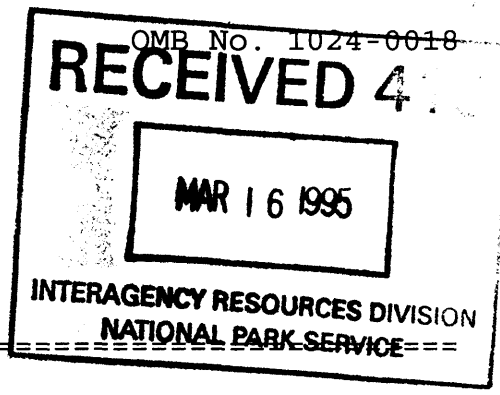


United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
REGISTRATION FORM**



1. Name of Property

historic name: FENWICK HISTORIC DISTRICT

other name/site number: N/A

2. Location

street & number: Agawam, Neponset, and Pettipaug Avenues
(see item 7 for complete list)

city/town: Old Saybrook not for publication: N/A

vicinity: N/A

state: CT county: Middlesex code: 007 zip code: 06475

3. Classification

Ownership of Property: private, public-local

Category of Property: district

Number of Resources within Property:

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>66</u>	<u>16</u>	buildings
<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>	sites
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	structures
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	objects
<u>67</u>	<u>16</u>	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register: 0

Name of related multiple property listing: N/A

4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this X nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property X meets does not meet the National Register Criteria. See cont. sheet.

John W. Shannahan 02/22/95
Signature of certifying official Date
John W. Shannahan, Director, Connecticut Historical Commission

State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. See continuation sheet.

Signature of commenting or other official Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

5. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby certify that this property is:

- entered in the National Register Edson H. Beall 4.13.95
 See continuation sheet.
- determined eligible for the National Register
 See continuation sheet.
- determined not eligible for the National Register
- removed from the National Register

 other (explain): Entered in the National Register
for Signature of Keeper Date of Action

6. Function or Use

Historic:	<u>DOMESTIC</u>	Sub:	<u>single dwelling</u>
	<u>DOMESTIC</u>		<u>hotel</u>
	<u>RELIGION</u>		<u>religious facility</u>
	<u>RECREATION AND CULTURE</u>		<u>sports facility</u>
Current:	<u>DOMESTIC</u>	Sub:	<u>single dwelling</u>
	<u>RELIGION</u>		<u>religious facility</u>
	<u>RECREATION AND CULTURE</u>		<u>sports facility</u>

=====
7. Description
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Architectural Classification:

Shingle Style
Queen Anne
Bungalow

Other Description: N/A

Materials: foundation STONE roof ASPHALT
walls WOOD: Shingle other BRICK

Describe present and historic physical appearance. X See continuation sheet.

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8. Statement of Significance
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Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties: state.

Applicable National Register Criteria: A,C

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions) : _____

Areas of Significance: ARCHITECTURE
ENTERTAINMENT/RECREATION

Period(s) of Significance: 1871-1944 _____

Significant Dates: See item 7

Significant Person(s): N/A

Cultural Affiliation: N/A

Architect/Builder: See item 7

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above. X See continuation sheet.

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National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Description	Fenwick Historic District Old Saybrook, Middlesex County, CT	7-3
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In the Inventory that follows, the count of contributing buildings (C) includes houses and outbuildings that retain their historic appearance; conversely, the count of noncontributing buildings (NC) includes buildings that appear to be of relatively recent construction. "Siding" indicates either aluminum or vinyl siding. Dates were primarily taken from the local historic district study report.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Description Fenwick Historic District 7-4
Old Saybrook, Middlesex County, CT

INVENTORY: BUILDINGS

ADDRESS	STORIES	DATE	DESCRIPTION	MATERIAL	C	NC
2 Agawam Avenue Photograph 1	1 1/2	1972	Modern "Colonial"	shingles/ brick	0	1
4 Agawam Avenue Photograph 1	2	1885	Queen Anne	shingles brick	1	0
6 Agawam Avenue Thomas Cole, architect -- Photograph 1	1	1957	Ranch	cedar siding brick	0	1
8 Agawam Avenue George Sheffield, architect	2 1/2	1890	Queen Anne/ Shingle style	clapboard/ shingles	1	0
15 Agawam Avenue Photograph 2	2	c.1871	Stick Style	siding	2	0
17 Agawam Avenue	1 1/2	1945	No style	shingles	0	1
18 Agawam Avenue	1 1/2	1944	No style	clapboard	1	0
19 Agawam Avenue	1 1/2	1913	No style	shingles	1	0
20 Agawam Avenue	1	1946	No style	siding	0	1
22 Agawam Avenue	1 1/2	1947	No style	siding	0	1
24 Agawam Avenue	1	1945	Ranch	redwood siding	0	1
30 Agawam Avenue ST. MARY'S BY-THE-SEA, Francis Goodwin, architect -- Photograph 3	1 1/2	1883	Shingle style	shingles	1	0
41 Agawam Avenue	2	c.1885	No style	shingles	1	0
16 Fenwick Avenue	2	1880	No style	siding	2	0
20 Fenwick Avenue RIVERSEA CLUB -- Photograph 2	2	1885	Colonial Revival	siding	1	0
26 Fenwick Avenue Photographs 4 and 5	2 1/2	c.1871	Shingle style	shingles	1	1
28 Fenwick Avenue	2 1/2	1887	Shingle style	shingles	2	0
30 Fenwick Avenue	2 1/2	c.1871	Shingle style	shingles	1	0
14 Grove Avenue	2	c.1882	No style	shingles	1	0
580 Maple Avenue Borough offices -- Photograph 6	1	c.1900	No style (former stables)	board siding	4	1
2 Mohigan Avenue Photograph 7	2 1/2	1881	Shingle style	shingles	1	0
9 Mohigan Avenue Derek Bower, architect	2	1949	Ranch	siding/ brick	0	1

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Description Fenwick Historic District 7-5
Old Saybrook, Middlesex County, CT

INVENTORY: BUILDINGS

ADDRESS	STORIES	DATE	DESCRIPTION	MATERIAL	C	NC
12 Mohigan Avenue John Parker Wayne, architect -- Photograph 12	2 1/2	1939	No style	brick	1	0
2 Neponset Avenue	1 1/2	1896	Victorian	shingles	1	0
4 Neponset Avenue	2	1895	No style	shingles	1	0
5 Neponset Avenue E. B. Case, architect	1 1/2	1920	Bungalow	shingles	2	0
6 Neponset Avenue	1 1/2	1912	Bungalow	shingles/ siding	1	0
15 Neponset Avenue	2	c.1900	Shingle style	shingles	2	0
19 Neponset Avenue Photograph 8	1 1/2	1921	Bungalow	shingles	1	0
4 Nibang Avenue	1	1910	No style	shingles	1	0
5 Nibang Avenue	1	1955	No style	shingles	0	1
8 Nibang Avenue	1 1/2	1911	Bungalow	shingles	1	0
20 Nibang Avenue	2 1/2	1928	Colonial Revival	siding	1	0
16 Old Fenwick Road John Dwight Parker, architect	2	1899	Shingle style	shingles	1	0
5 Pettipaug Avenue W. E. Becker, architect	2 1/2	1900	No style	shingles	1	0
6 Pettipaug Avenue George Sheffield, architect	1 1/2	1913	Shingle style	shingles	1	0
7 Pettipaug Avenue	2 1/2	1880	Shingle style	shingles	2	0
9 Pettipaug Avenue	2	1905	Shingle style	shingles	2	0
10 Pettipaug Avenue	2 1/2	1885	Shingle style	shingles	2	0
11 Pettipaug Avenue	2 1/2	1910	Shingle style	shingles	1	0
12 Pettipaug Avenue Photograph 9	2 1/2	1881	Shingle style	shingles	2	0
15 Pettipaug Avenue Francis Goodwin, architect	2	c.1880	No style	shingles	2	0
17 Pettipaug Avenue	1 1/2	c.1880	No style	shingles	2	0
18 Pettipaug Avenue Henry Miller, architect -- Photograph 10	1	1953	Ranch	shingles	0	1
21 Pettipaug Avenue	2	1880	No style	shingles	1	0

United States Department of the Interior
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**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Description Fenwick Historic District 7-6
Old Saybrook, Middlesex County, CT

INVENTORY: BUILDINGS

ADDRESS	STORIES	DATE	DESCRIPTION	MATERIAL	C	NC
23 Pettipaug Avenue	1 1/2	c.1900	No style	board and batten	1	0
24 Pettipaug Avenue	1	1955	Ranch	shingles	0	1
25 Pettipaug Avenue	2	c.1871	Shingle style	shingles	2	0
26 Pettipaug Avenue	2 1/2	1884	Queen Anne	shingles	2	0
27 Pettipaug Avenue	2	c.1878	Shingle style	shingles	2	0
30 Pettipaug Avenue	2	1937	No style	shingles	1	0
31 Pettipaug Avenue Thomas Cole, architect	1	1968	No style	brick	0	1
34 Pettipaug Avenue Photograph 11	2 1/2	c.1884	Shingle style	shingles	1	0
35 Pettipaug Avenue	1 1/2	1913	Shingle style	shingles	1	0
39 Pettipaug Avenue	2 1/2	c.1882	No style	shingles	2	0
41 Pettipaug Avenue	2	1974	No style	siding	0	1
43 Pettipaug Avenue	2	1988	No style	shingles	0	2
108 Sequassen Avenue Photograph 12	2 1/2	1900	No style	shingles	2	0
110 Sequassen Avenue	2	1900	No style	shingles	1	0
112 Sequassen Avenue Francis A. Nelson, architect	2	1918	No style	siding	1	0

INVENTORY: SITES

Agawam, Fenwick, & Neponset Avenues	FENWICK GOLF COURSE, 9-hole golf course, c.1900, set among house lots; asphalt tennis courts, corner of Agawam and Fenwick Avenues. Photograph 12.	1	0
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United States Department of the Interior
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**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Significance Fenwick Historic District 8-1
Old Saybrook, Middlesex County, CT

Summary

The Fenwick Historic District illustrates an important development in Connecticut's social history, the creation of upper-class and upper-middle-class seaside summer retreats (Criterion A). Fenwick, laid out in 1870 as a business venture by the New Saybrook Company, became the summer home of many of Connecticut's most socially prominent, politically powerful, and wealthy residents. Industrialists, insurance executives, and financiers from the Hartford and Middletown areas built spacious cottages for their families along Fenwick's winding roads. Boating, bathing, tennis, and golf offered recreational diversion, as did social events at Fenwick Hall, a luxurious hotel that originally stood in the center of the settlement. Aided by its small size and isolated position, socially homogeneous population, and long-term ownership of the cottages, Fenwick developed a community identity that endures to the present.

Fenwick also has exceptional architectural significance; its buildings exemplify particular architectural styles from the late 19th and early 20th centuries, most notably the Shingle style (Criterion C). With their characteristic wood-shingled exteriors and broad rooflines, Fenwick buildings such as St. Mary's-by-the-Sea (Photograph 3) and more than one dozen large cottages (Photographs 5, 9, and 11) represent one of the largest concentrations of well-preserved Shingle-style buildings in Connecticut.

Entertainment/Recreation Significance

In an age before air conditioning, people of every social station sought escape from the stifling heat of the city. For many, this meant a trip by trolley to an amusement park or beach, or perhaps a short stay in a seaside boarding house. The state's more prosperous residents, however, were able to acquire cottages at the shore where their families could spend the entire summer. Improvements in transportation, an increase of leisure time, and newly acquired wealth all contributed to the growth of coastal resort areas. Most often, these seaside communities were characterized by particular gradations of social class, with the size, spacing, and stylishness of the cottages increasing toward the higher end of the social scale.

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**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Significance Fenwick Historic District 8-2
Old Saybrook, Middlesex County, CT

Surrounded by water on three sides, yet easily accessible by railroad from Hartford and Middletown, Fenwick held great appeal for the families of central Connecticut's elite. Originally part of a large parcel of land owned in colonial times by George Fenwick, one-time governor of Saybrook Colony, and his wife, Lady Alice Fenwick, the area had become simply another saltwater farm by 1870, when it was purchased by the New Saybrook Company. The company, many of whose officers and stockholders were among the principal business and political leaders of Connecticut, purchased the peninsula with the intention of creating a summertime retreat, with the Charter Oak Life Insurance Company of Hartford as the chief financial backer of the project. The insurance company also had a stake in the Valley Railroad, which connected Hartford with nearby Saybrook Point.

The railroad opened in 1871, by which time the New Saybrook Company had finished a large hotel it called Fenwick Hall. Although the hotel was not a success, several of the company's lots were sold to well-to-do families from central Connecticut, and by 1884, 18 cottages had been constructed in Fenwick. The following year, the residents of Fenwick, led by Morgan G. Bulkeley and the Reverend Francis Goodwin, established a borough government to regulate the use of property and thereby protect their interests.

In 1887 the Charter Oak Life Insurance Company went bankrupt, and Fenwick Hall came into the possession of Edward Stokes, a man with close ties to the New York City political machine. It was rumored that Stokes had committed a murder, but escaped prosecution because of the influence of his political associates. Guests of the hotel under Stokes's ownership included politicians, entertainers, and other celebrities, and he spared no expense in providing them with lavish accommodations. This colorful era came to end in 1894 when, following a tax dispute, the hotel was bought at auction by Fenwick resident Morgan Bulkeley. From then on, the hotel primarily served as a social center for residents and to accommodate guests from the same social circle. When Fenwick Hall burned in 1916, its function was taken over by the Riversea Inn, as the large Colonial Revival-style building at 20 Fenwick Avenue was then known (Photograph 2, right).

The people who made Fenwick their summer home were prominent political, business, and civic leaders, mostly from Hartford and surrounding central Connecticut towns. Among the many notables who summered at Fenwick were the families of Morgan G. Bulkeley, president of the Aetna

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**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Significance Fenwick Historic District 8-3
Old Saybrook, Middlesex County, CT

Insurance Company and at various times Mayor of Hartford, Governor of Connecticut, and a U.S. Senator; Bulkeley's brother-in-law, Leverett Brainard, another former mayor and proprietor of Hartford's largest publishing house, Case, Lockwood and Brainard; George Welles Root, a wholesale dry goods merchant; John Hall, president of Colt Patent Firearms Manufacturing Company; George W. Cheney, of the Cheney silk mills in Manchester, Connecticut and a vice-president of Phoenix Mutual Insurance Company; and Katherine Houghton Hepburn, president of the Connecticut Woman Suffrage Association and a leader in the fight to secure the vote for women. These and other Fenwick families were joined together by a loose but wide-ranging web of business and political relationships, and many were related through family connections as well.

Although it was a small-scale community dedicated to privacy and quiet living, Fenwick did offer its summer residents numerous recreational possibilities. Sometime in the 1890s, the remaining vacant lots in the interior of the peninsula were put to good use as a golf course, making it one of the oldest courses in the country. Meandering among the shingled cottages, Fenwick's nine holes have remained substantially unchanged since at least the 1930s, except for the numbering (the course originally started and ended at Fenwick Hall, but now proceeds from the borough offices, located near the barns on Maple Avenue that formerly served as common stables). There were tennis courts from an early date as well, and both tennis and golf tournaments were held annually for the men and women of Fenwick. Finally, Fenwick's physical location, surrounded by the waters of South Cove and Long Island Sound, made it ideal for sailing and boating enthusiasts; the Fenwick Yacht Club dates from 1928.

In addition to its own government, recreational facilities, and hotel, the Fenwick summer community had its own house of worship. Initially, the Reverend Francis Goodwin held Sunday services in his house, but as the number of worshippers increased, Goodwin designed and built a small chapel on his property. In 1886 the chapel had become too small, so it was moved and enlarged with more pews and a bell tower into the present St. Mary's-by-the-Sea. The church offered a nondenominational Protestant service.

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National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Significance

Fenwick Historic District
Old Saybrook, Middlesex County, CT

8-4

Architectural Significance

Fenwick represents one of the state's largest concentrations of Shingle-style buildings; 17 of the district's 60 major buildings exhibit characteristics of the style. The most obvious of the distinctive Shingle-style traits, the use of wood shingles as the primary exterior material, is common to all of these buildings, with the house at 26 Fenwick Avenue representing one extreme of the continuum: even its porch railings and columns are shingled (Photograph 5). As was common in the style, Fenwick cottages exhibit a uniform shingled exterior surface, uninterrupted by corner boards or elaborate window trim. In conformance to the style's preference for exterior uniformity, details such as porch woodwork assume the form of simple stick bracing.

As an architectural concept, the Shingle style goes beyond simply the use of a particular siding material. Shingle-style houses have a pronounced mass to them, a sense of heaviness and horizontality, that often was created by the use of a single large main roof, such as a gambrel or hip roof, in contrast to the usual Victorian practice of equal-sized cross-gables. Dormers, where present, were usually made distinctly subordinate. Many of the buildings in Fenwick illustrate this principle. The house at 34 Pettipaug Avenue, for example, achieves the desired heavy appearance by having its gable-on-hip roof encompass the two-story side porches, thereby creating a single block, whereas in earlier Victorian styles the effect would likely have been one of a profusion of appendages (Photograph 11). The house at 12 Pettipaug Avenue has a similar roof, but smaller second-story porches (Photograph 9). Nevertheless, it achieves the same effect by making the porch roofs into extensions of the main roof; indeed, the first-floor porch itself appears as a continuation of the main roof, interrupted only slightly by the second-story walls. Finally, many Fenwick Shingle-style buildings augment the effect of massiveness by giving the roof a flare at the eaves, or having an upper story swell out and overhang the lower story, or by including pent roofs over window and door openings. All three techniques appear in a quintessential Shingle-style building in Fenwick, St. Mary's-by-the-Sea (Photograph 3).

Although the Shingle style is the single most frequent historical architectural style found at Fenwick, other styles are represented in the district by well-preserved examples. The asymmetrical rooflines,

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**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Significance Fenwick Historic District 8-5
Old Saybrook, Middlesex County, CT

towers, and multiplicity of porches with elaborate sawn and turned detail that characterized the Queen Anne style are embodied in a number of houses (Photograph 1); in some cases, these Queen Anne-style houses include Shingle-style elements such as shingled porch railings or shingled walls that curve in toward an attic-story window. The Colonial Revival style has an outstanding representative in the former Riversea Inn, remodeled into its present appearance c.1910 (Photograph 2, right). Its two-story portico, symmetrical facade, and small-pane sash typify the Colonial Revival movement, which used the elements of high-style early American buildings to create connotations of elegance and tradition. Finally, a number of the smaller cottages built in Fenwick c.1920 typify the Bungalow style with their single-story height, large central dormer, and porch formed from an extension of the main roof.

Although they are generally large, comfortable houses, the cottages of Fenwick are not elaborate by turn-of-the-century standards. Part of the reason for the overall lack of ostentation is the nature of Fenwick itself. Since it was an almost private retreat, where everyone knew everyone else, it was hardly necessary to make social statements by means of architecture. Also, many of the houses were designed by gifted amateurs, rather than professional architects. Two of the houses for whom a designer has been identified were by local builder George Sheffield, and he may be presumed to have designed others for whom no attribution has been made. The Reverend Francis Goodwin drew the plans for his own cottage (15 Pettipaug Avenue) and for St. Mary's-by-the-Sea (30 Agawam Avenue, Photograph 3). John Dwight Parker, a Hartford insurance executive, designed his family's large shingled cottage at 16 Old Fenwick Road; his grandson, John Parker "Jack" Wayne, was the architect of the large brick house at 12 Mohigan Avenue (Photograph 12).

Currently a local historic district administered by a commission with powers of architectural review, Fenwick can be expected to maintain its unique character for many years to come.

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9. Major Bibliographical References
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X See continuation sheet.

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested.
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark ST. MARY'S-BY-THE-SEA
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # CT-371
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

Primary Location of Additional Data:

- X State historic preservation office Connecticut Historical Commission
- Other state agency 59 South Prospect Street
- Federal agency Hartford, Connecticut 06106
- Local government
- University
- Other -- Specify Repository: _____

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10. Geographical Data
=====

Acreeage of Property: approx. 195 acres

UTM References: Zone Easting Northing Zone Easting Northing

A				B			
C				D			

X See continuation sheet.

Verbal Boundary Description: See continuation sheet.
The boundary is shown on the accompanying map, scale 1" = 200', traced from Old Saybrook Assessor Maps 5, 9, 10, and 11.

Boundary Justification: X See continuation sheet.

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11. Form Prepared By
=====

Name/Title: Bruce Clouette and Maura Cronin, reviewed by John Herzan,
Conn. Hist. Commission

Organization: Historic Resource Consultants Date: April 19, 1994

Street & Number: 55 Van Dyke Avenue Telephone: 203-547-0268

City or Town: Hartford State: CT Zip: 06106

