

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places  
Registration Form

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This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "X" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

**1. Name of Property**historic name North Branch Historic District

other names/site number \_\_\_\_\_

**2. Location**street & number Easton Turnpike, Burnt Mills Road, Vanderveer Ave & Station Road ☐ not for publicationcity or town Branchburg Township ☐ vicinitystate New Jersey code NJ county Somerset code 035 zip code 08853**3. State/Federal Agency Certification**

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I 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. I recommend that this property be considered significant ☐ nationally ☐ statewide ☒ locally. ☐ See continuation sheet for additional comments.

Signature of certifying official/Title

Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

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

Signature of certifying official/Title

Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

**4. National Park Service Certification**

I hereby certify that this property is:

- ☒ entered in the National Register.  
☐ See continuation sheet.

- ☐ determined eligible for the  
National Register.  
☐ See continuation sheet.

- ☐ determined not eligible for the  
National Register.

- ☐ removed from the National  
Register.

- ☐ other, (explain:) \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

*Edson H. Beall* 4-16-12

**5. Classification****Ownership of Property**

(Check as many boxes as apply)

- ☒ private
- ☒ public-local
- ☐ public-State
- ☐ public-Federal

**Category of Property**

(Check only one box)

- ☐ building(s)
- ☒ district
- ☐ site
- ☐ structure
- ☐ object

**Number of Resources within Property**

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
50	5	buildings
4	0	sites
9	0	structures
1	0	objects
64	5	Total

**Name of related multiple property listing**

(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

N/A

**Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register**

0

**6. Function or Use****Historic Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC/ single dwelling

DOMESTIC/ secondary structure

GOVERNMENT/ post office

COMMERCE/ general store and specialty stores

AGRICULTURE/ animal facility and outbuildings

FUNERARY/ cemetery

TRANSPORTATION/ road related

**Current Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC/ single dwelling

DOMESTIC/ secondary structure

COMMERCE/ restaurant and business

AGRICULTURE/ animal facility and outbuildings

FUNERARY/ cemetery

TRANSPORTATION/ road related

**7. Description****Architectural Classification**

(Enter categories from instructions)

COLONIAL/ Dutch Colonial

EARLY REPUBLIC/ Federal

MID-19<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY/ Greek Revival

**Materials**

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation STONE

walls WOOD

roof ASPHALT

other

**Narrative Description**

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

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North Branch Historic District  
Somerset County, New Jersey

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### NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION

Located in northwestern Somerset County in New Jersey's Piedmont geographical province, the North Branch Historic District occupies relatively flat land on the west bank of the North Branch of the Raritan River. It is a predominately 19<sup>th</sup>-century linear settlement that stretches along Easton Turnpike (County Route 614) from the North Branch of the Raritan River on the east to Burnt Mills Road (County Route 641) in the west, and comprises a section of the early 19<sup>th</sup> century New Jersey Turnpike that was bypassed in the construction of New Jersey State Route 22 in the 1940s. The district also extends north along Vanderveer Avenue and south along Station Road (County Route 679), encompassing several early farmsteads that predated the turnpike village. The village consists of a combination store and dwelling, a cemetery and several dozen dwellings, as well as a daycare center housed in a former schoolhouse. The district is bordered on the south and south west by mid-late 20<sup>th</sup> century commercial and office development along U.S. Route 22, on the northwest by two small modern developments of several dozen houses on large lots, on the north by pastures and open fields, and on the east by the North Branch.

The North Branch Historic District encompasses the Branchburg Township portion of the surviving 19<sup>th</sup>-century village and land associated with farmsteads integral to the village, but excludes the adjoining modern commercial cluster and residential development. An inventory of district resources is included in this section, and all resources have been categorized as "contributing" or "non-contributing" to the district's historical significance. Contributing resources consist of fifty buildings, mostly dwellings – a number of which have been converted from early shops – and outbuildings; four sites, including a cemetery, and the sites of a mill, a house site and a historic farmstead; thirteen structures, including covered wells, smokehouses, a corncrib, a bridge and four district roads; and one object – a highway milepost. Non-contributing resources include five buildings, comprised of three outbuildings, a modern dwelling and a child-care facility.

Architecturally, the district consists of modestly-scaled, gable-roofed, vernacular buildings of frame construction, several from the late 18th century but most dating from the 19th century and early decades of the 20th century. The buildings generally exhibit simple stylistic embellishments characteristic of that era. Most have retained their historic form and a fair amount of early detailing, and although many have been refurbished or enlarged, these alterations do not significantly affect the character of the district. There are also a number of more recent buildings comprised of outbuildings such as garages and sheds and a number of infill houses, which in general are compatible in siting, scale, and form. Most of the buildings within the district, which are predominantly dwellings and their associated outbuildings, are typically closely spaced on small lots and face the road with short setbacks; the 18<sup>th</sup>-century dwellings on Vanderveer Avenue typically face south or southeast. Nearly one hundred acres of fields along Vanderveer Avenue are under farmland preservation easement, and Somerset County owns approximately forty acres of open space along the river in that area, all of which is land originally associated with Jacob Ten Eyck's original farmstead. Open space that once constituted the Stryker farm lies south of the Easton Turnpike, and a portion on the east side of Station Road also is owned by the County and Branchburg Township. These properties reflect the historic relationship of agricultural lands to the village. In the southeast corner of the district, Branchburg Township owns twenty-three acres of open space

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lands. Buildings generally are in good condition and well maintained with only a very few that exhibit neglect; surrounding yards similarly are well groomed, often featuring large trees and mature plantings.

District roads follow their early 18<sup>th</sup>- or early 19<sup>th</sup>- century alignments and feature one travel lane in each direction, ranging from about twelve feet in width along Easton Turnpike to eight feet in width along Burnt Mills and Station Roads, all of which also have paved shoulders. Vanderveer Avenue is narrower still, and has no shoulders. All of these roads are paved with asphalt, and all of the roads except Vanderveer Avenue have painted center or sidelines. There are no curbs in the district and in general lawns extend to the edge of the shoulder. The minimal signage in the district consists of standard road identification and traffic control signs.

The district's architecture is representative of the rural region's vernacular construction practices and building types. Construction is primarily frame on stone or masonry foundations and dwellings predominate. Noteworthy exceptions include one stone dwelling, the Jacob Ten Eyck House at #27, which is the only early stone house standing in Branchburg Township, one brick dwelling, and three brick smokehouses.

### *Form*

There are two examples of the traditional 1½-story house, known as an East Jersey Cottage, which was common in the region, though not in North Branch, at an early date (#s 22 & 6, west wing, photos #s 2 & 12). Another of the earliest traditional dwelling types – the Dutch house – is represented in the district by the 1½-story east wings at Inventory #s 24 & 27 (photo #s 15, 16 & 17). Georgian plan influences are evident in a number of 2-story, 5-bay double-pile dwellings (#s 14, 20, 27 - main block - and 31, photo #s 9, 10 & 17), as well as several side-hall plans of that type (#s 19, 20, 23, 24, & 33; photo #s 7, 15, & 19). Well represented in the district are the traditional, 2-story, gable-roofed types with single-pile plans, interior gable-end chimneys and generally regular fenestration patterns of three to five bays. Such houses (the I-type and its center and side-hall plan variants) are ubiquitous in the region's 19<sup>th</sup>-century housing stock, revealing Delaware Valley cultural influences. Examples include #s 2, 10, 11, 16, 17, 18, and 32; (photo #s 5 & 6). One of the significant early buildings in the district, site #24 (photo #15), features a gambrel roof, evidence of influence from either Dutch or East Jersey/New York culture regions.

Well represented with the category of popular building types (national, non-traditional forms) are gable-front buildings such as #s 3, 4, 7, and 21 (photo #s 3 & 12), which were common in the region during the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and continuing into the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Examples of L-plan buildings, a popular adaptation of the asymmetrical Italianate villa form that appeared in the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century, are largely absent from the district, with the exception, perhaps, of #21 (photo #12). Popular house forms that appeared at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century are represented by a pyramidal roof example of the form known as the "American Four-Square" (#12, photo #4).



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### *Style*

Many district dwellings exhibit decorative detailing, typically restrained and usually at the front entry or roof eaves, embellishments that were derived from the architectural styles popular in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. For example, a lunette transom and a striking south front frieze board of alternating diamond and oval motifs at #24 are characteristic of the Federal style, as is the center entry at #31 (photo #s 15 & 20), which has narrow pilasters and a round brick arch framing a fanlight window, and the wood fan motif above the entry at #22 (photo #12). Many of the district's houses feature stylistic details that are expressive of Greek Revival influences: 2, 6, 10, 11, 13, 14, 16, 18, 19, 20, 21, 33 and 34 (photo #s 2, 5, 8, 9, 11, 12 & 19). Victorian influences are relatively few, and can be seen in the Italianate embellishments at #31 (cornice brackets and east porch; photo #20), and Queen Anne style influences, mainly porches, at: 5, 7, 17, 18 and 21 (photo #s 1, 3, 6, 11 & 12). Colonial Revival influences are evident primarily in porches with Tuscan columns added to typically vernacular types, for example at site #s 2, 13, and 34 (photo #19).

The building at #12 (photo #4), a simply styled Colonial Revival, is the district's surviving contributing commercial building. A number of other simple vernacular buildings that previously were used for commercial purposes have been converted to dwellings: #1, wheelwright shop; #3, harness shop; #13, general store; and #34, store (photo #19).

### *Other Resources*

Also of interest are the mostly 19<sup>th</sup>- and early 20<sup>th</sup>-century outbuildings associated with the district's dwellings and old farmsteads. Barns and wagon houses/carriage houses are all of frame construction, except for wagon houses at site #s 12 and 21, and date from the mid-19<sup>th</sup> to early 20<sup>th</sup> century. The district's collection of barns (site #s 12, 18, two at 24, 27, and 32; photo #s 16, 21 & 22) includes a rare early Dutch/English barn at #24 (photo #16). The interior of this barn is three bays wide, with a center nave and flanking aisles. The framing suggests Dutch anchor-bent framing, which has been extended on each side to form the aisles; the side entry derives from English traditions. Wagon houses or wagon sheds are found in the district at #s 1, 2, 12, and 31. Combination barn/wagon houses or wagon house/sheds exist at 14, 19, 21 and 27. Other district outbuildings include a commercial ice house (#12), three brick smoke houses (#s 5, 14, and 32; photo #10); a privy (#22), four covered wells (#s 2, 5, 6, 31; photo #2); a drive-through corn crib (#24; photo #16), and several small sheds (#s 4, 6) dating from the mid 19<sup>th</sup> to early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries.

Included within the district are transportation and industrial resources. At site #30, the sandstone milepost for the New Jersey Turnpike is the sole extant example along the route of the former turnpike and is a significant contributing resource. Four district roads that follow their early alignment are notable resources (#s 35, 36, 37 & 38; photo #s 1, 11, 12, 13, 14, 16, 19 & 22). There are also four sites in North Branch Historic District. A cemetery, the North Branch Reformed Church Cemetery (site #26, photo #18), is situated on the east side of Vanderveer Avenue. The site of an 18<sup>th</sup> century mill along the North Branch includes an early millrace feature and undoubtedly has further archaeological potential (site #32). The site of a house at #29 retains early

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cellar/foundation features and may have further archaeological potential.<sup>1</sup> The site of the Stryker farmstead at #15 retains two concrete posts that survive from an early 20<sup>th</sup> century landscape feature and also has archaeological potential (photo #24).<sup>2</sup>

The following inventory has been adapted from the 2004 *North Branch Village Historic District Intensive Level Survey* by Hunter Research, Inc., which was prepared to facilitate a National Register nomination. Each principal structure and site is identified by a number that locates it on the accompanying district map. All entries are categorized as either "contributing" or "non-contributing" to the significance of the district. All outbuildings included in the inventory are identified as either contributing or non-contributing with the designation (C) or (NC). Corresponding reference numbers for prior surveys are provided where appropriate: 2004 *North Branch Village Historic District Intensive Level Survey* ("Hunter Survey"); 1989 Somerset County Cultural Resource Survey ("SCCRC"); and 1983 draft North Branch National Register Nomination ("Daniels et al").

## INVENTORY

- 1 **9 Burnt Mills Road.** (Hunter Survey #6; Daniels et al #34) Frame, 2-story, 4-bay side gable dwelling with an interior block chimney and a second story enclosed porch on front (west) elevation.

**Style:** None

**Date:** c. 1850 (Otley and Keily) "A. Lane Wheelwright Shop" (Lake and Beers)

**Additional description:** Former shop converted to residential use. Exterior features include aluminum siding, two entries on the west façade, one of which is sheltered by a gabled hood on plain brackets, and one entry on north facade. Windows 6/6 wood sashes. The foundation is parged masonry.

**Outbuildings:** Frame, 2-story, gable roof wagon house sheathed in clapboard planks features open eaves with a fascia board. On south elevation is a center entry and a plank hay door on the

<sup>1</sup> Hunter Research, Inc. "A Phase I Cultural Resource Survey for the Proposed New Elementary School, Block 169, Lot 1, Milltown Road and Easton Turnpike, Bridgewater Township, Somerset County, New Jersey." Trenton: Hunter Research, Inc., 2004. On file, New Jersey Historic Preservation Office, site #41.

<sup>2</sup> New Jersey State Review Board minutes, February 24, 2011.

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second story. Windows consist of six-pane fixed sash units on the east and west facades, and a single-pane fixed sash window on the second story (c.1850) (C).

Contributing B3 /L26

- 2 **1104 Easton Turnpike.** (Hunter Survey #8; Daniels et al #39) Frame, 2-story, 5-bay, gable-roofed, single-pile **dwelling** with internal gable end chimneys with brick stacks and a rear gable roof addition, with a small shed roof.

**Style:** Greek Revival; Colonial Revival embellishments

**Date:** c. 1850 "R.F. Hageman" (Otley and Keily)

**Additional description:** Exterior features include a wide plain cornice and plain pilasters at each corner of the primary facade. There is a hipped roof front porch with a boxed cornice sheltering the primary entryway, supported by Tuscan columns. The entryway features sidelights, panels and a fixed transom. Windows vary, but generally consist of 6/6 sashes with shallow arched crowns. Windows on the front facade have shutters. Fixed sash windows flank the chimneys at the gable ends. There is a small fixed-sash window forming the center-bay of the second floor on the primary facade. On the southern (rear) elevation is a pair of full-height double doors. The rear addition is accessed by means of a Dutch 'split' door.

**Outbuildings:** (1) Frame, 1-story, gable-front **wagon shed** with batten doors (early 20th) (C); (2) frame **well house** with pyramidal hip roof and lattice and clapboard siding (c.1900) (C), (3) frame, shed roof **wagon shed** with vertical plank sheathing (c.1910) (C).

Contributing B7 /L3

- 3 **1100 Easton Turnpike.** (Hunter Survey #9) Frame, 1-story, 2-over 3-bay, gable-front **dwelling** with block chimney at rear gable; rear (south) single story shed roof addition.

**Style:** None

**Date:** c. 1850 (Otley and Keily); "R.F. Hageman Harness Shop" (Lake and Beers)

**Additional description:** Exterior features include open eaves; center entry with wood door of a single panel and 8 lights; shed roof porch supported by square wood posts with a simple balustrade. Windows consist of 6/6 wood sash windows with casement moldings. The former harness shop rests atop a stone rubble foundation.

**Outbuildings:** None

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Contributing B7 /L3

- 4 **1081 Easton Turnpike.** (Hunter Survey #13; Daniels et al #31) Frame, 2-story, 3-bay gable-front dwelling with a rear gable roof appendage.

**Style:** None

**Date/History:** c. 1900 (Hunter 2004). Back portion is the 1805 carriage house from 1071 Easton Turnpike (Inventory #5). Front portion is the 1835 Jacob Ten Eyck chair shop. The two parts were joined together and back portion raised and a brick foundation was put on after 1875. (Source: BHPC)

**Additional description:** Exterior features include a center hall entryway sheltered by a front gable roof supported by scrolled knee braces over a concrete stoop. The door is a 15-light type with a full casement molding. The door is flanked by 6/1 wood sash windows also with casement moldings. Two fixed-sash windows are in place on the second floor, and may have flanked a chimney at one time, long since removed. The windows on the primary facade are flanked by vertical plank shutters. There is an enclosed side porch between the front gable section and the gable ell, topped by a hipped roof. There is a front entryway door on the porch, which is enclosed by large paneled windows and transom windows. The foundation, constructed of brick, is exposed at the southern end of the front gable section and fully exposed at the gable ell section. There is a sliding batten door in the foundation that provides access to a garage space beneath the gable ell.

**Outbuildings:** (1) Frame, 1-story, 2-bay gable roof, one-room cottage with exposed foundation, panel and glass door flanked by a 6/6 sash window. Previously located on B4/L14.02; reported as recently transferred to B4/L14.01 via lot line adjustment; was old post office building (Source: BHPC) (c.1900, Hunter)(C). (2) Frame, 1-story gable-roofed shed with vertical panel siding, a wide overhang and open eaves. (c.1900)(C).

Contributing B4 /L14.01

- 5 **1071 Easton Turnpike.** (Hunter Survey #14; Daniels et al #30) Frame, 2-story, 4-bay, double-pile, gable roof dwelling with interior gable end chimneys with brick stacks; 1-story, gable roof appendages at each end.

**Style:** Federal & Greek Revival influences; Queen Anne embellishment

**Date:** late 18<sup>th</sup>/Early 19<sup>th</sup> century. The house of Jacob Ten Eyck, chairmaker (Source: BHPC).

**Additional description:** Exterior features include slate roof, plain cornice below the boxed eaves (with integral gutter) and a corner bead molding detail. The front facade is punctuated on its



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eastern side by a two-story bay window – which replaced two original east windows on each story – that also has a corner bead detail flanking each of the windows. The main entryway is topped by a transom, has a post and lintel surround, and is sheltered by a hipped roof porch supported by chamfered wood posts with scrolled brackets. Flanking the primary block are two, side gable, single story additions, one to the east and one to the west. There are entryway doors on the primary facade of each. Windows throughout the building consist of 6/6 and 9/6 wood sash units, which may be original. Flanking the chimneys are fixed sash windows. Windows on the main block have wood shutters.

**Outbuildings:** (1) Brick smokehouse with a pyramidal hipped roof with boxed eaves, two entry doors (one board and batten with a casement molding; one a batten style with cross bracing and casement molding) on a fieldstone foundation (early 20th)(C); (2) Frame covered well with pyramidal hipped roof with ball finial, wood plank sheathing and latticework (early 20th)(C). A one-room cottage previously part of this lot is reported to have been transferred, via lot line adjustment, to B4/L14.01, Inventory #4 (Source: BHPC).

Contributing

B4 /L14.02

Photo #1

- 6 **1065 Easton Turnpike.** (Hunter Survey #15; Daniels et al #29) Frame, 1½-story, 3-bay gable roof dwelling with center chimney with brick stack; 2-story gable front wing at east end; 1-story shed roof porch; shed roof appendage to the rear.

**Style:** None; Greek Revival addition

**Date:** Early 19<sup>th</sup> century. James Hull, blacksmith. Incorrectly identified by Otley and Keily as “J.Ten Eyck, Chairmaker.” [Source: BHPC]

**Additional description:** Exterior features include a front shed-roof porch supported by wood posts. Windows consist of 6/6 sashes on the first floor and 6-light sashes in the garret space of the east section, and 2/1 sashes with projecting crowns on the front gable section. The two-story east section has a front gable roof with a wide cornice, partial returns and a raked cornice molding; a side hall entryway has a double-leaf door. Appended to the east side of the building is a partially enclosed shed roof porch. There is an open gable walkway that leads to a modern garage to the west of the residence. The dwelling sits atop a stone rubble foundation.

In 1983 the interior of the western wing of the house displayed hand hewn oak post and lintel structural members, with brick nogging within the exterior walls. There was also evidence of a gable end fireplace. Hand hewn lath attached with hand-forged nails had been applied to the interior wall surfaces. The primary block was constructed without a fireplace; instead, the chimney was constructed to accept only stovepipes. (Source: 1983 National Register Nomination Form)

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**Outbuildings:** (1) Small, frame, 1-story gable-roof shed with clapboard siding, a single entryway, a window opening and rubble stone foundation (mid 19th)(C); (2) rusticated block covered well with pyramidal roof and lattice work (early 20th)(C).

Contributing

B4 /L15

Photo #2

- 7 **1057 Easton Turnpike.** (Hunter Survey #16; Daniels et al #28) Frame, 2-story, 2-over-3-bay, gable-front dwelling with a brick chimney stack rising through the roof ridge at the southern end of the house and a gable addition at the rear that is full height and matches the roofline of the southern (primary) section of the building.

**Style:** None; Queen Anne embellishments

**Date:** c. 1860

**Additional description:** Exterior features include unboxed eaves and exposed rafter tails, with a cornice that adorns the eave-line on the western and eastern facades. A shed roof wrap-around porch is supported by turned posts and shelters the primary entryway door. On the western elevation is a gabled, enclosed entryway that services the rear of the building. Windows are 9/6 wood sash units flanked by shutters. The building is on a brick foundation. The gable-end chimney and the wide cornice and center entry on the east façade suggest that the dwelling may have been a 3-bay, side-gable house.

**Outbuildings:** None

Contributing

B4 /L16

Photo #3

- 8 **1053 Easton Turnpike.** (Hunter Survey #17; Daniels et al #27) Frame, 1½-story, 3-bay, gable-roofed dwelling with an interior brick chimneystack and attached garage.

**Style:** Cape Cod

**Date:** c. 1940

**Additional description:** Exterior features include front gable dormers and 6/1 windows.

**Outbuildings:** None

Non-contributing

B4 /L17

- 9 **1047 Easton Turnpike.** (Hunter Survey #18; Daniels et al #26) Frame and masonry block, 2-story, 3-bay gable-front daycare center with one-story, flat-roofed wings at each side.

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**Style:** None

**Date/History:** c. 1860 (the Academy/North Branch Firehouse) As visible on historic photographs, the building had a bell tower. The 1883 Beers Atlas identified the schoolhouse as 'Sch. No. 19.' Approximately 183 students attended the school by 1881. By the early 20th century, an additional classroom had been added at its eastern end and a smaller addition was appended to the west side. The bell tower may have been removed by this time. In the mid-20th century Branchburg Township commenced the construction of centralized schools and the Academy was conveyed to the North Branch Fire Company, and the building was again enlarged.

**Additional description:** Exterior features include a stepped front gable; the rear gable has wide, unboxed overhanging eaves and a hatch in the second story. To the east of the main block is a one-story addition that was added in the 1950s when the building became a firehouse; the engine bays have been infilled and are now used as classroom space. The section to the west is the most recent and features a band of three triple windows. The entry is centered on the main block. The foundation is not visible.

**Outbuildings:** Frame, 1-story gable roof shed (mid-20<sup>th</sup>)(NC).

Non-contributing

B4 /L18

- 10 **1043 Easton Turnpike.** (Hunter Survey #19; Daniels et al #25) Frame, 2-story, 4-over-5-bay, single pile dwelling with two rear additions, one a taller 2-story gable roof addition and the other a 2-story shed roof addition.

**Style:** Greek Revival influences

**Date:** c. 1850 (Otley and Keily); "M. Nevius" (Lake and Beers)

**Additional description:** Exterior features include evidence that a gable end chimney has been removed, leaving behind flanking attic windows. The fascia board and verge board are detailed with a scrolled scalloped trefoil motif. The central entry, which is elevated atop a set of paired wood steps with newel posts and balustrades, is sheltered by a shed roof that is sheathed in standing seam metal and supported by square columns with scrolled brackets. Windows on the second story of the front facade consist of short 6/6 sashes, which resemble frieze band windows. Windows elsewhere are 6/6 sashes. The building has a parged foundation. The building appears to have been raised on its foundation.

**Outbuildings:** Frame gable front garage with overhead door and aluminum siding (mid-20<sup>th</sup>)(NC).

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Contributing B4 /L19

- 11 **1039 Easton Turnpike.** (Hunter Survey #20; Daniels et al #24) Frame, 2-story, 4-bay, gable-roofed single pile **dwelling**; interior chimneys with brick stacks at each gable end; taller 2-story rear appendage; hip roof appendage at southwest corner.

**Style:** Greek Revival influences

**Date:** c. 1850 (Otley and Keily); "C. Stryker" (Lake and Beers)

**Additional description:** Exterior features include open eaves and exposed rafter tails. The main entry with sidelights and a fixed transom, with tapering pilasters; sheltered by a hipped roof overhang supported by a knee brace bracket. Windows throughout are generally 6/1 sashes; there is a projecting bay on the east façade. The foundation is parged, and there is a storm cellar (Bilco) door on the eastern facade.

**Outbuildings:** None

Contributing B4 /L20

- 12 **1037 Easton Turnpike.** (Hunter Survey #21; Daniels et al #23) Frame, two-story, 3-bay, hipped-roofed **dwelling/commercial building**; brick chimney stack on east roof slope.

**Style:** Colonial Revival

**Date/History:** c. 1910. Originally constructed as a general store and dwelling for F. C. Williams and likely replaced an earlier building.

**Additional description:** "American Four Square" features wide open eaves with rounded rafter tails; hipped dormers on each slope; windows are 1/1 sashes on the main block; clapboard siding. A shed-roofed enclosed porch with multi-light casement sashes and a wide overhang has been appended to the original 1-story, shed-roofed porch. The original storefront, which occupied the west half of the original porch, survives. At the rear there is a large rear turret with a hipped roof that contains a grain elevator that was used to move bulk goods within the building. The building has been raised on its foundation.

**Outbuildings:** (1) Frame, 1½ -story, 2-bay, gable roof **icehouse** with open eaves and a molded verge board. The building is sheathed in clapboard with a corner bead detail. There are two means of entry to the building: on the lower story is a two-panel Greek Revival style door with a casement molding/surround; above this is a smaller plank hatch, held in place by strap hinges. Flanking each of these doors are a 6/6 wood sash unit on the first floor and a 6-pane fixed sash unit on the second floor (early 20th)(C). (2) Frame, 2-story, 2-bay, gable-roofed **barn** constructed



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in two distinct sections: the west section is 1½ story with a side gable roof and sheathed in wood plank, 5 bays wide fitted with sliding batten doors, and featuring wide eaves with fascia board and 6/1 double hung wood windows; the east section is topped by a front gable roof with a clerestory (ventilator) and exposed purlins. On this section there is a hay hook with 3 hatch openings on the second floor fitted with plank doors attached with bar hinges. There is a hatch in the tympanum that folds down. Leading to this hatch is a ladder attached to the front of the building. The barn rests atop a concrete block foundation (early 20th)(C). (3) Masonry and frame 2-story, 6-bay, gable-roofed **wagon house** topped by a side gable roof and constructed of concrete block that has been coated in stucco and scored. The upper story of the building is sheathed in clapboard. The wagon bays are each fitted with double leaf batten hinged doors with cross bracing. Windows throughout the building vary, although generally consist of 1/1 sashes with brick lintels and sills. There is a 6-pane fixed sash unit in the tympanum of the eastern elevation. The eastern end of the building is one story in height and connects to the barn to the east. There is one large bay that was formerly fitted with double leaf doors. There is a timber-framed wall to the rear (north) side that is sheathed in board and batten siding. Windows consist of 6-pane fixed sash units (early 20th)(C).

Contributing

B4 /L21

Photo #4 (left)

- 13 1035 Easton Turnpike.** (Hunter Survey #22; Daniels et al #22) Frame, two-story, 5-bay, gable-roofed double-pile **dwelling/commercial building**.

**Style:** Greek Revival influences; Colonial Revival embellishments

**Date:** c. 1850 (Otley and Keily); "G.I. Vanderwort" (Lake and Beers)

**Additional description:** Exterior features include wide overhanging eaves, exposed rafter tails, and a cornice frieze with dentil detailing; windows throughout the building consist of 6/6 sash flanked by shutters. Spanning the front facade is a full-length, 1-story hip roof porch with Tuscan columns and plain balustrade that shelters a storefront with a projecting glass-flanked entryway at the western end. The original central entry has been sealed, although it retains its original sidelights and pilasters. At the rear of the building has been appended a two story gable roof addition and a single story gable roof addition. There is a large wood deck and an ADA ramp on the western elevation. The building has been raised on its foundation.

**Outbuildings:** See Inventory #12.

Contributing

B4 /L21

Photo #4 (right)

- 14 1031 Easton Turnpike.** (Hunter Survey #23; Daniels et al #18) Frame, two-story, 5-bay, gable roof, double pile **dwelling**; interior chimneys with brick stacks at each gable end, and a two-story shed roof addition at the rear.

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**Style:** Greek Revival influences

**Date:** c. 1830 (Hunter 2004); "A. Van Nest" (Lake and Beers)

**Additional description:** Exterior features include wood-shingled roof with wide eaves; cornice molding clapboard siding and corner boards. The center entry features a full surround with pilasters, sidelights, and an infilled transom. Windows throughout the building consist 2/2 sashes. The building has been raised on a brick foundation.

**Outbuildings:** (1) Brick smokehouse damaged during the 1999 flood has been restored. The building is topped by a front gable roof with exposed purlins. There is a small plank hatch on the eastern elevation that is attached with strap hinges. The entryway on the western elevation is open (c. 1870)(C). (2) English barn and wagon house consisting of two separate structures that have been **raised** on new brick foundations and connected via a modern enclosed walkway designed to resemble a corncrib. Now converted to residential use, the primary section is a three-bay English barn, topped by a side gable roof with unboxed eaves, fascia board, sheathed in wood shakes. The primary bay of the barn has been infilled with a balcony area with large areas of glass. The sliding batten doors have been affixed at an angled position, although the original hardware remains. The main entryway is elevated atop wooden stairs. Windows throughout this section are 6/6 replacement units. The western section is a smaller wagon shed topped by a saltbox roof with a chimneystack rising from the eastern portion of the roof. Original fenestration has been infilled with new plank siding, although casements remain intact. Windows throughout consist of 16-pane fixed sash windows (c. 1860) (C)

Contributing

B4 /L23

Photo #s 9 & 10

15 **Station Road.** (Hunter Survey #24; Daniels et al #7) Stryker Farmstead site. Archaeological site.

**Date/History:** Property settled around 1761 by Dirck Dumont who acquired 172 acres from his father, John Dumont, that was originally part of "Lot 64" as depicted on "Land Patents of Somerset County North of the Raritan River Copied from the Elizabeth Bill in Chancery," in Snell, opposite p. 562. According to Snell, "This tract was . . . south of the village of North Branch. About 1820 it was in possession of Peter Quackenbush; later it was owned by Garret Stryker, then by Christopher Stryker, and at present [c. 1883] by James Low." By 1976, the farm had been reduced to 119 acres, and extended south of Route 22.

**Features:** By the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, the farmstead consisted of a range of buildings and/or structures stretching along Station Road: a primary dwelling, four barns, two sheds and a garage. [Wayne McCabe, minutes of 2/24/11 meeting of State Review Board for Historic Sites.] The Christopher Stryker dwelling is depicted on the North Branch detail of Beer's 1873 atlas. The location of the Stryker house, which was demolished c. 1981 [Hunter 2004, n.p.], is indicated by a pair of concrete posts that flank steps, which are mostly obscured by underbrush (c. early 20<sup>th</sup> c)

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(C).

Contributing

B7 /L4

Photo #24

- 16 **319 Station Road.** (Hunter Survey #26; Daniels et al #40) Frame, two-story, 4-bay, gable-roofed, single-pile **dwelling**; rear shed extension; 1-story gable roof appendage and attached concrete block garage at south end; interior metal stack at north gable.

**Style:** Greek Revival influences

**Date/History:** c. 1850 "D. Wyckoff" (Otley and Keily). A "burying house" that was originally located east of the house is believed to have been appended onto the rear of the house. (BHPC)

**Additional description:** Exterior features include overhanging boxed eaves; shingle siding; windows are 6/6 sashes with plain casement moldings. The inner-bay entry features a simple surround with sidelights and a four-light fixed transom and is sheltered by a one-bay shed roof porch supported by turned wood posts. The building is on a stone rubble foundation.

**Outbuildings:** None

Contributing

B8 /L12.01

Photo #5

- 17 **1048 Easton Turnpike.** (Hunter Survey #27; Daniels et al #41) Frame, two-story, 5-bay, gable-roofed, single-pile **dwelling**; interior chimney with brick stack at west gable end; 2-story shed roof rear appendage.

**Style:** None; Queen Anne embellishments

**Date:** c. 1850 "Smith" (Otley and Keily)

**Additional description:** Exterior features include a side gable roof with a wide plain cornice, partial returns and a molded verge board. The center entry is sheltered by a 3-bay shed roof porch, supported on turned wood posts with scrolled brackets. Windows throughout the building consist of 6/6 wood sashes.

**Outbuildings:** (1) Small, frame **garage** with front gable roof with double-leaf plank doors affixed with strap hinges and detailed with casement molding (early 20<sup>th</sup>) (C); (2) gable-roofed **shed** with overhanging eaves and fixed sash windows (early 20<sup>th</sup>) (C).

Contributing

B8 /L1

Photo #s 6 & 11

- 18 **1046 Easton Turnpike.** (Hunter Survey #28; Daniels et al #42) Frame, two-story, 4-bay, gable-

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roofed, single-pile **dwelling** with a small hipped-roof east addition; 2-story gable roof rear appendage with 2 block chimneys.

**Style:** Greek Revival influences; Queen Anne embellishments

**Date/History:** c. 1850. "W. Van Doren" (Otley and Keily). Rear wing was used as a general merchandise store.

**Additional description:** Exterior features include a side gable roof with wood shingles, overhanging boxed eaves, plain cornice; clapboard siding. Inner bay entryway is flanked by sidelights with pilasters, and is sheltered by a 2-bay porch roof that is supported on turned posts with scrolled brackets, with a turned balustrade and wood steps. Windows are 6/6 sashes. The perpendicular rear wing (former store) has an enclosed porch and a gabled wall dormer on its east elevation. The building has been raised on a new foundation.

**Outbuildings:** Frame, two-story, three-bay **barn** is topped by a side gable roof with wide eaves and exposed purlins and rafter tails. The exterior of the barn is sheathed in vertical plank siding, with a centrally located sliding batten/plank door. Windows consist of 6/6 wood sash units on the first floor, with 3/3 sashes on the second floor (c.1900) (C).

Contributing                      B8 /L2                      Photo #s 8 & 11

- 19    **1042 Easton Turnpike.** (Hunter Survey #29; Daniels et al #43) Frame, 2-story, 3-bay, gable roof **dwelling** with a exterior brick chimney at the west end; 2-story gable roof addition at the southwest corner; 1-story shed roof addition at the southeast corner.

**Style:** Greek Revival influences

**Date:** c. 1850 (Otley & Keily); " I.E. Stryker" (Lake and Beers)

**Additional description:** Exterior features wide overhanging boxed eaves; clapboard siding; windows with 6/6 sashes and shutters. The east bay entry features sidelights and is sheltered by a wrap around porch supported by wood posts with spindle brackets..

**Outbuildings:** Long **wagon house** is topped by a side gable roof and is constructed of concrete block that has been painted on its front (north) elevation. The building is constructed in two sections, with the larger section to the east and a smaller section offset to the west. The bays are fitted with hinged double leaf batten doors with strap hinges. The roof structure features exposed rafter tails. The smaller section to the west is two bays wide. There is a smaller addition that is inset and fitted with a sliding batten door. (early 20th) (C).

Contributing                      B8 /L3                      Photo #s 7 & 11



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- 20 **1036 Easton Turnpike.** (Hunter Survey #31; Daniels et al #44) Frame, two-story, 3-bay, gable-roofed double pile dwelling; interior chimneys with brick stacks at each gable end; rear 1-story shed roof addition.

**Style:** Greek Revival influences

**Date:** c. 1830 (Daniels, et al); "L. B. Smith" (Lake and Beers)

**Additional description:** Exterior features include roof with overhanging boxed eaves and plain cornice on front façade and molded raked cornice in the gable ends; clapboard siding with corner pilasters The side hall entryway. The west bay entry is punctuated by a full surround flanked by plain pilasters, panels and sidelights and is sheltered by a single-bay hipped roof porch with exposed rafter tails, supported on turned posts. Windows are 6/6 wood sashes with casement moldings and projecting cornices on the front facade. There is an infilled diamond-shaped window above the main entry.

**Outbuildings:** Frame, gable-roofed shed. (Late 20<sup>th</sup>)(NC)

Contributing B8 /L5

- 21 **1030 Easton Turnpike.** (Hunter Survey #33; Daniels et al #46) Frame, two-story, 3-bay, L-plan dwelling; interior chimney with brick stack at rear gable; shed roof, one-story appendage at the rear.

**Style:** None; Queen Anne embellishments

**Date:** c. 1880

**Additional description:** Exterior features include a slate roof with open eaves, exposed scrolled rafter tails and an internal gutter system. The east bay entry is sheltered by a wrap around shed roof porch supported on turned posts with scrolled brackets. The porch floor is supported by brick piers. Windows are 6/6 or 8/8 sashes. The building rests atop a brick foundation.

**Outbuildings:** Wagon house/shed was constructed in three distinct sections. The primary portion of the building is a concrete block side gable section with two open garage bays. There is a covered entryway door on the north facade. There is a flat roof section to the south that is fitted with double hung windows. A smaller side gable section has been appended to the north side (early 20<sup>th</sup>) (C).

Contributing B8 /L7 Photo #12 (right)

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- 22 1026 Easton Turnpike.** (Hunter Survey #34; Daniels et al #9) Frame, 1½ -story, 4-bay, gable-roofed dwelling with a central brick chimneystack; rear shed roof extension, lending the roofline a 'saltbox' appearance; small shed roof appendage at southeast corner.

**Style:** None; Federal influences

**Date:** c. 1795 (Hunter 2004); "J. Morell" (Lake and Beers)

**Additional description:** Exterior features include flush eaves; clapboard sheathing varies, with wide, rough-hewn planks on the western elevation, and much narrower, milled planks on the eastern elevation. Windows consist of 6/4 sashes. The central entry is flanked by two windows on the west and one on the east. The entryway is topped by a wood fan motif and the wide plank door is hung on strap hinges. The building has been raised on a new foundation.

**Outbuildings:** (1) Frame, gable front shed with vertical wood plank siding, a plank door and a sliding batten door (early 20<sup>th</sup>) (C); (2) gable front privy with vertical wood plank siding, a plank door and decorative lintel molding over the entryway (c.1870) (C).

Contributing                      B8 /L8                      Photo #12 (left)

- 23 221 Vanderveer Avenue.** (Hunter Survey #36; Daniels et al #57) Frame, 2-story, 3-bay, gable roof dwelling; a brick chimneystack rises through the roof ridge slightly off-center; one-story addition at the northern end.

**Style:** Colonial Revival

**Date:** Early 20<sup>th</sup> century

**Additional description:** Exterior features include a side gable roof with wide boxed eaves and partial returns. Windows are 3/1 sashes. The center entry features a full surround with pilasters and sidelights, and is sheltered by a gable roof with a arched gable, which is supported by slender Tuscan columns atop a brick stoop. The house rests atop a parged foundation.

**Outbuildings:** Frame, side gable 3-bay barn features wide overhanging eaves and partial returns; double leaf batten doors and a hay hatch are located on the eastern facade. There is an additional hay hatch on upper portion the southern facade (early 20<sup>th</sup>) (C).

Contributing                      B4 /L24

- 24 290 Vanderveer Avenue.** (Hunter Survey #37, Daniels et al #3; SCCRS #18-05-11) Frame, 2-story, 3-bay, gable-roofed double-pile dwelling with interior chimney with brick stack at west gable end; 1½-story gable roof east wing.

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**Style:** Federal influences

**Date:** c. 1800 main block (Hunter 2004); "C. Hall" (Otley and Keily); "J. Perrine" (Beers). East wing may be earlier.

**Additional description:** Exterior features on main block include boxed eaves, a flush raking verge board, a cornice on the southern facade adorned with a decorative oval-and-diamond motif; side hall entry topped by a lunette transom with right-angled muntins and flanked by delicately articulated pilasters. The entry is sheltered by a hipped roof with a boxed cornice, supported by square posts. There is a sealed doorway on the rear (north) elevation. Windows in the main block are 2/2 wood sash units. Flanking the brick chimney in the western gable end are 6/6 windows. The single pile east wing may represent an earlier building campaign and features slightly flared eaves and a roof overhang (sometimes called a 'gutter') that creates a porch (or protected work area). There is some indication that there may have been a roof overhang on the north facade as well. A tall brick chimney in the eastern gable end was felled during a storm.

**Outbuildings:** (1) Frame, gable roof Dutch/English barn/stable features a corrugated metal roof with a simple verge board. The exterior is sheathed in rough-hewn plank siding. There is a deteriorating hay hook on the west elevation above a plank double hay hatch on strap hinges. There is a sliding batten door on the southern elevation and a double leaf batten door on the northern elevation. This portion of the building has a stone rubble foundation. At the northeast has been appended a stable, topped by a gable roof sheathed in corrugated metal. The exterior of this section is sheathed in rough-hewn plank. All openings on this section have been sealed with planking. A smaller front gable section is appended to the stable, composed of the same materials, with a hay hook and hatch on the west facade, flanked by fixed sash windows. The foundations of these sections are concrete block. There is a small lean-to appended to the north elevation of the stable on the verge of collapse. Interior framing is anchorbent. (c. 1800, Hunter, 2004) (C). (2) Frame, front gable drive-through corn crib features a large central bay and cribbed walls on north and south. Hinged batten doors are fitted to the front bay (c. 1850) (C). (3) Frame, front gable barn/stable sheathed in vertical plank siding (c. 1880) (C).

Contributing

B2 /L9; B4 /L2

Photo #s 15, 16 & 21

- 25 **Vanderveer Ave.** (Daniels et al #4; SCCRS #18-05-10) Frame, 2-story, 3-bay, gambrel roof, double-pile dwelling with paired interior chimneys with brick stacks at south gambrel; 1½ story, 3-bay gable roof, single-pile north wing with interior chimney with brick stack at north gable; taller 1½ story gable roof south wing; 2-story rear appendage.

**Style:** Federal

**Date:** Late 18<sup>th</sup> century (north wing); early 19<sup>th</sup> century (main block). Jacob Ten Eyck bequeathed

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this property to his son Peter Ten Eyck in 1753.

**Additional Description:** Exterior features include shake roof with boxed eaves; windows are 6/6 sashes; perpendicular oval window on north side of main block; side entry with sidelights and round arch fanlight; north wing has shed-roof screened porch supported posts on front and north end; main block and north wing on stone foundation.

**Outbuildings:** Frame, gambrel roof barn. (Late 20<sup>th</sup>) (NC)

Contributing B4 /L1

- 26 Vanderveer Avenue.** North Branch Reformed Church Cemetery. (Hunter Survey #38; Daniels et al, #2)

**Date:** c. 1764

**Additional Description:** The headstones are arranged in loose rows with family plots located near the rear of the property (east). The grounds are enclosed with a metal fence and is accessed by a gravel drive through a black iron gate. The cemetery was originally the Ten Eyck family burial ground, and includes the stones of Jacob ten Eyck (1794) and his wife. The earliest headstone, of Teunis Post, bears a date of 1764 and is inscribed in Dutch. The cemetery was leased to the North Branch Dutch Reformed Church in 1829. Generally, earlier sections of the yard are characterized by tripartite-arched sandstone headstones. An unusual group of post-type stones dating from the 1760s may be representative of the influence of Dutch settlers arriving from Ulster County, New York. The stones take on a familiar shallow arch shape starting in the 1820s, and ultimately move to obelisks and polished marble slabs.

**Outbuildings:** None

Contributing B2 /L11 Photo #18

- 27 234 Vanderveer Avenue.** (Hunter Survey #39; Daniels et al, #1; SCCRS #18-05-12) Stone, 2-story, 5-bay, gable-roofed double pile dwelling; interior gable end chimneys with large brick stacks; 1-story double pile east wing with center chimney.

**Style:** Georgian influences

**Date/History:** Early-mid 18<sup>th</sup> century; 1792. (BHPC). Local historians have long thought that this dwelling was originally built c. 1733 as a 1½-story house by Jacob Ten Eyck (1693-1753) and was raised to 2 stories in 1792 by his son, Jacob Ten Eyck (1733-1794). Snell's chapter on Branchburg Township states that the younger Jacob and his wife "lived on the old homestead, in the stone house built by his father, where Tunis Ten Eyck now lives. This was repaired by him and raised



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one story higher in 1792" (Snell, p. 761). This account was repeated by a 1930s history of early Dutch New Jersey houses (Bailey, p. 458).

**Additional description:** Exterior features on this dwelling of coursed, roughly squared stone include shallow eaves, a narrow cornice and west gable pent roof. The recessed center entry has a full surround with pointed arch pediment, paneled walls flanking the doorway and a door with oval lights. Window openings have segmental arched brick lintels. Windows are 12/8 sashes. There is a secondary entryway to the rear of the building, and a cellar entry flanking the main entry leading.

**Outbuildings:** (1) Frame, 2-story stable/carriage barn is topped by a side gable roof with a front gable. The barn has three bays across the front facade (south). The center bay is a standard doorway flanked by larger carriage bays that have been fitted with modern overhead garage doors. There is a double leaf hay hatch in the front gable, flanked by fixed sash windows, and topped by a similar window in gable peak. A rail for sliding doors is still intact beneath a shed overhang. (c.1870) (C). (2) Cast concrete, 2-story cross gable barn has a metal roof with wide eaves and exposed rafter tails with a fascia; one cupola on the south section and two cupolas on the north section. The longer southern section has a hay hook. Doors on the southern section consist of batten sliding types, along with plank entryway doors. There is a hay hook on the western elevation, beneath which is a hay hatch. There is a small one-story addition attached to the center gable by a small gabled section. Windows throughout consist of 6/6 wood sashes with surrounds. There is a large oval cast concrete silo adjoining the southeastern corner of the building. (c.1900) (C).

Contributing

B2 / L12

Photo #s 17 & 22

- 28 **Vanderveer Avenue Bridge over Ten Eyck Brook.** (Hunter Survey # 40) This small bridge carries Vanderveer Avenue over the Ten Eyck Brook.

**Style:** Wood stringer type

**Date:** c. 1900 (Hunter 2004)

**Description:** The bridge has plank decking paved with asphalt; wood beam stringers, and stone abutments. The decking and stringers appear to be modern.

Contributing

Photo #22

- 29 **Easton Turnpike.** (Hunter Survey #41; Daniels et al #21) J. Owens House site.

**Additional Description:** Two foundations, one at the corner of Vanderveer Avenue and Easton Turnpike, and the second slightly north adjacent to the roadway.

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Contributing B2 /L14

- 30 **Easton Turnpike.** (Hunter Survey #42; Daniels et al #20) The milepost for the Easton-New Brunswick Turnpike.

**Date:** c.1816

**Additional Description:** The partially buried sandstone milepost is located on the north side of the road, east of Vanderveer Avenue and is the last remaining milepost from the Easton-New Brunswick Turnpike. The arched milepost has been carefully dressed and is inscribed: "15 M. to N.B." i.e., 15 miles to New Brunswick.

Contributing B2 /L14 Photo #23

- 31 **1005 Easton Turnpike.** (Hunter Survey #44; Daniels et al #16) Brick, 2-story, 5-bay, gable roof double pile dwelling; interior gable-end chimneys with brick stacks; open porch at east end.

**Style:** Federal; Italianate embellishments

**Date:** c. Early 19<sup>th</sup>; c. 1880 addition (Hunter 2004)

**Additional description:** Exterior features include wide eaves, a cornice with dentils and scrolled brackets. The center entry has narrow pilasters and a round brick arch framing a fanlight window. There is a sealed doorway on the western facade. Windows are 4/4 sashes with casement moldings and unused shutter pin hinges. The porch is supported by scrolled posts and brackets on paneled wood piers. The foundation is ashlar brownstone.

**Outbuildings:** (1) Frame front gable wagon house with exposed rafter tails. The exterior is sheathed in clapboard. There is a sliding batten door within the single front bay. Above the central bay is a 6/6 wood sash window. North and south elevations have 6/6 wood sash windows. The building rests on stone piers. (c.1900) (C). (2) Covered well is sheltered by a gable roof supported on Permastone posts on a Permastone base (c.1910) (C).

Contributing B2 /L15 Photo #20

- 32 **1007 Easton Turnpike.** (Hunter Survey #45; Daniels et al #15) Frame, 2-story, 5-bay, gable-roofed, single-pile dwelling; interior chimneys with brick stacks at each gable end; 2-story gable roof rear appendage; 1-story shed-roof appendage and wood deck on northeast.

**Style:** None

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**Date:** c. 1807 (Map of the New Jersey Turnpike, 1807)

**Additional description:** Exterior features include boxed eaves and clapboard siding; windows are 6/6 sashes; center entry. The dwelling has been raised on a new foundation.

**Outbuildings and other Features:** (1) Frame, 2-story, 3-bay gable roof barn is constructed with a braced timber frame. There are three bays across the primary (southwestern) facade that provide entry, two of which are currently open. The third has been infilled and a plank door put in its place. There is a hay hatch on the second level on the western end of the primary facade (c.1850) (C). (2) Brick smokehouse with gable roof and open eaves. There is a single plank door on the southwestern facade. Two small openings in each gable that provide ventilation (c.1864) (C). (3) Mill site. Some depressed areas of the former sluice that powered the mills are discernable (18<sup>th</sup> century)(C).

Contributing

B2 /L13

- 33 **1024 Easton Turnpike.** (Hunter Survey #47; Daniels et al #47) Frame, 2-story, 3-bay, gable-roofed dwelling; interior stove pipe at east gable; 1½-story gable roof addition at rear with interior gable end chimney; hip-roofed appendage at southeast corner.

**Style:** Greek Revival influences

**Date:** c. 1840 (Daniels, et al); " A.J. Auten" (Lake and Beers)

**Additional description:** Exterior features include a side gable roof with partial returns; clapboard siding. The west bay entry has sidelights and molded cornice with dentils. Windows on the main block are 1/1 sashes; rear addition has frieze band or knee windows on its western facade. The building has been raised on a new foundation.

**Outbuildings:** None

Contributing

B8 /L9

Photo #19

- 34 **1022 Easton Turnpike.** (Hunter Survey #48; Daniels et al #48) Frame, 2-story, 4-bay, gable-roofed dwelling; interior chimney with brick stack in the east gable.

**Style:** Greek Revival influences; Colonial Revival embellishments

**Date:** c. 1850 (Lake and Beers); " A. Van Nest Store" (Beers)

**Additional description:** Exterior features include shallow boxed eaves; a center entry sheltered

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by a gabled portico supported on Tuscan columns; windows are 1/1 sashes. The residence has been raised on a new concrete block foundation.

**Outbuildings:** None

Contributing

B8 /L10

Photo #19

- 35 Easton Turnpike (CR 614).** Two-lane Easton Turnpike follows the alignment established by the 1807 survey for the New Jersey Turnpike, as it was originally known. The road is presently two lanes with shoulders, all paved with asphalt. There are no sidewalks and signage is minimal. There is one traffic control signal at the intersection of Vanderveer Avenue. The roadway is painted with center and sidelines. The segment included extends eastward from the western district boundary to west end of the bridge across the North Branch of the Raritan River.

**Style:** None

**Date/History:** The road was extant by 1754 with a slightly different alignment than now. The present alignment was established in accordance with a survey in 1807. In 1917, the road was designated Route 9, one of New Jersey's first fifteen state routes. In connection with construction of Route 22, the road was designated NJ Route 28 around 1941. It is now also known as County Route 614. Pavement is 20<sup>th</sup> century. (Advertisement contained in W. Nelson (ed.), *Extracts from American Newspapers, Relating to New Jersey, Volume III 1751-1755*; Henry Plum, *Map of the New Jersey Turnpike Road, 1807*).

Contributing

Photo #s 1, 11, 12, 13, 14, 19

- 36 Burnt Mills Road.** Two-lane Burnt Mills Road appears to follow its early alignment and is paved with asphalt, as are minimal shoulders. Pavement is delineated with painted center and sidelines. There are no sidewalks and signage is minimal. Segment included extends from the north side of Block 7, lot 3 south to Easton Turnpike.

**Style:** None

**Date:** The road was extant by 1778 (Robert Erskine, "Road from Mr. TenEikes towards Germantown, No. 70A."); pavement 20<sup>th</sup> century.

Contributing

- 37 Station Road (CR 679).** Two-lane Station Road appears to follow its early alignment and is paved with asphalt. There are no shoulders or sidewalks. Roadway is delineated with painted center and sidelines. Signage is minimal. Segment included extends from the south side of block 7, lot 4 north to Easton Turnpike.



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**Style:** None

**Date:** c. 1778; (R. Erskine, "Road from Duyckinks' Mill to the South," c. 1778) Also depicted as a public road on 1850 map, J.W. Otley and J. Keily, *Map of Somerset County, New Jersey*, Camden, NJ: Lloyd Van Derveer, 1850); pavement 20<sup>th</sup> century.

Contributing

- 38 Vanderveer Avenue.** One-lane Vanderveer Avenue appears to follow its original alignment and is paved with asphalt. There are no shoulders or sidewalks and signage is minimal. The entire extent of its public right of way, from Easton Turnpike to its northern terminus at block 4, lot 1, is included in the district.

**Style:** None

**Date/History:** Probably extant as a private land or driftway in the early 18<sup>th</sup> century and possibly established by Matthias Ten Eyck who acquired 500 acres along the North Branch of the Raritan River in 1700 and 1702 or his son, Jacob, who received the land from his father in 1721. Vanderveer Avenue was originally a farm lane providing access to the Ten Eyck farm (or plantation) that fronted on the North Branch north of the early east-west highway that would become the Easton Turnpike. The lane also provided access to Burnt Mills Road, and in 1885 Vanderveer Avenue was formally surveyed as a public road, providing a through route from Easton Turnpike to Burnt Mills Road. The northern portion of the road was vacated around 1934 and returned to private ownership. (Bailey, p. 458; Snell, p. 761; Somerset County Road Returns, Book B, p. 378). Pavement is 20<sup>th</sup> century.

Contributing

Photo #s 16 & 22

**8 Statement of Significance****Applicable National Register Criteria**

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- ☒ **A** Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- ☐ **B** Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- ☒ **C** Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- ☐ **D** Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

**Criteria considerations**

(mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- ☐ **A** owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- ☐ **B** removed from its original location.
- ☐ **C** a birthplace or grave.
- ☐ **D** a cemetery.
- ☐ **E** a reconstructed building, object or structure.
- ☐ **F** a commemorative property.
- ☐ **G** less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

**Narrative Statement of Significance**

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

**9. Major Bibliographical References****Bibliography**

(cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

**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 # \_\_\_\_\_

**Areas of Significance**

(Enter categories from instructions)

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

ARCHITECTURE

**Period of Significance**

c.1725 - 1926

**Significant Dates**

1807

**Significant Person**

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

**Cultural Affiliation**

N/A

**Architect/Builder**

Unknown

**Primary location of additional data**

- ☐ State Historic Preservation Office
- ☐ Other State agency
- ☐ Federal agency
- ☐ Local government
- ☐ University
- ☐ Other

Name of repository:

**10. Geographical Data****Acreage of property** Approximately 270 acres**UTM References**

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1	18	527375	4495930
	Zone	Easting	Northing
2	18	527794	4495830

3	18	528170	4495170
	Zone	Easting	Northing
4	18	527415	4494110

☒ See continuation sheet**Verbal Boundary Description**

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

**Boundary Justification**

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

**11. Form Prepared By**name/title Ann Parsekian, Janice Armstrong, Dennis Bertlandorganization Dennis Bertland Associatesdate December 2011street & number P.O. Box 315telephone 609-397-3380city or town Stocktonstate NJ zip code 08559**Additional Documentation**

Submit the following items with the completed form:

**Continuation Sheets****Maps**A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.**Photographs**Representative **black and white photographs** of the property.**Additional items**

(Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

**Property Owner**

(Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)

name \_\_\_\_\_

street &amp; number \_\_\_\_\_ telephone \_\_\_\_\_

city or town \_\_\_\_\_ state \_\_\_\_\_ zip code \_\_\_\_\_

**Paperwork Reduction Act Statement:** This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C.470 *et seq.*)

**Estimated Burden Statement:** Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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## **NARRATIVE SIGNIFICANCE**

### ***Summary Paragraph***

The North Branch Historic District possesses significance under Criteria A and C in the areas of community development and architecture. The district's community development significance derives from its historic village as well the survival of substantial portions of its agricultural setting: the district is representative of the small agglomerate settlements that developed throughout the region in the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries to serve the dispersed local agricultural population and, where favored by location, private travelers and commercial traffic moved over the early New Jersey highways. The village also exemplifies the distinctive linear form that these agglomerate settlements typically assumed in proximity to important roads and turnpikes. Growth in some of these villages, including North Branch, was thwarted when they became isolated as a result of being bypassed by transportation innovations elsewhere. The district's architectural significance derives from its assemblage of modest early dwellings and outbuildings whose construction, form, detailing and spatial organization are representative of the rural region's domestic architecture during the 18<sup>th</sup>, 19<sup>th</sup>, and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. In addition, archaeological resources relating to the area's 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup>-century material culture may be present in the environs of district buildings and sites, although Criterion D is not claimed. The period of significance begins c.1725 with the erection of the Jacob Ten Eyck dwelling on Vanderveer Avenue and continues to end of the turnpike era, c.1926, when a State Highway study provided the impetus for the bypass that would relegate turnpike villages such as North Branch to a byway in a new highway era.<sup>1</sup> The North Branch Historic District retains substantial historic integrity in its location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling and association.

### ***Community Development Significance***

North Branch Historic District represents the evolution of an agglomerate settlement that arose around a mill seat and river crossing to service dispersed Dutch farmsteads during the 18<sup>th</sup> century and subsequently developed into linear community along a major road, providing services to local farmers and travelers. While European settlement in the area around what became North Branch began as early as 1725, when farmsteads were established fronting along the North Branch of the Raritan, a village did not begin to coalesce there until some years later. A mill was in operation at the river crossing before 1760, along one of the few early east-west roads in the northern part of Somerset County, which linked New Brunswick, the head of navigation on the Raritan River, to Easton, Pennsylvania, at the forks of the Delaware River. During this early period, the neighborhood around the river crossing was composed of dispersed farmsteads, several of which were located north or south of the main road, accessed by driftways or farm lanes, such as present-day Vanderveer Avenue. The year 1807 brought a survey for the New Jersey Turnpike Road, which was constructed a few years later. The coming of the turnpike

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<sup>1</sup> Amy Fox, Miriam Crum, Terry Karscher, et al, "The New Jersey Historic Roadway Study Draft," p. 92. A draft of the report was provided by New Jersey Department of Transportation.



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transformed North Branch from its initial small cluster into a distinctively linear village stretching east and west from the river along the broad turnpike. Over the next few decades, North Branch grew east and west along the turnpike for approximately a mile to include a church, several dozen dwellings, three stores, an academy, a post office, and at least six artisan shops. Bypassed in 1848 by the Central Rail Road of New Jersey, whose route was about one mile south of the village, North Branch was overshadowed by a new village, North Branch Station, which built up alongside the railroad tracks. While development in North Branch subsequently stagnated, the village continued as a service center for the neighborhood into the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. Although potential for commercial growth increased again with the coming of the automobile, for which the village seemed to be well positioned, relatively few transportation-related businesses appeared before North Branch was again bypassed, this time as a result of the construction of U.S. Route 22 less than a quarter of a mile south of the village, where subsequent commercial growth occurred.

There was little further development in the village until the last quarter of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, when some low-density residential subdivisions were constructed on former farm fields. As a result of being twice bypassed, North Branch has preserved much of its 19<sup>th</sup>- and early 20<sup>th</sup>-century character despite the loss of its early mill and tavern. Although subject to commercial and residential development pressures in recent years, North Branch has been able to retain its historic village character as well significant portions of its agricultural context. Along Vanderveer Avenue, the land has remained in agricultural use, much of which is under farmland conservation/preservation easements, and Somerset County acquired several river front parcels for open space. South of the turnpike, Branchburg Township has acquired the land behind the residential lots east of Station Road as well as the former site of the North Branch Inn. These lands, which help convey the feeling of the village's original agricultural landscape setting, will remain farmland or open space for the foreseeable future (photo #s 16, 21, 22, 24). West of Station Road, a large privately owned parcel extending along the south side of the turnpike encompasses open fields and wooded areas associated with the Stryker farmstead site (Inventory #15; photo #24), open lands that have historically formed part of the village streetscape. Despite the loss of its buildings, the Stryker farmstead retains its integrity of location setting, feeling, and association, and along with the farm properties along Vanderveer Avenue attests to North Branch's historic character as an agricultural, as well as a service, community.

***Architectural Significance***

The district's resources, mainly dwellings, but also including a cemetery and a combination general store and dwelling, are, in general, well preserved with relatively few alterations that postdate the period of significance. Collectively they possess architectural significance. Their form, construction, detailing and siting provide a representative illustration of the rural region's essentially vernacular architecture in the 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries.

The 18<sup>th</sup> century dwellings of Jacob Ten Eyck (#27, photo #17) and Peter Ten Eyck (#25) and an unidentified house at #24 are arguably the most significant resources in the district and include examples of early frame 1½-story Dutch houses (east wings at #s 24 & 27; north wing at #25; photo #15). Dutch

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features include projecting eaves on posts for porches at #s 24 and 27 (photo #15), and a gable-end chimney at #25 (a gable-end chimney at #24 fell during a storm). According to historian Rosalie Fellows Bailey, "Most of the one-and-a-half story farmhouses in Somerset County are reminiscent of the [Dutch] houses on Long Island; they are covered with clapboards or shingles and have gable roofs of varying degrees of steepness," which is an accurate description of the three North Branch examples, although the Ten Eycks immigrated from Esopus, New York, along the Hudson River.<sup>2</sup> An interesting comparison can be made with the similar 1½ story East Jersey Cottages at site #s 22 & 6 (photo #s 1 & 12). At least from the exterior, the East Jersey Cottages, a form associated with English immigrants, bear a close resemblance to the dwellings built by the Ten Eycks. The similarity might be expected in an area that attracted both English and Dutch settlers, a time when Dutch assimilation of English ways may have been accompanied by English adoption of some Dutch practices.

According to Bailey, "The most usual form of addition was the erection of a larger and deeper house at the side and the conversion of the original unit into a kitchen wing with slave quarters. . . . It was not until the nineteenth century that wings were built at the same time as the main building . . . With the erection of the addition, the living and bedroom quarters were transferred here and the original unit became the kitchen wing and slave quarters."<sup>3</sup> If this is in fact the case in North Branch, the three Dutch houses reflect an increasing prosperity of the Dutch farmers during the 18<sup>th</sup> century. All three houses have two-story main blocks that are adaptations of the symmetrical double-pile Georgian house form; however, there are interesting distinctions among them. The c.1792 five-bay center hall main block of the Jacob Ten Eyck house, notable as the only early stone dwelling in the township, features end chimneys and a pedimented west gable, and a simple pediment over the entry, all are characteristic of Georgian style (photo #17). In contrast, the frame, three-bay side-hall main block of the house at #24 features Federal details such as a cornice with a decorative oval-and-diamond motif and pilasters and fanlight at the entry, while the frame three-bay side hall main block of the Peter Ten Eyck house combines Federal entry and paired gable end chimneys with a gambrel roof, which is typically identified as a Georgian roof form and is also the traditional roof used on double-pile Dutch houses. By around 1800, all three Dutch houses were substantial dwellings suitable for their prosperous farmers.

The influence of popular architectural styles can be seen in details added to several of the earliest dwellings, Dutch and English. For example, a lunette transom and a striking south front frieze board of alternating diamond and oval motifs of #24 are characteristic of the Federal style, as is the wood fan motif above the entry at #22.

During the decades following the road realignment and new bridge associated with the New Jersey Turnpike project, at least a half dozen residential construction projects were undertaken (#s 5, 6, 13, 14, 20, 31 & 33, photo #20), attesting to the slow but steady growth of the village during the period. The miller's substantial brick house at #31 provides further evidence of the prosperity of the small farming community. Evidently constructed by John Bayles, who was likely of English descent and selected a

<sup>2</sup> Rosalie Fellows Bailey, *Pre-Revolutionary Dutch Houses and Families in Northern New Jersey and Southern New York*, New York, Dover Publications, 1968. p. 36.

<sup>3</sup> Bailey, p. 26

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prominent location and a more expensive building material to advertise his success, the center-hall house features Federal detailing in its dentil cornice, narrow pilasters, and round brick arch framing a fanlight above the entry. The group of dwellings represent a variety of forms: 3-bay side hall (#s 20, 25 & 33, photo 19); 5-bay center hall (#s 5, 13, 14 & 31, photo #s 1, 9, & 20); and 2-bay gable front (#6, photo #2); All but one feature Greek Revival influences, an indication that the residents of the remote village were very aware of current architectural styles.

By the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century, an additional half dozen or so dwellings had been constructed (#s 2, 7, 11, 16, 17, 18, & 19, photo #s 3, 6 & 7), including a row of four that resulted from the first residential subdivision in the village, developed by Garret Stryker in 1849 (#s 16-19).<sup>4</sup> Most of the houses built during this time were modestly-scaled variations of traditional or popular forms, indicative of a village of relatively prosperous workers, mechanics and artisans whose livelihoods benefited from turnpike traffic that peaked during the 1850s. Some of their shops still survive as residences (#s 1, 3, 4, & 10). Then during the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, as commercial interests were drawn to others sections of the township after the arrival of the railroad in 1847, development in North Branch slowed markedly. Only one residence can be dated to the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, an L-plan house with modest Queen Anne stylistic porch details (#21, photo #12). Two buildings represent early 20<sup>th</sup> century Colonial Revival styles: an "American Four-Square" house and store at #12 (photo #4) and a modestly scaled side-gable dwelling at #23. Although few new dwellings were added, the numerous additions visible throughout the district suggest a continuing level of relative prosperity in the village. Dwellings were enlarged by side (#s 5 & 19) or rear appendages (#s 11; 20, 21 & 32); also shed extensions of rear façade appear at (#s 14, 16 & 22) In addition, new porches were added to numerous houses, providing opportunities to add details adapted from fashionable styles. For example, an cornice brackets and an elegant Gothic Revival/Italianate porch were added to the miller's house at #31 (photo #20); a Queen Anne porch and bay window at #5; Queen Anne porches at #17, 18, and 21 (photo #s 3, 6, & 8); Colonial Revival porches were added at #s 2, 13, and 34 (photo #s 4 & 19).

Contributing to the district's architectural significance are the outbuildings, nearly all of which are frame construction, most of which are located behind their associated houses. The rare c.1800 Dutch/English barn at #24 (photo #16) is particularly noteworthy. The interior of this barn is three bays wide, with a center nave and flanking aisles. The framing suggests Dutch anchor bent framing, which has been extended on each side to form the aisles; the side entry derives from English traditions. English style barns are found at #s 12, 14, 18, 24, 27 and 32 (photo #10). Wagon houses or wagon sheds are found in the district at #s 1, 2, 12, and 31. Combination barn/wagon houses or wagon house/sheds exist at 14, 19, 21 and 27. Other district outbuildings include a commercial ice house (#12), three brick smoke houses (#s 5, 14, and 32, photo #10); a privy (#22), four covered wells (#s 2, 5, 6, 31); a drive-through corn crib (#24), and several small sheds (#s 4, 6) dating from the mid 19<sup>th</sup> to early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. Taken as a whole, this is noteworthy group of surviving agricultural and domestic outbuildings that increases

<sup>4</sup> Wayne Daniels states that prior to 1860, more than thirty new structures were built along the turnpike. This number includes buildings that do not survive, as well as buildings in the Bridgewater section of North Branch. [Wayne Daniels, Robert Saganski and Frank Szczepanski. *North Branch Village Historic District National Register of Historic Places Nomination Form*, 1983.]



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the significance of the district as a cultural landscape.

The building at #12 (photo #4), a simply styled Colonial Revival, is the district's surviving contributing commercial building. A number of other simple vernacular buildings that previously were used for commercial purposes have been converted to dwellings (#s 1, wheelwright shop; #3, harness shop; #13, general store; and #34, store).

Although buildings of individual architectural note within the district are relatively few, as a collection they are evocative of a hardworking rural community, and express the region's vernacular architectural traditions and stylistic preferences over a long period. Reflecting its location on an important early turnpike, the architecture reveals a variety of influences from East Jersey and Delaware Valley cultural regions. The relative similarity in scale and lack of pretension of the buildings provide visual clues about the cohesive nature of the community.

### *Historical Overview*<sup>5</sup>

European land acquisition in and settlement of the Raritan Valley began during the second half of the 17<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>6</sup> The first recorded purchase of Indian lands by Europeans in what is now Somerset County occurred in May, 1681, and in November of that year John Robinson, William Pinhorn, Richard Jones and Matthew Taylor purchased from local Lenape sachems Pawark, Cowalanuck, Mananasamit and Agnamapamund a large tract that included land on both sides of the North Branch of the Raritan.<sup>7</sup> This was one of four deeds encompassing what would later become Bridgewater Township that were given by the Lenape before land titles in the region were assumed by the East Jersey Proprietors in 1682.<sup>8</sup> The lands fronting the North Branch were subdivided into lots of typically several hundred acres. According to Snell's county history, a "Great Road" was laid out from Piscataqua [in what is now Middlesex County] to the North Branch in 1686, and shortly afterward it was extended to the Delaware River, providing access to land and facilitating settlement in the vicinity of what would become the village of North Branch.<sup>9</sup> In 1688, the same year that Somerset County was set off from Middlesex County, a 400-acre parcel on the east side of the North Branch (identified as Lot 43 on a 1737 map of

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<sup>5</sup> Portions of the history have been adapted from "North Branch Village Historic District Survey," contained in Douglas Scott, Nadine Sergejeff, and Damon Tvaryanas. "North Branch Village Historic District Intensive Level Survey Branchburg and Bridgewater Townships, Somerset County, New Jersey," Trenton: Hunter Research Inc., 2004, Appendix E.

<sup>6</sup> James P. Snell (Compiler), *History of Hunterdon and Somerset Counties*, Philadelphia: Everts & Peck, 1881, p. 561; Peter O. Wacker, *Land and People: A Cultural Geography of Preindustrial New Jersey*, New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1975, p. 133, 168; Hunter Research, Inc., "A Phase I Cultural Resource Survey for the Proposed New Elementary School, Block 169, Lot 1, Milltown Road and Easton Turnpike, Bridgewater Township, Somerset County, New Jersey," Trenton: Hunter Research, Inc., 2004, Section 2, p. 1-3

<sup>7</sup> Snell, p. 560.

<sup>8</sup> Snell, p. 648.

<sup>9</sup> Snell, p. 765



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land patents in northern Somerset County) was conveyed to William Ackman, a land speculator.<sup>10</sup> On May 20, 1690, John Johnston of Monmouth County acquired a 400-acre tract, known as Lot 53, on the west bank of the Raritan River in the North Branch vicinity.<sup>11</sup> On May 24, 1690, Lot 55 containing 1,000 acres on the west side of the river was conveyed to former East Jersey governor Lord Neil Campbell. In 1695, a warrant was given to Campbell for Lot 48, a 1,650-acre property located on the east side of the North Branch of the Raritan River.<sup>12</sup> In 1697, John Johnston also acquired Lot 61, a fifty-acre triangular piece of land located south of Lot 53.<sup>13</sup> Importantly, each lot was surveyed to include river frontage. In some cases, such as Lot 53, the tract featured substantial frontage.<sup>14</sup>

The Ten Eycks were one of the earliest families to settle within the vicinity of what would become North Branch village. In 1700, John Johnston sold Lot 53, the 400-acre lot on the east side of the North Branch of the Raritan River, to Matthias Ten Eyck (1658-1741), a farmer and river trader of Ulster County, New York.<sup>15</sup> Two years later, Matthias Ten Eyck acquired Lot 61, a 100-acre tract south of the first, but it appears that he never settled on the land since he died in New York.<sup>16</sup> Matthias had four sons, Conraedt, Andrew, Jacob and Abraham. On October 20, 1721, Matthias conveyed the 500 acres (Lots 53 and 61) to his second-youngest son, Jacob (1693-1753), then thirty-two years old, who subsequently moved to the property. Jacob soon married Jemima Van Nest, and erected a house on his

<sup>10</sup> East Jersey Survey Book, Book L, p. 237; J. P. Snyder, *The Story of New Jersey's Civil Boundaries, 1606-1968*, Trenton: Bureau of Geology and Topography, 1969, cited in Hunter Research, p. 4-1. Lot numbers referenced are those used for the map that accompanied the Elizabethtown Bill of Chancery, published by James Parker in 1747. [Snell, p. 562]

<sup>11</sup> J. Parker, *A Bill in the Chancery of New Jersey, at the Suit of John Earl of Stair, and Others, Proprietors of the Eastern Division of New Jersey Against Benjamin Bond and Some Other Persons of Elizabethtown*, New York: James Parker, 1747, p. 83. The lot was No. 53 in Parker's Elizabethtown Bill of Chancery. [Snell, p. 562]

<sup>12</sup> Parker, p. 89. Along with the intensifying settlement there came numerous disputes over land ownership between the proprietors and those tracing ownership through the Elizabethtown grant, a situation that was exacerbated by confusion over the boundary between the two provinces of East and West Jersey. Land riots and numerous court cases ensued, and great efforts were made to establish clear chains of title back to the initial proprietary subdivisions of the late 17<sup>th</sup> century. Within this context, in 1747 a bill was presented in New Jersey's Court of Chancery on behalf of John, Earl of Stair and other East Jersey Proprietors, which included accompanying maps showing the late 17<sup>th</sup>-century land ownership status and original lot number assignments.

<sup>13</sup> Parker, p. 83; Snell, p. 760.

<sup>14</sup> The riverfront lots along the North Branch are depicted on "Land Patents of Somerset County North of the Raritan River Copied from the Elizabeth Bill in Chancery," in Snell, opposite p. 562

<sup>15</sup> Bailey, p. 458. The first Dutch settlers purchased lands in the eastern part of the Raritan Valley near New Brunswick and steadily the Dutch tide flowed into what were or would become Middlesex, Somerset and eventually Hunterdon Counties. Many came from Long Island and Brooklyn but a number of Dutch farmers also came from upstate New York, many from the vicinity of Esopus or as it is known today, Kingston, in Ulster County. This influx was primarily motivated by the ability to acquire sizable tracts of land in close proximity to existing settlements but it was also driven to some degree by a desire to escape New York's rapidly expanding non-Dutch population [Snell, p. 561; Wacker, pp. 133, 168; Hunter Research, Section 2, p. 1-3.]

<sup>16</sup> Snell, p. 761. Lots 53 and 61 are depicted on the map, "Land Patents of Somerset County North of the Raritan River Copied from the Elizabethtown Bill in Chancery," in Snell, opposite p. 562.

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property (Inventory #27; photo #s 17 & 22).<sup>17</sup> They had four sons, Jacob, Peter, Conrad, and Matthew. Jacob (1733-1794), who later served in the Revolutionary War, inherited his father's house, which remained in the family into the 20<sup>th</sup> century. His brother Peter (b. 1739) settled north of him (Inventory #25); Conrad settled on the east side of the river (i.e., outside the district) opposite the homestead; Matthew also settled on the east side of the river.<sup>18</sup>

The large tract south of Ten Eyck's parcels, Lot 55, was acquired in 1690 by Lord Neill Campbell, who subsequently subdivided it.<sup>19</sup> After several interim owners, a portion came into the hands of John Brokaw, who subdivided that portion in 1761 into lots for his three sons, Peter, Dirck and Abraham. Dirck Brokaw came into possession of the lot containing 172 acres that lay south of the village of North Branch. Dirck Brokaw's lot then passed through Peter Quackenbush and later Garret Stryker (whose name appears on the 1850 Otley and Keily and 1860 Beers and Lake maps) and Christopher Stryker (whose name appears on the 1873 Beers atlas). By 1883, the property came into possession of James Low (site #15; photo #24).

North Branch was settled by both Dutch and English families in the 18<sup>th</sup> century, and Dutch surnames such as Ten Eyck, Van Nest, Vanderveer, Nevius, Ten Brook and Dumont appear in the early records and on historic maps.<sup>20</sup> The growth of Dutch-American communities was directly tied to the organization of Dutch Reformed congregations and the subsequent coalescence of villages was linked to the construction of church edifices. The earliest congregation of Reformed Dutch in Somerset County was formed c. 1699. Their church edifice was constructed in 1721 at Raritan in the vicinity of present-day Somerville, about four miles from North Branch.<sup>21</sup> By 1718 there were four Dutch Reformed congregations in the county: Raritan, Three Mile Run, Six Mile Run, and North Branch. In 1719, the North Branch congregation erected a church known as the "Dutch Reformed Church over the North Branch," at the confluence of the North and South Branches of the Raritan. The location of this church, approximately three miles south of present day North Branch village, suggests the population was still very small in the vicinity of the future village.<sup>22</sup> At this early date, "North Branch" clearly referred to a broader geographical area. There would be no church edifice in the village until 1826.<sup>23</sup>

Population grew slowly during the 18<sup>th</sup> century in the area around the North Branch, and the settlement pattern of widely dispersed farmsteads persisted. Inheritances, however, were gradually breaking up the original large tracts. The development of civil boundaries reflects this slow growth.

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<sup>17</sup> Jacob reportedly erected a stone one-and-a-half story house, which was enlarged in 1792 to two stories. (Snell, p. 761) While this sequence of events is certainly possible, there is no visual evidence in the stonework of any reworking.

<sup>18</sup> Bailey, p. 458.

<sup>19</sup> The history of Lot 55 is related in Snell, p. 760.

<sup>20</sup> Wacker, p. 166.

<sup>21</sup> Snell, p. 669.

<sup>22</sup> Snell, p. 669; Wayne Daniels, *North Branch Village and Its Church, at the Millennium*, Bridgewater, NJ: The North Branch Reformed Church, 2000, cited in Hunter Research, p. 4-2

<sup>23</sup> Snell, p. 677.

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Somerset County was divided into three "precincts" around 1745. One of these, the "Northern Precinct," included Bridgewater Township, which was chartered in 1749 and encompassed all of what is now Branchburg Township.<sup>24</sup> Around this same time, a mill was established not far from Jacob Ten Eyck's house, a harbinger of the future hamlet.

Before his death in 1753, the elder Jacob Ten Eyck sold the 100 acres originally known as lot No. 61 for a mill-site, and a mill was subsequently constructed with "two large undershot wheels."<sup>25</sup> Although the date of the mill's original construction has not been discovered, it must have been some years before 1754, when the "rebuilt" mill was being advertised for sale:

To be sold, at North-Branch, in New-Jersey, 15 Miles above Rariton Landing, on the main Road that leads from the thickest Farmers in those Parts, to the said Landing. A Lot of Ground of 40 Acres, half of it very good Pasture Ground, in English Grass, and in good Fence: The other Half well-timber'd, whereon stands 2 good Dwelling-Houses, and a good Grist Mill, new rebuilt, will grind about 8 or 9 Bushels an Hour, and at all Times plenty of Water: A very suitable Place for a Tavern, or merchandizing, having a great Opportunity of buying Wheat, being on the main Road where [a] great Part of the Wheat is carried that goes to the said Landing. The Title is indisputable. Any Person inclining to buy, may apply to Joseph Forman, Merchant, in New-York, or to William M'Kinney, who lives on the Premises, for either the Whole or Half, on reasonable Terms.<sup>26</sup>

The advertisement gives some interesting clues about settlement in the area at that time. The claim of "thickest Farmers" presumably refers to relative numbers of farmers; in addition to the mill, there were also two houses on the property by 1754; and the amount of traffic on the road to Raritan Landing provided "great" opportunity for mill business. The advertisement suggests that neither a tavern nor a store was in existence at that date.

In 1759, John David purchased the mill from Mordecai McKinney.<sup>27</sup> A 1781 redrafting by John Hills of a map originally drafted in 1766 by Benjamin Morgan shows the mill on the west bank of the North Branch of the Raritan River situated directly opposite from Lot 203 on the east bank (a parcel owned by a member of the Ten Eyck family).<sup>28</sup> By 1772, the mill had been acquired by John Duyckink.<sup>29</sup>

<sup>24</sup> Snyder, cited in Hunter Research, p. 4-2.

<sup>25</sup> Snell, p. 761.

<sup>26</sup> W. Nelson (ed.), *Extracts from American Newspapers, Relating to New Jersey, Volume III 1751-1755. Documents Relating to Colonial History of the State of New Jersey, Volume XIX*. Paterson, NJ: The Press Printing and Publishing Co., 1897, p. 438. The description to the title as "indisputable" is undoubtedly an indirect reference to the ongoing dispute between the East Jersey Proprietors and the Elizabethtown Associates (see footnote #9).

<sup>27</sup> Richard W. Hunter "Patterns of Mill Siting and Materials Processing: A Historical Geography of Water-Powered Industry in Central New Jersey," 1999. Ph.D. diss., Rutgers University, 1999, cited in Hunter Research, p. 4-5.

<sup>28</sup> J. Hills, *Plan of Somerset County in the Province of New Jersey*, 1781.

<sup>29</sup> Hunter, cited in Hunter Research, p. 4-5.



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In 1774, Duyckinck placed a lengthy and descriptive advertisement for the mill property in the *New York Journal*:

The noted grist-mills, fulling-mill, dwelling-houses, store-house and barn, together with about 12 acres of land, four acres of excellent land adjoining said mills, the other being woodland, about half a mile distance from the mills, lying and being in the county of Somerset, on the north branch of Rariton, in the province of New Jersey, on the main road that leads to Rariton landing and New-Brunswick, about 14 miles from said landing and 15 from Brunswick, in a remarkably healthy place, and in the heart of a wheat country, surrounded with able farmers; the grist mills have two pair of excellent stones, the one burr, a winnowing mill and screen for cleaning wheat, five good bolts for merchant and country work, all in excellent and good order, and go by water, the mills and dams are so situated that little or no risk of being damaged by freshets or breaking of the ice, and never known to be so dry as to prevent grinding, the dwelling-house at a proper distance from the mill-house, a commodious store and shop, (which has been kept for many years) adjoining the dwelling-house, the fulling mill is in excellent good order adjoining the grist-mills, and has constant employ; the dwelling-house for the fuller is at a convenient distance from the mills; as those mills are in a remarkable healthy and rich country, that with proper care may have as much work as the chuse they being in the possession of the subscriber. . . .<sup>30</sup>

The advertisement provides a detailed account of the operation. It describes the mill as "noted" and "surrounded with able farmers," and mentions a "commodious store and shop," all of which suggests a prosperous enterprise in a location with continuing good potential for business. By this time, a tavern kept by a Mr. Flummerfelt had been established near the mill, evidence that a hamlet was beginning to coalesce around the river crossing.<sup>31</sup>

In 1775, the local population was sufficient to merit the creation of its own company of militia. Jacob Ten Eyck the Younger (son of the Jacob Ten Eyck who was mentioned previously) served prominently as the Captain of the North Branch Company of the First Somerset County Battalion of Militia, which saw action in 1776 at nearby Two Bridges.<sup>32</sup> Two Revolutionary War maps drafted by Robert Erskine c. 1778 show the alignment of early roads in this area. One map depicts two roads on either side of the North Branch of the Raritan River running south from present-day Easton Turnpike; the road depicted on the west side of the river appears to follow the route of present day Station Road.<sup>33</sup>

<sup>30</sup>W. Nelson (ed.), *Extracts from American Newspapers, Relating to New Jersey, Vol. X 1773-1774. Documents Relating to the Colonial History of the State of New Jersey, Volume XXIX*, Paterson, NJ: The Call Printing & Publishing Co., 1917, pp. 270-271.

<sup>31</sup> Snell, p. 766.

<sup>32</sup> Although North Branch was not the site of any known Revolutionary War activity, it wasn't far from it. In 1776, Captain Ten Eyck's company was involved in an engagement that took place at the site of Two Bridges near the Old Log Church when a group of Loyalists tried to pass the bridges in order to connect with the British who were located at New Brunswick. Following an engagement, the Tories were forced to retreat since they were unable to ford the river at this point. Throughout this period of hostilities, the Clothier General was headquartered in the miller's house at Burnt Mills, just north of the hamlet of North Branch.

<sup>33</sup> Robert Erskine, "Road from Duyckink's Mill to the South, No. 71."



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On the east side of the North Branch is the dwelling of "Matthew TenEyck" (Captain Jacob Ten Eyck's uncle); on the west side is another house.<sup>34</sup> The second map, titled "Road from Mr TenEikes towards [New] Germantown," depicts the mill seat, identified as "Fulling Mills," as well as the same two dwellings.<sup>35</sup> Between the river and the road to New Germantown (present-day Oldwick), the map shows an earlier alignment of what is now Easton Turnpike. A continuation of the route toward Reading Town appears as a secondary route. Several years later, the Hills map of 1781 depicts the mill on the north side of the road on the east bank of the North Branch, rather than the west bank. This is probably a cartographic error rather than evidence of a relocation of the mill.

According to 19<sup>th</sup> century county historian James P. Snell, Dr. Abraham Bertron operated the tavern in North Branch until 1795. This is probably the "Bartron" mentioned in the minutes of the Somerset County Freeholders for September 14, 1783, when Andrew T. Tenyck was appointed superintendent of the bridge near Bartron's Tavern.<sup>36</sup> Bertron may have acquired the property c. 1778, the earliest year that his name appears in tavern petitions.<sup>37</sup> The tavern and the mill were later acquired by John Bayles c. 1802, although a map from 1807 continued to identify the tavern as "Bertron's."<sup>38</sup> During John Bayles' ownership, a smaller wheel was added to the mill in 1812.<sup>39</sup> During the early 19<sup>th</sup> century, the locale was known as "Bailes."<sup>40</sup> The place name reflected the significance of the mills to the identity of the developing village. The mills remained in Bayles family ownership until the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century.

The New Jersey Turnpike Company was chartered in 1806 with the goal to construct a four-rod (66 feet) wide road from New Brunswick to Phillipsburg, opposite Easton on the Delaware River.<sup>41</sup> The turnpike company was required by its charter to complete the road within a ten-year time frame. Work was quickly commenced, but the project was soon found to be greater than the period of time allotted for it. A five-year extension was granted in 1815. The New Jersey Turnpike, as it was originally known, was completed through Somerset County in 1816, generally following and straightening the early road that connected Raritan and White House.<sup>42</sup> As part of turnpike project, the existing road was realigned through North Branch. From the bridge at the North Branch of the Raritan to just west of the road to

<sup>34</sup> Hunter Research, pp. 4-8 and 4-9.

<sup>35</sup> Robert Erskine, "Road from Mr TenEikes towards Germantown, No. 70A."

<sup>36</sup> *Minutes of the Meetings of the Justices and Chosen Freeholders for the County of Somerset, May 13, 1772 to September 2, 1822*, Somerville, NJ: Somerset County, 1977, p. 44.

<sup>37</sup> Snell, p. 766; Somerset County Tavern Licenses.

<sup>38</sup> Henry Plum, *Map of the New Jersey Turnpike Road*, 1807.

<sup>39</sup> Snell, p. 766.

<sup>40</sup> T. F. Gordon, *Gazetteer of the State of New Jersey*. Trenton, NJ: Daniel Fenton, 1834, p. 200.

<sup>41</sup> The New Jersey Turnpike was also known as the New Brunswick-Easton Turnpike or just simply as the Easton Turnpike; it was later designated Route 9, then Route 28. It is now designated County Route 614 and locally known as Easton Turnpike.

<sup>42</sup> Wheaton J. Lane, *From Indian Trail to Iron Horse: Travel and Transportation in New Jersey, 1620-1860*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1939, p. 147; Daniels, cited in Hunter Research, p. 4-11.

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New Germantown, the new turnpike was laid slightly south of the original road.<sup>43</sup> In 1809, the directors of the company petitioned the Somerset County Board of Chosen Freeholders for possession of the bridge over the North Branch of the Raritan River. The Board, which included Jacob Ten Eyck, agreed to relinquish the bridge under the condition that the turnpike company would keep it in good repair, at their own expense.<sup>44</sup>

Along the turnpike route, the company erected mileposts, with distance measured from New Brunswick. One such marker, which informs the traveler that the distance to New Brunswick measured fifteen miles, survives near the brick Bayles house (Inventory #s 30 & 31; photo #s 20 & 23). A map of the proposed turnpike route drawn in 1807 showed the existing road and landmarks.<sup>45</sup> On the south side of the road, the mapmaker identified "Bertrons Tavern" on the west side of the millrace, although, according to Snell, Bertron operated the tavern only until 1795.<sup>46</sup> Depicted to the north of the tavern are the "North Branch Mill" and its millpond, and just west of the mill a residence is shown facing the original road. The location and alignment of this house appears to correspond to that of the building that presently stands behind the Bayles house. Its angled orientation to the road suggests it pre-existed the turnpike. The orientation of the Bayles house toward the turnpike suggests it was constructed after the road was realigned for the turnpike.

West of the river, the turnpike map shows an early alignment of Burnt Mills Road, which is identified as the "Road to Germantown." Germantown – actually "New Germantown" and now known as Oldwick – was a settlement about seven miles northwest of North Branch. The map shows a building labeled "Poor House" standing along the original road at the corner of the Germantown road.<sup>47</sup> Another map, prepared in connection with the survey of the Germantown Turnpike in 1813, depicted the proposed route running northwest from the New Jersey Turnpike, beginning "between Bayles' mill and the white house", passing through New Germantown (present-day Oldwick), and eventually connecting to the Washington Turnpike in Morris County.<sup>48</sup> Depicted on the survey are two adjacent mill sites on the west bank of the river, just north of the New Jersey Turnpike, and one unidentified building, most likely the tavern, on the south side of the turnpike.

The turnpike spurred growth in Somerset County throughout the first half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, and it was very much responsible for the commercial growth of a number of villages along its route, including North Branch. In 1810, Milltown Road – just east of the district – was formally surveyed, likely in response to the new turnpike. This road, measuring two rods in width, commenced a short distance east of the river and ran southerly towards the Raritan River.<sup>49</sup> The road followed the alignment

<sup>43</sup>Plum.

<sup>44</sup> Snell, p. 577.

<sup>45</sup> Plum.

<sup>46</sup> Snell, p. 766.

<sup>47</sup> The site of this building north of the turnpike has not been located, but is likely outside the district boundary.

<sup>48</sup> H. G. Schmidt, *Rural Hunterdon*, Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1972, p. 164; *Map of the New Germantown Turnpike*, 1813.

<sup>49</sup> Somerset County Road Returns, Book B, p. 18.

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of an earlier road depicted on one of the c. 1778 Erskine maps and on the 1781 Hills map that ran southward to a point near the confluence of the North and South Branches of the Raritan Rivers. By this date, the mill hamlet included a blacksmith, a wheelwright and other businesses.<sup>50</sup> Although North Branch existed as a nucleated settlement well before the construction of the turnpike, when it was centered on its mills and tavern, it was the turnpike that fostered its linear development pattern. Along the turnpike, homes were constructed and businesses prospered. In 1826, the mill at North Branch was advertised for sale by John Runk, who succeeded John Bayles as the miller. The advertisement described its operation as "carding, fulling and dyeing, and manufacturing cloths of all descriptions."<sup>51</sup> The advertisement suggests that John Bayles sold the mill sometime between 1813, the date of the turnpike map that mentions his name, and 1826. Around 1840, John Runk removed the fulling mill and remodeled the grist mill, which continued in operation.<sup>52</sup>

By 1825, North Branch had a school and post office in addition to the mill and hotel. The North Branch post office was established April 30, 1822, with Peter Wortman, Jr. appointed postmaster.<sup>53</sup> The first North Branch school was a log building situated on the north side of the turnpike east of the river. According to Snell, the log building was replaced by a frame schoolhouse, which was erected at the same location.<sup>54</sup> With continuing growth in North Branch, the local members of the Dutch Reformed church, who had been traveling to Readington for services, recognized the need for a more convenient church. A new congregation was organized in 1825 at the residence of James Ten Eyck. The list of elders included a number of North Branch's most prominent citizens: Jacob Ten Eyck, John Van Derveer, John Runk and Abraham Quick. A church edifice was erected around this time on the east side of the river (outside the district although within the village).<sup>55</sup> The church leased the Ten Eyck family cemetery (located within the district). However, the validity of the lease and upkeep of the cemetery later came into question, and a bitter clash regarding title to the property ensued. The church formally acquired the burying ground in the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>56</sup>

In 1834, North Branch or "Bailes"<sup>57</sup> was described in a state gazetteer as a post town on the turnpike road, in level, fertile country, with "a large grist mill and fulling mill, a tavern, 2 stores, and

<sup>50</sup> Richard Grubb and Associates, Inc. "Cultural Resources investigation Replacement of Bridge No. D0907 Over North Branch of the Raritan River, Branchburg and Bridgewater Townships, Somerset County, New Jersey," 2003, cited in Hunter Research, p. 4-11.

<sup>51</sup> Ursula C. Brecknell, (ed.), *Somerset County Historical Quarterly: Commemorative Issue, 1882-1992*. Somerville, NJ: Somerset County Historical Society, 1993, p. 71. According to Snell, the property "came into the hands of John Runk" in 1840. [Snell, p. 766]

<sup>52</sup> Snell, p. 766.

<sup>53</sup> John L. Kay and Chester M. Smith, Jr., *New Jersey Postal History*, Lawrence, MA: Quarterman Publications, Inc., 1977, p. 121.

<sup>54</sup> Snell, p. 766. The property was in what is now the Bridgewater Township section of North Branch, which is not included in the district.

<sup>55</sup> Snell, p. 766.

<sup>56</sup> Daniels, cited in Hunter Research, p. 4-18.



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about 20 dwellings. There is a Dutch Reformed church in the neighborhood.”<sup>57</sup> Over the course of its existence, the Easton Turnpike was often in such disrepair that care of the sections of the roadway within the counties through which it ran were eventually taken over by the county governments. In 1838, the turnpike was abandoned in Warren and Hunterdon Counties. The New Jersey Turnpike Company fully relinquished its rights to the Easton Turnpike in 1870.<sup>58</sup>

In 1844, Garret Stryker set off four lots from his property along the Easton Turnpike east of present-day Station Road.<sup>59</sup> Snell describes this subdivision as the event by which the village of North Branch was “laid out”.<sup>60</sup> Four houses were erected on these properties, which actually comprised only a small portion of the growing village.<sup>61</sup> By the early 1840s, North Branch residents desired to set themselves off from Bridgewater Township, and Branchburg Township was formed in 1845, with the North Branch of the Raritan as the boundary between the two municipalities. Consequently, about two thirds of the village of North Branch lies within Branchburg Township and the remaining third in Bridgewater Township.

The turnpike was integral to the village’s commercial growth during the first half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century; however, that growth pattern changed with the arrival of a new mode of transportation, the railroad. In 1847 the Central Railroad of New Jersey extended its tracks west over the North Branch of the Raritan to Branchburg Township via an impressive five-span viaduct, and by 1852 the line reached Phillipsburg. The route of the railroad lay nearly a mile to the south of the turnpike and the village. A railroad station, later known as North Branch Depot, was constructed c. 1850. Growth along the turnpike subsequently stalled as commercial development was drawn to the railroad, where North Branch Station developed as a separate hamlet. Although the railroad stifled commercial development within North Branch village, it played an important role in stimulating the local agricultural economy by providing local farmers with convenient access to urban markets.

By the 1850s, North Branch village consisted of approximately twenty dwellings along both sides of the turnpike. On an 1850 map the hamlet is depicted in more or less its present configuration. Station Road is depicted on the map on its present alignment between the turnpike and the railroad. Church and Milltown Roads are shown east of the river. Vanderveer Avenue, a private farm lane at that time, is not depicted.<sup>62</sup> Commercial development is found clustered along the turnpike west of the river: J.O. Beekman’s store, A. A. Tenyk’s [sic] Store, J. Runk’s grist and saw mills, R. Stout’s tavern, Bartow & Van Nest’s store, E. Wyckoff’s wagon shop, and a post office. An “Academy” is depicted opposite Station Road. East of the river, in Bridgewater Township, are half a dozen dwellings in addition to the

<sup>57</sup> Gordon, p. 200.

<sup>58</sup> Lane, p. 161.

<sup>59</sup> Daniels, cited in Hunter Research, p. 4-18.

<sup>60</sup> Snell, p. 766.

<sup>61</sup> According to another source, Stryker’s parcels were near the later site of North Branch Station (Thiele, cited in Hunter Research, p. 4-18).

<sup>62</sup> Vanderveer Avenue would be surveyed as a public road in 1885. [Somerset County Road Returns, Book B, p. 378]



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church and parsonage.<sup>63</sup> At the west end of the village, several dwellings and a tannery are clustered at the intersection of the turnpike with the road now called Burnt Mills Road, which led north to Lamington and New Germantown (now Oldwick). Reverend Dr. Philip M. Doolittle, who arrived in 1856 to serve as pastor of the North Branch Reformed Church, recalled that during his first years in the community, the hamlet contained three general stores, two shoemaker shops, two wheelwright shops, two blacksmith shops, a chair maker, a printing office and two undertakers, in addition to the mills, the tavern, the school, post office, and a doctor.<sup>64</sup> From 1850 to 1857, the printing office published North Branch's first newspaper, *The Comet* (inventory #34; photo #19).<sup>65</sup>

An 1860 map includes an inset of the village, with the tavern newly identified as a "Hotel."<sup>66</sup> Commercial development west of the river had grown during the ten years since the village was previously mapped and included a chair shop, a blacksmithy, three stores, a post office, an academy, a cabinet shop, a wagon shop and J. Runk's mills. Also visible on the map is the millrace that started on the west side of the millpond on the dammed river and flowed south between the sawmill and gristmill, eventually rejoining the river. The map shows residential development had increased slightly since the 1850 map. Also, Vanderveer Avenue is depicted as a farm lane, extending north from the turnpike, past the dwelling of A.S. Ten Eyck and terminating at the [Sc]henck dwelling. At the west end of the village, the map shows the secondary node of development at the intersection of the turnpike and the road to Lamington consisting of a harness shop, blacksmith shop, wheelwright shop, and tannery, as well as several dwellings. Development east of the river was relatively unchanged. Dutch and German names predominate on the map: Ten Eyck, Van Nest, Runk, Wyckoff, Van Pelt, Schenck, Vanderwort, Stryker, Nevius, Van Doren, and Hageman. As a result of the steady growth of the community, the c.1825 Reformed church building was demolished in 1863 to make way for a larger edifice. Many bricks were reused in the new building, which was dedicated in 1864.<sup>67</sup> According to local tradition, leftover bricks were used to construct a number of smokehouses, several of which still survive (inventory #s 5, 14 & 32).<sup>68</sup>

North Branch appeared little changed in 1873, when it was mapped for F.W. Beers' *Atlas of Somerset County*. There were several new dwellings, mainly in the Bridgewater portion of the village, and the Academy had become the public school for District No. 19. Although ownership had changed for several businesses, virtually all shown on the 1860 map appeared again on the 1873 atlas. While commercial development had migrated south to North Branch Station, the village center was holding its own. The Dutch Reformed church continued to be an important institution, and was rededicated in 1875 after structural repairs.<sup>69</sup>

<sup>63</sup> J. W. Otley and J. Keily, *Map of Somerset County, New Jersey*, Camden, NJ: Lloyd Van Derveer, 1850.

<sup>64</sup> Thiele, cited in Hunter Research, p. 4-22.

<sup>65</sup> Daniels et al., Sec. 8, p. 11.

<sup>66</sup> D. J. Lake and S. N. Beers, *Map of the Vicinity of Philadelphia and Trenton*, Philadelphia: C.K. Stone & A. Pomeroy, 1860.

<sup>67</sup> Daniels et al, Sec. 7, p. 33.

<sup>68</sup> Daniels, cited in Hunter Research, p. 4-28.

<sup>69</sup> Daniels et al, Sec. 7, p. 33.

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The last three decades of the 19<sup>th</sup> century saw relatively few changes in the village of North Branch. Vanderveer Avenue was formally surveyed in 1885 after the farm lane was vacated (site #38; photo #s 16 & 22.<sup>70</sup> As surveyed, the road extended from the Easton Turnpike north and then west to Burnt Mills Road. The mill continued in operation under several different owners. The hotel had been expanded, probably several times, and was known as the Riverview Inn.

In 1906, Reverend Doolittle observed that most of the artisan businesses that had operated in the village in 1856 were no longer in existence, although the mill continued its operations. Population growth in the vicinity necessitated additions to the school building. By the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, a classroom had been added at the east end and a small addition appended to the west end of the building.<sup>71</sup> Little building activity took place in Branchburg from the last quarter of the 19<sup>th</sup> century through World War Two. Nevertheless, indications of a relative degree of prosperity in the village can be found in an 1914 directory, which included the River View Hotel as well as R. B. Beatty, miller, A. V. Van Derveer and F. C. Williams, general merchants, H. V. Davis, physician, Fred Schmidt, blacksmith, R.B. Jacob Van Nest, professional trapper, and W. J. Wyckoff, painter.<sup>72</sup> The directory listings document a surprising persistence of Dutch and German names in North Branch, including Nevus, Orts, Pfaff, Reinhart, Schmidt, Ten Eyck, Tunison, Vanderbeek, Van Derveer, Van Holteng, Van Nest, Wurtz, and Wyckoff.

In 1917, the former Easton Turnpike was designated as Route 9, one of New Jersey's first fifteen state routes, demarcating a new era when "the requirements of the motor vehicle would dictate the future course of roads in New Jersey."<sup>73</sup> The late 19<sup>th</sup> century iron truss bridge that spanned the North Branch was replaced with a concrete structure in 1924.<sup>74</sup> Yet by 1926 it was clear that the system of roads established by the 1917 legislation was not adequate for post war needs. A formal study took an innovated approach by differentiating between local traffic and terminal traffic – traffic that passed through the state – and provided the impetus for the bypass that would relegate turnpike villages such as North Branch to a byway in a new highway era.<sup>75</sup> In the 1930s, the New Jersey State Highway Department began planning an improved four-lane highway, incorporating portions of the original turnpike in places and new sections of roadway in other areas. The contract in North Branch, awarded in 1941, was for a bypass around the village, diverting traffic away from the local businesses onto the newly designated U.S. Route 22, rerouting of the highway to eliminate what was deemed a hazardous traffic condition within the business section of the village. Interestingly, the demands of both transportation and agriculture collided with the construction of Route 22, which bisected several farms, prompted one local dairy farmer to construct tunnels beneath the roadway to connect his fields. After the highway improve-

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<sup>70</sup> Somerset County Road Returns, Book B, p. 378.

<sup>71</sup> Schleicher, cited in Hunter Research, p. 4-33.

<sup>72</sup> *Farm and Business Directory of Hunterdon and Somerset Counties, New Jersey*. Philadelphia: Wilmer Atkinson Co., 1914, pp.167-169.

<sup>73</sup> Fox et al, p. 69.

<sup>74</sup> Schleicher, cited in Hunter Research, p. 4-62.

<sup>75</sup> Fox et al, p. 92.

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

**National Register of Historic Places**  
**Continuation Sheet**

North Branch Historic District  
Somerset, New Jersey

Section number 8 Page 16

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ments were completed, the old turnpike was designated County Route 614, and now is locally known as Easton Turnpike.

The middle decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century brought more changes to the village. One local history suggests the mill was taken down during World War II.<sup>76</sup> The north portion of Vanderveer Avenue was vacated in 1934, returning that portion to farm lane use, and eliminating a through-route to Burnt Mills Road. The post office and township clerk's office were moved away from the village in the 1950s.<sup>77</sup> After township schools were centralized, the old schoolhouse in North Branch was conveyed to the North Branch Fire Company and later converted into a daycare facility.<sup>78</sup> The character of the village became largely residential; the departure of commercial activity served to help preserve the village. By the 1970s, the sole business left within the village was the general store.

In 1983, after the loss of several historic buildings, a group of North Branch residents, North Branch Villagers, Inc., prepared and submitted nomination to the National Register for the North Branch Historic District that was ultimately tabled by the New Jersey State Review Board, pending a redefinition of boundaries and a revised statement of significance.<sup>79</sup>

In 1998, portions of North Branch flooded as a result of Hurricane Floyd. In response, the Federal Emergency Management Agency undertook a project in consultation with the New Jersey Historic Preservation Office that resulted in demolition of the North Branch Inn and two dwellings. In addition, as a precaution against future flooding, a number of buildings within the flood plain were subsequently raised onto higher foundations. A certificate of eligibility for the district was issued in 1999.<sup>80</sup> Several years later, the c.1924 concrete bridge was replaced.

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<sup>76</sup> Schleicher, cited in Hunter Research, p. 4-55.

<sup>77</sup> Daniels et al., Sec. 8, p. 12.

<sup>78</sup> Daniels, cited in Hunter Research, p. 4-56.

<sup>79</sup> K. Clark, "North Branch Historic District, Somerset County, Branchburg and Bridgewater Townships: Administrative Summary," November 29, 2007.

<sup>80</sup> Clark.



United States Department of the Interior  
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**Continuation Sheet**

North Branch Historic District  
Somerset County, NJ

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

North Branch Historic District  
Somerset County, NJ

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National Park Service  
**National Register of Historic Places**  
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Somerset County, NJ

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Somerset County Deeds  
Somerset County Road Returns  
Somerset County Tavern Licenses  
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**National Park Service**  
**National Register of Historic Places**  
**Continuation Sheet**

North Branch Historic District  
Somerset County, NJ

Section number 9 Page 4

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United States Census Population Schedules, 1850, 1860, 1870

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service  
**National Register of Historic Places**  
**Continuation Sheet**

North Branch Historic District  
Somerset County, NJ

Section number 10 Page 1

### UTM COORDINATES (continued)

	Zone	Easting	Northing
5.	18	526855	4494340
6.	18	526895	4494875
7.	18	527300	4494810

### VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

The boundary of the North Branch Historic District is delineated on the attached map subtitled "Site Location and Boundary Map," and is verbally described in the following paragraph. The Site Location and Boundary Map was created from current municipal tax maps of the Township of Branchburg.

The boundary of the district begins in the middle of the North Branch of the Raritan River at the intersection of the municipal boundary line between Branchburg and Bridgewater Townships and the north side of the US Route 22 right-of-way, from which point it runs west into Branchburg Township along the north side of the Route 22 right of right-of-way and the south sides of block 8, lots 11.01 and 13 to the southwest corner of lot 13 at the northeast corner of the intersection of Route 22 and Station Road. From that point the boundary runs north along the east side of Station Road for a distance of 450 feet, and then crosses on a straight line (perpendicular to the east side of Station Road, also the west side of lot 13) to the west side of Station Road and the east side of block 7, lot 4, and from there proceeds west along the south side of lot 4, also the north side of Route 22, to the southwest corner of lot 4, also the southeast corner of block 7, lot 4. It then proceeds north and west along the south and west sides of block 7, lot 4, also the east and north sides of block 4.01, to a southwest corner of lot 4 and continues west along a straight line continuation of the north side of lot 4.01 (and south side of lot 4) across the dog-leg northern extension of lot 4.01 to the west side of lot 4.01. From there it runs north along the west side of lot 4.01 to the southeast corner of block 7, lot 3, and proceeds west and north along the south and west sides of lot 3 to that lot's northwest corner on the south side of Easton Turnpike.

From the northwest corner of block 7, lot 3, the district boundary crosses Easton Turnpike on a straight line continuation of the west side of lot 3 to the north side of Easton Turnpike. From there the boundary proceeds east along the north side of Easton Turnpike to the southwest corner of block 3, lot 26 and continues north and east along the west and north sides of block 3, lot 26 to that lot's northeast corner on the west of Burnt Mills Road. It then crosses Burnt Mills Road on a straight line continuation of the north side of block 3, lot 26 to the east side of Burnt Mills Road. It then runs south along the east side of Burnt Mills Road to the intersection of that road with Easton Turnpike, and turning east runs along the north side of Easton Turnpike to the southwest corner of block 4, lot 14.01. It then runs north along the west side of lot 14.01 to the northwest corner of that lot, then east along north sides of block 4, lots 14.01, 14.02 and 13, also the south sides of block 4, lots 30 and 31, to the southeast corner of lot 31. It then turns north along the west side of lot 4 to that lot's northwest corner and proceeds west and north along the south and west sides of block 4, lot 2 to that lot's northwest corner.



United States Department of the Interior  
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**Continuation Sheet**

North Branch Historic District  
Somerset County, NJ

Section number 10 Page 2

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From the northwest corner of block 4, lot 2, the district boundary runs west, north, east and south along south, west, north and east sides of block 4, lot 1 to the southeast corner of lot 1 on the west side of Vanderveer Avenue. From there, it crosses Vanderveer Avenue to the northwest corner of block 2, lot 9, and proceeds east along the north side of lot 9 to the middle of the Raritan River and the boundary line between Branchburg and Bridgewater townships. The district boundary then follows the municipal boundary southwardly to the north side of the Easton Turnpike right-of-way. It next runs west along the north side of the right-of-way to the northwest corner of the Easton Turnpike bridge. It crosses Easton Turnpike to the south side of the highway right-of way and the southwest end of the bridge. It then runs east along the right-of-way to the middle of the river and the municipal boundary line and turning south following the boundary line downstream to the place of beginning.

## BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION

The boundary of the North Branch Historic District is delineated to include to the greatest extent possible the architectural and historical resources of the village, with the fewest non-contributing resources. The district includes the properties along Vanderveer Avenue and the North Branch of the Raritan where the early settlement of the area began and properties along Easton Turnpike where the village of North Branch developed along this important east west transportation route. The district includes several tracts of land on its north and east sides, some of which are preserved open space, that typify historic agricultural land use and retain good integrity, while excluding the modern highway commercial development along Route 22 to the southwest and the modern residential development to the north and west along Easton Turnpike and Burnt Mills Road. Route 22 provides a clear physical edge on the south side of the district, as does the North Branch of the Raritan on the east, with its large, modern non-contributing bridge. Several historic resources are located on the east side of the river in Bridgewater Township (a church and several dwellings), and consideration might be given in future to expanded the district boundary to include them. The boundary follows property lines or lines of convenience across lots to encompass resources related to the district and exclude unrelated resources.

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Continuation Sheet**

North Branch Historic District  
Somerset County, NJ

Section \_\_\_\_\_ Photos \_\_\_\_\_ Page 1

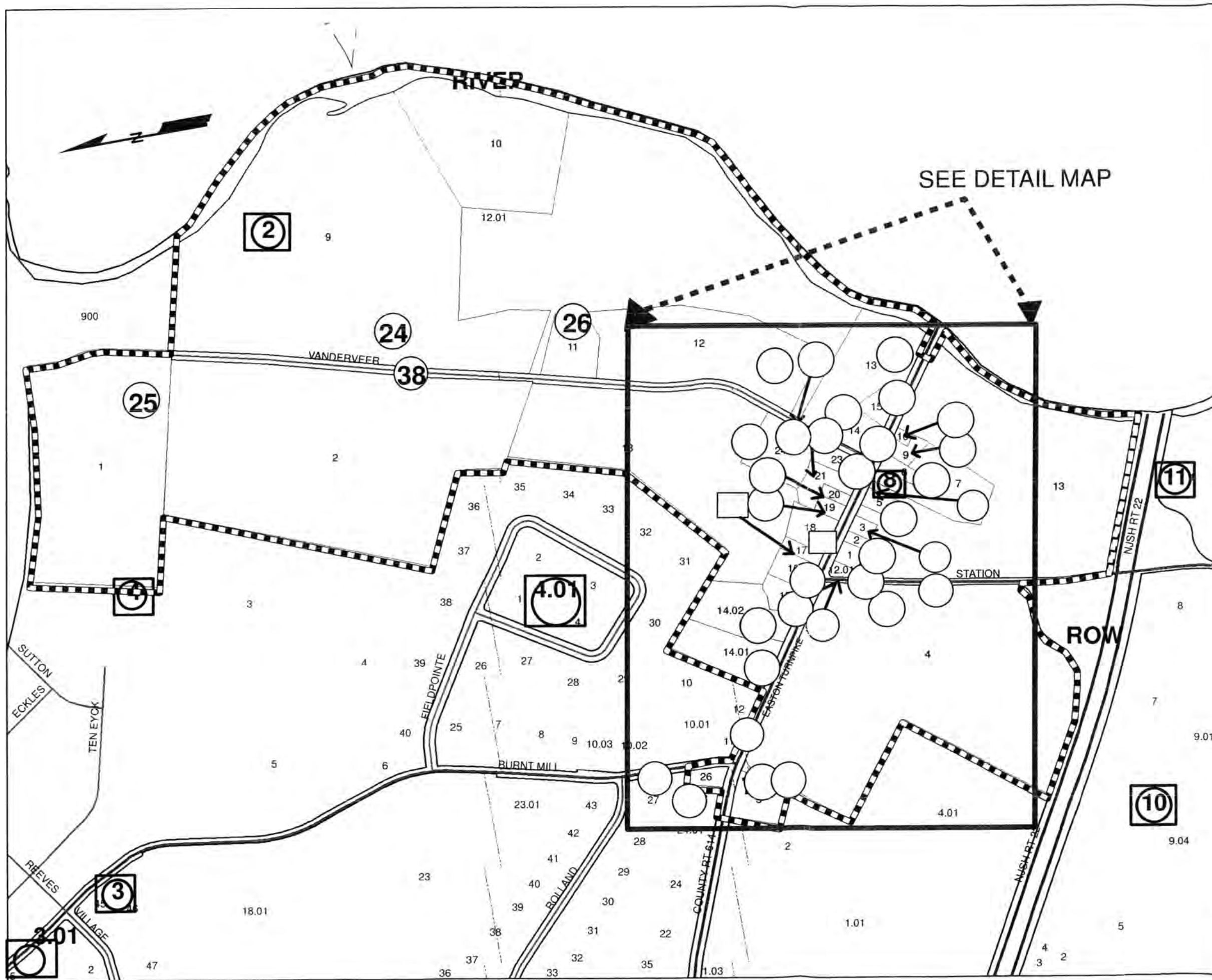
**PHOTOGRAPHIC IDENTIFICATION:**

The following information is the same for all of the photographs submitted:

Name: North Branch Historic District  
Location: Branchburg Township, Somerset Co., NJ  
Photographer: Janice Armstrong; Ann Parsekian  
Date of photographs: Fall 2008 and 2009; Spring 2011  
Digital repository: Dennis Bertland Associates  
PO Box 315  
Stockton, NJ 08559

Photograph direction of view:


- #1 Site # 5, northwest view.
- #2 Site # 6, north view.
- #3 Site # 7, north view.
- #4 Site #s 12 (left) & 13, (right), northwest view.
- #5 Site # 16, east view.
- #6 Site # 17, south view.
- #7 Site # 19, south view.
- #8 Site # 18, south view.
- #9 Site # 14, north view.
- #10 Site # 14, northwest view.
- #11 Site #s 19 (left), # 18 (middle), & # 17 (right), northwest view.
- #12 Site #s 21 (right) & 22 (left), southwest view.
- #13 Context shot looking southwest from Easton Turnpike and Vanderveer Ave.
- #14 Context shot, west view.
- #15 Site # 24, north view.
- #16 Site # 24, north view.
- #17 Site # 27, northeast view.
- #18 Site # 26, east view.
- #19 Site # 33 (left) & 34 (right), southeast view.
- #20 Site # 31, northwest view.
- #21 Site #24, west view.
- #22 Context looking north along Vanderveer Avenue.
- #23 Site #30, northeast view.
- #24 Site #15, southeast view.





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HISTORIC DISTRICT  
BRANCHBURG TOWNSHIP  
SOMERSET COUNTY, NJ**


**SITE LOCATION & BOUNDARY MAP**

**INVENTORY SITE #'s**

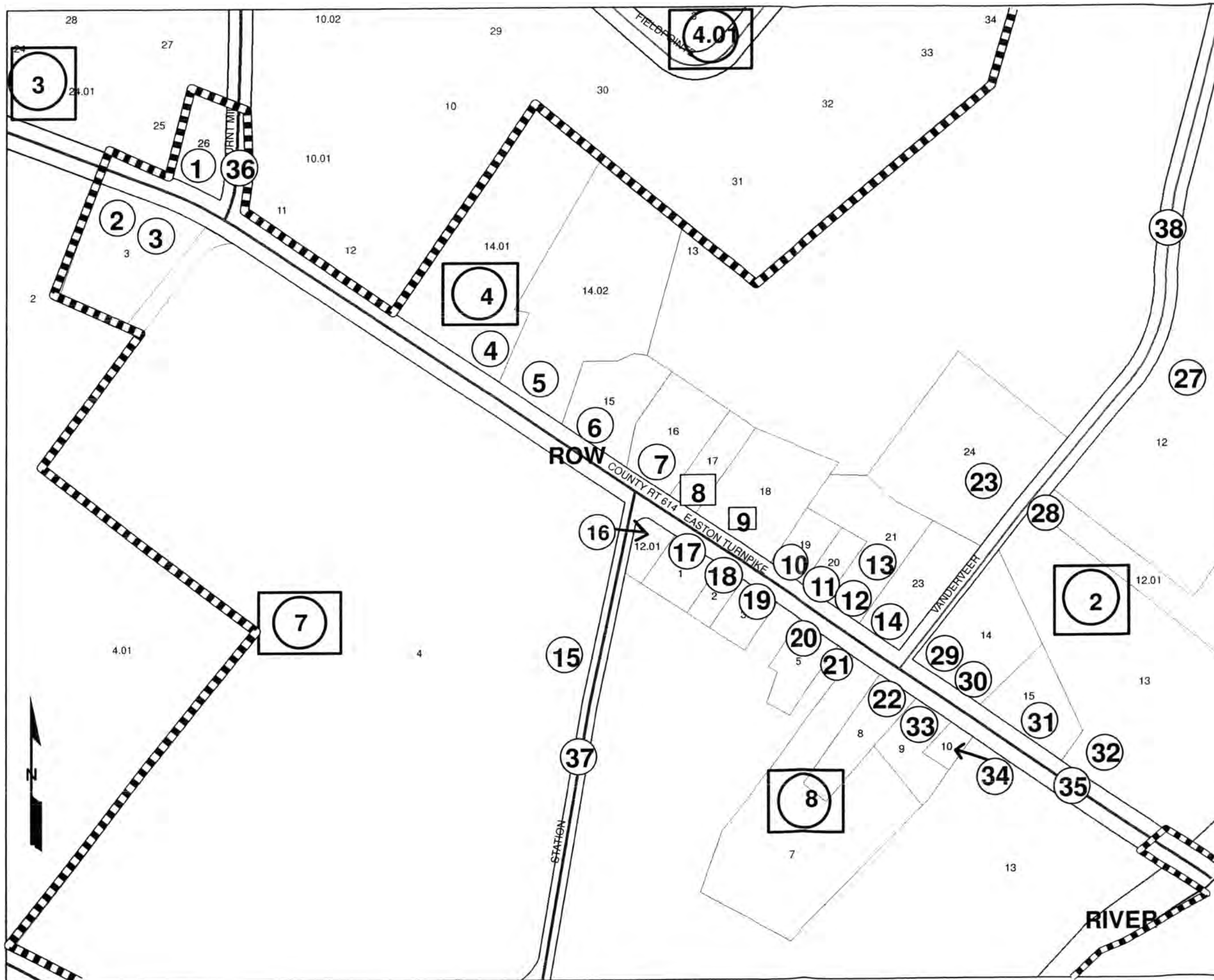
 = DISTRICT BOUNDARY

 = CONTRIBUTING

 = NON-CONTRIBUTING

 = Block

0 225 450 900 Feet





**NORTH BRANCH  
HISTORIC DISTRICT  
BRANCHBURG TOWNSHIP  
SOMERSET COUNTY, NJ**


**SITE LOCATION & BOUNDARY  
DETAIL MAP**

**INVENTORY SITE #'s**

 = DISTRICT BOUNDARY

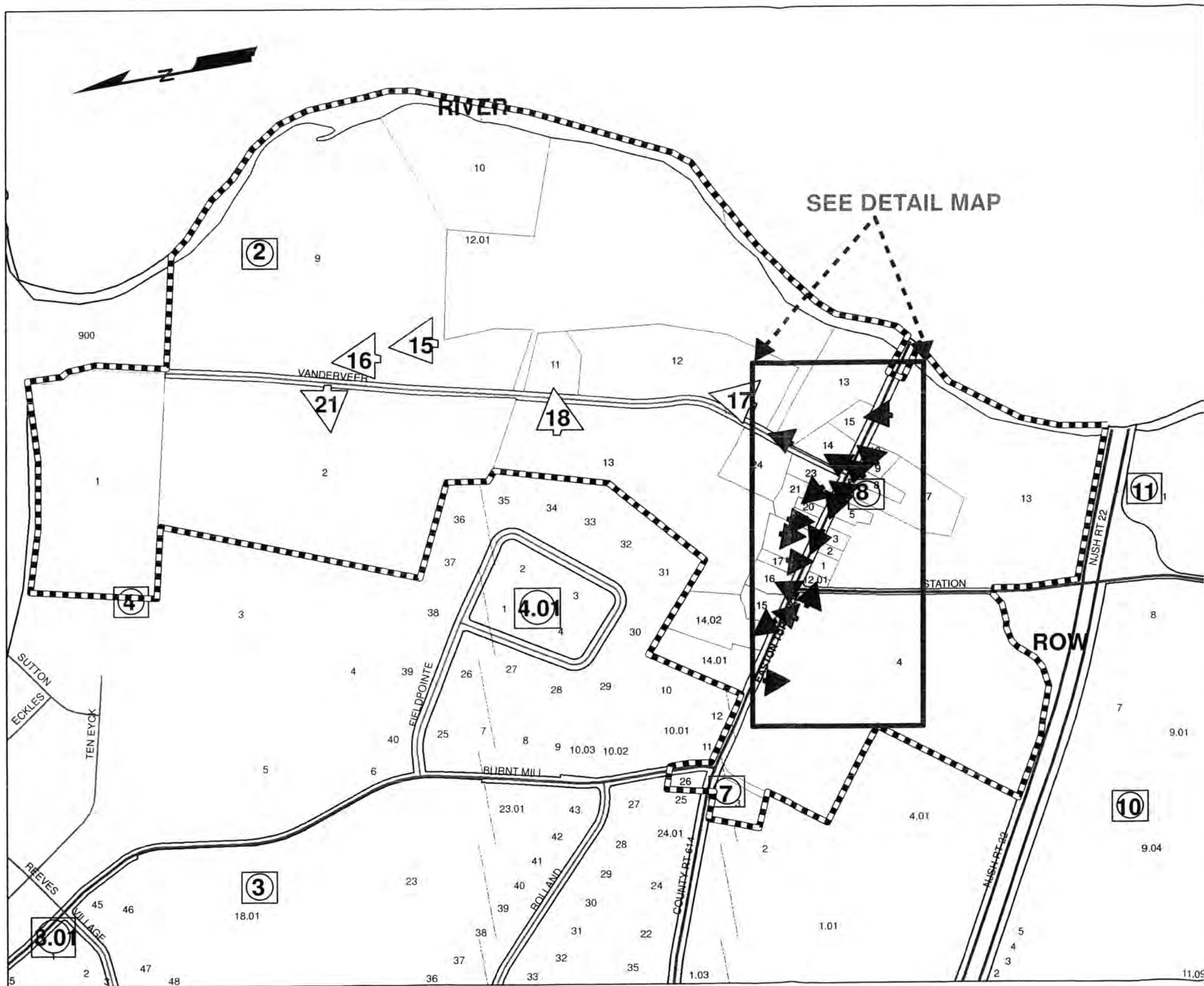
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 = Block

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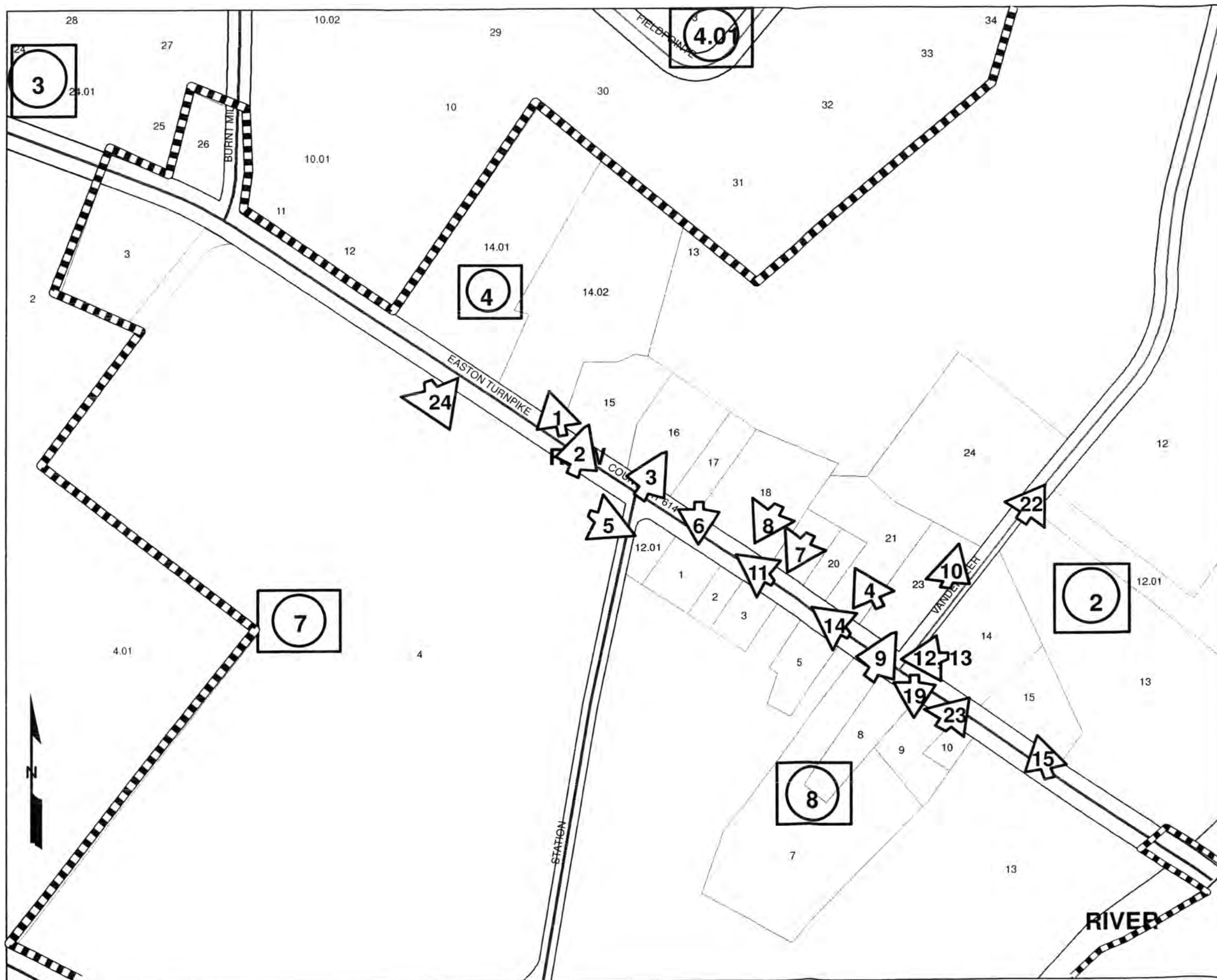
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HISTORIC DISTRICT  
BRANCHBURG TOWNSHIP  
SOMERSET COUNTY, NJ**

**PHOTOGRAPH  
IDENTIFICATION  
MAP**

**INVENTORY SITE #'s**

-  = District Boundry
-  = Photo #  
and Direction of View
-  = Block

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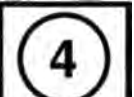
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SOMERSET COUNTY, NJ**

**PHOTO IDENTIFICATION  
DETAIL MAP**

**INVENTORY SITE #'s**

 = DISTRICT BOUNDARY

 = Photo #  
and Direction of View

 = Block

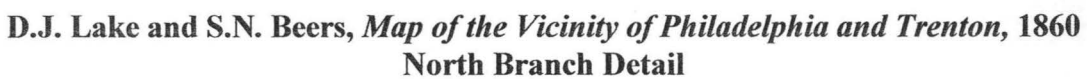
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**D.J. Lake and S.N. Beers, *Map of the Vicinity of Philadelphia and Trenton, 1860.***



North Branch Historic District, Somerset County, New Jersey



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: NOMINATION

PROPERTY North Branch Historic District  
NAME:

MULTIPLE  
NAME:

STATE & COUNTY: NEW JERSEY, Somerset

DATE RECEIVED: 3/02/12 DATE OF PENDING LIST: 3/27/12  
DATE OF 16TH DAY: 4/11/12 DATE OF 45TH DAY: 4/18/12  
DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:

REFERENCE NUMBER: 12000209

REASONS FOR REVIEW:

APPEAL: N DATA PROBLEM: N LANDSCAPE: N LESS THAN 50 YEARS: N  
OTHER: N PDIL: N PERIOD: N PROGRAM UNAPPROVED: N  
REQUEST: N SAMPLE: N SLR DRAFT: N NATIONAL: N

COMMENT WAIVER: N

☒ ACCEPT ☐ RETURN ☐ REJECT 4-16-12 DATE

ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:

Entered in  
The National Register  
of  
Historic Places

RECOM./CRITERIA \_\_\_\_\_

REVIEWER \_\_\_\_\_ DISCIPLINE \_\_\_\_\_

TELEPHONE \_\_\_\_\_ DATE \_\_\_\_\_

DOCUMENTATION see attached comments Y/N see attached SLR Y/N

If a nomination is returned to the nominating authority, the nomination is no longer under consideration by the NPS.





































A black and white photograph of a street intersection. In the upper right, a rectangular street sign reads "Vanderveer Ave". To its left is a vertical traffic light with three circular lenses. The scene is filled with bare trees, suggesting a winter or late autumn setting. On the left side of the road, a two-story house is partially visible behind the trees. A utility pole with several cross-arms and wires stands near the house. The road in the foreground has a crosswalk with white stripes. The street extends into the distance on the right side of the frame.

Vanderveer Ave

























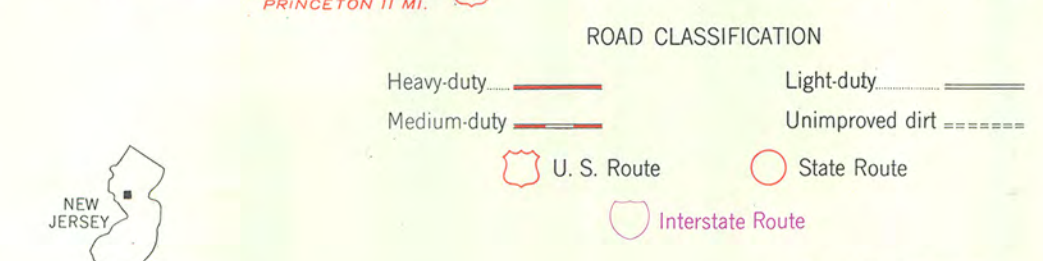
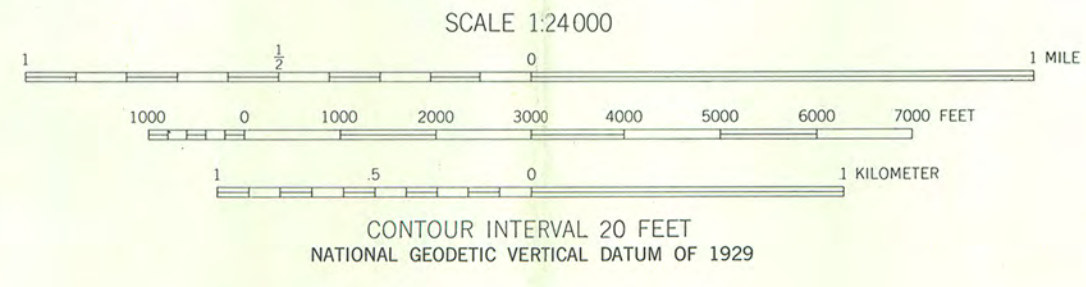
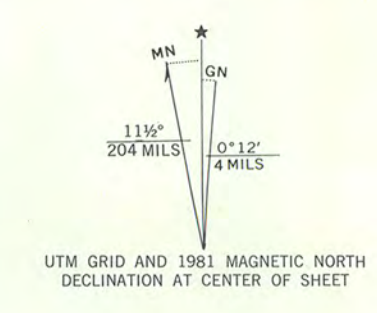




UTM: Z=18

	Easting	Northing
1.	527385	4495930
2.	527794	4495830
3.	528170	4495770
4.	527915	4494110
5.	526855	4494740
6.	526895	4494875
7.	527300	4494810

Mapped by the Defense Mapping Agency  
Edited and published by the Geological Survey  
Control by NOS/NOAA and New Jersey Geodetic Survey  
Topography by photogrammetric methods from aerial photographs taken 1942. Field checked 1942  
Culture revised by the Geological Survey 1955  
Polyconic projection. 10,000-foot grid ticks based on New Jersey coordinate system. 1000-meter Universal Transverse Mercator grid ticks, zone 18, shown in blue. 1927 North American Datum  
To place on the predicted North American Datum 1983 move the projection lines 6 meters south and 33 meters west as shown by dashed corner ticks  
Red tint indicates area in which only landmark buildings are shown  
There may be private inholdings within the boundaries of the National or State reservations shown on this map



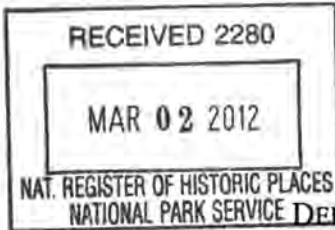
THIS MAP COMPLIES WITH NATIONAL MAP ACCURACY STANDARDS  
FOR SALE BY U.S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY, RESTON, VIRGINIA 22092  
A FOLDER DESCRIBING TOPOGRAPHIC MAPS AND SYMBOLS IS AVAILABLE ON REQUEST

Revisions shown in purple compiled by the Geological Survey  
from aerial photographs taken 1975 and other sources  
This information not field checked. Map edited 1981  
Purple tint indicates extension of urban areas

RARITAN, N. J.  
40074-E6-TF-024  
1955  
PHOTOREVISED 1981  
DMA 6065 II SW-SERIES V822







HPO Proj. #10-0921-8  
HPO L2011-169

## State of New Jersey

MAIL CODE 501-04B

DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

NATURAL & HISTORIC RESOURCES

HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICE

P.O. Box 420

Trenton, NJ 08625-0420

TEL. (609) 984-0176 FAX (609) 984-0578

CHRIS CHRISTIE  
*Governor*

BOB MARTIN  
*Commissioner*

KIM GUADAGNO  
*Lt. Governor*

January 13, 2012

Paul Loether, Chief  
National Register of Historic Places  
National Park Service  
Department of the Interior  
Washington, D.C. 20240

Dear Mr. Loether:

I am pleased to submit the nomination for the North Branch Historic District, Somerset County, New Jersey, for National Register consideration.

This nomination has received majority approval from the New Jersey State Review Board for Historic Sites. All procedures were followed in accordance with regulations published in the Federal Register.

Should you want any further information concerning this application, please feel free to contact Daniel D. Saunders, Administrator, New Jersey Historic Preservation Office, Mail code 501-04B, P.O. Box 420, Trenton, New Jersey 08625-0420, or call him at (609) 633-2397.

Sincerely,

Amy Cradic  
Deputy State Historic  
Preservation Officer