

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) Private Residence / Charles S. Guthrie House, Lighthouse Inn, Meadow Court		
	COUNTY New London	TOWN/CITY New London	VILLAGE
	JOB NUMBER Primary: 00417 Related Job Numbers:		
	Landscape Type <input type="checkbox"/> Park, Parkway, Recreation Area. Scenic Reservation <input type="checkbox"/> City/Regional Plan, Improvement Project <input type="checkbox"/> Subdivision, Suburban Community <input type="checkbox"/> College/School Campus <input type="checkbox"/> Grounds of Residential Institution <input type="checkbox"/> Grounds of Public Building <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private Estate / Homestead <input type="checkbox"/> Cemetery / Burial Lot / Memorial / Monument <input type="checkbox"/> Grounds of Commercial / Industrial Building <input type="checkbox"/> Country Club / Resort, Hotel, Club <input type="checkbox"/> Grounds of Church <input type="checkbox"/> Arboretum, Garden <input type="checkbox"/> Exhibition, Fair <input type="checkbox"/> Miscellaneous		
	DATE OF ORIGINAL PROJECT: 1900 SUBSEQUENT PROJECTS: 1904		

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DESIGNER(S) (primary)

- Frederick Law Olmsted, Sr.
- John Charles Olmsted
- Frederick Law Olmsted, Jr.
- Other firm member(s):
- 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: National Register of Historic Places nomination, Lighthouse Inn

Observations regarding features characteristic of Olmsted firm design

The Olmsted Brothers Landscape Architects designed an extensive estate within the city of New London for Charles S. Guthrie during the early twentieth century. Photographic evidence indicates that much of the design was implemented. After Mr. Guthrie died, his wife began to subdivide and then sold the property. The new owners opened the Lighthouse Inn within the house in 1927. By the early 1930s, several houses and a road—Guthrie Place—had been built on the original estate southeast of the residence. Other later additions built on the original property are W. Guthrie Place, which forms a half circle west, south, and east of the residence, and Admiral Drive, which separates the residence from an open lot that formerly contained garden features designed by the Olmsted Brothers Landscape Architects. Surviving today are the residence, repaired following an extensive fire in 1979, a circular entrance court at the northern principal facade, a caretaker's dwelling northwest of the house, and open space across Admiral Drive that was part of the original site plan. Older trees located within the open space north of Admiral Drive may date to the original plan.

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	COUNTY New London	TOWN/CITY New London	VILLAGE											
	STREET AND NUMBER (and/or location) 6 Guthrie Place													
	OWNER(S) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE <input type="checkbox"/> MUNICIPAL <input type="checkbox"/> STATE <input type="checkbox"/> FEDERAL <input type="checkbox"/> TRIBAL <input type="checkbox"/> EASEMENT													
	LAT/LONG COORDINATES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Center Point <input type="checkbox"/> Polygon 41.31708, -72.09355													
	PARCEL INFORMATION Acres: 4.23 PID(s): MBLU(s): G25-27-17													
	USE (Present) Private residence		(Historic) Private residence, commercial inn											
	SURVEY TYPE <input type="checkbox"/> Reconnaissance-Level <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Intensive-Level													
D E S C R I P T I O N	LANDSCAPE TYPE (Check all that apply) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Designed <input type="checkbox"/> Vernacular <input type="checkbox"/> Cultural/Ethnographic <input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural <input type="checkbox"/> Linear <input type="checkbox"/> System/Multi-Site <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Residential <input type="checkbox"/> Commercial <input type="checkbox"/> Industrial <input type="checkbox"/> Institutional <input type="checkbox"/> Maritime <input type="checkbox"/> Green <input type="checkbox"/> Park- Active Recreation <input type="checkbox"/> Park-Passive Recreation or Commemorative <input type="checkbox"/> Other – specify:													
	DATE OR PERIOD (Include source of date) 1900; 1904 (Olmsted Research Guide Online)													
	DESIGNERS (Entities that created, designed, constructed, or shaped the landscape) Olmsted Brothers Landscape Architects													
	DESIGN SCOPE (For designed landscapes, explain what work was commissioned) The property was designed by Olmsted Brothers Landscape Architects with extensive plantings and site features such as entry drives, formal gardens, a tennis court, and outbuildings													
	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.) <table border="0"> <tr> <td><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Layout & Spatial Relationships</td> <td><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Water Features</td> </tr> <tr> <td><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Circulation</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Drainage</td> </tr> <tr> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Topography</td> <td><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Buildings/Structures/Objects</td> </tr> <tr> <td><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Plantings/Vegetation</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Recreational Space</td> </tr> <tr> <td><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Views & Vistas</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Other:</td> </tr> <tr> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Boundaries</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Design Style:</td> </tr> </table>			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Layout & Spatial Relationships	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Water Features	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Circulation	<input type="checkbox"/> Drainage	<input type="checkbox"/> Topography	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Buildings/Structures/Objects	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Plantings/Vegetation	<input type="checkbox"/> Recreational Space	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Views & Vistas	<input type="checkbox"/> Other:	<input type="checkbox"/> Boundaries
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C O N D I T I O N	EXISTING CONDITION <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Recognizable <input type="checkbox"/> Not Extant/Not Recognizable Changes: Much of the property has been subdivided and developed as residences		
	POTENTIAL THREATS <input type="checkbox"/> None Known <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Infrastructure Improvements <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Onsite Development <input type="checkbox"/> Adjacent Development <input type="checkbox"/> Vandalism <input type="checkbox"/> Overuse <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Deferred Maintenance <input type="checkbox"/> Invasive Vegetation <input type="checkbox"/> Environmental – specify: _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Other – specify: _____		
E N V I R O N M E N T	SETTING (One sentence description) The property is located within a residential neighborhood		
	VEGETATION <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Maintained Open Land <input type="checkbox"/> Natural Open Land <input type="checkbox"/> Woodland/Forest <input type="checkbox"/> Wetland <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Specimen Plants <input type="checkbox"/> Other – specify: _____		
	SLOPE <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Level/Nearly Level <input type="checkbox"/> Moderate Slope <input type="checkbox"/> Steep Slope Elevation (ASML): 17'		
	CONNECTICUT PHYSIOGRAPHIC PROVINCE (Eco-Region) <input type="checkbox"/> Northwest Highlands <input type="checkbox"/> Western Uplands <input type="checkbox"/> Western Coastal Slope <input type="checkbox"/> Central Valley <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Eastern Coastal Slope <input type="checkbox"/> Eastern Uplands		
	Soil Description: Dominated by moderately well-drained Sutton fine sandy loam and well-drained stony Charlton-Chatfield complex.		
H I S T O R Y	SUMMARY (Provide a brief overview in this space. More detailed narrative can be attached.) The Guthrie House, originally known as Meadow Court, was a 12-acre estate created by Charles Strong Guthrie and Frances Amelia Lampson Guthrie in 1901 based on plans prepared by Olmsted Brothers Landscape Architects. The plans included an expansive graded open lawn, entrance drive, circular arrival court near the house, walks, plantings, gardens, and recreation features. The property was subdivided in the mid-1920s, which led to the construction of numerous residences south of the house.		
	NATIONAL REGISTER RECOMMENDATION Entered by: <input type="checkbox"/> Recommended Eligible (Criterion <input type="checkbox"/> A <input type="checkbox"/> B <input type="checkbox"/> C <input type="checkbox"/> D) <input type="checkbox"/> Not Eligible <input type="checkbox"/> Not Evaluated Explanation: Lighthouse Inn was listed in 1996; the landscape contributes to the property's significance NR Listed: <input type="checkbox"/> District-Contributing <input type="checkbox"/> District-Non-Contributing <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Individual <input type="checkbox"/> Insufficient Documentation		
R E P O R T E D B Y	NAME Liz Sargent and Maeve Corcoran	ORGANIZATION Red Bridge Group	DATE December 2021
	ADDRESS 2100 Green Street, San Francisco, California 94123		
	PHOTOGRAPHER Liz Sargent	DATE September 14, 2021	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Permission to use photographs (public domain)
	SURVEY METHOD <input type="checkbox"/> Site Visit/In-Person Walkover <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Drive-through/Windshield (no permission) <input type="checkbox"/> 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

Forms containing sensitive Information may be withheld from public disclosure (CGS 1-210)

DESCRIPTION (Visual Assessment Summary)

Layout & Spatial Relationships: The Charles S. Guthrie House is a large residence sited on axis with Guthrie Place. The house affords views to the Thames River and Long Island Sound beyond. Guthrie Place extends from Pequot Avenue along the river to West Guthrie Place, which forms a half-circle west, south, and east of the Guthrie House. West Guthrie Place intersects Admiral Drive, a road that passes between the house and an additional lot to the north. Associated with the house is a forecourt along the northern principal facade. The space contains a circular turnaround and a fountain. A hedge edges Admiral Drive to the north, screening views into the open lawn beyond that contains various shade trees and a gazebo. A caretaker's dwelling is located in the northwest corner of the lot. To the south of the house, several residential lots edge Guthrie Place, and Parkway South to the east and Lower Boulevard to the west in an area that was part of the original 12-acre estate.

Circulation: The house is framed by West Guthrie Place and Admiral Drive. Guthrie Place approaches the house on axis from the south. A circular drive forms an arrival court north of the house. There are also walks that extend from the wings and main entrance to the arrival court.

Plantings/Vegetation: Ornamental foundation plantings edge the house. The lot to the north is edged along Admiral Drive by a hedge. The lot is primarily turf lawn in the center. A grove of shade trees is in the eastern part of the lot. These likely survive from the Olmsted design.

Views & Vistas: The upper story of the residence affords views toward the Thames River and Long Island Sound. Views are also afforded to the house to the north and the water to the south from Guthrie Place.

Water Features: A fountain is part of the garden feature set within the center of the circular turnaround in front of the house (north elevation).

Buildings/Structures/Objects: The residence is the primary built feature on the property. The current owners have erected fencing and walls to restrict access to the property along West Guthrie Place and Admiral Drive at the intersection with West Guthrie Place. A wooden gazebo and caretaker's house are located in the lot north of the house. The caretaker's house survives from the original design. A pool and outbuildings to its east are later additions to the property.

HISTORICAL NARRATIVE

The Guthrie House, originally known as Meadow Court, was a 12-acre estate created by Charles Strong Guthrie and Frances Amelia Lampson Guthrie in 1901. Charles Guthrie was the president of Republic Iron and Steel Corporation. The Guthries began vacationing at the Pequot Colony, a stylish summer retreat of socialites nearby in the 1890s before establishing their own residential property. They named the property Meadow Court for the 6-acre wildflower meadow that was present when they purchased the property.

The couple hired William Ralph Emerson as the architect for the project, and the Olmsted Brothers Landscape Architects for the site plan. Emerson interpreted the Mission style in his design for the dwelling. The Olmsted firm designed the site in the picturesque style, augmenting the property's romantic location on Long Island Sound. In the design of the building, Emerson strategically placed windows to capture views of the water from the upper stories. The Olmsted plan completed these views by establishing a large, carefully graded, open lawn south of the house edged by groves of trees. Large stone piers and walls marked the property boundary. The firm designed an entrance drive and circular turnaround on the north façade of the house, as well as formal garden elements and spaces. Plantings included a meadow in the large open space south of the house, and arrangements of trees and shrubs around rock outcrops and boulders northeast of the house. A caretaker's residence was located in the northwest corner of the property.

Charles Guthrie died at age 46 in 1906. By 1920, Frances Guthrie had begun spending her summers at stylish Long Island resorts, leaving Meadow Court unoccupied. In 1925, Mrs. Guthrie began selling off lots from the estate, later selling the property. The mansion survived the subdivision process and opened as the Lighthouse Inn in 1927. Adaptive use of the property as an inn led to the loss of some original features. The subdivided lots were developed as modest residences located along existing Parkway South and Lower Boulevard, and the newly built Guthrie Place, and W. Guthrie Place. The road providing access to the northern entrance into the house was partially realigned and became Admiral Drive. As a result of the property subdivision, much of the Olmsted design was destroyed.

The Lighthouse Inn quickly became a popular destination for visitors to the area. Guests of the Lighthouse Inn's restaurant and hotel suites appreciated its homey, private atmosphere and waterfront views. The Inn regularly hosted loyal guests returning for weeks each summer as well as visiting dignitaries and celebrities. After William and Albert Ronnick of Hartford purchased the Lighthouse Inn in 1945, it remained a popular destination for society members and celebrities, who included Joan Crawford, Bette Davis, and Esther Williams. The Inn remained a premier dining and dancing locale until 1970 when the Ronnicks retired and sold the property. In 1979, a fire destroyed much of the upper floors. Albert Ronnick reacquired the building through foreclosure and devoted the next 14 years to restoring the property. In 1988, New London Landmarks/Union Railroad Station Trust honored his reclamation efforts with landmark status. The property was listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 1996.

The original design for the circular turnaround and garden north of the house survives along with some original trees and the caretaker's house.

REFERENCES

Andrews, Gregory E. "Lighthouse Inn." National Register of Historic Places Nomination. US Department of the Interior, National Park Service, June 24, 1996. NRIS #96000822.

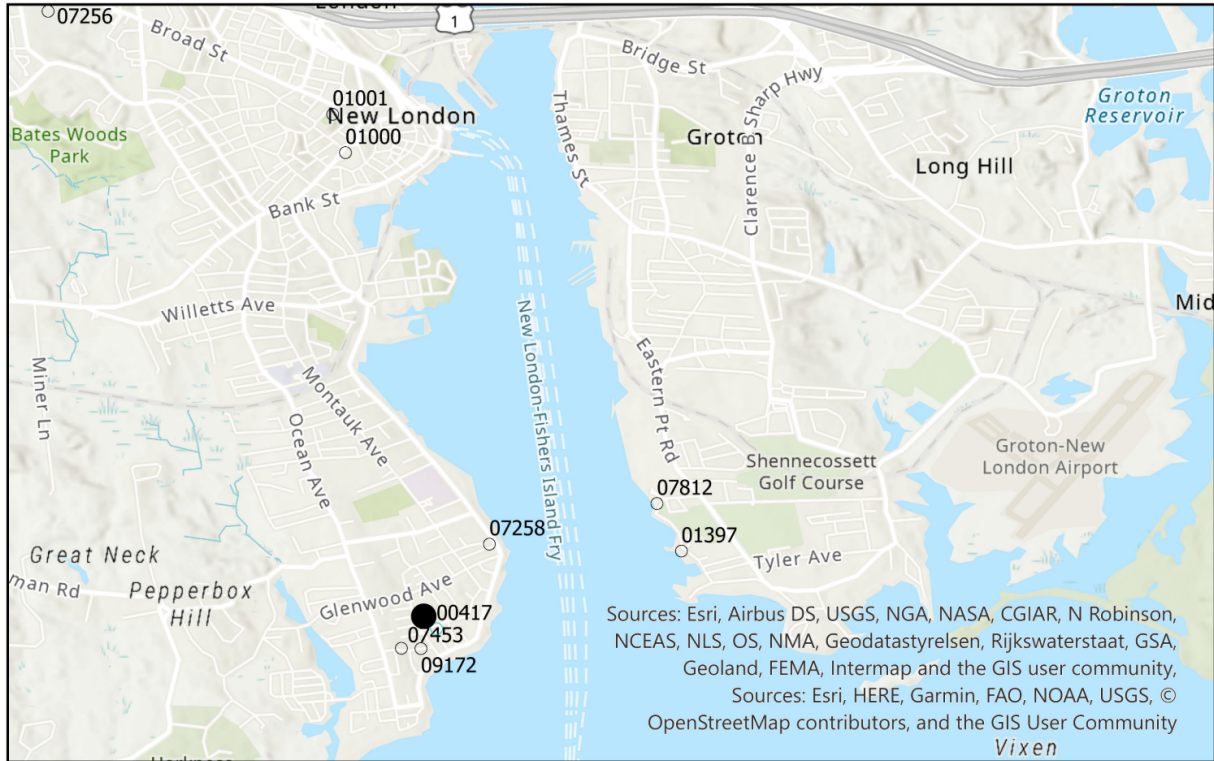
New York *Times*. Obituary of Charles Strong Guthrie. January 5, 1906.

Savage, Henry Stuyvesant. "Meadow Court." *American Homes and Gardens*. September 12, 1912, 308.

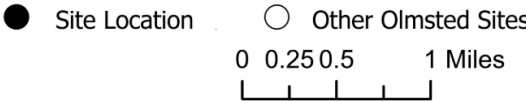
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CONTINUATION SHEET Charles S. Guthrie House (#00417) / 6 Guthrie Place, New London

GRAPHICS

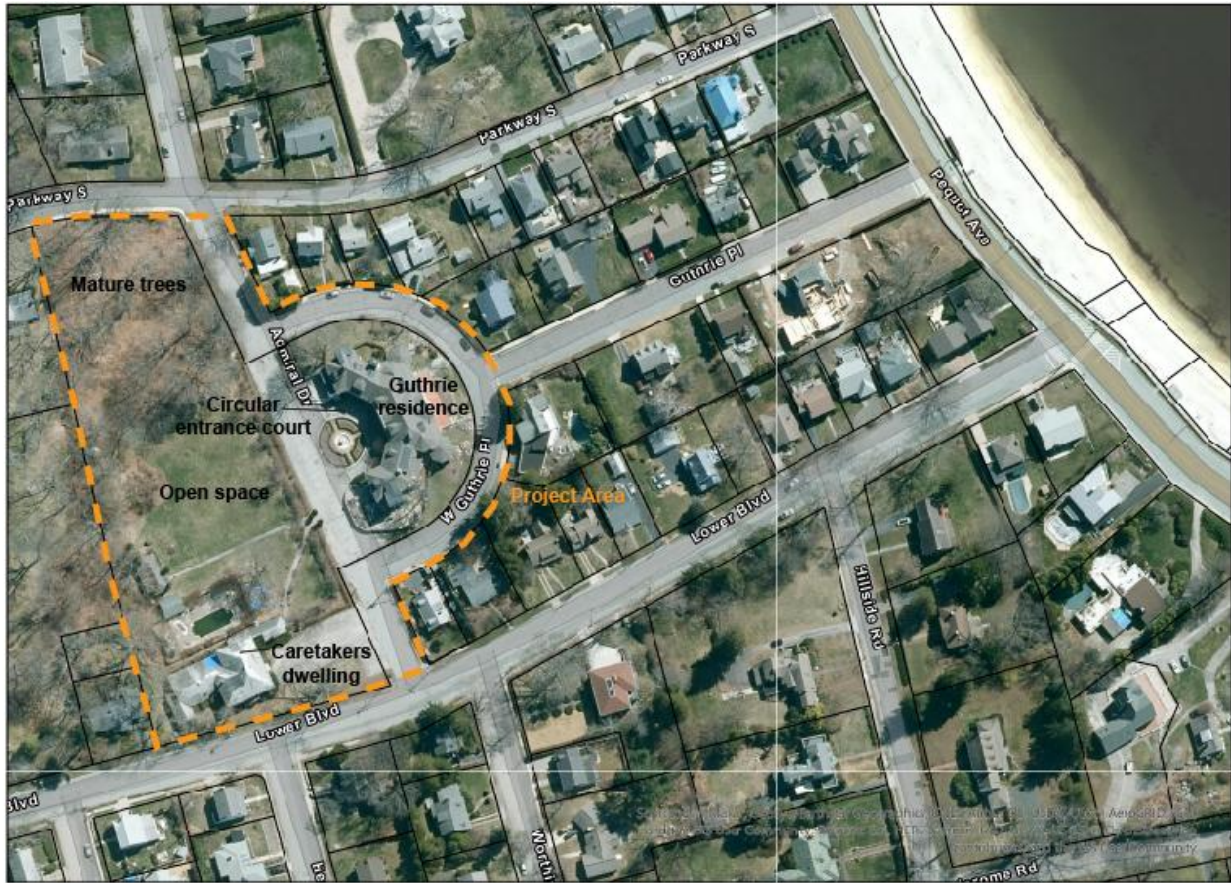


JOB: 00417 LOCATION: New London

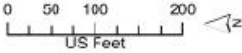


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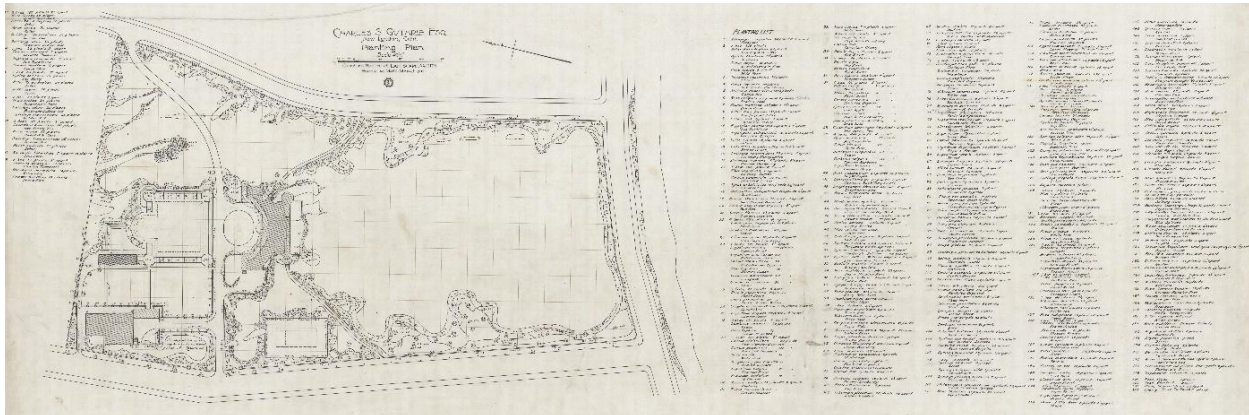


JOB: 00417 LOCATION: New London PROJECT: Charles C. Guthrie Home



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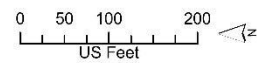
CONTINUATION SHEET Charles S. Guthrie House (#00417) / 6 Guthrie Place, New London



Planting plan for Charles Guthrie Estate, 1902, Olmsted Brothers Landscape Architects. (Source: Courtesy Frederick Law Olmsted National Historic Site)



JOB: 00417 LOCATION: New London PROJECT: Charles C. Guthrie Home



Aerial photograph of the property overlaid with the historic Olmsted Brothers plan. (Source: Kevan Klosterwill)



Historic photograph, view southwest of the entrance into the estate soon after construction. (Source: Courtesy Frederick Law Olmsted National Historic Site)



Historic photograph southwest toward the residence and surrounding landscape north and east of the building soon after construction. (Source: Courtesy Frederick Law Olmsted National Historic Site)



Historic photograph, view northeast toward the residence and surrounding landscape soon after construction. (Source: Courtesy Frederick Law Olmsted National Historic Site)

CONTINUATION SHEET Charles S. Guthrie House (#00417) / 6 Guthrie Place, New London



View northwest toward the house from Guthrie Place. (All photographs taken by authors in 2021 unless otherwise noted)



View of the residential lots southeast of the house within the former estate.



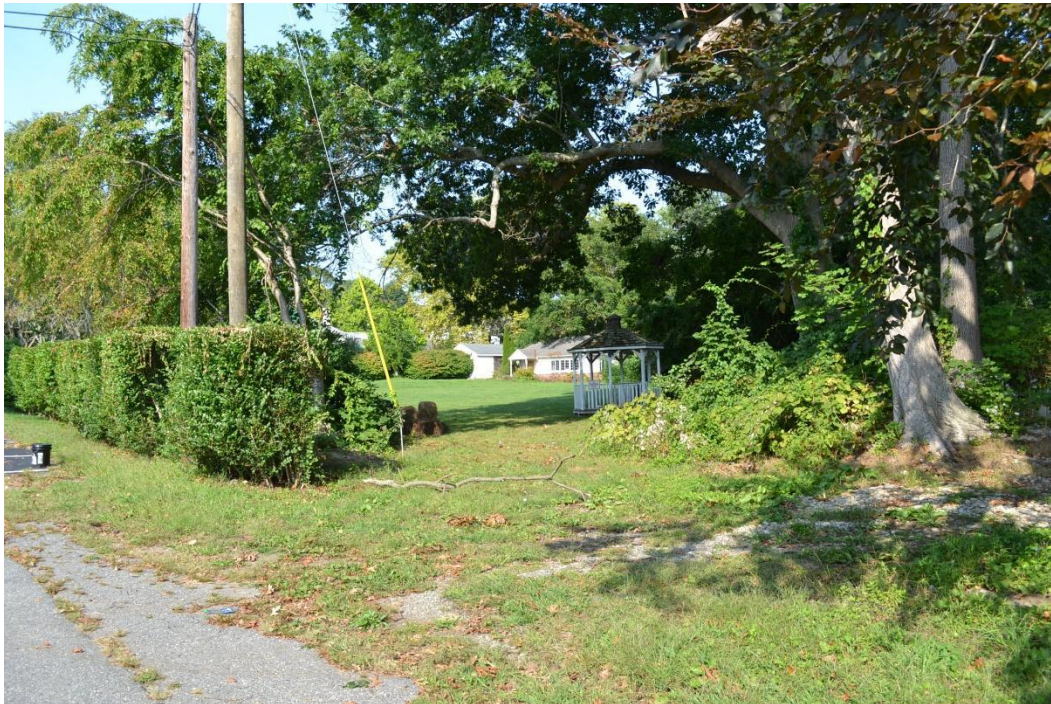
View northeast along Admiral Drive toward the house (right) and hedge screening the open lot across Admiral Drive (left).



View northeast along Admiral Drive toward the entry court behind the house.



View northwest toward piers marking a break in the hedge along Admiral Drive.



View west into the rear lot from Parkway South and Admiral Drive.