United States Department of the Interior National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Name of Property

County and State

SUPPLEMENTARY LISTING RECORD Section number Page _

NRIS Reference Number: 08000158

Property Name: Tontine Building

County: Windham State: Vermont

Date Listed: 5-2-08

Multiple Name:

This property is listed in the National Register of Historic Places in accordance with the attached nomination documentation subject to the following exceptions, exclusion, or amendments, notwithstanding the National Park Service certification included in the nomination

documentation. Ô Signature of Keeper

 $\frac{5 \cdot Z : OS}{\text{Date of Action}}$

Amended Items in Nomination

Section 8. Period of Significance

The Period of Significance is revised from 1819 - 1957 to 1819 - 1869, reflecting the building's significance under Criterion A and Criterion C. Built in 1819, the building is significant under Criterion C as a good example of a Federal style building designed to serve multiple uses. Under Criterion A, the Tontine Building is significant for Community Planning and Development, representing the unusual tontine business/development plan. The building was a tontine for approximately fifty years after it was built (until 1869).

Section 3. Level of Significance

The Level of Significance is clarified as follows:

The Tontine Building is architecturally significant at the local level as an early nineteenth century multi-use building, a property type that is "little known" at this time (see nomination, page 8-6). The building is important at the state level as an example of a tontine, a business/development arrangement that is only known in buildings in three other Vermont communities, Bethel, Springfield, and Windsor (see nomination, page 8-4).

B. Wyatt, 5-2-08

Notification and Distribution

The Vermont State Historic Preservation Office was notified of this amendment. This notice was distributed to the following:

National Register property file Nominating Authority, without nomination attachment

NPS Form 10-900 (Rev. 10-90)	OMB No. 1024-0018
United States Department of the Interior	<i>⋵\$</i> ,22015 डि
National Park Service	
NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES	RECEIVED 2280
REGISTRATION FORM	
This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and disl	MAR 1 9 2008
Historic Places Registration Form (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by mai requested. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not ap	king "x" in the appropriate box proventering the information
requested. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not ap areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place add	plicable." For functions, and the off an additional and the state of t
10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.	

1. Name of Property	
nistoric name: Tontine Building	
other names/site number: <u>Mary Ellen Smith Place</u>	
street & number <u>500 Coolidge Highway</u>	not for publication <u>N/A</u>
city or town <u>Guilford</u> code VTcounty <u>Windh</u>	vicinity <u>N/A</u> am code 025 zip code _05301
52222222222222222222222222222222222222	***************************************
As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation _x_ nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the p in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property _X meets does recommend that this property be considered significant nationally (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)	e documentation standards for registering occedural and professional requirements set forth not meet the National Register Criteria. I $\gamma_{\rm X}$ statewidexx_ locally.
3. State/Federal Agency Certification	e documentation standards for registering ocedural and professional requirements set forth not meet the National Register Criteria. I y_x statewidexx_locally. caccev = 3-14-08
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(Page 2)

Number of Resources within Property	
Contributing Noncontributing <u>1</u> buildings sites	
nultiple property listing.) NA	

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

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

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

Criteria Considerations

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

- ____A owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- _____B removed from its original location.
 - ___C a birthplace or a grave.
- ____ D a cemetery.
- _____E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- ____ F a commemorative property.
- _____ G less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Narrative Statement of Significance

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

See continuation sheets (8-1 through 8-6)

9. Major Bibliographical References

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

Previous documentation on file (NPS)

- ___ preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has
- been requested.
- ____ previously listed in the National Register
- ____ previously determined eligible by the National Register
- ____ designated a National Historic Landmark
- ____ recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _
- ____ recorded by Historic American Engineering Record #

Areas of Significance (Enter categories from instructions) Architecture

Community planning & development

Period of Significance

1819 - 1957

Significant Dates 1819

Significant Person (Complete if Criterion B is marked above) <u>N/A</u>

Cultural Affiliation

<u>N/A</u>_____

Architect/Builder

unknown

Primary Location of Additional Data

- X State Historic Preservation Office
- ___ Other State agency

- ____ Federal agency
- X Local government
- ____ University
- X Other :Name of repository: Guilford Historical Society

(Page 4)

10. Geographical Data	.2.524222283232323
Acreage of Property20 acre_	
UTM References (Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)	
Zone Easting Northing Zone Easting Northing 1 <u>18 698168 4743157</u> 3 2 4 _ See continuation sheet.	
Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)	
Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)	
======================================	*****************
name/titleLyssa Papazian, Historic Preservation Consultant	
organization date <u>March 12, 2008</u>	
street & number 13 Dusty Ridge Road telephone (802) 387-2878	
city or town <u>Putney</u> state <u>VT</u> zip code <u>05346</u>	
Additional Documentation	
Submit the following items with the completed form:	
X Continuation Sheets	
X Maps A USGS map (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location. A sketch map for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.	
X Photographs Representative black and white photographs of the property.	
_Additional items (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items) -Copies of historic photographs, maps, an	d documents
Property Owner	
Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.) nameFriends of Algiers Village, Inc.	
street & number C/O Eric Morse, 638 Coolidge Highway telephone_(802) 254-8477	
city or town <u>Guilford</u> state VT zip code 05301	
Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate pro determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 et seq.).	e with the National Historic

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including the time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.0. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Project (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

United States Department of the Interior National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 7 Page 1

OMB No. 1024-0018

Tontine Building name of property Guilford, Windham County, Vermont Town, county and State

The Tontine Building, constructed in 1819, is a large two-story, I-house plan, Federal style frame structure that was originally a commercial and multi-use property. The partly original long rear ell extends from the main block at an acute angle to accommodate the triangular "flatiron" site. The gable roofed main block and ell are clapboarded with a fine Federal style front door surround on the main block. The rest of the trim is simple and includes plain window and door surrounds, plain corner boards, and a molded cornice with returns on the south gable end. The five-by-two bay main block structure has its front façade on the east which faces U.S. Route 5 or Coolidge Highway, the main north-south artery in the Town of Guilford's eastern village. The ell fronts along the village's other main thoroughfare, Guilford Center road. The hamlet has been known variously by the names Guilford, East Guilford, and Algiers and was the location during the 19th century of the "Guilford" post office. The Tontine Building is very prominently sited at the village's main intersection across the road from the historic Broad Brook House, now the Guilford Country Store. Both these landmarks are easily seen when approaching the village from the north due to a bend in Route 5. In addition to the store, the largely residential village surrounding the Tontine Building today contains several historic buildings that date from the same period or later as well as a few non-historic buildings and would constitute an eligible historic district. The near neighbors to the Tontine Building include historic residences and offices, the historic store, a church, an automotive repair shop, a modern empty commercial property, and a former grist mill. Although the Tontine Building has suffered a loss of historic integrity on the interior due to many uses and changes over time, its original exterior details, massing, and central corner site, give it significant integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association.

The 1819 main block is a two by five bay, two story structure oriented to the east fronting on Coolidge Highway. Extending at an acute angle from the main block's north façade is the 1819 original two by six bay two story ell which fronts along Guilford Center Road. The southern side of the ell is recessed from the south façade of the main block. The western end of the ell abuts and is flush with a roughly four-bay, two story extension. This is a mid-19th century former attached barn that appears to have originally been only one or one and a half stories with a large open bay on the first floor probably topped by a loft. It was raised to the height of the ell in the early to mid 20th century and has a commercial space on the first floor. A one story shed addition was added along the southern façade of the ell and former barn in c.1980.

The front (east) facade of the main block has a slightly off-centered door in the middle bay that is flanked by asymmetrical fenestration. The south side is longer than the north side but there are two windows on each floor on each side of the door plus one in the bay above the door. The Federal style door surround is original with a pair of fluted square pilasters supporting a full entablature. The door is a modern six panel replacement and is served by a short set of c. 1900

United States Department of the Interior National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 7 Page 2_

Tontine Building name of property Guilford, Windham County, Vermont Town, county and State

granite steps. Most of the windows have six-over-six light sash and modern exterior storm windows though several windows on the ell have twelve-over-twelve light sash. The windows in the center and north bays of the main block's front facade have wood shutters as do several on the north and northwestern facades. The long, two-story ell is recessed from the south end of the main block but is flush with the north end as it follows the angle of the parcel. The main and ell gable roofs are connected by a hipped roof on the northern end of the main block. On the street (northwest) façade, the first four bays of the ell have regular fenestration with windows on the first and second floor aligned vertically. After the fourth bay, a modern door has been added almost between bays and the two windows on each floor to the west of the door do not line up vertically. This marks the end of the original six-bay ell. The western end of the ell has such irregular fenestration that the number of bays is not clear. On the ground floor level, there are some windows, a door, and a modern store window set within the infilled frame of a former bay opening or large door. A vertical trim board marking the end of the original ell and the western end is in two sections, a wider board at the first floor and a narrower board on the second floor. The overall effect of the trim, fenestration and door pattern indicate that this was likely once an attached barn or open bay shop and may have been one story with a loft and later raised to two stories. A one story modern shed roofed addition runs along the entire southeast side of the ell. There are two brick chimneys – one on the rear wall of the main block at the juncture with the ell, and another in the middle of the ell between the original six bay eastern section and the later western/barn section.

Foundation:

Most of the main block and original ell have a masonry foundation with dry laid round rubble stone below grade and brick or brick and concrete above grade. The exceptions are the south and west walls of the main block basement, which have no stone but only brick walls for a foundation. On the south facade, most of the brick is above grade with a short, presently infilled doorway. On the west wall, the southern half is above grade and currently or formerly exposed (a section with a door opening is presently enclosed underneath the modern addition), while the northern half is an interior wall between main block and original ell. The older sections of brick masonry use American bond and handmade, likely locally made bricks. On the north basement wall of the main block and northwestern basement wall of the ell the dry-laid stone masonry of large rounded boulders and rocks appears continuous and original, though may have been rebuilt with later brick supporting piers in the ell. Above the old stone masonry, there is brick above grade on some of the north façade but the rest of this façade and extending along the ell has stone - mostly flat slates under the sills. This is all presently below grade but was likely originally above grade with brick on the main block and stone on the ell. The main block front facade foundation was re-constructed c. 1930 and has poured concrete above the stone masonry which includes many pieces of slate and brick masonry above the concrete. The foundation is exposed

OMB No. 1024-0018

United States Department of the Interior National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 7 Page 3

Tontine Building name of property Guilford, Windham County, Vermont Town, county and State

above grade about 18" on this façade. The top of the foundation is roughly near or even below grade along the northwest ell façade. Some narrow basement windows in the foundation have been infilled. The brick piers in the front wall of the main block appear to date from the 1930s when the concrete was added to the front. In the northwest wall of the ell there are brick piers and buttressing which date to the mid to late 20th century and may correlate to the pouring of the adjacent concrete floor. Some of the poured concrete floor in the western end of the ell has a drainage swale cut into it at the base of the foundation wall.

The westernmost portions of the ell have a dry laid stone foundation of mostly thin, flat pieces of slate along the northwest and west sides and a frame foundation along the above-ground southeast side. The northwestern wall of the ell is seriously bowed inward and failing. The southeastern side has framed openings that are now closed up with cardboard and wood and the exterior side of this wall is covered in corrugated metal roof material. It is entirely enclosed presently by the southern addition and has been insulated crudely with fiberglass batting and plastic sheeting. The southern one story addition has no proper foundation and is set a half story above grade on pressure-treated wood posts and the space underneath enclosed with varying types of wood or pressed wood siding.

The foundation is generally in poor condition. The foundation is failing structurally in several locations and is collapsing inward with bowed stone masonry walls in the main block and ell. Water infiltration has further deteriorated the brick masonry is several locations including the eastern, southern and western brick walls. In particular, the southwestern corner of the main block is crumbling and there are several areas throughout of spalled, eroded, or powdered bricks. The front (east) foundation wall is one of these areas of poor brick condition. The rear basement wall of the main block, which is an interior wall next to the ell is another area of poor brick condition. The northwestern and north facades where grade has been a serious problem also exhibit water damage and rotten wood sills where they are in contact with dirt. An evaluation by a structural engineer finds that the foundation movement appears to be caused by water infiltration and pressure and is further compounded by the modern vibration of heavy traffic from the two main roads alongside the building.

Wood trim & siding

The wood clapboards and trim of the main block and ell are in fair to poor condition. The narrow clapboards vary slightly in reveal throughout the building but have a roughly 3 ½ inch reveal. The siding around the sills and near the foundation is in the poorest condition on all facades. In addition, the siding of the entire south gable end of the main block and the west gable end of the ell which appear to have weathered harder than other siding are also severely deteriorated.

United States Department of the Interior National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 7 Page 4

Tontine Building name of property Guilford, Windham County, Vermont Town, county and State

Trim details include simply molded cornices and cornice returns as well as the fine Federal style front door surround. The door surround elements include a simple classically detailed entablature with a delicate and deep overhanging molded cornice supported by two fairly flat vertically articulated pilasters. The bottom foot or so of the pilasters are suffering from rot due to the extra splash back from the stone steps installed about 75 years ago. One of the simple bases of the pilasters is partially detached and falling off. The upper windows may have their original plain board surrounds, but the lower floor window trim appears to have been modified with a two-clapboard wide infill section above each plain lintel board. Originally there may have been a wider, more decorative lintel.

The ell was extended into what a 19th century attached barn or shed and the extended portion has clapboards similar to the older portion. The c. 1980 one story shed addition on the south façade of the ell & barn has T-111 type paneled vertical wood siding.

Windows and Fenestration:

The wooden, single-hung windows with plain rail sash have various light patterns. In the main block, all are six-over-six light sashes. Patched-in clapboards above each first floor window suggest that they once had a wider type of lintel. (Note: they were not likely taller windows, because the first floor ceilings and framing are just above the interior lintels.) Some of the windows in the ell (mostly on the second floor) have twelve-over-twelve light sash while the rest have six-over-six light sash and are all of the single hung plain rail type. The old construction style of the windows suggests that they may be original or may date to the mid 19th century with a few replaced more recently. It seems quite possible that this building may be an example of the original use of two different window sash types – an older style (i.e. twelve-over-twelve) on the ell but more fashionable (i.e. six-over-six) sash on the main block¹. A window survey has been recently completed by an architect and indicates that the window sash is in fair condition in some locations such as the front façade but in poor condition in many other areas. They all have failing, lead-based paint and poor or missing glazing and all have modern exterior triple track storm windows in fair to poor condition.

On the front/east façade the five bays each have windows (with a second floor window above the central door bay) but those on the south side are more widely spaced than those on the north resulting in asymmetrical fenestration. The windows themselves are all the same size. The north

¹ See discussion of window sash and shutter history in *A Building History of Northern New England*, by James L. Garvin (Hanover, N.H.: University Press of New England, 2001), pp. 146-155.

OMB No. 1024-0018

United States Department of the Interior National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 7 Page 5

Tontine Building name of property <u>Guilford, Windham County, Vermont</u> Town, county and State

and south gable facades of the main block each have two windows on each floor. The small exposed section of the main block's rear or western façade has one modern second floor window on the southern end above the one story addition and south of the ell.

On the ell where the fenestration is a bit irregular, the northwestern facade has seven twelve-over-twelve light sashes, mostly on the second floor and the rest are six-over-six light sashes. On the first floor there are four windows, a door, two more windows, the vertical trim board marking the end of the older ell and the beginning of the newer ell extension, then a window, a narrow door and a large multi-paned store window. On the second floor, there are four windows, a blind narrow bay above the door, two windows, the vertical trim board, then three more windows on the newer ell extension. The west gable end of the ell has irregular fenestration with a multi-pane fixed light window and a modern door on the first floor which is nearly a full level above grade and one two-overtwo light sash double hung window in the attic/gable. On the southeastern facade of the ell, the second floor is still visible above the one story addition and has two small fixed single light sash windows on the ell extension and another four similar small fixed single light sash windows on the older ell.

The one story addition has three irregularly placed modern windows that include two pairs of sliders and one double hung window as well as a double glass sliding door entrance.

There are also historic wooden louvered window shutters in poor condition on some front façade and most of the north façade and northwestern ell façade windows. Empty pintels on all other main block windows indicate that these also had shutters. The shutters which, like most of the sash, are pegged were mounted on simple butt hinges and were operable. They have a fixed upper section of louvers and a moveable lower section of louvers operated by a vertical rod. This configuration matches the sash which also has a fixed upper sash and operable lower sash. The type and construction of the shutters suggests that they date roughly to the mid-19th century² and may indicate a time of sash replacement. As evidenced by early photographs, exterior louvered shutters were a common addition to houses in the area throughout the mid to late nineteenth century. The present condition of the shutters are now wood screwed into the siding and are thus no longer operable.

Exterior Doors:

² Ibid

United States Department of the Interior National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 7 Page 6

Tontine Building name of property Guilford, Windham County, Vermont Town, county and State

There are no original or significant extant historic exterior doors. The present five exterior doors are all modern doors and only two of the doorways (on the front façade of the main block and on the northwestern façade of the ell entering the commercial unit) appear to be historic. The second door on the northwest façade of the ell appears to have been added at some later date – likely in the mid- 20^{th} century – as it is between bays. The west ell gable façade and the southeast ell façade have modern glazed apartment doors.

Porches:

The granite front entry porch appears to date roughly from c.1900 though it was likely installed here c. 1930. It has three shallow steps between low molded parapet walls. These were likely salvaged from the house next door to the south which burned in 1914. An historic photograph of the neighboring house taken c. 1900 shows nearly identical steps and parapets though the steps are wider than on the Tontine building. It seems likely that the steps were modified in width and installed here when the grade was lowered on the east façade c. 1930. The stone is in good condition but the parts all need to be re-set as they are no longer level and large spaces have opened up between the steps and the parapet walls.

On the southwestern façade, the one story addition is raised above grade and the first floor entrance has a modern frame entry porch with shed roof and side stair. The stair and platform of modern, unpainted dimensional pressure treated lumber is in fair condition. On the west façade of the ell, there is a modern pressure-treated exterior wood staircase and platform.

Roof:

The roofing on the main block and most of the ell is asphalt shingle, however, a section of original Guilford slate roofing remains on the rear (western) slope of the main block and part of the southeastern side of the ell roof. The one story addition along the southwestern side has a corrugated steel roof.

Chimneys:

There are two American bond brick ridge chimneys. One is on the rear of the main block at the juncture with the ell and other is between the older and newer portions of the ell. There is evidence in the roof framing of the main block of a center chimney that was likely the original chimney. Based on the basement portion of the present main block chimney, it appears this was added in the 20th century and is clearly not as old as the rest of rear wall masonry based on the bricks and mortar. In fact some of the present brick pier in the center of the main block basement may have been built when the center chimney was removed utilizing some of its bricks. The present rear wall chimney may have been added in c. 1946 when other major changes were made and a new owner took over the property from the Smith family. The other, smaller, mid-ell

United States Department of the Interior National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 7 Page 7

OMB No. 1024-0018

Tontine Building name of property Guilford, Windham County, Vermont Town, county and State

chimney may be original and likely served the ell and/or the attached barn/shed. The chimneys are in fair to good condition.

Frame:

The hand-hewn post and beam framing members of the 1819 main block and rear ell appear in good condition except for sills particularly on the northwestern façade where there is extensive rot. The main block has interior corner posts on all four corners which are exposed and finished in most locations on both floors. In the ell, the framing members have been exposed with new sheet rock around them. Some have their knee braces and some do not. The mid-late 19th century post and beam hewn frame of the western end of the ell is also largely sound but may be missing braces and some elements and does not appear sufficient to support residential loads. The common rafter framed roof has been altered several times and reinforced in the past. There is evidence of a former center chimney in the rafter framing, now infilled with plywood sheathing. None of the masonry associated with this chimney is extant. The basement has also been altered several times, most recently with a poured concrete floor in the mid-late 20th century. The first floor framing is heavily sistered and bolstered by added braces and posts including, brick, masonry and metal piers that are free standing as well as brick buttresses against the stone foundation walls that help to support the frame in the front façade of the main block and along the northwest wall of the ell.

Interior:

The interior of the main block and ell have been considerably altered over the building's long history and presently have many modern finishes and partitions. The floor plan has been altered as well through many uses and tenants. Currently there are five apartments and one commercial space in the building. The main block has an apartment on each floor that are both accessed through the front central entry. In the ell, a stair leading from the door on the northwest façade leads to an upstairs apartment in the original portion of the ell. An exterior stair on the southeast façade leads to a first floor unit (that is nearly a story above grade) in the ell that includes the eastern half of the more modern one story addition and part of the original ell. A second door on the northwest façade of the ell in the western former barn or shop section leads into a commercial first floor unit that presently houses an automotive business. This unit includes parts of the barn/shop section, parts of the original ell and the western half of the modern one story addition. On the western gable end of the ell another exterior stair provides separate access to a second floor unit in the former barn/shop loft area.

The front entrance of the main block accesses a small vestibule that appears to be a fairly recent alteration of what may once have been a central hall with winding stair in front of an original

OMB No. 1024-0018

United States Department of the Interior National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 7 Page 8

Tontine Building name of property Guilford, Windham County, Vermont Town, county and State

central chimney mass³. On the left of the vestibule is a small enclosed staircase that is not original though its location appears to be at least fifty years old. The right wall is more recent and made of sheet rock while the left wall is plastered lath. There are large front rooms on either side of the vestibule. Though there is presently no doorway to enter the south room on the left, the son of a former owner remembers that there were doors on either side⁴. The first floor apartment is entered from the right of the vestibule in a new partition. In the main block, the two main southern chambers on the first and second floors are slightly larger than the northern chambers and also retain some additional window and door trim suggesting a slightly higher level of decorative treatment.

"Unit 4": First floor, Main block

The north room is full width front to back and the south and west walls are covered with painted vertical wood paneling. The room has a fireplace near the center of the rear (west) wall. The fine Federal style fireplace surround and mantel may be original and re-located as it is somewhat crudely attached to the c. 1946 paneling. It was likely installed in c. 1946 when the chimney was also built. The detailing of the surround includes paired delicately fluted pilasters at each side, a narrow fluted frieze, and a broad articulated entablature with a center raised panel decorated by elaborate raised floral festoons. The wood flooring of medium wide boards is installed around a paving stone hearth and also appears to date to the early to mid 20th century. The bathroom for this unit is in the angled section of the ell. The south side of the apartment is divided into a front bedroom and a rear kitchen and dining area. A door off the dining area near the center of the west wall has been infilled but once communicated to the ell.

"Unit 1": Second floor, Main Block

From the front vestibule, a stair leads up to the second floor apartment with a door at the top of the steps. Within the apartment, there is an entry corridor with a blind door near the center of the west wall, a shallow closet where a stair to the attic may have once been and now is simply a ceiling hatch, and a round arch framed doorway into the south living room with a c. 1946 (or later) fairly crude arched wood surround with a keystone and imposts. On the north a door leads into the bedroom which is full width front to back with a modern bathroom framed into the room's southeast corner and a modern closet framed into the northwest corner. The rear (west) wall appears to be plastered lath. The south end of the apartment is divided into a front living room and a rear kitchen by a c. 1946 (or later) simple half partition wall with a center square arch framed by posts and modern open shelving on the north end. In the living room there is a

³ The roof framing shows evidence of a patched opening in the center of the ridge and the central area of the basement shows some reworking with several non-original brick piers supporting the central framing.

⁴ Telephone interview with Peter Dearborn, by author, July 2007

OMB No. 1024-0018

United States Department of the Interior National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 7 Page 9

<u>Tontine Building</u> name of property <u>Guilford, Windham County, Vermont</u> Town, county and State

possibly original small closet above the stairs with a narrow four panel door and wood floor. The floors are all carpeted except for vinyl sheet in the kitchen and bathroom.

"Unit 5": First floor, Ell

This apartment is entered from an exterior stair on the southeast façade of the ell through the newer one story section. It has an odd shaped small entry vestibule and a large open living room/kitchen to the right that is roughly the eastern half of the modern ell addition. The cathedral ceiling is open to the shed roof of the addition. A door in the north wall connects to a bedroom in the original section of the ell. The bedroom has one window in the northwest wall. This wall is covered by wood paneling set in a "V" pattern. From the bedroom the bathroom is divided between two triangular small rooms utilizing the odd angled section between ell and main block. The toilet and sink are in one room and the bathtub is in the other. The floors are covered with carpeting and the finishes are all modern as are many of the partition walls – some of which are angled.

"Unit 6" (Commercial Space): First floor, ell

The commercial space is accessed directly at grade from the western of two exterior doors in the northwest ell façade in the end that was once likely an attached barn or shop. The main room has a post in the center of the floor, exposed posts on the walls and a modern office space framed into the northwest corner. A brick chimney is on an interior wall and from the main room a large framed opening leads to the rear room in the modern one story addition and another framed opening leads to a set of smaller rooms including the bathroom in the older section of the ell. The wall and ceiling finishes are all modern and include unfinished wood paneling and sheetrock. The floors are carpeted. In the rear room, which comprises the western end of the one story shed addition, the cathedral ceiling is open to the shed roof and paneled. The newly framed office is windowless and the partitions of sheetrock. The smaller rooms on the east include a workshop with an exterior window as well as a vestibule and bathroom - both to the interior. Off the eastern end of the bathroom is the access to the fairly modern basement stair.

"Unit 2": Second floor, ell

The eastern of the two exterior doors on the northwest façade of the ell leads to a small vestibule and staircase to the second floor. On the left wall of the vestibule there is evidence of a former arched framed opening. On the southern wall at the bottom of the stairs is the door to the upstairs apartment. The staircase finishes are all modern with sheet rock walls, carpeted steps, and a painted wood railing on both sides at the top of the stairs. This unit contains all of the second floor space of the original ell. The open concept living room/dining room/kitchen space has modern finishes but the original timber frame is exposed including posts, beams and some intact braces. In the eastern end a door leads to the oddly shaped bathroom located in the space

OMB No. 1024-0018

United States Department of the Interior National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 7 Page 10

Tontine Building name of property Guilford, Windham County, Vermont Town, county and State

between ell and main block which has some flush board wainscoting on one wall. A door off the west section of the living room leads to a front bedroom with windows on the northwest façade of the ell. In one corner of the eastern end a painted brick chimney is exposed with a covered stove nipple.

"Unit 3": Second floor, ell

The western end of the ell which was a renovated attached barn or shed is an apartment accessed directly from the exterior by a stair and landing on the west façade. The apartment is contained entirely within what may have been the loft of the former barn/shop. The main living room is oddly shaped with angled partitions at the east end which have doors into three rooms – two bedrooms and the bathroom. The northwestern corner is also angled with a partition wall and door into the kitchen. The apartment has modern finishes with old timber frame elements exposed including posts and beams though no braces. These may or may not be original to the structure. The present interior partitions do not always match the posts. In one bedroom on the southeastern exterior wall a high framed chase at the base of the wall may indicate that the loft was once only a half story that was subsequently raised to the level of the rest of the ell. The roofline of the exterior between these two sections suggests that the framing was done at different times. On one interior wall there is a small double hung wood window between the living room and kitchen. In one of the bedrooms there is a painted brick chimney stack near the eastern wall.

Basement:

A 3/4 height basement exists under all of the main block and ell. The southern modern addition has a semi-enclosed space underneath. The basement floor is dirt in the main block and fairly uneven. In the ell a concrete floor has been poured. The floor frame of the first floor has been sistered in places and is supported by several brick piers as well as wood posts and metal lolly columns. There is moisture in most areas with some of the stone foundation walls weeping water. In the western end of the ell where a late 20th century concrete floor has been poured, there are drainage swales at the bases of the foundation walls to address this condition. The basement access is presently by a modern wood stair in the ell and was formerly by a closed up stair under the center stair of the main block –though this was not original either as there had once been a central chimney in this area. There are several heating systems and water heaters in various parts of the basement as well as oil tanks, overhead ductwork, and plumbing.

Current Rehabilitation Project

In late 2007 through the spring of 2008, the Tontine Building will be rehabilitated in a manner that meets the *Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation* and through use of the federal preservation tax credit for historic rehabilitation. A local non-profit provider of

United States Department of the Interior National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 7 Page 11

Tontine Building name of property Guilford, Windham County, Vermont Town, county and State

affordable housing – the Brattleboro Area Community Land Trust – is partnering with the building's owner – The Friends of Algiers – to renovate the building and create seven affordable apartments, one of which will also be handicapped accessible. The existing, distinctive exterior and few historic interior characteristics will be retained and many of the features repaired, restored, or replaced in-kind as necessary, following the Secretary's Standards.

The substantial rehabilitation project will remove many deteriorated modern finishes and features as well as preserve and repair some of the deteriorated historic features mainly on the exterior. The existing, largely non-historic floor plan will be changed to create seven apartments from the present six units while preserving the exterior appearance and features. The location of the main block front entry vestibule and stair will be preserved although this layout and several of the walls have been altered in the past. The windows have been evaluated and will be repaired and restored on the front facade of the main block but will be replaced elsewhere with wooden double hung simulated divided light sash using a compatible muntin and light configuration. Remaining older sash will be stored in the basement. The original clapboards will be largely preserved and sealed through preparation and painting though some will be replaced in areas of greater deterioration such as the entire west gable façade of the ell and south gable façade of the main block, as well as the few extant areas of exposed ell on the southwest façade, and the lowest foot and a half of the other main facades. These new wood clapboards will match the old in exposure. The deteriorated historic shutters will be salvaged, repaired and reinstalled on the front (east) and north facades of the main block. Any remaining will be stored in the basement. If there are not enough for these two facades or the deterioration is too great, new matching wood shutters will be installed. On the interior, the fireplace and its surround will be preserved as will the existing wood flooring and some of the plain trim.

The site, which presently has significant drainage problems due to the adjacent road grade which has risen over time and re-building, will be built up to raise the overall site grade and the entire structure raised about one and a half feet on a reconstructed foundation so that the wood frame and siding will be well above the grade and the presently failing foundation will be replaced with one that is structurally sound. The overall result will not appear very different than it does now – with a short foundation exposure above the new grade faced with salvaged brick on the main block and stucco on the ell. The exception would be the south façade of the main block which is largely above grade and would continue to be brick faced with a restored wood half door and the ell addition foundation along the southeast façade which will be concrete with wood cladding on the above grade exterior. In addition new site work will add a roadside sidewalk, paved ADA compliant parking area, on-street parking along Guilford Center Road, and new paths to the two exterior doors. On the front (east) façade, this path will include a new concrete set of steps from the sidewalk to a concrete landing and then the historic stone steps re-set on the new grade

United States Department of the Interior National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 7 Page 12

OMB No. 1024-0018

Tontine Building name of property Guilford, Windham County, Vermont Town, county and State

leading to the door. The two sets of steps will have a new modern very simple pipe railing as required by code and which will not physically attach to the front facade. On the northwest façade of the ell, the entrance will have a concrete landing and shallow ADA compliant concrete ramp with a simple modern pipe railing extending along the façade for approximately twelve feet and connecting to the curbside sidewalk.

This significant and unusual former multi-purpose commercial building and home, though altered internally many times, still conveys its multiple use nature and simple elegance in the front door surround, prominent corner location, and original massing.

OMB No. 1024-0018 ·

NPS Form 10-900-a (8-86)

United States Department of the Interior National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 8 Page 6

Tontine Building name of property <u>Guilford, Windham County, Vermont</u> Town, county and State

Very few, if any, original partitions are extant and in the ell the post and beam frame has been exposed throughout. The west wall of the main block on both floors which separates the main block from the ell has original sections and the main block's second floor appears to have an original closet above the entry vestibule. Most of the other partitions and wall finishes are new – ranging in vintage from c. 1946 to c. 2000.

Presently the building is deteriorated and was recently purchased by the Friends of Algiers, a community group that is partnering with the Brattleboro Community Land Trust to undertake a historic rehabilitation of the building to create seven affordable housing units.

The Tontine Building, though altered on the interior by heavy use over its nearly two century life, continues to be significant as a rare example of an early Federal style Vermont commercial and multi-use building as well as a key landmark in the village of Algiers in Guilford. Not only is it a fine example of the simple Federal style used extensively throughout southern Vermont in the early 19th century with its door surround, molded cornice and returns, massing, fenestration, and slate roofing but its triangular massing and strategic placement fronting on two sides of the prominent flat iron corner site of the village's main intersection make it a great example of an early commercial building. The cumulative effect of the building's siting, massing, and size is to make the building an ideal billboard to advertise its business tenants. These characteristics embody the distinctive features of a type -early 19th century small village commercial and multiuse buildings - that are presently under-documented in Vermont. Little is known about this property type in Vermont where older, smaller village centers have buildings that appear residential but that may have started as multi-use to accommodate the needed stores, professional offices, rental units and services. The fact that the Tontine Building was originally documented in deeds as a multi-use structure provides a window onto an important aspect of the development of early Vermont villages that is little known at this time.¹¹ The Tontine Building's very development was a well documented prominent part of the village's creation by local entrepreneurs and it played an important role in supporting those businesses that made the village prosper. It continued in this role through the mid-20th century. Additionally, as a "tontine," it appears to be an example of a fascinating archaic investment scheme¹² which links this building to other landmarks of the early 19th century such as the Tontine Coffee Houses in New York and Albany.

¹¹ Additional research into the early development of village multi-use and commercial properties in Vermont is encouraged and may reveal a great many examples of a building type that is previously not well understood but that may be associated with prominent, large, early buildings that appear residential.

¹² Additional research may further establish that this model of capitalizing a large commercial/multi-use structure played an important role in the early history of many Connecticut River Valley towns and villages.

United States Department of the Interior National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 8 Page 1

Tontine Building name of property Guilford, Windham County, Vermont Town, county and State

The Tontine Building is a fine example of the simple Federal style used extensively throughout southern Vermont in the early 19th century. The simplicity of its ornamentation derives from its original use as a commercial and multi-use structure and as such the building is a fairly rare surviving type from this period. As an early example of a commercial building, it is also notably characterized by its triangular massing and strategic placement fronting on two sides of the prominent flat iron corner site of the village's main intersection which essentially make the building into a billboard advertising its business tenants. The building retains its original Federal style door surround and simple molded cornice with returns, some of its original Guilford slate roofing, as well as its unusual fenestration and massing. In addition, the building represents a prominent example of an early community development effort to create a village center where none had existed. The 1819 frame Tontine Building was originally constructed as a "tontine" commercial property housing shops including a drug store and early tenements on the upper floors. The investors who created the tontine, a financing mechanism for raising capital, were among those who also developed several of the other early industrial and commercial properties in this hamlet. It is one of several surviving structures built or owned by this group of entrepreneurs who based their efforts on the available water power of the Broad brook, the traffic of the public highways, and the establishment of two church parishes there and essentially turned a scattered settlement into a prosperous village within only a few years. The building's long history is characterized by three phases – all involving multiple uses. It spent its first fifty years as a "tontine" used for multiple commercial and residential occupants. By the 1860s it became primarily used as a family home for a branch of the prominent Smith family of Algiers, but it continued to have commercial and secondary residential units for the next century under their ownership. In the mid-20th century, after the Smith family sold it, it's usage swung from primarily commercial – housing a large home center – to primarily residential – housing apartments with only a single store. The Tontine Building's key location at the visual center of the village and an important crossroads, as well as its unusual massing and exterior integrity enable it to clearly convey this commercial and multi-use heritage. The building is eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A for its significance in Community Planning and Development as well as Criterion C for its architectural significance as an early type of multi-use village building.

The building has had on-going significance as a multi-use commercial structure throughout its history. Based on its earliest deeds, it contained various businesses and was used as a tenement. The property changed hands frequently during its first fifty years. It then passed into the Smith family and remained mainly a residence, along with additional apartments and commercial activities, for almost a century. It was converted primarily to apartments after passing out of the Smith family ownership in the mid 20th century and then spent over twenty years as a home

OMB No. 1024-0018

United States Department of the Interior National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 8 Page 2

Tontine Building name of property Guilford, Windham County, Vermont Town, county and State

improvement center. At some point in the 20th century its ell was considerably altered, likely by renovating a former attached barn or shop into residential and commercial space.

The name "Tontine" is defined in two ways. The first and primary definition derives from a financial scheme devised by 17th century Italian-born Frenchman named Lorenze Tonti in which a group of subscribers raise capital for an income-producing investment – such as the construction of a commercial or rental property – and then share the annuity. The death of one subscriber generally results in the annuity being re-distributed amongst the survivors until one or a small specified number remain who then become the owners – or essentially the winners in this odd sort of lottery. Different known examples of these tontine schemes vary the details. In the case of the Tontine Association of New York City which built and owned the famous 1792 Tontine Coffee House there, the "constitution" of the association laid out the terms which modified Tonti's original scheme and was a model for other tontine associations that owned "tontine" properties in New York and Albany¹. The New York association lasted for over a century before the property reverted to some small number of surviving members.

The second meaning of "tontine" appears to be archaic and possibly peculiar to the northeastern United States as it is used in describing several early to mid 19th century buildings bearing the name. For these "Tontine" buildings, several local histories simply define the name as a property type such as "school" or "office building." "Tontine" is used to describe a building housing multiple businesses with or without reference to any financial scheme that may have funded it. Current dictionaries and encyclopedias only refer to the financial scheme in defining "tontine" so the usage as a property type may ultimately relate to an original funding scheme. The several examples of buildings named "Tontine" found in Vermont and New Hampshire are, like the Guilford example, built in the early 19th century and in several cases were one of the earliest commercial structures in a village or town center. Research through internet searches so far has uncovered the following examples: c. 1815 Tontine Block in Windsor, Vermont, 1812 Tontine-Commonwealth-Sparrow Block in Springfield, Vermont, 1829 Tontine Building (later part of Bethel Mills) in Bethel, Vermont, 1818 Tontine building (demolished in1851) in Newport, New Hampshire, the 1813-15 Tontine Building (Later part of Dartmouth College and demolished in 1887) in Hanover, New Hampshire, and the pre-1840 Tontine Building (described as "an old

¹ Stone, William Leete. *History of New York City from the discovery to the present day.* New York: Vitrue & Yorston, 1872. Chapter III and Appendix I,

Dayton, Abram C. The Last Days of Knickerbocker Life in New York. New York: Putnams, 1897. pp 93-96. Anon. Albany's Historic Street: a collection of some of the historic facts and interesting traditions relating to State Street and its neighborhood. Albany, NY: unknown publisher, 1918, p22-23 All the above available through <u>http://persi.heritagequestonline.com</u>

United States Department of the Interior National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 8 Page 3

Tontine Building name of property Guilford, Windham County, Vermont Town, county and State

schoolhouse" and moved to be part of Marlow Academy, later used as a blacksmith shop) in Marlow, New Hampshire. In addition there was a "Tontine" building erected in 1863-64 by the Oneida Community in New York State (originally from Vermont) to house some of their business enterprises and the dining hall.

One of the most famous "Tontine" buildings is not a good example of either of these definitions. The residential 1793-4 "Tontine Crescent" designed by Charles Bulfinch in Boston was a bold architectural venture that proved financially disastrous for Bulfinch and was not completed as intended². Before its demolition in the 1850s it had been a model for urban design in Boston and other cities. However, research on this building has not yet found any mention of either a tontine financial scheme or that it was an example of the commercial property type.

Unlike most other buildings now bearing the name "tontine" the building in Guilford has been specifically associated with the financial scheme according to the 1961 *Official History of the Town of Guilford*. The deeds confirm much of what the book reports in terms of owners and the date of construction. Somewhat less clear is the evidence of a "tontine" financial arrangement, though the name "tontine" is in the earliest deed referencing the building. This is a July 15, 1819 quit claim deed from Solomon Pratt to Benjamin Jacobs transferring land and the "frame erected for a tontine." Other quit claim deeds from around that time point to but do not spell out a tontine-like financial arrangement.

The deeds establish that the early history of this building was in fact connected to the key community players who developed the village of East Guilford or Algiers. Their transactions in the years between 1815 and 1820 include grist mill and distillery sites, a carriage factory, the Broad Brook House tavern later to become the Guilford Country Store, and land and water rights on the Broad Brook. The Tontine building was their effort to provide a place for burgeoning mercantile and commercial pursuits. According to the *Official History of the Town of Guilford*, it soon housed a drug store and other commercial tenants and by 1821 it was described in a deed as a "messuage and tenement" suggesting that it was also housing workers in the new industries of East Guilford.

While "tontines" may be rare or as yet undocumented in Vermont, the example of a core group of businessmen being responsible for much of the initial development in a village is a common model in the state. Many early southern Vermont town centers and hamlets were established through the efforts of landowners and mill owners who hoped to increase their investment by

² http://walkboston.org/events/images/financialMap.pdf &

http://www.holycross.edu/departments/classics/wziobro/ClassicalAmerica/TontineHP.html

United States Department of the Interior National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 8 Page 4

Tontine Building name of property Guilford, Windham County, Vermont Town, county and State

building the infrastructure required to do business. In Guilford, Vermont's largest town in 1790 and 1800³, a group of men undertook to create a second village center where several mill sites on the Broad Brook intersected the main north-south highway.

As one of the southernmost towns in eastern Vermont, Guilford's early history has settlement going back nearly to its charter in 1754⁴. It became one of Vermont's first organized settlements after the French and Indian wars with people re-locating from Connecticut and Massachusetts traveling up the Connecticut River valley to the Vermont frontier. The town was well established as Vermont's most populous before the 19th century but the settlement pattern was fairly scattered throughout the town's borders. A village in the center of the town had emerged with the establishment there of the first Congregational church in 1778. This village is now known as Guilford Center and still houses the town government and school.

In the northeastern corner of town, where the Broad Brook leads west from the Connecticut river, a north-south stage route connected Brattleboro to Guilford and points south in Massachusetts. In this section of town, there were a few early mills on the Broad Brook, a few houses and farms on the two main roads, and a store. After the construction of an east parish church on the highway in 1813, a group of entrepreneurs that included Nathan Cutler, Elihu Field, John and Artemas Gale, Benjamin Jacobs, Philemon Baker, and Solomon Pratt became actively involved in further developing the area into a second village center. Their names occur in nearly every deed chain for the village properties often more than once.⁵ By 1819, they had succeeded in combination and singly in the development of a grist mill, carriage maker's shop, blacksmith's shop, cotton factory, distillery, the Broad Brook House inn and tavern, another store, and the Tontine building which housed stores and shops⁶. Whether by tontine investment plan or more usual transactions, the village was fully realized through their efforts. Of the dozen or so early buildings built or owned by this group, the tavern (now the Guilford Country Store), the Tontine Building, Christ Church, the gristmill, and several houses remain today. The distinctive architecture of the Tontine, Broad Brook House tavern and Christ Church form the visual core of the present-day hamlet of Algiers and are its principal landmarks, having anchored the community since its earliest days.

³ United States Census for 1790 and 1800

⁴ Early Guilford history is based on Hamilton *Child's Gazetteer & Business Directory for Windham County* (Syacuse:1884) and Zadock Thompson's *History of Vermont* (Burlington:1842).

⁵ Town of Guilford land records and Broad Brook Grange No. 151, ed. *Official History of Guilford, Vermont, 1678-1961, With Genealogies and Biographical Sketches.* Guilford, Vt.: Town of Guilford & Broad Brook Grange No. 151:1961, pp. 275-295.

⁶ Official History of Guildford, p. 181 quoting Abby Maria Hemenway's History.

United States Department of the Interior National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 8 Page 5

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Tontine Building name of property Guilford, Windham County, Vermont Town, county and State

As with many commercial and investment properties, the Tontine Building - called a "messuage and tenement" in deed descriptions - changed hands frequently.⁷ In the 1852 land record documenting its lease to Edward Childs, the description added "appurtenances and garden attached." The deeds continued to reference the building as a "tenement known by the name of the 'Tontine Building' and it clearly played several commercial roles in the heart of the village though it is not clear how long if at all it was organized as a financial "tontine." In 1868, it was purchased by Henry Smith, ending its period as a tontine. After that, the Smith family lived in the building as a primary residence for nearly a century though it appears that the multiple units of its earlier uses served to house multiple generations of the family as well as Henry Smith's butchering business. Henry transferred the property to his parents Stephen and Anne in 1869 but continued to live there with his wife Hannah. In 1870, according to the federal census, both he and his father Stephen worked as manufacturers of children's carriages⁸ likely in the locally prominent Smith & Hunt carriage business run by Sanford A. Smith. By 1880, the census shows Henry, his wife and two children living in the property and his occupation had changed to "farming." His father had died and Henry's sister, Mary Ellen, continued to live there with her mother. While the main block and ell appeared to be used residentially, the attached barn or shop on the west end of the ell was likely the continued location of businesses. At some point in the 1920s or 30s, the grade around the front of the house was changed and may have coincided with a road re-building project. After the death of Mary Ellen Smith in 1937, her heirs sold the property out of the family in 1946 and it was remodeled as rental apartments and with an antiques shop and later an upholstery business⁹. Some of the present finishes and alterations in the main block and ell date to this period.

In 1978 the main block, ell and a large, separate structure just to the west were converted into the Guilford Home Center¹⁰ and the separate structure was physically joined to the west end of the ell. The larger structure to the west became the lumber and hardware departments while both floors of the main block and ell contained kitchen and bath showrooms, the paint and wallpaper department, and the kitchen design office. The Home Center moved out of the buildings around 2000 and the connector to the neighboring building was removed. The main block and ell were converted into five apartments and one commercial unit in the west end of the ell. Some of the walls and finishes date from this recent period 1978-2000.

⁷ Official History of Guilford, p.181-182 and Town of Guilford land records

⁸ 1870 U.S. Census records for Guilford Vermont, (Series M593, Roll 1627, page 456)

⁹ Telephone interview by author with Peter Dearborn, the son of the 1946 owners, July, 2007

¹⁰ Telephone interview by author with Peter Dearborn, George "Tucky" Houghton, and Debbie Gilman, who all worked for the Guilford Home Center, July, 2007

OMB No. 1024-0018

United States Department of the Interior National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET

Section <u>9</u> Page <u>1</u>

<u>The Tontine Building</u> name of property <u>Guilford, Windham Co., Vermont</u> Town, County and State

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OMB No. 1024-0018

United States Department of the Interior National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 9 Page 2

<u>The Tontine Building</u> name of property <u>Guilford, Windham Co., Vermont</u> Town, County and State

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Telephone Interviews by Lyssa Papazian in July 2007: -Peter Dearborn -George "Tucky" Houghton -Debbie Gilman

Internet sources: http://persi.heritagequestonline.com

http://walkboston.org/events/images/financialMap.pdf http://www.holycross.edu/departments/classics/wziobro/ClassicalAmerica/TontineHP.html

OMB No. 1024-0018

United States Department of the Interior National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET

Section <u>10</u> Page <u>1</u>

Tontine Building name of property

Guilford, Windham County, Vermont Town, county and State

Verbal Boundary Description

The Tontine Building is also known as 500 Coolidge Highway (a.k.a. U.S. Route 5), located on the southwest corner of the intersection of Guilford Center Road and Coolidge Highway. It is known as Guilford Tax Lot # 6-322. The property is bounded on the northwest and east by the two roads mentioned above. On the west the property boundary is about 10 feet west of the west end of the ell. On the south, the property boundary runs along the south edge of the building's parking lot extending from a point on Coolidge Highway approximately 35' south of the southeast corner of the main block northwesterly to a point approximately 25' southwest of the southwest corner of the ell. The property contains $0.20 \pm$ acre immediately surrounding the building. It is further described and referenced in the deed in Book 111, Page 125 of the Guilford land records.

Boundary Justification

The present property boundary, used as the National Register boundary, is close to the original property boundary for the Tontine Building and contains the structures and immediately adjacent grounds.

OMB No. 1024-0018

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NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET

Tontine Building name of property

Guilford, Windham County, Vermont Town, county and State

Photograph Labels

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The following information is the same for all photographs: Tontine Building Guilford, Windham County, Vermont Digital images are on file at the Vermont Division for Historic Preservation

Photograph

Number	Description	Date	<u>Credit</u>
1	View looking south on Coolidge Highway		
	(U.S. Route 5) w/Broad Brook House (Guilford		
	Country Store) on left & Tontine Bldg. on right	July 2007	<u>L. Papazian</u>
2	View looking south on Coolidge Highway		· .
	(U.S. Route 5) from Guilford Center Rd. w/Christ		
	Church in distance & Tontine Bldg. on right	January 2006	I. Wagner
3	View looking east on Guilford Center Rd. with		•
	Tontine Bldg. on right	July 2007	L. Papazian
4	South & east facades, looking northwest	March 2007	I. Wagner
5	East, north, & northwest facades,		
	looking southwest	July 2007	L. Papazian
6	Front (east) façade, looking west	March 2007	I. Wagner
7	South façade, looking north	March 2007	I. Wagner
8	Northwest & west facades, looking southeast	July 2007	L. Papazian
9	Southeast ell façade, looking northwest	March 2007	I. Wagner
10	Detail: front door surround	July 2007	L. Papazian
11	Detail: north & northwest facades	July 2007	L. Papazian
12	Detail: interior, first floor fireplace surround	July 2007	L. Papazian
13	Looking northwest on Coolidge Highway		Courtesy
	(U.S. Route 5) with Tontine Bldg. on right	c . 1900	Guilford
	(Note retaining wall)		Historical Soc.

OMB No. 1024-0018

United States Department of the Interior National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET: SKETCH MAPS

Tontine Building name of property

Guilford, Windham County, Vermont Town, county and State



OMB No. 1024-0018

United States Department of the Interior National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET: SKETCH MAPS

Tontine Building name of property

Guilford, Windham County, Vermont Town, county and State

