

CT Trust Resource ID: 2460

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): Maurice Sendak HouseOther Name(s) (Historic): Maurice Sendak HouseStreet Address or Location: 200 Chestnut Hill Rd., RidgefieldTown/City: Ridgefield

Village:

County: Fairfield

Designation(s):

Owner(s): Maurice Sendak EstatePublic/Private: PrivateLatitude: 41.3508 Longitude: -73.5410

PROPERTY INFORMATION

Present Use: Residential: single family dwellingHistoric Use: Residential: single family dwellingAccessibility to public: No Exterior visible from public road? YesInterior accessible? If yes, explain: NAStyle of building: Colonial Date of Construction: c. 1790Material(s) (Indicate use or location when appropriate) ClapboardStructural Systems(s): Wood FrameRoof(Type): Gable (Material): Asphalt ShingleNumber of Stories: 1 1/2 Approximate Dimensions: 30' x 23'Structural Condition: GoodExterior Condition: GoodLocational Integrity: On original site Moved, When: NAAlterations?: Yes If yes, explain: Additions addedRelated outbuildings or landscape features: Barn, ShedSurrounding Environment: Residential

Interrelationship of building and surroundings: This property sits on 16.57 acres of land on the north side of Chestnut Hill Road. The house is set back from the road, partially obscured from view by trees along the south border of the property. A garage sits to the east of the house, and a short driveway extending to the north terminates in front of it. A small shed is directly to the north of the house. Just to the west of the property is the intersection of Cherry Hill Road and Chestnut Hill Road. Surrounding the property are wooded areas with coniferous and deciduous trees as well as nineteenth and twentieth century single-family dwellings.

Other notable features of building or site: This is a one and a half story, Colonial house with a side gable-roof. The house has two large additions, one added on the west elevation and the other on the east elevation. It is sheathed in clapboard siding with asphalt shingles on the roof. A brick chimney protrudes from the ridge of the roof. The main entry appears to be in the breezeway connecting the west elevation of the house to the western side addition. The façade faces south. Fenestration includes a bay window with eight-pane windows centered on the façade with pairs of six-over-six double-hung windows with shutters on either side. Just below the eaves of the roof are three two-pane windows with shutters. Both additions have front-gable roofs with brick chimneys.

Architect: Unknown Builder/Maker: Unknown

Historical or Architectural importance:

Maurice Sendak was born in 1928 in New York City to Polish-Jewish immigrants. His father was a dressmaker, and Sendak grew up in Brooklyn. Sendak was often sick as a child and started to draw to pass his time by. During high school, he worked for All-American Comics and after his graduation he published some of his illustrations in "Atomics for the Millions." In 1948 he began working at the toy store, F. A. O. Schwartz, as a window designer, and continued to work there for four years while taking night classes at the Art Students League. While working at F. A. O. Schwartz, he met book editor, Ursula Nordstrom, and with her help was able to acquire illustrating jobs for such children's book authors as Ruth Krauss, Else Holmelund Minarik, and Marcel Aymé. After some successful illustrating jobs, he left the toy store to freelance as an illustrator. During the 1950s, Sendak illustrated more than 50 books by other children's book authors before writing and illustrating his own book. In 1956, "Kenny's Window," his first children's book he wrote and illustrated himself was published. One of his best known books, "Where the Wild Things Are," was published in 1963, and earned him a Caldecott Award. According to Biography.com,

"Sendak's dark, moody illustrations were a shocking contrast to the usually light and happy fare found in typical children's books of the time. The main character, Max, like many of Sendak's protagonists, acted like a real child, not some idealized version of youth" (Biography.com 2016). In 2012, Maurice Sendak died at the age of 83. Throughout his life, he produced more than 50 books, and illustrated more than 50 by other writers. In addition to writing and illustrating children's books, he collaborated with Carole King on the musical, "Really Rosie," and contributed to other stage work.

Sources:

http://www.nytimes.com/2014/12/02/books/maurice-sendaks-estate-debating-where-the-things-go.html?_r=0#;
<http://www.ctpost.com/local/article/Sendak-collection-coming-home-to-Ridgefield-5765944.php#photo-6881762>;
<http://www.biography.com/people/maurice-sendak-9478893#critical-acclaim>; <http://www.pbs.org/wnet/americanmasters/maurice-sendak-about-maurice-sendak/701/>

Photographer: Bing.com **Date:**

View:

Form completed by: Kristen Nietering **Printed On:** April 18, 2016

Organization: Connecticut Trust for Historic Preservation

Address: 940 Whitney Avenue, Hamden CT 06517-4002

Threats: None known

Subsequent field evaluations:



Bing.com photo of the south facade.

FOR OFFICE USE:

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

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