

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

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National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form

received OCT 27 1983

date entered NOV 29 1983

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

1. Name

historic N. A.

and/or common Main Street Historic District

2. Location

Boughton, Elm, Ives, Keeler, Main, West and  
White Sts

street & number See Continuation Sheet

N.A. not for publication

city, town Danbury

N.A. vicinity of

state Connecticut

code 09

county Fairfield

code 001

3. Classification

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

4. Owner of Property

name Multiple

street & number See Continuation Sheet

city, town Danbury

N.A. vicinity of

state Connecticut

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Danbury City Hall

street & number 155 Deer Hill Avenue

city, town Danbury

state Connecticut

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

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

date 1983  federal  state  county  local

depository for survey records Connecticut Historical Commission

city, town 59 South Prospect St., Hartford

state Connecticut

## 7. Description

### Condition

excellent  
 good ~~too~~  
 fair

deteriorated  
 ruins  
 unexposed

### Check one

unaltered  
 altered

### Check one

original site  
 moved date 1958, John Dodd Shop  
No. 43 Main Street

### Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The Main Street Historic District comprises 132 properties in the center of the City of Danbury, of which 97 are historically and/or architecturally significant. The buildings are located on both sides of Main Street between No. 34 Main Street and No. 43 Main Street on the south and the intersection of Main Street with White Street and Elm Street on the north, and on nine adjacent side streets. The district is inclusive of Danbury's business, institutional and earliest residential center as it developed from its founding in the late seventeenth century to the mid-twentieth. The buildings within the district are a mix of commercial, residential, ecclesiastical and institutional, reflecting Main Street's multiple functions as Danbury's principal street. Represented within it are buildings from a wide range of periods and styles from the late eighteenth century to the early twentieth, including Georgian, Greek Revival, Renaissance Revival, Italianate, Gothic Revival, Second Empire, High Victorian Gothic, Richardsonian Romanesque, Beaux Arts Neo-Classical, Commercial, Georgian Revival, Dutch Colonial Revival and Modernistic. The majority of the structures are vernacular in character, the work of local builders and architects, but there are significant, well-preserved examples of several of these styles.

The Main Street Historic District is centrally located in the City of Danbury. The city's geographic center is within the district, in the area of No. 238 Main Street. The terrain within the district can be described as generally flat and level, due to its valley location. Main Street slopes almost imperceptibly northward towards the Still River, a few hundred feet beyond the district's northern boundary. To the west is an upward slope for most of the length of Main Street, to the east a moderate falling off.

Boundaries of the district have been drawn to focus on the physical development of Main Street as Danbury's commercial and institutional center. The boundaries are inclusive of buildings and streetscapes which are representative of Main Street's historical development, multiplicity of functions and architectural character. The district is visually and architecturally distinct from primarily residential and strip commercial neighborhoods which surround it to the east, south and west. Directly behind the east side of Main Street between Liberty and White Streets is "Parcel A," a six-acre tract cleared by the City's Redevelopment Commission during the 1960s and 1970s and slated for future development.

The street pattern of the district can be described as dendritic or tree-like. Side streets - some of which originated during early settlement as routes to mills or outlying farms, and some of which were opened by speculators during the decades of Main Street's commercial expansion - branch off at irregular intervals from the Main Street "trunk." No streets within the district are continuous east and west across Main Street, but significant intersections occur at White and Elm and Main, known as Wooster Square; and West, Liberty and Main, known as City Hall Square. These intersections, together with Elmwood Park to the south, have served at different periods as focal points for public, institutional and commercial buildings and activities.

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

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

For NPS use only  
received  
date entered

Main Street Historic District  
Continuation sheet Danbury, Connecticut Item number 4

Page 1

Boughton St. - No. 6

Elm St., - Nos. 10-16, 18-24, 26, 30, 32-52

Ives St. - Nos. 1, 2-4, 5-7, 8-10 1/2, 11

Ives at Railroad Place

Ives and Delay St.

Keeler St. - Nos. 7-13, 20, 28-32, 34-38, 40-46

Library Place - Nos. 5-15, 17-21

Main St. - Nos. 34, 36, 40, 42, 43, 43 rear, 46, 47, 48, 49, 54, 57, 58,  
59, 63, 64, 65, 67, 68, 70, 71, 75, 80, 85-87, 88, 89-91,  
93-95, 97, 98, 101-103, 104, 105-107, 109, 111-113, 116,  
119, 120, 125, 129, 132, 135, 136, 137-139, 140, 141,  
143-147, 149-151, 153-157, 158, 161-169, 170, 173-175,  
177-179, 181-185, Soldiers' Monument, 190-196, 191-193,  
195-197, 198-204, 199-201, 203-205, 207, 206-210, 209-  
211, 213, 215, 220-224, 221-223, 226-228, 229 1/2-239,  
234, 238, 240-242, 241-251, 244-246, 248, 253-255, 254,  
257, 258, 259, 260, 261, 264, 265, 266-268, 270, 272,  
274, 275-277, 276, 278, 279-283, 282-286, 275-287, 288,  
289, 290-292

Post Office Place - No. 3

West St. - Nos. 2-16, 17, 18-20, 22-24, 25, 31

White St.- Nos. 16-18, 20-26, 32-34, 36-40, 42, 44-52

Wooster St. Cemetery

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

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

Main Street Historic District  
Danbury, Connecticut

Continuation sheet

Item number 6

Page 1

For NPS use only

received

date entered

National Register of Historic Places:

John and Mary Rider House, 43 Main Street, listed November 23, 1977.

Determination of Eligibility:

Old Danbury Jail, 80 Main Street, December 3, 1980.

Local Surveys:

Main Street Survey, 1979-1980; Town Hill Survey, 1982-1983.

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

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

For NPS use only
received
date entered

Main Street Historic District

Continuation sheet Danbury, Connecticut Item number 7

Page 1

The sections of White, Ives, West, Boughton, Keeler and Wooster Streets and Post Office and Library Place within the district represent extensions of Main Street uses and architecture onto adjacent side streets, and are visually continuous with Main Street.

The southern boundary of the district is the south property line of No. 34 Main Street on the west side of Main Street and No. 43 Main Street on the east side of Main Street. The character of Main Street changes dramatically south of these property lines, giving way to recently constructed commercial structures to a point where the visual continuity and integrity of the streetscape is lost. (Photograph 1) The northern boundary of the district is the north side of White and Elm Streets, the edge of Flood Control/Redevelopment programs of the 1960s which levelled old structures on the north sides of Elm Street and White Street and for a block on Main Street north of the intersection. The eastern and western boundaries of the district follow the rear property lines of Main Street properties and other contributing properties on adjacent side streets, except where they cut through privately owned parking lots behind some Main Street buildings.

The district includes several distinct streetscapes defined by buildings of different periods, types and styles. The gradual transition from a primarily residential character at the south end of the district to a fully urban complex at its north is a reflection of the northward growth of Danbury's business center during the nineteenth century. Between the southern boundary of the district and Elmwood Park, contributing buildings consist almost entirely of eighteenth and early nineteenth-century homes, shops and stores, primarily of early craftsmen and merchants. (Photographs 1, 2, 3) The earliest buildings in this section are two-story vernacular Georgian plan dwellings with steeply pitched roofs. (Photographs 2, 3) Also included is the John Dodd Shop, an apothecary shop and dwelling built in 1790. (Photograph 2) This building was moved from its original location in 1958 by the Danbury Scott-Fanton Museum and Historical Society when a large supermarket was built on its site just south of the museum grounds and the building was threatened with destruction. The building is significant as the earliest commercial building on Main Street. On the west side of Main Street is a row of buildings dating from the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century. All of the early buildings south of Elmwood Park are set back from the sidewalk and have landscaped yards. Despite some intrusions and alterations in this section, these buildings represent the historic roots of the present business district to their north, contribute strongly to historic and architectural themes of the district, and convey a feeling of time and place. Many are presently used for offices or small businesses.

On both sides of Main Street facing Elmwood Park, a grassy, tree-lined island in the middle of the street, are institutional buildings including the courthouse and jail, a church, school and other buildings traditionally associated with the park, a focal point for public activities since the early nineteenth century. The land was originally donated to the town

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

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

For NPS use only  
received  
date entered

Main Street Historic District  
Continuation sheet Danbury, Connecticut Item number 7

Page 2

for use as a common in 1801. In 1853 it was planted with trees and a hay crop, and converted to a public park. In 1879 the park was further equipped with benches, fountains, a bandstand and serpentine walks, all of which have been removed. It was the starting point for parades down Main Street and the bandstand was the site of summer concerts by local bands. The modern park is planted with maples and equipped with benches and an historical marker.

Occupying a modest eminence on the west side of the south end of the park is the present Courthouse, built in 1899 on the site of two predecessors. Its symmetrical facade is buff brick with limestone trim. A central, pedimented pavilion projects from the facade between the two wings. In it are the entry, flanked by tapered Ionic columns which support a frieze and cornice with balustrade above. Four Ionic pilasters on the second story carry a frieze which bears the inscription "Fairfield County Courthouse." The pilasters flank a central window with round arched fan with a rusticated Gibbs surround, and enframe smaller side windows with portal windows above. The interior of the Courthouse is original. The hallways are lined with stained ash wainscoting topped with a bead-and-reel molding, and the iron staircases with cast-iron newel posts also survive intact. The main courtroom, beneath the large copper dome, is completely original, with panelling, door surrounds, bars, benches and jury box all intact. (Photographs 5, 6)

Directly across Elmwood Park from the Courthouse is the old Jail building, constructed in 1872 and converted into a Senior Center which was dedicated on May 1, 1983. The red-brick, Second Empire-style building served as a jail for Fairfield County until 1959, when the county system in Connecticut was abolished, and as a State jail until 1969. It occupies the site of two earlier jails, and is also on the site of the first Congregational meetinghouse, constructed in 1696. Directly to the rear of the jail on Wooster Street is the town's original cemetery, part of the churchyard of the first meetinghouse, with graves dating to the early eighteenth century. Facing Main Street is the two-story, mansard-roofed jailer's residence, with one-story, gable-roofed cell block wings extending from the rear to the west and south. A three-story watch tower and prisoner's entrance is at the intersection of the jailer's quarters and the south cell block. Beginning in 1980, the building has been substantially restored. The slate roof, round-arched dormers and exterior brick were cleaned and restored. Rotted porch columns were replaced matching the originals. The interior window and door surrounds, crown moldings and staircases with turned newels, rails and balusters have been preserved. The western or men's cell block has been converted into a meeting room, while six of the women's cells in the southern cell block have been preserved as an exhibit of the building's historic function. (Photograph 7)

North of the jail and cemetery across Wooster Street are a row of three late nineteenth century, red brick buildings erected by St. Peter's Roman

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

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

For NPS use only  
received  
date entered

Continuation sheet Main Street Historic District  
Danbury, Connecticut Item number 7

Page 3

Catholic parish. From south to north they are: the Convent, a Renaissance Revival building erected in 1895 with a copper hip roof, round arched windows with billeted brick, and stained glass windows; the School, with an Italianate-style tower which projects from the front; and the Rectory, a significant local example of Richardsonian Romanesque influence. (Photograph 8, Figure 2)

St. Peter's Church is directly across Main Street and Elmwood Park from the Rectory. The slate-roofed, Gothic Revival church is of rusticated granite, quarried locally. Its 175' spire is a prominent Main Street landmark, visible throughout most of the district. (Photograph 9)

Between St. Peter's Church and the Courthouse on the east side of Elmwood Park are several early nineteenth-century residential structures, intermixed with commercial buildings of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. A Greek Revival double house stands at Nos. 101-103 Main Street in the center of this block. The house has two distinct entrances, with a fan and two quarter fans in the gable, an ornamental feature found nowhere else in the district. (Photograph 9)

Nos. 111-113 Main Street, the Marshall Building, is a four-story commercial and apartment building erected in 1891. Its original cast-iron storefront was covered when the storefront was extended, but the interior retains its pressed metal walls and ceilings. The upper stories of the facade feature different fenestration on each floor - groups of three windows on each side with keystones and splayed lintels on the second story, round arches formed of molded brick and brownstone sills on the third, and rusticated sandstone lintels and sills on the fourth floor, beneath a corbelled cornice. On the exposed north wall of the building there remains painted advertising for its longtime former owner and occupant, Cornelius Delohery Undertakers and Home Furnishings. A stone set in the center of the building between the third and fourth stories bears the inscribed legend "Marshall, 1890." (Photograph 9)

The former firehouse of Humane Hose Co. No. 1, a bracketed, Italianate stucco building with hip roof, is on adjacent Boughton Street. Presently used for vehicle storage by the nearby Police Department, the firehouse was built in 1911 for one of Danbury's two original fire companies, which had served this area since it was organized in 1829.

Directly north of the Park area on the west side of the street is a section of buildings of predominantly modern construction. At the northwest corner of Boughton Street is the Police Station, at the corner of West Street is the Danbury Library, both buildings constructed in 1969-70. In between are several commercial buildings constructed since 1945 or completely remodelled. These buildings are classified as non-contributing. (Photograph 10) On the east side of Main Street above the Park are commercial buildings built during the 1920s and 1930s, as far as No. 141 Main Street, which occupies the corner at Main and Keeler and begins a continuing row of multi-story

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

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

For NPS use only  
received  
date entered

Continuation sheet Main Street Historic District  
Danbury, Connecticut Item number 7

Page 4

commercial structures to the north end of the district.

No. 141 Main Street, a two-story brick commercial building, two bays wide and with brickwork panel, is notable for its dedication stone, set in the center of the building between the first and second stories. The inscription reads "Oct. 25, 1907, Daoud Bocharhe" in English and Arabic letters. Keeler Street, adjacent to the east of this building, is built up on its south side for approximately one-half of its length with buildings which represent an extension of Main Street uses and architecture, including the former Moose Lodge, a red-brick lodge hall with shaped gable; and the high-style brick Queen Anne tenement at Nos. 36-42 Keeler Street, which retains its slate mansard roof and conical towers, and rusticated brownstone lintels and sills. (Photograph 11)

On the east side of Main, north of Keeler Street, the character of the streetscape changes to three and four-story brick commercial buildings as far north as White Street. The block between Keeler and Liberty Streets is a cohesive streetscape, a blend of Italianate, Commercial and Colonial Revival influences. (Photograph 13) At the south end of the block at the intersection of Keeler Street is the Keeler Building, a four-story commercial building with pressed brick facade and corbelled window hoods. Nos. 149-151 Main Street directly to the north is an extension of the Griffing Block, Nos. 153-157 Main Street to its north. The Griffing Block, built in 1864, is a three-story commercial block with molded window surrounds and quoins; it has an unusual wooden cornice, its paired brackets featuring tear-drop like returns and pendants. Uniting the two buildings is Nos. 149-151 Main Street, which matches No. 153 in building height but whose corbelled window hoods echo the Keeler Block. (Photograph 12)

At the north end of the block is the four-story Hull Building, a Commercial style building with multi-colored pressed brick facade. In the center of the block is the Martha Apartments/Palace Theater complex. The Martha Apartments is five stories, of brick laid in a striking English bond pattern, with limestone cornice and storefronts. In the third storefront from the south end of the ground floor of the building is the entrance to the Palace theater, the fifth largest auditorium in Connecticut. The interior of the 2,000-seat theater is Adamesque. Its glass and bronze doors are original, surmounted by a festooned frieze. The lobby, 100' long, is mirrored and panelled in mahogany, with a marble pattern floor and marble dado. A corridor lined with amber-colored leaded glass leads down to an oval foyer, where massive marble Corinthian pilasters rise to the full height of the mezzanine above. Marble staircases lead to the balcony. The theater's interior space is created by a 45' dome. As in the lobby and foyer, the decor is Adamesque. Medallions to either side of the screen enframe paintings of female figures carrying urns. Festooned friezes and Corinthian pilasters carry out the Classical motif elsewhere. Two large wall panels, presently covered by fabric, feature Classically inspired murals. The stage area is 67' x 34', with twenty dressing rooms to either side rising



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

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

For NPS use only

received

date entered

Continuation sheet Main Street Historic District  
Danbury, Connecticut Item number 7

Page 5

to five tiers. In 1979, the theater was converted into a triplex by partitions down the middle of the main floor and a floor installed at the balcony level. The conversion is not irreversible, and the theater is currently being studied by an Arts Task Force as a possible site for a Regional or community center for the performing arts. Its structure, furnishing and decorative elements are essentially intact. (Photograph 13)

North of Liberty Street on the east side of Main are two and three-story commercial buildings joined by party walls and flush with the sidewalk, ranging in date from 1852 to 1965. (Photograph 17) A large proportion of the commercial buildings on this side of the street were built prior to 1880. The Benedict and Nichols Building at Nos. 191-193 Main Street (Photograph 17) is representative of the earliest commercial buildings, which display Greek Revival features such as trabeated lintels and sills of granite or limestone and simple cornices bearing Classical ornament.

No. 213 Main Street, built in 1911, retains its original storefront cornice, second-story plate glass display window and brickwork panels below a corbelled cornice, all in buff brick. Next north of it, the present Howland's Department Store (Nos. 215-217 Main Street) features a triple display window in its second story and a cornice with Grecian fretwork frieze and parapet. (Photograph 18)

The Post Office, at No. 265 Main Street, is a two-story brick building, Georgian Revival in style. Its main entrance is through a triple arched loggia separated by Corinthian pilasters and flanked on either side by high, round-arched windows. The pilasters rise to a denticulated limestone cornice and parapet. The vestibule and bulletin boards to either side in the Post Office lobby are of handcarved, ammoniated and waxed oak with floral, egg-and-dart and bead-and-reel moldings. The lobby has terrazzo floors and marble wainscoting. The Post Office occupies the whole south side of Post Office Place, a short alley between Main Street and Ives Street. (Photograph 20)

White Street, the northern boundary of the district, is a street of commercial buildings on its south side, included in the district. (Photograph 21) The former Heyman building at No. 36 White Street is a commercial adaptation of the Neo-Classical style, built in concrete with a denticulated cornice and panelled parapet. The easternmost building in the district is the Seaman-Lynch Hardware Store, originally Union Hall, Nos. 42-52 White Street. This three-story commercial block has a pressed brick facade and retains its original bracketed wooden cornice. Tall windows on the third floor lighted a 1,000 seat temperance hall, now used as apartments. The large block defines the district's northeastern boundary. To its east is National Place, a lane leading to parking lots.

Off White Street and paralleling Main Street as far south as Post Office Place is Ives Street, upon which is located a significant late-nineteenth

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form

For NPS use only

received

date entered

Main Street Historic District  
Continuation sheet Danbury, Connecticut Item number 7

Page 6

century streetscape. On the east side of the street are the Ives Street Firehouse; and the former Swift, now Omaha Beef, warehouse. (Photograph 22) The Firehouse, built in 1883, is a two-story brick Queen Anne building. Its windows are segmentally arched with soldier courses of alternating red and yellow brick. Originally painted red, it has been painted several colors in the intervening years. Triple windows in the second story are trimmed in red and blue stained glass, which also was originally in the transoms of the fire and other doors. The ground floor was and is now used for storage of fire vehicles; while the upper floor, originally parlors for the two fire companies for which it was built, was converted during the late nineteenth century into barracks for paid firemen. To the rear are a small battery room and stable constructed during the 1890s. To the south of the firehouse is the former Swift, now Omaha Beef, warehouse.

On the west side of the street are the former Leonard Buildings, on the corner of Ives Street and Post Office Place. (Photograph 23) Characterized by bracketed cornices of pressed metal and rectangular windows with sills and lintels of rusticated brownstone, these two Victorian commercial buildings are united at storefront level by a common cornice, also of formed metal. Windows on the ground floor level of No. 2 - 4 Ives Street have been filled in or altered.

The east side of Main Street between Liberty and White Street is characterized by a common scale and the early period of many of its buildings. In this section modernization of storefronts by building owners has had its greatest impact. While nearly all the commercial buildings in the district have been altered to a greater or lesser extent at the storefront level, during the 1960s and 1970s in particular, building owners in many cases applied various facade treatments to make their buildings appear more modern. Some of these treatments consist of applied metal screen or sprayed-on gunnite (Nos. 275-277 Main, Nos. 279-281 Main) (Photograph 34); others have been gutted and given completely new facades (No. 207 Main, Nos. 203-205 Main, Nos. 197-199 Main, No. 257 Main). (Photograph 17)

The intersection of Main Street and West Street has been a central focal point for public activities and structures since the late eighteenth century. In the center of the intersection, on a small park-like island, is the Soldiers Monument. (Photograph 10) The monument is 32' high, consisting of a marble figure of a Union Soldier holding a flag in his right hand, atop a granite Corinthian column 12' high, encircled by a band bearing the names of battles in which Danbury soldiers fought. Upon the die facing Main Street is the inscription: "To our Brothers, Beloved, Honored, Revered, Who Died that Our Country might live." On the West Street face is inscribed: "The Defenders of the Union." The northern corner of the intersection is dominated by the Pershing Building Nos. 190-196 Main Street and Nos. 1 - 15 West Street, a three-story Commercial-style office building of buff brick with concrete trim, with parapet roof and pedimented crests at the corners and in the center of the south elevation. West Street for a block west of

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

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

For NPS use only

received

date entered

Main Street Historic District  
Continuation sheet Danbury, Connecticut Item number 7

Page 7

Main Street is included in the district. On the north side of the street is the Gothic Revival St. James Episcopal Church. (Photograph 15)

To the west of the church on the north side of the street is the former office building of the Southern New England Telephone Company in Danbury at No. 31 West Street. (Photograph 16) The two-story brick building rises to a modillioned cornice of formed metal. Five bays wide and four deep, its windows have splayed lintels of brick with keystones of sandstone. The side walls form stepped gables. Across West Street on its south side are a pair of stucco, Italianate lodge halls, the former Odd Fellows Building at No. 18-20 West Street, and Nos. 22-24 West Street, the Danbury Club. (Photograph 14)

The section of the west side of Main Street between West and Elm Streets in the central business district is characterized by buildings of a more massive scale and monumental quality and by a greater proportion of examples of high style buildings than the east side of Main Street in the same section. Several are free-standing.

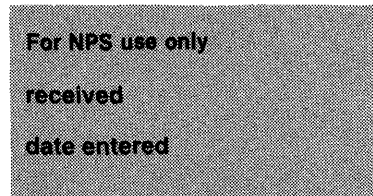
A feature of this section of Main Street is a row of four banks. The southernmost of these banks is the Union Trust, a Neo-Classical building of Indiana limestone. (Photograph 24) Its facade consists of a central entry, no longer in use, surrounded by rope molding, with four large, round-arched windows, a simple modillioned cornice and parapet. Panels with carved foliated designs in relief occupy the spandrels between the arched windows. The seal of the State of Connecticut is carved above the central entry. An addition to the bank's south contains the present entry. The interior is distinguished by its high, panelled and molded ceiling.

Across Chapel Place from the Union Trust, and sited upon a slight eminence is the Savings Bank of Danbury. (Photograph 25) A limestone balustrade with turned balusters lines the sidewalk on the southern property line, enclosing a small lawn, the only significant private landscaping in the business area north of Elmwood Park. The building's interior is entirely original. Panelled wainscoting, furniture and a pedimented vestibule are of finished oak, as are the bank's counters. The walls have plaster cornices featuring scroll modillions and egg-and-dart moldings which conceal ceiling lights. An oak mantle with frieze, triglyphs and cornice encloses the vault. (Photograph 26)

The Union Savings Bank at Nos. 226-228 Main Street is three-stories high, and distinguished by its dark red exterior and its lavish use of terra cotta tile as a surface treatment. This bank is the only one of the four in the row whose interior has been extensively modernized, after the offices were blown up in a 1971 robbery. Upper floors are used for offices, and the third floor contains a large hall which seated 500, once used for the Danbury High School during the 1890s. In front of the ground floor is suspended a square Tiffany glass clock added in 1927. (Photograph 25)

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

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



Continuation sheet Main Street Historic District  
Danbury, Connecticut Item number 7 Page 8

City Trust Bank is a Neo-Classical building of white marble, with a central entry arch in which is set the bronze doors, enriched by etched designs, with a large transom window above and a bronze relief of an Indian looking out over the Plain of Pahquioque above the center of the arch, a design taken from an early bank note. The interior of No. 234 Main Street retains its original monumental two-story ceiling, with a frieze around it featuring swags, cornucopias, rope moldings and other motifs and a Grecian fret border. The upper floors are reached by an Otis elevator, installed in 1931 when the bank was enlarged and remodelled into its present appearance. A carved eagle is set between the spandrel panels of the arch. A modillioned cornice and parapet with crest surrounds a flat roof. Side walls are of yellow brick. (Photograph 25)

At the southern corner of Main and Library Place is the former Danbury Library, used for city offices. (Photograph 28, Figure 3.) The building is the only example of High Victorian Gothic style in the district. The exterior is of orange-red pressed brick, resting on a coping of rusticated granite. Stained glass windows light the stairway leading to the second floor on the south side. The interior consists of a first floor with a main room, originally the Children's Room, now used as an office. The former Children's Room is distinguished by murals executed in 1937 as a W. P. A. project by local artist Charles Federer. Illustrations are of Mother Goose tales; the artist used local Danburians of the time as models. The second floor, originally the main reading room, has a high, vaulted ceiling of ash. It retains its original wainscoting, windows and radiators. The room, which occupies almost all of the second floor, is lighted by the tall arched windows in the crossing gables and has been partitioned by temporary sliding dividers into offices. These offices are expected to be moved in the near future and the room converted into a Creative Arts Center by the City of Danbury, which also cleaned the exterior and re-painted the wooden window trim during the summer of 1981.

To the north of the Library is the former Danbury National Bank, presently known as the Thomas Settle Building, at No. 248 Main St. (Photograph 28, Figure 2) Its exterior of rusticated sandstone features round arched windows on the first floor and a carved frieze above the second story. The building's main banking room is now used as an insurance office. It remains substantially intact, including its original wainscoting and pedimented door surrounds at the former vaults. The building's third-story gables, which complemented the design of the neighboring Library, were unfortunately lost following severe fire damage in 1973. Significant features remain, however, particularly the carved, foliated relief and the well-preserved interior. (Photograph 28, Figure 3)

North of the Library on the north side of Library Place is the former Seifert Armory at Nos. 5 -15 Library Place; and a row of three attached tenements complementary in design and materials, to its west. The massive former armory has seven storefronts on the ground floor, the three easternmost with Carrara glass storefronts. The three upper stories are used for

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Main Street Historic District

Continuation sheet Danbury, Connecticut Item number 7

Page 9

apartments. Its exterior is pressed brick. The three attached apartments feature a bay window flanking the entry on the ground floor with round-arched windows above on the second, rising to a modillioned cornice of formed metal. (Photograph 29) The structures form a cohesive extension of the Main Street streetscape up the steep northern slope of Library Place as far as Tower Place.

North of Library Place the west side of Main Street consists entirely of commercial buildings. The Treadwell Block at Nos. 266-268 Main Street, a three-story building, stands out. The building, of a more massive scale than its neighbors, dominates the center of the block. (Photograph 30)

At the corner of Main and Elm Streets is the Danbury News Building, with its distinguishing tower. (Photograph 31)

Elm Street, which includes a mix of building types, forms the northwestern boundary of the district. (Photographs 32, 33) The Hornig Block at Nos. 10-16 Elm Street is the only building in the district with a pressed metal facade. At No. 30 Elm Street a Greek Revival house is sited on a slight promontory, above a row of stores at sidewalk level. The house is fully pedimented with frieze and corner pilasters, together with a Victorian front porch. The westernmost building in the district is the former American Legion Building at Nos. 36-52 Elm Street. (Photograph 33) Its facade is original, with a buff brick exterior, and unornamented concrete cornice and parapet above. Five storefronts retain their original glass block transoms and are surmounted by a continuous modillioned storefront cornice of concrete. The building's second floor is lighted by five round-arched windows flanked by two rectangular windows on the second story. The former lodge hall contains an auditorium and theater on the second floor.

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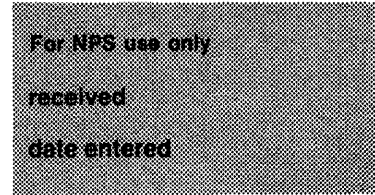
Main Street Historic District

Danbury, Connecticut

Continuation sheet

Item number 7

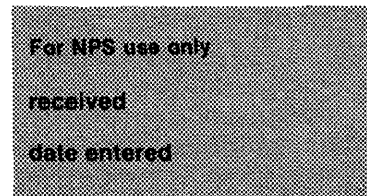
Page 10



INVENTORY	C= Contributing NC= Non-contributing	Contribution to Historic and/or Architectural Themes	Map Id. No.
Street and No.			
Boughton St.			
6			
	1911, Italianate, Philip Sunderland, architect. 2 stories, stucco on frame, slate hip roof, ornamental wooden brackets. Originally Humane Hose Co. No. 1 Firehouse, presently used for storage of vehicles by Danbury Police Department.	C	1
Elm St.			
10-16			
	1882, Italianate Commercial. Hornig Block: two stories, pressed metal over clapboard; low pitch, composition roof. Only pressed metal sided building in district.	NC	2
18-24			
	1883, Italianate Commercial. Pratt Block: three stories, brick with wooden cornice and window heads; low pitch, composition roof. Three stores with apartments on upper floors.	C	3
26			
	1926, 1955, Modern commercial. One-story, aluminum storefronts - brick; flat, composition roof.	NC	4
30			
	c. 1840, Greek Revival. Two stories, gable roof facing street. Fully pedimented with corner pilasters rising to frieze. Clapboard. Victorian front porch with turned columns and scrollwork. Roof of No. 26 Elm begins at bottom of porch, below this building and not in front of it.	C	5
32-52			
	1927, former Americo Vespucci, American Legion Hall; Modern/Colonial Revival, Philip Sunderland, architect. Roman buff brick with concrete modillioned cornice and parapet above. Expanses of wall surface with large, round arched windows are characteristic of Sunderland's work. Six storefronts, lodge hall and auditorium in upper floors. Concrete modillioned storefront cornice and original glass block transoms.	C	6
Ives St.			
1			
	1893, Romanesque Revival, William Webb Sunderland, architect. Brick with brownstone lintels, ground floor. Flat, composition roof, three stories. Segmental arch second floor of facade, third story features arcade formed of corbelled round arches. Built and still in continuous use as meat warehouse.	C	7

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National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form



Continuation sheet Main Street Historic District  
Danbury, Connecticut Item number 7

Page 11

Contribution to  
Historic and/or  
Architectural Themes  
Map Id. No.

Street and No.

Ives Street continued

2-4 1895, Italianate, Joel Foster, architect.  
Three-stories, brick with iron cornices,  
brownstone sills and lintels. C 8

5-7 1883-84, Queen Anne, Joel Foster, architect.  
Used as Fire Department Headquarters 1889-1969.  
Two-stories, brick, slate roof. First floor  
was used for vehicle storage, with a one-story  
stable addition to the rear, and a second addi-  
tion built for a battery room. Second floor  
originally were parlors for volunteer fire  
companies, later converted to sleeping quarters. C 9

8-10 1/2 1895, Italianate, Joel Foster, architect. Two-  
stories, brick, iron cornices, brownstone lintels  
and sills; flat, composition roof. C 10

11 1943, Modern, steel and glass on concrete block  
foundation. One-story paint warehouse. NC 11

Ives at  
Railroad Place

c. 1940, Modern. One-story, brick; flat composi-  
tion roof. Tire dealership. NC 12

Ives and

Delay St. 1955, Modern. Diner with corrugated metal  
siding. One-story, flat composition roof. NC 13

Keeler St.

7-13 1882, 1896, Italianate, Joel Foster, architect.  
Connected with Nos. 141-147 Main Street (Keeler  
Block) by one-story addition, but originally  
free-standing. Brick, two-stories, corbelled  
brick window hoods match those of Nos. 141-147  
Main Street. Five stores with apartments above. C 14

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National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places  
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Continuation sheet Main Street Historic District  
Danbury, Connecticut Item number 7

Page 12

<u>Street and No.</u>	<u>Contribution to Historic and/or Architectural Themes</u>	<u>Map Id. No.</u>
<u>Keeler Street Continued</u>		
20	1940, Modern. One-story brick tire dealership and launderette.	NC 15
28-32	1922, Dutch Colonial Revival. Originally Moose Lodge Hall No. 1373; brick with shaped gable. Two-story, three-bay wide addition to east.	C 16
34-38	1890, Queen Anne. Three-stories, brick with slate, gable roof, brownstone lintels, sills and stringcourses. Conical tower occupies center bays. Tenement. Projecting bays.	C 17
40-46	c. 1896, Queen Anne. Three-stories, brick with aluminum siding; flat, tin roof. Projecting end bays with gable roofs facing street. Tenement.	C 18
<u>Library Place</u>		
5-15	1891. Victorian Commercial, Joel Foster, architect. Seifert Armory: brick with brownstone lintels, sills and arches, iron cornice; low pitch, composition roof. Five stores, westernmost of which has Carrara glass storefront. Original tower projecting upward above main entrance bay is missing. Third floor is a former armory, now apartments.	C 19
17-21	1892, Romanesque Revival, Joel Foster, architect. Three-stories, brick with brownstone lintels, iron cornice. Three attached apartments, with first floor bay window, second story round arches, bracketed cornice.	C 20
<u>Main Street</u>		
34	c. 1790, Georgian. Two-stories, aluminum sided with ground floor brick veneer storefront. Gable, asphalt shingled roof.	C 21
36	c. 1830, Greek Revival Commercial. Brick, gable end-to-street, asphalt-shingled gable roof, rear addition, wood shingled. Fan in gable.	C 22



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Main Street Historic District

Continuation sheet Danbury, Connecticut

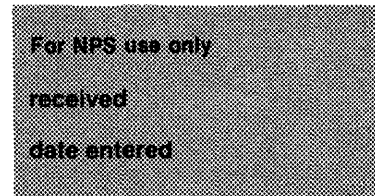
Item number 7

Page 13

<u>Street and No.</u>	<u>Contribution to Historic and/or Architectural Themes</u>	<u>Map Id. No.</u>
Main Street continued		
40	c. 1790, Georgian. Two-stories, aluminum sided and facade remodelled. Asphalt shingled roof, fieldstone foundation.	NC 23
42	1832, Greek Revival. Two-stories, aluminum sided, asphalt shingled gable roof. Full pediment with dentil trim, fan in tympanum, front doorway with reeded columns, fanlight and sidelights.	C 24
43	1785, Georgian. John and Mary Rider House: two-stories, clapboard, wood shingled gable roof. Part of Scott-Fanton Museum. Restored interior. Listed on National Register.	C 25
43 rear	1790 Georgian, John Dodd Shop: one and one-half stories, wood-shingled gable roof, clapboard. Earliest shop building on Main Street. Moved from original site. Part of Scott-Fanton Museum.	C 26
46	c. 1912, Colonial Revival. Two-stories, stucco; hip, asphalt shingled roof.	C 27
47	c. 1805, Georgian. Two-stories, wood shingled, gable roof with asphalt shingles.	C 28
48	c. 1780, Georgian, Victorian remodelling. Two-stories, aluminum siding, gable roof, asphalt shingles.	C 29
49	c. 1815, Federal elements. Originally home and shop of a shoemaker: two stories, wood shingles, gable roof, asphalt shingles. Rear addition shop.	C 30
54	1961, Modern; brick, flat roof. Office building.	NC 31
57	1870, 1928, Italianate, Colonial Revival. Two stories, aluminum siding, gable roof, asphalt shingles. Victorian porch with scrollwork trim.	C 32
58	1959, Modern, Brick, mansard shingle roof. Restaurant.	NC 33

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National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form



Main Street Historic District

Continuation sheet Danbury, Connecticut

Item number 7

Page 14

<u>Street and No.</u>	<u>Contribution to Historic and/or Architectural Themes</u>	<u>Map Id No.</u>
Main Street continued		
59	c. 1795, Georgian, Blackman House: two-stories, wood shingles, gable roof, asphalt shingles. Fanlight and sidelights. Colonial Revival front porch.	C 34
63	1949, Ceramic front gas station, Modern.	NC 35
64	1925, Colonial Revival. Two-stories, aluminum sided brick veneer on first floor. Brick store- front on north side.	C 36
65	c. 1804, Georgian. Two-stories, wood shingled, gable roof, asphalt shingles. Original window frames, Victorian front and side porticoes.	C 37
67	1926, 1958 addition-second story. Two-stories, brick with flat, composition roof. Originally an automobile showroom.	NC 38
68	1836, Greek Revival. Old Saddle factory: originally a saddle and harness factory, con- verted to tenement and later to offices. Two- stories, wood shingle, gable roof.	C 39
70	1953, Modern, Stucco on brick, one-story; flat, composition roof.	NC 40
71	1899, Beaux Arts, Warren Briggs, architect. Fairfield County Courthouse: two-stories, buff brick with Bedford sandstone coping and trim. Copper dome. Interior oak, original.	C 41
75	1968, Modern. One-story, cement block and plate glass; used car lot office.	NC 42
80	1872, Second Empire, Joel Foster, architect. Former Fairfield County Jail: Brick, two- stories, slate mansard roof. Tower with cor- belled ornament, cell block wings projecting to south and west.	C 43
85-87	1881, Modern. Three-stories, stucco on brick, flat, composition roof. Originally a wooden, gable roofed commercial building, completely remodelled during the 1920s.	NC 44

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**National Register of Historic Places  
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Main Street Historic District

Continuation sheet Danbury, Connecticut Item number 7

Page 15

<u>Street and No.</u>	<u>Contribution to Historic and/or Architectural Themes</u>	<u>Map Id. No.</u>
Main Street continued		
88	1895, Renaissance Revival, St. Peter's Convent: three-stories, brick with brown-stone trim, granite foundation. Copper hip roof. Wooden porch on south elevation with scrollwork, round arched arcade.	C 45
89-91	1929, Modern, One-story, brick; flat, composition roof. Originally automobile dealership, completely remodelled.	NC 46
93-95	c. 1840s, 1950s. Old building incorporated into new structure. Two-stories; Modern, brick, aluminum siding; flat, composition roof.	NC 47
97	1842, remodelled. Two-stories, aluminum siding; gable, asphalt shingled and flat, composition roof. Old structure with false front applied, interior converted to bakery.	NC 48
98	1885, Italianate, St. Peter's School: three-stories, brick with granite foundation and coping; flat, composition roof with wide eaves. Bell tower projects from symmetrical facade. Three-story, 1909 addition to rear.	C 49
101-103	c. 1830, Greek Revival, wood shingled; gable, roll asphalt roof. Quarter fans at gable corners, lunette with keystone in gable. Built as double house and continues in same use.	C 50
104	1891, Richardsonian Romanesque, Walter Stickels, architect. St. Peter's Rectory: brick, molded brick, three-stories, granite foundation and coping. Twin octagonal towers united by massive round arched front entry with balcony above. Towers have modillions in wood, roofs are slate. Three-stories.	C 5.1
105-107	c. 1840, Federal. Double house converted into offices. Two-stories, wood shingles. Gable, asphalt shingles, Victorian era porch.	C 5 2

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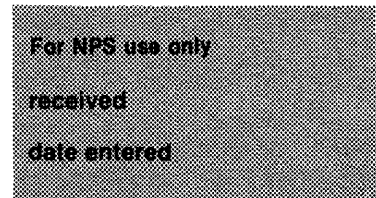
Continuation sheet Danbury, Connecticut Item number 7

Page 16

<u>Street and No.</u>	<u>Contribution to Historic and/or Architectural Themes</u>	<u>Map Id. No.</u>
Main Street Continued		
109	c. 1890, Victorian commercial. One-story brick building, with high, projecting iron cornice. Flat, composition roof. Facade remodelled.	C 53
111-113	1890, Victorian Commercial, Walter Stickels, architect. Marshall Building: three-stories, brick with brownstone trim. Flat, composition roof.	C 54
116	c. 1916, Colonial Revival. Two-stories, stucco on brick, gable roof with cornice returns, asphalt shingles.	C 55
119	1869-1875, Gothic Revival, St. Peter's Church: coarse granite, slate roof, gable, stained glass windows.	C 56
120	1970, Contemporary. Police Station: one-story, concrete.	NC 57
125	1922, Modern. Aluminum facade over brick. One-story; flat, composition roof. Automobile dealership, still used for auto display.	C 58
129	1929, Modernistic, William E. Lehman, architect. Sears Department Store: two-stories, brick, concrete cornice and trim, large glass block windows second story and in transoms over storefront. Concrete storefront cornice with lozenge design. Originally built as Sears Department Store and still used for original purpose.	C 59
132	1919, remodelled 1930, 1950. Modern one-story brick auto dealership.	NC 60
135	1938, Commercial. Originally a supermarket. One-story, brick; flat, composition roof.	NC 61
136	1912, remodelled 1949. Modern. Two-story brick furniture store.	NC 62

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National Park Service**

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



Main Street Historic District

Continuation sheet Danbury, Connecticut Item number 7

Page 17

<u>Street and No.</u>	<u>Contribution to Historic and/or Architectural Themes</u>	<u>Map Id. No.</u>
Main Street continued		
137-139	1931, Modernistic, Art Deco elements. One-story, concrete, commercial building; flat, composition roof. Four storefronts, separated by fluted piers, with glass brick transom panels and a frieze featuring a lozenge design.	C 63
140	19 , Modern. Brick, one-story, Flat, composition roof. Formerly gas station now vacant.	NC 64
141	1907, Italianate commercial. Two-stories, brick; flat, composition roof. Segmentally arched windows, brickwork panel below cornice. Dedication stone in center of facade inscribed in English and Arabic lettering.	C 65
143-147	1882, Italianate Commercial, Keeler Block: brick, four stories. Three storefronts. Cornice missing. Flat, composition roof.	C 66
149-151	1882, Italianate Commercial. Brick, three-stories, with bracketed wooden cornice, eyebrow window hoods of corbelled brick. Flat, composition roof.	C 67
153-157	1864, Italianate Commercial, Griffing Block: three-stories, brick with bracketed wooden cornice, molded window surrounds. Flat, composition roof.	C 68
158	1958, Colonial. Danbury Savings & Loan: two-stories, flat roof, brick with marble trim.	NC 69
161-169	1926, 1928. Georgian Revival, Philip Sunderland, architect. Martha Apartments/Palace Theater: five-stories, brick with concrete cornice, facades. Flat, composition roof. 3,000 seat theater.	C 70
170	1969, Modern. William Webb Sunderland, architect. Danbury Library: Brick with marble columns, flat roof.	NC 71
173-175	1882, Italianate Commercial, Hawley Block: three-stories, brick with wooden cornice and window hoods. Flat, composition roof.	C 72

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Main Street Historic District

Continuation sheet Danbury, Connecticut

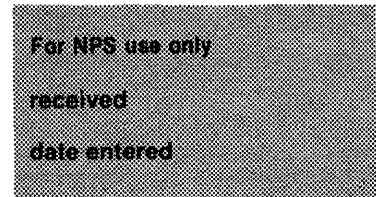
Item number 7

Page 18

<u>Street and No.</u>	<u>Contribution to Historic and/or Architectural Themes</u>	<u>Map Id. No.</u>
Main Street Continued		
177-179	1884, Italianate Commercial, Joel Foster, architect. Bernd Block: three-stories, brick; flat, composition roof. Metal cornice removed after severe fire damage, 1981	C 73
181-185	1907, 1908, Beaux Arts, Meloy & Beckwith, architect. Hull Building: brick, three-stories. Flat, composition roof.	C 74
Soldiers' Monument	1878, Carpenter & Raymond, Dayton, Ohio: Italian Marble figure of Civil War soldier atop 12' granite column wreathed with the names of battles.	C 75
190-196	1924, Commercial, Neo-Classical elements. Pershing Building: brick, three-stories rising to a frieze, cornice and parapet with pediments at corners and in center of south elevation; flat, composition roof.	C 76
191-193	1852, Greek Revival/Italianate, Polley & Raymond, builders. Benedict & Nichols Building: brick, three-stories. Low pitch hip roof, roll asphalt. Modillioned wooden cornice and fascia removed during roof repair 1981 but saved and could be restored.	C 77
195-197	1863, Greek Revival/Italianate, Stucco over brick. Modernized mid-nineteenth century commercial building. May not be restoreable. Originally had two facades - No. 195 matched neighboring building Nos. 191-193, while No. 197 had round arched windows in upper stories, bracketed cornice, was more clearly Italianate. Gable roof, roll asphalt, three-stories.	NC 78
198-204	1962, Colonial Revival, Ives Manor; four-stories, brick. Flat, composition roof. Originally motor inn, now Senior citizens housing.	NC 79
199-201	1937, Modernistic. McCrory's: Limestone facade with marble veneer base. Flat, composition roof, two-stories.	NC 80

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Main Street Historic District

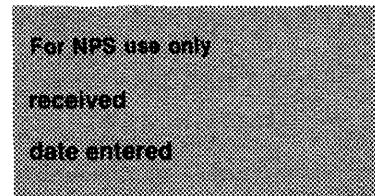
Continuation sheet Danbury, Connecticut Item number 7

Page 19

<u>Street and No.</u>	<u>Contribution to Historic and/or Architectural Themes</u>	<u>Map Id. No.</u>
Main Street Continued		
203-205	1884, Italianate Commercial originally, marble veneer. Remodelled 1975.	NC 81
207	1867, originally Italianate Commercial. Three-stories, marble veneer. Totally gutted and remodelled 1973. Not restorable.	NC 82
206-210	1866, 1924, Beaux Arts, Philip Sunderland, architect. Union Trust Bank: three-stories, limestone; flat, composition roof. Incorporates 1866 bank building, to south.	C 83
209-211	1867, Italianate. Three-stories, brick with wooden window hoods. Flat, composition roof, cornice missing. Storefront remodelled.	C 84
213	1911, Commercial, Philip Sunderland, architect. Brick, two-stories; flat, composition roof.	C 85
215	1924, Neo-Classical elements, Philip Sunderland, architect. Two-story department store built for same purpose. Limestone, Greek fretwork frieze below cornice and parapet. Flat, composition roof.	C 86
220-224	1908, Beaux Arts, Philip Sunderland, architect. Savings Bank of Danbury: two-stories, limestone; flat, composition roof. Bronze doors, original oak furniture, panelling and counters.	C 87
221-223	1868, Italianate Commercial. Three-stories, brick. Flat, composition roof. Facade covered with gunnite. Panelled wooden frieze, bracketed cornice.	C 8.8
226-228	1886-1887, Sullivanesque. Union Savings Bank: five bays wide and five deep, brick with terra cotta tile and pressed brick facade; three-stories, flat, composition roof. Facade rises to a frieze and wide eaves, cornice. Upper stories contain offices.	C 89
229 1/2-239	1965-66, Contemporary. One-story commercial building; flat, composition roof.	NC 9.0

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National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form



Continuation sheet Main Street Historic District  
Danbury, Connecticut Item number 7

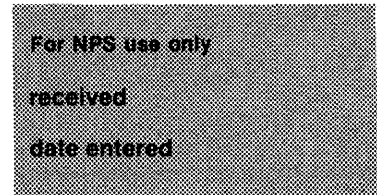
Page 20

<u>Street and No.</u>	<u>Contribution to Historic and/or Architectural Themes</u>	<u>Map Id. No.</u>
<u>Main Street continued</u>		
234	1912-1913. Neo-Classical. City Trust Bank: three-stories, brick sides and rear, marble facade, bronze doors. Flat, composition roof. Remodelled 1929-31, Morgan, French & Co. architects.	C 91
238	1891-1892, Victorian Commercial, Joel Foster, architect. Darragan Building: four-stories, brick with terra cotta tile in arches, iron cornice, pressed brick facade. Storefront and interior largely unaltered.	C 92
240-242	1891-1892, Richardsonian Romanesque Commercial, Leoni W. Robinson, architect. Larue Building: four-stories, seven bays wide, brick with brown-stone lintels and sills. Flat, composition roof.	C 93
241-251	1938, Modernistic. Woolworth Building: two-stories, five bays wide; brick with porcelain finish, terra cotta tile facade, black granite storefront base and ash trim; flat, composition roof. Outstanding example of Art Deco design in district, largely unaltered.	NC 94
244-246	1855, 1891, 1965, Modern facade. Original building constructed 1855 as Danbury National Bank, Henry Austin, architect. Enlarged to three-stories and completely remodelled 1891 by Foster Brothers, Joel Foster, architect. Present metal facade applied c. 1965. 1891 facade may still exist beneath the metal facade. Three-stories, brick with bronzed metal facade; flat, composition roof.	NC 95
248	1887-1888, Richardsonian Romanesque, Warren Briggs, architect. Thomas Settle Building: originally three-stories, rusticated brownstone, flat, composition roof. Interior is largely unaltered. Gables and original roof removed after extensive damage in 1973 fire. Built as Danbury National Bank.	C 96
253-255	1876, Italianate. Crofut Block: three-stories, brick, with wooden window hoods; third story, wooden cornice. Three-stories, brick, six bays wide; flat, composition roof. Corner quoins and pedimented window hoods, together with pressed	



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Main Street Historic District

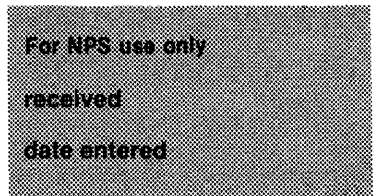
Continuation sheet Danbury, Connecticut Item number 7

Page 21

<u>Street and No.</u>	<u>Contribution to Historic and/or Architectural Themes</u>	<u>Map Id. No.</u>
253-255 continued: tin ceiling in store of No. 255 make this a good surviving example of Italianate Commercial in the district. Under separate ownership since heirs of original owners sold out in 1890s.	C	97
254 1876-1878, High Victorian Gothic, Lorenzo Wheeler, architect. Danbury Library, financed by Alexander Moss White, heir and partner in wealthy hatters' fur processing family: two-stories, gable, slate roof, four bays wide and three deep. Lantern removed, otherwise largely unaltered exterior and interior. Pressed brick with polychromatic sandstone trim.	C	98
257 1857, 1981. Modern. Remodelled older building, totally gutted and remodelled 1981. Three-stories, brick walls and amber mirror glass facade.	NC	99
258 1876, Italianate. Built as Post Office; three-stories, brick; flat, composition roof. Cornice missing. Corbelled brick window hoods.	C	100
259 1915, Italianate, Brick, three-storiesñ flat, composition roof. Constructed to resemble an earlier frame building on the site. Interior largely unaltered.	C	101
260 1879, Italianate Commercial. "Wildman's Hall." Three-stories, brick; flat, composition roof, five bays wide, three bays deep. Public hall originally on third floor. Corbelled brick window hoods.	C	102
261 1915, Modern Commercial, Philip Sunderland, architect. Brick; flat, composition roof, hollow clay tile foundation.	C	103
264 1885, Italianate. Three-story commercial building, brick; three bays wide; flat, composition roof. Interior largely unaltered.	C	104
265 1915-1916, Georgian Revival, Oscar Wenderoth, architect. Post Office: two-stories, brick with limestone trim, marble and stained oak used in interior.	C	105

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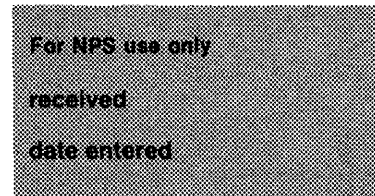


Continuation sheet Main Street Historic District Danbury, Connecticut Item number 7 Page 22

<u>Street and No.</u>	<u>Contribution to Historic and/or Architectural Themes</u>	<u>Map Id. No.</u>
Main Street continued		
266-268	1885, Romanesque Commercial, Treadwell Block; four-stories, brick with brownstone, bluestone and terra cotta trim and cornice. Flat, composition roof.	C 106
270	1885, Italianate, Ball Block: three-stories, brick; flat, composition roof. Bracketed wooden cornice.	C 107
272	1914-1915, Colonial Revival influence. Chiarella Block, commercial building, Ann Apartments: three-stories, brick with lime-stone trim. Two stores with apartments above. Flat, composition roof.	C 108
274	1908, Commercial. Christian Science Reading Room: one-story, cinder block; flat, composition roof. Small commercial building, originally a market, completely remodelled.	NC 109
275-277	1891, Italianate Commercial. Three-stories, brick with recent vinyl and aluminum facade applied. Flat, composition roof. Original facade intact beneath metal exterior. Built as Groveland Hotel.	C 110
276	1884, Italianate, Barnum Block: three-stories, three bays wide, brick; flat, composition roof. Pedimented and flat wooden window heads, bracketed wooden cornice.	C 111
278	1961, Modern. Two-stories, cinder block and brick; flat, composition roof.	NC 112
279-283	1853, Greek Revival, Tudor, Modern. Commercial building in three sections sold by heirs of original owner to three different parties and has different facade treatments. No. 279 raised one story. No. 281 and No. 279 covered by metal and stucco aggregate facade on ground floor. Flat, composition roof. Original facade believed intact beneath. No. 283 remodelled in Tudor style.	C 113

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National Park Service**

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



Main Street Historic District

Continuation sheet Danbury, Connecticut Item number 7

Page 23

Street and No.	Contribution to Historic and/or Architectural Themes	Map Id. No.
Main Street Continued		
282-286 1853, 1882, 1930, Modernistic.		
Originally a small dwelling, progressively modernized into a commercial building in 1882, Modernistic facade addition 1930. Two and three-stories, brick, concrete; flat, composition roof.	C	114
275-287 1859, 1941, 1978. Commercial. One-story, brick; flat, composition roof. Originally five-story Italianate commercial building, upper stories burned 1940. Modernized facade applied 1978.	NC	115
288 1873, 1893. Queen Anne Commercial, Philip Sunderland, architect. Danbury News Building: three-stories, brick; flat, composition roof.	C	116
289 1976, Modern. One-story, stucco and aggregate on concrete block. Flat, composition roof.	NC	117
290-292 1883, Victorian Commercial. Two-stories, three bays wide, brick with metal cornice, aluminum sided. Flat, composition roof.	C	118
Post Office Place		
3 1920, Modernistic, Colonial Revival influence. Auto repair shop. One-story, brick; flat, metal roof. Use of fanlights, suggestion of cornice and frieze.	C	119
West Street		
2-16 1937, Georgian Revival. Two-stories, brick; flat, composition roof. Office building with thirteen offices, four storefronts.	NC	120
17 1924, Commercial. Two-stories, brick; flat, composition roof. Contemporaneous with and complementary to its neighbor, the Pershing Building at 190-196 Main.	C	121
18-20 1911, Italianate, Philip Sunderland, architect. Originally Odd Fellows Hall: two-stories, stucco on frame; flat, composition roof. Interior mill construction.	C	122

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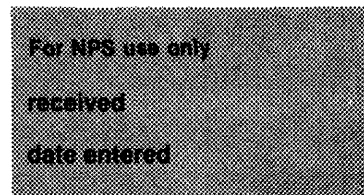
Main Street Historic District

Danbury, Connecticut

Continuation sheet

Item number 7

Page 24



Contribution to  
Historic and/or  
Architectural Themes

<u>Street and No.</u>			<u>Map Id. No.</u>
<u>West Street continued</u>			
22-24	1907, Italianate, Philip Sunderland, architect. Danbury Club: two-stories, stucco on frame with wooden cornice and portico; flat, composition roof.		C 123
25	1867-1872, 1929. Gothic Revival. St. James Episcopal Church, Rectory and Parish Hall: Rectory and parish hall addition, 1929, Gothic and Tudor Revival. Philip Sunderland, architect. Granite.		C 124
31	1908, Dutch Colonial Revival influence, Leoni W. Robinson, architect. Originally Southern New England Telephone Co. offices: two-stories, brick; gable, composition roof. Prominent stepped gables, modillioned metal cornice.		C 125
<u>White Street</u>			
16-18	1898, Victorian Commercial. One-story, brick; built-up shed roof. Cornice missing, modernized.		C 126
20-26	1898, Victorian Commercial. One-story, brick; flat, composition roof. Modernized storefronts.		C 127
32-34	1974, Modern. Two-stories, brick; flat, composition roof.		NC 128
36-40	1931, Neo-Classical. Two-stories, concrete; flat, composition roof. Commercial building with cornice and balustrade-like relief.		C 129
42	1870, Italianate Commercial. Three-stories, brick with wooden cornice and trim; flat, composition roof. Present signage obscures original facade, believed to be intact beneath.		C 130
44-52	1883, Italianate Commercial. Three-stories, brick with iron cornice, granite trim; flat, composition roof. Originally a meeting hall on third floor.		C 131
<u>Wooster St.</u>			
Cemetery	c. 1700. Town's oldest cemetery, sited directly to rear of Jail property.		C 132

## 8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> social/ humanitarian
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> other (specify)
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> local history

Criteria A, B, C \_\_\_\_\_

Specific dates See Inventory \_\_\_\_\_

Builder/Architect See Inventory - Item 7 \_\_\_\_\_

### Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The Main Street Historic District is significant historically as the focus of Danbury's public and commercial life since its founding in 1684, and as the institutional, commercial, social and cultural center for the surrounding region of northern Fairfield County (Criterion A). Throughout its history, its development has been associated with local businessmen and civic leaders significant to the history of Danbury, and has also been associated with figures of state and national prominence, including newspaper publisher James Montgomery Bailey, the "Danbury News Man," widely known during the late nineteenth century as a humorist; and composer Charles E. Ives (Criterion B). The Main Street Historic District is significant architecturally for its individual buildings which are well-preserved examples of their periods, often the work of leading Connecticut and New York architects, as well as for its unified streetscapes in which buildings of different eras and styles blend harmoniously. Of particular note is the concentration of commercial architecture built from the late eighteenth century to the early twentieth (Criterion C).

### HISTORICAL ORIGINS AND DEVELOPMENT

Main Street Historic District can be characterized as what Carole Rifkind calls "The thickened spine of a New England village."<sup>1</sup> Laid out in 1684 as "The Town Street" when the settlement was founded by eight families from Norwalk, Main Street has remained the focus of Danbury's public and commercial life. The first frontier settlement in northern Fairfield County, Danbury was founded as an agricultural community. The Main Street area was chosen as the site for the first settlement because of its central location. Danbury began to assume the role of regional trading center as new towns such as New Milford, Newtown and Ridgefield were founded on its borders during the early eighteenth century. Its strategic location in the Still River valley at the intersection of the east-west road connecting the Hudson River area with the central region of Connecticut and the north-south route from Long Island Sound to Litchfield County made it the natural focus for commerce in the region. During the American Revolution, the town served as an important depot on the supply line to Continental forces in the Middle Atlantic colonies, and as the site of an army hospital and the base of a company of "artificers" who manufactured nails, wagons, shoes, harnesses and other materiel. Most of the early village was destroyed during a British raid in April, 1777, but industries which blossomed after the war laid the groundwork for a continuing growth.

The manufacture of men's hats had pre-existed the Revolution but during the 1780s and 1790s Danbury became one of the leading national centers for the industry, producing 20,000 hats in 1800.<sup>2</sup> Shortly after that date several local manufacturers established retail outlets in southern port cities, setting up a trade that remained lucrative until the Civil War.

## 9. Major Bibliographical References

See continuation sheet

## 10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property 47

Quadrangle name Danbury

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

UTM References

A 

1	8	6	2	9	3	1	0	4	5	8	3	8	8	0
Zone				Easting				Northing						

B 

1	8	6	2	9	9	9	5	4	5	8	2	8	8	0
Zone				Easting				Northing						

C 

1	8	6	2	9	3	2	0	4	5	8	3	8	6	0
Zone				Easting				Northing						

D 

1	8	6	2	9	0	0	0	4	5	8	3	6	6	0
Zone				Easting				Northing						

E 

Zone				Easting				Northing						

F 

Zone				Easting				Northing						

G 

Zone				Easting				Northing						

H 

Zone				Easting				Northing						

Verbal boundary description and justification

Boundary lines as shown on accompanying Danbury Tax Assessor's map.  
For boundary justification see Item 7, cover page.

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

state N/A code N/A county N/A code N/A

state N/A code N/A county N/A code N/A

## 11. Form Prepared By

name/title William E. Devlin - edited by John Herzan, National Register Coordinator

organization Danbury Preservation Trust date May, 1983

street & number 368 Curtis Road telephone (203) 354-1370

city or town Bridgewater state Ct. 06752

## 12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national  state  local

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

State Historic Preservation Officer signature

title Director, Connecticut Historical Commission

date October 21, 1983

For NPS use only

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

*for* Shelores Byers National Register

date 11/29/83

Keeper of the National Register

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

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Continuation sheet Main Street Historic District  
Danbury, Connecticut Item number 8

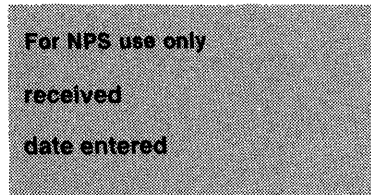
Page 1

Boots, shoes, saddles and horn combs were also manufactured for sale in the Southern states. The old Saddle Factory at No. 68 Main Street in the district was built in 1836 by one of these firms, Fry, Gregory & Co. The success of local entrepreneurs and the employment of several hundred skilled craftsmen in these industries provided a ready market for the services of artisans of all descriptions. Working in rooms in private homes or in small shop buildings, craftsmen and merchants made the lower end of "Town" Street or Main Street a center for commercial activity. Among those who advertised in early newspapers were tailors, general merchants, silversmiths, blacksmiths, apothecaries, joiners and makers of chairs, shoes, clocks and carriages. Prices for commodities on the New York market were printed in the Farmer's Journal and other early newspapers, as Danbury merchants also acted as agents for local farmers. The small shop building and dwelling on the Scott-Fanton Museum property at No. 43 Main Street was constructed in 1790 by John Dodd, and is Danbury's earliest known apothecary<sup>3</sup> as well as its earliest known commercial building. The John and Mary Rider house, also at No. 43 Main Street, was constructed in 1785 by a successful cabinetmaker and joiner who built the house and perhaps others in the vicinity. No. 49 Main Street was the home and shoemaker shop of Elias Sanford, constructed c. 1810. No. 59 Main Street, built in 1802, is the well-preserved home of successful silversmith and jeweler John S. Blackman, and later his son Frederick S. Blackman, who worked there until 1869. (Photograph 3) The Farmer's Journal, established in 1790, was the first successful newspaper in Fairfield County.<sup>4</sup> A later newspaper, the Republican Farmer, was printed in 1796 in a room at No. 34 Main Street, which was later the home of Hiram Barnes, a stage line operator and a figure in local folklore during the nineteenth century.

Among the events that helped establish Danbury as the political and commercial center for the region was its designation as a "half-shire town" of Fairfield County in 1784, sharing county seat duties with Fairfield. The first courthouse and jail had been constructed by 1792 on the sites occupied by their modern successors. The meetinghouse of the First Congregational Society had been the focus of the early settlement. The old cemetery on Wooster Street, originally part of its church yard, marks its original site. It relocated to a new building on the corner of Main and West Street in 1785, drawing some businesses and residences with it, but the acknowledged center remained in the courthouse area. In 1801 land was donated for use as a town common. This open area in the middle of the street, converted in 1853 to Elmwood Park, was kept informally at first, used by local militia companies on training days and as the site of early fairs of the Fairfield County Agricultural Society. In 1829 the last property of the Congregational Society, the "parsonage lot" on the east side of the common, was subdivided and sold as building lots to pay off an accommodation with a departing minister. During the 1830s double houses, including those at Nos. 101-103 and Nos. 105-107 Main Street, were constructed on the property. A Universalist church, no longer standing, located in the common area in 1833. Its property was purchased in 1851 by St. Peter's Roman Catholic Church as Irish immigrants began moving into

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Main Street Historic District  
Continuation sheet Danbury, Connecticut Item number 8 Page 2

the area. (Figure 1)

In 1822 the Connecticut legislature granted borough status to Main Street and its immediate environs, to allow for the organization of fire companies and a water supply. Early descriptions of Danbury during this period describe it as "one, long, stragglng street,"<sup>5</sup> and Pease and Niles called it "a large and flourishing and interesting village. It is built principally upon one street, which for more than a mile exhibits an almost continued range of buildings, consisting of Dwelling houses, Mercantile stores, Hat Factories, Mechanic Shops and churches."<sup>6</sup> White Street, West Street, Liberty Street and Elm Street existed from the eighteenth century, but were sparsely developed. Danbury was so thoroughly identified with Main Street that farmers from outlying districts referred to it as "Danbury Street."

The present downtown area was created following the completion of the Danbury and Norwalk Railroad in 1852. A rivalry between property owners from the northern and southern sections of Main Street was responsible for its location. Property owners in the northern section of Main Street, above the traditional center in the common area, sought to develop their own properties by choosing a location for the line's passenger depot on the site of the present Post Office. They held a majority of shares in the railway's stock, and a promise to build a secondary depot near the common was never kept. Conversely, a proposal to transform the common into a "central park" was defeated by the property owners from the northern end of the street. Residents from the southern end of the street raised their own funds and created Elmwood Park in 1853, planting the first elm trees and a hay crop.

The first brick commercial blocks and a hotel were constructed near the Danbury & Norwalk depot during the early 1850s by Phineas D. Crosby, a stage line operator and liveryman. Crosby's Block at Nos. 225-229 Main Street (Photograph 18) was the first multi-story brick commercial block. The Benedict and Nichols Building at Nos. 191-193 Main Street was the second, constructed in 1852. (Photograph 17) This firm had established Danbury's first grocery in 1838. David P. Nichols later became a significant state Republican leader. He served several terms in the legislature, holding key posts on the committees on Railroads and New Towns, and was State Treasurer from 1868 to 1874 and from 1878 until his death in 1881.

The improved transportation facilities also encouraged the building of large new steam-powered hat factories which employed thousands of new workers. The population of Danbury (exclusive of Bethel, which became a separate town in 1855) increased from 4105 in 1850 to 7240 in 1860, most of the influx occurring in the borough area. Large numbers of Irish, English and German immigrants as well as people from nearby rural towns moved to Danbury to take advantage of employment and business opportunities. New residential streets were opened through open land on either side of Main Street, as the street itself became increasingly commercialized.



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Continuation sheet Main Street Historic District  
Danbury, Connecticut Item number 8

Page 3

Hatters, well-paid and independent craftsmen in a skilled trade, tended to live in one and two-story homes on the new residential streets rather than to cluster into tenements. The hat factories themselves were generally constructed along the Still River, many of them near Main Street. Intensive commercial development until 1880 tended to take place along the east side of Main Street between Liberty and White Street, while the west side of the street in the same area, situated on higher ground, continued to be a desirable residential area, home to several older mercantile families. The Wooster Square area, formed by the intersection of Main Street with White and Elm Streets, became increasingly important during this period because of the location of the Danbury and Norwalk depot. White Street began to be developed with lumberyards and frame stores. Ives Street was opened in 1856 by entrepreneur Isaac Ives, owner of a lumberyard and uncle of the composer Charles E. Ives. Following the completion of further rail facilities in 1871 and 1881, when the New York and New England line linking Boston with New York City was completed through Danbury, the borough again experienced large spurts of population growth, accompanied by industrial and commercial expansion. During the 1880s three and four-story commercial blocks began to be constructed on White and Elm Streets and on the west side of Main Street north of West Street.

Danbury's growth spurred construction of public buildings which were of a higher architectural order than the vernacular Italianate commercial architecture then prevailing. In 1873 a new Jail was completed, replacing an inadequate structure built in 1828. The Jail was comparable with the most expensive residential buildings being erected in Danbury at the time. The High Victorian Gothic Danbury Library, erected in 1878, was donated to the Danbury Library Association by Alexander M. White, partner in the leading hatters' fur processing firm in Danbury. The building is a fine example of High Victorian Gothic. The Borough constructed a new firehouse on Ives Street in 1883-1884, and a new City Hall at the corner of Main and West Streets (now the site of the present Danbury Library) the same year. The City Hall, and the Soldier's Monument at the corner of Main and West Streets, erected in 1880, in addition to new commercial construction in the area, made the intersection called City Hall Square the new center of the business district.

Merchants and bankers followed the lead of the Borough in hiring architects to design buildings that would enhance the city's image. In 1887 the Danbury News observed that "more than eight years ago the library building was finished. This was our sole attractive building in the business portion of our village. And it remained alone for five years. Now we have the City Hall, the United Bank Building, the Danbury National Bank structure, the Treadwell and the McPhelemy buildings and the Town Club House."<sup>7</sup>

During the 1880s Main Street developed into the retail center for the surrounding region. In an article in 1881 the News noted that the Benedict Brothers Shoe Store at No. 225 Main Street was the largest retail shoe store

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

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Continuation sheet Main Street Historic District  
Danbury, Connecticut Item number 8

Page 4

in the state, and other businesses were providing services that townspeople had previously traveled to New York or Bridgeport for.<sup>8</sup> An important aspect of Danbury's growth as a regional center was the proliferation of banks. A branch office of the Fairfield County Bank was opened in Danbury in 1826. This institution eventually grew into the Danbury National Bank, and, after several mergers, is the modern Union Trust. In 1848 the Savings Bank of Danbury was formed by local merchants and businessmen, with offices in the home of treasurer George W. Ives on Main Street, grandfather of the composer Charles Ives. The Savings Bank occupies its own building at Nos. 224-226 Main Street, a few feet from its original location. The present office dates from 1908. The National Pahquioque Bank, founded by another group of local businessmen and manufacturers, was formed in 1855, and is today a part of City Trust at No. 234 Main Street. The Union Savings Bank was founded by Danbury hat manufacturers and merchants in 1866 and has been at its present location at Nos. 226-228 Main Street since the building was constructed in 1887.

During the 1880s brick commercial buildings began to extend the downtown shopping area off Main Street onto side streets. Elm and White Streets, Ives Street and later in the early twentieth century, West Street, were built up near their intersections with Main Street. In 1887 Isaac Ives, entrepreneur and uncle of composer Charles Ives, opened Keeler Street as a secondary business thoroughfare. Library Place had a similar origin as Alexander Wildman constructed first a Post Office and later other commercial buildings, including the Armory, on his property on the north side of Library Place, which had been opened following construction of the Library in 1878.

During the 1880s flagstone sidewalks were constructed on Main Street, along with a sewer system, electric arc lights, and a horse railway, and Main Street between Elmwood Park and White Street was paved with granite blocks. In 1889 the Borough of Danbury was granted a city charter by the legislature. By the turn of the twentieth century, Danbury was considered the leading producer of hats in the United States. An electric sign over the passenger depot on White Street featured the outline of a hat and proclaimed that "Danbury Crowns Them All." In 1899 the city was successful in procuring funds for a new courthouse from the county legislature despite opposition from Bridgeport. 35 hat factories and dozens of machine shops, label printers, silk works, fur processors and other related industries employed 5,000 workers by 1900. During the twentieth century Danbury remained the leader of the American hatting industry until the decline in hats as an article of men's fashion after World War II. Main Street, White Street and West Street in the central business district became parts of State Highways 6, 7 and 202. During the 1920s and 1930s chain stores, including the present Woolworth, McCrory's and Sears stores, were attracted to Main Street locations by the city's continuing vitality as a retail center.

The floods of August and October, 1955, badly damaged many businesses in

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

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Continuation sheet Main Street Historic District  
Danbury, Connecticut Item number 8

Page 5

the district, particularly in the area of Wooster Square and White Street. Danbury participated in federally sponsored flood control and Redevelopment programs that resulted in the re-channeling of the Still River in the downtown area and the levelling of scores of older buildings on the north side of White Street and Elm Street, on Main Street above White, and on other streets north of the Main Street Historic District boundaries. A later phase of Redevelopment in the 1970s cleared six acres of primarily wood frame residential structures to the east of Main Street and on Liberty Street in the downtown area, and re-routed and expanded Liberty Street to the north. Beginning in the 1920s Main Street's location on state highways and its role as the city's business center contributed to several intrusions on the district as automobile dealerships and modern commercial buildings were constructed on individual lots in the area below Elmwood Park, frequently resulting in the destruction of older buildings. Until recent years, historic preservation activities were confined to the same area. The John and Mary Rider house of the Scott-Fanton Museum at No. 43 Main Street has been meticulously restored, and in 1958 the John Dodd Shop was saved from destruction when it was moved from its original site to the museum property, where it was restored and now houses the museum's hatting exhibits. In 1958, the Blackman house at No. 59 Main Street was adapted into offices. The building's exterior was maintained, while fireplaces and exposed beams inside the house were preserved as part of the offices. The flood damage and Redevelopment programs caused the relocation of many Main and White Street businesses to new locations on state highways outside the city limits. On those same highways, Routes 6, 7 and 37, new shopping centers began to be constructed during the late 1950s and 1960s, eventually equalling the commercial space available on Main Street and other downtown streets. Perceiving a threat if they failed to keep up with these new, modern shopping facilities, many downtown merchants during the 1960s and 1970s modernized their storefronts, and some remodelled their entire facades. This was particularly prevalent on the older, east side of Main Street between Liberty and White. Some historic buildings were entirely gutted and new facades installed which destroyed or permanently altered the fabric of the buildings. More common were screen-like fixtures or sprayed on wall coverings which may be removed. (Photograph 34) The City of Danbury has taken a leading role in promoting the preservation and adaptive re-use of historic structures. The old Danbury Jail has been restored on the outside and its interior converted into a Senior Center while maintaining the original ornamental features and some of the cells in one wing. The exterior of the old Library Building at No. 254 Main Street was cleaned in 1981, and is to be converted into a Creative Arts Center, again retaining the building's rich interior woodwork and stained glass. In 1982 the facade of the Martha Apartments at Nos. 161-169 Main Street was cleaned and the woodwork repainted by owner Joseph DaSilva, who has also restored parts of the facade of the Hull building at Nos. 181-195 Main Street. A new north wall is being constructed on that building using brick to match that of the facade, replacing the remains of a party wall shared with a building that burned down in 1965. The Danbury Downtown Council, working with Consultant Norman Mintz, has established a Sign Review

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Main Street Historic District  
Continuation sheet Danbury, Connecticut Item number 8 Page 6

program to encourage appropriate signage for downtown businesses. A pilot facade program, jointly administered by the City Planning Department and the Danbury Preservation Trust, will be instituted this year, to encourage sensitive rehabilitation of commercial facades.

**SOCIAL SIGNIFICANCE**

In addition to its role as political and commercial center, the Main Street Historic District is significant as the central location for social and cultural activities. Several buildings within the district were constructed by fraternal organizations, while others were designed with space on upper floors to be rented to many groups. The first downtown commercial building, Crosby's Block at Nos. 225-229 Main Street, contained rooms for the local Odd Fellows Chapter on its third floor. The Crofut Block, at Nos. 253-255 Main Street, built in 1876, had a Masonic Hall on the third floor. Wildman's Hall at Nos. 260-262 Main Street had as its primary purpose a large third floor room which was rented to many organizations, including the Hebrew Benevolent Society and early Black social organizations. The large third floor of Henry B. Hawley's building at Nos. 42 - 52 White Street was occupied by Union Hall, a non-denominational, pro-temperance lecture and meeting hall that seated 1,000 and was frequently used by church groups. In 1882 Danbury's German social and fraternal groups were provided for in the upper floor of the building constructed at Nos. 290-292 Main Street by bottler Jean Hornig. In 1927 the Italian-American Amerigo Vespucci Lodge commissioned the large building at Nos. 32-52 Elm Street. (Photograph 33) Nearly all of the lodge halls constructed in Danbury during the first three decades of the twentieth century were designed by Danbury architect Philip N. Sunderland. St. Peter's Church, as well, performed an important role during the nineteenth century in forming associations among its largely Irish parishioners by sponsoring a Catholic Library Association; the Kennedy Guards, a marching group; and St. Peter's Band, which presented summer concerts on Elmwood Park and evolved into the town band during the late nineteenth century.

**EDUCATIONAL SIGNIFICANCE**

Several buildings in the Main Street Historic District have been associated with the history of education in Danbury. Danbury High School during the 1890s was housed in the third floor of the Union Savings Bank at Nos. 226-228 Main Street. A gymnasium in the third floor of the Hull Building at Nos. 181-185 Main Street was used until 1924 as the high school gymnasium. St. Peter's School was the first Catholic parochial school in the Danbury area, founded in 1885.

**RELIGIOUS SIGNIFICANCE**

St. Peter's Roman Catholic Church is significant to the history of religion in the Danbury area. The parish was established in 1853. It was the first parish and St. Peter's the first Roman Catholic Church to be constructed in northern Fairfield County, and served Catholics in all of the surrounding towns. Parishioners walked ten miles or more to Mass Sunday mornings from surrounding towns.<sup>9</sup> St. James Episcopal Church was founded in 1762, the

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form

For NPS use only

received

date entered

Main Street Historic District  
Continuation sheet Danbury, Connecticut Item number 8

Page 7

second religious organization in Danbury. It has occupied its West Street site since 1845.

## COMMUNICATIONS SIGNIFICANCE

The Main Street Historic District has been associated with individuals of state and national significance, as well as with many businessmen and civic leaders prominent in local history. During the 1870s Danbury News editor and publisher, James Montgomery Bailey, was nationally known as "the Danbury News Man" for his editorial humor and his anecdotal writing. A pioneer in journalistic humor, Bailey purchased the Danbury Times in 1865 with a partner, and changed its name to the Danbury News in 1870. His wry comments in the local news pages and his humorous anecdotes based on incidents in Danbury and on his boyhood in Rome, New York, attracted national attention. In 1873 he published a national edition of the News which for a brief time had a nationwide circulation of 30,000. He embarked on lecture tours that took him as far as San Francisco and later to London and wrote a series of humorous books, including Life in Danbury, The Danbury Boom, The Danbury News Man's Almanac and other titles. Capitalizing on his success, local businessmen began producing Danbury News Man cigars, hats and other products. Bailey abandoned his outside activities by 1880, but his fame was lasting. In 1882, the Hat, Cap and Fur Trade Review observed that "Danbury...is chiefly known for its hat manufactories and as the home of the Danbury News man."<sup>10</sup> During the late 1870s Bailey began collecting local historical information which was published after his death in 1894 as The History of Danbury, 1684-1896. He constructed the first newspaper office building in Danbury at No. 288 Main Street in 1873. It was enlarged and remodelled in 1893 into its present appearance.

## MUSIC SIGNIFICANCE

Composer Charles Edward Ives was born in 1874 in the family homestead at No. 210 Main Street. That building has been moved to a new location in Rogers Park. Ives grew up in several houses near Main Street. Acknowledged as "the first truly original and independent American composer,"<sup>11</sup> Ives' music was deeply influenced by the parades, concerts and serenades on Main Street in which his father, George E. Ives, was the band and orchestra leader. Charles Ives' earliest compositions were performed on Main Street by local bands.<sup>12</sup> Several of his major compositions deal with Main Street events, particularly such works as "The Holiday Symphonies." The "Decoration Day" segment of this work is about a parade from Elmwood Park to Wooster Cemetery, while "The Fourth of July" is composed of Ives' boyhood reminiscences of that holiday on Main Street. Ives described these works as "attempts to make pictures in music of common events in the lives of common people."<sup>13</sup> One of Ives' compositions, "Tone Roads," was inspired by Main Street's erratic street pattern. In his notes to the work, he compares the divergent paths of several instruments away from and back to a single theme to the way different roads around Danbury all lead in their own way back to Main Street.<sup>14</sup>

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

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

For NPS use only  
received  
date entered

Main Street Historic District

Continuation sheet Danbury, Connecticut

Item number 8

Page 8

ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE

Within the Main Street Historic District are several individual buildings of architectural significance as good, well-preserved examples of particular styles. The earliest of these buildings chronologically is the old Danbury Jail at No. 80 Main Street. Consisting of a mansard-roofed jailer's residence with cell block wings to the west and south, the building has been substantially restored during its conversion to a Senior Center. It is the best surviving example of the Second Empire style in downtown Danbury.

The former Library at No. 254 Main Street is the only extant example of High Victorian Gothic style in Danbury or the surrounding towns. It was the first commission of Lorenzo Wheeler, an architect raised in Danbury who went on to design major office buildings and apartment houses in southern and western cities. It is built on the cruciform plan with an exterior of orange-red pressed brick on a rusticated granite coping. In its broken roof lines and massing, polychromatic banding in the window and door arches, the heavy, structural quality of the exterior woodwork, and in the polished gray marble pillars at the main doorway which stand out against the orange-red brick behind it, the building incorporates major characteristics of the style. (Photograph 28, Figure 4)

Constructed in 1886 and 1887, the Union Savings Bank at Nos. 226-228 Main Street was built to serve two banks, the Union Savings Bank and the National Pahquioque Bank. The building's design, by the New York firm of Berg and Clark, was innovative for its time and is unusually avant-garde in concept for a town the size of Danbury at the time (approximately 18,000 inhabitants). In the enrichment of the facade with a wealth of decorative terra cotta tiles in many patterns, the division of the facade by the use of multi-story round arches, the boldly projecting modillioned cornice, and window spandrels recessed behind the plane of the piers that rise to the cornice, it is of a kindred spirit with such Sullivanesque buildings as the Guaranty Building in Buffalo, N. Y. and could be considered an early example of that style. Other elements of the building, such as the turning back of the corner bays to create an octagonal feeling to the upper stories of the facade, appeared in later buildings also, particularly in the Phoenix Mutual Insurance Co. Building in Boston, by Cady, Berg and See, constructed in 1897. The third floor of the building, a hall that could seat 500, was utilized at first by the YMCA and later by the Danbury High School. The bank's interior was remodelled in 1971 following a spectacular robbery in which the office was blown up. (Photograph 25)

St. Peter's Rectory, constructed in 1891, is the most significant example within the district of the influence of Richardsonian Romanesque. It is a well-preserved building, with all of its exterior and interior elements intact. The building's twin octagonal towers are united at the ground floor by a striking entry arch of molded brick. Windows are round arched throughout, their arches occupied by stained glass, particularly in the facade and on the south side, lighting a staircase to the second floor.

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

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

For NPS use only

received

date entered

Continuation sheet Main Street Historic District Item number 8  
Danbury, Connecticut

Page 9

The building's mantels, parquet floors and plaster work are intact.  
(Photograph 8)

The Courthouse, constructed in 1899 and designed by Warren Briggs, is a well-preserved example of its type and is the major example of Beaux Arts Neo-Classicism within the district. It features a balanced facade with a central projecting pavilion and a green copper dome. The building's interior is original, particularly the main courtroom. (Photographs 5, 6)

Another significant, well-preserved example of Beaux Arts Classicism within the district is the Savings Bank of Danbury at No. 224 Main Street. The limestone building also includes some Colonial Revival features, such as the swan's neck pediment over the front doorway. The doorway, which features bronze doors enriched by engraved classical motifs such as cornucopiae, ram's heads and lamps, is flanked by fluted Corinthian pilasters and is surmounted by a large round arch, lighting the lobby. Above is a frieze, modillioned cornice and crest bearing the bank's name, and a balustrade. The bays on either side of the doorway above the first floor windows have inset panels with carved, foliated relief. The overall symmetry and simplicity of the design are enhanced by the landscaping. The building is set atop a slight eminence and is reached by a flight of ten granite steps from the Main Street sidewalk. To either side is a lawn area, enclosed on the south side facing Chapel Place by a limestone balustrade, the members of which match the balustrade at the parapet. (Photograph 25)

The Post Office, at No. 265 Main Street, is the most significant example of Georgian Revival within the district. It is distinguished by its well-preserved exterior, and its intact interior woodwork. (Photograph 20)

The Palace Theater, constructed in 1928, is significant for its well-preserved Amadesque interior, which is essentially intact despite the conversion of its seating area into a triplex in 1979. The lobby and foyer have not been altered.

Several buildings achieved architectural significance following extensive enlargements. The earliest of these is St. James Church, originally built from 1867 to 1872. The Gothic Revival church is of locally quarried rusticated granite with castellated tower and slate roof with "streaky bacon" pattern. Its interior is original. In 1929, the present parish hall was constructed to the west. Without overwhelming the original structure the building repeats the rusticated granite texture and pointed arch windows of the original building, adding half-timbering and a gable at the west end facing West Street with a large pointed arch window of stained glass with Gothic tracery. It was designed by Philip Sunderland, Danbury's major architect from 1893 until 1933. (Photograph 15)

The Danbury News or News-Times building at No. 288 Main Street was a two-story Italianate block when it was constructed as the newspaper's office

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

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

For NPS use only

received

date entered

Continuation sheet Main Street Historic District  
Danbury, Connecticut Item number 8

Page 10

in 1873. In 1893 its successful publisher and editor, James Montgomery Bailey, had the building extensively remodelled. It was the first commission of Philip Sunderland, who added a tower based on the design of a building he had passed on his way to classes at the Institute for Artists and Artisans in New York City. A third story was added and the building was extended to the rear. A large round arched window of molded brick was added in the north bay of the first floor. Located at the intersection of Main and White and Elm Streets, known as Wooster Square, opposite White Street, the main source of incoming traffic, the building became a prominent landmark, and was widely identified with Danbury. (Photograph 31) It appeared on the cover of the New Yorker magazine in 1949.

The present Citytrust bank was originally constructed as a two-story Neo-Classical structure in 1912. Dwarfed by the neighboring Union Savings Bank, the City National Bank in 1929 enlarged the building on designs by Morgan, French & Co. of New York. Completed in 1931, the remodelling added a suite of offices on a new third floor and a new marble facade based on a Roman triumphal arch. A bronze relief of an Indian reclining on a hillside overlooking the Plain of Pahquioque was taken from one of the National Pahquioque Bank's early notes. (Photograph 25)

There are several good examples of multi-family buildings within the Main Street Historic District. Nos. 28-32 Keeler Street is a well-preserved Queen Anne-style tenement with most of its features, including its slate mansard roof, octagonal projecting bays with conical roofs and rusticated brownstone lintels and sills intact. Nos. 17-21 Library Place, completed in 1892, represented a good example of Romanesque Revival influence in an eclectic, vernacular building. Designed by Joel Foster, the building makes use of octagonal bay windows on the ground floors, joined round arches of molded brick on the second, and has ~~denticulated~~ modillioned cornices. The building's scale and fenestration relate to the Armory building which borders it to the east. The two buildings were designed together by the same architect. (Photographs 11, 29)

Parts of the district are distinguished by streetscapes which feature buildings which relate to each other in style, fenestration and materials. The earliest example is the Keeler Block at Nos. 143-147 and the Griffing Block extension at Nos. 149-151 Main Street. These two buildings, designed by Danbury builder/architect Joel Foster and built in 1882 on the site of a hotel that had burned, relate in style, fenestration and scale to the older Griffing Block to the north, at Nos. 153-157 Main Street. The newer buildings echo the older one's round arched windows and the building at Nos. 149-151 Main is a visual transition between the two. (Photograph 12)

In 1891 the Darragan and Larue Buildings, at No. 238 and Nos. 240-242 Main Street respectively, were constructed simultaneously. The former building was designed by local architect Joel Foster, the latter by Leoni W. Robinson of New Haven. Though differing in height, the buildings are complementary in fenestration patterns, with large segmental arches on the second story,



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

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

For NPS use only

received

date entered

Continuation sheet Main Street Historic District  
Danbury, Connecticut Item number 8

Page 11

round arches on the third, and rectangular windows on the fourth. Window ornament is of terra cotta tile in No. 238, and of rusticated brownstone in Nos. 240-242. (Photograph 27)

The convent, school and rectory of St. Peter's Roman Catholic parish on the west side of Elmwood Park (Figure 3) relate to each other in their red brick exteriors, rusticated granite copings and scale, despite being of differing styles.

A number of buildings designed by Danbury architect Philip Sunderland complemented the existing streetscape. Nos. 18-20 and Nos. 22-24 West Street, a pair of stucco Italianate Lodge Halls, relate to each other in style, scale and massing. (Photograph 14) No. 261 Main Street, built at the same time as the Post Office which adjoins it to the north as a clothing store, carries out the brick facade and building height of the larger Post Office. (Photograph 20) Two stores designed by Philip Sunderland for members of the mercantile McLean family also relate to each other and to older buildings around them. No. 213 Main Street was constructed in 1911, No. 215 Main Street in 1924. Their scale, building heights and cornices fit them into the existing commercial streetscape on the east side of Main north of Liberty. (Photograph 18) The strongest example of new construction designed by Sunderland relating to an existing streetscape is the Martha Apartments, built in 1926. Designed to be a modern, five-story apartment building with stores at street level, it was constructed in the middle of a block of older buildings between Liberty and Keeler Streets on the east side of Main Street. Sunderland's design achieves a Classical balance. Viewed as a whole the block has the tall, U-shaped Martha building in the center, flanked by a pair of low, three-story buildings to either side, and with taller, four-story, more massive buildings at each end. The arched wooden loggia in the middle stories of the two wings of the Martha Building picks up the segmentally-arched windows of the Italianate buildings on either side of it. The block is visually cohesive and unified.

The district is particularly significant architecturally for its wide range of commercial architecture. Most of the major styles and methods of construction that evolved in commercial architecture between the late eighteenth century and the mid-twentieth are represented in the streetscapes of the district. The earliest example in the district of a building designed principally for commercial use is the 1790 John Dodd Shop on the property of the Scott-Fanton Museum at No. 43 Main Street. The gable roofed one and a half-story clapboard building has a central entry and a single large room on the first floor, with stairs leading to bedrooms on the second story. The large interior space, heated by a fireplace on the east side, was originally an apothecary shop with the owner's living quarters on the second floor. The building is 18' x 30', three bays wide and two bays deep with 12 x 12 windows. (Photograph 2) Nearly across the street from the Dodd Shop, at No. 36 Main Street, is a two-story brick, Greek Revival building constructed c. 1830. The building is simple in design, with 6 x 6 windows, three bays wide and a fan in the gable, which faces Main

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form

For NPS use only

received

date entered

Continuation sheet Main Street Historic District  
Danbury, Connecticut Item number 8

Page 12

Street. Again the store was on the ground floor and living quarters for the owner on the second floor. (Photograph 3) Further development of the Greek Revival commercial building is seen in the Benedict and Nichols Building at Nos. 191-193 Main Street. It is square with a moderate hip roof, characterized by trabeated lintels and sills of limestone and granite and a modillioned cornice. One of the first commercial blocks on Main Street, the building had two stores originally on the ground floor, rooms for small businesses and services like barbers, tailors and milliners on the second, and a meeting hall on the third.

The Italianate block began to appear after the Panic of 1857. It was increasingly larger in scale and more ornate, but its organization was similar to Nos. 191-193 Main Street, occasionally with living quarters on the upper floors, but generally commercial space. Nos. 153-157 Main Street, the Griffing Block, is a good example of the increasingly ornate character and larger scale of the Italianate blocks. The building held three stores. It features molded window surrounds on the upper stories, quoins and an intact bracketed wooden cornice with teardrop-like returns and bulbous pendants. A good example of a later development of this type of block is the Hawley Block at Nos. 171-173 Main Street, which is similar in style to several other buildings in the district. The Hawley Block features pedimented window heads and a bracketed wooden cornice characterized by delicate incised ornament. The building retains an early, pressed metal storefront cornice. (Photographs 12, 13)

A Romanesque influence began to appear, as well as a more massive structural quality, with the construction of the Treadwell Block at Nos. 266-268 Main Street in 1885. Built in the middle of a block of smaller Italianate buildings, it stands out visually as the most dominant on the west side of Main between Library Place and Elm Street. Its facade is divided by three round arches that rise to the cornice, divided by piers. The second story is made up of paired round-arched windows. The cornice is ornamented by terra cotta tiles. (Photograph 30)

An original vernacular example of Romanesque influence is the meat warehouse at 1 Ives Street, built for the Swift Co. in 1893 and presently used for its original purpose by Omaha Beef. The facade is divided into a central section and two single bay wings by a three story round arch flanked by piers. At street level the division has a cornice of rusticated brown-stone. At the second story is a single large segmentally-arched window spanning the piers. At the third story is an arcade of round arches with corbelled heads. A pointed gable peak is supported from the rear by a metal support. (Photograph 22)

The Beaux Arts style is evidenced in the Hull Building, constructed by Frederick Hull on the site of two of his firm's earlier buildings which had been destroyed by fire. Following the destruction of the family's hardware store in 1906 Hull, determined to eliminate the risk of fire, commissioned the Bridgeport architects Meloy and Beckwith, who designed a

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form

For NPS use only

received

date entered

Continuation sheet Main Street Historic District  
Danbury, Connecticut Item number 8 Page 13

building of brick and reinforced concrete. The building's ornament is Neo-Classical, with a denticulated cornice above the second story, ornamented with egg and dart moldings. Its piers are surmounted by triple iron brackets of an elaborate openwork design. Above the third story cornice is a balustrade-like relief and central pedimented crest. The building's design also makes use of polychromatic brick work at the third story, with red brick diaperwork in a diamond pattern. The Hull Building is architecturally significant also for its reinforced concrete and steel construction, the earliest example in the district. There are no wooden structural members used in its construction. The building has been cleaned in 1982, the iron brackets restored, and an exposed former party wall on the north side is being covered with brick matching that used in the facade. (Photograph 13)

The Modernistic style of the 1920s and 1930s is represented in the district by features in several buildings. The most significant and best preserved example is the Woolworth Building at Nos. 239-249 Main Street. Its porcelain finish and terra cotta facade is stepped in typical "ziggurat" fashion, with a storefront frieze of chevron design. The store's walnut panelling is entirely intact, and abstract, streamlined grill-like capitols remain on the supporting posts, along with the marble bases. A black glass mirror with geometric design is at the former rear entry. (Photograph 19)

The Main Street district is unique for inland industrial cities of Danbury's size in Connecticut. Most other cities grew up around water power sites in the early to mid-nineteenth century or as ports. Danbury's institutional and commercial center has been concentrated in the same area since its founding, and the evolution of the community is evident in the architecture represented in the district. The character of the district is defined by the visual impact of the majority of its buildings. The district has a distinctly eighteenth century character south of Elmwood Park and a nineteenth and early twentieth century character north of Elmwood Park. The district is the major concentration of commercial and institutional architecture in Danbury, and is inclusive of all of the major extensions of Main Street architecture and functions on adjacent side streets.

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United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form

For NPS use only

received

date entered

Continuation sheet Main Street Historic District  
Danbury, Connecticut Item number 8 Page 14

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

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

Main Street Historic District,  
Danbury, Connecticut

For NPS use only

received

date entered

Continuation sheet

Item number 9

Page 1

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