NAME: Common: Liberty Savings Bank    Historic: Old Banking House Block

VILLAGE: Middletown    COUNTY: Middlesex

NUMBER (and/or location): 319-323 Main Street

The Liberty Bank For Savings    PUBLIC PRIVATE

Built: Bank    Historic: Bank and Stores

TY TO PUBLIC: Exterior visible from public road: x yes no
Interior accessible: x yes, explain: bank use no

BUILDING: Commercial Italianate    DATE OF CONSTRUCTION: c. 1796; north section, c. 1815

MATERIAL: (indicate use or location when appropriate):
  asbestos siding
  asphalt siding
  stucco
  concrete: type: 
  brick
  fieldstone
  cobblestone
  cut stone: type: brownstone
  lintels & sills; keystone, second floor window arches

UP AL SYSTEM:
  frame: post and beam
  bearing masonry
  structural iron or steel

SLOPE:
  x flat
  shed
  hip
  round
  sawtooth
  other

STORIES: 3    APPROXIMATE DIMENSIONS: 44' x 43'

CONSTRUCTION:
  Structural: excellent
  Exterior: excellent

x good
x good
fair
fair
deteriorated
deteriorated

LOCATION: x on original site moved, when:
Alterations: no x yes, explain: Third story added c. 1890, See #18; major interior renovations

OUTBUILDINGS OR LANDSCAPE FEATURES:
  shed
  garage
  other landscape features or buildings:

BUILDING ENVIRONMENT:
  woodland
  residential
  scattered buildings visible from site
  x high building density

ATIONSHIP OF BUILDING AND SURROUNDINGS: This three-story brick structure faces...
...west side of Main Street in Middletown's central business district. Attached...
...wall is a five-story Renaissance Revival structure, also housing Liberty Bank of...
...building is attached to the north. Located across the street and...
(see continuation sheet)
SIGNIFICANCE

Architect: ___________ Builder: ___________

18. HISTORICAL OR ARCHITECTURAL IMPORTANCE: This structure was constructed in three different sections over a one hundred year period. The original two-story south section was built by Samuel Watkinson between 1796 and 1809. The second two-story north section was built by Watkinson's son-in-law, Samuel Gill, between 1812 and 1822. Records indicate the third story, extending across the two sections, was added by Oliver Watrous in 1890. The Middletown Savings Bank owned and occupied the building from 1838 to 1870. This was the bank's first substantial building. In 1870 the business moved and two years later sold the building to David J. Neale. David J. Neale and his brother Thomas, both "merchant tailors", were probably responsible for the north store front "modernizations." Neale leased the south store to the Beebe brothers, "millinery and fancy good" merchants. The upstairs of the premises was leased by various dentists, one of whom, Oliver Watrous, eventually purchased the building in 1890. Other occupants of the late 19th century included: Blake and Barton, "clothing, hats and gents furnishing"; Alvin P. French, dentist; Bacon and Guy, shoes and insurance agents; and The Middletown Coal Company, coal and wood, flagging and curbing stone. In 1924, Watrous sold the (see continuation sheet)

PHOTOGRAPH

photographer: John E. Reynolds
date: 10/78 view: east
negative on file: Roll 50, #36

COMPiled BY:

name: Elizabeth Loomis date: 11/78
organization: Greater Middletown Preservation Trust
address: 27 Washington St., Middletown, CT. 06457

19. SOURCES: Middletown Land Records; Middletown City Directories; "Old Banking House Block,"

20. SUBSEQUENT FIELD EVALUATIONS:

21. THREATS TO BUILDING OR SITE:

X none known ______ highways ______ vandalism ______ developers
____ renewal ______ private ______ deterioration ______ zoning
____ other: __________________________
____ explanation: ____________________
Old Banking House Block
319-323 Main St., Middletown, Ct. 06457

located south is Riverview Center, a large, modern, two-story, commercial complex. Directly
north is the Old Post Office (1916).

...ing to The Middletown Coal Company who continued to occupy the premises until 1951.
...he time it was purchased by the Middletown Savings Bank, which had moved to the ad-
...nt corner site, erecting a five-story Renaissance Revival building in 1928. Thus this
...oved back into its first building, which has stood through it all.

The facade of this Italianate structure is brick and is accented by brownstone sills and
...els at the second story, arched windows with keystones at the third story, all of which
...ounted by a decorative wooden cornice. The bank undertook a major restoration/ren-
...hough dominated by large structures on either side, this building stands out due to its
...t appearance and crisp lines.
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