

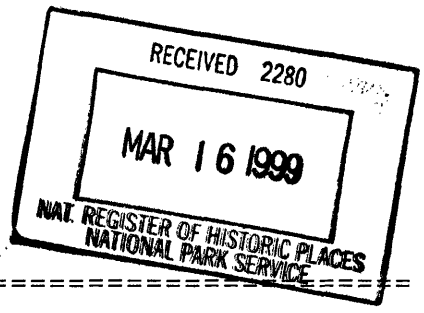
449

NPS Form 10-900  
(Rev. 8-86)

OMB No. 1024-0018

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
REGISTRATION FORM**



=====

1. Name of Property  
=====

historic name: \_\_\_\_\_

other name/site number: South Main and Washington Streets Historic District (Boundary Increase #2)

=====

2. Location  
=====

street & number: 1-5 Ann Street (77-79 North Main Street); 9, 11, 15, 23, 29, 38, 41, 50, 55 North Main Street

city/town: Norwalk not for publication: N/A  
vicinity: South Norwalk

state: CT county: Fairfield code: 001 zip code: 06854

=====

3. Classification  
=====

Ownership of Property: private

Category of Property: district

Number of Resources within Property:

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>10</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>10</u>	<u>0</u>	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register: 1

Name of related multiple property listing: N/A

4. State/Federal Agency Certification

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.

Signature of certifying official: John W. Shannahan, Director, Connecticut Historical Commission; Date: March 10, 1999

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

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: Elson H. Beall; Date of Action: 4-15-99

6. Function or Use

Historic: COMMERCE Sub: specialty store, financial institution, theater; Current: COMMERCE Sub: specialty store, financial institution, theater

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

Architectural Classification:

Italianate  
Queen Anne  
Classical Revival

Other Description: N/A

Materials: foundation STONE roof ASPHALT  
walls BRICK other METAL  
STONE

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

=====  
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.1870 - 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.
- previously listed in the National Register Norwalk City Hall
- previously determined eligible by the National Register 41 No. Main St.
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # \_\_\_\_\_
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # \_\_\_\_\_

Primary Location of Additional Data:

- 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: 3 acres

UTM References:	Zone	Easting	Northing	Zone	Easting	Northing
	A	_____	_____	B	_____	_____
	C	_____	_____	D	_____	_____

X See continuation sheet.

Verbal Boundary Description: See continuation sheet.  
 The boundary is shown on the accompanying sketch map, scale 1 inch = 200 feet.

Boundary Justification: See continuation sheet.  
 The boundary includes all contiguous late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup>-century buildings and excludes buildings of recent construction.

11. Form Prepared By

Name/Title: Bruce Clouette and Hoang Tinh, reviewed by John Herzan,  
Conn. Hist. Commission  
 Organization: Historic Resource Consultants Date: July 1, 1998  
 Street & Number: 55 Van Dyke Avenue Telephone: 860-547-0268  
 City or Town: Hartford State: CT Zip: 06106

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**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

<b>Functions and Uses</b>	<b>South Main and Washington Streets Historic District (Boundary Increase #2) South Norwalk (Norwalk), Fairfield County, CT</b>	<b>6-1</b>
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**Historic:**

COMMERCE: Restaurant  
GOVERNMENT: City Hall

**Current:**

COMMERCE: Restaurant  
RECREATION AND CULTURE: Museum  
VACANT/NOT IN USE

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**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

<b>Description</b>	<b>South Main and Washington Streets Historic District (Boundary Increase #2) South Norwalk (Norwalk), Fairfield County, CT</b>	<b>7-1</b>
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**Architectural Classification:**

Colonial Revival  
Late Gothic Revival  
Moderne  
Other: Post-Modern

**Present and Historic Physical Appearance:**

This boundary increase extends the historic commercial district of South Norwalk north of the 1895 railroad bridge so as to include eight contiguous buildings on the east side of the street and two on the west side. They are predominantly large late 19th or early 20<sup>th</sup>-century commercial buildings, of brick construction and two or three stories high. Like the buildings in the existing district, they are situated directly on the sidewalk and form a continuous line of storefronts along the curve of North Main Street; two are corner blocks that continue along Ann and Marshall Streets, side streets running to the east. Most of the storefronts have been modernized, but the upper floors continue to exhibit the characteristic features of various historical architectural styles: Queen Anne-style shingling and tower (Photograph 1), Italianate cornice brackets and arched windows (Photograph 2), and Neo-Classical pilasters and entablatures (Photographs 3-6). One late-1920s building represents the late Gothic Revival, with foliate corbels and bands of pointed-arch ornament (Photographs 7 and 8), while another exhibits stylized Classical and geometric ornament reflective of Art Deco inspiration (Photographs 9 and 10).

Outside of this boundary increase, the other blocks on the west side of North Main Street, as well as both sides north of the proposed boundary, are characterized by modern office and commercial buildings; the boundary was delineated so as to include contiguous historic commercial buildings similar to those in the original district and its increase to the south. Together with this increase, the entire historic commercial center of South Norwalk will be encompassed by the South Main and Washington Streets Historic District.

All of the buildings have been classified as contributing. One, an amalgam of two one-story 19<sup>th</sup>-century buildings behind a Post-Modern "Classical" facade, represents a substantial alteration; however, even in this case the distinctive siting and scale of a turn-of-the-century

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**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

**Description** **South Main and Washington Streets** **7-2**  
**Historic District (Boundary Increase #2)**  
**South Norwalk (Norwalk), Fairfield County, CT**

commercial district remain, and from the rear, the building's original brick walls are intact and make clear its historical origins.

**Inventory of Resources**

<b>Address</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Contributing/ Noncontributing</b>
1-5 Ann Street (77-79 North Main St.)	MURVON BUILDING, Neo-Classical details, 1928, Bernhardt Doehrer (Norwalk), architect. Two stories, red brick walls with yellow brick accents, brick piers, parapet, three-part "Chicago" windows. Main entrance has cast-stone pilasters, lintel, cresting; round-arched second-story window above. Photograph 6.	Contributing
9 North Main Street	Queen Anne style wood-frame building, c.1890, two stories, low-pitched roof, clapboard and shingle exterior. Round-arched second-story windows. Round tower with conical roof cantilevered at second story, southwest corner. Photograph 1.	Contributing
11 North Main Street	EDLIN BUILDING, Italianate style, c.1880, three stories, brick walls, bracketed cornice, segmental-arched windows with cast-iron acanthus leaf-detailed hoodmolds and sills. Ground level altered c.1980, second story c.1920. Photograph 2.	Contributing
21 North Main Street	Two formerly separate brick one-story 19th-century buildings now combined behind one five-bay stucco Post-Modern Neo-Classical facade. Photograph 3.	Contributing

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**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

**Description** **South Main and Washington Streets** **7-3**  
**Historic District (Boundary Increase #2)**  
**South Norwalk (Norwalk), Fairfield County, CT**

<b>Address</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Contributing/ Noncontributing</b>
23 North Main Street	Commercial building, c.1900, Neo-Classical style, two stories, yellow-brick walls, brick parapet above Classical denticulated cornice. Second-story windows altered, 1924. Photographs 3 and 4.	Contributing
29 North Main Street	PALACE THEATER, orig. Beaux Arts style, 1914, W. H. and H. McLean (Boston), architects; substantially remodeled, Neo-Classical style, 1929, Eugene DeRosa (New York City), architect. Two stories, brick walls with limestone detailing (parapet urns, cornice moldings, festooned shield on pediment, stylized Composite capitals on pilasters). Photographs 3-5.	Contributing
38 North Main Street	Commercial building, 1928, Late Gothic Revival style, Benjamin Dreisler (New York City), architect. Two stories, brick and steel construction, cast-stone facade in imitation of travertine, Gothic-arch frieze above first story and along stepped parapet. Second-story pilasters with Gothic-arch panels, Medieval foliate corbels, and bell-shaped domed caps. Photographs 7-8.	Contributing



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**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

**Description** **South Main and Washington Streets** **7-4**  
**Historic District (Boundary Increase #2)**  
**South Norwalk (Norwalk), Fairfield County, CT**

41 North Main Street	NORWALK CITY HALL (Norwalk Museum), Colonial Revival style, 1912, Barber and Bissell, architects. Hip roof with domed belfry, two-and-a-half stories, brick walls, quoins. Two-story pedimented portico with four marble Doric columns. Photograph 3.	Contributing
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Address	Description	Contributing/ Noncontributing
50 North Main Street	PEOPLES TRUST COMPANY (Fleet Bank), 1929, Moderne style, Frank H. Bissell (Norwalk), architect. Two stories, limestone facade. Wide fluted pilasters; parapet panels with eagle, shield, and flower decoration. Metal window spandrels between stories have floral decoration, fluting, and zig-zag bands. Panel above entry decorated with zig-zags and stylized waves, flowers, leaves, and interlocking tendrils. Photographs 9-10.	Contributing
55 North Main Street	SAMUEL ROODNER BUILDING, Commercial style, 1924. H. E. Koerner (Bridgeport), architect. Two stories, brick exterior, soldier-course accents, stepped parapet.	Contributing

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**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

<b>Significance</b>	<b>South Main and Washington Streets Historic District (Boundary Increase #2) South Norwalk (Norwalk), Fairfield County, CT</b>	<b>8-1</b>
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**Summary:**

The buildings in this boundary increase contribute to the significance of the South Main and Washington Streets Historic District by adding numerous well-preserved examples of particular types of commercial architecture (Criterion C) and by further substantiating the area's historical importance in the economic development of Norwalk (Criterion A). South Norwalk's role as a harbor, railroad junction, and industrial center led to commercial expansion in the post-Civil War period, with banks, mercantile blocks, and wholesale and retail businesses first appearing on Washington Street, and then spreading outward on South and North Main Streets. Prior to its commercial development, the area in this boundary increase was characterized by a mixture of hat factories and other small-scale industrial enterprises, scattered dwellings, and small business buildings such as that still in place at 9 North Main Street (Photograph 1). In the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, the various properties were developed with an ever-increasing density, until by 1930 the area had come to resemble the rest of South Norwalk's central business district.

**Architectural Significance:**

In terms of the range of styles and the degree of architectural embellishment, the buildings in this boundary increase are comparable to those in the district as originally listed and as amended. The Italianate style is epitomized in the upper-story arched windows, bracketed cornice, and finely detailed cast-iron window sills and lintels of the Edlin Building (Photograph 2). The characteristic features of turn-of-the-century revival styles, particularly the Neo-Classical and Colonial, are in evidence in the building at 23 North Main Street, the Palace Theater, the Norwalk City Hall, and the Murvon Building (Photographs 3 - 6). In addition, the boundary increase adds two outstanding examples of the commercial architecture of the 1920s, a Late Gothic Revival block executed in cast-stone and a richly ornamented Art-Deco bank building (Photographs 7- 10), further extending the diversity of the district's architecture.

The architects of the buildings in the boundary increase represent a mix of New York City and local practitioners similar to that found in the other parts of the district. The Neo-Gothic building and the Palace Theater as re-built in 1929 were the work of architects from the City, Benjamin Dreisler and Eugene DeRosa, respectively, while other blocks were designed by H. E. Koerner of Bridgeport and Bernhardt

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**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

**Significance**                      **South Main and Washington Streets**                      **8-2**  
**Historic District (Boundary Increase #2)**  
**South Norwalk (Norwalk), Fairfield County, CT**

Doehrer and Frank H. Bissell of Norwalk. Bissell (1881-1957) had a large influence on the look of Norwalk that endures to this day. In addition to the Norwalk City Hall, he designed many other important early 20<sup>th</sup>-century public buildings, including two schools, a fire station, and a public library, either alone or in partnership with Joel D. Barber. Bissell's Moderne design for the People's Trust Company building is a model of the stylization and iconography that characterized that movement. The combination of geometric zigzags and vegetative motifs in the window spandrels and entry panels is especially notable, as are the frieze carvings that incorporate an eagle, shield, and flower, appropriately symbolizing the strength, protection, and growth offered by the bank within.

**Historical Importance:**

The buildings in the boundary increase further illustrate a significant chapter in Norwalk's economic history, the emergence of South Norwalk as an important commercial center. Samuel Roodner, a South Norwalk flour and grain dealer who built several buildings in the earlier-listed parts of the district, once again played a key role in propelling the city's growth. Roodner was responsible for both the initial construction of the Palace Theater and for its alteration to its present appearance in 1929, and he built the large block at the corner of North Main and Marshall Streets that originally accommodated 14 stores. Roodner was born in 1876 in Russia and came to the United States in 1893. A biographical entry in 1928 noted that "in fact, Mr. Roodner has completely rebuilt the city" and that his many "large and imposing edifices" had made him the town's biggest taxpayer (Wilson, Vol. III, p. 224). Roodner was not alone in his speculative activities. A group of industrial managers, attorneys, and small businessmen, of both Yankee and immigrant heritage, founded the People's Trust Company in 1913 to provide capital that would further sustain the area's business growth, and riding the wave of prosperity in the 1920s, the bank moved from its original location on Washington Street to a new headquarters on North Main Street. The Murvon Building at the corner of Ann Street was built about the same time by another set of Norwalk entrepreneurs, Julianna Murphy and Edward H. Von Castleton. Murphy was the proprietor of the Murphy Manufacturing Company, a toy and novelty factory started by her father, when she married Von Castleton, and together they added numerous other businesses to their portfolio, including a seed company, a printing company, and interests in two bowling alleys.

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## NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET

<b>Significance</b>	<b>South Main and Washington Streets Historic District (Boundary Increase #2) South Norwalk (Norwalk), Fairfield County, CT</b>	<b>8-3</b>
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One distinguishing characteristic of turn-of-the-century central business districts that is well-illustrated by the boundary increase was a rich variety of businesses. A partial list of the enterprises accommodated by these ten buildings in the period 1890-1930 includes the following:

- laundry
- restaurants (at least 3, including Wing Sim's Far East)
- saloons
- furniture showroom
- groceries
- meat market
- men's clothing
- hat store
- barber
- undertaker
- candy store
- S & H Trading Stamps
- vaudeville and movie theater
- bank
- radio shop
- glass display window installer

Some of the upper-story space was residential, but most was rented out for various professional and business offices.

In summary, although the area of the boundary increase is visually separated from the earlier-listed parts of the district by the railroad overpass, there was and is a great deal of functional and physical continuity. Local business magnates such as Samuel Roodner were active throughout the area, and particularly in the 1920s, several businesses, such as the People's Trust Company, relocated from the older parts of the commercial area to newer accommodations on North Main Street. The historic uses in the boundary increase both mirror those in the earlier parts — groceries, banks, theaters, furniture stores — and add new uses particular to the early twentieth century, such as the radio shop and trading-stamp store. Finally, the similarity in architectural styles and stylishness and the distinctive appearance of the period's commercial development — large masonry buildings built-out to the sidewalk and property side lines — make the area of the boundary increase a logical continuation of the historic resource represented by the South Main and Washington Streets Historic District.

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CONTINUATION SHEET**

<b>Bibliography</b>	<b>South Main and Washington Streets Historic District (Boundary Increase #2) South Norwalk (Norwalk), Fairfield County, CT</b>	<b>9-1</b>
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**Additional Bibliography:**

*Commercial Record*, 1914-1930.

Connecticut Historical Commission. Statewide Survey of Historic  
Theaters, Hartford, 1983.

Wilson, Lynn W. *History of Fairfield County, Connecticut 1639-1928*.  
Chicago: S. J. Clarke Publishing Co., 1929.

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National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

<b>Geographic Data</b>	<b>South Main and Washington Streets Historic District (Boundary Increase #2) South Norwalk (Norwalk), Fairfield County, CT</b>	<b>10-1</b>
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**UTM REFERENCES:**

- 1: 18.632720.4550990
- 2: 18.632730.4550980
- 3: 18.632760.4550970
- 4: 18.632800.4550900
- 5: 18.632780.4550890
- 6: 18.632780.4550880
- 7: 18.632810.4550890
- 8: 18.632830.4550850
- 9: 18.632790.4550790
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- 11: 18.632760.4550730
- 12: 18.632760.4550820
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- 14: 18.632690.4550870
- 15: 18.632730.4550900
- 16: 18.632670.4550980

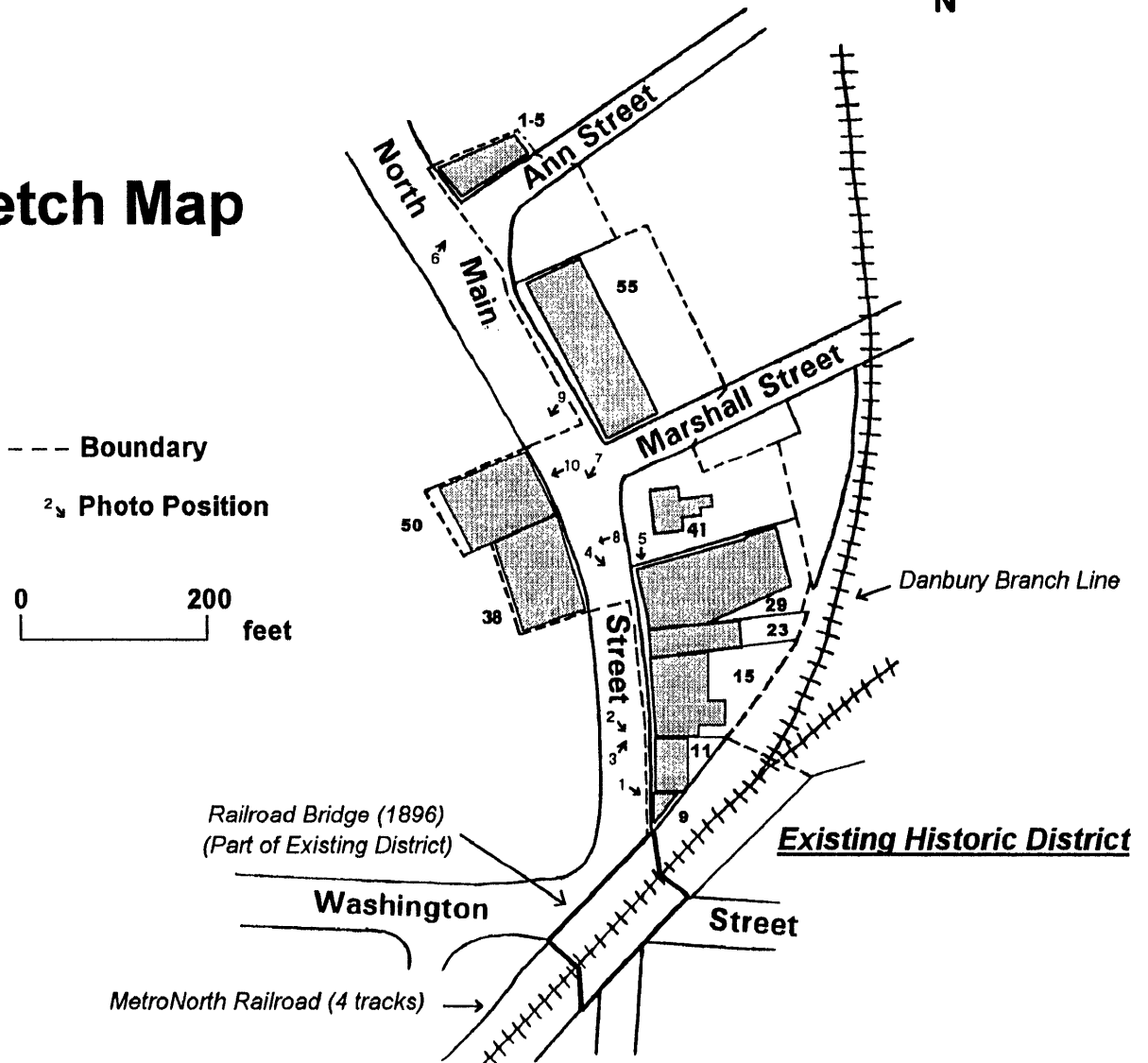
# South Main and Washington Streets Historic District

(Boundary Increase #2)

South Norwalk (Norwalk)  
Fairfield County, Connecticut



## Sketch Map

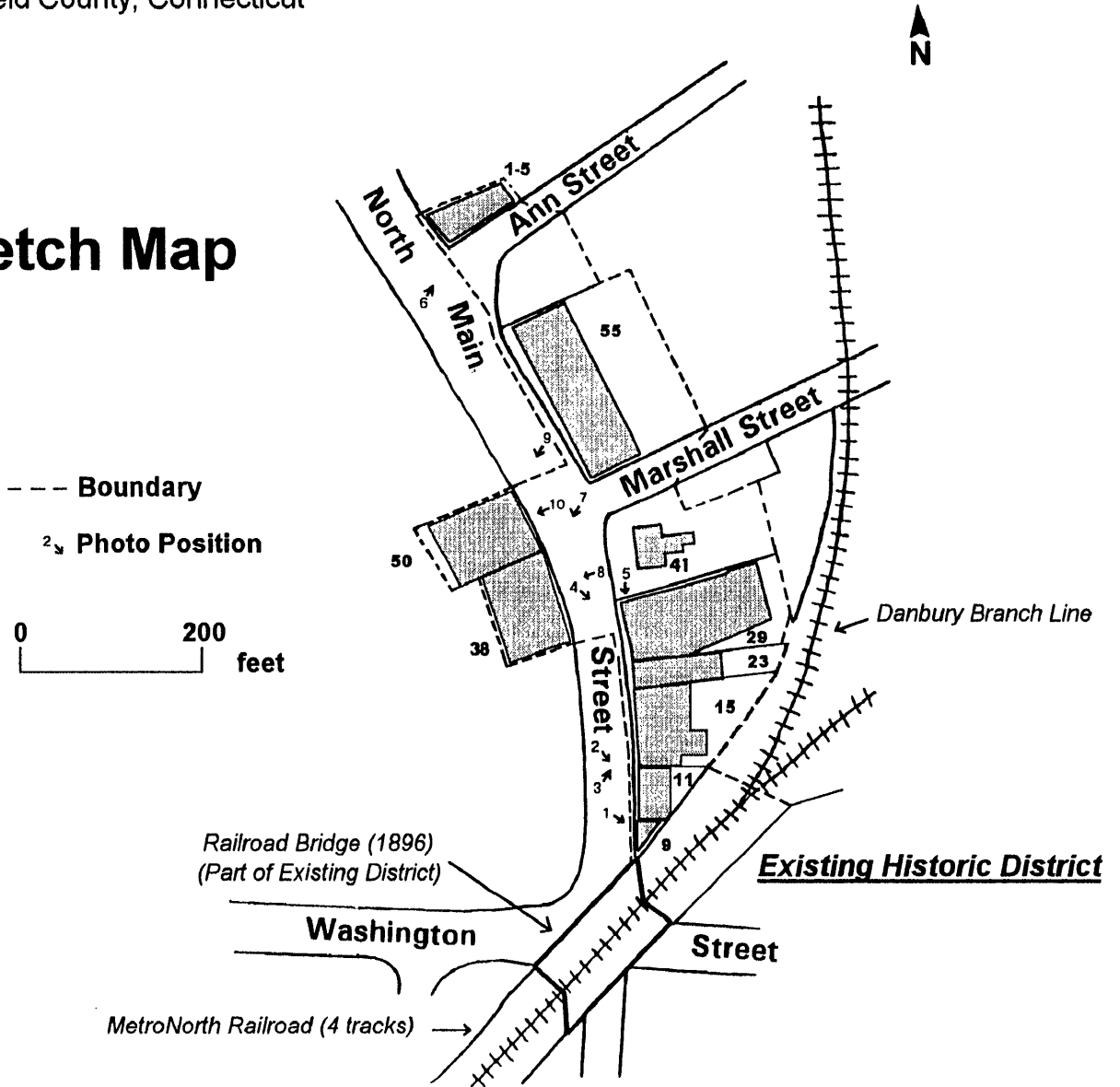


# South Main and Washington Streets Historic District

(Boundary Increase #2)

South Norwalk (Norwalk)  
Fairfield County, Connecticut

## Sketch Map





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National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

**Photographs**                      **South Main and Washington Streets**                      **Photos-1**  
**Historic District (Boundary Increase #2)**  
**South Norwalk (Norwalk), Fairfield County, CT**

**All Photographs:**

1. South Main and Washington Streets Historic District (Boundary Increase #2)
2. South Norwalk (Norwalk), Fairfield County, Connecticut
3. HRC Photograph
4. June 1998
5. Negative filed with Connecticut Historical Commission,  
59 South Prospect Street, Hartford,  
Connecticut 06106

**Captions:**

Building at 9 North Main Street, camera facing east  
Photograph 1 of 10

Edlin Building, 11 North Main Street, camera facing southeast  
Photograph 2 of 10

East side of North Main Street, 21 through 41 North Main Street, camera facing northeast  
Photograph 3 of 10

Palace Theater, 29 North Main Street, with 23 North Main Street to right, camera facing southeast  
Photograph 4 of 10

Detail of pilaster capital, Palace Theater, 29 North Main Street, camera facing south  
Photograph 5 of 10

Murvon Building, 1-5 Ann Street, also including 77-79 North Main Street, camera facing northeast  
Photograph 6 of 10

Building, 38 North Main Street, camera facing southwest  
Photograph 7 of 10

Detail of corbel, Building, 38 North Main Street, camera facing west  
Photograph 8 of 10

Bank (Fleet Bank), 50 North Main Street, camera facing southwest  
Photograph 9 of 10

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**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

<b>Photographs</b>	<b>South Main and Washington Streets Historic District (Boundary Increase #2) South Norwalk (Norwalk), Fairfield County, CT</b>	<b>Photos-2</b>
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Detail of panel above bank entry, 50 North Main Street, camera facing  
west  
Photograph 10 of 10