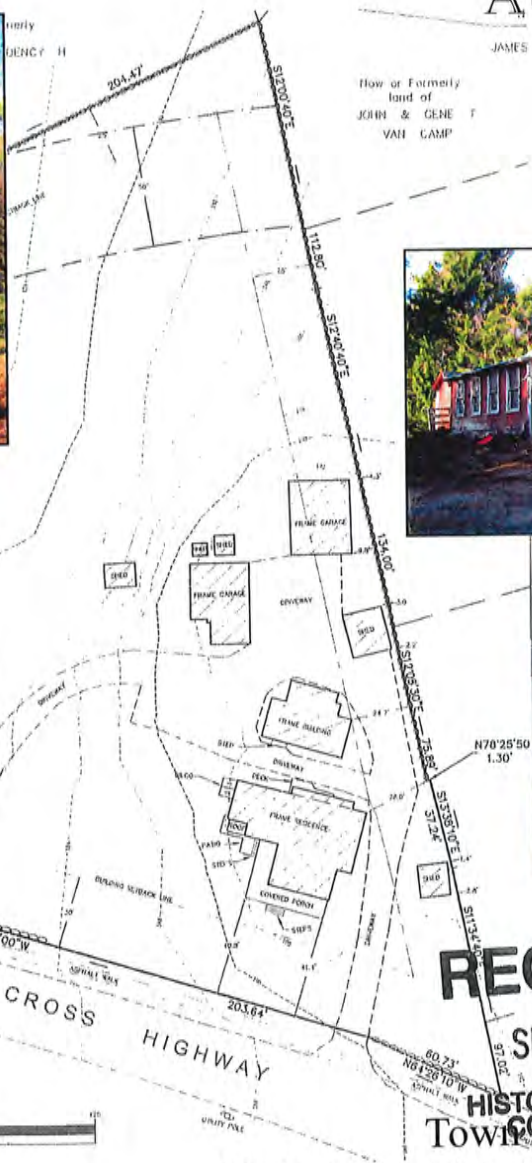


STUDY REPORT FOR PROPOSED INDIVIDUAL HISTORIC PROPERTY 113 CROSS HIGHWAY WESTPORT, CONNECTICUT

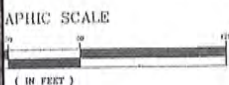
AUGUST
2006



Now or Formerly
land of
JOHN & GENE T
VAH CAMP

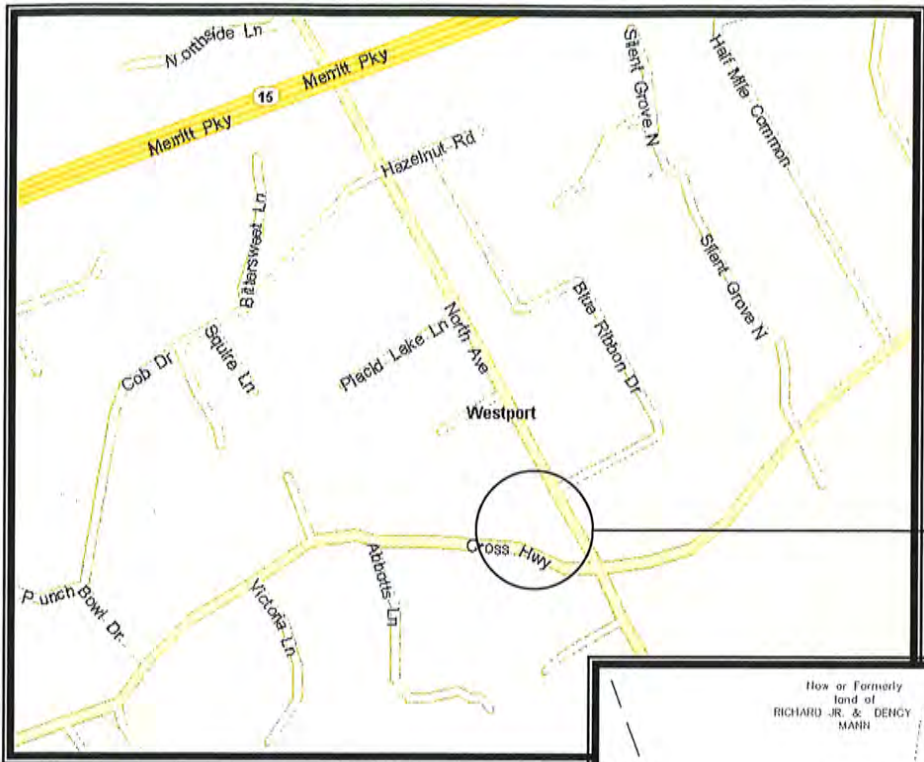


Now or Formerly
land of
ROBERT L. GAHES

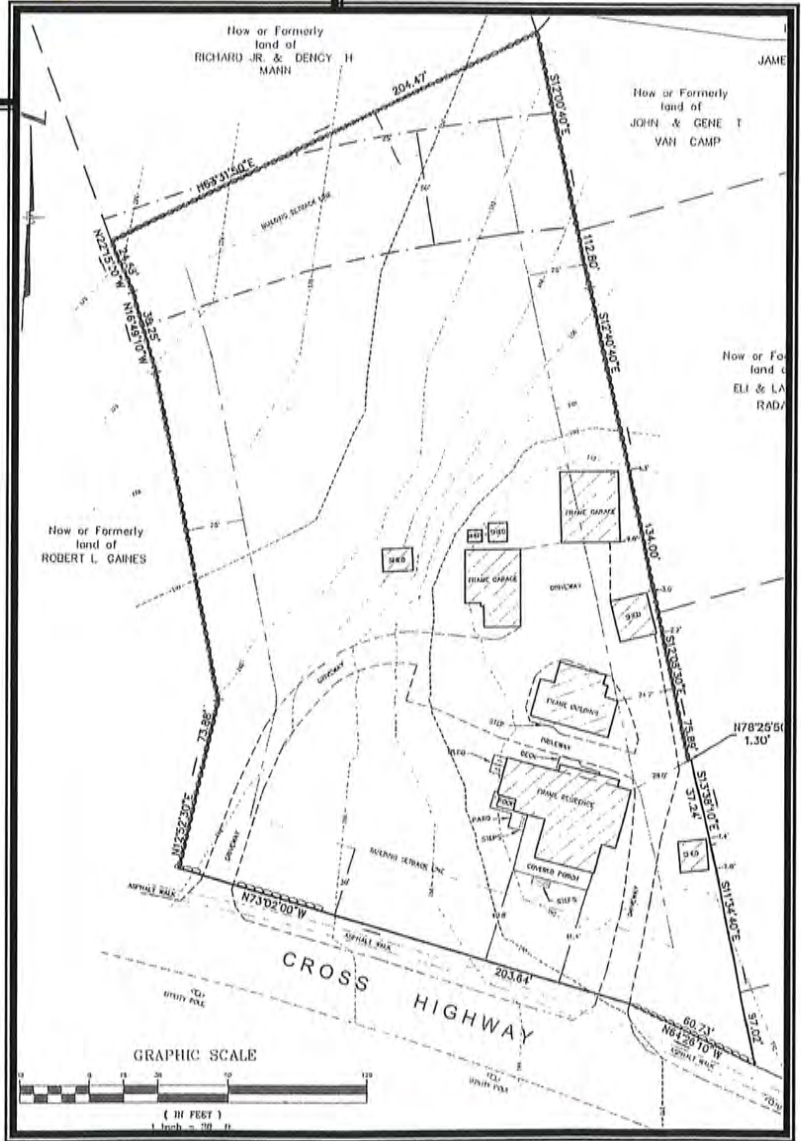


RECEIVED
SEP 6 2006
HISTORIC DISTRICT
COMMISSION
Town of Westport

Historic District Commission
Prepared by:
Associated Cultural Resource Consultants
ACRC



**Study Property:
113 Cross Highway
Westport, Connecticut**





Westport Historic District Commission

Town Hall

Westport, Conn. 06880

August 17, 2006

J. Paul Loether
Division Director and Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer
CT Commission on Culture and Tourism
Historic Preservation and Museum Division
59 South Prospect Street
Hartford, CT 06106

Re: Proposed Local Historic Property at 113 Cross Highway; Westport Assessor's Map #5320/2/11-1

Dear Mr. Loether:

In April of 2006, a petition was submitted to the Historic District Commission members to designate 113 Cross Highway as a local historic property.

At the April 11th, 2006 meeting of the Historic District Commission, the Commission members supported the submission of the required Study Report to the Planning and Zoning Commission and the Connecticut Historical Commission for review and comment.

The Representative Town Meeting has appointed the Historic District Commission as the historic study committee in accordance with Connecticut General Statutes 7-147(b).

The Historic District Commission has indicated their interest in designating this property as a local historic property for the following reasons:

- The property owners support the designation as a local historic property.
- The 1997 Westport Plan of Conversation and Development recommends the following to indicate Westport's commitment to preserving its unique character and beauty and conserving the character and architecture of its historic neighborhoods:

Goal: Protect Westport's inventory of significant historical properties from destruction or architectural degradation.

Policy: Employ the full range of methods available to protect and enhance Westport's historic and cultural resources.

Recommendations: The HDC should propose as appropriate the establishment of additional historic districts and local historic properties as defined by state statute. Where appropriate, the HDC should work towards enlarging the existing local historic districts. The HDC should also work towards the listing of additional historic districts and individual properties in the State and National Registers of Historic Places.

The HDC should conduct the necessary work to establish or expand three additional local districts and/or properties and three additional National Register Districts and/or properties in the next ten years.

Goal and Policy: Maintain preservation management consistent with the responsibilities of a Certified Local Government (CLG) and the quality and quantity of the historic resources in the Town of Westport.

Recommendations: Seek to establish new districts and historic properties. Continue to update the Historic Resources Inventory.

The Study Report has been completed and, in accordance with CGS sec. 147(b), is being submitted to you for your comments and recommendations.

The following items are included for your review:

- I. Statement of Significance;
- II. Site Map and current photographs of the property;
- III. Historic Property Inventory Form;
- IV. Town Ordinance with boundary description dated April 25th, 2006;
- V. A survey map of the proposed local historic property;
- VI. The letter of petition received from the property owners, and;
- VII. Contact information for the property owners.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Donald Miro
Chairman,
Westport Historic District Commission

CC: Laurence Bradley, Director, Planning & Zonong

Attachments as noted

I. Statement of Significance

Description:

The property today consists of an irregular 1.7-acre site, whose southern boundary sits on Cross Highway (Figure 1). The main house and primary outbuildings are placed at the southeast portion of the property on the high ground. The property slopes gently to the south and west from the main house, but more steeply at the north, beyond the garage buildings. The site contains nine buildings: The main house; converted barn directly to the north; three frame garage buildings; two ancillary sheds; an outhouse, and; frame pavilion. (Figures 2 thru 9). A dry-laid stone wall runs the western half of the southern boundary (Figure 2). A lawn area covers the southern portion of the property and to the east adjacent to the main house. A circular driveway leads behind the main house and services the ancillary buildings. The northern portion of the site consists of a grassy area with wooded section at the far north end.

The extant, side-hall plan, two-story farmhouse on the property was constructed ca. 1830 in the Greek Revival style (Figure 16). The three-bay main block contains a one-and-a-half story service wing (identified as original in the Historic Resource Inventory) placed on the west end of the house. A covered porch was added sometime in the late nineteenth century (Figure 2). The house retains the majority of its architectural integrity, particularly at the façade and side elevations. The foundation of the main block retains its original cut granite blocks and the wood shingle-siding and trim work is all extant. In the late 19th century the door hood was removed when the wrap-around porch was added (Figure 17). The most dramatic change was the expansion to the north with the addition of a second story overhang covered by a hipped roof, likely added in the 1970s (Figure 3). The interior also retains a significant amount of original integrity including the braced-frame structural components as well as early architectural features such as the cook hearth and late nineteenth century stylistic elements (Figures 10 thru 14). A deep, dry-laid well remains at the southwest corner of the house covered only by a simple wood box (Figure 15).

Historical Significance

In addition to the architectural significance of the nineteenth century farmhouse and the association with the Meeker family, the property is considered locally significant as the first automobile service station in Westport. The service buildings are all extant as well as the original barn which, while altered, retains the majority of its structural integrity.

Creation of Fairfield:

In 1638, a colonist named Roger Ludlowe founded present-day Fairfield, which also included what is presently Green's Farms, Redding, Weston, Easton and the western section of Bridgeport. With additional treaties made with the local Pequonnock, Norwalke and Sasqua families between 1639 and 1661, the land between the Saugatuck and Norwalk rivers was incorporated into Fairfield.

As Fairfield developed slowly over the ensuing decades, several small villages including Hockanum (Cross Highway and north) and Westport, rural estates and farms were settled, but much of the interior remained largely uninhabited. In the early decades of the 18th century, several hamlets began to operate independently from Fairfield in both religious and commercial enterprises, resulting in the significant growth of the villages of Saugatuck and Westport along the Saugatuck River. The hamlets of Fairview and Maple Shade were part of the village of Hockanum which was located in the Cross Highway section of the incorporated town of Westport.



1868 Map of Westport

The Post Road and Cross Highway:

Although the first post rider made the trip from New York to Boston in January, 1673, the King's Highway, (now the Post Road) was initially built upon Native American paths that ran from village to village throughout New England. The King's Highway was running regular coach service between New York to Boston before the American Revolution, and was considerably widened and re-graded as the towns studded along the roadway grew. Similarly, the road splitting north from the Post Road just west of Westport village and known presently as Kings Highway / Canal Street / Main Street was most likely an original Native American path, as was Cross Highway, which continues east of Easton Road. On mid-19th century maps of Westport and Fairfield, Cross Highway is shown as continuing east of Merwin's Lane in a zigzag pattern, which has been straightened, interrupted and, in part, terminated by the present-day Merritt Parkway.

This organic road system is in sharp contrast to the parallel Colonial-era farm roads Highway passes through, like Sturges (Sturges) Highway, Middlebrooks Highway (now Redding Road), and Merwins Lane which are defined by the 'Long Lots' system of land division.

The Incorporation of Westport:

Soon after the Revolutionary War, the Town of Fairfield began to have successionist movements for self-governance within its outlying villages. North Fairfield, which had been created by the Connecticut General Assembly in 1762, was combined with Norfield to create the town of Weston. Later, North Fairfield, split from Weston to become the town of Easton. Similarly, as the villages of Westport and Saugatuck continued to grow, a considerable number of residents and businessmen clamored for increased self-governance. Spearheaded by a resident named Daniel Nash, 130 villagers made an application to the Connecticut General Assembly to incorporate as a town. In the process, Westport incorporated parts of Weston, Norwalk and Fairfield. Because of the economic influence of the villages, which at the time were specialized in onion farming and coastal shipping, the charter was granted on May 28, 1835.

Hamlet of Maple Shade and the Meeker Family:

William Meeker was a descendant of Robert Meeker, who first arrived in Connecticut in New Haven in 1640. On an 1842 map, William Meeker, a farmer, is shown as already in ownership of an undetermined amount of acreage at the northwest corner of Cross Highway and North Avenue. On an undated 19th century map, Meeker's property is described as consisting of 45 acres. The hamlet, described as Maple Shade on a map of Westport from 1868, was centered on Meeker's property, and was part of the larger section of town known as Cross Highway.

While William Meeker and his children lived at Maple Shade, the Meeker family was prevalent throughout Westport. For example, the Abel Bradley house, located on Sturges Highway, was purchased by Silas Meeker in 1851, when he bought the house and approximately seven acres of farmland; he also owned land to the south and west which totaled over 20 acres. The Meeker family was prominent in the Fairview section; on an 1868 map of Westport, there are eight houses shown as being owned by members of the Meeker family, as well as extensive farmland.

In the late 19th century, William passed the house and property on to his heirs. His granddaughter, Nellie L. Elwood, conveyed a half interest in the property to her son, Clayton Elwood, and her foster son, John Mackle.

20th and 21st Century History:

Fairfield, Westport and other southern Connecticut shore towns became great industrial powerhouses in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Rail service and the opening of the Merritt Parkway created some growth prior to World War II throughout Fairfield County. Westport had doubled in population from 1910 to 1940 from 4,000 to 8,000 residents due to its dual role as a manufacturing town and artistic resort community. The ever-growing presence of the automobile necessitated filling and service stations.

In 1945, John Mackle took over what was known as the Cross Highway Garage, which was founded in 1908. The automobile service station, the first in Westport, was in operation until the 1970s. The extant service buildings are recognized as Westport's first fully operational automobile service station designed for auto repair and service.

Due to its proximity to New York City, Westport became a commuter suburb since World War II and has tripled its 1940 population to over 25,000 residents. Much of the interior of the town remained untouched by suburbanization until after the construction of the Connecticut Turnpike. From the 1970s on, much of the remaining farmland and large estates, both active and fallow, began to be developed in earnest for cul-de-sac housing and large houses on much smaller parcels. However, the main interior roads, including Cross Highway, have retained a rural atmosphere. Many 19th century houses remain, with newer, post-war houses infilled on former vacant lots.

Current Status

In 2004 Michael & Kim Ronemus purchased the property in hopes of rehabilitating the house and outbuildings, all of which are in some degree of disrepair. In an effort to seek guidance and to protect the historic character of the buildings and property, they have requested Local Historic Property Status from the Town of Westport. This would place the site under the jurisdiction of the Westport Historic District Commission. Plans include sensitive rehabilitation of the main house and outbuildings.

II. Site Map & Current Photographs

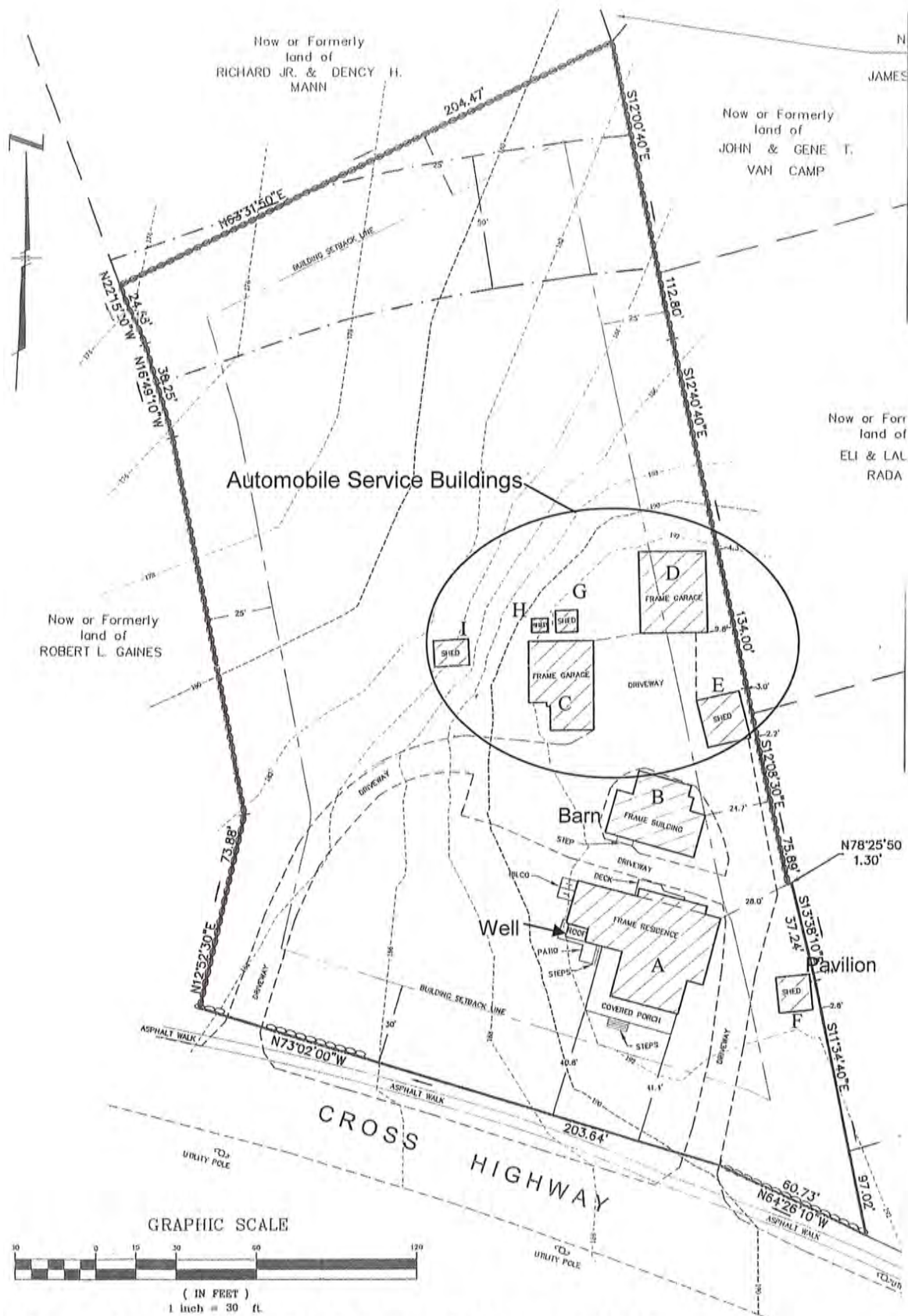


Figure 1. Site Map of 113 Cross Highway (2006)



Figure 2. Main House—View to Northeast [A]



Figure 3. Main House & Converted Barn—View to Southeast



Figure 4. Auto Service Area —View to Northwest



Figure 5. Auto Service Area—View to Northeast



Figure 6. Converted Barn—View to Northeast [B]

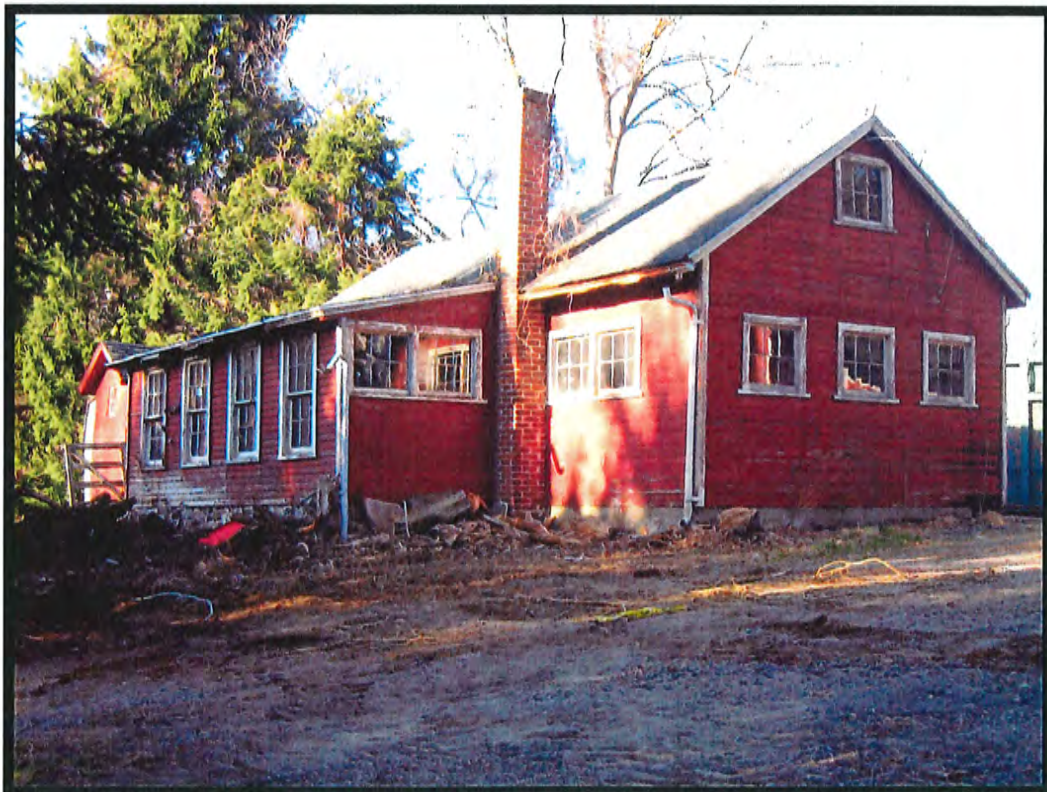


Figure 7. Garage Building—View to Northeast [C]



Figure 8. Garage Building—View to North [E]



Figure 9. Pavilion—View to Southeast [F]

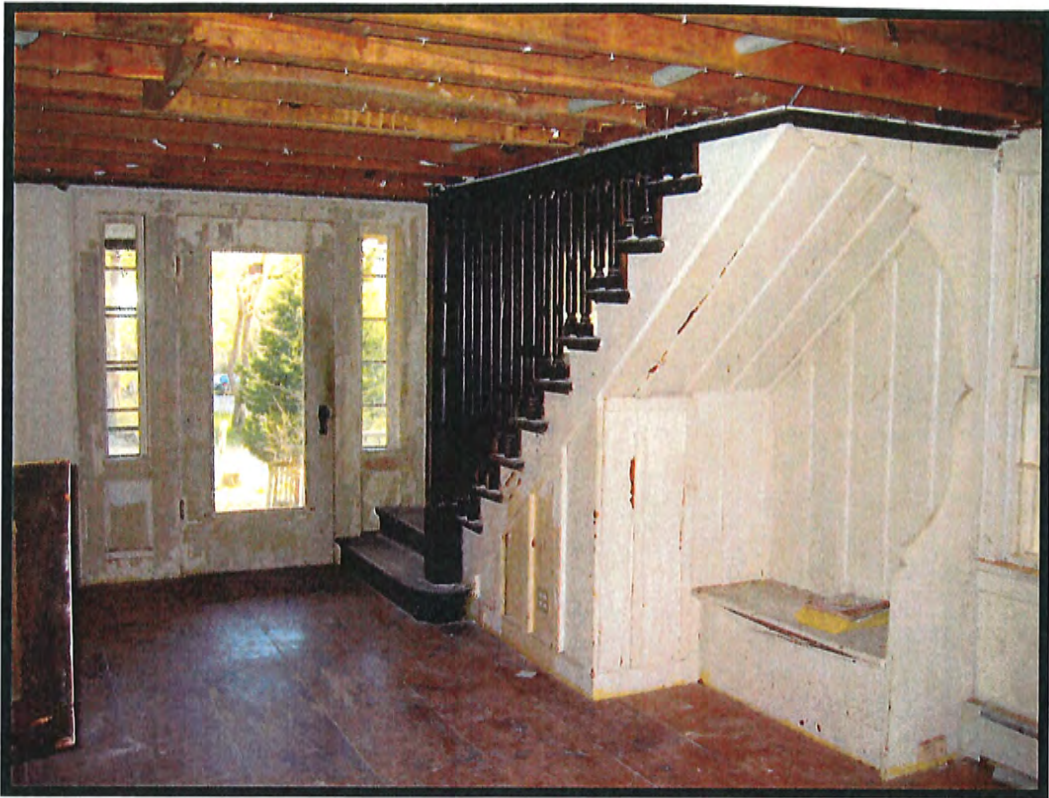


Figure 10. Entry & Staircase—View to Southwest



Figure 11. Fireplace Detail

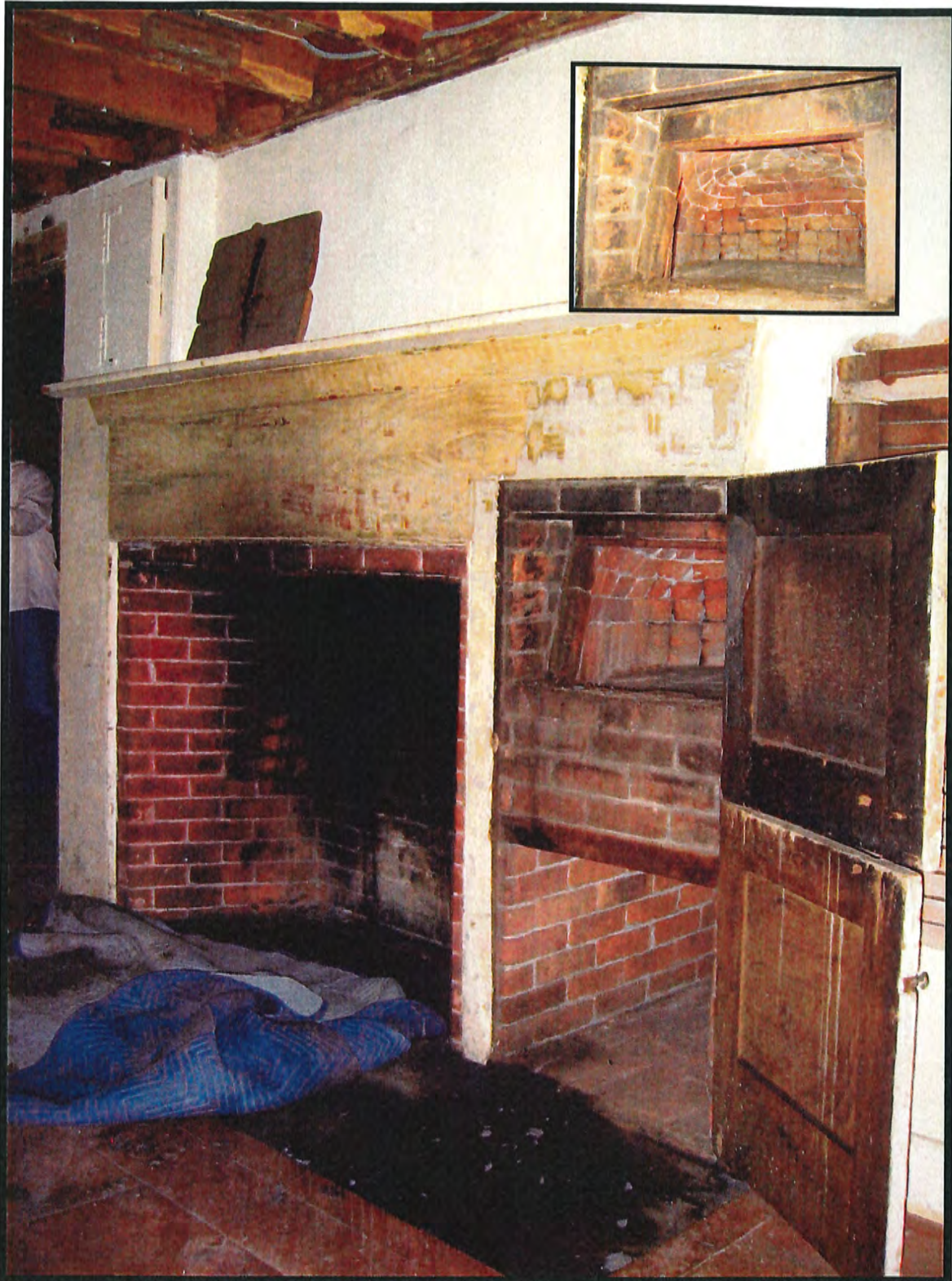


Figure 12. Hearth Detail, Parlor, View to Northeast



Figure 13. Framing Detail



Figure 14. Floor Framing Detail



Figure 15. Well Detail—Southwest Coner of House



Figure 16. Historic Photo—Circa 1885



Figure 17. Historic Photo—Circa 1975

III. Historic Property Inventory Form

HISTORIC RESOURCES INVENTORY
BUILDING AND STRUCTURES

SI 6 REV 5 83

STATE OF CONNECTICUT
CONNECTICUT HISTORICAL COMMISSION
59 SOUTH PROSPECT STREET, HARTFORD, CONNECTICUT 06106
(203) 566-3005

FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

Town No.: _____ Site No.: **117**

UTM: _____

QUAD: _____

DISTRICT: S NR IF NR, SPECIFY: Actual Potential

IDENTIFICATION	1. BUILDING NAME (Common) (Historic)	
	Meeker-Elwood House Samuel Meeker House	
	2. TOWN CITY	COUNTY
	Westport	Fairfield
	3. STREET AND NUMBER (and/or location)	
	113 Cross Highway 5320-2/11-1	
	4. OWNER(S)	
	Godfrey, John <input type="checkbox"/> Public <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private	
	5. USE (Present) (Historic)	
	Residence Residence	
	6. ACCESSIBILITY TO PUBLIC:	IF YES, EXPLAIN
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
	7. STYLE OF BUILDING	
	Greek Revival	
	DATE OF CONSTRUCTION	
	ca. 1830	
DESCRIPTION	8. MATERIAL(S) (Indicate use or location when appropriate)	
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Clapboard <input type="checkbox"/> Asbestos Siding <input type="checkbox"/> Brick <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) _____ <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Wood Shingle <input type="checkbox"/> Asphalt Siding <input type="checkbox"/> Fieldstone <input type="checkbox"/> Board & Batten <input type="checkbox"/> Stucco <input type="checkbox"/> Cobblestone <input type="checkbox"/> Aluminum Siding <input type="checkbox"/> Concrete Type: _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Cut stone Type: _____	
	9. STRUCTURAL SYSTEM	
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Wood frame <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Post and beam <input type="checkbox"/> balloon <input type="checkbox"/> Load bearing masonry <input type="checkbox"/> Structural iron or steel <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) _____	
	10. ROOF (Type)	
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Gable <input type="checkbox"/> Flat <input type="checkbox"/> Mansard <input type="checkbox"/> Monitor <input type="checkbox"/> sawtooth <input type="checkbox"/> Gambrel <input type="checkbox"/> Shed <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Hip <input type="checkbox"/> Round <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) _____ (Material) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Wood Shingle <input type="checkbox"/> Roll Asphalt <input type="checkbox"/> Tin <input type="checkbox"/> Slate <input type="checkbox"/> Asphalt shingle <input type="checkbox"/> Built up <input type="checkbox"/> Tile <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) _____	
	11. NUMBER OF STORIES	APPROXIMATE DIMENSIONS
	2	26x38
	12. CONDITION (Structural) (Exterior)	
	<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Good <input type="checkbox"/> Fair <input type="checkbox"/> Deteriorated <input type="checkbox"/> Excellent <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Good <input type="checkbox"/> Fair <input type="checkbox"/> Deteriorated	
	13. INTEGRITY (Location) (Alterations)	
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> On original site <input type="checkbox"/> Moved <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No IF YES, EXPLAIN skylights	
	14. RELATED BUILDINGS OR LANDSCAPE FEATURES	
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Barn <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Shed <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Garage * <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other landscape features or buildings (Specify) *repair garage 2+ hole outhouse/original	
	15. SURROUNDING ENVIRONMENT	
	<input type="checkbox"/> Open land <input type="checkbox"/> Wood-land <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Residential <input type="checkbox"/> Scattered buildings visible from site <input type="checkbox"/> Commercial <input type="checkbox"/> Industrial <input type="checkbox"/> Rural <input type="checkbox"/> High building density	
16. INTERRELATIONSHIP OF BUILDING AND SURROUNDINGS		
Set on generous grounds with large maples. Picket fence at road. Cross Highway Garage buildings to rear and east of house. Contributing structure.		

(OVER)

17. OTHER NOTABLE FEATURES OF BUILDING OR SITE: *(interior and/or exterior)*
 The handsome, well-proportioned, side-hall plan dwelling is an excellent example of a transitional house. Grecian details include the deep frieze and molded cornice which continue along the rake of the roof on the gable ends and the bold, tripartite door surround with side lights but no transom. The entrance door dates from the turn-of-the-century. The 1 1/2-story recessed service wing on the west side is original, but the wrapping verandah with turned posts, lacey corner brackets, and a plain balustrade is a late-19th century improvement. The 6-over-6 windows appear to be at least a partial replacement. Two-over-two sash are set in gable ends. Barns and sheds are located to the rear and east of the house, which until recently stood in a remarkably complete state of preservation.

18. ARCHITECT _____ BUILDER _____

19. HISTORICAL OR ARCHITECTURAL IMPORTANCE
 Farmer William Meeker (1800-1886) got a parcel of unspecified acreage but "with dwelling house and other buildings thereon standing" from his father Burr Meeker in 1840 (3:330), and he resided there until his death in 1886. The house was settled on Angeline Meeker, his widow, from William's heirs in 1886, and then to William's son Leroy and his wife Eliza in 1891 (16:710, 18:403). In 1924 ownership passed to Leroy and Eliza's daughter, Nellie L. Elwood, and she conveyed a half interest in the property to her sons, John Mackle and Clayton Elwood, in 1945 (94:153). John Mackle operated the Cross Highway Garage, founded in 1908, and it later became the first automobile service station in Westport. Most of the buildings associated with the business survive. The house is one of the few early dwellings that retain its late-19th century improvements.

SOURCES
 Westport Land Records.
 Adams Manuscript.
 Westport Historical Society: House File.
 Wakeman, Isaac. Interview, 6/88.

PHOTO
 PHOTOGRAPHER: Mary E. McCahon DATE: May, 1988
 VIEW: south NEGATIVE ON FILE: CHC 5:13
 COMPILED BY: NAME: Mary E. McCahon, Architectural Historian DATE: June, 1988
 ORGANIZATION: Westport Historic District Commission
 ADDRESS: Town Hall Westport, Conn. 06880



20. SUBSEQUENT FIELD EVALUATIONS

21. THREATS TO BUILDING OR SITE
 None known Highways Vandalism Developers Other _____
 Renewal Private Deterioration Zoning Expropriation _____

IV. Town Ordinance & Boundary Description

**Code of the Town of Westport
Chapter 63
Historic Districts**

ARTICLE VI

**Proposed Local Historic Property
113 Cross Highway**

§ 63-10. Purpose, establishment

In order to promote the educational, cultural, economic and general welfare of the Town of Westport and the public in general through preservation of buildings and places of historic interest, 99 Myrtle Avenue is hereby established as a Local Historic Property and shall exist in accordance with the provision of Section 7-147a through 7-147k inclusive, of the Connecticut General Statutes, as the same may be amended from time to time.

§ 63-11. Boundaries

The property is known as 99 Myrtle Avenue. The boundaries shall be amended to include the proposed 113 Cross Highway Local Historic Property whose metes and bounds are as follows:

Town of Westport Assessor's Map # 5320-2, Lot 11-1

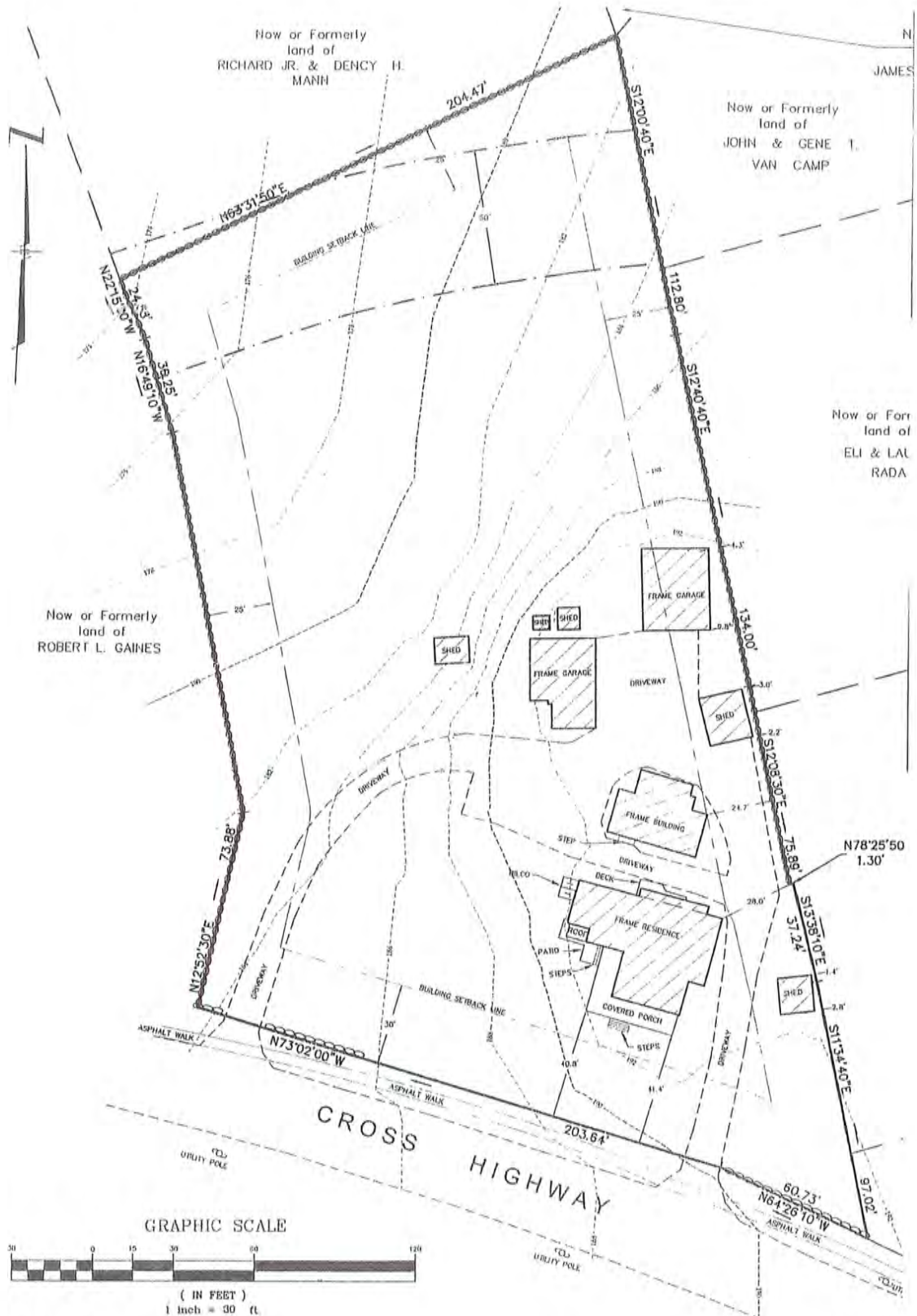
NORTHERLY:	204.47 feet by Lot 7;
EASTERLY:	458.25 feet in part by Lot 5, in part by Lot 4, in part by Lot 3 and in part by Lot 2
SOUTHERLY:	264.36 feet by the public highway, Cross Highway, so-called;
WESTERLY:	277.57 feet by land now or formerly of John Mackle

§ 63-12. Record Map

The boundaries of the proposed historic property is also shown on a map entitled "113 Cross Highway Local Historic Property," and is attached to the Westport Historic District Commission Study Report.

Dated: April 25, 2006

V. Survey Map—113 Cross Highway (2006)



VI. Letter of Petition from Property Owners



①

March 21, 2006

To The Historic District Council,

This letter is to request the opportunity to be put on the Council's agenda for the next meeting on April 11th. We have recently purchased the property at 113 Cross Highway and would be interested in having it registered as an historic residence.

If you need to reach me, please feel free to email me at: kim@kimronemusdesign.com or call me at: 203.226.8410

I look forward to meeting with the members of the council.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Kim Ronemus', written in a cursive style.

Kim Ronemus

RECEIVED

MAR 24 2006

**HISTORIC DISTRICT
COMMISSION**

123CROSSHIGHWAYWESTPORTCT06880 203-226-7185 KIMRONEMUSDESIGN.COM

ACRC

Assessing Cultural Resource Consultants

VII. Property Owner Contact Information

Michael & Kim Ronemus
123 Cross Highway
Westport, CT 06880

(203) 226 7185