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: Building #N-5 Historic: Russell Company Office
2. TOWN/CITY: Middletown VILLAGE: South Farms COUNTY: Middlesex
3. STREET & NUMBER (and/or location): 395 East Main Street
4. OWNER(S): Fenner American Limited PUBLIC x PRIVATE
5. USE: Present: Vacant Historic: Office (?) USE: Present: Vacant Historic: Office (?)
6. ACCESSIBILITY TO PUBLIC: Exterior visible from public road: x yes no Interior accessible: yes, explain ____________________________________________ no

DESCRIPTION
7. STYLE OF BUILDING: 19th Century Industrial DATE OF CONSTRUCTION: before 1896; probably before 1874
8. MATERIAL(S) (indicate use or location when appropriate):
   - clapboard
   - wood shingle
   - board & batten
   - aluminum siding
   - other:
   - asbestos siding
   - asphalt siding
   - stucco
   - concrete: type: __________ x brick
   - fieldstone
   - cobblestone
   - cut stone: type: brownstone
   - Foundation

9. STRUCTURAL SYSTEM:
   - wood frame: x post and beam balloon
   - load bearing masonry
   - structural iron or steel (tie rods)
   - other:

10. ROOF: type:
    - gable cross
    - gambrel
    - shed
    - hip
    - round
    - monitor
    - sawtooth
    - material:
    - wood shingle
    - roll asphalt
    - asphalt shingle built up
    - tile
    - other: x slate

11. NUMBER OF STORIES: 2½ APPROXIMATE DIMENSIONS: 75' x 45'
12. CONDITION: Structural: excellent xgood fair deteriorated
    Exterior: excellent __good fair __deteriorated

13. INTEGRITY: Location: x on original site moved, when: ___________________________________________________________________
    Alterations: no x yes, explain: North extension removed
14. RELATED OUTBUILDINGS OR LANDSCAPE FEATURES:
    - barn
    - carriage house
    - shed
    - shop
    - garage
    - garden
    - other landscape features or buildings: two buildings on either side share common walls
15. SURROUNDING ENVIRONMENT:
    - open land
    - woodland
    - residential
    - commercial
    - industrial
    - rural
    - scattered buildings visible from site
    - high building density
16. INTERRELATIONSHIP OF BUILDING AND SURROUNDINGS: This is one of the Russell Manufacturing Company's factory buildings that border East Main Street in South Farms. It shares a common wall with a similarly styled building, south, and a large concrete structure, north. Remnants of this early industrial site, including a dam, a large smokestack and a vacant mill, are located behind the building. A large concrete structure is across the street.
17. OTHER NOTABLE FEATURES OF BUILDING OR SITE (interior and/or exterior):

SIGNIFICANCE

18. HISTORICAL OR ARCHITECTURAL IMPORTANCE: This building was erected by the Russell Manufacturing Company, and probably served as the company's office for a period. The company, founded in 1834, was the first to produce elastic webbing on power looms. By 1896, it was the nation's largest manufacturer of suspenders. The structure may predate 1874 and was certainly built before 1896. The 1874 Beers Atlas shows a building on this site labeled "office." A building is depicted on the 1859 Walling Map at this approximate location; however, conclusive evidence to substantiate the structure's age and use is presently not available.

The brick building is one of the oldest Russell Company structures left standing. It has two sections, connected by the main axis, that have gables facing the street. The northernmost wing projects from the main facade. Each section has a ground floor doorway, and the south wing also displays a second story entrance. The numerous windows have smooth brownstone sills and lintels. A brick corbelled cornice moulding decorates the eaves. The original structure extended further along East Main Street to the north. Probably this section was removed with the erection of the adjoining concrete building in 1916. The similarly styled structure, which was attached to the south wall in the 20th century, was used as the South Farms district firehouse.

PHOTOGRAPH
photographer: Robert Svec
date: 12/78 view: east
negative on file: Roll 53, #16A

COMPILED BY:
name: Robert Svec date: 11/78
organization: Greater Middletown Preservation Trust
address: 27 Washington St., Middletown, Ct. 06457

19. SOURCES: History of Middlesex County (New York: J.B. Beers, 1884); H.F. Donlan, Middletown Tribune: Souvenir Edition (Middletown: 1896); 1859 Walling Map; 1874 Beers Atlas

20. SUBSEQUENT FIELD EVALUATIONS:

21. THREATS TO BUILDING OR SITE:

| none known | highways | vandalism | developers | other: |
| renewal | private | x deterioration | zoning | explanation: |