



United States Department of the Interior

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

The attached property, the High Street Historic District, in Hartford County, Connecticut, reference number 98000850, was listed in the National Register of Historic Places by the Keeper of the National Register on 07/08/1998, as evidenced by the FEDERAL REGISTER/WEEKLY LIST notice of July 17, 1998. The attached nomination form is a copy of the original documentation provided to the Keeper at the time of listing.



Keeper of the National Register of Historic Places

2/12/2009
Date

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
REGISTRATION FORM**

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1. Name of Property

=====

historic name: HIGH STREET HISTORIC DISTRICT

other name/site number: N/A

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2. Location

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street & number: 402-418 Asylum Street, 28 High Street, and 175-189
 Allyn Street (also numbered 53-59 High Street)

city/town: Hartford not for publication: N/A
vicinity: N/A

state: CT county: Hartford code: 003 zip code: 06106

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3. Classification

=====

Ownership of Property: private

Category of Property: district

Number of Resources within Property:

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u> 3 </u>	<u> 0 </u>	buildings
<u> 0 </u>	<u> 0 </u>	sites
<u> 0 </u>	<u> 0 </u>	structures
<u> 0 </u>	<u> 0 </u>	objects
<u> 3 </u>	<u> 0 </u>	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register: 2

Name of related multiple property listing: N/A

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4. State/Federal Agency Certification
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As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this x nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property x meets does not meet the National Register Criteria. See cont. sheet.

John W. Shannahan 6/12/98
Signature of certifying official Date
John W. Shannahan,
Director, Connecticut Historical Commission
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. See continuation sheet.

Signature of commenting or other official Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

=====
5. National Park Service Certification
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I, hereby certify that this property is:

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

Signature of Keeper Date
of Action

=====
6. Function or Use
=====

Historic: COMMERCE Sub: business
 COMMERCE specialty store
 INDUSTRY manufacturing facility

Current: COMMERCE Sub: business
 COMMERCE restaurant
 VACANT/NOT IN USE

=====
7. Description
=====

Architectural Classification:

- Gothic
- Romanesque
- Classical Revival

Other Description: N/A

Materials: foundation	<u>STONE</u>	roof	<u>ASPHALT</u>
walls	<u>BRICK</u>	other	<u>STONE</u>
	<u>STEEL</u>		

Describe present and historic physical appearance. X See continuation sheet.

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8. Statement of Significance
=====

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties: state

Applicable National Register Criteria: A,C

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions) : N/A

Areas of Significance: ARCHITECTURE
COMMERCE

Period(s) of Significance: c.1860-c.1930

Significant Dates: See Item 7

Significant Person(s): _____

Cultural Affiliation: _____

Architect/Builder: See Item 7

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above. X See continuation sheet.

9. Major Bibliographical References

X See continuation sheet.

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

 preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested.

X previously listed in the National Register **Judd and Root Building, 175-189 Allyn Street; Batterson Block, 28 High Street**

X previously determined eligible by the National Register **Capitol Building, 402-418 Asylum Street**

 designated a National Historic Landmark

 recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____

 recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

Primary Location of Additional Data:

X State historic preservation office Connecticut Historical Commission

 Other state agency 59 South Prospect Street

 Federal agency Hartford, Connecticut 06106

 Local government

 University

 Other -- Specify Repository: _____

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property: approx. 1.1 acre

UTM References: Zone Easting Northing Zone Easting Northing

A _____ B _____

C _____ D _____

X See continuation sheet.

Verbal Boundary Description: See continuation sheet.

The boundary includes the three properties shown in the Hartford Assessor Records as Map 419, Block 6, Parcel 5 (175-189 Allyn Street and 53-59 High Street); Map 419, Block 6, Parcel 6 (402-418 Asylum Street); and Map 419, Block 8, Parcel 2 (28 High Street).

Boundary Justification: See continuation sheet.

The boundary includes three contiguous late 19th/early 20th-century commercial blocks; surrounding properties are either modern construction or surface-level parking lots.

11. Form Prepared By

Name/Title: Bruce Clouette and Hoang Tinh, reviewed by John Herzan,

Organization: Historic Resource Consultants Date: March 20, 1998

Street & Number: 55 Van Dyke Avenue Telephone: 860-547-0268

City or Town: Hartford State: CT Zip: 06106

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Description High Street Historic District
 Hartford, Hartford County, CT

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The High Street Historic District in Hartford is a grouping of three large commercial buildings, dating from c.1860 to 1926, on High Street between Allyn Street on the north and Asylum Street on the south. The buildings are five or six stories tall, with brick facades and elaborate decorative detailing in various historical-revival styles. Two of the buildings are corner buildings and thus have two street-facing elevations; otherwise, the side and rear elevations are generally devoid of architectural embellishment. The 19th-century buildings are of load-bearing brick masonry construction, while the 1926 Capitol Building, 402-418 Asylum Street, is a steel-framed structure with a brick exterior. All the buildings have contrasting architectural trim carried out in various types of cut stone.

The buildings form a distinct cluster of historical architecture, separated from their surroundings by modern office and hotel buildings adjoining the district on Asylum Street and surface-level parking to the north, west, and east. To the south, at the corner of High Street and Asylum Street, the district adjoins the portion of Bushnell Park that serves as the setting for the Connecticut State Capitol (1878). Although there have been some exterior changes to the buildings, particularly at the street level, overall they retain a great amount of original architectural detailing and thus retain their integrity of design and materials.

Below are descriptions of the buildings in the district, all of which are counted as contributing properties:

Judd and Root Building (Professional Building), 175-189 Allyn Street, Romanesque Revival style, 1883, Francis H. Kimball and Thomas Wisedell, architects (Photographs 1 and 2). Brick construction, 6 stories, approximately 140 x 90 feet in plan. Notable decorative elements include limestone beltcourses and rustication, banded flat-arch lintels, brick corbel tables, terra-cotta bands; terra-cotta panels with griffins and other carved ornament surrounding third-story arched windows; smooth engaged columns on sixth story, and parapet with inset terra-cotta panels. Ground-floor storefronts have modern stucco finish.

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Description

High Street Historic District
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Capitol Building, 402-418 Asylum Street, Neo-Classical Revival style, 1926, Thomas W. Lamb, architect, Ferrigno and Perrone, contractor (Photographs 3-6). Steel-frame construction with concrete roof and floors and yellow-brick exterior walls, 6 stories, approximately 175 x 100 feet in plan. Originally had parking garage in basement. Rusticated granite first story, with arched recessed entranceways centered on Asylum and High Streets. Storefronts retain green-marble panels and granite pilasters; modern awnings. Entries have building name in Roman-style lettering, keystones, cartouches, and tiled soffits with paired Neo-Classical winged female victory figures holding wreaths (Photographs 5 and 6). Fifth and sixth-story bays demarcated by granite Ionic pilasters with ashlar shafts. Cornice enriched with disks along the frieze, dentils, leaf-carved modillions, and metal acanthus-leaf cresting. Lobby detail includes vaulted ceilings and mosaics of Hartford's Old State House (1796) and current Connecticut State Capitol (1878).

Batterson Block (Lewtan Building), 28 High Street, Gothic Revival/Romanesque Revival style, c.1860, architect unknown (Photographs 7-8). Brick construction, 5 stories, approximately 40 x 120 feet in plan; top story replaced original mansard roof with dormers. Fifth through third stories have pointed-arched openings outlined by stone drip molds. First-story arches (stuccoed over) supported on engaged polished-marble columns with foliate capitals, with similar but smaller columns on the upper stories. Second and third-story openings have limestone/brownstone polychromatic banding. Fourth story has round-arched openings outlined in brick. Cornice is embellished with round-arched corbel table, cross-shaped recesses, and terracotta guttae.

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**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Significance High Street Historic District
 Hartford, Hartford County, CT

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Summary

The High Street Historic District is significant as one of a diminishing number of groupings of buildings in downtown Hartford that embody the distinguishing characteristics of the urban commercial architecture of the late 19th and early 20th centuries (Criterion C). The multi-story, facade-oriented form of the buildings, their brick and stone exteriors, and their elaborate architectural detailing are all typical of such business blocks, which at one time dominated the streetscapes of Hartford and other medium and large-sized American cities. The district also has historical significance: its buildings illustrate the role of Hartford as a vibrant commercial center, one that underwent rapid growth in the period between the Civil War and the Great Depression.

Architectural Significance

The three buildings in the district are significant because they epitomize the commercial architecture of urban America in the late 19th and early 20th centuries and serve as illustrations of particular architectural styles. Moreover, two of the three buildings in the district were designed by well-known architects with practices in New York City (the designer of the Batterson Block is not known), and these Hartford buildings contribute to an understanding of their careers.

The district's buildings reflect the response of commercial architecture to rising urban land values, which called for a greater building density. Among the distinguishing characteristics of the commercial architecture of the period are multi-story height; substantial, fire-resistant construction; the siting of buildings directly on the sidewalk, with little or no space between buildings, which are built out to the limits of the property lines on most sides; and concentration of architectural elaboration where it could be seen, that is, the street-facing elevations. Commercial buildings in the period were often regarded as statements of the prosperity and good taste of their owners and occupants, so exceptional effort and expense were lavished on their exteriors. In the case of the Batterson Block, such pride is evident in the corbelling, arched windows, and granite columns of the facade; the latter played the dual role of advertisement for the owner's business in stone for buildings and memorials. Similar expense is evident in the extensive terra-cotta detailing applied to the headquarters of the Judd and Root wholesale wool business; so intricate are the griffins and vines on the third-floor terra-cotta panels that one is hard-pressed to say whether the firm's initials are

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CONTINUATION SHEET**

Significance High Street Historic District
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depicted or not (Photograph 1); in 1901 the Judd and Root building was judged to be "one of the finest in the city" (*Commemorative Biographical Record*, p. 78). Decades later, the Capitol Building was hailed as "the latest achievement in beautiful exterior design" by the *Commercial Record*, which selected it as one of the year's most notable buildings in Connecticut, even though the magazine misunderstood its clearly Roman allusions as a "Grecian design" (February 23, 1926, p. 82).

All three buildings illustrate the eclectic borrowing from historical sources that characterized Victorian and early 20th-century architecture. The Batterson Building combines Romanesque corbelling and columns with Gothic arches and dripmolds; if a single precedent is to be chosen, it would be in the Moorish-influenced buildings of medieval Italy and Spain. The point was not academic correctness, however, so much as a rich density of decoration that would create a picturesque effect. A similar intent appears evident in the more consistently Romanesque Revival Judd and Root Building (though it too has one pointed-arch opening visible in the alley where the first floor has not been covered over). Both buildings exhibit the variety in surface colors and textures that was so valued in the period in their banded arches and contrasting stone, brick, and terra-cotta details.

With the 1926 Capitol Building, the focus shifted to ancient Rome, or at least Renaissance interpretations of Roman architecture, but the basic rules of dense ornamentation drawn from historical sources and use of expensive materials remained unchanged. The building is an excellent example of the Neo-Classical Revival style, right down to the lettering style above the entries. The Classical cornice and use of pilasters were favored in the early 20th century because of connotations of wealth, traditional good taste, serious purpose, and permanence. These qualities undoubtedly were especially appealing to the building's long-term tenant, the Capitol Bank and Trust Company. Adding to the Capitol Building's architectural distinctiveness are the local allusions in its soffit and lobby: the mosaics of the other two "capitols" and the female figures that recall John Randolph Rogers's *Genius of Connecticut*, which formerly stood atop the State Capitol's dome. Finally, the Capitol Building is notable because it was considered so architecturally up-to-date in its day. In addition to the convenience of multiple elevators, the building offered a built-in garage for automobile access and nearly fireproof construction.

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Significance High Street Historic District
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Francis Hatch Kimball (1845-1919)

The designer of the Judd and Root building, Francis H. Kimball, had a prominent architectural career both in Hartford and in New York City. Born in Kennebunk, Maine, he learned architecture as a draftsman in Boston under the tutelage of Gridley J. F. Bryant and Louis P. Rogers. He came to Hartford in the 1870s to supervise construction of the firm's design for the Charter Oak Insurance Company building and then served as superintending architect for the erection of buildings at Trinity College designed by the English architect William Burges. In 1879 Kimball went to New York where he formed a partnership with Thomas Wisedell; they designed Hartford's landmark Goodwin Building, an elaborate exercise in brick and terra cotta in the Queen Anne style. The Judd and Root Building, two years later, used the same materials and a similar high degree of ornamentation, but in a more Romanesque style.

Francis Kimball designed several important buildings in New York, including the Catholic Apostolic Church (1885) on 57th Street, Emmanuel Baptist Church (1887) on Lafayette Avenue, and the Trinity and U.S. Realty buildings (1906) on Broadway. All exhibit the rich masonry detail that Kimball first used in his Hartford works. From 1892 until shortly before his death in 1919, Kimball was partners with George Kramer Thompson.

Thomas White Lamb (1871-1942)

Born in Dundee, Scotland, Thomas W. Lamb grew up in New York City. Today he is rightly remembered as one of the country's finest theater architects. In addition to such New York City landmarks as Loew's 175th Street Theater on Broadway and the Audubon Ballroom, Lamb designed vaudeville houses and movie palaces in cities across the country. His theaters were regarded as entertainment in their own right: in addition to facades richly embellished with cast-stone or terra-cotta details, Lamb theaters featured breath-taking interiors with domes, stained-glass screens, and a plethora of "carved" ornament, all of which Lamb minutely delineated in his drawings.

Hartford's Capitol Building is important because it offers a commercial counterpoint to Lamb's primary specialty. Although overall the design is much more restrained than his exuberant theater facades, the same attention to detail can be seen in the cornice enrichment, entrance soffits, and lobby tile. Although they employ the same Classical/Renaissance vocabulary, the localistic references are

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Significance High Street Historic District
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interesting because Lamb's theaters typically used much more generic detailing. Lamb departed from the overall theme evident in the Capitol Building--rich Classical detailing applied to a simplified Renaissance palazzo form--only at the end of his career, when he gave his arches and columns a distinctly Art-Deco tone.

Historical Significance

In addition to their architectural qualities, the buildings of the High Street Historic District are important because they recall Hartford's historical role as a commercial center for much of Connecticut. Although it had a large industrial sector as well, Hartford in the 19th and early 20th centuries was home to major retail, wholesale, insurance, financial, and professional enterprises. One consequence of its economic vitality was an ever-growing density of development in the downtown commercial area. Blocks that had been residential neighborhoods in the 1860s, such as High Street north of Asylum, were transformed into areas of tightly packed multi-story business blocks. In the case of the Capitol Building, the last of the three to be built, the site had been occupied by the Park Congregational Church; like several other downtown religious organizations in the period, it no longer had nearby residential areas from which to draw parishioners.

Although constructed over a span of six decades, each of the three buildings in the district illuminates the interplay of economic activities that made Hartford a thriving city. The Batterson Building, the earliest of the three, was erected as a speculative venture by James G. Batterson (1823-1901); it was originally part of a two-building parcel with a similar, though somewhat larger, building on the corner of Asylum Street. Batterson's first business was quarrying stone; his company, the New England Granite Company, supplied the granite for the Library of Congress in Washington, D.C., and many other prominent buildings. In 1863 he founded the Travelers Insurance Company, one of the firms that earned the label "Insurance City" for Hartford. Batterson's buildings at the corner of Asylum and High Streets, however, were intended as income properties and were occupied by a variety of light-industrial and commercial tenants. The building at 28 High Street was home, over the years, to the Hartford Silver Plate Company factory, a print shop, a paper box factory, and, in the 20th century, the Gross Brothers Furniture store and the studio of Nathan Margolis, who produced high-quality reproductions and hand-crafted furniture.

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The Judd and Root building was built by the firm of Henry C. Judd and Judson H. Root, wool merchants who were reportedly "one of the largest wholesalers in the country." (*Commemorative Biographical Record*, 1901, p. 78). The ground floor accommodated offices and storefronts (one was a grocery), while the upper floors were devoted to additional offices and wool storage. Judd and Root were one of the vital links between wool raisers and textile mills, many of the latter of which were located in Connecticut and other New England states. The elegance of the firm's Hartford headquarters testifies to both its prosperity and the importance of Hartford as a center for wholesale trade. In the 1920s the building acquired its present name, the Professional Building. The ground floor housed a pharmacy and a surgical supply company, while more than 50 physicians and surgeons had their offices on the upper floors.

The third building in the district, the Capitol Building, was envisioned from the start as top-flight commercial and office space. Its view of the State Capitol across the beautifully landscaped Bushnell Park provided it with its name and, presumably, some marketable cachet. On its street level, the building was quickly occupied by a men's clothing store, barber shop, beautician shop, and tobacconist, as well as two major tenants: a Western Union Telegraph office and the newly chartered Capitol National Bank and Trust, a bank and investment firm with a relationship with Kidder-Peabody of New York City. The upper floors were slower to rent, but within a few years the Capitol Building was occupied by an assemblage of doctors, dentists, accountants, insurance agents, and advertizing agencies. The early 20th century was a prosperous period for Hartford. The population more than doubled from 98,915 in 1900 to 164,072 in 1930, and hundreds of housing units were built each year. Hartford's factories competed for the title of largest of their kind in the world (such as the Underwood and Royal Typewriter factories and the Colt's Patent Firearms plant), its insurance companies reached national and international prominence, and its banks were the largest in the state. The Capitol Building, with its large size, ornate architectural detailing, and "modern" conveniences, symbolizes the heyday of Hartford.

The headiness of the 1920s is also reflected in the careers of the Capitol Building's developers. In 1920 Joseph (Giuseppe) Ferrigno and Thomas Perrone listed their occupations individually as "bricklayer." By 1924 they had formed a partnership and advertized themselves as "builders." The following year, their confidence impressed enough investors that they were able to raise \$1.5 million to purchase the

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land, hire a prominent New York architect¹, and put up an office building, which they contracted to their own firm. The \$900,000 construction loan was the largest to date by Parker-Smith of New Haven. Although the venture might appear today to have been risky, Ferrigno and Perrone were actually following a proven path for Italian-American entrepreneurs in Hartford, several of whom had already assembled impressive fortunes in construction and real estate.

Ferrigno and Perrone were unable to sustain their position during the economic collapse of the Great Depression, and the Second National Bank of New Haven took over the Capitol Building and operated it for many years thereafter². Capitol Bank and Trust remained as an important tenant until it was absorbed into another bank, and the upper floors continued to accommodate a variety of professional and organizational and professional tenants. Among the latter were groups that played an important role in the civic life of the city and the state: the Connecticut Chamber of Commerce, the American Red Cross, and the League of Women Voters. The proximity to the State Capitol was undoubtedly a factor in the decision by various trade groups, such as the Motor Truck Association of Connecticut, to locate their offices there. During World War II, important agencies such as the State Defense Council and the War Production Board maintained offices in the Capitol Building, and it was during the war that the state Republican Party began its long association with this address.

¹No hard evidence exists to explain why they chose Thomas W. Lamb as the architect; however, Lamb had designed several Connecticut theaters for another prominent Italian-American, the impresario Silvestro Poli, an intriguing coincidence.

²Although Joseph Ferrigno and Thomas Perrone went their separate ways, both remained active in the contracting business (albeit on a smaller scale) in Hartford for many years.

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**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
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Bibliography High Street Historic District 9-1
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MAPS AND VIEWS:

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CONTINUATION SHEET**

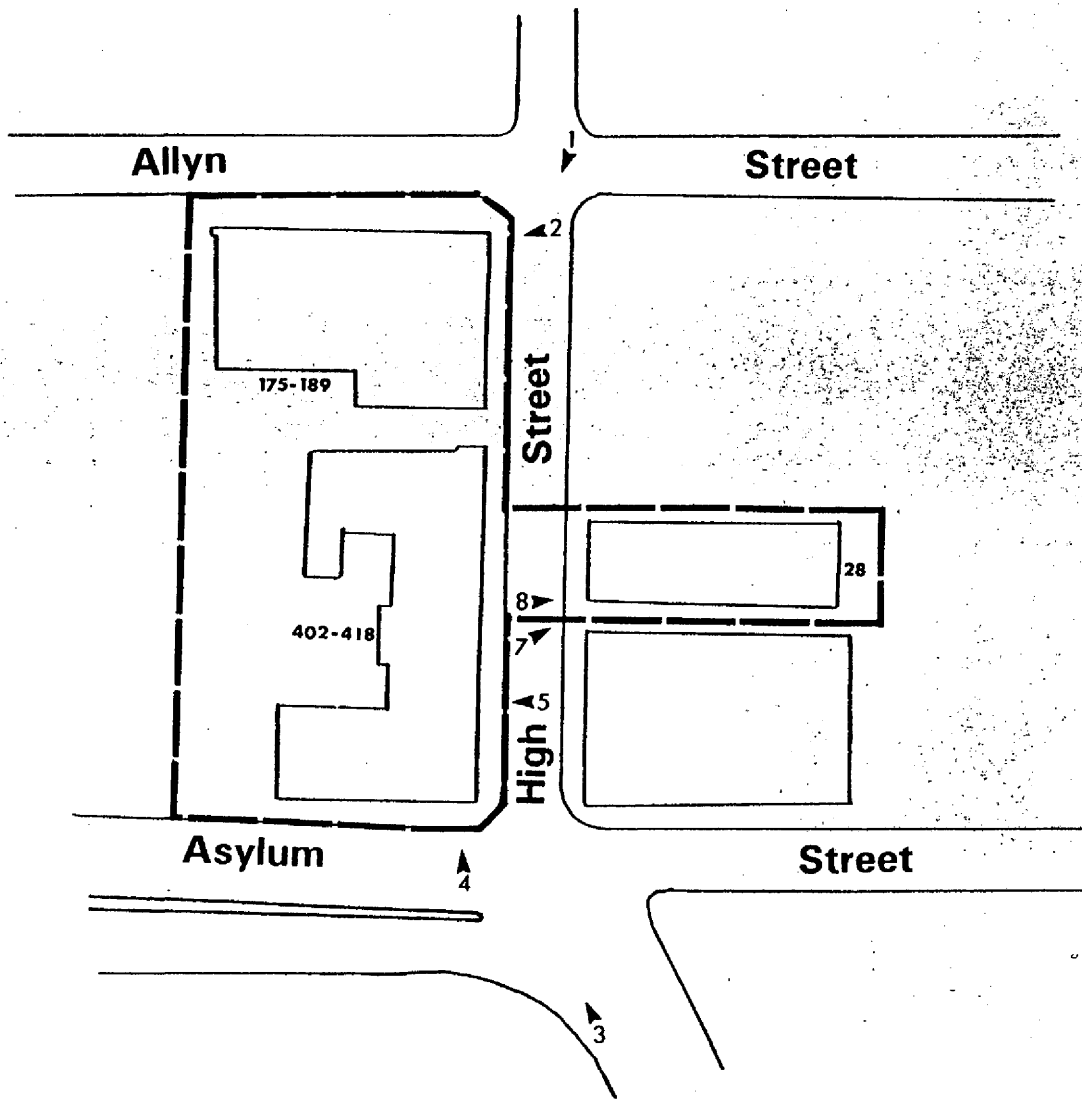
Geographical Data High Street Historic District
 Hartford, Hartford County, CT

10-1

UTM References:

1. 18.692780.4626460
2. 18.692780.4626420
3. 18.692830.4626420
4. 18.692830.4626380
5. 18.692780.4626390
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High Street Historic District Hartford, Hartford County, CT

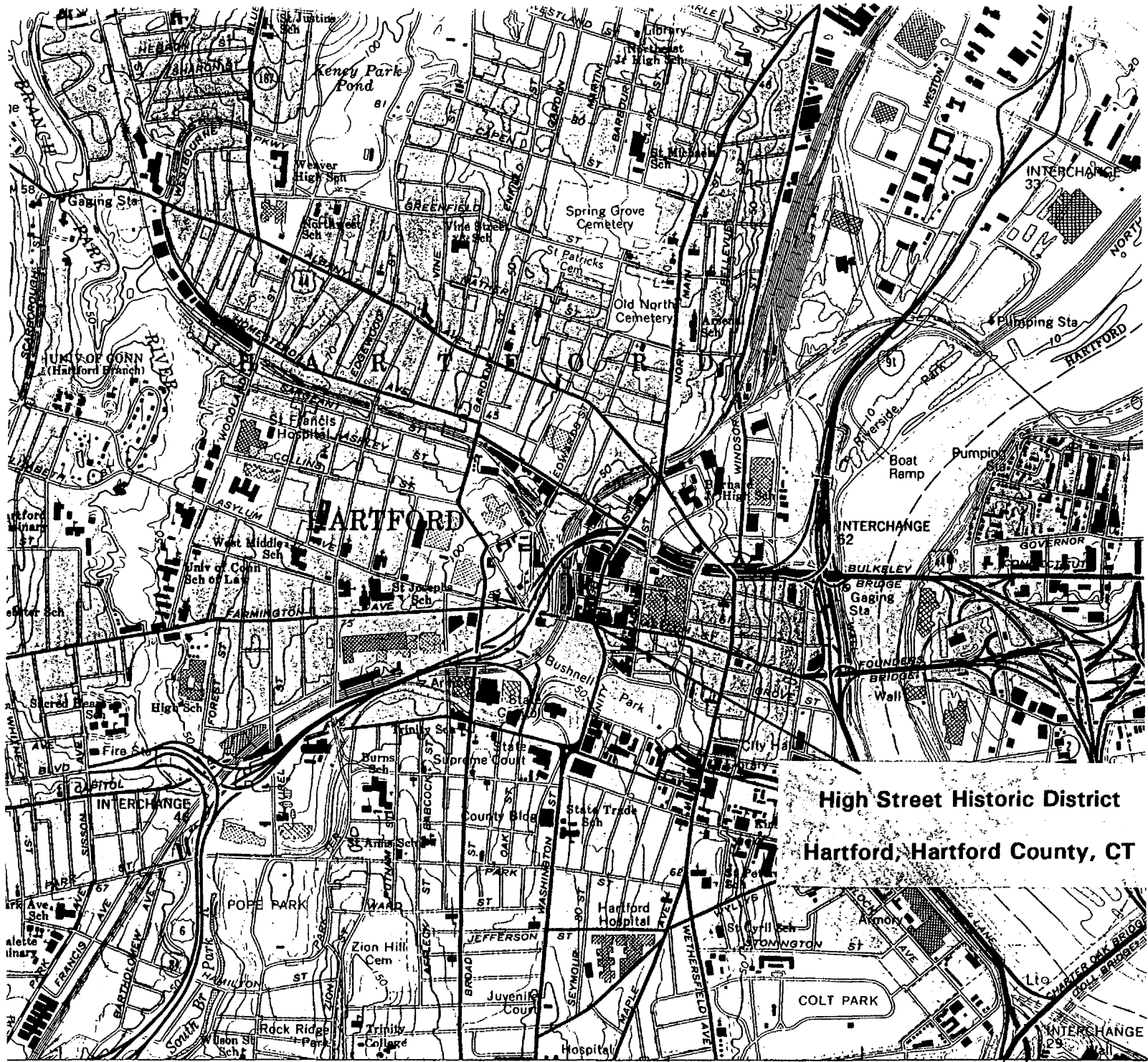


— District Boundary

2 Photo Position



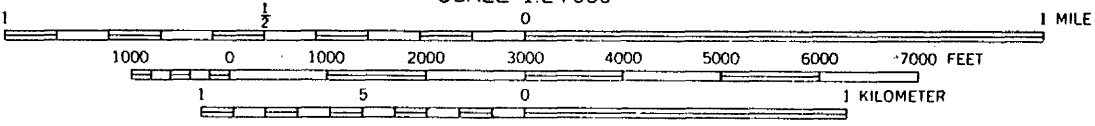
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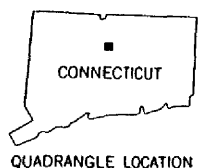
**High Street Historic District
Hartford, Hartford County, CT**

42°30" 691 692 (HARTFORD SOUTH) 693 40' 15 5 91 695

SCALE 1:24 000



CONTOUR INTERVAL 10 FEET
NATIONAL GEODETIC VERTICAL DATUM OF 1929



C NORTH SHEET
d compiled
id other sources
not field checked

THIS MAP COMPLIES WITH NATIONAL MAP ACCURACY STANDARDS
FOR SALE BY U.S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY
DENVER, COLORADO 80225, OR RESTON, VIRGINIA 22092
A FOLDER DESCRIBING TOPOGRAPHIC MAPS AND SYMBOLS IS AVAILABLE ON REQUEST

areas

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**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
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Photographs

High Street Historic District
Hartford, Hartford County, CT

Photos-1

All photographs:

1. High Street Historic District
2. Hartford, Hartford County, CT
4. February, 1998
5. Negative filed with Connecticut Historical Commission
Hartford, CT

Captions:

Judd and Root Building (Professional Building), 175-189 Allyn Street,
Capitol Building visible on left; camera facing southwest
Photograph 1 of 8

Detail of architectural embellishment, High Street elevation, Judd and
Root Building, 175-189 Allyn Street, camera facing west
Photograph 2 of 8

Capitol Building, 402-418 Asylum Street, camera facing northwest
Photograph 3 of 8

Detail of upper stories, Capitol Building, 402-418 Asylum Street,
camera facing north
Photograph 4 of 8

Detail of High Street entry, Capitol Building, 402-418 Asylum Street,
camera facing west
Photograph 5 of 8

Detail of soffit decoration, Asylum Street entry
Photograph 6 of 8

Batterson Block (Lewtan Building), 28 High Street, camera facing
northeast
Photograph 7 of 8

Architectural details, Batterson Block, camera facing east
Photograph 8 of 8