Don Tinty Family Park/Tinty Barn  
Record No. 3723

Street Address or Location 9190 Main Street (See Note, p. 2)

Owner(s) Town of Farmington, 1 Montieth Drive, Farmington, 06032
Type of Use: Public

Present Use: Agriculture/Subsistence: agricultural outbuilding

Historic Use: Agriculture/Subsistence: agricultural outbuilding

Material(s) (Indicate use or location when appropriate):
- Fieldstone
- Board & Batten
- Vertical board siding
- Wood Frame
- Post & Beam
- Asphalt Shingle

Structural System

Roof (Type)
- Gambrel

Roof (Material)
- Wood Shingle

Number of Stories: I: 1, II: 1 1/2
Approximate Dimensions I: 55' x 30', II: 57' x 30'

Other: 

Exterior Condition: Excellent

Exterior Condition: On original site

Exterior Condition: Moved

Exterior Condition: When?

Exterior Condition: Moved

Exterior Condition: When?

Exterior Condition: Moved

Exterior Condition: When?

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PROPERTY INFORMATION (CONT’D)

Related outbuildings or landscape features:

- ✔ Barn
- ☐ Shed
- ☐ Garage
- ☐ Carriage House
- ☐ Shop
- ☐ Garden
- ✔ Other landscape features or buildings: stone walls, fencing, ruins of a stone silo

Surrounding Environment:

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

• Interrelationship of building and surroundings:

• 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 Kristen Young Date 9/6/2012

View Multiple Views Negative on File CTHP

Name Kristen Young and Todd Levine Date 9/12/2012

Organization Connecticut Trust for Historic Preservation

Address 940 Whitney Avenue, Hamden CT 06517

• Subsequent field evaluations:

Latitude, Longitude:

41.700330, -72.844570

Threats to the building or site:

- ✔ None known
- ☐ Highways
- ☐ Vandalism
- ☐ Developers
- ☐ Renewal
- ☐ Private
- ✔ Deterioration
- ☐ Zoning
- ☐ Other ________________
- ☐ Explanation ________________
• INTERRELATIONSHIP OF BUILDING AND SURROUNDINGS:

The property is located on 16 acres of land, on the west side of Main Street. Note that the street number has been assigned by the Town of Farmington and is not sequential with the adjacent properties.

Barn I is to the southwest of Barn II. They are attached at the northeast corner of Barn I and the southwest corner of Barn II forming an L-shape. Near the northwest corner of Barn II is part of a stone silo that has now been partially demolished and is overgrown with vines. A stone wall borders portions of the east and south sides of the property with the barns, enclosing a barnyard. The original farmhouse is located on a separate parcel at 400 Main Street, just to the south of the barns. The house in which the Tinty family resided, and which was associated with the barn before the land was given to the Town of Farmington, is located at 376 Main Street, to the northwest of the barns. The property is bordered by trees on the east and west sides.

Main Street (Rte. 10) runs approximately through the center of town, and the property is to the north of the intersection of Main Street and Cooke Street. It is to the north of the border of Plainville, which is approximately a mile from the barns. The Farmington National Register and Local Historic District is located along Main Street to the north of the property. Residential neighborhoods surround the property to the north, south and east, and the Pequabuck River is just to the west, running north to the Farmington River. A complex of office buildings is just to the west of the river.

• OTHER NOTABLE FEATURES OF BUILDING OR SITE (INTERIOR AND/OR EXTERIOR):

Architectural description:

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Structure</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Category</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Barn I</td>
<td>Early 19th c.</td>
<td>C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Barn II</td>
<td>Late 19th c.</td>
<td>C</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Barn I:

This is a four-bay, five-bent, 1 1/2-story, 55' x 30' extended English barn whose ridge-line runs north-south. The south bay appears to be a later addition to a standard three-bay barn. There are two entries found on this barn, one on the east eave-side and one on the west eave-side. A second barn is attached to the northeast corner of Barn I.

Exterior:

The east eave-side of Barn I faces the road and has two entries. The main entry, a pair of full-height, exterior-hung sliding doors with trim and X-bracing, is found close to the north corner of the east eave-side. Just to the south is a smaller exterior-hung sliding door with trim and X-bracing. Along the south gable-end of Barn I are three open arched bays with trim. In the south gable-attic is a window opening that is now filled in. On the west eave-side of Barn I is a pair of double-height exterior-hung sliding doors with trim and X-bracing which are reached by a concrete ramp. There are no features on the north gable-end of the barn, but attached to the northeast corner is Barn II. Barn II extends to the east, creating an "L" shape between Barn I and Barn II. The gable roof of Barn II has asphalt shingles, and the barn is sheathed in vertical board siding painted brown with yellow trim. The foundation is mortared fieldstone.

Interior:

The entries lead into an open space with a wall dividing both the north and south halves of the barn. “The north half is of the barn is open to the roof but the south half has a loft that was added long after the original construction” (James K. Grant Associates). A dirt floor and wood plank walls are found in this half which is approximately 29' x 30'. The wall to the south has a hinged door with iron hinges, running the length of the wall. Post-and-beam framing with square rule construction and mortise-and-tenon joints were used to construct Barn I. The hand hewn beams and end girt resting on the plate indicate this barn appears to have been constructed in the
late 18th, early 19th century. However, the posts and beams in this barn appear to have been re-used as there is a mix of hand hewn square rule timbers and circular sawn timbers. Some of the square rule timbers have been re-used as queen posts. Simple ladders are constructed of pegs inserted through some of the posts. Sometime during the 20th and 21st century, new support braces have been added in an attempt to stabilize the barn. The rafters meet at the ridge with a ridge-board and the roof deck is constructed of wood planks.

The south half of Barn I is accessed by the three open bays found in the south gable-end, and also by a pass-through door found on the east corner of the dividing wall. This section measures approximately 26’ x 30’ and has dirt floors with a 5’ long concrete floor in the north end. Wood plank walls rest on top of a mortared fieldstone foundation. Post-and-beam framing with square rule construction and mortise-and-tenon joints are also found in the south half of Barn I.

Barn II:

This barn is attached at the northeast corner of Barn I and the southwest corner of Barn II. This is a 2-story, 57’ x 30’ Dutch gambrel barn whose ridge-line runs east-west. A shed-roof addition is attached to the south eave-side of the barn. There are two entries found on this barn, one on the east gable-end and the other on the west gable-end.

Exterior:

The east gable-end of Barn II faces the road and has an exterior-hung sliding door, off center to the left (to the south), with trim and X-bracing. Just to the north is a six-pane window. Found in the gable-peak of the barn is a large hinged hay door that opens outward, with the hinges on the bottom of the door. Flanking the hay door are two six-pane windows. A hay track extends to the east out of the gable-peak. A 1-story shed-roof addition is attached to the south eave-side of Barn II, running the entire length of this side. No other features are found on this side. An exterior-hung sliding door with trim and X-bracing is found on the west gable-end of the barn, off-center. To the south is a window opening with trim. Two six-pane windows are found in the second-story of Barn II on the west gable-end. Along the north eave-side is a series of six stable window openings, now filled in.

The shed-roof addition is approximately 57’ x 6’ and is attached to the south eave-side of Barn II. It includes a window opening, now filled in, on the east side. Along the south side of the addition are two window openings, now filled in, with an exterior-hung sliding door with trim and X-bracing just to the west of these. To the west of the door is a series of six stable window openings, now filled in.

The barn has a Dutch gambrel roof with flared eaves and asphalt shingles, while the addition has a shed roof with asphalt shingles. Both the barn and addition are sheathed in vertical board siding painted brown with yellow trim. A short gable-roof cupola is centered atop the ridge. Louvered vents are found on both the south and north eave-sides of the cupola.

Interior:

The entries lead into an open space at the ground level with concrete floors, wood plank walls and two rows of heavy posts running the length of the interior. The posts and beams are a mix of hand hewn and circular sawn wood with whitewash, indicating this was once used as a dairy barn. In the northeast corner is a built-in ladder, leading to the second floor, and to the south of this is an interior hung sliding door that is non-functional. Near the east end is a wood ventilation hatch in the ceiling. In the southeast corner is a staircase with ten risers that leads to the second floor of Barn II.

The staircase leads to the east gable-end of the upper floor. For approximately 10’ extending from the east gable-end wall, the floor is raised up about a foot from the rest of the floor of Barn II. This story consists of wood plank floors and walls, with some heavy posts and beams. Hand hewn and circular saw marks are extant on the wood. It is evident this was once a gable-roof post-and-beam structure on which a gambrel roof was built above later in time.

The roof is not a post and beam structure but is framed with trussed 2x6 wood rafters at 24” o.c. The design creates a very large, unobstructed space which could contain huge volumes of hay. The loft floor is
framed with 2x6 wood joists at 24” o.c. supported on 8x8 timber beams and posts (James K. Grant Associates).

A hay fork track is still visible along the ridge-line, although the hay fork is no longer extant. A rope is attached to the hay door in the east gable-end of Barn II, and tied to a post on the north side in order to keep it closed. Near the east end of the barn is a wooden ventilating box, protruding from the floor.

It is evident that the barn this gambrel roof was built upon was originally built during the same time as Barn I, due to the hand hewn wood from the post-and-beam framing visible in the upper floor. Also, what appears to be an end girt is resting upon what was once the plate of the gable-roof barn.

• HISTORICAL OR ARCHITECTURAL IMPORTANCE:

Applicable Connecticut State Register Criteria:
1. Associated with the lives of persons significant in our past;
2. Embodying the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction.

These barns are outstanding examples of early 19th-century barns showing exceptional integrity and are still surrounded by 16 acres of open fields. The National and Local Historic District to the north adds historic context to the site. The site also has significance due to the history of the Cowles family, who were prominent local citizens involved in public life. Several Cowles family homes are located in the historic district along Main Street.

Historical background:

This property was purchased by Samuel Orvis from Thomas Stanley in 1705. Three years later, Samuel’s cousin, Roger Orvis, purchased the property. In 1719, Roger deeded a portion of his property to his son, David. Isaac Cowles purchased this portion of the land from David in 1722, and three years later he purchased a portion of Roger Orvis’s property (which included buildings). It is believed that Isaac Cowles had the house at 400 Main Street constructed in 1725. In 1753, Isaac’s son, James Cowles, acquired the property and called the farm the Maples. James Cowles had 8 children, six girls and two boys, and it was his second son, Jeremiah, that inherited the property in 1792. It was during this time that the property was reputed to have a tavern, or part of the farmhouse was used as such.

James Woodruff Cowles, son of Jeremiah Cowles, purchased the property from his father for $4,000.00 in 1832. James Woodruff Cowles was well known in town. He was elected selectman in 1847 and 1849, tax collector in 1850 and 1852 and became constable from 1853 to 1862. Upon his death in 1894, James W. Cowles deeded the property to his son Gustavus. At the time Gustavus Cowles acquired the property it was approximately 300 acres and extended on both sides of Main Street.

Gustavus Cowles became constable of Farmington in 1884, and also served as assessor in 1884 and 1885. He had four children with his wife Evelyn. Percy Arthur Cowles, the second son, often helped his father with the farm, and eventually acquired the property from his siblings sometime after Gustavus passed away in 1929. Before his death, Gustavus, with the help of Percy, established an orchard and a milk route. At the time of Percy’s ownership, the farm included a large herd of dairy cows, and the milk route proved to be very successful. However, during World War II times proved difficult to find help to run the farm so Percy sold off his cattle and went on an extended vacation with his wife Christine. After they returned, the Cowles sold off portions of their land. In 1965, the Tinty family purchased 19 acres of land from the Cowles, including the barns. In 2004, Donald Tinty donated 16 acres of land, including the barns, to the Town of Farmington to be used as a family park.

In 1916, Percy and Christine Cowles had a gambrel roof constructed on a shed that is now Barn II. Also, a silo was removed from what is now Barn I (for photographic evidence of this, please see page 43 of Images of America: Farmington, CT written by Jean M. Martin). At some point before 2004, a shed-roof addition on the south gable-end of Barn I was removed. During the early 20th century, the barns were used to house dairy cows and store hay. The enlargement of the roof was to enable the barn to hold more hay. There were also more buildings on the property, including a gable-roof barn to the southeast of Barn II. Currently, the barns are vacant.
Architectural significance:

These barns are outstanding examples of barns showing exceptional integrity. The materials are original post-and-beam, hand hewn wood from the early 19th century. Although the gambrel-roof barn originally had a gable-roof, the posts are still visible and extant in the barn. The surrounding location has changed since the barn was originally constructed, however, the National and Local Historic Districts to the north adds historic context to the site. Furthermore, they are still surrounded by 16 acres of open fields. The barns sit close to Main Street (Rte. 10), which was once a main through way from New Haven to Farmington.

The site also has significance due to the history of the Cowles family, who were prominent local citizens involved in public life. Several Cowles family homes are extant in the historic district along Main Street.

• SOURCES (CONTINUATION):

Photographs and field notes by Kristen Young - 9/6/2012.

Interview with Elizabeth Dolphin, Assistant Town Planner - 9/6/2012, 9190 Main Street, Farmington, CT.

Map resources:


Aerial views from:

Historical aerial photography and maps accessed on 9/12/2012 at UConn MAGIC:
  http://magic.lib.uconn.edu/mash_up/1934.html
  http://magic.lib.uconn.edu/historical_maps_connecticut_towns.html.

Parcel Map from 2011 Barns Grant Application, Town of Farmington, 2011, Housed in Barns Grant Files at CT Trust.


Print and internet resources:


James K. Grant Associates, The Tinty Barns Assessment of Existing Structural Conditions, 2011 Barns Grant Application for 9190 Main Street, Farmington, Feb. 15, 2012, Housed in Barns Grant Files at CT Trust.


1. Location map of 9190 Main Street, Farmington, CT - from https://maps.google.com/ - accessed 9/12/2012.

2. Parcel map of 9190 Main Street, Farmington, CT (Courtesy of Elizabeth Dolphin and the Town of Farmington).

5. Partially demolished stone silo near the northwest corner of Barn II, now overgrown with vines, camera facing northeast.

6. North context view of Barn I and field.
7. Northwest context view of field.


10. West eave-side and south gable-end of Barn I, camera facing northeast.

12. West gable-end of Barn II, north gable-end and west eave-side of Barn I, camera facing southeast.
13. North eave-side of Barn II, note the stone silo to the right now overgrown with vines. Camera facing south.

15. Interior view of the south wall of north half of Barn I, note the hinged section that lifts up. Camera facing south.

17. Interior view of the post-and-beam framing with the end girt lying on top of the plate in Barn I. Camera facing northwest.

18. Interior view of a beam with hand-hewn marks on it in Barn I.

20. Interior view of a post in Barn II with hand-hewn marks and whitewash.
21. Interior view of the wooden ventilator in the ground floor of Barn II, camera facing southwest.

22. Interior view of staircase that leads to the upper floor in Barn II, camera facing southeast.
23. Interior view of lumber with circular saw marks in Barn II.

24. Interior view of a post-and-beam construction post with hand-hewn marks and a mortise and tenon joint found on the upper floor of Barn II, topped by a sawn plate. Note the gambrel roof construction on top of this post. Camera facing north.
25. Interior view of roof rafters, roof deck and hay fork track in Barn II.

26. Interior view of the wooden ventilation shaft on the upper floor of Barn II, camera facing southwest.
27. Interior view of the northeast corner of Barn II, note the post-and-beam construction at the bottom with the 20th century gambrel roof construction just above. Camera facing northeast.