

STATE OF CONNECTICUT

CONNECTICUT HISTORICAL COMMISSION

59 South Prospect Street, Hartford, Connecticut 06106
(203) 566-3005

HISTORIC RESOURCES INVENTORY FORM

For Buildings and Structures

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY			
TOWN NO.:			SITE NO.:
UTM: 18	/	/	/
QUAD:			
DISTRICT:	S	NR:	ACTUAL POTENTIAL

IDENTIFICATION

1. BUILDING NAME: Common: Jim's Flower Shop; Victor Shoe Repair Historic: Peter Butler Homestead
2. TOWN/CITY: Middletown VILLAGE: _____ COUNTY: Middlesex
3. STREET & NUMBER (and/or location): 590-594 Main Street
4. OWNER(S): Douglas R. Sr., Douglas R. Jr., & William B. Magee PUBLIC PRIVATE
5. USE: Present: Commercial Historic: Residential
6. ACCESSIBILITY TO PUBLIC: Exterior visible from public road: yes no
Interior accessible: yes, explain with owner's permission no

DESCRIPTION

7. STYLE OF BUILDING: Center-Chimney Colonial DATE OF CONSTRUCTION: before 1750,
probably before 1732
8. MATERIAL(S) (indicate use or location when appropriate):
 clapboard asbestos siding brick
 wood shingle asphalt siding rear fieldstone
 board & batten stucco cobblestone
 aluminum siding concrete: type: _____ cut stone: type: _____
 other: _____
9. STRUCTURAL SYSTEM:
 wood frame: post and beam balloon
 load bearing masonry structural iron or steel
 other: _____
10. ROOF: type:
 gable flat mansard monitor sawtooth
 gambrel shed hip round other _____
 material:
 wood shingle roll asphalt tin slate
 asphalt shingle built up tile other: _____
11. NUMBER OF STORIES: 2½ APPROXIMATE DIMENSIONS: 37'x66' with additions
12. CONDITION: Structural: excellent good fair deteriorated
 Exterior: excellent good fair deteriorated
13. INTEGRITY: Location: on original site moved, when: _____
 Alterations: no yes, explain: Facade raised to two stories, front; sheds, rear
14. RELATED OUTBUILDINGS OR LANDSCAPE FEATURES:
 barn shed^s garage other landscape features or buildings: Blacktopped
 carriage house shop garden parking lot, rear
15. SURROUNDING ENVIRONMENT:
 open land woodland residential scattered buildings visible from site
 commercial industrial rural high building density
16. INTERRELATIONSHIP OF BUILDING AND SURROUNDINGS: Sited in a row of taller, substantial commercial buildings along the east side of Main Street in the North End, the Peter Butler Homestead is hidden behind deteriorating shop fronts and second-story wooden signboards that obscure its eighteenth century origin.

17. OTHER NOTABLE FEATURES OF BUILDING OR SITE (interior and/or exterior):

Gambrel roof (rear)
Oldest remaining dwelling house on Main Street

SIGNIFICANCE

Architect: _____ Builder: _____

18. HISTORICAL OR ARCHITECTURAL IMPORTANCE: The early history of the Peter Butler Homestead is clouded. It is mentioned in Butler's 1732 inventory. His daughters sold their interests to Stephen Warner and Samuel Starr in separate transactions in 1750 and 1753. Title was consolidated by Mary Van Overwyk in 1795. The house passed through a series of relatives and other owners until the early 1870s when real estate developer Henry Fountain bought it. Legal agreements exist that indicate Fountain remodeled the building, raising the second-floor front to two full stories and installing a bracketed cornice. In the current century the building has housed a variety of businesses, including an antique shop, a real estate firm, and the current cobbler shop and florist. The structure has not been used as a residence for some time; the second floor provides storage space for the businesses below.

Viewed from the rear, the building's basic form and age are apparent. It is a two and one-half story gambrel-roofed cottage with the chimney slightly off center. Narrow clapboards are visible on the north gable end. There have been severe alterations: the center chimney has been reduced to one stack; the first floor has been converted into

(see continuation sheet)

PHOTOGRAPH

photographer: Elizabeth Loomis
date: A: 5/78; B: 8/78 view: A: east; B: west
negative on file: A: Roll 25A, #28; B: Roll 33, #27



COMPILED BY:

name: Roger Sherman date: 12/77
organization: Greater Middletown Preservation Trust
address: 27 Washington St., Middletown, Ct. 06457

19. SOURCES: Middletown Land Records; Middletown Probate Records; Early Connecticut Probate Records (State Library); Middletown Press, 7/14/75

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20. SUBSEQUENT FIELD EVALUATIONS:

21. THREATS TO BUILDING OR SITE:

none known highways vandalism developers other: _____
 renewal private deterioration zoning explanation: _____

Building has been purchased by a developer whose future plans for it are uncertain.

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CONTINUATION SHEET

Item number: 18 Date: 12/77

Peter Butler Homestead
590-594 Main Street, Middletown, Ct. 06457

#18

shop usage; clapboarding on the rear is covered with roll asphalt; and two added rear sheds are in disrepair.

A number of eighteenth century details remain intact on the second and third floors: the steep stairs, molded handrail, and protective balustrade at the top of the stairway; an original closet under the eaves at the southeast corner, complete with batten door and lighted by the original dormer; bolection molding around the fireplace openings; some original pegged rafters and purlins.

Given the fine detail of these remaining early features, and with the distinction of being the earliest existing dwelling house on Main Street, the building assumes a historical importance that transcends its current time-worn appearance.



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