STATE OF CONNECTICUT

1. BUILDING NAME: Common: Alsop Farmhouse Historic: Joseph Wright, Jr. House

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

3. STREET & NUMBER (and/or location): 1181 East Street

4. OWNER(S): George J. Achenbach PUBLIC / PRIVATE

5. USE: Present: Vacant Historic: Residence

6. ACCESSIBILITY TO PUBLIC: Exterior visible from public road: Yes No Interior accessible: Yes, explain No

DESCRIPTION

7. STYLE OF BUILDING: Center-Chimney Colonial DATE OF CONSTRUCTION: c. 1735-1740

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

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

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

11. NUMBER OF STORIES: 2½ APPROXIMATE DIMENSIONS: 39'x27'; leanto 12'x42'

12. CONDITION: Structural: Excellent x Good Fair Deteriorated
    Exterior: Excellent Good Fair Deteriorated

13. INTEGRITY: Location: x on original site moved, when:
    Alterations: No, Yes, explain: Exterior flue added, north side

14. RELATED OUTBUILDINGS OR LANDSCAPE FEATURES:
    - barn
    - carriage house
    - shed
    - shop
    - garage
    - x other landscape features or buildings: condominiums and parking lot
    - open land
    - woodland
    - residential
    - scattered buildings visible from site
    - commercial
    - industrial
    - rural
    - x high building density

15. SURROUNDING ENVIRONMENT:

16. INTERRELATIONSHIP OF BUILDING AND SURROUNDINGS: The Alsop farmhouse is located in Westfield, a rural area in the western part of Middletown. It is well set back from East Street, in the midst of a large, contemporary apartment condominium development.
17. OTHER NOTABLE FEATURES OF BUILDING OR SITE (interior and/or exterior):
   Fireplace wall panelling and dado panelling in all main rooms
   Triple-run stair with turned balusters and carved handrail
   Many original doors and much old hardware

SIGNIFICANCE
Architect: Builder:

18. HISTORICAL OR ARCHITECTURAL IMPORTANCE: Joseph Wright, Jr. built this house possibly as early as 1735. Wright was a well-to-do farmer in the Newfield and Westfield areas of Middletown, with land holdings of over four hundred acres. The marriage of his daughter Mary to Capt. Richard Alsop in 1760 established a family alliance between Middletown's most prominent merchant and an equally prominent supplier of foodstuffs, livestock, and other locally produced goods which found a ready market in the West Indies.
   Tradition has it that Joseph Wright was the first to discover the suitability of the local clay for brick making. Around 1751 he built a gambrel-roofed townhouse on Main Street said to be the first building in Middletown constructed of native brick. Wright was an important figure in the organization of Middletown's Episcopal Church, and later served as Captain of militia during the Revolution.
   The Wright House in Westfield, although presently vacant and suffering from neglect, retains most of its original fabric and decoration. This includes hardware, raised panelling, fireplaces, and a fine triple-run staircase. Reflecting Wright's elevated standing in Colonial Middletown, his house displays an elaborate and formal decorative treatment which belies its early date and rural origin.

PHOTOGRAPH
photographer: John E. Reynolds
date: 12/78 view: southeast
negative on file: Roll 51, #35

COMPILED BY:
name: John E. Reynolds date: 9/78
organization: Greater Middletown Preservation Trust
address: 27 Washington St., Middletown, Ct. 06457

19. SOURCES: Middletown Land Records; "Joseph Wright House," Colonial Dames Monograph; 1859 Walling Map; 1874 Beers Atlas

20. SUBSEQUENT FIELD EVALUATIONS:

21. THREATS TO BUILDING OR SITE:
   none known highways ☒ vandalism ☐ developers ☐ other:
   renewal ☐ private ☒ deterioration ☐ zoning ☐ explanation: building is vacant, without maintenance and is vulnerable to vandalism