STATE OF CONNECTICUT
CONNECTICUT HISTORICAL COMMISSION
9 South Prospect Street, Hartford, Connecticut 06106
(203) 566-3005
HISTORIC RESOURCES INVENTORY FORM
for Buildings and Structures

IDENTIFICATION
1. BUILDING NAME: Common: ___________________________ Historic: Joseph Danforth House
2. TOWN/CITY: Middletown VILLAGE: __________________ COUNTY: Middlesex
3. STREET & NUMBER (and/or location): 122-124 College Street
4. OWNER(S): Farmer’s & Mechanic’s Savings Bank PUBLIC X PRIVATE
5. USE: Present: Vacant Historic: Residence
6. ACCESSIBILITY TO PUBLIC: Exterior visible from public road: X yes no Interior accessible: X yes, explain with owner’s permission no

DESCRIPTION
7. STYLE OF BUILDING: Center Chimney Colonial DATE OF CONSTRUCTION: 1787
8. MATERIAL(S) (indicate use or location when appropriate):
X clapboard under siding asbestos siding
X wood shingle asphalt siding
X board & batten stucco
X aluminum siding concrete: type:
other:
X brick storefront addition
X fieldstone
X cobblestone
X cut stone: type: brownstone
foundation
9. STRUCTURAL SYSTEM:
X wood frame X post and beam balloon
X load bearing masonry X store-front structural iron or steel
other:
10. ROOF: type:
X gable flat X mansard X monitor sawtooth
X gambrel shed X hip round other
material:
X wood shingle roll asphalt
X asphalt shingle built up tile slate
other:
11. NUMBER OF STORIES: 2½ APPROXIMATE DIMENSIONS: 30’x26’ (original structure)
12. CONDITION: Structural: X excellent X good fair deteriorated
X excellent X good fair deteriorated
13. INTEGRITY: Location: X on original site X moved, when: Alterations: no X yes, explain: See #18
14. RELATED OUTBUILDINGS OR LANDSCAPE FEATURES:
X barn X shed garage other landscape features or buildings:
X carriage house X shop to east garden
15. SURROUNDING ENVIRONMENT:
open land X woodland X residential scattered buildings visible from site
X commercial X industrial rural X high building density
16. INTERRELATIONSHIP OF BUILDING AND SURROUNDINGS: This house faces south from the north side of College Street between Main and Broad Streets. Across the street is a variety of commercial buildings, recently proposed as the Metro South National Register District; and a vacant lot awaiting redevelopment. College Street slopes up from Main Street and the entrance to this house is raised from the street.
17. OTHER NOTABLE FEATURES OF BUILDING OR SITE (interior and/or exterior):

Panelled wainscotting and remnant of panelled fireplace wall in southwest chamber
Original fireplaces; one in cellar, three on first floor, two on second floor
Some original sash remain
Date "1787" painted on kitchen fireplace lintel

SIGNIFICANCE

18. HISTORICAL OR ARCHITECTURAL IMPORTANCE: This house was built in 1787 for Joseph Danforth (1758-1798) on land he purchased from other heirs of his father, Thomas Danforth, II (1731-1782). Joseph Danforth was a pewterer of great skill, and had taken over the pewter making business established by his father in Middletown around 1755. The Danforth pewter shop stands just east of this house (see form for 120 College Street). Pewterware made by Joseph Danforth is highly valued by collectors and can be found in the Boston Museum of Fine Arts and the Garvan Collection at Yale University. The Danforth family produced several generations of pewterers whose impact in the industry was far-reaching, due to the quality of their work and the wide distribution of their wares.

The Joseph Danforth House was originally of a four-bay, center-chimney configuration with the entrance in the third bay to the east. This type of construction was not uncommon in eighteenth century Middletown; however, few examples remain. Many subsequent additions and alterations have buried the original appearance of this structure. These include a brick storefront, a 2½ story rear wing, and the division of the interior into seven apartments.

Site investigation has revealed the original fireplaces and other structural evidence which
(see continuation sheet)

PHOTOGRAPH

photographer: Robert Svec
date: 11/77 view: southwest
negative on file: Roll 5, #32A

COMPILED BY:

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


20. SUBSEQUENT FIELD EVALUATIONS:

21. THREATS TO BUILDING OR SITE:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>threat type</th>
<th>frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>none known</td>
<td>highway</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>renewal</td>
<td>x private</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>vandalism</td>
<td>deterioration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>developers</td>
<td>zoning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>other</td>
<td>explanation: Farmer's &amp; Mechanic's Savings Bank has purchased property for intended parking expansion: an on-site preservation effort is unlikely; however, bank will permit developer to remove the structure from the site.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(see continuation sheet)
demonstrate the plan of the house as it was built.

The Danforth family occupied four buildings in this area, and their neighbors included Joseph King, a silversmith, and Benjamin Henshaw, who sold copper and tinware. The survival of the Danforth House and Shop, together with the Benjamin Henshaw House at 138 College, presents a streetscape reminiscent of the area's eighteenth-century role as an artisans' enclave.

Its Makers and Their Marks (Houghton Mifflin Co., 1940); 1825 Barnum Map; 1874 Beers Atlas