then named Killingworth, was formally established by the General Assembly. As in most coastal Connecticut towns, the settlers were primarily interested in agriculture, rather than maritime pursuits, so the initial settlement occurred some distance from the water. However, the harbor, formed by the confluence of the Indian River with Long Island Sound, did offer some advantages, so it is not surprising that the road laid out toward the water (now Waterside Lane) became built up with houses.

As the 18th century progressed, the area represented by the district assumed the character of a village and took on the role of a central place for the whole town. The Congregational meetinghouse served the entire community until the late 18th century, when a second society was established in the north part of the town; this north part became its own town in 1838, keeping the name Killingworth, at which time the older portion was renamed Clinton in honor of Dewitt Clinton, the popular governor of New York and Erie Canal proponent. The Congregational meetinghouse was an important community symbol, since the majority of inhabitants were at least nominally adherents of that religion, and it reinforced the role of the village as a central place because it drew people in for weekly religious services. The meetinghouse also accommodated secular purposes, particularly town meetings and elections, furthering the role of this area as the focal point of the community. In addition to Clinton's earliest burying ground, the area also provided common land, today represented by the

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vestige at Liberty Green, for militia drills; finally, the Green was the site of one of Clinton's earliest schoolhouses.

The prosperity of colonial Clinton, and the resulting density of residential development, was aided by its location along one of Connecticut's busiest roads, the shoreline route now known as Route 1, and by the increase in commerce that occurred toward the end of the period. In addition to farmers, the village's inhabitants now included merchants, shopkeepers, and craftsmen. The Eli Kelsey House at 96-98 East Main Street housed a tavern (and Masonic lodge) in the 1790s, and some of the other buildings in the district are known to have accommodated small stores or artisan shops, such as the store attached to the Stanton House at 63 East Main Street (Photograph 5). Many of the larger houses are associated with sea captains such as Elisha White (103 East Main Street) and merchants such as Adam Stanton (63 East Main Street).

In the 19th century, the village's role as a central place continued. Other religious groups built their houses of worship nearby, and a large academy was erected to prepare local scholars for college. Later, a private school founded by New York merchant and Clinton native Charles Morgan was established at what today is the site of the Abraham Pierson public school. Beginning in 1846, when a group of citizens banded together to plant shade trees, Liberty Green came to assume its present park-like appearance and function. In addition to providing a peaceful public open space, it served a symbolic function, not only recalling the town's patriotic past, but also providing the site for memorials to the town's soldiers. The Green continues today as an important public space for Clinton, serving as a parade destination and site of small festivals and other events.

Development also occurred on the west bank of the Indian River, outside the boundaries of this district, where there was another road leading down to the waterfront and where the town's railroad depot was situated. In the Victorian period and early 20th century, the west side underwent more commercial development than the older part on the east side, including a large seaside hotel. However, it in no way eclipsed the east side as the town center, as evidenced by the erection of the Town Hall on the east side in 1930 and a large modern brick public school (named after Abraham Pierson, one of the founders of Yale) there in 1932.

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Today Clinton Village continues to embody historical associations and much of the period's physical appearance from the days of its development as a town center. The dense concentration of 18th and early 19th-century houses, the presence of important civic, religious, and educational buildings, the numerous monuments, and the village green combine to recall the important role played by this area in the history of the town.



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**BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION:**

The boundaries were chosen to include reasonably contiguous groupings of historic buildings along East Main Street, starting at the Indian River. The district does not include that part of the village on the west side of the river because commercial development on that side, as well as a greater number of modern buildings, gives it a different character.

The area to the north and east of the district is primarily made up of modern residential development, as are the side streets other than Waterside Lane.

Along East Main Street, there are a number of large-scale modern buildings, including condominiums, shopping plazas, and two churches. These either occupy back lots or are set much further back from the street than the historic buildings; the boundary has been drawn so as to exclude these properties.

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Photographs                      Clinton Village Historic District  
Photos-1                              Clinton, Middlesex County, CT

All Photographs:

1. Clinton Village Historic District
2. Clinton, Middlesex County, CT
3. Photo Credit: HRC, Hartford, CT
4. March, 1994
5. Negative filed with Connecticut Historical Commission  
Hartford, CT

Captions:

Clinton Congregational Church, 55 Church Street, camera facing north  
Photograph 1 of 16

Clinton Town Hall, 54 East Main Street, camera facing southwest  
Photograph 2 of 16

The Academy, 61 East Main Street, camera facing northwest  
Photograph 3 of 16

George Eliot House, 62 East Main Street, camera facing southeast  
Photograph 4 of 16

Stanton House, 63 East Main Street, camera facing northwest  
Photograph 5 of 16

Houses along the north side of East Main Street (85 East Main Street on  
left), camera facing northeast  
Photograph 6 of 16

Village Motel (noncontributing), 143 East Main Street, camera facing  
northwest  
Photograph 7 of 16

Dibbell House, 170 East Main Street, camera facing northeast  
Photograph 8 of 16

Houses on east side of Liberty Street (7-9 Liberty Street on left),  
camera facing southeast  
Photograph 9 of 16

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House at 15 Liberty Street, camera facing northeast  
Photograph 10 of 16

House at 11 Waterside Lane, camera facing southwest  
Photograph 11 of 16

Richard Buel House, 17 Waterside Lane, camera facing southwest  
Photograph 12 of 16

House at 18 Waterside Lane, camera facing southeast  
Photograph 13 of 16

The Arsenal, 65 Waterside Lane, camera facing northwest  
Photograph 14 of 16

Typical 18th-century grave marker, Clinton Cemetery, Cemetery Road,  
camera facing east  
Photograph 15 of 16

Liberty Green, showing cannon and monument, camera facing northeast  
Photograph 16 of 16