

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

JUN 13 1989

National Register of Historic Places  
Registration Form

NATIONAL  
REGISTER

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in *Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms* (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries.

1. Name of Property

historic name FAIRFIELD RAILROAD STATIONS  
other names/site number N/A

2. Location

street & number Carter Henry Drive N/A  not for publication  
city, town Fairfield  vicinity Fairfield  
state Connecticut code 09 county Fairfield code 001 zip code 06430

3. Classification

Ownership of Property	Category of Property	Number of Resources within Property	
<input type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	Contributing	Noncontributing
<input type="checkbox"/> public-local	<input type="checkbox"/> district	<u>2</u>	<u>        </u> buildings
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> public-State	<input type="checkbox"/> site	<u>        </u>	<u>        </u> sites
<input type="checkbox"/> public-Federal	<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<u>        </u>	<u>        </u> structures
	<input type="checkbox"/> object	<u>        </u>	<u>        </u> objects
		<u>2</u>	<u>0</u> Total

Name of related multiple property listing: N/A Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

4. State/Federal Agency Certification

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

[Signature] 6/7/89  
Signature of certifying official Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

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

Signature of commenting or other official Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

5. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this property is:

entered in the National Register.  See continuation sheet.

determined eligible for the National Register.  See continuation sheet.

determined not eligible for the National Register.

removed from the National Register.

other, (explain:)

[Signature] 7/28/89  
Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

**6. Function or Use**

Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)

TRANSPORTATION: rail-related

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)

TRANSPORTATION: rail-related

COMMERCE/TRADE: specialty store

COMMERCE/TRADE: restaurant

TRANSPORTATION: road-related

(vehicular)

**7. Description**

Architectural Classification

(enter categories from instructions)

LATE VICTORIAN: Stick/Eastlake

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation Stone

walls Brick

Wood

roof Stone: slate, asphalt

other

**Describe present and historic physical appearance.**

The railroad stop at Fairfield, Connecticut, includes two historic station buildings: the east-bound station on the south side of the tracks (Photographs 1 through 3) is a 1 1/2-story brick building built in 1882, and the west-bound station on the opposite side (Photographs 6 and 7) is a 1 1/2-story wood-frame station built about 1895 (see sketch map). Both are oriented with their long dimensions parallel to the tracks, and both are adjacent to long high-level concrete platforms dating from the upgrading of the line in the late 1960s. The stations lie on the boundary between Fairfield's downtown commercial area and a residential neighborhood to the north; both have extensive commuter parking lots. Pedestrian traffic between the two stations is made possible by stairways to a bridge which crosses the four-track electrified railroad right-of-way at the east end of the property; the cross-over is a remnant of the c.1890 Unquowa Road bridge.

**East-bound Station:**

The east-bound station measures 26' by 82' in plan, with piers dividing the shorter elevation into two bays and the longer into nine bays. The brick is laid in common bond with Flemish variation. Window openings have rusticated brownstone lintels and sills and are fitted with one-over-one wooden sash. Paired narrow windows in the gables have been boarded up. The several transomed entrances have four-panel doors with applied moldings; most have glass in place of their upper panels. On all sides of the building except that facing the tracks, a pent roof on wooden trusses is supported by long angle-iron braces (Photograph 4). Two small brick chimneys are centered on the ridge of the gable roof near the ends of the station, and there is a central metal ventilator with an acorn finial. The north or track-side slope of the roof retains its original fishscale slates.

As originally built, the station had a shed-roofed platform shelter extending out from the north wall and supported on a series of round columns; it was replaced in 1887 by a wooden platform shelter which was formed in part from an extension of the station roof and continued some distance westward as a gable-roofed canopy. The second structure was removed as part of the c.1970 rail improvement program, and the platform is now open.

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Fairfield, CT

Description (continued):

East-bound Station (continued):

The high-ceilinged interior (Photograph 5) includes extensive original materials: hardwood floors, a dado of narrow beaded boards, paneled doors, molded window and door surrounds, and a complex series of cornice moldings. There is a large central waiting room which also serves a taxi office; restrooms and a cleaner business in the west end; and a delicatessen at the east end. Ceilings, plywood paneling applied above the wainscot, and lighting fixtures are modern.

West-bound Station:

The west-bound station (Photographs 6 and 7) measures 30' x 90' in plan. Its gable roof has an unusual profile: because the ridge line is located only about four feet back from the south or track-side wall, the front slope of the roof is much shorter than the rear slope. The roofline reflects the loss of the original wooden platform shelter, which was formed in part from a continuation of the front slope of the roof. The present metal canopy over the platform dates from c.1970. The roof forms a pronounced overhang on all sides, supported (except on the south side) by simple chamfered braces. There are two brick chimneys about one-third in from the ends of the station. On the west end of the south elevation is a shed-roofed projection which appears to be of recent construction.

Most of exterior of the station is clapboarded, complemented by matched-board vertical siding below a molding which encircles the building at the level of the window sills. On the south elevation, the upper-story clapboards are interrupted by a series of vertical boards. Windows have plain-board frames and are fitted with two-over-two sash. The paired end-elevation windows have small-pane transoms. In the gables are windows with peaked heads repeating the shape of the roof; a small loading door is directly below the east gable window. On the ten-bay north elevation, one entrance is modern and one is a transomed doorway with a panel-and-glass door (Photograph 8).

The interior features hardwood floors, fluted window and door surrounds with corner blocks, and walls of grooved vertical sheathing. In addition to the large waiting room, ticket area, and restrooms, the station accommodates a cleaner and donut shop at the west end.

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View showing original track shelter in front of station, from Tone,  
1966.

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**8. Statement of Significance**

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

nationally  statewide  locally

Applicable National Register Criteria  A  B  C  D

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions)  A  B  C  D  E  F  G

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)

ARCHITECTURE

TRANSPORTATION

Period of Significance

1882-c.1945

Significant Dates

1882

c.1895

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Significant Person

N/A

Architect/Builder

Unknown

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.

The Fairfield railroad stations are significant as reminders of the important role of railroad passenger service in the historical development of Fairfield, as artifacts of the New Haven Railroad, a company which virtually monopolized the state's public transportation at the end of the 19th century, and as well-preserved examples of small-town station architecture. Fairfield has been affected by the railroad since the late 1840s when the shore line route was built through the town. Originally an agricultural and maritime community, Fairfield experienced substantial commercial and industrial development as a direct result of its rail connections, and the location of the passenger station at its present site helped to establish nearby Post Road intersections as the commercial focus of the town. Different lifestyles, including summer-resort visitors and commuters to New York and other Connecticut shoreline cities, appeared. And for much of Fairfield, the stations became a symbol of community life: visitors arriving, children going off to camp or college, and soldiers departing and returning from service were just some of the important events at the station which affected the lives of generations of Fairfield families. Although highways changed travel patterns in the region after World War Two, passenger rail service remains an important mode of transportation.

The older east-bound station was built in 1882 to replace a depot destroyed by fire. It is typical of the substantial brick stations built at small-town stops throughout the state in the period. Whereas earlier stations had been small wood-frame buildings, often in a picturesque Gothic or Italianate style, the stations of the 1880s were brick (probably reflecting the railroads unhappy experience with frame construction and fires) and were large enough to accommodate spacious waiting rooms, ticket counters, offices, restrooms, and a baggage area. Outside waiting and entrance areas were protected by a roof overhang, pent-roof, or attached shelter. Most stations were well-built but utilitarian structures, with only limited architectural embellishment.

See continuation sheet

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Fairfield, CT

## Significance (continued):

The Fairfield east-bound station embodies these qualities in its size, brick construction, pent-roof shelter, and its restrained architecture; its rusticated stone trim, fish-scale slates, and interior woodwork testify to the substantial quality of its construction. The station is particularly notable for its well-preserved state: its historic integrity is exceptional, with such often-replaced features as wooden sash, slate roof, interior woodwork, and paneled doors preserved intact. It even retains its original ventilator, centered over the waiting area.

The west-bound station was built in the 1890s as part of a massive rebuilding of the New York, New Haven and Hartford Railroad's main line. The New Haven, as it was known, was formed in 1871 and eventually acquired some 300 transportation companies, including all but one rail line in Connecticut. The shore line along the coast, a major route from Boston to New York, was its principal source of passenger revenue. Beginning about 1892, the railroad undertook a far-reaching program of straightening curves, raising the rail line above the grade of intersecting roadways, rebuilding drawbridges, and doubling the number of tracks to the present four. As a consequence of the extra tracks, and the policy of providing separate structures for each direction, a series of new stations was needed for the north or west-bound side of the line. These physical improvements, the near-total consolidation of the state's rail service under New Haven control, and the electrification of the main line in the early 1900s enabled the New Haven Railroad to become one of the nations's largest carriers, accounting at one time for nearly 10% of America's passenger traffic. At the same time, railroad development contributed to the growth of all the shore line towns of Fairfield County, transforming many of them into residential suburbs of the greater New York area. Over the decade 1885-1895, the number of passengers carried by the New Haven Railroad increased from 7,582,213 to 43,838,676.

Fairfield west-bound station stands as an excellent example of the New Haven Railroad's 1890s passenger facilities. In order to build a large number quickly and economically, the railroad adopted a single design concept for all the stations, reverted to wood construction, and limited the stylistic details and interior finishes to a few variations. The Fairfield station has the characteristic frame construction, asymmetrical roof profile, variegated exterior materials, simple Victorian stylistic details, and wood-paneled interior which

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Significance (continued):

together define the type. Although the concept, form, and detailing of these stations was standardized for the entire four-tracking project, no two are exactly alike. The Fairfield station is one of the largest of the 1890s stations.

Like the older east-bound building, the west-bound station embodies the distinctive characteristics of the small-town railroad architecture of period. It is a commodious building with Victorian decorative detail, such as variegated siding, Stick-Style brackets, and interior paneling, to give some stylish touches to an otherwise utilitarian structure. Although the platform has been modernized, Fairfield west-bound station's plain form, restrained Victorian ornament, overhanging roof, and highly original interior make it a significant and well-preserved example of small-town station architecture.

**9. Major Bibliographical References**

- Connecticut Railroad Commissioners. Annual Report, 1883, 1892-1896.
- Fairfield Historical Society. Original drawings, east-bound station.
- Tone, John C. New Haven Railroad Station and Line Improvements: Preliminary Plans and Cost Estimates. New York: Tri-State Transportation Commission, 1966.
- Turner, Gregg M. and Melancthon W. Jacobus. Connecticut's Railroads, An Illustrated History. Hartford: Connecticut Historical Society, 1986.

See continuation sheet

**Previous documentation on file (NPS):**

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # \_\_\_\_\_
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # \_\_\_\_\_

**Primary location of additional data:**

- State historic preservation office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

**Specify repository:**

Connecticut Historical Commission  
59 South Prospect St., Hartford, CT

**10. Geographical Data**

06106

Acreege of property Approximately .7 acres

**UTM References**

A 

1	8	6	4	6	1	8	0	4	5	5	5	8	5	0
Zone			Easting				Northing							

C 

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B 

1	8	6	4	6	1	3	0	4	5	5	5	8	6	0
Zone			Easting				Northing							

D 

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

See continuation sheet

**Verbal Boundary Description**

The boundary includes a perimeter of 25' around each station as well as the entire railroad right-of-way in front of and between the buildings. The cross-over and stairway east of the east-bound station is not included. See sketch map, scale of 1"=50'.

See continuation sheet

**Boundary Justification**

The boundary includes the stations and their immediate surroundings, but excludes the facility's extensive parking areas.

See continuation sheet

**11. Form Prepared By**

name/title Bruce Clouette, Reviewed by John Herzan, National Register Coordinator

organization Historic Resource Consultants date August 29, 1988

street & number 55 Van Dyke Avenue telephone (203) 547-0268

city or town Hartford state Connecticut zip code 06106



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Photographs \_\_\_\_\_ Fairfield Railroad Stations  
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All photographs:

1. FAIRFIELD RAILROAD STATIONS
2. Fairfield, CT
3. Photo Credit: HRC, Hartford, CT
4. August, 1988
5. Negative filed with Connecticut Historical Commission  
Hartford, CT

East-bound station, south elevation, camera facing northeast  
Photo 1 of 8

East-bound station, south elevation, camera facing northwest  
Photo 2 of 8

East-bound station, north elevation, camera facing southeast  
Photo 3 of 8

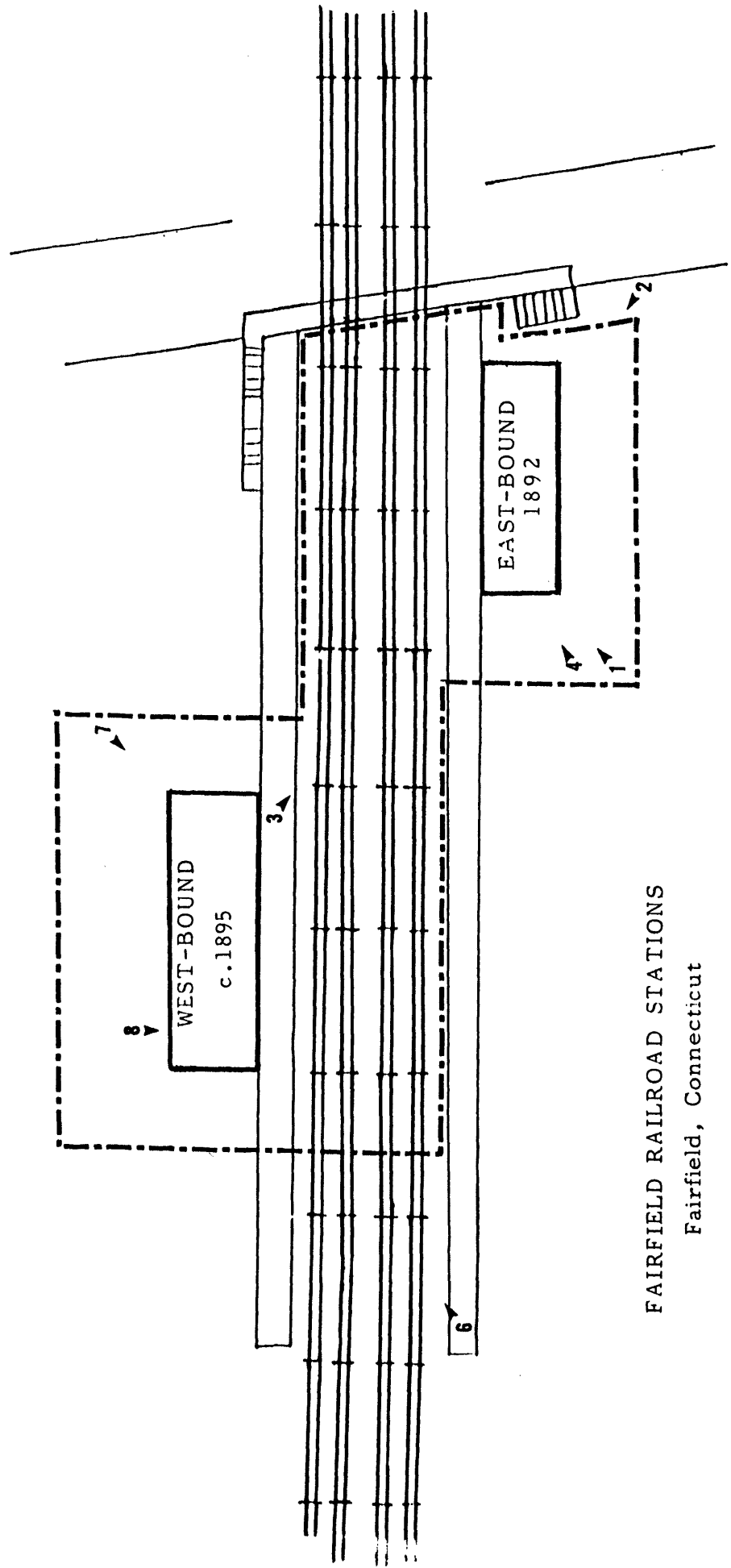
East-bound station, detail of bracing, camera facing northeast  
Photo 4 of 8

East-bound station, interior, camera facing northwest  
Photo 5 of 8

West-bound station, south elevation, camera facing northeast  
Photo 6 of 8

West-bound station, north elevation, camera facing southwest  
Photo 7 of 8

West-bound station, detail of doorway, camera facing south  
Photo 8 of 8



FAIRFIELD RAILROAD STATIONS  
Fairfield, Connecticut

Scale: 1" = 50'

- Boundary of Nominated Property
- ▲2 Photo Positions