

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)		
	Basilica of the Immaculate Conception/ Waterbury Church of the Immaculate Conception		
	COUNTY	TOWN/CITY	VILLAGE
	New Haven	Waterbury	
	JOB NUMBER		
Primary: 07909 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 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> Grounds of Church <input type="checkbox"/> Arboretum, Garden <input type="checkbox"/> Exhibition, Fair <input type="checkbox"/> Miscellaneous			
DATE OF ORIGINAL PROJECT: 1928			
SUBSEQUENT PROJECTS: 1928			

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DESIGNER(S) (primary)

- Frederick Law Olmsted, Sr.
- John Charles Olmsted
- Frederick Law Olmsted, Jr.
- Other firm member(s): Edward Clark Whiting
- 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

The design includes small areas of plantings around an urban church. A diagonal path leading from the entrance of the church to the secondary building, a rectory, balances the formal structure of the site with a more informal and dynamic sense of movement. Plantings are focused on the sloping areas of the landscape areas. An axial approach to the rectory moves through open lawn. The circulation of the site is largely intact, though plantings have changed over time.

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

- Lawns
- Steps, curbing and paths

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I D E N T I F I C A T I O N	PROPERTY NAME (Current/Historic) Basilica of the Immaculate Conception/ Waterbury Church of the Immaculate Conception (Job #07909)													
	COUNTY New Haven	TOWN/CITY Waterbury	VILLAGE											
	STREET AND NUMBER (and/or location) 74 West Main St.													
	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 41.5571, -73.04182													
	PARCEL INFORMATION Acres: 1.47 PID(s): 027400030012 MBLU(s): 0274-0003-0012													
	USE (Present) Church		(Historic) Church											
	SURVEY TYPE <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Reconnaissance-Level <input 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 type="checkbox"/> Residential <input type="checkbox"/> Commercial <input type="checkbox"/> Industrial <input checked="" 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) 1928 (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.) Walkways and plantings associated with church 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.) <table border="0"> <tr> <td><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Layout & Spatial Relationships</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Water Features</td> </tr> <tr> <td><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Circulation</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Drainage</td> </tr> <tr> <td><input checked="" 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 type="checkbox"/> Water Features	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Circulation	<input type="checkbox"/> Drainage	<input checked="" 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	<input type="checkbox"/> Design Style:
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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: Circulation is largely intact, but plantings have changed.		
	POTENTIAL THREATS <input type="checkbox"/> None Known <input type="checkbox"/> Infrastructure Improvements <input type="checkbox"/> Onsite Development <input type="checkbox"/> Adjacent Development <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Vandalism <input type="checkbox"/> Overuse <input 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) An urban church complex located in downtown Waterbury adjacent to the green.		
	VEGETATION <input 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 type="checkbox"/> Level/Nearly Level <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Moderate Slope <input type="checkbox"/> Steep Slope Elevation (ASML): 300'		
	CONNECTICUT PHYSIOGRAPHIC PROVINCE (Eco-Region) <input type="checkbox"/> Northwest Highlands <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Western Uplands <input type="checkbox"/> Western Coastal Slope <input type="checkbox"/> Central Valley <input type="checkbox"/> Eastern Coastal Slope <input type="checkbox"/> Eastern Uplands		
	Soil Description: Site composed of urban soils.		
H I S T O R Y	SUMMARY (Provide a brief overview in this space. More detailed narrative can be attached.) As the basilica was being completed in 1928, the Olmsted firm provided recommendations for improvements of the landscape to link the site's buildings together. Edward Clark Whiting visited the site, and prepared recommendations for planting of the site.		
	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: Contributes to the Downtown Waterbury Historic District NR Listed: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> District-Contributing <input type="checkbox"/> District-Non-Contributing <input type="checkbox"/> Individual <input type="checkbox"/> 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 9/15/21	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Permission to use photographs
	SURVEY METHOD <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Site Visit/In-Person Walkover <input type="checkbox"/> Drive-through/Windshield <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

CONTINUATION SHEET Waterbury Basilica of the Immaculate Conception (#07909) / 74 West Main Street,
Waterbury

DESCRIPTION (Visual Assessment Summary)

Layout & Spatial Relationships: Green space fills the voids between the street and buildings. A symmetrical lawn is aligned with the front of the rectory. Secondary spaces and paths flow from the front steps of the basilica.

Circulation: Concrete steps and walks lead through the site. An asphalt driveway set on a retaining wall serves the back of the buildings.

Topography: The site slopes downward from the rear toward the front streetscape. Rectory is set on a slight rise.

Plantings/Vegetation: Weeping cherry and dogwoods are the primary larger trees. Remainder of plantings are lawn and annual or perennial beds.

Views & Vistas: Views are primarily related to the buildings and the green.

Buildings/Structures/Objects: Church and rectory are primary structures. Site features include metal railings and fencing with stone piers, walls, benches, and statuary.

HISTORICAL NARRATIVE

Ground was broken for the Roman Catholic church in 1924. Upon completion, it was dedicated in 1928. The Italian-Renaissance-style church was designed by the Boston architecture firm of Maginnis & Walsh which was well-known for designing many churches in Boston. The church is a contributing structure in the Downtown Waterbury Historic District. As the church and next-door rectory were being completed in 1928, the Olmsted firm was enlisted to develop landscaping plans. A March 15 report noted "Father (William) McGurk wishes to have us send someone as soon as possible to study out what should be done in a small area in front of the rectory facing West Main Street. This area is just a little corner between the street, the church and the rectory." On March 21, Edward Clark Whiting, a member of the Olmsted firm, reported spending "two hours or so on the ground considering planting requirements and other landscape developments..." By the end of the month, Father McGurk requested a plan and informed Whiting he "will buy the plants and take care of the planting work." In mid-April, the plan was submitted including a planting list and "our suggestions as to the size and character of the more important plants and places where you would be most likely to get plants of this particular character."¹ The church was dedicated on May 20, 1928. In the midst of torrential rain 1,500 people attended the service conducted by three bishops, more than 50 priests, and a 60-voice choir.²

REFERENCES

Hartford *Courant* articles.

¹ Project Correspondence, Library of Congress.

² Hartford *Courant*, "Many Attend New Church Dedication," May 21, 1928, accessed October 2021.

**CONTINUATION SHEET Waterbury Basilica of the Immaculate Conception (#07909) / 74 West Main Street,
Waterbury**



View northwest from street toward rectory. (All photographs taken by authors in 2021 unless otherwise noted)



View north along courtyard between buildings.

**CONTINUATION SHEET Waterbury Basilica of the Immaculate Conception (#07909) / 74 West Main Street,
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View west to walkway in front of rectory.



View north to rectory from sidewalk.

**CONTINUATION SHEET Waterbury Basilica of the Immaculate Conception (#07909) / 74 West Main Street,
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View north along eastern side of basilica.