

HISTORIC RESOURCES **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) South Farms Record No. 42767
 Building Name (Historic) Feldsher, Aaron and Bernard, Farmstead
 Street Address or Location 131 South Street
 Town/City Morris Village _____ County Litchfield
 Owner(s) Erica & Corey Matthews, 131 South Street, Morris 06763 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 Ground level stable barn, Gothic gambrel-roof style Date of Construction 1945

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 poured) Cut Stone (Type _____) Other _____

Structural System

- Wood Frame Post & Beam Balloon Load bearing masonry Structural iron or steel
- Other Laminated wood arch ribs

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 100' x 30'

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: Chicken coop, covered cow shelter

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 Bonvicini Building Co.

• Historical or Architectural importance:

See continuation sheet.

• Sources:

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

See continuation sheet.

Photographer Kristen Young Date 6/19/2013

View Multiple Views Negative on File CTHP

Name Kristen Young Date 7/29/2013

Organization Connecticut Trust for Historic Preservation

Address 940 Whitney Avenue, Hamden CT 06517

• Subsequent field evaluations:

Latitude, Longitude:
41.674524, -73.19581

Threats to the building or site:

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

• Interrelationship of building and surroundings:

This barn sits on 38 acres of land on the east side of South Street. A driveway extends to the east off the road and leads to a parking space on the north side of the barn. There are numerous other buildings on this property including a farmhouse, a barn, three sheds, an icehouse, a pump house, a chicken coop, and a new covered shelter for the cattle. The Barn is on the south side of the driveway set back from the road on a hilltop. Slightly to the northeast of the barn are a shed (Shed I), the Icehouse, and the Pump house. Shed I was once used as living space for farm workers. To the east of these outbuildings is the Chicken coop, and to the north of that are two more sheds (Sheds II and III). To the north of the barn, across the driveway is the Farmhouse. Open fields used for agricultural purposes are in the east side of the parcel.

The original section of the Farmhouse was built in the 18th-century, but is now a small wing off the main core of the house. In the original section is a post-and-beam frame with mortise and tenon joints. The main core of the Farmhouse was added during the mid-20th-century. A garage addition and an in-law addition have been added over time. The garage addition is added to the east side of the original section of the house, extending to the east, and the in-law addition has been added to the northwest corner of the house, extending to the west. An enclosed porch surrounds the west and south sides of the house. The main entry into the house is now found in the garage addition. The ridge-line runs north-south, parallel with South Street.

This property is located in the south half of Morris, approximately half a mile north of the border with Bethlehem. Approximately half a mile to the north of the property is the center of Morris. In Morris, South Street (Route 61) runs northward roughly parallel with Route 63 to the east, then curves and toward the northeast, and joins with Route 63 which continues north into Litchfield. To the northwest is Bantam Lake. Memorial Park is less than half a mile to the north of the property at the town center where Route 109 (West and East Streets) intersects Route 61 (South and North Streets). The 1861 Old Town Hall and c. 1772 Mill School (relocated) are located in the town center and together form a National Register Historic District. The surrounding area has a few farm properties, including a substantial gambrel barn directly to the west across South Street, but mostly residential properties and some forested land. Also included in the current thematic nomination of Agricultural Heritage resources is the Paletsky Farm at 21 Higbie Road, Morris.

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

Architectural description:

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

Farmhouse	Mid-20 th c.	C	Icehouse	Early 20 th c.	C
Barn	1945	C	Pump house	Early 20 th c.	C
Shed I	Early 20 th c.	C	Chicken coop	Early 20 th c.	C
Shed II	Early 20 th c.	C	Cow shelter	2012	NC
Shed III	Mid 20 th c.	C			

Barn:

This is an approximately 100' x 30,' 1 ½-story, Gothic style, gambrel-roof dairy barn with a milk room addition. The ridge-line runs approximately north-south, parallel with South Street. The steeply-pitched curved Gothic roof springs from the floor elevation of the loft, and has a slight flare at the eaves. The barn is clad in clapboards painted red with white trim. The typical window sash are vertically-oriented six-pane hopper windows. The roof is covered in asphalt shingles and the foundation is poured concrete. A silo foundation is located northeast of the barn.

Exterior:

The north gable-end of the barn has an centered exterior-hung sliding-door at grade. It is flanked by two six-pane windows with trim. Just above the entryway is an exterior-hung sliding-hay door with a mural painting of horses. A sign reading "E. R. Dorsett" hangs above the hay door. A small rectangular hay door is just above the sign and three

six-pane windows with trim are in the gable attic. Near the east corner, at grade, is a concrete retaining wall extending to the north. A pass-through door is on the east corner of the north gable-end of the barn.

An exterior-hung sliding-door is on the north corner of the east eave-side of the barn. A series of ten six-pane hopper windows with trim run along this side. An exterior-hung sliding pass-through door is on the south corner of the east eave-side of the barn. On the slope of the roof are two gothic-roof dormers with a single-pane window in each.

An exterior-hung sliding door is centered on the south gable-end of the barn. Flanking this entryway are two six-pane windows with trim. Just above the entry is an exterior-hung sliding hay door. In the gable attic is a pair of exterior-hung sliding hay doors that slide diagonally down and outward.

A series of ten six-pane windows with trim run along the west eave-side of the barn. Two Gothic-roof dormers with single-pane windows are located on the slope of the roof on the west eave-side of the barn. On the north corner of this side is the addition, presumed to have been the milk room. This structure has a miniature Gothic roof with its ridge-line oriented north-south, parallel to the main barn. It has four six-pane windows with trim on the south side. Two six-pane windows and a pass-through door are on the west side. On the north side of the addition are two six-pane windows and a pass-through door that is reached by a wooden staircase. A pass-through door is in the passageway that connects the milk house with the barn. This connector is a 1-story structure with an asymmetrical gable roof, the south pitch being shallower than the north.

Interior:

The barn is accessed by the entryway in the north gable-end of the barn. The interior has concrete floors and wood plank walls. Two rows of steel columns support two longitudinal (north-south) girders. The wood joists supporting the loft level run laterally (east-west) and are carried on the girders and the exterior walls. Cow stanchions and a manure trough are still extant along the east eave-side of the barn, laid out for two rows of dairy cows facing outward. The interior walls and ceiling are unfinished and whitewashed. Horse stalls were added later to the south half of the west eave-side of the barn.

The upper level of the barn was originally used for loose hay but about two years after the barn was built, the owners switched to baling their hay instead of storing it loose. The balloon frame is visible in the upper level. Long curved wood rafters spring from the wood plank floor and meet at the peak. These rafters are constructed of laminated wood, meaning they are constructed of many thin layers of curved wood glued together. Large A-frame supports were added some time before 1975 to help stabilize the barn because the arched rafters were failing. Large ventilator shafts run along each eave-side of the barn. See the nomination for 78 Bill Hill Road, Lyme, for a similar structure.

• Historical or Architectural importance:

Applicable Connecticut State Register Criterion:

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

This is an outstanding example of a dairy barn that was built in 1945 by pre-fabricated parts using a then-experimental design. The barn remains in its original location and the frame is intact. Although many residential properties now line South Street, the farm landscape preserves a sample of the time when this area was primarily dairy farms; the farm is again in agricultural use. The farm gains significance from the history of European immigrant farmers moving onto farms and working in dairy and poultry production in the 20th century.

Historical background:

The Feldsher family owned this property in the early 20th-century. Aaron Feldsher was born in Lithuania, and his wife, Hilda was born in Russia. In the 1930 census records, Aaron and Hilda Feldsher were both listed as well as their children Bernard and Zelda. Aaron Feldsher was listed as a farmer and at the time owned approximately 200 acres of land. In 1940, he was listed as a dairy farmer in the census records. A fire destroyed the original dairy barn on the property during the 1940s, and the Feldshers had to apply for permission from the United States of America

War Production Board in order to build a new dairy barn in 1945. During this time, after the original barn burned, the Chicken coop was converted into a temporary dairy barn in order to house the cattle.

Aaron Feldsher and his son Bernard (who went by the name of Bernie) hired Bonvicini Building Co. to build the barn on a monumental size and scale using the most modern technologies. The plans, specifications, and materials were purchased ahead of time as this was a kit barn (meaning it was a barn built from pre-made, pre-cut, mass-produced parts that came with specific plans and specs). The parts for the barn were ordered and shipped to the property, and the barn was constructed in 1945. A 1955 aerial photograph shows a tall silo standing adjacent to the northeast corner of the barn.

Bernie Feldsher acquired the property from his father, Aaron during the mid-20th-century. In 1970, Bernie Feldsher ceased dairy operations and in 1975 he sold the buildings and 38 acres of land to Ed and Judy Dorsett. The property is still farmed today and the barn continues to be used for agricultural purposes. In 2012, Ed and Judy Dorsett sold the property to their daughter and son-in-law, Erica and Corey Matthews, who have partnered with Ben Paletsky (see nomination for 21 Higbie Road, Morris) to run South Farms.

Architectural significance:

This is an outstanding example of a large-scale dairy barn built during 1945 from pre-fabricated parts. The Gothic style gambrel-roof added a state-of-the-art design and allowed for maximum space for the storage of hay. The frame is intact and the barn remains in its original location. Still used for agricultural purposes, the barn and the immediate surrounding land have changed little over time. Numerous dairy barns and farms were found along South Street during the early and mid-20th century, however, most of these farms have since closed and much of the land sold for residential development. This barn remains an example of a time when this area was used mainly for dairy farming.

The site gains significance as an example of the movement of immigrant farmers from northern and eastern Europe in the 20th century. These farmers took on farms from previous owners who were abandoning farmwork, and through dairy and poultry product, served the markets of Connecticut's urban workers.

• Sources (*continuation*):

Photographs and field notes by Kristen Young - 6/19/2013.

Interview with Ed Dorsett - 6/19/2013, 131 South Street, Morris, CT.

Map resources:

Morris Tax Assessor's Records accessed 7/29/2013 - <http://data.visionappraisal.com/MorrisCT/search.asp>
Parcel ID: 10/ 680/ 131.

Aerial views from: <http://maps.google.com/> and <http://www.bing.com/maps> - accessed 7/29/2013.

Historical aerial photography and maps accessed 7/29/2013 at UConn MAGIC:

http://magic.lib.uconn.edu/mash_up/1934.html

http://magic.lib.uconn.edu/historical_maps_connecticut_towns.html .

USGS Historical Maps accessed 7/29/2013 at <http://historical.mytopo.com/> .

UTM coordinates accessed 7/29/2013: <http://itouchmap.com/latlong.html> .

Print and internet resources:

Carr, Ann & Bill, and Irwin, Sally, Pictorial History of Morris, CT, 150th Anniversary Committee Members, 2009.

Connecticut Trust for Historic Preservation, Historic Barns of Connecticut Resource Inventory, 2010,
<http://www.connecticutbarns.org/42767>

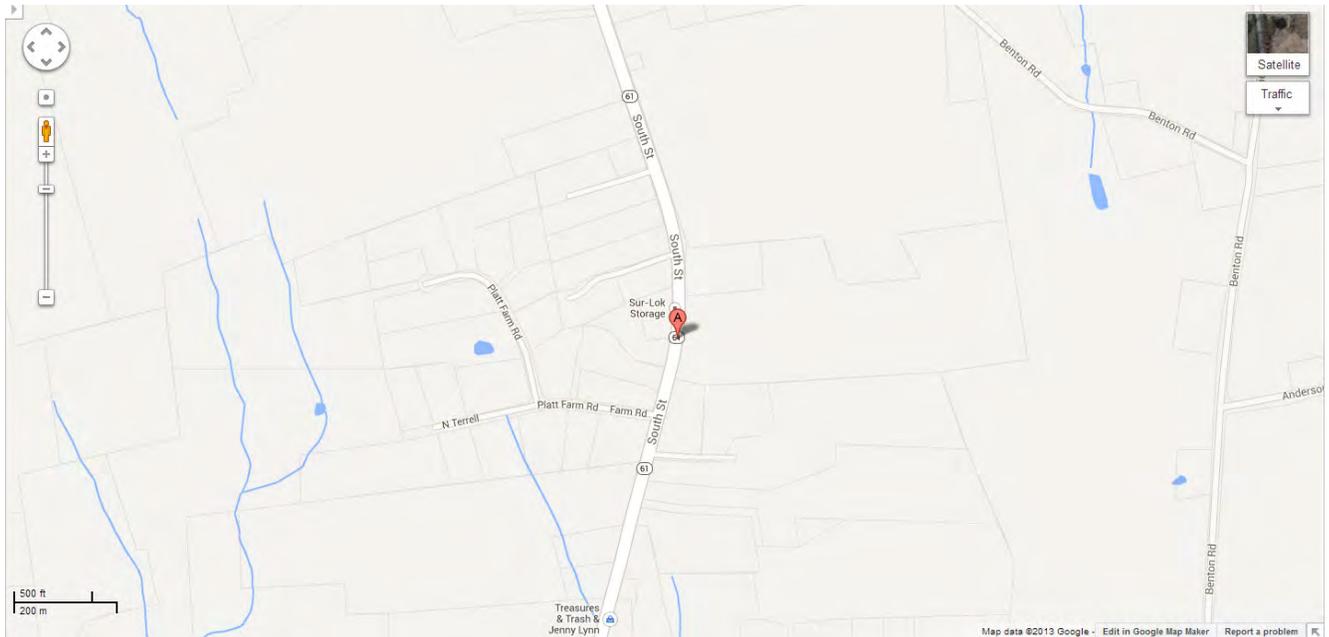
Plans, specs, estimates, bills including Feldsher correspondence, on file with Ed and Judy Dorsett, accessed 6/19/2013.

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 7/29/2013 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 131 South Street (Rte. 61), Morris, CT – from <http://maps.google.com> – accessed 7/29/2013.



2. Parcel map of 131 South Street (Rte. 61), Morris, CT – base image from <http://maps.google.com>.



3. South view - aerial "bird's-eye" view map of 131 South Street (Rte. 61), Morris, CT – from <http://www.bing.com/maps> - accessed 7/29/2013.



4. Site detail map of 131 South Street (Rte. 61), Morris, CT – base image from <http://maps.google.com> – accessed 7/29/2013.

HISTORIC RESOURCES INVENTORY FORM – BUILDING AND STRUCTURES continuation sheet

131 South Street, Morris CT

Record No. 42767

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5. South context view of the Barn (on the left), Shed I and the Pump house (in the distance to the right of the barn), Shed III (in the distance to the right of the Shed I), and Chicken coop (on the right). Camera facing north.



6. Northeast context view of the barn (in the distance on the left), Shed I (in the middle), and the Icehouse (on the right). Camera facing southwest.

HISTORIC RESOURCES INVENTORY FORM – BUILDING AND STRUCTURES continuation sheet

131 South Street, Morris CT

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7. Southwest context view of Shed III (on the left), the Cow shelter (in the middle), and the Chicken coop (on the right). Camera facing northeast.



8. South context view of the Farmhouse (in the distance on the left) and the Barn (on the right) with the Milk room addition. Camera facing north.



9. East context view of Shed I (on the left), the Icehouse (in the middle), and the Farmhouse (in the distance on the right). Camera facing west.



10. Southwest view of the Farmhouse. Camera facing northeast.



11. Southeast view of Shed I, the Pump house, and the Icehouse. Camera facing northwest.



12. South view of Shed II. Camera facing north.



13. Southwest view of Shed III. Camera facing northeast.



14. Northwest view of the Chicken coop. Camera facing southeast.

HISTORIC RESOURCES INVENTORY FORM – BUILDING AND STRUCTURES continuation sheet

131 South Street, Morris CT

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15. West view of the cow shelter. Camera facing east.



16. North gable-end of the Barn. Camera facing south.



17. North gable-end of the Barn and north gable-end of the Milk room addition. Note the connector with the pass-through door. Camera facing southwest.



18. East eave-side of the Barn. Camera facing west.



19. South gable-end of the barn. Camera facing north.



20. South gable-end and west eave-side of the Barn, and south gable-end of the Milk room addition. Camera facing northeast.



21. Interior view of the east side of the south end of the Barn ground level. Note the cow stanchions and hopper windows. Camera facing southeast.



22. Interior view of the west side of the south end of the Barn. Note the horse stalls. Camera facing southwest.



23. Interior view of the south gable-end of the upper loft level of the barn. Note the large A-frames helping to stabilize the barn, and the curved wood rafter arches. Camera facing south.



24. Interior view of the upper level of the barn. Note the curved wood rafters meeting at the peak with a hay track. Camera facing south.



25. Interior detail view of a laminated arched rafter. Note the many thin layers of wood that are glued together to make the rafter.

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The High Gothic rafter was originally designed to provide the abundant storage required for loose hay. It is considered by some to be the most attractive of Laminated Barns.

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UH Specification Chart

SPAN	HEIGHT	ARC	END AREA SQ. FT.	NUMBER PLYS UN24-C	FULL RAFTER WT. POUNDS	VOLUME SQ BALES PER FOOT
30	19'-9"	28'-1"	425	6	92	95
32	20'-1"	27'-3"	465	6	96	104
34	20'-4"	26'-2 1/2"	507	6	99	110
36	22'-5"	30'-5 1/2"	581	7	124	130
38	25'-9"	33'-10"	685	7	137	150
40	26'-2"	34'-11"	745	8	161	170

26. Sample pages from Unadilla laminated rafter catalog, courtesy of Dorsett family.