Agricultural Heritage Multiple Property Submission - State Register

HISTORIC RESOURCES

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

Fairfield County Hounds
Building Name (Common)
Botsford Farmstead / Golden Harvest Farm
Building Name (Historic)

104 Botsford Hill Road
Street Address or Location

Roxbury Village
County
Litchfield
Town/City

Fairfield County Hounds, 155 Botsford Hill Road, Bridgewater, CT 06752
Owner(s)

Public
Private

PROPERTY INFORMATION

Agriculture/Subsistence: agricultural outbuilding; Domestic: single dwelling
Present Use:

Agriculture/Subsistence: agricultural outbuilding; Domestic: single dwelling
Historic Use:

Yes
No
Accessibility to public: Exterior visible from public road?

Yes
No
Interior accessible?

If yes, explain

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English, extended English bank, dairy barns; vernacular
Material(s) (Indicate use or location when appropriate):

Block masonry
Concrete (Type)

Clapboard
Fieldstone
Concrete (Type)

Asbestos Siding
Board & Batten
Cut Stone (Type)

Brick
Stucco
Other

Wood Shingle
Cobblestone
Other

Asphalt Siding
Aluminum Siding
Other

Wood Shingle
Aluminum Siding
Other

Vertical wood siding

Structural System

Wood Frame
Post & Beam
Balloon

Yes
Fair

Load bearing masonry
Other

Structural iron or steel

Gable
Gambrel

Yes
Other

Flat
Shed

Excellent
Fair

Mansard
Hip

Good
Deteriorated

Monitor
Round

Sawtooth
Other

Roll Asphalt
Tin
Slate

Asphalt Shingle
Other

Built up
Tile

Number of Stories: 1 1/2, B
Approximate Dimensions
See continuation sheet.

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:

See continuation sheet.

FOR OFFICE USE:

Town #
Site #
UTM

District:
If NR, Specify:

S
NR
Actual
Potential

One Constitution Plaza, 2nd Floor, Hartford CT 06103
State Historic Preservation Office, Department of Economic and Community Development
Historic Resources Inventory

PROPERTY INFORMATION (CONT’D)

Related outbuildings or landscape features:

- ✔ Barn
- ✔ Shed
- ✔ Garage
- ☐ Carriage House
- ☐ Shop
- ✔ Garden
- ✔ Other landscape features or buildings: Multiple structures, driveways, open fields, scattered trees, silo.

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 _________________

View _________________________________________________________________________________ Negative on File _________________

Name _________________________________________________________________________________ Date _________________

Organization __________________________________________________________________________

Address ______________________________________________________________________________

- Subsequent field evaluations:

Latitude, Longitude: 41.534346, -73.333912

Threats to the building or site:

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

Botsford Hill Road extends south from Baker Road (CT Route 67) near the western boundary of Roxbury. The road runs along the east slope of a hill at a level slightly below the crest. Downslope to the east is the course of the Shepaug River, winding south through a valley before plunging down a falls into the Housatonic River (at Lake Lillinonah). The present No. 97, 104, and 119 Botsford Hill Road properties were all part of the Botsford Homestead in the early 19th century. The structures at 97 Botsford Hill Road are briefly described; for 119 Botsford Hill Road, see separate nomination.

Two historic houses are located at 97 and 119 Botsford Hill Road, both located on the west side of the road. 97 Botsford Hill is a 1 ½-story vernacular Cape-style house with an entrance in the south-facing eave-side. The east gable-end faces the road and also has an entry door. The structure is of a locally common high-plate Cape type. A wrap-around porch on the south and east sides was added in the early 20th century (Cunningham, Inventory No. 18). The house at 119 Botsford Hill is also of the high-plate Cape type (Cunningham, Inventory No. 19).

To the northwest and north of the house at 119 Botsford Hill Road there are barns and sheds used for equestrian stables and hay storage (Barns I-VI). The property includes 14.6 acres to the west of the road and 16 acres east of the road. An entrance driveway passes on the north side of the house and continues west to run on the south side of the barns. Paddocks are located to the north. Landscaping around the house includes lawn and gardens, tennis and paddle tennis courts, and pool to the southwest.

On the east side of Botsford Hill Road at No. 104 is a property now belonging to a fox-hunting club. An extended English bank barn (Barn VII) converted to ground level stable dairy barn and later to horse stalls, is located parallel to the road. A former heifer barn (Barn VIII) converted to club use is southeast of the main barn and extends downslope to the east. A former bull barn (Barn IX) located to the east has been converted to a kennel for hounds. At the center of the grouping is a small 1 ½-story cape-style house. An extensive drive and parking area is at the east side of Barn VII, with driveways connecting to the road both north and south of the barn. A blue enameled steel silo is at the east side of Barn VII. The 16-acre property has pastures and hay fields extending to the north and east of the cluster of structures.

To the north and west of the house at 97 Botsford Hill Road there are barns, sheds, and hoop houses used by a landscape business. A hay barn is located west of the house, a Quonset hut is to the northwest, and another extended barn is to the north. The 15-acre property has cultivated fields extending westward.

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

Architectural description:

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

119 Botsford Hill Road See nomination for Barns 1-VI

104 Botsford Hill Road

| Barn VII – Extended English bank dairy | 19th & 20th c. | C |
| Silo | c. 1970-80 | C |
| Barn VIII – Heifer/hay | 20th c. | C |
| Barn IX – Bull barn | 20th c. | C |
| House | 1987 | NC |

Barns at 104 Botsford Hill Road:

Barn VII – Extended English bank dairy barn, 19th & 20th c.

This barn at 104 Botsford Hill Road is an extended English bank barn. The upper level consists of two three-bay barns attached at the common gable-end, for a total size of 30 x 110 feet. The barn is oriented with its ridge-line north-south and is located close to the east side of the road. Two tall barn doors in the west eave-side open to the grade of the road. The hill slopes down toward the east.
The timber-framed barn has been erected above a newer substructure consisting of rows of steel columns and longitudinal girders forming a banked ground-level dairy barn at a lower grade level, with doors opening in the north and south ends. A large shed-roofed addition, approximately 30 x 70 feet, across most of the east side extends the lower level to create a wide three-aisle configuration. A narrow transverse gable-roofed wing, 20 x 60 feet, near the south end extends east and contains a single-loaded corridor and one row of horse stalls.

A 1 1/2-story milk room structure at the northeast corner is connected to the shed addition. An enameled steel silo on a concrete foundation is located east of the shed addition, and is connected to the transverse wing by a small gable-roofed passage.

**Exterior:**

The west eave-side of the double English barn has six bays. The barn door openings have a pair of exterior sliding doors in the left (northern) opening, and a similar pair in the right (southern) opening. A series of six-pane stable-type windows is located just above grade in the central bays, and gives clerestory light to the stable barn in the lower level. Six of these are clustered and two single windows are located near the north corner and to the left of the southern door. A pass-through door is located adjacent to this last window, to its right. There is a hay door near the center of the west eave-side, and two stable type windows light the upper level of the barn, one near the left (north) corner and the other near the pass-through door. Siding is horizontal wood lap siding painted red with white trim.

The north gable-end has a mortared field-stone retaining wall at the lower level extending northward aligned with the west side of the barn to make the transition to the lower grade entrance. A sliding barn door is located to the left (east) of the ridge peak, at the center of the lower level area formed by the combined main barn and shed addition. To the left of the door is a six-pane stable window and to the right is a pass-through door.

At the left (east) corner, the milk room’s west gable-end wall forms a right angle corner with the main block and has a door and a six-pane window. The north eave-side of the milk room has two six-pane windows. Its east gable-end has a full-width shed addition with a door at the left (south) and a small window to the right. The milk room has been remodeled into toilet facilities for the current users, the Fairfield Hounds hunt club.

The east side of the barn consists of the eave-side of the shed addition and its large sloping roof which joins the wall of the main barn just below the eave line. A row of six-pane stable windows extends along the east wall, and a loading dock door is located at the right (north) corner next to the milk room.

The transverse 1 1/2-story wing containing horse stalls extends east near the left (south) end of the shed addition. The silo is connected to it at the northeast corner. The east gable-end has a pass-through door at grade and a hay door above. The west eave-side has an attached shed addition to extend its width. This has a row of four stall doors alternating with six-pane stable windows. The lower part of the doors appears to be boarded shut, leaving the upper part as operable shutters. A livestock entry door is at the left (west) end of this wall adjacent to the main barn.

The southern section of the main barn has a narrow shed addition extending its width eastward. This has three six-pane stable windows.

The south gable-end, like the north, has a stone retaining wall along the road and opens at grade with a sliding door located to the right of the peak. There is a six-pane stable window to the left (west) of the door and a small attic window near the peak. Siding throughout is wood horizontal lap siding painted red with white trim. Roofing is asphalt shingles. There is a cupola with a hip roof at the center of the ridge-line of the main extended barn and a small round metal ventilator on the milk house.

**Interior:**

The interior of the timber-framed English barn section appears to be an old post and beam frame altered considerably by the replacement of purlins and girders with dimension lumber. The rafters are sawn dimension lumber with plywood decking. The main level is used for hay storage.

The lower level has the concrete floor with recessed waste troughs, finished ceilings painted white, and wainscoting of gray-painted wood that represent early 20th-century hygienic standards. The milking stanchions have been removed. A row of horse stalls lines the west wall and above the stalls are the clerestory lights that are seen on the
west façade. The layout appears to consist of a row of horse stalls along the west wall and a double row dairy cow positions in the center and eastern areas. The southern section of the interior has been partitioned off as a garage or equipment repair area. The milk room has become toilet rooms, and the transverse southeast wing has horse stalls.

Silo

This is an approximately 16-foot diameter pre-fabricated Harvestore® silo. Its access ladder frame is on the northeast side. An access panel at grade on the north side has been removed and the interior is visible. Part of the roof has collapsed. Rust is visible at the seams and riveted joints. The silo is connected to the stall wing by a gable-roofed connector which has a sliding door in the east wall giving access to the barnyard.

Barn VIII – Heifer/Hay Barn, probably 20C

This barn at 104 Botsford Hill Road was the heifer barn and has been altered for use as a clubroom and for storage by the hunt club. The alterations include replacement sash and the enclosure of the south elevation with rolling barn doors. The south elevation was originally open to pens on the south side of the barn. The barn is to the southeast of the main dairy barn. It is approached by a drive to the west of this barn, which has its west gable end tucked below an incline. The north elevation fronts a parking area east of Barn VII.

The structure is a 2 ½-story, approximately 40 x 80-foot; gable-roofed New England bank barn oriented with gable ends to the east and west. The western portion stands on concrete block foundation; the west elevation has a pair of sliding doors in the loft level opening to the upper grade of the road level. The north elevation has three single doors, various stable-type windows (mostly replacement sash) on the lower level opening to the lower grade, and two loft doors on the upper level. The south elevation has two rolling wagon doors toward the right (east) opening to the lower grade, two single doors to left (west), and a metal ventilator on the ridge off-center to west. Walls are horizontal wood lap siding, painted red with white trim. Roof is asphalt shingles.

Barn IX – Bull Barn, 20C

This barn was the bull barn at 104 Botsford Hill Road, and has been altered for use as a kennel for 40 hounds. The barn stands on to the east of the main dairy barn and Barn VIII. The west elevation fronts a parking lot. The dog run is to the north. The structure is a 45 x 18-foot; gable-roofed barn with gable ends to the north and south; shed roof addition at northwest corner. There are Dutch doors at north gable end, pair of hinged loft doors at north gable peak, and a shed wing at northeast corner. The structure is wood framed with lap siding painted red with white trim.

• Historical or Architectural importance:

Applicable Connecticut State Register Criteria:
  1. Associated with events that have made a significant contribution to our history and the lives of persons significant in our past; or
  2. Embodying the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction.

Historical background:

The farmstead that is now 119 Botsford Hill Road belonged to the Glover Botsford family in the late 1800s. The Botsfords were local farmers for whom this road is named. Identified in Home of Old Woodbury as the Charles Botsford House, the Colonial Cape at 119 Botsford Hill Road first belonged to his father, Glover Botsford (b. 1795 - c. 1852). The Botsfords do not appear in the Roxbury census until 1850. At that time 19-year-old Charles was living at home with his parents. Also in the house were his George (15), who later lived next door at No. 97, and Mary (11). A 65-year-old laborer also boarded here and worked on the farm. Charles, who is identified here on the Roxbury map in the c. 1855 county atlas, may have inherited the house, but by 1870 he had left Roxbury, leaving the property to his 73-year-old widowed mother, Mary A. Botsford (Cunningham, Inventory No. 19).

A subsequent owner, Charles Palmer, ran a dairy farm at 119 Botsford Hill Road before and after 1920.
The property now 97 Botsford Hill Road is known as the Isaac & George Botsford House. The history of this property illustrates the depressed state of the farm economy in Connecticut's uplands in the last half of the nineteenth century. Farm credit from banks was not yet available, and tenant farming had become a way of life for many. A series of farmers tried and failed to make a living here from a dairy farm that once encompassed 160 acres in Roxbury and Bridgewater. Originally owned by Isaac Botsford, it was inherited by George Botsford (b. 1835). He sold the then 42-acre farm to James H. Keeler of Bridgewater in 1864 but continued to live here as a tenant, according to the 1870 census. Keeler never lived here but held onto the farm by leasing it out to tenants. Leander Palmer took over in 1901. The next owners were John and Mary Pokrywka, Polish immigrants who first came to Roxbury in 1904. They farmed here for 17 years.

The property at 104 Botsford Hill Road on the east side was once part of the old Botsford farm across the road to the west at No. 97. Prior to the mid-1930s, both were owned by the Pokrywka family, who used the barn on the east side of the road for their dairy operation. The conversion of the main barn (Barn VII) from a typical 19th-century English bank barn to a ground level stable barn with 20th-century features including a dedicated milk room, would likely date from the Pokrywka period of ownership.

By the mid-1930s all three properties and additional acreage as well, had been purchased by Frasier McCann, the grandson of Frank Winfield Woolworth, founder of the F.W. Woolworth retail chain. McCann, a gentleman farmer, began assembling parcels of land around 1936 to create Golden Harvest Farm, where he maintained a herd of about 100 head of Golden Guernsey cattle. In the 1970s McCann switched to the higher-yielding Holsteins and also raised shorthorn steers for beef.

Numerous building projects can be attributed to the Golden Harvest period: at 119 Botsford Hill Road, the small concrete masonry stables (Barn II & III), the pony stable (Barn V), the root cellar (Barn IV), and modifications to Barn I are attributable to the McCanns’ Golden Harvest management. At 104 Botsford Hill Road, Barns VII & IX were the Golden Harvest heifer and bull barns.

The glass-on-steel silo, typical of the 1970s and 80s, must have been added by the McCanns as well. The silo represented the later stages in the evolution of 20th-century feed storage, in which the fermented silage allowed milk cows to receive adequate nourishment through the winter to continue milk production. Pre-fabricated Harvestore® silos, made of glass-fused-to-steel were first produced in the 1940s by the A. O. Smith Co. of Milwaukee, Wisconsin as an off-shoot of their glass-lined water heater products. This type of silo is loaded from the top and unloaded from the bottom using electric motor-driven equipment.

The Quonset hut shed at 97 Botsford Hill Road is a locally rare example of a prefabricated building type mass-produced during World War II and made available for sale as surplus after the war. The Nissen hut was invented by a Canadian officer during World War I, and in World War II a Rhode Island company developed mass-production methods for the Quonset Point, Rhode Island, naval base and production began in 1941 (Carley, p. 89).

Much of Golden Harvest was eventually sold to a partnership which subdivided the land in the mid-1980s. Some of the property to the east along the Shepaug River now belongs to the Roxbury Land Trust. 119 Botsford Hill Road is Thistledown Farm, still owned by the McCann family (Franklin McCann) and now home to a number of horses. The 104 Botsford Hill Road parcel belongs to Fairfield Hounds, a hunt club. 97 Botsford Hill Road is Burton Landscaping.

Architectural significance:

These farm properties, with multiple barns, are significant because of the integrity of the structures on their original sites in an intact rural community. The history of use represents historical trends in regional agricultural practice affecting the community of Roxbury from the 1860s to the present, involving locally-significant historical figures.

The Botsford farmsteads represent the 19th-century farming period when local farming was subsistence-based and either owner-occupied, or as at 97 Botsford Hill, farmed by tenants renting from an absentee owner.

The Palmer and Pokrywka farms illustrate the movement toward a larger-scale commercial business model, providing goods to urban markets, that arose in the early 1900s. Many farmers at this time were Eastern European immigrants, taking up land from earlier generations who had moved west out of state or out of farming altogether.
In Roxbury, a number of immigrant families such as the Pokrywkas, Voytersharks, and Orzechs settled during the early years of the 20th century.

Both Barn I and Barn VII exhibit the characteristics of increasing requirements for hygienic conditions in the production of milk: The stanchion arrangement in aisles with concrete floors channeled for cleaning of waste, the finished wall and ceiling surfaces, the ganged hopper windows for ventilation and to light the work area during milking time, are a few of the typical features of this period. Barn VII exhibits an ingenious effort to turn a bank barn into a well-lighted ground level stable barn by cutting clerestory windows and light wells into the level above where the old timber-framed barn has been set atop the new modern basement layout.

Next, the consolidation of land into Golden Harvest, with major land purchases by a wealthy business family, the McCanns, during the late years of the Depression era, represents the gentleman farming trend. This occurred in several other instances in Roxbury, for instance on Painter Hill Road (Toplands – see 102 Painter Hill Road) and Judds Bridge Road (Judds Bridge Dairy). The gentleman farmers, although they had sufficient financial means to support capital improvements on a large scale, took dairying seriously and operated until the mid- to late-1980s when economic conditions drove many farmers out of business. Roxbury and some other nearby communities experienced this development particularly because of their proximity to New York City. The area was within a convenient distance such that the farm owners could travel to and from the city to oversee the business, generally with the help of experienced local farm managers. The co-existence of gentleman farmers such as the McCanns with immigrant families – the Pokrywkas and others – was a significant historical trend that has strongly influenced the demographics of Roxbury.

The final stage in the evolution of Roxbury’s farms can be seen in the current uses of the land – a mix of the country estate use at Thistledown Farm, with the recreational use under the Fairfield Hounds ownership, and a scattering of owners still making a living from the land, as the Burton Landscaping business does.

The extant structures on these properties represent the range of building types over nearly two centuries of continuous use. Barns I and VII are 19th-century English barns with post and beam frames and the characteristic center-bay barn doors. Each has been extensively modified. As a result, both illustrate the design features and technology of early 20th century scientific dairy farming. Particular features such as the enameled steel silo and the milk room at Barn VII, and the attention to daylighting that can be seen in the arrangement of windows for the dairy cattle facilities, are surviving remnants of functional building types that have become obsolete. The mid-20th century buildings include concrete block masonry stables, a steel Quonset hut, and an enameled steel silo.
Sources (continuation):

Parcel ID: 06-028, Parcel ID: 06-005, Parcel ID: 06-013.

Interview with Franklin McCann and Jim Conway, 10/25/2011, at 119 Botsford Hill Road, Roxbury.

Map resources:

Aerial views from:

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


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

Print and internet resources:

Connecticut State Library online: iconn.org or  http://www.cslib.org/iconnsitemap/staff/SiteIndex.aspx#directories

Connecticut Trust for Historic Preservation, Historic Barns of Connecticut Resource Inventory, 2010,


Harvestore Silos – company web sites:


4. Site Plan sketch of 104 Botsford Hill Road.
5. Northwest view of Barn VII at 104 Botsford Hill Road, showing west eave-side of upper English barn at right; lower level basement visible on north gable-end, milk room at left rear; camera facing southeast.

6. East view of Barn VII, showing southeast wing at left, silo, basement level shed addition, milk room at right; camera facing west.
7. Southeast view of Barn VII southeast wing and silo, camera facing west.

8. Southwest view of Barn VII, camera facing northeast.
9. Southwest view of Barn VII at rear, Barn VIII at right front; camera facing north.

11. South view of Barn VIII at left and Barn IX at right, camera facing north.

12. Interior view, lower level of Barn VII, showing ground level stable area, camera facing southeast.
13. Interior of upper level of Barn VII, camera facing east. At right is the south gable-end; view shows interior of main block and shed addition.


15. Southwest view of Barn XI, Quonset hut shed at 97 Botsford Hill Road (photograph by Donna Cloutier, Carley p. 89).