

HISTORIC RESOURCES INVENTORY
BUILDING AND STRUCTURES
 HIST-6 NEW 5/77

STATE OF CONNECTICUT
CONNECTICUT HISTORICAL COMMISSION
 59 SOUTH PROSPECT STREET, HARTFORD, CONNECTICUT 06106
 (203) 566-3005

103
 169/91/14/1

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY	
Town No.:	Site No.:
UTM	
QUAD:	
DISTRICT	IF NR, SPECIFY
<input type="checkbox"/> S <input type="checkbox"/> NR	<input type="checkbox"/> Actual <input type="checkbox"/> Potential

IDENTIFICATION	1. BUILDING NAME (Common) (Historic)	
	NORTH GROSVENORDALE PUBLIC LIBRARY RUSSELL SPENCER HOUSE	
	2. TOWN CITY THOMPSON	VILLAGE NORTH GROSVENORDALE
	3. STREET AND NUMBER (and/or location) 108 MAIN STREET (65 MAIN ST.)	
	4. OWNER(S) TOWN OF THOMPSON	
	5. USE (Present) (Historic) Library/Offices Residence	
	6. ACCESSIBILITY TO PUBLIC: EXTERIOR VISIBLE FROM PUBLIC ROAD <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No INTERIOR ACCESSIBLE <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No IF YES, EXPLAIN Library hours	
DESCRIPTION	7. STYLE OF BUILDING Victorian Vernacular/Greek Revival	
	DATE OF CONSTRUCTION c. 1860	
	8. MATERIAL(S) (Indicate use or location when appropriate)	
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Clapboard <input type="checkbox"/> Asbestos Siding <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Chimneys <input type="checkbox"/> Brick <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify)	
	<input type="checkbox"/> Wood Shingle <input type="checkbox"/> Asphalt Siding <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Fieldstone Foundation	
	<input type="checkbox"/> Board & Batten <input type="checkbox"/> Stucco <input type="checkbox"/> Cobblestone	
	<input type="checkbox"/> Aluminum Siding <input type="checkbox"/> Concrete Type: <input type="checkbox"/> Cut stone Type:	
	9. STRUCTURAL SYSTEM	
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Wood frame <input type="checkbox"/> Post and beam <input type="checkbox"/> balloon	
	<input type="checkbox"/> Load bearing masonry <input type="checkbox"/> Structural iron or steel	
<input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify)		
10. ROOF (Type)		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Gable <input type="checkbox"/> Flat <input type="checkbox"/> Mansard <input type="checkbox"/> Monitor <input type="checkbox"/> sawtooth		
<input type="checkbox"/> Gambrel <input type="checkbox"/> Shed <input type="checkbox"/> Hip <input type="checkbox"/> Round <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify)		
(Material)		
<input type="checkbox"/> Wood Shingle <input type="checkbox"/> Roll Asphalt <input type="checkbox"/> Tin <input type="checkbox"/> Slate <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Gable end to the street		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Asphalt shingle <input type="checkbox"/> Built up <input type="checkbox"/> Tile <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) <input type="checkbox"/> Ridge parallel to the street		
11. NUMBER OF STORIES APPROXIMATE DIMENSIONS 2 1/2 23' x 33'		
12. CONDITION (structural) (exterior) <input type="checkbox"/> Excellent <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Good <input type="checkbox"/> Fair <input type="checkbox"/> Deteriorated <input type="checkbox"/> Excellent <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Good <input type="checkbox"/> Fair <input type="checkbox"/> Deteriorated		
13. INTEGRITY (location) (Alterations) IF YES, EXPLAIN <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> On original site <input type="checkbox"/> Moved WHEN? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No New entry hood		
14. RELATED OUTBUILDINGS OR LANDSCAPE FEATURES <input type="checkbox"/> Barn <input type="checkbox"/> Shed <input type="checkbox"/> Garage <input type="checkbox"/> Other landscape features or buildings (Specify) <input type="checkbox"/> Carriage house <input type="checkbox"/> Shop <input type="checkbox"/> Garden		
15. SURROUNDING ENVIRONMENT <input type="checkbox"/> Open land <input type="checkbox"/> Wood-land <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Residential <input type="checkbox"/> Scattered buildings visible from site <input type="checkbox"/> Commercial <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Industrial <input type="checkbox"/> Rural <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> High building density		
16. INTERRELATIONSHIP OF BUILDING AND SURROUNDINGS In an extensive 19th century mill village; just south of modern bakery.		

(OVER)

PHOTO	PHOTOGRAPHER Mark McDonough	DATE 1986
	VIEW SE	NEGATIVE ON FILE A-1
COMPILED BY	NAME Mark McDonough	DATE 1986
	ORGANIZATION Town of Thompson, Connecticut	
	ADDRESS	
20 SUBSEQUENT FIELD EVALUATION		



DESCRIPTION (Continued)	17 OTHER NOTABLE FEATURES OF BUILDING OR SITE (interior and/or exterior)
<p>Three-bay facade, right entry with modern steel paneled door under modern hood on 2-by-4 supports. Sash generally 2-over-2. Windows have prominent plain board surrounds, flat molded caps on jigsawn consoles.</p> <p>Plain corner pilasters have capitals with rows of small scrolled jigsawn consoles. Molded architrave, plain frieze; molded cornice shows partial return.</p> <p>One-and-one-half-story cross-gabled right wing has similar detailing, small frieze band windows. End wall of wing has one story bay window with narrow 1-over-1 sash over panels.</p>	

18 ARCHITECT	BUILDER
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SIGNIFICANCE	19 HISTORICAL OR ARCHITECTURAL IMPORTANCE
<p>This house was built about 1870 by farmer and landowner Russell Spencer. At the time, the Main Street area was just rising to prominence as a privately controlled commercial and residential neighborhood, serving as an annex to the company controlled areas surrounding the Grosvenor-Dale Company cotton mills in Grosvenor-Dale and North Grosvenor-Dale. Spencer had extensive property holdings in North Grosvenordale. It is unclear if he lived in this house, but its relatively elaborate ornamentation makes it unlikely that it was built as rental housing.</p> <p>Spencer was born in Thompson, married Laura A. Green in 1852, and died in 1880 at the age of 53. Laura Green Spencer died in 1903, leaving the house to her son Warren R. Spencer. In 1914, it was purchased by philanthropist Harriet Arnold Tourtellotte, and donated to the Town of Thompson; it was used for many years as the residence of the principal of Tourtellotte Memorial High School (1372 Route 12). The principals paid \$40 in monthly rent. Any money remaining after upkeep and other expenses was to be used to help defray the cost of the senior class trip "to Washington or some other place of interest". In recent years, the building has been used as a branch library, and as the office of the Thompson Small Cities Program.</p>	

SOURCES	<p>1867 Atlas</p> <p>Thompson Land Records 32:505 (1903); 34:405 (1914); 37:167</p> <p>Thompson Vital Statistics</p>
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21 THREATS TO BUILDING OR SITE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> None known <input type="checkbox"/> Highways <input type="checkbox"/> Vandalism <input type="checkbox"/> Developers <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____
<input type="checkbox"/> Renewal <input type="checkbox"/> Private <input type="checkbox"/> Deterioration <input type="checkbox"/> Zoning <input type="checkbox"/> Explanaton _____

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STATE OF CONNECTICUT
 CONNECTICUT HISTORICAL COMMISSION
 59 South Prospect Street, Hartford, Connecticut 06106
 HISTORIC RESOURCES INVENTORY FORM
 For Buildings and Structures

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY			
TOWN NO.:			SITE NO.:
UTM: 18	/	/	/
QUAD:			
DISTRICT:	S	NR:	ACTUAL
			POTENTIAL

CONTINUATION SHEET #19 RUSSELL SPENCER HOUSE
 Item number: _____ Date: _____

Historically, the Russell Spencer House is significant as part of a large assemblage of 19th century dwellings along Main Street, for its association with Spencer, a prominent 19th century resident of North Grosvenordale, and as a longtime community institution in its role as principal's residence, library and Small Cities' office.

Architecturally, the building is significant as an excellent late example of the Greek Revival style. Most popular between 1835 and 1855, the Greek Revival was America's first truly national architectural movement. The Spencer house's corner pilasters, the formal entablature (architrave, frieze, and cornice), and the gable-end-to-street orientation were all intended to suggest the construction of a classical Greek temple.

The window caps and jigsawed consoles show the growing influence of the Victorian Vernacular mode, which reached its zenith in the 1880's and 1890's. Victorian Vernacular architecture features the extensive use of mass produced wooden ornament, a practice made affordable by improvements in mechanized wood forming tools such as the power lathe, drill press, and jigsaw.