HISTORIC RESOURCES [redacted] BUILDING AND STRUCTURES

Please send completed form to: Stacey Vairo, National Register and State Register Coordinator,
State Historic Preservation Office, Department of Economic and Community Development,
One Constitution Plaza, 2nd Floor, Hartford CT 06103
* Note: Please attach any additional or expanded information on a separate sheet.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Building Name (Common) Armbruster Farmstead Record No. 40896

Building Name (Historic) Armbruster, Philip, Farmstead

Street Address or Location 155 North Harwinton Avenue

Town/City Plymouth Village Terryville County Litchfield

Owner(s) Connecticut Residential Inc, PO Box 558 Oxford, CT 06478 ○ Public ◉ Private

PROPERTY INFORMATION

Present Use: Agriculture/Subsistence: agricultural outbuilding; Domestic: single dwelling

Historic Use: Agriculture/Subsistence: agricultural outbuilding; Domestic: single dwelling

Accessibility to public: Exterior visible from public road? ◉ Yes ○ No

Interior accessible? ○ Yes ◉ No If yes, explain _____

Style of building Extended English bank barns, Vernacular style Date of Construction mid-late 19th c.

Material(s) *(Indicate use or location when appropriate):*

☐ Clapboard ☐ Asbestos Siding ☐ Brick ☐ Wood Shingle ☐ Asphalt Siding

☑ Fieldstone ☐ Board & Batten ☐ Stucco ☐ Cobblestone ☐ Aluminum Siding

☑ Concrete (Type block masonry) ☐ Cut Stone (Type _____) ☑ Other Vertical wood siding

Structural System

☑ Wood Frame ☑ Post & Beam ☐ Balloon ☑ Load bearing masonry ☐ Structural iron or steel

☑ Other Square rule framing

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 _____

Number of Stories: 1 1/2 Approximate Dimensions See continuation sheet.

Structural Condition: ☐ Excellent ☐ Good ☑ Fair ☐ Deteriorated

Exterior Condition: ☐ Excellent ☑ Good ☐ Fair ☐ Deteriorated

Location Integrity: ◉ On original site ○ Moved When? _____

Alterations? ○ Yes ◉ No If yes, explain: _____

FOR OFFICE USE: Town #_____ Site # _____ UTM _____

District: ☐ S ☐ NR If NR, Specify: ☐ Actual ☐ Potential

PROPERTY INFORMATION (CONT'D)

Related outbuildings or landscape features:

☑ Barn ☑ Shed ☐ Garage ☑ Carriage House ☐ Shop ☐ Garden
☑ Other landscape features or buildings: Pond

Surrounding Environment:

☑ Open land ☑ Woodland ☑ Residential ☐ Commercial ☐ Industrial ☑ Rural
☐ High building density ☑ Scattered buildings visible from site

• Interrelationship of building and surroundings:

See continuation sheet.

• Other notable features of building or site *(Interior and/or Exterior)*

See continuation sheet.

Architect _____ Builder _____

• Historical or Architectural importance:

See continuation sheet.

• Sources:

Cunningham, Jan, Connecticut's Agricultural Heritage: an Architectural and Historical Overview, Connecticut Trust for Historic Preservation & State Historic Preservation Office, 2012.

See continuation sheet.

Photographer Todd Levine Date 7/10/2012
View Multiple Views Negative on File CTHP
Name Todd Levine Date 9/10/2012
Organization Connecticut Trust for Historic Preservation
Address 940 Whitney Avenue, Hamden CT 06517

• Subsequent field evaluations:

Latitude, Longitude:
41.696029, -73.034938

Threats to the building or site:

☐ None known ☐ Highways ☐ Vandalism ☑ Developers ☐ Renewal ☐ Private
☑ Deterioration ☐ Zoning ☐ Other _____ ☐ Explanation _____

• Interrelationship of building and surroundings:

This barn was a part of a large farm, the Armbruster Farmstead, of over 500 acres. Today, 23.78 acres remain along with the main bank barn with multiple additions (Barn I), a secondary bank barn with attached carriage barn (Barn II), two silos, a corn crib, a gable-roofed shed and the farmhouse. The buildings are located in a cluster northwest of the intersection of Preston Road, which runs east-west, and North Harwinton Avenue, which runs north–south.

The town of Plymouth is situated north of Waterbury; its main road is US Route 6/202, which runs east-west over a high plateau between the Naugatuck River to the west and the Farmington-Pequabuck River watershed to the east. The village center of Terryville is on today's Route 6 where an industrial center was established in the 19th century utilizing water power from the Pequabuck River. There the Terryville Waterwheel is preserved and is the most nearly intact of the three known 19th-century wooden waterwheels remaining in Connecticut. The Waterwheel is a Local Historic Property and is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. It marks the location of the Eli Terry, Jr. clock factory and later, Eagle Lock Company, important local water-powered industries in the mid- to late-19th century. Also on the National Register, the Plymouth Center Historic District is situated on the western edge of town about a half mile from the Naugatuck River and extends for about three-quarters of a mile along Main Street (US Route 6), with the Green and over 100 structures contributing to the district. This is located 2.6 miles southwest of the Armbruster Farmstead site. Another small National Register district is the East Plymouth Historic District on East Plymouth and Marsh Roads, approximately 2 miles east of the site. This includes an 18th-century Anglican (Episcopal) church and village with surrounding homes, several with barns.

The ridge-lines of the Farmhouse and Barn I are east-west, perpendicular to the road. The ridge-line of the main block of Barn II is parallel to North Harwinton Avenue, while the carriage barn ell is parallel to the ridgeline of the house. Barn I is behind and to the southwest of the house with which it is associated. Barn II is just west of the house. A dirt path leads from the road directly to the east gable-end of Barn I. A paved driveway leads from the road just south of the house, directly to the east eave-side of Barn II, turning south to the eave-side of Barn I. The Corn crib is to the northwest of Barn I and the Shed is to the south of Barn II. Both the Crib and Shed are just to the west of the driveway. At the northeast corner of Barn I is a Silo. A second Silo is at the northwest corner of Barn I; both are concrete stave silos of the mid-20th century. The site includes land south of the tree line, east of Schroback Lane, north of Preston Road and west of North Harwinton Avenue. Between Schroback Lane and North Harwinton are 10 acres of wetlands and a small pond.

The house is a 1 ½-story vernacular Farmhouse built c. 1900. It features an east-facing gable front with three bays at the ground floor level and the entry in the south bay. Two windows are in the gable attic, which has small simple cornice returns. The windows are one-over-one double-hung sash. An addition extends west with a gable-roofed wing with a parallel ridgeline, off-set to the north. A partially enclosed porch on the south side of the house has scroll sawn details. The house has vinyl siding, concrete foundation and an asphalt shingle roof.

The property is located in a predominantly residential area of rural character with individual plots separated by woodland and parcels of open land. South of the parcel is Terryville Reservoir #2.

Architectural description:

Inventory of structures (C – contributing, NC – non-contributing):

Farmhouse	c. 1900	C	Corn crib	Early 20th c.	C
Barn I	Mid-19th c.	C	Shed	Early 20th c.	C
Barn II	Late 19th c.	C	Silos (two)	20th c.	C

Barn I:

This is a five-bay gable-roofed barn consisting of a three-bay English bank barn extended by two additional bays at the west end. It also has three additions and a lean-to. The original main entry of the barn is in the north eave-side of the barn. Another newer entry in the east gable-end has altered the barn into a hybrid New England layout.

The current main entry is on the east gable-end facing North Harwinton Avenue and accessed by a slight earthen ramp. To the east of the barn, covering the north half of the east gable-end is a concrete stave silo with metal hoops

and a metal roof. To the north of the northeast corner of the barn is a similar silo. Surrounding the barn are fenced paddocks to the south and west. The barn has a mortared fieldstone foundation. All of the additions have concrete block masonry foundations. The roof of Barn I and the additions have asphalt shingles, except Addition I to the south, which has corrugated metal roofing. The barn and all the additions are clad in vertical wood siding painted red. Centered atop the ridge of Barn I is a metal ventilator.

Exterior:

The main entry is an exterior sliding double-height door, encompassing the entire south side of the east gable-end. Centered in the gable attic is a single-pane window. Extending south from the south eave-side of the barn is a shed-roofed addition (Addition I), with its east side flush with the east gable-end of Barn I. The grade declines in a step fashion south of the barn at the intersection of Addition I, revealing a concrete block masonry foundation. The step is capped with two wood horizontal rails.

The south eave-side of Barn I is entirely encompassed with Addition I. The east side of the addition has an exterior sliding door with the hinges hidden behind a siding divide. Above the siding divide is a single-pane window. Set in the foundation are two two-pane basement windows. Extending south from the southeast corner of Addition I is a retaining wall. The grade declines sharply west of the retaining wall, revealing a full basement level. The retaining wall is 24' long and turns west. The south and east side of the retaining wall have fieldstone set in concrete. The west and north side of the retaining wall is concrete. The basement level has a series of eight double-hung windows set into a concrete block masonry foundation with two pass-through doors; one at the southeast corner and the other just west of the third window from the southwest corner which appears to have been two exterior sliding doors at one time. In the main level of Addition I are two window openings just beneath the eave and an exterior sliding hay door towards the southeast corner. Extending south from the southwest corner of the basement level of the shed-roofed addition is a gable-roofed addition (Addition II).

Addition II has a concrete block masonry foundation and is entered from the south gable-end by a pass-through door towards the west corner. Centered beneath the apex of the roof is a window opening. The east eave-side of the addition has a centered side-hinged hay door flanked by two two-pane windows.

The west eave-side of the addition has five two-pane windows and a pass-through door. In the basement level of the addition towards the north end is cinderblock with weep holes for drainage. Extending west and encompassing the entire west side of the addition is an open sided lean-to-roofed shelter.

The basement level of the west gable-end of Barn I is encompassed by a shed-roofed addition (Addition III) extending west. Beneath the apex of the roof in the west gable-end of Barn I is a twelve-pane window.

The west end of the addition has three six-pane windows and an access door at the south corner. Set in the concrete block masonry foundation is a side hinged access door by the north corner. At the south corner is a hay track that has been literally smashed through the concrete block masonry foundation. The south side of the addition has a pass-through door in the main level. The north side of the addition has an exterior sliding door that extends to the north eave-side of Barn I. Above is a single-pane window.

The grade at the north eave-side of Barn I declines to the north. At the east corner of the north eave-side of Barn I are two six-pane windows just above grade. The barn has five bays. The second bay from the east (which would have been the middle bay of the original barn,) has a double-height exterior sliding door. Centered above is an eight-pane transom window. Centered at the fourth bay and extending north is a shed-roofed addition (Addition IV). In the main level of the westernmost bay is an exterior sliding door.

Interior:

The main entry in the east gable-end of the barn enters into a five-bay barn. The timbers of the easternmost three bays are hand hewn square rule mortise and tenon timber frame construction. The posts are 10" x 8" with 4" diagonal braces. The barn has dropped girts at the gable-ends and queen post trusses with purlin plates. The roof structure has common rafters without a ridge board measuring 4" x 4". The floor boards are wood plank ranging from 8" to 24." The westernmost two bays have both hand hewn and circular sawn square rule mortise and tenon

timber frame construction. Barn I is open to the south to Additions I & II; the south wall of Barn I is open to Addition I and the westernmost bay of Barn I opens to the south into Addition II's attic level. Barn I is open to the west to Addition III. The third bay from the east has a hatch with a stairway to the basement level of Barn I with thirteen risers.

The basement level of Barn I, Addition I and II are made up of white washed hand hewn and circular sawn square rule mortise and tenon timber frame construction. This is the ground level stable barn. There are 60 total stanchions. There is a central corridor running east-west with stanchions on both sides facing each other and concrete floors with manure troughs. Along the south wall of Addition I is a raised concrete platform with feed bins and two feed chutes at the southeast corner. Between the second and third window from the southeast corner is a ladder and trap door to the main level of Barn I. Running north-south in the main level of Addition II are bull and calf stalls. Centered in the north wall is a pass-through door that leads to Addition IV, which is a white-washed milk room to the west and an office to the east.

Barn II:

This is a 1 ½-story four-bay extended English bank barn. The main entry faces east. Attached to its northernmost bay is a carriage barn extending east. The ridgeline of the carriage barn addition is lower than the ridgeline of Barn II. Barn II has a mortared fieldstone foundation, vertical wood siding painted red and an asphalt shingled roof. The carriage barn addition has vertical wood siding painted red and an asphalt shingled roof.

Exterior:

The main entry of the barn in the third bay from the south is a pair of double-height exterior sliding doors, both of which opens by sliding to the south. The rest of the east eave-side of the barn is blank except for the carriage barn addition.

The grade at the southeast corner declines sharply, revealing a basement level. A small retaining wall capped with fieldstone extends south, tapering to the declined grade to the west. The basement level of the south gable-end of Barn II has two pass-through doors and two two-pane windows. Approximately two' above the main grade is a horizontal band and a siding divide. Off-center to the west just beneath the apex of the roof is a boarded opening.

The basement level of the west eave-side of Barn II is concrete block masonry, whereas the basement of the south gable-end was vertical wood siding. Set in the masonry are four two-pane windows. At the north corner is a single-pane window set in plywood and a pass-through door. The main level of the west eave-side of the barn is blank except for two window openings in the northernmost bay. Extending north from the north gable-end of Barn II is a shed-roofed addition with its west side flush with the west eave-side of Barn II. The shed-roofed addition has a pass-through door on the west side which accessed the basement level of Barn II. Extending east from the northernmost bay in the east eave-side of Barn II is the carriage barn addition. The main façade of the carriage barn addition is its south eave-side, facing Barn I. It has a centered exterior sliding door, an overhead garage door to the east and a four-pane window to the west.

Interior:

The main entry of Barn II opens into a four-bay barn. The barn is made up of circular sawn square rule mortise and tenon timber frame construction. The ceiling has common rafters with wide ceiling boards and a ridge-board. The gable-ends have dropped girts. The basement of the barn is whitewashed and contains horse stalls. The interior of the carriage barn is used as a garage.

• Historical or Architectural importance:

Applicable Connecticut State Register Criteria:

1. Associated with the lives of persons significant in our past; ethnic history of immigrant farmers;
2. Embodying the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction.

Both Barns are significant as typical examples of square rule timber framed English bank barns. The oldest portion of Barn I includes hand hewn post and beam framing. The farm has been in active agriculture for over a century by

a family of immigrant farmers from Eastern Europe who came and revitalized farming in early 20th-century Connecticut. The subdivision of the eastern portion of the land has reduced the integrity of the landscape, although the open space to the south around the reservoir contributes to the sense of the historical agricultural setting.

Historical background:

The farm appears to have been owned by Milo Holt, one of the early families of Plymouth. The site was later acquired by the Armbruster family, immigrants from Germany, sometime on the late 19th- to early 20th century. According to the U.S. Census, as early as 1900 the Armbruster family was farming in Plymouth. In 1920, Philip Armbruster lived on the farm; the founding of the family farm is given as 1919. The Armbruster Farmstead was over 500 acres at its maximum, including the land ot the modern subdivision to the east. The original house on the site was built as early as the mid- to late 18th century, but was demolished in the 1960s. At that time, the family moved to the c. 1900 house on the site, which was a separate residence, but also owned by the Armbruster family. Raymond (known as "Ing"), one of Philip Armbruster's 13 children married a woman named Joan. When Raymond passed away, Joan remarried Walter Lassy, Sr. and moved away. In 2009, Joan sold the 40-acre property to the present owner, Connecticut Residential, a development company which has subdivided just over 15 acres for 16 home lots on Preston Road; the remaining 24.67 acres are the current farm.

The farm appears to have been converted from a crop farm to a dairy farm in the early to mid-20th century. At its peak it had as many as 100 cows. The dairy business for the Armbrusters faded in the 1960s. The basement level of Barn II has been used to board horses for decades and continues to do so today. The main levels of Barn I & II are used for hay storage and farming equipment for a local farmer that leases the land for hay production.

Architectural significance:

Both Barn I and II are significant as typical examples of square rule timber framing in English bank barns, the most common barn type in Connecticut. The oldest portion of Barn I includes hand hewn post and beams. The fact that the farm has been in active agriculture for over a century is significant. Further significance derives from the adaptive re-use of Barn I. It was originally a hay barn and was enlarged multiple times to convert it to a dairy barn. The addition of concrete floors in the basement level and silos signify the development of the site for dairy production. Lastly, this site is a reminder of the importance of immigrant farmers from Eastern Europe who came and revitalized farming in early 20th-century Connecticut.

• Sources (*continuation*):

Photographs and field notes by Todd Levine, 7/10/2012.

Interview with Scott Volpe, owner, 7/10/2012, 155 North Harwinton Avenue, Plymouth, CT.

Interview with Judy Giguere, Town Historian, 8/24/2012 via email.

Map resources:

Plymouth Assessor's Records http://plymouth.univers-clt.com/, Parcel ID: 00079300.

Aerial views from: http://maps.google.com/ and http://www.bing.com/maps/ accessed 7/10/2012.

UTM coordinates: http://itouchmap.com/latlong.html accessed 7/10/2012.

Print and internet resources:

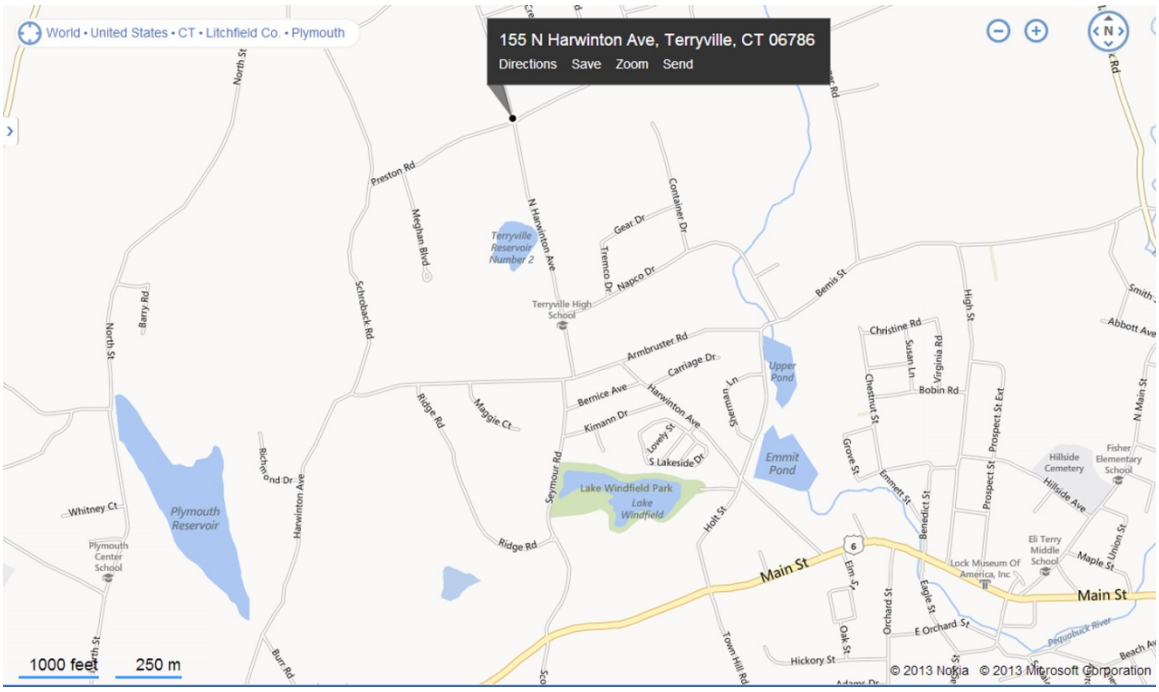
Connecticut Trust for Historic Preservation, Historic Barns of Connecticut Resource Inventory, 2010, http://www.connecticutbarns.org/40896 .

Cunningham, Jan, Connecticut's Agricultural Heritage: an Architectural and Historical Overview, Connecticut Trust for Historic Preservation & State Historic Preservation Office, 2012.

Sexton, James, PhD; Survey Narrative of the Connecticut Barn, Connecticut Trust for Historic Preservation, Hamden, CT, 2005, http://www.connecticutbarns.org/history.

U.S. Federal Census, accessed at http://persi.heritagequestonline.com/hqoweb/library/do/census/search/basic .

Visser, Thomas D., Field Guide to New England Barns & Farm Buildings, University Press of New England, 1997.



1. Location map of 155 North Harwinton Avenue, Plymouth, CT – from http://www.bing.com/maps accessed 10/22/2013.

2. South view – aerial "bird's-eye" map of 155 North Harwinton Avenue, Plymouth, CT – http://www.bing.com/maps accessed 7/10/2012.

3. Detail Site Plan, East view – aerial "bird's-eye" map of 155 North Harwinton Avenue, Plymouth, CT – http://www.bing.com/maps showing contributing resources numbered, accessed 7/10/2012.

4. East gable-end view of Farmhouse, with Barn II and the shed in the background, camera facing west.

5. Southeast view of Barn II and Carriage barn addition, camera facing northwest.

6. Northeast view of Corn crib, camera facing southwest.

7. Northeast view of Shed, camera facing southwest.

8. Southeast view of Barn I, Addition I & II, with house and Barn II in the background, camera facing northwest.

9. East gable-end view of Barn I, Addition I and Silo, camera facing west.

10. South side view of Addition I, camera facing northwest.

11. East eave-side of Addition II, south side of Addition I and retaining wall to the left, camera facing west.

12. South view of Addition II and I, camera facing north.

13. Southwest view of Barn I, Addition II, III and leanto, with corn crib, shed, Barn II and house in background.

14. West view of Barn I, Silo, Addition II, III and lean-to, camera facing east.

15. Detail of exterior, manure cleaner emerging through concrete block masonry foundation of Addition III, camera facing east.

16. North view of Addition III and concrete tile stave Silo, camera facing south.

17. North view of Barn I, Addition III and IV, with silos, camera facing south.

18. Detail of interior, square rule construction of Barn I, camera facing east.

19. Detail of interior, queen trusses and purlin plates in Barn I, camera facing southeast.

20. Detail of interior, transition space from Barn I to Addition II, camera facing south.

21. Detail of interior, hatch from main level to basement of Barn I, camera facing south.

22. Detail of interior, manure trough in basement of Barn I, camera facing west. Note whitewash finishes, indicating use as a dairy stable.

23. Detail of interior, cow stanchions in basement of Barn I, camera facing east.

24. Detail of interior, feed chutes on the north wall of Addition I, camera facing north.

25. East view of east-eave side of Barn II, camera facing west.

26. South view of Carriage barn addition, camera facing north.

27. Detail of exterior, Armbruster sign on east eave-side of Barn II, camera facing west.

28. 1934 Fairchild aerial photography view at left, compared with current Google Map view, http://magic.lib.uconn.edu/mash_up/1934.html accessed 10/22/2013. Note the reforestation of old farm fields as well as the residential development that has changed the landscape.