

STATE OF CONNECTICUT

CONNECTICUT HISTORICAL COMMISSION  
50 South Prospect Street, Hartford, Connecticut 06106  
(203) 566-3005

HISTORIC RESOURCES INVENTORY FORM  
For Buildings and Structures

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY			
TOWN NO.:	SITE NO.:		
UTM: 18/	/	/	/
QUAD:			
DISTRICT:	S	NR:	ACTUAL POTENTIAL

IDENTIFICATION

- 1. BUILDING NAME: Common: Odd Fellows Hall Historic: Universalist Church
- 2. TOWN/CITY: Middletown VILLAGE: \_\_\_\_\_ COUNTY: Middlesex
- 3. STREET & NUMBER (and/or location): 203-207 Main Street
- 4. OWNER(S): City of Middletown  PUBLIC  PRIVATE
- 5. USE: Present: Theatre, meeting hall; stores 'historic: Church; stores
- 6. ACCESSIBILITY TO PUBLIC: Exterior visible from public road:  yes  no  
Interior accessible:  yes, explain permission of owner  no

DESCRIPTION

- 7. STYLE OF BUILDING: Greek Revival DATE OF CONSTRUCTION: 1839
- 8. MATERIAL(S) (indicate use or location when appropriate):  

<input type="checkbox"/> clapboard	<input type="checkbox"/> asbestos siding	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> brick basement foundation wall
<input type="checkbox"/> wood shingle	<input type="checkbox"/> asphalt siding	<input type="checkbox"/> fieldstone
<input type="checkbox"/> board & batten	<input type="checkbox"/> stucco	<input type="checkbox"/> cobblestone
<input type="checkbox"/> aluminum siding	<input type="checkbox"/> concrete: type: _____	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> cut stone: type: <u>brownstone</u>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> other: <u>Probably flushboarded wooden siding under stucco.</u>		<u>steps, foundation</u>
- 9. STRUCTURAL SYSTEM:  
 wood frame:  post and beam  balloon  
 load bearing masonry  structural iron or steel  
 other: \_\_\_\_\_
- 10. 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: \_\_\_\_\_
- 11. NUMBER OF STORIES: 3½ APPROXIMATE DIMENSIONS: 57'x70'
- 12. CONDITION: Structural:  excellent  good  fair  deteriorated  
Exterior:  excellent  good  fair  deteriorated
- 13. INTEGRITY: Location:  on original site  moved, when: \_\_\_\_\_  
Alterations:  no  yes, explain: Northeast storefront extended; pressed metal sign panel added
- 14. RELATED OUTBUILDINGS OR LANDSCAPE FEATURES:  
 barn  shed  garage  other landscape features or buildings: \_\_\_\_\_  
 carriage house  shop  garden  occupies whole plot
- 15. SURROUNDING ENVIRONMENT:  
 open land  woodland  residential  scattered buildings visible from site  
 commercial  industrial  rural  high building density

16. INTERRELATIONSHIP OF BUILDING AND SURROUNDINGS: The stuccoed Greek Revival style Universalist Church Building stands out at the southwest corner of College and Main Streets among commercial buildings of varied age and size. It echoes the high front entrance of the Old Middlesex Mutual Building two doors south, and opens on the sidewalk like its northwest counterpart, the Farmers and Mechanics Bank. It faces the Metro Square project and River-view Center across Main Street, looking toward the river.

17. OTHER NOTABLE FEATURES OF BUILDING OR SITE (interior and/or exterior):

Prominent brownstone entrance steps one-half story up from street level  
Paneled wood entrance doors

**SIGNIFICANCE**

Architect: \_\_\_\_\_

Builder: \_\_\_\_\_

18. HISTORICAL OR ARCHITECTURAL IMPORTANCE: Constructed in 1839, at a cost of \$12,000, this is the first and only church building erected by the First Universalist Society (organized 1829). Membership in the Universalist Society varied under different pastors; during the last quarter of the nineteenth century membership averaged around 150 people. The church went into a decline after 1900. In 1916 the building was sold to the Middletown Odd Fellows for use as a meeting hall. Current plans by the Middletown Redevelopment Agency are to use the structure as part of a "Theatre Block Restoration Project" comprising most of the buildings on the west side of Main Street across from the agency's Metro Square Project.

The Greek Revival style of the 1839 Universalist Church is strongly echoed by the 1842 brick Baptist Church, similarly sited one block to the south. Both buildings display a high front entrance, "temple front" to the street, pilasters and pedimented gable. Originally topped by a square two-tiered belfry and lantern, the Universalist Church has undergone considerable alteration. The bell tower is gone, the whole exterior surface has been stuccoed, and the northeast street-level storefront has been extended to provide display windows. The building retains its imposing mass with classical lines, and functions well as an urban meeting hall.

photographer: Elizabeth Loomis  
date: 2/78 view: northeast  
negative on file: Roll 13, #26

**COMPILED BY:**

name: Roger Sherman date: 7/78  
organization: Greater Middletown Preservation Trust  
address: 27 Washington St., Middletown, Ct. 06457

19. SOURCES: Middletown Tax Assessor's Records; Middletown Land Records; Middletown City Directories; Larry Marino Postal Card Collection (GMPT); Middletown Tribune: Souvenir Edition (Middletown: 1896); David Dudley Field, Centennial Address and Historical Sketches (Middletown: 1853); Records of the First Universalist Church at Middletown, "1846-1911 (Ct. State Library)

20. SUBSEQUENT FIELD EVALUATIONS:



21. THREATS TO BUILDING OR SITE:

none known     highways     vandalism     developers     other: \_\_\_\_\_  
 renewal     private     deterioration     zoning     explanation: \_\_\_\_\_

