

CULTURAL RESOURCES INVENTORY – LANDSCAPES * OLMSTED PROJECT COVER SHEET

Please submit completed form to: Architectural Survey Coordinator
State Historic Preservation Office, Connecticut Department of Economic and Community Development
450 Columbus Boulevard, Suite 5, Hartford, CT 06103

I D E N T I F I C A T I O N	PROPERTY NAME (Current/Historic)		
	Naugatuck Library / Howard Whittemore Memorial Library		
	COUNTY	TOWN/CITY	VILLAGE
	New Haven	Naugatuck	
	JOB NUMBER		
	Primary: 01399 Related Job Numbers:		
	Landscape Type ☐ Park, Parkway, Recreation Area. Scenic Reservation ☐ City/Regional Plan, Improvement Project ☐ Subdivision, Suburban Community ☐ College/School Campus ☐ Grounds of Residential Institution ☒ Grounds of Public Building ☐ Private Estate / Homestead ☐ Cemetery / Burial Lot / Memorial / Monument ☐ Grounds of Commercial / Industrial Building ☐ Country Club / Resort, Hotel, Club ☐ Grounds of Church ☐ Arboretum, Garden ☐ Exhibition, Fair ☐ Miscellaneous		
	DATE OF ORIGINAL PROJECT: 1894 SUBSEQUENT PROJECTS:		

CULTURAL RESOURCES INVENTORY – LANDSCAPES * OLMSTED PROJECT COVER SHEET

Please submit completed form to: Architectural Survey Coordinator
State Historic Preservation Office, Connecticut Department of Economic and Community Development
450 Columbus Boulevard, Suite 5, Hartford, CT 06103

DESIGNER(S) (primary)

- ☐ Frederick Law Olmsted, Sr.
- ☐ John Charles Olmsted
- ☐ Frederick Law Olmsted, Jr.
- ☒ Other firm member(s): Warren H. Manning
- ☐ Other notes:

Other Designers (prior to or following Olmsted project):

Repositories consulted with source materials

- ☒ Frederick Law Olmsted National Historic Site, Olmsted Archives (online albums)
- ☒ Library of Congress
- ☒ Olmsted Online (OlmstedOnline.org)
- ☐ National Archives and Record Administration
- ☐ Connecticut State Library
- ☐ Hartford History Center
- ☐ Other:

Observations regarding features characteristic of Olmsted firm design

Original planting plans suggest a fairly understated approach to planting that highlights the architecture of the building. A larger lawn in the rear of the site, now covered by an addition to the library, would have been planted with curving perennial borders, creating an informal space aligned with the building.

Surviving features resulting from the Olmsted firm's design work include:

- Alignment of front walk and lawns

CULTURAL RESOURCES INVENTORY – LANDSCAPES

Please submit completed form to: Architectural Survey Coordinator
State Historic Preservation Office, Connecticut Department of Economic and Community Development
450 Columbus Boulevard, Suite 5, Hartford, CT 06103

I D E N T I F I C A T I O N	PROPERTY NAME (Current/Historic) Naugatuck Library / J.H. Whittemore (Job #01399)		
	COUNTY New Haven	TOWN/CITY Naugatuck	VILLAGE
	STREET AND NUMBER (and/or location) 243 Church Street		
	OWNER(S) ☐ PRIVATE ☒ MUNICIPAL ☐ STATE ☐ FEDERAL ☐ TRIBAL ☐ EASEMENT		
	LAT/LONG COORDINATES ☒ Center Point ☐ Polygon 41.490987, -73.054974		
	PARCEL INFORMATION Acres: 0.55 PID(s): MBLU(s): 1-1W3		
	USE (Present) Public library		(Historic) Public library
	SURVEY TYPE ☒ Reconnaissance-Level ☐ Intensive-Level		
D E S C R I P T I O N	LANDSCAPE TYPE (Check all that apply) ☒ Designed ☐ Vernacular ☐ Cultural/Ethnographic ☐ Agricultural ☐ Linear ☐ System/Multi-Site ☐ Residential ☐ Commercial ☐ Industrial ☒ Institutional ☐ Maritime ☐ Green ☐ Park- Active Recreation ☐ Park-Passive Recreation or Commemorative ☐ Other – specify:		
	DATE OR PERIOD (Include source of date) 1894 (Olmsted Research Guide Online)		
	DESIGNERS (Entities that created, designed, constructed, or shaped the landscape) Olmsted, Olmsted & Eliot Landscape Architects; Warren Manning		
	DESIGN SCOPE (For designed landscapes, explain what work was commissioned.) Plantings and circulation around a public library building		
	LOCATION OF DRAWINGS/IMAGES/SOURCE MATERIAL Frederick Law Olmsted National Historic Site; Library of Congress		
	VISUAL ASSESSMENT SUMMARY (Check boxes for the qualities that are key features of this landscape. If attaching descriptive narrative, consider these categories.) ☒ Layout & Spatial Relationships ☒ Circulation ☒ Topography ☒ Plantings/Vegetation ☒ Views & Vistas ☐ Boundaries ☐ Water Features ☐ Drainage ☒ Buildings/Structures/Objects ☐ Recreational Space ☐ Other: ☐ Design Style:		

CULTURAL RESOURCES INVENTORY – LANDSCAPES

Please submit completed form to: Architectural Survey Coordinator
State Historic Preservation Office, Connecticut Department of Economic and Community Development
450 Columbus Boulevard, Suite 5, Hartford, CT 06103

C O N D I T I O N	EXISTING CONDITION ☒ Recognizable ☐ Not Extant/Not Recognizable Changes: A rear addition to the library occupies the site of a lawn area shown in early plans. Plantings are much more developed, and new paths have been inserted into the front space		
	POTENTIAL THREATS ☐ None Known ☐ Infrastructure Improvements ☒ Onsite Development ☐ Adjacent Development ☐ Vandalism ☐ Overuse ☐ Deferred Maintenance ☐ Invasive Vegetation ☐ Environmental – specify: _____ ☐ Other – specify: _____		
E N V I R O N M E N T	SETTING (One sentence description) This building is located adjacent to the Naugatuck Green, near other public buildings, churches, and offices.		
	VEGETATION ☒ Maintained Open Land ☐ Natural Open Land ☐ Woodland/Forest ☐ Wetland ☒ Specimen Plants ☐ Other – specify: _____		
	SLOPE ☒ Level/Nearly Level ☐ Moderate Slope ☐ Steep Slope Elevation (ASML): 220'		
	CONNECTICUT PHYSIOGRAPHIC PROVINCE (Eco-Region) ☐ Northwest Highlands ☒ Western Uplands ☐ Western Coastal Slope ☐ Central Valley ☐ Eastern Coastal Slope ☐ Eastern Uplands Soil Description: Site dominated by urban soils.		
H I S T O R Y	SUMMARY (Provide a brief overview in this space. More detailed narrative can be attached.) John Howard Whittemore commissioned the Olmsted firm to provide landscaping improvements to this library in 1894. Whittemore sought further advice on maintenance of the landscape from Warren H. Manning as Manning consulted for Whittemore on other projects.		
	NATIONAL REGISTER RECOMMENDATION Entered by: ☐ Recommended Eligible (Criterion ☐ A ☐ B ☐ C ☐ D) ☐ Not Eligible ☐ Not Evaluated Explanation: Contributes to Naugatuck Center Historic District; landscape contributes NR Listed: ☒ District-Contributing ☐ District-Non-Contributing ☐ Individual ☐ Insufficient Documentation		
R E P O R T E D B Y	NAME Kevan Klosterwill and Carolyn Brackett		ORGANIZATION Red Bridge Group
	ADDRESS 2100 Green Street, San Francisco, California 94123		
	PHOTOGRAPHER Kevan Klosterwill	DATE 9/16/21	☒ Permission to use photographs
	SURVEY METHOD ☒ Site Visit/In-Person Walkover ☐ Drive-through/Windshield ☐ Digital Review Only		

ATTACHMENTS (Include the following items in the PDF)

- ☒ Location Map ☒ Site Map ☒ Photographs with captions ☒ Historic Images (if applicable)
☒ Narrative Description of Property ☒ Historical Narrative of Property ☐ References

DESCRIPTION (Visual Assessment Summary)

Layout & Spatial Relationships: A lawn space enclosed by hedges and other plantings is bisected by a path leading to the front door of the library.

Circulation: Concrete walks lead along the center and some edges of the space. A circular plaza with pavers provides a transition from the sidewalk to the site.

Topography: The lot is flat.

Plantings/Vegetation: Plantings include a hedge, perennial beds, and various small trees including a dogwood.

Views & Vistas: Views are primarily to and from surrounding streets. The space itself is somewhat enclosed.

Buildings/Structures/Objects: Furnishings include lampposts, which seem to be fairly old, and a birdbath.

HISTORICAL NARRATIVE

John Howard (J.H.) Whittemore was an industrialist who built an iron manufacturing empire in Naugatuck in the late 19th century and was instrumental in community plans including a library and school.

In 1891 Whittemore contacted Olmsted Brothers regarding “improving a very rough piece of ground lying contiguous to our churches and ‘the green’ and putting therein a new school house.” Stating his desire to show “more care from a ‘Landscape and Architecture’” perspective than usual, he described a “modest bricking building of eight or 10 rooms” on two or three acres. Designed by renowned architectural firm McKim, Mead and White, the school was built in 1893 and opened in 1894.

By June of 1894, Warren Manning had made a site visit, and a follow up letter from Whittemore discussed landscaping. Whittemore expressed his desire for a plan that placed only a few trees in the front, while in the back he wanted “enough trees to screen school from adjoining grounds.” The letter also discussed placement of the soldiers’ monument on the Green.¹

When J.H. Jr., son of Whittemore and his wife, Julia, died at the age of 15 in 1887, he decided to build a library in his son’s memory. The Howard Whittemore Memorial Library was also designed by McKim, Mead & White. Minimal correspondence exists between Whittemore and the Olmsted Brothers. Evidently Whittemore hired the firm to landscape the library grounds. A June 1894 letter from Whittemore notes that Mrs. (Julia) Whittemore has reviewed the plan and “pronounces it very satisfactory.” Whittemore directed the firm to complete the plan and order stock.²

¹ Project Correspondence, Library of Congress.

² Salem Elementary School, https://saalem.naugatuck.k12.ct.us/apps/pages/index.jsp?uREC_ID=782346&type=d&pREC_ID=1179841, accessed December 20, 2021.

CULTURAL RESOURCES INVENTORY – LANDSCAPES * OLMSTED PROJECT

CONTINUATION SHEET Naugatuck Green (#01399) / 243 Church Street, Naugatuck

GRAPHICS

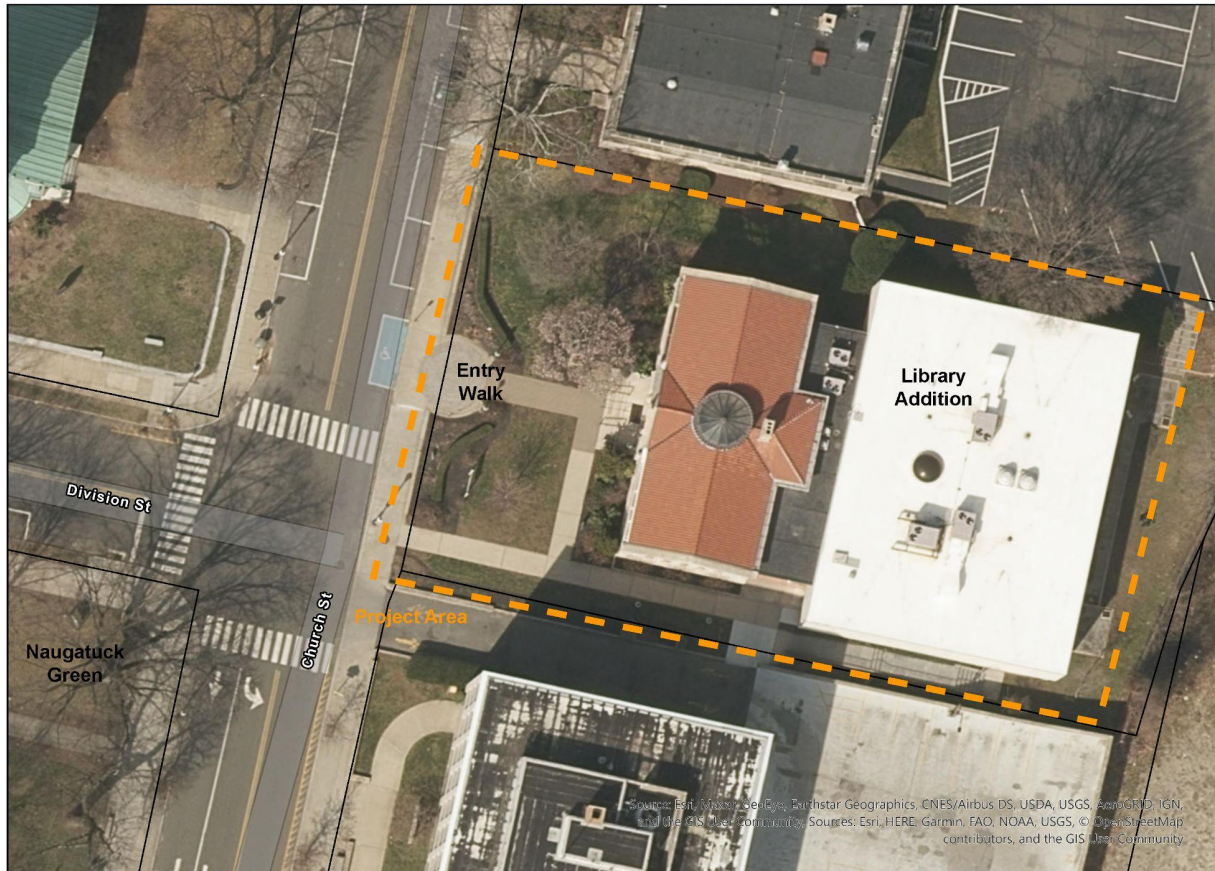


JOB: 01399 LOCATION: Naugatuck

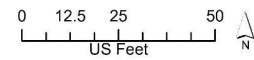


CULTURAL RESOURCES INVENTORY – LANDSCAPES * OLMSTED PROJECT

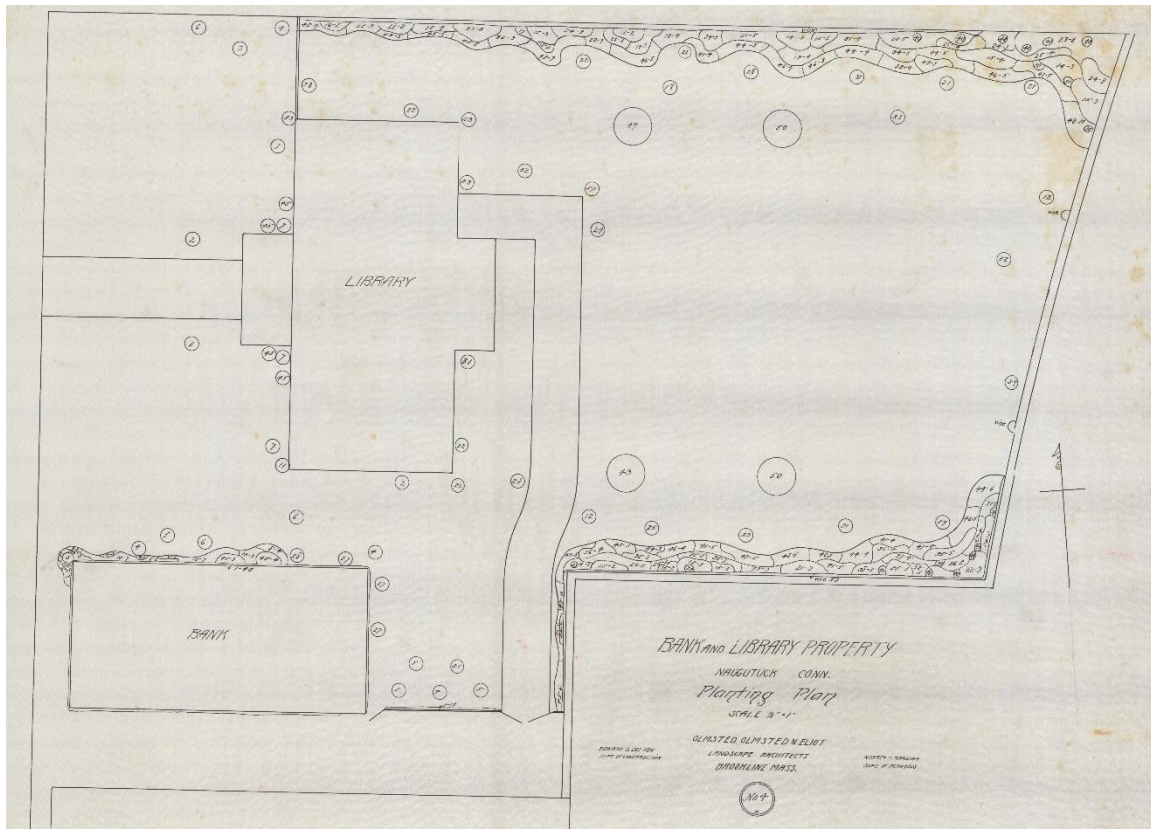
CONTINUATION SHEET Naugatuck Green (#01399) / 243 Church Street, Naugatuck



JOB: 01399 LOCATION: Naugatuck PROJECT: Naugatuck Library



CONTINUATION SHEET Naugatuck Green (#01399) / 243 Church Street, Naugatuck



Bank and Library Property, Planting Plan, Olmsted, Olmsted & Eliot Landscape Architects. (Source: courtesy Frederick Law Olmsted National Historic Site)



View east to main entrance of library from street. (Source: courtesy Frederick Law Olmsted National Historic Site)



View northwest from corner of library building.



View south from central path toward adjacent building.



View south across front lawn.



View northeast to library from Naugatuck Green.