

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

For NPS use only

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form

received DEC 17 1987
date entered

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

1. Name

historic Stapleton Building

and or common

2. Location

street & number 751 North Main Street

N/A not for publication

city, town Waterbury

N/A vicinity of

state Connecticut

code 09

county New Haven

code 009

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational
<input type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial
	N/A	<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military
			<input type="checkbox"/> museum
			<input type="checkbox"/> park
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private residence
			<input type="checkbox"/> religious
			<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
			<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
			<input type="checkbox"/> other:

4. Owner of Property

name Freddie Dwight E. Lewis

street & number 217 Walnut Street

city, town Waterbury

N/A vicinity of

state Connecticut

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Town Clerk of Waterbury

street & number City Hall--235 Grand Street

city, town Waterbury

state Connecticut

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title State Register of Historic Places

has this property been determined eligible? 5-18-79
 yes no

date 1987

federal state county local

Connecticut Historical Commission

depository for survey records 59 South Prospect Street

city, town Hartford

state Connecticut

7. Description

Condition		Check one	Check one
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site
<input type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved date _____
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed		

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The Stapleton Building, erected in 1903, is a 4-story, Second Renaissance Revival-style structure with commercial space on the ground floor and residences above. Situated close to the sidewalk on the corner of North Main and Easton streets, it has an irregular, 5-sided plan. The principal material is brick in two colors, yellow on the two street-facing elevations and standard red on the rear walls. The Stapleton Building is located about three-quarters of a mile north of downtown Waterbury. It is part of a secondary commercial area some three blocks long that served the residents of "The Hill" neighborhood. The Hill, consisting mostly of two- and three-family homes extending west from North Main Street, was built up in the late 19th and early 20th centuries as a working-class residential district.

The facade (Photograph 1) consists of two sides set at an oblique angle to each other, following the curb line of North Main as it blends into Easton Street. (Despite having frontage on both streets, the building has always had a North Main Street address.) There are three storefronts, all with recessed entries. At the vertex of the angle is the main storefront, its entry set between display windows. At either end are smaller storefronts, each with a single display window. The cast-iron storefront surrounds feature paneled pilasters with simply molded tops. Painted wooden panels now fill the store windows, but the glazed transoms are evident in the center and right modules. The center transom features faded, painted letters advertising "Ice Cream" and "Lemon Ice"; the right transom features lozenge-pane glazing. Between the center and right storefronts is the recessed entry to the upstairs apartments (Photograph 2). Its round-arched brownstone surround has deeply incised joints, upper moldings on either side suggestive of capitals (although no pilasters appear), and a molded cornice above two pairs of triglyphs with guttae. The vestibule has a floor of patterned tile and marble-paneled walls; fluted wooden pilasters frame the transomed entry. The original door is in place, with plywood filling a large panel that was originally glazed. A molded brownstone cornice with dentils extends across the first floor of the facade, broken only by the bases of two oriels on the upper floors.

The upper floors feature three bays facing North Main, with an oriel in the center, and four bays facing Easton, with an oriel in the third bay. The 3-story oriels have rectangular panels below each window and are finished with deteriorating stucco. Dividing the third and fourth floors is an intermediate cornice of brownstone moldings above and below a half-dozen courses of brick, with the upper course treated as dentils; set in this cornice is a brownstone tablet facing North Main, with the name of the building's first owner, "F.J. Stapleton," carved in relief. On the second and third floors, the window bays are divided by shallow, 2-story pilasters with molded pedestals and Ionic capitals, both in brownstone. The window

(continued)

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/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700–1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800–1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900–	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> other (specify)
Criteria A,C				ethnic history

Specific dates 1903--built **Builder/Architect** not known

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

Summary and Architectural Significance:

The Stapleton Building is significant because it embodies the distinctive characteristics of the Second Renaissance Revival style of architecture (Criterion C), as applied to commercial buildings: strong horizontal lines dividing the facade into three stages; arched openings with deep reveals; rusticated masonry; and ample use of Classically inspired ornament, such as the cornice moldings and triglyphs of the entry treatment, the several courses of dentils, and the Ionic pilasters on the second and third stories. Often seen as a reaction to Victorian excess, the Second Renaissance Revival was one of a group of styles that emerged around the turn of the 20th century that held in common the renewed reliance on Classical precedents and the attempt to transmit a sense of order and solidity. This style is particularly characteristic of early 20th-century Waterbury. In normal commercial expansion, in rebuilding after a disastrous fire in 1902, and in the city-planning schemes engineered by Waterbury's government and economic leaders, the Second Renaissance Revival style was used for many prominent buildings. It found this wide application because, while formal and restrained, it could also accommodate the modulated surfaces and applied ornament that fulfilled the desire for a lively and interesting appearance.

The Stapleton Building is also significant for its role in an important trend in Connecticut's urban growth: the establishment of secondary commercial centers in the major cities (Criterion A). These secondary commercial centers, such as Bridgeport's East Main Street and Hartford's Albany Avenue, typically served the immediately surrounding neighborhoods rather than the city-wide, or even regional, markets that drove the expansion of the principal central business districts. In part because the neighborhoods they served generally consisted of people from immigrant backgrounds, and in part because of the greater availability and lesser cost of land and commercial space outside of the major downtowns, ethnic businesses tended to locate in these secondary commercial districts. Built by Irish immigrant Frank J. Stapleton, and occupied by several Irish- or German-American businesses, the Stapleton Building well illustrates these aspects of ethnic diversity and geographic expansion that marked the rise of Connecticut cities.

Historical Context

Development of Waterbury's Hill neighborhood (now known as Hillside) began in the late 19th century, primarily to provide housing for factory workers and their families. By 1900, the residents included immigrants from throughout Europe, with substantial clusters of Polish, Italian, German, and Irish families. Frank J. Stapleton arrived from Ireland in 1894 at the age of 23,

(continued)

9. Major Bibliographical References

Waterbury City Directory, 1890-1930.

Waterbury Republican, December 24, 1959 (Stapleton obituary).

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property less than 1

Quadrangle name Waterbury

Quadrangle scale 1:25000

UTM References

A

1	8	6	6	4	0	4	0	4	6	0	2	9	7	0
Zone		Easting				Northing								

B

Zone		Easting				Northing								

C

Zone		Easting				Northing								

D

Zone		Easting				Northing								

E

Zone		Easting				Northing								

F

Zone		Easting				Northing								

G

Zone		Easting				Northing								

H

Zone		Easting				Northing								

Verbal boundary description and justification The nominated property includes only the lot on which the building stands, which is shown on Waterbury Assessor's Map #218 as Block 179, Lot 47, and described in the Waterbury Land Records in Book 1130, page 249. The building covers most of the lot.

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries N/A

state	code	county	code
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state	code	county	code
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11. Form Prepared By

name/title Matthew Roth and Bruce Clouette, edited by John Herzan, National Register

organization Historic Resource Consultants date 6/15/87 Coordinator

street & number 55 Van Dyke Avenue telephone 203 547-0268

city or town Hartford state CT

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national state local

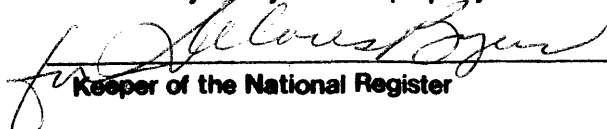
As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature 

title Director, Connecticut Historical Commission date December 9, 1987

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I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

 date 1-14-88
Keeper of the National Register

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

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

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Stapleton Building

Continuation sheet

Waterbury, CT

Item number

7

Page 1

Description (continued):

surrounds feature brownstone quoins, imposts, and molded keystones. Second-floor sills are integrated into a molded brownstone stringcourse; on the third, the brownstone sills rest on corbeled-brick consoles. Fourth-floor windows are separated by rectangular panels outlined in raised brick and have sills incorporated into the upper molding of the intermediate cornice. The main cornice of molded brownstone surmounts a frieze of horizontally placed raised-brick panels alternating with pairs of brownstone triglyphs with guttae. The brick parapet, with narrow recessed panels, is finished with a plain course of brownstone.

The side and rear elevations (Photographs 3 and 4) feature segmental-arched window openings with brownstone sills, and a stringcourse of yellow brick at the cornice. Steel fire escapes appear on both sides, and steel-framed porches to the rear.

Inside, much of the original finish material appears to survive: plaster walls; beaded-board wainscoting and molded baseboards in the halls; door openings with fluted jambs and molded caps; and molded stair rails on turned balusters (Photographs 5 and 6).

The building exhibits some evidence of deterioration, notably the stucco. Interior plaster is broken and crumbling in numerous locations, and several balusters are missing. With the exception of some new interior doors, however, there have been no alterations or additions to compromise the architectural integrity of the building: the changes to the original appearance are those of normal use, not the result of incompatible alteration.

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Stapleton Building

Continuation sheet Waterbury, CT

Item number 8

Page 1

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Significance (continued):

joining his brothers Patrick, Michael, and Luke. Patrick pursued a variety of small-business schemes, such as a bottling business, real-estate sales, and running a saloon. Frank gained his first experience as a saloonkeeper soon after arriving in Waterbury, in Patrick's Meadow Street establishment. By 1900 Frank had opened his own saloon and pool room on North Main Street, about a block north of the nominated building, apparently renting ground-floor space for the business and living quarters above. Either through pooling family assets, frugal retention of his own earnings, ability to borrow, or a combination of these sources of money, Frank was able to erect his own building in ¹⁹⁰³. His saloon occupied the middle storefront, and he rented the other commercial spaces to two German-American businesses: Gerald Schieffer's dairy store and the Dauch and Holland meat market. Frank lived upstairs, and rented other rooms to a succession of tenants. All were single males, most worked in factories, and many were of Irish or German descent.

Frank Stapleton, his saloon, and the elegant business block he named for himself perfectly illustrate several intertwined themes of Connecticut urban and ethnic history. His arrival in Waterbury followed the pattern of "chain migration," whereby immigrants joined family members or people from their Old World hometowns; few immigrants faced America without support from loved ones or a wider ethnic community. As small-business entrepreneurs, Frank and his brother Patrick followed the typical path of immigrant economic mobility; and the saloon business was a common small business for ambitious immigrants in this period. The saloon and the other business occupants of the building dealt in food and drink, items typically purchased close to home; thus Stapleton and the store tenants depended on patronage from the immediate local area, and in turn helped to establish the secondary commercial center on North Main Street that emerged at the turn of the century. In later years, Frank Stapleton exemplified themes of ethnic mobility and urban change not directly tied to this building: in the 1920s he moved to the suburbs, relocating to Cheshire.