

## 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) Barn Hill Studio & Gallery Record No. 38462  
 Building Name (Historic) Gray-Hurd Farmstead  
 Street Address or Location 20 Barn Hill Road  
 Town/City Monroe Village \_\_\_\_\_ County Fairfield  
 Owner(s) Dohanos, Linda & Gilchrist, Timothy, 20 Barn Hill Road, Monroe CT 06468  Public  Private

### PROPERTY INFORMATION

Present Use: Commerce/Trade: professional; Domestic: single dwelling  
 Historic Use: Agricultural/Subsistence: agricultural outbuilding; Domestic: single dwelling  
 Accessibility to public: Exterior visible from public road?  Yes  No  
 Interior accessible?  Yes  No If yes, explain During gallery hours  
 Style of building Extended English bank barn, Victorian vernacular Date of Construction c. 1860, 1895

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: 2 1/2 Approximate Dimensions 30 x 56 feet

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: conversion to gallery/studio, structural reinforcement at basement

**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: House, pool, chicken coop, beehives, cupola

**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:

See continuation sheet.

Photographer Lee Hossler, Charlotte Hitchcock Date 3/09/2011, 10/13/2011

View Multiple Views Negative on File CTHP

Name Charlotte Hitchcock Date 11/01/2011

Organization The Connecticut Trust for Historic Preservation

Address 940 Whitney Avenue, Hamden CT 06517

• Subsequent field evaluations:

Latitude, Longitude:  
41.334541, -73.185902

**Threats to the building or site:**

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

• **Interrelationship of building and surroundings:**

The 3.35-acre property with its c. 1827 house is located on the south side of Barn Hill Road. Barn Hill Road runs generally south from the high point of Barn Hill in the northeast part of Monroe. It bends westward as it passes this property, and then southwest toward the center of Monroe. The present-day Shelton Road (Route 110) is a historically recent construction (1935); in the 19<sup>th</sup> century Barn Hill Road connected with Old Tannery Road to reach the Green at the center of town. Today the Shelton Road right-of-way runs directly south of the barn, leaving the property as a wedge-shaped site between Shelton and Barn Hill Roads.

The property is situated in a residential area surrounded by mainly late 20<sup>th</sup>-century residential properties. The earliest homes along Shelton Road were developed in 1944-52, with the majority constructed in a rapid building campaign in 1970. On Barn Hill Road, 40 Barn Hill dates from 1865, and one other from 1947, while the majority of the homes were constructed in 1985. A golf course is located nearby to the west, and to the east in Shelton are a park with woods and ball fields, and to the southeast is an extensive Christmas tree farm (the Jones Family Farm).

The barn is located along the southern edge of the property abutting Shelton Road while the c. 1827 Greek Revival style main residence is located towards the north, facing onto Barn Hill Road. The ridge-line of the barn runs east-west while that of the house runs north-south. The house has a vernacular Greek Revival three-bay gable-end façade facing north with the door in the right (west) bay indicating a side-hall plan. A rectangular 15-pane attic window is a characteristic period detail. Other windows are one-over-one double-hung replacements. A 1-story porch wraps around the north and west sides – Italianate-style square posts indicate this as an addition to the basic house. Other recent additions have expanded the house to the south (rear) and to the east, including three garage bays below a finished second floor. A garden with a small saltbox-roofed 6 x 10-foot chicken coop, several beehives, and a few fruit trees are located to the immediate east of the barn, thus continuing the agricultural tradition. A stream, Nelson Brook, crosses the property near its eastern boundary, running southeast to join Means Brook.

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

**Architectural description:**

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

House	c. 1827	C
Barn	c. 1860	C
Chicken coop	20 <sup>th</sup> c.	C

This is a 1 1/2-story gable-roofed eave-entry barn, known as an extended English bank barn. The ridge-line runs east-west and the north eave-side of the barn is the main entry façade. Grade slopes down toward the south along fieldstone foundation walls, and the south basement wall is fully exposed at the lower grade elevation.

Construction is square-rule timber framing, with a mix of hewn and sawn materials and possible re-use of older timbers. Siding is vertical boards painted gray with green trim. The roof has deep overhangs at the eaves and rakes, the material is asphalt shingles, and a cupola is located at the center of the ridge-line.

**Exterior:**

The barn is a four-bay post-and-beam framed structure, with the western-most bay possibly added after the construction of the eastern three bays.

The main entrance is in the second bay from the east through a pair of tall exterior-hung X-braced sliding barn doors. The doors' exterior bracing system has ornamental detailing including beveled edges and eased corners; vertical boards make up the solid panels behind the bracing members. To the left (east) a modern pair of French doors and a single-pane stained glass window in the upper wall, have been added. To the right (west) in the end bay a shorter double sliding exterior door matches the main doors in style, and slides to the left (east) to reveal a modern triple glass sliding door infilling the barn door opening and providing entry into the studio space. Above these doors is a smaller sliding hay door, also in the rightmost bay and surfaced with vertical siding. All three barn doors have shallow hoods covering the track mechanisms. A fieldstone retaining wall extending in line with the

east wall creates a gently ramped ground surface adjacent to the north side. Flagstone paving covers the approach to the triple glass doors.

The grade along the west gable-end of the barn declines towards the south. A half-height fieldstone foundation wall is partially exposed and above it a wood-framed basement wall has two six-pane stable windows near the north and south corners. Above at the main level of the west gable-end, four six-over-six double-hung windows with trim are equally spaced – the layout is consistent with the typical configuration of stable windows. Above these a dropped girt-line is indicated by the saw-toothed lower ends of the attic siding. In the attic near the peak is a one-over-one arch-topped window.

The south eave-side of the barn has a horizontal trim course separating the bank level from the main level above. The basement wall has vertical wood siding, and the interior is accessed by two over-head garage doors – one towards the left (west) and the other towards the extreme right (east). These have replaced sliding doors, as evidenced by grooves in the siding above. A modern pass-through door located in the second bay from the right (corresponding to the threshing floor bay above) is flanked by a six-pane window with frame on each side. At the main level above, an exterior-hung sliding hay door is at the first floor level, above the pass-through door. A twenty-four pane window is centered above the sliding hay door. A pair of ornamental wood cutouts of doves is mounted on the upper wall of the western bays.

The grade level along the east gable-end of the barn slopes down from north to south, partially exposing the unmortared full-height fieldstone masonry foundation wall. The masonry projects out beyond the plane of the wall above. The main floor level of the east gable-end has eight modern one-over-one double-hung windows. These are grouped into two panels of four, with a horizontal transom above each of the two panels. The gable attic matches the east end.

The gable roof of the barn has a hip-roofed cupola with a finial at the apex and a pair of arch-topped one-over-one double-hung windows on each side. The cupola is approximately centered on the ridge-line, hence not located above the threshing floor bay. The deep overhangs at the eaves and rakes have sloped soffits finished in wood trim.

#### **Interior:**

At the basement level, recent stabilization has supported the old framing by placing new timbers below the originals, leaving the old fabric extant and visible. The north and east foundation walls are full-height fieldstone, mortared on the interior. The west foundation is a half-height fieldstone wall with wood framing above up to the main level plate. The eastern bay has joist framing above to support the main floor, running east-west and consisting of a mix of hand-hewn squared members, round poles with the upper and lower surfaces hewn, and modern dimensional lumber. New plank flooring has been cut from trees on the site for the Gallery floor above. The second bay, where the big barn doors above indicate the threshing floor, are framed with a series of girders running east-west and joists oriented north-south. These are mainly hewn squared timbers mortised into the girders. The next bay to the west and the far western bay resemble the eastern bay, with the joists spanning east-west. The third bay has mainly square-hewn joists while the fourth bay has mainly round poles hewn flat on their upper and lower surfaces. Some of the heavy timber posts in this area exhibit unused mortises, suggesting the possibility that they were recycled from an earlier structure. A stair has been inserted at the northeast corner connecting to the main level above.

At the main level, the easternmost two bays are open to the roof while the western two bays have a loft floor level. The loft floor is supported on joists that are a mix of hewn timbers and sawn dimension lumber. Additional windows have been added in the east and west gable-end walls for the studio and gallery uses, and interior wall finishes and partitions running north-south separate the eastern bays into two galleries. The wall finishes have been held between posts so that the structural posts are exposed, and finishes extend up to the plate level, with the underside of the roof structure remaining exposed. Longitudinal purlins at the center of the rafter spans are supported on queen posts which are part of the framing of the lateral bents. The rafters are sawn dimensional lumber, and appear to be spliced over the purlins. Roof decking is spaced boards, suggesting an original wood shingle roof. A modern layer of plywood decking is visible through the spaces.

• **Historical or Architectural importance:**

Applicable Connecticut Register Criterion:

2. Embodying the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction.

**Historical background:**

Land at a location called “Barn Hill” in Monroe was under cultivation as early as 1687. Barn Hill Road was one of the earliest areas of [the future] Monroe to be settled, since its soil was among the most fertile in town. The first permanent homes were probably constructed during the 1720s (Donohue & McCain).

In 1823 Monroe was formed from areas of the surrounding communities, New Stratford and Ripton parishes.

This house was built circa 1827 by David Gray, and by 1867 had become the property of “C & C. G. Hurd” according to the Beers atlas. David O. Gray, born in 1802, married Lucinda Adams in 1824 in Redding, Connecticut, and possibly built this house for his bride. In 1850 Gray, a farmer, owned \$3,000 worth of real estate. The six members of his household included a son, Lewis B., 23, employed as a hatter, a common occupation in pre-Civil War Monroe. David and Lucinda Gray's daughter Elizabeth married Dr. Edward M. Beardsley, who lived at 354 Moose Hill Road (Donohue & McCain).

The date of the barn is not definitely known; however visual analysis suggests that it may have been constructed – with square-rule framing and new or re-used hand-hewn timbers – as a typical three-bay English bank barn for the farmstead. A mid-19<sup>th</sup> century date such as during the Hurd ownership would be consistent with the evidence. A later modification might have converted the use toward a carriage barn function, with a fourth bay added for horses. The saw-toothed siding detail, arched attic windows, centered cupola with arched windows, sliding doors with ornamental bracing, and the sawn lumber rafters, would suggest a renovation around 1890-1900.

The construction of a new road, State Route 110, in 1935, sliced through the property along the south side of the barn, altering the barn's relationship to its surroundings by separating it from the farmland to the south. The new road also made the barn highly visible to traffic passing by, and the new accessibility suited the structure to its eventual use as an art studio and gallery. The current owners renovated the structure again after 2006, adding electricity, windows and doors, insulating walls, and selectively installing interior finishes. Wood harvested on site was used for the flooring and window casings in the gallery.

**Architectural significance:**

This barn is an outstanding example of its type, the extended English bank barn, maintained in good condition and with substantial integrity of materials.

The barn also illustrates changes over time. It appears to have been constructed in the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century as a standard bank barn for agriculture, and to have been expanded and remodeled to adapt to changes in use and style at the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century and then again in the first decade of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Sensitive adaptive re-use by the present owners has preserved much of the original fabric including the supporting structural members at the basement level and the timber frame at the upper level. The current use as an art gallery makes a virtue of the cavernous interior volume, which forms a suitable backdrop for the display of artworks.

Active agriculture is continued at the site with chickens in a historic coop and beehives adjacent to the barn.

• **Sources** (*continuation*):

Photographs and field notes by Lee Hossler, 03/09/2011.

Town of Monroe Assessors' records <http://monroe.univers-ct.com/>  
Parcel ID: 077 072 00

**Maps:**

Aerial Maps of Monroe, CT, from websites  
<http://www.bing.com/maps>  
<http://maps.google.com/> accessed 10/28/2011.

Assessors' map from website <http://www.monroect.org/> accessed 10/28/2011.

Historic map:

Chace, J., Clark's map of Fairfield County, Connecticut, Publisher: [S.I.], 1856.

Scale: 1 inch to 250 rods, 1 map: hand col.; 154 x 138 cm.

Notes: Reference: LC Land ownership maps, 58. Reproduced from the original map in the Geography and Map Division, Library of Congress.

<http://www.flickr.com/photos/uconnlibrariesmagic/3387034755/>

US Geological Survey Maps, archived at the University of New Hampshire:  
Derby Connecticut 1893, Long Hill Connecticut 1947 and 1953,  
<http://historical.mytopo.com/quadlist.cfm?stateabr=CT&town=Monroe>

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

**Print and internet resources:**

Coffey, Edward Nichols, A Glimpse of Old Monroe, Monroe Sesquicentennial Commission, 1974.

Connecticut Trust for Historic Preservation, Historic Barns of Connecticut Resource Inventory, 2010,  
<http://www.connecticutbarns.org/38462>

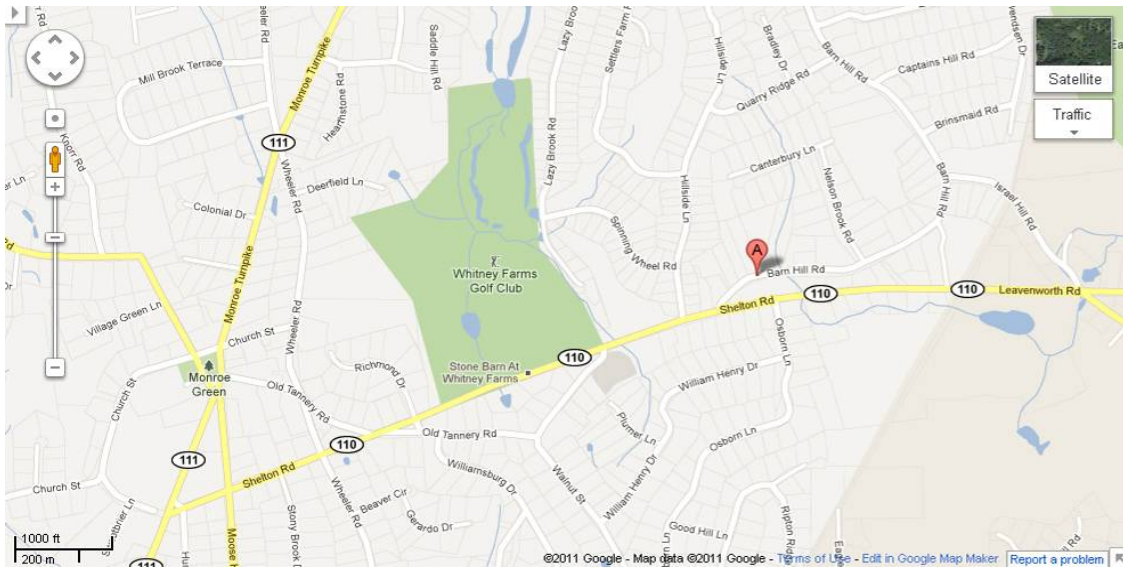
Donohue, Mary, McCain, Diana Ross, Historic & Architectural Resource Survey of Monroe CT, Connecticut Historical Commission, 2002.

Durrell, Brad, "Monroe's barns tell a story," The Monroe Courier, 9/22/2011, [monroecourier.com](http://monroecourier.com).

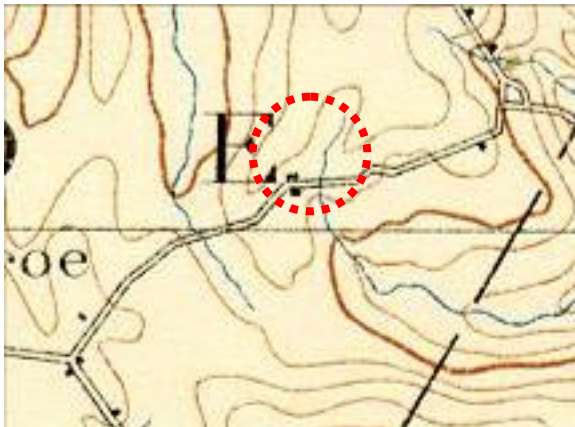
Oglesby, Scott, "Route 110," Connecticut Roads, <http://www.kurumi.com/roads/ct/ct110.html>.

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

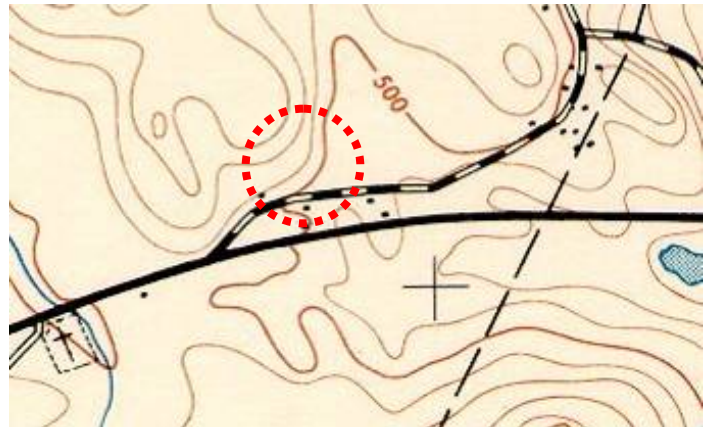
Visser, Thomas D., Field Guide to New England Barns and Farm Buildings, University Press of New England, 1997.



1. Location map of 20 Barn Hill Road, Monroe CT – from <http://maps.google.com/> accessed 10/28/2011.



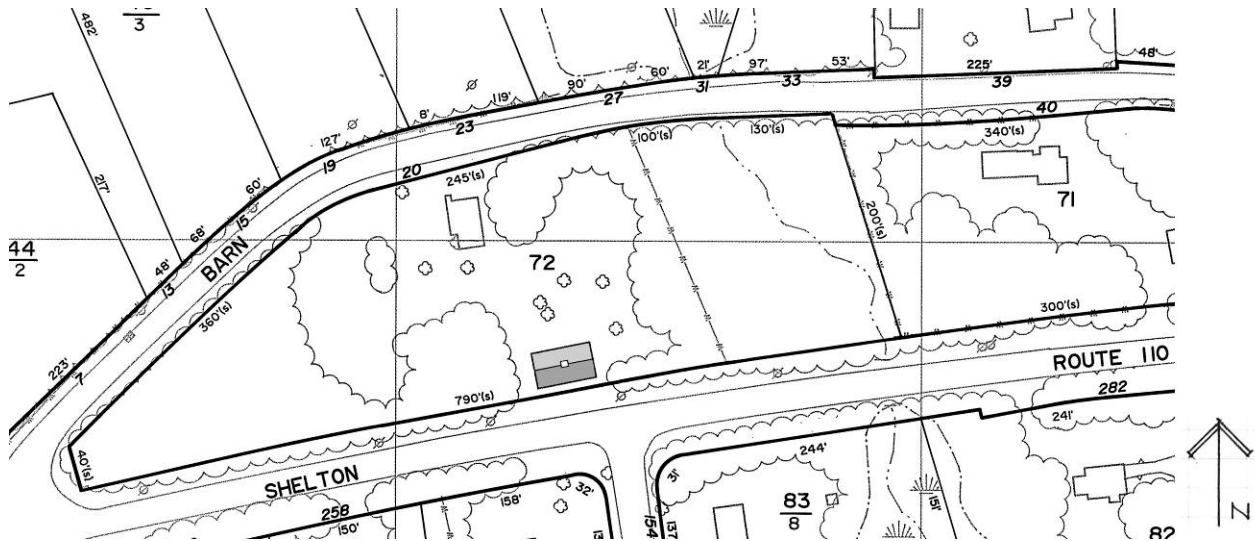
2a. Historic US Geological Survey Map, 1893.



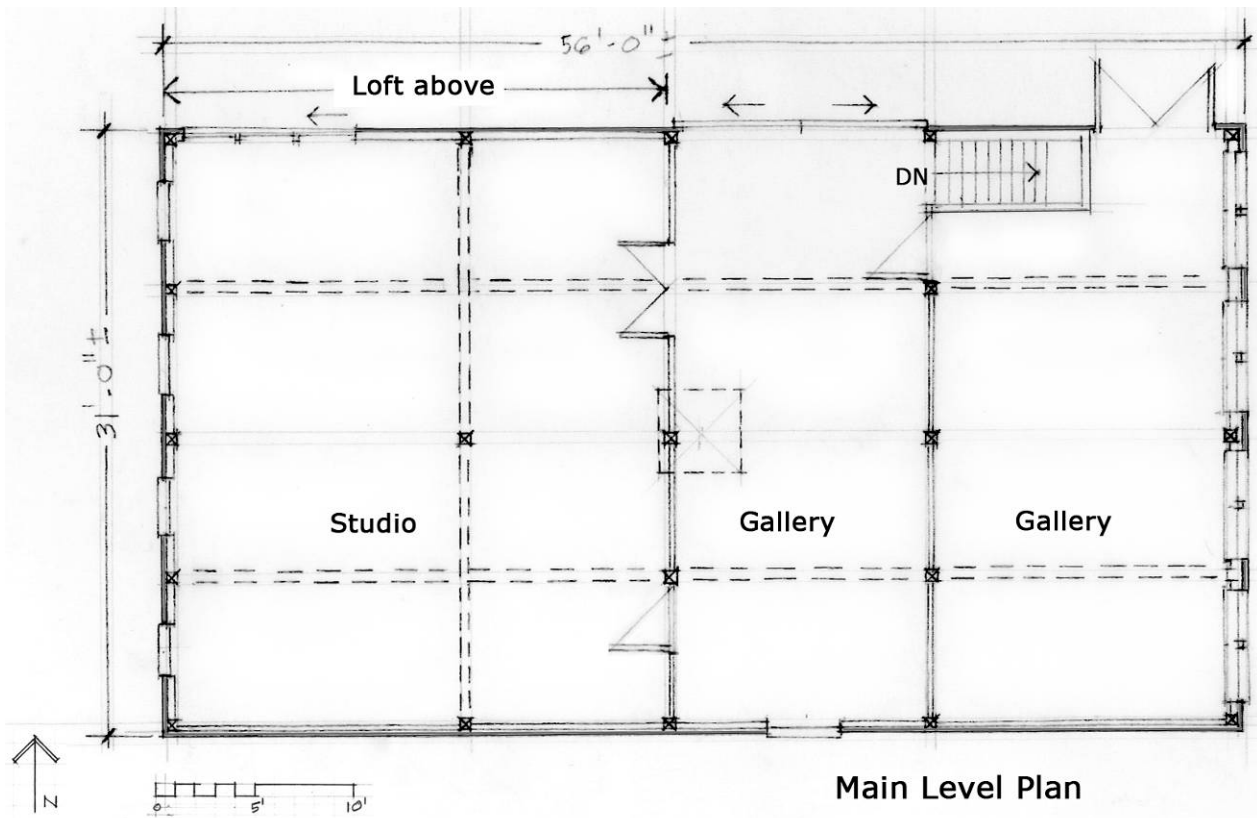
2b. Historic US Geological Survey Map, 1947.  
after construction of State Route 110.



3. South aerial “bird’s-eye” of 20 Barn Hill Road – <http://www.bing.com/maps> accessed 10/28/2011.



4. Assessor's parcel map of 20 Barn Hill Road, Monroe CT – from <http://www.monroect.org/> 10/28/2011.



**Main Level Plan**  
 Gray-Hurd Barn  
 20 Barn Hill Road, Monroe CT

5. Plan sketch – main level.





6. Northwest view, camera facing southeast.



7. Southwest view, camera facing northeast.



8. Northeast view, camera facing southwest.



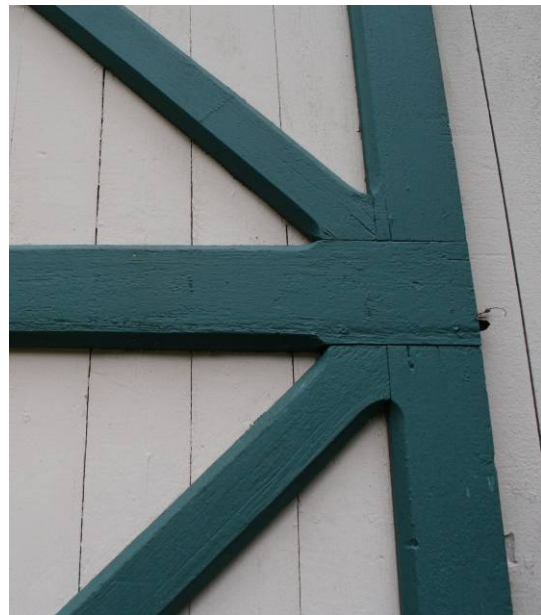
9a. Southeast view of chicken coop, camera facing northwest.



9b. Southwest view of coop.



10. Northwest view of farmhouse, camera facing southeast.



11a-b. Details of barn doors and cupola, camera facing south.



12a. Cupola detail, camera facing north.



12b. Southeast corner detail, camera facing north.



13a. Interior view of southeast corner.



13b. Interior view of threshing bay gallery, camera facing south.



14. Interior of loft level, camera facing west.



15. Interior of basement below threshing bay, camera facing south.  
Note change of joist direction in adjacent bay to right (west).