

CT Trust Resource ID: 2482

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): Sturges-Wright House

Other Name(s) (Historic): George Hand Wright House/Eliphalet Sturges House

Street Address or Location: 93 Cross Hwy., Westport

Town/City: Westport

Village:

County: Fairfield

Designation(s): SR, NR

Owner(s): Edward F. Gerber

Public/Private: Private

Latitude: 41.1622 Longitude: -73.3423

PROPERTY INFORMATION

Present Use: Residential property

Historic Use: Residential property

Accessibility to public: No Exterior visible from public road? Yes

Interior accessible? If yes, explain: NA

Style of building: Federal style saltbox Date of Construction: c. 1764

Material(s) (Indicate use or location when appropriate) Wood Shingle, Clapboard

Structural Systems(s): Wood Frame

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

Number of Stories: 2 Approximate Dimensions: 35' x 41'

Structural Condition: Good

Exterior Condition: Good

Locational Integrity: On original site Moved, When: NA

Alterations?: Yes If yes, explain: went from a Colonial structure to Federal style to Saltbox style.

Related outbuildings or landscape features: studio, Barn

Surrounding Environment: High building density, High building density, High building density

Interrelationship of building and surroundings: This property consists of 1.57 acres of land on the north side of Cross Highway. A short driveway extends to the north off the road and terminates in front of (to the west) of the garage. The house is set slightly back from the street and a stone wall lines the south, east, west, and north borders of the property. The garage is just to the northeast of the house. The property is across the street and slightly to the northeast of the intersection of Cross Highway and Victoria Lane. To the east of the property is the intersection of Cross Highway and Quaker Lane. Surrounding the property are nineteenth, twentieth, and twenty-first century single-family dwellings.

Other notable features of building or site: As noted by Tod Bryant in the Sturges-Wright House National Register nomination, "The Sturges-Wright House is a three bay, two story, Federal saltbox with a central brick chimney and a wood shingled roof. It is a wood frame structure on a rubble stone foundation faced with ashlar cut stone on the façade with a three light basement window centered at the base of the northeast and southwest bays. The façade is sheathed in painted clapboard and there are brown-stained shingles on the other three elevations. The northeast and southwest bays have two nine-over-six double hung windows with shutters on each story and the center bay has a single identical window over the portico. The central doorway is protected by a portico with a wood-shingled shed roof supported by flat pilasters on the façade and Tuscan columns at the front of the portico. A flight of two wooden stairs leads to the entrance and benches sit between the columns and the pilasters on each side of the doorway. The seven-panel door is flanked by five-light sidelights above blind panels which are enframed by pairs of narrow round fluted pilasters supporting a similar narrow round fluted architrave."

Architect: Unknown Builder/Maker: Unknown

Historical or Architectural importance:

As noted in the Sturges-Wright National Register nomination, "George Hand Wright was born to a Quaker family in Fox Chase, Pennsylvania, a suburb of Philadelphia, on August 6, 1872. His father was a blacksmith who had a shop near the center of town. His parents died when he was very young and he was raised by his grandparents in Camden, New Jersey. While living with them he was influenced by his aunt Mary Wright, who was also an artist. Later on, a family friend, English artist and musician Eugene Headson gave the young artist his first instruction and criticism. At Headson's urging Wright enrolled in the Spring Garden Institute in Philadelphia where he attended classes in 1889-1890. This

school taught working class boys skill in engineering, industrial design and architecture. Wright's classmates included Everett Shinn (1876-1953) and John Sloan (1871-1951).

Anne [Anne Boylan who Wright married in 1906] and George Wright intended to move to Paris after their marriage, because it was cheaper to live there. But in 1907, before they left, George went to Connecticut to visit his artist friend John Narval Marchand (1875-1921) who had moved to Westport two years earlier; a year after another artist, Edmund Ashe had bought property there... John took him on a tour of the town and showed him the little farm at 93 Cross Highway. Wright bought the place immediately. He put \$100 down on the purchase price of \$2950, which included enough cordwood to get him through the winter, an old horse, three cows and an old wagon. He and Anne at first thought it would be a summer house, but once they moved in, they never left. He converted an outbuilding into his studio soon after the move and he was photographed standing in front of it. The affection he had for the house is evident in his painting of a couple, probably himself and his wife, working on a tree in the property. Other New York artists soon began to follow him to Westport. Arthur Dove in 1910 (he moved again in 192), Ossip Linde in 1911 and Karl Anderson in 1912; Kerr Eby and Charles Prendergast after World War I." He became known as "Dean of the Westport Art Colony," after more artists were drawn to the area because of him. George Hand Wright died in 1951 after a long and successful career as an illustrator and artist.

Sources:

Bryant, Tod, Sturges-Wright House National Register nomination, June 15, 2013, National Park Service

Photographer: Kristen Nietering Date: 4/21/2014

View:

Form completed by: Kristen Nietering Printed On: March 14, 2016

Organization: Connecticut Trust for Historic Preservation

Address: 940 Whitney Avenue, Hamden CT 06517-4002

Threats: None known

Subsequent field evaluations:



Southeast facade of the house. Camera facing northwest.

FOR OFFICE USE:

Town # _____ Site# _____ UTM _____

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