### General Information

**Extown Farm**

**Record No. 150**

**Town Farm / Poor Farm**

**Street Address or Location**: 485-500 Laurel Road

**Town/City**: New Canaan  
**Village**:  
**County**: Fairfield

**Owner(s)**: Charles Baird c/o North Castle Partners 183 East Putnam Ave Greenwich 06830  
**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**: English bank barn, Vernacular style  
**Date of Construction**: 19th c.

**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 blocks)  
- [ ] Cut Stone (Type)  
- [ ] Other vertical wood siding

**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  
**Approximate Dimensions**: 60' 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**:  
**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: stone walls, cottage, stable, hobby house

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 ___________________________________________ Date 4/5/2013

View Multiple Views Negative on File CTHP

Name Kristen Young Date 7/25/2013

Organization Connecticut Trust for Historic Preservation

Address 940 Whitney Avenue, Hamden CT 06517

- • Subsequent field evaluations:

Latitude, Longitude:
41.183156, -73.493306

- Threats to the building or site:

- ✔ None known
- □ Highways
- □ Vandalism
- □ Developers
- □ Renewal
- □ Private
- □ Deterioration
- □ Zoning
- □ Other
- □ Explanation
• Interrelationship of building and surroundings:

This property consists of two parcels, one on each side of Laurel Road, the total amount of land totaling approximately 17 acres of land. Laurel Road runs roughly north-south to the east of and parallel to Smith Ridge Road (Route 123) in the northern part of New Canaan. However, a dog-leg bend in the road results in this portion having an east-west direction. The north parcel is 485 Laurel Road and is the location of the main house. 500 Laurel Road is the south parcel where the barns are found.

Numerous buildings are located on the property including two houses, two barns, a stable, a hobby house, a shed, and a garage. A driveway extends to the southwest off Laurel Road and leads to Barn II, the Cottage, and parking spaces on the west side of the Cottage. Barn I sits close to the roadway on the south side of Laurel Road. To the southeast of Barn I are the Hobby house, the Stable, and the Shed. Barn II is a three-bay gable-roofed English barn with half-height sliding barn doors in the outer bays of the east side and two modern horizontal four-pane windows in the center bay. Three hay doors are above at the loft level. The south side has modern windows on two levels. Siding is vertical boards painted red and roofing is asphalt shingles. The foundation is fieldstone.

Another driveway extends to the north off Laurel Road and leads past the west side of the main House, which is set back behind a lawn, to the south side of the Garage. Stone walls are found throughout the property. An open field is to the north of the House and Garage, in the north half of this parcel. Forested land surrounds the buildings.

The main core of the main House, a 2 ½-story gable-roof block with its ridge-line oriented east-west, was built c. 1776 and has been renovated and expanded numerous times through the years. The main entryway was once on the south eave-side of the house, which faces the road, but has since been moved to the east gable-end of the house, and set within a recessed porch in a recent addition. Along the south eave-side of the main block of the house there is a series of six nine-over-six double-hung windows with trim on both the first and second floors. To the northwest a series of wings extend northward. The house is clad in cedar shingles painted light grey with white trim. The foundation is cut stone and the roof is covered in wood shingles.

This property is located in the northeast portion of New Canaan, approximately two miles north of the center of town, in an area of residential property and woodlands. One mile to the east is the border of Wilton, and approximately one and a half miles to the north is the border of New York State. Within three miles of this site are several properties that are listed on the National Register of Historic Places as resources in a thematic nomination of 20th-century Modernist houses. Approximately four miles to the south is the New Canaan or God's Acre Historic District, a Local and National Register district at the town center.

• 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>House</th>
<th>c. 1776</th>
<th>C</th>
<th>Stable</th>
<th>19th c.</th>
<th>C</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cottage</td>
<td>c. 2008</td>
<td>NC</td>
<td>Hobby house</td>
<td>19th c.</td>
<td>C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Barn I</td>
<td>19th c.</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>Shed</td>
<td>19th c.</td>
<td>C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Barn II</td>
<td>Early 19th c.</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>Garage</td>
<td>Early 20th c</td>
<td>C</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Barn I:

This is an approximately 60’ x 30,’ extended four-bay gable-roof English bank barn built during the late 19th-century. The barn is 1 ½-story with basement, and the ridge-line runs east-west, parallel with this portion of Laurel Road. The barn is clad in vertical wood siding painted red with white trim. The roof is covered in asphalt shingles and the foundation is of fieldstone and concrete blocks. A hip-roof cupola is centered atop the ridge and has louvered vents on all four sides. A silo is located adjacent to the west gable-end.
Exterior:
The north eave side of the barn faces the road and has a large pair of double-height exterior-hung sliding doors in the second bay from the west. Each leaf has X-bracing and a diamond shaped window set within. To the east in the fourth bay is a smaller pair of exterior-hung sliding doors, each leaf with X-bracing and a four-pane window set within. Just above this is a pair of hay-doors with X-bracing.

The fieldstone foundation is visible along the east gable-end of the barn. Three six-pane windows with trim are centered on this side. Just above, off center to the north, is a twelve-pane window with trim. In the gable attic is a diamond shaped window with trim.

The grade declines sharply towards the south, revealing a full basement. A fieldstone retaining wall extends off the southeast corner, extending to the east and providing the transition to the lower grade. A stone staircase leads down to the lower grade at the south eave-side of the barn. At the basement level which has a concrete block masonry wall, two six-pane windows are near the east corner of the south eave-side of the barn. To the left (west) is a pair of side-hinged doors with X-bracing and three single-pane windows set within each leaf. Toward the west are four six-pane windows. At the main level above in the two eastern bays is a series of five six-pane windows with trim. To the west in the second bay from the left is a pair of exterior-hung sliding-doors with X-bracing; two six-pane windows with trim are set within each leaf. Just below the eave at a loft or second floor level are four large two-pane windows with trim on the east half and two three-pane windows with trim on the west half just above the sliding doors.

Grade gradually inclines along the west gable-end of the barn, toward the north. A six-pane window, a pass-through door, and two more six-pane windows run along the basement level of the west gable-end of the barn. In the gable-attic is a diamond shaped window with trim. Attached to the north corner of the west gable-end of the barn is a wood stave silo with a conical roof.

Interior:
The interior of the barn is accessed by the two pairs of doors on the north eave-side of the barn. Inside are wood plank floors and walls. The post-and-beam frame is joined by mortise and tenon joints with tree nails. Saw marks are visible on the lumber throughout the barn, indicating a 19th-century construction date. Lofts are on the north, south, and east sides of the barn and are reached by stairs.

The typical bent has two full-height interior posts supporting purlin plates at the mid-span of the rafters. This layout creates a tall center aisle and two side aisles. The posts are braced to the outer walls with dropped tie-girts while the center aisle has a high tie-girt just below the tops of the posts. Common rafters meet at the peak with a ridge-board. Roof decking is narrow evenly-spaced boards typical of late 19th-century barn design. A hayfork and hay track are still extant and suspended from the peak of the ridge.

The basement is accessed by the side-hinged doors along the south eave-side of the barn. Inside are concrete floors and concrete block walls. Cow stanchions, a feeding trough, and a manure trough are still extant in the west gable-end of the barn, near the silo opening. Stalls for cows and other livestock are found in the basement of the 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.

This barn is an outstanding example of an English bank barn from the late 19th-century. It remains in its original location and the frame has been well maintained. It gains significance through its association with the Town of New Canaan and its usage as a Town Farm.

Historical background:
This property was originally owned by the St. John family in the late 18th century. In the early 19th century they sold the property to Matthew Kellogg. In 1852, the Town of New Canaan purchased the property from Matthew Kellogg.
along with 82 acres of land. The Town used the property as a Town Farm, a place where the poor of New Canaan could live if they had no money or family to care for them. The idea was that the farm would be self-supporting while also producing a small income for the Town. In 1921, however, New Canaan decided to close down the Town Farm, and in 1923 the residents moved out. The caretaker’s family moved elsewhere in New Canaan while the three remaining indigents were transferred to other Town Farms in Connecticut.

In 1928, the property was sold to Arba Marvin. Marvin renovated the house and moved his family in a year later. In 1941, the Marvin family decided to sell the property and David and Harriett Findlay purchased it. The Findlay family remained the owners of the property for 60 years until they sold it to the Bairds in 2008. The Bairds remain the current owners.

During town ownership, the farm was prosperous and Isabel Bouton remembers her time growing up on the farm. Isabel Bouton was the daughter of the last caretaker of the Town Farm whose name was Edwin F. Bouton. He was the superintendent from the early 1900s until 1923 when the farm closed. Livestock, including cattle, dairy cows, horses, pigs, and chickens were kept on the farm. Vegetables, fruit, and hay were grown to provide food for the family, residents, and animals. The produce that was not used to feed those living on the farm was sold for profit. During this time numerous outbuildings were on the property including three barns (a cow barn, horse barn, and a work barn), a wagon shed, an ice house, smokehouse, chicken coop, corn crib, pig house, milk house, and a wood shed. A large silo was attached to the cow barn (Barn I), and each of the barns had a haymow in the top floor. All three barns were across the street from the house. The milk house, ice house, pig house, chicken coop, corn crib, smokehouse, and wood shed were all on the same side of the road as the house. There was no electricity or plumbing in the house at this time; it was added in 1928 after the Marvin family purchased the property.

According to a 1934 aerial map of the property, it appears the work barn was still extant as well as Barn II in its current location. By 1949, the work barn had been demolished or moved. Many of the other outbuildings on the same side of the road as the house had been demolished by 1949, and the garage was constructed. What was once the wagon shed may have been moved and turned into what is now the stable. The cow barn and silo (Barn I) remain in their original location. What was once the horse barn has since been turned into what is referred to as the Hobby house.

Neither the Marvin or Findlay families were full-time farmers. However, they did maintain a farm on the property. The Marvin family kept livestock and continued to grow vegetables and fruit. The Findlay family owned approximately 2000 chickens who lived in Barn I. Each owner of the property made changes to the house, and it is currently undergoing renovations today. The name “Extown Farm” was coined in 1928 to depict the fact that the property was no longer owned by the Town of New Canaan. Today, the property is no longer farmed and Barns I and II are used for storage. The Stable is currently used to store firewood, and the Hobby house is vacant.

**Architectural significance:**

This is an outstanding example of an extended English bank barn from the 19th-century. The barn remains in its original location and has been well maintained and intact. The surrounding land has changed little over time, and even though it is no longer farmed, the barn and outbuildings stand as representatives of a time when this area was primarily agricultural.

The use as the Town Farm or “Poor Farm” adds historical significance to the property. Poor Farms and Town Farms were established in order to keep indigents and petty thieves off the streets. The intention was that the indigents would work the farm, pay off their debts, as well as provide for themselves, and have a place to live. This was a common solution to keeping people off the streets and out of trouble in numerous towns throughout Connecticut. This barn still remains and helps to tell the story of its history and the history of the Town of New Canaan.
Sources (continuation):
Photographs and field notes by Kristen Young - 4/5/2013.
Interview with Christine Kelly and Charles Baird - 4/5/2013, 485-500 Laurel Road, New Canaan, CT.

Map resources:
Parcel ID: 0040/0105/0112/ and 0040/0101/0007/
Aerial views from:
Historical aerial photography and maps accessed 7/25/2013 at UConn MAGIC:
http://magic.lib.uconn.edu/mash_up/1934.html
http://magic.lib.uconn.edu/historical_maps_connecticut_towns.html.

Print and internet resources:
Connecticut State Library online accessed 7/25/2013: iconn.org or
http://www.cslib.org/iconnsitemap/staff/SiteIndex.aspx#directories
Connecticut Trust for Historic Preservation, Historic Barns of Connecticut Resource Inventory, 2010,
http://www.connecticutbarns.org/150
Dove, Jane K., Extown Farm: New Canaan Treasure Begins a New Chapter in its History, The HOME Monthly,
Ridgefield, CT, November 2004.
Files of Extown Farm information, located at Baird residence, accessed 4/5/2013.
Hsin, Annabel, A Living History, Period Homes March 2011 accessed 7/25/2013 at
http://www.period-homes.com/Previous-Issues-11/MarchProject11Living.html
Sexton, James, PhD; Survey Narrative of the Connecticut Barn, Connecticut Trust for Historic Preservation,
Sullivan, Jenny, Cottage at Extown Farm, Builder Magazine accessed 7/25/2013 at
http://www.builderonline.com/design/cottage-at-extown-farm.aspx
http://persi.heritagequestonline.com/hqoweb/library/do/census/search/basic


5. West context view of Barn II (on the left), the House (in the distance on the left), Barn I (in the distance on the right), and the Cottage (on the right in the foreground). Camera facing east.

6. East context view of the Hobby house (on the left), Barn I (in the middle), and Barn II (in the distance on the right). Camera facing west.
7. Northeast context view of the stable (on the left), the shed (in the distance), the hobby house (in the foreground), and Barn I (on the right). Camera facing southwest.

8. Northwest context view of the Cottage (on the left) and Barn II (on the right). Camera facing southeast.
9. South context view of the Garage (rear left) and the House (on the right). Camera facing north.

10. Southwest context view of the Garage (in the distance behind the trees on the left), the House (in the distance in the middle), and Barn I (on the right). Camera facing northeast.

13. East view of Barn II. Camera facing west.


19. East gable-end of Barn I. Camera facing west.


22. South eave-side and west gable-end of Barn I. Camera facing northeast.

24. Interior view of the west gable-end of Barn I. Note the full-height posts supporting purlin plates, and loft levels along both sides. Camera facing west.
25. Interior view of the northwest corner of Barn I. Camera facing northwest.

26. Detail of the post and beam frame with mortise and tenon joints pegged together with tree nails in the east gable-end of Barn I. Camera facing east.
27. Interior view of the east gable-end of Barn I. Camera facing east.

28. Interior view of the roof of Barn I. Note the common rafters meeting at the peak with a ridge-board, and the hay track suspended below the ridge. Camera facing east.
29. Interior view of the cow stanchions in the west gable-end of the basement of Barn I. Camera facing south.

30. Interior view of the stalls in the basement of Barn I. Camera facing southeast.
31. Interior view of the wood silo that is attached to the west gable-end of Barn I. Note the construction is of narrow vertical wood boards.

32. Historic photograph of the residents of the Town Farm and the house in the background. Photograph from the late 19th or early 20th century. Courtesy of the Baird family. Camera facing north.
33. This map indicates where outbuildings were during the time as the Town Farm. The red rectangles indicate buildings that are no longer extant or have been moved, except in the case of the horse barn/hobby house and the smokehouse. The outlined buildings indicate those that are still extant. The key is below.

Key:
A. Work barn (no longer extant)
B. Horse barn (now the Hobby house and still extant)
C. Wagon shed (presumably moved and now is the Stable)
D. Milk house (no longer extant)
E. Icehouse (no longer extant)
F. Chicken coop (no longer extant)
G. Pig house (no longer extant)
H. Corn crib (no longer extant)
I. Smokehouse (still extant)
J. Wood shed (no longer extant)