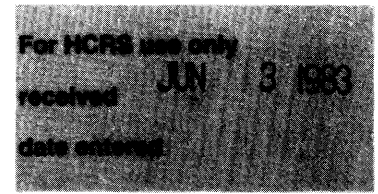


**United States Department of the Interior
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service**

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



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

1. Name

historic Captain William Full Tavern

and/or common Tollgate Hill Tavern

2. Location

street & number Route 202, north side between Tollgate Road and Wilson Rd ^{CT} ~~not for publication~~

city, town Litchfield ~~vicinity of~~ NA congressional district Sixth

state Connecticut code 09 county Litchfield code 005

3. Classification

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

4. Owner of Property

name Frederick J. and Anne D. Zivic

street & number Route 202

city, town Litchfield ~~vicinity of~~ NA state CT

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Litchfield Land Records, Litchfield Town Hall

street & number West Street

city, town Litchfield 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 State Historical Commission

city, town Hartford state Connecticut

7. Description

Condition		Check one	Check one	
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input type="checkbox"/> original site	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> moved	date 1923
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed			

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

Description

The Tollgate Hill Tavern property is located in the northeast corner of Litchfield, a hill town in northwest Connecticut. The main building on the property, the Captain William Bull house, was originally located approximately two miles from the current site, on a farm near the present intersection of Litchfield and Clark roads. (See Map #1) This earlier site, like the present one, provided a rural setting of woods and open fields among gently rolling hills.

The nominated property is the nucleus of a farm of approximately 100 acres to which Frederick Fuessenich brought the Bull house and other buildings in the 1920's. It is the 10-acre piece of property which Fuessenich retained when he sold most of the farm in the 1930's. Triangularly shaped, the property is bounded by Tollgate Road on the northwest, Wilson Road on the northeast, and Route 202 on the south. Route 202 (the old Torrington Turnpike) descends from the high ridge where the village of Litchfield is set through a largely rural area of farms and woodland similar to the building's original site.

The property has three principal buildings. The main house (the Captain William Bull House, later called the Tollgate Hill Tavern) is set back from the street approximately 150 feet and is mostly screened from view by trees and bushes. (Photograph #1) A gravel and dirt driveway curves in front of the Tavern and around to the rear. The house is elevated a few feet from the drive behind a fieldstone retaining wall and a small front yard.

Slightly behind and to the right of the Tavern is an eighteenth-century, 1 1/2-story gambrel-roofed house. (Photograph #2) To the rear of the main house is a yard with fruit trees and a small wooden bulkhead which provides access to two underground cisterns of 5000 gallons each. A wooden fence separates the yard from the wooded property behind it and the nineteenth-century barn a few hundred yards beyond. (Photograph #13)

The Tavern (the main building) is a large, gambrel-roofed, colonial house. (Photographs 1, 2, 3) The main section (44' x 32') is of three stories including a full story under the steep gambrel roof. The wing (50' x 22') also has a gambrel roof but is only 2 1/2 stories. Both interior and exterior are in very good condition.

The main section has a typical five-bay facade, with a center doorway topped by a six-light transom. While there has been some replacement of clapboards on the sides and back, the clapboards on the front are mostly old. The facade is framed by the narrow corner boards and the slightly molded soffit under the eaves of the roof. Windows are twelve over twelve. The foundation and large chimney are of local fieldstone and date from the building's move.

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On the west side is a well-detailed Federal-period doorway and entrance porch which was added to the house in 1929. (Photograph 4) Slender columns support the cove-ceilinged roof, and the pediment and entablature are decorated with delicate Federal moldings. The heavy six-panelled door is framed by narrow pilasters and sidelights with decorative leaded glass. The leaded glass has been removed from the elliptical fanlight above. Both the porch and doorway are of exceptional quality.

The exterior of the wing is similar in appearance to the main house in proportion and detail, *i.e.* clapboards, windows, and even the flaring out at the bottom of the gambrel roof. (Photograph 3) However, although the wing incorporates eighteenth-century structural and decorative material, it is largely of modern construction. On the west side, the first floor stable/garage is entered through Federal-period arched doors which project slightly from the main body of the building. A large, early-twentieth century chimney of fieldstone is attached to the north end of the wing.

On the interior, the main, front section has a typical center-chimney plan: a small entrance hall with stairway, two rooms to either side of the central chimney, and a large room to the rear. The interior of the main section has largely original eighteenth-century material, well preserved and of good quality, with a sensitive restoration and interesting Colonial Revival additions made by owner Frederick Fuessenich in the 1920s.

In the entrance hall, the triple-run stairway and soffit is panelled. (Photograph 5) The open balustrade has diamond-shaped spindles, square posts with molded tops, and applied scroll-shaped brackets on the step ends.

The most formal room is the parlor to the right of the stairway. (Photograph 6, 7) The fireplace wall is fully panelled and the fireplace itself is surrounded by a wide bolection molding. The other three plastered walls are set off by a baseboard, chair rail, and a heavy crown molding which also runs on both sides of the cased summer beam. The exposed corner posts are cased with a beaded edge. In the rear right (northeast) corner of the room is a corner cupboard of excellent quality, with arched doors framed by pilasters.

To the left of the stairway, the "tap room" walls are finished with vertical feather-edged sheathing of pine, the panels ranging in size from 10" to 22". (Photograph 8) A horizontally divided door to the right side of the fireplace leads to a small compartment fitted out like a "bar," which winds around to the side and back of the fireplace. In the left rear (northwest) corner of the room is a less formal corner cupboard with scalloped edges surrounding the open shelves. Summer beam and corner posts are cased and beaded. All the panelling is in excellent condition. Considerably less formal than the parlor, the tap room may in fact be the room mentioned in a 1925 article as having been brought from a house in Harwinton by Frederick Fuessenich.¹

1. Harriet Sisson Gillespie, "Tollgate Hill Tavern," Country Life, September 1925, p. 59.

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The long room behind the chimney which runs nearly the full length of the house (Photograph 9) demonstrates the way in which Fuessenich combined original material with a careful and interesting elaboration upon that material. The entire length of the fireplace wall is panelled; however, the panels immediately around the fireplace and the fireplace bolection molding are identical to that in the parlor and original to the house, while the panelling which extends from just to the right of the fireplace to the far west wall is an accurate and well-made reproduction of the original. The plaster walls in the rest of the room are fitted out with built-in shelving with a Colonial feeling. Two original cased and beaded beams run from the rear wall to the fireplace wall. This spacious room is naturally lit by the sidelights and fanlight of the Federal doorway at the west end.

The second-floor plan of the main section is similar to the first floor with the exception of the division of the space to the rear of the chimney into smaller rooms and halls. The two front rooms to the left and right of the stairway are large and airy. In each, a low (24") dado of vertical sheathing with plaster walls above is set off by a chair rail and baseboard. The fireplaces have plain square molded surrounds and a small, panelled door to one side. Exposed posts and beams are cased and beaded like those on the first floor.

An unusual feature of the room to the rear of the chimney are two raised panels above the fireplace which project well beyond the rails and stiles. A bold bolection molding surrounds the fireplace. To either side of this room, in the northeast and northwest corners, are two well-preserved early-twentieth century bathrooms with white tile walls and floors and contemporary fixtures. Above, in the unfinished attic, the massive post-and-beam framing for the gambrel roof is visible.

There is much original material throughout the house in addition to that described; for example, panelled eighteenth-century doors and wide pine floors. The wrought-iron hardware is original and of very good quality. Although the chimney was rebuilt, the granite hearths, lintels, and sides of the fireplaces appear to be original.

In the wing, the ballroom which occupies the entire second floor most clearly represents Fuessenich's own conception of the Colonial period. (Photograph 10) Although the room may incorporate some eighteenth-century materials, it is largely a twentieth century recreation of eighteenth century features. It is a large, open room with high cove ceiling. The walls are finished with a panelled dado and chair rail with plaster above, and the fireplace wall is panelled. The eight large windows providing natural light are fitted with folding panelled shutters. While the second floor of the wing is fanciful and romantic, the first floor is utilitarian, and includes a garage/storage area and modern kitchen facilities.

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The house behind the Tavern dates from the mid-eighteenth century and is believed to have been used as the first school house in Berlin, Connecticut. (Photograph 12) It consists of a 1 1/2-story gambrel-roofed original section, probably with a fire-place end wall, and a later but early, small, gambrel-roofed addition. Most of the exterior material is original. Partition walls on the first floor have been largely removed; however, horizontal sheathing with beaded edges remains throughout the first and second floors.

The barn in the rear of the property probably dates from the mid-nineteenth century. (Photograph 13) It is about 2½ stories in height and is clad with vertical sheathing. The interior is undivided, exposing the massive post-and-beam framing which is entirely original material.

8. Significance

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

Criteria C

Specific dates c, 1760, 1923

Builder/Architect Unknown

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

Significance

The Tollgate Hill Tavern property in Litchfield, Connecticut is significant as an excellent local example of rural Colonial architecture and as an important artifact in the history of American collecting and antiquarianism (Criteria C). The main building on the property was once the mansion house for the prosperous Litchfield farm of Captain William Bull in the late-eighteenth century. An imposing building with excellent eighteenth-century architectural detailing, it is an important example of early Litchfield's rural architectural heritage. The nominated property includes the Captain William Bull house as part of a complex assembled in the 1920s by Frederick Fuessenich. Fuessenich moved the Bull house to its present location in 1923, thereby saving it from demolition, and soon after also rescued and moved to the site an eighteenth-century building believed to be the first schoolhouse in Berlin, Connecticut, as well as a nineteenth-century barn. (Photographs 12, 13). Fuessenich, an early and avid collector of American antiques, recreated an entire Colonial atmosphere encompassing both buildings and grounds. As such, the property is a significant artifact which illuminates the values and concerns of early twentieth century collectors and antiquarians, and reflects the contemporary Colonial Revival movement in Litchfield.¹

Historical Background

Litchfield, settled in the hills of northwest Connecticut in 1719, was a typical Colonial agrarian community until its selection as the County Seat in 1751 marked the beginning of its emergence as a commercial center. Litchfield was also a way station on the highway from Hartford and New Haven to Albany, and on the alternative inland route from Boston to New York. Commercial enterprise and small-scale manufacturing, which developed successfully from about the time of the Revolution to the War of 1812, brought to Litchfield substantial wealth and sophistication. It was during this period that outstanding examples of Georgian and Federal architecture were built in Litchfield's village center. Litchfield's later role as a summer resort and as a focal point of interest in the Colonial past reinforced the interest in Litchfield's commercial history and village center. The Tollgate Hill Tavern, on the other hand, reflects Litchfield's agricultural past and its tradition of rural building, both before its commercial growth and through the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

The house was originally part of a large piece of farmland on the East Litchfield Road (Map #1, Photograph 11), the major road leading out of Litchfield to the east, and part of the "highway from Hartford to Albany."

1. Documented in "Litchfield Historic District," National Register of Historic Places Nomination, prepared by David F. Ransom, 1978.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Land Records, Town of Litchfield
 Alain C. White, History of the Town of Litchfield, Connecticut (Litchfield: Enquirer Print: 1920)
 "Tollgate Hill Tavern," Harriet Gillespie, Country Life, September 1925
 "Fuessenich's Folly," Newtown Bee, December 10, 1965

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property 10

Quadrangle name West Torrington, CT

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

UMT References

A

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B

1	8	6	5	2	6	1	0	4	6	2	7	0	4	0
Zone		Easting				Northing								

C

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

D

Zone		Easting				Northing								

E

Zone		Easting				Northing								

F

Zone		Easting				Northing								

G

Zone		Easting				Northing								

H

Zone		Easting				Northing								

Verbal boundary description and justification

The nominated property in Litchfield, Connecticut is bounded by Tollgate Road, Wilson Road, and Route 202. It is the well-defined residential nucleus of a farm owned by Frederick Fuessenich in the 1920s, and retained by the Fuessenich family after the remainder of the farm was sold in the 1950s. There has been no division of the property since that time. A legal description may be found in Litchfield Land Records, Vol. 173, p. 42.

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

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

state		code	county	code
-------	--	------	--------	------

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Barbara A. Cleary, edited by John Herzan, National Register Coordinator

organization N/A date November 30, 1982

street & number 28 Rocky Neck Avenue telephone (617) 283-6417

city or town Gloucester state Massachusetts

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 Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature



title Director, Connecticut Historical Commission

date May 17, 1983

For HCERS use only

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

Entered in the
National Register

date 6/30/83

for 
Keeper of the National Register

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

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Although its original owner is not known, in the 1790s the house was the property of Captain William Bull (1748-1799), a native of Hartford, and one of a number of his family who moved to the Litchfield area. Bull is listed as having served at the capture of Fort Ticonderoga in 1775.² His probate inventory indicates that at the time of his death he was carrying on a substantial and prosperous farming operation. His inventory lists an "old house" in addition to the "mansion house," an old and new barn, and approximately 275 acres of land, as well as considerable livestock, feed, and farm equipment. In addition to the usual furniture, kitchen articles, and clothing, his inventory includes furniture of mahogany, items of silver, brass candlesticks, pictures in frames, etc. The total value of his estate was £ 7943, which is substantial for an enterprise that appears to be solely agrarian.

Architectural Significance

The house is of a scale and quality that is exceptional in a rural context, and most certainly indicates Bull's agrarian success. Full-wall panelling in the first-floor rooms, a well-executed corner cupboard, and a panelled stairway attest to the standing of its owner. (Photographs 5, 6, 7, 8, 9) Other notable features are the many eighteenth-century panelled doors and wrought-iron hardware. Both its size and architectural detail make the house one of Litchfield's pre-eminent pre-Revolutionary buildings.³

Later History

The house remained in the family's hands until Bull's estate was finally administered in 1827. In 1829, it was sold to the Buel family, and by them to the Candee family in 1843. It was owned by the Griswolds and continued to be part of a working farm throughout the second half of the nineteenth century (1867-1900). The house passed through a number of owners from 1900 to 1915 until purchased by the Vanderwaters in that year. The Vanderwaters owned the property when Frederick Fuessenich purchased the house in 1923, and continued to own the land until at least the late 1950s.

In the 1920s, the building had fallen into disuse, and stood boarded up and deteriorating. The owners had decided to dismantle it. It was rescued through its purchase by Frederick Fuessenich, who moved it in 1923 to 100 acres of farmland approximately two miles from its original site. The house was placed directly across from the location of the old tollhouse on the Torrington Turnpike (incorporated in 1801 and in operation until approximately 1860), hence it was named by Fuessenich the "Tollgate Hill Tavern."

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2. Record of Connecticut Men in the War of the Revolution, by Authority of the General Assembly (Hartford: 1889), I:31.
 3. See Ranson, "Litchfield Historic District," op.cit. for comparisons.

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Fuessenich as Collector

Fuessenich, a native of Torrington and then president of the locally based Hendley Machine Company, had already developed a strong interest in the Colonial period and an extensive collection of American antiques at the time that he purchased the house. At that point, he retired from operation of the company and devoted himself to his collecting, restoration projects, and dairy farming.

Fuessenich took great care in the moving and adaptation of the building to modern living. This accounts in part for the excellent condition of the building's panelling, doors, floors, hardware, etc. Like other Colonial enthusiasts of his day, Fuessenich also engaged in restoration which expanded upon specific original material. This is clearly seen in the half wall of modern panelling in the first-floor rear room, which is nearly identical to the original panelling next to it. (Photograph 9) The ballroom, especially, is a romantic but well informed invention. On the exterior it is very similar in appearance to the main house, and on the interior, the panelling, windows, and shutters are similar in both appearance and construction to eighteenth-century examples.

Like the more affluent Henry Ford, Fuessenich augmented the property's ambience by bringing to it other buildings from the same period. These included the eighteenth-century gambrel-roofed house which is said to be the first building used as a schoolhouse in Berlin, Connecticut (Photograph 12), and a nineteenth-century barn with vertical sheathing brought from Newbury's Corners in 1926. (Photograph 13) Fuessenich also rescued a Federal doorway from a house which was being moved in Danbury in 1929, and installed it on the northwest side of the house. (Photograph 4).

Most importantly, perhaps, Fuessenich furnished and decorated the house in a reverent and authentic manner with an excellent collection of American antiques. A Country Life article of September 1925 provides not only a photographic record of the house's appearance, but also a sense of Fuessenich's vision. The mostly country pieces - seventeenth- and eighteenth-century chairs, tables, beds, and settles - were complemented by period pewter, ceramics, light fixtures, rugs and fabrics. In general, the appearance of the rooms is not unlike that of other museum houses and collectors' rooms of the period. The article goes on to state that "Representatives of museums and the more important private collectors make frequent pilgrimages to Tollgate Hill Tavern to view Mr. Fuessenich's treasures, which, apart from their historic value, possess the added advantage of being one of the few such collections in the country that is 'lived with!'"⁴

4. Harriet Sisson Gillespie, "Tollgate Hill Tavern," Country Life, September 1925, p. 59.

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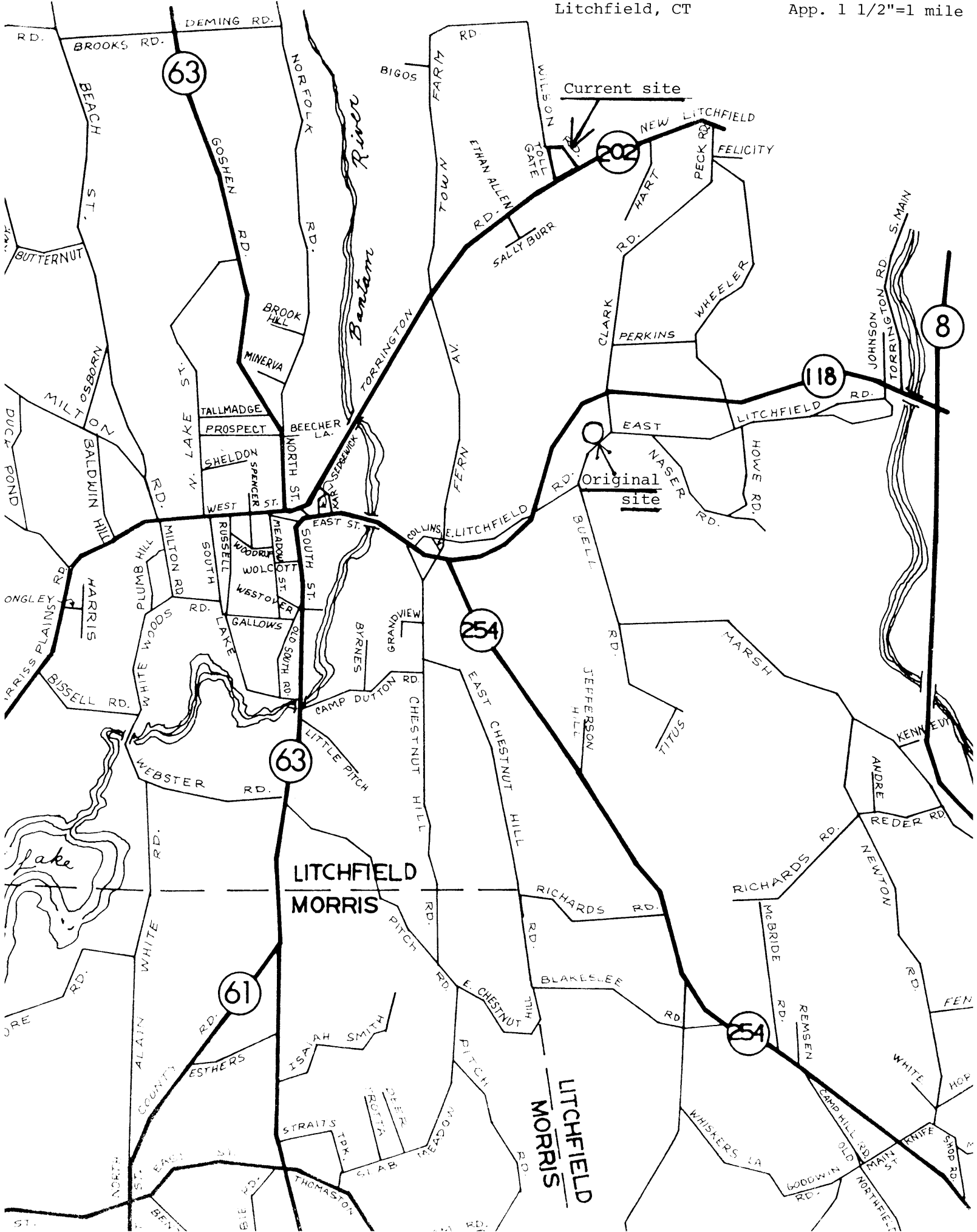
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During the Depression, Fuessenich's collection was dispersed to such major collectors as Israel Sack, Wallace Nutting, Henry Ford, and Henry duPont. In the 1930s the Fuesseniches established an Inn at the Tavern, which was a well-known and popular setting for private parties and wedding receptions. A handbill of this period shows the building looking exactly as it does today, and advertises "Luncheon, Dinners, Teas," and "Theatre." The Fuesseniches continued to be dealers in Americana for many years, "particularly in furniture, fabrics, and painting. The now well-known private and public collections have things that passed through their hands."⁵

The Fuessenich restoration and use of the house was in a similar spirit to other pioneer antiquarians such as Henry Ford, Henry duPont, the Wells brothers, and Henry Sleeper. It is certainly sympathetic with the sentiments expressed by Wallace Nutting in 1921, in describing a room in the house of a collector finished with reproduction vertical sheathing and furnished with antiques (looking much like the taproom in Fuessenich's day). Nutting says: "It (the room) is a suggestion to those who have, as he has, fine examples of Seventeenth Century furniture and who wish for a proper setting for it. It is true that old materials may often be secured and worked into such a room with a greater quaintness of effect and a closer approximation to the mellowing influence of the past."⁶

Fuessenich may also have been influenced by the strong local revival in the early-twentieth century of interest in Litchfield Colonial buildings and history. Fuessenich's vision, however, was also personal and romantic. According to a contemporary, "Frederick and Jean's attitude toward the house was one of pride, love, and admiration."⁷ That attitude is evidenced in the building by the painstaking attention to detail and the craftsmanship of both the restoration and all modern work in the house. Moreover, the modern additions are not only charming but interesting in their own right. Luckily, both the original house and the Fuessenich's vision of it survives intact today.

-
5. William Warren letter to B.A. Cleary, 10/10/82
 6. Wallace Nutting, Furniture of the Pilgrim Century (New York, New York: Crown Publishers, Inc. 1921)
 7. Warren, op.cit.



TOLLGATE HILL TAVERN
Litchfield, CT

Map #2
Partial site plan

1"=40'
1977, Revised 7/82

Barn
#3

House #2

House #1
Tavern

Route 202

