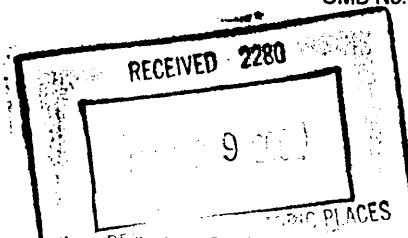


United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service
**National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form**



1777

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and 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 from 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 Pratt-McDaniels-LaFlamme House

other names/site number _____

2. Location

street & number 501-507 South Street [] not for publication

city or town Bennington [] vicinity

state Vermont code VT county Bennington code 003 zip code 05201

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this [X] 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 as set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property [X] meets [] does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant [] nationally [] statewide [X] locally. ([] see continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Suzanne C. Jamali, National Register Specialist 5-24-02
Signature of certifying official/Title Date

Vermont State Historic Preservation Office
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 the 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) _____

Edson H. Beall 7/11/02
Signature of the Keeper Date of action

5. Classification

Ownership of Property
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

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing		Non-contributing	
<u>2</u>	<u>1</u>	buildings	
_____	_____	sites	
_____	_____	structures	
_____	_____	objects	
<u>2</u>	<u>1</u>	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

COMMERCIAL / Specialty Store

DOMESTIC / Secondary Structure

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC: Multiple Dwelling

DOMESTIC: Secondary Structure

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions)

Federal

Greek Revival

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation STONE

walls WOOD: weatherboard

roof STONE: Slate

other ASPHALT

Narrative Description

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

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 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.

Areas of Significance:

(Enter categories from instructions)

- Architecture
- Commerce
- Settlement

Period of Significance:

c1800 - 1951

Significant Dates:

c1800

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all boxes that apply.)

- 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

Significant Person:

N/A

Cultural Affiliation:

N/A

Architect/Builder:

unknown

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 Building Survey # _____
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal Agency
- Local Government
- University
- Other repository: _____

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 1.7 acre

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1 18 647253 4748012
Zone Easting Northing

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 Susanne R. Warren
organization Consultant date August 2001
street & number 101 Monument Avenue telephone 802-447-0973
city or town Old Bennington state VT zip code 05201

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 SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

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

name Regional Affordable Housing Corporation Attn: Ms. Diane Binnick, Executive Director
street & number P.O. Box 1247 telephone _____
city or town Bennington state VT zip code 05201

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, D.C. 2050

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Pratt-McDaniels-LaFlamme House
Name of Property
Town of Bennington, Bennington County, VT
County and State

Section 7 Page 1

Description

The nominated property includes a 1½ and 2-story, three-unit residential structure constructed in the early nineteenth century as a single family residence (**501, 503 and 505 South Street**: one contributing building) and **507 South Street**, a detached 1½ story residence (one contributing building) to the rear of 501-505, a portion of a larger 19th century accessory building once connected to the main residence and now converted to residential use. In addition, a c1940, two-bay garage is located at the extreme south of the parcel and does not contribute to the significance of the nominated resource due to deterioration. The primary building, 501-505 South Street, displays architectural elements of the Federal style on the two-story, gable-front main block (505), including a full pediment with attenuated cornice moldings and prominent, reeded pilasters. The 1½ story north wing (501 and 503), of a later date, displays the deep entablature and robust moldings characteristic of the Greek Revival Style. A truncated west wing containing the kitchen of unit 503 is the remainder of a once large wing that connected to a stable or other barn-like accessory structure, now demolished. The property is located on the west side of South Street (US 7), the main north-south route through Bennington, in an area of mixed residential and commercial use. At a slight distance to the south is a modern one-story metal building housing the Salvation Army. A small motel complex set back from South Street by a broad lawn is immediately opposite 501-507 South Street. The property is bounded on the north by Prospect Street, beyond which is an undeveloped wooded parcel extending several hundred yards along South Street. Although there appears to be some potential for an historic district on South Street north of the nominated property, modern development and intervening wooded lands isolate this property visually from that potential district. Despite modern era interior and exterior alterations, the nominated property retains a significant degree of integrity of materials, form and architectural detail of the Federal/Greek Revival styles. The integrity of the property's setting is compromised by a modern motel complex to the east, across South Street, and by modern metal retail structure (Salvation Army shop) to the south. Nevertheless, the Pratt-McDaniels-LaFlamme house retains its prominent siting on the primary north-south route through Bennington in a predominantly residential setting near, but removed from, the commercial core of Bennington, as at the time of initial construction.

Based on recorded ownership and early maps of Bennington, the earliest portion of the main residence (unit 505) is believed to have been constructed c1800 as a two-story, gable-front Federal Style residence set close to South Street. Although a portion of the north wing may have been original to the c1800 construction, the completed north wing (units 501 & 503) is detailed in the later Greek Revival style and is first documented on the 1852 map of Bennington.

An initial construction date has not been firmly determined. The slender pilasters, attenuated detailing of the entablature and vertical emphasis given by the pilasters are characteristic of the Federal style of the late 18th and early 19th centuries, but offer a range of several decades for stylistic dating. The lack of early map documentation and a series of sales of the property within the Pratt family add to the difficulty in assigning a firm date to the building from documentary sources. Following purchase by Stephen Pratt of a tract of land including this property in 1798, the sale of a portion of the property to his son, Stephen Pratt, Jr. in 1817 is recorded (\$800). In 1838, Stephen Pratt Jr. sold the property to his son Edward Pratt (\$500) who, in less than a year, sold the property to his (Edward's) new brother-in-law, Thomas McDaniels (\$1450). The considerable price increase in the sale to McDaniels in 1839 might ordinarily suggest new construction or other capital improvement, but the likelihood of the previous sales within the Pratt family being at less than full market value clouds the issue. A brief examination of contemporary buildings in the vicinity found a similar gable-front building with distinctive reeded pilasters at

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

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Pratt-McDaniels-LaFlamme House

Name of Property

Section 7 Page 2

Town of Bennington, Bennington County, VT
County and State

85 Monument Avenue, Old Bennington (Old Bennington Historic District; NR listed), given a date of c1820 and identified as Hiram Waters carpentry shop (the reeded detailing of the "shop" is mistakenly identified as fluted in the district nomination). The residence at 55 Monument Avenue, Old Bennington (given the date 1787) also has an entry surround with reeded pilasters, but lacks full façade pilasters as at 505 south Street and 85 Monument Avenue.

501, 503 and 505 South Street

Exterior:

The earliest block, **505 South Street**, is a 2-story, rectangular plan residence with wood clapboard siding, a gable roof of slate and a central chimney. The prominent east façade is in three bays, defined by reeded pilasters carrying a full pediment. Segments of a classically derived entablature are incorporated above the pilaster capitals, but this profile is not carried between pilasters. Similarly, the full molded depth of the cornice is carried across the pediment only a short distance from each corner as "returns," with a cornice of lesser projection continuing across the façade. A half-elliptical window in the gable has plain trim with a small "keystone" block and is now blanked with a plywood panel with a modern louvered grill. The original main entry is at the north and has a single door framed by paired, reeded pilasters carrying a deep entablature. The east façade has a c1920 shed-roofed porch spanning the northern two of three bays on the ground story. The porch has open eaves with curvilinear sawn rafter ends, square posts and clapboarded balustrade. The west (rear) elevation has irregular fenestration: on the first level, mismatched 2-over-2 double-hung windows are placed north of the elevations center line illuminating the kitchen and adjacent bathroom; the second level has a modern entry to the kitchen and small, modern 1-over-1 bathroom window at the north. The west elevation is largely obscured by an open stair and second story wood-framed deck of late-20th century date. The foundation of **505 South Street** is of native limestone, naturally fractured in stones of roughly even thickness. Windows are generally 2-over-2, double hung sash dating from late 19th or early 20th century renovations. Several 6-over-6 windows at various locations appear to be surviving, original sash. Exterior window trim is of plain stock without moldings or cornice.

A portion of the 1 ½ story north wing may have been part of the initial construction, based on the continuity of the stone foundation and on what appears to be an exterior type door on the ground story leading from **503 South Street** to the later **501 South Street**. If a portion of the north wing were original, it is likely to have been lower than at present judging by the awkward juncture between the present north wing eave line and the earlier, gable-front section (unit 505) and by the overly high ceilings on the second story of #503. The North wing now comprises two separate residential units, **501 and 503 South Street**, with 1st and 2nd floor habitable space. The exterior shows no break between the two units in the roof, eave line, frieze or clapboard siding.

Fenestration on the primary, east façade of the north wing is irregular and largely obscured by enclosed, shed-roofed porches constructed c1920 in the same style as that on the original block. At unit 503, a trabeated Greek Revival style entry is flanked by a single 4-over-4 window on the north and paired 4-over-4 windows on the south. Two 2-over-2 windows above the porch roof interrupt the deep frieze. At **501 South Street**, an apparent extension of the north wing dating from the mid-19th century, the enclosed porch covers two large 6-over-6 windows. An unadorned entry located between the windows is tight against the northern of the two windows and, judging by construction details, appears to have been inserted later, possibly with subdivision of the house in the early 20th century. A single, multi-pane window interrupts the frieze and is aligned with the southern of the two ground-story windows.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Pratt-McDaniels-LaFlamme House

Name of Property

Section 7 Page 3

Town of Bennington, Bennington County, VT
County and State

The gable end of the north wing (501 & 503) displays robust Greek Revival style detailing. Broad corner pilasters rise to the wide frieze on the east and the partial pediment on the north; both pilasters and frieze are given visual emphasis by being built out slightly from the wall plane by 1" stock. It is evident that the north gable originally had a pronounced, full pediment, later interrupted when paired 2nd-story windows were lowered: clapboard infill of the earlier window openings is evident, as is a notable lack of finish where the original cornice was sawn through and capped. A pair of large 6-over-6 double-hung windows are symmetrically located at the first floor of the north façade. Due to the slope of the terrain downward to a marshy area on the west, the foundation is fully exposed at the northwest, revealing dressed ashlar. Greater attention to the fit and finish of the stone work at the north end than at the southern section of the house is evident.

In general, the least visible, west façade shows little regularity of fenestration and has suffered repeated alterations, demolitions and retro-fittings during years of use of the property as a multi-unit residential property. The prominent frieze of the north wing extends a few feet beyond the northwest corner, beyond which it is reduced to a plain, horizontal board. A truncated, gable-roofed wing to the west is the remnant of a larger wing once extending further westward, then southward to meet the current **507 South Street**, a residence converted from an earlier shop or outbuilding. The one-story west wing contains the kitchen area of **503 South Street** at the east and storage and a bathroom at the west. A deteriorated, shed-roofed, open porch of mid-20th date covers the south elevation of the west wing. Paired 2-over-2 double-hung windows open from the porch to the kitchen unit 503; a 6-over-6 double hung-window on the west wall of the main block is set beneath the porch roof and lights the small pantry adjacent to the kitchen. The east elevation of the west wing is fully exposed by the slope of the site and is faced in wood clapboard siding on the exposed basement and first level. An "inverted cross" style wooden door opens to the basement level near the west end of the façade; a 6-over-6 double-hung window is located to the east of the entry. Above, 2-over-2 unit windows are aligned with the basement window and nearly aligned with the basement door in a slightly irregular two-bay arrangement. The north face of the west wing is vinyl sided to cover the unfinished area left by demolition of the attached barn

Interior:

Note: Units 505, 503 and 501 are separate residences and have received differing interior treatments and finishes in the 19th and 20th centuries. The interiors of each will be described separately.

The interior of **505 South Street** has suffered both from neglect and incompatible alterations during its lengthy period as a residential rental property. What appears to be the original staircase rises along the north wall of the entry hall, turning southward at an intermediate landing. The plain, tapered newel, square-section balusters and rounded handrail are simply styled and are in good repair, aside from several missing balusters. Fret-sawn, curvilinear elements support the projecting tread ends. A modern passage door leads from the stair hall to a parlor in the southwest corner. Paired rooms to the west – serving last as living room and dining room -- are reached from the southwest parlor and are linked by a wide passage, apparently an enlargement of an earlier doorway. The stair hall originally led rearward directly to these paired rooms but has been closed to allow installation of a small closet off the room behind. At the extreme west, a narrow kitchen and half bathroom line the west exterior wall.

The first floor walls are generally covered with modern sheet paneling, although earlier painted and papered plaster walls show in limited areas. Original baseboard remains in the parlor and scattered locations, but was largely removed for installation of the sheet paneling. Door trim and moldings remain at the broad opening between dining and living rooms, but elsewhere have been removed and replaced by

United States Department of the Interior
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places
Continuation SheetSection 7 Page 4Pratt-McDaniels-LaFlamme House
Name of Property
Town of Bennington, Bennington County, VT
County and State

modern 1" x 4" trim. Original interior window trim and moldings have been retained at many 1st floor windows, but are damaged by years of curtain attachment, staples, and other fastenings; molding profiles are obscured by a heavy paint buildup. The parlor, living room and dining room have pressed metal ceiling and cornices installed during late-19th renovations. The presumed wood flooring is covered throughout by wall-to-wall carpeting, except in the kitchen and bathroom where sheet vinyl flooring has been installed.

The second story retains little historic fabric and shows extensive reconfiguration. Modern doors, baseboard and trim, carpeting and tile, and sheet paneling have been installed throughout. Perimeter moldings at some windows and molded chair rails are modern attempts to restore historic character to this area. A small bedroom at the southwest was not renovated and displays original molded door and window trim and a 6-over-6, double-hung sash window, although in highly deteriorated condition. A portion of the attic has been converted to residential use within the past two decades and has no trim or finishes from within the period of significance.

503 South Street appears to have been renovated in the late-19th or early-20th century. The first floor displays baseboard and door and window trim with a dark varnish finish with a cyma edge molding profile popular at that period. Entry is into a large living room extending nearly to the rear wall; paired, double-hung windows are south of the entry, opening to the later, enclosed porch. From the living room, paired French doors open to the north to a front room last used as a bedroom. Both living room and bedroom have patterned metal ceilings with matching cove moldings. Immediately west of the bedroom, is a north-south hall adjacent to stairs to the second floor. The hall ends at a heavy multi-panel door on the north once opening to the adjacent unit 501, but now sealed. The size and construction of this door are appropriate for an exterior door, suggesting – together with other structural evidence – that **503 South Street** was a later, mid-19th century addition. From the rear hall and parallel to it, a straight flight of stairs leads to the second floor. Modern sheet paneling covers the walls of the stairway and rear hall. At the rear (west) a small pantry opens off the living room and features simple, painted wooden shelving rabbeted into vertical end boards. The pantry and the hall open to the kitchen contained in a gable roofed west wing. At the extreme west of the wing is a narrow passage along the south wall and a bathroom, accessed from the northwest corner of the kitchen. Baseboard and trim in this area are plain and paint encrusted. The kitchen has modern sheet paneling on the walls and a patterned metal ceiling with cove molding.

The second story at **503 South Street** appears to retain its historic plan, except for the insertion of a bathroom along the west wall. The stairs rise from north to south, giving access to two bedrooms across the east (front) wall and one smaller bedroom at the southwest. A short hall parallels the stairs and leads to a now blocked passage to **501 South Street** at the north and to a bathroom at the northwest. The front bedrooms have painted plaster walls and ceilings and plain, painted baseboard and trim. A lightly constructed enclosure of beaded board inside the entry of the northeastern bedroom appears to date from the late-19th or early-20th century. Double hung sash in the front bedrooms rise from near floor level to just below the juncture between wall and raking ceiling, a height of approximately 5 feet. A horizontal shelf along the north wall at the second story suggests the location of a heavy horizontal framing member. The southeastern bedroom matches the adjacent room in finish, trim and approximate size, but lacks the beaded board enclosure. A smaller bedroom is located in the southwest, opposite the head of the stairs and adjacent to the bathroom. All bedrooms have painted plaster walls, modern acoustical tile ceilings and painted or carpeted softwood floors. The bathroom is modern and includes a built-in tub with shower. A floor-level window once matching those in the bedrooms has been partially filled to block the area where the west wing roof meets the wall.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places
Continuation SheetSection 7 Page 5Pratt-McDaniels-LaFlamme House
Name of Property
Town of Bennington, Bennington County, VT
County and State

The present **501 South Street**, the latest and northernmost portion of the north wing, displays robust interior and exterior detailing of the Greek Revival period and of late-19th century alterations. Physical evidence suggests that this section of the residence had been a single, large room probably used by Thomas McDaniel as his office in his primary occupation -- what we would now call a venture capitalist. **501 South Street** is distinguished by an approximately 14 inch deep, heavily molded baseboard around the perimeter walls, continuing behind later inserted partitions. Large 6-over-6, double-hung sash on the east and west are framed by equally bold, fluted surrounds with turned corner blocks. The window trim extends through the baseboard to floor level and frames a wood panel beneath the window. A fireplace with painted wood mantel and surround is centered on the south wall. The surround has a graceful two-layered Tudor arch carried on classically composed paneled pilasters.

The original, single space of **501 South Street** was subdivided in the late 19th century to create a parlor in the northeast corner, an additional parlor with fireplace in the southeast, and a kitchen (now with a bathroom at the south end). The two parlors have wallpapered walls and painted plaster ceilings, which appear to have been lowered based on the lowered second floor windows of the north gable. The ceilings now are immediately above the window trim and would not have been consistent with the grandly conceived original dimensions and oversized trim of the original space. The later partitions are trimmed with molded baseboard narrower than at the perimeter walls; door trim is narrower than the fluted window trim and has molded inner and outer edges and turned corner blocks consistent with late 19th century stylistic tastes. The modern kitchen and bathroom have ceramic tiled walls and floors. A narrow and awkwardly steep enclosed stair rises along the kitchen east wall; a narrow passage adjacent to the stairs leads to 503 South Street, now closed with gypsum wallboard but retaining the heavy Greek Revival period trim found at the north and east windows.

The second story of **501 South Street** contains three small bedrooms at the northeast, north west and southeast. A small modern bathroom has been inserted at the southwest corner. A short north-south hall is parallel to and west of the stairs, separated by a utilitarian rail of plain 2" stock. Baseboard, window trim and door trim throughout are painted and unmolded. Walls are painted or papered plaster; floors are carpeted or exposed softwood flooring. The materials and finish of the second floor and the unmolded 4-panel doors are utilitarian and match the finish and materials of the second story at **503 South Street**.

It appears likely that **501 South Street** was the last portion of the north wing to be constructed and that the earlier roofline of the north wing was raised to match the imposing proportions of McDaniel's new office addition. This would account for the unusually high second floor ceilings at **503 South Street** as well as a mismatch of second floor levels between units 501 and 503. The presumed generous original ceiling height at **501 South Street** allowed for later lowering of the second floor, as suggested by plaster ceilings immediately above the window trim at 501 and the rougher surface finish of that ceiling. The obvious lowering of the north end gable windows further suggests lowering of the second floor during conversion of **501 South Street** from office to residential space.

507 South Street

Exterior:

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Pratt-McDaniels-LaFlamme House

Name of Property

Town of Bennington, Bennington County, VT
County and State

Section 7 Page 6

507 South Street is a small, 1 ½-story residence on a fieldstone foundation with a slate-shingled gable roof. A 1 story, shed-roofed extension to the south doubles the footprint of the structure. A low, shed-roofed porch on the east extends the width of the gable-roofed block. The building is free-standing and is located west of 501-505 South Street, slightly offset to the south. 507 South Street has wood clapboard siding, plain eaves, door and window trim and simple cornice returns. The primary, east façade is in three bays, with the central entry flanked by 2-over-1 double-hung windows; a single modern double-hung window is centered in the gable. A secondary entrance on the east opens to a living room area in the shed-roofed wing. The south façade of the main block is largely obscured by the shed-roofed addition; the low south elevation of the addition has two 2-over-2, double-hung sash windows with plain trim. The north elevation is without windows, doors or other openings. Map documentation shows that this structure existed by the late 19th century and that it was linked to the north by an L-shaped barn or other accessory structure joining the west wing of 501-505 South Street; a fragment of intersecting gable roof on the north slope of the roof indicates the former connection to the main building. The west elevation has two symmetrically-placed 6-over-6 windows on the first level with a single 6-over-6 window centered in the gable. 507 South Street sits on a fieldstone foundation partially exposed on the north and west and a poured concrete foundation beneath the later shed-roofed addition. A hooded, cantilevered beam and lift eye at the peak of the east gable suggest a previous commercial or accessory use of this structure.

Interior:

The central entry opens immediately to the kitchen. Doors on the kitchen west (rear) wall open to a small bathroom (south) and to a pantry/storage area (north); a narrow, enclosed stair rises along the north wall to the second floor. South of the kitchen, in a shallow, shed-roofed wing is a living room/dining room. The second floor has two finished rooms set beneath the low eaves. The first floor is finished throughout with modern sheet paneling, carpet and vinyl tile. The second floor has walls and ceilings of painted and papered plaster; the floors are painted softwood flooring.

Garage:

An abandoned 2-bay garage estimated to date from the 1940s is located at the extreme south of the property, approximately 200 feet from the detached residence, unit #507 down an overgrown dirt driveway. The garage is of stud wall construction with clapboard siding, an asphalt-shingled gable roof and dirt floor. The garage is adjacent to a poured concrete retaining wall for a c1970 metal structure now housing a Salvation Army Thrift Shop and parking lot, located to the east. The condition of the garage is poor: the studs and sheathing show considerable rot; the roof surface is badly deteriorated and the roof decking and rafters show extensive areas of wood rot. Due to the deterioration evident and the physical and visual separation of the garage from the residences, this structure is not considered a contributing component of the nominated property.

Renovation in progress:

During the process of nominating the Pratt-McDaniels-LaFlamme house to the National Register of Historic Places, the Regional Affordable Housing Corporation, has under taken extensive renovation of this property in a program of work now being considered for certification under the federal reinvestment

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

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Pratt-McDaniels-LaFlamme House

Name of Property

Section 7 Page 7

Town of Bennington, Bennington County, VT
County and State

tax credit program. The alterations have reconfigured those interior areas that had lost historic integrity due to inappropriate modern treatment and deterioration from lack of maintenance. Limited demolition and additions to the building have provided an increase in available, affordable housing units. Existing exterior wood siding, trim and architectural details have been repaired or replicated where missing or deteriorated and painted. Specific changes are summarized below; although additional residential units have been created, the general sections of the property will be referred to as units 501, 503, 505 and 507, as described above.

Exterior:

The majority of the wood sash windows were found to be deteriorated beyond feasible repair and have been replaced by replacement units of wood to match the existing in size and manner of operation. Permanently adhered muntins of 6-over-6 configuration were used, based on the earliest surviving sash found in two location in the house. The intact windows in unit 503 on the first story east façade were repairable and have been reused. The large, double-hung windows at unit 501, first story east and north have been reconditioned and retained. The now unused east entry at unit 501 has been made inoperable, but remains in place to show the historic fenestration of that unit. At unit 501, a second frieze window matching the existing has been added on the east, reflecting the two-bay composition of the first floor.

The early 20th century shed-roofed porches have been removed at the three east façade entries and are replaced by a single shed-roofed porch in the angle between the original block (unit 505) and the north wing. Removal of the porches has exposed the elegant Federal style entry at # 505 and the reeded pilasters of that façade. The east façade cornice moldings of the north wing have been replicated and restored. On the west, the remaining west wing at unit 503 was demolished due to deterioration of the foundation and extensive decay of timber framing at the basement level.

A 1-story addition, plus basement, now covers the footprint of the demolished west wing and extends along the west wall of the original structure, turning west to form an L-shaped connection to the north elevation of the former detached residence (unit 507). The new connecting link has been recessed from the south façade of the original main house to provide a shallow porch and to allow the original units to remain visually distinct. The shallow porch contains the entry to one of three residential units in the new connector. An "L"-shaped, hip-roofed porch has been added at the northwest angle of the main house and the new addition, providing entry for a second floor apartment in the former unit #501 and for a new apartment in the addition. The porch is carried on new brick piers at the fully exposed foundation.

The shed-roofed porch of the formerly detached unit 507 has been demolished and replaced by a hip-roofed porch continuing the porch of the new "L" addition.

Interior:

All spaces have been renovated and, in most cases, reconfigured to provide additional residential units. In general, however, existing walls have been retained through the renovation, particularly at the first level.

At unit 505, the main entry to the 1st floor has been moved to the southwest corner, accessed from the recessed porch of the new connector. The 1st floor kitchen remains at the west wall; the adjacent bathroom has been expanded into the former kitchen area to provided a handicapped-accessible

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

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Pratt-McDaniels-LaFlamme House

Name of Property

Section 7 Page 8

Town of Bennington, Bennington County, VT
County and State

bathroom. The former living room and dining room remain and retain their patterned metal ceilings. The southeast room now serves as a bedroom. The former entry from the stair hall to the new bedroom has been sealed; the original entry hall now serves the 2nd floor apartment in unit 505 only. The 2nd floor, previously altered, has been reconfigured to provide a large living room and kitchen area on the east, two bedrooms on the west, and a dining area on the north. A new bathroom has been inserted between the kitchen and southwest bedroom.

The 1st floor of unit 503 retains the living room and former bedroom – now dining room – on the east. The c1890 windows, baseboard and trim in these areas have been retained, as were the patterned metal ceilings and double French doors. The former pantry area at the southwest has been expanded and converted to a kitchen. The 2nd floor has been renovated and contains bedrooms in each corner of the approximately square area, with a new bathroom centered on the south. All wall and ceilings are modern, as are the baseboard, door trim and window trim.

Former unit 501 has been reconfigured to provide separate 1st and 2nd floor apartment, both accessed from the new rear porch. The heavily molded Greek revival period moldings of the 1st level have been removed, stripped of lead-bearing paint, as were the large 2-over-2 windows on the north and east facades. The kitchen, formerly extending the full width of the west wall has been reduced to provide for a stairway to the 2nd floor from the porch and the insertion of a new bathroom accessed from the bedroom at the southeast. The painted, wooden fireplace surround in what is now the bedroom has been stripped of paint, refinished and reinstalled.

Garage:

The garage has been completely restructured for use as secure storage during renovation of the main house. The east, west and south walls have had the lower 2-3 feet of studding and sheathing removed and new, pressure-treated "sister" studs and new sheathing installed. New pine clapboard siding, new roof trusses sheathing and shingles have been installed. A new concrete slab replaces the perimeter foundation and dirt floor. A single overhead type garage door have been installed on the north, in place of the earlier paired garage doors.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Pratt-McDaniels-LaFlamme House

Name of Property

Section 8 Page 9

Town of Bennington, Bennington County, VT
County and State

Significance

The Pratt-McDaniels-LaFlamme House, comprising the main house (501-505 south Street) and a small detached dwelling at the rear (507 South Street), are significant for representing an evolution, stylistically and functionally, that mirror developments in the surrounding community. Built ca. 1800 by local landholder and farmer Stephen Pratt, the house reflects the town's growing prosperity as an agricultural center. In 1839 it became home to Thomas McDaniels, an entrepreneur who underwrote some of the industrial and commercial enterprises that were beginning to transform Bennington and its economy. By the time the house was purchased by John LaFlamme in 1913, Bennington had long since become an industrial town, home not to farmers, but to factory workers. La Flamme subdivided the house to serve the needs of his large extended family, many of whom worked in those mills and shops. The small dwelling at the rear of the property also mirrors this changing socioeconomic history; it was once part of a large barn/shed complex that joined the rear of the main house, the result of a transition to light commercial activity in the late 19th and early 20th century. Just as the house reflects the economic and social changes in the town, it is a record of the evolution of architectural style, as well. The original section of the main house displays Federal details, which are unusually elegant for the area. A later wing displays robust Greek Revival style details reflecting changing stylistic tastes. Subsequent physical changes in the early 20th century, the subdivision of the house into apartment units are due not to changes of taste but to economic forces. No longer fashionable, the once elegant dwelling had become a more viable investment as multi-family housing for the industrial age. As it stands, the house evolved with Bennington as it was transformed from a farming to an industrial community, being home in turn to an affluent farming family, a entrepreneur of the industrial/commercial growth phase, and finally to those who came work in the established mills and businesses.

Bennington was first settled in 1761 when Samuel Robinson, a veteran of the French and Indian Wars, purchased the rights to large tracts of land from the original proprietors and brought a group of Congregational Separatists to the area. The soil was unusually good for the region and the farming settlers quickly prospered, producing enough surplus to export to Albany in exchange for goods.¹ The farming community on the hill above the Walloomsac River was well situated to become a larger center, being at a natural crossroads for those heading north from Massachusetts and east from the Hudson Valley.

In 1786 Stephen Pratt, a veteran of 5 battles of the Revolution,² arrived in Bennington and began buying large plots of land. By 1798, when he purchased the 100+ parcel of land which would become the family farm, he was one of the largest landowners in the area³. Pratt's family had by that time grown to include 9 children,⁴ (it is unclear whether all survived) and it seems likely that the house would have been built around the time of the land purchase. In 1817 he sold the entire property to Stephen Jr. (Stephen Sr. was by then 63 years old), noting that it is "the farm upon which Stephen Pratt Jr. now lives and all the land I formerly bought of Joseph Robinson... containing all land I ever owned south of the highway leading from the Meetinghouse in Bennington to the town of Woodford."⁵

¹ Welter, p.3

² Day papers U 92

³ Cutter, p. 2119.

⁴ Lovelace, p. 574-575.

⁵ Bennington Town Records. Book 9 p. 461. January 16, 1817. It also seems likely that Stephen Jr, who married in 1806, was living in another house to the south of his father's dwelling, since he is located there in a 1832 map, and

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Pratt-McDaniels-LaFlamme House

Name of Property

Town of Bennington, Bennington County, VT
County and State

Section 8 Page 10

While farming was still the primary economic activity in Bennington, by the early 19th century small industries and mills producing rag paper, pottery, cotton goods, woolens, textile machinery and steel carpenter's squares⁶ were springing up along the Walloomsac and neighboring streams. Unlike its immediate neighbors of Arlington and Manchester, which were agricultural communities with only enough light industry to serve their own needs, Bennington was becoming a center for regional industrial production, a development which would change the nature of the community over the coming decades.

As these small industries developed in the valley below the farming community on the hill, it became clear that the newly settled area would become the industrial heart of the town. By the early 1840's the East Village, as the budding industrial hamlet in the valley was called, had a population of 700.⁷ The early industrial enterprises were often hampered by lack of ready capital, so when in 1828 Bennington's first bank was established, the scale of industrial undertakings began to expand rapidly. The focus of much of this industrial development was the manufacture of cotton goods, for which new machinery was needed, requiring in turn, capitalization.⁸ During the 1830's banks underwrote numerous industrial ventures, only to quickly overextend themselves.⁹ As Welter notes in his study of Bennington's industrial history, "The interconnections of banking and manufacturing, whatever their functional significance may have been, suggest that it was necessary or at least extremely helpful, to be well-to-do or to have wealthy connections before attempting to go into manufacturing."¹⁰

These developments would have an impact on Bennington and on the Pratt family as well. In late 1838 Stephen Jr. subdivided the farm property, selling the older home to his son Edward S. Pratt. In January 1839 Stephen Jr.'s daughter Erin, married Thomas Mc Daniels, who had arrived in Bennington from Danby, VT the previous year. It may not have been a coincidence that McDaniels arrived at this time, just as banks were experiencing difficulties underwriting local industry. Significantly, McDaniels' business was providing capital and loans to businessmen to finance their various enterprises,¹¹ an activity which meshed nicely with the financial climate in Bennington at the time.

In October of 1839, Edward Pratt sold the family home to his brother-in-law¹² and in June of 1841, the McDaniels celebrated the birth of their first child, Sarah. The first child was followed by three more; Julia in 1843, Jane Erin in 1847, and John Thomas in 1849. It is probable that during the 1840's, as his family and business expanded, McDaniels would have also expanded his house, adding the Greek

subsequent deeds place him in a separate house. This second house, also a Federal with the gable to the road, is one of the six or seven surviving from this period on the road south of town..

⁶ Welter p. 5

⁷ Welter, p. 7

⁸ Welter, p. 14

⁹ Welter, p. 13

¹⁰ Welter. p. 14

¹¹ "Mr. McDaniels began business by loaning money, and that was his business through life, as long as he did business. For many years the local papers used frequently to publish his announcement that he had "a few thousand dollars to lend on good security." Obituary, Bennington Banner, January 13, 1887.

¹² It would seem that Edward was responding to the same economic forces that were transforming the town. He chose not to remain in farming but to become a tradesman. The Day Papers (M 38) note that he had a store that burned in 1850; The Day Papers (M89) also record that he was involved in the iron business in 1861.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Pratt-McDaniels-LaFlamme House

Name of Property

Section 8 Page 11

Town of Bennington, Bennington County, VT
County and State

Revival wing to the north side.¹³ According to his obituary, McDaniels was always active in the community; he served as justice of the peace, notary public, and as State Senator in 1852. As a banker and businessman, it is likely that he did business from his home; certainly the large high-ceilinged room that occupies the north end of the wing displays more formality than any other room in the house, and may have been used as his office. Not only is the room more grandly proportioned than the others but, tall windows display a fluted surround, which speaks of a certain desire to impress. The wide baseboards echo the heavy Greek Revival proportions of the exterior cornice, while the mantel and fireplace surround display Gothic Revival leanings in the arched opening and lobed motif of its carved detail.

The 20th century role of the house as a multi-family dwelling probably had roots planted firmly in the 19th. In 1867 McDaniels deeded the house for the "...consideration of One dollar and the further consideration of the goodwill of my children Sarah McDaniels Potter and Andrew Potter...give, grant etc. the Homestead where I now live..."¹⁴ Col. Andrew Potter, a 1856 graduate of Williams College had relocated from North Adams, where he had been practicing law for several years, to Bennington where he opened an office in January of 1867.¹⁵ It is possible that the time of his relocation coincided with his marriage to Sarah McDaniels, and that the house represented a wedding gift. The nature of the wording of the deed suggests that Thomas Mc Daniels and his wife would continue to reside in the house along with their daughter and son-in-law.

McDaniels continued to do business and be active in Bennington life up to the time of his death in 1887, though his style of "banking," the personal bankrolling of various business ventures, had by that time changed considerably. That he was considered a prominent citizen is supported by the lengthy obituary that appeared in the Bennington Banner, outlining not only his life, but that of his father, who was cited as being "a Vanderbilt of his generation."¹⁶ Thomas McDaniel was well liked and remembered as being "genial with abounding good humor," and that he displayed "tranquility amid reverses" (of business) proved the soundness and quality of his character. The obituary goes on to speculate that he left an estate "estimated from \$50,000 to ten times that sum."¹⁷ That the community cared to publicly speculate on his worth is an indicator of his role as a man of standing.

Andrew and Sarah McDaniels Potter continued to live in the house after Thomas' death in 1887. By 1877 an additional outbuilding had been attached at the rear of the house¹⁸ and by 1894 a much more extensive structure is noted, suggesting that perhaps there were other than merely residential uses. The house continued in the McDaniels-Potter family until the first decade of the 20th century, passing first from Sarah and Andrew to their son James Tracy Potter, and then briefly to George and Helen Elwell, before it was purchased by John LaFlamme in 1913. LaFlamme's large extended family soon was in residence, and a 1921 map shows that the main house and the small building in the rear (now 507) had been officially subdivided into four separate dwellings. This same map confirms that by this time the

¹³ It is clear from the stylistic evidence that the original Federal block was built at an earlier time than the Greek Revival wing. Although it isn't possible to confirm a definite date for the construction of the wing, it had been built by 1852, as it is shown on the map of that date by Presdee and Edwards. Several outbuilding behind the house are also shown on this map. (Bennington Free Library).

¹⁴ Bennington Town Records, Book 43, p. 460. March 20, 1867.

¹⁵ Bennington Banner, January 10, 1867. Noted in Name File, Bennington Historical Society.

¹⁶ Obituary, Bennington Banner, January 13, 1887. p.3

¹⁷ Obituary, Bennington Banner, January 13, 1887.p.3

¹⁸ Bird-eye view, J.J. Stoner, Madison. Wisconsin, 1877. Bennington Free Library.

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

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Pratt-McDaniels-LaFlamme House

Name of Property

Section 8 Page 12

Town of Bennington, Bennington County, VT
County and State

outbuildings at the rear were in light commercial use, as a bicycle shop is noted.¹⁹ The house was owned and occupied by the LaFlammes for the better part of the 20th century. Various members of the family occupied different apartments at different points in time, moving from unit to unit as the configuration of the family changed. The last LaFlamme family members moved out in the 1990's when the building passed to an owner outside of the family.²⁰

The Pratt-McDaniels-LaFlamme house is architecturally significant as an unusually elegant example of the Federal style for Bennington. The east façade in three bays, defined by reeded pilasters carrying a full pediment. Segments of a classically derived entablature are incorporated above the pilaster capitals, but this profile is not carried between pilasters. A half-elliptical window in the gable has plain trim with a small "keystone" block. The main entrance is framed by paired, reeded pilasters carrying a deep entablature. The reeded, paired, and attenuated pilasters of the entrance are features found on only two other local dwellings, and these are of much more modest proportions.²¹ The use of reeded pilasters to mark both the corners and the central bay is unique in the area. The house is also one of the few examples of the Federal style in Bennington outside of the original settlement (now Old Bennington) and of these remaining examples, it is clearly the most elaborate.

The gable end of the north wing displays robust Greek Revival style detailing. Broad corner pilasters rise to the wide frieze on the east and the partial pediment on the north; both pilasters and frieze are given visual emphasis by being built out slightly from the wall plane. The later Greek Revival wing with its unusually heavily proportioned cornice and broad, unadorned pilasters contrasts with the lightness of the Federal style reeded pilasters, making an emphatic statement about the evolution of style and taste in the first half of the 19th century.

¹⁹ Sanborne Map, 1921. Local History Room, Bennington Free Library.

²⁰ Conversation with Alice LaFlamme Bailey, July 3, 2000.

²¹ The houses at 85 and 55 Monument Avenue both have the paired, reeded pilasters.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Pratt-McDaniels-LaFlamme House

Name of Property

Section 9 Page 13

Town of Bennington, Bennington County, VT

County and State

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United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section 10 Page 14

Pratt-McDaniels-LaFlamme House
Name of Property
Town of Bennington, Bennington County, VT
County and State

10. Geographical Data

Verbal Boundary Description

The nominated property is the entire parcel identified by Town of Bennington tax map #56-54-74, as indicated by bold line on the attached portion of tax map #56.

Boundary Justification

The boundary of the nominated property corresponds to the current legal boundary of that parcel containing 501-507 South Street.

Additional Documentation

Photographs:

Pratt-McDaniels-LaFlamme House
Town of Bennington, Bennington County, Vermont

Photographer: James Warren

Date: September 2000

Location of Negatives: filed at the Vermont Division for Historic Preservation, Montpelier, VT

1. General view toward northwest; 501-507 South Street.
2. View of 501-505 South Street; view toward southwest.
3. Façade, 505 south Street; view toward west.
4. 505 South Street; view toward northwest
5. 501 South Street, north elevation; view toward south.
6. 507 South Street; view toward northwest.
7. View of west wing; view toward northeast.
8. Rear (west) elevation, 507 South Street; view toward northeast.

PRATT - Mc DANIELS - La FLAMME House
501-507 South St.
BENNINGTON, BENNINGTON CO., VT

ZONE 18

E 647253 N, 4748012

646 12'30" 647 PUTLAND 56 MI. 6369 1 NW 0.2 MI. TO VT. 9 (BENNINGTON) 0.3 MI. TO VT. 9649 10' 650

