

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

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

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received JUL 3 1986
date entered

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

1. Name

historic N.A.

and/or common River Park Historic District

2. Location

street & number See continuation sheet.

N.A. not for publication

city, town Milford N.A. vicinity of

state Connecticut code 09 county New Haven code 009

3. Classification

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

4. Owner of Property

name Multiple public and private.

street & number

city, town Milford N.A. vicinity of state Connecticut

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Town Clerk's Office, Milford City Hall

street & number West River and River Streets

city, town Milford state Connecticut

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title State Register of Historic Places has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date 1975 federal state county local

depository for survey records Connecticut Historical Commission, 59 South Prospect Street

city, town Hartford state Connecticut

7. Description

Condition		Check one	Check one
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input checked="" 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 River Park Historic District is located in the town of Milford, a community on Long Island Sound on the southern coast of Connecticut. Encompassing the residential and institutional center of the town, the district generally lies between the Boston Post Road on the north and Milford harbor on the south, with the commercial district to the immediate south on Broad and lower River streets. It contains 192 buildings and sites. Eighty-eight percent (168) of these contribute to the historic character of the district: 160 buildings and eight structures and sites. A major centrally located component of the district is a river park system containing three parks and six structures--four bridges, and two dams. All but one of these structures pre-date 1936, a bridge built in 1952 (Inventory #187). Only 12 (7%) of the contributing buildings were built before 1800; the remainder are divided almost equally between the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Of the 23 non-contributing buildings, 13 are of recent construction (after 1936) and ten do not contribute to the character of the district because they no longer have historic architectural integrity.

The Wepawaug River winds down through the district, entering Long Island Sound at Milford's harbor, less than a quarter mile below the district. Stone retaining walls along its banks define the course of the river, and two stone dams with waterfalls control its flow (Photograph #1, 3, 5). Ten acres along both banks of the river, landscaped with mature trees, create a continuous series of picturesque river parks (Photograph #2, 3, 4, 5, 6). This large elongated open space in the center of the district is bordered by North and West River Streets on the east and west side, respectively, generally the boundaries of the local historic district. The River Park Historic District boundaries for the National Register are extended to include the secondary streets that cross the river on a series of four twentieth-century bridges and radiate out from the parks. (See item #10.)

Although "beautification" programs in the early twentieth century radically altered the historic appearance of nineteenth-century Milford, the physical layout of the district is virtually unchanged since the early colonial period. When Milford was established in 1639, house lots were concentrated in two separate settlements along the principal watercourses. Rather than the more common single axial pattern, both town plots had two streets, a double axis, with a river running north to south between them. The primary eastern settlement, the larger of the two, is the nucleus of the River Park District. With only minor variations, the location of the present-day roads and bridges date from the early settlement period. (Compare the original town plot, Exhibit A, with the present district map.) River Park, from which the district derives its name, is the largest, occupying most of the ten acres set aside for the city's park system. It has been open space, common ground, since settlement. The river itself, once the source of power for gristmills and nineteenth-century industry, still follows its original course with one exception. At King's Bridge, a small island in the river now forms part of the east bank.

The nineteenth-century appearance of the district was transformed in the early twentieth century. North Street was the commercial/residential center of the town through the nineteenth century. By the late 1800s the locus of commerce had begun to shift to Broad and lower River streets just to the south of the district; some of the small shops and stores adjacent to, or part of, existing houses were abandoned, to be demolished or converted exclusively to residential use. The process was accelerated just prior to World

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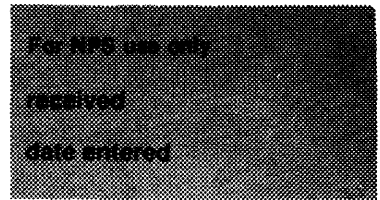
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Location:

801 Boston Post Road
94, 100 Buick Avenue
11-111; 14-102 Cherry Street
9-91; 12-90 Governor's Avenue
9 Housatonic Street
1-21 Maple Street
8-146; 33-155 North Street
3-5 Orange Street
9-25; 10-34 Plymouth Court
3-11 Plymouth Place
23-86; 38-58 Prospect Street
15, 18-116 West Main Street
125-231; 100-232 West River Street
16-54; 17-53 Winthrop Court

The following properties do not have street/number addresses:

Map 818:1; 819:2; 319:1; 317:1; 819A: 1; 823:1; 316:1 (City of Milford)

Map 317A:1 (First Church of Christ Congregational)

The west side of West River Street from Darina Place to West Main Street

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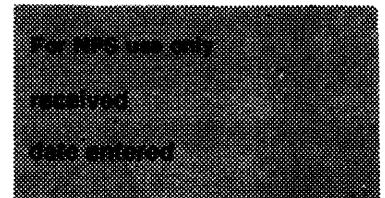
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War I by the Village Improvement Association. Largely due to its efforts, the entire district became completely residential for the first time in its history. Shops remaining along the river banks were demolished after the land was bought up by these concerned citizens. The old mills and factories along the river were also torn down as part of the same beautification effort, leaving only the dams and waterfalls as mute reminders of Milford's industrial past. Today only two historic industrial buildings remain and they are located on the outskirts of the district (Inventory #4, 139; Photograph #9). Sub-standard houses on the island in the river, where many of Milford's black families lived in the nineteenth century, were also torn down. To complete the transformation, the river banks were landscaped between 1920 and 1935, creating Milford's extensive river park system. River and Higby parks, the earliest, were projects of the civic group (Inventory #186, 190), Jefferson Park (Inventory #192), a W.P.A. project during the Depression.

In the absence of a professional archaeological survey, the archaeological potential of the park area is difficult to assess. Sub-surface material may exist but there are no visible surface remains from either the nineteenth-century industrial activity or the residential use of the island in the river. The dam (Inventory #185) to the immediate north of King's Bridge (Inventory #187) has created a pond in this location which may post-date the historical occupation of the island. If so, the dam was quite possibly constructed after 1911 as part of the park development program. All or part of the original island is now incorporated in the east bank of the river above the bridge. In any event, all the visible traces of nineteenth-century occupation of the island have been obliterated. Between King's Bridge (Inventory #187) and Meeting House Bridge (Inventory #188) residential properties abut the banks of the river, particularly on the east bank. Between these houses and the river may be an area with greater archaeological potential, but again no professional survey has been conducted. Stone retaining walls, of the type constructed on the riverbanks throughout the parks, were built here as well, the only obvious disturbance in this location.

Two institutional buildings are the principal architectural foci of the district. The Milford City Hall, located at the southern terminus, is the fifth town hall on this site. The present building, constructed in the Classical Revival style with a rotunda, dates from 1916 (Inventory #141; Photograph #4, 7). From the rear of the City Hall there is an unobstructed view along the river to an equally imposing building, the 1823 United Church of Christ Congregational Church, built in the Adamesque style (Inventory #127; Photograph #8). Five other institutional buildings across the street to the west of City Hall include a large educational complex between West River and West Main streets. Three public schools were constructed there between 1908 and the 1970s, on the former site of at least two colonial-period houses (Inventory #142, 143, 144; Photograph #10). Currently all the schools are vacant and in the process of being rehabilitated for use as an office park. The county courthouse (Inventory #140) and the post office to the south of the school complex (Inventory #165) were both constructed in the 1930s.

Between the City Hall and the church, historic residences along the principal streets face the river park area from the east and west. Although several predate 1800, most of these houses were built in the early nineteenth century. Late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century houses are generally found on the side streets that extend out from the

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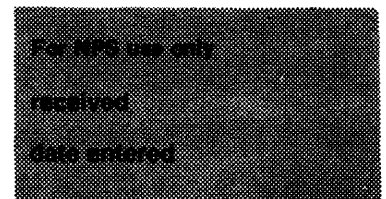
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park to the east and west. Several of the shorter streets, such as Plymouth Court, which were laid out with small lots for development in the twentieth-century, contain clusters of similar houses which resemble the pre-cut houses sold in this period and exhibit influences of the Arts and Crafts style in their overhanging eaves and exposed rafter ends (Inventory #95-104; Photograph #11).

The range and level of style of the domestic architecture in the district is limited. Most of the surviving houses are quite modest, vernacular versions of a few contemporary architectural styles--particularly those built after 1850. Consistent with this architectural simplicity, common construction materials were used more for their utilitarian than their esthetic value. Rather than brick or stone, all of the houses were built of wood. Full brick construction did not occur until the twentieth century and even then it was reserved for schools and other public buildings. Carved or turned wooden detailing is the exception, rather than the rule. Until about 1860, rubble foundations of broken granite were favored. Although this type of foundation was common before 1800, the absence of dressed and coursed stone foundations for even the larger, more formal houses of the nineteenth century is unusual. After the Civil War until about the end of the first decade of the twentieth century, brick underpinning was common, giving way to rusticated cinder block, and finally to concrete by the end of the historic period.

Few houses survive from the colonial period in the River Park Historic District; most of them have been altered to some degree. The Thomas Buckingham House, reputed to be the oldest house in Milford (about 1650), was remodelled by the mid-eighteenth century (Inventory #77; Photograph #12). Despite the weathered appearance of the clapboards on the facade, this house today appears more typical of many of the three-bay, center-chimney colonials built in Connecticut until after the Revolution. Part of another house is also dated by tradition from the seventeenth century, but historic alterations have totally obscured its original form (Inventory #128). The least altered of the earlier houses is the Nehemiah Bristol House (Inventory #85; Photograph #13) built about 1700.

The one-and-one-half story gambrel at the end of Buick Avenue (Inventory #3) and the Abijah Carrington House on West Main Street, with its five-bay facade (Inventory #136; Photograph #15), are probably more representative of the types of colonial houses once common in Milford. The exterior of both houses has been totally restored with new clapboards and windows, and the center chimney of the latter has been rebuilt. Several examples of the one-and-one-half-story Cape style located on Governor's Avenue possibly date from as late as the early nineteenth century (Inventory #42, 48, 59). Two of them were originally built as shops. An early interesting example of this form on North Street is the 1725 Samuel Durand House (Inventory #69; Photograph #14). Its shed-dormered roof flares out over a facade porch which now displays scalloped wood trim.

Few houses in the district today can be identified as Federal in style, although several date from that period. At least two of these Federal-period houses have undergone a series of historic alterations: the 1780 David Miles House (Inventory #71) and the 1790 Thomas Sanford House (Inventory #83; Photograph #16), both on North Street. Many of the original Federal details have been retained on the interior of the former house, including Federal dado panelling, fireplace surrounds, and sweeping central hall, but its present

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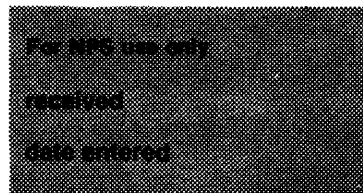
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exterior appearance resembles the Late Greek Revival style. The Sanford House was built with a half-gambrel roof with dormers in 1790 and doubled in size in 1850; the porch was added across the long facade about 1880. Another case in point is the William Strong House at 1 Plymouth Place built by Captain Peck, a local carpenter/builder, in the 1820s. Federal-style features survive, such as the doorway fanlight (now at the second story), but the eaves now display Gothic scroll work (Inventory #107; Photograph #17).

Peck was also the builder of the 1823 Congregational Church. Neo-classic in the Adamesque manner with its fanlights and slim, fluted Ionic columns, its form foreshadows the Greek Revival style favored for churches and houses for at least the next three decades (Inventory #127; Photograph #8). The plans for the church may have been borrowed from David Hoadley, who designed a similar church in Orange (formerly North Milford) and Cheshire about the same time.

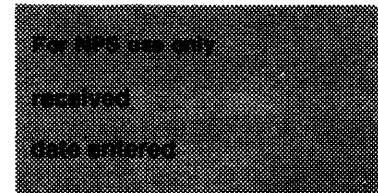
The Greek Revival was a major stylistic influence in the nineteenth century until about the Civil War. At least 20 houses survive that were built in this style. They are characterized generally by the gable-to-street temple form with cornice returns or a full pediment. A notable group of cube-form buildings were built in this style as well, with a one-story colonnade in the Ionic order across the facade, a feature of at least one of the temple-form houses as well (Inventory #68; Photograph #18). Scattered throughout the district, they are so similar in form, size, and detail that they may have been constructed by the same architect/builder. (For examples, see Inventory #121, 150; Photograph #19, 20). Two nearly identical houses on Cherry Street are unusual examples of Late Greek Revival-style row houses. These cube-form, clapboarded buildings retain their two-decker porches (Inventory #5, 7; Photograph #21).

Small Victorian cottages and simple vernacular gable-to-street or cross-gable form houses were built in the district between 1860 and 1900 in great numbers. Earlier examples can be found on Governor's Avenue (Photograph #24), or North Street (Photograph #22). By the end of the century houses like the group of three on West River Street were constructed (Photograph #23). The Queen Anne influence is evident in some of the notable exceptions, but the district has none of the massive, rambling Victorian piles commonly found in Connecticut's towns and cities in the late nineteenth century. Only one fully detailed mansion has survived, the Italianate-style Mary Hepburn Smith House on West River Street (Inventory #151; Photograph #26). Several more modest examples of this style can be found on Maple and Governor's avenues (Inventory #63, 64; Photograph #27). A Stick-style house at 28 Cherry Street that has retained all the detailing on the house and its period carriage house, is more modest in scale (Inventory #10; Photograph #28). The Second Empire style also had some impact in the district. Several houses display mansard roofs, including one hybrid, the Daniel Buckingham, Jr., House, built as a Greek Revival about 1840, with a mansard roof added about 1870 (Inventory #86; Photograph #29).

Many of the twentieth-century houses in the district are generally Colonial-Revival in style, some with Dutch-Colonial influence in the flare of the gambrel roof. Typical examples include Inventory #16, 20, 22, 35; Photograph #30). The other house styles that are also quite prevalent are the Queen Anne/Colonial Revival, sometimes called the Free Classic style, or the bungalow.

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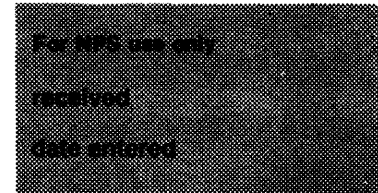
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A complete inventory of the buildings and sites follows. Dating of the houses is based primarily on architectural evidence; names of historic owners or builders which are identified are derived from the historic maps of Milford and/or the Milford Historic District Study Report.

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Inventory of Contributing/Non-Contributing Buildings

Inventory #	Address	Name/Style/Date	C/NC	Photo-graph #
1.	801 Boston Post Road	Cross-gable, brick, ca. 1880	C	
2.	94 Buick Avenue	Salt box, ca. 1780	C	
3.	100 Buick Avenue	Gambrel, ca. 1750 Barn, n. d.	C	
4.	11 Cherry Street	19th-century industrial	C	
5.	13-15 Cherry Street	Late Greek Revival row house ca. 1860	C	21
6.	14 Cherry Street	Cross gable/Shingle influence, ca. 1890	C	
7.	17-19 Cherry Street	Late Greek Revival row house, ca. 1860	C	21
8.	18 Cherry Street	Modern residence, ca. 1950	NC	
9.	21-25 Cherry Street	Modern brick office	NC	
10.	28 Cherry Street	Stick, with carriage house, ca. 1880	C	28
11.	31 Cherry Street	Greek Revival with colonnade (cube form), ca. 1850	C	
12.	32 Cherry Street	Cross-gable altered, ca. 1880	NC	
13.	35-37 Cherry Street	Greek Revival (cube form), ca. 1850 Porch enclosed (columns in place)	C	
14.	41-43 Cherry Street	Greek Revival, ca. 1850 altered	NC	

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Inventory #	Address	Name/Style/Date	C/NC	Photo-graph #
15.	42 Cherry Street	Victorian cottage, altered, ca. 1880	NC	
16.	47 Cherry Street	Colonial Revival, ca. 1910	C	
17.	50 Cherry Street	Second Empire, ca. 1880 Large modern addition in process, ca. 1986	C	
18.	51 Cherry Street	Gothic cottage	C	
19.	55 Cherry Street	Bungalowoid, ca. 1920	C	
20.	58 Cherry Street	Colonial Revival, ca. 1910	C	
21.	61 Cherry Street	19th-century domestic, ca. 1880	C	
22.	64 Cherry Street	Queen Anne/Colonial Revival, ca. 1900	C	
23.	69 Cherry Street	19th-century domestic, ca. 1880	C	
24.	70 Cherry Street	Carpenter Gothic, ca. 1880	C	
25.	74 Cherry Street	19th-century domestic/ ca. 1880, altered	NC	
26.	77-79 Cherry Street	19th-century domestic, ca. 1870	C	
27.	78-82 Cherry Street	19th-century tenement, altered	NC	
28.	81 Cherry Street	19th-century domestic, ca. 1880	C	

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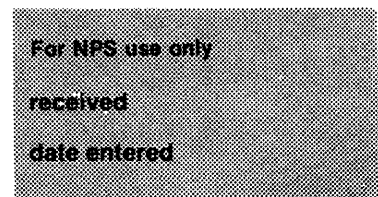
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Inventory #	Address	Name/Style/Date	C/NC	Photo-graph #
29.	83 Cherry Street	19th-century domestic, ca. 1887	C	
30.	86 Cherry Street	Greek Revival, ca. 1840	C	
31.	91 Cherry Street	19th-century domestic	C	
32.	92 Cherry Street	Gambrel/Colonial Revival, ca. 1915	C	
33.	95 Cherry Street	Greek Revival, ca. 1845	C	
34.	99 Cherry Street	20th-century domestic, ca. 1930	C	
35.	102 Cherry Street	Colonial Revival gambrel, ca. 1910	C	30
36.	105 Cherry Street	Second Empire, ca. 1870	C	
37.	111 Cherry Street	Greek Revival, ca. 1840	C	
38.	9 Governor's Avenue	Modern residence	NC	
39.	12 Governor's Avenue	Early 19th-century domestic, ca. 1810	C	
40.	17 Governor's Avenue	Modern ranch house	NC	
41.	20-22 Governor's Avenue	Early 20th-century domestic, ca. 1910	C	
42.	30 Governor's Avenue	Cape style, ca. 1780 (possible shop)	C	
43.	31 Governor's Avenue	Dutch colonial, ca. 1930	C	
44.	34 Governor's Avenue	Early 20th-century, ca. 1900 Gothic style influence	C	

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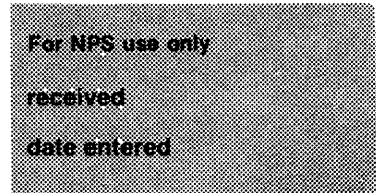
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Inventory #	Address	Name/Style/Date	C/NC	Photo-graph #
45.	38 Governor's Avenue	Colonial Revival/Queen Anne, ca. 1910	C	
46.	43 Governor's Avenue	19th-century domestic, ca. 1880	C	
47.	44 Governor's Avenue	Cross-gable, Gothic influence, ca. 1880, carriage house	C	25
48.	51 Governor's Avenue	Cape, ca. 1840 Greek Revival doorway	C	
49.	52 Governor's Avenue	Late 19th-century domestic, ca. 1880	C	
50.	55 Governor's Avenue	Italianate, ca. 1880	C	
51.	58 Governor's Avenue	19th-century domestic ca. 1890	C	
52.	61 Governor's Avenue	Carpenter Gothic/Queen Anne, ca. 1860/1910	C	24
53.	64 Governor's Avenue	Late Greek Revival, ca. 1860	C	
54.	65 Governor's Avenue	19th-century cottage, ca. 1880	C	24
55.	71 Governor's Avenue	Late Greek Revival, ca. 1860	C	24
56.	76 Governor's Avenue	19th-century cottage, n.d. altered	NC	
57.	79 Governor's Avenue	Greek Revival (brick), ca. 1860	C	

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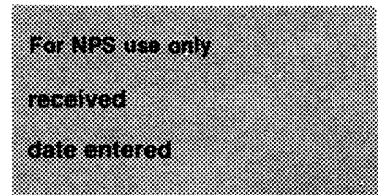
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Inventory #	Address	Name/Style/Date	C/NC	Photo-graph #
58.	85 Governor's Avenue	20th-century domestic, ca. 1910	C	
59.	90 Governor's Avenue	Cape (poss. orig. shop), ca. 1820	C	
60.	91 Governor's Avenue	Dutch Colonial, ca. 1920	C	
61.	9 Housatonic Street	19th-century cottage, ca. 1890 (porch enclosed)	C	
62.	1 Maple Street	Modern residence	NC	
63.	7 Maple Street	A. B. RUBY HOUSE, Italianate, ca. 1860	C	
64.	15 Maple Street	Italianate, ca. 1870	C	27
65.	17 Maple Street	Stick, ca. 1880	C	27
66.	21 Maple Street	19th-century domestic, ca. 1860	C	27
67.	8 North Street	19th-century domestic, ca. 1850 (possible earlier shop)	C	
68.	18 North Street	WILLIAM BUSH HOUSE, 1836 Greek Revival, Ionic colonnade	C	18
69.	24 North Street	SAMUEL DURAND HOUSE, 1725 Cape with porch	C	14
70.	28 North Street	Modern church, 1968	NC	
71.	33 North Street (Corner of Plymouth Place)	DAVID MILES HOUSE, 1780, 1820, 1880 Federal (?)	C	

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Inventory #	Address	Name/Style/Date	C/NC	Photo-graph #
72.	38 North Street	20th-century domestic, 1910	C	
73.	41 North Street	Dutch Colonial, ca. 1920	C	
74.	44 North Street	ANON TREAT HOUSE Greek Revival, ca. 1850	C	
75.	47 North Street	Late Queen Anne, 1910	C	
76.	60 North Street	Modern residence, 1973	NC	
77.	61 North Street	THOMAS BUCKINGHAM HOUSE Center-chimney colonial, ca. 1650 (?), remodelled ca. 1750	C	12
78.	73 North Street	LOUIS F. BALDWIN HOUSE Greek Revival, ca. 1840 (enclosed porch)	C	
79.	79 North Street	ELIAS SMITH HOUSE Greek Revival, ca. 1830	C	
80.	87 North Street	Cross-gable, 1880	C	22
81.	97 North Street	SANFORD L. HOTCHKISS HOUSE Colonial Revival, 1912	C	
82.	105 North Street	WOODCOCK HOUSE 19th-century domestic, ca. 1868 (glassed-in porch)	C	
83.	111-113 North Street	THOMAS SANFORD HOUSE Federal/Colonial 1790, doubled 1850, porch ca. 1880	C	16

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Inventory #	Address	Name/Style/Date	C/NC	Photo-graph #
84.	117 North Street	JAMES BEACH HOUSE 1790; porch ca. 1920	C	
85.	124 North Street	NEHEMIAH BRISTOL HOUSE Colonial, ca. 1700	C	13
86.	125 North Street	DANIEL BUCKINGHAM, JR./ HAMMOND BEACH HOUSE Greek Revival, ca. 1850; Mansard, ca. 1870	C	29
87.	132 North Street	Cross-gable, ca. 1880	C	
88.	133 North Street	HARVEY BEACH HOUSE , ca. 1860	C	
89.	138 North Street	HORATIO DOWNS HOUSE/SHOP 1835; porch 1910	C	
90.	139 North Street	JOHN DOWNS HOUSE , ca. 1750	C	
91.	146 North Street	E.W. PECK HOUSE Greek Revival, ca. 1860 (Asbestos siding)	C	
92.	147 North Street	Modern residence, ca. 1940	NC	
93.	155 North Street	19th-century domestic, ca. 1880; porch, ca. 1920	C	
94.	3-5 Orange Street	Greek Revival, ca. 1850; porch, ca. 1920	C	
95.	9 Plymouth Court	20th-century domestic, ca. 1910	C	
96.	10 Plymouth Court	20th-century domestic, ca. 1920, Arts and Crafts influence	C	11

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Inventory of Contributing/Non-Contributing Buildings

Inventory #	Address	Name/Style/Date	C/NC	Photo-graph #
97.	13 Plymouth Court	20th-century domestic, ca. 1920 Arts and Crafts influence	C	
98.	14 Plymouth Court	20th-century domestic, ca. 1920 Arts and Crafts influence	C	11
99.	17 Plymouth Court	20th-century domestic, ca. 1920 Arts and Crafts influence	C	
100.	18 Plymouth Court	20th-century domestic, ca. 1920 Arts and Crafts influence	C	11
101.	21 Plymouth Court	20th-century domestic, ca. 1920 Arts and Crafts influence	C	
102.	24 Plymouth Court	20th-century domestic, ca. 1920 Arts and Crafts influence	C	11
103.	25 Plymouth Court	20th-century domestic, ca. 1920 Arts and Crafts influence	C	
104.	28 Plymouth Court	20th-century domestic, ca. 1920 Arts and Crafts influence	C	11
105.	32 Plymouth Court	20th-century domestic, ca. 1920 Arts and Crafts influence	C	11
106.	34 Plymouth Court	Modern residence	NC	
107.	1 Plymouth Place	WILLIAM STRONG HOUSE Federal/Gothic Revival, 1808, 1860	C	17
108.	3 Plymouth Place	Queen Anne/Colonial Revival 1910	C	
109.	5 Plymouth Place	Queen Anne/Colonial Revival 1908	C	
110.	7 Plymouth Place	Stick, 1890	C	
111.	11 Plymouth Place	Shingle, 1912	C	

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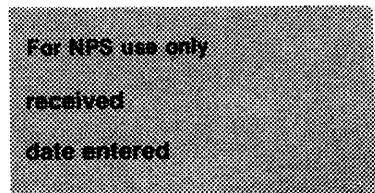
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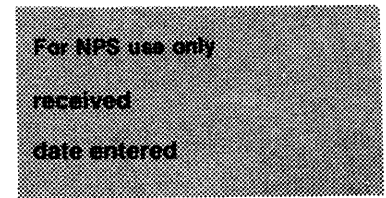


Inventory of Contributing/Non-Contributing Buildings

Inventory #	Address	Name/Style/Date	C/NC	Photo-graph #
112.	23 Prospect Street	Victorian cottage, ca. 1850 Possible 18th century	C	
113.	35 Prospect Street	Greek Revival, ca. 1850	C	
114.	38 Prospect Street	Victorian cottage, ca. 1850	C	
115.	40 Prospect Street	Victorian cottage, ca. 1850	C	
116.	44-46 Prospect Street	Second Empire, ca. 1870	C	
117.	47 Prospect Street	Victorian cottage with Gothic influence ca. 1860	C	
118.	52 Prospect Street	Greek Revival, ca. 1850 Porch, ca. 1890	C	
119.	-- Prospect Street	D.A.R. (modern brick), 1957	NC	
120.	58 Prospect Street	Italianate, ca. 1870	C	
121.	67 Prospect Street	DAVID BALDWIN HOUSE Greek Revival, ca. 1835 Cube form/Ionic colonnade	C	20
122.	75 Prospect Street	Federal (3-bay), altered, ca. 1820	NC	
123.	81 Prospect Street	Cape, ca. 1750 (Saltbox??)	C	
124.	85 Prospect Street	FENN-GREGORY HOUSE Greek Revival, ca. 1850	C	
125.	15 West Main Street	UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST PARSONAGE, Italianate, 1859	C	

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Inventory of Contributing/Non-Contributing Buildings

Inventory #	Address	Name/Style/Date	C/NC	Photo-graph #
126.	18 West Main Street	United Church of Christ Plymouth Building (educational), 1952	NC	
127.	-- West Main Street (Corner of West River Street)	UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST Adamesque, Ionic Order, 1823	C	1, 8
128.	36-38 West Main Street	REVEREND SHERMAN HOUSE Ca. 1680 core, remodelled ca. 1820	C	
129.	46 West Main Street	Queen Anne/Bungaloid, ca. 1910	C	
130.	52 West Main Street	Gambrel/Colonial Revival, ca. 1930	C	
131.	56 West Main Street	Queen Anne/Shingle, ca. 1890	C	
132.	62 West Main Street	Italianate, ca. 1865	C	
133.	68-70 West Main Street	Side-hall Federal with portico, ca. 1820/Gambrel ell, ca. 1750	C	
134.	74 West Main Street	Cross-gable, ca. 1880	C	
135.	84 West Main Street	Queen Anne, ca. 1880	C	
136.	88 West Main Street	ABIJAH CARRINGTON HOUSE Colonial saltbox, ca. 1750	C	15
137.	96 West Main Street	Victorian cottage/Stick influence, ca. 1880	C	
138.	100 West Main Street	Stick/Queen Anne, ca. 1900 Porch enclosed/Asbestos shingle	C	
139.	108-116 West Main Street	19th-century industrial (wood)/Gothic detail (Henry Stuart Co.)	C	9

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Inventory #	Address	Name/Style/Date	C/NC	Photo-graph #
140.	West River Street	COURTHOUSE, 1936 Classical Revival	C	
141.	West River Street	MILFORD CITY HALL, 1916 Classical Revival	C	4, 7
142.	West River Street	OLD MILFORD HIGH SCHOOL, 1908, Renaissance Revival	C	10
143.	West River Street	OLD CENTRAL GRAMMAR SCHOOL, 1932 Colonial Revival	C	
144.	West River Street	MILFORD HIGH SCHOOL, 1949 Colonial Revival with large auditorium/gymnasium addition to west (on West Main Street), ca. 1970. Playing field to the west.	NC	
145.	100 West River Street	Cross-gable, 1911, with Queen Anne influence	C	23
146.	104 West River Street	Gross-gable, ca. 1880	C	23
147.	110 West River Street	Greek Revival, ca. 1830	C	23
148.	125 West River Street	19th-century extensively remodelled 1970	NC	
149.	120 West River Street	Greek Revival, ca. 1845, porch, ca. 1920	C	
150.	130 West River Street	DENNIS BEACH HOUSE Greek Revival (cube form), ca. 1830, Ionic colonnade	C	19
151.	144 West River Street	MARY HEPBURN SMITH HOUSE Victorian Italianate, ca. 1870	C	26

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Inventory of Contributing/Non-Contributing Buildings

<u>Inventory #</u>	<u>Address</u>	<u>Name/Style/Date</u>	<u>C/NC</u>	<u>Photo- graph #</u>
152.	152 West River Street	Modern residence, ca. 1980	NC	
153.	180 West River Street	Modern residence, 1948	NC	
154.	191 West River Street	19th-century domestic, ca. 1850	C	
155.	192 West River Street	19th-century domestic, ca. 1850 Porch, ca. 1910	C	
156.	195 West River Street	Cross-gable, ca. 1860	C	
157.	198 West River Street	SAMUEL BEACH HOUSE Greek Revival, ca. 1830	C	
158.	203 West River Street	Modern residence, ca. 1960	NC	
159.	211 West River Street	Modern residence, ca. 1960	NC	
160.	218 West River Street	Late 19th-century domestic, ca. 1860	C	
161.	223-225 West River Street	Cross-gable, ca. 1870	C	
162.	230 West River Street	Late Federal, 1830	C	
163.	231 West River Street	Bungalow, ca. 1910	C	
164.	232 West River Street	Cross-gable, ca. 1860	C	
165.	West River and River Streets	U.S. Post Office, 1931 Georgian Revival	C	
166.	16 Winthrop Court	20th-century cottage, ca. 1920	C	
167.	17 Winthrop Court	20th-century cottage, ca. 1920	C	

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Inventory #	Address	Name/Style/Date	C/NC	Photo-graph #
168.	19 Winthrop Court	20th-century cottage, ca. 1920	C	
169.	20 Winthrop Court	20th-century cottage, ca. 1920	C	
170.	23 Winthrop Court	20th-century cottage, ca. 1920	C	
171.	27 Winthrop Court	20th-century cottage, ca. 1920	C	
172.	28 Winthrop Court	20th-century cottage, ca. 1920	C	
173.	31 Winthrop Court	20th-century cottage, ca. 1920	C	
174.	32 Winthrop Court	20th-century cottage, ca. 1920	C	
175.	35-37 Winthrop Court	20th-century cottage, ca. 1920	C	
176.	36 Winthrop Court	20th-century cottage, ca. 1920	C	
177.	40 Winthrop Court	20th-century cottage, ca. 1920	C	
178.	41 Winthrop Court	20th-century cottage, ca. 1920	C	
179.	44 Winthrop Court	20th-century cottage, ca. 1920	C	
180.	47 Winthrop Court	20th-century cottage, ca. 1920	C	
181.	48 Winthrop Court	20th-century cottage, ca. 1920	C	
182.	53 Winthrop Court	20th-century cottage, ca. 1920	C	
183.	54 Winthrop Court	20th-century cottage, ca. 1920	C	

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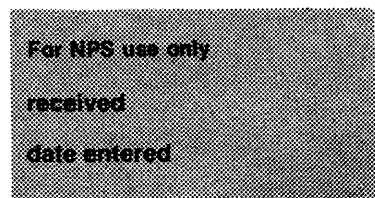
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Inventory of Sites and Structures

<u>Inventory #</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Name/Description/Date</u>	<u>C/NC</u>	<u>Photo-graph #</u>
184.	Bridge Street	Single arched concrete bridge, 1909	C	3
185.	Just north of King's Bridge	Stone Dam, 19th century (Possibly 20th century)	C	6
186.	Bounded by North, West, River, Maple and Bridge Streets (See also section along lower east side of West River Street)	RIVER PARK, ca. 1915	C	3, 5
187.	Maple Avenue	KING'S BRIDGE, 1952 3-arch stone facing over concrete replaced 1711 structure	NC	6
188.	West Main Street	MEETING HOUSE BRIDGE, 1929 Steel/concrete replacement for earlier iron bridge (1865), wooden bridge (1641)	C	
189.	Just north of City Hall	Stone Dam, 19th century	C	1
190.	Bounded by River, North, and West Main Streets	HIGBY PARK, ca. 1920	C	
191.	River Street	JEFFERSON BRIDGE, 1935 3-arch stone facing over concrete replacement for wooden bridge (1802), steel bridge (1898)	C	2, 4
192.	Bounded by Prospect, River Streets, Wepawaug River	JEFFERSON PARK, 1935	C	2, 4

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Amendment to the River Park Historic District, Milford Connecticut 12/18/1987

Corrections to Inventory (Item 7:6):

Original documentation (2/10/86)

Inventory #2 94 Buick Avenue Salt box, ca. 1780 C

Inventory #3 100 Buick Avenue Gambrel, ca. 1750 C

Corrected version (12/18/87)

Inventory #2 94 Governor's Avenue Cape, ca. 1780
Demolished 12/87

Inventory #3 34 Buick Avenue Gambrel, ca.1750

Prepared by: Jan Cunningham, National Register Consultant
Cunningham Associates Ltd.
98 Washington Street
Middletown, CT 06457

8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input checked="" 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1600–1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/
<input checked="" 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input checked="" 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 type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

Specific dates 1650 - 1936 **Builder/Architect** Captain James Peck (Inventory #107, 127),

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph) Everetts Tracy (Inventory # 141) and unknown others.

The River Park Historic District comprises the residential and institutional center of Milford. It is a significant and distinguishable entity which illustrates the development of the town from settlement to the present (1650–1936) (Criterion A). Good representative vernacular examples of most of the major domestic styles are contained within the district, including a notable group of well-preserved Greek Revival-style houses (Criterion C). The major focal component of the district is its river park system, a significant demonstration of early twentieth-century community planning. This historic landscape adds significance to the district's collection of domestic architecture and provides a unique setting for its distinguished institutional buildings.

History

Forty-two of the 60 planters of Milford settled in the area encompassed by the district about 1640. Most were dissenters from the New Haven Colony. They came to Milford not simply to establish a new town but to form a new colony. The group was led by the Reverend Peter Prudden, one of the ministers with the Davenport and Eaton Company, founders of New Haven.

Although the Milford planters had separated from the New Haven Colony over the issue of church membership as the condition for the franchise, the new colony was modelled on the old. Seven "pillars" of the church were elected to be responsible for town and church government; five judges were appointed to regulate civil matters. Within a few years, Milford had reassessed its position and realigned with the New Haven Colony, but the uneasy alliance dissolved for good in 1644 when Milford became part of the Connecticut Colony. Property ownership then became the basis for civil rights. Only one of the original planters' houses exists today, the Thomas Buckingham House on North Street (ca. 1650) (Inventory #77; Photograph #12). Buckingham was one of the first seven pillars.

Milford grew slowly during the colonial period with little more than 1600 people living there by 1755. With a natural harbor and access to the ocean, a small shipping industry had developed by 1700. Fishing and oystering supplemented the standard colonial diet, the latter to become a major industry by the middle of the eighteenth century. Six houses remain in the district which date from the first half of the eighteenth century. The earliest unaltered example is the five-bay, center-chimney house built about 1700 at the corner of Bridge and North Streets (Inventory #85; Photograph #13).

The nineteenth century was the beginning of a new era for Milford. It was marked by the building of the Jefferson Bridge across the Wepawaug in 1802 at the site of the present bridge (Inventory #191), an auspicious beginning for a prolonged period of prosperity. Although oystering and fishing continued to be major occupations along with shipping from the harbor, new sources of wealth were developed. Within a few years industries such as carriage manufacturing played an important role. The famous Beach Carriage Factory, founded by two brothers, received national recognition when President

9. Major Bibliographical References

See continuation sheet.

10. Geographical Data

Acreege of nominated property 128

Quadrangle name Milford

Quadrangle scale 1:24,000

UTM References See continuation sheet.

A

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Zone Easting Northing

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Zone Easting Northing

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Verbal boundary description and justification

See continuation sheet.

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 Jan Cunningham, Consultant, edited by John Herzan,
National Register Coordinator

organization Cunningham Associates date 2/10/86

street & number 98 Washington Street telephone (203) 347 4072

city or town Middletown state Connecticut

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national state local

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

State Historic Preservation Officer signature

title Director, Connecticut Historical Commission date June 24, 1986

For NPS use only

hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

Patricia Andrews date 8/14/86

/s/ Keeper of the National Register

Attest: _____ date _____

Chief of Registration

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James K. Polk ordered one of its carriages. Several members of the Beach family built their houses in the district between about 1830 and 1860 (see Inventory #84, 86, 88, 150, 157). Hammond Beach, one of the founders of the carriage business, owned and may have lived at 125 North Street. He was responsible for the addition of the mansard roof to this Greek Revival-style building (Inventory #86; Photograph #29). Dennis Beach built across the river at 130 West River Street, a fine example of the Greek Revival style with an exceptional Ionic colonnade and side portico (Photograph #19). Shipbuilders and merchants still played an important role in the town in this period, as evidenced by some of the fine houses built by men like David Baldwin, whose Greek Revival-style house on Prospect Street is quite similiar in design (Inventory #121; Photograph #20).

The present church of the United Church of Christ Congregational was built in this period, replacing the second building on the site dating from 1723. On the other side of the river, the Second Congregational Society of Milford built a Greek Revival-style building designed by Sidney Mason Stone of New Haven. It was demolished in 1951 and replaced by the Plymouth Educational Building (Inventory #126). Ironically enough, when the Second Society broke away in 1741 from the original Milford church the dissident group was led by the great-grandson of Peter Prudden, Job Prudden, in the first "Great Awakening."

The railroad was established in Milford in 1848, opening the town up to a larger transportation network and fostering industrial growth and residential development. The line passed through town along the shore. A wooden trestle bridge which serves the railroad today is located just to the south of the district, along the southern property line of 24 Prospect Street (Inventory #109), marking the boundary between the residential and commerical districts that exist today. By the end of the century an electric trolley line was operating in Milford, bringing to the town summer visitors who built seasonal cottages along the shore. Modest housing for the middle and working classes proliferated throughout the district. It was interspersed between existing earlier houses on North and West River streets. The remaining land on West Main, Maple, and Cherry streets and Governor's Avenue was divided up into individual building lots for the construction of vernacular examples of Queen Anne and Italianate styles. For examples see Photographs #22, 24, 25, 27, 28.

The urbanization of Milford was completed in the twentieth century but it had a limited impact on the district. Population growth was phenomenal, peaking during both World Wars. Evidence of the growth after World War I is clear in the proliferation of Colonial Revival-style houses on the periphery of the district in the 1920s and 1930s, particularly on the west end of Governor's Avenue and Cherry Street. Winthrop Court was laid out for development in this period, where a group of 16 small houses utilizing only three or four house plans were constructed (Inventory #168-183).

In the 1940s war-related industry and new industries in the postwar period attracted newcomers to town. Seasonal cottages were converted to permanent residences to relieve the housing shortage, a repetition of a similar occurrence during and after World War I. Although tract housing was built in the outlying areas in the 1950s and 1960s, few modern

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houses were built in the district, primarily due to the lack of available building lots. The demolition of historic houses to make way for new residences has begun on West River Street, however, and may be the beginning of a trend.

Evaluation of Architectural Significance

The river parks, which are the dominant visual element in the district, are a unique resource. The historic open space of seventeenth-century Milford has been preserved and overlaid with the historic and esthetic sensibility of the twentieth century, creating a remarkable demonstration of community planning. While the impulse to beautify home towns in this period was a common phenomenon, it was generally confined to the colonializing of existing homes by private property owners. In Milford it became a full-scale community effort. The initial impetus clearly came from the private sector but the project was supported and fostered by the town. Municipal participation is evident. The bridges and retaining walls along the river are all publicly funded projects as are two of the parks. The parks today are all owned and maintained by the City of Milford.

The beautification of the Wepawaug River with these landscaped parks has created an open vista of exceptional design. Not only does it bring into sharper focus the two principal institutional buildings--the classic white church and the impressive town hall--but it reinforces the ideological importance of these institutions throughout most of Milford's history. These buildings are exceptional and architecturally significant in their own right--outstanding examples of the Adamesque and Classical Revival styles because of their level of style and craftsmanship. Both are well-preserved throughout and enhanced by the open landscaped setting.

The architects who designed the City Hall were Everetts Tracy (?-1922) and Edgerton Swartwout (1871-1943). The plans, drawn by Tracy, the principal of this Bridgeport, Connecticut firm, were discussed and reproduced in architectural journals of the period.²

By contrast, the domestic architecture, while making a substantial contribution to the historic character of the district, does play a relatively subordinate role. The historic streetscapes that surround the parks are characterized by a similiarity of form and scale, an impression reinforced by the almost exclusive use of white paint. The straightforward construction of the houses, utilizing the most ordinary of building materials and limited architectural detail, adds to the effect. A major exception is the group of Greek Revival houses with colonnaded porches. They command attention because of their distinctive cube forms and exceptional craftsmanship.

It is evident from the surviving residential architecture that Milford had a relatively limited economic base throughout most of its history. Modest vernacular housing for the middle class was constructed throughout the district even in the colonial period. Mansions of the Georgian style, such as are found in other coastal cities, are missing from the historic streetscape, as well as the later mansions of the Victorian period, although some of these types may have been built and not survived. What does remain is a well-integrated and exceptionally well-preserved collection of historic resources. Examples influenced by most of the major architectural styles can be found in the district, includ-

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ing Gothic Revival, Italianate, Stick, and Queen Anne. (Please refer to Item 7:5; Paragraph 2.) Each house is distinguished by some degree of architectural detail and makes an important contribution to the collective architectural significance of the district. The primary importance of these cultural resources, therefore, lies in their historical significance. To quote from the report of the Historic District Study Committee, "[they] reflect the continuing change and development of the whole history of the town since its founding."

Notes

1. Building histories and information about the interiors of houses are taken from the "Milford Historic District Study Report," 1975.
2. See Architecture, 1915, Vol. XXXII, pp. 297-301. The plans for the building are featured in Architecture, 1919, Vol. XXXIX, pp. 29-31, plates 26-30. Tracy's obituary is published in American Architect, March, 1922, Vol. CXXI, p. 168. There is no similar published information on Swartwout.

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Major Bibliographic Sources:

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Tuttle, Morehouse and Taylor Co., 1914.

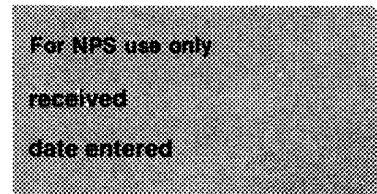
Historic Maps of Milford, 1835, 1855, 1868.

Milford Connecticut: 325th Anniversary. Milford, Connecticut, 1984.

"Report of the Historic District Study Committee." Milford, Connecticut, 1975.

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UTM References:

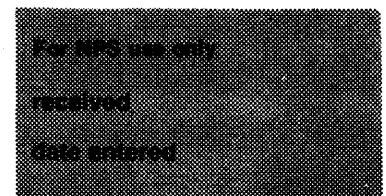
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B 18	663280	4565640	O 18	662350	4565670
C 18	663290	4565550	P 18	662470	4565720
D 18	662960	4565440	Q 18	662520	4565710
E 18	663030	4565240	R 18	662550	4565780
F 18	662810	4565380	S 18	662620	4565770
G 18	662800	4565170	T 18	662680	4566150
H 18	662720	4565160	U 18	662830	4566040
I 18	662650	4565300	V 18	662840	4566120
J 18	662410	4565250	W 18	662900	4566120
K 18	662240	4565480	X 18	662910	4566250
L 18	662320	4565560	Y 18	662990	4566160
M 18	662290	4565580	Z 18	662970	4566820

Verbal Boundary Description and Justification:

Beginning at a point at the northeast corner of the property on the Buick Avenue (Inventory #3), the boundary extends down the north side of said street to a point directly opposite Gulf Street before crossing Cherry Street and extending along the rear property lines of all properties on the south side of said street (or the northern boundary of the Milford cemetery), before continuing around the cemetery and turning in a southerly direction to the right of way of the railroad at the southeast corner of the property at 24 Prospect Street. Here the boundary turns to the west and crosses Prospect Street and the Wepawaug River to the western bank. The boundary then turns in a northerly direction and follows the stone embankment of said river to the Jefferson Bridge, before returning in a southerly direction along the west side of River Street to the southern boundary of the property where the U.S Post Office is located. The boundary then extends around said property and returns in a northwesterly direction along the rear property line of the post office and the County Courthouse, before extending around the entire historic school complex and its playing field, so as to exclude the modern school building to the rear (west) of West River Street, to West Main Street. Here the boundary crosses West Main Street to include the first property on Housatonic Street (#8) and the historic factory at 108-116 West Main Street and returns along the northern rear property lines of properties on the north side of said street to a point opposite the west boundaries of the properties at 54 and 53 Winthrop Court. At this point the boundary angles to the northeast to run along said boundaries before turning to the east and returning along the northern rear property lines on Winthrop Court, before turning and running along the rear property lines on the north side of Maple Street to a point opposite #144 West River Street. Here it turns to the north along the rear property line of said property and #166, 180, 192 West River Street to the southwest corner of #198 West River Street. Here the boundary turns to the west to include the north portion of #218 West River Street and extends up said street to include #223-225, and #231, extends around the perimeter of said property before returning to the southeast to the western property line of #211 West River Street. Here the boundary runs along said property line, crosses the Wepawaug River to meet the northwest corner of #146 North Street, and extends along the northeast side of said property

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

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



River Park Historic District

Continuation sheet Milford, Connecticut

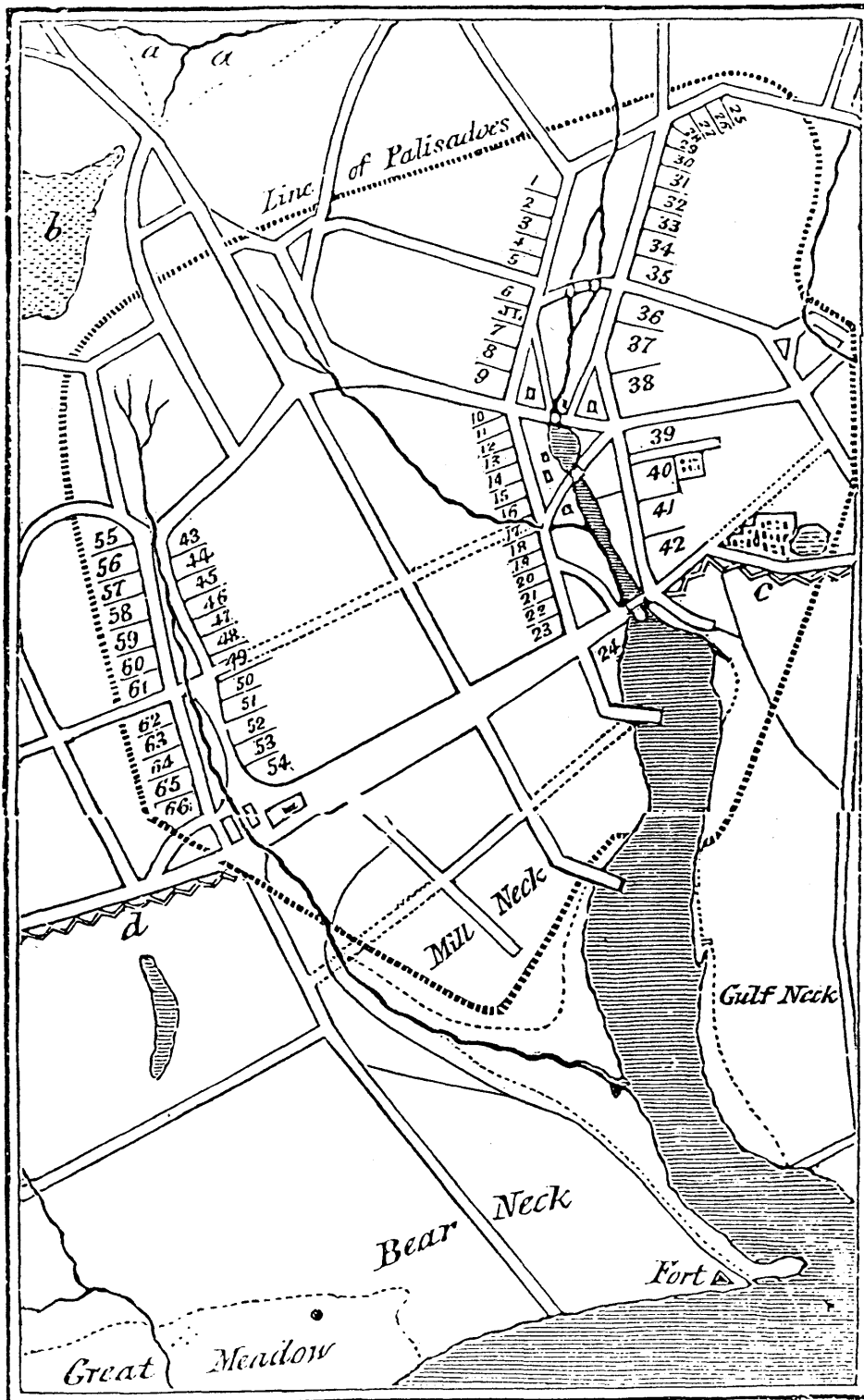
Item number 10

Page 2

Verbal Boundary and Justification continued:

and includes # 162 North Street before crossing the street to include both dwellings on Lot 70, Map 825, before returning along the rear property lines of #155, 147, 139, 133, 125, and #117 in a southerly direction. The boundary continues south across Lot 77 (#111-113 North Street) and Lot 78 (105 North Street) to a point at the northeastern corner of Lot 80 (87 North Street). At this point the boundary turns to the west and runs along the rear property lines of the entire north/northeast side of Governor's Avenue and Buick Avenue to return to the first point.

The above boundaries encompass the historic residential and institutional center of Milford. They were established to provide historical and visual continuity and include the maximum number of historic buildings associated with the development of the area from about 1650 to 1936. Outside the district to the east, west, and north, modern commercial intrusion, including strip development, has taken place and provides a distinct visual barrier. To the south the commercial district of Milford was not included because the buildings there are not architecturally or historically compatible with the primarily residential character of the district.



PLAN OF THE ORIGINAL TOWN PLOT OF MILFORD.

Reproduced from "Milford, Connecticut:
325th Anniversary," p.6.

EXHIBIT A

River Park Historic District: Town plot upper right hand corner.