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

STORIC RESOURCES INVENTORY FORM
for Buildings and Structures

ENTIFICATION
1. BUILDING NAME: Common: Old Mill Wayside Furniture Historic: Johnson's Mill
2. TOWN/CITY: Middletown VILLAGE: ____________________________ COUNTY: Middlesex
3. STREET & NUMBER (and/or location): 675 Washington Street
4. OWNER(S): Edward Larson ____________________________ PUBLIC X PRIVATE
5. USE: Present: Furniture Store Historic: Grist Mill
6. ACCESSIBILITY TO PUBLIC: Exterior visible from public road: x yes __ no
Interior accessible: x yes, explain ____________________________ no

DESCRIPTION
7. STYLE OF BUILDING: Late 18th Century Industrial DATE OF CONSTRUCTION: c. 1780
8. MATERIAL(S) (indicate use or location when appropriate):
   X clapboard ______ wood shingle ______ board & batten
   ______ aluminum siding ______ other: ______ asbestos siding wing
   ______ asphalt siding ______ stucco ______ concrete: type: ______ brick
   ______ fieldstone ______ cobblestone X 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
    X asphalt shingle ______ built up ______ tile ______ other: ____________________________
11. NUMBER OF STORIES: 3 1/2 APPROXIMATE DIMENSIONS: 30' x 50'; wing 25' x 60'
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: Commercial signs; structural reinforcements, interior;
    added "picture windows," first floor
14. RELATED OUTBUILDINGS OR LANDSCAPE FEATURES:
    X barn ______ shed ______ garage ______ other landscape features or buildings: park-like field
    ____ carriage house ____ shop ____ garden ______ approximately one acre adjacent to the buildings
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 tall clapboarded mill building,
painted barn red with white trim, occupies a prominent site at the intersection of the Coginchaug River and Washington Street. It is located in the heart of a drive-in business district. The commercial clamor is moderated by well-kept grounds stretching back alongside the river to the original mill pond on the south.
17. OTHER NOTABLE FEATURES OF BUILDING OR SITE (interior and/or exterior):

Functional loading ramp at west end of main building -- originally used for unloading grain for milling at second floor level. Now used for loading furniture into delivery trucks. It is supported by a brownstone rubble retaining wall.

SIGNIFICANCE

18. HISTORICAL OR ARCHITECTURAL IMPORTANCE: The first building on this site was a saw-mill built in the mid-eighteenth century. Late in the same century the current building was erected as a grist mill. Throughout the nineteenth century the grist mill was operated here under the name of J. Johnson and Co. When the age of water power passed, the land was filled in around the mill, leaving only the current stream bed. In the 1950s and 1960s the Larson family, owners of the furniture store run in the old mill building, made plans to restore the old water works as a tourist attraction. Current highway reconstruction and bridge rebuilding at the very doorstep of the building has made it doubtful if the plans will ever be completed.

The main mill building is of post and beam construction throughout. Some of the weakened beams and flooring have been replaced, but in a sympathetic manner. The two-story wooden wing at the south side, which serves as a furniture showroom, is a factory building from the Cutaway Harrow Company, which was moved up from Higganum. These former industrial buildings have been effectively adapted for use as display areas for the Old Mill Wayside Furniture store.

PHOTOGRAPH

photographer: Roger Sherman
date: 9/78
view: north
negative on file: Roll 42, #22-22A

COMPILED BY:

name: Roger Sherman
date: 9/78
organization: Greater Middletown Preservation Trust
address: 27 Washington St., Middletown, Ct. 06457

19. SOURCES: Consultation with owner, 11/78;
1851 Clark Map; 1874 Beers Atlas

20. SUBSEQUENT FIELD EVALUATIONS:

21. THREATS TO BUILDING OR SITE:

- none known
- highways
- vandalism
- developers
- renewal
- private
- deterioration
- zoning

Explanation: A corner of the building is within the right-of-way of Route 66, the major east-west highway out of Middletown. A bridge rebuilding project currently causes much traffic congestion at the site.