

CT Trust Resource ID: 4159

## 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): Frankenthaler, Helen, HouseOther Name(s) (Historic): Frankenthaler, Helen, HouseStreet Address or Location: 102 Saddle Rock Road, StamfordTown/City: Stamford

Village:

County: Fairfield

Designation(s):

Owner(s): WARD WILLIAM WPublic/Private: PrivateLatitude: 41.0184 Longitude: -73.5292

### 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: Shingle style (altered) Date of Construction: 1914Material(s) (Indicate use or location when appropriate) ClapboardStructural Systems(s): Wood FrameRoof(Type): Hip (Material): Asphalt ShingleNumber of Stories: Approximate Dimensions:Structural Condition: GoodExterior Condition: GoodLocational Integrity: On original site Moved, When: NAAlterations?: Yes If yes, explain: Modernization, additionsRelated outbuildings or landscape features: Barn, ShorelineSurrounding Environment: Residential

### Interrelationship of building and surroundings:

The house is located on Shippan Point which extends into Long Island Sound near the eastern border of Stamford. This property is on the east side of the point, facing eastward toward the water. The house is surrounded by lawn with a masonry seawall along the east side of the lawn, and a stretch of beach fronting the property.

### Other notable features of building or site:

This is a large and rambling 2 ½-story house of more than 7,000 square feet in living space. Built in 1914 as a seasonal home in the Shingle style, it was winterized, probably in the late 1990s. The main block is a hip-roofed building with steeply-pitched roofs and several shed dormers in the attic level. Several one-story projections include porches facing the entry and ocean sides. A large added building to the north includes garage space and additional living spaces.

Architect: Unknown Builder/Maker: Unknown

### Historical or Architectural importance:

Abstract expressionist painter Helen Frankenthaler (1928-2011) lived and had her studio here beginning in 1978. She enjoyed the peaceful life on the water, and its proximity to urban life. She is quoted as saying, 'with the Sound, it's like the Riviera is right here ... and with it all, New York is only one hour away' (Moss 1983).

Frankenthaler, born in New York City, came from a prosperous Manhattan family. She was one of three daughters of Alfred Frankenthaler, a New York State Supreme Court judge. At age fifteen, she enrolled in the Dalton School in New York where she studied under the Mexican muralist Rufino Tamayo. She completed her undergraduate work at Bennington College in Vermont where she studied with Paul Freeley. After graduating with her B.A. in 1949, she returned to New York City. A year later she organized an exhibition for Bennington alumnae artists in New York. It was at this exhibition that Frankenthaler met Clement Greenberg who introduced her to prominent artists like Willem de Kooning, Jackson Pollock, Lee Krasner, and Adolph Gottlieb. It was Gottlieb who selected her work for inclusion in his Fifteen Unknowns exhibit and, in

1951, Frankenthaler had her first solo exhibition at the Tibor de Nagy Gallery. Her experimentation in the realm of avant-garde Abstract Expressionism began after seeing an exhibition of Jackson Pollock's work. Frankenthaler pioneered the technique of staining unprimed canvas with oil paints, known as Color Field painting. From 1958 to 1971 Frankenthaler was married to painter Robert Motherwell. Subsequently, Helen Frankenthaler move to Connecticut in the 1970s, maintaining her primary studio in Stamford and later, after her marriage with Stephen M. DuBrul Jr., in Darien.

**Sources:**

Frankenthaler, Helen M. Connecticut Womens Hall of Fame, inducted in 2005. Record accessed at: [http://cwhf.org/inductees/arts-humanities/helen-m-frankenthaler#.Vyd9f\\_krL0M](http://cwhf.org/inductees/arts-humanities/helen-m-frankenthaler#.Vyd9f_krL0M)

Glueck, Graces. 12/27/2011. Helen Frankenthaler Dies at 83. New York Times. Accessed at: <http://www.nytimes.com/2011/12/28/arts/helen-frankenthaler-abstract-painter-dies-at-83.html> and [http://www.nytimes.com/slideshow/2011/12/27/arts/design/20111228\\_FRANKENTHALER-6.html](http://www.nytimes.com/slideshow/2011/12/27/arts/design/20111228_FRANKENTHALER-6.html)

Hirschberg, Stephen. 1979. Historical & Architectural Survey of Stamford. Connecticut Historical Commission.

Moss, Jacqueline. 10/02/1983. 'Lyrical painter Helen Frankenthaler has inventive, yet durable vision.' Connecticut Newspapers. p. F2. Copy courtesy of Wes Haynes.

Smith, Roberta. 12/27/2011. Two Artists who Embraced Freedom. New York Times. Accessed at: <http://www.nytimes.com/2011/12/29/arts/design/helen-frankenthaler-and-john-chamberlain-an-appraisal.html?action=click&contentCollection=Arts&module=RelatedCoverage&ion=EndOfArticle&pgtype=article>

**Photographer:** Vision Assessor photo **Date:**

**View:** West view

**Form completed by:** Charlotte Hitchcock **Printed On:** May 2, 2016

**Organization:** Connecticut Trust for Historic Preservation

**Address:** 940 Whitney Avenue, Hamden CT 06517-4002

**Threats:** Private. Other- Demolition planned for new construction

**Subsequent field evaluations:**



102 Saddle Rock Rd. - West view (Vision assessor photo)

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**FOR OFFICE USE:**

**Town #** \_\_\_\_\_ **Site#** \_\_\_\_\_ **UTM** \_\_\_\_\_

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