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

67/102/26/11

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)
 MECHANICSVILLE POWER STATION

2. TOWN CITY VILLAGE COUNTY
 THOMPSON MECHANICSVILLE WINDHAM

3. STREET AND NUMBER (and/or location)
 WEST THOMPSON ROAD (no street number) 12 Old Route 12 65/102-26

4. OWNER(S)
 110 Tremont Street
 ESSEX DEVELOPMENT ASSOC., INC. Boston, MA 02108 Public Private

5. USE (Present) (Historic)
 Ruin Hydroelectric Power Station

6. ACCESSIBILITY TO PUBLIC: EXTERIOR VISIBLE FROM PUBLIC ROAD INTERIOR ACCESSIBLE IF YES, EXPLAIN
 Yes No Yes No

DESCRIPTION

7. STYLE OF BUILDING DATE OF CONSTRUCTION
 Industrial c. 1925

8. MATERIAL(S) (Indicate use or location when appropriate)

<input type="checkbox"/> Clapboard	<input type="checkbox"/> Asbestos Siding	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Brick	<input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify)
<input type="checkbox"/> Wood Shingle	<input type="checkbox"/> Asphalt Siding	<input type="checkbox"/> Fieldstone	
<input type="checkbox"/> Board & Batten	<input type="checkbox"/> Stucco	<input type="checkbox"/> Cobblestone	
<input type="checkbox"/> Aluminum Siding	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Concrete Type: REINFORCED	<input type="checkbox"/> Cut stone Type:	

9. STRUCTURAL SYSTEM

<input type="checkbox"/> Wood frame	<input type="checkbox"/> Post and beam	<input type="checkbox"/> balloon
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Load bearing masonry	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Structural iron or steel	
<input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify)		

10. ROOF (Type)

<input type="checkbox"/> Gable	<input checked="" 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 type="checkbox"/> Gable end to the street
<input type="checkbox"/> Asphalt shingle	<input type="checkbox"/> Built up	<input type="checkbox"/> Tile	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) Not visible	<input type="checkbox"/> Ridge parallel to the street

11. NUMBER OF STORIES APPROXIMATE DIMENSIONS
 1 50' x 30'

12. CONDITION (Structural) (Exterior)

<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> Good	<input type="checkbox"/> Fair	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> Good	<input type="checkbox"/> Fair	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Deteriorated
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13. INTEGRITY (Location) WHEN ? (Alterations) IF YES, EXPLAIN
 On original site Moved Yes No Building is a ruin

14. RELATED OUTBUILDINGS OR LANDSCAPE FEATURES

<input type="checkbox"/> Barn	<input type="checkbox"/> Shed	<input type="checkbox"/> Garage	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other landscape features or buildings (Specify)
Concrete dam and pond, mill foundations to west			
<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 type="checkbox"/> Industrial	<input type="checkbox"/> Rural	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> High building density

16. INTERRELATIONSHIP OF BUILDING AND SURROUNDINGS
 Just north of Mechanicsville's mill housing, adjacent to the site of the town's mills (destroyed by flood).

(OVER)

PHOTO	PHOTOGRAPHER Mark McDonough		DATE 1986
	VIEW NE	NEGATIVE ON FILE F21	
COMPILED BY	NAME Mark McDonough		DATE 1986
	ORGANIZATION Town of Thompson, Connecticut		
	ADDRESS		



20 SUBSEQUENT FIELD EVALUATION:

17 OTHER NOTABLE FEATURES OF BUILDING OR SITE (interior and/or exterior)
Reinforced concrete factory construction with brick panels, containing industrial steel sash windows (deteriorated). Poured concrete floor, structural steel roof. Molded concrete cornice.

East and west elevations have two bays, north and south have three. Building stands at the south end of a large stone and concrete dam, still relatively intact. On south elevation, concrete head race with six head gates (deteriorated). All visible interior machinery has been removed, save for one turbine shaft; impossible to determine if turbines remain in place.

18 ARCHITECT

BUILDER

19 HISTORICAL OR ARCHITECTURAL IMPORTANCE
This deteriorated hydro-electric power house was built about 1925 by Putnam Light and Power, presumably to serve the village of Mechanicsville and its woolen mills. In the 1930s, ownership of the property passed to Connecticut Light and Power, which sold the property to Acme Bleaching, a local mill owner, in 1942. When this power station was built, the New England textile industry was just beginning to take advantage of electric power. New England mills began with direct mechanical power, transmitted from large water wheels to looms and other machines through a system of shafts and belting.

Beginning in the 1860s, water wheels began to be replaced by simple, efficient turbines, similar in appearance to modern jet engines. At the same time, both turbines and water-wheels were challenged by huge steam engines. Steam engines burned expensive coal but were able to operate steadily through droughts and floods.

Electricity, first distributed commercially in the 1880s, was not immediately adopted by industry; the mixture of steam and waterpower used by most factories was inexpensive, well tried, and paid for. However, electric power provided more flexibility, especially when individual electric motors were attached to each machine. This change allowed factory

SOURCES
Bayles, History of Windham County
Thompson Land Records 51:324-7 (1942)

21 THREATS TO BUILDING OR SITE

<input 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"/> Explanation _____

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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 MECHANICSVILLE POWER STATION
 Item number: _____ Date: _____

owners to eliminate the forest of dangerous, failure prone belts and pulleys overhead.

Small hydropower sites were eagerly developed early in the 20th century. Later regulatory changes essentially encouraged utilities to build the largest, most expensive power plants possible, a tendency which reached its conclusion in nuclear power development in the 1970s. Recent changes in utility regulations have pared back what amounted to a subsidy for large, centralized power plants and brought a renewed interest in small hydro-power sites (Thompson's 19th century Quaddick Dam now houses a hydro-power operation after nearly a century of disuse).

Architecturally, this power house and dam are significant as good examples of early 20th century industrial construction. The reinforced concrete posts, structural steel roof, and industrial steel sash windows are typical of many contemporaneous factory buildings.

Historically, it is significant for its connection with Mechanicsville's textile industry. Mill operations began in Mechanicsville in 1828, when a group of local investors formed the Mechanics Company to operate a woolen mill. It continued under a great variety of owners until the final mills (including that of Acme Bleaching) were destroyed by the flood in 1955. The dam upon which the building sits probably incorporates material from a 19th century waterpower dam.