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: Rockwell House Historic: Rockwell-Sumner House
2. TOWN/CITY: Middletown VILLAGE: COUNTY: Middlesex
3. STREET & NUMBER (and/or location): 21 Pleasant Street
4. OWNER(S): South Congregational Church PUBLIC X PRIVATE
5. USE: Present: Parish House & offices Historic: Residence
6. ACCESSIBILITY TO PUBLIC: Exterior visible from public road: X yes no
   Interior accessible: X yes, explain open to public no

DESCRIPTION
7. STYLE OF BUILDING: center chimney Colonial
   DATE OF CONSTRUCTION: c. 1721
8. MATERIAL(S) (indicate use or location when appropriate):
   X wood shingle ___ asbestos siding
   ___ board & batten ___ asphalt siding
   ___ aluminum siding ___ stucco
   ___ other: ___ concrete: type:
   ___ brick foundation-rear addition
   ___ fieldstone ___ cobblestone
   ___ cut stone: type: brownstone
   ___ foundation-main section
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 ___ shedrear ___ hip ___ round ___ other
        ___ wood shingle ___ roll asphalt ___ tin ___ slate
        ___ asphalt shingle ___ built up ___ tile ___ other:
11. NUMBER OF STORIES: 2½ APPROXIMATE DIMENSIONS:
12. CONDITION: Structural: X excellent ___ good ___ fair ___ deteriorated
    Exterior: X excellent ___ good ___ fair ___ deteriorated
13. INTEGRITY: Location: on original site ___ moved, when:
    Alterations: ___ no X yes, explain: later entranceway; shed to rear:
14. RELATED OUTBUILDINGS OR LANDSCAPE FEATURES:
    ___ barn ___ shed X garage ___ other landscape features or buildings:
    ___ carriage house ___ shop ___ garden
15. SURROUNDING ENVIRONMENT:
    X open land ___ woodland ___ residential ___ scattered buildings visible from site
    ___ commercial ___ industrial ___ rural ___ high building density
16. INTERRELATIONSHIP OF BUILDING AND SURROUNDINGS: This house is located on the south
    side of Pleasant Street, facing the historic South Green. It sits between two
    Second Empire dwellings. It is the earliest house in an area primarily of mid-to late-nineteenth
    century residences.
HER NOTABLE FEATURES OF BUILDING OR SITE (interior and/or exterior):

Later Federal entrance porch

ARCHITECT:

HISTORICAL OR ARCHITECTURAL IMPORTANCE: The Joseph Rockwell house is the sole survivor of the early days of the South Green development. It was built when the "Road to Haven" swept from Main Street through this broad open space and continued southerly towards the Pamecha district. This road, in later years, was called South Main Street. Between the years of 1867 and 1870 the area experienced marked development; high style residences were erected on the South Green and on Crescent Street. By 1874 the South Green formally became known as Union Park. Throughout all of these changes, the Joseph Rockwell House survived.

The house was constructed by Joseph Rockwell around 1728 and shortly after was transferred to his son Joseph Rockwell, Jr. It remained in the Rockwell family until 1782. It then passed through a succession of owners until 1825 when it was purchased by John Sumner. It stayed in the Sumner family for over one hundred years. Subsequently the Pease family occupied the house, until 1950. It is presently owned by the South Congregational Church and is used for a variety of services.

The interior has a typical first period Colonial floor plan; center chimney and triple (see continuation sheet)

PHOTOGRAPH

photographer: Elizabeth Loomis

date: 7/78

view: northwest

negative on file: Roll 33, § 35

COMPILED BY:

name: Elizabeth Loomis
date: 8/78

organization: Greater Middletown Preservation Trust

address: 27 Washington St., Middletown, Ct. 06457

19. SOURCES: Middletown Land Records; Middletown Probate Records; Middletown City Directories

20. SUBSEQUENT FIELD EVALUATIONS:

21. THREATS TO BUILDING OR SITE:

X none known

highways

vandalism

developers

other:

explanation:

renewal

private

deterioration

zoning

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run staircase in a shallow entrance hall. The parlor and the dining room flank the chimney and the kitchen runs full width across the rear of the house.

The building has been adapted for new uses, but retains many early elements such as paneling, a beehive oven, wrought iron hardware and wide floor boards.

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CONTINUATION SHEET

Item number: _____ Date: 1/90

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY

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