STATE OF CONNECTICUT

CONNECTICUT HISTORICAL COMMISSION
59 South Prospect Street, Hartford, Connecticut 06106
(203) 566-3005

HISTORIC RESOURCES INVENTORY FORM
For Buildings and Structures

IDENTIFICATION
1. BUILDING NAME: Common: Joseph Wilcox House Historic: same
2. TOWN/CITY: Middletown VILLAGE: Westfield COUNTY: Middlesex
3. STREET & NUMBER (and/or location): 227 Atkins Street
4. OWNER(S): Patrick and Virginia Renschen PUBLIC __PRIVATE X
5. USE: Present: Residence Historic: same
6. ACCESSIBILITY TO PUBLIC: Exterior visible from public road: yes no
Interior accessible: yes, explain with permission no

DESCRIPTION
7. STYLE OF BUILDING: Center-Chimney Colonial DATE OF CONSTRUCTION: c. 1774
8. MATERIAL(S) (indicate use or location when appropriate):
   - clapboard
   - wood shingle
   - board & batten
   - aluminum siding
   - brick
   - fieldstone
   - concrete: type: 
   - cut stone: type: brownstone
9. STRUCTURAL SYSTEM:
   - wood frame: x, post and beam __ balloon
   - load bearing masonry __ structural iron or steel
10. ROOF: type:
    - x gable
    - gambrel
    - shed
    - hip
    - round
    - monitor
    - sawtooth
11. NUMBER OF STORIES: 2½ APPROXIMATE DIMENSIONS: north wing 30'x15'
12. CONDITION: Structural:
    - x excellent
    - good
    - fair
    - deteriorated
13. INTEGRITY: Location: x on original site moved, when:
    Alterations: no x yes, explain: North wing added ca. 1812; southwest wing ca. 1870
14. RELATED OUTBUILDINGS OR LANDSCAPE FEATURES:
    - barn
    - shed
    - carriage house
    - shop
    - garage
    - garden
    - x other landscape features or buildings: outhouse
15. SURROUNDING ENVIRONMENT:
    - x open land
    - woodland
    - residential
    - commercial
    - industrial
    - x rural
    - high building density
16. INTERRELATIONSHIP OF BUILDING AND SURROUNDINGS: The section of Westfield west of Interstate 91 retains its primarily rural character. This house faces east from the west side of Atkins Street. It is set back from the road by a yard and two large trees which flank the brownstone walk leading to the front door.
17. OTHER NOTABLE FEATURES OF BUILDING OR SITE (interior and/or exterior):

Panelling, wainscoting, and corner cupboards in northeast and southeast parlors
North wing tromp l'oeil simulated panelling (ca. 1830)
Keeping room fireplace wall with vertical sheathing; fireplace with bake oven in rear
Basement beehive oven

SIGNIFICANCE

18. HISTORICAL OR ARCHITECTURAL IMPORTANCE: This center-chimney Colonial house was built around 1774 by Joseph Wilcox. It remained in the Wilcox family until six years ago. The Wilcoxes were a prominent early family in Westfield, their presence there dating from the early eighteen century. Much of the original materials exist in this house. The northeast parlor is of exceptional quality; featuring a corner shelf cupboard, paneled wainscoting, and an elaborately paneled fireplace wall. Although the southeast parlor is less formal in its appointments, it too displays a corner cupboard, wainscoting, and a paneled fireplace wall with cupboard. Rare five panel doors with strap hinges also remain as do the original wide floorboards and beam casings. A kitchen wing was added to the original structure around 1812. It features simulated panelling and woodgraining which was executed around 1830. The two story southwest wing was added around 1875 to take in the overflow from the resort hotel located across the street (since destroyed).

The center-chimney, two room deep plan of this house was a common form of construction in the Connecticut River valley during the second half of the eighteenth century. Because of its nearly original condition and fine workmanship, this house is one of the best examples of the type in Middletown.

PHOTOGRAPH

photographer: John E. Reynolds
date: 9/78 view: east
negative on file: Roll 35, #16

COMPiled BY:

name: John E. Reynolds date: 8/78
organization: Greater Middletown Preservation Trust
address: 27 Washington St., Middletown, Ct. 06457

19. SOURCES: Middletown Land Records; Middletown Probate Court Records; Middletown City Directories; 1874 Beers Atlas

20. SUBSEQUENT FIELD EVALUATIONS:

21. THREATS TO BUILDING OR SITE:

X none known highways vandalism developers other: ____________________________
renewal private deterioration zoning explanation: _______________________________