

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

56-954

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. If any 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.



1. Name of Property

Historic name: Clara T. O'Connell School

Other names/site number: Park Street School

Name of related multiple property listing: _____

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

2. Location

Street & number: 122 Park Street

City or town: Bristol State: CT County: Hartford

Not For Publication: ☐ Vicinity: ☐

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,

I hereby certify that this ☒ nomination ☐ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.

In my opinion, the property ☒ meets ☐ does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:

☐ national ☐ statewide ☒ local

Applicable National Register Criteria:

☒ A ☐ B ☒ C ☐ D

Mary B. Dunne / Deputy SHPO

3-22-17

Signature of certifying official/Title:

Date

CT State Historic Preservation Office

State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

In my opinion, the property ☐ meets ☐ does not meet the National Register criteria.

Signature of commenting official:

Date

Title :

State or Federal agency/bureau
or Tribal Government

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4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

- ☒ entered in the National Register
☐ determined eligible for the National Register
☐ determined not eligible for the National Register
☐ removed from the National Register
☐ other (explain:)


Signature of the Keeper

5/8/17
Date of Action

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 ☐

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7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions.)

LATE 19TH AND 20TH CENTURY REVIVALS:

Neoclassical

Collegiate Gothic

Materials: (enter categories from instructions.)

Principal exterior materials of the property:

Foundation: Stone

Walls: Brick with cast concrete and limestone trim

Roof: Rolled Asphalt

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance and condition of the property. Describe contributing and noncontributing resources if applicable. Begin with a **summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, type, style, method of construction, setting, size, and significant features. Indicate whether the property has historic integrity.)

Summary Paragraph

The Clara T. O'Connell Elementary School stands on a 3.8-acre parcel located on the north side of Park Street (CT Route 72) in the West End neighborhood of Bristol, Connecticut (Figures 1 and 2). The property is approximately one-quarter-mile east of Rockwell Park and one-half-mile west of Bristol's downtown commercial district. The building is set back approximately 65 feet from Park Street with a lawn at the front of the property and mature trees lining the street on the east and west sides of the school. There is a large parking lot on the east side of the school which extends to the rear (north). The north border of the property is formed by the Pequabuck River, which flows in a roughly west-east direction. The surrounding neighborhood is primarily comprised of a mix of residential and commercial structures,

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the majority of which are two- or three-family homes built between 1880 and 1930 in modest interpretations of the Queen Anne and Colonial Revival styles.

The school complex consists of an original 1914 building, additions dating from 1920 and 1927, and a gymnasium/auditorium addition completed in 1960. Constructed in 1914, and substantially enlarged in 1920 and 1927, the main block of the O'Connell School is two-stories in height and is connected to a separate auditorium-gymnasium (constructed in 1960) by a partially elevated passageway on its west elevation. The building is of load-bearing, red-brick masonry construction and was designed in the Neoclassical style with Collegiate Gothic elements by architect Walter P. Crabtree (Photograph 1). The original block consists of a symmetrical three-ranked façade with a central entry set within a segmental arched opening. The rear additions to the building are in keeping with the original and have simplified versions of similar decorative finishes. Fenestration throughout the original school and the additions from the 1920s consists of 1/1 double-hung replacement sash set within rectangular openings, while the auditorium retains its original mix of metal sash with hopper-style openings and fixed multi-pane windows. The entire building has a flat roof covered in a built-up asphalt system. The school was in continuous use for nearly a century; however, it was decommissioned and students were sent to the new South Side Elementary School at 21 Tuttle Road upon its completion in 2012. Despite over ninety years of use, the overall plan of the building remains unchanged and many original features of both the original building and the historic additions remain intact. These include most of the floors, walls, pressed metal ceilings, door surrounds, trim, built-in bookcases, and blackboards. The 1960 auditorium also retains character-defining elements that firmly link it to the period in which it was constructed.

Narrative Description

Exterior Description

The façade (south elevation) of the original building (1914) is composed of a rectangular red-brick block three bays wide and a single bay deep (Figure 3; Photographs 1 and 2). The entire school rests on a brick and stone foundation set one-half story above grade. A cast-stone water table extends around the 1914 original block. The walls are set in a simple running bond pattern and rise to a decorative brick belt course spanning the building at the lintel height of the second-story windows. Above this is a corbelled brick cornice topped by a row of bricks laid in soldier course, which in turn is topped by a stepped brick

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parapet wrapping around all elevations of the building. Triangular brick panels are located below the peaked sections of the parapet on the south, east, and west elevations, and concrete coping caps the entire roofline.

The building's primary entrance is centered on the façade and is accessed from a set of cast concrete steps lined by low cheek walls. The segmental-arched opening has a quoined, cast-stone door surround and an infilled transom pierced by four small lights (Photographs 1 and 2). Below the lights are aluminum letters that read "CLARA T. O'CONNELL ELEMENTARY SCHOOL". The original entry doors have been replaced with a pair of modern metal units, each with a single, narrow light. Above the door surround there is a cast-stone plaque, the bottom of which follows the curve of the arched entry below. The plaque reads, in Tudor script, "PARK STREET SCHOOL".

The entrance is flanked by a pair of narrow windows with cast-stone sills and hooded molding. On the second story, above the entrance, there is a pair of windows set within a single opening framed with cast-stone. They are flanked on each side by a single, narrow window. The three openings have narrow, cast-stone sills and are joined by a continuous, stepped, cast-stone lintel (Photograph 2). The outer bays of the facade have symmetrically spaced tripartite windows at the basement level and the first and second stories. The water table forms a heavy lintel above the basement windows, while the upper-story windows have their own wide, cast-stone lintels. Fenestration throughout the building consists of one-over-one double-hung aluminum sash set within rectangular openings.

The east elevation of the O'Connell School is comprised of three chronological divisions. The two southernmost blocks are original (1914) and include a pedimented section at the south end of the building, and the eastern half of the block to the north, which contains a side entry and a bay of tripartite windows. The original school had an L-shaped footprint. The first addition, erected in 1920, filled in the western corner of the rear block and continued north for three bays, terminating just before the northernmost side entry door. The final addition, constructed in 1927, includes the aforementioned entrance and the last block on the north end of the building.

The architectural details of the east elevation are unified throughout the three periods of construction and the nine total bays. On the south end, the decorative elements of the façade, including cast-stone watertable, recessed two-story window bay with tripartite windows and cast-stone lintels, corbelled brick cornice, decorative panels created by wide mortar joints, and pedimented parapet, are all continued from the façade across the southernmost block (Photograph 3). The next two bays, both erected in 1914, are somewhat less detailed. They lack the cast-stone watertable, lintels, and corbelled cornice found in the southern block; and they have tile, rather than concrete, coping lining the parapet. A ground-

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level entry with a bracketed and hip-roofed hood is located in the middle of the three bays on the east side of the 1914 building. This has a pair of metal doors with one narrow light each, and a large single-light transom above.

The 1920 addition has three bays on its east elevation. These consist of a wide bay flanking either side of a projecting stair pavilion. Each of the window bays has five windows set in a single opening on each floor. For an unknown reason, brick headers and limestone sills are used on the southern bay, while limestone lintels and sills are found on the northern portion of this addition. A small brick block with an entrance to the basement is also located at the southend of the 1920 addition.

A third stairwell containing six windows within a single opening on each floor were added as part of a 1927 expansion project (Photograph 4). The stairwell bay was built flush with the northernmost section of the 1920 addition, while the east elevation of the next block to the north is recessed slightly from this plane. Changes in the brickwork indicate where the 1927 addition joined the earlier building. Despite having been constructed over the course of over a decade, the school's eastern elevation is stylistically unified. The entire elevation is characterized by the use of recessed spandrel panels between the windows on the first and second floors, and by the continuous cornice composed of a slightly projecting soldier course of red brick. Above each stairwell entrance there are the same transoms, splayed brick lintels, and hip-roof porticos supported by curved, paneled brackets (Photograph 5).

The north (rear elevation) of the school consists of three bays. The central bay is framed by a pair of concrete-capped buttresses at its basement level and it has small window openings on each floor. The two flanking bays each have three basement-level windows with blind walls above. The only decorative elements visible on this elevation are two raised brick panels that comprise the majority of the blind walls, a run of soldier-coursed brick extending across the roofline, and the brick parapet above (Photograph 6).

The west elevation of the O'Connell School is largely identical to the east elevation, with the exception that the bay on the north side of the southernmost side entry was erected in 1920 and thus matches the construction details of other work from this period. A second notable difference between the west and east elevations is the presence of a pedimented parapet on the northernmost bay of the 1920 addition. The passageway connecting the school to the gymnasium is attached immediately to the north of this bay and connects to the 1927 addition at the height of the first floor (Photograph 7). It then drops to ground level after extending westward roughly twenty-five feet. The passageway has a flat roof that angles downward as it accommodates the half-story change to ground level. The exterior of the passageway is clad in brick and it is lit by a run of three multi-pane, aluminum hopper windows. Before the passageway connects to the gymnasium/auditorium there are entrances on both the north and south

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sides, which are shielded by flat hoods supported by slender, aluminum posts. The doorways are set within narrow limestone frames and feature pairs of metal doors topped by three-light transoms. A narrow limestone cornice runs along the passageway's roofline (Photograph 8).

The gymnasium/auditorium building consists of a two-story, central, red-brick block surrounded by single-story, red-brick ells on its south, east and west elevations (Photograph 9). All of the walls are laid in a common bond pattern and the flat roofs are lined by a flat limestone cornice. The main entrance to the building is on the south side and is the focal point of the structure. It is composed of three pairs of metal doors that are topped by single-light transoms and recessed within a wide, projecting, limestone surround. This entrance is set within a projecting pavilion, which is flanked by slightly shorter pavilions to the east and west, each set with a single window. These, in turn, are flanked by recessed, single-story wings on either side of the main block of the building. Openings throughout this building are small and symmetrically spaced on all elevations. On the upper levels of the auditorium, the windows are filled with a combination of glass block and steel hopper sash. All of the window openings have limestone lintels and brick headers.

Interior Description

The O'Connell School incorporates 50,500 total square feet with 22 classrooms, a library, special study rooms, and lavatories on three floor levels of the main building, as well as the connected gymnasium/auditorium, which housed a kitchen, locker rooms and additional lavatories. The interior plan of the building is comprised of one long, central, double-loaded, north-south corridor with stairs at the south end. The central corridor is intersected by three perpendicular corridors running from east-west. The central corridor is accessed from the entry centered on the south side of the school, while the intersecting corridors have stairwells at either end. These lead between each floor as well as in and out of the building. The northernmost stair corridor connects on its west side to the passageway linking the school building to the gymnasium/auditorium. Four of the six classrooms housed on the south side of two primary floors of the original block (1914) are arranged in pairs flanking the central stairwell, while the fifth and sixth rooms are located in the two-story block at the northeast corner of the original building. The northwest corner of the original building was filled in with two classrooms in 1920, the same time that eight additional (four on each story) classrooms were erected on the north side of the school.¹ Four more

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classrooms (two on each side of the central corridor) were added at the far northern end of the building in 1927.

The three levels of the original building share a similar plan, with classrooms flanking the central (north-south) corridor. The primary entry is through the doors centered on the south side of the building. Here two metal doors, each with one narrow light, lead into a small vestibule. This space has wood floors and steps, plaster walls, and a pressed metal ceiling. It leads into the building's central hallway through a pair of full-height, single-light doors with ash rails and brass hardware. The door is topped by a pivoting, six-light transom (Photograph 10). The doors lead into the building's central corridor, where coat rooms and classrooms are located directly to the east and west. The western coat room retains its original "sanitary drain," which catches water dripping off of coats and umbrellas stored in this area (Photograph 11).²

The classrooms and hallways in the original 1914 portion of the building retain the majority of their historic interior details. This includes maple plank or tongue-and-groove flooring; wide, ash mopboards, chair rails, chalk trays, window sills and door trim; slate blackboards; plaster walls; and metal ceilings (Photograph 12). The classrooms are flooded with natural light from their large window openings and coat closets and built-in bookcases with glass cases above and drawers below can also be found in many of these spaces (Photograph 13). Although the wood surrounds framing the entries to the classrooms remain intact, new classroom doors were installed and many of the transoms were infilled as part of a 1957 project.³ Original paneled wood doors remain in many of the interior spaces. Most retain their original brass hardware.

The design details found in the original 1914 block are carried throughout the majority of the subsequent additions, although some of the later spaces feature larger built-in cabinets, and others have non-original floor or ceiling finishes, namely vinyl or acoustic tile (Photograph 14). The rear portions of the central corridor floors are finished with composite tile flooring that was likely installed during a 1981 renovation. Despite these changes, the classrooms in the 1920 and 1927 blocks retain the majority of their original details, including maple plank or tongue-and-groove flooring; wide ash mopboards, chair rails, chalk trays, window sills and door trim; slate blackboards; plaster walls; and pressed metal ceilings (Photograph 15). Although a classroom on the western side of the 1920 addition was converted to administrative space and new partition walls, new cabinets and counters added as part of the 1981 renovation, this space retains its original paneled wood doors, trim, and chair rails (Photograph 16).

The stairways throughout the school are well lit by tall, narrow windows. The stairwells have concrete floors and stairs, and plaster walls and ceilings. Steel newel posts with chamfered corners

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and rounded tops and square steel balusters support molded wood handrails flanking the stairs, while wood balusters and railings can be found on some of the stair landings (Photographs 17 and 18).

The school's second floor is almost identical in plan to the first except that there are four full classrooms along the west wall of the north corridor instead of administrative space. The Principal's Office is located in the original building situated above the entry vestibule. The office is separated from the corridor by a five-section wood wall composed of three paneled wood sections topped by two rows of frosted fixed windows above (Photograph 19). The window wall is flanked on each side by a single wood door. The design of the space lends privacy to the office, while also allowing natural light from the south elevation into the hallway (Photograph 20).

The basement level of the school does not appear to have been fitted out at an early date. At the south end of the building, within the original structure, there are two classrooms arranged on either side of a pair of coatrooms supplied with toilets. The first of the three east-west corridors is found immediately north of these rooms. The boiler room is located at the northeast corner of the basement level of the 1914 building, and is accessed from a short, ramped corridor that also leads to an exit on the east elevation (Photograph 21). The custodian's room is across the hall from the boiler room and the entrance to the art room is immediately opposite the utility corridor on the western side of the central hall (Photograph 22). Continuing north, the boys' and girls' lavatories are on the west side of the central corridor and a small classroom is situated to the east. North of the second east-west corridor is a choral/music room on the west and a storage room to the east. The third and final east-west corridor leads to exits on the east and west sides of the building, and into the sunken library area reached via a pair of short stairwells at the northern end of the school. The basement-level classrooms and corridors have painted brick walls and the floors are composite tile or carpet likely completed as part of the 1981 renovation (Photograph 23).

The passageway leading from the school building to the combined gymnasium/auditorium has cinder block walls and concrete steps (Photograph 24). Squared steel newel posts support a pair of rounded wooden railings running down the center of the short stair leading from the school's first floor to ground level (Photograph 25). The gymnasium/auditorium space has concrete block walls and 22-foot-high ceilings supported by supported by steel joists and covered in acoustic tile. The large open space is lit by banks of fluorescent lights and is ventilated by caged ceiling fans (Photograph 26). A stage is located at the north end of the room and is framed by a plain recessed tile surround (Photograph 27). The wood strip flooring remains and appears to be in good condition. Windows are set high on the east and west walls and have hopper sash flanked by glass block. Metal fire doors provide access to the space from the three entrances on the south side of the building, as

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well as from the passageway. Boys' and girls' lockers rooms with showers are located within an ell running along the eastern side of the building, while a kitchen is located along the west elevation. The locker rooms retain their original square tile walls and mosaic tile floors and the kitchen walls are clad in green sanitary tiles and have quarry tile floors (Photographs 28 and 29).

Integrity and Alterations

Although modern fluorescent lighting has been added throughout the building, its impact is minimized by the fact that the original pressed metal ceilings have largely been preserved. In addition, while doors to all of the classrooms were replaced in 1957 as part of a large, multi-district project, the ash door surrounds and transom frames were retained in situ. Metal fire doors with glass block transoms were also installed at the stairwells throughout, and a classroom on the western side of the 1920 addition was converted to administrative offices. Sections of the corridor walls in the rear portions of the building were built out to make space for banks of lockers as part of the 1981 renovation, while the replacement of the original multi-paned windows with one-over-one double-hung aluminum sash was completed at an unknown date.⁴ Despite these changes made by the City to meet fire and safety codes, the building has retained a remarkable level of integrity on both the interior and exterior. It stands on its original site and retains the same neighborhood presence that it possessed when it was built. Additionally, it is expressive of a high level of historic design and workmanship and retains a majority of original materials. Finally, it expresses the feeling and associations of an early-twentieth century elementary school. The auditorium is set back from and does not detract from the rest of the historic school complex; and it retains historic integrity dating to its 1960 construction.

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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.)

- ☐ 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 old or achieving significance within the past 50 years

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Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions.)

EDUCATION

ARCHITECTURE

Period of Significance

1914-1960

Significant Dates

1914: Original building constructed

1920: Addition to rear constructed

1927: Second addition to rear constructed

1960: Auditorium/Gymnasium constructed

Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Crabtree, Walter Percival (1873-1962)

Hayden, Harold A. (1892-1985)

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Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph (Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance, applicable criteria, justification for the period of significance, and any applicable criteria considerations.)

The Park Street School/Clara T. O'Connell Elementary School is significant at the local level under National Register Criterion A in the area of Education, and Criterion C in the area of Architecture. The period of significance extends from 1914, the construction date of the earliest portion of the school, to 1960, the construction date of the last addition to the school complex. Located at 122 Park Street, the O'Connell School marks the point of transition in Bristol's history when industrial growth resulted in rapid population increases and the need to replace wood-frame district schoolhouses with well-lit, well-ventilated, sanitation-equipped, fire-proof buildings.

The property meets Criterion A for its association with the Progressive Movement's impact on educational theories and school design. At the time of its construction in 1914, the Park Street School was extolled as one of Bristol's best examples of a modern educational building. Thanks to the tenets of the Progressive Movement, which spanned a period from roughly 1890 to 1930, the nation's public schools were increasingly idealized as an egalitarian institution in which all children might develop both their minds and bodies in a safe and sanitary environment. One result of Progressive Era educational reform was the replacement of loosely organized district schools with structured graded schools. This took place throughout Connecticut's municipalities during the early decades of the twentieth century, and the O'Connell School, originally known as the Park Street School, was widely touted as one of the best-equipped schools in Bristol at the time of its completion in 1914. The first of Bristol's schools to be completed during the Progressive Era, the construction and design of the O'Connell School, and its subsequent expansion in the following decade, were influenced by both the aforementioned educational theories and the explosive population growth that Bristol experienced in the first three decades of the twentieth century. As a largely immigrant workforce filled the ever expanding number of factory positions available in Bristol, the town's South Side neighborhood developed rapidly as real estate development firms, such as the Bristol Realty Company, provided housing for workers in this neighborhood adjacent to downtown Bristol and the factory district. Originally constructed as a branch school for the South End's District No. 3, the Park Street School became a neighborhood hub

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in its own right as the local population increased.

The school meets the requirements of Criterion C as a notable local example of a Progressive Movement-influenced school design as expressed in the Neoclassical style and with Collegiate Gothic influences. It is also significant as a representative work of regionally-known architect Walter Percival Crabtree (1873-1962), and locally prominent architect Harold A. Hayden (1892-1985). In continual use until 2012, the O'Connell School is a fine example of a public educational facility typical of those found throughout Connecticut, and the United States, at the time of its construction and subsequent expansion. Designed by notable local architect Walter Percival Crabtree in 1914, the building is characterized by Neoclassical styling with Collegiate Gothic influences.⁵ While the architects responsible for the 1920 and 1927 additions to the O'Connell School are not known, they may have been designed by either Crabtree himself, or by Harold A. Hayden, who was also active in Bristol at the time and who completed several other commissions for the City's School Committee, including that for the 1960 auditorium addition to the O'Connell School.⁶ Hayden was also responsible for the design of Bristol's Endee Manor housing development (1916-1917, listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1996), as well as several significant residential buildings in Hartford County, Connecticut, including Copper Ledges in Bristol (60 Founders Drive (1924), listed on the National Register in 1992). In his design for the auditorium, Hayden respected Crabtree's Neoclassical vision, but simultaneously provided a decidedly contemporary and stylized take on the original building.

Narrative Statement of Significance (Provide at least **one** paragraph for each area of significance.)

Area of Significance: Criterion A, Education

The Clara T. O'Connell School was one of seven local schools built during the early-twentieth-century that illustrate many of the ideological priorities popularized by Progressive Era educational reformers. Notable among these were the desire to provide a clean, hygienic, light-filled space in which students would be able to become responsible and able contributors to a democratic society through education. Following a national trend from small district schools to monumental centralized school buildings, the O'Connell School is also significant under the category of Education as the earliest brick neighborhood school of this kind in Bristol.⁷ The existence of a modern, well-designed school in a

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neighborhood populated largely by lower income, immigrant factory workers is a notable illustration of Bristol's early commitment to provide a modern and safe learning environment for all of its residents.

The Early History of Bristol's Schools and District No. 3

Bristol's first school committee was chosen in 1748 at a meeting of the Ecclesiastical Society. The committee was authorized to hire for "three months a master and three months a dame," who would be responsible for educating the town's children.⁸ Schoolhouses were soon built in the two principal areas of town; the first on Federal Hill near the green (where St. Joseph's Church stands today) and the other on Chippens Hill. In 1764, a third schoolhouse was built in the Stafford District, and just four years later the town was formally divided into five districts: North, Northwest (including Pine Hollow and Chippens Hill), Northeast (comprised of Stafford and North Forrestville), South, and Southeast.⁹ Each district had its own wood-framed, one-room schoolhouse typical of the period. A history of Bristol notes that, "The school-houses were all small, and built on the ancient model, with a bench running around three sides of the room, on which the scholars sat facing the wall for study, and which they climbed over, so as to face the centre of the room in recitation."¹⁰ The schools were partially supported by the Ecclesiastical Society, with supplemental funding provided by an additional fee paid (often in kind) by each student's family.¹¹

By the time the Town of Bristol was incorporated in 1785, the local school system comprised ten districts. This included West Bristol, which would not break away in order to form the Town of Burlington until 1806. In the meantime, control of Bristol's schools passed from the Ecclesiastical Society to a town committee in 1796. The establishment of Bristol's School Society allowed the town to take advantage of a public education endowment, known as the Connecticut School Fund, which was collected by the State from the sale of land it owned in the Western Reserve of Ohio. The School Fund was particularly important for the fact that it helped Bristol manage rising education costs in the industrial districts that had sprung up around the town's budding clock manufacturers.

With endowment funds at its disposal, the School Society oversaw the subsequent growth of the town's school system and addressed any needs that might arise. One such decision came at a meeting held on December 14, 1837, in which one of these industrial areas, the Second School District (originally known as the West Center School District), was established.¹² Five years later, at a Bristol School Society Meeting held on January 19, 1842, the town was again divided, this time into thirteen school districts

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based upon actual concentrations of population rather than the arbitrary geographical borders that had largely guided previous determinations.¹³ It was at this point that District No. 3 was established; however, like several other districts, it appears not to have been large enough to support its own school building. Little changed in the district for the next 70 years as for the remainder of the nineteenth century students in the district attended classes held in the District No. 4 School on School Street and the combined Third and Fourth Districts were often referred to as the South Side School District. As the districts grew, however, they would in turn erect their own schoolhouses as needs arose and resources allowed.

Demand for School Improvements in Bristol

Bristol's transformation from a rural farming community to a small-scale manufacturing center picked up speed over the course of the nineteenth century. While a burgeoning clock industry had helped push the town's population to over 5,000 people in the 1880s, by the 1890s a diverse array of metalworking firms had driven that number to over 7,000. Even more significant shifts came at the end of the nineteenth and beginning of the twentieth century, whereupon Bristol's various industrial entities evolved into large firms with massive factories capable of competing on a national and international level. These plants required substantial workforces, the arrival of which continued to reshape the size and make-up of the city. According to the 1910 Census Bulletin, Bristol's population had grown to 13,502 people, up from 9,643 in 1900. Of the city's total population in 1910, 3,982 were foreign-born workers overwhelmingly drawn by factory jobs. The growth was such that the City of Bristol was incorporated in 1911.¹⁴

Bristol's population increases during the late-nineteenth century resulted in associated developments in the school system, among the most notable being the establishment of the town's first high school-level classes in 1881. The principal high school courses were conducted in the District No. 3 School on South Street until 1893, when a dedicated building was erected on Federal Hill.¹⁵ By 1907, the city's school system comprised twelve districts (this following the consolidation of two rural districts), these staffed by 28 teachers. Of the 2,682 school-age children in town that year, 2,090 attended public district schools, 174 attended the public high school, and 437 were educated at private or parochial schools. The twelve district schools operated on a combined annual budget of \$47,884 and the High School expenses totaled \$10,000.¹⁶

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While the city's school enrollment numbers appear impressive, the reality was far from the landscape idealized by Progressive Era reformers in which the children of the industrialist and the laborer might be educated in a shared environment and at an equitable level. Despite the desire to educate the children of the working class, the reality was that most were concentrated in the city's industrial districts and a great many found themselves obliged to drop out of school after just a few years in order to help support their families. Such is clearly illustrated by the fact that during the 1890s just 45 percent of students in Bristol's working-class Third School District completed grammar school. An even smaller percentage of children in this demographic went on to or completed high school. In 1893 only two of ten high school graduates in Bristol were of non-Yankee lineage, while in 1899 and 1905 they comprised just three of eight and three of nineteen graduates, respectively.¹⁷

The Progressive Era, which lasted from roughly the 1890s to 1930, was a period marked by widespread social and educational reform, and adherents to the ideologies popularized during this period sought to establish a public level of responsibility for all citizens, including the poor and less fortunate. Included in the latter groups were the factory workers – often immigrants from southern and eastern Europe – who worked long hours and commonly lived in cramped and unsanitary tenements in Bristol's North and South End neighborhoods.

John Dewey (1859-1952), perhaps the best-known education reformer of the Progressive Era, felt that the loss of small-scale industry resulted in a generation of youth who no longer received training in how to be useful and productive members of society. Schools began to figure more prominently in the social lives of students as the instillation of democratic ideology as part of the school curriculum was one of the major tenants of the movement. Children were not only taught arithmetic and English, but they were taught how to become productive and contributing members of society. Although one of the main tenets of the movement was an alleged respect for diversity, in immigrant communities the national trend was toward a kind of assimilation or "Americanization" of students through education. Dewey tested out his curriculum at the Laboratory School at the University of Chicago from 1896-1904. In *The School and Society*, a series of lectures published by Dewey in 1900, he stated, "When a school introduces and trains each child of society into membership within such a little community, saturating him with the spirit of service and providing him with instruments of effective self-direction we shall have the deepest, best guarantee of a larger society which is worthy, lovely and harmonious."¹⁸ One might also argue, however, that the result was less categorized by self-direction than an intended course laid out by the educator.

As academic theories evolved, so too did school buildings evolve in character. The physical structure of schools began to reflect the spirit of the aforementioned ideologies and curricula as designs

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transitioned from wood-frame district schoolhouses to brick and stone buildings of more public character. Democratic ideals were allegedly expressed by an emphasis on cleanliness, hygiene, space, and light. A variety of classical and European revival styles were the most common choice for school architects during this period – all styles having their origins based on the classical and democratic ideology of symmetry and order.¹⁹

By the 1910s, the ideologies of the Progressive Movement had saturated educational systems throughout the country and they likewise seeped into Bristol where they increasingly inspired a shift in how the city's upper class citizens viewed the subject of educating the foreign born. Largely driven by the desire to assimilate the working class, the city's elite poured both money and their time into efforts to educate the poor. A common course of study and common graduation exercises were also adopted in an effort to create an equitable and uniform academic system, modern schools were built and staffed to meet the needs of immigrant children, and a variety of English-language Evening Schools were set up to educate working-class adults. As a result, some of the most dramatic changes in the quality and character of Bristol's schools occurred in the 1910s and 1920s. These efforts were led by both educators, such as Karl A. Reiche, who assumed the role of superintendent of schools in 1914 and served over 40 years, as well as industrialists, such as Albert F. Rockwell, a wealthy industrialist and founder of the New Departure Company who donated land and money for the construction of new, modern schools.²⁰

The Clara T. O'Connell/Park Street School

As Bristol's manufacturing sector continued to expand during the early twentieth century, a scarcity of housing increasingly created an unstable workforce as employees took jobs in the city but often left shortly thereafter due to the poor living conditions or prohibitively expensive rents. The reaction from many of Bristol's factory owners was to create housing themselves. Many new houses were erected in the western sections of the South Side neighborhood by local builder and developer George J. LaCourse (1880-1941), who was responsible for the construction of over 250 single- and multi-family houses in Bristol during the 1910s and 1920s.²¹ Twelve of these houses were built on George Street for the Bristol Realty Company (1907-1922), which was formed by a group of leading industrialists to provide affordable housing for their workers.²² The occupants of these homes (listed on the National Register as the South End Historic District in 2000) were first- and second-

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generation immigrants drawn to work in Bristol's factories. Inevitably, their children added significantly to the district's school enrollment rates.

In reporting on a meeting of Bristol's South Side School District Committee held on January 11, 1908, the *Hartford Courant* noted that the number of children in this district was rapidly expanding. Superintendent Charles L. Wooding stressed that a second school would soon be needed in the district in order to manage the increasing enrollment. Wooding reported that all of the rooms in the South Side School on School Street were full and some "overfull".²³ In his report to the Committee, Wooding argued that, "a schoolhouse for the primary grades be erected in some thickly settled portion of the district, west of West Street." Specifically, his inclination was that the north side of Park Street would be the ideal location for a new school.²⁴

In 1912, voters in the district effectively faced the fact that they could not serve all of the children at the South Side School due to its increasing attendance rates. A committee was appointed to investigate the matter and they decided to elect a building committee that might oversee the construction of a new school. The committee consisted of the following members: Chairman William A. Hayes, Emil H. Funek, W. J. Kellegher, Algernon H. Wilcox, Martin Heutfleve, David Kelly, and Charles Stock.²⁵ Several articles in local newspapers published at the time indicated that the need for additional space was rapidly becoming an emergency. The projected enrollment numbers in the South Side School District for the fall semester of 1913 required 18 classrooms, yet the district had only 16.²⁶ In July of that year, the district voted to build a six-room schoolhouse on a site on the north side of Park Street, east of Tulip Street, the very same site originally chosen by Superintendent Wooding in 1908. Voters in the district also approved the appropriation of \$35,000 from the town's school fund for the building committee to construct the building, which began shortly thereafter.²⁷

By July of 1914, work on the new building was complete and a report of the Board of Education noted that, "The Park Street School is a very modern six-room building."²⁸ In August of the same year, an article in the *Bristol Press* referred to the school, which could accommodate 225 pupils, as one of the "best in the state." The architect's design and the quality of workmanship undertaken by the Torrington Building Company were also both lauded.²⁹ The Park Street School was celebrated in the *Hartford Courant* in an extensive article published on September 6, 1914. A photograph of the building ran alongside a broad description of all of the modern amenities and a photograph of School District Chairman, William Hayes. Not only was the building a point of significant pride for the district and the City of Bristol, but it was built to a very high standard and within the appropriation budget. Hayes oversaw every aspect of the project and reportedly worked "so economically" that the work was

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completed for \$32,000. According to the *Courant*, Bristol's District No. 3 claimed to "have one of the finest equipped schools in the entire country."³⁰

Health and safety concerns were of paramount importance to the committee members, as was the idea of creating a comfortable learning environment for students. The school was set back from the street "so as to allow room for children to play."³¹ Lighting was considered "of great importance with windows dominating each space . . . and providing the most possible amount of light for the students."³² Desks were obtained from the Haywood Brothers and the Wakefield Company of Gardiner, Massachusetts (later the Haywood-Wakefield Company best known for their mid-twentieth-century modern furniture) and were chosen by the building committee due to the fact that they opened from the top. This was considered "more sanitary" and the committee felt that it would help the students maintain orderliness "in some small way."³³ Stairways were described as "large and fireproof" and a fire gong was placed in the vestibule entrance in order to notify occupants should an emergency arise. It was reported that fire drills were to be practiced regularly and telephone connections were placed in every room, linking the Principal to the teachers. Additionally, each coat room had umbrella racks under which drains were placed to "make the rooms more sanitary," and the Principal's office contained an "emergency outfit to meet small accidents."³⁴

When it opened, the Park Street School was considered a branch of the South Side School, and thus fell under the supervision of that school's principal, Harry K. Viner. The practical principal on site, however, was a Miss Hazel Crumb of Forrestville.³⁵ Miss Crumb oversaw a school that was inadequately sized to accommodate the growth of District No. 3's school age population immediately following its dedication. By 1915, a Kindergarten had to be added in what was the building's sixth and last-completed classroom. This was done to relieve pressure from the overcrowded South Side School, which was described in School District Committee meeting minutes as "cramped."³⁶

In 1915, the South Side recorded the largest registration of students in any of the City's districts, with 1,000 students anticipated. Bristol's rapid growth during World War I is well illustrated by the ever-increasing school registration rates.³⁷ The *Courant* noted that in January of 1915, "Since opening of winter term...[there are] twenty four new pupils on the South Side." The article also noted that this growth was largely a result of the development of several tracts of land for housing in the district.³⁸

As a result, in April of 1915, the residents of District No. 3 voted to make an appropriation for the construction of a ten-room addition to the Park School. It was obvious that the South Side was facing another crisis since it was noted that, "work will begin as soon as plans can be drawn."³⁹

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However, no monies were appropriated to pay for this addition and it would be four more years before any changes were made to the Park Street School.

Finally, in April of 1919, the *Hartford Courant* reported that District No. 3 School Committee was moving forward with an addition to the Park Street School.⁴⁰ The proposal would double the school's capacity through the addition of six new classrooms. The plan called for squaring off the L-shaped footprint of the original building, and then adding four more rooms on its northern elevation. The article, highlighting the project, specifically identified one of the primary drivers of the district's population growth as the construction of new residences by the Bristol Realty Company.⁴¹ While similar problems were being faced by all of the city's school districts, in December of 1920, District No. 3 received a bond not to exceed \$150,000 in order to complete the aforementioned project.⁴²

Bristol's manufacturing base and the corresponding population in South Side's "West End" continued to grow following World War I. Bristol's citizens numbered 13,502 in 1910, yet boomed to 20,620 in 1920, and 28,451 in 1930. Those experiencing the most significant growth were found on the north and south sides of the city, where developers following the lead of LaCourse continued to build single and multi-family homes. By the 1920s, the western sections of the South Side had begun to establish its own identity as the West End. In 1922, Miss Clara T. O'Connell, a graduate of the New Britain Normal School (later the Connecticut State Teachers College and Central Connecticut State University) and a former teacher at the South Street School, was elected Principal of the Park Street School.⁴³ During O'Connell's tenure, the need for additional space at the Park Street School remained constant. Finally, in March of 1927, the School District Committee, after considerable discussion, voted at a special meeting to proceed with the erection of "four additional rooms at the Park Street School and equip the same at a price not to exceed \$40,000." It was noted that the bids should be accepted only by local contractors.⁴⁴ The four new classrooms were completed that same year.

Similar developments had been experienced elsewhere in the South End, as well as other parts of Bristol, during this period. By the early 1930s, the city's North and South Side districts had built several new modern schoolhouses in addition to the O'Connell School. Although the O'Connell School was the first of Bristol's school buildings to illustrate the influences of Progressive Era theories on school design, a year later District No. 1 erected a substantial addition to its Federal Hill School (later dedicated as the Thomas H. Patterson School), and then a year after that District No. 2 built its own new eight-room building on North Street (later dedicated as the Clarence A. Bingham School). In 1920, District No. 1 added a second school on Burlington Avenue, this dedicated in honor of local educator

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John J. Jennings. In 1921, the East Side's Fifth School District erected a modern addition to its school on Pine Street (later dedicated as the Mary A. Callen School), and then in 1925 District No. 4 erected a new facility on Church Street just southwest of its existing building on School Street.⁴⁵

Perhaps the most prominent of Bristol's schools built during the Progressive Era, however, was its new high school, this designed by architect George Wilson Potter and completed in September 1922. The need for larger high school accommodations in Bristol was made clear following the end of World War I, however, it was not until 1919, when Albert F. Rockwell, a wealthy industrialist and founder of the New Departure Company, came forward with a proposal to donate twelve acres of land for the site of the school and financing half of its construction was any traction gained. Rockwell's desire was to build a sprawling park and boulevard running along the south bank of the Pequabuck River and he felt a grand high school would make the perfect anchor to his vision. Rockwell's condition was that the City acquire a 100-foot swath of land between Main Street and the proposed high school site in order to complete the Boulevard. Although support for his plan was not unanimous – notable opposition came from John Nolan, a city planner from Cambridge, Massachusetts, hired to complete a comprehensive study of the city in 1920 – a local referendum approved the project in a vote of 5,527 to 362. Upon its opening for the 1922-1923 school year, enrollment at the high school was 560. The \$932,000 building served as a bustling community hub, with the gymnasium, swimming pool, and auditorium in its northern wing remaining open to the public outside of school hours.⁴⁶

Continued Growth and Later Additions

The expansion of O'Connell School is significant under Criterion A under the theme of Education as an example of a neighborhood school that was expanded to meet the demands of sustained population growth. This was a typical occurrence both regionally and nationally as the steady expansion of urban neighborhoods resulted in struggles on the part of school districts to add adequate classroom space. The 1927 addition to the Park Street School appears to have been sufficient to serve the needs of the district's West End for the following two decades. Residential construction in the area slowed during this period and the density of the neighborhood's population began to level off. In 1945, Principal O'Connell retired. In honor of her service to the district, the Park Street School was rededicated as the "Clara T. O'Connell School" at a service held on November 10, 1954.⁴⁷ The decision was a fitting tribute to a teacher and

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administrator who had worked for over three decades in the South Side district. A few months later, in February of 1955, O'Connell died at the age of 71.⁴⁸

In 1957, after three decades without any significant updates to the O'Connell School having been completed, Bristol's Board of Education began to contemplate constructing a new gymnasium addition.⁴⁹ Two years later, the School Board's Building Committee hired Bristol architect Harold Hayden to prepare plans for a combined gymnasium/auditorium/cafeteria, and a \$385,000 bond was issued to pay for the improvements.⁵⁰ The total included \$42,250 to pay for the acquisition of three neighboring properties to the west of the school, which would be needed to complete the work.⁵¹ The *Hartford Courant* noted in April of 1959 that construction had begun.⁵² This was completed in 1960, and a formal "open house" took place in January of 1961.⁵³

The O'Connell School continued to serve the local community as an educational facility throughout the remainder of the twentieth century; however, following the conclusion of World War II, Bristol's manufacturing sector began a slow but steady decline. The increasing prevalence of the automobile and rise of suburban development drew many families to the suburbs at the expense of Bristol's densely settled north end neighborhoods. This resulted in a significant change in where new schools were built and how they were operated. Buses allowed for greater centralization and the cost of maintaining a large number of "neighborhood" elementary schools became a budgetary challenge. Large, centralized schools were built on undeveloped parcels in the outer reaches of town throughout the 1950s and 1960s. By the 1970s, the majority of the city's larger factories had closed, striking a fatal blow for many of the neighborhood schools in the central city. Following the addition of the gymnasium, the only significant improvements to the O'Connell School took place in 1981. This renovation included the installation of fire doors, the reconstruction of some of the basements spaces, and the installation of lockers in some of the corridors. This kept the building in operation for another twenty years; however, after extensive public debate the school was closed and replaced by the new South Side Elementary School at 21 Tuttle Road in 2012.

Area of Significance: Criterion C, Architecture

The Clara T. O'Connell School is significant as an early local example of a Progressive Era school in Bristol and as a local example of the work of Walter P. Crabtree, a prolific local architect in Connecticut. The O'Connell School was one of Bristol's earliest neighborhood schools and it exhibits

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many design theories and elements popularized during the Progressive Era. These include large classrooms with tall ceilings and windows promoting both air circulation and abundant natural light, fireproof construction and wide corridors to promote ease of circulation through the space, and the latest modern conveniences such central heating systems to promote sanitary conditions. This sense of order was carried through to the interior through Crabtree's use of a symmetrical, Neoclassical-style form comprised of a central hall flanked by symmetrically-spaced classrooms. The Clara T. O'Connell School exhibits a number of design elements and decorative features characteristic of the Neoclassical and Collegiate Gothic styles. The former includes the symmetrical arrangement of the façade, while the latter is typified by the rusticated entry with segmental-arched doorway, heavy window hoods, and the stepped parapet. These features lend the building a solid, monumental quality and stands in sharp contrast to the wood frame schoolhouses of the 1800s. The authoritative quality of these styles made them popular choices for banks, schools and all manner of public buildings after the turn of the twentieth century, and the design of the O'Connell School effectively blends aspects of both in a single institutional structure. Little expense was spared and the design, technology, and quality of materials used rivaled the work found in many larger cities at the time, thus creating an amicable environment for students and teachers alike.

William George Bruce, editor of the *American School Board Journal* penned his study of academic buildings, *School Architecture: A Handy Manual for the Use of Architects and School Authorities*, in 1906. In it, rather than favoring a specific plan, he describes aspects of plans that should be incorporated into successful school designs such as wide corridors, well-ventilated cloak rooms and fireproof staircases. According to Bruce, classrooms "should afford fifteen square feet of floor space and two hundred cubic feet of air space for each pupil."⁵⁴ He also recommended the use of stamped metal ceilings and the maintenance of a constant temperature of 70 degrees Fahrenheit since a "variation from this is likely to result not only in discomforts, but injury to the health of the school occupants." Many of these details are present in the design of the O'Connell School, the first such modern school built in Bristol, and the quality of the craftsmanship and materials applied in construction is evident throughout the building. This ranges from the pressed metal ceilings found in many of the original classrooms, to the variety of built-in cabinets, bookcases, and cloakrooms found throughout the building. A spacious, bright, fireproof, and sanitary school built in a section of Bristol that was home to many immigrant factory workers, the O'Connell School is an excellent example of the type of school erected as a result pervasive influence of the Progressive Era ideals in educational theory during the early decades of the twentieth century.

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Walter Percival Crabtree, Sr. (1873-1962)

Walter Percival Crabtree designed the original portion of the Park Street School in 1914. Crabtree was a prominent architect of institutional and residential buildings throughout Hartford County. Born in Rochester, New York, Crabtree began his career in Holyoke, Massachusetts during the 1890s, and from 1901 to 1904 he was employed in the New Britain office of William H. Cadwell. In 1905, Crabtree opened his own office at 272 Main Street in New Britain, where he practiced independently until he briefly partnered with his son, Walter P. Crabtree, Jr., during the late 1920s. In 1930, the elder Crabtree left the partnership to establish an independent office in Hartford, where he worked until 1951.⁵⁵

Although the Park Street School was undertaken fairly early in his career, Crabtree was already well known in Bristol by the time he was chosen for this commission. Two of his highest profile designs were for the Beaux-Arts-style Bristol Trust Company building at 150 Main Street (1907, listed on the National Register August 15, 1995), and the Neoclassical style Ernest R. Burwell House, located on Grove Street (1918, listed on National Register August 18, 1992). His commercial and institutional commissions were most often completed in the Neoclassical style in and around Hartford County; a few notable examples being the Plainville First National Bank (1910), the New Britain's Elks' Club (1911), and the Suffield Savings Bank (1918). Crabtree's work was well represented in numerous contemporary trade publications, including *American Architect* and *The Western Architect*. His design for the New Britain Prevocational School (1915) was featured as an exceptional example of modern school construction in the *American School Board Journal*.⁵⁶

Harold. A. Hayden (1892-1985)

Harold A. Hayden was a Bristol native well-known for a number of local commissions by the time he designed the addition to the O'Connell School in 1960. A graduate of the Pratt Institute in Brooklyn, New York, Hayden went on to build a prominent and successful practice in Bristol during the 1910s.⁵⁷ One of his earliest commissions was to design the Endee Manor development for the New Departure Manufacturing Company in 1916. He left soon thereafter to join the military, where Hayden served as a sergeant stationed at Fort Devens, Massachusetts.⁵⁸

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Hayden maintained his Bristol office for over fifty years, during which time he designed a variety of commercial, residential, and academic buildings throughout Hartford County. In Bristol, he was most notably the architect of Copper Ledges on Federal Hill in Bristol (1924), a stunning Colonial Revival-style building that was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1992, and the City's World War I memorial, erected at the intersection of Memorial Boulevard and Mellen Street in 1922. Among his many other local commissions were a large addition to the Clarence A Bingham School in Bristol, completed in 1936, a second housing development, known as Cambridge Park, built in 1942, a large addition to the Mary A. Callen School completed in 1951, and an addition to the Greene-Hills School erected in 1955.

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Previous documentation on file (NPS):

 X preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
 previously listed in the National Register

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____ previously determined eligible by the National Register
____ designated a National Historic Landmark
____ recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
____ recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____
____ recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # _____

Primary location of additional data:

____ State Historic Preservation Office
____ Other State agency
____ Federal agency
____ Local government
____ University
____ ☒ Other
Name of repository: Bristol Public Library History Room

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): _____

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 3.8

Use either the UTM system or latitude/longitude coordinates

Latitude/Longitude Coordinates (decimal degrees)

Datum if other than WGS84: _____

(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

1. Latitude:	Longitude:
2. Latitude:	Longitude:
3. Latitude:	Longitude:
4. Latitude:	Longitude:

Or

UTM References

Datum (indicated on USGS map):

☐☒

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NAD 1927 or NAD 1983

1. Zone: 18	Easting: 670286	Northing: 4615470
2. Zone:	Easting:	Northing:
3. Zone:	Easting:	Northing:
4. Zone:	Easting :	Northing:

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property.)

The boundary of the nominated property corresponds to the parcel identified as Lot 44 on Tax Map 28 on file with the City of Bristol's Assessor's Office.

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

This boundary encompasses the full extent of the historic resource identified in this nomination. It is consistent with the historic parcel boundary in 1960 when land was purchased and the gymnasium addition was completed.

11. Form Prepared By

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organization: FuturePast Preservation
street & number: 940 West Blvd.
city or town: Hartford state: CT zip code: 06105
e-mail Lucas.Karmazinas@gmail.com
telephone: 860-428-7982
date: 03/20/2015

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

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- **Maps:** A **USGS map** or equivalent (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
- **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO, TPO, or FPO for any additional items.)

Photographs

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels (minimum), 3000x2000 preferred, at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map. Each photograph must be numbered and that number must correspond to the photograph number on the photo log. For simplicity, the name of the photographer, photo date, etc. may be listed once on the photograph log and doesn't need to be labeled on every photograph.

Photo Log

Name of Property: Clara T. O'Connell School

City or Vicinity: Bristol

County: Hartford

State: Connecticut

Photographer: Lucas A. Karmazinas

Date Photographed: 02/05/2015

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera:

1 of 29.

Façade (south elevation) and west (side) elevations of the Clara T. O'Connell Elementary School, 1914 (building), 1920, 1927, 1960 (additions).

Camera facing northeast.

2 of 29.

Detail of façade (south elevation) of the Clara T. O'Connell Elementary School.

Camera facing north.

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3 of 29.

Façade (south elevation) and east (side) elevations of the Clara T. O'Connell Elementary School.

Camera facing northwest.

4 of 29.

East (side) and north (rear) elevations of the Clara T. O'Connell Elementary School.

Camera facing southwest.

5 of 29.

East (side) entry detail of 1920 block.

Camera facing southwest.

6 of 29.

North (rear) and west (side) elevations of 1927 block and north (rear) elevations of 1960 additions.

Camera facing southeast.

7 of 29.

South (front) and west (side) elevations of 1914, 1920, and 1927 blocks, and south (front) elevations of 1960 addition.

Camera facing northeast.

8 of 29.

South (front) and east (side) elevations of gymnasium/auditorium and passageway additions (1960).

Camera facing north.

9 of 29.

West (side) elevation of 1927 block and south (front) and west (side) elevation of 1960 addition.

Camera facing northeast.

10 of 29.

Detail of primary entry vestibule, showing door and ceiling details.

Camera facing north.

11 of 29.

Coat room drain in original building.

Camera facing south.

12 of 29.

Clara T. O'Connell School
Name of Property

Hartford Co., CT
County and State

Original first-story classroom.
Camera facing east.

13 of 29.
Original classroom details.
Camera facing northwest.

14 of 29.
Classroom in 1920 addition.
Camera facing north.

15 of 29.
First-story classroom, 1927 addition.
Camera facing southwest.

16 of 29.
Original door retained in the converted office space.
Camera facing south.

17 of 29.
Newel post details.
Camera facing northwest.

18 of 29.
Original balustrade details.
Camera facing east.

19 of 29.
Corridor in original portion of the building second floor with Principal's office at the center.
Camera facing south.

20 of 29.
Interior of original Principal's office.
Camera facing north.

21 of 29.
Boiler room details.
Camera facing southeast.

22 of 29.
Basement-level art classroom.
Camera facing south.

Clara T. O'Connell School

Name of Property

Hartford Co., CT

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23 of 29.

Basement hallway.

Camera facing north.

24 of 29.

Interior of the passageway connecting the main block to the gymnasium/auditorium.

Camera facing west.

25 of 29.

Passageway stair details.

Camera facing east.

26 of 29.

Interior of Gymnasium/Auditorium.

Camera facing south.

27 of 29.

Gymnasium/Auditorium stage detail.

Camera facing northwest.

28 of 29.

Boy's locker room detail.

Camera facing northwest.

29 of 29.

Interior of kitchen.

Camera facing south.

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.460 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 100 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 Office of Planning and Performance Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.

¹ "Bristol Shows Growth in Schools", *Hartford Courant*, January 4, 1917, p. 17.

Clara T. O'Connell School

Name of Property

Hartford Co., CT

County and State

² "Bristol Has Fine New School Building", *Hartford Courant*, September 6, 1914, p. 4.

³ "Gym Among Equipment Under Study by Board", *Hartford Courant*, May 10, 1957, p. 8.

⁴ Plans for Renovation of the Clara T. O'Connell Elementary School, from the Hartford Design Group, dated July of 1981.

⁵ Crabtree's other significant work in Bristol includes the Neoclassical-style Ernest R. Burwell House on Grove Street, and the Beaux Arts-style Bristol Trust Company at 150 Main Street (these listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1992 and 1995, respectively).

⁶ Hayden's other local work includes the design of Bristol's Endee Manor development, completed 1916-1917 (listed on the National Register in 1996), as well as several notable residential buildings, including Bristol's Copper Ledges (listed on the National Register in 1992).

⁷ The others being the Clarence A. Bingham School (1916) and the Federal Hill School (1915).

⁸ Eddy N. Smith, George Benton Smith and Allena J. Dates, comps. *Bristol, Connecticut (In the Olden Time "New Cambridge")*. Hartford: City Printing Company, 1907, 36; Bruce Clouette and Matthew Roth, *Bristol, Connecticut: A Bicentennial History, 1785-1985*. Canaan, N.H.: Phoenix Publishing, 1984.

⁹ Smith, et al., 36.

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² The district's first schoolhouse was constructed at the rear of the original Methodist Church building on West Street. Smith, et al., 534; Roth, 37, 78.

¹³ Epaphroditus Peck, *A History of Bristol, Connecticut*. Hartford: Lewis Street Bookshop, 1932., 240.

¹⁴ Roth, 134; United States Census Bulletin, Connecticut Excerpt, 1900.

¹⁵ Supplementary departments were maintained in Districts No. 1 and No. 13 into the early-twentieth century.

¹⁶ Smith, et. al., 36, 525.

¹⁷ Roth, 147.

¹⁸ "A Brief Overview of Progressive Education" The John Dewey Project, University of Vermont, accessed April 18, 2015, www.uvm.edu/~dewey/articles/proged.html.

¹⁹ Although the O'Connell School is overtly Gothic Revival in style, its overall symmetry and order of the basic form is essentially classical.

²⁰ Roth, 150.

²¹ National Register of Historic Places, South End Historic District, Bristol, Hartford County, Connecticut, National Register Number 00001625).

²² National Register of Historic Places, Endee Manor Historic District, Bristol, Hartford County, Connecticut, National Register Number 96000027).

²³ "Need of Another School at Bristol", *Hartford Courant*, January 11, 1908, p. 16

²⁴ Ibid.

²⁵ "Bristol Has Fine School Building", *Hartford Courant*, September 6, 1914.

²⁶ "Bristol School Needs More Room", *Hartford Courant*, July 17, 1913, p. 13.

²⁷ "Big Registration in Bristol Schools", *Hartford Courant*, September 7, 1915, p. 15.

²⁸ Board of Education Minutes, 1914. History Room, Bristol Public Library.

²⁹ "Model of School on Park Street for District No. 3", *Bristol Press*, August 27, 1914, p. 1.

³⁰ "Bristol Has a Fine School Building", *Hartford Courant*, September 6, 1914, p. 4.

³¹ Ibid.

³² Ibid.

³³ Ibid.

³⁴ Ibid.

³⁵ Ibid.

³⁶ Minutes of School District Committee No. 3: 1915, History Room, Bristol Public Library.

³⁷ "Big Registration in Bristol Schools", *Hartford Courant*, September 7, 1915, p. 11.

³⁸ "Bristol Shows Growth in Schools", *Hartford Courant*, January 4, 1917, p. 17.

³⁹ "School Appropriation for New Building" *Bristol Press*, April 1, 1915, p. 2.

⁴⁰ "Bristol District to consider New plans for School Committee to Recommend Addition to Park Street Building". *Hartford Courant*, April 1, 1919, p. 8.

⁴¹ Ibid.

⁴² "Bristol Issues Bond", *Hartford Courant*, December 22, 1920, p. 11.

⁴³ "Clara T. O'Connell Elected Principal of Park Street School", *Bristol Press*, May 10, 1922, p. 5.

Clara T. O'Connell School
Name of Property

Hartford Co., CT
County and State

⁴⁴ Minutes of School District No. 3: 1922, History Room, Bristol Public Library.

⁴⁵ Roth, 191. All of the schools referenced are extant, however, they retain varied degrees of historical integrity and none continue to be used for educational purposes. Although the author has only toured the interior of the O'Connell and North Street Schools, the O'Connell, North Street, Church Street, and Burlington Avenue Schools all have minimal exterior alterations (primarily window replacement) and retain their historic character. The Federal Hill School was converted for residential use in 1981, yet its exterior historic character has been minimally impacted. The Pine Street School was adapted for office use during the 1980s and its historical integrity has been compromised.

⁴⁶ Peck, 244; Roth, 199-200.

⁴⁷ Vertical files, "O'Connell School", History Room, Bristol Public Library.

⁴⁸ "Clara T. O'Connell Retired School Principal Dies at age 71", *Bristol Press*, February 17, 1955, p. 1.

⁴⁹ "Gym Among Equipment Under Study by Board", *Hartford Courant*, May 10, 1957, p. 8.

⁵⁰ "Building Committee Acts on Proposed Addition", *Hartford Courant*, February 28, 1959, p. 8.

⁵¹ "City Acquires Property for School Wing", *Hartford Courant*, August 20, 1959, p. 20.

⁵² "New Proposed Gymnasium-Auditorium-Cafeteria: Clara T. O'Connell School", *Hartford Courant*, April 15, 1959, p. 8.

⁵³ "Gym, Cafeteria to be Inspected at Open House", *Hartford Courant*, January 17, 1961, p. 11.

⁵⁴ William George Bruce, *School Architecture: A Handy Manual for the Use of Architects and School Authorities*, Milwaukee, Wisconsin: Johnson Service Co., 1906, p. 17.

⁵⁵ "Gym, Cafeteria to be Inspected at Open House", *Hartford Courant*, January 17, 1961, p. 11.

⁵⁶ Bruce, William, *American School Board Journal* Volumes 52-53, January 1916, Milwaukee, Wisconsin: Bruce Publishing, p. 31.

⁵⁷ National Register of Historic Places, Endee Manor Historic District, Bristol, Hartford County, Connecticut, National Register Number 96000027).

⁵⁸ *American Architect and Architecture*, Volume 113, p. 48.

Location Map:

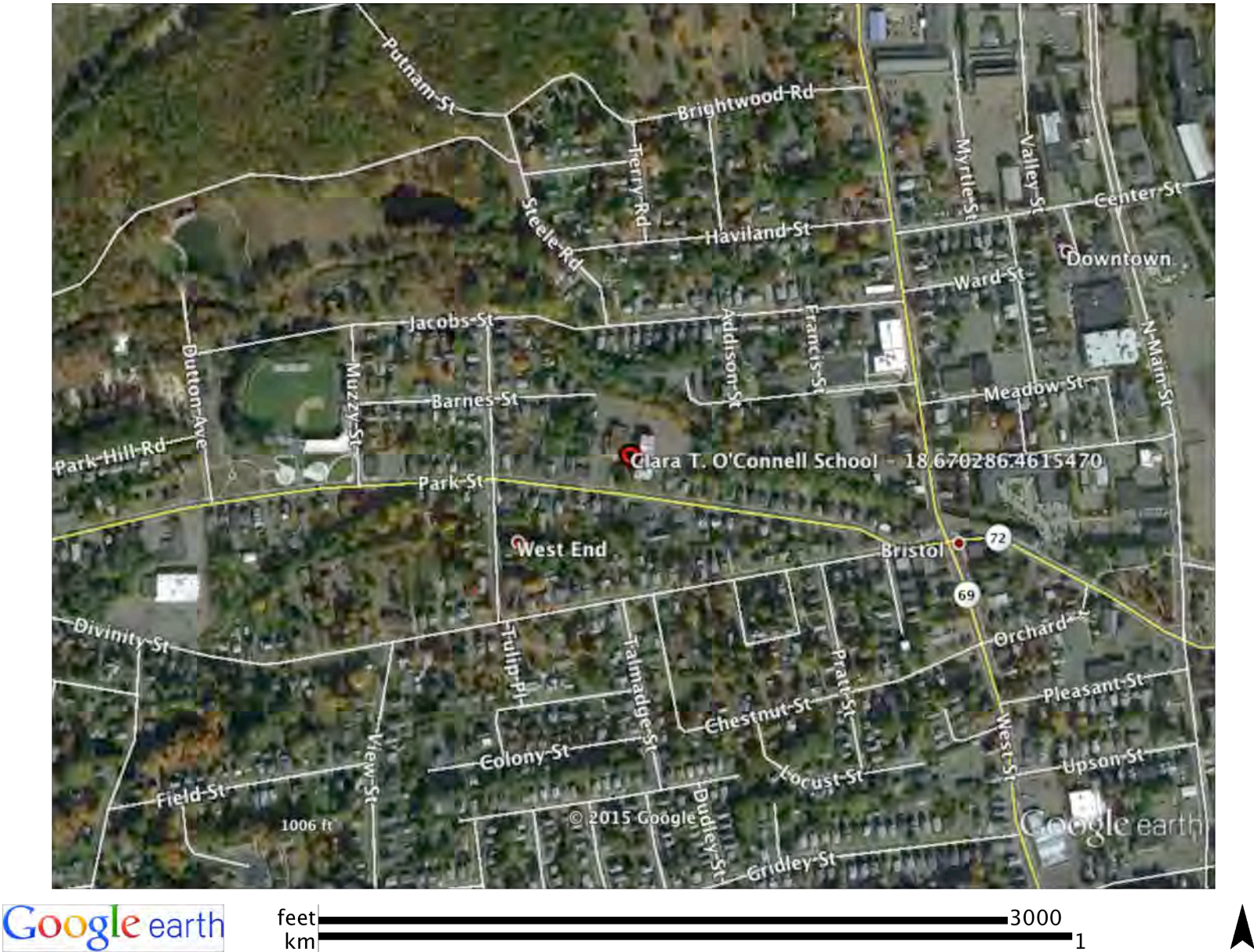


Figure: 1

Site/Aerial Images:



Aerial image of Clara T. O'Connell School, 122 Park Street, Bristol, Connecticut.
Camera facing north. Accessed from Bing.com December 29, 2016.
Figure 2.



Aerial image of Clara T. O'Connell School, 122 Park Street, Bristol, Connecticut.
Camera facing west. Accessed from Bing.com December 29, 2016.
Figure 3.

Figure: 3



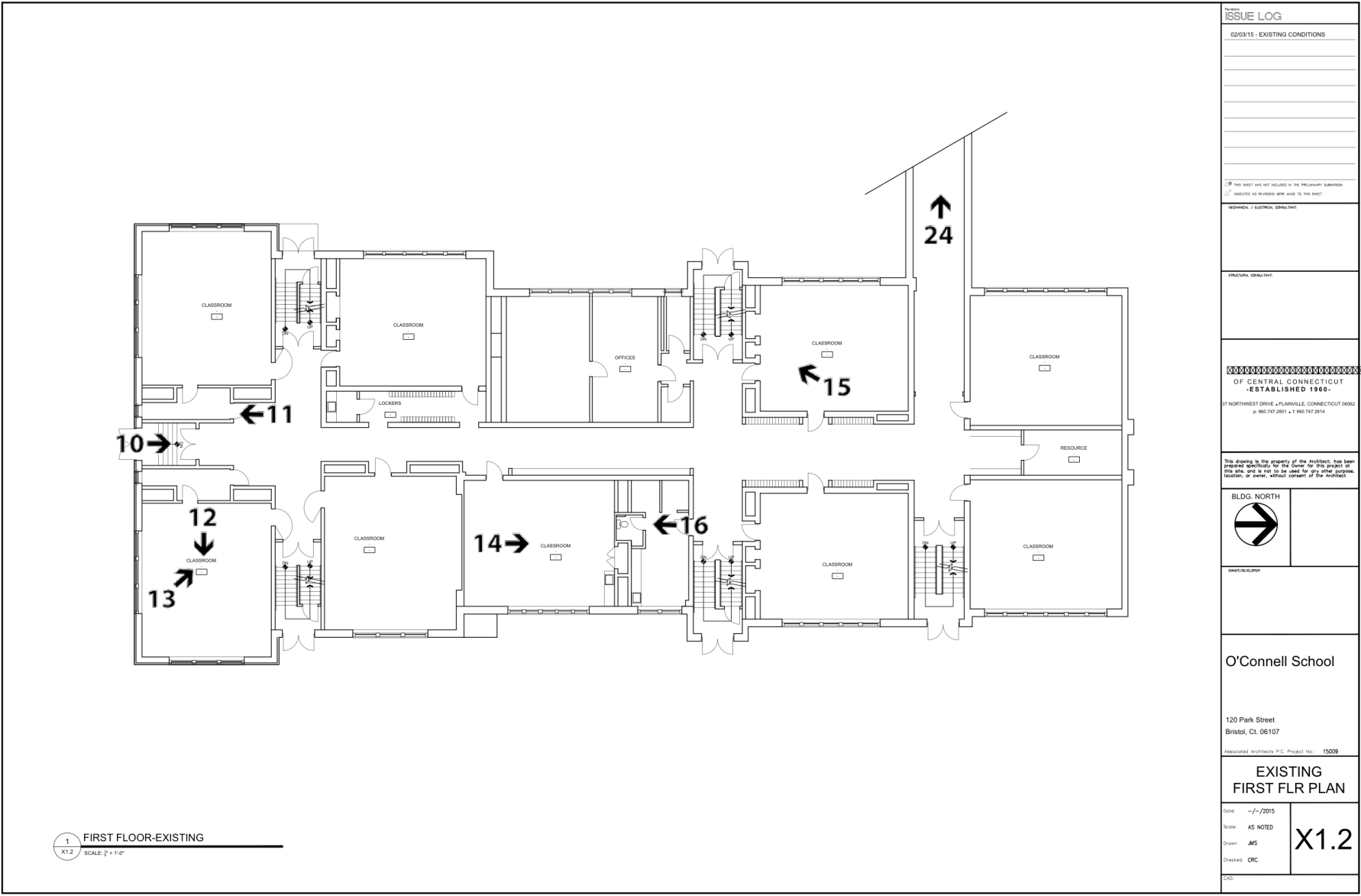
Figure 4. The Park Street School, ca. 1915.

Photo Directions and Floor Plans:



Exterior.

Figure: 5



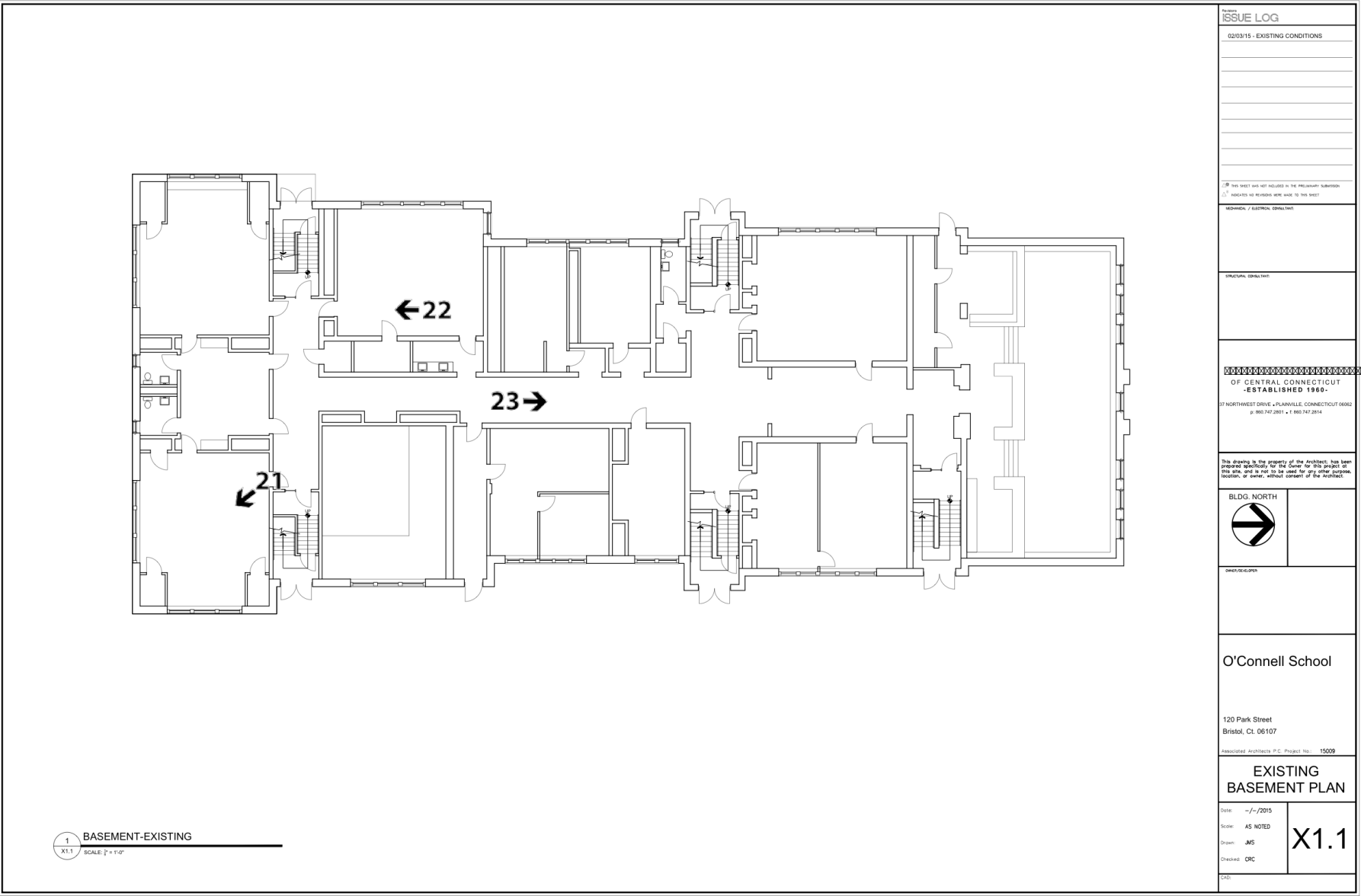
Interior – First Floor.

Figure: 6

Clara T. O'Connell School; Hartford Co., Connecticut

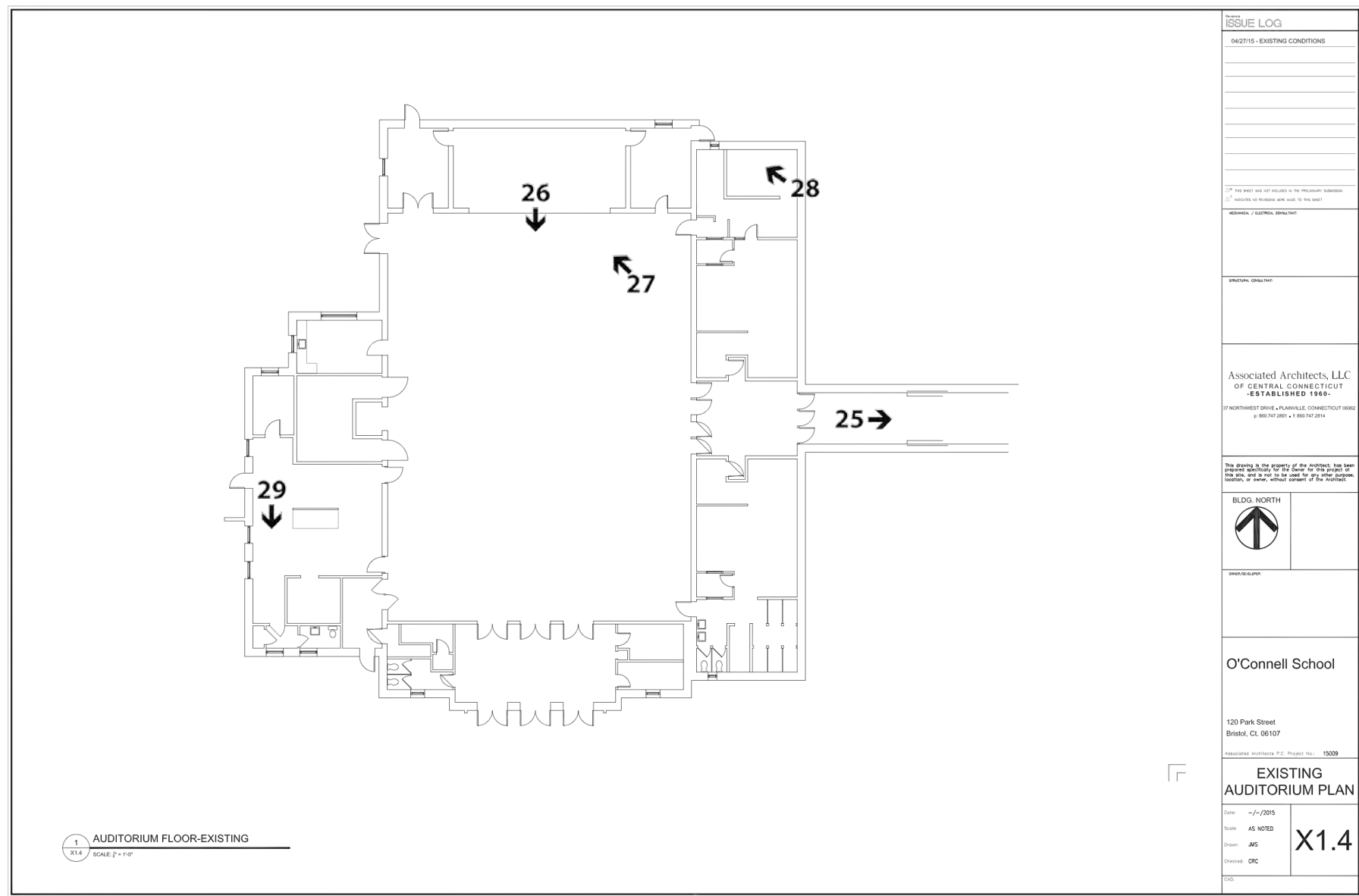


Figure: 7



Interior – Basement.

Figure: 8



Existing – Auditorium.

Figure: 9





CLARA J. O'CONNELL
SCHOOL

CLARA J. O'CONNELL
ELEMENTARY SCHOOL







NO
SMOKING
ON
SCHOOL
GROUNDS

POSTED
OFFICE HOURS ONLY
NO TRESPASSING IF NOT
NOTED OTHERWISE
AUTHORIZED PERSONNEL ONLY
NO OTHER PERSONS OR VEHICLES
ALLOWED TO ENTER WITHOUT





WARNING
City of Bristol
PARK
RESTRICTIONS
NO OVERNIGHT
Parkers for
Violating the
Times for
Contact with
900-345-1234










P • I
A • I
W • I
S • I
Know

• I will
• I will
• I will
• I will
• I will















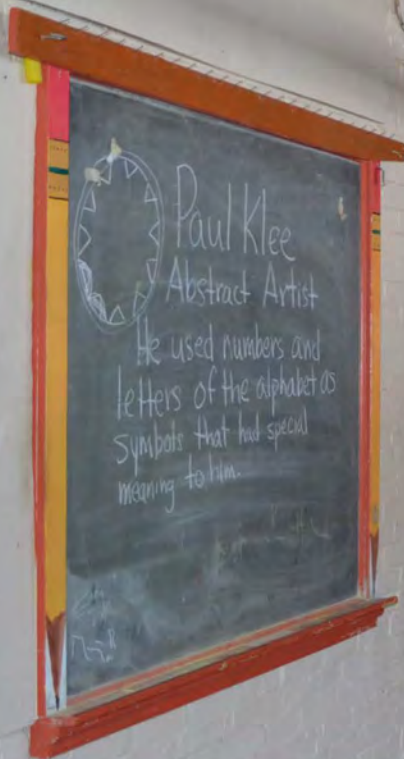




NO
SMOKING
IN
THIS
AREA





















UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

Requested Action:	Nomination	
Property Name:	O'Connell, Clara T., School	
Multiple Name:		
State & County:	CONNECTICUT, Hartford	

Date Received: 3/24/2017 Date of Pending List: Date of 16th Day: Date of 45th Day: 5/8/2017 Date of Weekly List: 5/18/2017

Reference number:	SG100000954
Nominator:	State

Reason For Review:

<input type="checkbox"/> Appeal	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PDIL	<input type="checkbox"/> Text/Data Issue
<input type="checkbox"/> SHPO Request	<input type="checkbox"/> Landscape	<input type="checkbox"/> Photo
<input type="checkbox"/> Waiver	<input type="checkbox"/> National	<input type="checkbox"/> Map/Boundary
<input type="checkbox"/> Resubmission	<input type="checkbox"/> Mobile Resource	<input type="checkbox"/> Period
<input type="checkbox"/> Other	<input type="checkbox"/> TCP	<input type="checkbox"/> Less than 50 years
	<input type="checkbox"/> CLG	

☒ Accept ☐ Return ☐ Reject 5/8/2017 Date

Abstract/Summary Comments:	
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Recommendation/ Criteria	
-----------------------------	--

Reviewer	<u>Roger Reed</u>	Discipline	<u>Historian</u>
Telephone	<u>(202)354-2278</u>	Date	

DOCUMENTATION: see attached comments : No see attached SLR : No

If a nomination is returned to the nomination authority, the nomination is no longer under consideration by the National Park Service.



Department of Economic and
Community Development

State Historic Preservation Office

March 22, 2017

Mr. Roger Reed
National Park Service
National Register of Historic Places
1201 Eye Street, NW
Washington, D.C. 20005



Subject: Clara T. O'Connell School and Clarence A. Bingham School, Bristol, Hartford County,
Connecticut, National Register Nominations

Dear Mr. Reed:

The following National Register nomination materials are submitted for your review:

- 2 Printed cover sheets (1 for each school nomination)
- CD of National Register text. The enclosed disk contains the true and correct copy of the nomination for the Clara T. O'Connell School to the National Register of Historic Places.
- CD of National Register text. The enclosed disk contains the true and correct copy of the nomination for the Clarence A. Bingham School to the National Register of Historic Places.
- CD of Digital Photographs for Clara T. O'Connell School
- CD of Digital Photographs for Clarence A. Bingham School

These National Register nominations were approved by the Connecticut State Historic Preservation Review Board on June 22, 2015. The photographs included with the nomination are the same as those reviewed by the Board at the June, 2015 meeting. Bristol is not a CLG community. No letters of support or objection were received for either nomination; the nominations were initiated by the current owner.

The National Park Service completed the following HPCA approvals:

- O'Connell School Part 1 approved on November 10, 2015
- O'Connell School Part 2 approved on March 24, 2016
- Bingham School Part 1 approved on November 16, 2015
- Bingham School Part 2 approved on January 29, 2016

If you have any questions, or if this office can be of assistance, please call Jenny Scofield at 860-256-2766.

Sincerely,

Jenny Scofield,
National Register Coordinator, CT SHPO

Enclosures

State Historic Preservation Office

One Constitution Plaza | Hartford, CT 06103 | P: 860.256.2800 | Cultureandtourism.org

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