**STATE OF CONNECTICUT**
**CONNECTICUT HISTORICAL COMMISSION**
57 South Prospect Street, Hartford, Connecticut 06106
(203) 566-3005

HISTORIC RESOURCES INVENTORY FORM
For Buildings and Structures

**IDENTIFICATION**

1. BUILDING NAME: Common: ____________________________
   Historic: "Ashcroft"
   Capt. Giles Wilcox House

2. TOWN/CITY: Middletown  VILLAGE: Westfield  COUNTY: Middlesex

3. STREET & NUMBER (and/or location): 455 East Street

4. OWNER(S): Helen M. Brainard
   PUBLIC X PRIVATE

5. USE: Present: Residence  Historic: same

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: 1786

8. MATERIAL(S) (indicate use or location when appropriate):
   x clapboard  __ asbestos siding
   __ wood shingle  __ asphalt siding
   __ board & batten  __ stucco
   __ aluminum siding  __ concrete, type:  
   __ other:
   __ brick  __ fieldstone  __ cobblestone
   __ cut stone, type: brownstone
   __ foundation

9. STRUCTURAL SYSTEM:
   x wood frame; x post and beam  balloon
   __ load bearing masonry  __ structural iron or steel
   __ other:

10. ROOF: type:
    x gable  __ flat  __ mansard  __ monitor  __ sawtooth
    __ gambrel  __ shed  __ hip  __ round  __ other:
    __ material:
    __ wood shingle  __ roll asphalt  __ tin  __ slate  __ other:
    __ asphalt shingle built up  __ tile  __ other:
       30’x38’

11. NUMBER OF STORIES: __2½__  APPROXIMATE DIMENSIONS: 31’x18’ southwest wing

12. CONDITION: Structural: x excellent  __ good
    __ fair  __ deteriorated
    Exterior: x excellent  __ good
    __ fair  __ deteriorated

13. INTEGRITY: Location: x on original site  moved, when:
    Alterations: __ no  x yes, explain: Southwest wing attached; southeast door removed; Greek Revival doorways added; north wing added

14. RELATED OUTBUILDINGS OR LANDSCAPE FEATURES:
    x barn  __ shed  __ garage  __ other landscape features or buildings: white picket fence along East Street; large ash tree on southeast corner of property
    __ carriage house  __ shop  __ garden

15. SURROUNDING ENVIRONMENT:
    x open land  __ woodland  x residential  x scattered buildings visible from site
    __ commercial  __ industrial  __ rural  __ high building density

16. INTERRELATIONSHIP OF BUILDING AND SURROUNDINGS: This large center-chimney Georgian house faces east on East Street at the head of Poplar Lane. It is set back behind an elaborate white picket fence along the road, and a large ash tree whose high branches frame the house in a picturesque manner. This section of East Street displays several fine old houses in a rural setting with some new development taking place south of Poplar Lane.
17. OTHER NOTABLE FEATURES OF BUILDING OR SITE (interior and/or exterior):

Denticulated main cornice
Paneling, wainscot, and denticulated cornice in northeast parlor
Much original material; floors, paneling, hardware, etc.
Original stone hitching posts flanking gate on picket fence

SIGNIFICANCE

18. HISTORICAL OR ARCHITECTURAL IMPORTANCE: Captain Giles Wilcox erected this house in 1786 on land he acquired from the estate of his father-in-law, David Doud. Giles Wilcox lived to be 88 years old, and was prominent in local affairs, serving as a Captain in the militia. The house remained in the Wilcox family until 1943, when it was acquired by the present owners, the Brainard family.

This house displays the center-chimney, two room-deep plan typical of 18th century Connecticut Valley house construction. A denticulated main cornice distinguishes the facade, while the interior displays much original paneling, wainscoting, hardware, etc. The southwest wing was originally a small center-chimney house which pre-dated this one. It was moved and attached for use as a kitchen wing over 100 years ago.

This is an imposing house for its type of construction; as such, it reflects the elevated position of Giles Wilcox in the Westfield Parish.

PHOTOGRAPH

photographer: John E. Reynolds

date: 11/78
view: east

negative on file: Roll 51, #5-5A

COMPILED BY:

name: John E. Reynolds
organization: Greater Middletown Preservation Trust

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date: 9/78

19. SOURCES: Middletown Land Records; Middletown Probate Court Records; Joellyn Kuhnlein and Elizabeth Reynolds, "Wilcox House," GMPT Report (unpublished, 1974); Beers Comemorative Biography of Middlesex County (Chicago: J.H. Beers, 1903); 1859 Walling Map; 1874 Beers Atlas

20. SUBSEQUENT FIELD EVALUATIONS:

21. THREATS TO BUILDING OR SITE:

X none known  __highways  __vandalism  __developers
__renewal  __private  __deterioration  __zoning
__ other: ____________________________
__ explanation: ______________________