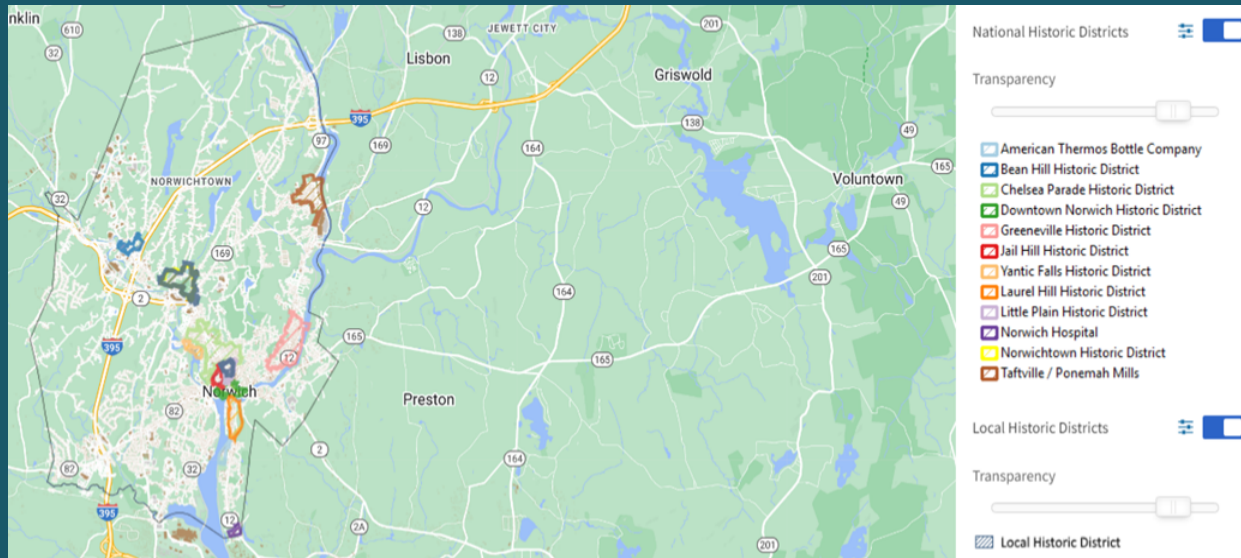


# PREPARING A LOCAL HISTORIC INVENTORY

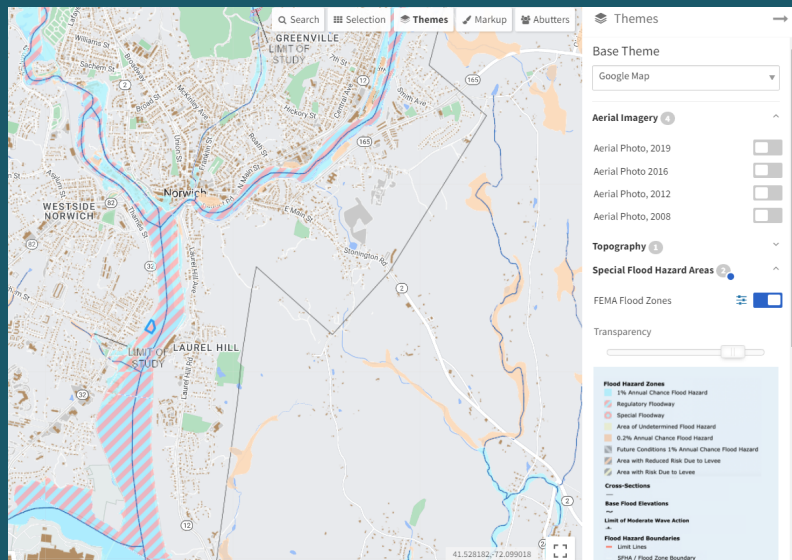


DEANNA L RHODES, AICP  
DIRECTOR OF PLANNING &  
NEIGHBORHOOD SERVICES





# 12 NATIONAL REGISTER HISTORIC DISTRICTS



# EXTENSIVE SPECIAL FLOOD HAZARD AREAS AND FLOODWAYS ALONG THE SHETUCKET, YANTIC AND THAMES RIVERS AS WELL AS SPAULDING BROOK

# THE CITY OF NORWICH WAS AWARE OF AND HAD BEEN UTILIZING THE HISTORIC EXEMPTION BECAUSE:

- The National Flood Insurance Program floodplain management regulations provide significant relief to historic structures.
- Historic structures do not have to meet the floodplain management requirements of the program as long as they maintain their historic structure designation.
- They do not have to meet the new construction, substantial improvement, or substantial damage requirements of the program.
- This exclusion from these requirements serves as an incentive for property owners to maintain the historic character of the designated structure and may also serve as an incentive for an owner to obtain historic designation of a structure.



National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP)

## Floodplain Management Bulletin **Historic Structures**

FEMA P-467-2

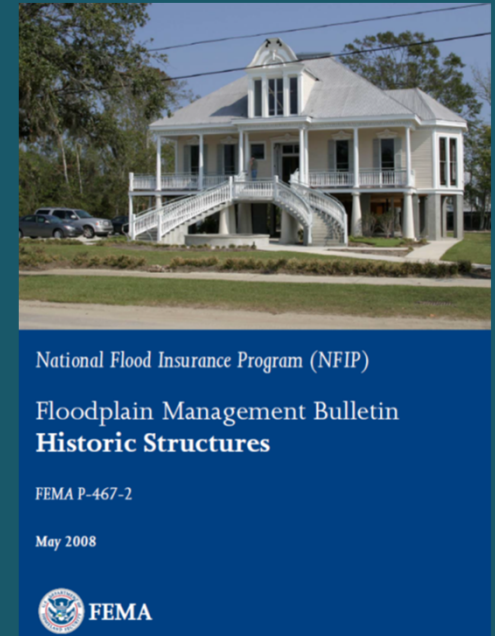
May 2008





## The NFIP Definition of “Historic Structures” is any structure that is:

1. Listed individually in the National Register of Historic Places...
2. Certified or preliminarily determined by the Secretary of the Interior as contributing to the historical significance of a registered historic district or a district preliminarily determined by the Secretary to qualify as a registered historic district;
3. Individually listed on a state inventory of historic places in states with historic preservation programs which have been approved by the Secretary of the Interior; or
4. **Individually listed on a local inventory of historic places** in communities with historic preservation programs that have been certified either: (a) By an approved state program as determined by the Secretary of the Interior or (b) Directly by the Secretary of the Interior in States without approved programs.”



OUT OF THE FOUR DEFINITIONS, THIS ONE WAS NOT BEING USED  
AND SEEMED LIKE IT WOULD BENEFIT THE COMMUNITY



# HISTORIC EXEMPTION IS ALLOWED EITHER BY DEFINITION OR VARIANCE

- The definition of “substantial improvement” provides an exclusion for historic structures: “Any alteration of a “historic structure”, provided that the alteration will not preclude the structure’s continued designation as an “historic structure”. It also applies to “historic structures” that have been “substantially damaged”.

## The provision specifically exempts historic structures from the substantial improvement and substantial damage

- In lieu of the outright exemption by definition, communities may follow a variance procedure upon a determination that the proposed repair or rehabilitation will not preclude the structure’s continued designation as a historic structure and the variance is the minimum necessary to preserve the historic character and design of the structure.” Under the variance criteria, communities can place conditions to make the building more flood resistant and minimize flood damages, but such conditions should not affect the historic character and design of the building as per the NFIP.
- **Communities have the option of using either provision for addressing the unique needs of “historic structures”. Communities should adopt only one option to address “historic structures”.**

# THE NORWICH PROJECT

- Looked for other examples nationwide of FEMA approved Local Inventories – Found ZERO
- Initiated multiple in depth conversations with FEMA and DEEP representatives to learn and understand what constitutes a LHI:
  - An inventory cannot consist of only one or two properties
  - The historic character and design of each structure must be validated (suggested getting SHPO on board)
  - Community must formally adopt the LHI
- Reviewed properties to determine which would benefit most and qualify using these criteria:
  - Non-residential (commercial) structures
  - Assumed to be “historic” due to their age, previous use(s) or appearance
  - Located outside of a National Historic District and not individually listed on the National Register
  - Existing low appraisal value
  - In need of significant costly repairs and rehab to adaptively reuse
- Contacted property owners to get them onboard
- Hired a Historical Consultant to perform research, document findings, and prepare SHPO forms for inventory
- Contacted the CT SHPO office who agreed to review all proposed LHI properties for eligibility



Summary of Target Area		
Parcel #	Address	Owner
1	22 Thames Terrace	City of Norwich
2	26 Thames Terrace	MacArthur, Marlene
3	Thames Terrace	Carter, Guy Kendall
4	76 Thames Terrace	Austin, John Scott
5	47 Shipping Street	Shipping Street LLC
6	36 Shipping Street	Shipping Street LLC
7	35 Merchant Court	Giamberini, David L
8	35 Shipping Street	Shipping Street LLC
9	35 Shipping Street	City of Norwich
10	1 Terminal Way	One Terminal Way LLC
11	83 Shipping Street	City of Norwich
12	25 Shipping Street	Castle Health LLC
13	11 Terminal Way	City of Norwich
14	28 South Street	Josh Prottas LLC
15	21 Terminal Way	Terminal Way LLC
16	270 West Thames Street	City of Norwich
17	27 Terminal Way	Josh Prottas LLC
18	178 West Thames Street	Angelo, Gary M
19	284 West Thames Street	Castle Health LLC
20	206 West Thames Street	One Terminal Way LLC
21	60 Terminal Way	Wrap Partners
22	130 West Thames Street	Wrap Partners
23	60 Terminal Way	Wrap Partners
24	140 West Thames Street	Wrap Partners
25	67 Terminal Way	Wrap Partners
26	71 Terminal Way	Mossburn Properties Ventures LLC



The City prioritized properties that needed to be “un-stuck”



PANEL 0214G

**FIRM**  
FLOOD INSURANCE RATE MAP  
NEW LONDON COUNTY,  
CONNECTICUT  
ALL JURISDICTIONS

PANEL 214 OF 154  
ONE MAP PER FIRM PANEL LAYOUT

CONTRACT NO.	DATE	SCALE	DATE
NO. 09011C0214G	2011	AS SHOWN	2011

Notice to User: The Map Number shown herein should be used when displaying and citing the Community Number shown above should be used on all notices pertaining to the subject community.

**MAP NUMBER**  
09011C0214G  
**EFFECTIVE DATE**  
JULY 18, 2011  
Federal Emergency Management Agency

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**26 SHIPPING STREET – FLOOD STUDY**  
NORWICH, CONNECTICUT

FIRM MAP  
MAP # 09011C0214G



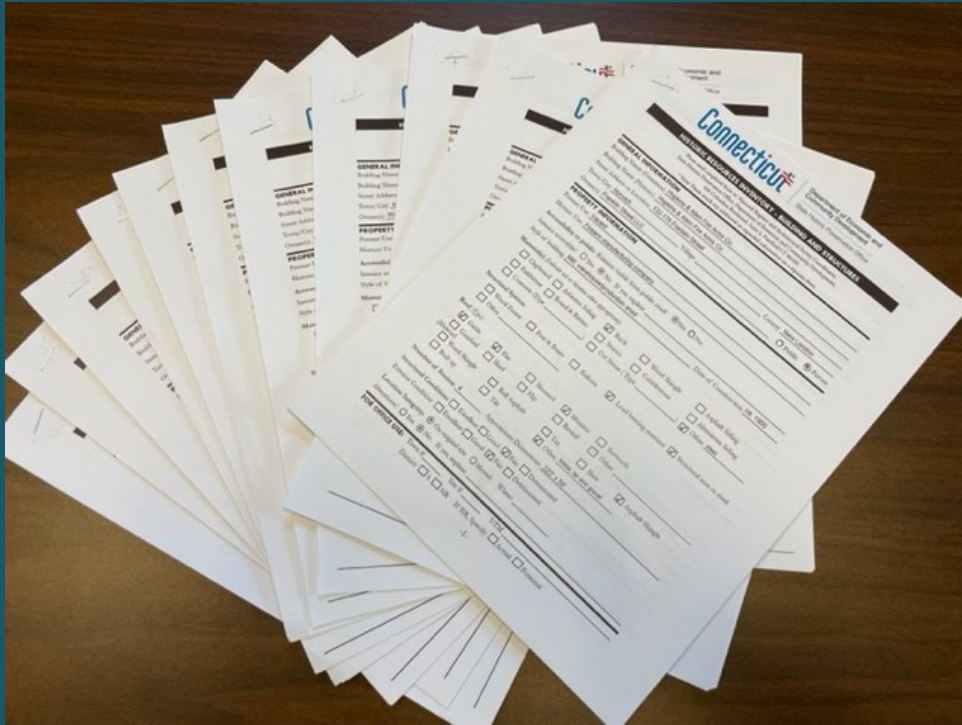


Aerial drone image of the Terminal Way area with the Thames River is on the right



Aerial drone image of Hopkins and Allen Firearm Factory via Franklin Street and Willow Street

## RESULT



## 11 out of 12 proposed buildings were deemed eligible for inclusion in the Norwich Local Historic Inventory

The majority (6 of 11) are located in the floodway of the Thames River. The Shipping Street area has great potential for attracting water dependent businesses but has been so blighted that it was used for a war scene in a Hallmark Christmas movie!

The other 5 buildings are located on sites either downtown (impacted by the floodway of the Spaulding Brook, situated along the Shetucket and Yantic Rivers, or are located on Hollyhock Island/the Marina Area.

All property owners whose buildings were listed were supportive of the historic structure exemption being applied by definition entice economic development opportunities.

THIS IS TO CERTIFY that the following is a true and attested copy of a resolution adopted by the Council of the City of Norwich at a meeting held on August 15, 2022 and that the same has not been amended or rescinded:

**WHEREAS**, there are properties in the City of Norwich with existing structures located within Federal Emergency Management Administration (FEMA) designated special flood hazard areas and floodway which are associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of Norwich History; and/or embody distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction; and

**WHEREAS**, these important structures should be preserved and restored for adaptive reuse to allow for economic development opportunities in the community, but have low market values which limits the amount of improvements that may be made to them; and

**WHEREAS**, these structures do not currently benefit from the FEMA "substantial improvement" exemption for historic structures as they are not currently listed individually on the National Register of Historic Places or preliminarily determined as meeting the requirements for individual listing on the National Register; or been certified or preliminarily determined as contributing to the historical significance of a registered historic district; or are individually listed on a state inventory of historic places; and

**WHEREAS**, a "Historic Structure" as defined by FEMA and the City of Norwich Zoning Regulations includes any structure that is Individually listed on a local inventory of historic places in communities with historic preservation programs that have been certified either: (1) By an approved state program as determined by the Secretary of the Interior or (2) Directly by the Secretary of the Interior in states without approved programs; and

**WHEREAS**, Norwich is a Certified Local Government with a historic preservation program; and


**WHEREAS** the City's Plan of Conservation and Development specifically seeks to capitalize on historic assets through protecting historic resources and supporting historic preservation efforts; and

**WHEREAS**, a historical consultant assisted the City of Norwich to prepare the 1<sup>st</sup> phase of a Local Historic Inventory which includes the following eleven (11) properties, which have been determined to be prime for redevelopment and would benefit from the FEMA "historic structure" exemption:

31 Clinton Avenue; 132-176 Franklin Street; 7 New Wharf Road; 1 Terminal Way; 21 Terminal Way; 27 Terminal Way #1; 27 Terminal Way #2; 55 Terminal Way; 67 Terminal Way; 63-65 West Main Street and 71-73 West Main Street; and

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF NORWICH** that the these properties are including in the first phase of the City of Norwich Local Historic Inventory as adopted, which list may be expanded by the City Council in the future, for said purpose of providing a substantial improvement exemption for a "historic structure" after the adoption hereof.

Dated at Norwich, Connecticut this 16<sup>th</sup> day of August 2022.

ATTEST:   
Roseanne Muscarella  
Assistant City Clerk

The Norwich Local  
Historic Inventory was  
unanimously adopted by  
Resolution by the  
Council of the City of  
Norwich on  
August 15, 2022



## WHERE DOES NORWICH GO FROM HERE

- Work with the property owners to educate them about the benefits and limitations of the historic structure exemption.
- Encourage owners to make historically appropriate, much needed repairs to stabilize their buildings and make them more flood resistant.
- Partner with Norwich Community Development Corporation (NCDC) to help owners market the available properties and act as a match-maker to find appropriate re-development projects which are not only economically viable, but will provide a positive impact on the adjacent neighborhoods and overall community (increased tax revenue, job creation, blight control, etc.).
- Apply for grants and technical assistance to help the City redevelop the Shipping Street/Terminal Way Coastal Area to capitalize on the expanding marine trade industries in southeastern Connecticut including off-shore wind turbines, the growing defense manufacturing sector, and commercial aquaculture who are all seeking sites strategically located for transportation of their products by water, rail and ground.

# QUESTIONS



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