

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

Section number \_\_\_\_\_ Page \_\_\_\_\_

**SUPPLEMENTARY LISTING RECORD**

**NRIS Reference Number: 93000209**

**Date Listed: 4/2/93**

Simsbury Townhouse  
**Property Name**

Hartford  
**County**

CT  
**State**

N/A  
**Multiple Name**

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This property is listed in the National Register of Historic Places in accordance with the attached nomination documentation subject to the following exceptions, exclusions, or amendments, notwithstanding the National Park Service certification included in the nomination documentation.

for Patrick Andrews  
**Signature of the Keeper**

4/6/93  
**Date of Action**

=====  
**Amended Items in Nomination:**

**Period of Significance:**

The period of significance is 1839 and corresponds to the date of original construction.

This information was confirmed with the Connecticut SHPO.

**DISTRIBUTION:**  
National Register property file  
Nominating Authority (without nomination attachment)

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in *Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms* (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries.

### 1. Name of Property

historic name Simsbury Townhouse  
other names/site number Boy Scout Hall

### 2. Location

street & number 695 Hopmeadow Street NA not for publication  
city, town Simsbury NA vicinity  
state Connecticut code CT county Hartford code 003 zip code 06070

### 3. Classification

#### Ownership of Property

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

#### Category of Property

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

#### Number of Resources within Property

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

Name of related multiple property listing:  
N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

### 4. State/Federal Agency Certification

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

[Signature] February 18, 1993  
Signature of certifying official Date  
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.  
 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:)

Patrick Andrus 4/2/93  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

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**6. Function or Use**

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Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)

GOVERNMENT/town hall

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Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)

SOCIAL/civic

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**7. Description**

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Architectural Classification

(enter categories from instructions)

MID-19TH CENTURY/Greek Revival

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Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation sandstonewalls weatherboard

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roof asphalt shingleother 

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**Describe present and historic physical appearance.**

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The Simsbury Townhouse is a wood-frame Greek Revival-style building located at the south end of the town center, set well back from the west side of Hopmeadow Street, the main thoroughfare (Photograph #s 1, 2). Built in 1839, it was first located on top of the hill which rises behind the present site. Although it was moved in the nineteenth century, the Townhouse always remained in the immediate vicinity of the First Congregational Church, now known as the the First Church of Christ and located south of this building. After a possible intermediate move in 1843, it was sited in its present location to the north of the church in 1869.

Rectangular in plan, the Townhouse now rests on a rubble foundation of brownstone with a crawl space instead of a full basement. It presents its flushboarded gable end to the street. The fully pedimented projecting gable extends over a full-width facade porch and is supported by four heavy fluted columns. A full entablature extends around three sides of the main block, ending under cornice returns on the rear elevation. Access to the hall is through two eight-panelled doors on either side of the facade. Four equally spaced windows with 12-over-12 wooden sash are located on the side elevations. A narrow brick chimney rises from the ridge at the rear of the main block. The only change to the exterior is the recent addition at the rear (Photograph #3). Set on a poured concrete foundation, it has its own entrance and brick chimney.

The interior plan consists of a large open room with a raised stage at the west end (Photograph #s 4, 5). There is a four-foot wainscot composed of wide horizontal boards around three sides. The front wall has narrower matched boards above the chair rail, also laid horizontally; they match the boards used outside on the ceiling of the porch. The other walls are plastered above the wainscot. The ceiling is sheathed with narrow bead and bevel boards, probably added late in the nineteenth century to replace or cover deteriorating plaster.

**8. Statement of Significance**

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:

nationally  statewide  locally

Applicable National Register Criteria  A  B  C  D

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions)  A  B  C  D  E  F  G

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)

ARCHITECTURE  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Period of Significance

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Significant Dates

1839  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Cultural Affiliation

N/A  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Significant Person

N/A  
\_\_\_\_\_

Architect/Builder

unknown  
\_\_\_\_\_

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.

A well-preserved representative example of early nineteenth-century institutional architecture, the Simsbury Townhouse is distinguished by its boldly executed Greek Revival style. The oldest surviving public building in Simsbury, it was the site of town meetings for almost 100 years.

Architectural Significance

Illustrating the prevailing, almost universal style favored for public buildings and churches in the second quarter of the nineteenth century, the Simsbury Townhouse also reflects the sure eye and craftsmanship of an unknown master carpenter/builder in its vernacular Greek Revival design and proportions. Its exceptionally broad pediment, defined by the characteristic shallow slope of the gable roof and accentuated by the low massing of the building, captures the essence of the Greek temple form. The columns, which are a departure from the customary proportions (eight diameters to the height) and which at first seem too massive, even squat, are in fact perfectly scaled to the visual weight and massing of the pediment. The rest of the building is quite plain. For example, although panels in the porch ceiling at either end would suggest the use of corner pilasters to complete the design, these features were omitted in favor of an unadorned flushboarded facade.

Historical Background

Following the disestablishment of the Congregational Church in Connecticut in 1818, most towns decided to physically separate the dual civic and religious functions of their meetinghouses by building townhouses or dedicating space in churches. A common solution was to set aside the basement room for town meetings in the many new Congregational churches that were built in this period. However, when the new meetinghouse was built in Simsbury in the 1830s, the First Ecclesiastical Society voted that it should not be used for town meetings, even though the town had made that request. Until Simsbury elected to build a separate townhouse, as the building was called until 1882, town meetings were held "near the meetinghouse" in an unspecified building, except for a brief period when meetings were held in other parts of town on a rotation basis, a procedure that was quickly abandoned.

**9. Major Bibliographical References**

- Barber, Lucius I., M.D. A Record and Documentary History of Simsbury. Simsbury, Connecticut: D.A.R., 1931.
- Trumbull, J. Hammond, LL.D. The Memorial History of Hartford County, Connecticut, Vol. II. Boston, Edward L. Osgood, 1886.
- Vibert, William M. Three Centuries of Simsbury, 1670-1970. Simsbury, Connecticut: Simsbury Tercentenary Committee, Inc., 1970.
- Woollacot, Evan W. The Gavel and The Book: The Simsbury Town Meeting, 1670-1986. Canaan, New Hampshire: Phoenix Publishing, 1987.

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
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # \_\_\_\_\_
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # \_\_\_\_\_

Primary location of additional data:

- State historic preservation office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Specify repository:

Simsbury Public Library

**10. Geographical Data**

Acreege of property .58

UTM References

A 

1	8	6	8	2	1	8	0	4	6	3	7	6	6	0
Zone				Easting				Northing						

C 

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B 

Zone				Easting				Northing						

D 

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See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

The nominated property is identified on the Tax Assessor's Map of Simsbury as Map G-9/Block 203/Lot 1.

See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification

The property identified above is essentially the same site that has been associated with the Simsbury Townhouse since it moved to this site in 1869.

See continuation sheet

**11. Form Prepared By** Reviewed by John Herzan, Connecticut National Register Coordinator

name/title Jan Cunningham, National Register Consultant

organization Cunningham Associates Ltd. date 7/15/92

street & number 37 Orange Road telephone (203) 347 4072

city or town Middletown state CT zip code 06457

**United States Department of the Interior  
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Simsbury Townhouse, Simsbury, Connecticut

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In 1839 a town meeting was held to approve the building of a new townhouse, 34'x 50' with a six-foot porch or portico, almost exactly the size of the present building, although the porch was extended to nine feet in the final design. The cost was not to exceed \$500 for design and construction, but later appropriations were made from the Town Deposit Fund for a final expense of \$1329.81. The moving of the building nearer the highway in 1843 is traditionally accepted as fact. Apparently requested by the church, this move was discussed in town meeting but is not confirmed by town meeting records. The expense of the move was to be borne by the church society but it is not definitely known whether the money was raised or even that the move actually took place. The 1869 relocation, again at the expense of the First Ecclesiastical Society, is, of course, confirmed by the present siting.

In the following years the building was used for many purposes in addition to its civic function and has undergone several minor changes. In 1882, the first time it was called the town hall in the minutes of the town meeting, new seats were installed. The first Roman Catholic services in Simsbury were held here in 1902. By 1906 it also was used for recreational purposes. The stage was reduced in size so that the new game of basketball, originated by James Naismith in 1891, could be played there. How this was accomplished until the seats were replaced by more readily movable chairs in 1915 is not known. In 1934, three years after it ceased to function as a town hall, the building was rented to the local troop of Boy Scouts and became known as Boy Scout Hall. Town meetings and other civic functions were then being held in the new Eno Memorial Hall, dedicated in 1932, a bequest to the Town of Simsbury from Antoinette Eno Wood, one of Simsbury's leading citizens and philanthropists. Currently Boy Scout Hall is managed by the Culture and Recreation Department and is rented out for various purposes.

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Simsbury Townhouse, Simsbury, Connecticut

Section number Photos Page 1

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List of Photographs

Property: Simsbury Townhouse, Simsbury, Connecticut

Photographer: Cunningham Associates Ltd.

Date: 6/92

Negatives on File: Connecticut Historical Commission

1. Facade and south elevation  
Facing: NW
2. Facade and north elevation  
Facing: SW
3. South elevation  
Facing: N
4. Interior  
Facing: SW
5. Interior  
Facing: E