IDENTIFICATION
Industrial Site and Factory Buildings


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

3. STREET & NUMBER (and/or location): 217 Smith Street

4. OWNER(S): Raymond Engineering, Inc. PUBLIC _PRIVATE x

5. USE: Present: Industrial Historic: same

6. ACCESSIBILITY TO PUBLIC: Exterior visible from public road: x yes _no
Interior accessible: _yes, explain ___________________________ x no

DESCRIPTION
Plain 19th Century

7. STYLE OF BUILDING: Industrial DATE OF CONSTRUCTION: c. 1875

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: probably brown-stone sills and lintels

9. STRUCTURAL SYSTEM:
   - wood frame: _post and beam _balloon
   - x load bearing masonry _structural iron or steel
   - other: ___________________________

10. ROOF: type:
    - x gable _flat _mansard _monitor _sawtooth _other
    - gambrel
    - shed _hip _round _other

    material:
    - wood shingle _roll asphalt _tin _slate _other: ___________________________ East building 58'x52' (north section, 22'x56'); West

    _asphalt shingle _built up _tile _other: ___________________________

11. NUMBER OF STORIES: 2 APPROXIMATE DIMENSIONS: building 27'x110'

12. CONDITION: Structural: _excellent _x good _fair _deteriorated
    Exterior: _excellent _x good _fair _deteriorated

13. INTEGRITY: Location: x on original site _moved, when:
    Alterations: _no _x yes, explain: Interior modernized; minor additions

14. RELATED OUTBUILDINGS OR LANDSCAPE FEATURES:
    - barn _shed _garage _x other landscape features or buildings: wire link
    - carriage house _shop _garden _fence topped with barbed wire surrounds
    - x commercial _industrial _residential _x scattered buildings visible from site
    - _high building density

15. SURROUNDING ENVIRONMENT:
    _open land _woodland _residential _x commercial _industrial _rural

16. INTERRELATIONSHIP OF BUILDING AND SURROUNDINGS: This industrial complex is situated close to the south side of Smith Street slightly east of Interstate 91. The two former J.O. Smith Manufacturing Company buildings are located near each other close by the Smith Street gate. The traditional rural character of this section of Westfield has been altered as the result of industrial zoning.
17. OTHER NOTABLE FEATURES OF BUILDING OR SITE (interior and/or exterior):
Denticulated brickwork main cornice and cornice returns
Stone window lintels with carved moldings
Some arched brick window lintels

SIGNIFICANCE

18. HISTORICAL OR ARCHITECTURAL IMPORTANCE: In 1826 a newly arrived English immigrant named John Smith purchased Nathaniel Bacon's distillery for the purpose of commencing the manufacture of "Japan" finishes. The business prospered, and it was subsequently re-organized into a joint-stock company by John Smith's son, James Owen Smith. The product line was enlarged to include varnishes, enamels, and "stationers' tinware". In 1874 a fire razed the factory buildings, which were at once rebuilt of brick masonry construction. Two of these buildings remain in the present industrial complex. After World War II Raymond Engineering Laboratories, Inc. purchased the site and have expanded its size up to the present day. This may be one of the oldest industrial sites in Middletown in continuous use.

The two brick buildings which date from the J.O. Smith Manufacturing Company's reconstruction of ca. 1875 are functional in appearance: two stories high with long facades and low gable roofs. Denticulated cornices and carved stone window caps are the only decoration.

PHOTOGRAPH
photographer: Barbara Ann Messina
date: 11/78 view: northeast
negative on file: Roll 49, #24

COMPILED BY:
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19. SOURCES: History of Middlesex County (Chicago: H.F. Beers, 1884); Commemorative Biography of Middlesex County (Chicago: J.H. Beers, 1903); Middletown City Directories; 1859 Walling Mapl 1874 Beers Atlas

20. SUBSEQUENT FIELD EVALUATIONS:

21. THREATS TO BUILDING OR SITE:

x explanation: Raymond Engineering's current plans to expand the plant call for the demolition of the former J.O. Smith Manufacturing buildings.