

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places  
Multiple Property Documentation Form**

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INTERAGENCY RESOURCES DIVISION  
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This form is used for documenting multiple property groups relating to one or several historic contexts. See instructions in *How to Complete the Multiple Property Documentation Form* (National Register Bulletin 16B). Complete each item by entering the requested information. For additional space, use continuation sheets (Form 10-900-a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer to complete all items.

New Submission     Amended Submission

**A. Name of Multiple Property Listing**

The Historic and Architectural Resources of St. Johnsbury, Vermont

**B. Associated Historic Contexts**

(Name each associated historic context, identifying theme, geographical area, and chronological period for each.)

A. Community Development of St. Johnsbury, Vermont: 1786-1945

**C. Form Prepared by**

name/title Deborah Noble, Principal

organization Deborah Noble Associates

date 1/20/92, 1/94

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zip code 05824

**D. Certification**

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this documentation form meets the National Register documentation standards and sets forth requirements for the listing of related properties consistent with the National Register criteria. This submission meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60 and the Secretary of the Interior's Standards and Guidelines for Archeology and Historic Preservation. ( See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

*Emilia Bellator*  
Signature and title of certifying official

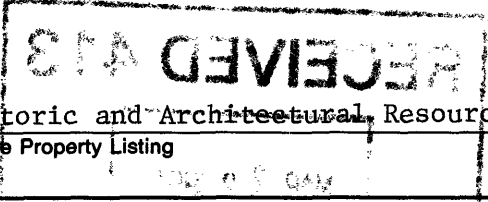
Date 3/9/94

Vermont State Historic Preservation Office  
State or Federal agency and bureau

I hereby certify that this multiple property documentation form has been approved by the National Register as a basis for evaluating related properties for listing in the National Register.

*Barbara Savage*  
Signature of the Keeper

5/5/94  
Date of Action



The Historic and Architectural Resources of St. Johnsbury  
Name of Multiple Property Listing

Vermont  
State

**Table of Contents for Written Narrative**

Provide the following information on continuation sheets. Cite the letter and the title before each section of the narrative. Assign page numbers according to the instructions for continuation sheets in *How to Complete the Multiple Property Documentation Form* (National Register Bulletin 16B). Fill in page numbers for each section in the space below.

	<b>Page Numbers</b>
<b>E. Statement of Historic Contexts</b> (If more than one historic context is documented, present them in sequential order.)	E1 to E9
<b>F. Associated Property Types</b> (Provide description, significance, and registration requirements.)	F1 to F13
<b>G. Geographical Data</b>	G/H1
<b>H. Summary of Identification and Evaluation Methods</b> (Discuss the methods used in developing the multiple property listing.)	G/H1
<b>I. Major Bibliographical References</b> (List major written works and primary location of additional documentation: State Historic Preservation Office, other State agency, Federal agency, local government, university, or other, specifying repository.)	I1 to I2

**Primary location of additional data:**

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

Name of repository:  
\_\_\_\_\_

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

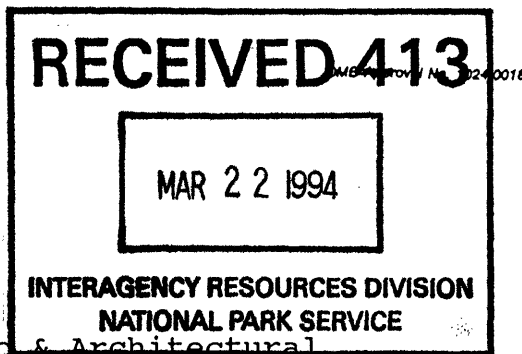
**Estimated Burden Statement:** Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 120 hours per response including the time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Project (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

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The Historic & Architectural  
Resources of St. Johnsbury, VT:  
Community Development 1786-1945



## Community Development of St. Johnsbury, Vermont, 1786 - 1945

The special way in which the people who came to St. Johnsbury interacted with the natural environment and each other has resulted over time in a complicated cultural layering that reflects the styles, concerns, livelihoods, politics, and ideologies of many eras of social development. The resulting cultural environment of the town - the historic buildings, districts, sites, structures, objects, landscapes and scenic vistas - work together to give St. Johnsbury a community identity evoking a unique sense of place.

In order to provide background to evaluate the significance and meaning of St. Johnsbury's cultural resources, the history of the town's settlement and development is presented together with general examples of the sites and architecture it has produced. This broad, thematic/geographically defined context has a large chronological base in order to reveal more specific contexts that may be further developed in the future.

The rolling uplands of the surface of St. Johnsbury are carved by many streams as the elevation slopes from the east and west to the Passumpsic River valley, which runs north to south through the center of town. In the southern part of town, the Passumpsic River is joined by two other major waterways: the Moose River from the east and the Sleepers River from the northwest. These waterways determined transportation routes for human occupants of St. Johnsbury throughout its history, with the existing road network conforming to a large degree to the courses formed by these valleys.

St. Johnsbury's links with Vermont's native peoples are within written history. All of the Indians in northern New England are referred to as Abenaki of the Algonquin Indian language and those in St. Johnsbury are called Western Abenaki. The name Abenaki probably means "dawn land people" or "land where the sun first bathes the earth in light." The Abenaki, eventually resettled near Montreal at St. Francis as they were pushed out of their more southerly lands in the historic period, travelled down the Connecticut River to hunt and fish until the 1750s and the French and Indian Wars. One of the several routes south to the Connecticut River followed the route from Lake Memphremagog, the Barton River, and the Passumpsic River to its mouth on the Connecticut River just seven miles south of St. Johnsbury in Barnet. From there it was not far to the Abenaki village at the oxbows in Newbury, Vermont.

Journal entries by Stephen Nash in 1755, while on a trip commissioned by the Massachusetts legislature to determine the potential for Indian attacks, reveal that he discovered a site where canoes had been constructed near the confluence of the Passumpsic and Moose Rivers at the present village of St. Johnsbury. Based on existing information, the town may have been an upland resource area for the Vermont Native peoples for thousands of years. Although there may not have been a large village in St. Johnsbury, the site may have included seasonal villages, hunting and berry picking camps, and other special resource areas. Many histories in nearby towns record Abenaki families maintaining relationships over long

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periods of time with white families during the period of settlement. There are undoubtedly unmarked Indian burial sites in town which range in age from 100 - 10,000 years in age. It is important to begin to inventory Native American Indian archaeological sites and identify archaeologically sensitive lands as part of the development of that context.

White settlement of St. Johnsbury began in the latter part of 1786, when James Martin and J.C. and Jonathan Adams established themselves along the Passumpsic River in the meadow south of the present village of St. Johnsbury. Simeon Cole made a settlement on the meadows south of present day St. Johnsbury Center, with seven other settlers making pitches during this period. On November 1, 1786, a charter was granted by Governor Thomas Chittenden of Vermont to a group of petitioners led by Jonathan Arnold of Rhode Island. The spring of 1787 brought 17 settlers from various parts of southern New England, who joined the early settlers who had come before the charter was granted. By 1800, the population of the town had grown to 663, when there were 10 frame houses taxed (most others were still rough cabins and evidently were not taxed).

Typical of the original 18th century charters in Vermont, St. Johnsbury was delineated as a roughly square township. Proprietors, the non-resident speculators who obtained the charters for lots of about 310 acres, sold smaller lots to settlers and drew gridded land divisions of about 100 acres on the original town maps, often with no knowledge of the topographic character of the town. Various historical accounts reveal a considerable amount of large land purchases, trading, and sales, that were often linked to investments by large commercial ventures, including to merchants engaged in international trade with holdings of large fleets of ships.<sup>1</sup> The settlement of St. Johnsbury could, through further research, thereby be linked with the "Triangular Trade" routes of the period.<sup>2</sup> Though mostly ignored in accounts of New England history, these economically important routes were a major factor in the American Revolution,

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<sup>1</sup> Claire Dunne Johnson, "I See By The Paper": An Informal History of St. Johnsbury, Vol. I, pps. 8-9: In discussing the largest landholders among the original proprietors: "And we have several owners whose names are difficult to trace, but who appear to have Rhode Island backgrounds and are probably merchant-investors. The largest of these is the firm of Clark and Nightingale, with six lots, and they are easy to trace because they were engaged in international trade, with their own fleet of ships out of Providence."

<sup>2</sup> Florence Lewisohn, The Romantic History of St. Croix, (St. Croix, USVI: The St. Croix Landmarks Society, 1964). P.40-44, in a discussion of the Triangular Trade, reveals that there were at least 63 known rum distilleries in Massachusetts alone dependent on East Indian molasses that were affected by the British Acts of trade in the mid-18th century. These several Acts put stiff duties on molasses, among other things, which would have been the demise of these distilleries if New Englanders had not evaded the acts. The distilling of rum was tied directly to the whole economic structure of the area, based on the rum and slave trade.

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using the importation of African slaves to acquire East Indian molasses and sugar that was distilled in New England as rum and exported to Africa to obtain the slaves and continue the triangular trade. Thus, the original charters were the beginning of a trend of land speculation and development which continues throughout the history of the towns of Vermont, including St. Johnsbury, to the present day - a context which should be further developed.

The results of this arbitrary division of lots over the township resulted at first in farmsteads spread rather evenly over the landscape. Today's rural landscape often still reflects the original lot configurations of the town proprietors, although subsequent subdivision has superimposed other layers on that record. The first villages, set out with churches or schools in the exact geographical center of town in the original charter, were often situated on hilltops. The first town meetinghouse in St. Johnsbury illustrates this trend: it was built in 1804 on a hill west of the present village of St. Johnsbury Center which had been designated as the exact center of the town. It was moved in the mid-19th century to the village which developed along the Passumpsic River.

Further settlement patterns reveal the controlling factor of geography which tempered the original geometric layout of the town. Because the town of St. Johnsbury had been laid out without regard to physical geography, several villages developed to meet the commercial and public needs of the settlers, who were separated from other centers by mountains or long distances. The various pockets of population were: St. Johnsbury Center, East St. Johnsbury, St. Johnsbury Village, Bible Hill, Goss Hollow, Coryville, Crow Hill, Chesterfield Hollow, Four Corners District, Pierce Mill District, Spaulding District, and Stark District. These were villages and districts that grew initially linearly along primary transportation routes and the power potential of the numerous rivers and streams that was harnessed by mills to supply lumber, grain and cloth to the outlying valley and hill farms which had been established. Areas of concentrated development in the outlying districts were marked by district schoolhouses and cemeteries, many of which remain today. The largest village, St. Johnsbury, developed where geography, transportation, industry, commerce and government (the county seat) coalesced.

The productive intervalle soils along the meadows of the Moose, Passumpsic and Sleepers Rivers led to the growth of larger scale, productive river valley farms as well as hill farms; settlement on farms continued to dominate during the first part of the 19th century. The original forests were heavily timbered, and concurrent with the clearing of farms was the start of the wood products industry. The economy remained largely subsistence agricultural until later in the century. Most of the historic farmhouses and agricultural outbuildings on the many farmsteads in St. Johnsbury were constructed during this period from c. 1800 - 1860 and reflect the Federal and/or Greek Revival styles that were widespread during the era.

Industrial and commercial growth potential, at first subsistence, was curtailed by the lack of a means of reliable transportation of goods both in to and out of

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the region. Transportation first depended on stagecoaches; improved roads or turnpikes linked a number of villages, determining the dominant commercial centers of the region and St. Johnsbury. The lack of transportation led to the development of residential neighborhoods or districts for workers in close proximity to major sources of employment: the mills and industries that grew up at sources of water power. Some of these often self-sufficient neighborhoods/villages were developed by business owners to provide housing and other amenities for their workers and as early as 1820 included such multi-family property types as tenements and boarding houses. The districts had different physical and social characteristics that were dependent upon the ethnic origins and social class of the residents drawn to settle in each. These characteristics are evident in US Census statistics from the various periods, which indicate the employment or social status of each resident, ranging from "gentleman" to "at home" to "worker".

The setting that was later to become the village of St. Johnsbury, the dominant commercial/public center of the town, had similar beginnings to the other rural areas within the town limits. The central core of the village includes commercial, industrial and residential districts and is situated on two terraces formed by an ancient glacial lake, the uppermost of which became known as the "Plain". The Plain, part of Jonathan Arnold's 300 acre lot, is the area where he first cleared and built his home. The first mill rights were developed just to the north of the Plain by Arnold on the Passumpsic River at a point just above the confluence with the Moose River. This area, first known as "Arnold's Mills", became known as "Ramsey's Mills" as Capt. James Ramsey took over the existing mills and built additional water-powered works. Later known as "Paddock Village" due to the later development of an iron foundry (from 1828) there by Huxham Paddock, this is the area of town known today as Arlington. Other early mill rights were located just to the south of the Plain on the Sleepers River, where Paddock first had his foundry and the Fairbanks family mills were begun in 1818. Another residential district to the east across the Passumpsic River on the Moose River developed around a fork and hoe factory started by the Fairbanks' c. 1820 and in 1848 revitalized by George Ely into a thriving business. First called "Elyville", this area was later known as "Summerville" before it was included in the town of St. Johnsbury in 1890.

Perhaps the single most significant event that determined the future development of St. Johnsbury as a leading center of population, culture, and commerce with urban amenities was the invention of the platform scale by Thaddeus Fairbanks c. 1830. Necessitated by the requirements of a business company employed in cleaning hemp for market and the need to facilitate the weighing of the raw material, the invention led to the establishment of the scale manufacturers, E. and T. Fairbanks & Co. on a twelve acre site on the Sleepers River which has served as the major employer of area residents to the present. The Fairbanks family controlled what was to become a multi-national corporation until the presidency moved to H. N. Turner in 1889 after the death of Horace Fairbanks. As rich and powerful employers, with large tracts of village land, several architecturally significant mansions and a large model farm near the scale works, the Fairbanks' were aware of the power and responsibility of their position, which held much more than merely the means of subsistence for those they

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employed. According to the most progressive mentality of this period of the Industrial Revolution, the Fairbanks family recognized their paternalistic role as keepers of their employees moral well-being.<sup>3</sup> Not only the most up-to-date factory improvements and benefits were utilized, but the Fairbanks' also constructed model worker housing in the immediate vicinity of the factory and developed Main Street into the principal thoroughfare with churches, St. Johnsbury Academy, a courthouse, a library and art gallery, a museum, a music hall, a YMCA, and a bank block through their financial support and the efforts of their company architect, Lambert Packard.<sup>4</sup>

St. Johnsbury, as a concentration of wealth and power, produced some of the most ornate architecture in the state. The exemplary status of the community was widely recognized, as evidenced by extracts from a letter of June, 1880, by Col. John W. Forney, editor of the "Progress" newspaper of Philadelphia:

"...The order of the factory is surpassed in the village. There are no beggars on the streets, no badly dressed people, no bad roads, no taverns or drinking men; cleanliness, thrift, refinement and peace prevail on every hand...It [the residences and public buildings on Main Street] was a group of natural and artistic beauty, a comparison of wealth and art, that would have done credit to the environs of a great city, dedicated and reserved to education, science and opulence. And as I looked upon the scene it was hard to remember that half a century ago this very spot was the home of a poor, simple, industrious, frugal people..."<sup>5</sup>

This small scale urban environment is a fragile part of the town's heritage. Tall masonry buildings, dense development, large and diverse commercial and manufacturing facilities, ornate cultural and governmental facilities, and distinct residential neighborhoods characterize this small-scale city. Architectural styles prevalent during this period of development include Greek Revival, Gothic Revival, Italianate, Second Empire, Richardsonian Romanesque and Queen Anne.

An integral part of the success of the Fairbanks' enterprises and the commercial/residential development of St. Johnsbury was the advent of the Connecticut and Passumpsic Rivers Railroad in 1850 and the Portland and Ogdensburg Railroad in the late 1860's. The building of the railroad just before 1850 attracted a wave

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<sup>3</sup> John S. Garner, The Model Company Town: Urban Design Through Private Enterprise in New England. (Amherst, Ma: University of Massachusetts Press, 1984), P. 13. Horace Fairbanks, who knew his workers on a first name basis, told them, "You should come to me as if to a father."

<sup>4</sup> Ibid, p. 13. The goal of companies was to protect their industrial investment through comprehensive planning and site control and secure employees by offering attractive working and living conditions.

<sup>5</sup> St. Johnsbury Illustrated, 1891, p.5.

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of immigration of primarily Irish workers and their families, who came to the United States through Eastern Canada. The immigrants stimulated a building boom and distinct neighborhoods with different socio-economic and physical characteristics developed. Although some French Canadians came to the town c. 1850 to work on the railroad, most were part of the second large wave of immigration accompanying the building of the east-west railroad line just before 1870, making St. Johnsbury a major crossroads of rail transportation.

While the first settlers to arrive in town were largely Anglos from lower New England and English Canada, the newer Irish and French Canadian immigrants stayed in town after the railroad was built, many becoming incorporated in the Fairbanks scale works employment force after company operations were enlarged in 1875<sup>6</sup> or taking advantage of the agricultural opportunities on farms vacated by the migration of earlier settlers to the West. These enterprising new citizens also rapidly became developers of new multi-family housing units constructed to accommodate a steady increase in population accompanying the general burgeoning economic activity and continued prosperity of the scale works through 1910. While housing units were largely owner-occupied in the first half of the 19th century, the increase in workers first led to many families taking in boarders and later the official conversion of many of these to apartments.

The construction of the railroad in St. Johnsbury accelerated the specialization within and commercialization of local agricultural enterprises which had been largely subsistence in the early part of the 19th century. By opening up markets for farm products, agriculture began to increase in scale and productivity. The invention of the insulated, iced railroad car c. 1855 led to the growth in the production of dairy products for a larger market. Sheep farming existed on a reduced scale due to competition with large western markets made accessible with improved transportation modes. Farms began to change in appearance as specialized structures were erected or rearranged according to function.

The railroad opened markets for the growth of the wood products and granite industries, both of which located important water-powered and later steam-powered

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<sup>6</sup> Garner, Op. Cit., p. 38. Most Gazetteers and later histories of the town, including this recent analysis of company towns, rely on the histories written by members of the Fairbanks family. These accounts focus on the contributions of the Fairbanks' as though they were solely responsible for the physical, social and cultural amenities of the town. Deed and census research performed as part of this context development reveals that direct control by the Fairbanks family has been exaggerated. Instead, the prosperity of the Fairbanks' appears to have served as a catalyst to attract and motivate extremely entrepreneurial individuals as professionals, business owners, and builders/developers of real estate. Several of the larger developers, including Horace Carpenter and James Foye, resided on Summer Street and are included as part of the development of that district nomination. Other smaller scale development was individually motivated as Irish and French Canadian immigrants saw housing for the workers who continued to flock to the town as a worthwhile investment.



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manufacturing mills near the depot on newly developed Railroad Street in St. Johnsbury village. The growth of farming combined with the rapid growth of industry placed increased demands on municipal and commercial services. Large public and commercial buildings began to line the principal thoroughfares, with several hotels in the central business district increasing accommodations for travelling salesmen and tourists. In 1880 the population of St. Johnsbury had grown to 5,800. The downtown district of St. Johnsbury achieved most of the present density of development during this time, although many of these buildings have since disappeared. Fires plagued the development of the central business district, with various entire blocks, especially on Railroad Street, consumed by major conflagrations. Most of the town's many churches, including two Catholic churches, were built during this period at the end of the 19th century. Larger, architecturally significant schools and hospitals were built. The period witnessed much entrepreneurial activity in the form of land developers who built tracts of housing for sale, a trend continuous from the settlement of the town to the present day. The Plain developed stately residences in the most up-to-date styles housing St. Johnsbury's "upper crust", while workers and immigrants developed closely-packed neighborhoods on the slope from the Plain to the river and in the Arlington and Summerville areas of the village. Outlying village centers with railroad depots also experienced similar, though smaller scale, growth at this time: East St. Johnsbury and St. Johnsbury Center. Architectural styles signalling this era of growth were the Greek Revival, Gothic Revival, Italianate, Second Empire, Romanesque and Queen Anne.

The economic boom in the late 1800's in St. Johnsbury resulting from technological and organizational innovation led to a growing differentiation of house forms. The balloon system of framing replaced heavy timber framing, steam-powered planers, jigsaws, bandsaws, and lathes manufactured architectural components, the contracting system organized carpenters, masons, and other trades, and lending institutions increased in number, capital and flexibility.

Taverns and inns had been built along the stagecoach routes of the mid-1800's. As technological innovation, industrialization, and regimented work schedules led to the time, need and resources for a period of leisure known as vacation, tourism became an increasingly important part of St. Johnsbury's service industry. This combined with official promotion of the healthful, pastoral benefits of the state by railroads and state agencies in the late 19th century to increase tourist visits to St. Johnsbury. A trend developed for some of the most scenic farms to take in summer boarders and the local hotels became well patronized. Three of the major hotels located in the central business core of St. Johnsbury included the New Avenue House (rebuilt from the Passumpsic House), the St. Johnsbury House and the Cottage Hotel. Many of the farms grew produce for the hotels, with expanded business in the early 20th century continuing to enrich the local economy. Also at the end of the 19th century, seasonal cottages ("camps") began to be built around ponds and lakes in neighboring towns, providing a number of economic benefits to the region. Tourism, once begun, continued at varying rates throughout the 20th century. The wide access to the automobile after World War II stimulated roadside cottage and motel development along Routes 5 and 2 in St. Johnsbury. The loss of passenger train service in the 1950's led to an

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increased dependence upon the automobile, with commercial strip and gas station development along highways proliferating.

The first quarter of the 20th century saw a decline in the lumber industry as the demands of the newly invented newsprint process were more easily filled by the vast reserves of timber in the west. Also, forests were depleted during the boom in the industry in the late 19th century. The economy of St. Johnsbury was not affected as much as that of surrounding communities more dependent upon forest resources, who lost population as forest workers left to seek work elsewhere. The Fairbanks Scale Works continued to flourish, and several local work projects actually increased population, until it had reached 9,656 persons in 1930 (the 5th largest city in Vermont). Immigrants from French Canada continued to come to St. Johnsbury, along with smaller numbers of other nationalities. In 1906, after electric lights had become a way of life in town, the St. Johnsbury Gas Company built a plant on S. Main St., importing 100 Italian workers from Naples to lay the pipe. Many of these workers remained in town and moved on to employment at the scale works. The construction of dams nearby on the Passumpsic River in 1928, employing 4,000 workers, continued to swell the area population. Conversions of homes into apartments and the construction of tenements reached a peak during the first quarter of the 20th century, as local society was restructured to capitalize on the rental of multi-family housing. The large, 5 story, Colonial Apartment building with 250 rooms was constructed in 1928 on the corner of Main and Church Streets as the culmination of this economic boom, which ended in the Great Depression. Architectural forms and styles characterizing the 20th century include the Colonial Revival style (often combined with Queen Anne style elements), the American Foursquare, Neo-Colonial Revival, Adirondack style, and Bungalow style.

The central business district of St. Johnsbury has continued to be altered by fires during the 20th century. By the present day, most of the original wood business blocks have been replaced. Beginning in the 1970's, there has been much commercial development along major highways just outside the village, especially along Routes 2 and 5, obliterating some of the original separation of the central business core from the rural countryside. A mall constructed in the 1970's north of St. Johnsbury has threatened the economic viability of the central business district and has contributed to the vacancy rate of buildings there. The large, imposing New Avenue House on the prominent Railroad St./Eastern Avenue corner remains vacant, with empty store fronts boarded against vandalism. With the construction of the junction of Interstates 89 and 91 just south of the village of St. Johnsbury c. 1980, the southern Route 5 access was widened and straightened to change the character of the area entirely. The location at this important junction has opened the town to further development on the three exit/entrance roads, and Route 5 north to Lyndon has seen much strip development.

The Fairbanks Company came into the control of the Fairbanks, Morse & Company of Chicago after the original family members had passed on in the 20th century. The company became a subsidiary of Colt Industries after World War II and only very recently reclaimed the name "Fairbanks Scales". The large plant, built after a fire destroyed original buildings in 1876 on the Sleepers River, became outmoded and was replaced in 1967 with a new plant of 200,000 square feet on Route 2 east of

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St. Johnsbury. Although reduced in numbers of its work force (in 1930 the Fairbanks company employed 800 workers), the employment of approximately 400 people still maintains Fairbanks as one of the largest employers in town. The site of the original factory was destroyed by fire in the 1970s, but some archeological remains and the Erecting Shop, Lubricant Storage Building, and Pattern House still mark the old location of this once thriving village/ industrial complex.

Much of the landscape of the outlying areas of St. Johnsbury today continues to reflect the town's strong agricultural tradition. In certain districts, not only houses and barns, but entire farmscapes survive, with open fields and stone walls delineating original agricultural activities on the landscape. Of these areas, the area from Crow Hill west, the Stark District, Goss Hollow, Bible Hill, parts of the Spaulding District, and Chesterfield Hollow continue to evoke this original farming tradition, with scattered modern residences contrasting with the winding network of dirt roads.

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The Historic & Architectural  
Resources of St. Johnsbury, VT:  
Residential Historic District

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**I. Name of Property Type: Residential Historic District**

**II. Description**

The Residential Historic District in St. Johnsbury, Vermont, may include a number of different buildings directly related to residential housing: main house, ells and wings, porches, attached or free-standing carriage barns/garages, sheds, landscaping elements such as fences, stone walls, natural plantings, driveways, and sometimes sidewalks. Residences may be single-family or multi-family types such as double houses, flats or apartments. Also included in some districts are various commercial, public and/or industrial buildings which complement the residential character: schools, playgrounds/parks, hospitals, nursing homes, multi-family housing, professional offices such as those occupied by lawyers or doctors, house museums, retail sales outlets, blacksmith shops, cemeteries, and churches.

Buildings are usually from 1 to 3 stories in height, and are constructed primarily of wood, stone, and/or brick. In rare cases, buildings may be as much as 5 stories in height. The principal buildings comprising the district are densely set and usually have a common setback ranging from close to the road to approximately 40 feet back from the street; the setback usually remains uniform throughout each particular district. A variation in arrangement includes small alleys with buildings arranged around a court. Principal entrances usually are oriented to the street or alley/court, with the layout of the house plan generated from that criteria according to prevailing practice.

Residential historic districts usually exhibit a mix of elements from a number of historic periods. Styles of the principal buildings may vary from c. 1800 to the present, with a concentration of numbers from a certain era as exemplified by the prevailing architectural styles. Styles may include: Federal, Greek and/or Gothic Revival, Italianate, Second Empire, Queen Anne, Colonial Revival, Bungalow, and Neo-Colonial Revival. Residential Historic Districts in St. Johnsbury tend to have a preponderance of styles from their period of initial development in the mid-to-late 19th century: the late Greek/Gothic Revival, Italianate, and Queen Anne styles. Several districts developed during the first half of the 20th century and exhibit Colonial Revival and neo-Colonial Revival style elements.

Groups of residences and other building types included in the district often were built by one builder/architect as speculative housing or by private commission. Some of these builders have been documented, and the study of design elements and stock manufactured details of the period may reveal similarities from which to attribute the builder/architect to other undocumented residences. Some residences may exhibit outstanding design/architectural details which overshadow the more common interpretations of style in the district and could also be eligible for National Register listing on an individual basis under Criterion C. Outbuildings and secondary structures may exhibit similar architectural detail as the principal residence, but are more usually vernacular in conception.

Residential Historic Districts also significant under the associative

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characteristics of Criterion A and/or B may have more vernacular interpretations of style and workmanship or may have a lesser degree of original building integrity than those significant primarily under Criterion C. These characteristics will be discussed further under the Property Type Significance portion of Section F. Residential historic districts in St. Johnsbury are likely to also have significance under local/state Social History and/or Community Planning and Development as research about occupants, ethnic heritage, occupation, ownership/building patterns and lot development reveals details appropriate to these categories. Residential Historic Districts may have been a development by a nearby 19th century mill owner, original investor/proprietor, later land developer or carpenter/builder. Individual or scattered groups of buildings may be related to investments by one speculator. In many cases, residences may be attributed to a local builder and/or developer who was locally prominent during a particular period of local history. Building patterns, such as alley-and-court arrangements, may be related to builders responding to the needs of occupants/owners of a particular ethnic heritage (in the St. Johnsbury case - French Canadian heritage of the occupants).

Locational patterns of Residential Historic Districts are related to historic locations of work sites, such as commercial town centers, mills, quarries, stone sheds, etc. These neighborhoods are usually sited within areas of town that are densely developed as village centers rather than in outlying rural areas with large amounts of open space separating resources. The location of the district also originally tended to be segregated according to the heritage and/or social status of the owners/occupants, with some of these original neighborhood distinguishing characteristics remaining. For example, those districts on the Plain of St. Johnsbury Village tended to be occupied by professionals and business owners employed on nearby Main/Eastern Ave./Railroad St., while those districts on the slope of the terrace from the Plain to the river or immediately around a former mill site on a water source were usually occupied by workers. Those individual resources significant as outstanding architecture (Criterion C) are usually also connected to an individual owner significant in local history (Criterion B).

Boundaries for Residential Historic Districts often require historic research to distinguish differing associative characteristics from apparent architectural cohesiveness. As the body of research develops relative to this property type, it may be that district boundaries will be altered to include adjoining areas found to have common physical/associative characteristics or to separate areas presently joined that are found to have different characteristics. Portions of residential districts have been and may continue to be included in commercial districts, as certain streets evolved into village centers over time. The development of the Residential Historic District property type as part of this multiple property nomination may help facilitate the organization of future nominations and points toward the necessity to develop the property type termed Downtown Historic District or Commercial Historic District.

Changes to Residential Historic Districts over time include: change in location and siting; construction of garages; conversion of carriage barns into housing or garages; tearing down of old, functionally obsolete buildings; moving or

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remodeling existing primary structures for new uses; conversion into multi-family housing; addition of details, such as porches, sash, siding, of more modern style/materials; changes in density of the district; addition or removal of landscaping elements; and conversions/construction of commercial and public buildings as the district evolves.

**III. Significance**

Residential Historic Districts are found throughout the town of St. Johnsbury, Vermont, and are significant in illustrating important aspects of the town's community development. They embody both the physical and associative qualities of significance described by Criteria A, B, and C. They are historically significant under Criterion A for their association with events in social history and in community planning and development that have contributed to broad patterns of our developmental history. Historic Residential Districts also may be associated with lives of persons, such as carpenters, entrepreneurs, industrial owners, and developers, who are significant in local, state, or national history. Individual elements within the districts may be architecturally significant under Criterion C for embodying the styles, forms, and methods of engineering and construction as associated with home/multi-family housing and related commercial/public buildings popular in St. Johnsbury, Vermont and the nation in the 18th, 19th and 20th centuries. While the potential to yield archaeological information exists to some degree (Criterion D), it is more likely that the property type will be nominated under the other criteria. Also included as part of the residential neighborhood is the multi-family housing property type developed as part of this multiple property submission and described in more detail in the appropriate portion of the nomination.

While the early history of the town was largely subsistence agriculture with farmsteads spread over the surface of the township, industrial/commercial development initiated the type of more compact residential development defined by this property type as homes for workers grew around work sites. As natural outgrowths in response to environmental/geographical factors as opposed to development arising from the original grid "zoning" of the town, residential districts depended on favorable economic factors for their initiation, development and survival. Small residential districts began to slowly develop in what were becoming the village centers of the town along the major transportation routes. Because these village centers were dependent upon power and goods turned out by mills run by water power, it is no coincidence that the villages developed along the numerous rivers and streams in the town.

As early as 1820, housing and services such as stores were developed around mill sites, especially evident in what was to become Fairbanks village and Paddocks Village in the Village of St. Johnsbury. After the invention by Thaddeus Fairbanks of the platform scale c. 1830, the future success of the Fairbanks Scale Works depended on the ability to attract outside labor and to house those workers in attractive housing close to the factory. Further economic development and business expansion with the accompanying in-migration of workers, business owners, and service professionals, depended upon the advent of a reliable means of transportation to move goods in and out of the region and connect with world-

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wide markets. The construction of the major north/south railroad route in 1850, the Connecticut and Passumpsic Rivers Railroad (later Canadian Pacific), resulted in significant immigration from Canada of primarily Irish railroad workers, with some French Canadian workers arriving as well.

The influx of workers created a housing shortage, and many established residents who had settled in town from areas in southern New England or English Canada responded by becoming building/housing developers or taking in roomers. For instance, original settler Jonathan Arnold, various members of the Fairbanks family, as well as such developers as Andrews and Bancroft, who owned large village tracts of land, established residential streets on the Plain and around mill works which had such deed restrictions and setbacks that would determine the future residential character of the town's neighborhoods after lots were developed. Developments of housing on large acreages is evident in the Summerville (Howe and Hovey, late 19th century) and Arlington (L. Buzzell, and the "Fairlawn" development, late 19th c. and early 20th c.) areas of St. Johnsbury Village, a trend which continues to expand the numbers of residential districts to the present. Further research will reveal similar land development ventures of residential neighborhood development within town limits. Census data reveals that it became common practice for owners of single family residences to take in a number of boarders who shared kitchen and sanitary facilities. In the more upper class neighborhoods that were developing on the Plain and were home to most of the original, Anglo settlers of the town, boarders were usually single individuals of a younger age who were beginning employment in the area or were servants in the household. These social practices became even more widespread as the community grew in response to the construction c. 1870 of the major east/west railroad, the Portland and Ogdensburg Railroad. For instance, in the newly developing neighborhoods occupied by the Irish and French-Canadian immigrants on the slopes of the terrace to the river and railroad as well as in Summerville, houses were often crowded with several families, related and unrelated, sharing facilities. While residential districts, especially those neighborhoods which were enclaves for Irish and French Canadian immigrants, had also included multi-family building types such as tenements or apartments since the mid-19th century, the practice of converting single family residences and building apartments peaked at the beginning of the 20th century.

Fairbanks mill owners, aware of the power and responsibility of their position for more than just their employees means of subsistence, had built a boarding house near the factory by 1820, 10 units of worker housing on what was later known as Cliff Street by 1858, and several apartments and many additional housing units along Western Avenue, School St. and Forest St. by 1875. Individual ownership of these worker units was encouraged by deducting the mortgage payments from the scale factory worker's wages.

Research of the residential and ownership patterns of these buildings and districts reveal several well-known builders and developers who capitalized on the housing shortage to provide their livelihood. Horace Carpenter is a good example of this social phenomenon. Carpenter was a resident of Summer St. on the Plain in St. Johnsbury Village, a residential district where many of the town's business owners, professionals or upper level workers lived. He built his own

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house, was a building contractor and sash and blind factory owner, landowner/developer of Spring and Cliff Streets, and contractor for many of the area's major building projects during the middle of the 19th century. His direct involvement in the development of several residential historic districts on the Hill is documented and comparisons of building components used in other houses suggest other houses that may be attributed to him. A later, well known builder with widespread influence, James Foye, bought and occupied Carpenter's house, remodelling it c. 1915 into an apartment house. The involvement of Lambert Packard, former Fairbanks Company architect, in the design of many residences on the Plain can be substantiated in a similar manner.

The Clarks Avenue area of St. Johnsbury Village reveals a trend for Irish immigrants to quickly rise to the position of developer/landlord for later French Canadian immigrants. French Canadian immigrants later became landlords themselves, as their social stature improved after coming to the town. In this area of town, which tended to house the town's worker population, housing specifically built as tenements quickly arose c. 1875, a practice which peaked during the first part of the 20th century. This district illustrates the inclusion in some residential districts of public buildings, as two Catholic churches, rectories, and parochial schools were constructed within the neighborhood. Peter P. Lonergan, an Irish landowner with considerable holdings in the district, built a spec apartment house c. 1878, selling it in 1881 to what was the beginning of a long line of French Canadian owners/renters of the house until 1977. T.J. Tierney, another Irish developer in the district, commissioned two tenement houses on Clarks Ave.: one in 1896 and another in 1906, constructed by Joe Brunelle and occupied by French Canadian workers (source: US Census records and directories). A French Canadian developer of apartments in the Clarks Avenue area was Connecticut and Passumpsic River Railroad official, Joseph Trudell, who immigrated c. 1850 and encouraged the second wave of immigrants with similar ethnic backgrounds during the railroad expansion of 1870. He built large, brick veneered tenements near the upper bend of the Avenue which were crowded by many French Canadian families. A similar later example is provided by Joseph Gauthier, who immigrated from French Canada in 1868 and by 1885 was investing in apartment houses, one of which he occupied, on upper Eastern Avenue, where he constructed a large tenement in 1889. By 1896 Gauthier had purchased the former Catholic Cemetery in Summerville and began developing Washington Ave. with large, impressive homes, including one for himself designed by the firm Packard and Thorne. The Maple Street and Elm Street areas of town disclose a practice of constructing areas of closely spaced houses in an alley/court arrangement, which is revealed through research to be connected with the French Canadian social practices of the original occupants, who tended to be close relatives. Further research in other districts within the village and township will uncover other patterns of entrepreneurial involvement by builder/architect/developers.

Residential neighborhoods embody, in their interpretations of prevailing architectural styles and through the accumulation of additions and alterations in later styles, the transitions represented in the social history of the district and the town. Most residential districts reflect styles prevailing during the mid-to-late 19th century: Greek Revival, Italianate, and Queen Anne, with some Gothic Revival and Second Empire examples. Porches tended to be



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replaced with Colonial Revival style examples as the originals deteriorated. Large infill apartment houses tended to be built in existing neighborhoods at the turn of the 20th century. They may be a mix of Colonial Revival and Queen Anne in style, or have Shingle Style or bungalow features. The sustainment of the local economy led to the continual development of neighborhoods until the start of the Depression. Hurricane damage in 1938 caused area-wide period repairs. Some areas continue to be changed by the effects of fire, rehabilitation efforts, deterioration, and the straightening and widening of roads.

**IV. Registration Requirements**

The Residential Historic District property type consists of individual buildings, most of which will be residential, and perhaps other historic resources such as fountains, street furniture, or bridges, which form a recognizable neighborhood. These districts will usually be eligible for the National Register under criterion C for being significant and distinguishable entities whose components may lack individual distinction. They may also be eligible under criterion A for having historic significance, usually under social history, ethnic heritage, community planning and development. Further research will be necessary to determine if such districts may be eligible under criteria B and D. These districts are most likely to be found in St. Johnsbury village, but may also exist in other villages in the town.

In general, districts should retain their historic density and spacing of buildings, with individual elements continuing to evoke their residential character and period of construction and/or period of historic changes through basic integrity of materials, design, setting, and association. Individual buildings within districts may be good examples of or display elements of the Federal, Greek Revival, Gothic Revival, Italianate, Second Empire, Queen Anne, Colonial Revival, Bungalow, Shingle, or Neo-Colonial styles, or may be vernacular with little or no ornamentation.

Individual elements within the district are likely to have evolved over time. Such changes may include additions to existing buildings, new construction, and some relocations of buildings. Changes made since the historic period should not visually overwhelm the traditional structures and relationships between elements to the point where the residential historic district can no longer be understood. Historic commercial, industrial, or public buildings and/or non-contributing elements

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or changes of historic functions to new uses within the district should not overwhelm the historic residential character or feeling.

(See also section 7 information for the multi-family housing property type.)

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I. Name of Property Type: Residential Historic District

II. Description

The multi-family housing property type in St. Johnsbury, Vermont, may include a number of different types of buildings related to residential housing: a historically single family house that was altered during the historic period to include apartments, a double house with separate living units and facilities, an apartment house (tenements or flats) with some shared entrances but separate units, boarding houses, and perhaps hotels. Accessory buildings include attached or detached carriage barns and/or garages, sheds, landscaping elements such as fences, stone walls, natural plantings, driveways, and sidewalks. Most multi-family housing is likely to also be contained in residential historic districts (see pp. F.1 to F.7).

Buildings of the multi-family housing type in St. Johnsbury are usually significant for the physical characteristics typical of Criterion C, many representing a distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction. The buildings are usually from 1 to 5 stories in height, with a concentration of 2-1/2 story resources. Reference is made to the property type Residential Historic District for further description of physical characteristics of the setting. Hotels and large boarding houses may constitute a separate property type which should be further investigated. Multi-family housing usually exhibits a mix of elements from a number of historical periods. Boarding houses were evident in St. Johnsbury from 1820, were of a large scale, and reflected utilitarian interpretations of the Federal style, Greek Revival, Italianate, Queen Anne and Colonial Revival styles. Single family housing later converted to accommodate multiple families often reflects original styles from the mid-to-late 19th century, a period of housing expansion in St. Johnsbury: Greek Revival, Gothic Revival, Italianate, Second Empire, and Queen Anne. The period of conversion of these units officially to apartments was at the turn of the century, with porches and specific alterations reflecting the Queen Anne and Colonial Revival styles. Buildings constructed specifically as apartments/tenements/flats tended to concentrate in the period from 1870, exhibiting Italianate, late Greek Revival, Queen Anne and Colonial Revival style characteristics, as well as updates in the later styles already enumerated.

Groups of multi-family residences were often included in residential districts and often were built by one builder/architect as speculative housing or by private commission. Some of these builders have been documented, and the study of design elements and stock manufactured details of the period may reveal similarities from which to attribute the builder/architect to other undocumented residences. Some multi-family housing may exhibit outstanding design/architectural details which overshadow the more common interpretations of style in the district and could also be eligible for National Register listing on an individual basis under Criterion C. Outbuildings and secondary structures may exhibit similar architectural detail as the principal residence, but are more usually vernacular in conception.

Multi-family housing also significant under the associative characteristics of

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Criterion A and/or B may have more vernacular interpretations of style and workmanship or lesser degree of original building integrity than those significant primarily under Criterion C. These associative characteristics will be discussed further under the Property Type Significance portion of Section F. Multi-family housing may, aside from Architecture, have significance under local/state Social History or Industry as research about occupants, ethnic heritage, occupation, ownership/building patterns and lot development reveals details appropriate to these categories. Certain types of multi-family housing may have been developed by an industrial magnate, land developer or carpenter/builder. Individual resources or scattered groups of this building type may be attributed to a local builder and/or developer who was locally prominent during a particular period of local history. Their location in certain districts of specific ethnic and socio-economic character reflects social history of the town in which developers and/or builders responded to the needs of a certain ethnic class of residents.

Locational patterns of multi-family housing are related to the discussion in the section Residential Historic Districts. Reference is made to this portion of the multiple property documentation form for further discussion. Multi-family housing tended at first to be located in neighborhoods inhabited by working class residents, rather than the upper classes in the town. During the peak of construction in the first quarter of the 20th century, the property type had become widely adapted to a larger social range of residents. Boundaries for this property type often include districts, but are most often limited to the city lot historically associated with the property.

Changes to multi-family housing over time include change in location and siting; construction of garages; conversion of former carriage barns; addition of elements, such as porches, sash, siding of more recent style/materials; addition or removal of landscaping elements; widening of roads.

### III. Significance

Examples of the multi-family housing property type are found throughout the town of St. Johnsbury, Vermont, and are significant in illustrating important aspects of the town's community development. They embody both the physical and associative qualities of significance described by Criteria A, B, and C. They are historically significant under Criterion A for their association with events in social history and in community planning and development that have contributed to broad patterns of our developmental history. Multi-family housing also may be associated with lives of persons, such as carpenters, entrepreneurs, industrial owners, and developers, who are significant in local, state, or national history according to Criterion B. Individual elements may be architecturally significant under Criterion C for embodying the styles, forms, and methods of engineering and construction as associated with multi-family housing popular in St. Johnsbury, Vermont and the nation in the 18th, 19th and 20th centuries. While the potential to yield archaeological information exists to some degree (Criterion D), it is more likely that the property type will be nominated under the other criteria.

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The material presented under the property type, multi-family housing, is contained in the portion of the nomination related to residential historic districts. It will be repeated to some extent in this section for ease of reference.

While the early history of the town was largely subsistence agriculture with farmsteads spread over the surface of the township, industrial/commercial development initiated the type of more compact residential development as homes for workers grew around work sites. As natural outgrowths in response to environmental/geographical factors as opposed to development arising from the original grid "zoning" of the town, residential districts depended on favorable economic factors for their initiation, development and survival. Small residential districts began to slowly develop in what were becoming the village centers of the town along the major transportation routes. Because these village centers were dependent upon power and goods turned out by mills run by water power, it is no coincidence that the villages developed along the numerous rivers and streams in the town.

As early as 1820, housing and services such as stores were developed around mill sites, especially evident in what was to become Fairbanks village and Paddocks Village in the Village of St. Johnsbury. After the invention by Thaddeus Fairbanks of the platform scale c. 1830, the future success of the Fairbanks Scale Works depended on the ability to attract outside labor and to house those workers in attractive housing close to the factory. Further economic development and business expansion with the accompanying in-migration of workers, business owners, and service professionals, depended upon the advent of a reliable means of transportation to move goods in and out of the region and connect with world-wide markets. The construction of the major north/south railroad route in 1850, the Connecticut and Passumpsic Rivers Railroad (later Canadian Pacific), resulted in significant immigration from Canada of primarily Irish railroad workers, with some French Canadian workers arriving as well.

The influx of workers created a housing shortage, and many established residents who had settled in town from areas in southern New England or English Canada responded by becoming building/housing developers or taking in roomers, thereby adding to the multi-family housing stock. For instance, original settler Jonathan Arnold, various members of the Fairbanks family, and such developers as Andrews and Bancroft, who owned large village tracts of land, established residential streets on the Plain and around mill works which had such deed restrictions and setbacks that would determine the future residential character of the town's neighborhoods after lots were developed. Developments of housing on large acreages of all types of housing, including many multi-family housing units, is also evident in the Summerville (Howe and Hovey, late 19th century) and Arlington (L. Buzzell, and the "Fairlawn" development, late 19th c. and early 20th c.) areas of St. Johnsbury Village, a trend which continues to expand the numbers of residential districts and multi-family housing units to the present. Further research will reveal similar land development ventures of residential neighborhood development within town limits and should be targeted to located other extant examples of multi-family housing. Census data reveals that it became common practice for owners of single family residences to take in a number

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of boarders who shared kitchen and sanitary facilities, making additional bedrooms in such areas as attics and rear wings/ells. In the more upper class neighborhoods that were developing on the Plain and were home to most of the original, Anglo settlers of the town, boarders were usually single individuals of a younger age who were beginning employment in the area or were servants in the household. These social practices became even more widespread as the community grew in response to the construction c. 1870 of the major east/west railroad, the Portland and Ogdensburg Railroad. For instance, in the newly developing neighborhoods occupied by the Irish and French-Canadian immigrants on the slopes of the terrace to the river and railroad as well as in Summerville, apparent single family houses were usually crowded with several families, related and unrelated, sharing facilities. While residential districts, especially those neighborhoods which were enclaves for Irish and French Canadian immigrants, had also included multi-family building types such as tenements or apartments since the mid-19th century, the practice of converting single family residences and building apartments peaked at the beginning of the 20th century.

Fairbanks mill owners, aware of the power and responsibility of their position for more than just their employees means of subsistence, had built a boarding house near the factory by 1820, 10 units of worker housing on what was later known as Cliff Street by 1858, and many apartments/tenements and additional housing units along Western Avenue, School St. and Forest St. by 1875. Individual ownership of these worker units was encouraged by deducting the mortgage payments from the scale factory worker's wages.

Hotels proliferated in St. Johnsbury after the advent of the railroad in 1850, although local taverns had developed along stage roads by the turn of the 19th century. Many travelling salesmen or business owners occupied hotel rooms as living quarters in a manner similar to a boarding house. However, the structural and scale differences of these buildings are sufficient to warrant a separate property type section for hotels.

Research of the residential and ownership patterns of multi-family housing and districts reveal several well-known builders and developers who capitalized on the housing shortage to provide their livelihood. Horace Carpenter is a good example of this social phenomenon. Carpenter was a resident of Summer St. on the Plain in St. Johnsbury Village, a residential district where many of the town's business owners, professionals or upper level workers lived. He built his own house, was a building contractor and sash and blind factory owner, landowner/developer of Spring and Cliff Streets, and contractor for many of the area's major building projects during the middle of the 19th century. His direct involvement in the development of several residential historic districts and multi-family housing on the Hill is readily available and comparisons of building components used in other houses suggest other houses that may be attributed to him. A later, well known builder with widespread influence, James Foye, bought and occupied Carpenter's house, remodelling it c. 1915 into an apartment house. The involvement of Lambert Packard, former Fairbanks Company architect, in the design of many residences on the Plain that had apartments and boarders in the early 20th century can be substantiated in a similar manner.

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The Clarks Avenue area of St. Johnsbury Village reveals a trend for Irish immigrants to quickly rise to the position of developer/landlord for later French Canadian immigrants who occupied the largely multi-family housing there. French Canadian immigrants later became landlords themselves, as their social stature improved after coming to the town. In this area of town, which tended to house the town's worker population, housing specifically built as tenements quickly arose c. 1875, a practice which peaked during the first part of the 20th century. This district illustrates the inclusion in some residential districts of public buildings, as two Catholic churches, rectories, and parochial schools were constructed within the neighborhood. Peter P. Lonergan, an Irish landowner with considerable holdings in the district, built a spec apartment house c. 1878, selling it in 1881 to what was the beginning of a long line of French Canadian owners/renters of the house until 1977. T.J. Tierney, another Irish developer in the district, commissioned two tenement houses on Clarks Ave.: one in 1896 and another in 1906, constructed by Joe Brunelle and occupied by French Canadian workers (see subsequent US Census records and directories). A French Canadian developer of apartments in the Clarks Avenue area was Connecticut and Passumpsic River Railroad official, Joseph Trudell, who immigrated c. 1850 and encouraged the second wave of immigrants with similar ethnic backgrounds during the railroad expansion of 1870. He built large, brick veneered tenements near the upper bend of the Avenue which were crowded by many French Canadian families. A similar later example is provided by Joseph Gauthier, who immigrated from French Canada in 1868 and by 1885, was investing in apartment houses, one of which he occupied, on upper Eastern Avenue, where he constructed a large tenement in 1889. By 1896 Gauthier had purchased the former Catholic Cemetery in Summerville and began developing Washington Ave. with large, impressive homes, including one for himself designed by the firm Packard and Thorne. The Maple Street and Elm Street areas of town disclose a practice of constructing areas of closely spaced houses occupied by multiple families in an alley/court arrangement, which is revealed through research to be connected with the French Canadian social practices of the original occupants, who tended to be close relatives. Further research in other districts within the village and township will uncover other patterns of entrepreneurial involvement by builder/architect/developers.

Multi-family housing embodies, in interpretations of prevailing architectural styles and through the accumulation of additions and alterations in later styles, the transitions represented in the social history of the district and the town. Most residential districts reflect styles prevailing during the mid-to-late 19th century: Greek Revival, Italianate, and Queen Anne, with some Gothic Revival and Second Empire examples. Porches tended to be replaced with Colonial Revival style examples as the originals deteriorated. Large apartment houses tended to be built as infill in existing neighborhood during the last quarter of the 19th century and at the turn of the 20th century, reflecting a mix of Colonial Revival and Queen Anne, with some examples of the Shingle and Bungaloid styles in garages. Neighborhoods continued to develop, especially until 1929, when the local economy continued to provide employment for growing numbers of people. The Colonial Apartments, a large 5 story apartment building with 250 rooms, was constructed in 1928 on the corner of Main and Church Streets in the village as the culmination of this economic boom. The Great Depression brought a halt to residential development during a difficult period of overwhelming financial

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problems and massive unemployment, with a recovery beginning by the start of World War II. Multi-family housing has continued to evolve over time, undergoing rehabilitation, receiving additions or other alterations, or in some cases deteriorating because of lack of maintenance.

**IV. Registration Requirements**

The physical characteristics and design integrity of the multi-family housing property type is as stated in the property type description and statement of significance. These resources have individual elements that have evolved over time and include additions, new construction, and perhaps relocation of buildings that may not detract from resource eligibility. Examples of the property type will usually meet registration requirements under criterion C because of their traditional styles, forms, and plans, which clearly will reflect their multi-family occupation.

There may be a number of multi-family houses that will also be eligible for the National Register as contributing resources in residential historic districts (see pp. F.1 to F.7.) Some of the most outstanding resources will meet the registration requirements not only because they clearly reflect their function but because they display a significant number of stylistic features of the Federal, Greek Revival, Gothic Revival, Italianate, Second Empire, Queen Anne, Colonial Revival, Shingle, or Neo-Classical styles. These resources should retain individual elements evoking their residential use and their period of construction or period of historic alterations through materials, design, setting, feeling, workmanship, and association. There may be historic period additions or alterations, which should either not significantly detract from the original construction or should be of sufficient architectural and/or historical quality so as to compliment or supplement the original significance or be of significance in its own right. Non-historic period additions or alterations should not overwhelm the integrity of scale, the architectural materials or design, or the residential feeling of the resource.

Multi-family housing may meet registration requirements under criterion A if the special relational elements and associations with social history, ethnic history, community development and planning, or other area of history remains clear. Housing eligible under criterion B should retain the important features associating the resource with significant persons.



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**G. Geographical Data**

The corporate limits of the town of St. Johnsbury, Caledonia County, Vermont.

**H. Summary of Identification and Evaluation Methods**

The multiple property listing of the historic and architectural resources of St. Johnsbury, Vermont, was based on the Vermont Historic Sites and Structures Survey of the town conducted in the 1970s and 1980s by the Vermont Division for Historic Preservation. This survey identified most of the historic buildings in town. Field architectural historians drove every road in town, and checked and photographed all resources that appeared eligible for the State Register of Historic Places. Surveyors made notes on the physical appearance of each buildings, interviewed property owners if they were available, conducted research, filled out detailed survey forms, and plotted the locations on USGS maps. For the preparation of the multiple property listing, some areas of the town were revisited.

The historic context identified for this initial submittal for the multiple property listing (Community Development of St. Johnsbury, Vermont: 1786-1945) was determined to be the theme that would be the most immediately useful for understanding and nominating historic housing stock individually or in residential historic districts. The time period dates from the first white settlement of the town through the historic period. Significant sources for developing the context were the survey, U.S. Census manuscripts, Sanborn insurance maps, local newspapers, and town directories. These sources revealed much about local social and ethnic history that previously had not been gathered. The two initial property types--multi-family housing and residential historic districts--were based on building function. The requirements for integrity were based on an assessment of the condition of existing properties.

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INTERVIEWS

Claire Dunn Johnson, St. Johnsbury, October, 1991.

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