

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: Building #M-5 Historic: Russell Company Office
- 2. TOWN/CITY: Middletown VILLAGE: South Farms COUNTY: Middlesex
- 3. STREET & NUMBER (and/or location): 395 East Main Street
- 4. OWNER(S): Fenner American Limited PUBLIC  PRIVATE
- 5. USE: Present: Vacant Historic: Office (?)
- 6. ACCESSIBILITY TO PUBLIC: Exterior visible from public road:  yes  no  
Interior accessible:  yes, explain \_\_\_\_\_  no

DESCRIPTION

- 7. STYLE OF BUILDING: 19th Century Industrial DATE OF CONSTRUCTION: before 1896;  
probably before 1874
- 8. MATERIAL(S) (indicate use or location when appropriate):  

<input type="checkbox"/> clapboard	<input type="checkbox"/> asbestos siding	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> brick
<input 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> cut stone: type: <u>brownstone</u>
<input type="checkbox"/> other: _____		<u>foundation</u>
- 9. STRUCTURAL SYSTEM:  
 wood frame:  post and beam  balloon  
 load bearing masonry  structural iron or steel (tie rods)  
 other: \_\_\_\_\_
- 10. ROOF: type:  
 gable cross  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: 2 1/2 APPROXIMATE DIMENSIONS: 75'x45'
- 12. CONDITION: Structural:  excellent  good  fair  deteriorated  
Exterior:  excellent  good  fair  deteriorated
- 13. INTEGRITY: Location:  on original site  moved, when: \_\_\_\_\_  
Alterations:  no  yes, explain: North extension removed
- 14. RELATED OUTBUILDINGS OR LANDSCAPE FEATURES:  
 barn  shed  garage  other landscape features or buildings: two buildings  
 carriage house  shop  garden on either side share common walls
- 15. SURROUNDING ENVIRONMENT:  
 open land  woodland  residential  scattered buildings visible from site  
 commercial  industrial  rural  high building density

16. INTERRELATIONSHIP OF BUILDING AND SURROUNDINGS: This is one of the Russell Manufacturing Company's factory buildings that border East Main Street in South Farms. It shares a common wall with a similarly styled building, south, and a large concrete structure, north. Remnants of this early industrial site, including a dam, a large smokestack and a vacant mill, are located behind the building. A large concrete structure is across the street.

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

**SIGNIFICANCE**

Architect: \_\_\_\_\_

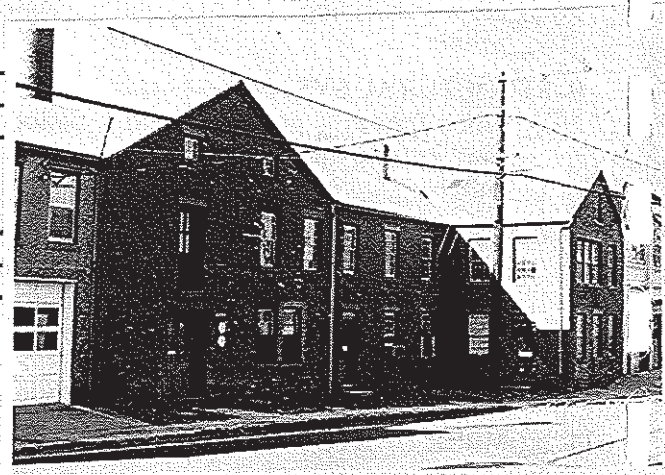
Builder: \_\_\_\_\_

18. HISTORICAL OR ARCHITECTURAL IMPORTANCE: This building was erected by the Russell Manufacturing Company, and probably served as the company's office for a period. The company, founded in 1834, was the first to produce elastic webbing on power looms. By 1896, it was the nation's largest manufacturer of suspenders. The structure may predate 1874 and was certainly built before 1896. The 1874 Beers Atlas shows a building on this site labeled "office." A building is depicted on the 1859 Walling Map at this approximate location; however, conclusive evidence to substantiate the structure's age and use is presently not available.

The brick building is one of the oldest Russell Company structures left standing. It has two sections, connected by the main axis, that have gables facing the street. The northernmost wing projects from the main facade. Each section has a ground floor doorway, and the south wing also displays a second story entrance. The numerous windows have smooth brownstone sills and lintels. A brick corbelled cornice moulding decorates the eaves. The original structure extended further along East Main Street to the north. Probably this section was removed with the erection of the adjoining concrete building in 1916. The similarly styled structure, which was attached to the south wall in the 20th century, was used as the South Farms district firehouse.

**PHOTOGRAPH**

photographer: Robert Svec  
date: 12/78 view: east  
negative on file: Roll 53, #16A



**COMPILED BY:**

name: Robert Svec date: 11/78  
organization: Greater Middletown Preservation Trust  
address: 27 Washington St., Middletown, Ct. 06457

19. SOURCES: History of Middlesex County (New York: J.B. Beers, 1884); H.F. Donlan, Middletown Tribune: Souvenir Edition (Middletown: 1896); 1859 Walling Map; 1874 Beers Atlas

**20. SUBSEQUENT FIELD EVALUATIONS:**

**21. THREATS TO BUILDING OR SITE:**

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