

Historical and Architectural Resources Inventory
Northeast Litchfield
2015

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Methodology

This survey of historic and architectural resources of Litchfield, Connecticut was conducted under the auspices of the Greater Litchfield Preservation Trust by Rachel Carley, an architectural historian and preservation consultant based in this town. The purpose was to make a record of sites that had not been included in inventories previously undertaken in the Litchfield Borough and in Bantam, Milton and Northfield, also sponsored by the Greater Litchfield Preservation Trust.¹ This 2015 report concentrates on northeastern Litchfield, covering properties on Buell, Chase, Chestnut Hill, Clark and Collins Roads; Country Place; Cramer Drive; Dingwell Drive; East Street; East Chestnut Hill and East Litchfield Roads; East Litchfield Road South; Fern Avenue; Hart, Howe, Johnson, Naser and Perkins Road; Rogers Drive; and Thomaston, Toll Gate, Torrington, Town Farm, West Chestnut Hill and Wheeler and Wilson Roads.

Surveys of this type provide accurate historical and architectural data, identify buildings, sites and districts worthy of further study and preservation and serve as the basis for nominations to the National Register of Historic Places. It is hoped that the information included here will not only be a useful planning tool for the Town of Litchfield, but will also benefit citizens by helping them make informed decisions about the historic buildings, landscape features and other resources on their properties. Copies have been placed on file for public use with the Greater Litchfield Preservation Trust, the Litchfield Historical Society, the Oliver Wolcott Library, the Office of the Litchfield Town Clerk and the Department of Economic and Community Development in Hartford. Original copies of historic resource inventories undertaken under DECD sponsorship are filed at the Homer Babbidge Library at the University of Connecticut at Storrs.

¹ These surveys are: Gregory E. Andrews and David F. Ransom, *Historical and Architectural Resources Survey of Litchfield, Connecticut: The Bantam/Milton Area* (September, 1987); William E. Devlin, *Historic and Architectural Survey of Northfield, Connecticut* (May, 1986); and Mary Elizabeth McCahon, *Historic and Architectural Survey of the Borough of Litchfield, Connecticut and the Surrounding Area* (May, 1987).

Survey Area and Criteria for Selection

The research, fieldwork and photography for this report were undertaken over several months from fall 2014 to spring 2015. Working with a preliminary list provided by the Greater Litchfield Preservation Trust, the project historian targeted approximately 200 sites. Criteria for evaluation of the included properties were based on those of the National Register of Historic Places, administered by the National Park Service under the supervision of the Secretary of the Interior. According to accepted practices, this survey also includes structures that may not clearly demonstrate National Register eligibility, but are nevertheless associated with an important person or event (local, state or national), or have architectural significance or, while not exceptional on their own, illustrate certain styles or construction methods or contribute to the historical context of a particular neighborhood or its vicinity.

Documented properties represent styles and types ranging from the colonial era to the mid-20th century. In order to avoid gaps in the numeric address list for each street, some properties covered in a 2006–7 survey of Litchfield farms by the same consultant (see bibliography, page 35) have been updated and incorporated as well. Researchers will thus find a complete survey for northeast Litchfield in a single, complete report. The project historian supported her findings with information from materials preserved in Litchfield town offices, the collections of the East Litchfield Village Improvement Society, the Litchfield Historical Society, the Oliver Wolcott Library and the Connecticut State Library. Among the sources consulted were historic maps, land records, census records, archival photographs, oral histories, newspaper articles and scrapbooks. The project director also relied on interviews with homeowners and consulted published histories and other secondary sources.

No attempt was made to locate archaeological sites, which would have been beyond the scope of this project. However, it should be noted that numerous prehistoric artifacts, including arrowheads and soapstone vessels recovered from the vicinity of Spruce Brook and other parts of the survey area, indicate potential for archaeological investigation.

The Inventory Form Explained

A standard digital resource inventory form, adapted from the form issued by the Department of Economic and Community Development, was prepared for each surveyed site according to guidelines supplied by the Commission on Culture and Tourism, which is the agency responsible for historic preservation in Connecticut. The forms provide fields for a physical description, an

account of alterations, a statement of architectural and historical significance and a listing of sources. Descriptions are based on an on-site survey, when field notes were recorded for each property. Although this report is primarily concerned with building exteriors, the project director occasionally included information about notable interior features for the historical record when it was available or noteworthy. Sites are not marked as accessible to the general public unless they are commercial or public properties that are open during business hours or by special appointment.

Identification, Date and Location: Each site is assigned an alpha-numeric inventory form (IF) number. Street names, numbers and property owners are listed as recorded by the Litchfield tax assessor at the time the information was collected. Tax assessor field cards also provided the approximate dimensions of buildings. The date of construction was based on information from tax records, title searches and from additional primary and secondary sources, and occasionally on a visual assessment. It is worth noting that dates in Litchfield tax records are not always reliable; researchers should be aware that assessor records often default to a date of 1800 or 1900 when the real date is unknown. The photograph(s) on each form show as much of the significant fabric as possible. When ancillary structures and outbuildings at a given address constitute significant groupings, or are assigned their own street addresses in tax records, they were recorded, numbered and photographed individually. Otherwise, photographs of noteworthy outbuildings appear on the main inventory form. Archival photos have been added when available.

Materials and Condition: Materials were identified and exterior condition was assessed as part of the visual record made during field visits. Buildings lacking obvious problems (by eye) were deemed structurally sound with the designation “good.” The designations “fair” and “poor” denote problems like failing roofing materials, severely peeling paint and rotting, failing or missing elements. “Deteriorated” was reserved for buildings that are failing structurally beyond much hope of repair, due to lack of maintenance and/or because they are vacant or being vandalized.

Architectural Style: Style was identified on the inventory forms whenever the structure, material and decorative elements supported such a designation (Colonial, Greek Revival, etc.) according to generally accepted terms used by historians. “Vernacular” refers to localized building types that originated in a given period but do not exhibit any clearly identifiable, or high-style, features.

Frequently used typological and stylistic terms that appear in the forms in this report are explained as follows:

Colonial Settlement Types: Medieval and Early English

Colonial/Vernacular: Most of the colonial houses in the survey area are one- or two-story timber-framed structures that can be dated to a particular era of Connecticut's domestic building primarily according to their proportions, floor plans and façade compositions. Reflecting medieval English building methods that were perpetuated for generations in the New World, the colonial buildings documented were erected with a traditional *post-and-beam* framing method in which the individual timbers were hand hewn and fitted together with pegged *mortise-and-tenon* (tongue-and-groove) joints. Foundations and chimneys were usually fabricated from stone.

Among the commonly found colonial types of domestic architecture are:

Center-Chimney House: Denotes a simply massed rectangular structure with a symmetrical plan, in which the rooms are arranged around a centrally placed chimney. The façade, located on the long side of the house, displays a balanced composition with a central door flanked by two pairs of windows in a *five-bay* arrangement. Second-story windows tuck directly under the roof eaves. When the structure has a one-room-deep floor plan, yielding a narrow gable end, the layout is known as a *single-pile* plan; when a house is two rooms deep, with a necessarily broader gable, it has a *double-pile* plan. The roof may have a simple peaked silhouette or a double-pitched *gambrel* profile.

Variations on the center-chimney type include:

Saltbox: In this traditional peak-roofed type, the basic center-chimney form displays a rear one-and-one-half-story lean-to, producing a long, low-slung roof silhouette on the backside of the dwelling, where the roofline drops down to the first story (IF 187). Some lean-tos were integrated into the original framing, while others were later additions.

Cape: Denotes a smaller, lower, center-chimney type of one or one-and-one-half stories, identified by its distinctive low profile; the eaves on the front of the house drop directly down to the window and door tops. As in the other types of center-chimney houses, the cape's facade, on the long side of the building, typically has a symmetrical five-bay arrangement with a central entry. Dormers are usually later additions. The form persisted well into the 19th century (IF 115) and underwent a revival in the 1900s.

Colonial and Post-Revolutionary: Classically Inspired Styles

During the second half of the 18th century, stylistic preferences increasingly reflected the influence of British taste. Colonial building evolved from the rudimentary medieval types of early settlement years to the classically inspired aesthetic that was fashionable in Great Britain beginning in the late 1600s. Inspired by Italian Renaissance sources, high-style Georgian architecture drew on the models of ancient Roman classical orders (Tuscan, Doric, Ionic, Corinthian, Composite) and incorporated new features like the tri-partite *Palladian window*. These classically inspired elements generally did not appear in colonial building in Connecticut before the mid-1700s.

Georgian (c. 1750–80): This term denotes the first Renaissance-inspired style to have an impact in New England—so called because it was adopted in the English colonies during the reigns of Kings George I, II and III (about two generations after it became fashionable overseas). Georgian houses in Connecticut may have peaked, or double-pitched gambrel or *hipped* roofs, and can incorporate center-chimney or *center-hall* plans. The center-hall plan, which appeared locally by the mid-1700s, incorporates a hall running on axis from the centrally placed front door to the back of the house; chimneys are located at or near the gable ends. Most of the Georgian-period structures recorded in this survey area have much simpler exteriors than their high-style counterparts found elsewhere in town (on North Street, for example) and are considered to be vernacular in style—although some display classically inspired Georgian paneling or fireplace treatments on their interiors.

Federal (c. 1780–1820): By contrast to the robust decoration of the Georgian era, the more conservative Federal aesthetic is light and delicate, with attenuated lines. High-style Federal design in New England is relatively scarce outside of port cities. In rural areas, it is often easiest to identify Federal influence on mantelpieces and other interior woodworking and finishes.

Motifs include elegant geometric shapes, such as the ellipse and the flattened fanlight, used over doors and in gable peaks. The swag and rosette are also typical embellishments. Federal-era buildings often display a *gable-end* format, in which the building is rotated so that its narrow gable end, rather than the long side, becomes the façade. In this form, the door is usually located off center, to the right or left of two parlor windows, indicating a *side-hall plan*.

Greek Revival (c. 1820–1850): This style draws on the classical orders, proportions and motifs prescribed by the ancient Greek rules of architecture—as opposed to the ancient Roman design precepts that inspired Georgian and Federal architecture. The Greek Revival reflected the growing interest in ancient Greek culture, based on spectacular finds at archeological sites such as the Athenian Acropolis. The style was spread through this country beginning around the 1840s, primarily through builders’ pattern books. Most of the Greek Revival farmhouses in the survey area exhibit the gable-end format that originated with the earlier Federal style (see above). On exteriors, decorative emphasis is usually on the entry, typically set off by a post-and-beam (*trabeated*) frame composed of *pilasters* (flattened columns) supporting a horizontal Greek entablature, usually in the Doric order. Other hallmark features include a wide *fascia* board under the eaves and a triangular cornice treatment on the gable, meant to evoke the triangular form of a pediment (IF 18). Rectangular gable windows, often fabricated with a geometric pattern of *muntins* (dividers) are another signature feature of the style.

Victorian and Early 20th-Century Styles

Coinciding with the English Romantic movement, the Victorian era (c. 1840–1905) introduced to America a period of highly romanticized, *Picturesque* styles, often rooted in European revivals like the medieval Gothic. During this era, which coincided with the Industrial Revolution, the balance and order defining the classical styles fashionable in the colonial and post-Revolutionary eras were displaced by fanciful decorations, asymmetrical floor plans and lively silhouettes created with intersecting gables, projecting bays and porches. Multi-hued color palettes came into style, and white was rejected as a primary exterior paint color. Many of the design innovations of the Victorian era were enabled by technological advances like the high-speed jigsaw and lathe. Introduction of commercially manufactured lumber in stock sizes coincided with the invention of the lightweight *balloon frame*, a cheap, flexible alternative to the hand-hewn timber frame.

Victorian Vernacular (c. 1840–1905): This term is used to identify 19th-century buildings that are very simply composed (e.g., no high-style features), but nevertheless display elements characteristic of the Romantic styles, such as deep overhanging eaves, intersecting gables (L- or T-plan), tall, narrow façades and gables and/or bracketed porches.

Carpenter Gothic (c. 1840–70): Among the earliest of the Victorian modes, this style was inspired by Gothic architecture, notably in the use of such features as the steeply pitched gable, pointed *Gothic arch* and *trefoil* motifs. When the high-speed mechanical jigsaw made it possible to mass-produce the whimsical decorative millwork known as “gingerbread,” the Carpenter Gothic was born (IF 99).

Italianate (c. 1840–70): The Italianate style was loosely based on the medieval Tuscan villa and usually features the squarish proportions of the *villa* form, a very low-pitched (nearly flat) roof and deep, overhanging eaves. Round-arched door and window openings and 2-over-2 double-hung windows (parlor windows may be floor to ceiling), ornate console brackets and elaborate door hoods typify the style.

Queen Anne (c. 1880–1900): This style displays an eclectic mix of forms drawn from a broad range of sources, including classical, colonial and sometimes even Tudor architecture. In Connecticut, the Queen Anne is best known for its elaborate interpretations in wood. Builders took advantage of newly available, inexpensive stock millwork, scrollwork, spindles and other assembly-line decorations to create whimsical designs. Sleeping porches, bay windows and conical tower roofs and other kinds of architectural appendages and projections are also characteristic.

Colonial and Historic Revivals

Colonial Revival (c. 1890–present): The Colonial Revival incorporates the familiar features and forms of early American building traditions, typically adapting them as loose interpretations, rather than as academic replicas of particular buildings. Hallmark features include the gambrel roof, fanlight and Palladian window. This highly traditional style was introduced by fashionable architectural firms (notably McKim, Mead & White of New York) as a tasteful expression for resort buildings and country estates (IF 37). Since the early 1900s, the style has remained the single most popular expression of conservative taste in suburban American building. Among

variations are the traditional center-hall and center-chimney form; the cape; and the *Dutch Colonial* variation (IF 96), which usually features a gambrel roof with flaring eaves.

Tudor Revival (c. 1900-present): Steeply pitched roofs (often clad in slate), intersecting gables and groupings of casement windows with leaded glass are typical features of the Tudor Revival. Facades are finished in stone or stucco and often embedded with hewn timbers to suggest the look of the European models that inspired this historicist revival. Like the Colonial Revival, the Tudor initially was favored for large country estate houses, notable for rambling, asymmetrical plans and complex massing; Topsmead (IF 9) is a fine example.

Craftsman/Bungalow (c. 1910–35): The bungalow is known for its low-slung lines, created by a long, pitched roof that slopes down over deep, bracketed eaves (IF 62). A front porch is often incorporated into the main roof plane, with its overhang supported on shortened *dwarf* columns typically mounted on low wooden bases or on rubblestone piers. The porch posts may also be *battered*, meaning that they swell or widen at the base.

Four Square (c. 1900–35): Named for its boxy form, the Four Square coincided with the bungalow as a popular early 20th-century house type, earning widespread favor due to low cost of materials and construction, and to the availability of mail-order builders' plans and prefabricated models. The simple square floor plan accommodates four rooms downstairs and four above. The squarish proportions call for a four-sided hipped roof; hipped dormers and a hip-roofed porch echo the basic form (IF 126).

Cape (c. 1920–present): Its colonial roots, simple form and attractive lines made the cape an especially popular choice for reproduction in the early 20th century, and the style has remained a traditional choice for suburban residential design to this day. The basic form recalls that of its colonial prototype, with its symmetrical façade and low silhouette; the roof, which slopes down to the first-story windows, is often punctuated by an evenly spaced pair of peak-roofed dormers. The modern cape owes much of its universal appeal to Boston architect Royal Barry Wills (1895–1962). Largely through Wills's influence, arched breezeways, chunky white-painted brick chimneys, multi-paned picture windows and louvered cupolas became signature features (IF 113).

Historical and Architectural Overview

Bordered north by the city of Torrington and east by the Naugatuck River, northeastern Litchfield is a rural district characterized primarily by country roads and a well-preserved natural setting. During the second half of the 19th century, a small but vibrant village grew up around a rail depot on the river—about four-and-one-half miles east of the Litchfield Borough—but all the business activity there has long since vanished. Excepting a sparse bit of light industry and commerce on lower Thomaston Road (in the northeast) and along a few stretches of Torrington Road (in the northwest part of the study area), the district today is almost exclusively residential.

In addition to its significant timeline of architecture, northeastern Litchfield is the site of the Topsmead State Forest, on Jefferson Hill, approached by Chase Road, and parts of the Mattatuck State Forest, located to the southeast of Buell Road. The craggy Pine Cobble, looming 803 feet above sea level east of Howe Road, is another natural landmark in a district defined by some striking contrasts in its topography. While open fields unfold in some areas, there are also extensive woodlands threaded with old stone walls, as well as quartz-rich crags, precipitous ravines and a particularly massive rocky outcropping (east of Johnson Road). The impressive geological detritus of the last glacial retreat (about 11,000 years ago) also includes a series of parallel north/south ridges forming a corduroy pattern across much of the town. Three of these ridges on the east side of Litchfield, early known as the first, second and third Chestnut Hills (moving west to east) were the focus of much of the community's early settlement. The clay-rich soil on these elevations was good for cultivating grain crops, and the network of brooks in the area—reported site of brief forays into copper mining and gold panning—provided excellent water power for tanneries and saw- and gristmills.

Early Settlement: Proprietors and Land Grants

The colonial history of the Litchfield settlement dates to 1715, when representatives of Hartford and Windsor purchased a 44,800-acre tract from the Paugussett Indians, whose main encampment was located in a section of Woodbury later to become Southbury. The process of establishing the new town formally began in 1719 with Litchfield's incorporation and the creation of a type of land corporation, known as a proprietorship, under the leadership of John Marsh (1688–1744) and John Buell (1671–1746).

As originally laid out, the settlement was roughly rectangular in shape, measuring about seven-and-one-half miles on its east and west sides and about eight miles on the north and south borders.² (Many subsequent reconfigurations reduced the town in size, including the breakaway of Morris in 1859 and annexation of a portion in the northeast to Torrington in 1866.)

The first obligation of Marsh and Buell in “planting” their community was to assemble sixty investing proprietors according to a quota set by the Connecticut General Assembly. Proprietors were typically responsible for establishing a Congregational ecclesiastical society—the primary political and religious understructure of all Connecticut communities—and for securing the town’s patent, which was owned jointly by members of the corporation. Equally important, they controlled the disposition of land, which was doled out in phased allotments to the investing partners at the discretion of a committee representing the corporation. Each share, or “right,” guaranteed investors an equal one-sixtieth cut in each allocation of real estate, including home lots and other plots that were usually doled out for farming and grazing. According to custom, three of the Litchfield shares were set aside as “pious rights” for the financial support of the church, minister and schools—meaning that there were fifty-seven rights left for investors. These were purchased by fifty-one original partners, some of who acquired multiple shares (and many of whom never actually settled in the town).³

Moving steadily forward with their settlement, Litchfield proprietors established the town in “Church estate” in 1722, began construction of the first Congregational meetinghouse in 1723 and received their patent from the colonial governor in 1724. Throughout this early period, surveys for a series of land divisions were ongoing. These included layout of sixty fifteen-acre home lots, including ten on the first Chestnut Hill, on what is now Chestnut Hill Road. The 1720s also brought additional “pitches” of woodlot, planting and grazing land, set out in various parts of town (sometimes in neat grids, other times as scattered parcels—but always in sixty shares).⁴

² The town originally included parts of present-day Goshen and Torrington, bits of Warren, Bethlehem, Woodbury, Washington and Thomaston and all of Morris. Boundary disputes, Congregational parish divisions and other reconfigurations eventually reduced the land area to about 36,400 acres.

³ Hartford and Windsor divided the profits from the sale of the proprietorship. Future divisions also included minister’s and school’s rights in the sixty shares, so that these “pious” rights were eventually distributed all over town, just as the other fifty-seven shares were. These lots were to be used to support the school and church as income-producing properties; thus a “school lot” was not the site of a schoolhouse, but rather land that was typically leased or used in some other way to raise money to fund educational endeavors.

⁴ Land divisions occurred frequently as a town got going, and then tapered off as the supply and the quality of the acreage diminished. The order of choice within each division was determined by lottery, often by pitching coins—hence the terms “lot” and “pitch” often used to describe land measures and allocations. A lottery for choice of order in Litchfield’s first division took place in 1718—even before formal permission for the town had been granted—and the last distribution took place in 1797. After each division, the

Some families appear to have moved immediately to their outlying divisions, which typically provided shareholders with non-contiguous holdings that were used for various purposes, including homesteading, cultivating different crops and grazing cattle.

By 1723 five fortified lookouts had also been erected, including one on the first Chestnut Hill. During this period tracts bordered west by present-day East Chestnut Hill Road and east by Route 254 were distributed as part of sixty- and one-hundred-acre divisions, including a one-hundred-acre parcel running down the east side of East Chestnut Hill Road allocated in 1726 to the Rev. Timothy Collins (1699–1766), the town’s first Congregational preacher, as part of his minister’s right.

The first major highway in the region, the old Farmington Road (later Litchfield and Harwinton Turnpike) passed directly through northeastern Litchfield, providing the only direct route between Hartford and points west. Present-day East Litchfield Road and East Litchfield Road South are remnants of this important thoroughfare, which probably followed the route of an Indian trail.

Among the other notable early roads was Camp Dutton Road, originally known as Broad Street, which traveled eastward up the hill from a landing on the Bantam River, continued on to the second (East) Chestnut Hill and to what is now Jefferson Hill Road, location of some of the early twenty-acre proprietorship divisions. At least two more highways were laid out eastward across the ridges toward the Naugatuck River, including Richards Road, surveyed about 1727. Present-day Chestnut Hill Road was extended south to a Waterbury road around 1745. More byways connected the Chestnut Hills to the Northfield section in the southeast corner of town. Early surveys for such roads suggest that Litchfield founders anticipated settlement to move eastward. Certainly the relative proximity to Waterbury (Mattatuck), populated in the late 1670s, would have been advantageous to people living on that side of the new town.

While it is clear that road building and early lot layouts placed settlers in northeastern Litchfield from the time of the town’s earliest founding, tracing the settlement of individual families is no easy task. We do know that the population was substantial enough by 1730 to require a schoolmaster’s services in three locations, one of which was on Chestnut Hill. In 1747 the town voted to build a permanent schoolhouse on the same ridge. (Where this first building

balance of land remained the combined holdings of the partnership. From these so-called “common, undivided lands,” shareholders reserved acreage for mill rights, highways and town plots like the burying ground and the meetinghouse lot, which doubled as town green. Since the partners were buying into the proprietorship, land divisions were not grants per se, as is sometimes described, but rather returns on their investments. Shares entitled their owners to rights in as-yet-to-be allocated divisions; those future shares were also re-conveyed or handed over to sons.

stood is unknown, but a schoolhouse, identified on 19th-century maps, long stood north of the fork of East and West Chestnut Hill Roads.)

Because Litchfield was essentially a speculator town, shares changed hands frequently, making it difficult to know who lived where. Moreover, investors with more than one share in the proprietorship received allotments in corresponding multiples in all divisions. As owner of two shares, for example, John Marsh, had rights to two home lots. Marsh selected one at the bottom of South Street and another on Chestnut Hill. Whether he settled on either of these or on an outlying division is unknown.

While John Buell's home lot was located on the north side of the town common, his extended family colonized much of the land in divisions the proprietor received in the area of what is now Topsmead State Forest and Buell Road (earlier known as the "Greate Highway to Waterbury"). About 1760, John Buell's grandson, Peter Buell Jr. (1739–97), is believed to have erected the building now standing at 71 Buell Road (IF 1) on fifty acres he received as a gift from his father that year.⁵

Two of the original fifty-one colonial proprietors known to have settled on Chestnut Hill were John Mason Sr. (1688–1773) and Benjamin Webster (1698–1755), who drew home lots on opposite sides of present-day Chestnut Hill Road at the intersection of Camp Dutton Road. Mason, who migrated to Litchfield from Hartford, received his home lot at the southwest corner of Camp Dutton Road, which he expanded with a twenty-acre division to the south around 1723. Mason's homestead, now vanished, stood on this property, later the site of Camp Dutton, a Civil War drill camp (see page 17). No. 132 Chestnut Hill Road (IF 19), located on the twenty-acre lot just to the south, was likely built by his heir, Jonathan Mason Jr.; a house and a shop stood at that location by 1793.

Further south at 226 Chestnut Hill Road is yet another Mason homestead (IF 21), built on a sixty-acre pitch that was laid out to John Mason Sr. in 1727. Records indicate that this house stood by 1748, making it one of the oldest known capes in the survey area. That sixty-acre tract straddled the road, thus including another 18th-century house (219 Chestnut Hill Road; IF 20) stands. The Masons and the Websters intermarried, and by the mid-1800s that house had passed into the Webster family (although exactly how or when is unclear). Both houses were conveniently situated near a now-vanished road that ran east to the second Chestnut Hill.

English Building Traditions

⁵ That house was moved from an earlier site on Chase Road in 1974 after Topsmead State Forest was created from the Edith Chase estate.

The dwellings erected by the first generation of Litchfield settlers probably represented a range of English colonial types, including capes and saltboxes. Colonial authorities dictated that proprietors or their sons build a “tenantable house” on their home lot or division “not less than sixteen feet square.” Many of the first houses were likely a New England colonial type known as the “half house,” a simple, timber-framed building consisting a single room with an end chimney.

Although local tradition dates some houses in the survey area to as early as the 1720s, it has not been possible to ascertain for certain the age of any of those buildings. The old Horace Baldwin place at 9 Collins Road (IF 36), for example, was reportedly erected in 1723. Survivors from that period are rare in Connecticut, but whatever the correct date may be, the building exemplifies a traditional early colonial type with its center-chimney format and overhang, and may in fact be one of the oldest dwellings in town. An anachronistic feature of medieval building, the overhang, which also appears on other houses in the survey area (IF 64, 111, 117, 179) is not completely understood, but is thought to have been used by colonial joiners to facilitate the connections between vertical timbers on a building’s upper and lower levels. The “colonial” door treatment on the Baldwin house, and probably the drop pendants, are products of a 1920s Colonial Revival renovation—a fate that befell many Litchfield buildings, including its neighbor at 43 East Litchfield Road (IF 48), which was moved back from the street in the 1930s.

The variation in size and complexity of Litchfield’s colonial-era houses correlates directly to the financial means of their owners. At the lower end of the economic spectrum was the cape, a familiar center-chimney type that continued to dominate the Litchfield landscape well into the 19th century. The cape was ubiquitous as the “fallback” dwelling form: Its low timber frame was relatively easy to erect, and its multi-purpose floor plan was simple, compact and practical. In an interesting regional variant of the type, the façade is raised about two feet above the first-story windows. This creates a gap below the roof eaves—presumably to provide headroom in the otherwise low second story, as displayed by the Horace Baldwin Jr. house (IF 115). The Cooke homestead at 191 Fern Avenue (IF 117), traditionally dated to the 1740s, is a good example of a gambrel-roofed cape, and is notable for its gable overhangs.

The Stephen Clark house at 11 West Chestnut Hill Road (IF 187) is significant as one of relatively few surviving saltboxes in town and the only example of the type still standing east of the Litchfield Borough. The 1803 date for the house is an indicator of how long the saltbox persisted in Litchfield despite the introduction of more stylish forms by the turn of the 18th century.

An iconic Connecticut architectural type, the full two-story, five-bay center-chimney farmhouse was well established in Litchfield by the 1760s and prevailed throughout the countryside for some years after the Revolutionary War. The Thomas Catlin III house at 125 East Chestnut Hill Road (IF 43) and the Morse homestead at 61 Chestnut Hill Road (IF 17) are fine examples. Even in rural farm towns, such dwellings could be substantial; the original section of the Catlin homestead measures 40 x 28 feet, which was a relatively standard size adopted by builders throughout the town.

The c. 1757 Bull house (40 x 30 feet) on Torrington Road (moved from East Litchfield Road) is especially noteworthy for its gambrel roof (IF 179). The double-pitched gambrel was much more complicated to frame than a simple peaked roof and was likely meant as an ostentatious display of wealth when used on dwellings as large as this one (as opposed to the smaller capes). The custom of siting such large two-story dwellings on a slight rise also helped to emphasize their prominence and signal their owners' social and financial standing in the community.

The exteriors of all these Georgian-period farmhouses are remarkably plain, with no sign of the classical pavilion fronts and pediments that distinguished their high-style counterparts in town—the Julius Deming house on North Street, for example. Their roomy interiors nevertheless provided a more sophisticated domestic arrangement than did those of the more modest cape or saltbox. Handsome carved paneling and mantels often distinguished the parlors, as in the Thomas Catlin house and the John and Huldah Clark house at 353 East Litchfield Road (IF 67). The Clark house is particularly significant for its single-pile (one-room deep) plan and the design of the center staircase, which ascends through the center chimney. This highly unusual feature has been identified in other colonial-era Litchfield buildings, suggesting they may have been the work of the same joiner.

Stylistic influences crossed the Atlantic Ocean with the help of British pattern books and the itinerant housewrights who helped spread new ideas inland to rural areas from the more cosmopolitan coastal settlements where they first took hold. Used widely and liberally by housewrights and joiners, these pocket guides came exclusively in Britain before the first American “builder’s assistant” was issued in 1797 by Connecticut native Asher Benjamin (1773–1845).

Through his many publications and their reprints, Benjamin was influential in popularizing both the Federal and Greek Revival styles in New England. Rural builders often extrapolated from the printed source, adding their own flourishes, like the distinctive attic vent on 79 East Chestnut Hill Road (IF 41), a lovely example of a vernacular farmhouse of the Federal

period. Representing a shift in emphasis from the Roman to the “purer” Greek forms of classical antiquity, the Greek Revival is particularly notable for its nearly universal adoption by domestic builders in the 1840s and 1850s. Among others, the Morse homestead at 62 Chestnut Hill Road (IF 17) and the Roswell McNeil house at 78 Wheeler Road (IF 195) are textbook examples of the rural Greek Revival farmhouse type, distinguished by its triangular cornice (a distant descendant of the pediments of classical temples). The trabeated entry treatment with its flat entablature and side-hall plan found on these houses are also hallmarks of the style. The standard Greek Revival doorway added distinction and style to even the most modest of farm dwellings: 293 and 373 East Litchfield Roads (IF 61, 70) are prime examples.

Transportation and Industry

As settlement expanded into the northeast section of town during the 18th-century, house locations became revealing indicators of early transportation patterns in the area. The cluster of four 18th-century houses at the intersection of present-day Fern Avenue, Collins Road and East Litchfield Road (IF 36, 46, 48, 111), for example, denotes the significance of this crossroads on the old Farmington Road. Following the north spine of the first Chestnut Hill, Fern Avenue provided a connector north/south to the Torrington Road (Route 202) to the north. More early houses line the north end of Fern (IF 116–118), where the road once forked, with one branch (now vanished) running northeast in front of the Miles Taylor house (IF 118). The old dwelling now absorbed into the Fernwood Rest Home (IF 163), was evidently the last outpost on the Torrington Road before the second turnoff to Fern Avenue.

There is plenty of evidence that the well-traveled Farmington highway east/west between Harwinton and Litchfield Center was the location of many early farms, along with small mills and assorted other enterprises, including a private boarding academy run by Isaac Bull on East Litchfield Road (IF 57), where the Bulls may also have run an inn. The inauguration in the 1790s of a Connecticut turnpike system—intended to ameliorate the state’s notoriously poor travel conditions—also brought Litchfield a web of new and improved roads, whose construction and maintenance was supported in part by tolls. (Local residents reportedly complained bitterly about the burden of paying for the privilege of entering and exiting the town, which was crossed by at least seven of these toll roads.) A tollgate long stood at the foot of the Torrington Road; 574 Torrington Road (IF 180) possibly may be the toll keeper’s house in an area still known as Toll Gate Hill.

Among the other toll roads was the Litchfield and Harwinton Turnpike, which followed the route of the original road from Farmington and was later absorbed into parts of East Litchfield Road and East Litchfield Road South. That turnpike was chartered in 1798 to maintain the sections of the road between Litchfield, Harwinton and Burlington, where it connected to the Farmington and Bristol Turnpike. At the Naugatuck River in East Litchfield, the Litchfield and Harwinton Turnpike intersected with the now-vanished Waterbury Turnpike. The Waterbury route evidently paralleled the east side of the river (south of East Litchfield) before crossing the water near the base of East Litchfield Road South and continuing north on the west side of the river, where a tier of fifty-acre lots was laid out in the mid- to late 1700s.

A succession of mill sites in this area, on both sides of the Naugatuck River, was partly responsible for the growth of the future East Litchfield Village, where much activity would center south of a dam once used to power various enterprises. A sawmill stood on the west side of the river by 1811, when Isaac Baldwin sold it to Ozias Seymour and Eaton Jones. That mill site eventually passed to Joseph Scovill in 1833, and in 1836 from him to Roswell Scovill (IF 68), a local resident who speculated in real estate. An early 19th-century operation for carding wool occupied the opposite bank on the Harwinton side, where a cotton mill was operating by the 1840s. The two turnpikes brought traffic to this area of town, and about 1846 a public house long associated with the Scovill family opened to serve teamsters. The inn would soon become the centerpiece of a small but thriving business district, owing to the 1849 construction of a rail line along the west side of the river.

Spruce Brook, which runs just west of the East Litchfield Firehouse (IF 69), also merits mention as the site of a long sequence of small milling operations that probably dated to the 1700s. Ebenezer Clark, who ran a sawmill there, purchased farmland on both sides of the road in 1808. The homesteads at nos. 353 and 377 East Litchfield Road (IF 67, 72) are both properties that Clark passed on to his sons. Lemuel Ensign, later owner of no. 353, is believed to have used the waterpower on the old Clark mill site for fabricating cheese boxes around the 1830s or 1840s; a wagon shop was also located in the vicinity. By the mid-1800s, William Clark was operating a cider mill at the same location. A town character, this self-proclaimed “Mayor of East Litchfield” took to picking rags and peddling junk as his health broke down and became known for sporadic exhibitions of bizarre behavior, including climbing into trees without a stitch of clothing on. The old Clark mill and shop buildings on the west side of the brook fell into ruin, but Martin Iffland (IF 71) would later re-establish a cider mill on the opposite bank. The impressive sluiceway stones are still visible from the bridge over the brook.

Not surprisingly, the East Litchfield train line, originally known as the Naugatuck Railroad Company, focused a significant portion of life in Litchfield on this side of town. Chartered in 1845, the line was intended to connect from Bridgeport through a string of burgeoning industrial centers as far as Waterbury. Lobbying by manufacturers to the north—clockmaker Seth Thomas of Thomaston among them—resulted in relocation of the northern terminus to Winsted. Among the stops added on the extended route was the East Litchfield depot, known alternately as Litchfield Station and Mattatuck Station. Originally hauled by wood-burning locomotives, the Litchfield trains commenced freight and passenger service in autumn 1849. (The construction process had not been entirely smooth. Earlier that year, members of the Irish work force laying the tracks had organized a strike, and the *Hartford Daily Courant* reported the shocking murder of one of the Irish workers, whose body was thrown in the Naugatuck River at East Litchfield.)

For a quarter century before the Shepaug Railroad began operating on the southwest side of town in 1872, the East Litchfield Station remained the hub for all of the freight and passenger service running in and out of town. By 1851 the railroad was hauling mail, and the first East Litchfield post office was established the same year with depot agent William Butler doubling as postmaster. Purchased in the 1850s by members of the Scovill family, a hotel adjacent to the station offered rooms, hot meals and a steady flow of spirits to railroad employees, salesmen and other travelers.

One of most memorable moments involving the East Litchfield depot occurred in 1862, when recruits for the 19th Connecticut Volunteer Infantry drilled at Camp Dutton, located on the old home lot of town proprietor John Mason on the southwest corner of Camp Dutton and Chestnut Hill Roads.⁶ For two weeks in late August and early September, the tent camp took on the air of country fairground, with vendors hawking keepsakes and visitors crowding in to see off their loved ones to war.

Events culminated on September 15, 1862, when a parade of 889 officers and recruits marched from the Chestnut Hill to East Litchfield Village followed by a string of carriages more than a mile long. Given that the entire population of the town was 3,200 at the time, this procession must have been an extraordinary spectacle. At the East Litchfield depot, a twenty-three-car train and two locomotives were waiting to transport the soldiers to New York City. The

⁶ The camp was named for Lt. Henry M. Dutton, who had fallen in battle at Cedar Mountain and had been practicing law in Litchfield before volunteering for service. The 19th Infantry was recruited in 1862 in Litchfield County and in 1863 became the Second Connecticut Heavy Artillery. The regiment was assigned to the Army of the Potomac and stationed in Alexandria, Virginia. Among the regimental officers from Litchfield were Col. Leverett W. Wessells, former town sheriff, and adjutant Charles J. Deming.

men embarked to the wild cheers of spectators who, according to the *Litchfield Enquirer*, covered every inch of ground around the depot. The officers and recruits reportedly enjoyed an enthusiastic welcome at each station along the Naugatuck line before making a connection at Bridgeport for New York, and finally transferring to boxcars in Baltimore on their way to deployment in Washington. (A derailment en route proved to be an unforeseen stroke of luck by causing a delay that kept the troops from reaching Antietam.)

By the end of the Civil War, the village at East Litchfield was firmly established. William Butler kept a shop for sundries and supplies in the basement of a house near the station before a separate store was built (burned down about 1894). By 1866, the cotton factory across the river from the train depot was operating as a paper mill, owned by John Page and George W. Dains. In 1876 the river also became the site of a substantial commercial ice-harvesting business, established by the Naugatuck Valley Railroad on a tract of land purchased from Harry Scovill. The operation included an immense warehouse capable of holding 1,800 tons of ice, which was cut in 600-pound cakes from a nearby cove. In February 1880, the railroad was using a team of one hundred workers to cut about forty carloads of ice daily for shipment to New York. (The ice house was dismantled in 1885 and moved to Waterbury.)

Meanwhile, Dwight C. Kilbourn (1837–1914) had expanded the Butler store into a full-scale general and dry goods emporium. Kilbourn’s clever advertising campaign, inaugurated in 1868, tantalized customers as a series of poems promoting his bargain-priced wares, including hardware, crockery and clothing. Some years earlier, Kilbourn had begun studying law with Origen S. Seymour, and upon returning from his service with Company A of the Connecticut Heavy Artillery, he resumed those studies. He was admitted to the bar in 1866, the same year he married Sarah Hopkins, descendant of Joseph Harris, a Litchfield founder who was killed by an Indian in the area west of Litchfield Borough known as Harris Plain.

The Kilbourns are still remembered among East Litchfield’s most prominent and accomplished citizens. It was Sarah who purchased the original one-half acre on which they built their house, Ferncliff, in 1872.⁷ During the next thirty years the couple amassed eighty acres, and Ferncliff became the village showplace. An entrepreneur and high thinker, Dwight Kilbourn had his hand in many enterprises, including the cheese factory he ran for a few years behind his family home. While serving as station agent for nineteen years, Kilbourn also managed to find time to practice law. After his office and extensive library were ruined in the 1886 fire that destroyed much of Litchfield’s business district, Kilbourn gave up his private practice. In 1888 he

⁷ After Sarah Kilbourn’s death in 1938, the house was broken up into apartments. It fell into disrepair, was long vacant and finally torn down in the 1990s.

was appointed Clerk of the Superior Court of Litchfield County, a position he held for twenty-six years. He also served as secretary of the school board.

During the war, Lieutenant Kilbourn, who was wounded in 1864, had seen active service under Gens. Ulysses S. Grant and Philip Sheridan and taken part in the Shenandoah Campaign. His war experience inspired a lifelong dedication to the honor of veterans. He served as president of the Veterans' State Association and secretary of the Second Artillery Veteran Association. In 1894 Kilbourn chaired a committee to erect a monument he designed for the Connecticut Heavy Artillery at Arlington National Cemetery. Even more remarkable, this East Litchfield resident was instrumental in saving the John Brown birthplace in Torrington by petitioning the State legislature in 1901 for an appropriation to purchase the site. Ever since a John Brown centennial celebration held that year, relic hunters had been carrying away pieces of the building. (The house burned in 1918.) Kilbourn also started the wheels turning for the preservation of the Tapping Reeve Law School by buying that venerable Litchfield landmark when it went on the auction block in 1907.

Sarah Kilbourn (1842–1938), who took over as secretary of the veteran's group after Dwight died in 1914, was an accomplished woman in her own right. Instrumental in founding the East Litchfield Chapel (IF 95), she also served as East Litchfield postmistress for many years, running the post office out of Ferncliff. Ill health finally forced her to retire in 1914.

The Country Life

While the town was already on several stage routes, the service provided by the Naugatuck Railroad played a significant role in making the town a destination for seasonal visitors. The Scovills' hotel served as the eastern terminus of a local stage and livery business, which provided regular service between the train station and the Mansion House and United States Hotels on the Town Green.

As originally laid out, the old East Litchfield Road had long made rough going for stage passengers as it passed up a rather severe incline on its way to Spruce Brook and points west. Riders on horse-drawn vehicles traveling the much-derided route often had to disembark and make their way along the worst sections by foot. As early as 1858, a new road from Litchfield Station to the depot was surveyed with the idea of circumventing the base of the hill. By 1864 the matter of a new road was still under debate. Meanwhile, summer visitors continued to arrive into town every afternoon on the bright red coach that rattled up the road from the depot. In summer 1864, as discussions about the controversial project were underway at the courthouse, a writer for

the *Litchfield Enquirer* (August 25, 1864) complained that the principal hindrance to the prosperity of Litchfield as a summer resort was the necessity of “clambering over the steep and uninteresting succession of hills from the station to the village.”³ Work on a new section finally began in July 1866. Even then, travelers had their problems: The same month a New York man driving his buggy from the depot was attacked by ruffians near the East Litchfield schoolhouse (IF 93). (Much of the alternative route has since disappeared, but a portion of it survives as the lower section of East Litchfield Road, which forms a loop at its easternmost end with East Litchfield Road South, providing access to the intersection of Johnson Road).

In the decades following the Civil War, Litchfield counted among many New England towns that developed bona fide summer colonies, thanks to its lovely rural landscape, well-appointed inns and appealing colonial pedigree. Even without the convenience of regular train service, the northeast district would have been a logical destination for newcomers in search of second homes. The area was close to shops and services in Litchfield Village, but also offered the peace and privacy desired by “country lifers,” not to mention some of the most gorgeous views to be found anywhere in the town.

One of the first of these newcomers was F. Ratchford Starr, a retired insurance executive from Pennsylvania, who came to Litchfield in an effort to escape the heat and humidity of Philadelphia summers. In 1869 Starr began assembling parcels along East Litchfield Road and Fern Avenue for a modern dairy operation known as Echo Farm. In expanding their real estate holdings, Starr and his wife bought up several old farmhouses, most of which were evidently occupied by the Echo Farm manager and other employees. The Starrs are believed to have used 20 Fern Avenue (IF 111), called the Homestead, as their own residence (they later lived on South Street.)

In recalling his foray into dairy farming, Starr later admitted he knew next to nothing about this new enterprise, but he threw himself into it with remarkable enthusiasm. At the time of his arrival in town, Litchfield was an agricultural community of considerable renown. According to census records, some 27,000 acres (more than half the acreage in town) were under cultivation and, as of 1850, nearly every one of the 336 farmers in Litchfield raised dairy cows. Butter production was significant; one of the larger herds (twenty-six head), owned by one Gary Potter, were responsible for an annual yield of 1650 pounds.

³ When the new route was voted down, a lawsuit followed, and it fell to a court committee to decide the question. Objections related to the expense of the new construction and to plans for another rail line (Shepaug Railroad), to enter the town from the southwest, which detractors of the new road project believed would reduce the importance of the East Litchfield depot.

F. Ratchford Starr was apparently undaunted by the competition, and in within a few short years had established one of the most sophisticated operations of its time. Among other achievements, Starr reportedly became the first dairy owner in the country to bottle milk commercially. Almost immediately, this entrepreneurial businessman tapped into a New York market by initiating a milk train on the Naugatuck Railroad to create a freight route that connected from Winsted all the way to the city. (The clatter of the cars on his Sunday milk train were said to cause considerable annoyance to worshippers at the East Litchfield Chapel.)

After the 1872 opening of the Shepaug Railroad, Starr established a rail-side creamery in Bantam, which provided another outlet for shipping dairy products into New York; the modern operation elicited so much publicity that he began opening its doors to tourists. In yet another project, Starr used the historic Buell mill on the Bantam River at the foot of East Hill (IF 107) to process corn, which he also sold through his New York offices.

Remarkably few remnants of the Echo Farm empire survive. Among them are a heifer barn (IF 48), a converted barn (IF 50) and the impressive stone foundation of an immense, ultra-modern barn capable of holding 200 tons of hay for Starr's herd of purebred Jersey cattle. (What happened to that building, which enclosed a 50-yard-long barnyard, is a mystery; its enormous foundation now supports a modern pole barn at Lee's Riding Stable.) Another survivor is the Lee's Riding Stable pond, located between Route 118 and East Litchfield Road, which was once part of Starr's extensive ice-harvesting operation.

The Starr operation was the quintessential representation of the gentleman's farm, a pastime often pursued by Victorian-era businessmen as part of a post-Civil War movement that advocated the benefits of fresh air and healthy outdoor activities as the antidote to the perceived ills of urban living. Promoted by everyone from real-estate professions to the popular press, this so-called Country Life Movement had a formidable effect on the American psyche and was a huge influence in creating a fashion for country homes.

At a time when rustic farmhouses could be bought for a song, it came as no surprise that one popular trend was to restore an old building. Purchased by New York exporter Frederick T. Busk and his wife Margaret, Spruce Brook Farm (now part of Wisdom House) at East Litchfield and Clark Roads (IF 58) represents just such a story. After acquiring the old McNeil farmhouse in 1912, the Busks enlarged and updated the old house, preserving its ancient timbers while adding Colonial Revival mantelpieces and other touches. A fabulous garden and a small dairy operation completed their new country retreat.

Another option was a full-scale country estate like Howelands (IF 37), now home to Touchstone, a residential treatment program for girls. In 1916 Ernest and Anne (Wilson) Howe

began work on this impressive property—also known as Red Horse Farm—located just across East Litchfield Road from the Busks. An eminent geologist and Yale professor who served as editor of *The American Journal of Science*, Ernest Howe (1875–1932) divided his time between New Haven and Litchfield.

Designed by architect F. H. Brooks, the Howes' main residence is significant for its masonry construction, incorporating multi-colored granite and other stones gathered from the surrounding property and used to distinctive effect, especially in unusual details like the house's "feathered" window lintels. A prehistoric grinding stone, a particularly rare find from the property, is incorporated into the chimney.

Like the Starrs, the Howes assembled multiple parcels of land as acreage became available and created a farm facility for a Howelands dairy herd. While meadowland was necessary for grazing cattle and growing hay and corn for feed, buying up land and houses was also an important way to build a buffer against development and to protect the vistas of the countryside that made the area so desirable. The Howe estate ultimately encompassed 230 acres, three houses and more than a dozen outbuildings, including a barn complex still largely intact on Naser and East Litchfield Roads (IF 128). The original garage and chauffeur's quarters, ice house and root cellar still stand on the main Touchstone property.

Among the Howe holdings was a Greek Revival farmhouse down the hill from their estate on Naser Road. This house, which they called Weather Watch Farm, was rented for a time to their friend Austin Purves Jr. (1900–77) and his wife Ellen. A noted artist, Purves became deeply involved in the East Litchfield community, and would purchase another fine Greek Revival farmhouse at 78 Wheeler Road (IF 195), where he refurbished the barn for use as a studio.

The Howes were also very connected to the community. Ernest held various public offices in Connecticut and was president of the First National Bank in Litchfield. Equally accomplished, Anne Wilson Howe (1880–1963) was appointed the first Republican state central committeewoman from the 30th Senatorial District after the 1920 ratification of the Woman's Suffrage Amendment. Founder and first president of the Litchfield County Women's Republican Club, she also served as justice of the peace and was a local Girl Scout leader.

Weather Watch Farm eventually became home to Anne and Ernest Howe's son, Walter Howe (1907–66), and his family. Walter served as U.S. ambassador to Chile from 1958 to 1961 during the Eisenhower administration, and as advisor on South American affairs to private and governmental groups. Walter's sister, Margaret Howe Crapo (1909–63) also lived in town. Margaret's husband Herbert L. Crapo was a Litchfield printer and longtime editor of the

Litchfield Enquirer. Mrs. Crapo, who worked at the newspaper, also founded the Prospect Press in Hartford; the couple built a handsome residence modeled after an English Farmhouse on Howelands property (Folly Farm) on Howe Road (IF 122). An Austin Purves mural is preserved on the interior.

The hilltop estate of Topsmead (IF 6–9), created beginning in 1917 by Edith Morton Chase (1891–1972), is another notable Litchfield estate of the same period. Edith’s father Henry Sabin Chase, a prominent Waterbury brass manufacturer, had acquired Echo Farm from the F. Ratchford Starrs in 1910. For a time Edith, also of Waterbury, rented one of the old Echo Farm houses, at 43 East Litchfield Road (IF 48); her father built the handsome Colonial Revival residence at 101 North Street in the Borough.

Topsmead had its genesis in a gift from her father of sixteen acres on Jefferson Hill, roughly bordered by Buell, Chase and East Litchfield Roads. Miss Chase started with a rustic cabin, which she expanded into the present Tudor Revival house in 1924 and named it Topsmead (old English for “top of the meadow”); grounds were laid out the following year. In 1927, Chase began assembling adjacent tracts, including the former Buell land in the area. Edith also had a working farm, which supplied dairy products, vegetables, fruit and other food to both her Litchfield and Waterbury households. A large barn and the manager’s and chauffeur’s residences still stand on Chase Road (IF 6–8); the small Greek Revival farmhouse at 85 East Litchfield Road (IF 51) was also part of the estate.

Topsmead is noteworthy as the work of Richard Henry Dana Jr. (1879–1933), the most significant architect of the era to have worked in East Litchfield. Dana, who studied at the Columbia School of Architecture and Paris École des Beaux-Arts, was a leading practitioner of the country house architectural movement. As of 1920 he maintained a private practice in New York City, but accepted many commissions in Connecticut. Prior to working for Miss Chase, Dana had designed a Litchfield estate called Stonecroft for Richard and Lura Liggett (present Montfort House and Shrine of Lourdes). Dana also worked on the Gunnery School in the nearby town of Washington, where he maintained his own country home.

As a product of the École des Beaux-Arts, this versatile architect sidestepped easily between architectural styles. Well known for his work in the Colonial Revival (he restored the Tapping Reeve House and the Congregational Church), he also designed a large house in the French Norman style on North Street, now part of the Forman School. In his Tudor Revival design for Topsmead, Dana employed a rich variety of materials and details, such as the iron hardware, half-timbering, stucco chimneypots and slate roofing, with great success. Guest quarters at the east end of the house, designed to resemble a dovecote, added particular charm to

the property, as did informal gardens and plantings of lilacs and holly. The property is now maintained with care as part of the Connecticut state forest system.

Immigrants, Farming and the Depression Years

Gentleman farming in eastern Litchfield was only one part of a much broader pattern of agriculture that included farms of all sizes and involved an expanding immigrant population that remains a rich, if under-studied, part of the community's cultural past. According to the 1880 U.S. Census, the majority of foreign-born farmers in Litchfield as of that year came from Ireland. Irish workers had begun flowing into Connecticut during the mid-19th century, and many initially found jobs in railroad construction before entering agriculture.

After the Civil War, the increasing influx of foreign-born residents to New England corresponded in large part to an out-migration of Yankee farmers, who were moving on to better agricultural opportunities (superior growing conditions and markets) in the Midwest—or simply exchanging the hard life of a farmer for more lucrative factory jobs.

Connecticut's melting pot continued to expand in response to an intense wave of immigration credited with bringing eight million people to American shores in the single decade between 1900 and 1910. Among them were émigrés from a range of European countries, most notably refugees from war and political strife in Russia, Ukraine and Eastern Europe. Many found their way into farming with help from relief charities that sought to remove families from urban slums and place them in healthier rural surroundings. Depressed real estate prices were also a significant factor in attracting immigrants to Connecticut—so much so, that by 1910, one in four of the state's farms were in the hands of foreign-born owners. Following World War II, a second wave of German and Polish refugees arrived in Connecticut, many traveling on visas allowing them to enter the United States if they filed as agricultural workers.

Research into the ownership of properties for this report reflects a pattern of immigration that correlates with statewide trends. The Miles Taylor homestead at 196 Fern Avenue (IF 118) is a case in point. In 1921, the farm was sold to Walter and Nellie Szostek, who, as natives of Russia, were among a string of European immigrants to live and farm at this one address. Others included John Zappula (Italy, 1928–41); Herbert Marx (Germany, 1941–44); and John Burinskas (Lithuania, 1944–62). (Marx also owned 79 East Chestnut Hill Road; IF 49).

Not all immigrants, of course, went into farming. Natives of Sweden, Benjamin and Emma Johnson, who purchased 386 East Litchfield Road (IF 74) in 1923 came to Litchfield from New Rochelle, New York. Mr. Johnson made his living building racing sculls for the Columbia University crew team. Martin Iffland, who in 1863 purchased 360 East Litchfield Road (IF 68) with his wife Barbara (both of Biebre, Germany) worked as a cobbler. Their son, Christian Iffland, of 374 East Litchfield Road (IF 71), a man of many pursuits (including farming), operated a portable sawmill. Many immigrants found employment as gardeners and domestics on country estates; Christian's son Martin worked as chauffeur for the Howes. More recently Czechoslovakian native Jan Tomas built the former general store that remains a village landmark at 422 East Litchfield Road (IF 81).

As the population of East Litchfield diversified, change was underway in other parts of local life. In 1906 the old Naugatuck Railroad officially became the Naugatuck Division of the New York, New Haven & Hartford Railroad Company, which had leased the line in 1887.⁹ According to the *Litchfield Enquirer*, the depot recently had undergone great improvements, including installation of new flowerbeds. The railroad continued to provide mail service: aided by a steel arm extended along the tracks, Fred Gasser routinely "hung the mail" in a bag that could be grabbed by a clerk as the mail car chugged past the station.

For a few more years, the five-room hotel adjacent to the depot continued to attract customers with novelties like the 1893 potato salad innkeepers introduced "directly from the Waldorf in New York City." The reputation of the hostelry, however, was soon to deteriorate. In 1902 a dispute arose over the saloon kept there by Julius Scovill, son of Harry. Julius's application to renew his liquor license was denied on the grounds that his establishment stood too close to the post office, then located in the Joseph Carter residence at 76 East Litchfield Road South (IF 102). Reports of drunken brawls and people lying intoxicated in the street did not help his case. Scovill went out of business late that year. Sadly, the old inn building burned in 1918, just as Mr. Carter, its new owner, recently married at sixty-eight, was about to move in with his twenty-two-year-old bride. The couple bounced back by building a fine bungalow on the property (IF 103).

Meanwhile, the Naugatuck River vicinity had been targeted for various improvements. Unveiled in 1911, reconstruction plans focused on elimination of two dangerous grade crossings and realignment of the tracks to avoid a blind curve near the hotel, where several fatalities had occurred. In the process, the course of the river was to be altered as part of removal of the

⁹ The New York, New Haven & Hartford Railroad, which initially agreed to lease the Naugatuck Railroad for ninety-nine years, fully absorbed the line under its control in 1906.

existing bridge and its reconstruction to the north. The depot was also moved north, and the river itself was re-engineered so that it now runs to the east of its original path. Auto travel was to shift to the east side of the river on a road yet to be built. In 1915, Edward J. Burns of East Litchfield laid out a residential subdivision known as Ideal Terrace—a tier of long, narrow lots that still back up to the Naugatuck River on the east side of Thomaston Road.

In 1915 the railroad received an injection of new life in the form of a contract to haul lumber harvested in the area of Spruce Brook, used to fuel Naugatuck Valley brass factories. The freight department officially closed in 1923, and three years later steam train service was cut to two round-trips daily between Waterbury and Winsted; gas cars were to make four runs. East Litchfield was among five stations abandoned that year. (Although the depot was torn down in 1936, freight drop-offs were made at the site for many years to follow.)¹⁰

Meanwhile the river was deteriorating owing in large part to sewage and industrial waste flowing in from Torrington, where contaminated waters contributed to a typhoid fever outbreak in 1911. As of 1927, the Naugatuck was reportedly among the most polluted rivers in Connecticut. When Paige & Dains, owners of the paper mill on the Harwinton side of the river, sued the city of Torrington for damages related to the sewage flow, the city bought out the plant in order to preclude the cost of litigation. The mill, long a landmark opposite the train depot, was demolished in 1914.

The story of this eastern district of Litchfield would also not be complete without mention of “Serkeyville,” the huge auto junkyard covering some eighty acres along both sides of Thomaston Road south of the Torrington line. By the 1920s local automobile dealer Andrew J. Serkey was collecting wrecked cars, amassing an immense stock of parts (more than three million) while creating a junkyard billed as the “largest auto graveyard in New England.” (“If it rolls, I have it,” Serkey proclaimed.) Serkey’s daughter Susan was reportedly the first employee of the Connecticut Motor Vehicle Department, founded in 1917, and the first state dealer license plate is said to have been issued at 76 Thomaston Road. Local lore has it that Serkey, remembered for driving his Stutz Bearcat while clad in a fur coat, buried his cash in barrels and shot the local tax collector in a particularly nasty altercation. He eventually lost some of his property, including the O & G quarry on the east side of the Naugatuck River, to gambling debts.

Judging by surviving architectural stock, residential building in East Litchfield Village appears to have slowed in the late 19th century before picking up again in the 1920s and 1930s.

¹⁰ Scrap metal was carted away via rail for the Torrington Company, and coal was dropped off for years. Fuel also came by rail to fill storage tanks that stood near the tracks until the 1960s.

Among the notable Victorian-era structures in the area is a well-preserved Carpenter Gothic-style house at 69 East Litchfield Road (IF 99), erected c. 1880 on land sold to Arthur Scoville by Hector Barber. Equally interesting is the East Litchfield Chapel (IF 95), built in 1868, where Barber had previously donated a tiny site (24 by 36 feet) for use by the newly formed East Litchfield Mission Society. Listed on the State Register of Historic Places, the chapel embodies a remarkable effort of community spirit: local residents harvested the lumber for the project from their own properties, while the East Litchfield Ladies Sewing Society raised funds for the building's interior decorations.

It is difficult to do justice to a discussion of East Litchfield building without acknowledging the role of Edward Wilson Sr., the entrepreneurial owner of an automobile sales and garage business in Torrington who made his mark on the east side of town as a self-styled real-estate developer. In 1922 Wilson and his wife Ethel Iffland settled into a small house they built at 67 East Litchfield Road South (IF 98). Wilson's Garage, established four years later, was widely known for its quality of service. During the Depression years Ed became especially well known for his honest work ethic and fair prices. In the early years of World War II, when production of new American cars was suspended, Wilson outfitted his garage with a machine shop for war work and tripled his payroll. During the Depression years, when customers typically put their cars on blocks for the winter and business slowed, he kept his staff employed building houses. More than a dozen homes associated with Wilson, built from the 1930s until as late as the 1960s, still stand on East Litchfield and Wheeler Roads and East Litchfield Road South (IF 66, 84, 92, 94, 96, 97, 98, 100, 106, 189, 191, 192, 194).

During the Depression, many locals continued to rely on small farms to provide food for the table, while augmenting incomes with the help of small cottage industries. The Iffland Farm (IF 71), for example, was a typical small family enterprise for the time. Clara Iffland peddled eggs and vegetables by wagon in Torrington, as did George Sawyer, former manager of Ferncliff and owner of nearby Kalmia Acres (IF 70). Electricity was not run through to the area until the 1920s, and many households remained without central heat and indoor plumbing until as recently as World War II. The section of East Litchfield Road running by the Iffland house remained unpaved until 1938.

The late 1930s brought the area one of Litchfield's best-remembered dairy operations, the Davenport family's Toll Gate Farms on Chestnut Hill (IF 17–18), which maintained a large herd of Ayrshires, a breed favored for producing milk notably rich in butterfat. Unlike most Litchfield dairy farmers of this era, the Davenports had their own delivery route, serving customers locally, in Torrington and as far away as Winsted, New Milford and Cornwall Bridge. (The Davenport

farm is not to be confused with the smaller Toll Gate *Hill* Farms, run by Frederick Fuessenich at 555 Torrington Road in the 1920s; IF 177).

In 1944 the Davenports built a modern processing plant and dairy bar at 383 Torrington Road (IF 161), where the farm's fresh milk, cream, ice cream and cottage cheese were sold to an appreciative public until 1957. (Toll Gate's chief competitor on the east side of town was the White Oak Dairy (IF 56–57), established by Henry Vanderwater as early as 1917. Both farms went out of business around the 1970s.)

Although it is hard to imagine it today, postcards from the 1920s depict Torrington Road as an unpaved country lane passing through bucolic countryside on its route between Litchfield and Torrington. Two popular country inns served travelers: the Rainbow Inn, opened in 1922 in what is now the Fernwood Rest Home (IF 163)—with many successors at the same address—and the Toll Gate Hill Inn (IF 179), which was moved from East Litchfield Road to Torrington Road in 1923 and opened as a tearoom during the Depression.

In locating their retail store on the road, the Davenports surely recognized it as one of the town's most rapidly developing areas. Residential development of Torrington Road between the 1930s and 1960s is represented by an especially complete timeline of residential building styles and types, including the Colonial Revival (IF 154, 159), the Four Square (174), the bungalow (IF 169, 170) and the cape (IF 166-168). The popularity of these “small house” types initially paralleled an effort to address a middle-class housing shortage after World War I. Organizations like the New York-based Home Owners Service Institute, founded in the early 1920s as part of the “Own Your Own Home Movement,” were instrumental in promoting a range of affordable house types like those mentioned above.

The effort to move people into home ownership—heavily supported by the construction industries—also gained momentum with the help of government-backed mortgage incentives. Manufacturers offering plan books and kit houses were another influence, along with popular consumer magazines that tempted readers with an array of designs and floor plans. Contests like *House Beautiful* Magazine's small-house competition, held yearly from 1928 to 1942, also spread the word.

Torrington and Johnson Roads preserve some interesting examples of the Four Square, whose form remained constant even as builders altered the design of dormers, porch posts and railings to provide some small variations on what was essentially a stock plan. A two-family version stands at 48 Johnson Road (IF 126), where the original façade was oriented east onto a now-discontinued section of Thomaston Road. The unusual masonry distinguishing the first story recalls that of a similar house at 72 Thomaston Road (IF 143), which occupies a pair of the Ideal

Terrace lots that had been laid out in 1918. Both buildings may be the work of the Italian laborers who worked on the road alterations and bridge construction around the Naugatuck River.

Broad public exposure to these new house types might be why the Joseph Carters were so current with fashion when they built their new bungalow at 78 East Litchfield Road South (IF 103) after the old Scovill hotel burned. The design's bracketed roof overhang and diamond-paned windows are highly characteristic of the type, which is also well represented on Torrington Road.

Ed and Ethel Wilson were also models of modern consumers when in 1930 they ordered an attractive Colonial Revival cottage (IF 96) in kit form from Aladdin Read-Cut Houses of Bay City, Michigan. Founded in 1908, Aladdin was one of many Midwestern firms to market such prefabricated houses, shipped from manufacturing plants in numbered, ready-to-assemble parts complete with specifications and instructions. The Wilsons' model sold for \$1,179; Aladdin delivered the necessary building supplies directly by boxcar to the East Litchfield depot. The house was called "The Plymouth," one of many names used by these manufacturers to promote the perennially popular New England designs that yielded them so much business.

The Wilsons' son Charles followed suit with another Aladdin house on Wheeler Road (IF 193). Among Aladdin's best-known competitors, Sears, Roebuck and Co., is also represented in the survey area, at 42 Chestnut Hill Road (IF 12). Between 1908 and 1940, Sears sold some 70,000 houses and marketed more than 440 styles as part of its Modern Homes division.

The survey also identified many good examples of capes and ranches from the 1940s and 1950s, representing a statewide explosion of suburban construction aimed at GIs, among other buyers. The majority of these homes were likely built from stock plans. Aside from their obvious economical advantages, standardized plans made it easy to reach a mass market, while also appealing to traditional tastes that never seemed to die out. Although the houses generally lacked individuality, marketers actually argued that it was easier to re-sell stock models (everybody liked them) than custom-designed residences that might serve one buyer's needs, but not another.

At the opposite end of that spectrum were the custom designs of Boston architect Royal Barry Wills (1895–1962), author of eight popular books on domestic building. Wills opened his Beacon Street office in 1925 and earned such a widespread following for traditional designs that he is still known as "master of the cape." Historians are always pleased to identify a Wills-designed house like the handsome example at 45 Fern Avenue (IF 113); its horizontal lines, white-painted chimney and breezeway are among many signature features associated with the architect's work.

Time Moves On

Beginning in the mid-1900s, East Litchfield underwent another series of changes that would significantly affect the landscape, chiefly through a combination of catastrophic weather events and the demise of the Naugatuck branch of the railroad. In August 1955 flash flooding brought on by back-to-back hurricanes washed out the old milldam at Spruce Brook and left the Naugatuck River Basin one of the most gravely affected watersheds in the region. Part of a subsequent flood-control project, the 1960 construction of the Thomaston Dam and a related reservoir system reconfigured the river valley. As a result, about ten miles of new tracks were constructed between East Litchfield and Thomaston. The train route opened in 1960 as the dam neared completion, but passenger service between Waterbury and Winsted never resumed. The simultaneous construction of Route 8 parallel to the Naugatuck River, running along a ridge just east of Thomaston Road, also contributed to significant physical change.

Road building was another factor. In 1956, a segment of former State Road Route 116 between Litchfield Center and Route 8 was constructed. Five years later, a new two-lane limited-access route opened between Route 8 and Route 254, paralleling East Litchfield Road. That road, which runs roughly parallel to a now-vanished section of the 1866 road, was renamed Route 118 in 1966 (see page 21).

There is no doubt that the demise of passenger traffic on the Naugatuck line and construction of Route 118, which now bypassed the district, helped to bring on the decline of small business in East Litchfield Village. Neighborhood identity nevertheless stayed strong thanks to social events and community efforts like the 1949 construction of the district's most important post-World War II structure: the East Litchfield Firehouse. Completed at a cost of \$7,000, the building went up entirely with volunteer labor (4,600 hours) from fire-department members, who even installed a lighting system so they could work at night. Two well-remembered residents, Joseph Luksco Jr. and Peter Naser, supplied the plans and supervised the masonry. In the social arena, diners enjoyed meals at The Maples, the popular home restaurant located on the poultry farm of Ernest and Frances Goodwin (IF 77). A boy scout troop and women's groups also flourished, and a baseball team affectionately known as the Hill Billies attracted crowds to their games.

Symptomatic of the times, the loss of the district's three country houses represented broader economic and social developments, as families no longer had the inclination, time or wherewithal to maintain estates with large staffs and huge amounts of property with increasingly high taxes. The local trend began in 1949, when Margaret Busk of Spruce Brook Farm sold the

house to the Daughters of Wisdom. In 1966 Howelands (present-day Touchstone) entered a new phase of its own history as the site of a Jungian residential treatment center for emotionally disturbed adults called The Country Place, founded by psychologist and author Dr. Renee Nell (1910–94). At the behest of Edith Chase, ownership of Topsmead passed to the state to become Topsmead State Forest in the 1970s; the house is preserved as a museum, open on a part-time basis to the public.

To be sure, the disposition of those estates was partly tied to individual circumstances of their original owners. Yet the sale and reincarnation of houses like Howelands and Topsmead is also illustrative of new trends in domestic architecture. In response to newly informal lifestyles, post-war design shifted toward the use of contemporary materials and open floor plans, and the large country house became (at least temporarily) somewhat obsolete.

Arguably no houses in Litchfield illustrate this new direction better than those of Marcel Breuer (1902–81), a leading Modernist who first came to town in 1950 through a budding friendship with his clients Leslie and Rufus Stillman. Breuer would design three residences in town specifically for the Stillmans. While the first (1950), went up in the Borough, the couple was so entranced with the collaborative process of building them that they commissioned two more on Clark Road (IF 28, 30). Built primarily of stone, Stillman II (1965) demonstrates Breuer's interest in the New England vernacular, and Stillman III (1973)—built in two parts around a courtyard and incorporating a cantilevered porch—embodies the architect's inventive approach to melding interior spaces with the outdoors. (Stillman also oversaw construction of a fourth house from pre-existing Breuer plans on Wheeler Road (IF 196), but never lived in it.)

Changing trends in post-war domestic building are noteworthy for their rapid absorption into the mainstream as architects and builders responded to the demand for functional houses that were also attractive, economical and convenient and enjoyable to inhabit. While he remained a steadfast promoter of the cape, even Royal Barry Wills offered new designs for sleek contemporary houses with convenient one-story layouts, masses of glass and easy access to patios and terraces. As Wills put it, America needed “houses for living in the present tense”—especially important at a time when construction costs were on the rise and domestic servants becoming a luxury of the past. Oriented to views and natural light, the one-story residence at 102 Naser Road (IF 131) exemplifies ideas for livable houses that were fundamental underpinnings of domestic design well into the 1970s. In establishing his Spruce Brook Nursery on Wheeler Road (IF 190) at route 118, Arthur Johnson recognized a parallel influence on landscaping. The post-war emphasis on capes and ranch houses called for smaller plantings, Johnson noted—creating a new market that reshaped the way he himself did business.

The identification of post-war housing types in this report contributes to a complete picture of historic resources that not only includes the landmarks of colonial, Victorian and Colonial Revival for which the town is already known, but also acknowledges the contribution of more recent building efforts to the town's historic landscape. Although preservation and land conservation efforts have traditionally focused on the Litchfield Borough, this inventory should make it clear that outlying districts in town contain a remarkably rich archive of significant resources deserving equal attention.

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Hartford Courant Historical Database:

<http://www.ctstatelibrary.org/subscrindex.htm/h?remotely=All>

Public Records of the Colony of Connecticut, 1636-1776: www.colonialct.uconn.edu.

Smithsonian Gardens Archives of American Gardens: <http://gardens.si.edu/collections-research/aag.html>

University of Connecticut Historical Map Collection:

http://magic.lib.uconn.edu/historical_maps.htm

Special Collections

East Litchfield Village Improvement Society, Research and Photograph Collections

Litchfield Historical Society, Research and Photograph Collections

Oliver Wolcott Library, Oral History Collections

Resources Associated with Minorities and Women

- Howelands, 11 Country Place (IF 37): Home to Anne Wilson Howe (1880–1963), who served as the first Republican state central committeewoman from the 30th Senatorial District after the 1920 ratification of the Woman’s Suffrage Amendment. Howe was also founder and first president of the Litchfield County Women’s Republican Club and a justice of the peace.

This property is also associated with the Jungian psychologist Dr. Renee Nell (1910–94), who founded The Country Place at this address in 1966.

- 284 Buell Road (IF 5): Home and studio of Louise E. Jefferson, African-American artist and photographer, and founding member of the Harlem Artists Guild.

- Daughters of Wisdom, 231 and 235 East Litchfield Road (IF 58–59): Established at the former Spruce Brook Farm as the Mary Immaculate Novitiate in 1949. In the 1960s the Daughters of Wisdom site expanded to include the Seat of Wisdom College and began its transition in 1967 to the retreat center presently housed here.

- Topsmead State Forest, 24-46 Chase Road (IF 6–9): The home of Edith Chase (1891–1972), a Waterbury philanthropist and board member of the Connecticut Park and Forest Association.

- 401 East Litchfield Road (IF 80): Home of Evelyn Naser Goodwin (1921–2009), who worked in the town clerk’s office for more than sixty years, serving as assistant town clerk beginning in 1943 and as town clerk from 1974 to 2008.

National Register and Other Recommendations

Maintained by the National Park Service under the supervision of the U.S. Department of the Interior, the National Register of Historic Places is a federal inventory of properties, including districts, individual structures, sites and objects, that are proven to be significant in American history, architecture, archaeology, engineering and culture. Criteria for evaluation for National Register listing state that potential sites are those:

- a. that are associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad pattern of our history, or;
- b. that are associated with the lives of persons significant in our past, or;
- c. that embody the distinctive characteristics of type, period or method of construction, or that represent the work of a master, or that possess high artistic values or that represent a distinctive and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction, or;
- d. that have yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important to prehistory or history.

The listing process for Connecticut properties is administered by the State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO) in the Offices of Culture and Tourism, Department of Economic & Community Development in Hartford. To qualify properties must be proven to have historical and architectural significance according to the above standards. Any individual or group can propose a district or property for listing on the National Register by contacting the National Register Coordinator in the office of the SHPO. For more information, log onto:

<http://www.cultureandtourism.org/cct/site/default.asp>.

During the time a nomination is under review by state personnel, property owners and local officials are notified of the intent to nominate, and public comment is solicited. Owners of private property have an opportunity to support or object to the listing. For National Register districts a simple majority (51%) of all property owners in the proposed district must be in favor. When a property is nominated for individual listing, it is necessary to obtain approval from the owner. If objections prevent the listing of a qualified district or property, the State Historic Preservation Officer may still forward the nomination to the National Park Service, but only for a

determination of eligibility. Any property or district that achieves listing for the National Register is automatically included on the Connecticut State Register of Historic Places

Listing on the National Register is an honorific citation only and does not restrict the rights of owners in the alteration, use, development or sale of their properties. A review is required if proposed changes involve federal funding, licensing or permits.

Owners of any properties in Litchfield who would like to proceed with National Register designation are invited to submit a request to have their property evaluated by the Historic Preservation division of the Connecticut Commission on Culture and Tourism.

As of Spring 2015, two properties in the survey area were listed on the National Register of Historic Places:

- Tollgate Inn, 571 Torrington Road (IF 179)
- Topsmead State Forest, Chase Road (IF 6–9, 52)

Further District Recommendations:

Historic Districts (contiguous resources)

A historic district is the designation used for areas that contain a number of resources that are geographically connected and relatively equal in importance, such as a neighborhood, rural village or a large farm made up of numerous buildings and resources.

Two historic districts in northeastern Litchfield are recommended for further research for potential listing as National Register districts based on the significance and integrity of the buildings, structures and landscapes they contain:

1. Echo Farm Historic District

This district would include four colonial-era houses and a converted barn at the crossroads of Fern Avenue and East Litchfield Road, a c. 1850 cape on Fern, and could possibly extend down East Litchfield Road as far as Lee's Riding Stable. All of these properties have associations with Echo Farm, established after the Civil War by F. Ratchford Starr as one of the most advanced dairy operations in New England. The older dwellings have significance as a colonial-era grouping at an important crossroads and include what may be one of the earliest houses in

Litchfield. Nos. 40 East Litchfield Road and 20 Fern Avenue are also significant as the former Lilac Hedges, producer of fine greeting cards in the 1950s and 1960s.

- 9 Collins Road (IF 36)
- 27 East Litchfield Road (IF 46)
- 40 East Litchfield Road (IF 47)
- 43 East Litchfield Road (IF 48)
- 51 East Litchfield Road (IF 49)
- 57 East Litchfield Road (IF 50)
- 85 East Litchfield Road (IF 51)
- 20 Fern Avenue (IF 111)
- 94 Fern Avenue (IF 115)

2. East Litchfield Historic District

This district would include a grouping of 18th and 19th-century properties linked to the early history of the town.

- 353 East Litchfield Road (IF 67)
- 360 East Litchfield Road (IF 68)
- 365 East Litchfield Road (IF 69))
- 373 East Litchfield Road (IF 70)
- 374 East Litchfield Road (IF 71)
- 377 East Litchfield Road (IF 72)

3. Town Farm (Milde Farm), 166 Town Farm Road (IF 185)

This historic property served from 1883 to 1941 as a working farm for indigents, overseen by Litchfield's Board of Relief. The site includes the 1883 almshouse, a dairy barn, bull barn, two silos and a springhouse. One of the few surviving poor-farm complexes in the state, representative of a community institution dating from the earliest years of Connecticut's history.

4. Fern Avenue Historic District

Three historic houses at the north end of Fern Avenue:

- 167 Fern Avenue (IF 116)
- 191 Fern Avenue (IF 117)
- 196 Fern Avenue (IF 118)

5. Upper Chestnut Hill Historic District

Three properties related by their connections to the Morse family (19th century) and later associations as part of the important 20th-century dairy operation, Toll Gate Farms.

- 61 Chestnut Hill Road (IF 16)

- 62 Chestnut Hill Road (IF 17)
- 111 Chestnut Hill Road (IF 18)

6. Lower Chestnut Hill Historic District

Two related historic properties associated with the town's original proprietors.

- 219 Chestnut Hill Road (IF 20)
- 226 Chestnut Hill Road (IF 21)

Thematic Multiple Property Listing (non-contiguous resources)

The National Register of Historic Places Multiple Property Documentation Form (NPS 10-900-b) nominates groups of related significant properties. On it, the themes, trends, and patterns of history shared by the properties are organized into historic contexts and the property types that represent those historic contexts are defined.

7. Modern Buildings in Litchfield

A Multiple Property Documentation was created in 2010 for mid-20th-century modern houses in Connecticut. It is recommended that the Marcel Breuer-designed houses identified in this report be considered for addition to this pre-existing National Register listing.

An alternative would be to explore a separate potential thematic listing for all mid-century modern buildings (including not only houses, but also other building types) in Litchfield, including the Breuer-designed houses identified in this report.

- 56 Clark Road (Stillman II), IF 28
- 106 Clark Road (Stillman III), IF 30
- 95 Wheeler Road (Stillman Roman Cottage), IF 196

Other Recommendations

For additional information on methods for protecting resources, including the creation of Local Historic Districts, consult the Connecticut Trust for Historic Preservation Website:

<http://cttrust.org/>

It should be noted that communities throughout the state are increasingly turning to special zoning as a way to protect resources within a flexible context. These include:

Historic Overlay Zoning

A historic overlay zone is a mapped zone that imposes a set of requirements in addition to those of the underlying zoning district in an area considered worthy of preservation because of its architectural, cultural or historic significance. This makes it possible to establish historic-district review by means of a zoning ordinance rather than by an independent process such as establishing a Local Historic District. Properties are placed simultaneously in the two zones, and the land may be developed only under the conditions and requirements of both. Overlay zones typically are established when there is a special community interest in a particular area.

Village District Zoning

Connecticut's Village District Act has enabled Village District Zoning, another tool designed to protect a community's character and historic development patterns. Connecticut PA 98-116 allows municipal zoning commissions to create Village Districts to preserve historic and scenic resources. The scope of this designation is somewhat broader than that of a Local Historic District designation, as it can require review of landscaping, road design, maintenance of public views and all new construction and major reconstruction. A Village District is established by a local zoning ordinance.

Index of Streets

IF Number	Address	Common/Historical Name	Date	Style
1	71 Buell Road	Buell Homestead	c. 1760	Colonial
2	79 Buell Road	Buell Farm	1886	Vernacular Victorian
3	109 Buell Road		c. 1925	Dutch Colonial Revival
4	273 Buell Road	Cheney Ames Homestead	c. 1781	Colonial
5	284 Buell Road	Louise Jefferson Cottage	1934 (and later)	Vernacular
6	25 Chase Road	Topsmead (Manager's House)	1910	Four Square (Colonial Revival)
7	25 Chase Road	Topsmead (Barn)	c. 1880	Vernacular
8	29 Chase Road	Topsmead (Chauffeur House)	c. 1927	Vernacular
9	46 Chase Road	Topsmead	1924-25	Tudor Revival
10	22 Chestnut Hill Road		1949	Cape
11	32 Chestnut Hill Road	East-A-Mile	1926	Colonial Revival
12	42 Chestnut Hill Road		1925	Cape (modified)
13	44 Chestnut Hill Road		c. 1750	Center-chimney Colonial
14	47 Chestnut Hill Road		1933	Colonial Revival
15	53 Chestnut Hill Road		1933	Cape
16	61 Chestnut Hill Road	Morse Homestead/Top-O-The-World	c. 1781	Center-Chimney Colonial
17	62 Chestnut Hill Road	Morse Homestead/Toll Gate Farm/ Longview Farm	1845	Greek Revival
18	111 Chestnut Hill Road	Morse Homestead/Toll Gate Farm	c. 1840	Greek Revival
19	132 Chestnut Hill Road	Mason Homestead	Before 1793	Vernacular
20	219 Chestnut Hill Road	Webster Homestead	c. 1760	Center-Chimney Colonial
21	226 Chestnut Hill Road	Mason Homestead	before 1748	Cape
22	265 Chestnut Hill Road		1930	Colonial Revival

IF Number	Address	Common/Historical Name	Date	Style
23	9 Clark Road		1958	Cape
24	12 Clark Road	Wisdom House (annex)	1920	Vernacular
25	21 Clark Road		c. 1941	Cape
26	46 Clark Road	John McNeil Homestead	c. 1800	Vernacular
27	49 Clark Road	Clark/Wheeler Barn	19 th cen.	English Bank Barn
28	56 Clark Road	Stillman III	1973	Modern
29	88 Clark Road	Perkins Homestead	c. 1745/1800	Vernacular
30	106 Clark Road	Stillman II	1963	Modern
31	176 Clark Road	Bissell Homestead	c. 1850	Vernacular Victorian
32	189 Clark Road		1943	Cape
33	206 Clark Road		c. 1930	Cape
34	216 Clark Road		c. 1930	Vernacular
35	220 Clark Road	Maple Lane Farm	c. 1925	Vernacular
36	9 Collins Road	Horace Baldwin Place	c. 1750	Center-chimney colonial
37	11 Country Place	Howelands; Red Horse Farm; The Country Place; Touchstone	1916–17	Colonial Revival
38	14 Cramer Drive		1933	Cape
39	22 Cramer Drive		1930	Cape
40	18 Dingwell Drive		1945	Cape
41	79 East Chestnut Hill Road	Catlin Homestead	1831	Federal
42	99 East Chestnut Hill Road		1932	Vernacular
43	125 East Chestnut Hill Road	Thomas Catlin III House/ Middle Ridge Farm	c. 1787	Center-Chimney Colonial
44	9 East Litchfield Road		1936	Cape
45	15 East Litchfield Road		1932	Colonial Revival
46	27 East Litchfield Road		c. 1800	Federal
47	40 East Litchfield Road	Lilac Hedges/Hill Top/The Homestead	c. 1860	Bank Barn (Converted)

IF Number	Address	Common/Historical Name	Date	Style
48	43 East Litchfield Road	William Norton Homestead	c. 1763	Center-chimney Colonial
49	51 East Litchfield Road		1920	Colonial Revival
50	57 East Litchfield Road	Lee's Riding Stable/Echo Farm	c.1875	Vernacular
51	85 East Litchfield Road		c. 1850	Vernacular
52	95 East Litchfield Road	Topsmead (Superintendent House)	c.1840	Greek Revival
53	145 East Litchfield Road		1936	Colonial Revival
54	182 East Litchfield Road	Eaton (Mary) Jones Farm/Peck House	c. 1755	Cape
55	184 East Litchfield Road	East Chestnut Hill Schoolhouse (District 8)	c. 1850	Vernacular
56	191 East Litchfield Road	White Oak Dairy	1921	Vernacular
57	195 East Litchfield Road	White Oak Dairy/Kiftsgate Farm	19 th cen.	Vernacular (converted barn)
58	231 East Litchfield Road	Wisdom House/Spruce Brook Farm McNeil Homestead	c. 1815 or earlier	Federal
59	235 East Litchfield Road	Wisdom House (Marie Louise Carriage House)	c. 1860; 20 th cen.	Vernacular
60	264 East Litchfield Road	Howelands (Manager's House); Meow Inc. Royal Ford Homestead		
61	293 East Litchfield Road		c. 1856	Greek Revival
62	307 East Litchfield Road		1935	Bungalow
63	332 East Litchfield Road		1935	Colonial Revival
64	335 East Litchfield Road	Alexander McNeil Homestead	c. 1760	Colonial
65	338 East Litchfield Road		1931	Bungalow/Colonial Revival
66	341 East Litchfield Road		1952	Cape
67	353 East Litchfield Road	John and Huldah Clark Homestead	18 th Cen.	Colonial
68	360 East Litchfield Road	Roswell Scovill Homestead	c. 1855	Cape
69	365 East Litchfield Road	East Litchfield Firehouse	1949	Vernacular
70	373 East Litchfield Road	Kalmia Acres	c. 1860	Greek Revival
71	374 East Litchfield Road	Iffland Farm	c. 1880	Vernacular
72	377 East Litchfield Road	Ebenezer Clark Jr. House	c. 1819	Vernacular
73	382 East Litchfield Road		1941	Cape
74	386 East Litchfield Road		c. 1858	Cape

IF Number	Address	Common/Historical Name	Date	Style
75	388 East Litchfield Road		1948	Cape
76	391 East Litchfield Road		1920	Colonial Revival
77	395 East Litchfield Road	The Maples	c. 1926	Colonial Revival
78	396 East Litchfield Road		Unknown	Vernacular
79	400 East Litchfield Road	Johnson Homestead	1952	Colonial Revival
80	401 East Litchfield Road		1942	Cape
81	422 East Litchfield Road	Tomas Store	1940	Vernacular
82	430 East Litchfield Road		1940	Cape
83	441 East Litchfield Road	(Moved from Topsmead)	1930	Vernacular
84	458 East Litchfield Road		1939	Contemporary
85	7 East Litchfield Road South		1940	Cape
86	8 East Litchfield Road South		1941	Cape
87	17 East Litchfield Road South		c. 1930	Bungalow
88	23 East Litchfield Road South		1949	Cape
89	39 East Litchfield Road South		1954	Cape
90	43 East Litchfield Road South		1941	Cape
91	47 East Litchfield Road South		1945	Cape
92	49 East Litchfield Road South		1948	Ranch
93	54 East Litchfield Road South	East Litchfield Schoolhouse (9 th District)	c. 1866	Vernacular
94	61 East Litchfield Road South		1950	Cape
95	62 East Litchfield Road South	East Litchfield Chapel	1868	Vernacular Victorian
96	63 East Litchfield Road South		1930	Dutch Colonial Revival
97	66 East Litchfield Road South		1943	Cape
98	67 East Litchfield Road South		1922	Vernacular
99	69 East Litchfield Road South		c. 1880	Carpenter Gothic
100	70 East Litchfield Road South		c. 1860s	Vernacular (Converted barn)
101	74 East Litchfield Road South	Hector Barber House	c. 1830	Greek Revival
102	76 East Litchfield Road South	Joseph Carter House	c. 1840	Vernacular
103	78 East Litchfield Road South	Joseph and Marian Carter House	c. 1920	Bungalow
104	81 East Litchfield Road South	Arthur Scoville House	c. 1905	Vernacular
105	82 East Litchfield Road South	East Litchfield Scale House	Unknown	Vernacular

IF Number	Address	Common/Historical Name	Date	Style
106	93 East Litchfield Road South		1935	Vernacular
107	220 East Street		1959	Modern
108	228 East Street		1945	Cape
109	230 East Street		1945	Cape
110	292 East Street			
111	20 Fern Avenue	Lilac Hedges/The Homestead/Hill Top Phelps Homestead	c. 1773	Colonial
112	39 Fern Avenue		1942	Cape
113	45 Fern Avenue		1961	Cape
114	85 Fern Avenue		1947	Cape
115	94 Fern Avenue	Horace Baldwin Jr. House	c. 1850	Cape
116	167 Fern Avenue	Phineas Baldwin House/High Meadow Farm	c. 1767	Colonial
117	191 Fern Avenue	Cooke Homestead	c. 1740	Cape
118	196 Fern Avenue	Miles Taylor Homestead	pre-1852	Vernacular
119	100 Hart Drive		1957	Ranch
120	10 Howe Road		1942	Cape
121	15 Howe Road		1943	Cape
122	52 Howe Road	Folly Farm	c. 1850	English Barn
123	55 Howe Road	Folly Farm	c. 1938	English Farmhouse
124	34 Johnson Road		1936	Vernacular
125	37 Johnson Road		1940	Cape
126	48 Johnson Road		c. 1920	Four Square
127	56 Johnson Road		1936	Colonial Revival

IF Number	Address	Common/Historical Name	Date	Style
128	9 Naser Road	Barns (Howelands/Red Horse Farm)	c. 1929	Vernacular
129	30 Naser Road	Weather Watch Farm	c. 1840	Greek Revival
130	83 Naser Road	Morton Persons Homestead	pre-1859	Vernacular
131	102 Naser Road		1962	Modern
132	121 Naser Road	Strickland Homestead	c. 1860	Vernacular
133	62 Perkins Road		1945	Cape
134	65 Perkins Road	Perkins Homestead	c. 1815	Vernacular
135	13 Rogers Drive		1935	Vernacular
136	16 Rogers Drive		1940	Vernacular
137	16 Thomaston Road		1930	Colonial Revival
138	23 Thomaston Road	Litchfield Spirits	1956	Contemporary
139	50 Thomaston Road	Jamieson Laser Co.	1945	Industrial
140	54 Thomaston Road	Barredo's Used Furniture and Antiques	1956	Commercial/Industrial
141	56 Thomaston Road		c. 1915	Vernacular
142	68 Thomaston Road		c. 1920	Vernacular
143	72 Thomaston Road		c. 1920	Vernacular
144	111 Thomaston Road	United Construction and Engineering	c. 1940	Industrial
145	113 Thomaston Road	CL & P Terminal 8A	c. 1930	Commercial/Industrial
146	11 Toll Gate Road		1949	Cape
147	17 Toll Gate Road		1943	Dutch Colonial Revival
148	292 Torrington Road		1946	Cape
149	296 Torrington Road		1940	Cape
150	303 Torrington Road		c. 1910	Vernacular
151	313 Torrington Road		1935	Cape
152	335 Torrington Road		c. 1910	Vernacular
153	337 Torrington Road		c. 1900	Vernacular

IF Number	Address	Common/Historical Name	Date	Style
154	353 Torrington Road		1930	Colonial Revival
155	357 Torrington Road		1930	Cape
156	362 Torrington Road		1946	Cape
157	366 Torrington Road		1948	Cape
158	371 Torrington Road		1950	Cape
159	373 Torrington Road		1939	Colonial Revival
160	375 Torrington Road		c. 1925	Vernacular
161	383 Torrington Road	Renaissance of Litchfield/Toll Gate Farms Dairy	1944	Commercial
162	393 Torrington Road	Litchfield Hills Nursery	c. 1940	Commercial
163	400 Torrington Road	Fernwood Rest Home/Litchfield Hills Inn Litchfield Lodge/Rainbow Inn	before 1859	Colonial Revival/Colonial
164	412 Torrington Road		1928	Bungalow
165	420 Torrington Road		1938	Cape
166	426 Torrington Road		1941	Cape
167	428 Torrington Road		1945	Cape
168	443 Torrington Road	Friendship Baptist Church Rectory/North Farms Schoolhouse (District 3)	before 1844	Vernacular
169	458 Torrington Road		c. 1920	Bungalow
170	462 Torrington Road		c. 1940	Bungalow
171	477 Torrington Road	Andrew Pierpont Homestead	c. 1850	Vernacular
172	486 Torrington Road		1947	Cape
173	496 Torrington Road		1945	Bungalow
174	501 Torrington Road		c. 1920	Four Square
175	510 Torrington Road		c. 1900	Vernacular Victorian
176	513 Torrington Road		c. 1900	Vernacular
177	555 Torrington Road	Toll Gate Hill Farms	c. 1860	Vernacular
178	556 Torrington Road		c. 1925	Vernacular
179	571 Torrington Road	Toll Gate Hill and Inn/Mockingbird Café William Bull House/Toll Gate Hill Inn	c. 1757	Colonial
180	574 Torrington Road		c. 1840	Greek Revival

181	628 Torrington Road	Peaches 'N Cream	c. 1925	Vernacular
IF Number	Address	Common/Historical Name	Date	Style
182	3 Town Farm Road		c. 1880	Cape
183	23 Town Farm Road			
184	133 Town Farm Road	John Woodruff Homestead	c. 1812	Vernacular
185	166 Town Farm Road	Milde Farm/Town Farm	1883	Vernacular Victorian
186	2 West Chestnut Hill Road	Beers-Perkins House	c. 1800	Vernacular
187	11 West Chestnut Hill Road	Stephen Clark Homestead/Whiting Place	c. 1803	
188	14-16 West Chestnut Hill Road	Roseneath (Caretaker house)	unknown	Vernacular
189	6 Wheeler Road		1952	Ranch
190	22 Wheeler Road	Still River Farms/Spruce Brook Nursery	1950	Vernacular
191	28 Wheeler Road		1956	Ranch
192	32 Wheeler Road		1957	
193	42 Wheeler Road		1950	Eclectic
194	45 Wheeler Road		1964	Cape
195	78 Wheeler Road	Roswell McNeil Homestead	c. 1844	Greek Revival
196	95 Wheeler Road	Stillman Roman Cottage	1974	Modern
197	144 Wheeler Road	Wheeler Homestead	c. 1793	Center-Chimney Colonial
198	188 Wheeler Road		19 th cen.	Vernacular Bank Barn
199	189 Wheeler Road		c. 1934	Colonial Revival
200	199 Wheeler Road		1953	Cape
201	209 Wheeler Road		1939	Cape
202	210 Wheeler Road		1940	Vernacular
203	214 Wheeler Road		1946	Colonial Revival
204	222 Wheeler Road		1942	Cape
205	28 Wilson Road		1950	Cape

