

## HISTORIC RESOURCES INVENTORY - 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) Ellenberg, Louis and Clara, Farmstead Record No. 20842  
 Building Name (Historic) Greenberg, Louis and Sarah, Farmstead; Ellenberg, Louis and Clara, Farmstead  
 Street Address or Location 4 Old Colchester Road  
 Town/City Hebron Village Amston County Tolland  
 Owner(s) Kessler, Maurice and Diane, 635 Hicksville Road, Far Rockaway NY 11691  Public  Private

### PROPERTY INFORMATION

Present Use: Domestic: secondary structure; 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 New England gambrel dairy barn, Vernacular style Date of Construction 1933

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

- |  |   |   |                                       |  |
|--|---|---|---------------------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Clapboard             | <input type="checkbox"/> Asbestos Siding        | <input type="checkbox"/> Brick  | <input type="checkbox"/> Wood Shingle | <input type="checkbox"/> Asphalt Siding  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Fieldstone            | <input type="checkbox"/> Board & Batten         | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Stucco                                  | <input type="checkbox"/> Cobblestone  | <input type="checkbox"/> Aluminum Siding |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Concrete (Type _____) | <input type="checkbox"/> Cut Stone (Type _____) | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other <u>horizontal wood lap siding</u> |                                       |  |

#### Structural System

- Wood Frame  Post & Beam  Balloon  Load bearing masonry  Structural iron or steel  
 Other \_\_\_\_\_

#### 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: 2 1/2 Approximate Dimensions 36' x 60', 16' x 16' milk room, 25' x 60' shed

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: Cowshed addition on north side

**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: Foundations of silo, other demolished outbuildings

**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 1933 Barn: Louis Ellenberg

• Historical or Architectural importance:

See continuation sheet.

• Sources:

See continuation sheet.

Photographer Charlotte Hitchcock Date 5/19/2012

View Multiple Views Negative on File CTHP

Name Charlotte Hitchcock Date 5/19/2012

Organization Connecticut Trust for Historic Preservation

Address 940 Whitney Avenue, Hamden CT 06517

• Subsequent field evaluations:

Latitude, Longitude:  
41.639627, -72.35475

**Threats to the building or site:**

- None known     Highways     Vandalism     Developers     Renewal     Private
- Deterioration     Zoning     Other \_\_\_\_\_     Explanation \_\_\_\_\_

• **Interrelationship of building and surroundings:**

The barn is located in the Amston section of Hebron, on the west side of the road at the corner of Old Colchester Road and Church Street (Rte 85). Some open farm land remains, along with second-growth woodlands and residential home development of the mid- to late- 20th century. The village center of Amston is located nearby to the south. The town center of Hebron is to the north on Church Street (Route 85). The Hebron Center Historic District includes much of the town center along Main, Church, and Gilead Streets. The Airline Trail State Park, formed from the abandoned Airline Railroad, runs nearby to the south. Proximity to the Airline Railroad may have played a part in the establishment of the farm.

The barn and farmhouse are located on a 1.5-acre parcel of land. Adjacent to the west and north is a parcel of 27 acres of farmland, formerly a part of the farm and now owned by a cousin of the owners. Buildings now on the site include a 2-story hip-roofed American Four-square style farmhouse built in 1910, a 1-story gable-roofed garage, and a gambrel dairy barn. The ruins of a silo lie near the northeast corner of the barn. The house is 26' x 36' with a 1-story porch across the east front and a 15' x 15' 1-story hip-roofed ell attached on the west side near the northwest corner.

The square original front block of the house, on cinder-block foundation, has a wide enclosed hipped-roof front porch. The porch roof is supported by posts resting on a high clapboarded balustrade railing, over [a] latticework skirt. There are three windows at the second floor. A hipped- roof dormer with paired windows occupies the front slope of the hipped roof. Windows are 3-over-1, the upper sash consisting of three vertical panes, which, like the basic American Four-Square architectural style, were a feature favored in early 20th century. Central chimney is corbeled. Similar dormers are in the side slopes. The house is generally plain, with little architectural embellishment save the entasis of its porch posts (Ransom).

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

**Architectural description:**

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

House	1910	C
Barn I	1933	C
Garage	20 <sup>th</sup> c.	C

**Barn I:**

This is a 1 1/2-story Dutch gambrel-roofed structure 36' x 60' with its ridgeline oriented approximately north-south. On the east side are a projecting milk room and the ruins of a concrete stave silo. On the west side a low-pitched shed-roofed addition encompasses the full length of the barn and extends west. The south doors open to a lawn which would have been a barnyard area according to the owner's recollection of other outbuildings that formerly framed the area.

**Exterior:**

The main entrance in the south gable-end is a pair of hinged barn doors. These appear to have once been exterior sliding, as there are boards attached to the exterior in the location of a head track. The doors, with frames, z-bracing, and vertical board panels, are flanked by a stable-type window and a pass-through door on each side. Above in the loft and attic levels are hay mow doors, with the opening at the upper attic level being larger with a pair of doors with x-braced lower and rectangular upper panels. A projecting hay hood extends from the roof peak. Windows flank the upper hay door on both sides.

The east eave-facade has a row of eight stable window openings and an attached gable-roofed milk room wing projecting east at the center of the facade. The milk room has similar stable type windows. One of the openings

north of the milk room is a doorway from the former silo. The north gable-end facade is simpler than the south, with centered doors in the ground level flanked by stable windows; the loft level has a vent at the peak.

The west side of the barn has an attached shallow-pitched shed-roofed addition the full length of the barn. This has a series of stable windows and a pass-through door in the west eave-side and in the south gable-end.

The foundation is concrete and extends approximately 18 inches above grade. Siding is Dutch lap horizontal wood novelty siding, painted white with dark green trim. The high gambrel roof has two metal ventilators and is roofed with asphalt shingles.

**Interior:**

The interior of the ground floor is a stable barn layout with two rows of metal stanchions, some still in place, for cows to face outward. The concrete floor has unusual cast-in manure gutters which channel the waste around a series of turns to arrive at the north doorway rather than running straight through the wall. The water bowl and piping are extant at the outer face of the stanchions. The upper loft floor is supported by two longitudinal girders supported on posts in the line of the stanchions. These apparently were too widely spaced, as a third girder was added at the center line of the stable area, supported on metal lally columns, some replaced by wood posts. This girder is painted to match the adjacent surfaces, so appears to have been an early reinforcement. The aisles outboard of the feed troughs and adjacent to the exterior walls, is elevated several inches and accessed by two narrow ramps at the center of the barn's length. A milk room wing is reached through a door in the east wall. A feed room is enclosed in the southwest corner of the stable area; in this space one of the original nine-paned hopper windows is extant. The loft is accessed via two hatches in the ceiling just south of the center, with sliding covers mounted on the underside and ladders mounted on the walls. The walls and ceiling are paneled with tongue-and-groove boards painted light green, an unusually elaborate finish for this type of barn. An additional doorway in the east wall north of center leads to the ruins of the silo. The west wall is covered with plywood where originally windows matched the east side but subsequently a shed addition covered the exterior wall.

At the loft level, the roof is framed by dimension lumber scissor trusses which are somewhat unusually shallow and maximize the clear open space. Chases between the framing are enclosed leading from the lower level to the two roof-top ventilators. A hay track and hay fork are extant, suspended below the ridge. The large hay doors in the peak of the south elevation appear to be of the vertical sliding type, as no hinges are visible. Windows in the south gable-end flanking the hay doors are boarded shut.

**• Historical or Architectural importance:**

Applicable Connecticut State Register Criteria:

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

This farmstead is significant because it represents the movement of immigrants, in this case of Jewish immigrants, into farming in Connecticut. Farmers such as the Greenbergs and Ellenbergs worked at dairy and poultry farming, supplying the growing industrial cities. This farmstead, with its typical gambrel-roofed ground level stable barn, exemplifies the type and the moment in history. The house is one of the few Jewish farmhouses to be built new, and thus is an exceptional example. Like the house, this barn was purpose-built new, with its interior layout ideal for the modern dairy practice of its time.

**Historical background:**

This farm and its owners were participants in an early 20<sup>th</sup>-century movement to assist Jewish immigrants to establish themselves as farmers in areas surrounding New York City. Some immigrants had agricultural backgrounds from their lives in Europe, while many were trades people without prior preparation for farming. Many worked for some time in city jobs before being financially able to move to rural farms. Often, the sites were existing farms which were being abandoned by their previous owners, of British ancestry, and taken over by European immigrant families. However some, like this property, were newly-established farmsteads with new buildings.

---

Five mortgages by the Baron de Hirsch Fund are recorded in the Hebron land records during the years 1893-1899. Eighty more were granted by the Jewish Agricultural & Industrial Aid Society [JA&IAS] 1902-1960. The record shows that Jewish settlers arrived early in the wave of immigration and continued to come in good numbers during the first half of the 20th century. The importance of the Hebron location to the JA&IAS is indicated by the fact that the society maintained a place of business in Hebron, on Old Colchester Road, west side, near the tracks of the Airline Division of the New York, New Haven & Hartford Railroad Company (Sibon, p. 197; Ransom).

The 19th-century owners of the farm, the Bissell family, sold the property in 1902 to Meyer Lubchansky, who in 1906 sold to the Greenbergs of Colchester. The Greenbergs built the house and added to the acreage. They sold to Harry and Minnie Herman in 1920, discharging their mortgage to the Jewish Agricultural & Industrial Aid Society as part of the transaction. The next owners, in 1922, were the Louis Ellenbergs of New York City who did not take up residence at the farm until 1928.

Ellenberg built the Wisconsin-type dairy barn, the most innovative and technologically advanced design available at the time. It is of lumber-truss construction, giving maximum space for storage. The design also increased the amount of light reaching cattle stanchions, and made temperature control more efficient. The overall result was more sanitary conditions than had previously prevailed. Louis Ellenberg was known for his use of scientific techniques in farm management.

The house, 1910, is a good example of the American Four Square style. It is one of the few Jewish farmhouses to be built, rather than purchased by a Jewish farmer" (Ransom).

Diane Kessler, present owner of the house and barn, is the granddaughter of Louis and Clara Ellenberg. At the age of about 17 or 18, Louis Ellenberg, along with his sister and brother, had immigrated to New York's Lower East Side where Louis worked as a coat presser. They found the farm in Hebron, which had already been owned by two other Jewish families with involvement of the Jewish Agricultural & Industrial Aid Society. Her grandparents farmed the land, ultimately owning 360 acres and raising chickens as well as running a dairy farm and dealing in cattle. They also took in summer boarders and peddled coats from a wagon in the surrounding towns. There were three Ellenberg children listed in the 1930 census: John, Sylvia, and Solomon.

As a child, Diane did not live on the farm but visited each summer until she was 12, when in 1956 her grandfather died. Her uncle lived across the street and took over the land, later dividing the property, with Diane and Maurice getting the house and barn on 1.5 acres. The Kesslers now live in Queens NY and use the house on weekends.

There were formerly additional buildings including a chicken coop and brooder house south of the garage, a horse barn between the garage and dairy barn, and a silo along the east side of the barn. As Diane tells the story, her uncle knocked it down to avoid paying taxes on it. The ruins of the silo are still lying on the ground next to the barn.

**Architectural significance:**

This farmstead is significant because it represents the movement of immigrants, and in this case of Jewish immigrants, during the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, into farming in Connecticut. They established themselves on land that had previously been owned by residents of British descent, who at that time were moving to the Midwest or into other occupations in urban areas. New farmers like the Greenbergs and Ellenbergs worked at dairy and poultry farming, supplying the growing industrial cities. This farmstead, with its classic gambrel-roofed ground level stable barn, exemplifies the type and the moment in history. The house is one of the few Jewish farmhouses to be built new, and thus is an exceptional example.

The barn is significant also as an example of a Jewish farmer striving for the latest technology. Unlike many older barns that were converted in a make-shift way to the requirements of 20<sup>th</sup>-century dairy, this barn is purpose-built with its interior layout ideal for the modern dairy of its time. Its milk room is attached and its silo was the latest concrete plank construction. The interior was finished with wood paneling and the concrete floor and stanchion setup were just what the publications of the time recommended.

• **Sources (*continuation*):**

Photographs and field notes by Charlotte Hitchcock 5/19/2012.

Interview with Maurice and Diane Kessler, 5/19/2012, at the site.

**Map resources:**

Town of Hebron Assessor's Records and GIS Viewer: <http://www.mainstreetmaps.com/CT/Hebron/>  
Parcel ID: 12-18A

Aerial views from:

<http://maps.google.com/> accessed 5/31/2012 and <http://www.bing.com/maps/> accessed 8/11/2010.

UTM coordinates: <http://itouchmap.com/latlong.html>

**Print and internet resources:**

Clouette, Bruce, Cronin, Maura, Hebron Center National Register Historic District Nomination 93000649, National Park Service, 1993.

Connecticut Trust for Historic Preservation, Historic Barns of Connecticut Resource Inventory, 2010, <http://www.connecticutbarns.org/20842> .

Cunningham, Janice, and Ransom, David; Back to the Land: Jewish Farms and Resorts in Connecticut 1890-1945, State of Connecticut Historical Commission and Jewish Historical Society of Greater Hartford, 1998, 186 pages. Entry by Ransom, pp. 148-152.

Hebron Historical Society, Images of America: Hebron, Arcadia Publishing, Charleston SC, 2004.

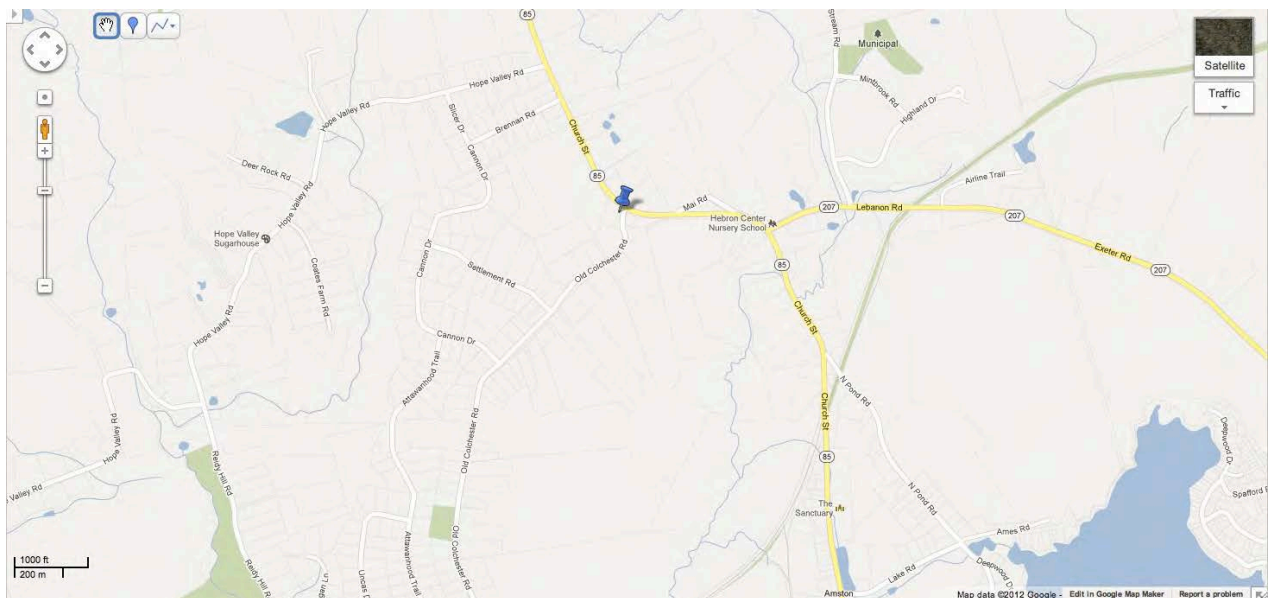
Hopkins, Alfred, Modern Farm Buildings, McBride, Nast & Co., New York, 1913.

James Way Catalog No. 27, James Manufacturing Company, Fort Atkinson, Wisconsin, 1919.

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

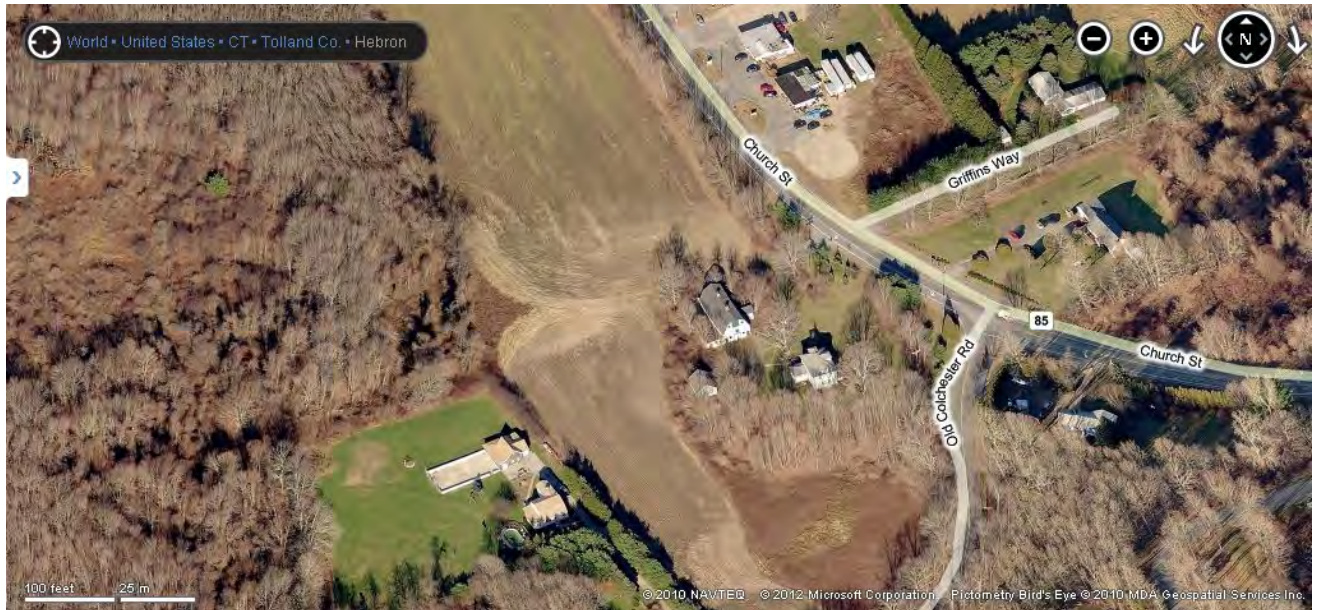
Sibun, John, Our Town's Heritage, 1708-1958, Hebron, Connecticut, Douglas Library of Hebron, 1975.

Visser, Thomas D., Field Guide to New England Barns and Farm Buildings, University Press of New England, 1997, 213 pages.



1. Location map of 4 Old Colchester Road, Hebron CT – from <http://maps.google.com/> accessed 5/31/2012.





2. South view – aerial “bird’s-eye” map of 4 Old Colchester Road, Hebron CT – <http://www.bing.com/maps> accessed 8/11/2010. Note active farmland to west and north, formerly associated with this property.



3. East view – aerial “bird’s-eye” map of 4 Old Colchester Road, Hebron CT – <http://www.bing.com/maps> accessed 8/11/2010.





4. Parcel map of 4 Old Colchester Road, Hebron CT – from Town of Hebron GIS Viewer:  
<http://www.mainstreetmaps.com/CT/Hebron/>



5. Northeast view of Farmhouse, camera facing southwest.





6. Southeast view of Farmhouse with barn at right rear, camera facing northwest.



7. South view of the gable-end of the Barn, camera facing north. West addition is visible at far left.





8. South view of Barn gable-end, camera facing north.



9. Northeast view of Milk room, camera facing southwest.



10. View of ruins of concrete stave silo, camera facing north.





11. Interior view of extant original window located in feed room, camera facing west.



12. Interior view of ground level stable area, camera facing north. East wall with door opening to silo site is at right. Note stanchions, remains of automatic watering system, and feed trough formed into floor.



13. Interior view of ground level stable area, camera facing southeast. At left is the door to the Milk room, at right the typical stable windows and stanchions with stall dividers. Note the ramp transition from the walkway aisle near the outer wall to the manure aisle at center.



14. Interior detail view of sliding ceiling access hatch to hay loft, camera facing north.





15. Interior detail view of floor slab at north door, camera facing north. Note the manure gutter exiting the building via a slot below the door, with an access panel cut into the door.



16. Interior view of loft level of Barn, camera facing southwest.