NPS Form 10-900 (Rev. 8-86)	OMB No. 1024-0018
United States Department of the Interior National Park Service	1568
NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES REGISTRATION FORM	NAT. FLATTA CLATTER DE CALCES
1. Name of Property	
historic name: GREENWOOD AVENUE HISTORI	
other name/site number: <u>N/A</u>	
2. Location	
street & number: <u>Greenwood Avenue</u> , P.T. Barnum and South Street	n Square, Depot Place,
city/town: <u>Bethel</u> state: <u>CT</u> county: <u>Fairfield</u> co	not for publication: <u>N/A</u> vicinity: <u>N/A</u> ode: <u>001</u> zip code: <u>06801</u>
3. Classification	
Öwnership of Property: <u>private, public-local</u>	
Category of Property: <u>district</u>	
Number of Resources within Property:	
Contributing Noncontributing	
29 _5 buildings 1 _0 sites	
Number of contributing resources previously lis Register:	sted in the National

Name of related multiple property listing: _____N/A_____

======================================	Federal Agency Certification	======== on		==========
of 1966, a request fo standards Historic H set forth	signated authority under thas amended, I hereby certime for determination of eligibies for registering properties Places and meets the proceed in 36 CFR Part 60. In my not meet the National Regi	fy that t ility mee s in the dural and opinion,	his <u>X</u> nominations to the documentation of the documentation of the documentation of the professional requirements <u>X</u> teria. <u>See construction</u> of the property <u>X</u> teria.	on of irements _ meets
	man flor	oh	11/8/99	
Signature John W. Shar	of certifying Official mahan, Director, Connecticut Hi	storical C	Date ommission	
State or H	Federal agency and bureau			
	nion, the property mea criteria See continua			National
Signature	of commenting or other of:	ficial	Date	
======================================	Tederal agency and bureau Al Park Service Certificat:	ion		
I, hereby enter deter Nati deter Nati remov	certify that this property red in the National Register See continuation sheet. cmined eligible for the ional Register See continuation sheet. cmined not eligible for the ional Register red from the National Register	y izə () er ()// e	on A. Bea	<u> </u>
otner	(explain):		M gnature of Keeper	
		\bigcup^{S_1}	gnature of keeper	Date of Action
6. Functio	on or Use			
Historic:	DOMESTIC	========= Sub:	single_dwelling	
	RELIGION		religious facilit	<u>y</u>
	COMMERCIAL		store	
Current:	DOMESTIC	Sub:	single_dwelling	
	RELIGION		religious facilit	<u>y</u>
	COMMERCIAL		store	

7. Description Architectural Classification:

Greek Revival				
<u>Italianate</u> Vernacular				
	-			
Other Description: <u>N/A</u>				
Materials: foundation _ walls	STONE WOOD		ASPHALT	
walls _	BRICK	Other	BRICK	
Describe present and hi sheet.	storic physical	appearance	. <u>X</u> See	continuation
8. Statement of Signifi	cance			
Certifying official has relation to other prope	considered the	significan	ce of this p	
Applicable National Reg	ister Criteria:	<u>A, C</u>		
Criteria Considerations	(Exceptions) :	N/A_		
Areas of Significance:	ARCHITECTURE EXPLORATION/SET SOCIAL HISTORY	TTLEMENT		
Period(s) of Significan	ce: <u>1759</u>			
Significant Dates:	See item 7	······································		
Significant Person(s):				
Cultural Affiliation: _		at status of a sector		
Architect/Builder: <u>See</u>	Item 7			

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

	ographical References		
<u>X</u> See continu	ation sheet.		
Previous docume	entation on file (NPS):		
_ preliminary or requested	letermination of individua	l listing	(36 CFR 67) has been
	isted in the National Regi	ster	Seth Seelye House, 189 Greenwood Avenue Bethel Opera House, 188 Greenwood Avenue
_ designated a _ recorded by H	etermined eligible by the National Historic Landmar Historic American Building Historic American Engineer	k s Survey	#
Primary Locatio	on of Additional Data:		
<pre>_ Other state a _ Federal agenc _ Local governm _ University</pre>	cy -	59 Soutl	icut Historical Commission n Prospect Street 1, Connecticut 06106
10. Geographica	al Data perty: <u>approx. 21</u>		
UTM References	Zone Easting Northing	Zone East:	ing Northing
2	B B B D	·	
-	X See continuation sheet	•	
Verbal Boundary The bounda	y Description: See co ary is shown on the accomp	ntinuation anying map	n sheet. p, scale 1"=200'.
Boundary Justif	fication: <u>X</u> See contin	uation she	eet.
11. Form Prepar	red By	=========	
Name/Title:	Bruce Clouette and Hoang		
Organization: _	Historic Resource Consult	ants, Inc	Conn. Hist. Commission Date: <u>July 20, 1998</u>
Street & Number	: <u>55 Van Dyke Avenue</u>	Tel	Lephone: <u>860-547-0268</u>
City or Town: _	Hartford	Sta	ate: <u>CT_</u> Zip: <u>06106</u>

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NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET

Description Greenwood Avenue Historic District Bethel, Fairfield County, CT

The Greenwood Avenue Historic District encompasses the commercial area of the town center of Bethel, Connecticut, between P.T. Barnum Square and Depot Place. The district includes a number of shops, several restaurants, a former opera house, a public library, and a church. T buildings are mostly from the mid 19th to early 20th centuries and are The generally one to three stories high, ranging in style from Greek Revival to various Victorian styles such as the Queen Anne and Italianate. Some of the commercial buildings lack a distinctive stylistic reference but instead make use of the false-front or parapet that characterized vernacular commercial architecture in the late 19thcentury. Many of the buildings now in commercial use, as well as the public library, were originally built as dwellings, and there are а few that are still in residential use. Most of the buildings are of frame construction, with exteriors that are clapboarded, shingled, or sided; two buildings are constructed of brick.

The oldest buildings in the district date back to around 1845, a period when the Greek Revival style of architecture was most popular, and feature the characteristic gable-end-to-the-street orientation. The Seth Seelye House at 189 Greenwood Avenue, built c.1842, has a fullheight portico across the front on fluted Doric columns, as well as a matched-board front gable suggestive of the tympanum of a Classical Greek temple (Photograph 9). The house at 152 Greenwood Avenue is a simpler version of the Greek Revival, with its off-center entry framed by a heavy cornice and pilasters; sidelights surround the door (Photograph 6).

Victorian styles include the Italianate, represented in the district by a number of commercial buildings with bracketed cornices and overhanging bracketed bay windows (Photographs 2,3, and 7). Bethel's 1848 opera house (Photograph 8) was also remodeled with a bracketed Italianate cornice later in the 19th century. The Second Empire style of architecture is represented in the district by the Putnam House at 12 Depot Place, a three-story structure with mansard roof, dormer windows, and overhanging eaves supported by brackets (Photograph 11). To the west at 5 Depot Place is the railroad passenger station, a plain rectangular gabled roof structure (Photograph 12) with simple Stickstyle braces in the gables as architectural ornamentation. The facade of the three-story commercial building at 118 Greenwood Avenue illustrates a Queen Anne-style influence in its steeply pitched gables atop double projecting bays (Photograph 2).

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NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET

Description Greenwood Avenue Historic District Bethel, Fairfield County, CT

Some of the district's buildings lack specific stylistic references. The store at 190-98 Greenwood Avenue (Photograph 10), built in the Greek Revival period, may retain its projecting pediment from its original use as a dwelling, but otherwise is plainly detailed, as is the restaurant at 138 Greenwood Avenue (Photograph 2). Commercial buildings of the vernacular false-front type include 6, 15, and 19 P.T. Barnum Square (Photograph 1). Also utilitarian in appearance is the district's only industrial building, a c.1920 brick and concrete woodworking factory that faces the railroad depot (Photograph 13).

The district's only church is the c.1861 United Methodist Church at 141 Greenwood Avenue, an eclectically detailed building that includes a Greek Revival cornice and pilasters, Italianate round-arched windows, and a Gothic Revival tower (Photograph 5). The tower features a castellated square turret and pinnacles at each corner. Above the turret is an octagonal bell tower with denticulated gables on each side. The tower is capped with a gold leaf dome within an octagonal balustrade, again with pinnacles at each corner.

P.T. Barnum Square (Photograph 1) is a small triangular plot of land located at the east end of the district between the intersection of Wooster Street and Greenwood Avenue. The park is shaded by two large oak trees on the south side, and there are several benches along the paved pathways; the park's perimeter is lighted with reproduction castiron streetlights. The central feature of the park is a bronze World War I Doughboy statue (Photograph 14) set on a granite pedestal. The statue depicts a soldier holding a rifle in his left hand, while his right hand holds a grenade above his head. The statue is set on a planted circle from which pathways radiate to the outlying sidewalks. Directly behind the memorial is the town flagpole.

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Description Greenwood Avenue Historic District 7-3 Bethel, Fairfield County, CT

INVENTORY OF RESOURCES

ADD	RESS STORI	ES D	ATE	DESCRIPTION	MATERIAL	С	NC	
	BUILDINGS							
6	P.T. Barnum Square Photograph 1	2	c.1870	False-fronted commercial building	siding	1	0	
8	P.T. Barnum Square	2	c.1980	No style	brick, stucco	0	1	
9	P.T. Barnum Square	2	c.1845	Greek Revival	clapboards	1	0	
15	P.T. Barnum Square	2	c.1900	False-fronted commercial building	siding	1	0	
19	P.T. Barnum Square	2	c.1900	False-fronted commercial building	siding	1	0	
23	P.T. Barnum Square Photograph 4	3	c.1900	Italianate	siding	1	0	
5	Depot Place RAILROAD PASSENGER STA	1 ATION - Photogr	c.1880 aph 12	Stick style	clapboards	1	0	
12	Depot Place PUTNAM HOUSE - Photogr	3 raph 11	c.1860	Second Empire	clapboards	1	0	
116-18	Greenwood Avenue Photograph 2	3	c.1875	Queen Anne	siding	1	0	
122-24	Greenwood Avenue Photographs 2 and 3	3	c.1875	Italianate	siding	1	0	
123	Greenwood Avenue	1	1948	Colonial Revival	siding	1	0	
126-28	Greenwood Avenue	1	c.1960	No style	shingles, brick	0	l	
129	Greenwood Avenue	2 ½	c.1860	No style	shingles	1	0	
130-34	Greenwood Avenue	3	c.1875	Italiante	siding	1	0	
137	Greenwood Avenue	1	1948	Art Deco	brick	1	0	

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NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES REGISTRATION FORM

Description Greenwood Avenue Historic District 7-4 Bethel, Fairfield County, CT

INVENTORY OF RESOURCES

ADD	RESS	STORIES	DA	TE	DESCRIPTION	MATERIAL	C	NC
138	Greenwood Avenue Photograph 2	2		c.1845	No style	siding	1	0
140	Greenwood Avenue	1	1⁄2	c.1980	No style	brick	0	1
141	Greenwood Avenue UNITED METHODIST	1 CHURCH -	- Photograph	1861 5	Greek/Gothic Revival, Italianate	clapboards	1	0
145	Greenwood Avenue UNITED METHODIST	2 CHURCH I	-	c.1845, remodeled c.188	Queen Anne 80	siding	1	0
146	Greenwood Avenue	1		c.1980	No style	brick	0	1
152	Greenwood Avenue Photograph 6	2	*	c.1845	Greek Revival	clapboards	1	0
153	Greenwood Avenue	2	¥	c.1845	Greek Revival, added storefront	siding	1	0
154	Greenwood Avenue Photograph 6	1	*	1927	English Cottage	brick	1	0
155	Greenwood Avenue	2	¥	c.1845	Greek Revival	clapboards	1	0
158	Greenwood Avenue	2	12	c.1845	Greek Revival	shingles	1	0
159	Greenwood Avenue	1		1970	No style	brick	0	1
162-74	Greenwood Avenue Photograph 7	3		c.1875	No style	siding	1	0
178-82	Greenwood Avenue Photograph 74	3		c.1860	Italianate	clapboards	1	0
184-88	Greenwood Avenue BETHEL OPERA HOU:	2 SE - Phot	tograph 8	1848, remodeled c.18	Italianate 880	brick	1	0
189	Greenwood Avenue SETH SEELYE HOUS	2 E (Bethel	-	1842 cary) - Photogra	Greek Revival ph 9	clapboards	1	0
190-98	Greenwood Avenue Photograph 10	2	¥	c.1845	Greek Revival	siding	1	0

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NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES REGISTRATION FORM

Description Greenwood Avenue Historic District 7-5 Bethel, Fairfield County, CT

	INVENTORY OF RESOURCES							
ADDF	RESS	STORIES	DATE	DESCRIPTION	MATERIAL	с	NC	
77	South Street Photograph 13	2	c.1920	Factory	concrete, brick	1	0	
			SITES					
	P.T. BARNUM SQUARE Photograph 1	:	1881	Small park		1	0	
	OBJECTS							
	P.T. Barnum Square WoRLD WAR I DOUGHE Photograph 14		1928 est Moore Viquesney	War memorial /, sculptor	bronze, concrete	1	0	
	P.T. Barnum Square VETERANS MONUMENT	•	1991	War memorial	granite	0	1	

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NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET

Significance Greenwood Avenue Historic District Bethel, Fairfield County, CT

Summary

The Greenwood Avenue Historic District is significant because it recalls Bethel's development as a small-scale commercial center (Criterion A). Buoyed up by the hat industry and by the coming of the railroad in 1852, Bethel, which had been a relatively undeveloped outlying part of Danbury to the north, underwent a change not only in its political status, emerging as a separate town in 1855, but also in its economic identity. Stores, an opera house, hotels, and restaurants spread out along Greenwood Avenue from the railroad depot, giving the center of Bethel a busy commercial ambience that endures to this day. The addition of a small park at the eastern end of the district in 1881, originally called Fountain Place and renamed P. T. Barnum Square in 1928, further enhanced the area's "small city" feel, as did the locating of civic and religious institutions in the area. The district also has architectural significance because of the many buildings that embody distinctive characteristics of particular periods and styles of American architecture (Criterion C). The district's earliest buildings feature typical Greek Revival elements, while later 19th-century structures have typical features of Victorian styles, such as the Second Empire-style mansard roof or the bracketed cornices of the Italianate style.

Historical Significance

The Town of Bethel originated in 1759 as the Second Ecclesiastical Society of Danbury. During its formative years and into the early 19th century, Bethel was primarily a small, self-sufficient farming community. As nearby Danbury grew into a successful manufacturing city, based primarily on the hat industry, Bethel also prospered and had several small hat factories in the town center. Eventually, after several petitions for separation, Bethel, meaning "House of God," was formally incorporated as a town in 1855.

The community's first Congregational meetinghouse and burying ground, dating from 1760, were located on a parcel of land that lies outside the district, on Main Street where stands the present Congregational Church. However, Greenwood Avenue, formerly known as Center Street, emerged as Bethel's principal thoroughfare because it provided an axis between the railroad depot and several small hat shops. In the vicinity of P.T. Barnum Square were once such enterprises as the hat factory known from 1884 to 1906 as the Cole and Ambler Hat

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SignificanceGreenwood Avenue Historic District8-2Bethel, Fairfield County, CT

Manufacturing Company (and later the D. Higson and Company and the Fay-Gorman Company) and G. G. Durrant's Hat Factory, which became Richmond Brother's Hat Factory in the 1880s. Although the hat shops are now all gone, along with other industrial enterprises such as the English and Lynn Cigar Factory, there remains in the district an early 20th-century woodworking shop, the successor to a long line of planing mills and lumber businesses dating to the middle 19th-century, as a symbol of the center's industrial heritage.

The railroad station at Depot Place (Photograph 12) recalls the importance to Bethel of the arrival of the Norwalk and Danbury Railroad in 1852. The connection with Norwalk, a commercial center on Long Island Sound, helped industry in town because Bethel's hatters could now inexpensively ship their finished products to larger markets through New York City wholesale merchants. The railroad stop also encouraged the development of stores, restaurants, billiard parlors, and hotels nearby, catering to travelers and residents alike. For example, the building at 190-198 Greenwood Avenue was formerly the site of Seth Seelye's general store in the mid-19th century (Photograph 10). The Seelye family was well-known for its involvement in the hat manufacturing industry as well as other financial enterprises in Bethel and Danbury. The Fox brothers ran a hotel in the building at 178-182 Greenwood Avenue (Photograph 7) for many years, rivaled by the neighboring Platt's Hotel. Other 19th-century commercial enterprises occupying the district's business blocks included a drugstore, three bakeries, a confectionery, a furniture store, a newsstand, several groceries, a fruit store, a fish market, a barber shop, and a candy, stationery and tobacco store.

Bethel Center was also a place for the town's social events. The Bethel Opera House (Photograph 8), built in 1848 and later remodeled in the Italianate style, was earlier known as Fisher's Hall, with a meeting place on the second floor for various lectures and a saloon and billiards parlor on the first floor. At the end of the century it became the Nichols Opera House, which was able to seat up to 400 people. Other social events took place at the Knights of Honor Hall, located on the third floor of the building at 130-134 Greenwood Avenue, and the Masonic Hall, above 116-188 Greenwood Avenue (Photograph 2).

The importance of the area as a town center was underscored in 1861 when the Methodist Church, which previously had met in private homes or social halls, erected its eclectically detailed church at 141 Greenwood Avenue, in 1861 (Photograph 5). Important civic functions were also

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NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET

Significance Greenwood Avenue Historic District 8-3 Bethel, Fairfield County, CT

relocated to the area, including the Post Office, which at one time was located on the first floor of 134-1348 Greenwood Avenue and later moved across the street, and Bethel's municipal offices, which in the early 20th century occupied the masonic Hall building at 116-188 Greenwood Avenue.

Even as it was undergoing commercial expansion, the area retained a number of private homes interspersed among the business blocks, many of which were occupied by Bethel's leading businessmen and hat manufacturers. The c.1860 Greek Revival house at 129 Greenwood Avenue once belonged to O. H. Hubbard, who owned a hat finishing factory in the town, and Clark Ferry, another Bethel hat maker, built the c.1845 house at 138 Greenwood Avenue. The single example of the French Second Empire-style house in the district, 12 Depot Place (Photograph 11), was built by Frank A. Judd, a partner in J. B. and F. A. Judd and Company, yet another hat manufacturing firm in Bethel. Perhaps the most notable house in the district is the 1842 Seth Seelye House at 189 Greenwood Avenue (Photograph 9), built by one of Bethel's leading citizens of the time. Seth Seelye was a large Bethel landholder and businessman with interests in numerous enterprises, including hat shops and the store across the street. His sons donated the building to the town, and it now serves as the Bethel Public Library.

The area's growing urban identity was augmented in 1881 by the development of a small triangular ornamental park at the east end of the district. The park was given by P. T. Barnum, the flamboyant showman and creator of Barnum's "Greatest Show on Earth," a combination of menagerie and circus performances. Barnum, who was born and raised in Bethel, donated a 16-foot fountain depicting a Triton holding a conch shell above a shell-shaped basin, into which fish spurted water from their mouths. Its original name was Fountain Place; however, during the winter of 1921, the fountain froze and cracked. It was replaced by the present Doughboy statue in 1928, and the park was renamed P. T. Barnum Square (Photograph 1).

Architectural Significance

The Greenwood Avenue Historic District has architectural significance because among its buildings are many well-preserved examples of particular styles and periods of architecture. From the Greek Revival through the various Victorian styles to the early 20th century, the

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NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET

Significance Greenwood Avenue Historic District 8-4 Bethel, Fairfield County, CT

buildings in Bethel Center provide an illustrated history of small-town American architecture.

The distinctive characteristics of the Greek Revival style are predominant in the district's mid-19th century buildings. Many of the earlier buildings along Greenwood Avenue such as 152 and 155 Greenwood Avenue, both built c.1845, illustrate common features of the Greek Revival style (Photograph 6). Both houses have their gable ends facing the street and off-center pilaster-and-lintel entryways with sidelights. The most notable example of the Greek Revival style is the previously National Register-listed 1842 Seth Seelye House, the oldest building in the district (Photograph 9). The house's fluted columns and full portico represent a fuller realization of the Classical Temple form that was so prized in the period.

The commercial architecture of the district primarily illustrates the Italianate style, with its bracketed cornices and bay windows. In some cases the brackets are reduced to just end consoles on a false-front parapet, the small-town vernacular embodiment of urban commercial architecture. Other buildings in the district embody the asymmetry and picturesque gables that are hallmarks of the Queen Anne style and the distinctive mansard roof that defines the Second Empire style (Photographs 2 and 11). The essential eclecticism of the Victorian period is demonstrated by the United Methodist Church, combining Classical Greek, Gothic, and Italian influences (Photograph 5). Taken together, they constitute a locally important concentration of historic architecture, one that helps to substantiate the sense of time and place that makes the Greenwood Avenue Historic District historically significant.

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NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET

Bibliography Greenwood Avenue Historic District 9-1 Bethel, Fairfield County, CT

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- Bailey, James M. *History of Danbury, Connecticut, 1684-1896*. New York: Burr Print House, 1896.
- Barnum, P.T. Barnum's Own Story. New York: Dover Publications, 1961.
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- Gallagher, Edward J. *History of Bethel, Connecticut*. New Haven: Technical Planning Associates, 1969.
- Hill, Susan B. *History of Danbury, Connecticut, 1684-1896.* New York:Burr Printing House, 1896.

Maps and Views:

Barber, John W. Connecticut Historical Collections. New Haven: Durrie & Peck, 1838.

Previous Surveys (All deposited with the Connecticut Historical Commission):

- Survey of Connecticut Town Greens. Connecticut Historical Commission, 1994.
- Statewide Sculpture Survey. Connecticut Historical Commission, 1994.
- Statewide Theater Survey. Connecticut Historical Commission, 1988.

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NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET

Photographs Greenwood Avenue Historic District Photos-1 Bethel, Fairfield County, CT

All photographs:

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- 1. Greenwood Avenue Historic District
- 2. Bethel, Fairfield County, CT
- 3. HRC Photo
- 4. June, 1998
- 5. Negative filed with Connecticut Historical Commission

Hartford, CT

Captions:

P.T. Barnum Square, camera facing northwest Photograph 1 of 14

Building, 116-118 Greenwood Avenue, far left, 122-124 and 126-128 Greenwood Avenue, left, 130-134 Greenwood Avenue, center, 138 Greenwood Avenue, right, 140 Greenwood Avenue, far right, camera facing southeast Photograph 2 of 14

Cornice detail on 122-124 Greenwood Avenue, camera facing southwest Photograph 3 of 14

Cornice detail on 23 P.T. Barnum Square, camera facing northeast Photograph 4 of 14

Bethel United Methodist Church, 141 Greenwood Avenue, camera facing north Photograph 5 of 14

Greek Revival style house, 152 Greenwood Avenue, left, 154 Greenwood Avenue, right, camera facing southwest Photograph 6 of 14

Building, 162-174 Greenwood Avenue, left, 178-182 Greenwood Avenue, far right, camera facing southwest Photograph 7 of 14

Bethel Opera House, 188 Greenwood Avenue, camera facing northeast Photograph 8 of 14

Greenwood Avenue Historic District Bethel, Fairfield County, CT



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PhotographsGreenwood Avenue Historic DistrictPhotos-2Bethel, Fairfield County, CT

Seth Seelye House, presently the Bethel Public Library, 189 Greenwood Avenue, camera facing northwest Photograph 9 of 14

Building, 190-198 Greenwood Avenue, camera facing southwest Photograph 10 of 14

Second Empire style house, 12 Depot Place, camera facing southeast Photograph 11 of 14

Railroad Passenger Station, 5 Depot Place, camera facing southeast Photograph 12 of 14

Building, 77 South Street, camera facing southwest Photograph 13 of 14

World War I Doughboy Statue, P.T. Barnum Square, camera facing northeast Photograph 14 of 14