DECD
State of Connecticut
Department of Economic and Community Development

# HISTORIC RESOURCES INVENTORY – BUILDING AND STRUCTURES

Please send completed form to: National Register and State Register Coordinator,
State Historic Preservation Office, Department of Economic and Community Development,
450 Columbus Blvd., Suite 5, Hartford CT 06103
* Note: Please attach any additional or expanded information on a separate sheet.

## GENERAL INFORMATION

Building Name (Common) 211 Ridgefield Road

Building Name (Historic) Former Wilton Academy Building

Street Address or Location 211 Ridgefield Road

Town/City Wilton Village _____ County Fairfield

Owner(s) Mlezcko, John S. and Deborah D. ○ Public ◉ Private

## PROPERTY INFORMATION

Present Use: Single-family residence

Historic Use: Single-family residence

**Accessibility to public**: Exterior visible from public road? ○ Yes ◉ No

Interior accessible? ○ Yes ◉ No If yes, explain _____

Style of building Modified Colonial Cape Date of Construction ca. 1830

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

☑ Clapboard ☐ Asbestos Siding ☐ Brick ☐ Wood Shingle ☐ Asphalt Siding
☐ Fieldstone ☐ Board & Batten ☐ Stucco ☐ Cobblestone ☐ Aluminum Siding
☐ Concrete (Type _____) ☐ Cut Stone ( Type _____) ☐ Other _____

**Structural System**

☑ Wood Frame ☑ Post & Beam ☐ Balloon ☐ Load bearing masonry ☐ Structural iron or steel
☐ Other _____

**Roof** *(Type)*

☑ Gable ☐ Flat ☐ Mansard ☐ Monitor ☐ Sawtooth
☐ Gambrel ☐ Shed ☐ Hip ☐ Round ☐ Other _____

*(Material)*

☐ Wood Shingle ☐ Roll Asphalt ☐ Tin ☐ Slate ☑ Asphalt Shingle
☐ Built up ☐ Tile ☐ Other _____

**Number of Stories:** 1.5 Approximate Dimensions 27' x 24', w/21'x31', 18'x17'

**Structural Condition:** ☐ Excellent ☑ Good ☐ Fair ☐ Deteriorated

Exterior Condition: ☐ Excellent ☑ Good ☐ Fair ☐ Deteriorated

**Location Integrity:** ◉ On original site ○ Moved When? _____

Alterations? ◉ Yes ○ No If yes, explain: Additions

**FOR OFFICE USE:** Town #_____ Site # _____ UTM _____

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

## PROPERTY INFORMATION (CONT'D)

**Related outbuildings or landscape features:**

☐ Barn ☐ Shed ☐ Garage ☐ Carriage House ☐ Shop ☐ Garden

☐ Other landscape features or buildings: _____

**Surrounding Environment:**

☐ Open land ☐ Woodland ☑ Residential ☐ Commercial ☐ Industrial ☐ Rural

☐ High building density ☑ Scattered buildings visible from site

• Interrelationship of building and surroundings:

See continuation sheet.

• Other notable features of building or site *(Interior and/or Exterior)*

See continuation sheet.

Architect N/A Builder N/A

• Historical or Architectural importance:

See continuation sheet.

• Sources:

See continuation sheet.

Photographer Stacey Vairo & Lucas Karmazinas Date September 2017

View See continuation sheet Negative on File CTSHPO

Name Stacey Vairo & Lucas Karmazinas Date December 2017

Organization Scheller Preservation Associates & FuturePast Preservation

Address 17 Hard Hill Rd., Woodbury, CT 06798 & 940 West Blvd., Hartford, CT 06105

• Subsequent field evaluations:

MBLU# 89/19 PID# 4615B

**Threats to the building or site:**

☑ None known ☐ Highways ☐ Vandalism ☐ Developers ☐ Renewal ☐ Private

☐ Deterioration ☐ Zoning ☐ Other _____ ☐ Explanation _____

Photograph of 211 Ridgefield Road, view facing southwest. (Photograph Vision Appraisal).

**Interrelationship of Building and Surroundings:**

This house is located on the southwest side of Ridgefield Road (CT Route 33), roughly 1800' east of the intersection of Ridgefield and Drum Hill roads. The house is set back roughly 300' from Ridgefield Road and a paved driveway leads from the street along the northwest side of the house. The house is surrounded by mature trees at the front and a wide-open lawn at the rear.

**Other Notable Features of Buildings or Site:**

The house at 211 Ridgefield Road is an expanded single-story, wood-frame expanded Colonial Cape built ca. 1820 and moved to this site in 1948. The roof ridge is oriented in a roughly northwest-southeast direction and parallel to the street. The house is clad in wood clapboards. Slightly taller, single-story gable-roofed ells adjoins the northwest and southeast (side) elevations of the main block. Interior, gable-end brick chimneys are found on the side additions closest to the main block. A large, gabled ell also extends from the center of the rear elevation (southwest) of the main block of the house. The main entrance is located

centrally on the main block and features a wide cornice set atop pilasters flanking the door. Fenestration throughout the house primarily consists of eight-light casements and a large picture window located northwest of the entrance. Other character defining features include a wide band of cornice trim set along the eaves and slight returns at the gable ends.

**Historical and Architectural Importance:**

The central portion of this house was originally built in 1820 on the site of current Congregational Parsonage. It was the second home of the Wilton Academy which was founded in 1818.

The Wilton Academy was founded by Hawley Olmstead and his son Edward Olmstead. It was reopened in 1855 and moved to the newly-renovated second floor of the Town Hall. It operated out of that space until 1868 when it then moved to Lover's Lane. The Academy continued to function until Edward Olmstead's death in 1898.

In 1870, William A. Sturges purchased the original Academy building and moved it down the hill to its Wilton Center location. Sturges, who was the postmaster, operated the building as a store and post office. It also housed the town's lending library. The building was purchased by landscape painter Henry Grinnell Thomson, who used it as a studio. It also continued to be used as the library during this time. It later served as a doctor's office and home to the local chapter of the Red Cross and the Wilton Bulletin. In 1936, Tim Merwin and his family operated a dairy farm from this property. Merwin delivered milk throughout the town, but his business suffered during the war as farmhands were scare and he sold the house shortly thereafter. It was moved in November of 1948 to its current location. The house is an excellent example of how older structures were "recycled" and incorporated into homes in the 20th century throughout Wilton. The building's association with the Wilton Academy and Henry Grinnell Tomson is also significant.

**Sources:**

*Wilton Bulletin,* Bob Carboni, date unknown (Wilton History room file for 211 Ridgefield Road); Wilton Assessor's Records on Vision Appraisal; U.S. Federal Census Records, 1900-1940; "Map of the Town of Wilton, Conn., 1909," C.C. Wood, C.E.; "Map of the Town of Wilton, Conn., 1922," Robt. F. Thorley; "Map of the Town of Wilton, Conn., 1929," W.E. Godfrey, Surveyor; "Atlas of Fairfield County, Conn., 1931," Dolph & Stewart, Publishers, New York: NY; "Residents of Wilton, Conn. (As of July 1, 1937), 1937," Town of Wilton, CT; "Atlas of Fairfield County, Conn., 1942," Dolph & Stewart, Publishers, New York: NY; "Wilton, Connecticut, Directory Map, 1950," Town Planning Committee, Wilton: CT; Westport, Saugatuck, Greens, Weston, Wilton Directory, The Price & Lee Co., New Haven, CT, 1933-1963.