

## 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) Marble Valley Farm / Kent Land Trust Record No. 6888  
 Building Name (Historic) Carlson Farmstead  
 Street Address or Location 170 Kent Road South (US Route 7)  
 Town/City Kent Village \_\_\_\_\_ County Litchfield  
 Owner(s) The Kent Land Trust, Inc., P.O. Box 888, Kent CT 06757  Public  Private

### PROPERTY INFORMATION

Present Use: Agriculture/Subsistence: agricultural outbuildings  
 Historic Use: Agriculture/Subsistence: agricultural outbuildings  
 Accessibility to public: Exterior visible from public road?  Yes  No  
 Interior accessible?  Yes  No If yes, explain \_\_\_\_\_  
 Style of building North Barn: Extended English bank, Vernacular style Date of Construction Mid-19th c.

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 checked="" 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 _____) | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other <u>Vertical wood 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: 1 1/2, B Approximate Dimensions North Barn I: 30' x 70'

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: Shed added to west side, South Barn converted to residence.

**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: Plastic hoop house, river bank

**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 Charlotte Hitchcock, Kent Land Trust, Inc. Date 4/07/2008, 2/26/2013

View Multiple Views Negative on File CTHP

Name Charlotte Hitchcock Date 3/20/2013

Organization Connecticut Trust for Historic Preservation

Address 940 Whitney Avenue, Hamden CT 06517

• Subsequent field evaluations:

Latitude, Longitude:  
41.695189, -73.496966

**Threats to the building or site:**

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

• Interrelationship of building and surroundings:

The site is located on the west side of Kent Road South (US Route 7) at the northern edge of the Bulls Bridge District of Kent (named for the 19<sup>th</sup>-century school district) and forms a striking southern gateway to Kent Village. The total size of the site is 14.22 acres, bordered by the road and by the Housatonic River. Two barns are located in a north-south line with their ridge-lines parallel to the road which runs slightly easterly of north-south as it heads toward Kent Village to the north. The South Barn served as a residence and later as a glass-blowing studio prior to its acquisition in 1996 by the Kent Land Trust.

The South Barn is now used as a residence and the offices for the Kent Land Trust. The North Barn is used for agricultural purposes. Adjacent to the northeast of the North Barn is a concrete stave silo. West of the North Barn there is a metal-framed plastic-covered hoop house. To the southwest of the barn structures is a small parking lot, which is accessed by a gravel driveway further to the southwest. Both barns front Kent Road, although the North Barn is set closer to the road.

The South Barn office/residence is a 1 ½-story Dutch gambrel-roofed barn, approximately 27' x 49', with a banked basement level. Grade slopes down toward the west exposing the basement level. Mortared fieldstone foundations and some new concrete walls are visible on the north and south gable-ends. The main level and attic gable walls are vertical wood siding; a number of residential casement and picture windows are installed in the main level and attic gables. There is a porch and steps from an entry door in the west side, and another entry door in the east side off-center toward the right. Modern picture and casement windows have been installed, utilizing many of the opening locations in which windows had been inserted by the previous users.

The roof is asphalt shingles; there is a projecting hay hood in the south ridge of the roof and a shed dormer in the west pitch of the roof. A split-rail fence along the edge of the roadway borders the property adjacent to the South Barn.

To the west the site slopes down into the river floodplain. To the north of the barns is a large planting area. Birch Hill Lane, a street of narrow river-front lots with small homes, borders the northwest portion of the property. The area surrounding the site is scattered residential, active agriculture, open space and woodland on the hillside sloping up to the east. Bulls Bridge, listed on the National Register of Historic Places, is 1.5 miles south and is a covered bridge crossing the Housatonic River. The town center of Kent is approximately 2.5 miles to the north along US Route 7; a mile further north is the Kent Iron Furnace, listed on the National Register, and a mile north is the Flanders National Register Historic District.

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

**Architectural description:**

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

South Barn - Residence	20 <sup>th</sup> c.	C
North Barn	19 <sup>th</sup> c.	C

**North Barn:**

This is a 1 1/2-story extended English bank barn five bays in length, 30' x 70', with a shed-roofed addition and a lean-to. The main eave-side faces roughly east and the ridge-line of the barn is parallel to the road. Siding is vertical boards painted red; roofing is asphalt shingles.

**Exterior:**

The barn has two main entries; two pairs of full-height exterior sliding doors on the east eave-side. The entries are in the second and fourth bays. The grade declines sharply at the south corner, revealing a basement level in the south gable-end of the barn. A stone retaining wall extends to the south. The south gable-end has a centered pair of hinged doors in the basement level. To the west is an exterior sliding door. A horizontal trim board separates the basement level from the main level. The rest of the southwest gable-side of the barn is blank except for an arch-

topped louvered vent with trim beneath the apex of the roof and "The Kent Land Trust" logo in black paint, centered on the main level and gable attic. The south gable-end of a shed Milk room addition is flush with the south end wall and has a hinged door in its right half.

The west eave-side of the barn has the 1-story shed-roofed Milk room addition extending to the west at the right (south) corner of the side, covering one bay of the main barn, and an open lean-to extending to the west at the left (north) corner. Above the lean-to is a set of two six-pane windows. Under the lean-to roof there is a hay door into the main barn and a sliding barn door into the basement level. In the center bay area of the main block is a pair of sliding hinged hay doors on the main level and a metal-framed glazed opening at the basement level.

The grade at the north corner inclines to the main level. A foundation wall, of mortared fieldstone, extends to the northwest at the north corner and becomes the north wall of the lean-to. It has a nine-pane stable-type window set into the masonry, and a wood-sided gable-end above. Under the lean-to is a concrete floor slab. The northeast gable-end of the barn is blank except for a modern two-pane sliding window towards the east corner on the main level and an arch-topped vent in the gable attic. The gable roof has a projecting overhang and is covered with asphalt shingles. Centered on the ridge is a gable-roofed cupola with a pair of arch-topped louvered vents on each side. Adjacent to the north of the barn is a concrete stave silo with a domed metal roof and an attached chute enclosure on the south side. The silo appears to have originally opened to the basement level of the barn below grade.

**Interior:**

The main level of the barn interior consists of a square rule post and beam frame. The bays are identified from south to north as Bays 1-5. The three southern bays, Bay 1 – Bay 3, comprise a traditional three-bay English barn frame with bay widths of 16'-7", 12', and 10'. The center of these bays, Bay 2, has the full-height barn door in the east wall. The bents are of hand-hewn timbers, with dropped tie-girts. The second interior bent (between Bay 1 and 2) has a single interior post off-center toward the west, while the remaining bents have a single interior post approximately centered. Vertical queen posts support longitudinal purlin plates. These carry hewn common rafters, which are mortised into a ridge pole. A hay track is extant below the ridge. The upper cross-tie girts appear to have been removed for clearance below the hay track, but have been replaced in recent rehabilitation work. The roof deck is wide random-width boards overlain by new plywood.

The northern bays, Bay 4 and Bay 5, appear to be of later construction. The plates in Bay 4 are jointed at the north face of the fourth bent, indicating that Bay 4 is an addition. The timbers forming Bays 4-5 are hand hewn but the rafters are sawn dimension lumber as is the floor framing below Bay 5, again indicating later construction. Bay 4 may be the first addition and Bay 5 a second addition, based on the floor framing, or both may have been concurrent, with later repairs of the roof and floor framing.

The basement level interior has mortared fieldstone retaining walls for the east and north sides. Most of the upper level is supported on east-west joists, which are a mix of hewn and un-dressed log timbers. These are carried on a pair of longitudinal hewn girders dividing the space into three aisles. The posts supporting the girders are modern wood heavy timbers, replacing the originals. The old ceiling material has a whitewash finish indicating its use as a dairy stable in the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The new posts are unfinished.

At the north end the last bay has a main level floor of sawn joists oriented north-south, indicating later construction. The floor is a concrete slab.

**• Historical or Architectural importance:**

Applicable Connecticut State Register Criteria:

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

This farm and its barns are significant because they occupy a prime and highly visible gateway location along a designated state scenic road leading to Kent Village. The North Barn is an excellent intact example of its type, the

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early 19<sup>th</sup>-century English barn, with changes over time including the extended length, cupola, and silo. The farm also represents the history of European immigrant farmers moving into the area in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century.

**Historical background:**

The barn is reported by local tradition to have been constructed in the early- to mid-1800s, certainly prior to the Civil War, although there is little documentation available about its provenance. The barn was reportedly used for tobacco farming and later dairy farming (Manley). It stands out as one of the very few barns in active agricultural use in the town (Smith).

It appears from the 1874 Beers map, that there may formerly have been a farmhouse located on the east side of the road, associated with the barns.

The North Barn's English bank barn form is typical of early- to mid-19<sup>th</sup>-century family farms, with the banked basement often added by jacking up the main level frame to permit a stanchion layout which was the standard in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. The cupola has a late 19<sup>th</sup>-century style with its arched louvers, while the concrete stave silo was a popular technology in the middle of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, after the 1940s.

The gambrel form of the South Barn suggests an early 20<sup>th</sup>-century date, when the construction of gambrel roofs with dimension lumber truss-work became common; however the structure is no longer exposed to view on the interior so it was not observed. An aerial view from the 1934 Fairchild photograph shows that the river's course has narrowed and silted in, and although the resolution is grainy, it appears that there was only one barn at that time.

Former Kent Historical Society President, Susi Casey Williams, compiled a list of dairy farms that she can remember from her childhood "... Hilda Carlson's farm (house on left, barns on right - which was the glassblower place until recently. It is now [since 1996] owned by the Kent Land Trust" (Williams).

The Carlsons grew some tobacco in addition to dairy; tobacco cultivation ended in Kent in the early 1930s in part due to the difficulty finding seasonal labor (Manley).

The Carlson family is recorded in the Census records of 1910 and 1920. Alfred Carlson, b. 1867, and Hannah, b. 1868, were natives of Sweden. Their oldest child, Anna had been born in Wisconsin in 1894, and they must have moved to Connecticut by 1897 as the second daughter, Hilda, was born in the state. Additional children Teresa, Frank, and Flora arrived by 1908. In 1910 Alfred was identified as a renter of farmland, but by 1920 he was a Dairy farmer, so must have acquired his farm. The Carlsons were followed by the Smallwood family and then by the glassblowers mentioned by Williams.

Since acquisition by the Kent Land Trust in 1996, the South Barn has been renovated as Land Trust offices and a residence for Farmer Megan Haney, who leases the farm for a CSA and farm-stand, operating as Marble Valley Farm. The North Barn is used for farm activities and storage.

**Architectural significance:**

This farm and its barns are significant because they occupy a prime and highly visible gateway location near the southern edge of Kent, bordered by a designated state scenic road leading to Kent Village and the northwestern towns beyond. The Appalachian National Scenic Trail runs on the west side of the Housatonic River, which borders the site on the west. The site is within the Upper Housatonic Valley National Heritage Area, designated as a unit of the National Park System for its historical, cultural, and natural resources. The Town of Kent's Plan of Conservation and Development identifies the southern gateway for prioritized conservation.

In addition to representing the historic landscape of agricultural Kent and protecting working farmland, the property's North Barn is an excellent intact example of its type, the early 19<sup>th</sup>-century English barn. In this case the extended form and the banked basement and silo exemplify the changes over time that were typical of Connecticut farming, and illustrate the evolution from subsistence farming to commercial dairy farming.

• Sources (*continuation*):

Photographs and field notes by Charlotte Hitchcock 4/07/2008 and 2/26/2013.

Interview with Connie Manes 2/26/2013, at the site.

**Map resources:**

Town of Kent Assessor's Records <http://data.visionappraisal.com/KentCT/findpid.asp?iTable=pid&pid=345>  
Parcel ID: 5/ 10/ 49/

Aerial views from: <http://maps.google.com/> and <http://www.bing.com/maps/> accessed 12/31/2012.

Historical aerial photography and maps accessed at UConn MAGIC:

[http://magic.lib.uconn.edu/mash\\_up/1934.html](http://magic.lib.uconn.edu/mash_up/1934.html)

[http://magic.lib.uconn.edu/historical\\_maps\\_connecticut\\_towns.html](http://magic.lib.uconn.edu/historical_maps_connecticut_towns.html) .

USGS Historical Maps accessed 12/31/2012 at <http://historical.mytopo.com/> .

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

**Print and internet resources:**

Connecticut State Library online: [iconn.org](http://iconn.org) or <http://www.cslib.org/iconnitemap/staff/SiteIndex.aspx#directories>

Connecticut Trust for Historic Preservation, Historic Barns of Connecticut Resource Inventory, 2010,  
<http://www.connecticutbarns.org/6888> .

Kent Historical Society web site:

Williams, Susi Casey, "The History of Agriculture in Kent," <http://www.kenthistoricalsociety.org/the-history-of-agriculture-in-kent.htm>, includes the reminiscences of former Kent Historical Society President, Susi Casey Williams, a list of dairy farms that she can remember from her childhood.

Manley, Caroline Templeton, "The History of Tobacco Growing in the Housatonic Valley,"  
<http://www.kenthistoricalsociety.org/tobacco-growing-in-the-housatonic-valley.htm>, identifies the Carlsons as tobacco growers.

Kent Land Trust web site: <http://www.kentlandtrust.org/index.html>

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

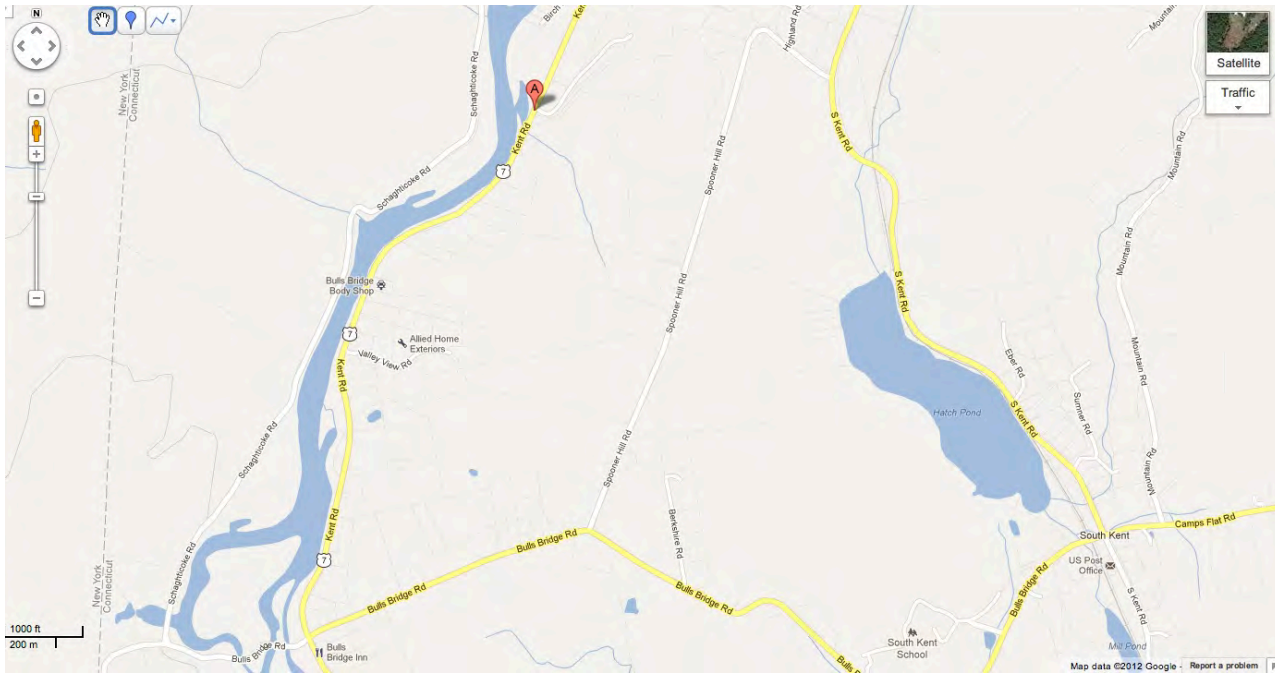
Smith, Marge (McAvoy), Letter of May 1, 2009, in support of grant application to CT Trust for Historic Preservation.

Town of Kent Plan of Conservation & Development, 2012 draft,  
[www.townofkentct.org/soubor\\_nahled.php?id=1751](http://www.townofkentct.org/soubor_nahled.php?id=1751) .

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

Upper Housatonic River Valley National Heritage Area web site: <http://www.upperhousatonicheritage.org/> .

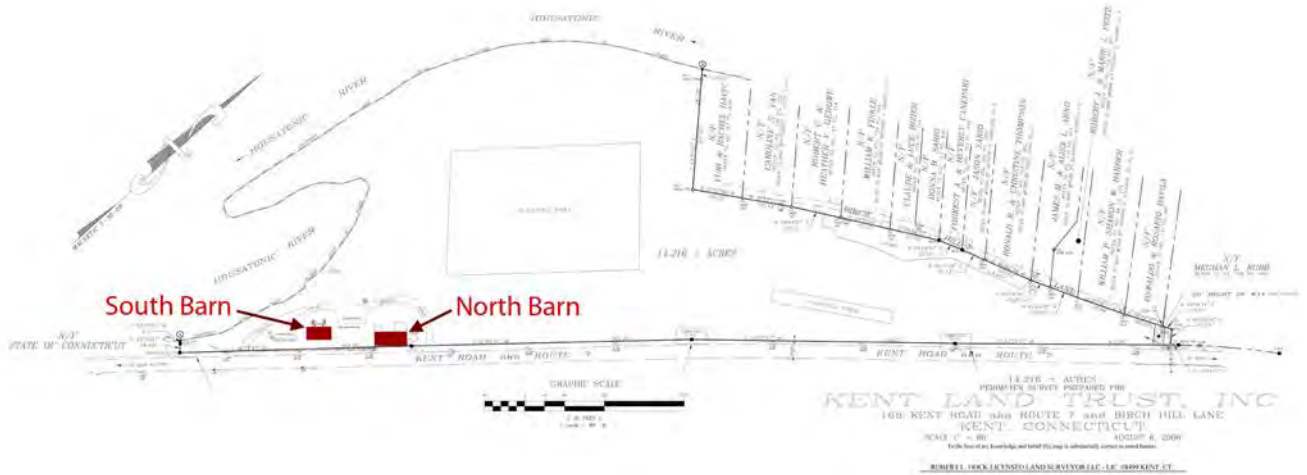
Visser, Thomas D., Field Guide to New England Barns & Farm Buildings, University Press of New England, 1997.



1. Location map of 170 Kent Road South (US Route 7), Kent CT – from <http://maps.google.com/> accessed 12/31/2012.



2. North view – aerial "bird's-eye" map of 170 Kent Road South (US Route 7), Kent CT – <http://www.bing.com/maps> accessed 12/31/2012.



3. Property survey map detail of 170 Kent Road South (US Route 7), Kent CT, courtesy of Kent Land Trust.



4. South view of South Barn with North Barn at rear, camera facing north.





5. Southeast view of South Barn at left and North Barn at right rear, camera facing northwest.



6. West view of South Barn, camera facing southeast, showing the alterations for the current uses as office space at the main level and an apartment above.



7. Northeast view of North Barn and Silo, with South Barn at left rear, camera facing southwest.



8. South view of North Barn, camera facing north.



9. Southwest view of North Barn and hoop house, camera facing northeast.



10. Southwest view of North Barn, camera facing northeast.



11. Northwest view of North Barn and silo, camera facing southeast.



12. North view of North Barn, camera facing south.



13. Interior view of North Barn basement level, camera facing north. Note hand hewn girders and joists.



14. Interior view of North Barn basement level, camera facing north, showing the change in framing at the northern bay (right rear of photograph).



15. Interior view of North Barn main level, camera facing south, showing the framing at Bay 1. Note the hand hewn rafters along with other hewn timbers.



16. Interior view of North Barn main level, camera facing east, showing Bay 4. Note discontinuous plate and change from hewn rafters (right) to sawn dimension lumber (left).



17. Photograph of South barn c. 1996 prior to renovation, camera facing southwest, courtesy of Kent Land Trust.



18. Photograph of North barn c. 1996 prior to renovation, camera facing northwest, courtesy of Kent Land Trust.



19. Fairchild 1934 aerial photograph at left, showing the site comparison with Google Map view at right; from UConn MAGIC web site, accessed 3/20/2013.