NATIONAL

1757

United States Department of the Interior National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES

REGISTRATION FORM	REGISTER
nistoric name: <u>COLUMBIA GREEN HISTORIC DISTRICT</u>	
other name/site number: N/A	
2. Location street & number: <u>Route 66 and Route 87</u>	
not for pub	olication: <u>N/A</u>
city/town:Columbiavicinity: _	N/A
state: <u>CT</u> county: <u>Tolland</u> code: <u>013</u> zi	ip code: <u>06237</u>
3. Classification Ownership of Property: <u>private, public-local</u>	
Category of Property: <u>district</u>	
Number of Resources within Property:	
Contributing Noncontributing	
42 23 buildings 2 sites 5 structures 1 3 objects 45 26 Total Number of contributing resources previously listed in the Interviously stated in the Interviou	National
Register:0	

Name of related multiple property listing: N/A

		=====		
4. State/F	Pederal Agency Certification	ì		
	signated authority under the			
of 1986, a	as amended, I hereby certify	that	this <u>X</u> nominatio	on
request fo	or determination of eligibil	lity me	ets the documentati	ion
standards	for registering properties	in the	National Register	of
	Places and meets the procedu			
	in 36 CFR Part 60. In my o			
	not meet the National Regis			
	mount I mille		10/17/90	
Signature	of certifying official		Date	
John W. Shan	nahan, State Historic Preservation	on Offic	er	
	•		-	
State or F	rederal agency and bureau			
In my opir	nion, the property meet	:s	does not meet the	National
	riteria See continuat			
_				
Signature	of commenting or other offi	cial	Date	
State or F	Pederal agency and bureau			
				========
National	al Park Service Certificatio	n		
========	=======================================	======		
I, hereby	certify that this property	is:		
1/				
	ed in the National Register			
	See continuation sheet.			
	mined eligible for the			
	onal Register			
	See continuation sheet.			
deter	mined not eligible for the	·		
	onal Register			
remov	red from the National Regist	er		
other	(explain):	-		
			12 8/4	12/6/90
-			John Jacob	
		S	ignature of Keeper	
		•		of Action
		=====		
6. Function				
Historic:	DOMESTIC		single dwelling	
	AGRICULTURE/SUBSISTENCE		agricultural outh	
	COMMERCE/TRADE		specialty store,	
	RELIGION		religious structu	ire
	GOVERNMENT		library	
Current:	DOMESTIC	Sub:	single dwelling	
	RELIGION		<u>religious structu</u>	
	GOVERNMENT		library, city hal	.1
	COMMEDCE /TPADE		enecialty store	restaurant

X See continuation sheet.

7. Description
Architectural Classification:
Greek Revival Oueen Anne COLONIAL
Other Description: N/A
Materials: foundation STONE roof ASPHALT walls WOOD other BRICK
Describe present and historic physical appearance. X See continuation sheet.
8. Statement of Significance
Applicable National Register Criteria: <u>A,C</u>
Criteria Considerations (Exceptions) :G_
Areas of Significance: EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT POLITICS/GOVERNMENT ARCHITECTURE LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE RELIGION
Period(s) of Significance: <u>c.1735-1941</u>
Significant Dates: <u>See inventory, Item 7</u>
Significant Person(s): N/A
Cultural Affiliation: N/A
Architect/Builder: Wilton E. Little
State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.

9. Major Bibliographical References	
X See continuation sheet.	
Previous documentation on file (NPS):	
<pre>_ preliminary determination of individual listi requested.</pre>	ing (36 CFR 67) has been
<pre>_ previously listed in the National Register _ previously determined eligible by the National _ designated a National Historic Landmark _ recorded by Historic American Buildings Surve _ recorded by Historic American Engineering Recorded</pre>	ey #
Primary Location of Additional Data:	
<pre>X State historic preservation office, 59 South _ Other state agency _ Federal agency _ Local government _ University _ Other Specify Repository:</pre>	CT 06106
10. Geographical Data Acreage of Property: approx. 35	
UTM References: Zone Easting Northing Zone Ea	asting Northing
A B	
X See continuation sheet.	
Verbal Boundary Description: See continuate The boundary is shown on the accompanying and reduced from Columbia Assessor Maps	ng map, scale 1"=200', traced
Boundary Justification: See continuation so The boundary includes historic buildings immediately adjacent to or nearby the Gr of modern construction. The boundary for except where it crosses properties in or back acreage.	s, objects, and sites reen and excludes buildings ollows rear property lines rder to exclude excessive
11. Form Prepared By	
=======================================	
Name/Title: Bruce Clouette and Matthew Roth, Re	
Organization: <u>Historic Resource Consultants</u>	Register Coordinator Date: March 20, 1990
Street & Number: 55 Van Dyke Avenue	Telephone: 203-547-0268
City or Town: Hartford	State: CT ZIP: 06106

NPS Form 10-900-a (8-86)

United States Department of the Interior National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET

Description

Columbia Green Historic District 7-1 Columbia, CT

The Columbia Green Historic District consists of 42 major buildings, along with 23 associated outbuildings, ranged along Route 87 at its intersection with Route 66 in Columbia, Connecticut. The major part of the Green itself is a triangular parcel of land at the northeast corner of the intersection (Photograph 1). It is primarily an open lawn area, upon which stands a modern bandstand or gazebo and several monuments. Unlike most town greens, the Columbia Green is not outlined by roadways along its perimeter. Instead, two wide state highways pass through the center of the Green, and only a line of shade-tree plantings separates the Green from the yards of the buildings fronting upon it. The strips of the Green left at the other corners of the intersection are narrower and less well defined.

The buildings in the district mostly date from the early to middle 19th century and have stone foundations, clapboarded exteriors, and brick The oldest is the Eleazar Wheelock house (Photograph 3), c.1735, one of three houses of the traditional five-bay, centralchimney form. Several houses have Federal or Greek Revival detailing (Photographs 13, 19, and 21), and there is a scattering of other styles as well, including Columbia's most elaborate Victorian dwelling, the William H. Yeomans house (Photograph 12). Although some of the houses have exceptional stylistic detailing, such as the columns and pilasters found in the Greek Revival-style houses, others are much plainer vernacular houses without any indication of architectural style (Photographs 15, 16, and 20). In addition to houses, the district includes several present or former public buildings, three church buildings, and three commercial structures, one an inn which has been a landmark at the Columbia crossroads for more than 200 years (Photograph 14). South of the intersection is the old Columbia burying ground, containing within its stone-walled bounds dozens of slate, brownstone, and marble markers from the 18th and early 19th centuries (Photographs 22 and 23).

Of the 42 major buildings in the district, 11 were judged to be noncontributing. These include the 1953 St. Columba Church (Photograph 24, background), the 1960 Congregational parish house, three buildings so altered from their historic appearance that their age and origin are completely obscured (Photographs 18, 19, and 21), and several houses of modern construction (Photograph 20). The district also includes numerous outbuildings, about equally divided between modern garages (noncontributing) and barns, carriagehouses, and garages which date from the period of significance. The district's period of significance extends to 1941, when Yeomans Hall (Photograph 6) was rebuilt following the fire which destroyed the original building. This

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET

Description

Columbia Green Historic District 7-2 Columbia, CT

period also encompasses the last major physical change affecting the Green, the 1935 widening of Route 66. Because of this period of significance, three houses from the 1920s and 1930s, as well as a stuccoed gas station from the time of the road widening (Photograph 16), have been counted as contributing buildings.

Most of the historic buildings in the district retain a high degree of integrity. Nearly all have their basic form and fenestration intact and retain appropriate exterior siding materials. Some houses have had their original small-pane sash replaced with later windows.

The boundaries of the district include most of the built-up part of Columbia center. On the east side, the boundary was stopped so as to exclude the 1948 Horace W. Porter school and concentration of houses and commercial buildings of recent construction. The few modern houses which lie beyond the boundary in the other directions were also kept out. To the north, there are other historic houses further along Route 87. However, these houses are widely spaced, with considerable open land and intervening stretches of modern construction. The area lacks the relatively dense settlement and concentration of historic buildings found in the village center. Therefore, they were not included in the district. For most of its length, the boundary follows the rear property lines of the house lots, though in the northwest quadrant the boundary cuts across the houses' extensive back lots so as to exclude excessive acreage.

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET

Description

Columbia Green Historic District 7-1 Columbia, CT

INVENTORY OF RESOURCES

Address	Contributing/Noncontr Description	ibut C	ing NC
	OBJECTS		
Route 87, on Green	World War I memorial, 1919, bronze plaque on fieldstone boulder (Photograph 2).	1	0
Route 87, on Green	Town history marker, 1973, blue- painted aluminum, Connecticut Histori- cal Commission (Photograph 1).	0	1
Route 87, on Green in front of church	Eleazar Wheelock monument, 1949, granite slab, Colonial Dames of America.	0	1
Route 87 in front of Town offices	World War II memorial, 1956, granite with carved eagle.	0	1
	SITES		
Routes 87 and 66	COLUMBIA TOWN GREEN, triangular grassy area with shade trees, gazebo, and monuments (Photographs 1, 13, 18). Additional narrower grassy areas along Route 87 in front of houses.	1	0
Route 87	OLD COLUMBIA CEMETERY, rectangular burying ground surrounded by stone walls. Several dozen gneiss, granite, brownstone, and marble markers, most from the 18th and early 19th centuries (Photographs 22 and 23).	1	0

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET

Description	Columbia Green Historic District Columbia, CT	7-2	
Address	Description	C	NC
	BUILDINGS		
Routes 66 and 87 (Town Green)	Gazebo, c.1980, Neo-Victorian, 8-sided, pressure-treated wood (Photograph 1)	0	1
172 Route 66	Don's Country Market, store remodelled from c.1880 barn, 2 1/2 stories, gambrel roof, wood-shingled exterior (Photograph 15). Noncontributing 3-bay garage, c.1940.	1	1
175 Route 66	House, c.1850, 2 stories, 5-bay facade, center entry, clapboards, modern door and windows. Former Masonic meeting hall. Rebuilt following fire, 1890, remodelled as dwelling, 1935, remodelled following severe accident, c.1985 (Photograph 15). Small old barn to rear.	2	0
177 Route 66	Gas station, 1935, Spanish Colonial Revival style, 1 story, stucco exterior, 3 garage bays plus office, parapet, false tile roof (Photograph 15). Small modern garage to rear.	1	1
182 Route 66	House, c.1850, gable end to street, 1 1/2 stories, clapboards, simple cornice over entry, Victorian sash. Large wall dormer, east side (Photograph 17). Large old barn and privy in rear.	3	0
- Route 66	Former blacksmith shop, c.1850, 1 1/2 stories, asphalt siding, corrugated-metal roof, chimney on east side (Photograph 17).	1	0
302 Route 87	House, c.1800, 2 1/2 stories, 5-bay facade, center entry with sidelights, transom. Shingled; 6-over-6 sash. Old barn to north.	2	0

7-3

0

0

1

Description

313 Route 87

314 Route 87

(Rose Lane, rear)

United States Department of the Interior National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET

Columbia, CT

NC Address Description C 307 Route 87 House, c. 1860, gable end to street, 3-1 bay facade, 2 1/2 stories, pilastered entry with sidelights and bracketed cornice. Corner and entry pilasters have semicircular cut-out at top. Clapboarded; 6-over-6 sash. Remains of old fence. Attached garage at rear, freestanding garage (Photograph 9). 309 Route 87 House, 1857, Gothic Revival style, 1 1/2 1 stories, 3-bay facade with center entry, central gabled dormer with bargeboard, bracing and pendant. Clapboarded; 2-over-2 sash. Paired narrow windows, bay window on south side. Attached shed in rear. Later (c.1900) porch (Photograph 8). Modern garage. 310 Route 87 House remodeled from older building, c.1981, 0 1 1 1/2 stories, stained clapboard exterior, copper double doors, octagonal windows, Neo-Victorian side porch (Photograph 10). House, 1851, 1 1/2 stories, clapboards, 0 311 Route 87 1 (Rose Lane, rear) later porch on cobblestone foundation, attached garage.

enclosed porch in front

(Photograph 11).

House, c.1850, 1 1/2 stories, clapboards,

SAXTON B. LITTLE LIBRARY (original), 1903,

Queen Anne style, 1 1/2 stories, hip roof, large round bay on left, entry recessed within round-arched opening, rustic stone foundation, clapboard and shingle exterior, original oak interior detail

Columbia Green Historic District

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET

Description	Columbia Green Historic District Columbia, CT	7 – 4	
Address	Description	С	NC
318 Route 87	WILLIAM H. YEOMANS HOUSE, c.1880, Queen Anne style, 2 1/2 stories, hip roof with gabled projections, clapboard and shingle exterior, jigsawn peak ornament, bargeboard with bosses and incised grooves, porch with turned posts, brackets, half-timbering at entry, 2nd-story porch with bombe-curved balusters (Photograph 12). Vertical-board sided carriage house to south with identical bargeboard.	2	0
319 Route 87	RICE-SORRACHI HOUSE (new Saxton B. Little Library), c.1800, 2 1/2 stories, center entry, 5-bay facade. Alterations: aluminum siding, bay window on north side, false center chimney, new small-pane windows. Modern library addition to rear. No historic interior material (Photograph 7).	1	0
320 Route 87	House, c.1830, Federal style, 2 1/2 stories, gable end to street, 3-bay facade, aluminum siding, entry with sidelights and transom, fanlight in gable. C.1900 porch. Modern garage.	1	1
321 Route 87	CONGREGATIONAL CHAPEL (Chapel on the Green Gallery), 1870, Greek Revival style, 1 1/2 stories, paneled corner and entry pilasters, full cornice return, 6-over-6 sash, small pilastered belfry with simple parapet (Photograph 7).	1	0

Description

324 Route 87

1 1

Columbia Green Historic District 7-5

United States Department of the Interior National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET

DC	SCLIPCI	011		Columbia, CT	, 3	
A d	dress	·		Description	С	NC
32	2 Route	87		House, c.1840, Greek Revival style, L-shaped plan, 1 1/2 stories, clapboards with matched-board facade. Gable brought forward to form portico on four Ionic columns; 2 additional columns for porch in ell. Entry with fluted pilasters, corner blocks, and leaded sidelights and transom. Crosetted window frames, 6-over-6 sash (Photograph 13). Old barn in rear	2	0
32	3 Route	87		YEOMAN'S HAll and Town offices, 1941, Colonial Revival style, 2 stories, clapboards, corner pilasters, denticulated cornice, fanlighted entries (Photograph 6).	1	0
32	3 Route	87	(rear)	MOOR'S INDIAN CHARITY SCHOOL, 1755, rebuilt c.1840 in Greek Revival style as Center District School, 1 story. Clapboards, pilasters, recessed entry, full cornice return, 6-over-6 sash. Moved to present site, 1948 (Photograph 5).	1	0

House, c.1910, Colonial Revival style,

2 1/2 stories, hip roof, wood shingled exterior, denticulated cornice, porch on Tuscan columns, small-pane sash (Photo-

graph 13). Modern garage.

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET

Description	Columbia Green Historic District Columbia, CT	7-6	
Address	Description	С	NC
325 Route 87	COLUMBIA CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH, 1832, remodelled 1850, Greek Revival/Italianate styles. Clapboards with matched boards in gable. Full cornice return, pilasters with semi-circular cut-outs at tops, molded caps over segmental-arched windows, including tall side windows. Two entries, each sheltered by a roof with heavy modillions around the cornice. Steeple is a 1938 reproduction of the 1870 steeple. Attached to rear is parish house, 1960 (Photographs 1 and 4).	1	1
326 Route 87	Old inn, presently known as The Landmark, c.1750 with additions. Hip roof with central chimney, extended north with gable roof, terminating in porte cochere. Porch on square columns along east side. Victorian sash. Ballroom on second floor. (Photograph 14).	1	0
327 Route 87	Congregational Parsonage (formerly Sexton's house), 1926, Bungalow style, 1 1/2 stories. Wood-shingled exterior, jerkinhead roof, large dormer, concrete-block foundation (Photograph 1). Similarly detailed garage to rear.	2	0
328 Route 87	St. Columba Church, 1953, brick, Colonial-style doorway, belfry with slender spire (Photograph 24).	0	1
329 Route 87	ELEAZAR WHEELOCK HOUSE, c.1735, 2 1/2 stories, clapboarded, 5-bay facade, brick central chimney (probably not original), Victorian windows. Small board-sided 19th-century barn to rear (Photograph 3).	2	0
330 Route 87	House, 1939, 1 1/2 stories, composition-shingle siding (Photograph 24).	1	0

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET

Description	Columbia Green Historic District Columbia, CT	7-7	
Address	Description	С	NC
331 Route 87	House, remodeled from old Columbia Library (1883), moved to site 1903. Clapboards, 1 1/2 stories, Gothic barge- board, enclosed porch (Photograph 18). Modern garage.	1	1
332 Route 87	House, 1959, 1 story, aluminum siding, attached garage.	0	1
333 Route 87	House, c.1920, 1 1/2 stories, clapboards, altered with picture window, stone facing, side porch (Photograph 18). Modern garage.	0	2
334 Route 87	Former Congregational parsonage, 1832, 2 1/2 stories, gable end to street, clapboards. Full cornice return, modern enclosed entry vestibule. Old barn to rear made into garage.	2	0
335 Route 87	House, 1940, 1 1/2 stories, composition-shingle siding. Garage.	0	2
336 Route 87	House, c.1850, 1 1/2 stories, clapboards, 3-bay facade with enclosed center entry porch, bay window on south side. Garage.	1	1
337 Route 87	House, c.1900, 1 1/2 stories, clapboards, altered with dormers, picture window. (Photograph 19). Garage.	0	2
339 Route 87	House, c.1840, Greek Revival style, 1 1/2 stories, 5-bay facade with center sidelighted pilaster-and-lintel entry. Paneled corner pilasters with dentils in capitals; 6-over-6 sash (Photograph 19). Large gambrel-roofed, wood-shingled barn,	2	0

c.1920, to rear.

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET

Description Columbia Green Historic District 7-8 Columbia, CT

Address	Description	С	NC
325 Route 87	COLUMBIA CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH, 1832, remodelled 1850, Greek Revival/Italianate styles. Clapboards with matched boards in gable. Full cornice return, pilasters with semi-circular cut-outs at tops, molded caps over segmental-arched windows, including tall side windows. Two entries, each sheltered by a roof with heavy modillions around the cornice. Steeple is a 1938 reproduction of the 1870 steeple. Attached to rear is parish house, 1960 (Photographs 1 and 4).	1	1
326 Route 87	Old inn, presently known as The Landmark, c.1750 with additions. Hip roof with central chimney, extended north with gable roof, terminating in porte cochere. Porch on square columns along east side. Victorian sash. Ballroom on second floor. (Photograph 14).	1	0
327 Route 87	Congregational Parsonage (formerly Sexton's house), 1926, Bungalow style, 1 1/2 stories. Wood-shingled exterior, jerkin-head roof, large dormer, concrete-block foundation (Photograph 1). Similarly detailed garage to rear.	2	0
328 Route 87	St. Columba Church, 1953, brick, Colonial-style doorway, belfry with slender spire (Photograph 24).	0	1
329 Route 87	ELEAZAR WHEELOCK HOUSE, c.1735, 2 1/2 stories, clapboarded, 5-bay facade, brick central chimney (probably not original), Victorian windows. Small board-sided 19th-century barn to rear (Photograph 3).	2	0
330 Route 87	House, 1939, 1 1/2 stories, composition-shingle siding (Photograph 24).	1	0

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET

Description Columbia Green Historic District 7-9 Columbia, CT

Address	Description	С	NC
331 Route 87	House, remodeled from old Columbia Library (1883), moved to site 1903. Clapboards, 1 1/2 stories, Gothic barge- board, enclosed porch (Photograph 18). Modern garage.	1	1
332 Route 87	House, 1959, 1 story, aluminum siding, attached garage.	0	1
333 Route 87	House, c.1920, 1 1/2 stories, clapboards, altered with picture window, stone facing, side porch (Photograph 18). Modern garage.	0	2
334 Route 87	Former Congregational parsonage, 1832, 2 1/2 stories, gable end to street, clapboards. Full cornice return, modern enclosed entry vestibule. Old barn to rear made into garage.	2	0
335 Route 87	House, 1940, 1 1/2 stories, composition-shingle siding. Garage.	0	2
336 Route 87	House, c.1850, 1 1/2 stories, clapboards, 3-bay facade with enclosed center entry porch, bay window on south side. Garage.	1	1
337 Route 87	House, c.1900, 1 1/2 stories, clapboards, altered with dormers, picture window. (Photograph 19). Garage.	0	2
339 Route 87	House, c.1840, Greek Revival style, 1 1/2 stories, 5-bay facade with center sidelighted pilaster-and-lintel entry. Paneled corner pilasters with dentils in capitals; 6-over-6 sash (Photograph 19). Large gambrel-roofed, wood-shingled barn, c.1920, to rear.	2	0

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET

Description Columbia Green Historic District 7-10 Columbia, CT

Address	Description	С	NC
341 Route 87	House, 1932, Bungalow style, jerkinhead roof, 1 1/2 stories, clapboards, enclosed porch (Photograph 22). Garage from same period.	2	0
343 Route 87	House, 1963, 1 1/2 stories, Cape-type, wood-shingled exterior, attached garage.	0	1
3 44 Route 87	House, c.1890, 1 1/2 stories, altered with aluminum siding, picture window (Photograph 21).	0	1
345 Route 87	House, 1958, 1 story, brick (Photograph 20).	0	1
347 Route 87	House, c.1860, 1 1/2 stories, 5-bay facade, aluminum siding, modern windows, awnings (Photograph 20). Garage made over from old barn, modern garage.	2	1
348 Route 87	House, c.1840, Greek Revival style, 2 1/2 stories, gable end to street, full cornice return, pilaster-and-lintel entry, 6-over-6 sash, composition-shingle siding (Photograph 21).	1	0

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET

Statement of Significance Columbia Green Historic District 8-1 Columbia, CT

Summary

Columbia Green is a significant resource because the Green and the buildings and sites surrounding it recall the location's historic role as the town's political, religious, educational, commercial, and social center (Criterion A). From the construction of the first Congregational meetinghouse in 1724 up to the present, the crossroads formed by present-day Routes 66 and 87 has been the location of virtually all the important institutions of Columbia's community life: the church of the town's once-predominant religious body, the oldest burying ground, the Public Library, and the town meeting. With its former taverns, meeting places, and blacksmith shop, the district also evokes the time when the area was Columbia's social and commercial center. Some of the buildings have architectural significance as locally notable examples of particular styles or types of construction, and the cemetery contains numerous significant examples of the 18th-century stonecarver's art (Criterion C). Finally, the Green itself has significance as a physical feature : it is typical of the village commons which emerged in the early 19th century, as towns turned reserved town land into central green spaces which, if not guite parks, were consciously maintained as areas of lawn surrounded by shade trees (Criterion C).

<u>Historical Importance of Columbia Center</u>

Columbia was settled in the early 18th century as part of Lebanon, Connecticut, and until its incorporation as a separate town in 1804, was known as Lebanon North Parish, the Second Society in Lebanon, or by its more picturesque name, Lebanon Crank. The two dozen families who started the parish in 1716 built their first meetinghouse not far from the site of the present structure, and for many years both the religious and political life of the community centered around the succession of Congregational meetinghouses which were erected near the crossroads. Other structures associated with the Congregational Church, the town's predominant religion throughout the 18th and 19th centuries, are the former parsonage built in 1832 and occupied for many years by the popular and influential Reverend F. D. Avery (334 Route 87); the conference house or chapel, erected in 1870 for meetings of church groups (Photograph 7); the Yeomans house across the street (Photograph 12), the parsonage from 1926 to about 1950; and the small Bungalow-style house to the south, now the parsonage but for many years the home of long-time sexton George Champlin.

Town meetings were also held in the church building, even after

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET

Statement of Significance Columbia Green Historic District 8-2 Columbia, CT

disestablishment in 1818, and it was not until 1836 that the town built its own building for meetings. In 1900 the Yeomans family gave a new town hall and meeting place, called Yeomans Hall, to the Town. This structure served until it burned in 1940 and was replaced by the present Yeomans Hall. Although only 49 years old at the present time (1990), this building is significant because it continued Columbia Green's function as the location of the town's political institutions. Other public functions which were centered on this important crossroads include the town's first burying ground, the only cemetery until 1851; the one-room district school, which served the families in the immediate vicinity of the Green (Photograph 5); and the town's World War I monument (Photograph 2).

Agriculture was the foundation of Columbia's economy, and most of the residential structures which line the roads leading from the Green were those of farmers. However, what trade there was in town centered on the Green, where there once were several inns, blacksmith shops, and general stores. The oldest of the inns, known by numerous names throughout history (Photograph 14) dates in part back to about 1750 and accommodated some of Rochambeau's officers as they scouted the route to The house at 319 Route 87, now the new library (Photograph Yorktown. 7), also once served as a tavern, and before Route 66 was widened in 1935, there was another store and "hotel" at the southeast corner of the intersection. One of the blacksmith and carriagemaker shop buildings remains at the extreme western edge of the district (Photograph 17). Both commerce and agriculture in Columbia received a boost from road improvement in the early 19th century, when both roads were upgraded by turnpike companies. Several of the houses in the district were lived in at one time or another by the various hotelkeepers, merchants, and craftsmen with businesses at Columbia center. largest and most elaborate is the house built by WIlliam H. Yeomans (Photograph 12), a merchant, farmer, and surveyor who was judge of probate, represented Columbia in the Legislature, and served on the State Board of Agriculture.

Social organizations also centered their activities at Columbia Green. The upstairs of the inn at the northwest corner has a large open room that accommodated a ballroom and meeting place. The house at 175 Route 66, rebuilt in 1890 following a fire (Photograph 18), was a meeting place for Masonic groups as well as the Columbia Grange, which also met at one time or another in the Inn and the old Yeomans Hall. The new Yeomans Hall also served as a major social center, a place where community organizations held their meetings and events.

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET

Statement of Significance Columbia Green Historic District 8-3 Columbia, CT

The Columbia Free Library started in 1883 in a small building at a site nearly opposite the present library. In 1903, the old building was moved to the southeast corner of the intersection, where it was converted into a dwelling (Photograph 18), and a new building (Photograph 11) was built and named for Saxton B. Little, an early benefactor who had established a book-purchase fund. Recently the library was moved again into the Rice-Soracchi House at 319 Route 87.

Eleazar Wheelock

Columbia's best known historical figure is Eleazar Wheelock, who served as the Congregational minister from 1735 to 1769. Wheelock became interested in the education of Native Americans, and aided by a grant from Mansfield farmer Joshua Moor, established a school in 1754 expressly to educate Native American youths and English students who were to serve as missionaries to Native Americans. The classes were first held in Wheelock's home (329 Route 87, Photograph 3), but soon a school house was built to accommodate the students. Both boys and girls came to Columbia to study at the school. The most famous graduate was Samson Occum (1723-1792), who became a Congregational minister and returned to his people as a missionary. Numerous other graduates, both Native and English, became schoolteachers and applied themselves to the education and acculturation of Native American groups throughout the colonies. In 1769 Wheelock moved his school to Hanover, New Hampshire, where it continues today as Dartmouth College. The old schoolhouse in Columbia was taken over for a district school, in which capacity it was remodeled in the 1850s in the Greek Revival style (Photograph 5). It has been moved several times, but it has always stood somewhere near the Green not far from its present position, in which it was placed in 1948.

Architectural and Artistic Significance

Many of the buildings in the vicinity of the Columbia Green have exceptional architectural qualities and represent the town's best examples of their type. The Greek Revival style is exemplified both by the relatively formal Ionic porticoes, matched-board siding, and crossetted window surrounds of the house at 322 Route 87 (Photograph 13) and by the denticulated pilasters and deep cornices of the plainer house at 339 Route 87 (Photograph 19). Both are well-preserved structures with all of their original architectural detailing intact. Among the institutional structures, the schoolhouse (Photograph 5) and

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NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET

Statement of Significance Columbia Green Historic District 8-4 Columbia, CT

Congregational chapel (Photograph 7) are significant because their clapboarded exteriors, small-pane windows, and simple Greek Revival detailing, such as pilasters and a full cornice return, are typical of mid-19th-century schools and meetinghouses. The house at 309 Route 87 (Photograph 8) embodies the distinguishing characteristics of Gothic Revival architecture with its steeply pitched dormer and intricate bargeboard, and both its neighbor (Photograph 9) and the Congregational Church (Photograph 4) represent the transition from Greek-inspired Classical detailing to Italianate forms such as curved brackets and window hoodmolds. Columbia's two most elaborate Victorian-period buildings are the c.1880 house of William H. Yeomans (Photograph 12) and, next door, the former Saxton B. Little Library, built in 1902 (Photograph 11). Both illustrate the complex massing, variegated exterior materials, and ornate eclectic detailing characteristic of that period's architecture.

Gravestones are today recognized as a major medium of artistic expression for 18th-century New Englanders. The carvings of death's-heads, angels, funerary symbols, and border designs in Columbia cemetery are typical examples of the genre. The cemetery is notable as an exceptional concentration of stones carved by Columbia craftsmen Benjamin Collins (1691-1759) and his son Zerubbabel (1733-1797), two artisans active throughout eastern Connecticut. Their Columbia stones include one of the earliest marble markers known in Connecticut, the 1791 stone of Lydia Bennitt (Photograph 23). Carved by Zerubbabel Collins, who had moved to Vermont in 1778, it may have been intended partly as an advertisement for future orders of Vermont marble, since the price of seven dollars was conspicuously included.

Finally, the landscape architecture significance of the Green itself is worth noting. In its lay-out the Green represents one of two major types of New England village centers. While many examples of the other type, the rectangular Green bordered by highways, survive throughout the region, the Columbia type, green areas surrounding an X-shaped

¹James A. Slater, <u>The Colonial Burying Grounds of Eastern Connecticut</u> (Hamden, Conn.: Connecticut Academy of Arts and Sciences, 1987), 145-48.

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NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET

Statement of Significance Columbia Green Historic District 8-5 Columbia, CT

intersection of highways, is much less common.² Both types, however, with their areas of lawns, lines of shade trees, public monuments, and gazebos and bandstands, represent an early 19th-century domestication of the rutty, ill-used 18th-century common into something resembling public green space.

The reason greens like Columbia's are less common is not hard to discern: they are extremely fragile in the face of highway widening, which guts them from the center outward. Although Columbia Green retains its sense of a town common, especially north of the intersection, further highway widening will diminish its value as a landscape feature.

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET

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NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET

UTM References

Columbia Green Historic District

10-1

Columbia, CT

A: 18/724290/4620320 B: 18/724320/4620280 18/724380/4620300 C: D: 18/724480/4620120 E: 18/724520/4620140 F: 18/724560/4620070 G: 18/724510/4620040 H: 18/724660/4619690 I: 18/724550/4619620 J: 18/724460/4619680 K: 18/724320/4619860 L: 18/724280/4619920 M: 18/724340/4619980

N: 18/724170/4620220

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NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET

Columbia Green Historic District Photos-1 Photograph captions Columbia, CT

All photographs:

- 1. COLUMBIA GREEN HISTORIC DISTRICT
- 2. Columbia, CT
- 3. Photo Credit: HRC, Hartford, CT
- 4. February, 1990
- 5. Negative filed with Connecticut Historical Commission Hartford, CT

Captions:

Columbia Green north of Route 66, camera facing north Photograph 1 of 24

World War One memorial on Green, camera facing north Photograph 2 of 24

Eleazer Wheelock House, 329 Route 87, camera facing northeast Photograph 3 of 24

Congregational Church, 325 Route 87, camera facing east Photograph 4 of 24

Moor's Indian Charity School, camera facing east Photograph 5 of 24

Yeomans Hall and Town Hall, 323 Route 87, camera facing northeast Photograph 6 of 24

Library (Rice-Soracchi House), 319 Route 87, with Congregational chapel, 321 Route 87, on right, camera facing southeast Photograph 7 of 24

House, 309 Route 87, camera facing northeast Photograph 8 of 24

House, 307 Route 87, camera facing northeast Photograph 9 of 24

House, 310 Route 87, noncontributing, camera facing west Photograph 10 of 24

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET

Photograph captions Columbia Green Historic District Photos-2 Columbia, CT

Former library, 314 Route 87, camera facing southwest Photograph 11 of 24

Yeomans House, 318 Route 87, camera facing west Photograph 12 of 24

Houses on west side of Green, 324, 322, and 320 Route 87, camera facing west Photograph 13 of 24

Old inn (The Landmark), 326 Route 87, camera facing northwest Photograph 14 of 24

Market, former barn, 172 Route 66, camera facing north Photograph 15 of 24

House, 175 Route 66, and gas station, 177 Route 66, camera facing southeast Photograph 16 of 24

House, 182 Route 66, old blacksmith shop in background, camera facing west
Photograph 17 of 24

Houses on east side, south of Route 66, 331, 333, 335 Route 87, camera facing southeast Photograph 18 of 24

House, 339 Route 87, 337 Route 87 on left, camera facing northeast Photograph 19 of 24

House at southern end of district, east side, 347 Route 87, camera facing northeast Photograph 20 of 24

House at southern end of district, west side, 348 Route 87, camera facing northwest
Photograph 21 of 24

Old Columbia cemetery, Route 87, camera facing southeast Photograph 22 of 24

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET

Photograph captions Columbia Green Historic District Photos-3 Columbia, CT

Lydia Bennitt stone, old Columbia cemetery, camera facing northeast Photograph 23 of 24

House, 330 Route 87, camera facing southwest Photograph 24 of 24 $\,$

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

ction number Page SUPPLEMENTARY LISTING RECORD						
NRIS Reference Nu	mber: 90001759	Date Listed:	12/06/90			
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COLUMBIA GREEN

