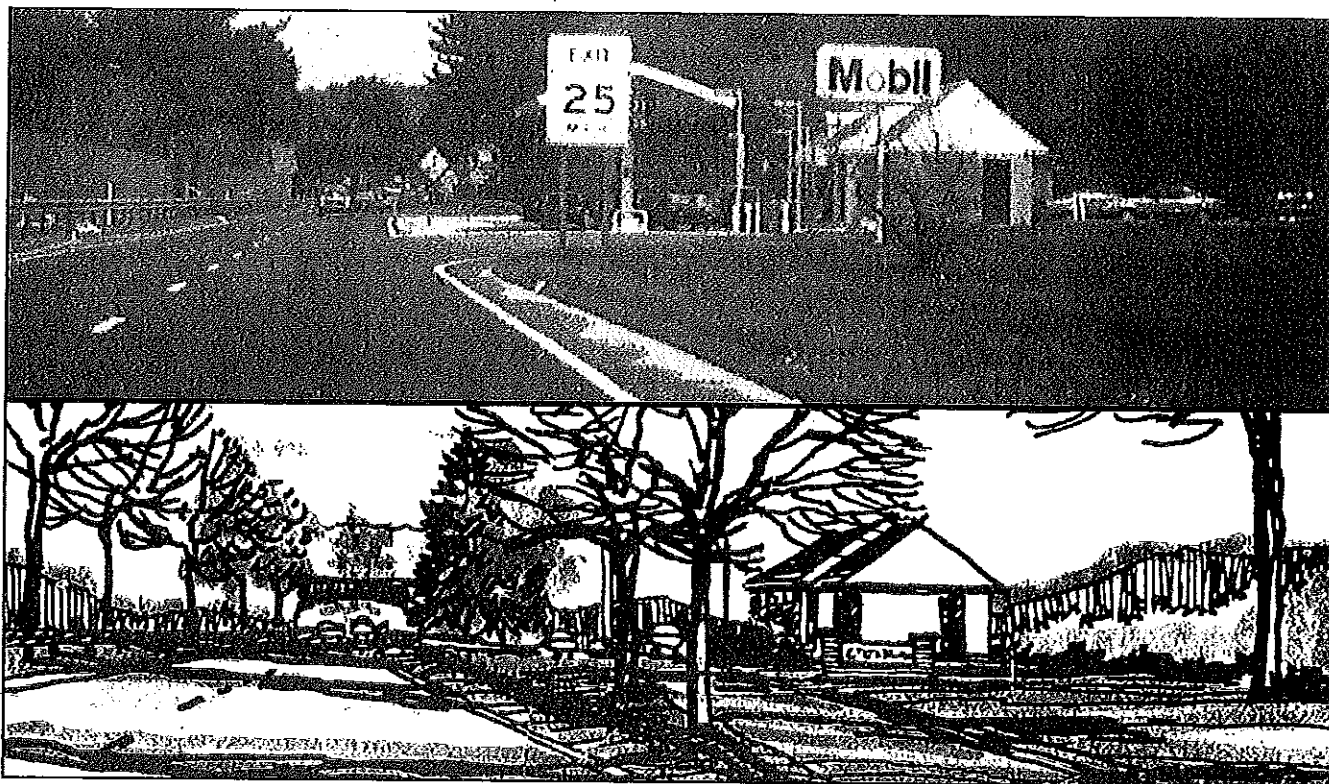


Landscape Master Plan for Merritt Parkway

Channing Harris, ASLA



ConnDOT Merritt Parkway Landscape Master Plan Concept Manual, Milone & MacBroom, Inc., et al.

Typical existing service area and approach lane on the Merritt Parkway. The conceptual drawing realigns and extends the approach lane to create a landscape "apron" on either end of the pumping area. A guiderail is utilized at the pavement's edge.

Connecticut's famous Merritt Parkway has recently been the focus of intensive study by a team of design consultants intent on producing a new Landscape Master Plan for the State

Department of Transportation (ConnDOT). The project is being directed by Milone & MacBroom, Inc., Landscape Architects and Engineers of Cheshire, CT and supported by:

Johnson, Johnson & Roy, Landscape Architects of Ann Arbor, MI; Johnson Land Design, Landscape Architects of Hartford, CT; and Fitzgerald and Halliday, Transportation Planners from Hartford.

At recent public information meetings in Stamford and Trumbull the Draft Landscape Master Plan was presented for review. The plan includes detailed analysis of historical and current conditions, data on the original design concepts, analysis of visual and aesthetic qualities and recommendations for future landscape treatments. The plan

In This Issue

Urban Design Charrette in Winsted	3
Archaeological Perspectives	7
New Listings on the National Register	8
Tour: New London	12

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(continued on page 2)

New Listings on the National Register

The National Register listings recently announced by the Connecticut Historical Commission include the homes of two important members of Hartford's black community, an African-American woman-owned pharmacy, a working women's retreat, two shoreline districts, an African-American church, a small town library, an expanded boundary for an historic farmhouse site, and an ancient rock shelter.

The first black candidate endorsed by the Democratic party anywhere in the state, Wilfred X. Johnson successfully ran for election to the General Assembly in 1958 and became Connecticut's first black state representative. Johnson served four terms as representative, and is known as a leader in Hartford's black community. In 1966 Johnson moved into a house located on Tower Avenue, a residential street in the North End of Hartford. Built in 1928, the Wilfred X. Johnson House is representative of the modest, well-crafted, custom-designed houses in its neighborhood.

The residential Blue Hills section of northwest Hartford is also the home of another important black community leader whose home has been added to the National Register listings. A lawyer, prosecutor and judge, Boce W. Barlow assisted in the writing of Connecticut's pioneering civil-rights laws. He was the first African-American in the Connecticut judiciary and the first black to be elected a state senator.

The Boce W. Barlow, Jr. House is one of a number of similar Colonial Revival style houses built in the twenties, uniformly set back from the street on relatively small lots.

Already part of the National Register-listed Old Saybrook South Green Historic District, the James Pharmacy was nominated for individual listing because of the previously undocumented significance in Connecticut's

history of Ann James, a former owner. Miss James (1886-1977) was the first African-American woman pharmacist in the state as well as a notable figure in the life of Old Saybrook.

The c.1820 Federal Style building served as her store and residence. Through major additions and alterations made by Miss James, the building is now dominated by Colonial Revival embellishments.

With more than 100 major structures built mainly in the 18th and early 19th centuries, the Clinton Village Historic District contains many well-preserved

Gillette Castle State Park in East Haddam. Founded in 1883 by prominent upper-class women and social workers in response to degrading conditions suffered by young women in New York's factories, the Vacation Society's mission was to protect the morality of American working women by creating opportunities for social intercourse, self improvement (education), and recreation in a morally uplifting setting. All six major buildings of the 27-acre district are examples of 19th and early 20th century vernacular building traditions and have survived with little alteration since 1945.

HRC, Hartford



Dibble House in the Clinton Village Historic District.

examples of the colonial, Federal and Greek Revival styles.

Densely grouped houses close to the street create a distinctive streetscape. This area is part of Clinton's town center, and two distinctive landscapes are also included: the town's colonial burying ground, now the predominantly Victorian Clinton Cemetery, and Liberty Green, a vestige of Clinton's 17th century common.

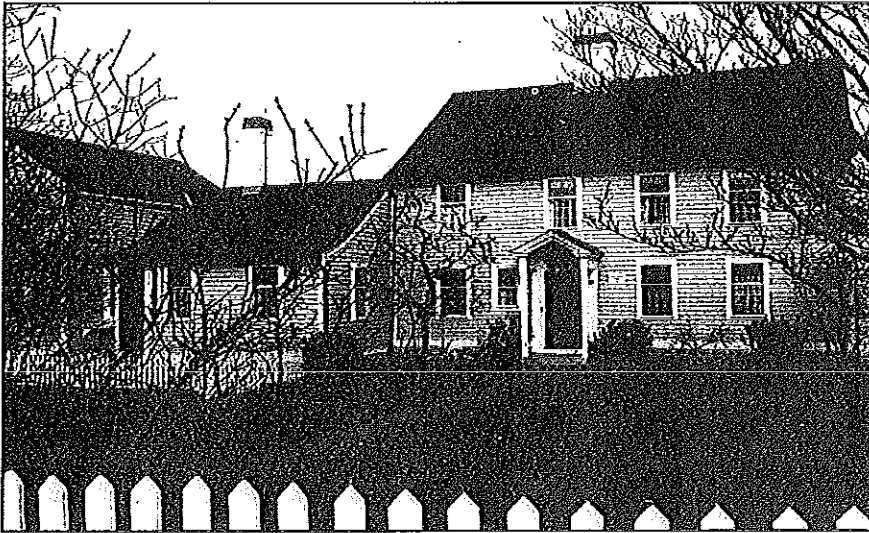
A second, smaller district is the Working Girls' Vacation Society Historic District, situated near

In Old Saybrook, the new North Cove Historic District is a narrow linear district of 63 buildings bordered on the east by the Connecticut River. It is a significant example of a small maritime landing at the mouth of the Connecticut River.

Its fine collection of well-preserved houses date from c.1700 to 1855 and include exceptionally well-crafted examples of Colonial, Federal, and Greek Revival domestic architecture.

✶ Although buildings owned by religious organizations are not normally eligible





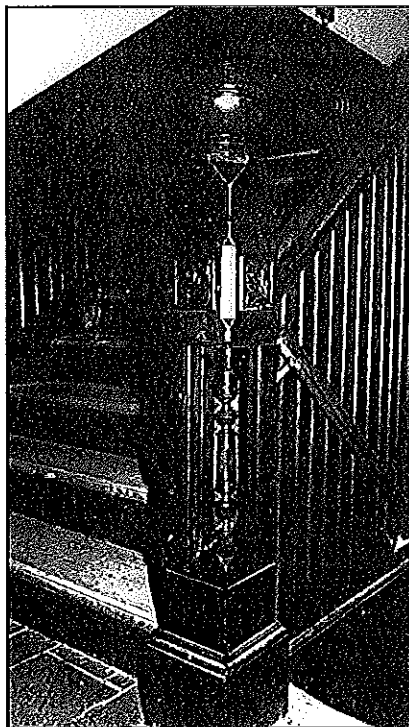
Black Horse Tavern in the North Cove Historic District of Old Saybrook.

for the National Register, the Metropolitan African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church in Hartford qualifies because of its unique architectural and historical importance. Built in 1873-73 by E.H. Waters for a white congregation, the High Victorian Gothic building is distinctive not just for its pointed arches, buttressed corners, exposed braced ceiling beams and window tracery, but for its eclecticism, complex massing, and use of contrasting color on the exterior. The congregation of the Metropolitan A.M.E. Zion Church is descended from Hartford's first African-American Church.

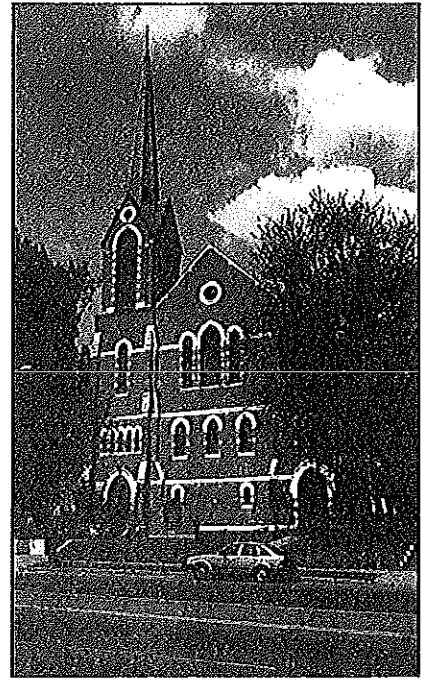
Another publicly-used structure recently added to the Register is the Aldrich Free Public Library in Plainfield designed by architect Charles F. Wilcox of Providence. An excellent example of Queen Anne style architecture, it features asymmetrical massing, a plethora of decorative woodwork, varied exterior siding materials, and an eclectic combination of details inspired by medieval, classical, and colonial architecture. Like most small town libraries built in Connecticut between 1890 and 1930, the Aldrich Free Public Library was financed largely through gifts from leading manufac-

turers and through funds raised by local residents, in this case largely by the Young Women's Christian Temperance Union.

In Windsor Locks, the David Pinney House and Barn site has been enlarged to include the surrounding 21.56 acres of Noden-Reen Park. This site is one of the few surviving reminders of



Metropolitan African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church in Hartford.



Metropolitan African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church in Hartford.

Windsor Locks' predominantly agrarian economy before the opening of its Canal in 1847. This historic landscape features a 359 foot long "haha" trench, a man-made pond for ice, acres of farmland, and a dirt road bordered by a row of ancient trees. This historic landscape greatly strengthens our ability to understand and appreciate the house and museum collection.

Approximately 500 feet southwest of the intersection of Saddle Hill and Rock Rimmon Roads in Stamford stands a surprisingly intact glacial erratic, Rockrimmon Rockshelter. The large overhang of rock sheltered prehistoric populations, primarily in the Late Archaic Period (circa 4000-1700 B.C.). Threats of development prompted the excavation of about one-fifth of the site in 1974 yielding evidence of stone tool manufacture, use and repair. Hearths suggest the cooking of food, and other features indicate the disposal of trash. The archeological evidence also suggests repeated use of the site on a seasonal basis by small hunting groups. □