

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

07001441



National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

Historic name Silvermine Center Historic District

Other names/site number _____

2. Location

street & number Roughly bounded by Perry Avenue, Old Kings Highway, not for publication
Mill and Rivers Roads, Silvermine Avenue & Silvermine
Roads in the towns of Norwalk, New Canaan & Wilton

city or town Norwalk, New Canaan & Wilton vicinity _____

State Connecticut code CT county Fairfield code 001 zip code _____

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, as amended, I hereby certify that this 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 meets does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant nationally statewide locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

[Signature] SHPO 3.14.09
Signature of certifying official/Title Date

CCT / SHPO
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official/Title Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this property is:

- entered in the National Register.
 ___ See continuation sheet
- determined eligible for the
 National Register.
 ___ See continuation sheet
- determined not eligible for the
 National Register.
- removed from the
 National Register.
- other (explain):

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

[Signature] 6/23/09

5. Classification

Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply)

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

Category of Property

(Check only one box)

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

Number of Resources within Property

(Do not incl. previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing	Non-Contributing	
97	24	buildings
0	0	sites
15	4	structures
0	0	objects
112	28	Total

Name of related multiple property listing:

(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

1

6. Functions or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

- DOMESTIC /Single Dwelling
- COMMERCE/TRADE Artists Studio, Specialty Store, Restaurant
- INDUSTRY Mill
- LANDSCAPE River, Pond
- RECREATION & CULTURE Art Gallery

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

- DOMESTIC Single Dwelling
- COMMERCE/TRADE Artists Studio, Specialty Store, Restaurant
- LANDSCAPE River, Pond
- RECREATION & CULTURE Art Gallery

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions)

- COLONIAL/Single dwelling/secondary structure
- EARLY REPUBLIC/Federal
- MID-19TH CENTURY/Greek Revival
- LATE VICTORIAN/Queen Anne
- LATE 19TH CENTURY & EARLY 20TH C.
- AMERICAN REVIVALS/Colonial Revival

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

- foundation STONE
- walls WOOD- Clapboard
- WOOD - Shingle
- roof ASPHALT
- other STUCCO

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property.)

SEE CONTINUATION SHEET

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Description

The proposed Silvermine Center National Register Historic District is at the heart of the present Silvermine neighborhood located in Norwalk, New Canaan and Wilton, Connecticut, three miles northwest of downtown Norwalk. The area known as Silvermine straddles all three municipalities. The mostly suburban residential community retains a high degree of physical and architectural integrity that has evolved over three centuries. This includes the rustic landscape that encompasses characteristics of the mill-industrial period that were celebrated and retained during the development of the arts colony in the early decades of the early twentieth century.

Physical Description of the Area

Silvermine lies within Connecticut's Western Coastal Slope, which stretches from the New York State line to New Haven. Silvermine, less than five miles from Long Island Sound, consists of uplands which surround a gorge at the Silvermine River, which flows into the Norwalk River. The land in the Western Coastal Slope contains high lime content, making the area some of the most fertile land in Connecticut. The Silvermine River flows through the center of a former glacial river valley, whose original banks form steep hillsides 150 to 250 feet above sea level. The resulting variable topography consists of elevations of 85 to 220 feet above sea level within the proposed district. Typical of northeastern United States formerly glaciated areas, the Silvermine River Valley has glacial till and outcroppings of rock throughout. Several streams feed directly into the Silvermine River. During the past three centuries, the river and streams have been dammed in numerous places, resulting in a series of rapids followed by small ponds. The Silvermine River joins the Norwalk River just south of the Silvermine area. Heavily wooded with predominantly deciduous trees, the Silvermine area was mostly cleared for agricultural use until after World War II. There are examples of centuries-old hardwood and softwood trees throughout the district. The existing road network is an amalgam of historic roadways and new streets constructed for development in the last half of the 20th century. Remnants of old roadways, such as abutments and borders at 9 Old Kings highway (Inventory #53) can be found throughout the district and on historic surveys. Based on limited historic maps and the placement of buildings in relationship to the extant street layout, little has changed over time aside from widening and paving. The section of Old Kings Highway did at one time terminate at what is now Mail Coach Court – the connection to Musket Ridge Road to the north was made during mid-twentieth century development.

Architectural and Developmental Overview

The historic district represents the core of the earliest built environment in Silvermine. This includes the highest concentration of former mill buildings as well as the shops and stores that supported the industrial and agrarian activity on and nearby the Silvermine River. Additionally, some of the earliest residential buildings in Silvermine are located in this core area. Many of the buildings in the district date from the 18th century. The majority of the earliest buildings reflect the characteristics of the

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architecture typical to newly-settled areas of New England during that period. This includes one-and-a-half and two-story vernacular residential and industrial buildings. Period elements common to most of the early buildings are: stone foundations, either dry-laid or mortared; post-and-beam structural systems; clapboard siding; double-hung sash windows, and gabled roofs. The chimneystacks, typically centrally placed during this period vary in placement possibly due to changes over time. The one house that unquestionably represents the English building tradition is the ca. 1724 Jacob St. John "saltbox" house at 297 Silvermine Avenue (Inventory #101; Photograph #16). Overall the buildings are modest with one exception, the ca. 1790 high-style Federal period house at 1053 Silvermine Road (Inventory #136; Photograph #12).

Some of the period interpretive value of the district has been lost to changes, but most of those changes are recognized as evolutionary and therefore, contributing. Constructed with post-and-beam technology, the extant houses, mill buildings, former industrial remnants and agrarian outbuildings all retain the simple functionality in their form and outward expression. Examples include the Guthrie Knob Factory (Inventory #83; Photographs #1 & 2), Riders White Mill (Inventory #65; Photograph #33), and the water-driven mechanical equipment at the former Aiken Mill (Inventory #71). The only mill building that has retained its outward form (and to some extent, appearance (there are no historic photos to contradict this) is the ca. 1770 Red Mill (Guthrie Knob Factory) at 192 Perry Avenue (Inventory #83; Photograph #1, 2). This celebrated local landmark is the best remaining example of the former mill industry in the district. Furniture knobs were fabricated here but finished in what is now the Silvermine Tavern building (Inventory #87; Photograph #7,8). Similarly, the early residential buildings are typical in their traditional construction and straightforward austerity. Some of the best examples include the Federal period houses at 198 Mill Road (Inventory #25; Photograph #28) and 1038 Silvermine Road (Inventory #133; Photograph #14). Many 18th century buildings underwent additions as well as subtle alterations during the 19th and 20th centuries. These are reflected in numerous accretions that clearly illustrate multiple time periods, particularly in buildings such as the Silvermine Tavern (Inventory #87; Photographs #7 & 8), and the Federal period houses at 1 and 2 Old Kings Highway (Inventory #46 & 47; Photographs #30 & 31). These alterations and additions were most often sensitively executed, keeping the vernacular and period character of the area intact.

The district contains a solitary example of a high-style period Federal house (Inventory #136; Photograph #12). Numerous residential and industrial buildings constructed in the 19th century are vernacular and include the former shop at 187 Perry Avenue (Inventory #80; Photograph #4), the Hyatt Gregory House (Inventory #139; Photograph #11), Austin's Blacksmith Shop (Inventory #41; Photograph #24), and the Victorian-era remodel of the Greek Revival house at 1 River Road (Inventory #89; Photograph #21). There are seven mid-nineteenth century Greek Revival style buildings in the district. Many have been altered but the best example is 276 Silvermine Avenue (Inventory #96; Photograph #18). An eighth Greek Revival-style house was constructed next door at 278 Silvermine Avenue, but not until 1910, well after the style was out of vogue (Inventory #98; Photograph #17). One particularly notable vernacular farm building of the period is the former Rider store at 304 Silvermine Road (Inventory #108). Late 19th century period architecture is represented by only a handful of buildings which include the vernacular Silvermine Market (Inventory #129; Photograph #19), and the Silvermine Tavern Store (Inventory #86; Photograph #9). The majority of those buildings are vernacular in character, in generally good condition, and well-maintained.

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Notable twentieth century houses include the, addition to the John Bayard residence (Inventory #95; Photograph #23), and the magnificent Norman French eclectic, J. Hyde Barnum House (Inventory #1; Photograph #20). The other extant 20th century buildings are examples of the historical revival such as the Gates Moore House (Inventory #91; Photograph #22), and the main house at 280 Silvermine Avenue (Inventory #99; Photograph #10). Elements typical to the historical revivals are the use of simple but picturesque massing; stone foundation work; traditional windows; wood shingle siding, and; traditional trim and architectural details. Many barns and mill buildings have been converted to residential or studio use, such as the John Bayard barn (Inventory #17; Photograph #32), and the gallery at the Silvermine Guild Arts Center (Inventory #131; Photograph #13). The Bayard barn is fundamentally intact – it has had mid-twentieth century garage doors, standard entry doors, and double-hung sash windows, all items that clearly show a change in use. Nevertheless, the form, siding, finishes, and site have not been altered, leaving the original interpretive value very much intact. Even with all the accretions to the Silvermine Guild Arts Center, the earliest buildings were former barns cobbled together, retaining the agrarian character of the immediate area.

The buildings in the district are typically placed in sight of one another on varying sized lots with much of the larger sites infilled by suburban residential development over time. Most of the buildings are set relatively close to the street, though late-nineteenth and twentieth century new construction is typically placed further back on their lots. Most of the later houses represent infill over time so no particular groupings of buildings are dominant. The early extant houses and buildings are typically found on the waterway or in close proximity to the river. Mill Road, River Road, Silvermine Avenue, and Perry Avenue all follow the course of the Silvermine River. The road system runs roughly north/south and tends to wind with the flow of the river and natural contours of the land. Perry Avenue turns most substantially as it drops quickly in grade and crosses the Silvermine River. The older buildings served by Comstock Hill Road and Silvermine Road to the west of the river served the agrarian purposes versus water-powered industrial activity on the river.

Significant resources include the Silvermine Arts Guild complex (Inventory #131; Photograph #13), the J. Hyde Barnum / Lily Pons house (Inventory #1; Photograph #20), the Guthrie Knob factory or Red Mill (Inventory #83; Photograph #1,2), the Silvermine Tavern (Inventory #87; Photograph #7,8), the ca. 1724 Jacob St. John homestead (Inventory #101; Photograph #16), and the John Byard residence (Inventory #95; Photograph #23). The contributing buildings include a variety of buildings some of which served in various capacities, but have mostly been converted to residences.

Non-contributing resources are all from the 20th century and include the mid-twentieth century raised Ranch house at 172 Perry Avenue (Inventory #64), and two large stylistically and contextually incompatible, late 20th century Neo-Traditional houses set far back from the street. Other infill residential buildings are non-contributing due to less than 50-year age and Modernistic styles such as the 1989 John Black Lee House (Inventory #19), and the 1980 Modern-Contemporary house at 962 Silvermine Road (Inventory #119). In all, the district continues to exhibit many of the architectural and site characteristics of earlier periods and as a result, continues to be a desirable residential neighborhood.

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Silvermine Center Historic District Inventory

Most of the buildings in the district are now residential. There are a total of 76 primary buildings. Of the primary buildings, 60 are contributing, and 16 are non-contributing. There are a total of 46 secondary buildings (barns, garages, cottages studios, etc.) in the district. Of these buildings, 34 are contributing and 12 are non-contributing. The contributing secondary buildings include 7 barns, 2 artist studios, 15 detached garages, 2 combination garage/artist studios, 2 pool houses, 7 cottages, 1 greenhouse, 1 horse stall, and 1 "chapel."

There are 19 structures (bridges, dams, well houses, sheds, playhouses, gazebos, etc.) in the district. Of these structures, 15 are contributing and 3 are non-contributing. The 1899 Perry Avenue Bridge is individually listed on the National Register of Historic Places (Inventory #79; Photograph #3). The contributing structures in the historic district include the remains of the roadway and bridge abutment that once crossed the Silvermine River in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries (Inventory #53), as well as 3 dams, 3 bridges, 5 well houses, and a chicken house.

The following is the inventory of all the contributing and non-contributing resources within the Silvermine Center Historic District. Inventory numbers are assigned to all the resources and can be cross-referenced in the text and maps. Historic or long-held names are in bold lettering. The dates of construction were culled from historic documentation, tax records, and local sources and were confirmed in the field.

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Inv. #	Address	Historic Name/Style/Date	C/NC	Photo #
Comstock Hill Road				
1.	54	J. HYDE BARNUM HOUSE, Norman French Eclectic, 1923	C	20
2.	54	garage, ca. 1940	C	
3.	54	pool houses (mirrored pair)	N/C	
4.	130	Neo-Colonial Revival, 1956; alterations	C	
5.	130	gazebo, ca. 1990	N/C	
6.	135	SUN HOUSE, Greek Revival, 1845; additions/alterations, ca. 1990	C	
7.	135	garage/studio, ca. 1920; additions/alterations, ca. 1990	C	
8.	135	cottage, ca. 1850; additions/alterations, ca. 1950	C	
9.	135	greenhouse, ca. 1920	C	
10.	153	Neo-Colonial Revival, 1969	N/C	
11.	163	Arts & Crafts/Modern, 1910; additions/alterations, ca. 1960	C	
12.	163	dam, ca. 1900	C	
Guild Road				
13.	5	LILY PONS STUDIO, 1937; additions/alterations, ca. 1970	C	
14.	5	garage, ca. 1970	N/C	
15.	5	small stone & wood-frame outbuilding, "chapel", ca. 1940	C	
16.	5	pool house, ca. 1925	C	

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Mail Coach Drive

- | | | | | |
|-----|---|---|---|----|
| 17. | 5 | barn, vernacular, 1920; additions/alterations, ca. 1960 | C | 32 |
| 18. | 5 | chicken house, ca. 1920 | C | |

Mill Road

- | | | | | |
|-----|-----|---|-----|----|
| 19. | 160 | JOHN BLACK LEE HOUSE, Modern, 1989-1992 | N/C | |
| 20. | 160 | barn, vernacular, ca. 1955 (former Buttery Mill site) | C | 29 |
| 21. | 183 | BUTTERY HOUSE, Greek Revival, ca. 1835; add's/alter's, ca. 1925 | C | |
| 22. | 183 | barn, vernacular, 1880 | C | |
| 23. | 183 | studio, vernacular, ca. 1880 | C | |
| 24. | 198 | bridge, footings ca. 1925 | C | |
| 25. | 198 | Federal, ca. 1790; additions/alterations, ca. 1925 | C | 28 |
| 26. | 198 | carriage house, ca. 1850; additions/alterations, ca. 1925 | C | |
| 27. | 201 | BUTTERY RESIDENCE, Greek Revival, ca. 1860; add's/alter's, ca. 1955 | C | |
| 28. | 207 | BUTTERY RESIDENCE, Greek Revival, ca. 1860; add's/alter's, ca. 1990 | C | |
| 29. | 207 | cottage, ca. 1940 | C | |
| 30. | 207 | barn, ca. 1955 | C | 27 |
| 31. | 221 | Colonial Revival, ca. 1850; additions/alterations, ca. 1922 | C | |
| 32. | 247 | vernacular, ca. 1735; additions/alterations, ca. 1925, 1990 | C | 25 |
| 33. | 247 | cottage, ca. 1930 | C | |
| 34. | 247 | barn, ca. 1880; additions/alterations, ca. 1925 | C | 26 |
| 35. | 256 | vernacular residence, ca. 1966 | N/C | |

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36.	264	Gothic Revival, 1846; additions/alterations, ca. 1930, 1990	C	
37.	264	garage, ca. 1950	C	
38.	273	vernacular, ca. 1912; additions/alterations, ca. 1960	C	
39.	273	garage, ca. 1915	C	
40.	273	cottage, ca. 1965	N/C	
41.	274	AUSTIN BLACKSMITH SHOP; vernac. ca. 1880; add's/alter's, ca. 1960	C	24
42.	275	vernacular, ca. 1900; additions/alterations, ca. 1990	N/C	
43.	289	Colonial Revival, 1923; additions/alterations, ca. 1955	C	
44.	301	Colonial Revival, 1933; Modern add's/alterations, ca. 1955	C	
45.	315	vernacular, ca. 1779; additions/alterations, ca. 1925, 1980	C	

Old Kings Highway

46.	1	vernacular, ca. 1812; additions/alterations, ca. 1925, 1980	C	30
47.	2	vernacular, ca. 1800; additions/alterations, ca. 1925, 1990	C	31
48.	6	Arts & Crafts-inspired, ca. 1935; additions/alterations, ca. 2000	C	
49.	6	cottage, ca. 1935; additions/alterations, ca. 2000	C	
50.	7	vernacular, ca. 1790; additions/alterations, ca. 1925	C	
51.	7	garage, ca. 1935	C	
52.	9	Modern Contemporary, 1965	N/C	
53.	9	bridge abutment, road border remnants, 19 th century	C	
54.	11	BRADLEY & DEBORAH NASH HOUSE, 1823; add's/alter's, 1980	C	
55.	11	garage, ca. 1980	N/C	
56.	11	studio, ca. 1935 (moved to site)	N/C	

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Perry Avenue

- | | | | | |
|-----|-----|--|-----|----|
| 57. | 163 | "SMOKEHOUSE," vernacular farmhouse, 1791; add's/alter's, ca. 1925 | C | |
| 58. | 163 | garage, ca. 1935 | C | |
| 59. | 165 | vernacular, ca. 1790; additions/alterations, ca. 1975 | C | |
| 60. | 165 | shed, ca. 1925 | C | |
| 61. | 169 | JAB RYDER HOUSE, ca. 1781; additions/alterations, ca. 1970 | C | |
| 62. | 169 | garage, ca. 1915; additions/alterations, ca. 1965 | C | |
| 63. | 171 | vernacular, ca. 1780; additions/alterations, ca. 1925 | C | |
| 64. | 172 | Ranch, 1950 | C | |
| 65. | 174 | RIDER'S WHITE MILL, vernac., ca. 1800; add's/alter's, ca. 1925 | C | 33 |
| 66. | 176 | vernacular, 1832; additions/alterations, ca. 1985 | C | |
| 67. | 176 | cottage, ca. 1935 – significantly altered late 20 th C. | N/C | |
| 68. | 176 | barn, ca. 1970 | N/C | |
| 69. | 176 | horse stall, ca. 1915 | C | |
| 70. | 176 | playhouse, ca. 1925 | C | |
| 71. | 179 | HUTCHENS RESIDENCE (Aiken Mill), ca. 1770; add's/alter's, ca. 1824, 1925, 1995 | C | C |
| 72. | 179 | studio, ca. 1935 | C | |
| 73. | 170 | (Historically # 181) vernacular, ca. 1800 | C | |
| 74. | 170 | barn/studio, ca. 1990 | N/C | |
| 75. | 183 | GUTHRIE-HUTCHENS BARN, 1844; add's/alter's, ca. 1985 | C | |
| 76. | 183 | dam, date unknown, 18/19 th century, rebuilt 1912 | C | 5 |
| 77. | 183 | well house, date unknown | C | |

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78.	184	vernacular, ca. 1900; additions/alterations, ca. 1935	C	
79.		PERRY AVENUE BRIDGE, 1899 (listed on National Reg. Oct. 2006)	C	3
80.	187	vernacular, ca. 1830; additions/alterations, ca. 1925	C	4
81.	191	vernacular, ca. 1870; additions/alterations, ca. 1990	C	
82.	191	carport, ca. 1990	N/C	
83.	192	THE RED MILL (Guthrie Knob Factory), ca. 1770; add's/alter's, ca. 1925	C	1, 2
84.	192	cottage, ca. 1925	C	
85.	192	dam, ca. 1770, rebuilt 20 th century	C	2
86.	193	SILVERMINE TAVERN STORE, ca. 1862; add's/alter's, ca. 1915	C	9
87.	194	SILVERMINE TAVERN, ca. 1810; add's/alter's, ca. 1930	C	7, 8
88.	194	garage/barn, ca. 1920	C	

River Road

89.	1	Greek Revival, ca. 1840; additions/alterations, ca. 1940	C	21
90.	1	garage, ca, 1940	C	
91.	5	GATES MOORE, Colonial Revival, 1928	C	22
92.	7	Neo-Traditional, 2005	N/C	
93.	7	barn, ca. 1850 (remodeled 2007)	N/C	
94.	9	Neo-Traditional, 2005	N/C	
95.	11	JOHN BYARD RESIDENCE, ca. 1750; add's/alter's, ca. 1927	C	23

Silvermine Avenue

96.	276	CLAUDE GUTHRIE HOUSE, Greek Revival, ca. 1840; add's/alter's, ca. 1950	C	18
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97.	276	well house (moved from original location), ca. 1840	C	
98.	278	Greek Revival, ca. 1910; add's/alter's, ca. 1965	C	17
99.	280	vernacular, ca. 1730; additions/alterations, ca. 1930	C	10
100.	280	garage, ca. 1980	N/C	
101.	297	JACOB ST. JOHN HOUSE, vernacular, ca. 1724; add's/alter's, ca. 1965	C	16
102.	297	garage, ca. 1965	N/C	

Silvermine Road

103.		vehicular bridge with stone walls, ca. 1925	C	6
104.	300	ROSWELL HYATT HOUSE, vernacular, 1840; add's/alter's, ca. 1990	C	
105.	300	garage, ca. 1925	C	
106.	302	Federal, ca. 1803; additions/alterations, ca. 1930	C	
107.	302	barn, ca. 1830	C	
108.	304	RIDER STORE, vernacular, ca. 1820; add's/alter's, ca. 1880, 20 th c.	C	
109.	306	STEPHEN & CYNTHIA GREGORY HOUSE, Federal, ca. 1826; add's/alter's, ca. 2003	C	
110.	306	garage, ca. 1930	C	
111.	306	well house, date unknown	C	
112.	308	Neo-Traditional, 2001	N/C	
113.	310	Neo-Traditional, 2001	N/C	
114.	312	Vernacular house, ca. 1830	C	
115.	312	cottage, late 19 th c.	C	
116.	312	gazebo, ca. 2000	N/C	

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117.	960	vernacular, ca. 1850	C	
118.	960	garage, ca. 1960	C	
119.	962	Modern-Contemporary, 1980	N/C	
120.	974	Greek Revival, ca. 1830	C	
121.	987	Colonial Revival, ca. 1932; additions/alterations, 1948	C	
122.	990	Colonial Revival, 1925; additions/alterations, date unknown	C	15
123.	1003	Neo-Traditional, 2000	N/C	
124.	1006	Colonial Revival, 1923, lost integrity with add's/alt's, ca. 2000	N/C	
125.	1012	Greek Revival, ca. 1860; additions/alterations, early 20 th c, 2007	C	
126.	1012	garage, ca. 2000	N/C	
127.	1022	Neo-Traditional, 2004	N/C	
128.	1028	vernacular, ca. 1885; additions/alterations, ca. 1929	N/C	
129.	1028	SILVERMINE MARKET, vernacular, ca. 1860	C	19
130.	1028	barn, ca. 1890	C	
131.	1035	SILVERMINE GUILD ARTS CENTER, 1922, add's/alter's, ca. 20 th c.	C	13
132.	1035	pottery studio, ca. 1955	C	
133.	1038	Federal, 1753; additions/alterations, ca. 1930	C	14
134.	1038	garage, ca. 1940	C	
135.	1038	well house, date unknown	C	
136.	1053	Federal, ca. 1790; additions/alterations, date unknown	C	12
137.	1053	garage, ca. 1955	C	
138.	1056	Federal, ca. 1832; additions/alterations, date unknown	C	

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- | | | | | |
|------|------|---|---|----|
| 139. | 1057 | HYATT GREGORY HOUSE vernacular, 1834; add's/alter's, ca. 1990 | C | 11 |
| 140. | 1057 | well house, date unknown | C | |

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- A** Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B** Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C** Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D** Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- A** owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B** removed from its original location.
- C** a birthplace or grave.
- D** a cemetery.
- E** a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F** a commemorative property.
- G** less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years.

Narrative Statement of Significance

(Explain the significance of the property.) SEE CONTINUATION SHEET

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form.) 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
- # _____
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record# HARS CT - 63

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

INDUSTRY

ART

ARCHITECTURE

Period of Significance

1724 (construction of Jacob St. John House) to 1958 (50 year cut-off)

Significant Dates

1922 - Formation of the Silvermine Guild of Artists

1741 - Longest continuously operating mill

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

Multiple artists

Cultural Affiliation

Architect/Builder

Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Name of repository:

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

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STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The proposed Silvermine Center National Register Historic District is a unique collection of resources located in Norwalk, New Canaan and Wilton, Connecticut. This significant concentration of 18th and 19th century residential, mill and commercial buildings, combined with the social history pertaining to the arts colony established in the early 20th century (and, to some extent, still existing today), is the nucleus of an unusual, organically developed village, fostered by its proximity to the Silvermine River. While substantially intact, the entire area has been impacted by recent infill development which threatens to adversely affect the integrity of this unique community.

The district is locally and regionally significant under *Criterion A* for its contribution to the broad patterns of local and regional history for its early mill industry; and locally, regionally and nationally significant for its later incarnation as a notable arts colony and cultural community. The district is locally significant under *Criterion B* for the association with the Guthrie family and other Silvermine mill owners and the industrial development of Silvermine; the district is also locally, regionally and nationally significant under *Criterion B* for the individual notable artists who both resided in the village and created the nucleus for the Silvermine Arts Guild. Finally, the district is locally significant under *Criterion C* for its numerous extant examples of 18th and 19th century residential, industrial and commercial architecture as well as a few examples of 20th century historical revival residential and arts-culture buildings. The period of significance ranges from 1716, the first large land holdings in Silvermine purchased by Ebenezer St. John, to the continued present-day influence of the Silvermine Arts Guild, founded in 1922.

Historical Background

The Silver Mine

The exact date when this part of Connecticut was first called "Silvermine" is unclear. However, in 1712 or 1713 a parcel of land was conveyed from Matthew Seymour to James Brown for a sum of 18£. In this transfer, the document makes mention of "ye saw mill standing upon ye west branch of Norwalk River, above Silver Mine Plain." Based on this document, it is clear that at the very latest the area was known as "Silver Mine" was at the beginning of the 18th century; it is possible that it had that moniker at least twenty to thirty years prior, as the settlement history goes back as far as the late seventeenth century.

The hills that run parallel to the Silvermine River are veined with sulphide-bearing quartz which includes galena (lead sulfide), where traces of silver may be found. Several other mines are located from Ridgefield and Wilton to Norwalk in a northwesterly orientation. However, there are two places where there may have been active, if short-lived, prospects immediately within Silvermine: the northern bluff at the intersection of Comstock Hill and Silvermine roads, and at the river just below where the BATTERY Mill once stood.

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The Mill Industry from Establishment to Decline

The first European settlers to the area known as Silvermine were drawn by its potential for waterpower, as well as the ore discovered in nearby mining operations as early as 1690. The first true industry in Silvermine was the various saw mills that were constructed along the Silvermine River and its tributaries.

The first person to consolidate large holdings in the area was Ebenezer St. John. From 1716 to 1722, St. John or his sons purchased over 200 acres in Silvermine. The earliest known settlement in Silvermine is by a British Army Officer, Matthew Seymour, who constructed a saw mill on the river in 1688. The general boundaries go from Red Barn Lane in the south, the Silvermine River to the east, Huckleberry Hill Road to the north and the ridgeline of Silvermine Hill to the west. This property eventually was passed down to his three sons, Daniel, Nehemiah and Jacob. The St. John family farmed this land for generations and owned and operated several mills on the Silvermine River. Even during this early period in Silvermine, there existed both an agrarian and a mill economy.

During the late 18th to the late 19th century, aside from the primary industry of cutting lumber, Silvermine produced textiles and furniture. Raw materials, such as mahogany from Cuba and cotton from the southern United States were typically sent to be processed in industrial centers like Silvermine in Norwalk. Additionally, tobacco was grown on the farms nearby and was processed and cured for distribution. Major property and sawmill owners, including the Buttery and Guthrie families, created full service manufacturing in Silvermine processing raw goods that were brought up from the coast at Norwalk.

The first mill, Matthew Seymour's saw mill, lay about two dozen yards north of its later location. In 1709, Seymour constructed a dam to further power his mill. The mill burned to the ground in 1712 or 1713, soon after he sold it to James Brown. The second sawmill was constructed by Jacob St. John in 1741; it was that mill that later was known as the Buttery Mill and remained in continuous operation until the flood of 1955, when it was destroyed.

The next oldest mill, no longer extant, was known as the Daniels Mill. Constructed in 1743 by Benajah and Abel Hoyt, this sawmill has the distinction of being the first deeded mill to be recorded in Silvermine. However, after being sold to Pliny Daniels in 1824, the operation turned to fulling, (a process to increase the weight and bulk of cloth by shrinking and beating or pressing), and a carding machine was installed for finishing cloth, which was very profitable in the middle decades of the 19th century. Eventually, the building went back to being a sawmill and was ultimately torn down in 1929 by Harry Thayer.

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The Red and White mills, now known as the "Old Red Mill" and 174 Perry Avenue (where it was relocated), were constructed ca. 1770 and ca. 1800, respectively. Initially designed as a cotton spinning factory by Joseph Cocker, the buildings were purchased by David Comstock by 1850 for use as a hat factory. The buildings were eventually purchased and used by the Guthrie family as a "Furniture Knobs and Trimmings Mill". The Aiken Mill, now known as the "Guthrie" "Old Mill" (constructed ca. 1770), was also purchased by the Guthrie family in 1855 and used as a saw mill.

The Web Austin Mill, located upriver from the Guthrie family's mills, was multi-disciplinary; it was able to cut wood, grind grain, make cider and distilled apple brandy. William Webster Austin purchased the mill in 1879 from the Platt estate. In 1883, the mill burned down in an intense fire, and a new mill was built in its place. That mill was converted into a house, but burned in 1964 with only the foundation remaining.

The Blanchard Fur Factory was originally located on the west bank of the Silvermine River adjacent to the extant Gutmann residence, at the bend in Mill Road by the Borglum Bridge. The earliest building at this site, a corn mill, was constructed prior to 1760. Constructed before 1850, the J. W. Blanchard Fur Cap Factory tanned hides and furs to make coats, caps and muffs. A successful business that also went under the name "New Canaan Fur Factory," the mill was sold more than a half-century later when the company moved the factory to south Norwalk. A woodworking mill was located at the mill for one year, and for a few more years a tannery operated at the site. By 1910, the mill had been converted into studios for the Gruelle family, and by 1912 it was demolished. Approximately a dozen mills were in use during much of the 19th century. By the latter part of the 19th century, the mill industry in Silvermine was in decline and by the turn of the 20th century only two mills were still in operation. The demise of the mill industry and agrarian activity was not sudden, but petered out over many decades.

The diversity of uses and products made by the mills turned Silvermine into a mildly prosperous crossroads for much of the 19th century. However, by the turn of the 20th century, the economy of scale needed to compete with "Machine Age" equipment and buildings made these mills obsolete. The picturesque, mostly abandoned buildings attracted a new type of industry: the arts.

The Guthrie Family

The Guthrie family holds a special place in Silvermine due to their long residency and ability to bridge the gap during the transition from industrial hamlet to arts colony. Robert Guthrie (1802-1900) emigrated to the United States from England in 1842 and came to Norwalk in 1846. He and his wife, Elizabeth, had eleven children, of which seven survived to adulthood. Of these siblings, Henry Guthrie had the most impact on Silvermine through his founding of the Guthrie Knob Factory (main building, Silvermine Tavern, Inventory #89; Photograph #7,8) and accessory buildings, the Red (Inventory #85; Photograph #1,2) and White Mills, as well as his marriage to Hannah Buttery that brought two important mill families together. The knob factory turned out tens of thousands of tent pegs for the

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Civil War and after, glass screws and drawer knobs for furniture. However, the Guthrie's produced no heirs and carrying on the family name was left to Henry's siblings.

The Guthrie family was ultimately involved in numerous local enterprises: the Guthrie Knob factory building which housed them and provided workrooms and included the Red and White Mills as part of its operation; the Aiken Sawmill (Inventory #71) which provided wood for the factory; and in the next generation, the Silvermine Market (Inventory #129; Photograph #19) and an ice harvesting business. Henry was a founder of the Gregory's Point Horse Railroad Company that was to provide a tie to shipping on the Sound but which failed during the Panic of 1873. Local farms owned by the family provided additional support and Henry was a director of the Fairfield County Agricultural Society. The Aiken Sawmill served the knob factory during Guthrie's ownership, which spanned the second half of the nineteenth century. Alexander Guthrie's son, John L., started the Silvermine Market sometime between 1901 and 1905. The family continued to own and run the business until 1956. They continued to contribute to the evolving community as the establishment of the arts colony affected it: John L. Guthrie was the Village Room's first president, and Sidney E. Guthrie and William Guthrie's wife were members of the Silvermine Arts Guild.

The Silvermine Tavern Complex

The Silvermine Tavern complex, which presently includes the Tavern (main building of Guthrie Knob Finishing Factory, Inventory #87; Photograph #7,8) and parking lot; a former Ice House; the Red Mill and dam (Inventory #83; Photograph #1,2); and the Country Store (Inventory #88; Photograph #9), is a major component in the transition of the area from an industrial center to an artistic one. While constructed as a cotton processing factory by Joseph Cocker circa 1810, occupied by the David Comstock hat factory in the mid-nineteenth century and then used as an industrial knob factory in the mid-to late-nineteenth century, the complex was transformed by John Kenneth Byard into one of the centers of social and cultural life in Silvermine following its purchase in 1925. Where the flagpole is located once stood a combined post office and grocery where local residents would meet and share the latest news about town. The building exploded around 1910 when fireworks were set off inside the building due to a rambunctious 4th of July celebration.

The Country Store, constructed by Claude Guthrie in 1862, also acted as a meeting place starting in the mid-1860s. Originally, the building had been immediately adjacent to Silvermine Avenue, but was moved in the early 20th century by John Kenneth Byard.

After the sale of the Red Mill to Sammy Rider in 1902, Rider continued to use the building for industrial purposes. In 1911, Hannah Buttery Guthrie, Henry's wife, sold the Tavern building to Otto Goldstein, who used it solely as a home for his extended family as had Henry Guthrie in the last few years of his life. Goldstein, who had occupied the building since 1906, also briefly ran a fur factory at the Red and White Mills. He leased them from Rider before 1909 when the dam was washed out.

In 1924, the year Sammy Rider died, Frank Hutchens, artist, purchased the Red and White Mills and rebuilt the dam at the site using his artists' eye to construct a more picturesque waterfall. He used the

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Red Mill as a studio and held exhibitions there and the opening of the refurbished building in that same year was celebrated as "Candle Light - Open Fire - Old Fashioned Cheer - MUSIC AND DANCING - Country Togs". The spirit of community merriment was extended to the White Mill, a little closer to the road than the Red Mill, and it became one of the main social gathering places. It was called the "Village Room" and used for several years before being relocated to 174 Perry Avenue by Hutchens (Inventory #65; Photograph #33) where it became a residence.

In 1924, John Kenneth Byard, lawyer and antiquarian, purchased the Tavern building, Country Store and numerous other buildings in the center of Silvermine. He transformed the look of the Tavern by adding a Mt. Vernon-style two-story porch on the front of the building (Inventory #87; Photograph #7) and began selling antiques out of the Tavern and the Country Store. He also expanded the dining areas and kitchen and opened the upper floors for guest accommodations. Gates Moore, Byard's cousin, connected the barn and the factory to create the modern Tavern complex. During Prohibition, under the Goldsteins, the house had been used as a speakeasy, with a still and bootleg liquor for sale and it was a natural progression for it to be reborn as the Silvermine Tavern. Byard eventually purchased the Red Mill from Hutchens, opened it for coffee and teas, weekend dinners, rooming for guests and special events.

The Tavern, Red Mill, Country Store, "The Pines", (Inventory #89; Photograph #21) and land on Old King's Highway (vacant lot) and River Road (parking lot) were sold to Ignatius Wiese of Southport, Connecticut in 1948, who continued to run the Tavern and antique shop. Francis Whitman, Sr. purchased the complex from Wiese in 1955 and the Whitman family has continued to own and operate the Tavern and Country Store for over half a century.

Shops and Other Businesses in Silvermine

From the late eighteenth century to the turn of the twentieth century, Silvermine had a number of shops, stores and businesses. Although only the Silvermine Country Store (owned by the Silvermine Tavern) and the Silvermine Market (originally a meat market) remain, a number of buildings housed businesses that catered to the mill owners and workers. One of the earliest mentions of a business was located at 163 Perry Avenue, known as the "Smoke House" (Inventory #57) The Rider Store was located at 304 Silvermine Road (Inventory #108) and operated during the mid-nineteenth century. The Seymour Austin Blacksmith Shop, located at 274 Mill Road (Inventory #41; Photograph #24) was in operation during the mid-19th century. The Hyatt Gregory House and Store, also known as the "Pink House" (Inventory #139; Photograph #11) sold tobacco, root beer, meat, cider and roasted peanuts. It is unclear whether 187 Perry Avenue (Inventory #80; Photograph #4), used locally as a basket weaving shop, ever actually functioned as a blacksmith shop but there was a blacksmith at the store two buildings away. Furthermore, the Basket Shop does retain two large barn-like doors on the front of the building. Guthrie Pond, located on the Silvermine Arts Guild campus, and the Guthrie Millpond on the Silvermine River were centers of a flourishing ice business owned and operated by the Guthrie family for several decades. Unlike the mills, which in many cases produced goods for export, these businesses and stores were homegrown solutions that responded to the needs of the local population.

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The one exception, ice production, dependent on cold winters, could always find a market in Norwalk's flourishing oyster business as well as in Silvermine.

Silvermine as Arts Colony

In the late 19th century, the American Renaissance, an arts movement that began at America's centennial celebration, was producing a large number of artists, writers and actors who were creating summer colonies, particularly in the northeastern United States. While places like Lenox, Massachusetts and Newport, Rhode Island, which were summer enclaves for the very wealthy during the Belle Époque, attracted artists due to their patronage, and Lawrence Park in Bronxville was a wealthy planned community designed to attract artists into its midst, Silvermine was a rural, semi-abandoned mill town which grew organically as an arts center.

The founding of the arts community in Silvermine can be traced back to Solon Hannibal Borglum's (1868-1922) establishment of 'Rocky Ranch' in Silvermine. Borglum was born in Utah prior to statehood and later spent his young adulthood as a cowboy in California and Nebraska. After studying art in Cincinnati from 1895-1897, Borglum won fame in Paris by creating sculptures of horses that personified the wildness of the western United States. After moving to New York at the height of his international acclaim in 1899, Borglum relocated to Silvermine in 1906 to one of the former Buttery houses on what is now Borglum Road. His property, which he christened 'Rocky Ranch,' included one of the Buttery family barns which he converted into a studio, as well as a mid-19th century farmhouse.

Within a year of Borglum's move, several of his peers and colleagues visited Silvermine, with some taking up at least part-time residence. The nucleus of this collection of artists in 1907, many of whom became lifelong friends and collaborators, was impressive: Edmund Ashe (1867-1941), a painter and illustrator; George Alfred Avison (1885-1970), an illustrator and muralist from Norwalk; Hamilton Hamilton (1847-1928), the renowned landscape painter, portraitist and illustrator; Howard Hildebrandt (1872-1958), a prize-winning portraitist; Addison T. Millar (1860-1913), affiliated with the Art Students League in New York City and a painter and etcher; Charles Shackleton (1856-1920), a landscape artist known for his coastal views of New England; and Henry Grinnell Thomson (1850-1937), a painter who studied with one of the preeminent American artists of the second half of the 19th century, William Merritt Chase. Those who came soon after included Lowell Leroy "Tony" Balcom (1887-1938), an etcher, painter and illustrator; Daniel Putnam Brinley (1879-1963), great-great grandson of Israel Putnam, a Revolutionary War general, and considered one of the finest Modernist painters in the United States with intimate knowledge of the Cos Cob artist's colony where he grew up; Richard Buckner Gruelle (1851-1914), a landscape painter known for his bucolic paintings and the father of Johnny Gruelle (1880-1938), creator of Raggedy Ann and Andy; Bernard Gutmann (1869-1936), a painter, etcher and printmaker; Helen Hamilton (1889-1970), daughter of Hamilton Hamilton and known as a post-Impressionist painter; Frank Townsend Hutchens (1869-1937), a nationally prominent landscape and portrait painter; George Picknell (1864-1943), an illustrator and landscape painter; and Charles Reifell (1862-1942), a Modernist landscape painter and lithographer.

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Many of these artists already knew each other from showing at the 1913 Armory Show in New York City, studying at the Art Students League or sharing exhibitions from San Francisco to Paris.

In the summer of 1907, Borglum began having critiques with other artists in his barn, which he had converted into a studio. The subsequent weekly events led to an annual show, which ran from 1907 to 1920. Originally calling themselves "The Knockers" for the barrage of criticisms they heaped upon each other, they soon were known as The Silvermine Group of Artists. These weekly sessions were anything but casual. As observed in the Christian Science Monitor on September 4th, 1915,

However vague and undefined as a geographical locality the place called Silvermine, Connecticut may be, there is nothing undefined or vague about the Silvermine Group of Artists. This group is a very definite thing, simply organized, with its purpose clearly stated, holding weekly meetings, admitting to membership only professional artists, and requiring for admission of new members a unanimous vote, maintaining independence, needing no patronage nor asking any. Its weekly meetings held in the hilltop studio of Solon Borglum, the sculptor, are not for relaxation. On the contrary, the member who brings his work to these meetings, as all members are not privileged to do, knows that he is sure of frank and competent criticism, which while it may not augment self-esteem it is very likely to result in self-improvement...There is therefore no lack of good pictures for the jury to select from when the time comes for the annual exhibition.

Another important social gathering point for the Silvermine Group of Artists was the creation of the Village Room. Clifton Meek, one of the leaders, started a series of readings at Borglum's barn. Eventually, these readings became the basis for the Village Room, which moved to Bernhard Gutmann's barn in 1915 and later to Rider's White Mill (later relocated to 174 Perry Avenue) (Inventory #65; Photograph #33). These regular 'coffeehouse'-type get-togethers soon turned into something more organized and civic-minded, with intention of creating improvements in Silvermine. The first president of the group was John S. Guthrie, who at the time still owned much of the land and buildings in the center of Silvermine. To that effect, member Richardson Wright created what is described as a "Garden at the Four Cross Roads." It is believed that the Village Room is the direct predecessor of the Silvermine Community Association (described below).

Many other artists entered and left, stayed or were fleetingly associated with the Silvermine Group of Artists. The rural atmosphere of the area, as well as its relatively inexpensive houses, mills and barns, were critical to the artists colony to sustain itself and grow.

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John Kenneth Byard and Frank Hutchens

Besides Solon Borglum and the Silvermine Group of Artists, two other transplants to Silvermine were important to its transformation from faded mill town to arts colony. Frank Townsend Hutchens, one of the founding members of the Silvermine Group of Artists, studied with Irving R Wiles and Frank DuMond at the Art Students League and was well known for his landscape and portrait paintings. He purchased a number of buildings, including in 1911 the Aiken Mill (Inventory #71), the Guthrie-Hutchens Barn (Inventory #75), the Basket (Blacksmith) Shop (Inventory #80; Photograph #4), the White Mill (Village Room, Inventory #65; Photograph #33), and The Red Mill (Inventory #83; Photograph #1,2). The purchase and rehabilitation of these buildings, all near or clustered by the Perry Avenue Bridge, were critical to retaining the rural ambience of Silvermine. While Hutchens preserved these five critical buildings, John Kenneth Byard played a larger role. Byard, who was the husband of the artist Dorothy Randolph Byard, purchased 83 (later expanded to over 100) acres in Norwalk, New Canaan and Wilton. He also acquired the original barn for the Silvermine Guild of Artists and was instrumental in selling and financing other properties in Silvermine. As one of the major antique dealers and expert on Colonial-era furniture in the United States, and a consultant to historic museums and property owners, including Old Deerfield Village in Deerfield, Massachusetts, Byard recognized the importance of the collection of buildings at the center of Silvermine. These included what is now known as the Three Barns (Dorothy's studio), the John Kenneth Byard Residence (Inventory #95; Photograph #23); "The Pines"; the Silvermine Country Store; and the Silvermine Tavern. Additionally, he purchased The Red Mill from Hutchens, which he reincorporated into the Tavern complex as it had been under Guthrie. The White Mill was gone, having been moved across the bridge to Perry Ave.

The Silvermine Guild of Artists

The most significant date in the history of Silvermine pertains to the official creation of the Silvermine Guild of Artists. After Borglum's sudden death from appendicitis in 1922, the Silvermine Group of Artists decided to create a larger and more permanent home, which they christened the Silvermine Guild of Artists. The artists had also decided that Borglum's barn was too small for their expanded operations. The Guild purchased a large barn and had it moved to Silvermine Avenue. This building became the studio, exhibition and performance space for the next two decades. With the creation of the Silvermine Arts Guild, new artists were drawn to the area. Additionally, many of the longtime residents, particularly the Guthrie family, became patrons and benefactors of the Guild. At its founding in 1922, the Guild had 33 Artist Members. By 1927, it had 119 Artist Members, 10 Sustaining Members and 148 Associate Members; by comparison, in 2003 the Guild had over 300 Artist Members. While continuing to focus on the visual arts, the Guild began to become a multidisciplinary arts center, mixing education, performance and community. It weathered the Depression when many of the artists survived by painting WPA murals. The murals may still be seen at Norwalk City Hall, Norwalk Transit Center and in New Canaan.

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Writers in Silvermine

Writers were particularly interested in Silvermine and its environs for its picturesque setting, history and the presence of other artists. In some cases, autobiographical descriptions were included in novels; in others, Silvermine was used as a backdrop or stage set, but was integral to the story nonetheless.

Prior to the advent of the arts colony, a detailed autobiographical sketch described Silvermine in the 1890s. Entitled *The Broom Behind the Door*, it was written by Adeline Hawkes and published in 1948. Hawkes was an orphan who had been adopted by the widow of the founder of Wellesley College, Pauline Adeline Durant. She was taken to Silvermine as a young child along with her siblings and a caretaker named Ada Porter. Porter had been adopted by the Blanchard Fur Mill family in the 1870s and had lived on Mill Road. Today, the Blanchard house and factory have been replaced by the artist, Bernhard Gutmann's, house. Adeline lived with the Blanchards for a short time until the little group relocated to the Buttery home, later to be renamed "Rocky Ranch" by Borglum. Adeline's last residence in Silvermine was the Sun House, built by John Ryder in 1841, on Comstock Hill Road (Inventory #6) where the Deering family resided in the first decade of the twentieth century. The period during which her memoir takes place is made all the more pertinent by its description of the daily life of a declining mill village.

The Sun House is the most documented building from an author's perspective in Silvermine. Besides Hawkes, William A. Boring, dean of the Columbia School of Architecture from 1919 to 1931, lived there, followed by Hamilton Hamilton and his daughter Helen Hamilton, both artists. Richardson Wright (1887-1961), the editor-in-chief of *House and Garden* for more than three decades and one of the most prolific writers on horticulture during the 20th century, lived in the house from 1918 to 1940. Wright was also President of the Silvermine Guild of Artists from 1933 to 1934. Two books written by Wright, *Truly Rural* (1922) and *A Small House and Large Garden* (1924) are testaments to the joys of country living and gardening; both books are sprinkled with references to Silvermine as well as to the Sun House itself. In *A Small House and Large Garden*, Wright describes the Sun House origins and his attempts to give credit to John Ryder in simple, if romanticized, prose:

On an obscure corner of the house, where a honeysuckle drapes it from too public and curious a view, we have placed a small board on which is lettered: John Ryder - Fecit - 1841. This, with due family ceremony, was put in place one June day, when the peonies and iris and blazing Oriental poppies made the border jubilant with color. We were prompted to place it there after reading what Royal Cortissoz said on the occasion of a presentation of a medal to Mr. Henry Bacon, architect of the Lincoln Memorial in Washington. This was the first time, it seems, that the United States Government had taken the trouble to honor an architect with a public ceremony. Mr. Cortissoz wondered why it wasn't more often done. And, following his thought, we wondered why people who build homes don't take the trouble to give the architect some permanent credit for his work...In our own case, there was no architect. According to the ancient son of the man who built this house, "Pop did it himself." On further questioning (for this old fellow was reticent), "Pop took it from a book because Mom liked it." "Pop," by the by, was a master carpenter, a worthy man in any age. And there must have been some excellent books of house plans in

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those days, for "Pop" chose a good one – simple, severe, classical, in the Neo-Greek style that prevailed in this country from 1800 up to the Civil War. This John Ryder, for such was his name, built the house for his bride, tucked it on the side of a Connecticut hill facing south so that the north winds would not make living unbearable in winter time. In front he planted two elms, one for his bride and one for himself – and they still shadow the old house with their generous branches. Successive generations of owners have had respect for its lines, and such additions as were made have only given it nobility...If, on some starry night, the shade of old John Ryder should lift aside the honeysuckle and read his name inscribed there, we hope he will be pleased.

In 1950, a decade after Wright sold the house to Ernest Heyn, the house was purchased by James Scripps Booth, heir to the Scripps-Booth Car Company, acquired by General Motors in 1918. Booth, an artist and engineer, converted the barn into an artist's studio. Booth sold the house in 1960 to John Harrison Yankee, Jr. and his wife Eileen Heckart (1919-2001). Heckart was an Academy Award-winning actress who starred on Broadway, film and television. Her son, Luke Yankee, published a book in 2006 entitled *Just Outside The Spotlight: Growing Up With Eileen Heckart* which chronicles not only her acting career but the family's life living in Silvermine and growing up at the Sun House.

Other authors include:

Edward Eager (1911-1964) was a writer of children's literature and a lyricist for a number of television productions from the late 1940s until 1963. Of the nine children's books that he authored, three were located in Silvermine. His stories focused on life in Silvermine during the 1950s, particularly the artists, musicians and writers that lived there.

Faith Baldwin (1893-1978) was a prolific author, writing over 100 books during her long career. A longtime resident of Silvermine, six of her novels were set in "Little Oxford," a fictional version of Silvermine. These books span from *The Station Wagon Set* (1940), which was set in 1930s, to *Any Village* (1972). Fable Farm Road off of Silvermine Road is named after her "fables," as she called her fictional accounts of the Silvermine area.

Evan Hunter aka Ed McBain (1926-2005) lived at the Aiken Mill (Inventory #71) for decades. Born Salvatore Lombino, he invented the modern police mystery novel, with 72 books written under his Ed McBain name. As Evan Hunter, he wrote an additional 22 books, including his debut, *The Blackboard Jungle* in 1954. Hunter referred several times to Silvermine in his novels.

Finally, an important author who lived in Silvermine but did not write about it was Vance Packard (1914-1996). Packard, who was considered one of the main socialites of Silvermine during his residency there, lived in the Gutmann house for the duration of his stay in Silvermine. A journalist and social critic, Packard created the melding of academic research with popular culture with his groundbreaking book, *The Hidden Persuaders* (1957).

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Music, Theater, Film and Other Arts in Silvermine

While the visual arts were paramount in Silvermine, theater, film, music and were well-represented as well. Muriel Tindal, an English-born soprano who lived at 306 Silvermine Road (Inventory #109), performed supporting roles on Broadway from 1919 to 1921 as well as debuting with the Metropolitan Opera Company in November of 1922. Katherine Sanger (Gordon) Brinley (1878-1966), wife of Daniel Putnam Brinley, was a writer of travel books and literature. Additionally, she took the stage name Gordon Brinley (Figure 8) and, in 1921 started putting on programs of Chaucer poetry around the country in various costumes that she had created.

The Silvermine Sillies, which were established in 1925, are an excellent example of the collaboration between writers, musicians and actors, and the sculptors, painters and other visual artists of the Silvermine arts colony. These shows, which ran one weekend during the summer for years, were written for and about the Silvermine area as well as current political and social trends that were sweeping the country and the world at the time. In 1935, twenty sketches were performed. John Vassos coordinated the Sillies that year, and his wife Ruth wrote several of the sketches, including "Nazi Nazi" and "George Washington and the D.A.R." Other artist participants included painter Dorothy Byard; Judson La Haye, a musician and the station supervisor of WICC in New Haven, the first radio station in southern Connecticut; and cartoonist Paul Webb and his wife Virginia. The Webbs also wrote a sketch entitled "Maw Gets 'Em Every Year," which included the characters Maw, Grammaw and the Hill Billies; this sketch may have been based on his cartoon, The Mountain Boys, which were shown in serial in Esquire Magazine and is considered the predecessor to Li'l Abner which he developed for cartoonist Al Capp in the early 1930s. Elizabeth Dempster, one of the organizers of the Sillies, wrote the "Theme Song" which began with these verses:

We are the Sillies
The Silvermine Hill-billies
We gild the lilies
For a living
We fled the city
Where life was low and gritty
And now its one long ditty
No misgiving.

We love the local
Gentry and the Yokel
Yes, we're very vocal
And creative
Silvermine's our passion
Life's a lovely ration
And it is the fashion
To go native.

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The Silvermine Sillies continued through the Depression up until the 1940s, and were used in the first decades to raise significant funds for the Guild.

In the late 1930s, Lily Pons purchased the artist and illustrator Jay Hyde Barnum's estate (Inventory #1; Photograph #20). Pons, who had made her debut at the Metropolitan Opera in 1931, was one of the principal sopranos in the United States through the 1960s. Soon after she purchased the estate, she had a music studio constructed near the pool. A small chapel was constructed a few yards to the south, where she married Andre Kostelanetz in 1938. Kostelanetz was well-known, one of the first conductors to bridge Classical and popular music in the 20th century. For more than a decade the estate was one of the main centers of social life in Silvermine, with numerous parties, concerts and events held there.

One of the more unusual arts developments in Silvermine was the creation of the Theatre in the Woods, near the intersection of Belden Hill and Grist Mill roads. Greek Evans, a baritone and light opera star who sang in various Broadway productions in the 1920s, married Henriette Wakefield, an opera star who sang with the Metropolitan Opera for several seasons. Wakefield owned property to the east of the Silvermine Golf Course which formed a natural amphitheater. Evans built seats in the side of the hill and constructed an orchestra pit. He named it "Theatre in the Woods." From 1932 to 1937, up to 4,000 persons attended musical and theatrical productions each summer. The theater closed due to Evans insistence on bringing in musicians from New York City. The Norwalk musician's union protested, and Evans had to pay them, even though they didn't play. In later years, Evans developed the perimeter of the site and former parking areas next to the golf course with Arts and Crafts-style bungalows and houses designed to attract the performing arts community.

1938 turned out to be a watershed year for the Guild in terms of artistic creativity and crossover collaboration, as well as the beginning of fundraising for a new annex to the barn (Inventory #131; Photograph #13). According to *The Silvermine Guild Arts Center – A History*,

In the landmark year of 1938, the Guild combined visual art and classical music with the Silvermine Music Festival – the first of its kind. Bringing together visual art and classical music, the four day musical event was attended by 30,000. The New York Philharmonic performed on a custom built platform over the pond. Eugene Ormandy and Jose Iturbi conducted an evening of Brahms, Debussy, Mozart, Wagner and Gershwin that climaxed with Beethoven's Ninth Symphony accompanied by a choral group of several hundred. An outstanding feature of the Festival was a composition contest to encourage young composers that offered a \$300 prize for an overture based on a romantic episode in New England's history. An accompanying exhibition of art displayed ceramics, sculpture and painting. The \$7,000 proceeds went toward building an annex to the barn, later known as the Vassos gallery...The expanded space allowed classes in drama, dance, music and experimental film to be conducted during the summer. But since none of the buildings had heating, only the most resilient artists and students continued to paint and sketch around the pot bellied stove in the winter.

To the north of the original Guild barns, and on the surrounding hillsides, thousands of spectators came to see numerous musical and theatrical performances in the 1930s and 1940s.

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From the beginning of the Silvermine Arts Guild, there was a keen interest in the use of art in new media. Robert Flaherty (1884-1951), considered the first full-length documentary filmmaker, showed his film *Nanook of the North* in Silvermine soon after it was made in 1922. Experimental and independent films were shown, including Fernand Leger's *Charlot presente le ballet mecanique* (1930); Jean Cocteau's *Le Sang d'un poete* (Blood of a Poet - 1930); and Abel Gance's *Un grand amour de Beethoven* (The Life and Loves of Beethoven - 1936). The Silvermine area was also used in numerous films, print and television advertising over the years.

Along with Clifton Meek, who was known for his metalwork, especially signs, used in residences in Silvermine, the Gates Moore Company, founded in 1950, worked in the industrial arts. Gates Moore, a cousin of John Kenneth Byard, trained as a cabinetmaker and eventually ventured into the reproduction of period lighting fixtures. Gates Moore designed these fixtures for historic museum communities such as Colonial Williamsburg and Old Deerfield Village. He also designed fixtures for the Silvermine Tavern and other period buildings in Silvermine. When Byard died, Gates Moore inherited some of his holdings that were not sold to Francis Whitman, including properties on River Road. The properties, which included the Gates Moore's residence and workshop (Inventory #91; Photograph #22); the John Kenneth Byard residence (Inventory #95; Photograph #23); a barn (Inventory #93); and a log cabin (demolished), was subdivided and sold in 2005, with the exception of the Gates Moore residence.

John Vassos and the Cartoonists of Silvermine

While painters, etchers and illustrators were common in Silvermine, there were also a number of well known cartoonists. One of the earliest cartoonists to settle in Silvermine was Clifton Meek. Meek lived in the Silvermine Forge north of Borglum Road. Not only was he a cartoonist – Meek was the creator of Grindstone George, which ran serially in newspapers from 1916 to 1919 – but he also designed hardware for doors and windows. Meek may have given the idea of Mickey Mouse to Disney— in the early 1920s, he drew a series of untitled cartoons about mice. In local Silvermine lore it is believed that Meek received a card from Disney stating, "thanks for giving me this character – Walt."

Another cartoonist who spent many years living in Silvermine was Paul Webb (1902-1985). Webb, who was a friend of John Vassos, had his work seen in *Life*, *Judge*, *The New Yorker*, *Colliers*, *The Saturday Evening Post* and *Esquire*. He was involved in both the Silvermine Sillies, creating an ongoing cast of characters known as the Hillbillies. These characters not only were connected with his cartoon, *The Mountain Boys*, but were the basis of one of the first pieces of television drama, *The Real McCoys*.

John Vassos (1898-1985) was a key figure in the Guild's – and Silvermine's – transformation from artist's colony to a nationally renowned center for the arts. An ethnic Greek who grew up in Istanbul, Vassos served in World War I with a suicide minesweeper squadron of the Ottoman Empire. After his boat was torpedoed, he was rescued by a United States transport and brought to Boston in 1919. In Boston he studied with John Singer Sargent, considered one of the deans of American artistry, at the

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Fenway Art School. In 1924 Vassos moved to New York, opened a commercial art business, studied at the Art Students League, and became an illustrator for *Harper's Magazine* and *The New Yorker*. He concurrently began to further explore industrial design and wrote a series of fictional books. His big break came when he was hired as the art consultant for Radio Corporation of America (RCA) and designed both the first portable phonograph and the first consumer television set. This television set was introduced at the 1939 World's Fair, where he also designed the pavilion for RCA.

When Vassos was president of the Guild from 1936 to 1938 and again after World War II, he had ambitious plans to make it an art center of national status. It is clear that within his first year, he had begun to change the direction of the organization. In the June 1938 edition of *The Silverminer*, a paper "devoted to Silvermine and to Silvermine Life," an article describes Vassos being unanimously re-elected president for a second year:

The success of the Guild under his administration was so marked that it was inevitable that he should succeed himself. During the first year of his presidency the large new wing of the Guild Hall was erected, the artist membership of the Guild increased 40%, the new members including some of the most eminent painters and sculptors in the country, the "Silvermine Sillies" were revived, the exhibition galleries were renovated, and a new policy established which resulted in distinctive exhibitions, the first performance of the Silvermine Music Festival was given and plans made for placing the Festival on a permanent basis.

During World War II, Vassos was asked to train spies by the predecessor to the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), known as the Office of Strategic Services (OSS). Vassos worked on creating effective camouflage for soldiers and was secretly parachuted twice into Greece to help the Resistance fight the Axis Powers. Additionally, Vassos worked with a number of cartoonists in Florida to create training manuals for spies. The cartoonists, including Mort Walker and Dik Browne, called Vassos "the Lieutenant." Many of the cartoonists came back to Silvermine and settled there, including Walker, the creator of *Beetle Bailey*, and Browne, the creator of *Hagar the Horrible*. These two cartoonists also co-wrote and designed the comic strip *Hi and Lois*, which has continued to the present day, produced by their children – Walker's son, Brian has an office on the second floor of the Silvermine Market (Inventory #129; Photograph #19). After the war Vassos spent his years as president of the Guild to upgrade its facilities so that his ambitions to make the Guild into a world-class center for art could be realized.

The Merritt Parkway and Suburbanization

The Merritt Parkway significantly impacted Silvermine when it was opened On June 29th, 1938 from the New York state line to Norwalk. Where Silvermine was accessible to cars via the Post Road and the rail connection from New York City stopped in the center of town, the Merritt Parkway immediately brought the road *through* Silvermine. While this created convenience for the artists and part-time residents to reach Silvermine from New York, where most of them worked or had other residences, the Merritt Parkway accelerated the development and increase property values of the interior of Fairfield County. According to The Merritt Parkway Conservancy,

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When completed, the parkway would open to development the self-described "hinterlands" of Fairfield County, thousands of acres of land in what had recently been nearly inaccessible countryside and farmland. One Connecticut realtor viewed the Merritt as a "marked impetus to real estate development," predicting that land adjacent to the parkway would be sold off in five- and ten-acre lots to meet the growing demand for suitable "country homes with acreage." Potential real estate value increases were even used to urge the Merritt's completion:

The increased values in real estate along the route will come from a completed highway--not from a partially completed project. why wait ten years, with millions [of dollars] tied up, before realizing a return on the investment?

Whether such an argument was as convincing as the simultaneous calls for relief from traffic congestion or unemployment is unknown. But regardless of its purpose, the Merritt Parkway did indeed "control the future of Fairfield County."

Silvermine in the Post-World War II era

With the rapid suburbanization of southwestern Connecticut after World War II, Silvermine began to change. Although the Guild continued to thrive as an arts center and organization, the first generation of artists had passed away and been replaced with a second and even third influx of artists whose work was directed more toward design, business and illustration than toward fine art. Brought on by the 1938 opening of the first phase of the Merritt Parkway and post World War II prosperity, scattered small farms, in the same family for generations, were developed into suburban tract housing for new transplants from New York and other parts of Connecticut. These new developments undermined the previously rural character of Silvermine. However, the new generation of artists, writers and musicians continued to celebrate the historic character of the area and preserve the older houses. John McClelland (1919-), an etcher who created plates using classic nursery rhymes, lived at both the "Pink House" at 1057 Silvermine Road (Inventory #139; Photograph #11) and 174 Perry Avenue (Inventory #65; Photograph #33).

The most important event of mid-century was the 1955 flood that affected both the Silvermine River and the Norwalk River of which the Silvermine is the western branch. The flood damaged the Perry Avenue stone arch bridge and many properties, particularly those located directly on the river. The most dramatic destruction was caused to the Buttery Mill, which was scoured and undermined so badly so that it had to be destroyed. While a section of the building was incorporated and included into a new secondary building on the property (Inventory #20; Photograph #29), it was never again used as a mill, ending the longest continuous usage as a mill in the history of the United States. Margaret Bourke-White (1904-1971), the first female war correspondent and one of the most famous photographers of the twentieth century, took pictures of the 1955 Silvermine Flood for Life Magazine.

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Silvermine Arts Guild History from WWII

During the Second World War, the majority of the Guild complex was taken over by Civil Defense and the local chapter of the American Red Cross, with the Barn utilized for classroom space for returning war veterans. Starting in 1943 and continuing to the end of the war, the Guild created the Annual War Bond Exhibition in which artists were paid for their work in war bonds. At the close of the war the Guild held an "all-comprehensive membership exhibition" in New York with an outside jury choosing the best paintings.

The post-war period began a new era of expansion for the Arts Guild starting in 1947 with the acquisition of "the barracks" a surplus building which was to house the Farrell Gallery, school director's office and storage. This was followed in 1950 with the construction of the first school building filling the need for heated classroom space. Spearheaded by John Vassos in 1948 as part of the Guild's expansion program, the entire project was entirely funded by Florence Schick Gifford after whom the Silvermine School of Art building was named. The school would include a curriculum which included a painting studio, a mirrored dance studio, and children's workshop. Dance classes, particularly ballet, hosted notable performers such as Alvin Ailey and Merce Cunningham.

The late 1940s saw the establishment of the *New England Exhibition*, a juried exhibition originally open to the New England states. The exhibition continues to the present day and, renamed *Art of the Northeast*, was expanded to include New York, New Jersey and Pennsylvania. It has been recognized as singularly significant in introducing emerging artists in American modernism. Juried by notable art critics, dealers, museum professionals and artists, the program hosted influential modernists such as critic Clement Greenberg, dealer Holly Solomon, Metropolitan Museum curator Henry Geldzahler, and Lowery Sims of the Museum of Modern Art. The annual exhibit continues to be the Guild's most prestigious show.

The programs at the Guild continued to expand through the 1950s. A new sculpture studio was dedicated in 1956 with an exhibition that included the work of Alexander Calder, Henry Moore, and Alberto Giacometti. Printmaking was yet another art form that was brought to the forefront of the Guild's programs by Gabor Peterdi, a painter and printmaker who joined the Guild in 1952. Having started the printmaking department at Yale University, Peterdi established the National Print Biennial competition at Silvermine in 1959. As a result, the Guild acquired a permanent print collection utilized for exhibitions and study. The arts at Silvermine expanded to include music with the establishment of The Silvermine Chamber Music Program in 1958. The program continues to the present day with an annual series of performances each summer. The *Meet the Composer* program brought notable composers Aaron Copeland and Virgil Thompson to Silvermine and special concerts saw performances by popular artists like Benny Goodman. Concert pianist Edith Grunewald began a chamber music series in 1959 that became an annual event for more than forty years.

A core theme in the Guild's education program during the 1950s' was design, which included furniture, interior decoration, product and textile design, as well as the art of typography. This became the impetus for a number of design symposiums at Silvermine. The first, *New Forces in*

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Design, was held in 1954 and was attended by department heads of Princeton, Yale and MIT. This was followed by *Make Room for the Arts*, a 1956 symposium which featured room settings that incorporated contemporary art. Other forums included the work of photo-journalist Margaret Bourke-White and painter Josef Albers.

In 1960, the Silvermine College of Art, with an affiliation with the University of Bridgeport, created an accredited, two-year Associate in Fine Arts degree. The first degrees were awarded two years later at which point the school became a nationally recognized institution. The college was acclaimed for its innovative approach to art education and was further bolstered by the presence of notable former Yale deans Richard Lytel and Robert Gray. Lack of funds and the demands of the accreditation process forced the closing of the school in 1969.

An outgrowth of the successful summer music series saw the formation of the Silvermine Chamber Orchestra, established in 1966. This included members of the Silvermine String Quartet who, in the late 1960s and 1970s were the resident company, performing at Silvermine and throughout New England.

The latter part of the twentieth century saw the continuation of well-established programs and introduced new ones such as the Outdoor Jazz Concerts, master dance classes by the Alvin Ailey Dancers in 1974, the "Fabulous Fakes" auctions, the Guild's first Collage Exhibition, and a new Crafts Gallery. The Guild was renamed the Silvermine Center for the Arts in 1980 and opened a second gallery at the Metro Center in Stamford, Connecticut in 1988.

The Silvermine Community Association and the Norwalk Association of Silvermine Homeowners

The Silvermine Community Association (SCA), an outgrowth of the Village Room social group from the early part of the 20th century, has been active for over sixty years. According to the group's website, "The purpose of SCA is to engage in cultural, civic, literary, benevolent and charitable activities that benefit Silvermine residents." The organization gives out educational scholarships, holds 'Meet and Greet's' at the Tavern, spring clean-ups and other social events. One of the most important projects that SCA undertook was a Boundaries Study in 1962. This committee researched and utilized various forms of documentation and historical records that included zoning and geophysical survey maps; early postal routes; charts of analysis of the Silvermine River and its tributaries; and historical documents of the Towns of Wilton, New Canaan and City of Norwalk. John Vassos, Clifton Meek and Granville Ackerman spent over a year examining those documents from Wilton, New Canaan and Norwalk to determine the boundaries of Silvermine, which were always somewhat undefined. Clifton Meek designed a metal sign proclaiming "This Is Silvermine" which was approved by the Silvermine community and installed in 1963. Currently, the SCA is attempting to reinstate the eighteen iron signs that are located at the SCA determined boundaries of Silvermine as of 1963.

In 1989, the Norwalk Association of Silvermine Homeowners (NASH) was formed in response to a proposed development, which would have included a multi-story residential facility, hospital and

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incinerator to be located at the Silvermine Golf Course. After defeating the proposed development, NASH continued to fight for the integrity of the Silvermine area, including a proposed Costco on Glover Avenue; Northeast Utilities proposed electrical towers; the preservation and relocation of the Borglum Barn / "Knockers' Club"; the creation of a Master Plan for the Norwalk portion of Silvermine; and the preservation of the Perry Avenue stone arch bridge after a capstone fell off and the bridge was threatened with demolition. Alarmed at the increasing number of teardowns in their part of Silvermine, as well as the parts in New Canaan and Wilton, the organization began to research the history of Silvermine in order to facilitate its continued protection from inappropriate development.

Architectural and Industrial Significance

The built environment at the core of Silvermine retains a high degree of architectural and contextual integrity with a mix of altered eighteenth century period buildings and a fair number of interspersed nineteenth and twentieth century resources. While additions and alterations to many of the buildings have occurred over time, the rustic setting in which the area was first settled remains, largely due to the reforestation in the twentieth century and the ever-present Silvermine River. Period "thrown" or farm walls abound, much of it on hilly terrain, as does the rustic nature of extant glacial till, rock outcroppings, and abundant old-growth hardwood trees. This context often belies the distinct changes to the historic buildings that dot the riverbanks and local roads. The picturesque character of the area, as well as inexpensive real estate, attracted a new generation of non-agrarian, non-industrial, professional artists who transformed the relatively well-preserved environment into a thriving artist colony. This group put the final and lasting mark on the character of Silvermine that has continued to define it for the last century.

The historic district contains the largest grouping of eighteenth century buildings in the generally recognized Silvermine area. This includes the highest concentration of the former mill buildings (at least seven) as well as the former shops that supported the industrial and agrarian activity on the river up through the late nineteenth century. Of the resources in the district, twenty-five percent were constructed prior to the turn of the nineteenth century and close to forty percent were constructed during the nineteenth century. The remainder of the resources was constructed in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries; of those, half were constructed prior to 1950.

The development pattern of the Silvermine area does not fit the categorization of a traditional English village plan, but of a smaller population center created by settlers attempting to derive subsistence from their proximity to a viable water source. Silvermine has no record of being part of any Long Lot platting, typical in the upland sections of the Connecticut coastal towns, such as Westport and Fairfield. It has been noted that the western towns of the Western Coastal Slope developed less traditionally than their eastern counterparts due to the fact they had both English and Dutch settlers, with Norwalk, Greenwich and Stamford governed under Dutch rule for a short time. The uplands in these towns were known to have smaller population centers with Silvermine likely fitting into this category.

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To a large extent, the character that defines the core of Silvermine is derived from the eighteenth and early nineteenth century vernacular buildings. Much has been written on the colonial architecture of Connecticut and New England. While much of the analysis has been concentrated on high style buildings, an equally categorical view of early types and styles has arisen, particularly focused on construction technology. Period elements common to most of the early buildings in the district are stone foundations, either dry-laid or mortared; post-and-beam structural systems; clapboard siding; double-hung sash windows, and gabled roofs. The chimneystacks, typically centrally placed during this period vary in placement possibly due to changes over time. The one house that unquestionably represents the English building tradition is the ca. 1724 Jacob St. John house at 297 Silvermine Avenue (Inventory #101; Photograph #16). Overall the buildings are modest with one exception, the ca. 1790 high-style Federal period house at 1053 Silvermine Road (Inventory #136; Photograph #12). Some of the period interpretive value of the district has been lost to changes, but most of those changes are recognized as evolutionary and therefore, contributing.

The structures that remain also add to the significance of the former mill industry, particularly the dams on the river, the most dramatic being at the former Red Mill (Inventory #83; Photograph #2) Remnants of the former roads in the district as well as the bridge abutment located at 9 Old Kings Highway are still visible and documented in early twentieth century survey maps. The Perry Avenue Bridge, constructed in 1899 as a vehicular crossing for the mill industry, was listed in 2005 on the National Register of Historic Places and used for over a century as inspiration for the local artists of Silvermine (Inventory #79; Photograph #3). It remains as an example of a stone arch bridge whose expense was justified by its position below an important millpond dam. It was constructed of stone to withstand the flood if the dam burst.

An important component to the former mill buildings is what the transformation to residential use did not fully erase – the remains of the original construction technology and the mechanical systems that drove the mill machinery. One of the benefits to the survivability of these buildings lies in the fact that these artists were not wealthy - at least not initially. Further, of those who did have the means, a deliberate effort to retain as much original building fabric as possible was used as a philosophical tenet, particularly espoused by Frank Hutchens. This is not to say that the outward appearance of the buildings did not change significantly. Many of them did, as evidenced by the changes to The Aiken Mill, or Hutchens' residence called "Old Mill House" at 179 Perry Avenue (Inventory #71). Nevertheless, the post and beam structure of the building remains largely intact and the turbine room, with remnants of the waterwheel extant, is easily accessible. The only mill building that has retained its outward form (and to some extent, appearance (there are no historic photos to contradict this) is the ca. 1770 Red Mill at 192 Perry Avenue (Inventory #83; Photograph #1,2). This celebrated local landmark is the best remaining example of the former mill industry in the district.

Nineteenth century building styles and types are well represented and relatively well preserved in the district and include carry-over building traditions from the previous century. Some good examples of turn of the nineteenth century buildings are the former mill building at 174 Perry Avenue (Inventory #65; Photograph #33), 1 Old Kings Highway (Inventory #46; Photograph #30), and 2 Old Kings Highway (Inventory #47; Photograph #31). There are seven Greek Revival-style buildings in the

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district. Many have been altered but the best example is 276 Silvermine Avenue (Inventory #96; Photograph #18). An eighth Greek Revival-style house was constructed next door at 278 Silvermine Avenue, but not until 1910, well after the style was out of vogue (Inventory #98; Photograph #17). One particularly notable vernacular farm building of the period is the former Rider store at 304 Silvermine Road (Inventory #108). Of the six recognized Victorian period styles, the Queen Anne is represented, but only in stylistic details added to pre-existing buildings. Common elements include porches and gable end windows added to houses at 170 Perry Avenue (Inventory #73), 302 Silvermine Road (Inventory #106), and 1057 Silvermine Road (Inventory #139; Photograph #11). Of these, those elements have been removed or replaced at 247 Mill Road (Inventory #32; Photograph #25).

The earliest part of the twentieth century is modestly represented by a few examples of the Arts and Crafts movement, the most notable being the modest one-and-a-half story Silvermine Market (Inventory #131; Photograph #19), whose exposed rafter tails and wood shingle-siding exemplify the rustic nature of the style. Although the Market building is a 19th century structure, it was altered at the turn of the 20th century to its present form. While originally constructed in 1832, the diminutive cottage at 312 Silvermine Road (Inventory #115) exhibits stylistic tendencies of the Arts & Crafts style, possibly altered in the early teens.

The best examples of Colonial-Revival era additions and or alterations are 2 Old Kings Highway (Inventory #47; Photograph #31), the former mill building at 174 Perry Avenue (Inventory #65; Photograph #31), 183 Mill Road (Inventory #21), and particularly the Silvermine Tavern at 194 Perry Avenue (Inventory #87; Photograph #7,8) with the Mt. Vernon-inspired two-story piazza at the facade. Two houses in the district have added significant, but sensitive additions to pre-existing period houses that exemplify the wealth of the period through attempts to selectively add substantially to otherwise modest dwellings. These are the John Kenneth Bayard house at 11 River Road (Inventory #95; Photograph #23) and, 198 Mill Road (Inventory #25; Photograph #28). The former Greek-Revival house at 183 Mill Road, the original Buttery homestead was converted in to a Georgian-Revival style house, likely in the 1920s (Inventory #21).

One of the most significant properties in the district is from the early 1920s. The design and construction of an estate for noted artist and illustrator J. Hyde Barnum coincides with the formation of the Silvermine Guild of Artists in 1922. The choice of this location for a house and property otherwise found in more prestigious environs speaks to the importance of Silvermine as an established and legitimate entity, particularly for an established and commercially successful artist. The house was designed by New York architect, Frank J. Forster in the French Provincial style. The house, located at 54 Comstock Hill Road (Inventory #1; Photograph #20), is virtually unaltered from its original construction and features lime-washed cut stone and brick, granite quoins, rusticated half-timbered elements, an entry turret, slate roof and oversized chimneystacks. Every element is artificially (and artfully) designed to mimic centuries of wear and tear, a weathered patina, and accumulated additions and accretions. Leland Roth in *A Concise History of American Architecture* describes the houses of this period as "historicism's finest and final flower."

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places

Continuation Sheet – SILVERMINE CENTER HISTORIC DISTRICT, NORWALK, NEW CANAAN & WILTON, COUNTY OF FAIRFIELD, CONNECTICUT

Section number 8

Page 21 of 22

Frank J. Forster (1886 -1948) is recognized as part of a group of notable eclectic movement architects who built country homes for wealthy Americans in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Trained at Cooper Union in New York he studied and traveled abroad. He started his own practice in 1911 specializing in country houses. He was awarded the Gold Medal of the Architectural League of New York in 1927 and 1929 for his residential designs. His early designs were in an English picturesque mode, but turned almost exclusively to the French Provincial style after 1924. He was the nations leading exponent of the rustic farm-like buildings he had seen firsthand in the French countryside in the early 1920s, likely inspiring the design of the Barnum house. Most of his houses were in built in suburban Connecticut, Westchester, and Pennsylvania. In 1931 he published *Country Houses*, an illustrated book on his work in which J. Hyde Barnum's house was featured.

The most definitive architectural element to come out of the early to mid-twentieth century in the core of Silvermine was the proliferation of studio windows – large expanses of glazing that were installed specifically to open studio spaces to a maximum of natural light. Some, such as the studio windows on the north elevation of the J. Hyde Barnum house were designed and installed as part of the original design. Most of the studio windows installed as artists took possession of the period houses and outbuildings still remain. Some of the best examples are placed in buildings that represent a variety of architectural periods and styles ranging from vernacular styles such as 187 Perry Avenue (Inventory #80; Photograph #4) and 990 Silvermine Road (Inventory #122; Photograph #15), to Colonial Revival at 280 Silvermine Avenue (Inventory #99; Photograph #10), to Modernistic additions at 191 Perry Avenue (Inventory #81).

The mid-twentieth century saw the greatest changes ever to influence the character of Silvermine. While the core of Silvermine managed to evade some of the destruction wrought by post war development, the impact on the periphery was unavoidable. Only a handful of infill houses from the period are in the district which include a couple of modest Ranch style buildings and neo-eclectic, Colonial-Revival-inspired residences. The former Byard barn at 5 Mail Coach Drive (Inventory #17; Photograph #32), while mostly intact, reveals the period's influence with the integrated garage bays with "clipped" upper corners.

Modernistic influence in the architecture in Silvermine is minimal and representative of the latter part of the century. There are two fully architect-designed Modern houses in the district, 962 Silvermine Road (Inventory #119) and 160 Mill Road (Inventory #20; Photograph #29). The first, designed by architect Vincent Calangelo in 1980, is a "thermal-envelope" house; the latter, designed by architect John Black Lee in 1989-92, is a reinforced-concrete residence with steel A-frame canopy built into the riverbank at the northern end of the district. Architect Richard Bergmann undertook alterations to two buildings in the district, one at the former Frank Hutchens house at 179 Perry Avenue (Inventory #71), and the residence located at 191 Perry Avenue (Inventory #81).

The neo-traditional houses of the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries have also impacted the historic character of the district. Of the six houses that by contemporary standards are considered "McMansions," two are set back from the street at 308 and 310 Silvermine Road (Inventory # 112, 113). The rest are placed prominently at the street.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places

Continuation Sheet – SILVERMINE CENTER HISTORIC DISTRICT, NORWALK, NEW CANAAN & WILTON, COUNTY OF FAIRFIELD, CONNECTICUT

Section number 8

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Conclusion

Although the New York City metropolitan area had numerous artists' colonies from the 1890s through the 1920s, Silvermine is one of the few that has remained intact and active. Without the establishment and growth of the Silvermine Arts Guild, it is very possible that Silvermine's emphasis on the arts, like the mill industry that preceded it, would have been extinguished. In recent years, with vacant land increasingly rare, older buildings, including historic houses and barns, have been enlarged, altered beyond recognition or, sometimes, demolished for new construction. Regardless of the changes over time, the core district and many outlying areas retain a remarkably cohesive 18th and 19th century feel, represented in the existing built character of Silvermine.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places

Continuation Sheet – SILVERMINE CENTER HISTORIC DISTRICT, NORWALK, NEW CANAAN & WILTON, COUNTY OF FAIRFIELD, CONNECTICUT

Section number 9

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United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places

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10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property Approximately 100 acres

UTM References

(Place additional UTM References on a continuation sheet.)

1	18N Zone	6 29 800 Easting	45 55 600 Northing	3	18N Zone	6 30 825 Easting	45 57 259 Northing
2	18N Zone	6 29 800 Easting	45 57 259 Northing	4	18N Zone	6 30 825 Easting	45 55 600 Northing

Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property.) **SEE CONTINUATION SHEET**

Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected.) **SEE CONTINUATION SHEET**

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Paul Graziano & Phillip S. Esser (Edited by Leigh Grant)
organization Associated Cultural Resource Consultants date July 25, 2008
street & number 54 Danbury Road, Suite 227 telephone 203.313.3427
city or town Ridgefield state CT zip code 06877

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative **black and white photographs** of the property.

Additional items

(Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items.)

Property Owner (Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)

name Multiple
street & number _____ telephone _____
city or town _____ state _____ zip code _____

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places

Continuation Sheet – SILVERMINE CENTER HISTORIC DISTRICT, NORWALK, NEW CANAAN & WILTON, COUNTY OF FAIRFIELD, CONNECTICUT

Section number 10

Page 1 of 1

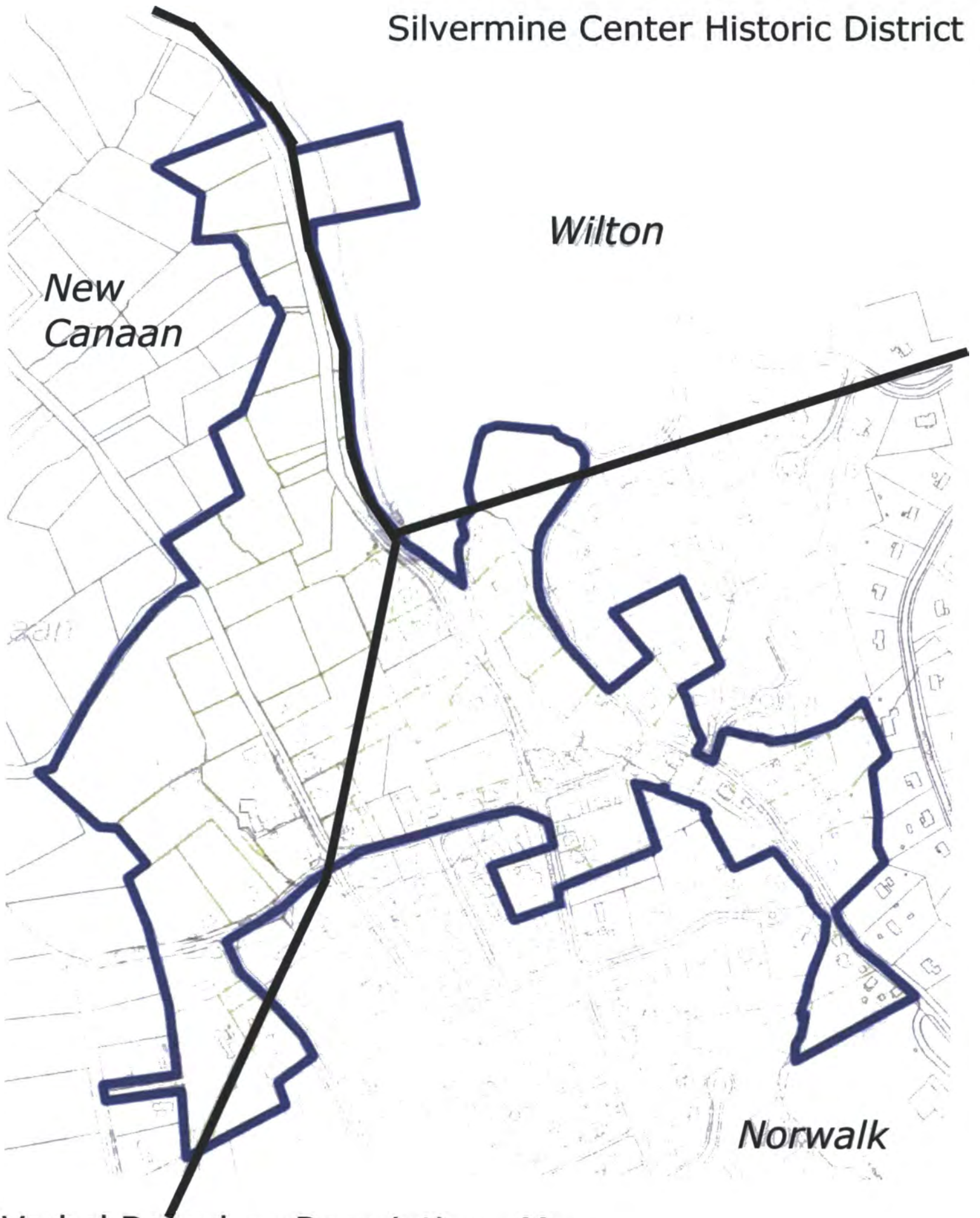
VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

The boundaries of the district are shown on the attached map drawn to scale from Tax Assessors maps from Norwalk, Wilton, and New Canaan.

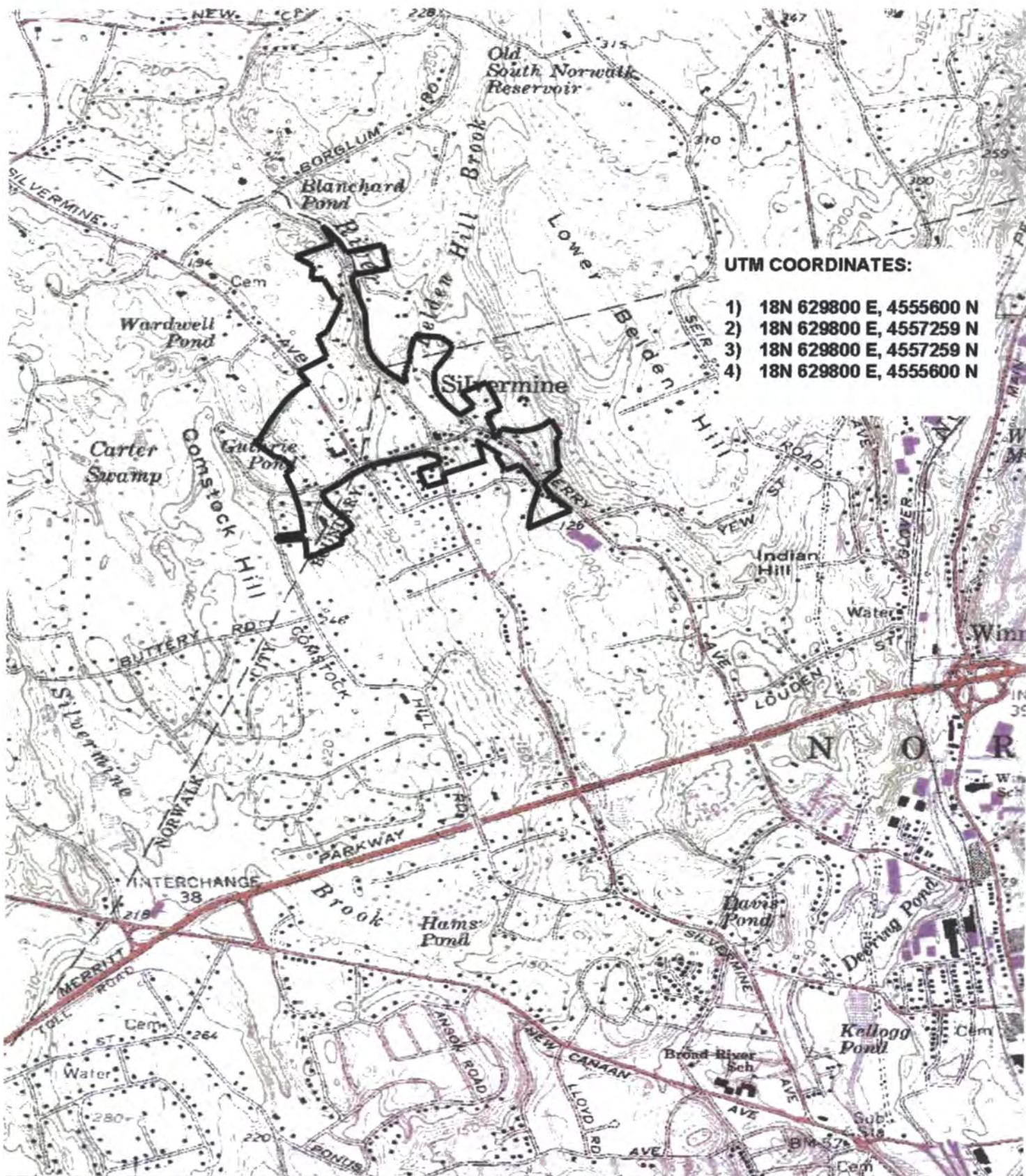
BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION

The boundaries were chosen to include the largest number of contiguous contributing historic resources associated with the development of the Silvermine core area during its period of significance. The irregularity of the boundaries is a result of the exclusion of non-contributing resources, particularly residential development, on its periphery.

Silvermine Center Historic District



Verbal Boundary Description—Map



- UTM COORDINATES:**
- 1) 18N 629800 E, 4555600 N
 - 2) 18N 629800 E, 4557259 N
 - 3) 18N 629800 E, 4557259 N
 - 4) 18N 629800 E, 4555600 N

27°30" 630 (NORWALK SOUTH) 6366 III SW 632 750 C

SCALE 1:24 000



SILVERMINE CENTER NATIONAL REGISTER HISTORIC DISTRICT

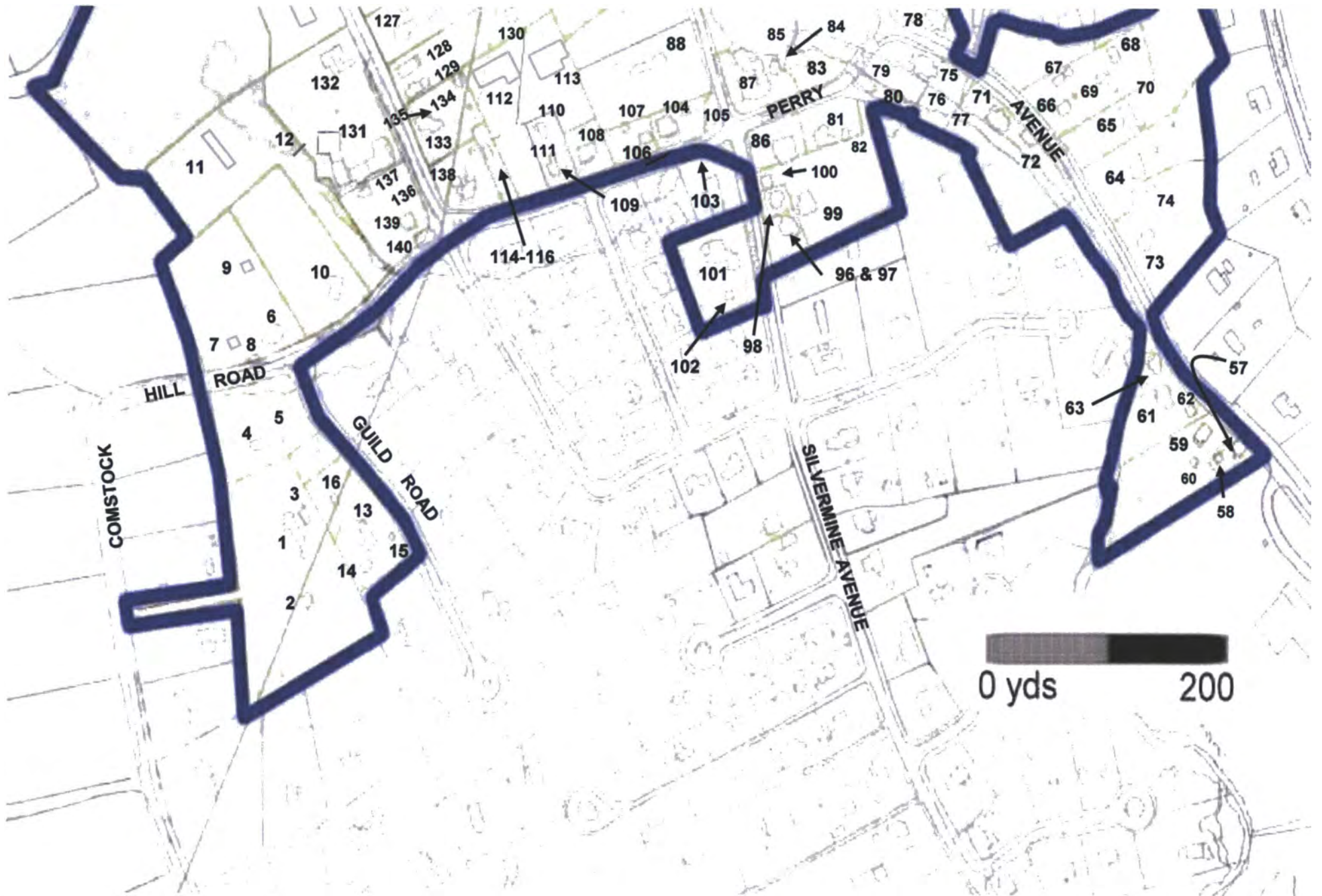
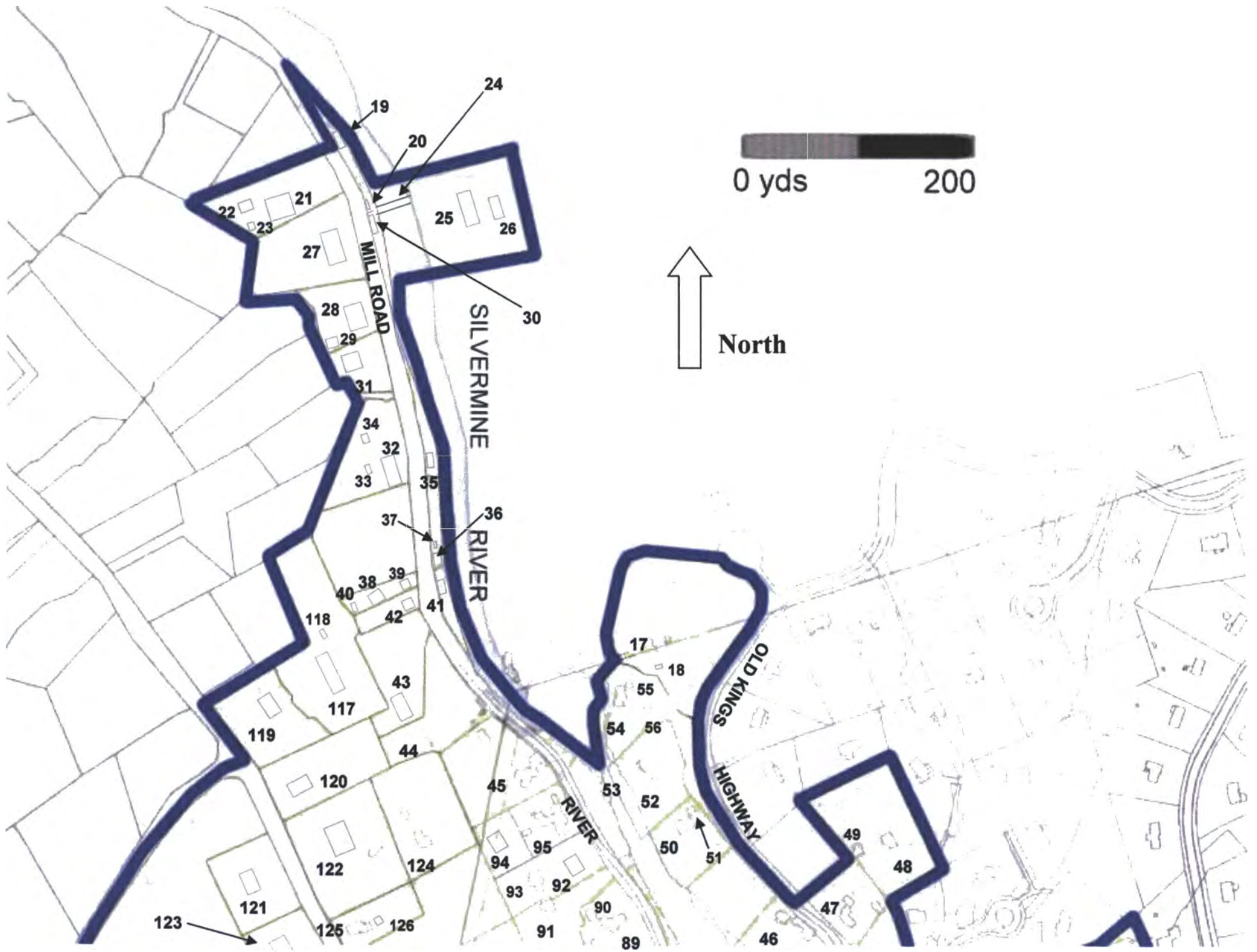


FIGURE 1: SILVERMINE CENTER HISTORIC DISTRICT—INVENTORY



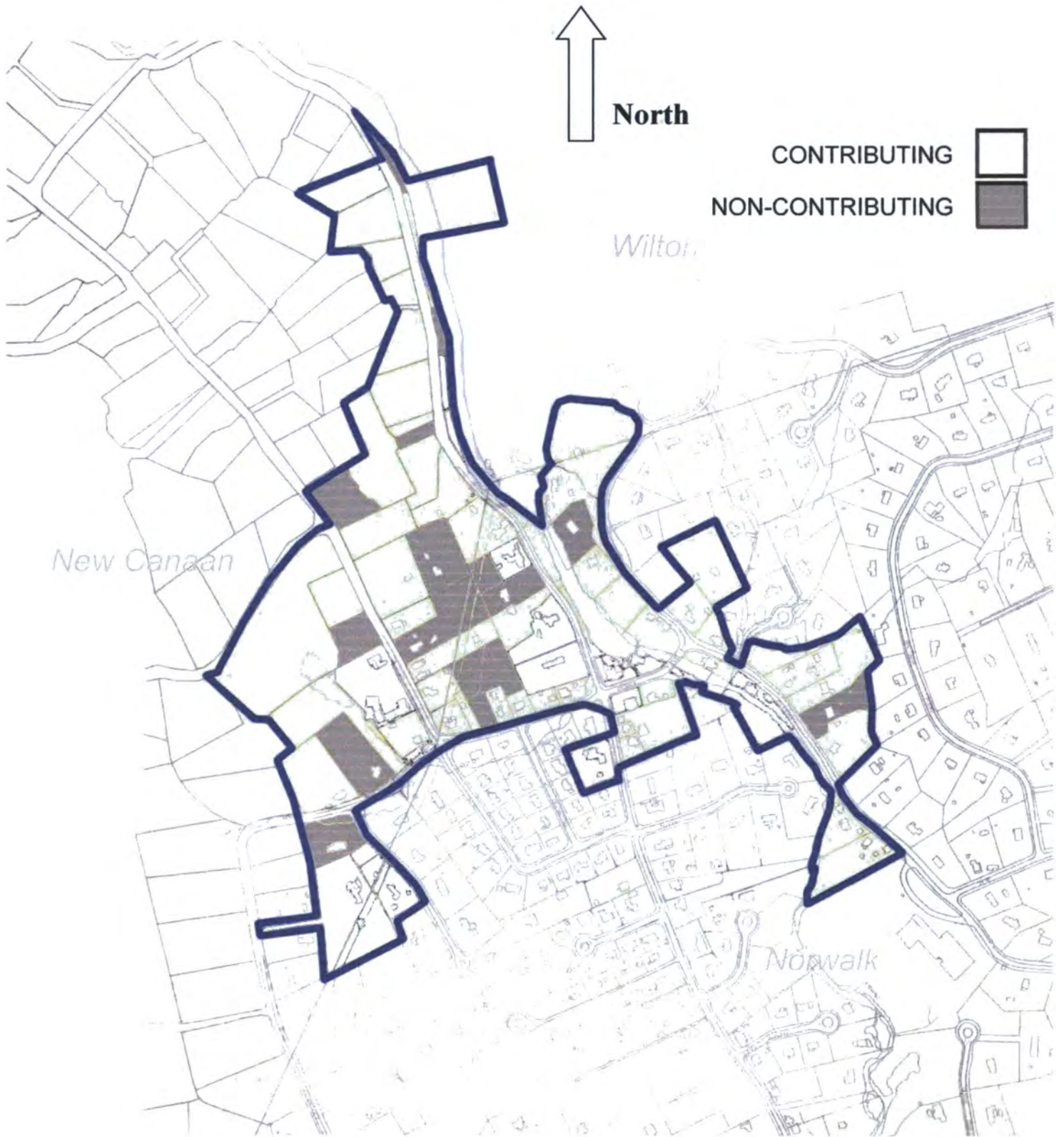
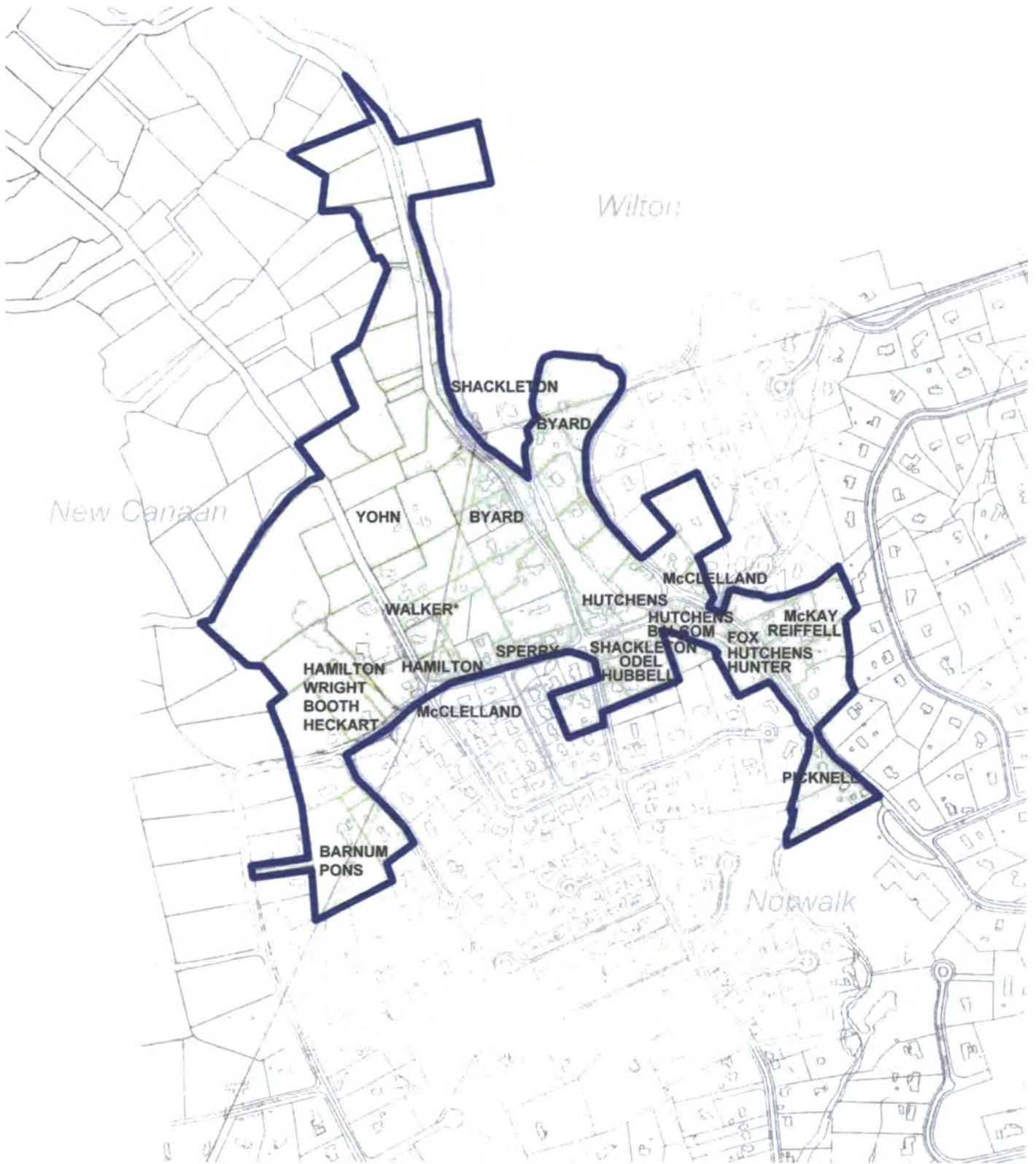


FIGURE 2: SILVERMINE CENTER HISTORIC DISTRICT—RESOURCES

NAME	DATES	ORIGIN OF BIRTH	MOVED TO SILVERMINE	KNOCKERS ?	PRES. OF GUILD?	DATES	LEFT SILVERMINE?	LIVED IN DISTRICT?
EDMUND MARION ASHE	1867-1941	NEW YORK, NEW YORK		YES				YES
GEORGE ALFRED AVISON	1885-1970	NORWALK, CONNECTICUT	(P/T) 1906	YES			NO	
LOWELL LEROY BALCOM	1887-1938	WESTPORT LANDING, MISSOURI	N/A					YES
JAY HYDE BARNUM	1888-1962	CONNECTICUT	1925					YES
ALON BEMENT	1876-1954	ASHFIELD, MASSACHUSETTS	1920s?		VP	1937-1938	YES	
SOLON HANNIBAL BORGLUM	1868-1922	OGDEN, UTAH	1930s	YES		**	NO	
MAURICE BRAUN	1877-1941	NAGY BITTSE, HUNGARY	1906					
DANIEL PUTNAM BRINLEY	1879-1963	NEWPORT, RHODE ISLAND			YES	1923	**	
CHRIS BROWNE	1952-	SOUTH ORANGE, NEW JERSEY	ca. 1910 (P/T)				YES	
DIK BROWNE	1918-1989	NEW YORK, NEW YORK						
ROBERT 'CHANCE' BROWNE	1948-	NEW YORK, NEW YORK						
DOROTHY RANDOLPH BYARD	1885-1974	GERMANTOWN, PA		YES				YES
AUGUSTUS SMITH-DAGGY	1858-1942	PARIS, ILLINOIS					NO	
RICHARD SMITH-DAGGY	1892-1973	CHATHAM, NEW JERSEY	1913			1938-1940		
EDWIN FOX	?							YES
JOHNNY GRUELLE	1880-1938	ARCOLA, ILLINOIS					YES	
JUSTIN C. GRUELLE	1889-1977	ARCOLA, ILLINOIS	ca. 1915					
RICHARD BUCKNER GRUELLE	1851-1914	CYNTHANIA, KENTUCKY					NO	
GERMAIN GREEN GLIDDEN	1913-1999	BINGHAMPTON, NEW YORK	1910				NO	
BERNHARD GUTMANN	1869-1936	HAMBURG, GERMANY	1913	YES	YES	1925	NO	
CHARLES HAAG	1867-1933	NORRKOPING, SWEDEN	1910s					YES
SOFIA OLOFSDOTTER HAAG	1878-1969	STAFSINGE, SWEDEN	1910s					YES
HAMILTON HAMILTON	1847-1928	OXFORD, ENGLAND	1913	YES			NO	YES
HELEN HAMILTON	1889-1970		ca. 1895					YES
HOWARD LOGAN HILDEBRANDT	1872-1958	ALLEGHENY, PENNSYLVANIA		YES		1924	NO	
HELEN HOKINSON	1893-1949	MENDOTA, ILLINOIS	1908					
HENRY SALEM HUBBELL	1870-1949	PAOLA, KANSAS	ca. 1925 (P/T)				YES	
FRANK TOWNSEND HUTCHENS	1869-1937	CANANDAIGUA, NEW YORK	ca. 1923 (P/T)				NO	YES
JOHN McCLELLAND	1919-	GEORGIA	1911					YES
EDWIN MURRAY McKAY	1869-1926	MICHIGAN		YES				
ADDISON T. MILLAR	1860-1913	WARREN, OHIO	1910s	YES				
CLIFTON MEEK			1907	YES			NO	
VAN DEARING PERRINE	1869-1955	GARNETT, KANSAS					NO	YES
GEORGE PICKNELL	1864-1943	NORTH SPRINGFIELD, VERMONT	1912	YES			NO	YES
CHARLES REIFFEL	1862-1942	INDIANAPOLIS, INDIANA	1912	YES	YES	1922	YES	
CARL SCHMITT	1889-1989	WARREN, OHIO	1912	YES			NO	
CHARLES SHACKLETON	1856-1920	MINERAL POINT, WISCONSIN	ca. 1909	YES			NO	YES
ARMSTRONG WELLS SPERRY	1897-1976	NEW HAVEN, CONNECTICUT	1908					YES
HENRY GRINNELL THOMSON	1850-1937	NEW YORK, NEW YORK		YES			NO	
HARRY EVERETT TOWNSEND	1879-	WYOMING, ILLINOIS				1927		YES
JOHN VASSOS	1898-1985	CONSTANTINOPLE (ISTANBUL)			YES	1936-1938	NO	
BRIAN WALKER	1952-		1930s					* STUDIO
GREG WALKER								* STUDIO
MORT WALKER	1923-	EL DORADO, KANSAS						* STUDIO
PAUL WEBB	1902-1985	TOWANDA, PENNSYLVANIA	1950s					
FREDERICK COFFAY YOHN	1875-1933	CONNECTICUT					NO	YES

FIGURE 3: SILVERMINE ARTIST REFERENCE LIST



**FIGURE 4: LOCATION OF RESIDENT ARTISTS
WITHIN SILVERMINE CENTER HISTORIC DISTRICT**

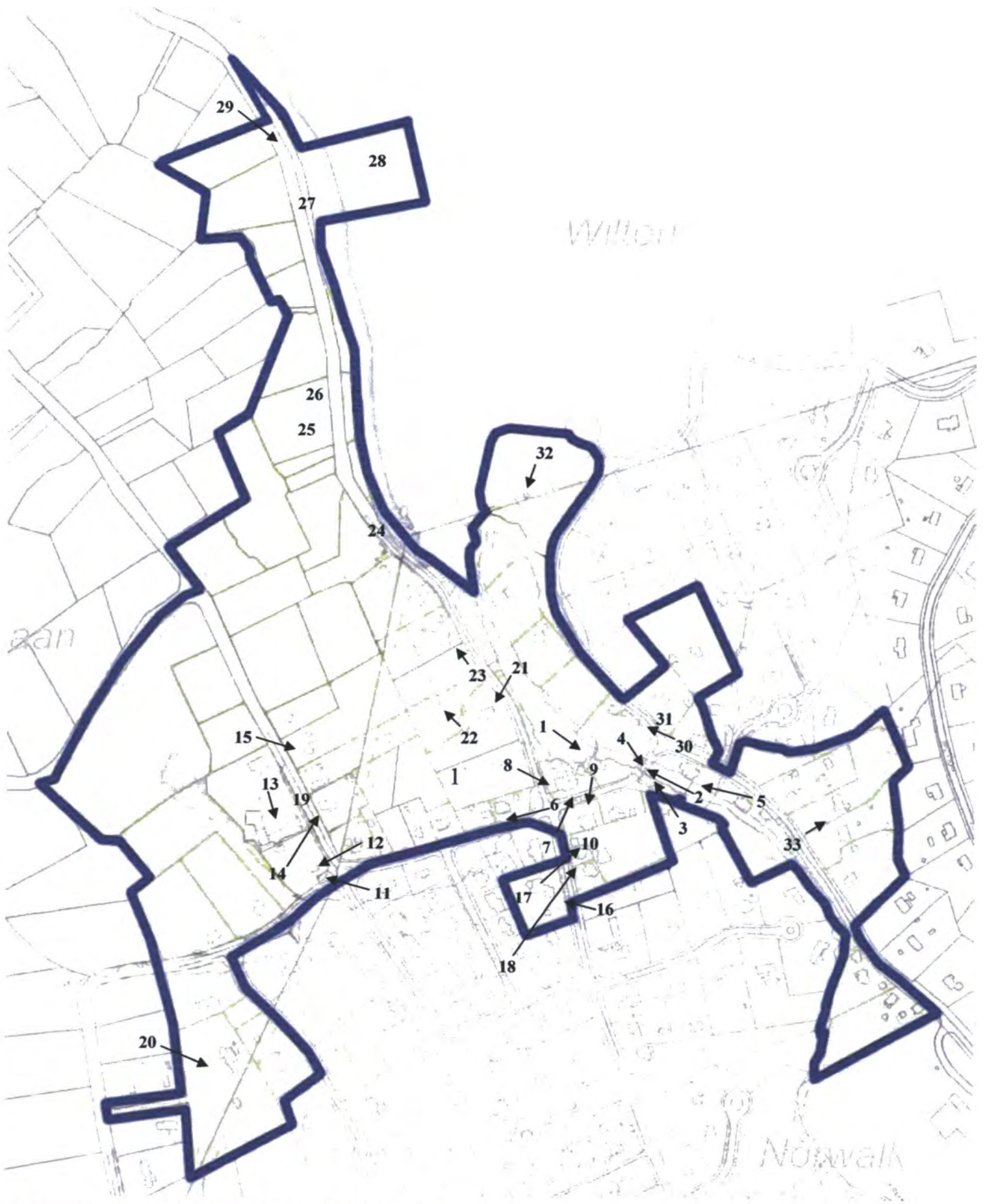


FIGURE 5: PHOTO LOCATER LIST

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: NOMINATION

PROPERTY Silvermine Center Historic District
NAME:

MULTIPLE
NAME:

STATE & COUNTY: CONNECTICUT, Fairfield

DATE RECEIVED: 12/12/07 DATE OF PENDING LIST: 1/03/08
DATE OF 16TH DAY: 1/18/08 DATE OF 45TH DAY: 1/25/08
DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:

REFERENCE NUMBER: 07001441

REASONS FOR REVIEW:

APPEAL: N DATA PROBLEM: N LANDSCAPE: N LESS THAN 50 YEARS: N
OTHER: N PDIL: N PERIOD: N PROGRAM UNAPPROVED: N
REQUEST: Y SAMPLE: N SLR DRAFT: Y NATIONAL: N

COMMENT WAIVER: N

ACCEPT RETURN REJECT 1/24/08 DATE

ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:

RECOM./CRITERIA

Return - Patrick Andrus

REVIEWER

Barbara Wyatt

DISCIPLINE

Historian

TELEPHONE

202-354-2252

DATE

1-24-08

DOCUMENTATION see attached comments Y/N see attached SLR Y/N

If a nomination is returned to the nominating authority, the nomination is no longer under consideration by the NPS.



United States Department of the Interior

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
1849 C Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20240

United States Department of the Interior National Park Service National Register of Historic Places

Comments Evaluation/Return Sheet

Property Name: Silvermine Center Historic District
Property Location: Fairfield County, CT
Reference Number: 07001441
Date of Return: 24 January 2008

Reason for Return

The Silvermine Center Historic District nomination is being returned for technical corrections and concerns about the Description and Statement of Significance. The following must be addressed for this nomination to be considered acceptable:

Section 2

The location must be completed, using 120 characters or less, in the blank provided; a continuation sheet cannot be used for this item. For historic districts, the location can be stated as "Roughly bounded by . . ." or a similar summary. The Verbal Boundary Description in Section 10 will provide much more detail.

Section 3

The certification indicates the district is locally significant, but Section 8 mentions that it is "locally, regionally, and nationally significant" under Criterion B for its association with notable artists. Please check all levels that pertain.

Section 7

The description of the district, Section 7, is only one-and-a-half pages long. Essential information regarding the appearance of the historic district has been omitted. Please see page 33 of the National Register Bulletin *How to Complete the National Register Registration Form* for a checklist of items that must be included in Section 7 to describe a historic district. Pages 108-109 of the National Register Bulletin *Historic Residential Suburbs* also describes the points that need to be covered in Section 7. Please amend this section so it is complete and provides a comprehensive description of the historic district as outlined in the two National Register bulletins. Based on the conclusion stated on page 8-16, the integrity needs to be thoroughly examined.

7

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service
National Register of Historic Places**

Comments

Property Name: Silvermine Center Historic District
Property Location: Fairfield County, CT
Reference Number: 07001441
Date of Return: 24 January 2008

Section 8

1. Criterion B is checked on page 3, but nothing has been entered on the Significant Person blank. This item should be addressed in 26 characters. In this case, "various artists" or "multiple artists" would be appropriate.
 2. Please see page 43 of *How to Complete National Register Registration Forms* to verify that the district only has one significant date (1922). Significant dates need to be explained in the text.
 3. The Period of Significance is not justified in the nomination. The beginning date of the Period of Significance, 1724, may refer to construction of the Jacob St. John House (#103) and the end date of 1957 may reflect the on-going existence of Silvermine Center as an artists' colony. Please explain both dates in Section 8.
 4. Although the nomination contains a great deal of history, a context has not been established for all of the claimed Areas of Significance: agriculture, art, education, and industry. The introductory paragraph states that Criterion A applies to the district's history as a "notable arts colony and cultural community." Criterion B applies to the district's association with the Guthrie family and "other Silvermine families" (which need to be identified). Do industry and agriculture pertain to the Guthrie family and the other families? What about education? Does art pertain to the "individual notable artists" as well as the art colony? Please explain these associations more explicitly and create a historical context for each.
- Please clarify if the national level of significance is associated with art as it pertains to Criterion A (Silvermine Center as an artists' colony) and Criterion B (the notable artists). The other areas of significance—agriculture, education, and industry--appear to be significant at the local level. Criterion C also appears to apply to local significance. Please clarify.
5. Criterion C is addressed on page 8-13, presenting a context for the plan and layout of the district, as well as the architecture. However, some buildings, built prior to the 1957 end date of the period of significance, are evaluated as noncontributing. Clarify if the 1923 Colonial Revival (#126) that was remodeled in 2000 has lost integrity. Was the studio (#56) moved to the site in 1932 or built in 1932? If it was present during the period of significance it may be contributing. Why are the following non-contributing?

Artil
needs
clarify

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service
National Register of Historic Places**

Comments

Property Name: Silvermine Center Historic District
Property Location: Fairfield County, CT
Reference Number: 07001441
Date of Return: 24 January 2008

- #4, Neo-Colonial Revival (1956) C
- #64, ranch (1950) C
- #67, cottage (1935) N/C

new counts
98
< r > minor reject
97

Map

ok Several properties in the inventory do not appear to be mapped; the following are noted: #70, 77, 99, 113, and 137. Also, #141 is mapped twice and a lot between #112 and 116/118 is not evaluated.

Paper

Please make sure that the paper is archival.

Please call me at 202-354-2252 if you have any questions.

Barbara Wyatt, Historian
National Register of Historic Places
24 January 2008

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: RESUBMISSION

PROPERTY NAME: Silvermine Center Historic District

MULTIPLE NAME:

STATE & COUNTY: CONNECTICUT, Fairfield

DATE RECEIVED: 9/24/08 DATE OF PENDING LIST: 11/07/08
DATE OF 16TH DAY: DATE OF 45TH DAY:
DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:

REFERENCE NUMBER: 07001441

DETAILED EVALUATION:

ACCEPT RETURN REJECT 11/5/2008 DATE

ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:

*see attached return sheet.
very weak support for Criterion C.*

Return - Patrick Andrus

RECOM./CRITERIA A + B

REVIEWER Lisa Delone

DISCIPLINE Historic

TELEPHONE _____

DATE 11/5/08

DOCUMENTATION see attached comments (Y/N) see attached SLR Y/N



United States Department of the Interior

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
1849 C Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20240

United States Department of the Interior National Park Service National Register of Historic Places

Comments Evaluation/Return Sheet

Property Name: Silvermine Center Historic District
Property Location: Fairfield County, CT
Reference Number: 07001441
Date of Return: November 5, 2008

Reason for Return

The Silvermine Center Historic District nomination is being returned for technical and substantive corrections. The following must be addressed for this nomination to be considered acceptable:

Section 3

The nomination is submitted at the local, state, and national level of significance for its association with various artists and the development of the Silvermine Arts Guild. However, the documentation in Section 8 doesn't substantiate how these artists were influenced by this connection only that they simply resided, visited, or performed in Silvermine. Many artists had already established careers with their artistic influences from other schools, connections, or experiences. If some nationally recognized art movement was started out of this concentration of artists, writers, and cartoonists, that made a lasting mark on the arts, then this is what needs to be documented for a national level of significance. The nomination does establish the significance on a regional level, particularly with the development and impact of the Arts Guild, therefore, the district appears to meet state level of significance.

Section 7 and Section 8

The descriptions of the mills and factory are confusing. On page 2, the c. 1770 Red Mill is also called the Guthrie Knob Factory. However, in Section 8, page 3, it states, "the Guthrie Knob Factory (main building, Silvermine Tavern, Photograph #7, 8)." However, photographs 1 and 2 show a different building and photographs 7 and 8 are of the Silvermine Tavern. Please clarify the "main building" and what elements comprise the Silvermine Tavern complex. A simple sketch map of this property would be useful.

Period of Significance (POS). The nomination indicates a beginning period of significance of 1716 with the purchase of 200 acres of land by Ebenezer St. John. Since the district is nominated for Industry and Art, the POS needs to be tied to these associations. The beginning date usually begins with the date when significant activities began giving the property its historic significance, such as a building's date of construction. If Industry and Art remain the only Areas of Significance, then the beginning date should reflect the construction date of the earliest extant mill building. The ending POS is defined as extending "to the present." An ending date (1958) is needed. Please see page 42, of *How to Complete National Register Registration Forms* for more information.

On pages 18-21, the nomination describes the district's architectural significance and on page 5-6, its commercial significance. However, architecture and commerce aren't listed as Areas of Significance. By adding these areas, the district's resources and history will be better defined and connected. The POS could start at 1724 (construction of the Jacob St. John House) and end with 1958 (the 50 year cut-off period).

The nomination does support National Register Criteria A and B. For Criterion C, the nomination indicates the Red Mill still "retains its outward form," although no historic photos have been found to illustrate this. Criterion C would be more strongly supported by adding architecture as an Area of Significance for the district's collection of residential architecture.

Map

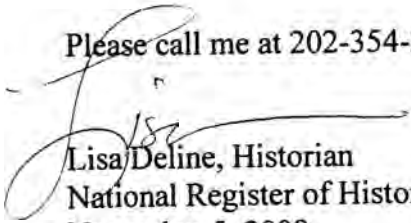
Please submit a revised map excluding those properties that are now considered noncontributing and can be easily drawn out of the district. Please remove any references and inventory numbers to these resources. Please check the resource count to make sure the contributing and noncontributing resource numbers accurately reflect the revised map and inventory list.

Note:

All referenced National Register Bulletins can be downloaded from the following link:

<http://www.nps.gov/history/nr/publications/bulletins.htm>

Please call me at 202-354-2239, or e-mail at <lisa_deline@nps.gov> if you have any questions.



Lisa Deline, Historian
National Register of Historic Places
November 5, 2008

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: RESUBMISSION

PROPERTY NAME: Silvermine Center Historic District

MULTIPLE NAME:

STATE & COUNTY: CONNECTICUT, Fairfield

DATE RECEIVED: 5/22/09 DATE OF PENDING LIST:
DATE OF 16TH DAY: DATE OF 45TH DAY: 7/05/09
DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:

REFERENCE NUMBER: 07001441

DETAILED EVALUATION:

ACCEPT RETURN REJECT 6/23/09 DATE

ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:

*Historic mill industrial district & ea. 20th c. artist community.
(18th-19th c.)*

RECOM./CRITERIA A, B, C

REVIEWER USA Delina

DISCIPLINE Historic

TELEPHONE _____

DATE _____

DOCUMENTATION see attached comments Y/N see attached SLR Y/N

Missing Core Documentation

Property Name	County, State	Reference Number
Silvermine Center Historic District	Fairfield, CT	07001441

The following Core Documentation is missing from this entry:

Nomination Form

Photographs

USGS Map



TO: Jan Matthews, Keeper
National Register of Historic Places

FROM: Cora Murray, National Register Coordinator

SUBJECT: National Register Nomination

The following materials are submitted on this 11th day of December
2007, for nomination of the Silvermine Center Historic District
to the National Register of Historic Places:

- Original National Register of Historic Places nomination form
- Multiple Property Nomination form
- Photographs
- Original USGS maps
- Sketch map(s)/figure(s)/exhibit(s)
- Pieces of correspondence
- Other _____

COMMENTS:

- Please insure that this nomination is reviewed
- This property has been certified under 36 CFR 67
- The enclosed owner objections do _____ do not constitute a majority of property owners.
- Other: _____



TO: Lisa DeLuca
~~J. Paul Loether, Chief~~
National Register of Historic Places

FROM: Stacey Vairo, National Register Coordinator

SUBJECT: National Register Nomination

The following materials are submitted on this 19 day of May
2008, for nomination of the Silvermine Center H.D.

Connecticut

to the National Register of Historic Places:

- Amended
Original National Register of Historic Places nomination form
- Multiple Property Nomination form
- Photographs
- Original USGS maps
- Sketch map(s)/figure(s)/exhibit(s)
- Pieces of correspondence
- Other _____

Lisa, this was sent a while ago but never got there! These are the edits to the existing document that you have on file there. Thank you!! Stacey

COMMENTS:

- Please insure that this nomination is reviewed
- This property has been certified under 36 CFR 67
- The enclosed owner objections do _____ do not _____ constitute a majority of property owners.
- Other: _____



Phillip Esser
<pesser@epsilon-systems.com>
m>

06/05/2009 05:45 PM

To "Russ Quaide" <rustin_quaide@nps.gov>

cc

bcc

Subject NR Bulletins

History:

✉ This message has been forwarded.

Dear Russ,

Thanks for following up on my request.

If available, please send the following NR Bulletins:

15
16
22
42
43

Please send to me at the address below.

Many Thanks,

Phil

Phillip Seven Esser
Architectural Historian
Epsilon Systems Solutions, Inc.
901 North Heritage Drive
Suite 204
Ridgecrest, CA 93555
(760) 446-6430

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If you have received this communication in error, please notify me immediately by replying to this message and deleting it and all copies and backups thereof. Thank you.

☑ 7685