IDENTIFICATION
1. BUILDING NAME: Common: Historic: James Plumb House
2. TOWN/CITY: Middletown VILLAGE: Westfield COUNTY: Middlesex
3. STREET & NUMBER (and/or location): 872 Westfield Street
4. OWNER(S): Peter M. and Laura Frenzel PUBLIC X PRIVATE
5. USE: Present: Residence Historic: same
6. ACCESSIBILITY TO PUBLIC: Exterior visible from public road: yes no Interior accessible: yes, explain with owner’s permission no

DESCRIPTION
7. STYLE OF BUILDING: Federal DATE OF CONSTRUCTION: c. 1804
8. MATERIAL(S) (indicate use or location when appropriate):
   X clapboard asbestos siding brick
   wood shingle asphalt siding fieldstone
   board & batten stucco cobblestone
   aluminum siding concrete: type: cut stone: type: brownstone
   other:
9. STRUCTURAL SYSTEM:
   X wood frame: X post and beam: balloon structural iron or steel
   ■ load bearing masonry
   ■ other:
10. ROOF: type:
    ■ gable ■ flat ■ mansard ■ monitor ■ sawtooth
    ■ gambrel ■ shed ■ X hip ■ round ■ other
    material: ■ wood shingle ■ roll asphalt ■ slate
    ■ asphalt shingle ■ built up ■ tile ■ other:
11. NUMBER OF STORIES: 2½ APPROXIMATE DIMENSIONS: 38’x33’; northeast ell 40’6”x17’
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: Bathroom added at head of main stairs, 2nd floor
14. RELATED OUTBUILDINGS OR LANDSCAPE FEATURES:
    X barn ■ shed ■ garage ■ other landscape features or buildings:
    ■ carriage house ■ shop ■ garden
15. SURROUNDING ENVIRONMENT:
    ■ open land ■ woodland X residential scattered buildings visible from site
    ■ commercial ■ industrial ■ rural ■ high building density
16. INTERRELATIONSHIP OF BUILDING AND SURROUNDINGS: This house faces south from the northeast corner of Westfield and East Streets. Tall shade trees shield the house from the nearby roads. Neighboring structures date from post-World War II development of this formerly rural area.
17. OTHER NOTABLE FEATURES OF BUILDING OR SITE (interior and/or exterior):

- Cove ceiling entrance porch
- Denticulated main cornice
- Leaded fanlight over entrance door
- Center stairway with delicate balustrade
- Southeast room fireplace is of Count Rumford design

SIGNIFICANCE

Architect: Builder:

18. HISTORICAL OR ARCHITECTURAL IMPORTANCE: James Plumb, a well-to-do farmer in Westfield, built this house in 1804 on land inherited from his father, Samuel Plumb. The house remained in the Plumb-Barry family until 1888; since then it has passed through a succession of owners while retaining its traditional residential usage.

This finely-scaled Federal style frame house is of a central hall plan; its exterior displays a symmetrical five-bay facade with hip roof and twin chimneys. A denticulated main cornice and delicate window caps add decorative interest to the facade, while attention is drawn to the entrance by a columned porch with cove ceiling. The possibility exists that the northeast kitchen wing is Samuel Plumb's own dwelling house, built around 1740, and relegated to a minor role as an attached dependency by the subsequent construction of James Plumb's "Mansion House".

The largely original condition of this house, together with its distinctive appearance and compatible site, makes it a rare and pleasing example of early Federal style architecture in Middletown.

PHOTOGRAPH

photographer: John E. Reynolds
date: 11/78
view: south
negative on file: Roll 51, #2-2A

COMPiled BY:

name: John E. Reynolds
date: 9/78
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19. SOURCES: Middletown Land Records; Middletown Probate Court Records; Middletown City Directories; Joellyn Kuhnlein and Elizabeth Reynolds, "James Plumb House," GMPT Report (unpublished, 1973); 1859 Walling Map; 1874 Beers Atlas

20. SUBSEQUENT FIELD EVALUATIONS:

21. THREATS TO BUILDING OR SITE:

X none known  highways  vandalism  developers  other:

renewal  private  deterioration  zoning  explanation: