

CT Trust Resource ID: 2932

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): Buena Vista Clubhouse; West Hartford Art League

Other Name(s) (Historic): Buena Vista Clubhouse; West Hartford Art League/ Clubhouse Gallery; West Hartford Art League

Street Address or Location: 37 Buena Vista Road, West Hartford

Town/City: West Hartford Village:

County: Hartford

Designation(s): SRHD, LHD

Owner(s): TOWN OF WEST HARTFORD

Public/Private: Non-Profit

Latitude: 41.7488 Longitude: -72.7660

PROPERTY INFORMATION

Present Use: RECREATION & CULTURE: art gallery

Historic Use: RECREATION & CULTURE: golf course clubhouse

Accessibility to public: Yes Exterior visible from public road? Yes

Interior accessible? If yes, explain: During open hours

Style of building: 20th century Craftsman Date of Construction: c. 1943

Material(s) (Indicate use or location when appropriate)

Structural Systems(s): Wood Frame

Roof(Type): Gable (Material): Asphalt Shingle

Number of Stories: 1 1/2 Approximate Dimensions: 44' x 60'

Structural Condition: Excellent

Exterior Condition: Excellent

Locational Integrity: On original site Moved, When: NA

Alterations?: Yes If yes, explain: Conversion from clubhouse to art gallery use

Related outbuildings or landscape features: Barn

Surrounding Environment: Residential

Interrelationship of building and surroundings:

The facilities of the West Hartford Art League include: Buena Vista Clubhouse (now Clubhouse Gallery) and Stanley-Woodruff-Allen House (now the Saltbox Gallery), both at 37 Buena Vista Road which is a 56.8-acre Town-owned property; and Old West School (also known as Little Red Schoolhouse) at 87 Mountain Road, a .27-acre parcel owned by the West Hartford Art League. All three buildings are located in the Buena Vista Local Historic District, which was established in 1977 and expanded in 1984.

Other notable features of building or site:

The Old West School is a one-story gable-roofed brick building, 25' x 40' in plan. The walls are brick, and the roof is slate. The arched front doorway faces east and has a gable porch roof over. Along the two sides are three tall double-hung windows. Grade slopes down toward the west, allowing access into a basement level.

For the Stanley-Woodruff-Allen House, see National Register nomination. The building and a small surrounding area were listed on the National Register as elements in a Multiple Property listing of eighteenth-century houses in West Hartford.

The Buena Vista Clubhouse served the town-owned Buena Vista Golf Club, established in 1943, on whose grounds it stands. It appears to be a slightly older building, as it is visible in the 1934 Fairchild aerial photograph of the area, and the Assessor's record gives 1926 as the date of construction. The Clubhouse is a 44' x 60' gable-roofed single-story building with a shed-roofed screened porch along the west side. Large multi-pane windows are located in the east side, entries on the north and east, and a fieldstone exterior chimney on the south end. Siding is wood novelty lap siding and roofing is asphalt shingles.

Architect: Unknown Builder/Maker: Unknown

Historical or Architectural importance:

In the 1700s, Buena Vista Road was part of a principal route to the town of Farmington known as South Middle Road. This route predated Farmington Avenue, which was laid out around 1800. At the east end of the road, the 1878 Old West School is the town's oldest remaining school building. The 1752 Stanley-Woodruff-Allen House sits further toward the west, on the south side of the road, overlooking former

farmland, now the golf course. The 1943 Buena Vista Clubhouse building is to the south, in the interior of the parcel. A modern town garage is located between the two buildings, designed as an earth-sheltered structure, which minimizes its visual impact.

The West Hartford Art League was founded in 1934, with the prime founders being Rebecca Field, a teacher, sculptor, and painter, and Gertrude Patterson, a portrait painter and art teacher. The town leased its Old West School building to the new organization, which installed plumbing and heating in the historic schoolhouse and later purchased it in 1965. In 1976 the League began leasing the Stanley-Woodruff-Allen House from the town, in return for funding its rehabilitation. Finally, in the mid-1980s, the League took on the Buena Vista Clubhouse building as its art gallery.

League founder Rebecca Field (1905-2002) was born in Montague, Massachusetts in 1905. She attended Massachusetts State College for one year. She then spent a year or more studying in a private studio in Munich, Germany. In 1933 she co-founded the West Hartford Art League, at which she later taught classes. During the 1930s, Field worked for the Public Works of Art Project and then for the WPA Federal Arts Project from its inception in 1935 until 1938. She created 39 works in a variety of media and prepared exhibits for the Children's Museum in Hartford. In 1941 she married Frederic Edward Jones, a well-known sculptor from Farmington. Later in that same year she joined the staff of Oxford School as an instructor in graphic arts and crafts, as well as history and art. She eventually taught sculpture at Miss Porter's School until 1968. Rebecca Field Jones died in 2002, at the age of 97.

West Hartford resident artist Walter O. R. Korder (1891-1962) served as Director in the late 1950s (see also Art League of New Britain where he taught and collaborated with Sanford Low). Irving Katzenstein (1902-1973) was another prominent area artist who taught at the League.

Sources:

Town of West Hartford Assessor's Records and GIS viewer: <https://westhartfordct.mapgeo.io/?latlng=41.7626%2C-72.756789&zoom=13> .
 Cohen, Deb. 5/24/2016. 'Living in a West Hartford Historic District.' Accessed at: <http://we-ha.com/living-west-hartford-l-historic-district-think/> .
 Faude, Wilson H. 2004. Images of America: West Hartford. Charleston: Arcadia Publishing.
 Foster, Sherrill. 1986. Stanley-Woodruff-Allen House National Register Nominaton No. 86002000. National Park Service. Note: nomination is a component of the Eighteenth-Century Houses of West Hartford Multiple Property Listing.
 Jones, Rebecca Field. WPA Art Inventory. Connecticut State Library. Accessed at: <http://ctstatelibrary.org/jones-rebecca-field/> .
 Old West School. 2013. Historic Buildings of Connecticut blog. Accessed at: <http://historicbuildingsct.com/?p=16570> .
 UConn MAGIC 1934 aerial map for Buena Vista Road. Accessed at:
http://magic.lib.uconn.edu/magic_6/raster/37800/aerial/1934/05994_to_07137/CT1934_06145.pdf .
 West Hartford Historic Districts & Properties. Local Historic District and Property Commissions in Connecticut web site. Accessed at:
<http://lhdct.org/maps/city/West-Hartford> .
 West Hartford Art League web site, history. Accessed at: <http://westhartfordart.org/history/> .
 West Hartford Public Library, local history. Accessed at: http://www.westhartfordlibrary.org/research_tools/local_history .

Photographer: Wikimedia Commons photo Date: 2008

View: North view

Form completed by: Charlotte Hitchcock Printed On: June 2, 2016

Organization: Connecticut Trust for Historic Preservation

Address: 940 Whitney Avenue, Hamden CT 06517-4002

Threats: None known

Subsequent field evaluations:



Buena Vista Clubhouse Gallery, W Hartford Art League (Wikimedia Commons photo)

FOR OFFICE USE:

Town # _____ Site# _____ UTM _____
 District ☐ S ☐ NR If NR, specify: ☐ Actual ☐ Potential