

NEW HAVEN – HARTFORD – SPRINGFIELD HIGH-SPEED RAIL PROJECT

TECHNICAL MEMORANDUM:

Identification of Vacant Historic Industrial Properties

Prepared by

**Archaeological and Historical Services, Inc.
55 Middle Turnpike
Storrs, Connecticut 06268**

under contract with

**Parsons Brinckerhoff, Inc.
500 Winding Brook Drive
Glastonbury, CT 06033**

for submission to

**The Connecticut Department of Transportation
2800 Berlin Turnpike
Newington, Connecticut 06111**

October 21, 2014

A. Introduction

This Technical Memorandum is intended to address one of the stipulations in a Programmatic Agreement among the Federal Railroad Administration, Federal Transit Administration, Connecticut State Historic Preservation Office (CTSHPO), and the Connecticut Department of Transportation (CTDOT) executed on August 2, 2012:

CTDOT, in consultation with CTSHPO, will identify at least one and no more than five vacant historic industrial properties adjacent to the Historic Line in Connecticut that may be eligible for Federal or State Historic Preservation Tax Credits. CTDOT will provide appropriate public notice of this funding opportunity [Programmatic Agreement, Attachment B, Corridor-Level Treatment Plan, Implementation Measure 5, page B-2].

Presented herein is information on four apparently vacant industrial properties adjacent to the Amtrak railroad right-of-way between New Haven and Hartford:

- Former Connecticut Telephone and Electrical Company plant
70 Britannia Street, Meriden
- Former United Upholstering Company building
1041 New Britain Avenue (Elmwood Section), West Hartford
- Former Connecticut Electric Steel Company building
540 Flatbush Avenue, Hartford
- Former J. R. Montgomery plant
Canal Bank, Windsor Locks

This information is intended to assist CTDOT with fulfilling the stipulation in the Programmatic Agreement regarding vacant historic industrial properties.

B. Methodology

These properties, as well as numerous other potentially historic industrial properties, were noted in field surveys of the railroad right-of-way undertaken by Archaeological and Historical Services, Inc. in 2011 and 2013. In order to confirm which properties still appeared to be vacant, they were field-checked again in October 2014. The information on the selected properties was taken from publicly available assessor databases and from online real-estate listings. There is no guarantee that any of the properties are or will remain available, nor is there any representation made that the properties are suitable for any particular purpose.

The properties included in this memorandum appear to have some claim to eligibility for listing on the State or National Registers, either individually or as part of a potential historic district, though none is currently listed. Actual listing of a property on the registers is the prerogative of

the Connecticut Department of Economic and Community Development, Offices of Culture and Tourism and, in the case of the National Register, the National Park Service.

C. Tax Incentives for Historic Industrial Buildings

Currently, there are both federal and state tax incentives available for rehabilitating Connecticut's historic industrial buildings. All of the programs are administered by the Connecticut Department of Economic and Community Development, Offices of Culture and Tourism. The chief point of contact is:

Ms. Julie Carmelich
Connecticut Department of Economic and Community Development
Offices of Culture and Tourism
One Constitution Plaza
Hartford, CT 06103
860-256-2762
julie.carmelich@ct.gov

Information on the federal tax incentives is available online at:

<http://www.cultureandtourism.org/cct/cwp/view.asp?a=3933&q=302266>

Information on the state tax incentives is available at:

<http://www.cultureandtourism.org/cct/cwp/view.asp?a=3933&q=430786>

C.1 Federal Historic Preservation Tax Incentive

The federal historic-preservation tax incentive program provides a credit against federal tax liabilities equal to 20% of qualified costs incurred in rehabilitating a historic income-producing property. To qualify, a property must be listed on the National Register, and the proposed rehabilitation work must be approved on the state and federal levels as conforming to the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation, which ensures that the historic character of the building is maintained. The rehabilitation must also be substantial, that is, equal or greater to the value of the building prior to rehabilitation. Finally, the owner must hold title to the building for five years after completing the rehabilitation.

C.2 Connecticut Historic Rehabilitation Tax Credit

This program, established by Connecticut General Assembly in 2014 to consolidate two earlier historic-preservation tax incentives, provides for a credit against Connecticut tax liabilities that is equal to 25% of qualified rehabilitation expenses (exclusive of site improvements and non-construction costs) incurred in rehabilitating historic buildings for 1) residential use of five units or more, 2) mixed residential and nonresidential use, or 3) nonresidential use consistent with the historic character of such property or the district in which such property is located. An additional credit of 5% (total of 30%) is available for projects that include affordable housing as

provided in section 8-39a of the General Statutes. The credits can only be used by Corporations, but other entities can sell the credits in whole or in part to corporations that can use them. There is only a certain amount of money available statewide for this program, and there is a cap of \$4.5 million for each project. To qualify, a property must be listed on the State or National Registers of Historic Places, and the proposed rehabilitation work must be approved to ensure that it is in accord with the historic character of the building. The federal incentive and the state incentive can be combined.

The above are capsule descriptions of the main features and requirements of these programs. The application materials require detailed project information, and determining the suitability of the tax credits in any particular situation will require careful consideration of the relevant regulations of the Internal Revenue Service, the National Park Service, and the Connecticut Department of Economic and Community Development, Offices of Culture and Tourism. The services of a historic-preservation consultant may be required.

Vacant Historic Industrial Properties

Historic Name: Connecticut Telephone and Electrical Company Plant
Address: 70 Britannia Street, Meriden, CT

Date of Construction: ca. 1900

Owner of Record: Britannia St LLC
35 Wildwood Drive, Kings Point, NY 11024

Broker/Agent: Colliers International
205 Whitney Avenue, Suite 300, New Haven, CT 06511
203-562-5000

Description: Four-story brick former factory, total of 89,592 sf., approved for 66 residential units.

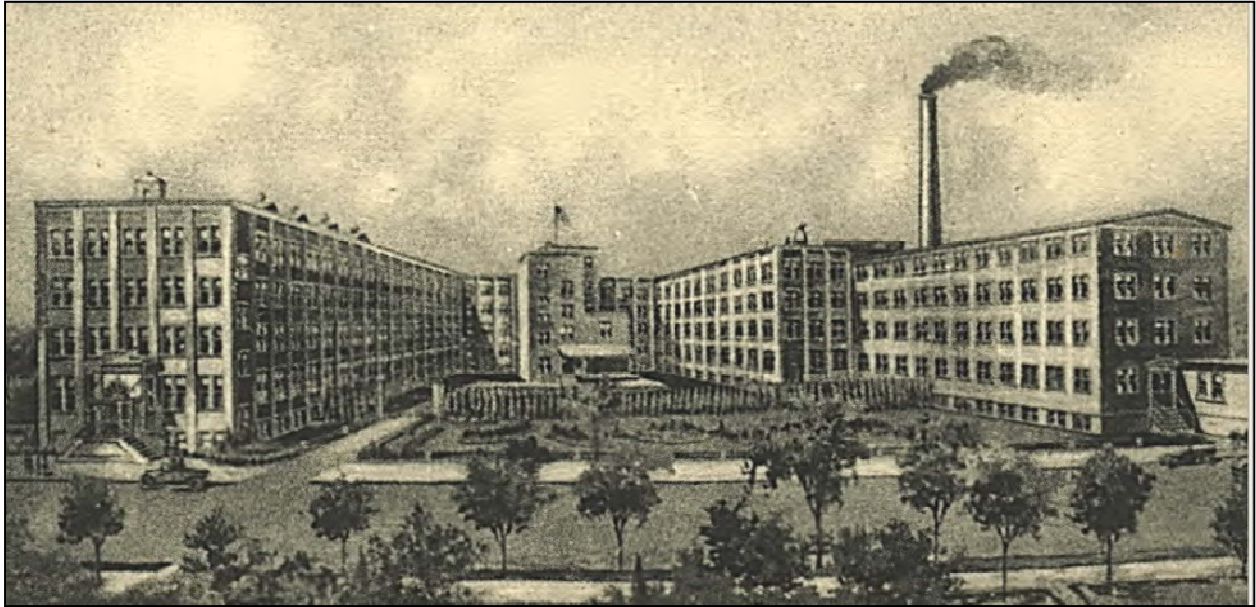
Significance: Meriden in the 20th century was a major manufacturing center, but today little remains to recall its industrial past; this is one of the few major plants to escape demolition. From about 1903 through the 1950s, this property was occupied by the Connecticut Telephone and Electrical Company, a producer of telephones, intercoms, radio components, and other communications products. It was one of the first to produce interchangeable telephones that would work with a variety of systems.

References: Sanborn insurance maps of Meriden, 1950.
Aero View of Meriden. New York: Hughes and Bailey, 1918.
“New Connecticut Interchangeable Telephone, *Electrical Age*, March 1010, p. 81.



Vacant Historic Industrial Properties

Connecticut Telephone and Electrical Company Plant
70 Britannia Street, Meriden, CT



Artist's view of plant in 1918, from the Hughes and Bailey bird's-eye view.

**The Connecticut Telephone
and Electric Co.**

MANUFACTURERS OF

**TELEPHONES
TELEPHONE
EQUIPMENT
AND
Electrical Supplies**

* This is the latest of three different types of Desk 'Phones which we manufacture, and represents the highest grade of apparatus, suitable both for Exchange and Interior work.

MERIDEN, CONN.

Please mention TELEPHONE MAGAZINE in writing to advertisers.

Type "C"
Desk
'Phone.

Advertisement for Connecticut Telephone and Electrical Company, Electrical Engineering and Telephone Magazine, December 1899, p. xv.

Vacant Historic Industrial Properties

Historic Name: United Upholstering Company
Address: 1041 New Britain Avenue, West Hartford

Date of Construction: ca.1930

Owner of Record: Deane Realty Corp.
1061 New Britain Ave., West Hartford, CT 06110

Broker/Agent: None given, for sale sign gives phone as 860-236-4271

Description: Single-story flat-roofed brick building; 5,712 sq. ft., 75' by 68' in plan.

Significance: Joseph A. Gallinoto (ca.1888-1977) learned the upholstery trade in Florence, Italy, before coming to America in 1920. Around 1930 he established the United Upholstery Company, which in addition to offering upholstery services, made and sold furniture at this location. This building may have originally been built by and briefly occupied by the Bennett Metal Treating Company (1045 New Britain Avenue), to which it is attached and with which it shares brickwork details. That company was started ca.1917 by Wilbur R. Bennett as part of the World War I-period expansion of Hartford's metalworking sector.

While this modest building may not be individually eligible for the National Register, it is part of a large grouping of industrial buildings on either side of the tracks in Elmwood that includes the former Bennett Metal Treating Co., Abbott Ball, Wiremold, and the former New Departure Elmwood plant. It therefore could be considered to be a contributing building to a potential National Register-eligible historic district. Listing such a district would require the cooperation of the owners of the other properties.

References: Hartford City Directory, 1930.



Vacant Historic Industrial Properties

United Upholstering Company
1041 New Britain Avenue, West Hartford



Bing 3D™ map showing the relationship to other historic industrial properties.

Vacant Historic Industrial Properties

United Upholstering Company
1041 New Britain Avenue, West Hartford



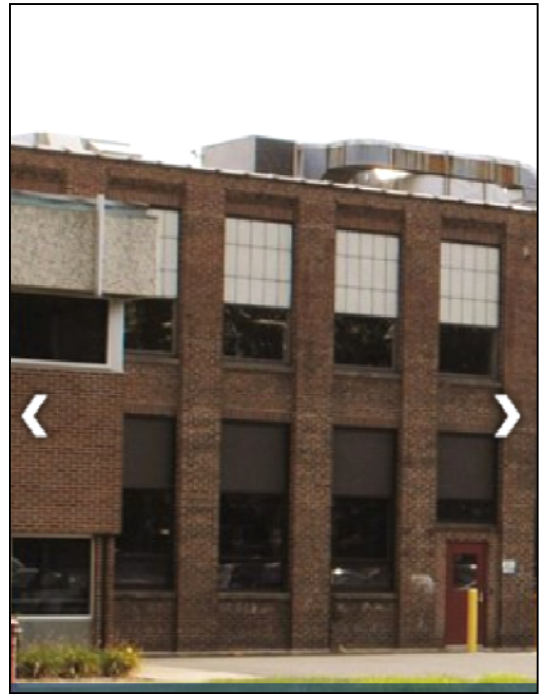
Former Bennett Metal Treating Company plant, 1045 New Britain Avenue, attached to subject property, visible at left.



Factory of the Abbott Ball Company, immediately south of the subject property.

Vacant Historic Industrial Properties

United Upholstering Company
1041 New Britain Avenue, West Hartford



Wire Mold property, south of Abbott Ball.



United Tool & Die, formerly part of the New Departure plant.

Vacant Historic Industrial Properties

Historic Name: Connecticut Electric Steel Company
Address: 540 Flatbush Avenue, Hartford

Date of Construction: ca.1918

Owner of Record: Harsco Corporation
22 State Route 208, Suite 525, Fair Lawn, NJ 07410-2609

Broker/Agent: Sentry Commercial (860-528-0884)
38 Prospect Street, Hartford, CT 06103

Description: Large gambrel-roofed steel-framed, steel-sided former manufacturing building, ca.1918; one-story brick addition, ca. 1960; total of 41,727 sq. ft.

Significance: Last used by the Patent Construction Systems division of Harsco Corporation, this complex has its origins in the World War I period, when Hartford's metalworking sector was undergoing rapid expansion. The Connecticut Electric Steel Company built a foundry for tool steel and other specialty-steel products at the Flatbush Avenue railroad crossing, first occupying some small buildings no longer extant and then adding the large steel-framed foundry building that still stands. Later occupied by the Hartford Electric Steel Corporation, the complex's one-story brick part was built for offices ca.1960. The "Electric" in the two names refers to the use of electric furnaces to make steel, an advanced technology for the day.

Perhaps not an immediately obvious candidate for National Register listing, this complex's remaining portions are mostly more than 50 years old and have important historical associations with Hartford's industrial past, particularly the city's tremendous industrial expansion in the World War I period. Hartford Electric Steel remained in business into the 1950s. In the 1960s and 1970s, the plant was occupied by New England Alloy Casting.

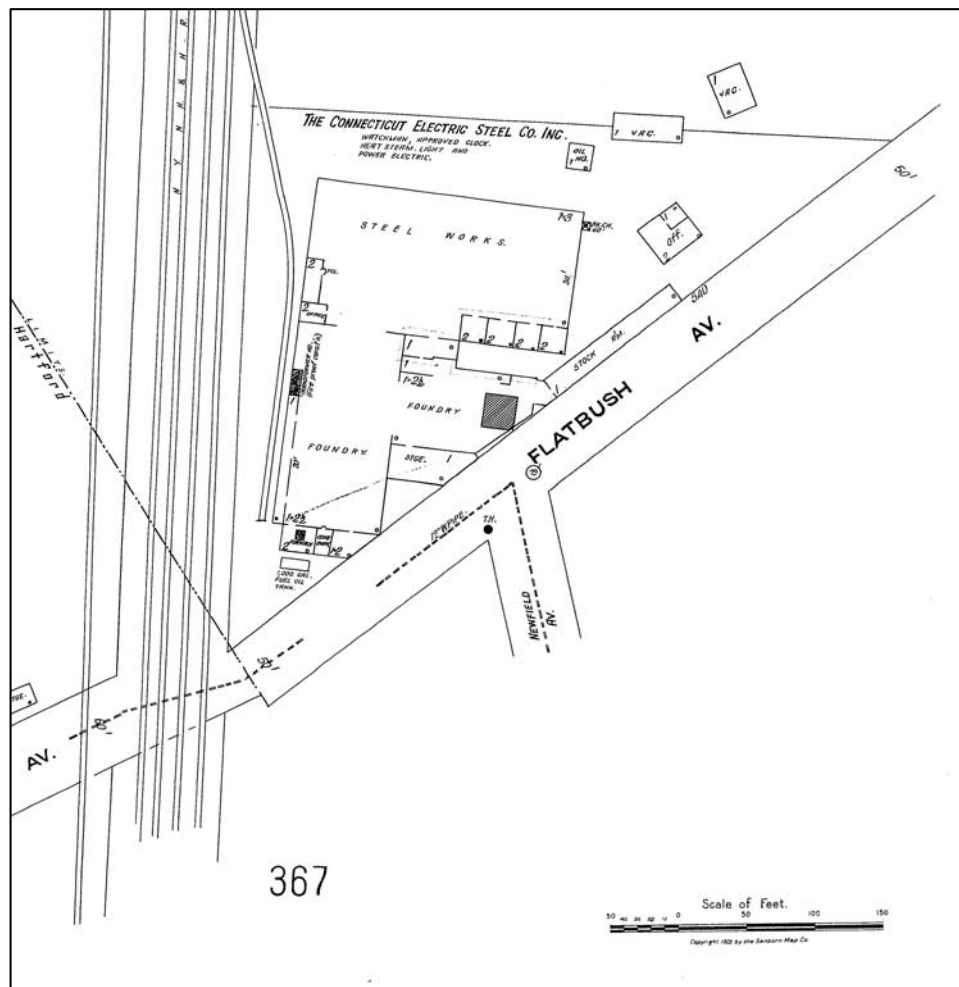
References: Hartford City Directory, 1950-1970.
Sanborn insurance maps of Hartford, 1917-1950.



Buildings #1 and #4 date from ca.1918, Building #2 is ca.1960, Building #3 is ca.1964.

Vacant Historic Industrial Properties

Connecticut Electric Steel Company
540 Flatbush Avenue, Hartford



Property as shown on the 1923 Sanborn map; the foundries south of the large building labeled "Steel Works" were demolished ca. 1980.

Vacant Historic Industrial Properties

Historic Name:	J. R. Montgomery Company
Address:	Canal Bank, Windsor Locks, CT
Date of Construction:	1891-1920
Owner of Record:	Nisha K. Sachdev 6 St. Andrews Drive, Farmington, CT 06032
Broker/Agent:	N/A
Description:	Five-story brick former factory, 1891-1905, with 1920 reinforced-concrete addition, total of 214,375 sf.
Significance:	The J. R. Montgomery Company was a major Windsor Locks employer for many years. The company started as a woolen mill in 1871 and then moved into the production of cotton warps and metalized novelty yarns. Initially intended as decorative trim, the latter proved useful in the manufacture of radios and telephone equipment. More recently the company, which closed in the 1980s, made tinsel for military purposes. The present plant incorporates portions built in 1891, 1905, and 1920.
References:	Roth, <i>Connecticut, an Inventory of Historic Engineering and Industrial Sites</i> (1981), p. 38.



The earlier part of the complex, built in 1891 and added to in 1905.

Vacant Historic Industrial Properties

**J. R. Montgomery Company
Canal Bank, Windsor Locks, CT**



The reinforced-concrete portion, added in 1920.