

CT Trust Resource ID: 2395

HISTORIC RESOURCE INVENTORY – BUILDING AND STRUCTURES

State Historic Preservation Office, DECD, One Constitution Plaza, 2nd Floor, Hartford, CT 06103

*Note: Please attach any additional or expanded information on a separate sheet.

Inventory form modified for the Creative Places - Arts & Letters Project

GENERAL INFORMATION

Building Name (Common): Vito Covelli HouseOther Name(s) (Historic): Name UnknownStreet Address or Location: 166 E West Hill Road, BarkhamstedTown/City: Barkhamsted

Village:

County: Litchfield

Designation(s):

Owner(s): Estate of Philip J. and Olivia C. CovelliPublic/Private: PrivateLatitude: 41.8905 Longitude: -73.0123

PROPERTY INFORMATION

Present Use: Domestic: single dwellingHistoric Use: Domestic: single dwellingAccessibility to public: No Exterior visible from public road? YesInterior accessible? If yes, explain: NAStyle of building: Greek Revival Date of Construction: c. 1860Material(s) (Indicate use or location when appropriate) Fieldstone, ClapboardStructural Systems(s): Wood FrameRoof(Type): Gable (Material): Asphalt ShingleNumber of Stories: 2 1/2 Approximate Dimensions: 25' x 30'Structural Condition: GoodExterior Condition: GoodLocational Integrity: On original site Moved, When: NAAlterations?: No If yes, explain: NARelated outbuildings or landscape features: ShedSurrounding Environment: Residential

Interrelationship of building and surroundings:

This property is located on the east side of East West Hill Road in Barkhamsted and includes a house constructed c. 1860 and a twenty-first century garage on a 78.38-acre lot. A short driveway extends to the east off the road and terminates in front of (to the east of) the garage. The garage sits just to the southeast of the house. The property sits very close to the town line of New Hartford which borders the south line of the property.

Other notable features of building or site:

The house is close to the road, and faces west. It is a two-story, wood-frame, front-gable house with Greek Revival features including the low pitch front-gable roof, a continuous frieze band across the gable-front, and the door surround. The house is sheathed in clapboard and vinyl siding, has a fieldstone foundation, asphalt shingles on the roof, and two brick chimneys. This single-family residence includes seven rooms and is approximately 25' x 30'.

The front door is centered on the façade, and includes an entry surround with pilasters and a simple entablature. The door is reached by stone steps. The gable attic has horizontal board siding and a multi-paned, rectangular window. A secondary entry is located on the south elevation of the house, near the west corner. The house has a small ell extending off the south elevation. The east elevation of the house has cornice returns in the gable-end. Fenestration includes six-over-six and nine-over-nine double-hung windows.

Architect: Unknown Builder/Maker: Unknown

Historical or Architectural importance:

In an 1859 Litchfield County map of Barkhamsted by G. M. Hopkins, the owner of this property was H. Dutton. By 1874, shown in a F. W. Beers Litchfield County Map, H. Dutton was still the owner. The Tiffany Records, found in Barkhamsted Heritage, edited by Richard G. Wheeler and George Hilton, confirm this and gives later owners, c. 1922 Alfred Hopkins, and in 1974 Vito Covelli (Wheeler and Hilton 1975, 287). Vito and Claire Covelli purchased the property, which consisted of 150 acres and a house, in 1926 (Covelli Interview 2015). The property was inherited by Philip and Olivia Covelli in 1955.

This property is significant for its association with artist Vito Covelli (1881-1958). Covelli created locally known works of art at the property during his year-round occupancy from 1926-1958. The works included 125 oil paintings for the Works Progress Administration Federal Art Project during the Great Depression.

Vito Covelli was born in 1881 in Bari, Italy. Before he immigrated to the United States, he had studied Art in Italy. He had also studied to be an electrician. When he first moved to New York, he worked as a repairman for counters and display cases in department stores (Covelli Interview

2015). In 1913 he married Claire deGuine, and after working in New York City for some years, they moved to Barkhamsted, purchasing this property and living simply. From 1937 until 1940, Covelli painted for the Works Progress Administration Federal Art Program. During this time he created 125 oil paintings that were hung in institutions around Connecticut (Boughton 2014).

Sources:

Photographs, field notes, and site visit by Kristen Nietering – 4/24/2015.

Interview with Olivia Covelli – 4/24/2015, 166 East West Hill Road, Barkhamsted, CT.

Town of Barkhamsted Assessor's Records & GIs viewer. Accessed at: Town of Barkhamsted. Accessed October 29, 2015

<http://www.mapgeo.com/barkhamstedct/#>.

Connecticut State Library. 2011. 1934 Aerial Survey Photographs Index Photograph 10348. Accessed October 29, 2015.

<http://cslib.contentdm.oclc.org/cdm/singleitem/collection/p4005coll10/id/5173>.

F. W. Beers & Co. 1874. Barkhamsted, Winchester Town, Riverton Town, Valley Pleasant. Litchfield County 1874.

Boughton, Kathryn. 2014. Rediscovering an artist Barkhamsted man part of America's revival. Republican American, October 17. Accessed October 29, 2015. <http://www.rep-am.com/articles/2014/10/18/news/local/836567.txt>.

Dickinson, Ernest N. 1952. The Secret of Happiness Is Richly Theirs: New Hartford's Joyous Covellis Make Life a Liltng Song. The Hartford Courant (1923-1990), October 19.

Special. 1955. Mrs. Vito Covelli Dies; Was Former Singer In Opera. The Hartford Courant (1923-1990), January 21. Vito Covelli Landscape Artist,

Dies. 1958. The Hartford Courant (1923-1990), January 25.

Wheeler, Richard G. & George Hilton. 1975. Barkhamsted Heritage. Canton, Connecticut: Barkhamsted Historical Society, Inc.

Photographer: Kristen Nietering **Date:** 4/24/2015

View: West view

Form completed by: Kristen Nietering **Printed On:** June 13, 2016

Organization: Connecticut Trust for Historic Preservation

Address: 940 Whitney Avenue, Hamden CT 06517-4002

Threats: None known

Subsequent field evaluations:



136 E. West Hill Road, Barkhamsted - West view

FOR OFFICE USE:

Town # _____ **Site#** _____ **UTM** _____

District ☐ S ☐ NR **If NR, specify:** ☐ Actual ☐ Potential