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United States Department of the Interior National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

DIVISION OF NATIONAL REGISTER PROGRAMS NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries.

1. Name of Property

historic name
other names/site number Route 146 Historic District

2. Location

street & number See Continuation Sheet
city, town Branford (Stony Creek) and Guilford
state Connecticut code 09 county New Haven code 009 zip code 06405 06437

3. Classification

Table with 3 columns: Ownership of Property, Category of Property, and Number of Resources within Property. Includes checkboxes for private/public ownership and building/district/site/structure/object categories.

Name of related multiple property listing: N/A
Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 2

4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. See continuation sheet.
Signature of certifying official John W. Shannahan, State Historic Preservation Officer Date March 1, 1990

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. See continuation sheet.
Signature of commenting or other official Date
State or Federal agency and bureau

5. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this property is:
Entered in the National Register.
determined eligible for the National Register.
determined not eligible for the National Register.
removed from the National Register.
other, (explain:)
Entered in the National Register
Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Domestic - single dwellings
Agriculture/Subsistence - outbuildings
Industry - manufacturing facility
Commerce/Trade - specialty store

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Domestic - single dwellings
Agriculture/Subsistence - outbuildings
Industry - manufacturing facility
Commerce/Trade - specialty store

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(enter categories from instructions)

New England Colonial
Mid-19th Century
Late Victorian
Late 19th and Early 20th Century American
Movements

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation Granite
walls Wood
Concrete
roof Asphalt
other Brick
Asbestos

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

The Route 146 Historic District is a coastal highway corridor located in the southeastern portion of Branford, Connecticut, and the southwestern portion of Guilford, Connecticut. It embraces approximately 169 acres of various types of undulating terrain ranging from about 10 to 50 feet in elevation. Roughly bounded by Flat Rock Road in Branford to the west, and the West River bridge in Guilford to the east, the district includes all of the intervening right-of-way associated with Connecticut State Highway Route 146, which is comprised of portions of the thoroughfares known locally as Leetes Island Road, Sachems Head Road, and Water Street. It also includes the fork at the southern end of Moose Hill Road, the property at 27 Moose Hill Road, and 51 other properties adjacent to Route 146.

The district's built environment (including Route 146) as it developed by 1940 remains substantially intact. Including notable outbuildings (e.g., barns, carriage houses, and garages) the district embraces a total of 84 buildings, 74 (88%) of which contribute to the area's significance. Virtually all of the noncontributing buildings in the district are modest post-World War II garages or sheds which, as a result of their relatively small size and inobtrusive siting, have little impact of the area's historic visual character. Two properties -- 710 Leetes Island Road in Branford and 616 Leetes Island Road in Guilford -- continue to function as working farms.

Architectural styles represented by contributing buildings include the Colonial, Federal, Greek Revival, Italianate, Queen Anne, Bungalow, and Colonial Revival modes. The district also includes a number of examples of historic houses, barns, and other outbuildings with essentially utilitarian exterior features. For the most part, buildings and structures are sited from 5 to 50 feet from the road. They are generally dispersed, either individually or in small clusters, throughout the length of the district. Wood, brick, and stone constitute the predominant construction materials for district buildings, although one notable example of concrete-block construction -- 135 Leetes Island Road, Guilford -- is also present. While some buildings exhibit non-historic exterior modifications to siding, window, and/or roofing fabric, significant alterations are generally limited to porch modifications and/or modest additions executed prior to World War II.

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PHOTOGRAPHS

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-
1. Looking from 650 Leetes Island Road (Calvin M. Leete, Sr., House) toward 616 Leetes Island Road (Edward Lorenzo Leete House), Route 146 Historic District
 2. Guilford, CT
 3. Photograph by J. Paul Loether
 4. February 24, 1989
 5. Negative filed with the Connecticut Historical Commission, 59 S. Prospect Street, Hartford, CT 06106
 6. View from the southwest
 7. **Photograph 13**
-
1. 616 Leetes Island Road (Edward Lorenzo Leete House), Route 146 Historic District
 2. Guilford, CT
 3. Photograph by J. Paul Loether
 4. February 24, 1989
 5. Negative filed with the Connecticut Historical Commission, 59 S. Prospect Street, Hartford, CT 06106
 6. View from the southwest
 7. **Photograph 14**
-
1. Route 146 causeway immediately west of Beattie Pond, Leetes Island Road, Route 146 Historic District
 2. Guilford, CT
 3. Photograph by J. Paul Loether
 4. February 24, 1989
 5. Negative filed with the Connecticut Historical Commission, 59 S. Prospect Street, Hartford, CT 06106
 6. View from the west
 7. **Photograph 15**
-
1. New York, New Haven, and Hartford Railroad overpass (Conrail Bridge # 87.79) at the junction of Sachem Head Road and (Lower) Water Street, Route 146 Historic District
 2. Guilford, CT
 3. Photograph by J. Paul Loether
 4. February 24, 1989
 5. Negative filed with the Connecticut Historical Commission, 59 S. Prospect Street, Hartford, CT 06106

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6. View from the south
7. Photograph 16

-
1. Former Shore Line Electric Railway overpass abutment (northern half) at the junction of Wild Rose Avenue and (Lower) Water Street, Route 146 Historic District
 2. Guilford, CT
 3. Photograph by J. Paul Loether
 4. February 24, 1989
 5. Negative filed with the Connecticut Historical Commission, 59 S. Prospect Street, Hartford, CT 06106
 6. View from the west/southwest
 7. Photograph 17

-
1. 468 (Lower) Water Street (G. Ross House - foreground; southern overpass abutment of former Shore Line Electric Railway - background), Route 146 Historic District
 2. Guilford, CT
 3. Photograph by J. Paul Loether
 4. February 24, 1989
 5. Negative filed with the Connecticut Historical Commission, 59 S. Prospect Street, Hartford, CT 06106
 6. View from the west
 7. Photograph 18

-
1. 342 (Lower) Water Street (Edgar Fowler House), Route 146 Historic District
 2. Guilford, CT
 3. Photograph by J. Paul Loether
 4. February 24, 1989
 5. Negative filed with the Connecticut Historical Commission, 59 S. Prospect Street, Hartford, CT 06106
 6. View from the south/southwest
 7. Photograph 19

-
1. 300 (Lower) Water Street (Route 146), Route 146 Historic District
 2. Guilford, CT
 3. Photograph by J, Paul Loether
 4. February 24, 1989

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5. Negative filed with the Connecticut Historical Commission, 59
S. Prospect Street, Hartford, CT 06106
6. View from the north/northwest
7. **Photograph 20**

-
1. Looking from West River bridge toward (R-L) 201, 209, and 211
(Lower) Water Street (Frank O. Blatchly House, Frank Blatchly
House, and Joseph Bradley House), Route 146 Historic District
 2. Guilford, CT
 3. Photograph by J. Paul Loether
 4. February 24, 1989
 5. Negative filed with the Connecticut Historical Commission, 59
S. Prospect Street, Hartford, CT 06106
 6. View from the east
 7. **Photograph 21**

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LOCATION (CONT.)

The Route 146 Historic District includes the portions Leetes Island Road, Sachems Head Road, and (Lower) Water Street which fall within the right-of-way of Connecticut State Highway Route 146 between Flat Rock Road in Branford, Connecticut, and the western end of the West River bridge in Guilford, Connecticut. The district also includes Conrail overpasses at Leetes Island Road (Conrail bridge number 85.95) and Sachems Head Road (Conrail bridge number 87.79), and all or substantial portions of the following individual properties, identified by street number and/or (Assessor's Map number), which lie adjacent to both sides of this portion of Route 146:

Town of Branford:

Leetes Island Road - 550 (K8-1:12), 576 (K3:13), 626 (K8-5:8), 638 (K8-4:8), 690 (K9-3:5), 693 (K9-4:5), 697 (K9-4:6), 710 (L9-1:3), 790 (L9-1:9).

Town of Guilford:

Leetes Island Road (AKA Route 146) - 31 (21:23), 135 (21:29), 144 (21:6), 149 (21:28), 444 (20:6), 559 (19:12), 575 (19:11), 588 (19:16), -- (19:10), -- (19:14), 616 (19:15), 650 (13:9), -- (19:1), -- (19:2), 715 (19:17A), 775 (18:16-1), 792 (18:3), 795 (18:15), 800 (18:4), 825 (18:13), 853 (18:11), 968 (18:8), -- (18W:2), 974 (18:9), 988 (18W:1).

Water Street (AKA Lower Water Street; Route 146) - 146 (32:95), 201 (32:13), 209 (32:12), 211 (32:11), 221 (32:10), 230 (32:97), 236 (32:99), 244 (32:100), 257 (32:3), 258 (32:101), 276 (32:102A), 283 (32:2), 300 (32:103), 342 (27:1), 441 (26:7), 468 (26:9), 481 (26:14).

Moose Hill Road - 27 (19:7).

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DESCRIPTION (CONT.)

While the district is bordered in some sections by a functional double-tracked railroad right-of-way laid out in the 1890s for the former New York, New Haven and Hartford Railroad's Shore Line Division, and includes one moderately sized early 20th-century foundry and one very small early 20th-century frame store, its present character is predominantly rural-residential. The most notable of the area's contributing structures include: two intact late 19th-century cut-stone/steel railroad overpasses and the northern and southern ends of a 1911 trolley viaduct. Several vehicular causeways are bordered by early to mid 20th-century style guardrails fashioned out of wood piles and cables (photographs 16 and 17). The remnants of a ca. 1880 raised cut-stone railbed associated with a former quarry spur is located along the southern side of Route 146 slightly east of the Uziel Cooke House (576 Leetes Island Road). More distant remnants of other cut-stone viaduct abutments as well as trestle pilings associated with the original 1852 Shore Line Railroad trackbed also remain clearly visible in the salt marshes adjacent to the southwestern side of Route 146 near the western end of the district. Surviving segments of 18th- and 19th-century stone walls found along both sides of the district's roads (photograph 10), which retain their basic pre-World War II layout, also contribute to the area's historic rural character.

The district's overall early 20th-century natural setting also remains remarkably intact. Major natural features which contribute significantly to the survival of the area's scenic, historic rural setting include several streams, a few small ponds/tidal pools, several large tidal inlets, a variety of large and small rock outcrops, and broad expanses of low-lying salt meadows/marshes bordered by sizable and often dense stands of phragmites -- tall, stalky, grass-like plants which typically mark the transition between fresh and saline watertables (photographs 3, 13, and 15). Other prominent landscape features contributing to the district's strongly rural character include substantial and often dense tracts of now mature post-agricultural era woodland which, in conjunction with deep building setbacks, minimize the intrusive effects of most adjacent post World War II construction (photographs 3, 5, and 15).

Finally, the district includes two properties which are individually listed on the National Register of Historic Places -- the 1750-60 John Rogers House at 690 Leetes Island Road in Branford and the ca. 1745 Pelatiah Leete House at 575 Leetes Island Road in Guilford. It is also flanked to the east and west by two national-register districts -- Guilford Historic Town Center and the Stony Creek/Thimble Islands Historic District, respectively.

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DESCRIPTION (CONT.)

Resource Inventory

The Route 146 Historic District includes, as a contributing resource, the entire right-of-way of Connecticut State Highway Route 146 and its associated features from the west end of Guilford's West River Bridge to a point due south of the junction of the western and southern property lines of 550 Leetes Island Road in Branford because of this roadway's significance as a good and locally rare example of a relatively intact early 20th-century State Aid Road.

A detailed list of other individual properties located within the Route 146 Historic District is provided below and on the following pages. This list is arranged in the following format:

Street Name

St. (Assessor's Map) #	Resource Status (C= Contributing/ NC= Noncontributing)	Brief Description of Resource. Photograph Reference # (where applicable)
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Leetes Island Road (AKA Route 146), Branford

550 (K8-1:12)	C	Ca. 1890. Late 19th-century frame house with cut-granite first-story front.
	C	Ca. 1920. Cut-granite garage.
576 (K8-3:13)	C	1751. Uziel Cooke House. Frame Colonial. Photograph 1
	C	Ca. 1930. Frame outbuilding.
--	NC	Ca. 1880. Raised stone-rubble abutment constructed to support trackbed for quarry spur of former Shore Line Railroad (adjacent to southern side of Leetes Island Road approximately 0.2 miles east of 576 Leetes Island Road).
626 (K8-5:8)	C	Ca. 1832. Polly Palmer House. Frame Greek Revival. Photograph 2
	C	Ca. 1930. Frame outbuilding.

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DESCRIPTION (CONT.)

Leetes Island Road (AKA Route 146), Branford (Cont.)

638 (K8-4:8)	C	Ca. 1868. Edward S. Palmer House. Mid 19th-century frame house.
	C	Ca. 1935. Frame Garage.
	C	Ca. 1875. Frame barn.
690 (K9-3:4)	C	Between 1750-60. John Rodgers House. Frame Colonial. (Individually listed on the National Register, 12/1/88.)
		Photograph 3
	C	Ca. 1800. Frame barn.
693 (K9-4:5)	C	Ca. 1920. Early 20th-century frame house.
	NC	Ca. 1920. Frame barn (extremely deteriorated).
697 (K9-4:6)	C	Ca. 1870. Frame Italianate.
710 (L9-1:3)	C	Ca. 1865. C. Botsford House. Frame Greek Revival with Queen Anne-style front porch.
	C	Ca. 1890. Frame barn.
	C	Ca. 1870. Frame barn.
	C	Ca. 1890. Frame barn.
	C	Ca. 1910. Frame barn.
	C	Ca. 1930. Frame outbuilding.
790 (L9-1-9)	C	Ca. 1870. Late 19th-century frame house.
	NC	Ca. 1950. Frame Garage.

Leetes Island Road (AKA Route 146), Guilford

31 (21:23)	C	Ca. 1935. Frame Colonial Revival.
135 (21:29)	C	1901-02. C.H. Hill Company. Small early 20th-century brick commercial/industrial building with large ca. 1940 concrete block foundry addition on west side.
144 (21:6)	C	Ca. 1920. Frame Bungalow.
149 (21:28)	C	Ca. 1885. August Bayha House. Late 19th-century frame house.
444 (20:6)	C	Ca. 1870. Late 19th-century frame house.
559 (19:12)	C	1797. Pelatiah Leete, III, House. Frame Colonial.
575 (19:11)	C	Ca. 1745. Pelatiah Leete House. Frame Colonial. (Individually listed on the National Register on

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DESCRIPTION (CONT.)

Leetes Island Road (AKA Route 146), Guilford (Cont.)

		10/1/74.)
588 (19:16)	C	Ca. 1850. Frame barn.
--(19:10)	C	Ca. 1940. Lawrence R. Leete House, Sr., House. Frame Colonial Revival.
--(19:14)	C	Ca. 1800. Frame Barn (located on northwestern side of road opposite 616 Leetes Island Road).
616 (19:15)	C	Ca. 1880. Frame Barn (located on southeastern side of road immediately northeast of 616 Leetes Island Road). Photograph 14
650 (13:9)	C	1834. Edward Lorenzo Leete House. Frame Federal. Photograph 14
-- (19:1)	C	Ca. 1900. Frame shed.
-- (19:2)	C	1874. Calvin M. Leete, Sr., House. Frame Italianate. Photograph 12
715 (19:17A)	C	Vacant lot (western half of the triangular space formed by the junction of Moose Hill Road and Leetes Island Road).
		Vacant lot (eastern half of the triangular space formed by the junction of Moose Hill Road and Leetes Island Road).
	C	1784. Daniel and Charity Leete House. Frame Colonial. Photograph 9
775 (18:16-1)	NC	Ca. 1965. Frame Garage.
792 (18:3)	C	Ca. 1930. Frame outbuilding.
795 (18:15)	C	Ca. 1930. Frame outbuilding.
	C	Ca. 1875. Late 19th-century frame house.
800 (18:4)	C	Ca. 1920. Frame Bungalow.
	C	Ca. 1870. Late 19th-century frame house.
	C	Ca. 1940. Frame Garage.
	C	Ca. 1930. Frame outbuilding.
825 (18:13)	C	Ca. 1875. Late 19th-century frame house.
	NC	Ca. 1960. Frame garage.
	C	Ca. 1870. Mid 19th-century frame house.
853 (18:11)	NC	Ca. 1988. Frame garage.
--	C	Ca. 1915. Early 20th-century frame store.
	C	1891-92. Cut stone/steel RR overpass constructed by

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DESCRIPTION (CONT.)

Leetes Island Road (AKA Route 146), Guilford (Cont.)

968 (18:8) C the New York, New Haven, and Hartford Railroad.
Ca. 1850. Frame Italianate. **Photograph 8**

-- (18W:2) C Retaining wall from a house built ca. 1800, demolished ca.
1935 (located on north side of road opposite 988 Leetes
Island Road). **Photograph 6**

974 (18:9) C 1875. George Watrous House. Frame Italianate.
Photograph 8

988 (18W:1) C Ca. 1940. Frame garage.
1851. Henry W. Norton House. Frame Greek Revival.
Photograph 7

-- NC Ca. 1930. Frame outbuilding (extensively altered).
C 1891-92. Cut-stone/steel overpass constructed by the
New York, New Haven, and Hartford Railroad (Conrail
bridge # 85.95).

Moose Hill Road (Guilford)

27 (19:7) C Ca. 1775. Daniel Leete, II, House. Frame Georgian.

Sachems Head Road (Northern end - AKA Route 146), Guilford

-- C 1891-92. Cut-stone/steel railroad overpass constructed
by the New York, New Haven, and Hartford Railroad
(Conrail bridge # 87.79). **Photograph 16**

Water Street (AKA Lower Water Street/Route 146), Guilford

146 (32:95) C Ca. 1830. Orren D. Blatchly House. Frame Greek
[218] Revival (Note: Guilford Assessor's Records identify this
property as "218 Lower Water Street"; 146 is number as

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DESCRIPTION (CONT.)

Water Street (AKA Lower Water Street/Route 146), Guilford (Cont.)

posted on house.)

201 (32:13) C 1892. Frank O. Blatchly House. Frame Queen Anne.
Photograph 21

C Ca. 1925 frame shed.

209 (32:12) C Ca. 1892. Frame carriage house.

C 1850. Frank Blatchly House. Frame Greek Revival.
Photograph 21

C Ca. 1900. Frame outbuilding.

211 (32:11) C 1744. Joseph Bradley House. Frame Colonial.

221 (32:10) C Ca. 1920. Frame Bungalow.

230 (32:97) C Ca. 1880. Frame Italianate/Queen Anne (district
includes only front 100 feet of property's lot depth).

236 (32:99) C Ca. 1875. Frame Italianate/Queen Anne.

NC Ca. 1960. Frame garage.

C Ca. 1920. Frame outbuilding.

244 (32:100) C Ca. 1875. Late 19th-century frame house.

C Ca. 1940. Frame garage.

257 (32:3) C 1865. Mid 19th-century frame house.

258 (32:101) C Ca. 1880. Late 20th-century frame house.

NC Ca. 1960. Frame garage.

NC Ca. 1965. Frame shed.

276 (32:102A) C Ca. 1860. Mid 19th-century frame house.

NC Ca. 1965. Frame garage.

283 (32:2) C Ca. 1875. Late 19th-century frame house.

C Ca. 1890. Late 19th-century outbuilding.

300 (32:103) C Ca. 1890. Late 19th-century frame house.

342 (27:1) C 1825. Edgar Fowler House. Frame Federal.
Photograph 19

441 (26:7) C Ca. 1880. Late 19th-century frame house.

C 1910-11. Reinforced concrete viaduct abutment
(northern portion) built for former Shore Line Electric
Railway Company. **Photograph 17**

468 (26:9) C Ca. 1855. Frame Greek Revival. **Photograph 18**

C 1910-11. Reinforced concrete viaduct abutment
(southern portion) built for former Shore Line Electric
Railway Company. **Photograph 18**

481 (26:14) C Ca. 1880. Frame Queen Anne.

8. Statement of Significance

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:

nationally statewide locally

Applicable National Register Criteria A B C D

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions) A B C D E F G

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)

Architecture

Transportation

Period of Significance

1740 - 1940

Ca. 1925 - Ca. 1935

Significant Dates

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Significant Person

N/A

Architect/Builder

See Item # 7 - Resource Inventory

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.

The Route 146 Historic District is significant because it encompasses a number of good, and in a few cases individually distinctive or unusual, examples of local rural architecture dating from the 18th through early 20th centuries, all of which are located in a relatively well-preserved pre-World War II setting. (Criterion C) The district is also significant because of the association between the early 20th-century development of this portion of Route 146 and the emergence and development of Connecticut's pre-World War II "State Aid Road" highway improvement program. (Criterion A)

Historical Background and Significance

Referred to as "the old road to Guilford" in a number of mid 19th-century deeds for properties in Branford's adjacent village of Stony Creek, the portions of Route 146 included within the district were initially laid out by the early 18th century as part of the coastal road linking the village centers of Branford and Guilford. Between the early 18th and mid 19th centuries, significant development in the district was essentially limited to the gradual establishment of farms and the construction of roughly two dozen scattered houses and a number of related outbuildings along both sides of the highway. Throughout this period, most of these farms were owned and occupied by successive generations of local families who had settled in Branford and Guilford by the early 18th century. The most notable of these families included the Leetes, Rodgers, Bradleys, and Palmers.

Despite the advent of the Shore Line Railroad through the area in 1852, and the emergence of granite quarrying as a major local industry during the late 19th and early 20th centuries, settlement and housing construction in the district continued at an extremely slow pace well into the 20th century. By the early 1880s, a handful of scattered new farmhouses had

See continuation sheet

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been built. A few additional dwellings, such as the small and relatively plain houses at 792 and 800 Leetes Island Road and 481 Water Street in Guilford, appear to have been erected for and/or occupied by workers employed in the nearby granite quarries, which reached the apex of their commercial prosperity around the turn of the 20th century. A small foundry was established (1901-02) and enlarged (ca. 1938) by Charles Hill at 135 Leetes Island Road, and a small 20th-century frame store was constructed at 853 Leetes Island Road (Guilford). With the exception of the house erected around 1940 at 588 Leetes Island Road in Guilford for Lawrence Leete, Sr., the only other particularly noteworthy buildings built in the district prior to World War II are seven houses dating from the period 1870-1925. These houses are sited along both sides of Route 146 slightly southwest of Guilford's West River bridge, an area which appears to have emerged as a small residential adjunct to Guilford's nearby town center during this era.

While the existence of an adjacent railroad did not appreciably affect the pace of post-1852 building construction in the district, a major upgrading of the railroad right-of-way undertaken in the early 1890s by the Shore Line's successor, the New York, New Haven, and Hartford Railroad, resulted in some notable modifications to the appearance and configuration of portions of the district's highway. The original single-track grade-level rail crossings at Leetes Island Road near the Branford/Guilford town line and at the junction of Sachems Head Road and Water Street in Guilford were supplanted by safer cut-stone overpasses supporting the railroad's newly raised twin-tracked bed (photograph 16). Slightly west of Beattie Pond, a major realignment of the highway eliminated two other 1852 grade-level crossings by shifting roughly 1500 feet of Leetes Island Road from its original course north of Snake Pond (where the railbed now lies) to its present course south of the pond. From there the new roadbed was run east through the present cut in the rock bluff known as High Cake Rock, which was blasted open by the railroad in accordance with its highway relocation agreement with the Town of Guilford.

The physical characteristics of the district's roadway remained basically static during the first two decades of the 20th century. The only notable new feature dating from this period was a trolley overpass built in 1910-11 to carry the Shore Line Electric Railway's short-lived Stony Creek-to-Ivoryton extension across Water Street in Guilford (photographs 17 and 18). However, between the mid 1920s and the mid 1930s, the full length of the Guilford portion of the roadway was completely reconstructed as a result of its incorporation within the Connecticut State Highway Department's early 20th-century "State Aid Road" program.

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SIGNIFICANCE (CONT.)

Initially known as the State Highway Commission, Connecticut's State Highway Department (now Department of Transportation) was created by an act of the state legislature in 1895, the year which also marked the closing of the state's last privately managed toll road (Derby Turnpike). During the first decade of its existence, the department's functions were limited to providing funding assistance and roadway construction supervision for individual towns, which selected the highways to be improved, advertised for bids, and awarded the contracts. Proposed in 1906, a statewide "Trunk Line" system was established in 1908 by the department's Commissioner, James H. MacDonald. Under this system principal highway routes connecting major population and industrial centers, were designated as state Trunk Lines. The responsibility for the reconstruction and maintenance of these Trunk Lines was assumed by the State Highway Department and wholly funded through state appropriations. Important town-owned secondary roads which connected Trunk Lines or the centers of small towns and villages, which individual towns selected for improvement and for which they received 50% (after 1911, 100%) state funding assistance for improvements and upkeep, were officially designated as "State Aid Roads." In 1923, the role of the towns was eliminated and the State Highway Department assumed full responsibility for the selection, improvement and maintenance of all State Aid as well as Trunk Line roads.¹

State Highway Department maps and records dating from the mid 1920s through mid 1930s indicate that Route 146 was one of a handful of roads in southeastern New Haven County, and until at least the mid 1930s the only road in Guilford and one of two roads in Branford, to have been designated as State Aid Roads. Today, it ranks among the best and most nearly intact examples of its type and period in this region.²

The route's gradual reconstruction, which had been initiated in the eastern third of the district by 1925 and completed as far as the Branford town line by 1931, included modifications reflecting typical State Aid Road reconstruction specifications, such as: an increase in the average width of the roadway from roughly 13-18 feet to 25-33 feet (except at the railroad overpasses); the installation of the road's first all-weather bound macadam surface; the expansion and/or replacement of existing causeways; the reconstruction of a few small bridges; and the installation of wood-post and wire-cable causeway guardrail systems (photograph 15).³ The course of much of the pre-World War I roadbed was also regularized. Slight meanders were straightened and numerous hummocks and dips were

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SIGNIFICANCE (CONT.)

leveled off. Sharp bends, such as the one which originally ran close to the front of the Pelatiah Leete House (575 Leetes Island Road), were eliminated. The still extant awkward right-angle jog formed by the original junction of Leetes Island and Moose Hill Roads (photograph 10) was bypassed by the construction of the gently sweeping curve which now runs east/southeast from the Daniel and Charity Leete House past the Calvin M. Leete, Sr., House (715 and 650 Leetes Island Road, respectively).

The full extent of these changes is best documented by relatively extensive surviving written and graphic records on file in the Town Clerk's Offices of Guilford and Branford, and at the State Archives of the Connecticut State Library. However, a number of the more major of these roadway improvements remain readily recognizable in the field. For example, the early stone walls flanking the forked southern end of Moose Hill Road, in combination with the lack of similar stone walls along the nearby portion of Leetes Island Road and the unusual, slightly canted orientation of the front elevation of the Daniel and Charity Leete House at 715 Leetes Island Road provide strong visual testimony for the fact that the present Moose Hill Road fork outlines the highway's original course.

Architectural Significance

The district encompasses one of central Connecticut's most cohesive and best-preserved coastal collections of pre-World War II rural architecture. Its buildings include a number of good to excellent examples of major historic architectural styles, such as Colonial, Federal, Greek Revival, Italianate, Queen Anne, Bungalow and Colonial Revival. The district also includes several plain and functional residences dating from the mid to late 19th century and agriculture-related outbuildings dating from the 18th through early 20th centuries which, as a group, contribute to the district's overall historic rural character through their scale, material, massing and siting.

Seven 18th-century farmhouses survive within the district. These include the 1784 Daniel and Charity Leete House at 715 Leetes Island Road in Guilford (photograph 9), a good example of a large post-Revolutionary "saltbox" incorporating later 19th-century window sash. The John Rogers House, built between 1750 and 1760 at 690 Leetes Island Road in Branford (photograph 4), and the ca. 1745 Pelatiah Leete House at 575 Leetes Island

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SIGNIFICANCE (CONT.)

Road in Guilford, both of which are individually listed on the National Register, rank among the towns' best examples of the the five-bay-wide, two-and-one-half story central-chimney Colonial house form. Featuring the unadorned functional exterior lines commonly associated with modest rural 18th-century Connecticut farmhouses, the exterior of the 1797 Pelatiah Leete, II, House at 559 Leetes Island Road in Guilford, serves as good and substantially intact example of the one-and-one-half story counterpart of the houses noted previously. Another good, though somewhat more altered example of early architecture in the district is the one-and-one-half story 1751 Uziel Cook House House, which features an excellent example of mid 19th-century Greek Revival-style front doorway surround, later 19th-century 2/2-pane sash, as well as a pair of early 20th-century front gable dormers (photograph 1).

Only two Federal-style buildings are located in the district. The relatively unaltered exterior of the Edward Lorenzo Leete House (1834) at 616 Leetes Island Road in Guilford, with its three-bay-wide, gable-to-street, side hall plan facade, gable fanlight, well-designed front doorway surround and lightly-scaled projecting window cornices, forms a quintessential example of a moderately sized Federal-style farmhouse. The somewhat earlier Edgar Fowler House (1825) is a more diminutive representative of this style which features relatively unusual overall proportions and a central front-entry plan (photograph 19).

The emergence of the Greek Revival style as a popular local building mode during the mid 19th century is evidenced by a several district buildings. Featuring a three-bay-wide, two-and-one-half story facade, a fully pedimented front gable with an inset rectangular window elaborated by geometrically patterned muntins, original 6/6-pane window sash, and a front doorway embellished by a Doric porch and entry surround, the 1852 Henry Norton House at 988 Leetes Island Road in Guilford forms a particularly fine and well detailed local example of a modestly scaled Greek Revival-style dwelling. The 1832 Polly Palmer House at 626 Leetes Island Road in Branford, an unusually early example of the the rural Greek Revival style, boasts an exterior of similar appearance and quality (photograph 2).

Notable examples of the Italianate style include the Calvin M. Leete, Sr., House (1874) at 650 Leetes Island Road, where Italianate-style detailing such as large eave modillions, a semicircular-arch attic window, and a hip roofed front porch with chamfered columns provide restrained yet

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SIGNIFICANCE (CONT.)

effective stylistic definition to a simple rectangular main block and attached wing. Somewhat more modest and typical examples of the Italianate style as adapted for local mid 19th-century houses are provided by the substantially intact pair of buildings at 968 and 974 Leetes Island Road in Guilford (photograph 8).

With its asymmetrical massing, multiple sidings and trim boards, and mass-produced turned porch details, the Frank O. Blatchley House at 201 Water Street stands as the district's best and most intact example of the type of the late 19th-century Queen Anne-style houses which achieved extensive popularity among the middle class working families (photograph 21). A much smaller and locally more unusual example of Queen Anne-style housing is provided by 481 Water Street.

The emergence of the Bungalow as a popular vernacular style among the middle-class in the early 20th century is reflected by the ca. 1920 house at 221 Water Street, a relatively modest but substantially intact structure featuring a typical exterior with a shed dormered front roof which extends in an unbroken fashion out over the front wall of the house to form the front porch roof. The district's sole representative of the Colonial Revival style is the large three-bay-wide, two-and-one-half story gable roofed central chimney house erected around 1940 for Lawrence Leete, Sr., at 588 Leetes Island Road in Guilford, which forms an excellent and virtually unaltered example of its style, period, and type.

Finally, the district contains a number of good examples of agricultural outbuildings such as barns and sheds, most of which appear to date from the 19th century. As a group, these structures form an important concentration of an historic building type which is rapidly disappearing throughout Connecticut as a whole and Branford and Guilford in particular (photograph 14).

END NOTES

1. Forty Years of Highway Development in Connecticut, 1895-1935, pp. 3-4. (Tercentenary Commission of the State of Connecticut, Committee on Historical Publications; Yale University Press, 1935.)

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SIGNIFICANCE (CONT.)

2. Based on visual field inspection of routes in Guilford, Branford, East Haven, and North Haven, Connecticut delineated as State Aid Roads on "Map of Connecticut Showing the System of State Highways and Other Improved Roads prepared by the State Highway Department, 1935" in Forty Years of Highway Development-in-Connecticut, 1895-1935.
3. See "Certification of Finished Project in the Town of Guilford known as Leetes Island Road (6-30-1930)."

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MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES (CONT.)

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Connecticut State Highway Department Right-of-Way Maps - "Leetes Island Road and Water Street," Map Records, pp. 102-109, 146, 149, and 150 (1929-1933). On file in Guilford Town Clerk's Office, Guilford Town Hall, Guilford, CT.

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Guilford Land Records. On file at Guilford Town Clerk's Office, Guilford, Town Hall, Guilford, CT.

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Map of the Town of Guilford, New Haven County, Connecticut, from Actual Surveys by H. Irvine, Surveyor. Philadelphia: Richard Clark, 1852. On file at Guilford Free Library, Guilford, CT.

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MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES (CONT.)

- "Plan of Location of the Shore Line Electric Railway - Stony Creek to Ivoryton, Conn." Shore Line Electric Railway Company, 1910/11. On file at Guilford Free Library, Guilford, CT.
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- "Standard Specifications and Contract for Road and Bridge Construction." Connecticut State Highway Department, 1927 and 1932. On file at Connecticut State Library, Hartford, CT.
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GEOGRAPHICAL DATA (CONT.)

Utm References

Quadrangle - Guilford Map Scale - 1:24000 Acreage - Approximately 169

<u>Pt.</u>	<u>Zone/Easting/Northing</u>
A.	18/693510/4572120
B.	18/693440/4571335
C.	18/693040/4571000
D.	18/693000/4570860
E.	18/692680/4570560
F.	18/691860/4570540
G.	18/691885/4570360
H.	18/690840/4570365
I.	18/690515/4570440
J.	18/690145/4570365
K.	18/689225/4571180
L.	18/688920/4571250
M.	18/688820/4571390
N.	18/688570/4571420
O.	18/688600/4571480
P.	18/688910/4571460
Q.	18/688930/4571350
R.	18/689290/4571255
S.	18/689695/4570920
T.	18/689710/4570850
U.	18/690180/4570460
V.	18/690530/4570510
W.	18/691160/4570500
X.	18/691380/4570600
Y.	18/692440/4570620
Z.	18/692910/4570860
AA.	18/692920/4571050
BB.	18/693220/4571230
CC.	18/693380/4571480
DD.	18/693340/4571020

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GEOGRAPHICAL DATA (CONT.)

Verbal Boundary Description

The Route 146 Historic District includes those portions of Leetes Island Road, Sachems Head Road, and (Lower) Water Street which comprise the present right-of-way for Connecticut State Highway Route 146 between Flat Rock Road in Branford, Connecticut, and the western end of the West River bridge in Guilford, Connecticut. The district also includes Conrail overpasses at Leetes Island Road (Conrail bridge number 85.95) and Sachems Head Road (Conrail bridge # 87.79), as well as the following individual properties adjacent to the Route 146 right of way identified herein by their respective town Assessor's Map numbers:

Town of Branford:

(K8-1:12), (K3:13), (K8-5:8), (K8-4:8), (K9-3:5), (K94:5), (K9-4:6), (L9-1:3), (L9-1:9).

Town of Guilford:

(21:23), (21:29), (21:6), (21:28), (20:6), (19:12), (19:11), (19:16), (19:10), (19:14), (19:15), (13:9), (19:1), (19:2), (19:17A), (18:16-1), (18:3), (18:15), (18:4), (18:13), (18:8), (18W:2), (18:9), (18W:1), (32:95), (32:13), (32:12), (32:11), (32:10), (32:97 - front 120 feet of lot only), (32:99), (32:100), (32:3), (32:101), (32:102A), (32:2), (32:103), (27:1), (26:7), (26:9), (26:14), (19:7), (18:11).

Verbal Boundary Justification

The boundaries of the Route 146 Historic District were delineated on the basis of the following criteria:

- a) The thematic unity of the district as an area encompassing a roadway and a variety of historic buildings and structures which, in concert, function as a good, substantially intact local example of a rural inter-village coastal highway corridor which developed over the course of the 18th through early 20th centuries.

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GEOGRAPHICAL DATA (CONT.)

Verbal Boundary Justification (Cont.)

- b) Exclusion of vacant land and properties which do not contribute directly to the historical or architectural significance of the district, wherever such exclusions were reasonable and practical.
- c) Conformance with the general National Park Service guideline that resources proposed for listing on the National Register as contributing to the significance of an historic district be a minimum of 50 years old.

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PHOTOGRAPHS

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1. **576 Leetes Island Road (Uziel Cook House), Route 146 Historic District**
2. Branford, CT
3. Photograph by J. Paul Loether
4. February 24, 1989
5. Negative filed with the Connecticut Historical Commission, 59 S. Prospect Street, Hartford, CT 06106
6. View from the west
7. **Photograph 1**

-
1. **626 Leetes Island Road (Polly Palmer House), Route 146 Historic District**
 2. Branford, CT
 3. Photograph by J. Paul Loether
 4. February 24, 1989
 5. Negative filed with the Connecticut Historical Commission, 59 S. Prospect Street, Hartford, CT 06106
 6. View from the west
 7. **Photograph 2**

-
1. **Looking from 626 Leetes Island Road (Polly Palmer House) toward 638 Leetes Island Road (638 Leetes Island Road in background on left), Route 146 Historic District**
 2. Branford, CT
 3. Photograph by J. Paul Loether
 4. February 24, 1989
 5. Negative filed with the Connecticut Historical Commission, 59 S. Prospect Street, Hartford, CT 06106
 6. View from the northwest
 7. **Photograph 3**

-
1. **690 Leetes Island Road (John Rodgers House), Route 146 Historic District**
 2. Branford, CT
 3. Photograph by J. Paul Loether
 4. February 24, 1989
 5. Negative filed with the Connecticut Historical Commission, 59 S. Prospect Street, Hartford, CT 06106
 6. View from the west/southwest
 7. **Photograph 4**

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1. **View of Leetes Island Road, Route 146 Historic District**
 2. Branford, CT
 3. Photograph by J. Paul Loether
 4. February 24, 1989
 5. Negative filed with the Connecticut Historical Commission, 59
S. Prospect Street, Hartford, CT 06106
 6. View from east (710 and 690 Leetes Island Road in far background)
 7. **Photograph 5**
-

1. **Retaining wall fronting site of former building adjacent to railroad
right-of-way across from 974 Leetes Island Road, Route 146 Historic
District**
 2. Guilford, CT
 3. J, Paul Loether
 4. February 24, 1989
 5. Negative filed with the Connecticut Historical Commission, 59
S. Prospect Street, Hartford, CT 06106
 6. View from the east
 7. **Photograph 6**
-

1. **988 Leetes Island Road (Henry W. Norton House), Route 146
Historic District**
 2. Guilford, CT
 3. Photograph by J. Paul Loether
 4. February 24, 1989
 5. Negative filed with the Connecticut Historical Commission, 59
S. Prospect Street, Hartford, CT 06106
 6. View from the north/northwest
 7. **Photograph 7**
-

11. **(R-L) 974 (George Watrous House) and 968 Leetes Island Road,
Route 146 Historic District**
2. Guilford, CT
3. Photograph by J. Paul Loether
4. February 24, 1989.
5. Negative filed with the Connecticut Historical Commission, 59
S. Prospect Street, Hartford, CT 06106
6. View from the northwest
7. **Photograph 8**

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PHOTOGRAPHS

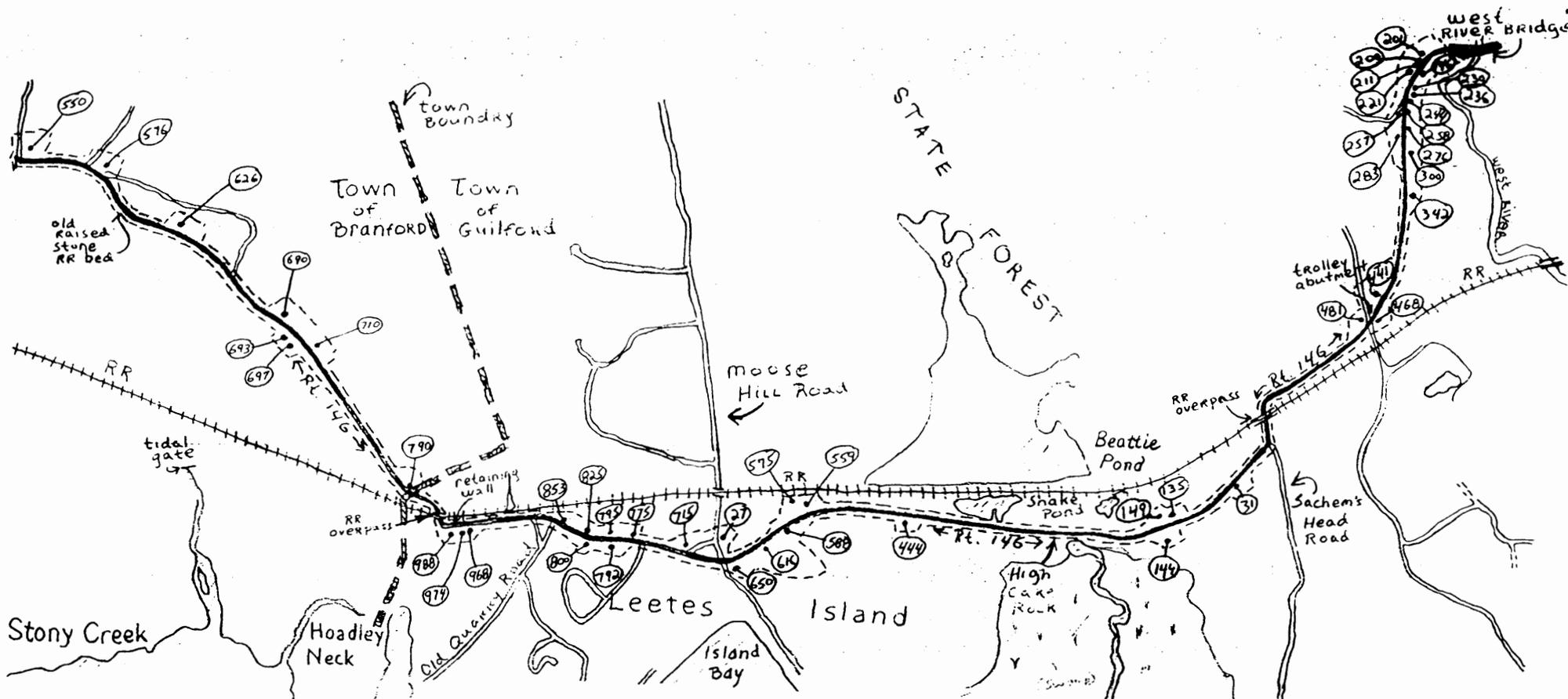
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-
1. 715 Leetes Island Road (Daniel and Charity Leete House), Route 146 Historic District
 2. Guilford, CT
 3. Photograph by J. Paul Loether
 4. February 24, 1989
 5. Negative filed with the Connecticut Historical Commission, 59 S. Prospect Street, Hartford, CT 06106
 6. View from the southeast
 7. Photograph 9

-
1. Western branch of the road fork (original roadway right-of-way) at the southern end of Moose Hill Road (junction Leetes Island Road). The small undeveloped triangular space at this junction is on the right.
 2. Guilford, CT
 3. Photograph by J. Paul Loether
 4. February 24, 1989
 5. Negative filed with the Connecticut Historical Commission, 59 S. Prospect Street, Hartford, CT 06106
 6. View from the southwest
 7. Photograph 10

-
1. 27 Moose Hill Road (Daniel Leete, II, House), Route 146 Historic District
 2. Guilford, CT
 3. Photograph by J. Paul Loether
 4. February 24, 1989
 5. Negative filed with the Connecticut Historical Commission, 59 S. Prospect Street, Hartford, CT 06106
 6. View from the east/northeast
 7. Photograph 11

-
1. 650 Leetes Island Road (Calvin M. Leete, Sr., House), Route 146 Historic District
 2. Guilford, CT
 3. Photograph by J. Paul Loether
 4. February 24, 1989
 5. Negative filed with the Connecticut Historical Commission, 59 S. Prospect Street, Hartford, CT 06106
 6. View from the northeast
 7. Photograph 12

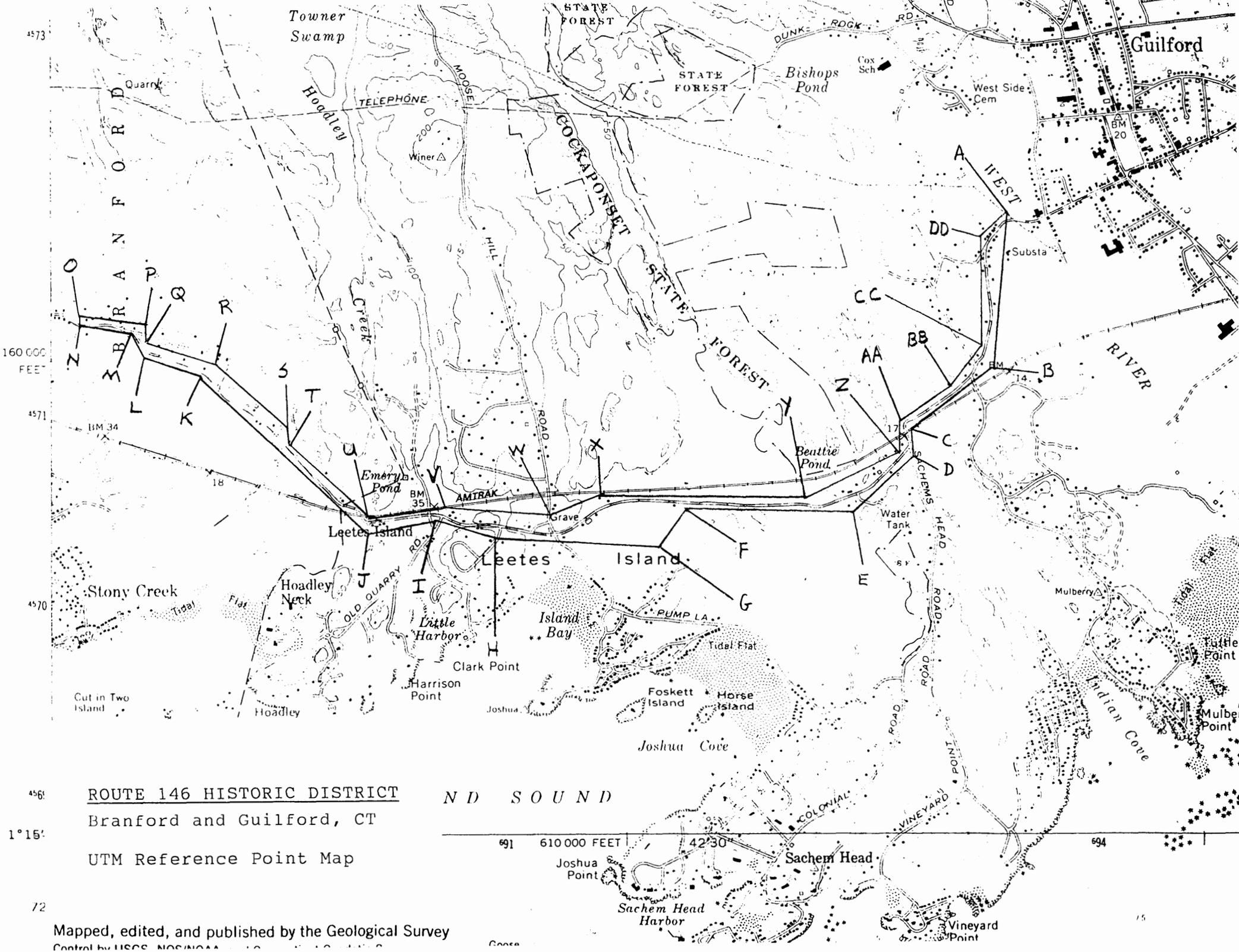


Sketch Map of the
Route 146 Historic District
 Branford and Guilford, CT

Approximate
 Scale - 0 1000'

- Street numbers/Major Building locations 
- District Boundaries 
- Route 146 





ROUTE 146 HISTORIC DISTRICT
 Branford and Guilford, CT

N D S O U N D

UTM Reference Point Map

