

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

For NPS use only

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form

received 10
date entered DEC 23 1986

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

1. Name

historic NA

and or common Milton Center Historic District

2. Location

street & number Portion of Milton, Headquarters, Shearshop,
Sawmill and Blue Swamp roads NA not for publication

city, town Litchfield X vicinity of Milton

state CT code 09 county Litchfield code 005

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> agriculture
<input type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> both	<input 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
	NA	<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military
			<input type="checkbox"/> museum
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> park
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private residence
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> religious
			<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
			<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
			<input type="checkbox"/> other:

4. Owner of Property

name See continuation sheet.

street & number

city, town _____ vicinity of _____ state _____

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Litchfield Land Records, Town Clerk, Town Office Bldg.

street & number West Street

city, town Litchfield state CT

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title State Register of Historic Places has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date 1975 federal state county local

depository for survey records Connecticut Historical Commission

59 South Prospect Street

city, town Hartford state CT

7. Description

Condition		Check one	Check one	
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> good	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> moved	date 1961 site 35
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed			1966 site 21

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The Milton Center Historic District is located in the Town of Litchfield about four miles northwest of the center of town. The district is oriented in an east-west direction encompassing churches, schools, former water power site, and houses in the center of the village of Milton. The components of the district¹ may be broken down as follows:

- 11 18th-century structures
- 7 19th-century structures²
- 1 20th-century structure
- 5 parcels significant because of function or artifacts
- 1 cemetery
- 8 non-contributing properties
- 2 bridges

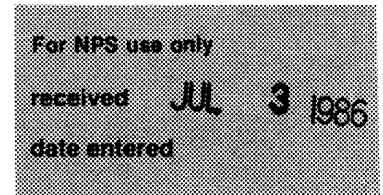
The east-west spine of the district is Milton Road running from the David Welch House (site 2, see map) on the east, westerly to the Common (5), Episcopal Church (7), Milton Hall (8), and Congregational Church (12).

The focus of the district is the Common (5), a triangular piece of unimproved land at the intersection of Milton Road with Headquarters and Shearshop roads. The Common retains its 18th- and 19th-century appearance, without plantings of trees and shrubs. At the northwest corner of the Common the Shepaug River flows under Milton Road in a southerly direction before taking a turn to the west, where it entered Milton Pond, now drained. Waterpower provided by the Shepaug River brought the first settlers to the village. The stone lining of the river where it crosses the corner of the Common, the 19th-century iron bridge, and the Congregational Church (12) beyond provide a view (Photograph 1) of basic components of the district.

Across Milton Road at the north end of the Common the Center includes the Congregational Church at the left followed by the Guild Tavern (9), Shearshop Road, Milton Hall (8) and Trinity Episcopal Church (7). A picture, c. 1925, (Photograph 2) shows this scene the same as it appears in 1986. (Photograph 3) The Guild Tavern is unusual for its 4-bay side elevation, while Milton Hall adds one of the few Queen Anne-style touches to the district with the imbricated shingles in its gable ends. (Photograph 4) Milton Hall replaces a store (Photograph 5) that burned in the 1890s. The district now has no store. The Episcopal Church is an early (1802) example of Gothic Revival features (Photograph 6) in a building with proportions and mass that would equally well accept Greek Revival treatment.

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

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



Milton Center Historic District, Litchfield, CT
Continuation sheet Owners of Properties Item number 4

Page 1

Since there are no street numbers in Milton, properties are listed in sequence of geographic location, starting with the east-west spine of the district along Potash Road, the Common, Milton Road, and Blue Swamp Road. The listing is from east to west. Properties on Shearshop Road and Sawmill Road, the north-south arteries, follow, arranged from north to south.

The three-part number identifying each parcel is made up of the map, block and parcel numbers used in the Assessor's records. The district happens to fall on parts of three maps.

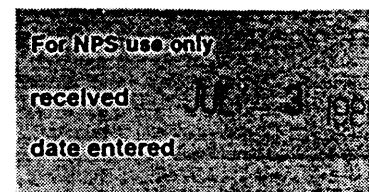
The mailing address of the owner is RD 1, Litchfield, CT 06759 unless another address is shown.

<u>Site</u>	<u>Parcel</u>	<u>Owner</u>
1	154 69 -	Town of Litchfield.
2	154 69 3	Mary E. Raymond
3	138 71 12	Raymond Realty Co.
4	138 71 14	James John & Mary A. Todd
5	138 71 13	Milton Congregational Church
6	137 77 8	G. H. Griffin, Jr., North Road, Bantam, CT 06750
7	154 69 2	Trinity Episcopal Church
8	154 69 1	Milton Public Hall Association
9	154 75 11	Alrene M. Janssen
10	137 77 9	Paul, Jr., & Patricia D. Deering
11	137 77 9C	Paul, Jr., & Patricia D. Deering
12	154 75 10	Milton Congregational Church
13	154 75 9	David R. & Rosanne S. Wilson
14	137 77 9A	William E. & Laura L. Dunn
15	137 77 10	Robert M. Martin, et al

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

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

Milton Center Historic District, Litchfield, CT
Continuation sheet Owners of Properties Item number 4



Page

2

<u>Site</u>	<u>Parcel</u>	<u>Owner</u>
16	137 77 11	James E. & Alvina Sheldon
17	137 77 12	Walter Charles Sheldon
18*	154 75 8	Ingrid O. Nesbit
19*	154 75 7	E. Walter & Evelyn K. Snyder 327 Martling Rd., Tarrytown, NY 10591
20	137 77 13	Hope Conn
21	137 77 14	Gerald M. & Nadina A. Napolitano
22	154 75 6	E. Walter & Evelyn K. Snyder 327 Martling Rd., Tarrytown, NY 10591
23*	154 76 5	Reeves W. Hart, Jr., et al 18 Briar Rd., Wilmington, DE 19803
24	137 77 15	Edward J. & Frances M. Litwin
25	154 76 4	Dewey L. & Elizabeth E. Kizzia
26	137 79 14	Bureau of Water, City of Waterbury 21 E. Aurora St., Waterbury, CT 06708
27	154 76 3	Janet F. Goller, 300 W. 108th St., NY, NY 10075
28	154 76 2	Eleanor Payne Goss, 16601 Briandale Rd., Deerwood MD 20855
29	154 76 1	Milton Cemetery
30	137 79 27 Partial	Pasternak, Varsenig Z.
31	137 77 16	Bureau of Water, City of Waterbury, 21 E. Aurora St., Waterbury, CT 06078
32	137 77 17	Blaine A., Jr., & Eleanor H. Cota
33	Bridge 1	Town of Litchfield
34	Bridge 2	Town of Litchfield

* Part of the parcel is included in the district

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

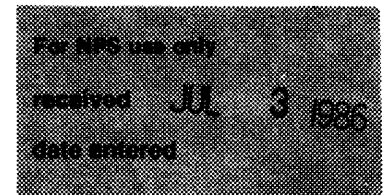
**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

Milton Center Historic District, Litchfield, CT

Continuation sheet Existing Surveys

Item number 6

Page 1



National Register of Historic Places

David Welch House
Potash and Milton Roads
Listed February 16, 1984

Trinity Episcopal Church
Milton Road
Listed April 23, 1976

Federal

Depository: National Park Service, U.S. Department of Interior,
Washington, D.C.

Archaeological Preservation and Archaeological Conservancies in Litchfield
County, Connecticut

Sites 055-075, 074-007, 074-008

1982

Local (American Indian Archaeological Institute)

Depository: Connecticut Historical Commission, 59 South Prospect
Street, Hartford, CT

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service****National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

Milton Center Historic District, Litchfield, CT

Continuation sheet

Description

Item number

7

Page

1

For NPS use only

received

11/10/88

date entered

At the south end of the Common, on site 4, are two Milton schools. Milton Academy (1855), on the far left in Photograph 7, still retains some original glazing and board-and-batten siding, while the Milton District School (1896) still has its distinctive tower, belfry, bell, and pyramidal roof with flared eaves.

Further to the west Milton Road is lined with historic houses and with four 20th-century houses that do not contribute to the 18th- and 19th-century character of the district. Among the historic houses, the Hugh Welch Mansion (1840) is a large square 5-bay Greek Revival structure (18), while across the street two smaller houses have doorways similar to one another with transom lights and plain entablatures (17, 20). The first of these is sheathed on its front elevation in flush matched boarding, an unusual feature.

At the end of this section of Milton Road where it turns almost 90 degrees to the north stands the second David Welch House of 1765 (23), impressively sited behind a picket fence. (Photograph 8) The house is large and its parcel is large, 90 acres.

The Shepaug River, whose power potential attracted the first settlers to Milton, flows from the north through the village in two branches. The East Branch enters the district at Shearshop Road,³ cuts across the corner of the Common and turns 90 degrees to the west where the Milton Pond was located for two centuries. The dam for the pond was at Sawmill Road. The East Branch continues westerly beyond the location of the dam to the western boundary of the district where it joins the West Branch and the single stream flows south. (Photograph 17)

Even though the dam at Sawmill Road, first built about 1740, survived until the flood of 1955, no picture of it has come to hand. Sawmill Road ran across the top of the dam, the highway sloping down to its height, and then up again. Now the East Branch flows through a concrete culvert. Earth has been piled on top of the culvert, making Sawmill Road run almost flat instead of dipping down as it did for centuries. (Photograph 9) The site of the former pond is now marshland (Photograph 10) with secondary forest growth. A nail forge was located on the edge of Milton Pond. Low walls still in place at the northwest corner of the parcel near the road (Photograph 18) demonstrate that a rectangular building, running parallel with the road, once stood there. (See sketch.) The gorge west of the site of the dam (Photograph 11) was the site of the Seelye Sawmill and Hutchinson Cider Mill. Several masonry artifacts are found along the edges of the stream and the steep banks of the ravine. Halfway up the south bank is a portion of a masonry

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

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

For NPS use only
received 11/10/80
date entered

Milton Center Historic District, Litchfield, CT

Continuation sheet

Description

Item number 7

Page 2

wall and a cavity that may have been part of the waterpower system.
(Photograph 19) Several brownstone ashlar blocks at the water's edge
(Photograph 20) are left from a building that once stood nearby. (See
sketch.)

While there appear to be no extant pictures of the dam, the pond, or
mills that stood near them, there is a 1910 photograph of the Smith
carriage factory that stood at the western edge of the district.
(Photograph 12) Foundations of a structure are on the site. (30,
Photograph 13) The carriage factory location is shown on an 1852 map.⁴
(Photograph 17)

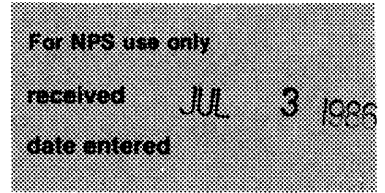
Near the western edge of the district the Milton Cemetery (29) lies
behind a stone wall of massive granite blocks with 19th-century iron
gates. (Photograph 14) Milton citizens who fought in the Revolutionary
War and many other distinguished Milton men and women are buried there.

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

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

Milton Center Historic District, Litchfield, CT

Continuation sheet Description Item number 7 Page 3



Inventory

Since there are no street numbers in Milton, properties are listed in sequence of geographic location, starting with the east-west spine of the district along Potash Road, the Common, Milton Road and Blue Swamp Road. The listing is from east to west. Properties on the north-south arteries, Shearshop Road and Sawmill Road, follow, arranged from north to south.

The designation C or NC before the description indicates whether the property is considered to contribute or not contribute to the historic and architectural significance of the district.

Dates are taken from the Final Report of the Milton Historic District Study Committee except those taken from Assessor's records as noted.

1. C Vacant land. Lawn between Trinity Church and Milton Hall.
2. C David Welch House. c. 1756. A 5-bay, central-chimney house with later additions. Listed in the National Register of Historic Places February 16, 1984.
3. C Jennings House. c. 1852. (1820 Assessor) Long, narrow, 26x60' 2-story frame house. Front door under gable end faces the Common. The house has been enlarged from time to time. Barn.
4. C Milton Academy. c. 1855. Built as frame 2-classroom structure with two doors and board-and-batten siding. 47x28'. Original glazed door to left. Garage door to right. Horizontal window in gable.

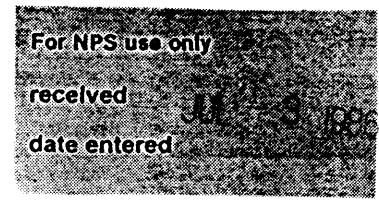
C Milton District School. 1897. 1-room 28x36' schoolhouse with 6x8' tower, belfry, bell and flagpole. Three 6-over-6 windows on each side. Active as a school 1897-1946. Interior converted to dwelling.
5. C The Common. Open land, not landscaped. Congregational Church was built on this site.
6. C Late 18C with early 20C alterations. 1½-story frame 30x24' gable-roofed house covered with weathered wooden shingles. Neo-Classical Revival front porch with round columns. Horizontal 5-pane windows under eaves. Front roof slope covered with standing-seam metal.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form

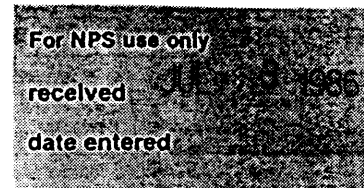
Milton Center Historic District, Litchfield, CT

Continuation sheet Description Item number 7 Page 4



7. C Trinity Episcopal Church. 1802. Oliver Dickinson, joiner/architect. 32x63' frame church with Gothic arched windows.⁵ Interior finished 1826. Fine stained glass. Listed in the National Register of Historic Places April 23, 1976.
8. C Milton Hall. c. 1900. Frame, vernacular, 30x40' 1-story structure. On the front elevation facing the Common, there is a gable-roofed entry under the main gable end. In both gables regular and fish-scale shingles are laid in alternating courses. Elsewhere the walls are covered with clapboards. There is a wing to the east. Windows are 2-over-2.
9. C Guild Tavern. c. 1782. Frame 38x27' 5-bay central-chimney central-doorway gable-roofed house covered with clapboards. Side elevation facing the Common has the unusual fenestration pattern of four bays regularly spaced at both first and second floors, under attic fanlight. Wing to north. Rebuilt after serious fire in 1960s, which may account for the 4-bay fenestration.
10. C A. B. Beach House. Late 19C. 26x50' gable-roofed 1-story house covered with clapboards. Because of the change in grade, the basement is fully exposed on the north and east elevations. After the store and Post Office that stood on the site of Milton Hall was destroyed by fire in 1894, the basement was used as a store.
11. NC Vacant land. Included for visual continuity.
12. C Milton Congregational Church. 1791. Greek Revival, 36x50' church covered with clapboards. Central double 4-paneled door flanked by plain pilasters and 12-over-12-over-12 windows. Paneled corner pilasters front and rear. Three 12-over-12-over-12 windows each side elevation. Tympanum without fenestration. First 8x8' stage of steeple covered with vertical flush boarding to molded cornice. Second stage has louver in each face and paneled corner pilasters as found in the main block. Built on the Common where the exterior was painted yellow. Moved to present location in 1828, at which time it may have assumed its Greek Revival character. For many years thereafter its carriage sheds stood on that part of the Common adjoining the Shepaug River. On the interior there is a gallery at the back only. Pulpit and central chandelier appear to date from the High Victorian era. Steeple added 1843.
13. C 1880 Assessor. T-shaped frame 2-story gable-roofed house sited above the road. Wrap-around porch has square posts with sawn brackets. Windows are 2-over-2. Paired peaked attic windows. Extensive stone fences and retaining walls. Three sheds.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service



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

Milton Center Historic District, Litchfield, CT

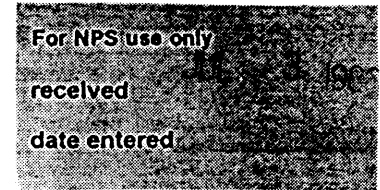
Continuation sheet Description Item number 7 Page 5

14. NC 1950 Assessor. 1-story 33x28' brick house with dormers in gable roof.
15. NC 1930 Assessor. Frame 1-story, 31x21' gable-roofed house with dormer. May incorporate some older fabric.
16. NC 1941 Assessor. 1-story 26x24' contemporary frame house, with ell.
17. C Late 18C, 1800 Assessor. 1-story 36x26' 5-bay house with 30x16' wing. Front elevation sheathed in horizontal flush boarding. Windows are 12-over-12. Central door has 5-pane transom under plain architrave and flat cap similar to that next door at 20. Rear roof slope flared at eaves. Front porch removed in 20C.
18. C Hugh Welch Mansion House. c. 1840. Greek Revival 2-story 5-bay 38x38' house covered with clapboards. Low hipped roof. Central doorway has side lights and transom. Wide front porch is supported by paneled posts. At the corners of the house paneled pilasters lead up to wide architrave and frieze. First-floor windows are tall 6-over-6, second floor conventional 6-over-6 and in the frieze are horizontal rectangular apertures. Sited well above the road with stone fence at lot line. Barn, sheds, chicken coop. 30.8 acres. Four chimneys have been removed.
19. NC Vacant land. Included for visual continuity along Milton Road.
20. C Moore Gibbs House. 1786. 1-story 30x28' central-chimney 3-bay house covered with clapboards. Windows are 12-over-12 at the first floor, 12-over-8 at the second. Central door has 5-pane transom under plain architrave and flat cap. Served as the Congregational parsonage for years starting c. 1854.
21. C Daniel Starr House. 1754. Gambrel-roofed, 3-bay, 32x26' 1-story central-chimney house covered with clapboards. Windows are 12-over-12. Built on East Street in Litchfield. Twice displaced by Congregational Church there. Disassembled and reassembled on its present site in 1960s.
22. NC 1965. Frame 1-story contemporary house.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

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

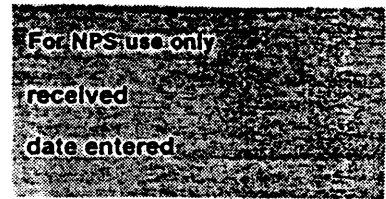
Milton Center Historic District, Litchfield, CT
Continuation sheet Description Item number 7 Page 6



23. C Jeremiah Griswold/Second David Welch House. c. 1765. Large 37x28' 2-story 5-bay central-chimney central-entrance house covered with clapboards. The paneled double door has a 7-pane transom. 12-over-12 windows are spaced in a 2-1-2 rhythm. There are narrow corner boards. Second floor has hewn overhang front and sides, third floor on the sides. The ell and shed extensions were added in 1823. Picket fence. 90 acres. Notation on the back of a photograph at Litchfield Historical Society says the house was built in 1775 for Lt. Jehiel Parmelee by Oliver Dickinson. The Historic District Study Committee found that the house was already standing when Parmelee bought the property.
24. C Mid 18C. 1-story 26x24' 3-bay house covered with clapboards. Central stone chimney. Windows are 6/6. Prior to 1850 Methodists met here for services conducted by a circuit preacher. Sited on edge of the bank of the former Milton Pond.
25. C Before 1852. 1760s Assessor. In the front elevation, facing east, of the 1-story house are three 6-over-6 windows and, at the extreme right, a door. A corbeled brick chimney rises from the ridge line at the extreme right. Shed-roofed extension to the west. Apparently altered from time to time.
26. C Vacant land. Is a deep ravine through which flows the East Branch of the Shepaug River. (Photograph 11) The 18C Seelye saw mill was located on the north side of the river. The structure was torn down in the 1940s. The 19C Hutchinson cider mill was on the south side of the river. See Sketch Map.
27. NC 1792, sign on house. Gable-roofed 1-story 32x32' house, covered with clapboards. There is a flat-roofed section across the rear and an 18x24' wing to the right with asymmetrical gable roof. Moved to this location in 1930s from near the mill pond of parcel 34, where it probably was a component of one of the mills. Enlarged in the 1940s. Considered to be Non-Contributing because of the small-paned picture windows on either side of the front door. (Photograph 16)
28. NC 1930 Assessor. 1-story 30x32' stucco summer residence.
29. C Blue Swamp Burying Ground. 18C. Graves of Revolutionary War soldiers and many others prominent in Milton's history are found here. The stone wall of massive granite blocks has 19th-century iron gates. The term Blue Swamp relates to the blue gentian found in the area in the 18th century. 3.75 acres.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form



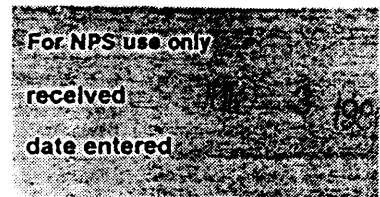
Milton Center Historic District, Litchfield, CT
Continuation sheet Description Item number 7

Page 7

30. C Site of the carriage shop. (Photograph 12) For purpose of delineating the district boundary, the north-south line between parcels 18 and 27 is extended to Blue Swamp Road. The portion of parcel 27 east of the line is included in the district. The portion west of the line is the site of a contemporary house.
31. C Vacant land. Site of the mill pond which was 165 feet long in the east-west direction by 80 feet wide. It was drained after the flood of 1955 which damaged the dam. Pratt's Nail Forge was located here. See Sketch Map.
32. C John Buell House. c. 1728. 2-story/full garret. Lean-to added c. 1740. 36x29' chestnut frame, double front plate, central stone chimney, clapboard siding, batten wide-pine doors. Windows are 9-over-6, 6-over-4, and 4-over-4; in the lean-to 6-over-6 and 2-over-2. All quarrels are 5½x7" poured glass. The house was rescued from demolition in 1961, disassembled, moved from its original site on the eastern side of Litchfield, and re-assembled on 12.9 wooden acres retaining 18th-century stone fences. The house has received museum quality restoration and period gardens have been re-created. The 1-story ell was added in 1975.
33. C Bridge 1, on Milton Road. c. 1915 Town Director of Public Works. An iron bridge similar to others of contemporary date constructed in the town by Berlin Steel Construction Co. of Berlin, CT. This one is not identified with the maker's name plate.
34. NC Bridge 2, on Sawmill Road. c. 1955 Town Director of Public Works. Double concrete box culvert.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form



Milton Center Historic District

Continuation sheet

Description

Item number

7

Page

8

1.

The local Milton Historic District of more than 150 properties includes a larger portion of the village.

2.

One property (4) has two 19th-century historic structures.

3.

Shearshop Road is so named because a factory for the manufacture of shears was operated on the east side of the road near the district. The shear shop was the last manufactory to operate in Milton, closing in 1891. It occupied a site where earlier there had been a puddling furnace in which the Welch family had an interest.

4.

The area's largest nail forge, active at the time of the Revolutionary War, was on the Shepaug River near the carriage factory. There were 17 mills and factories in the village by 1820. [White, Alain C., The History of the Town of Litchfield, Connecticut, 1720-1920. (Litchfield: Enquirer Print, 1920)]

5.

Kilbourne's description of Trinity reads, "The architecture is of the old style, with galleries and large windows rounded at the top. It has been enlarged by the addition of a chancel, and improved by the way of new seats, a stained chancel-window, and other internal arrangements." [Kilbourne, P. K., Sketches and Chronicles of the Town of Litchfield (Hartford; Case, Lockwood & Co., 1859) p. 135.] This passage suggests the possibility that the pointed-arch windows are an alteration. If they are original they are an unusually early example of the use of a Gothic Revival motif. If they are not original, then question arises as to whether the other interior Gothic Revival features may also be alterations. The National Register nomination does not address these issues.

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 checked="" 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/
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

Specific dates See Item 7

Builder/Architect See Item 7

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

Criteria C (Architecture), A (History), and D (Archeology)

The Milton Center Historic District contains several excellent examples of pre-Revolutionary War architecture and later 19th-century structures. These buildings, which continue to exist in their original relationship to one another, together form an entity of quality and integrity that is architecturally significant. (Criterion C - Architecture). The buildings and sites depict the 18th- and 19th-century origin and development of the district, based on the waterpower potential of the Shepaug River. There have been few intrusions. (Criterion A - History) The presence of early industrial sites offers the potential for developing useful information through their examination. (Criterion D - Archeology)

Criterion A - History

The area now known as Milton was called West Farms. It was settled and developed because of its attractive potential for water power development. Among the first settlers, who arrived before 1740, were Justus Seelye, David Welch and Jeremiah Griswold from New Milford. Welch engaged in the iron business as a merchant, buying and selling ore mined in north-western Connecticut. One of the men he dealt with was Ethan Allen, the Revolutionary War hero. Welch also brought ore to Milton and processed it in a puddling furnace located north on Shearshop Road behind his house. Griswold, a builder, constructed the dam at Sawmill Road, which formed Milton Pond, and also the second David Welch House (23). Others took advantage of the waterpower available from the Shepaug River at several sites. In the district the Seelye Sawmill, Pratt Nail Forge, and Hutchinson Cider mill were located near the dam at Milton Pond.

The community became a religious and political entity through the usual course of pleading hardship in reaching the church at Litchfield Center in bad weather. Permission to hold services at Milton during winter months was requested in 1768. The Third Ecclesiastical Society of Litchfield built the meetinghouse on the Common in 1791. Four years later the General Assembly granted a petition for establishment of the independent Milton parish.

Famous and near famous people associated with the district included Lt. John Griswold, son of Jeremiah Griswold. John Griswold, who lived on Sawmill Road south of the district, was an early inventor of an iron-clad naval vessel. He tested a model of his armored vessel on Milton Pond early in the 19th century. Oliver Dickinson, joiner/architect of Trinity Church, was the father of Anson Dickinson, nationally known painter of miniatures. The Welch family continued prominent in the district's affairs. David's son, John, became an Episcopalian and gave the land on

9. Major Bibliographical References

See continuation sheet.

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property 90 prox.

Quadrangle name Cornwall

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

UTM References See continuation sheet.

A

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

 Zone Easting Northing

B

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

 Zone Easting Northing

C

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

D

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

E

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

F

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

G

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

H

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

Verbal boundary description and justification The district boundary is shown by the dotted line on the map drawn at scale of 1" = 400'. For boundary justification see continuation sheet.

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

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

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

11. Form Prepared By

name/title David F. Ransom/Consultant, edited by John Hansen,
National Register Coordinator

organization Connecticut Historical Comm. date February 9, 1986

street & number 59 South Prospect Street telephone 203 566-3005

city or town Hartford state CT

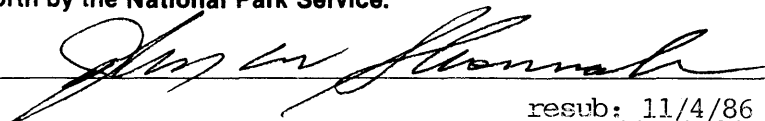
12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

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 National Park Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature



title Director, Connecticut Historical Commission

resub: 11/4/86
date June 24, 1986

For NPS use only

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


Keeper of the National Register

date 12/23/86

Attest: 
Chief of Registration

date 12/23/86

United States Department of the Interior
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form

Milton Center Historic District, Litchfield, CT

Continuation sheet

Significance

Item number

8

Page

1

For NPS use only

received

date entered

which Trinity Church stands. Hugh Welch, grandson of David Welch, built the Greek Revival house, the last architecturally significant house to be built in the district, after he achieved success as a banker.

The district's years of growth and prosperity coincided with the period when waterpower was important as a source of energy for industry. Activity was strong until about the middle of the 19th century, when the advent of steam and railroads brought decline to industry based on waterpower. In the district no developments succeeded waterpower. The railroad did not come to Milton; there were no other natural resources to exploit; it was not a crossroads, county seat, or trading center. Industry faded away and was not replaced by other activity. Now it takes searching to find factory foundations and dam abutments. Many of the civil, domestic, and religious structures, however, have survived and continue to tell their story of the past.

The Milton Center Historic District enjoys a rural setting and is surrounded by farmland and woodland. Indeed, the Jeremiah Griswold (Second David Welch) House is set on a 90-acre farm. Nevertheless, the significance of the district does not relate to its rural setting but derives from its industrial development. The waterpower potential of the Shepaug River was the attraction that drew the early settlers to Milton Center and the development of the waterpower was the driving force in the history of the village. While the mills and factories that used the waterpower have now disappeared, the stream itself runs through the district as it always has, and foundations, stone walls, and remnants of the waterpower system clearly indicate the industrial past. The community of houses, churches, schools, and village hall that was built as a necessary complement to the industry is substantially intact, giving an excellent understanding of the appearance and function of the Milton Center Historic District at the time of its 19th-century industrial eminence.

Criterion C - Architecture

The two David Welch houses are fine examples of pre-Revolutionary War architecture, both being designed in the traditional 5-bay central-chimney central-doorway manner. Welch's first house (2) later received a 3-bay addition to the east, for a store, and an ell. These additions and outbuildings are intact. Similarly, his second house (23) has a large added ell and substantial outbuildings, intact. The presence of these two complexes of fine houses with additions and service buildings, largely unchanged in the past 150 years, is a factor of major significance in the district.

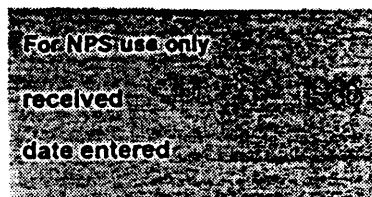
The third significant 18th-century structure is the John Buell House² at site 32 (Photograph 15). Although not indigenous to the district, it is the only surviving architecture in the town dating to the first settlement of Litchfield. The ell was added to represent the 19th-century original which was beyond salvage. It houses modern conveniences. No visible intrusions mar the house or its environment.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form

Milton Center Historic District, Litchfield, CT

Continuation sheet Significance Item number 8 Page 2



The Congregational Church is of more architectural interest than its standard Greek Revival appearance suggests because the Greek Revival features are added. It would be interesting to know whether, when originally built on the Common, it was a meetinghouse with door on a side elevation, but this information and the reason why it was moved are not known.

The Episcopal Church is significant because its joiner/architect, Oliver Dickenson, (1757-1847) is known³ and because the use of pointed arch windows in its design, if original, is very early.⁴

The two small 18th-century houses on the south side of Milton Road (17,20) have interesting similarities in their doorways and are examples of modest homes in contrast to the large David Welch houses. The Hugh Welch Mansion across the street from them is a monumental expression of the Greek Revival style, unlike any other structure in the district.

The two school buildings at the south end of the Common help to give a sense of the late 19th-century ambience of the Milton community. The board-and-batten siding of the Milton Academy and the belfry tower of the District School are characteristic of their era.

Criterion D - Archeology

Since the the attraction that drew early settlers to Milton was its water power facilities, industrial sites were established early in the 18th century and continued to be the community's raison d'etre to the end of the 19th century. While all buildings associated with these enterprises are gone, visible stone foundations abound. It is likely that examination of these locations, notably sites 26 and 31 in the district, would yield useful and worthwhile information of an archeological character.

Investigatiion and study at site 31 might yield information placing the building whose walls remain there in the industrial history of Milton Center, perhaps illustrating the functioning of a nail forge. Investigation and study of site 26 might yield information placing its artifacts in the industrial history of Milton Center, probably as parts of the sawmill and cider mill that stood on this parcel below the dam. The low stone walls on site 30 appear to be those of the carriage factory shown by the 1852 map to have been located on this parcel. Aside from natural growth of vegetation, and with the exception of construction work on Sawmill Road where it crosses the river, the sites appear to be little disturbed by extraneous occurrences during the 20th century.

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

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

Milton Center Historic District, Litchfield, CT

Continuation sheet Significance

Item number 8

Page 3

For NPS use only
received
date entered

1.

The house at site 2 was a gift from his father-in-law to David Welch at the time of his marriage. David Welch in turn gave the house to his son John when John was married in 1785. At that time David Welch moved to the house at site 23.

2.

The owners' extensive documented research supports the architectural, historical, and geneological significance of the John Buell House. See Eleanor H. Cota, letter May 11, 1986, to Connecticut Historical Commission.

3.

William Spratts, the architect of British origin, also lived in Milton on Sawmill Road southwest of the district.

4.

At Union Church, Barkhamsted (1829), Gothic-arched apertures also were used in a structure of standard Greek Revival proportions.

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

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

Milton Center Historic District, Litchfield, CT

Continuation sheet

Bibliography

Item number 9

Page

1

For NPS use only

received JUL 3 1986

date entered

Beers, F. W., Atlas of Litchfield County, Connecticut (New York: 1868), plate 39.

Cota, Eleanor H., letter May 11, 1986, to Connecticut Historical Commission regarding the John Buell House (site 35).

Final Report of the Milton Historic District Study Committee, 1975.

History of Litchfield County, Connecticut (Philadelphia: J. W. Lewis & Co., 1881) v. 1.

Kilbourne, P. K., Sketches and Chronicles of the Town of Litchfield (Hartford: Case, Lockwood & Co., 1859).

Page, Rev. W. E., "Centennial Address Delivered in the Congregational Church, Milton, Conn., Aug. 21, 1898."

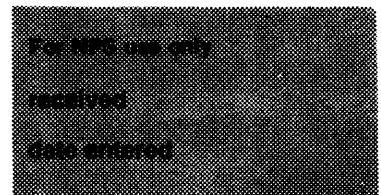
White, Alain C., The History of the Town of Litchfield, Connecticut, 1720-1920 (Litchfield: Enquirer Print, 1920).

Woodford, E. M., "Map of the Town of Litchfield, Litchfield County, Connecticut," 1852.

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

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

Milton Center Historic District, Litchfield, CT
Continuation sheet Geographical Data Item number 10



Page 1

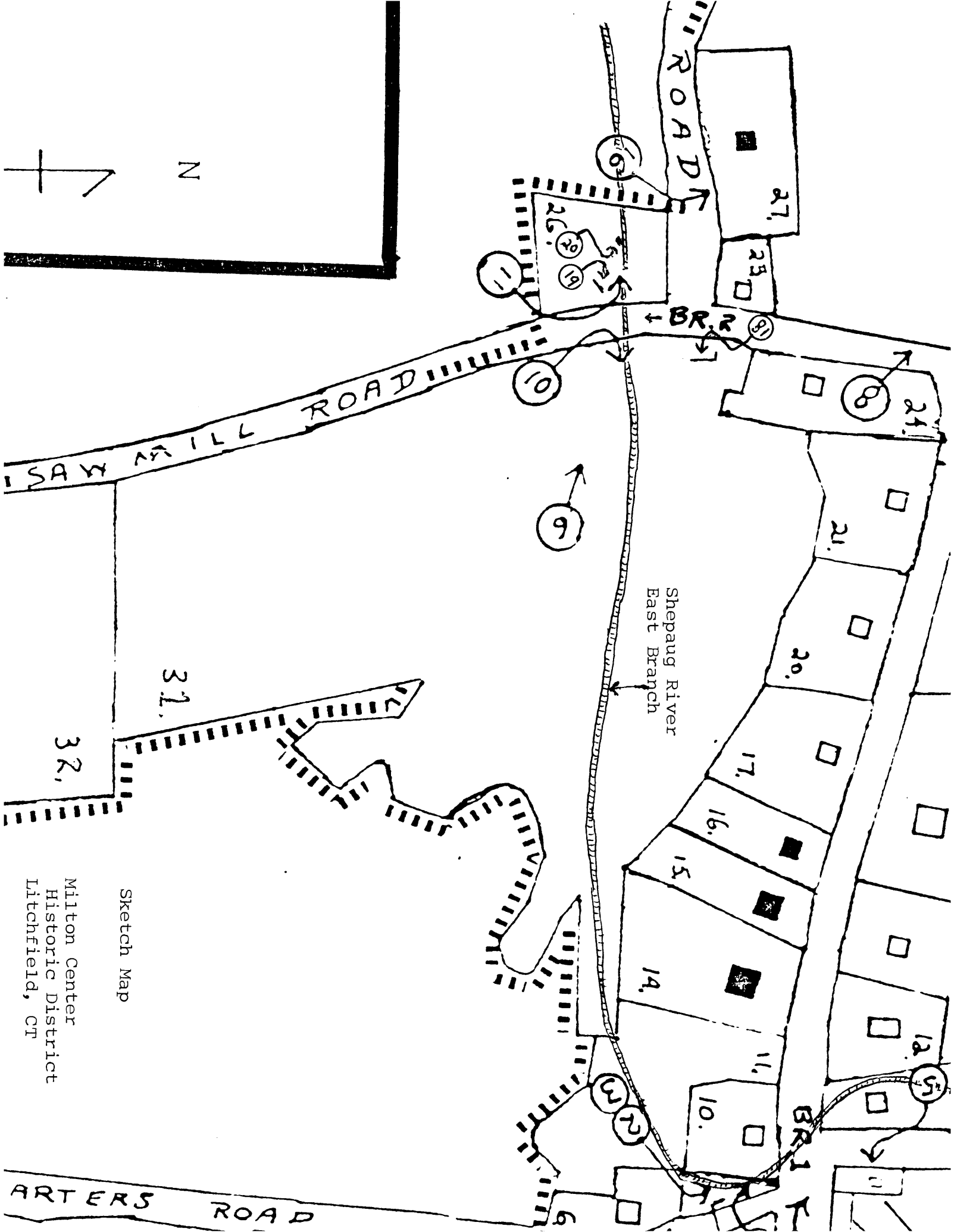
UTM References

A 18/644150/4625590
B 18/644080/4625320
C 18/643880/4625260
D 18/643290/4624800
E 18/643740/4624820
F 18/643520/4625260
G 18/643060/4625200
H 18/643120/4625520
I 18/643910/4625680

Boundary Justification

The boundary is drawn to encompass that part of Milton which historically formed Milton Center during its period of industrial activity. While the mills and factories have all but disappeared, the river continues to flow through the district with industrial artifacts still in place on sites 5, 31, 26, and 30. Community support structures were built on Milton Road north of the river where the common, schools, churches, tavern, store, and meeting hall are or were, as well as houses. The two fine Welch houses, sites 2 and 23, define the east and west ends of this section of Milton Road. Non-contributing sites along Milton Road are included for visual continuity and in order to avoid doughnuts.

The boundary is drawn through parcels 18, 19, and 23, excluding from the district substantial acreage belonging to these parcels, because that acreage is rural in character whereas the district has an industrial and industrial-related theme. The cemetery, site 29, is included because it is a source of data on people important to the center's history, while the house at site 32 is included because the site adjoins the mill pand parcel 31 and because the house, of museum quality, is perhaps the oldest in Litchfield. The greater Milton community has several other houses that probably are of National Register quality but they do not form part of the Center.



Sketch Map

Milton Center
 Historic District
 Litchfield, CT

Milton Center Historic District
 Litchfield, CT

Scale: 1" = 400'

District Boundary
 Contributing Structure □
 Non Contributing Structure ■

Photo Key ↗

N ↑

