

Connecticut Commission on Culture & Tourism
Historic Preservation and Museum Division/State Historic Preservation Office

CONNECTICUT STATE REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES REGISTRATION FORM

This form is for use in nominating individual properties and districts to the Connecticut State Register of Historic Places (C.G.S. Chapter 184b, Sec. 10-409(2)). See instructions in *How to Complete the Connecticut State Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets. Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name Hebbeln, Henry, House / Gorky, Arshile, House

other names/site number Page, Samuel, House / Glass House

2. Location

street & number 21 Spring Lake Road

city or town Sherman

☐ vicinity

county Fairfield

zip code 06784

☐ not for publication

3. State Agency Certification

I hereby certify that this nomination ☐ meets ☐ does not meet the documentation standards and criteria for registering properties in the Connecticut Register of Historic Places. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

 State Historic Preservation Officer

 Date

4. Classification

Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply)

- ☒ private
☐ public-local
☐ public-state
☐ public-federal

Category of Property

(Check only one box)

- ☒ building(s)
☐ district
☐ site
☐ structure
☐ object

Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in count.)

Contributing

Non Contributing

1

2

buildings
 sites
 structures
 objects

3

Total

Property Owner

name Martha Clarke

address 21 Spring Lake Road

city Sherman state code CT

zip code 06784 phone _____

Hebbeln/Gorky House

Name of Property

Sherman

Municipality

5. Historic Preservation Council

Approval date

Comments

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC: Single dwelling

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC: Single dwelling

7. Description

Architectural/Archaeological Classification

(Enter categories from instructions)

EARLY 19TH CENTURY AND MID-20TH CENTURY

NO STYLE / MODERN

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation STONE: Fieldstone

walls WOOD: Clapboard and vertical board

roof WOOD: Cedar shingles

other

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

SEE CONTINUATION SHEET

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable Connecticut Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for State Register listing.)

☒ **1** That are associated with events that have made a significant contribution to our history and lives of persons significant in our past; or

☒ **2** That embody the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or that represent the work of a master, or that possess high artistic values, or that represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction; or

☐ **3** That have yielded, or may be likely to yield information important in prehistory or history.

Levels of Significance (local, state)

State: Criterion 1

Local: Criterion 2

Areas of Significance (Enter categories from instructions)

ART

ARCHITECTURE

Significant Dates

c. 1802: house constructed

1945-1946: renovations by Henry Hebbeln

1948: year-round occupancy of the property by Arshile Gorky

Significant Person

Gorky, Arshile

Hebbeln, Henry

Cultural Affiliation (Complete if Criterion 3 is marked)

Architect/Builder

Hebbeln, Henry (renovations 1945-1946)

Narrative Statement of Significance

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

SEE CONTINUATION SHEET

Hebbeln/Gorky House

Name of Property

Sherman

Municipality

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 2.49

Municipal Map, Block and Lot Number and UTM Coordinate (If possible)

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

| | | | |
|---|-------------|----------------|-----------------|
| 1 | <u>Map</u> | <u>Block</u> | <u>Lot</u> |
| 2 | <u>Zone</u> | <u>Easting</u> | <u>Northing</u> |

| | | | |
|---|-------------|----------------|-----------------|
| 3 | <u>Zone</u> | <u>Easting</u> | <u>Northing</u> |
| 4 | <u>Zone</u> | <u>Easting</u> | <u>Northing</u> |

☐ See continuation sheet

Latitude & Longitude: 41.585648, -73.502379

Parcel ID: 20-4

Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

The boundaries of the nominated property are the legal limits of Parcel ID 20-4 of the Town of Sherman's assessment records.

Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

The boundaries encompass the full extent of the intact historic resources on this property associated with artist Arshile Gorky.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Kristen Nietering

organization Connecticut Trust for Historic Preservation

date October 2015

street & number 940 Whitney Avenue

telephone 203-562-6312

city or town Hamden

state CT

zip code 06517

Connecticut Commission on Culture & Tourism
Historic Preservation and Museum Division/State Historic Preservation Office

CONNECTICUT STATE REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES REGISTRATION FORM – Continuation Form

Hebbeln/Gorky House

Name of Property

Sherman

Municipality

Narrative Description

The Hebbeln/Gorky property is an early nineteenth century residential resource associated with an individual who was engaged in art in Connecticut. This nomination was prepared as part of the Creative Places – Arts and Letters Project.

This property is located on the southwest side of Spring Lake Road in Sherman and includes a house constructed in the early nineteenth century, an early twentieth century shed, and a 2004 barn/garage on a 2.49-acre lot. The house is set back from the road and sited on a slight hill. A paved parking area extends to the southwest off the road, just to the south of the barn/garage. The barn/garage is to the north of the house, and the shed is to the west. A garden is located directly in the rear of the house (to the south). Along the south border of the property is a stone wall. Dense vegetation around the edges of the north and west sides of the property screen it from surrounding properties. This property is located within a neighborhood of nineteenth and early-mid twentieth century single-family dwellings.

Sherman is a town in Fairfield County, not far from the New York State border. Just to the northwest is Spring Lake, and a little over a mile to the west is the border of New York State. Candlewood Lake is less than a mile to the southeast of the property. Half a mile to the south is the center of Sherman where the Sherman National Register Historic District is located.

Data Table (C – contributing, NC – non-contributing)

| | | |
|-------------|--------------------------------|----|
| House | Early 19 th c./1946 | C |
| Shed | pre-1934 | NC |
| Garage/Barn | 2004 | NC |

House:

The house sits close to the road, on a slight hill, and faces north. It is a two-story house with an attic and an addition on the west elevation, making it an “L” shape. This vernacular house has a stone foundation and is sheathed in clapboard siding. The front-gable roof is covered in cedar shingles, and a brick chimney protrudes from the ridge-line. A glass wall was added to the south gable-end of the house in the 1940s after the original wall was demolished. This single-family residence includes eight rooms and is approximately 2,313 square feet.

The main entry is located on the north side of the house where the house and addition meet, and is protected by the elements by a shed-roof supported by slender posts. The addition extends to the west off the west elevation of the house. It is sheathed in vertical board siding and has a poured concrete foundation. A brick chimney protrudes from the south slope of the addition.

A back entry to the house is on the south elevation of the addition and is reached by way of the garden. The entire gable end of the house consists of the glass wall which spans both first and second floors. The east elevation of the house faces the road. Fenestration consists of six-over-six and nine-over-six double-hung sash windows as well as multi-pane windows.

The main door opens into an open space with brick and wood floors. To the right (to the west) is a sitting room, but was Gorky’s studio during his occupation of the home. The living room, in the east side of the house, includes a large chimney

and hearth. The kitchen is behind (to the north) of the living room. A bedroom and bathroom are in the southeast corner of the house, converted to a bedroom after Gorky's occupation of the home. An open staircase leads to the second floor of the home. Exposed beams, brick and wood flooring, built-in bookcases, and radiators are found throughout the home. A sliding barn door was added to the kitchen during Hebbeln's renovations in the 1940s. During Gorky's occupation, much of the furniture was built-in. Today, however, most of the built-in furniture has been removed.

Shed:

The shed is a small, wood frame, one-story building with a gable-roof. The roof is covered in cedar shingles, and the building is sheathed in vertical board siding. On each of the gable ends (both north and south elevations) are single-pane windows. It measures 10' x 16', and was built before 1934 according to the Fairchild Aerial Survey done in 1934. On each of the gable ends (both north and south elevations) are single-pane windows.

Barn/Garage:

The barn/garage is a wood frame, two-story building with a gable-roof and a fieldstone foundation. The roof is covered in cedar shingles, and the building is sheathed in vertical board siding. It is built into a hill, so the second story on the west gable-end is at grade. The main entry consists of a sliding barn door, and fenestration includes six-pane windows. The barn/garage was built in 2004 to replace an earlier barn.

Narrative Statement of Significance

Criterion 1

This property derives its primary significance for its associations with artist Arshile Gorky. Gorky was an internationally known artist whose works have been exhibited in New York, California, London, and Moscow, among other places. He is considered one of the first American abstract artists and helped to transform American art (Taylor 2009, 17). Gorky created some of his works of art on the property during his occupancy in 1948.

Gorky's Association with Property:

In the early nineteenth century the property was owned by Samuel Page who sold the house and lot to Josiah Buck in 1803. In 1808, Buck mortgaged the property to Sally and Philomelia Buck for \$150. Levi Bostwick purchased the property in 1824 for \$375 from Philomelia and Jonathan Giddings. Bostwick owned the property until 1830 when it was sold to Ferdinand Spencer. The properties of Ferdinand Spencer were auctioned off in 1902, and was purchased by Charles Stevens. In 1933, the ownership of this site was transferred to Inez (Lake) Stevens and son, Harold. Harold Stevens sold the property in 1936 to Lewis C. Young who sold it in 1944 to Henry and Jean Hebbeln (The Sherman Sentinel 1978, 52). The Hebbeln's leased the property to Arshile Gorky in December of 1947 until his death in July of 1948. It was then sold to Rachel Love. In 1982, the property was sold to the current owner from Rachel (Love) and Henry Mitchell.

Prior to Henry Hebbeln's ownership of the property, Lewis Young had removed walls within the house, leaving an open space. Hebbeln added a glass wall to the south end of the house spanning both first and second stories. He left the downstairs open with exposed chestnut beams. A sliding barn door was added to the kitchen entry. In the living room, a hearth and chimney were added on the foundation of what had once been a central chimney. As noted in *The Sentinel Houses* in 1978, "A large bricked entrance and an open stairway completed a primitive and warm atmosphere which caused a stir among architectural circles and widespread publicity" (The Sherman Sentinel 1978, 53). The house was featured in *Architectural Forum* in 1947, *Life* in 1948, and was on the cover of *House Beautiful* in 1949. In 1964, a porch in the southeast corner of the house was converted into a bedroom and bathroom.

Significance of Arshile Gorky:

Arshile Gorky was born in Khorkom, a village in eastern Turkey in the turn of the twentieth century. Due to the fact that Armenians did not consult calendars, Gorky's birth year is unknown. He was born between 1902 and 1905. At birth, his name was Vosdanig Adoian, which was changed to Manouk Adoian to honor his grandfather after his death (Herrera 2003, 22). His parents, Sedrak Adoian and Shushanig (Shushan) der Marderosian had both been previously married and widowed in 1896. Each of his parents had children with their first spouse. Sedrak Adoian, his father, had a son, Hagop, and a daughter, Oughaper. Shushan der Marderosian, his mother, had two daughters, Sima and Akabi. Sedrak and Shushan had three children, Satenig (older sister), Vosdanig (Gorky), and Vartoosh (younger sister).

Gorky was slow in learning to speak, and did not do so before he was about six years old. Before then, however, he had begun drawing and carving (Taylor 2009, 353). It was around this time his father, Sedrak, immigrated to the United States to live with his son Hagop. Shortly after, in 1910, Shushan and her children moved to the city of Van to be closer to her brother, Aharon. It was at the American Mission School in Van when Gorky first came into contact with Americans (Spender 2009, 15). In 1915, after a raid on the city in which many of the Armenian population were killed, Shushan and her children walked to Yerevan. A year later, in 1916, Gorky's half-sister, Akabi, her husband, Mkrdich, their child, and Gorky's oldest sister, Satenig, immigrated to the United States. During the hard winter of 1919-1920, thousands of Armenian people died of starvation, including Shushan (Spender 2009, 482).

After their mother's death, Gorky and his sister, Vartoosh, immigrated to the United States and first lived with their father, Sedrak and half-brother, Hagop in Rhode Island. After a short time, they moved in with Akabi and her family, who lived in Massachusetts. During this time, Gorky attended a few art schools. However, as noted by Matthew Spender in *Goats on the Roof*, "Despite having some formal art training, Gorky was essentially self-taught, and obtained most of his education through visits to museums and galleries, and reading art books and magazines" (Spender 2009, 480). In 1924, he became the assistant instructor for the life-drawing class at New School of Design in Boston. This was also the same year he began using a different name than Manouk. On a painting of his, *Park Street Church*, he signed it "Gorky, Arshele" (Taylor 2009, 354-355). Gorky went through a few different changes of his name including Archele, Archel, and Gorki before settling on Arshile Gorky. As noted in *Arshile Gorky: A Retrospective*, "Vosdanig soon changed his name to Arshile Gorky in honor of the famed Russian writer Maxim Gorky, a great advocate for the Armenian cause, and moved to New York City to invent a new life for himself" (Taylor 2009, 17).

In 1925, Gorky moved to New York City and began classes at Grand Central School of Art. By 1926, he became a full faculty member there and taught classes until 1931. In the late 1920s, Gorky was inspired by Henri Matisse, Joan Miro, Pablo Picasso, and Georges Braque (Taylor 2009, 355). Before this time, he was more influenced by Impressionist painters such as Paul Cezanne.

Gorky joined the federal governments Public Works of Art Project (PWAP) in 1933, and in 1935 he qualified for a position in the New Deal Federal Art Project (FAP) program (which later became the Works Project Administration, or WPA, program), and was assigned to the mural division. He remained employed through the WPA program until 1941. During this time he painted a mural for the Newark Airport Administration Building which was unveiled in 1937. The murals were abstract in style, and became "...the largest commission of abstract art ever financed by the Federal Government" (Spender 2009, 14). In 1934, Gorky met and married Marny George. That same year, he had the marriage annulled.

In 1939, Arshile Gorky became a United States citizen, and in 1941 he met Agnes Magruder through Elaine Fried at a party in New York City. Soon after, Gorky began calling Magruder, Mougouch, an Armenian term of endearment. Magruder used the name, Mougouch, for the rest of her life. In the summer of 1941 an exhibition of his paintings was held in San Francisco. He, Mougouch, and some friends drove to California for the exhibition. In September of that year, Mougouch and Gorky were married in Nevada on their way back to New York.

Mougouch and Gorky had a daughter in 1943, and in 1944 he signed a contract with Julien Levy, a well-known art dealer. The following year, they moved to Roxbury and lived in David Hare's house for nine months. During this time, their neighbors included Alexander Calder, Yves Tanguy and Kay Sage, and Andre and Rose Masson. Their second daughter, Yalda (name later changed to Natasha), was born in 1945. Mougouch and Gorky then moved to Sherman to live with Henry Hebbeln and

his wife, Jean. Hebbeln (an architect) converted a barn on the property into a studio for Gorky's use. During this time, Hebbeln was in the process of renovating this dwelling at 21 Spring Lake Road, for Gorky and his family to live in.

Between 1946 and 1948, tragedies in Gorky's life lead to his eventual suicide in 1948. The first tragedy was in January of 1946, his studio, along with twenty paintings, were destroyed by a fire. In March of this same year, Gorky was diagnosed with rectal cancer and underwent surgery. In December 1947, Mougouch and Gorky moved into the house at 21 Spring Lake Road that Hebbeln renovated for them. At the time it was known as the Glass House. In June of 1948, Mougouch had a brief affair with Roberto Matta, and afterwards she took the children to Crooked Run Farm to celebrate her father's birthday. On June 26, 1948, Julien Levy and Gorky were in a car accident while Levy was driving Gorky home. Gorky broke his neck and fractured his collar bone, and spent a few weeks in the hospital. In the beginning of July, Gorky was released from the hospital. On July 21, 1948, Gorky hung himself in a shed near his house. On a wooden beam in the shed Gorky wrote, "Goodbye, my loveds" (Spender 2009, 382).

Throughout his life, Arshile Gorky produced paintings and drawings that would eventually influence the American Art world. "Although his life was tragically cut short, the unique and impressive body of work that Gorky left behind made a profound impact on American Art, securing his reputation as the last of the great Surrealist painters and one of the first Abstract Expressionists" (Spender 2009, 481). Working in the studio at his home on Spring Lake Road, Gorky produced some of his last works of art. Some of the works of art he produced at his Sherman home at 21 Spring Lake Road include *Dark Green Painting*, *Red Painting*, and *Last Painting*.

Criterion 2

The site gains significance due to its association with the prominent architect, Henry Hebbeln. Hebbeln was an architect who built Modern style buildings. He was influenced by Ludwig Mies van der Rohe, Phillip Johnson, Walter Gropius, and Marcel Breuer. Hebbeln studied at Cornell University and Cranbrook Academy of Art. He was also connected with a nationally influential network of architects who had a strong presence in Connecticut at the time such as Phillip Johnson and Marcel Breuer. Many dwellings he has designed include the Robert and Phyllis Scott House in Maryland (listed on the National Register of Historic Places), a cottage in Tryon, New York built in 1949, a house built into a hillside overlooking Long Island Sound in Sands Point, New York, and a weekend retreat for businessman, Gustav Wally in Upper Nyack, New York.

Henry Hebbeln was born in 1915 in Illinois and moved as a child moved with his family to Davenport, Iowa. His father worked in the building trades as a contractor and lumber retailer. Hebbeln attended Cornell University and earned a degree in architecture, graduating in 1937. After graduation, he worked for numerous architectural firms including Kruse and Klein in Davenport, Iowa; A. F. Brinckerhoff in New York; Hamilton Brown in Houston; and Klein and Parish in Davenport, Iowa.

In 1938, he enrolled in Cranbrook Academy of Art in Michigan and began a fellowship in regional planning. At Cranbrook he studied under Eliel Saarinen, Charles Eames, and Marianne Strengel. In 1939, he moved to Helsinki and worked with Alvar Aalto. He only remained there for a short while due to World War II. After returning to the United States, he became engaged to Jean Lamson, a sculpture student from Cranbrook Academy of Art. They were married in 1940. After his marriage, he worked in San Francisco on the Bay Area Planning Commission, then worked for Antonin Raymond in New York City before joining the Marines during World War II. After the war he worked for William Lescage in New York before opening his own firm in 1946.

Trademarks of his work included using hardwoods and natural stone instead of concrete and metal, built-in furniture, open planning, rubble stone chimneys, corner fireplaces, large expanses of glass, pitched roofs, sliding glass doors that open out onto a deck or narrow passage, narrow passages, and galley kitchens (Short 2003, section 8 pgs. 4-5).

Bibliography

Photographs, field notes, and site visit by Kristen Nietering – 5/22/2015

Interview with Martha Clarke – 5/22/2015, 21 Spring Lake Road, Sherman.

Map Sources:

Sherman Tax Assessor's Records accessed at

<http://www.propertyrecordcards.com/sherman/Images/ShermanFieldCards/20-4.pdf> on 10/15/2015.

Parcel ID 20-4

Fairchild Aerial Survey Co. *Aerial Survey of Connecticut 1934 photograph 05715*. Connecticut State Library. April 1935. Accessed November 11, 2015. <http://cslib.contentdm.oclc.org/cdm/singleitem/collection/p4005coll10/id/7215>

Aerial views from: <https://www.google.com/maps> and <http://www.bing.com/mapspreview> accessed 10/15/2015.

UTM Coordinates accessed at <http://itouchmap.com/latlong.html> on 10/15/2015.

Print and Internet Sources:

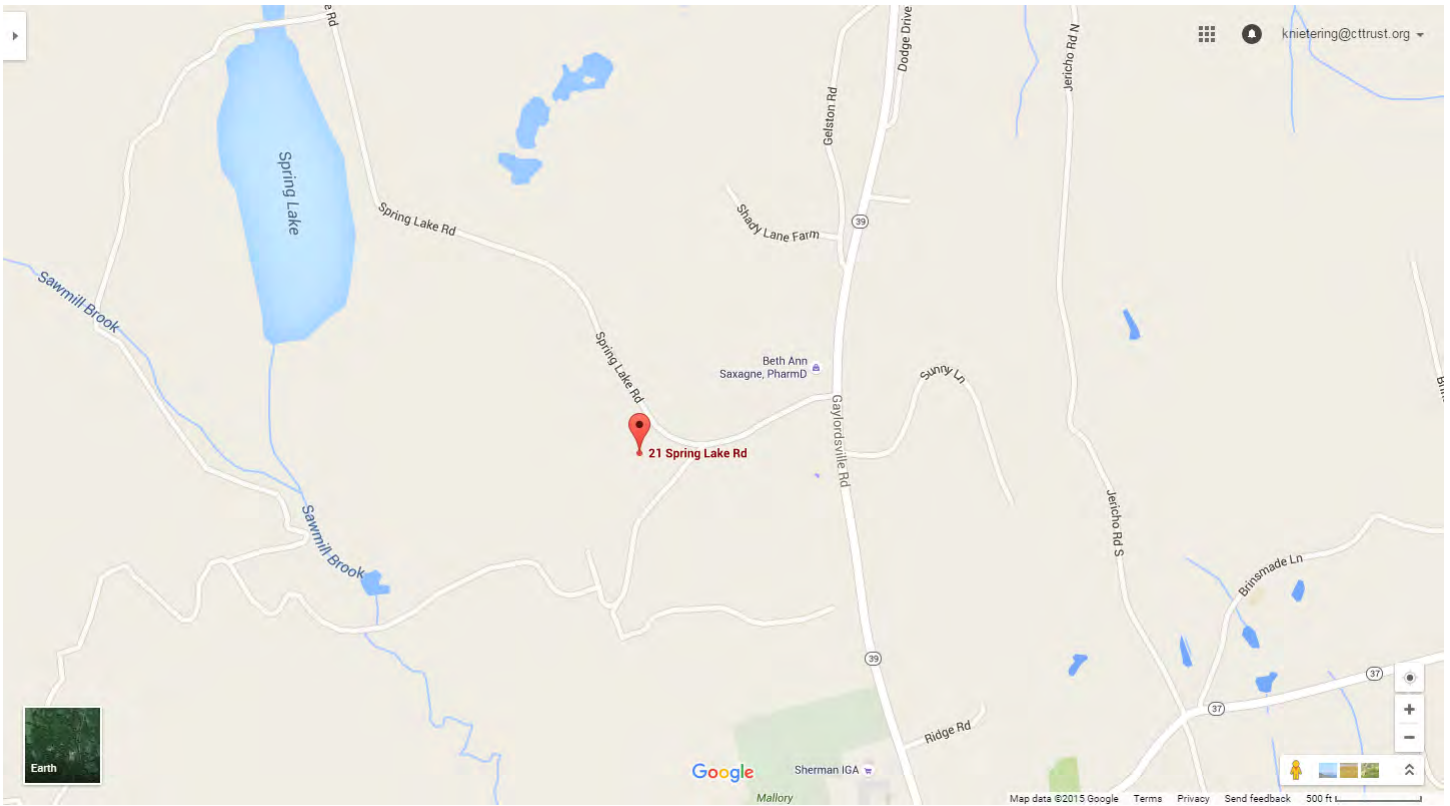
Herrera, Hayden. *Arshile Gorky: His Life and Work*. New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2003.

Sherman Sentinel. *The Sentinel Houses: Sherman, Connecticut*. Sherman, Connecticut: The Sherman Sentinel, 1978.

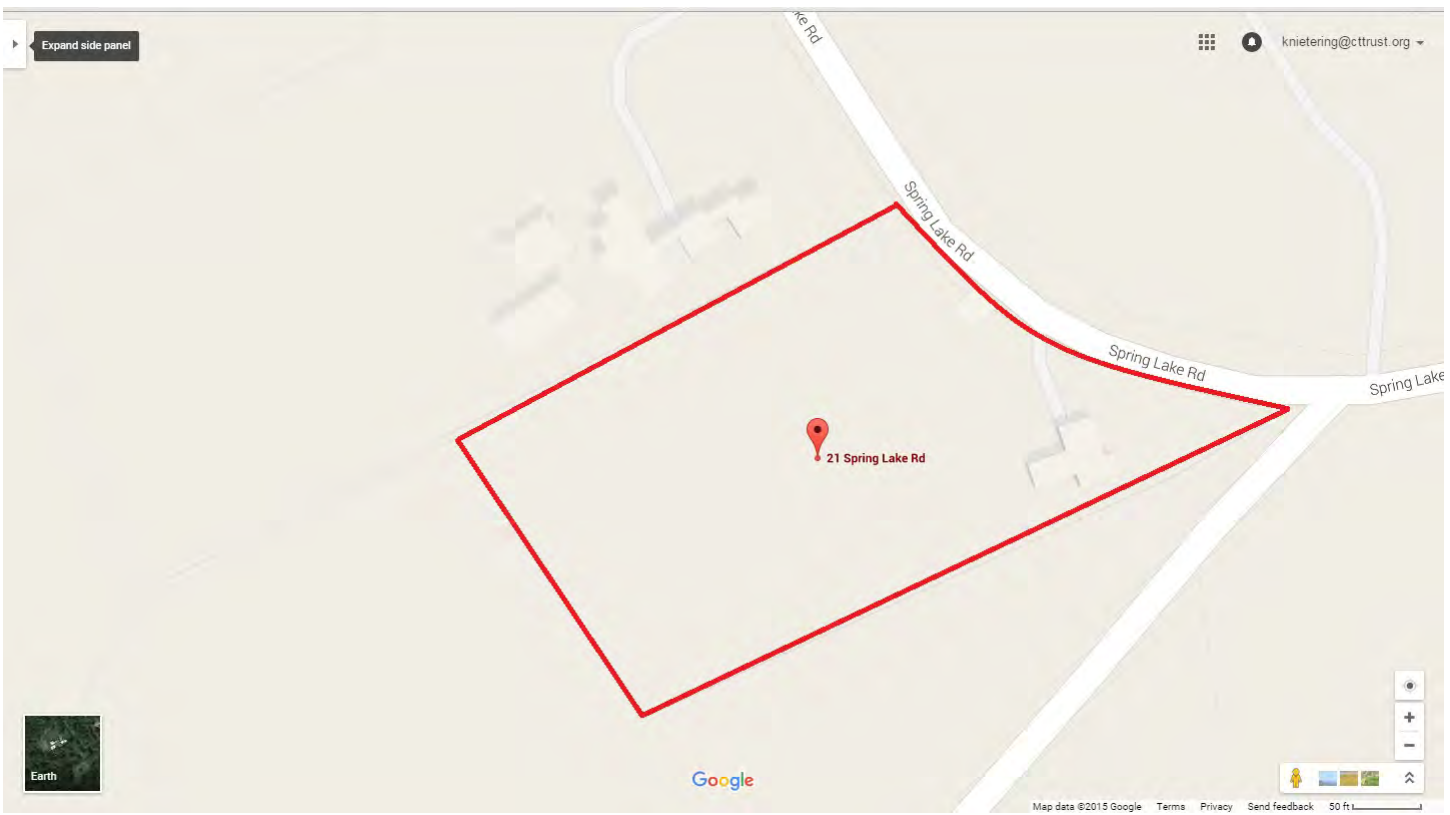
Short, Kenneth M. *Scott, Robert and Phyllis, House National Register of Historic Places Nomination*. National Park Service, 2003.

Spender, Matthew. *Goats on a Roof*. London, UK: Ridinghouse, 2009.

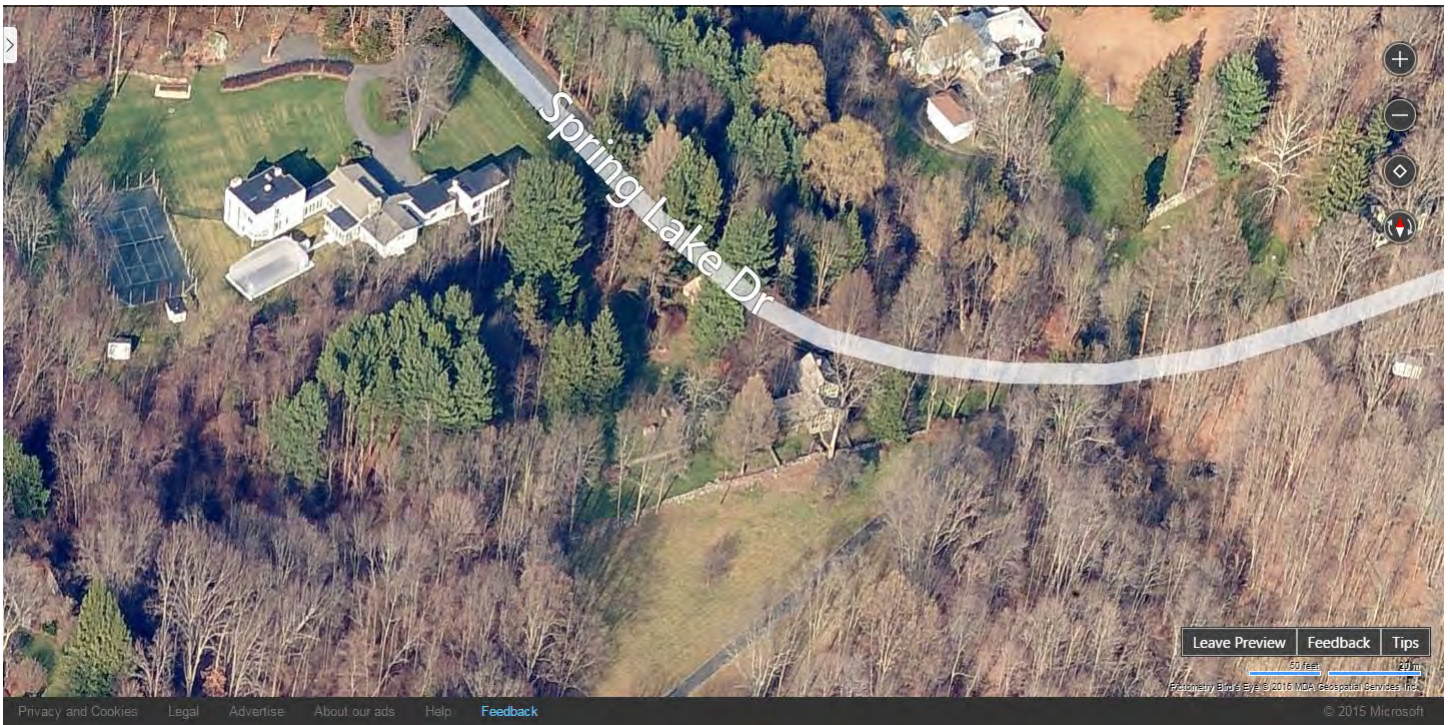
Taylor, Michael. *Arshile Gorky: A Retrospective*. Philadelphia: Philadelphia Museum of Art, 2009.



1. Location map of 21 Spring Lake Road, Sherman, CT – from <http://www.google.com/maps> – accessed 10/15/2015.



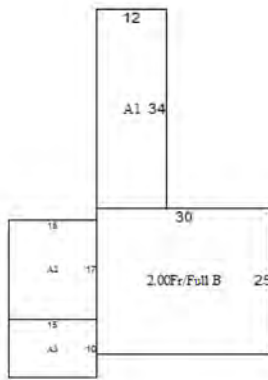
2. Parcel map of 21 Spring Lake Road, Sherman, CT – from <http://www.google.com/maps> – accessed 10/15/2015.



3. South aerial “bird’s eye” view of 21 Spring Lake Road, Sherman, CT – from <http://www.bing.com/mapspreview> – accessed 10/15/2015.



4. Site map of 21 Spring Lake Road, Sherman, CT – from <http://www.bing.com/mapspreview> – accessed 10/15/2015.



5. Floor plan of 21 Spring Lake Road, Sherman, CT – from <http://www.propertyrecordcards.com/sherman/Images/ShermanFieldCards/20-4.pdf> – accessed 10/15/2015.



6. Northwest context view of the house (in the background) and the shed. Camera facing southeast.



7. Southwest context view of the shed (on the left), barn (in the background), and the house (on the right). Camera facing northeast.



8. North elevation of the shed. Camera facing south.



9. South and east elevations of the barn/garage. Camera facing northwest.



10. North elevation of the house. Camera facing south.



11. North gable-end of the house. Camera facing south.



12. North and west elevations of the house. Camera facing southeast.



13. West and south elevations of the house. Camera facing northeast.



14. South elevation of the house. Camera facing north.



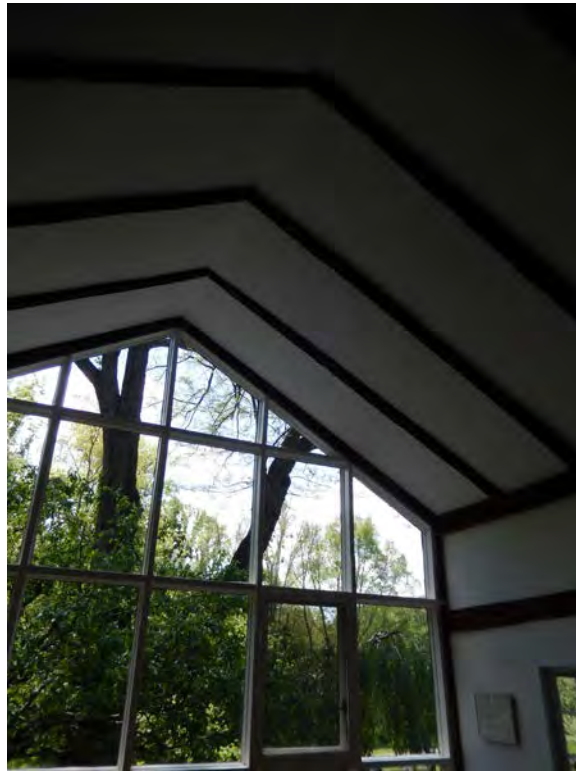
15. South elevation of the house (showing the glass wall). Camera facing northeast.



16. East elevation of the house. Camera facing west.



17. Interior view of the flooring in the house. Note the brick and wood flooring.



18. Interior view of the exposed beams and glass wall. Camera facing south.