

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form

For NPS use only  
received JUL 23 1987

date entered SEP 4 1987

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

1. Name

historic NA  
and or common Colony Street/West Main Street Historic District

2. Location

street & number 1-62 Colony Street, 55 Grove Street  
1-119 and 82-110 West Main Street NA not for publication  
city, town Meriden NA vicinity of  
state CT code 09 county New Haven code 009

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> district	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture
<input type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> commercial
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational
<input type="checkbox"/> site	<b>Public Acquisition</b>	<b>Accessible</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial
		<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military
			<input type="checkbox"/> museum
			<input type="checkbox"/> park
			<input 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 Multiple ownership. See continuation sheet  
street & number  
city, town vicinity of state

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. City Clerk, Meriden Land Records  
street & number City Hall, 142 East Main Street  
city, town Meriden state CT

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

Architectural and Historical  
title Survey of Meriden has this property been determined eligible? \_\_\_ yes \_\_\_X no  
date 1978 \_\_\_ federal \_\_\_ state \_\_\_ county \_\_\_X local  
depository for survey records Connecticut Historical Commission  
59 South Prospect Street  
city, town Hartford state CT

## 7. Description

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

### Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The Colony Street/West Main Street Historic District comprises 11.5 acres in the heart of downtown Meriden north and west of the intersection of West Main Street with the railroad. The one- to five-story buildings were constructed during the years from approximately 1850 to 1940 to house department stores, shops, offices, banks, church, Y.M.C.A., lodge, and on the upper floors, many apartments. The buildings have been altered from time to time, most with new store fronts. Others have been demolished, and in some cases replaced with new structures.

Statistical profile of the district follows:

Parcels	41	Romantic styles	4
Buildings	38	(Gothic Revival, Italianate)	
Contributing	31	Victorian-Era styles	4
Non-contributing	7	(Neo-Grec, Romanesque Revival, Victorian Vernacular, Renaissance Revival)	
Vacant lots	4	Neo-Classical Revival	12
(Non-contributing)		Georgian Revival	2
Structures, objects		Tudor Revival	1
outbuildings, sites	0	Art Deco/Art Moderne	5
19th century	18	19th-century vernacular	4
20th century before 1937	19	20th-century vernacular	6
Less than 50 years old	1		

The district is divided into two sections, the buildings facing Colony Street, which runs north from West Main Street, parallel with the railroad, and the buildings facing West Main Street, which runs westerly from the railroad at the foot of Colony Street. See district map.

The range of buildings along the east side of Colony Street is the most consistent in the district. These 12 buildings, all contributing, are free of truly damaging alterations, and the row is free of vacant lots. The southeast corner of the district is firmly anchored by the 5-story Neo-Classical Revival building at 1-3 Colony Street. (Photographs 1, 2) Its terra-cotta frieze and cornice are characteristic of good work in the early 20th century. Its neighbor, 5-7 Colony Street, and the three buildings further along at 25-31, 33-37, and 51-53 Colony Street (Photographs 1, 6, 7) are Victorian Era structures in a mixture of classically derived styles that all feature skilled bricklaying and important roof lines.

The three Art-Deco/Art Moderne buildings at 9, 11-17, and 19 Colony Street (Photograph 1) are characteristic of construction in the district during a period of growth and prosperity associated with the 1920s. The front elevations of 19 and 21-23 Colony Street are examples of changes made to older structures, as becomes apparent upon examining their rear elevations. (Photographs 4,5) In the case of 21-23 Colony Street the alteration is much earlier.

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

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

For NPS use only

received

date entered

Colony Street/West Main Street Historic District, Meriden, CT

Continuation sheet

Owners

Item number

4

Page 1

<u>Property Street Address</u>	<u>Map/Block/ lot number</u>	<u>Owner's name and mailing address</u>
<u>Colony Street</u>		
1 - 3	103/13/15	One Two Three Colony Associates Limited Partnership 95 Niles Street Hartford, CT 06105
5 - 7	103/13/14	ICH Associates 1541 Broad Street Hartford, CT 06114
9	103/13/13	Legare, David 42 Marboy Drive Plantsville, CT 06479
13 - 15 - 17	103/13/12	Legare, David 42 Marboy Street Plantsville, CT 06479
16	103/12/8	Home Bank & Trust Co. 16 Colony Street Meriden, CT 06450
19	103/13/11	Hanrah's, Inc. 19 Colony Street Meriden, CT 06450
21 - 23	103/13/10	Codespoti, J. R., et al 116 East Main Street Meriden, CT 06450
24 - 36	103/14/20	Shweky, Moshe M. 1746 Tuttle Avenue Wallingford, CT 06492
25 - 31	103/13/9	Legere, David 42 Marboy Drive Plantsville, CT 06479
33 - 35 - 37	103/13/8	Legere, David 42 Marboy Drive Plantsville, CT 06479



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

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

For NPS use only

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Colony Street/West Main Street Historic District, Meriden, CT

Continuation sheet

Owners

Item number 4

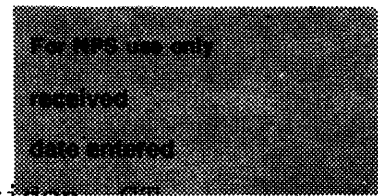
Page 3

West Main Street (Cont.)

29	103/12/2A	Clements, Robert 29 West Main Street Meriden, CT 06450
31 - 33 - 37	103/11/9	Meadow Haven Inc. Box 724 Meriden, CT 06450
41	103/11/8	Bank of Boston Connecticut 89 West Main Street Waterbury, CT 06700
41½	103/11/7A	Ives, Julius Jr. No address <sup>1</sup>
43 - 45	103/11/7	Meriden Trust & Safe Deposit Co., Exec. Meriden, CT 06450
49 - 51	103/11/6	Giannakas, Elefterior & Eleni 300 East Bruce Park Avenue Greenwich, CT 06830
53	103/11/5	Hyman, Albert H., et al 53 West Main Street Meriden, CT 06450
57 - 59 61 - 65 55 Grove Street	103/11/4	The Main-Grove Realty Corp. c/o Joe Morello 254 South Colony Street Meriden, CT 06450
67 - 73	102/10/32	Lagana, J. J. & J. I. 67 West Main Street Meriden, CT 06450
75 - 79	102/10/31	Lagana, J. J. & J. I. 102 Highland Avenue Meriden, CT 06450
81 - 83	102/10/30	Lagana, J. J. & J. I. 102 Highland Avenue Meriden, CT 06450

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

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



Colony Street/West Main Street Historic District, Meriden, CT

Continuation sheet

Owners

Item number

4

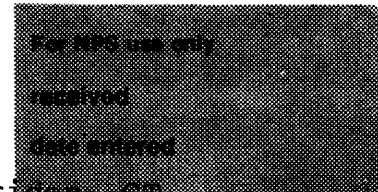
Page 4

West Main Street (Cont.)

82	110/46/3	R & L Restaurants, Inc. 82 West Main Street Meriden, CT 06450
86	110/46/3B	Masari, Alphonse L., et al 58 Ranch Road Hamden, CT 06514
87	102/10/29	Paul, Albert, et al 87 West Main Street Meriden, CT 06450
88 - 90 - 92	110/46/4	Meriden Insurance Agency, Inc. 88 West Main Street Meriden, CT 06450
91	102/10/28	Halepas, Denis, & George S. 91 West Main Street Meriden, CT 06450
98 - 104	111/50/1	Martino, Robert, et al 9 Butler Street Meriden, CT 06450
101	102/10/27C	Del Crecco, Enrico 33 Summitt Drive Wallingford, CT 06492
103 - 105	102/10/27	Lopez, Letycia, et al 73 Cherry Street Meriden, CT 06450
107 - 111	102/10/26	Roccapriore, Gerard B. Box 450 Meriden, CT 06450
110	111/50/2	Young Men's Christian Association 110 West Main Street Meriden, CT 06450
115	102/10/25	Fields, Irene R. 223 Swain Avenue Meriden, CT 06450

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

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



Colony Street/West Main Street Historic District, Meriden, CT

Continuation sheet                      Owners                      Item number                      4                      Page                      5

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West Main Street (Cont.)

119	102/10/24	West Main Development Co. c/o Anthony Shippert Box 238 Middle Haddam, CT 06438
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<sup>1</sup> Julius Ives, Jr., is shown by the Assessor's record to be the last known owner of the right-of-way, but he lived in the 19th century.

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

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

For NPS use only

received

date entered

Colony Street/West Main Street Historic District, Meriden, CT

Continuation sheet Surveys

Item number 6

Page 1

State Register of Historic Places

1987

x state

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**

Colony Street/West Main Street Historic District, Meriden, CT

Continuation sheet	Description	Item number	Page
		7	1

For NPS use only  
received  
date entered

39-49, 55, and 61 Colony Street are early 20th-century buildings that reflect the then current fashion for Classical Revival styles. (Photograph 7) The 2-story Corinthian pilasters of 39-49 Colony Street are an elaboration of the same school as the cornice of 1-3 Colony Street. 55 Colony Street is entirely different, in the Georgian Revival style.

The bank building at 16 Colony Street, on the west side, is another example of the earlier Neo-Classical Revival, a fine example of its type. (Photograph 3) Across the side street, 24-36 Colony Street has pilasters similar to those at 39-49 Colony Street on its side-street elevation, with Art Deco treatment in its front elevation. (Photograph 3) Beyond the adjoining parking lot, the First Congregational Church presents a substantial statement in granite of ecclesiastical Gothic Revival-style architecture contemporary with the district's period of significance. (Photograph 8)

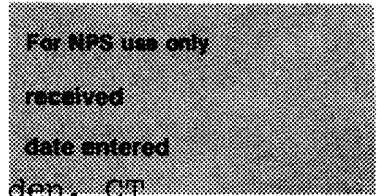
On the north side of West Main Street the buildings form a row of 18 structures that is almost uninterrupted, but includes five 1-story structures and one vacant lot. The first building, 1 West Main Street, is a new bank which is located on the site of an earlier bank. (Photograph 9) Beyond it is the building, thought to date from 1854, that may be the oldest in the district, 29 West Main Street. (Photographs 9, 10) It has been altered, severely so at the first floor. Its neighbor, 31-33-37 West Main Street has received an entire new front elevation, causing it to be designated non-contributing (Photographs 10, 11) Its elaborate Georgian Revival front elevation is unlike any other on the street.

Architecture from the Victorian Era resumes with 53 North Main Street, where the number of windows grouped under a common lintel treatment increases arithmetically from floor to floor. At the second floor paired windows share a common 3-centered arch; at the third floor three windows are grouped in a Palladian manner; at the fourth floor four windows share a stepped flat lintel; and at the fifth floor nine windows form an arcade interrupted only by the cornice brackets. In vivid contrast is the Art Moderne front next door at 57-59 West Main Street, with distinctive glazed blue panels. (Photographs 12, 13)

61-65 West Main Street, a more restrained design, has its original 2/2 windows under cast-iron lintels, one of the unexpectedly few examples of the use of cast iron in the district. Other buildings and a vacant lot carry the row westward to the last two structures in the district, a florist's shop and a Tudor Revival commercial building. The florist's shop incorporates a greenhouse over the store, while the Tudor Revival design is carefully and extensively detailed with shops, fenestration, bays

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

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



Colony Street/West Main Street Historic District, Meriden, CT

Continuation sheet      Description      Item number      7      Page      2

cornice, and parapets all carefully arranged in a central section flanked by two completely symmetrical flanking sections. (Photograph 16)

The south side of West Main Street, starting at the railroad, long the site of historic buildings, has suffered the misfortunes of fire, alterations, and demolition. On this side of the street the district begins with the Streamlined Diner at 82 West Main Street and includes two contributing multi-story structures. 88-92 W. Main St. (Photo 17) uses finer materials than many of the buildings in the district, pressed brick and limestone dressing, in a restrained Neo-Classical Revival design, while 110 West Main Street, the Y.M.C.A., has a curious central 1-story projecting section flanked by French doors with balustrades in an otherwise uneventful front elevation. (Photograph 15) The gymnasium ell to the rear is constructed of tile covered with stucco. The restrained Neo-Classical Revival style of 88-90-92 West Main Street is carried by the planar quality of the Y.M.C.A. a step further toward the Art Deco.

As a group, the buildings that line Colony Street and West Main Street in the district are compatible in scale, materials, and purpose. They clearly express their function of housing the activities of a busy downtown area that enjoyed a flourishing period of construction from the mid-19th century to World War II.

Inventory of the district follows. In the inventory the source of the date of construction is given by a suffix, A for Assessor's record, V for visual approximation, and S for Survey.

Colony Street/West Main Street Historic District, Meriden, CT

Inventory

<u>Street Address</u>	<u>Contr. or Non-Contr.</u>	<u>Year Built</u>	<u>Description</u>
Colony Street			
1-3	C	1910 A	Hall & Lewis Building. Neo-Classical Revival 5-story 9-bay yellow brick building. Leaded transom over main entrance. Ionic pilasters. Rinceau frieze in elaborate terra cotta entablature. (Photographs 1, 2)

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

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

Colony Street/West Main Street Historic District, Meriden, CT

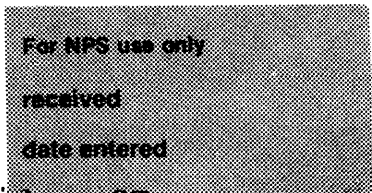
Continuation sheet

Description

Item number

7

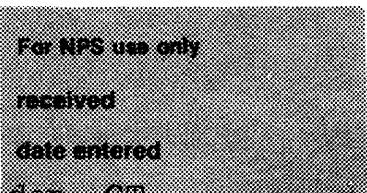
Page 3



Colony Street (Cont.)

5-7	C	1865 S	Trade Building. Italianate 3-story 5-bay brick furniture store. Large gilded letters in leaded upper section of store front. 6/6 windows. Paired brackets support roof overhang. (Photograph 1)
9	C	1874 A	Wilcox Hardware Building/Styletex Building. 3-story brick store with Art Deco front, c. 1935 V. (Photograph 1) 6/6 windows and corbeled cornice on rear elevation.
13-15-17	C	1936 A	Art Moderne 2-story brick building with concrete block front. (Photograph 1)
16	C	1922 A	Home Bank & Trust Co. Neo-Classical Revival 3-story bank faced with limestone, painted. Three tall arched windows, filled in, are separated by Corinthian pilasters. Cornice is supported by modillion course and supports paneled parapet. (Photograph 3)
19	C	1850 V	Art Deco stucco front, c. 1935 V, an old frame building with low-pitched gable roof. Recessed entry has multi-colored terazzo floor. Pressed metal ceilings. (Photographs 1, 4, 5)
21-23	C	1889 A 1877 S	Y.M.C.A. Neo-Classical Revival 4-story brick building. Large windows of upper floors have multi-paned transoms. Swags in roof-line frieze. (Photographs 1, 4, 6) Pedimented dormers in mansard roof on rear. (Photograph 5) Present front is an alteration, c. 1920, after new Y.M.C.A. was built.
24-36	C	1935 S	Wilcox Building. Neo-Classical Revival/Art Deco 2-story building of brick covered by stucco. 2-story shallow Corinthian pilasters separate planar store fronts under sheet-metal cornice on Church Street elevation. \$40,000 fire in 1983. (Photograph 3)

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



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

Colony Street/West Main Street Historic District, Meriden, CT

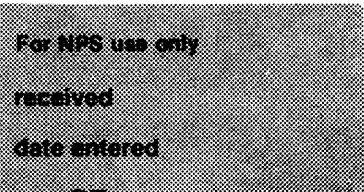
Continuation sheet      Description      Item number      7      Page      4

Colony Street (Cont.)

- |          |    |                  |   |
|----------|----|------------------|---|
| 25-31    | C  | 1885<br>in bldg. | Byxbee Block. Renaissance Revival/Neo-Classical Revival 5-story 12-bay brick building with smooth brownstone dressing and terra-cotta rosettes and moldings. 1/1 windows. Pressed metal cornices at first and second floors and roof line. Fourth- and fifth -floor windows blocked up. (Photographs 1, 6)                              |
| 33-35-37 | C  | 1863 A           | Byxbee House (hotel). Italianate/Neo-Grec 3-story 5-bay brick building with later aluminum front at first floor. Shallow central pavilion. Curvilinear, arched, and stilted segmental lintels. Projecting cornice supported by elaborate wooden brackets. (Photographs 1, 6)  |
| 38-44    | NC |                  | Parking lot, included for visual continuity.  |
| 39-49    | C  | 1922<br>in bldg. | Colony Building. Neo-Classical Revival 2-story brick building of eight stores which are divided by 2-story concrete Corinthian pilasters. Arched window over arched central entrance. 2-foot parapet. (Photograph 7)  |
| 51-53    | C  | 1892 A           | Romanesque Revival/Renaissance Revival 4-story brick former furniture store with brownstone trim. Second and third floors have six large 1/1 windows; 14 round-arched windows at fourth floor. Bracketed cornice supports three small square superstructures with pyramidal roofs and ball finials. (Photograph 7)                      |
| 55       | C  | 1902 A           | Cahill Beef Co. Block. Georgian Revival 2-story building of red brick with buff brick trim. Rusticated first floor. Second floor divided into three bays by Ionic pilasters with entasis. Tall arched window in central bay; elliptical windows in flanking bays. Terra-cotta Greek key frieze. Appears to be unaltered. (Photograph 7) |

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

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



Colony Street/West Main Street Historic District, Meriden, CT

Continuation sheet      Description      Item number      7      Page      5

Colony Street (Cont.)

- 61      C                      1921 A      Meriden Permanent Savings and Loan Association. Neo-Classical Revival/Art Deco 3-story bank faced with marble at first floor. Metal panels under upper floor windows. (Photograph 7)
  
- 62      C                      1879      First Congregational Church. Cutting & Holmes, architects. Gothic Revival granite church with buttresses, clerestory, and square tower without planned spire. Stone retaining wall across front. (Photograph 8)

Grove Street

- 55      C                      1901 A      Lacourciere Block. Neo-Classical Revival 2-story brick commercial building. Round-arched doorway with brownstone keystone at first floor. 6/1 windows with splayed brownstone lintels at second floor. Sheet-metal cornice. Pressed metal ceilings.

West Main Street

- 1      NC                      1975 A      Connecticut National Bank. Modern brick office building, included for visual continuity. (Photograph 9)

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

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

For NPS use only

received

date entered

Colony Street/West Main Street Historic District, Meriden, CT

Continuation sheet      Description      Item number      7      Page 6

West Main  
Street (Cont.)

29	C	1854 S	Lewis Block. Italianate/Neo-Classical Revival 3-story brick building. Facade dates from c. 1870. At second and third floors the central window is flanked by tripartite windows. At third floor sills are supported by impost blocks and windows have half-round transoms. At the roof line the bracketed wooden parapet supports a segmental pediment. (Photographs 9, 10)
31-33-37	NC	Old A	2-story brick commercial building now faced with glazed brick and stucco. (Photograph 10)
41	C	1923 A	Meriden Electric Light Co. Georgian Revival 2-story brick building. Front faced with limestone. Stone columns of recessed entry have acanthus-leaf capitals. Flanking picture windows have cast-iron frames; the jambs are narrow paneled pilasters and the lintel a cyma molding. Seven arched windows at second floor. (Photograph 10) Elaborate entablature. (Photograph 11)
41½	NC		Right of way for passway. Roadway to rear. Included for continuity.
43-45	NC	1910 A	1-story brick store faced with stucco. New store front.
49-51	NC	Old A	1-story frame building with modern store fronts. (Photograph 12)
53	C	1889 A	Yost Block. Victorian Vernacular. 5-story brick building with altered store fronts. Second, third, and fourth-story 1/1 windows are grouped under extended brownstone lintels. Fifth-story windows are round-arched under bracketed cornice with central low pediment. (Photographs 12, 13)

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

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

For NPS use only

received

date entered

Colony Street/West Main Street Historic District, Meriden, CT

Continuation sheet      Description      Item number      7      Page      7

West Main  
Street  
(Cont.)

- |       |    |                  |  |
|-------|----|------------------|--|
| 57-59 | C  | 1901 A           | Art Moderne concrete front, c. 1935 V, with vertical glazed blue panels that enclose a stylized motif. 1-story brick building. Pressed metal ceiling. (Photograph 13)  |
| 61-65 | C  | 1901 A<br>1883 S | R. Hicks Block. Renaissance Revival 4-story 10-bay brick building. 2/2 windows have peaked cast-iron lintels, some with top moldings, some with rosettes. Coved metal cornice. Open rear porches. (Photograph 13)  |
| 67-73 | NC |                  | Foundations of former building, only. Vacant lot. Included for continuity.   |
| 75-79 | C  | 1890 A           | Clark's Block. Italianate 4-story 5-bay brick building with first- and second-floor front altered decades ago. Curvilinear lintels at third floor. Bracketed metal cornice. (Photograph 14)  |
| 81-83 | C  | 1900 V<br>1890 S | Cook & Curtis Block. Vernacular 3-story pressed brick building with three stores and 16 apartments. Store fronts altered. 2-story wooden 3-sided oriels above. (Photograph 14)   |
| 82    | NC | 1948 A           | Palace Diner. Paterson Vehicle Company. Streamlined 1-story stainless steel structure. Intact on exterior and interior. Sunburst patterns. Horizontal stripes.   |
| 86    | NC | 1949 A           | 1-story brick commercial building.   |
| 87    | C  | 1920 V           | Rialto Apartments. Neo-Classical Revival 3-story red and black brick building. Store fronts altered. Brick is laid in geometric patterns. Second- and third-floor windows are tripartite with wide central section; upper sash are multi-paned, lower sash single panes. Greek key in cornice. (Photograph 14) |

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

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

For NPS use only

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Colony Street/West Main Street Historic District, Meriden, CT

Continuation sheet      Description      Item number 7      Page 8

West Main  
Street  
(Cont.)

- |          |    |                  |  |
|----------|----|------------------|--|
| 88-90-92 | C  | 1905 A           | Fox Building. Neo-Classical Revival 4-story pressed buff brick building with stores, apartments, and lodge. Arched central entrance with archivolts. 1/1 windows under splayed brick lintels. Cornice with modillion course. Limestone trim. (Photograph 17)   |
| 91       | NC | Old A            | 1-story brick store remodelled in 1980. (Photograph 14)  |
| 98-104   | NC |                  | Vacant lot, included for continuity.   |
| 101      | C  | 1883 S           | Michael's Block. Vernacular 2-story brick building, 22 x 67'. Windows reduced in size. Metal cornice with saw-tooth band and rosettes.   |
| 103-105  | C  | 1900 V           | Vernacular 1-story brick building with large recessed panels above shop windows.   |
| 107-111  | C  | 1910 V           | Schwanler Block. Neo-Classical Revival 3-story brick building with restrained, planar front elevation. Curvilinear lintels are joined by bead molding. Glass brick storefronts. (Photograph 16)  |
| 110      | C  | 1919<br>Director | Y.M.C.A. H. Wales Lines Co., architect and builder. Restrained Neo-Classical Revival 4-story brick structure. Projecting 1-story front section has 8/12 windows. On either side are two French doors in molded cast stone arhitraves protected by balustrades. Second-floor windows are 9/9 and third floor windows 6/6. (Photograph 15) |
| 115      | C  | 1925 A           | Blatchly Florist. H. Wales Lines, builder, attr. 1½-story brick, glass and steel-frame florist's shop and greenhouse. Since the structure is built into a bank, the second floor continues at the rear as a greenhouse with no first floor under it. (Photograph 16)   |

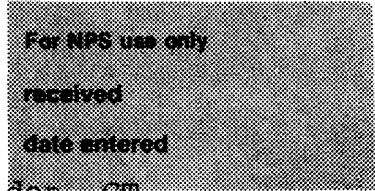


**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

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

Colony Street/West Main Street Historic District, Meriden, CT

Continuation sheet                      Description                      Item number                      7                      Page                      9



West Main  
Street  
(Cont.)

119	C	1923 S	Dondero Building. Tudor Revival 4-story buff brick building with stores, offices, and apartments. At the first floor there are three stores with arcaded transoms over their shop windows on either side of the Tudor-arched central entrance. At the upper floors the front elevation is divided into three sections, each under a shaped parapet. (Photograph 16)
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# 8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/
<input 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 type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input 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)**

The architecture of the Colony Street/West Main Street Historic District is significant because the buildings are good examples of styles that were in vogue between approximately 1870 and 1940. The buildings function for the various purposes normally associated with an urban downtown area, and, since they continue to exist in their original relationship to one another, give an excellent sense of the quality and styles of architecture of a commercial district constructed in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. (Criterion C)

The completion of the railroad from New Haven to Meriden in 1838 brought a change in the development of downtown Meriden. Prior to that time the activity center had been to the east, at Broad Street, while West Meriden, as the district's area was known, was an outpost. After a battle between conflicting interests to determine the railroad's route through Meriden, the tracks were laid to West Meriden, establishing the intersection of West Main Street and Colony Street as the important center for the future. A passenger station was built on the site now occupied by 39-49 Colony Street. Extension of the line to Hartford soon increased the traffic and made the location more desirable for commercial purposes. Simultaneously, Meriden's industry developed at an increasing pace, with emphasis on silver and brittania ware, culminating in the 1898 consolidation of several firms into the International Silver Company. Professional offices, department stores, shops, banks, a lodge, and a church, all needed to serve the burgeoning community, were built in the district.

Several of the earliest buildings, as seen in the 1875 aerial view,<sup>1</sup> were multi-story frame structures with long low-pitched gable roofs of the type now represented solely by 19 Colony Street. (Photographs 4, 5) The dominant building type, however, soon became a brick structure with Victorian-Era front elevation that combined elements from several styles. These buildings are characteristic of the district's most active period of construction. Generally derivative of the Italianate style, of which 5-7 Colony Street (Photograph 1) is perhaps the best example, others, such as 33-35-37 Colony Street (Photograph 6), combine an Italianate roof line with a Queen Anne sawtooth band between roof brackets and stilted lintels of the Neo Grec style. 53 West Main Street (Photograph 12) combines a similar roof line with a Romanesque Revival band of arched, top-floor windows over lower floors with Classical Revival features.

## 9. Major Bibliographical References

See continuation sheet.

## 10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property 11.5 prox.

Quadrangle name Meriden

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

UTM References See continuation sheet.

A 

Zone	Easting			Northing							

B 

Zone	Easting			Northing							

C 

Zone	Easting			Northing							

D 

Zone	Easting			Northing							

E 

Zone	Easting			Northing							

F 

Zone	Easting			Northing							

G 

Zone	Easting			Northing							

H 

Zone	Easting			Northing							

### Verbal boundary description and justification

The boundary is shown by the dotted line on map drawn to scale of 1" = 115'. 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 Herzan, National Register Coordinator Connecticut

organization Historical Commission date February 22, 1987

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

date July 17, 1987

### For NPS use only

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

Patricia Adams

date 9/4/87

for Keeper of the National Register

Attest: Beth L. Savage  
Chief of Registration

date 9/4/87

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National Park Service**

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Colony Street/West Main Street Historic District, Meriden, CT

Continuation sheet

Significance

Item number

8

Page

1

The corbeled roof line of 25-31 Colony Street (Photograph 6), possibly of Romanesque derivation, surmounts a segmental arch and the large 1-over-1 windows associated with the Neo-Classical Revival style. A further variation on combinations of styles is found next door at 21-23 Colony Street (Photographs 4, 5, 6) where a Neo-Classical Revival front was applied to what was originally the district's only Second Empire-style building, as shown by the unaltered rear elevation.

Construction in the district continued during the turn-of-the-century years when Victorian-Era complexities gave way to Classical-Revival balance and restraint. The bank at 16 Colony Street (Photograph 3) is a fine example of the Classical Revival, now with its tall arched windows closed up instead of displaying the radial glazing seen in historic photographs. 61 Colony Street (Photograph 7) and 88-90-92 West Main Street (Photograph 17) are other good examples of restrained Neo-Classical Revival architecture. The two Georgian Revival buildings, 55 Colony Street (Photograph 7) and 51 West Main Street (Photographs 10, 11), add carefully articulated classical details to the district in front elevations also notable because they are little altered.

A later variation of the Classical Revival is represented by 87 West Main Street (Photograph 14), where brick laid in geometric patterns is combined with windows of small panes over a single large pane, and a roof-line stepped parapet. These glazing and roof-line features are further developed in a Tudor-Revival idiom at 119 West Main Street, which enjoys the unusual feature of store fronts that are unaltered. (Photograph 16)

The Gothic Revival style is well represented in the district by the First Congregational Church. The pointed-arch windows, buttresses, and clerestory over the aisles are a fine statement of the style. The church is the only building in the district constructed of granite and is the only building for which the identity of the architects is known. The plans for the church were drawn by Cutting & Holmes of Worcester, Massachusetts. Amos F. Cutting, F.A.I.A. (d. 1896), appears to have been the member of the firm who specialized in ecclesiastical architecture. He is credited with more than 75 "correct and scholarly" churches in various eastern cities.<sup>2</sup>

During the period of the district's construction, the H. Wales Lines Company, builders, of Meriden enjoyed a state-wide and regional reputation for extensive high-quality work. Founded by H. Wales Lines, a mason, in 1878, the firm employed architects and therefore was able to assume responsibility for design as well as construction, the Y.M.C.A. at 110 West Main Street (Photograph 15) being a case in point. While the florist's shop (Photograph 16) is the only other building in the district known to have been built by the H. Wales Lines Company, it is likely that others were as well. The firm continued in business for about 100 years.

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Colony Street/West Main Street Historic District, Meriden, CT  
Continuation sheet      Significance      Item number      8      Page      2

Prior to World War II the district's latest style episode was the construction of Art Deco and Art Moderne fronts in the 1930s. Sometimes these were multi-storied as at 9 Colony Street and 19 Colony Street (Photograph 1), but more often were one story high. The building at 19 Colony Street has the distinction of being one of the oldest in the district (frame with pitched roof) with a front that is in the district's latest style. The front at 57-59 West Main Street (Photographs 12, 13) with its distinctive vertical glazed blue panels is perhaps the outstanding example of the style in the district.

The array of architectural styles in the Colony Street/West Main Street Historic District constitutes a fine statement of commercial architecture of the period from 1850 to 1940 during which the district was constructed. The individual styles, mixtures of styles, and alterations of one style upon another are an informative record of architectural developments during the district's period of significance. The buildings co-exist with one another in compatible masses and materials forming cohesive street-scapes of architectural merit.

<sup>1</sup>"City of Meriden, Conn. 1875," aerial view (Milwaukee: J. Knauber & Co., 1875).

<sup>2</sup>Henry F. Withey and Elsie Rathburn Withey, Biographical Dictionary of American Architects (Deceased) (Los Angeles: Hennessey & Ingalls, 1970; reprint ed. 1956), p. 157.

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Colony Street/West Main Street Historic District, Meriden, CT

Continuation sheet

Bibliography

Item number 9

Page 1

- "City of Meriden, Conn. 1875" aerial view. Milwaukee: J. Knauber & Co., 1875.
- "Meriden, Conn., 1918" aerial view. Boston: Hughes & Bailey, 1918.
- "Meriden, Conn., 1881" aerial view. Pattenberg, New Jersey: B. S. Farrow, 1881.
- "100th Anniversary of the Dedication of the Sanctuary of First Congregational Church." Meriden: First Congregational Church, 1979.
- Pfeiffer, Bruce. Architectural and Historical Survey of Meriden. Natick: Massachusetts: The Preservation Partnership, 1978.
- Withey, Henry F., and Withey, Elsie Rathburn. Biographical Dictionary of American Architects (Deceased). Los Angeles: Hennessey & Ingalls, 1970; reprint ed. 1956.

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National Park Service**

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Colony Street West Main Street Historic District, Meriden, CT  
Continuation sheet Geographical Data Item number 10 Page 1

**Boundary Justification**

The eastern boundary of the district is the railroad. East of the railroad is a redeveloped area. On the east side of Colony Street the district continues north to the United States Post Office, which on January 21, 1986, was listed in the National Register of Historic Places. On the west side of Colony Street the district continues north through the First Congregational Church. Beyond the church are domestic residential structures. West of Colony Street and north of West Main Street, in the angle of the ell formed by the two streets, elevation rises to a hill. (See USGS map.) The hill is occupied by domestic structures, so is not included in the district. On the north side of West Main Street the district continues westward through the multi-storied commercial/apartment buildings that form a continuous row. 119 West Main Street is the last building in the row and the last building in the district. On the south side of West Main Street starting at the railroad former multi-storied commercial buildings have, in part, been destroyed by fire and, in part, remodelled to appear as modern buildings. Next west is a row of Art Deco/Art Moderne buildings of indeterminate age but built, at least in part, in 1941. In appearance the entire row dates from that time. The last of the row, 40-44 West Main Street, is under contract for demolition. Next west is a vacant lot, then two significant 19th-century buildings which are under contract for demolition. All of these buildings are omitted from the district. The district boundary is the street in front of them. On the south side of West Main Street, then, the district begins with the Streamlined Diner, included because it is fine even though it is non-contributing due to age, and continues through the Y.M.C.A. West of the Y.M.C.A. are domestic structures. South of West Main Street are domestic structures and 20th-century commercial infill buildings.

Generally, the boundary follows lot lines as shown by the tax maps, but three parcels are split. Parcel 103/14/20, 24-36 Colony Street, is split to exclude the rear building which has been severely altered by removal of the top two floors and by addition of a shingled front on the first floor of the street elevation. Parcels 102/10/26, 107-111 West Main Street, and 102/10/24, 119 West Main Street, have been split to exclude 19th-century residences that stand behind the commercial buildings.

**UTM References**

- A 18/683400/4600800
- B 18/683290/4600590
- C 18/683260/4600600
- D 18/683050/4600590
- E 18/683050/4600530
- F 18/682910/4600530
- G 18/682900/4600640
- H 18/683240/4600660
- I 18/683340/4600830