Report on Phase 1 Archaeology Assessment Survey of Proposed Pedestrian Safety Improvements at Westport Road (State RTE 136) and Center Road Intersection in Easton, CT.

December 2022

Report prepared for:
Town of Easton
225 Center Rd
Easton, CT 06612

Report prepared by:
Sarah Holmes, PhD
Archaeology Consultant
860 501-1446 slh@att.net

Abstract

The Phase 1 Archaeological Assessment Survey was conducted for the area of potential effect (APE) for the proposed pedestrian safety improvements at the intersection of Westport and Center Roads. This intersection has historical significance in Easton as one of the town centers. The Congregational Church of Easton, Staples Academy and Greiser's Store are located in this vicinity. The Connecticut State Historical Preservation Office (SHPO) expressed concern the proposed safety improvements might impact known archaeological sites in this area. State archaeological site files identified several archaeological sites within a mile of the current APE, in addition to a stonewall associated with Site #46-98 adjacent to Westport Road and Greiser's Store.

The Archaeological Assessment entailed a review of pertinent historical documentation and a walkover of the APE. The visible reconnaissance isolated two areas of archaeological sensitivity with possible undisturbed or intact soils. A total of three subsurface test pits (STPs) were placed on level ground, two (STP T1-1 & T1-2) on the north side of Westport Road alongside Staples Academy, and one (STP T2-1), at the northernmost edge of stonewall associated with archaeological Site #46-98. STP T1-1 yielded two clear glass bottle fragments associated with other modern plastic debris, STP 2-1 contained disturbed soils due in part to erosion. Sections not conducive to testing were the lawn in front of the Congregational Church situated on a steep slope and sections of the APE in areas previously disturbed by pavement and utilities. The assessment determined the safety improvements and sidewalk installation would not adversely impact any archaeological resources and only minimally impact the nature of Easton's historic center.

Authority

The archaeological fieldwork was accomplished in compliance with the guidelines set by the Connecticut State Historical Preservation Office (SHPO) and the Office of the State Archaeologist (OSA) as published in the Connecticut Historic Preservation Office's *Environmental Review Primer for Connecticut's Archaeological Resources* (1987). This reflects the United States Interior Department's Standards and Guidelines for Archaeology and Historic Preservation (48 FR 44716, Sept. 28, 1983). Easton received funding in part for the project through a grant awarded by the Connecticut Department of Transportation's Community Connectivity Grant Program.

Table of Contents

Project Description

The Phase 1 Archaeology Assessment Survey was conducted in the area of potential effect (APE) for the proposed pedestrian safety improvements and sidewalk installation at the intersection of Westport Road (State Route 136) and Center Road. This historic intersection is the site of the Congregational Church of Easton (1836) built on the site of the earlier meetinghouse, Grieser's Store (1740), the Easton Post Office (c. 1800) and Staples Academy. The project includes the installation of approximately 225 linear feet of sidewalk, crosswalks, ADA ramps and signage. The new sidewalk in front of the Congregational Church will run across existing pavement along Center Road (refer to fig. 1 below). In the letter dated October 13, 2022, the State Historic Preservation Office requested an archaeological assessment survey be conducted prior to the improvements. Several archaeological sites within a one mile radius of this Easton center were recorded in state archives. In addition, there was concern the section of sidewalk adjacent to Greiser's Store would impact the edge of a stone wall associated with the archaeological Site #46-98 identified as the "Big Easton Center Garage". The original design for the improvements presented by the Town of Easton was modified to include a rain garden at this corner in lieu of a level spreader to avoid the stone wall. As mentioned above, Easton received funding for the project through a grant awarded by the Connecticut Department of Transportation's Community Connectivity Grant Program.

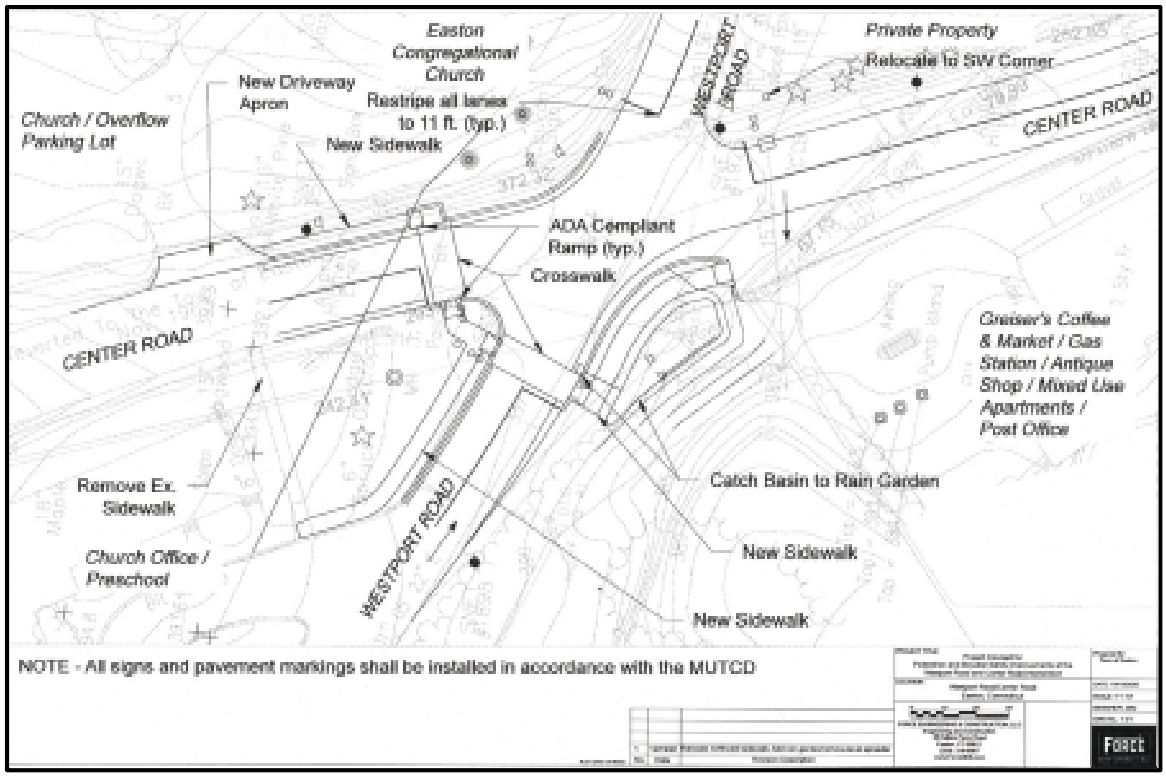

Fig. 1 Easton map of proposed safety improvements - revised to include rain garden (Force Engineering and Construction, LLC)

Project Area

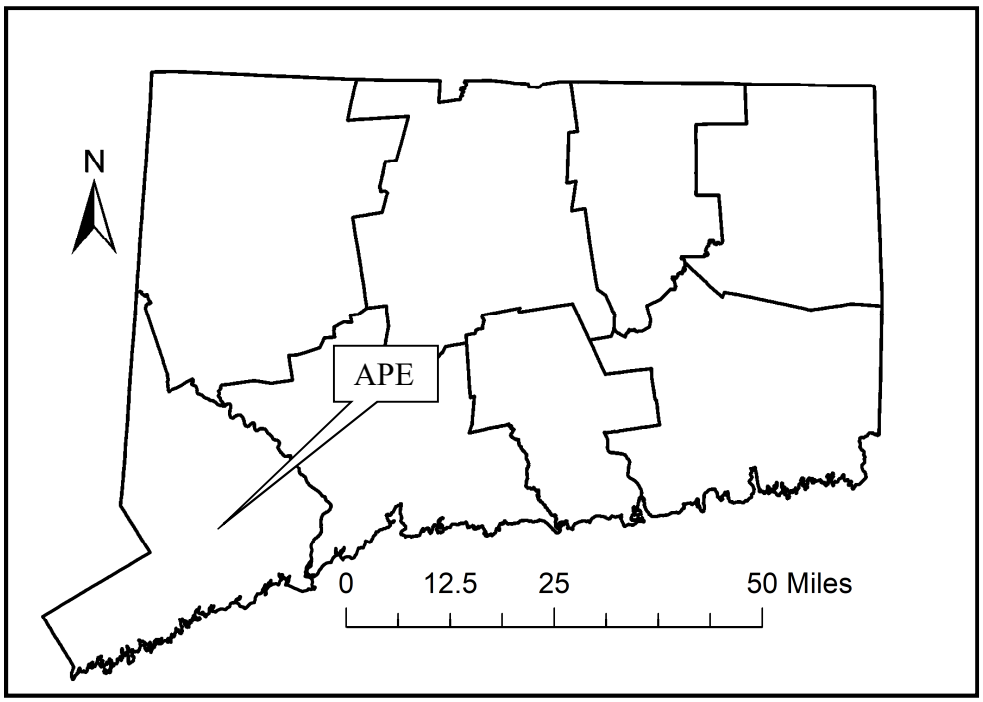

Fig. 2: Connecticut county map locating APE in Fairfield County (magic.lib.uconn.edu)

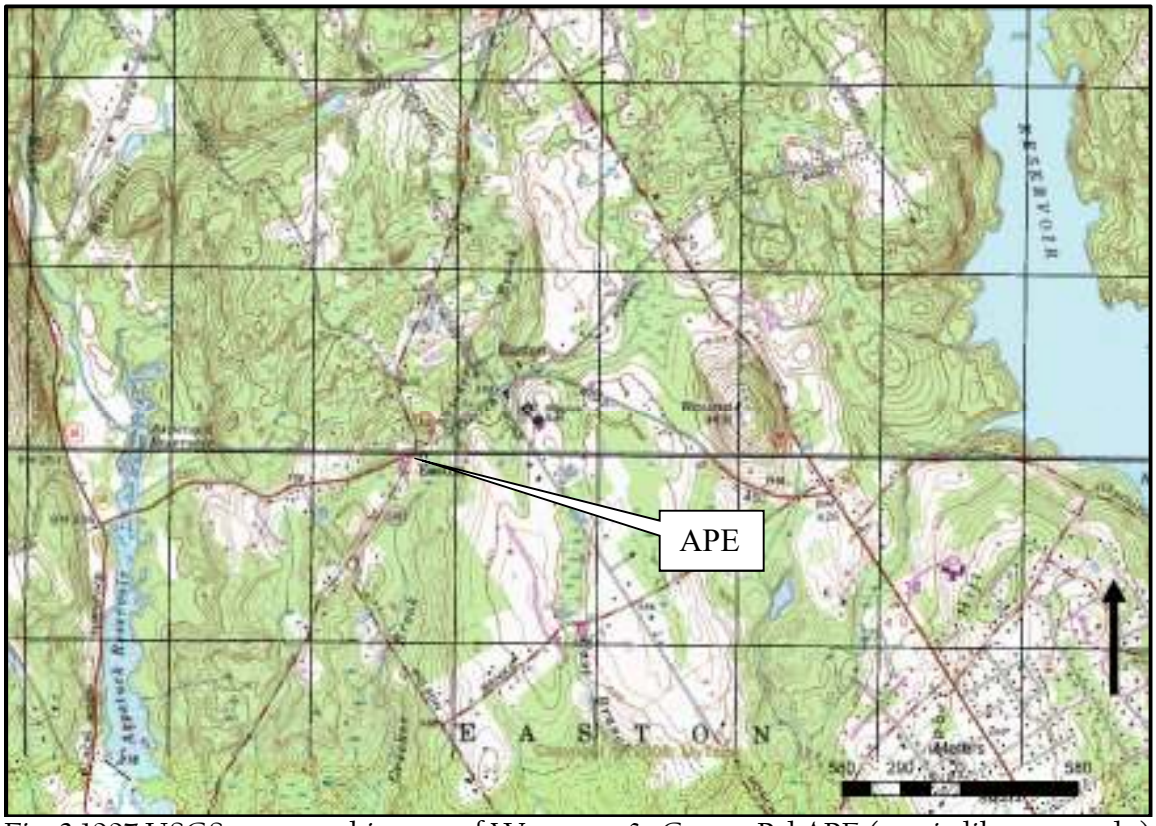

Fig. 3 1997 USGS topographic map of Westport & Center Rd APE (magic.lib.uconn.edu)

Background Research

The background research for the proposed improvements in Easton consisted of a review of the following sources:

- Archaeological site files and reports archived for the Connecticut State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) and the Office of the State Archaeologist (OSA).
- Local town histories, state documents and maps identifying historic period Indigenous and Euro-American sites and structures within or immediately adjacent to the project area.

Criteria for Determining Archaeological Potential

Pre-contact, contact and historic period sites are rarely visible on the surface and are typically located through subsurface testing. The presence of Indigenous sites and some early colonial sites is predicted by implementing models based on known site locations in Connecticut and throughout southern New England. These sites correlate with environmental criteria based on geology, soils, and topography as listed below. The criteria include:

1) Known archaeological sites within or immediately adjacent to the project area.
2) National Register properties within or adjacent to the project area.
3) Distance from a fresh water source
4) Soil characteristics such as slope, drainage, texture and suitability for cultivation.
5) Topographic features such as degree of slope, aspect and elevation.
6) Proximity to raw material sources such as a lithic quarry, pond or inland wetland.
7) Proximity to areas of historic and modern development
8) Degree of disturbance from plowing, gravel mining, and modern construction.

Criteria for Stratification

The Phase 1 Archaeology Assessment survey entails a walkover of the project area to identify visible cultural or natural features on the landscape. Cultural features include stonewalls, stone piles, and house foundations. Natural (geological) features include bodies of water, streams, swampland and rock shelters that represent a landscape conducive to human site selection.

To locate archaeological sites, project areas are typically stratified (divided) into sections with low, moderate and high sensitivity. Topographic and surficial geology maps compiled by the United States Geological Survey and soil data compiled by the United States Department of Agriculture are used to delineate areas of well-drained soils and minimal slope. Areas with less than a 5% slope, with moderate to well-drained soils within 150 meters of a wetland or stream are considered to be of high potential. Areas further from a water source with poorly drained soils or excessive slope are considered less sensitive. These levels of sensitivity are categorized as follows:

High. Undisturbed areas less than 150 meters (450ft) from a water source, on moderate to well-drained soils and slopes less than 5% are subjected to a more intensive program of systematic subsurface testing including additional judgment test pits when considered necessary.

Moderate. Areas greater than 150 meters (450ft) from a water source on moderate to well-drained soils on slopes between 5-8% are subjected to systematic subsurface testing.

Low. Areas that are poorly drained, in excess of 8% slope or have been disturbed are not subsurface tested.

The preliminary walkover determines the testing strategy when required and placement of the subsurface test pits when warranted. For the Easton improvements and sidewalk installation the soils were visually inspected with minimal soil probes and three subsurface test pits placed on level ground in front of the Staples Academy and adjacent to Site #46-48. A majority of the APE was already paved, within an area of excessive slope or where erosion had occurred.

Pre-Contact Overview

Paleoindian Period (12,500-9,500 BP)

In the Northeast, the Paleoindian Period dates from 12,000 to 9,500 BP, during the final glacial period known as the Younger Dryas. This was a time marked by a return to severe glacial conditions (McWeeney 1999). The earliest archaeological evidence for human occupation in the New England region dates to approximately 12,000 BP (Spiess, Wilson and Bradley 1998) and in Connecticut to around 10,200 BP (Moeller 1980, Jones 1999). Sites from this period are characterized by distinctive fluted points and flaked stone assemblages dominated by unifacial tools.

The archaeological record reflects a settlement system based primarily on small, highly mobile social groups seasonally dispersed in search of resources. Their diet consisted of a wide range of food resources, including small and large game, fish, wild plant foods, and perhaps extinct megafauna (Meltzer 1988; Jones 1998). Caribou likely played a significant, if seasonal, role in subsistence. However, small game, fish, fowl, reptiles and wetland tubers were also important components of the diet at this time.

Data reflecting Paleoindian Period land use patterns and subsistence activities in the Northeast is relatively scarce (Spiess, Wilson and Bradley 1998). Few intact Paleoindian sites have been found in Connecticut. To date, five sites have been investigated and published in detail: the Templeton Site in Washington (Moeller 1980, 1984), three on the Mashantucket Pequot Reservation: the Hidden Creek Site (Jones 1997), the Ohomowauke Site and a third within 100 meters of the Ohomowauke Site (Singer). The fifth, the Dr. Brian D. Jones site, was identified in Avon in 2019. A small number of additional sites have received more cursory attention. Upwards of 50 fluted points have

been recovered as isolated finds across Connecticut. The scarcity of identified sites in the region indicates that population density was likely very low at this time. The small size of sites dating to this period, and the high degree of landscape disturbance over the past 10,000 years, also contributes to poor site visibility overall. Connecticut archaeological site files identified one fluted point found within Easton boundaries.

Archaic Period (9,500-2,700 BP)

The Archaic Period dates from 10,000 to 2,700 BP in the Northeast and is characterized by generalist hunter-gatherer populations utilizing a variety of seasonally available resources. The period is subdivided into the Early, Middle, Late and Terminal Archaic Periods on the basis of associated changes in environment, projectile point styles and inferred adaptations (Snow 1980; McBride 1984). Each sub-period is discussed below.

The Early Archaic Period (9,500-8,000 BP)
Pollen evidence indicates a gradual trend toward a warmer climate beginning around 10,000 BP (McWeeney 1999). By this time Pleistocene megafauna had disappeared and given way to modern game species such as moose, muskrat and beaver. It is feasible deer was not abundant until the end of this period when oak began to dominate upland forests. Plant and animal resources became more predictable and abundant as the climate stabilized, permitting Early Archaic populations to utilize a wider range of seasonal resources. Population density remained low during this period as reflected in the sparse representation of Early Archaic sites in the regional archeological record. This low representation of sites could be due to changing environmental conditions deeply burying, inundating or destroying many early sites through erosion, or due to the difficulty of recognizing Early Archaic assemblages (Funk 1997, Jones 1998).

Stone tool assemblages dating to the Early Archaic period have been recovered from several sites in the Northeast and indicate this period as characterized by a number of distinct episodes. The most poorly understood period between 9,500 and 9,000 BP reflects the local Late Paleoindian and intrusive southern Piedmont Tradition Early Archaic influences. A quartz lithic industry in which projectile points are extremely rare occurs locally between roughly 9,000 and 8,500 BP as demonstrated at the Sandy Hill Site on the Mashantucket Pequot Reservation (Forrest 1999). The period concludes with the appearance of a temperate forest-adapted culture utilizing bifurcate-based projectile points typically manufactured from non-regional materials (Jones 1998, 1999). However, field excavations in 2006 adjacent to the Cedar Swamp at Mashantucket unearthed a chert assemblage that included bifaces and debitage likely of local manufacture from low quality chert. The Dill Farm Site in East Haddam is one of the best-documented bifurcate sites in Connecticut (Pfeiffer 1986). Archaeological investigations at this site identified cooking and refuse features, quartz flakes, retouched tools, bifurcate-based projectile points, and subsistence remains including charred nuts and mammal bone associated with a radiocarbon date of 8560 +/- 270 BP.

The Middle Archaic Period (8,000-6,000 BP)
Pollen evidence indicates a trend toward a warmer, drier climate during the Middle Archaic Period, as well as the development of alluvial terraces along Connecticut's major river systems (Jones 1999). Most modern nut tree species established themselves during this period providing a new food resource for human foragers and many game animals including deer, turkey and bear. Evidence of Middle Archaic Period occupation in Connecticut is more widely documented than for the preceding periods and indicates specialized seasonal activity in different resource zones during a period of population increase (McBride 1984; Jones 1999). The development of grooved axes suggests the increased importance of wood being used as a raw material, while the presence of pebble net sinkers on some regional sites implies a growing reliance on marine and riverine resources (Dincauze 1976; Snow 1980).

Despite their relative abundance, sites in Connecticut yield limited information on Middle Archaic subsistence and land use patterns (Jones 1999). Archaeological assemblages are characterized by the presence of Neville and Stark projectile points and large flake tools. The settlement patterns are oriented, at least seasonally, toward large upland interior wetlands (McBride 1984; Jones 1999). The data suggest seasonal re-use of such locales over a long period of time. This pattern is evident at the Dill Farm Site and those around the Great Cedar Swamp on the Mashantucket Pequot Reservation (Jones 1999). Coastal and riverine sites may be poorly documented because of rising sea levels that resulted in deep alluvial burial.

Late Archaic Period (6,000-3,700 BP)
The Late Archaic Period in the Northeast is characterized by an essentially modern distribution of plant and animal populations. This period is considered a time of cultural fluorescence reflected in evidence of burial ritual, population increase, and long-distance exchange networks (Ritchie 1994; Dincauze 1975; Snow 1980; Cassedy 1999). The Late Archaic Period is one of the best-known temporal sequences in southern New England. During most of this period, large revisited seasonal settlements are located in riverine areas and along large wetland terraces, while smaller more temporary and special-purpose sites are situated in the interior and uplands (Ritchie 1969a and b, McBride 1984; Cassedy 1997, 1999). The nature and distribution of sites suggest aggregation during summer months, with seasonal dispersal into smaller groups during the cold weather (McBride and Dewar 1981). Easton has at least one Late Archaic site identified within the town.

Terminal Archaic Period (3,700-3,000 BP)
A transition in settlement and subsistence patterning began to occur with the onset of the Susquehanna Tradition, also referred to as the Terminal Archaic Period (Dincauze 1975). A number of technological innovations appear as well. These include the use of steatite bowls and the rare manufacture of cord-marked and grit-tempered ceramics. Lithic assemblages contain high proportions of chert and other non-local lithics such as argillite, rhyolite and felsite. Regionally available quartzite was commonly used as well, but the use of local quartz became uncommon at this time. Settlement focused on upper

river terraces rather than floodplains as well as expansive lacustrine and wetland settings (McBride and Dewar 1981). The interior and uplands were used less extensively (McBride 1984). Human cremation burials were common at this time (Dincauze 1968; Robinson 1996; Leveillee 1999). These changes in technology, lithic material preference and settlement organization may represent the arrival of non-regional peoples or ideas rather than in situ developments, though the debate over the possibility of migration remains active (Robinson 1996: 38-39).

The Woodland Period (2,700-450 BP)

The Woodland Period is characterized by the increased use of clay pottery, celts and non-local raw materials as well as the introduction of bow and arrow technology, smoking pipes and horticulture (Lavin 1984, Feder 1984, 1999). An increase in site size and complexity along with greater sedentism and social complexity was likely the result of an increase in population, particularly at the end of this period (McBride and Dewar 1987; Lavin 1988). The Woodland Period is traditionally subdivided into Early, Middle, and Late periods based on ceramic styles, settlement and subsistence patterns, as well as political and social developments (Ritchie 1969a and b; Snow 1980; Lavin 1984). Despite these changes, most recent scholars see the Woodland Period as a continuation of the traditions and lifeways of the preceding Archaic Period (Feder 1984, 1999). Woodland Period artifacts have been identified within a mile of the Easton APE.

The Early Woodland Period (2,700-2,000 BP)
Early Woodland regional complexes are generally characterized by stemmed, tapered and rare side-notched point forms; thick, grit-tempered, cord-marked ceramics; tubular pipe-stones; burial ritual; and suggestions of long-distance trade and exchange networks (Lavin 1984; Juli 1999). The Early Woodland Period remains poorly understood, and is less well represented in the archaeological record than the preceding phases of the Late Archaic. This may be the result of shifts in settlement that promoted the formation of larger, but fewer seasonal aggregation camps. It is possible that incipient horticulture focused on native plant species (George 1997). The existence of stone pipes suggests the trade of tobacco into the region by this time.

The Middle Woodland Period (2,000-1,200 BP)
The Middle Woodland Period is characterized by increased ceramic diversity in both style and form, continued examples of long-distance exchange, and at its end the introduction of tropical cultigens (Dragoo 1976; Snow 1980; Juli 1999). Much of our current knowledge of the Middle Woodland Period in southern New England is from work done by Ritchie (1994) in New York State. Ritchie noted an increased use of plant foods such as goosefoot (*Chenopodium sp.*), which he suggested had a substantial impact upon social and settlement patterns. Ritchie further noted an increased frequency and size of storage facilities during the Middle Woodland Period, which may reflect a growing trend toward sedentism (Ritchie 1994; Snow 1980). At this time jasper tool preforms imported from eastern Pennsylvania are entering the region through broad exchange networks (Luedtke 1987).

Settlement patterns in Connecticut indicate an increased frequency of large sites adjacent to tidal marshes and wetlands along the Connecticut River, a decrease in large upland occupations, and a corresponding increase in upland temporary camps (McBride 1984). This may indicate reduced residential mobility from earlier time periods and is likely due to the development of modern tidal marshes in low-lying riverine areas by 2,000 BP. The tidal marshes supported a wide variety of terrestrial and aquatic animal and plant resources, allowing for longer residential stays (McBride 1984).

Late Woodland Period (1,200-450 BP)

The Late Woodland Period is characterized by the increasing and intensive use of maize, beans, and squash and changes in ceramic technology, form, style, and function. Settlement patterns reflect population aggregation in villages along coastal and riverine locales and the eventual establishment of year-round villages. However, the use of the upland-interior areas by small, domestic units or organized task groups on a temporary and short-term basis remains apparent as does this trend toward fewer and larger villages near coasts and rivers. It has been hypothesized that these changes can be attributed to the introduction of maize, beans, and squash, but it is unclear how important cultigens were to the aboriginal diet of southern New England groups, especially those with access to coastal resources (Ritchie 1994; Ceci 1980; McBride 1984; McBride and Dewar 1987; Bendremer and Dewar 1993; Chilton 1999). Although sites clearly demonstrate the use of tropical cultigens in the Connecticut River Valley, wild plant and animal resources were still a primary component of the aboriginal diet. The use of imported chert increases over time in the Connecticut River Valley implying social, economic, and/or political ties to the Hudson Valley region. Ceramic style affinities also suggest western ties at this end of this period (Feder 1999).

Activities associated with a more sedentary subsistence pattern, such as the cultivation of maize, beans, and squash, resulted in the development of a more complex social organization. Regional variation between various tribal entities is reflected in stylistic design elements found on pottery in particular. Prior to this time, the populations were fairly mobile, loosely based kin-groups that required little, if any, form of centralized authoritative power. Leadership roles were determined on a case-by-case basis and often shifted according to circumstance. This began to change with increasing sedentism.

Contact Period Overview

The Seasonal Round

Although the European trading networks impacted the daily lives of Indigenous peoples throughout southern New England, they continued to practice many of their traditional subsistence strategies. Archaeological sites in coastal and inland locations throughout Connecticut reflect a series of occupations taking place within specific resource rich areas on an annual and seasonal basis. Communities settled closer to the coastline and riverbanks to fish and gather mollusks in the spring, summer, and autumn months. Large amounts of shell found along the coastline of Connecticut attest to these activities taking place. For inland riverine settings, ancient fishing weirs and horticultural fields reflect a slightly different adaptation, although coastal resources continue to be utilized.

In addition to attracting wildlife, wetlands and marshland provided raw materials such as rushes, cattails and other fibrous plants for making basketry and matting. By mid-April many groups cultivated maize, beans, squash, and tobacco in the fields adjacent to their settlements. Like their neighbors to the south, many communities in the Connecticut River Valley adopted maize horticulture early on and foodstuffs were considered an integral part of trading networks in the area. Local plants were collected, such as nuts, berries, herbs, and tubers. In the colder months, provisions cached away from summer habitations were utilized. As the winter months approached, family groups or bands on the immediate coast removed further inland to wooded areas where archaeological sites reflect the presence of smaller temporary hunting camps.

In contrast to the end of the Late Woodland, after European contact, cultural rather than environmental factors influenced the subsistence patterns of local Indigenous peoples (Ceci 1979). The impact from European trading networks, Native wampum production and the fur trade disrupted the balance of power in the years just prior to the Pequot War in 1637 (McBride 1994:44). After contact, European trade affected Indigenous populations who opted to shift their settlements to one geographical area to intercept and negotiate with their trading partners. This was certainly the case for inland groups along the Connecticut River and its tributaries. The same applied to coastal dwelling peoples who constructed fortified villages for protection while vying for trade (Ceci 1979). Fortifications were often occupied on a continual basis for at least a segment of the population, possibly housing the sachem's family. However, other horticultural activities took place within close proximity of these structures.

At the time of European contact the socio/political organization of groups in coastal and in some inland areas of southern New England was becoming more highly stratified. In the larger village sites the demographic included extended families whose sachem was a close family relation. It is important to note that infectious disease introduced by the European voyagers decimated local Indigenous communities and disrupted traditional leadership roles observed just after contact that were often matrilineal.

Historic Period – Easton/Easton Center

Initially within the northern reaches of Fairfield's early boundaries. As a section of Weston, Easton was formerly established in 1787 and separated from Weston in 1845 to create its own township. Settlement in Fairfield began two years after the 1637 Great Swamp Fight, so called, in Southport that decimated many of the remaining Pequot who fled the attack on their village forts in New London County. By 1639, Roger Ludlow, who took part in the conflict with the Pequot, obtained permissions from the General Court of Connecticut to establish a plantation at Unquowa (Unquoway) or Fairfield. When the Connecticut Charter was secured in 1662, the lands within Fairfield County were absorbed by Connecticut.

Aspetuck was the Algonquian place name for the lands and river valley located within the borders of present day Easton. Aspetuck is also associated with the aboriginal territory of the Indigenous people once connected to these lands. Early deeds denote Aspetuck's sachem Crocecrow transferring the "native right" to the early settlers in 1670.

A claim later contested by John Wampus, through his wife's matrilineal land rights as a daughter to Romanock, chief sachem of Aspetuck and Sasquannock, yet dismissed by English settlers (Schenck 1889). In the 17th century, the Indigenous people of Aspetuck paid tribute to the English to ensure their protection from Mohawk raiding parties. In order to protect the English against further claims to the land, several treaties were signed with local native peoples throughout Connecticut, as well as transfers of land or purchase of the "native right" or title.

Many of the same natural resources that attracted Indigenous populations to the area also attracted European settlers throughout Fairfield County who were in search of arable lands. According to Hurd (1881), in 1668 lands were set aside for the Native peoples at the northernmost bound of Fairfield at Northfield. The Indigenous peoples of Aspetuck may have coalesced in the vicinity of Cricker's Brook. At the time the General Court required land be reserved for local Indigenous communities to continue to hunt, fish, and gather firewood (Schenk 1889). For the first English inhabitants, Fairfield lands were set out in lots running north to south and divided amongst the proprietors for pasture and commons. The "long lots" so called measured 11 miles in length and a few rods in breadth (Hurd 1881). The east and west long lots were separated by the one mile common, and the eastern long lots eventually encompassed the town of Easton and the western lots the town of Weston.

Due to its geography, Easton's early settlement patterns are best described as dispersed consisting of several town centers over the years with the first settlement at Aspetuck or Gilbertown where one of the earliest burial grounds is located. Eventually the town center coalesced around the current APE at the intersection of Westport and Center Roads.

Easton's early economy focused mainly on subsistence farming. As with most New England towns in the 18th and 19th century, many cottage industries sustained the local economy from farming to the operation of saw, grist and tanning mills. The town's first grain mill was built and maintained by Samuel Davis as early as 1704 (Reeve, et.al. 1990). By the 19th century, Easton's economy included numerous boot and shoemakers, carpenters, blacksmiths, grocers and merchants. The historic maps from the 19th century identify many place names, dwellings, mills and landowners within Easton and in the vicinity of the Westport Road and Center Road intersection in particular.

Several denominations are represented in Easton including Congregational, Episcopalian, Methodist and Baptist. At Easton Center, the Congregational Church of Easton, and the Episcopal Church on Westport Road are within one quarter mile of one another.

Throughout the 19th century Easton lost many of its inhabitants to westward expansion. The introduction of the railroads and eventually the automobile shaped the demographic of Easton with many of its population searching for work in urban centers yet choosing to reside in Easton. The demographics of Easton also changed with the influx of immigrants from Eastern Europe and Russia in the early 20th century who contributed greatly to the character and economy of Easton.

Easton's geologic past also provides ample water resources through underground springs that provide water to nearby towns in Fairfield County. The Bridgeport Hydraulic

Company (BHC), established in the early 20th century established Easton's Hemlock Reservoir and obtained property rights along Cricker's Brook in the 1920s that runs near Easton Center's saw and grist mill in close proximity to Greiser's Store.

Previous archaeological research in the vicinity of the Westport and Center Road intersection.

The Office of State Archaeology archaeological site files listed upwards of 15 sites within one mile radius of the intersection of Westport and Center Road APE. There are several pre-contact sites dating from the Early to Middle Woodland Period (2,700-1200 BP), the Late Archaic Period (6,000-3,700 BP) and possibly as early as the Paleolithic (12,500-9,500 BP). Artifacts identified from these sites include narrow stem, Susquehanna Broad, Levanna, and Rossville projectile point types and one possible fluted point. These artifacts attest to Indigenous land use in Easton centuries prior to European Contact.

National Register properties and historic districts in Easton include the 18-19th century Aspetuck Historic District and the residence of well-known author Ida Tarbell's House known as "Twin Oaks" at 320 Valley Rd. In the 1990s The Easton Historical Society conducted a comprehensive review of historical structures within the town. *The Historic and Architectural Resource Survey of Easton* funded in part by the National Park Service and the State Historic Preservation Office catalogued numerous historic structures in town. The Easton Center Historic District designation was recommended for the vicinity of the current pedestrian improvements and included upwards of 14 properties.

As previously mentioned, in the immediate vicinity of Westport Road and Center Road is where the North Fairfield Congregational Church was in built in 1836 on the site of the earlier meetinghouse. Samuel Staples, grandson to Thomas Staples, one of Fairfield's first settlers in 1669, donated four acres to build the structure. The Staples Academy established in 1795 offered free education to local children. This structure currently houses the offices for the Congregational Church as well as a preschool. A remnant raceway, millpond and stone foundations of the Easton Center (Turney's) saw and grist millworks are still visible east and south on Cricker's Brook near the current APE. Greiser's Store, or "West Store" dates to approximately 1800. According to state site files, the store may have been moved to its current location after 1870. The Easton Post Office, also referred to as the "East Store" was constructed around 1740, possibly by Stephen Wheeler and later purchased by the Greiser family in the 1920s. Refer to *The Historic and Architectural Resource Survey of Easton* publication for additional information regarding Easton's historical architecture.

Historic Maps

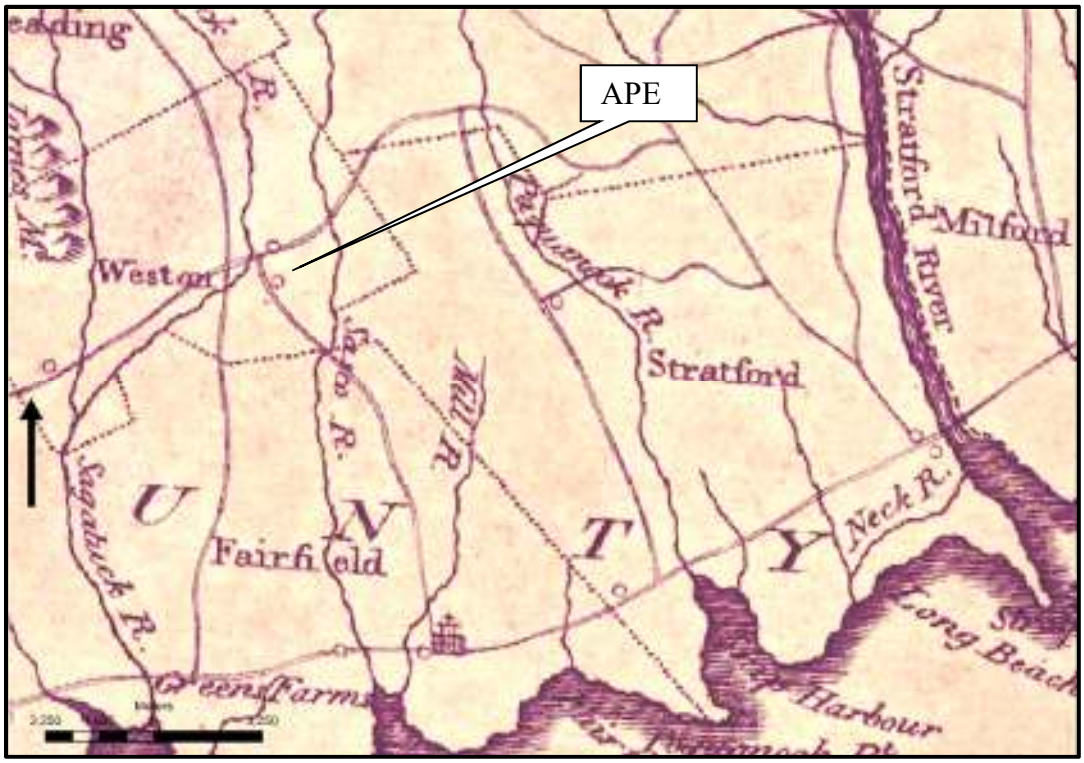

Fig. 4: Tanner map in 1796 (magic.lib.uconn.edu)

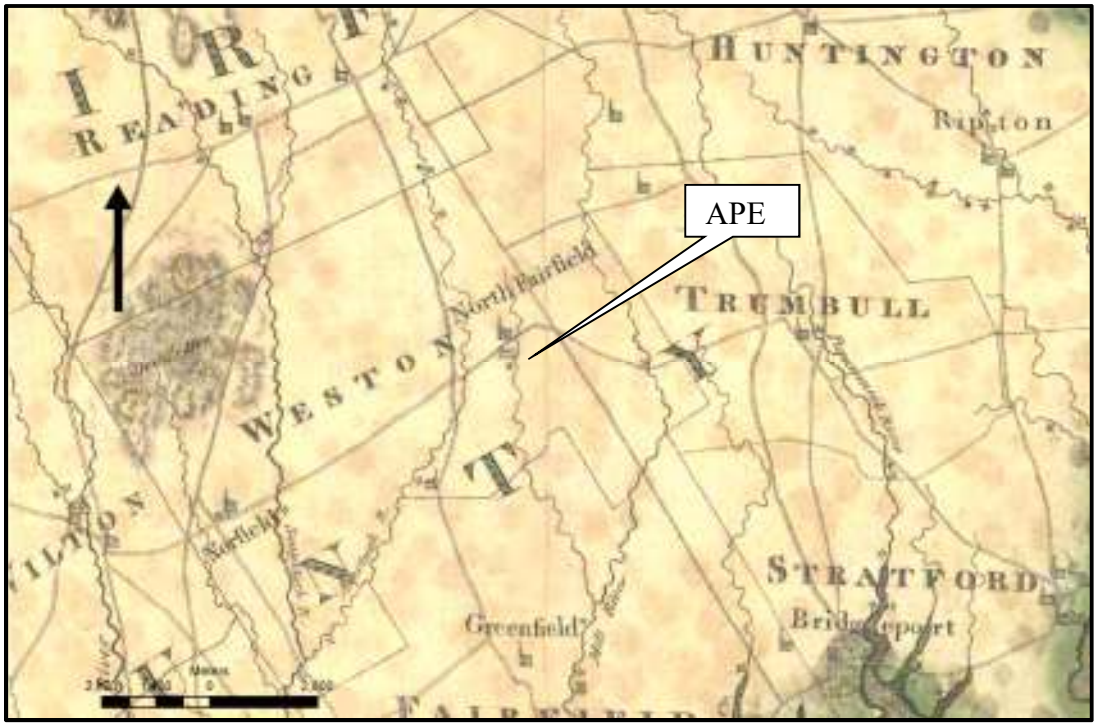

Fig. 5: 1811 Warren & Gillet map of APE identifies Congregational Church, Staples Academy and nearby sawmill (magic.lib.uconn.edu).

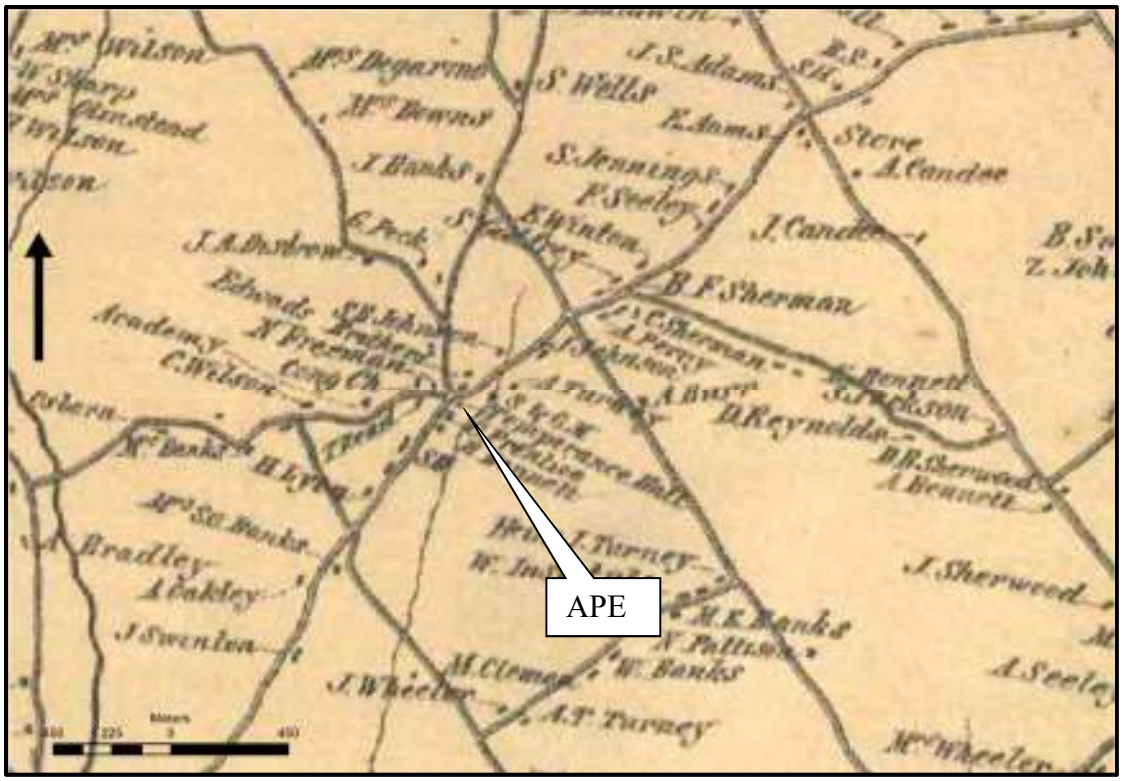

Fig. 6 1856 Chace map identifies nearby Turney saw and gristmill along Cricker's Brook adjacent to current APE (magic.lib.uconn.edu)

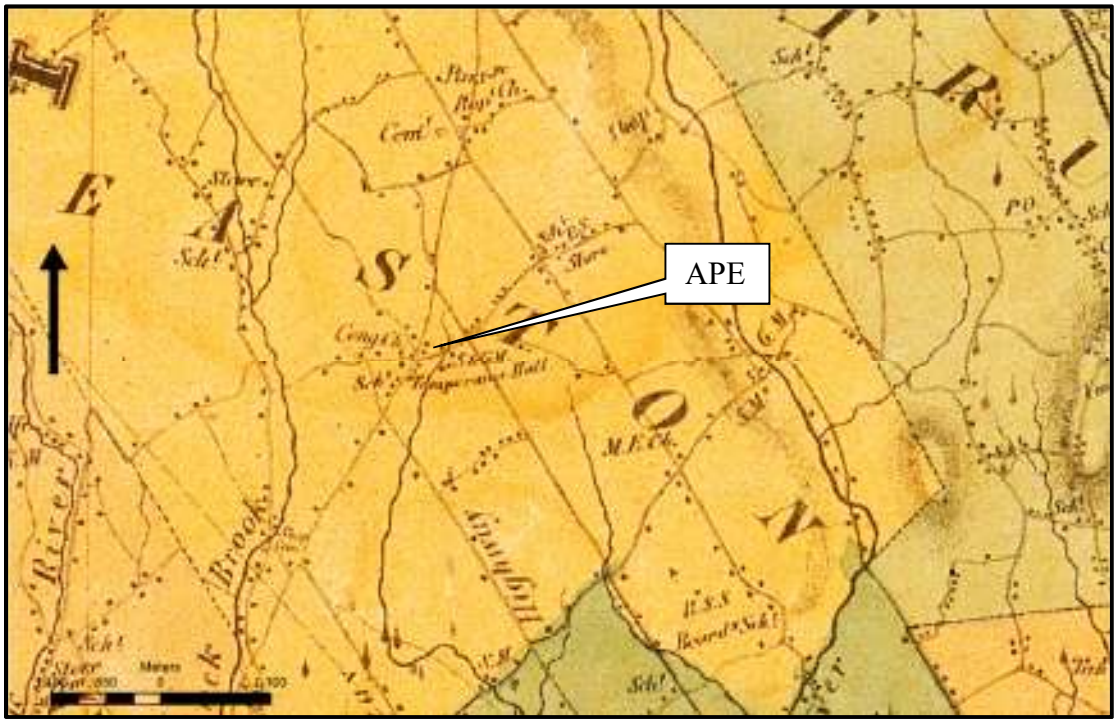

Fig. 7: 1859 Clark & Tackabury map (magic.lib.uconn.edu)

Fig. 8 1893 H.D. Hurd & Co. map (magic.lib.uconn.edu)

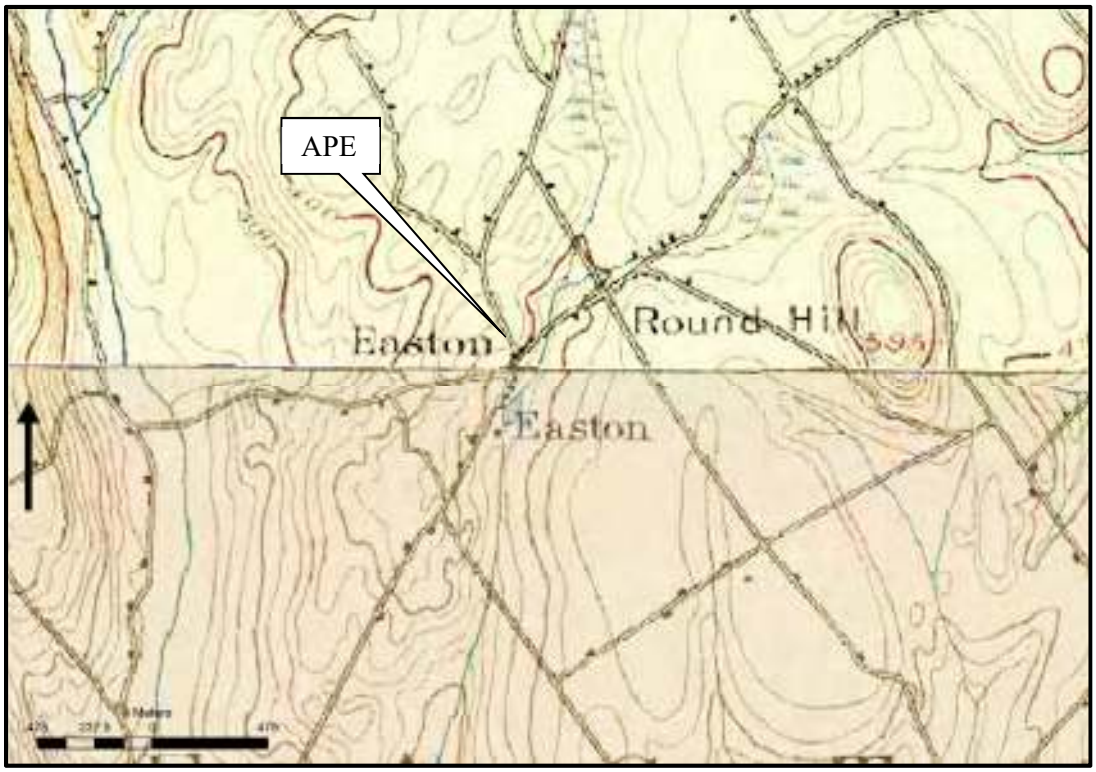

Fig. 9 1895 USGS topographic map (magic.lib.uconn.edu)

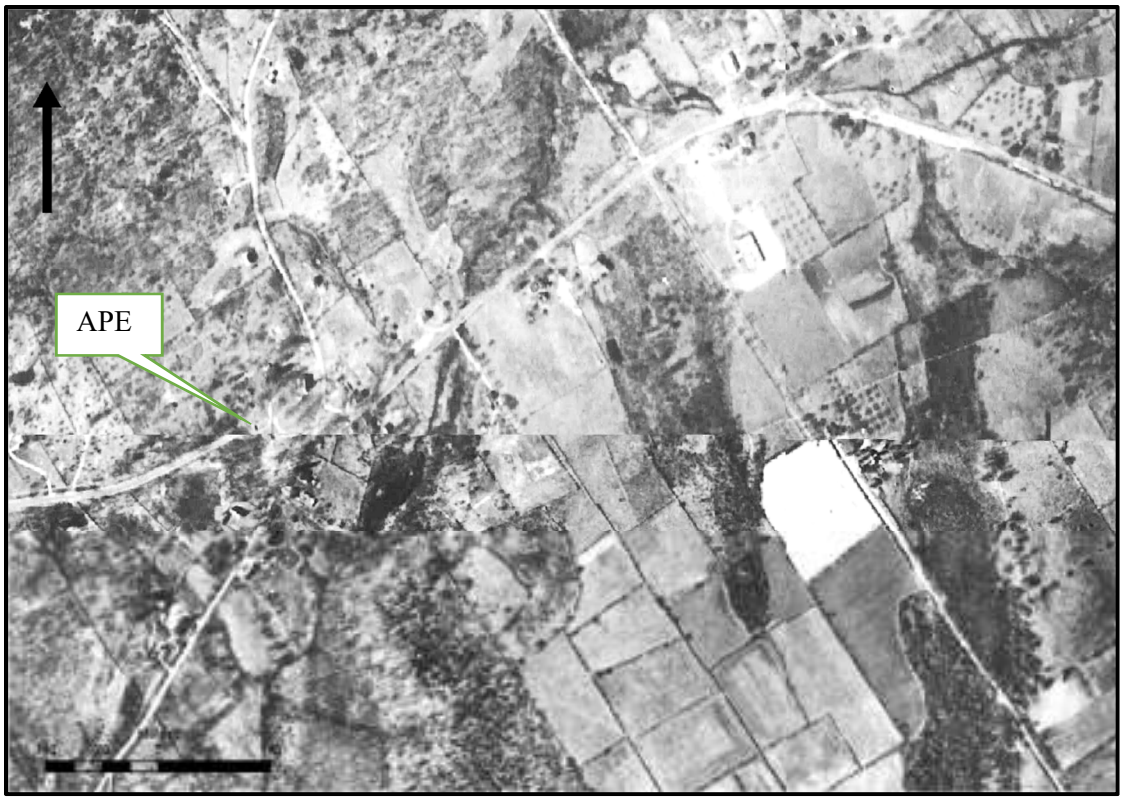

Fig. 10 The 1934 aerial - mosaic tiles are offset and do not line up correctly in this image (magic.lib.uconn.edu)

Environmental and Geological Setting

As with many areas of Connecticut, climate conditions noted by the USDA for Easton estimates the mean annual precipitation of 42.0 inches annually with an average temperature is 46.0° F with 120 to 185 days frost free (http://websoilsurvey.usda.gov). The vegetation bordering along Westport Road and Center Road consists of grassy lawns, deciduous trees such as maple (Acer), oak (Quercus), green ash (Fraxinus pennsylvanica) and eastern white pine (Pinus strobus) along with wild raspberry (Rubus idaeus). Domestic groundcover such as English ivy (Hedera helix) and Periwinkle (Vinca minor) is visible around the vicinity of the stonewall remnants at Site #46-98.

The APE consists of a sloping upland geography with exposed bedrock and buried ledge in addition to surficial sandy loams, gravel and silt. The NRCS soil maps listed two soil designations for the project area. Used as a guide, the accuracy of these maps is often inconclusive at a small scale for a specific parcel and requires on-site inspection. (Refer to NRCS map and table 1 below). The walk-over assessment determined that within the immediate roadside APE, buried ledge was present along with fill, compacted gravel and disturbed topsoil likely the result of vehicle traffic and routine road maintenance. Previous paving, utility work and storm water runoff impacted the integrity of the APE especially in the vicinity of the stonewall documented for Site #46-98 adjacent to

Greiser's Store. This section of remnant wall borders close to the edge of Westport Road and is situated within a gulley buried beneath fill and vegetation with visible evidence of displaced soils due to storm runoff. In addition, other natural disturbances such as uprooted trees displaced several stones on the section of the wall adjacent to the proposed improvements.

Table 1 Soil designation from NRCS (https://websoilsurvey.sc.egov.usda.gov)

Soil ID	Soil	Acres	Area
60B	Canton and Charlton fine sandy loams, 3 to 0% slopes	0.5	33.9%
73C	Charlton - Chatfield complex, very rocky 0 to 15% slopes	1.0	66.1%
Totals for Area of Interest		1.5	100.0%

Fig. 11 NRCS soil map of Westport Rd and Center Rd intersection APE. (https://websoilsurvey.sc.egov.usda.gov)

Survey and assessment

The Phase 1 Archaeology Assessment consisted of a walkover of the APE to determine site integrity and identify well drained undisturbed soils conducive to subsurface testing. It was concluded a majority of the APE had been previously paved. As referenced above, the intersection slopes southeastward from the Congregational Church and the adjacent property across Westport Road at 276 Center Road. The slope is extremely steep at this point being upwards of 15 degrees. The topography levels off in front of the former Staples Academy. The terrain where the stone foundation was documented for Site #46-98 also slopes and rests in a gulley. The only section of the APE conducive to testing was in front of the Staples Academy on the north side of Westport Road.

Two subsurface test pits, STP T1-1 and T1-2, were placed 6.6 meters from the edge of the driveway at five meters apart. The test pits terminated at 40 and 48 centimeters below surface (cmbs) due to rock and gravel. One additional test pit STP T2-1 was placed near the northernmost edge of the remnant buried stone wall of Site #46-98. This STP was terminated at 15 cmbs due to disturbed and displaced soils resulting from erosion and uprooted trees. The only artifacts identified were two fragments of clear bottle glass retrieved in the topsoil from test pit STP T1-1 at 9 to 25 cmbs. There was modern plastic debris found within the topsoil. Test pit T1-2 was sterile.

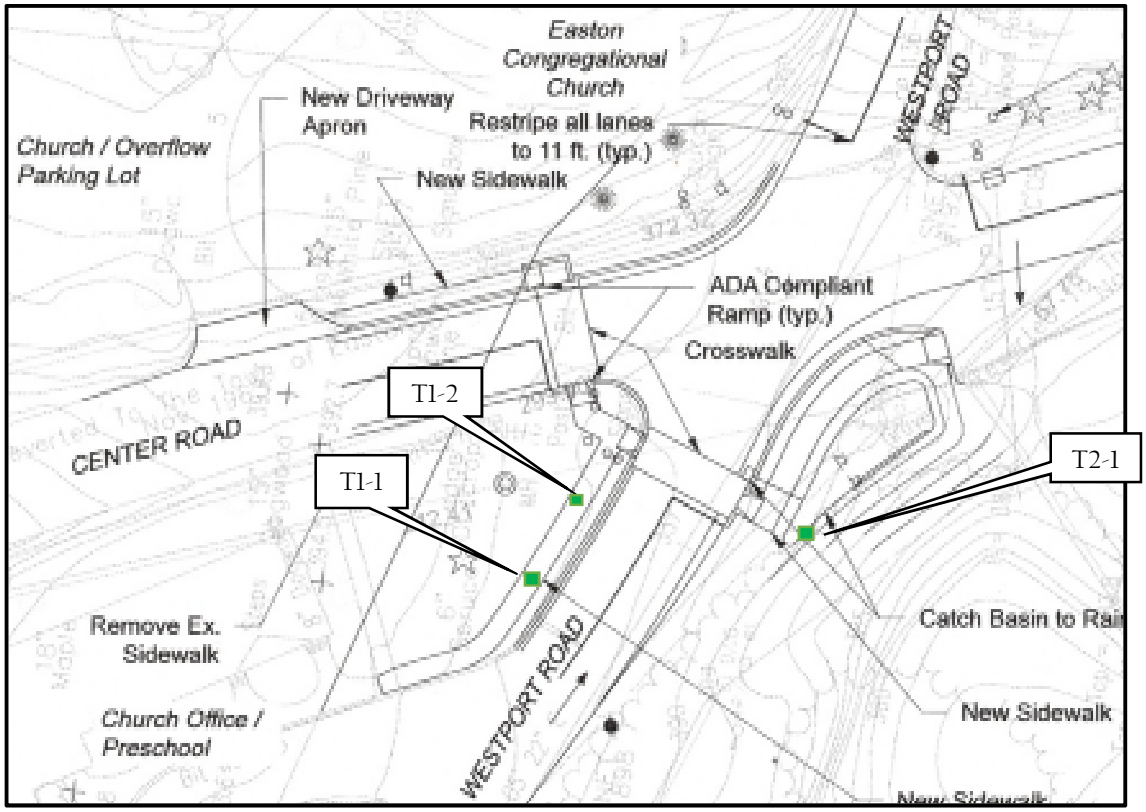

Fig. 12 Placement of subsurface test pits. T2-1 is located adjacent to northernmost edge of Site #46-98 stonewall. (base map - Force Engineering and Construction, LLC)

Fig. 13 Placement of subsurface test pits. STP T2-1 adjacent to northern edge of stonewall documented for Site #46-98. (2019 aerial base map https://cteco.maps.arcgis.com/)

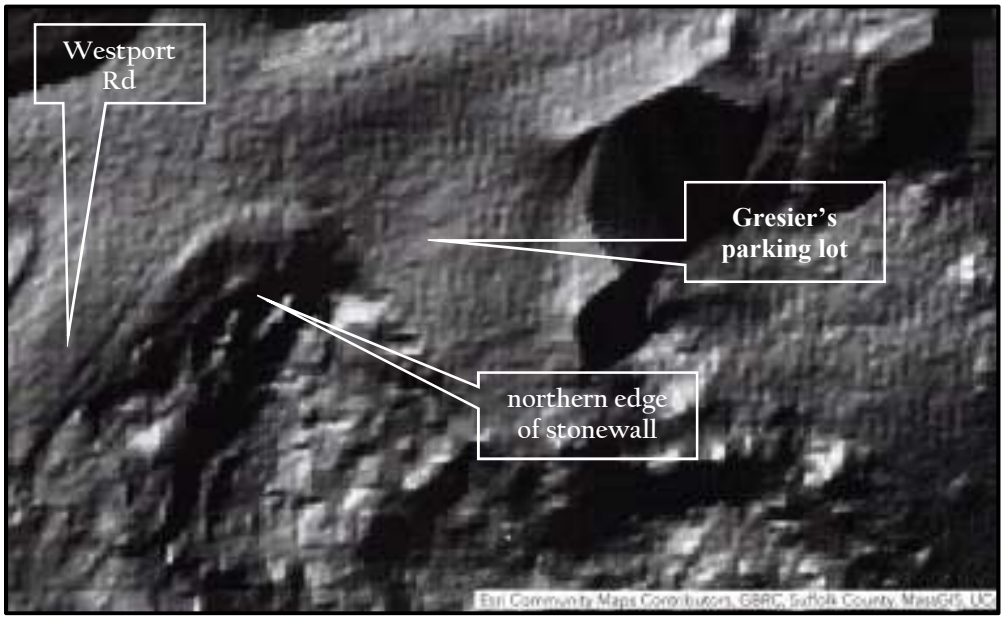

Fig. 14 LiDAR image of stonewall associated with Site #46-98 at intersection of Westport and Center Roads (https://cteco.maps.arcgis.com/)

Fig. 15 View facing northerly along Westport Road toward the Congregational Church where subsurface testing was accomplished in front of former Staples Academy (current preschool).

Table 2: Excavation Summary								
STP#	Bags	A0/duff	Depth	AP soils	Depth	B1	Depth	Comments
T1-1	1	med bn vy sd lm 2.5yr 4/2 weak red	0-9 cmbs	med bn sd lm 2.5yr 3/2 dusky red	9-32 cmbs	dk rd bn sd lm w/ rock and cobble 2.5yr 4/8 red	25-46 cmbs	1 clear glass @9-25 cmbs
T1-2	0	med bn vy sd lm 2.5yr 4/2 weak red	0-9 cmbs	med bn sd lm 2.5yr 3/2 dusky red	9-40 cmbs	dk rd bn sd lm w/ rock and cobble 2.5yr 4/8 red	40-48 cmbs	no cultural material
T2-1	0	brn lm & fill 2.5yr 3/3 dk rd brn	0-15 cmbs					adjacent stonewall Site #46-98

Fig. 16 Two curved clear glass modern bottle fragments in STP T1-1 in association with modern plastic debris @9-25 cmbs.

Site photographs

Fig. 17 Congregational Church, photo taken from Center Road facing northerly.

Fig. 18 View in front of Congregational Church facing easterly toward Greiser's Store. Proposed sidewalk to run alongside embankment.

Fig. 19 View facing northeasterly along Center Rd and Westport Rd intersection and Congregational Church property to the right.


Fig. 20 View facing southwesterly over Westport Road with Staples Academy to the right and Site #46-48 across the road. Storm drains at this intersection connect to Cricker's Brook that runs under Center Road to the east of Site #46-98.

Fig. 21 View facing northwesterly over Westport Road toward Staples Academy.

Fig. 22 View from Westport Road toward Site #46-98 and Greiser's Store. Note how Site #46-98 rests in a gulley.

Fig. 23 View at intersection overlooking Center Road with Greiser's Store in the background. A remnant of the stonewall associated with Site #46-98 rests in the depression underneath the brush.


Fig. 24 View facing toward Greiser's Store parking lot where uprooted trees disturbed the stonewall associated with Site #46-98.

Fig. 25 Section of wall associated with Easton Center Garage Site #46-98 just off current APE

Conclusions and Recommendations

The Phase 1 Archaeology Assessment Survey consisted of a visual assessment/walkover of the project area and three subsurface test pits. It was determined a majority of the Westport Road and Center Road APE had been previously paved or situated on a steep slope not conducive to testing. This was the case for soils in front of the Congregational Church where the new sidewalk will run across existing pavement along Center Road and minimally impact the hillside. The lawn in front of the Staples Academy was situated on level ground with relatively intact and undisturbed soils although the first nine centimeters consisted of loam mixed with fine grained sand or fill. One STP alongside Staples Academy (T1-1) yielded two curved clear glass bottle fragments in association with modern plastic debris.

The section of roadside adjacent to Greiser's Store parking lot, where Site #46-98 and the Big Easton Center Garage once stood, is downslope from the Congregational Church and rests in a slight gulley or depression at the intersection southwest of the stop sign. Storm runoff and soil erosion visibly buried portions of the stonewall while uprooted trees displaced a few stones. Disturbed soils were identified within STP T2-1 placed at the northernmost edge of stonewall mapped for Site #46-98. A majority of stone work associated with Site #46-98 is well off the APE with a large section situated on private lands.

To conclude, there was concern the pedestrian safety improvements might impact undocumented archaeological sites in the area. This is in addition to a section of

stonewall to the south of the stop sign on Westport Road for Site #46-98, referred to as the Big Easton Center Garage adjacent to Greiser's Store. However, visual inspection of the existing stonewall and evidence of natural disturbances such as erosion and uprooted trees have impacted this site over the years. Although improvements at this corner are within close proximity to an edge of the stone wall, most of the wall is buried and well off the current APE. In addition, the design for the safety improvements include a small rain garden that would not impact stone previously buried or disturbed from other natural events. Therefore, the Phase 1 Archaeology Assessment Survey determined the proposed safety improvements and sidewalk installation would not adversely impact any archaeological resources nor impede or disturb the visual appearance or integrity of the historic nature of one of Easton's town centers.

Sources/Bibliography

Barber, John Warner
1836 Connecticut Historical Collections, containing a general collection of interesting facts, traditions, biographical sketches, anecdotes, &c. relating to the history and antiquities of every town in Connecticut, with geographical descriptions. Published by Durrie & Peck and J. W. Barber: New Haven (archive.org)

Bellantoni, Nicholas
1995 Distribution of Paleoindian Cultural Material in Connecticut. Paper presented at the Archaeological Society of Connecticut Annual Spring Meeting.

Bendremer, Jeffrey and Robert Dewar
1993 The Advent of Maize Horticulture in New England. In Corn and Culture in the Prehistoric New World, University of Minnesota Publications in Anthropology, No 5, edited by Sissel Johannessen, Christine A. Hastorf, Westview Press, Boulder.

Cassedy, Daniel F.
1997 From the Erie Canal to Long Island Sound: Technical Synthesis of the Iroquois Pipeline Project, 1989-1993. Garrow and Associates, Inc., Atlanta.

1999 The Archaic Florescence: The Late and terminal Archaic Periods of Connecticut as seen from the Iroquois Pipeline. Bulletin of the Archaeological Society of Connecticut 62:125-139.

Ceci, Lynn
1979
1980 Maize Cultivation in Coastal New York: The Archaeological, Agronomical and Documentary Evidence. North American Archaeologist 1(1): 45-74.

Chilton, Elizabeth
1999 Mobile Farmers of Pre-Contact Southern New England: The Archaeological and Ethnohistorical Evidence. Current Northeast Paleoethnobotany, edited by J. Hart, pp. 157-176. New York State Museum, No. 494, Albany.

DeForest, John, W.
1852 History of the Indians of Connecticut. Reprint. Native American Book Publishers. Brighton, Michigan.

Dincauze, Dena F.
1968 Cremation Cemeteries in Eastern Massachusetts. Cambridge, Ma.: Peabody Museum.

1975 The Late Archaic Period in Southern New England. Arctic Anthropology 12(2): 23-24.

1976 The Neville Site: 8,000 Years at Amoskeag. Peabody Museum Monographs 4. Harvard University, Cambridge.

Dragoo, D.
1976 Some Aspects of Eastern North American Prehistory. A Review of 1975. American Antiquity 41(1).

Easton Planning and Zoning Commission
2006 Town Plan of Conservation and Development, Easton, CT.

Feder, Kenneth L.
1984 Pots, Plants, and People: The Late Woodland Period in Connecticut. Bulletin of the Archaeological Society of Connecticut 47:99-111.
1999 The Late Woodland Revisited: The Times, They Were A-Changin' (But Not That Much). Bulletin of the Archaeological Society of Connecticut 62: 155-174.

Forrest, Daniel
1999 Beyond Presence and Absence: Establishing Diversity in Connecticut's Early Holocene Archaeological Record. Bulletin of the Archaeological Society of Connecticut 62:79-99.

Funk, Robert E.
1997 Holocene or Hollow Scene? The Search for the Earliest Archaic Cultures in New York State. The Review of Archaeology 17(1):11-24.

George, David
1997 Late Prehistoric Archaeobotany of Connecticut: Providing a Context for the Transition to Maize Agriculture. Bulletin of the Archaeological Society of Connecticut 60:13-28.

Hines, Herbert H

A New England Country Parish, its Background, History and Romance : a History of the North Fairfield Congregational Parish of Easton, Fairfield Co., Conn. (https://collections.ctdigitalarchive.org/)

Holmes, Sarah L.
2007 "In Behalf of Myself and My People": Mashantucket Pequot Strategies in Defense of Their Land Rights. Ph.D. dissertation in Anthropology, University of Connecticut.

Hurd, D. Hamilton
1881 History of Fairfield County, Connecticut. J. W. Lewis & Co., Philadelphia. (archive.org)

Jameson, J. Franklin
1909 Narratives of New Netherland, 1609-1664. Digital image http://archive.org.

Jones, Brian D.
1997 The Late Paleoindian Hidden Creek Site in Southeastern Connecticut. Archaeology of Eastern North America 25:45-80.

1998 Human Adaptation to the Changing Northeastern Environment at the End of the Pleistocene: Implications for the Archaeological Record. Ph.D. dissertation, University of Connecticut. Available from University Microfilms, Ann Arbor, No. 9906705.

1999 The Middle Archaic Period in Connecticut: The View from Mashantucket. Bulletin of the Archaeological Society of Connecticut 62:101-123.

2004 Paleoindian Population Dynamics in New England: Possible Typological Consequences. In Hunters and Gatherers in Theory and Archaeology, edited by G. Crothers. Center for Archaeological Investigations, Occasional Paper No. 31. Carbondale: Southern Illinois University.

2007 (2002) The Simple and the Complex: Two Middle Archaic Small Upland Lithic Sites in North Stonington, Connecticut. In Current Approaches to the Analysis and Interpretation of Small Lithic Sites in the Northeast, edited by C. B. Reith, pp 77-88. New York State Museum: Albany.

Jones, Brian D. and Daniel T. Forrest
2003 Life in a Postglacial Landscape: Settlement-Subsistence Change During the Pleistocene-Holocene Transition in Southern New England. In Geoarchaeology of Landscapes in the Glaciated Northeast edited by David L. Cremeens and John P. Hart. New York State Museum Bulletin 497. University of the State of New York, The State Education Department, Albany, New York.

Juli, Harold
1999 Current Perspectives on Early and Middle Woodland Archaeology in Connecticut. Bulletin of the Archaeological Society of Connecticut 62:141-153.

Lavin, Lucianne
1984 Connecticut Prehistory: A Synthesis of Current Investigations. Bulletin of the Archaeological Society of Connecticut 47:5-40.

1988 Coastal Adaptations in Southern New England and Southern New York. Archaeology of eastern North America 16:101-120.

Leveillee, Alan
1999 Transitional Archaic Ideology as Reflected in Secondary Burials at the Millbury III Cremation Complex. Archaeology of Eastern North America 27:157-184.

Luedtke, Barbara E.
1987 The Pennsylvania Connection: Jasper at Massachusetts Sites. Bulletin of Massachusetts Archaeological Society 48:37-47.

McBride, Kevin A.
1984 Prehistory of the Lower Connecticut River Valley. Doctoral dissertation, University of Connecticut. University Microfilms, Ann Arbor.

1994 The Source and Mother of the Fur Trade: Native-Dutch Relations in Eastern New Netherland. Enduring Traditions: The Native Peoples of New England. Laurie Weinstein ed. Westport, Ct.: Bergin & Garvey.

McBride. Kevin A. and Robert Dewar
1981 Prehistoric Settlement in the Lower Connecticut River Valley. Man in the Northeast 22:37-66.

1987 Agriculture and Cultural Evolution: Causes and Effects in the Lower Connecticut River Valley. In Emergent Horticultural Economies in the Eastern Woodlands, edited by W. Keegan, pp. 305-328. Center for Archaeological Investigations, University of Illinois, Carbondale.

McWeeney, Lucinda
1999 A Review of Late Pleistocene and Holocene Climate Changes in Southern New England. Bulletin of the Archaeological Society of Connecticut 62:3-18.

Mellon, Francis
A Short History of the Congregational Church of Easton, CT. 1762-1946. (https://collections.ctdigitalarchive.org)

Meltzer, David J.
1988 Late Pleistocene Human Adaptations in Eastern North America. Journal of World Prehistory 2(1):1-52.

Moeller, Roger W. eds.
1990 Experiments and Observations on the Terminal Archaic of the Middle Atlantic region. Archaeological Services, Bethlehem, Ct.

Moeller, Roger W.
1980 6LF21: A Paleo-Indian Site in Western Connecticut. American Indian Archaeological Institute, Washington, Connecticut.

1984 Regional Implications of the Templeton Site for Paleo-Indian Lithic Procurement and Utilization. North American Archaeologist 5(3):236-246.

Motzkin, G. W.A. Patterson III and D.R. Foster
1999 A Historical Perspective on Pitch Pine-Scrub Oak Communities in the Connecticut Valley of Massachusetts. Ecosystems (1999) 2: 255-273.

Nicholas, G.P.
1991 Putting wetlands into perspective. Man in the Northeast 42:29-38r.

Nichols, George E.
1914 The Vegetation of Connecticut III. Plant Societies of Uplands. Torreys Vol. 14, No. 10 (October, 1914), pp. 167-194.

Pfeiffer, John
1986 Dill Farm Locus One: Early and Middle Archaic Components in Southern New England. Bulletin of the Archaeological Society of Connecticut 49:19-35.

Pollock, Stephen G. et.al.
1998 Chert from the Munsungun Lake Formation (Maine) in Paleoamerican Archaeological Sites in Northeastern North America: Recognition of its Occurrence and Distribution. Journal of Archaeological Science (1999) 26, 269–293.

Reeve, Stuart, David Silverglade, and Kathleen von Jena
A Brief History of Our Town of Easton, Connecticut. Aspetuck Landways Survey. (historicalsocietyofeastonct.org)

Ritchie, William A.
1969a The Archaeology of Martha's Vineyard. The Natural History Press. Garden City, New York.

1969b The Archaeology of New York State. The Natural History Press. Garden City, New York.

1971 The Archaic in New York. New York State Archaeological Association Bulletin 52:2-12.

1994 The Archaeology of New York State, Revised Edition. Purple Mountain Press, Fleischmanns, NY.

Robinson, Brian S.
1996 Archaic Period Burial Patterning in the Northeast. The Review of Archaeology, Special Issue 17(1):33-44.

Schenck, Elizabeth Hubbell
1889 The History of Fairfield County, Connecticut; from first settlement of the town in 1639 to 1818. J.J. Little & Co. Astor Place, New York. (archive.org)

Snow, Dean
1980 The Archaeology of New England. Academic Press New York.

Spiess, Arthur E., D. B. Wilson and J. Bradley
Paleoindian Occupation in the New England-Maritimes Region: Beyond Cultural Ecology. Archaeology of Eastern North America 26:201-264.

Sullivan III, A.P.
1992 Investigating the Archaeological Consequences of Short-Duration Occupations. American Antiquity 57(1):99-115.

Thorson, R.M., and McWeeney, L.
n.d. Lake-Level Changes Near the Southeastern Laurentide Limit. Unpublished manuscript in possession of the authors.

Webb, T. III, P.J. Bartlein, S.P., and Anderson, K.H.
1993 Vegetation, Lake Levels, and Climate in Eastern North America for the Past 18,000 Years. In Global Climates Since the Last Glacial Maximum, 415-467.

Will, Richard T.
1998 Some Recent Paleoindian Finds from Maine. Paper presented March 15 at the 38th Northeastern Anthropological Association Meetings, Orono.

Internet Sources

archive.org
cteco.uconn.edu
ctexplored.org
magic.lib.uconn.edu
websoilsurvey.nrcs.usda.gov
ct.gov/deep
connecticuthistoryonline.org
collections.ctdigitalarchive.org
historicalsocietyofeastonct.org

Historical and Architectural Surveys

1996, 223 properties, Townwide, 1996, Connecticut Historical Commission

Archaeological Surveys

1997, Phase Ia Archaeological Assessment Survey Report of the Trout Brook Valley Golf Course and Housing Development (located between Route 58, Freeborn Road, and Saugatuck Reservoir), also covers Weston, CHPC no. 733

1997, Phase Ib Archaeological Assessment Survey Report of the Trout Brook Valley Golf Course and Housing Development (located between Route 58, Freeborn Road, and

Saugatuck Reservoir), also covers Weston, CHPC no. 744

1998, Phase II Archaeological Survey Report of the Trout Brook Valley Golf Course and Housing Development (located between Route 58, Freeborn Road, and Saugatuck Reservoir), also covers Weston, CHPC no. 774

2001, Phase I Archaeological Reconnaissance Survey of the Potential Cell Tower Site at 550 Sport Hill Road/Route 59, CHPC no. 979

2003, Phase I Cultural Resource Survey for the Proposed AT&T Tower Site, CT-520 (located at 1091 Black Rock Road), CHPC no. 1173

2009, Historical and Archaeological Assessment Survey of Easton, Connecticut, Shelved with oversized archaeological surveys, CHPC no. 1796

Appendix A: Letters from SHPO

Connecticut

State Historic Preservation Office
Department of Economic and Community Development

October 13, 2022

Mr. Justin Giorlando
Town of Easton
225 Center Road
Easton, CT 06612
(via email only to jgiorlando@eastonct.gov)

Subject: Pedestrian Safety Improvements (State Project No. 0170-3513GR)
Intersection of Center Road and Westport Road
Easton, Connecticut

Dear Mr. Giolando:

The State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) is in receipt of a request for comments on the potential effects of the referenced project on historic properties. It is our understanding that the Town of Easton plans to install approximately 225 linear feet of sidewalks at the intersection of Center Road and Westport Road. The project will include the installation of a flashing light, crosswalks, a catch basin, and level spreader. The proposed will obtain funding from the Community Connectivity Grant Program (CCGP). As a result, it is subject to review by this office pursuant to the provisions of Section 106 of the Connecticut Environmental Policy Act.

There are no previously reported properties listed on the National Register of Historic Places recorded within the project area, but several archaeological sites have been recorded in areas surrounding it. Further, a previously documented archaeological site (Site 46-98) was recorded within the southwestern portion of the Area of Potential Effects (APE) associated with the proposed project. This site may be impacted by the installation of the proposed level spreader. SHPO recognizes that portions of the project corridor may have experienced prior ground disturbance, but their extent is not known. Due to the proximity to a previously documented archaeological site, overall archaeological sensitivity, and no obvious signs of extensive prior disturbances associated with the proposed project, it is SHPO's opinion that the project has the potential to impact significant archeological resources. SHPO requests that a professional archaeological assessment and reconnaissance survey of the project corridor be completed. The assessment survey should examine all areas of anticipated disturbance and a reconnaissance survey should follow unless sufficient research or fieldwork documents that this level of effort is unwarranted. All work should be in compliance with the *Environmental Review Primer for Connecticut's Archaeological Resources* and no construction or other project-related ground disturbance should be initiated until SHPO has had an opportunity to review and comment upon the requested survey.

This office looks forward to additional consultation as the project moves forward. For additional information, please contact Cory Atkinson, Staff Archaeologist and Environmental Reviewer, at (860) 500-2458 or cory.atkinson@ct.gov.

Sincerely,

Jonathan Kinney
State Historic Preservation Officer

450 Columbus Blvd., Suite 5 | Hartford, CT 06103 | P: 860.500.2300 | ct.gov/historic-preservation

An Affirmative Action/Equal Opportunity Employer; An Equal Opportunity Lender

Connecticut

State Historic Preservation Office
Department of Economic and Community Development

January 11, 2023

Dr. Sarah L. Holmes
31 Mistuxet Ave
Mystic, CT 06355
(via email only to slh@att.net)

Subject: Archaeological Investigation of a Proposed Sidewalk Project
Intersection of Westport Road and Center Road
Easton, Connecticut

Dear Dr. Holmes:

The State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) has reviewed the Cultural Resources Reconnaissance report titled *Report on Phase I Archaeology Assessment Survey of Proposed Pedestrian Safety Improvements at Westport Road (State RTE 136) and Center Road Intersection in Easton, Connecticut* prepared by Dr. Sarah L. Holmes. The submitted report meets the standards set forth in the ***Environmental Review Primer for Connecticut's Archaeological Resources***. SHPO understands the Town of Easton plans to install approximately 225 linear feet of sidewalks at the intersection of Center Road and Westport Road. The project will include the installation of a flashing light, crosswalks, a catch basin, and rain garden. The proposed will obtain funding from the Community Connectivity Grant Program (CCGP). As a result, it is subject to review by this office pursuant to the provisions of Section 106 of the Connecticut Environmental Policy Act.

The completed archaeological assessment survey included a contextual overview of the project region, environmental characteristics, historical research, and a review of previously identified cultural resources. The literature review identified 15 previously recorded archaeological sites within a mile of the Area of Potential Effect (APE) associated with the project. One of the identified sites, Site 46-98, was recorded immediately adjacent to proposed project items. No National Register of Historic Places listed properties were identified within the APE. The report did note several documented historic structures including the Staples Academy, Congregational Church of Easton, and Gresier's Store within close proximity to the project area. During the investigation, the APE was subjected to a pedestrian survey. The results of the pedestrian survey revealed that much of the APE contained previous disturbance, erosion, and/or steep slopes. Subsurface testing was recommended within the remainder of the APE. Further, the pedestrian survey revealed that Site 46-98 will not be impacted by the proposed actions. The subsurface testing effort included the excavation of three shovel tests which resulted in the identification of two clear bottle glass fragments. Based on the information provided to our office, SHPO concurs with the findings of the report that no additional archeological investigations are warranted and that no historic properties will be affected by the proposed project. This comment is conditional upon the submission of two bound copies of the final report to our office for permanent curation and public accessibility.

Connecticut

State Historic Preservation Office
Department of Economic and Community Development

SHPO appreciates the cooperation of all interested parties in the professional management of Connecticut's archeological resources. This letter updates and supersedes all previous correspondence. Do not hesitate to contact Cory Atkinson, Staff Archaeologist and Environmental Reviewer, for additional information at (860) 500-2248 or cory.atkinson@ct.gov.

Sincerely,

Jonathan Kinney
State Historic Preservation Officer

cc: Giorlando, Town of Easton