

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

FOR NPS USE ONLY	
RECEIVED	JUN 21 1979
DATE ENTERED	AUG 21 1979

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN *HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS*
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

1 NAME

HISTORIC **Rising Sun Tavern, Half Mile House, Todd's**

AND/OR COMMON **Rising Sun Tavern**

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER **Old Tavern Lane**

CITY, TOWN **North Haven**

NOT FOR PUBLICATION
CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT
Third

STATE **Connecticut**

VICINITY OF
CODE
09

COUNTY **New Haven** CODE **009**

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE	
<input type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT	<input type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE	<input type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL	<input type="checkbox"/> PARK
<input type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> BOTH	<input type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE RESIDENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> SITE	PUBLIC ACQUISITION	ACCESSIBLE	<input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGIOUS
<input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT	<input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: RESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENTIFIC
	<input type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: UNRESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRIAL	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
		<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER:

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME **Bruce and Gloria Andrews**

STREET & NUMBER **Old Tavern Lane**

CITY, TOWN **North Haven**

VICINITY OF

STATE **Connecticut**

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC. **Town Clerk, North Haven Town Hall**

STREET & NUMBER **18 Church Street**

CITY, TOWN **North Haven**

STATE **Connecticut**

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE **State Register of Historic Places (Connecticut)**

DATE **1978** FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS **Connecticut Historical Commission**

CITY, TOWN **Hartford**

STATE **Connecticut**

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED
<input type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		DATE _____

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Rising Sun Tavern, now a 1-family dwelling, occupies an area of high ground on the east side of Old Tavern Lane, a short street in the extreme eastern part of North Haven, less than a half mile from the North Branford town line. The property also includes a 1-acre triangle of land on the west side of the same street. The site is well shaded by trees, and the house is the only structure on the street.

The main, original part of the tavern is essentially a 2-story, frame, Georgian farmhouse, 30 x 40' in dimension, with 5-bay facade, 2 end chimneys, and central hall plan. The exterior covering is clapboard, which probably replaces an original wood shingle covering. There is a slight hewn overhang (with molding) at the 2nd floor level, and another at the attic floor level, gable ends. The cornice is set diagonally. The windows are 12 over 12 pane, double-hung sash with heavy muntins, molded frames and molded sills with extended ends. A substantial portion of the glass is original. The fenestration on the facade is arranged so that the 3rd, or central, bay is wider than the 1st, 2nd, 4th and 5th bays, which expresses the interior central hall plan.

The central entrance is the principle decorative feature of the facade. The doorway is framed with a molded architrave and flanked by a pair of classical, fluted pilasters of slight projection, each set on a high, molded base. These support an entablature whose essential tripartite division is distorted by an undersize frieze and oversize cornice ruled with numerous narrow moldings, achieving a fine, liney effect which relates to the shallow, narrow fluting of the pilasters. Despite this somewhat unusual treatment of the entablature, the overall proportions of the doorway are classical. The double front doors are early or original and each has 2 panes of glass set in the top, in addition to 6 rectangular sunken and molded panels below. The present double storm doors are 20th-century and are installed by the present owners only during the winter months. The front steps consist of 4 red sandstone slabs (early or original).

Early in the 19th century a 1-story kitchen ell with additional chimney was attached to the west end of the rear (south) side of the house. A small shed-roof, 1-room addition attached to the east side the the house, flush with the facade, was probably also constructed around this time.

Inside, on the 1st floor, the central hall runs the entire width of the house and opens into 4 rooms (2 on each side). An open, single-flight staircase occupies the center of the hall. A paneled wall below the stairs encloses the cellar stairs accessed by a door under the main staircase on the south side. The staircase has a square, fluted newel, square balusters set diagonally, and a carved scroll bracket beneath the string.

The plan and most of the details of the 4 1st-floor rooms (including the wide floor boards) are original. Most of the woodwork is pine.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
HERITAGE CONSERVATION AND RECREATION SERVICE

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RISING SUN TAVERN
North Haven, CT

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER **six** PAGE **one**

REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

North Haven Historic Resources Inventory
1978 - Local
Connecticut Historical Commission
Hartford, CT
and
North Haven Historical Society
North Haven, CT

Old House Committee Survey
1975-1977 - Local
North Haven Historical Society
North Haven, CT

Census of Old Buildings in North Haven,
Records of the Works Progress Administration of
Connecticut
1932-1937 - State
Connecticut State Library
Hartford, CT

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The arrangement of the chimneys inside the ends of the house, between the front and back rooms, provides a corner fireplace in each room, an unusual arrangement for a house of this date and the only example of its kind in North Haven.

The northeast (north front) room, originally a parlor, has been altered by the addition of 2 doors in the east wall, the 1st accessing the added room on this side and cut through in the early 19th century, the 2nd an outside door cut through about 1930, replacing an original window. The overmantel in this room is embellished by an exceptionally large panel cut from a single piece of wood (38 x 70") and known as a "King's Panel." The hand-printed partridge and church-tower wall-paper in this room, composed of 12" squares, dates from the 19th century. A corner cupboard framed by fluted pilasters occupies the northeast or outside corner of the room.

The southeast room, originally the bar room, is now used as a library. The original wainscoting in this room has been pulled out to form the front of bookshelves, although the corner gun racks are still in place. The overmantel contains a square chimney cupboard and 3 other rectangular panels of unequal size -- an unusual, asymmetrical arrangement.

The northwest room, originally the dining room, was converted to a parlor or living room possibly in the early 19th century. A corner cupboard in this room was moved to the southwest room when the kitchen ell was added (see below), and marks showing its original position can still be seen on the floor. The overmantel paneling in this room is walnut, and bows out forming what seems to have been an intentional, decorative, convex effect. The pilaster fireplace frame and mantel shelf in this room were probably also added in the early 19th century.

The southwest room, originally a kitchen, was converted to a dining room (receiving the northwest room's corner cupboard) early in the 19th century when the kitchen ell was constructed. The mantel shelf in this room may also be an addition. The fireplace wall contains an original side cupboard, but no arrangement for bake ovens. An opening under the floorboards in the southeast corner of this room reputedly contained stairs or a dumb-waiter at one time, giving access to the basement fireplace (see below). Besides the fireplace wall paneling, paneled wainscoting surrounds the other walls of the room to the level of the chair rail.

The rear ell contains the present kitchen and pantry, probably added between 1800 and 1820. The kitchen fireplace is in the south wall (between kitchen and pantry) which is paneled to the level of the high

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mantel shelf. The large beehive bake oven next to the fireplace, accessed by an original iron door, is unusual in having its own separate flue. The chimney cupboard and closet in this room are original.

The 2nd floor plan of the house (excluding the ell) was originally a repetition of the 1st. However, the rear portion of the hall on this floor has been enclosed to form a bathroom. The northeast, northwest and southwest rooms on this floor are bedrooms with corner fireplaces. The southeast room, however, was never finished on the interior and contains no fireplace. It may have been used as a loom room. The northeast and northwest bedrooms are in relatively original condition. The southwest bedroom, however, has been altered by additional cupboards and closets built in the 20th century. Also in this room is a doorway to a space over the kitchen ell which may have been used for storage -- the previous owner found a collection of 19th-century guns in this space.

The foundation of the main house and rear ell is constructed of large, rough-cut red sandstone blocks. A fireplace at the base of the west chimney was originally a large, walk-in type. A beehive bake oven constructed of large, very old, low-fired (soft) bricks was installed, filling in one side of this fireplace, in the late 18th or early 19th century.

The attic framing is a rafter and purlin system with saw-cut timbers secured by wooden pegs.

The grounds of the house encompass the entire length of Old Tavern Lane on both sides of the street, and are notable for the absence of 20th-century features. The driveway has never been paved. Both lots are thickly wooded, although cut away from the front of the house. On the south side of the street, within 150' of the rear of the house, is a spring and the remains of an early stone foundation which was partly removed when the present owners dug a garden in this area. China and pottery fragments were found at this time, suggesting that an early outbuilding on this foundation may have been a milkhouse located, as was customary, near a natural source of cool water. East of the house is an old apple orchard which may date to the residency of the last member of the Todd family to live in the house, who died in 1904. The immediate grounds of the house, within 225' of Old Tavern Lane, contain 4 or 5 old wells which have been blocked up by the present owners. While the present house lot on the south side of the street encompasses 6.8 acres, the southern portion of the lot, not included within the site boundary, contains no significant outbuildings or potential archeological remains.

FHR-8-300A
(11/78)

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The small triangle on the north side of the street contains an additional well, also blocked up, and the foundations of a large horse barn and sundry smaller outbuildings (all burned down between 1932 and 1955).

The owners also possess what appears to be an original tavern sign, found by the previous owner in the rear orchard. This shield-shaped, metal-bound sign carries the rising sun motif and the title of the tavern along with the date 1738.

8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES circa 1760-1770

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Rising Sun Tavern is an excellent example of the small 18th-century Connecticut tavern geared to travelers along the state's major roadways, and is associated with the particular development of present-day Middletown Avenue from Colonial highway to major state turnpike in the early 19th century. It is additionally significant as an intact and well-preserved example of the 18th-century Georgian house modified to serve public refreshment. (Criteria A and C.)

Although the exact date of the tavern's construction is not known, its architectural features indicate that it was built some time in the 1760s. This is supported by what is known about the history of the tavern and its original owners. The property is located within a strip of land known as the "Half-Mile," originally belonging to the parish of East Haven, which became part of the North Haven parish in 1738 and was included within the North Haven boundaries when the town was incorporated in 1786. Among the petitioners for the annexation was Caleb Hitchcock (1712-1777) who owned the tavern property at this time. The date 1738 on the old tavern sign may refer to this annexation, or to a previous house or tavern built by Hitchcock on or near the foundation of the present structure. Caleb Hitchcock conveyed the land, with a house (presumably the present structure), to his son Samuel (b. 1746) between 1769 and 1777. 1769 and 1770 entries for lumber purchased by Samuel from a local merchant, Joseph Pierpont, in the latter's account book, probably relate to the construction or alteration of the house or its outbuildings.¹ Tavern licenses were acquired by Caleb in 1771 and 1774, and by Samuel in 1775, and presumably the tavern operation commenced during these years. In 1784 it was purchased by Gideon Todd (1738-1817) who also had a license and may have helped Samuel run the business prior to 1784 since there is record of the tavern sign having carried both Samuel's and Gideon's names at one time.²

¹Original account book in the North Haven Historical Society.

²Reynolds, 1891, p. 16n. It is not clear whether the sign referred to by Reverend Reynolds is the one now in the possession of the present owners of the tavern, which carries a different inscription. It is possible that more than one sign was used during the period of the tavern's operation, or that the original sign was repainted.

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Old Inns of Connecticut. Edited by Marian Dickinson Terry from material collected by The National Society of Colonial Dames of America. Hartford: Thr Prospect Press, 1937.

Henry S. Kelly. "Architectural Notes on Rising Sun Tavern, Middletown Turnpike, North Haven, Connecticut." 1932. Typescript, Connecticut State Library.

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY approx. 3.6

QUADRANGLE NAME Branford Quadrangle

QUADRANGLE SCALE 1:24000

UTM REFERENCES

A 18 1681960 4582140

B

ZONE EASTING NORTHING

ZONE EASTING NORTHING

C

D

E

F

G

H

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

The property occupies part of the lot identified on North Haven Assessor's Map #48 as Block 137, Lot 1, and also includes all of the parcel identified

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
-------	------	--------	------

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
-------	------	--------	------

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Susan Ryan, Consultant

ORGANIZATION

Connecticut Historical Commission

DATE

13 February 1979

STREET & NUMBER

59 South Prospect Street

TELEPHONE

(203) 566-3005

CITY OR TOWN

Hartford

STATE

Connecticut

12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

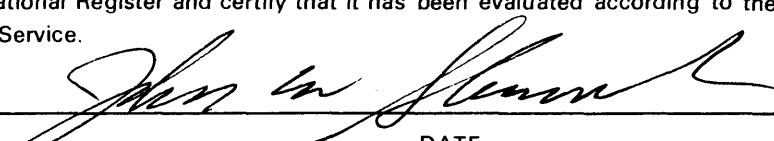
NATIONAL

STATE x

LOCAL

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE



TITLE

Director, Connecticut Historical Commission

DATE

June 19, 1979

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER



DATE 8-21-79

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

ATTEST: 

DATE 8/20/79

CHIEF OF REGISTRATION

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Under the ownership of Gideon Todd and his sons, the business seems to have flourished to the point where additional space was deemed necessary, and the rear kitchen ell was added. Throughout its history the tavern offered food and short-term accommodations only -- travelers did not lodge there. This helps account for the fact that no other additional rooms were needed as the business grew, and therefore the form of the house and arrangement and fittings of the rooms remained substantially unaltered.

The tavern originally served travelers along one of the major Colonial radial highways from New Haven center which led to Hartford via Middletown, a fragment of which probably constitutes the present Old Tavern Lane. By the 1780s the town began to project the construction of an improved route approximating that of the old highway, and in 1813 the Middletown Turnpike and mail route between New Haven and Hartford, connecting with routes to New York and Boston, was completed along the course of present-day Middletown Avenue. At this time the fragment of old highway in front of the tavern may have become a separate carriage way off the turnpike. A toll gate was established on the turnpike just northeast of the intersection with the old highway, occupying a part of the triangle of land where the tavern's barns were formerly located. Gideon's son John acted as tollkeeper during the early years of the turnpike, and must have helped drum up business for the family tavern. By 1820 12 coaches stopped at the tavern daily (6 traveling north, 6 south). The tollgate seems to have ceased operation in the 1860s and the tavern itself may have closed at this time. By the late 19th century it served solely as the Todd family mansion.

The Rising Sun Tavern is representative of mid and late 18th-century taverns in Connecticut and throughout New England built away from town centers and serving travelers along major highways. Characteristically, it is essentially a large Georgian house of simple plan and design. On the exterior classical details, notably the central entryway, are combined with more conservative building traditions such as the overhang and the severe, box-like treatment of the overall mass. On the interior, the tavern function is indicated only by the generous size of the rooms and the presence of the bar room although the location of the latter at the rear of the house is uncommon in New England taverns. The central hall, always a formal and somewhat public space even within private residences, is a typical feature of the house-type tavern in this period.

The tavern is of outstanding significance within its North Haven context. It was the only major tavern in the town geared primarily to travelers, and of the 3 or 4 important taverns operating in North Haven

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during the late 18th century, it is the only one still extant. It is also the only remaining 18th-century house in North Haven with central hall plan -- not a common feature in this locality. The arrangement of the chimneys, allowing corner fireplaces on each floor, is unusual in New England architecture during this period and relates to a corresponding feature of a contemporary Rising Sun Tavern in Fredericksburg, Virginia. While simple and unpretentious by national standards, the tavern is an excellent example of the larger and more ambitious 2-story houses which began to appear in North Haven along with increasing wealth during the mid 18th century, a result of expanding trade based on improved communication with other communities along the Colonial highways.

The authenticity and preservation of the house are exceptional. Not only are the early period features intact throughout the building, but they are in uniformly excellent condition, even to the early 19th-century wallpaper in the parlor. The isolation of the house within its immediate street context, the absence of modern outbuildings or improvements to the grounds, and the preservation of the triangle of land opposite the tavern, all contribute to its historic appearance within its setting, and a very effective sense of time and place is maintained. While the cluster of original outbuildings on the triangle disappeared between 25 and 45 years ago, some of the foundations are still intact. This area has never been excavated or carefully examined and the possibility of existing artifacts pertaining to the tavern's operations in this area can not be ruled out. The same holds true for the partial foundation located near the spring at the rear of the house, and the 4 or 5 closed wells, also in the rear grounds.

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BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

- Reverend William T. Reynolds. Historical Address Given on the Occasion of the North Haven Centennial, 1886. New Haven: Press of the Price, Lee and Adkins Co., 1891.
- Sheldon Thorpe. North Haven Annals. New Haven: Press of the Price, Lee and Adkins Co., 1892.

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VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

as Block 137, Lot 1A on same map. The first parcel is bounded on the north by Old Tavern Lane, and on the east by Warner Road. The south boundary commences at a point on the west edge of Warner Road and proceeds westerly for 500', more or less, along a line 225' south of the south edge of Old Tavern Lane. At this point the west boundary runs northerly for 225', more or less, to the south edge of Old Tavern Lane at its intersection with the east edge of Middletown Avenue.

The second parcel, Lot 1A, is a triangle of land bounded on the north-west by Middletown Avenue, on the east by Warner Road, and on the south by Old Tavern Lane.

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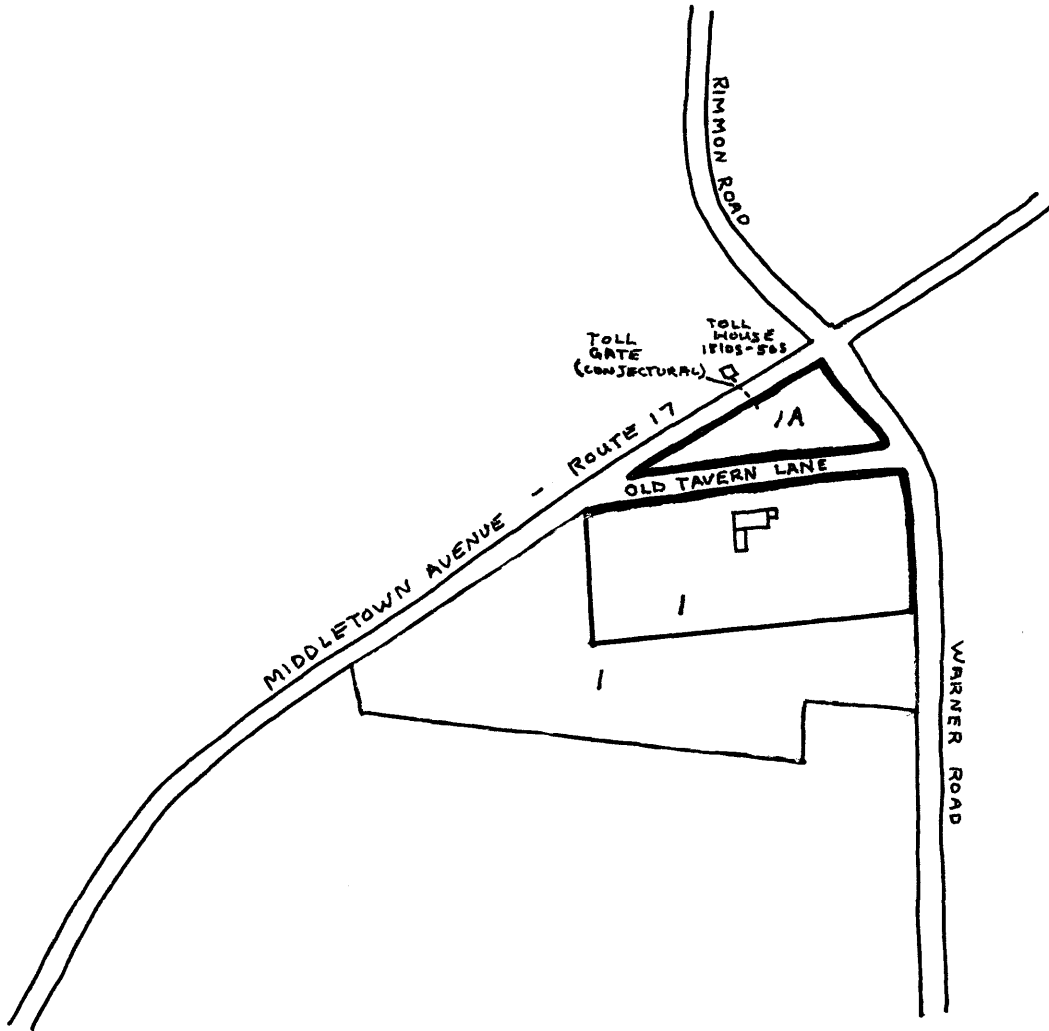
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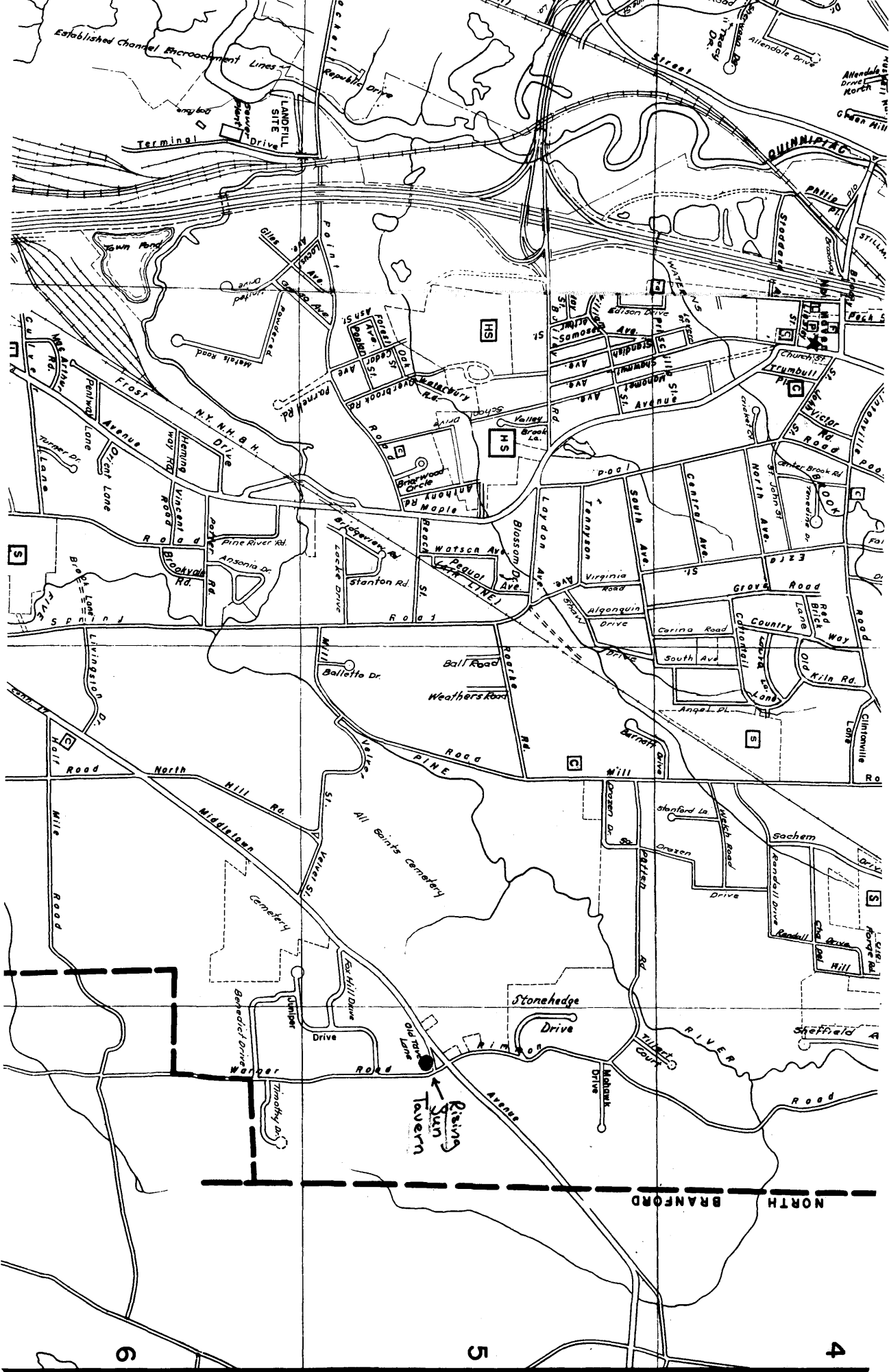
ACCOMPANYING GEOGRAPHICAL DATA
SKETCH MAP



———— LOT BOUNDARIES
———— SITE BOUNDARIES

APPROX. SCALE
1" = 300'
—————





NORTH BRANFORD

6

5

4

Rising Sun Tavern

Established Channel Encroachment Lines

LANDFILL SITE

All Saints Cemetery

Stonehedge Drive

Sheffield A Road

Sochem

Stanford La

Will

South Ave

Carina Road

Algonquin Drive

Virginia Road

Tompson

South Ave

Carina Ave

Watsco Ave

Blossom Ave

Watsco Ave

Stanton Rd

Locke Drive

Bridgeway

Watsco Ave

Watsco Ave

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