

MHC Reconnaissance Survey Town Report

AGAWAM

Report Date: 1982

Associated Regional Report: Connecticut Valley

Reconnaissance Survey Town Reports, produced for MHC's Statewide Reconnaissance Survey between 1979 and 1987, introduce the historical development of each of the Commonwealth's municipalities. Each report begins with an historic overview, a description of topography, and political boundaries. For the purposes of the survey, the historic period has been subdivided into seven periods: Contact (1500–1620), Plantation (1620–1675), Colonial (1675–1775), Federal (1775–1830), Early Industrial (1830–1870), Late Industrial (1870–1915), and Early Modern (1915–1940/55). Each report concludes with survey observations that evaluate the town's existing historic properties inventory and highlight significant historic buildings, settlement patterns, and present threats to these resources. A bibliography lists key secondary resources.

Town reports are designed for use together with a series of town maps that demarcate settlement patterns, transportation corridors and industrial sites for each historic period. These maps are in the form of color-coded, polyester overlays to the USGS topographic base map for each town on file and available for consultation at MHC. For further information on the organization and preparation of town reports, readers should contact MHC.

Users should keep in mind that these reports are now two decades or more old. The information they contain, including assessments of existing knowledge, planning recommendations, understanding of local development, and bibliographic references all date to the time they were written. In some cases, information on certain topics was not completed. No attempt has been made to update this information.

Electronic text was not available for digital capture, and as a result most of the reports have been scanned as PDF files. While all have been processed with optical character recognition, there will inevitably be some character recognition errors.

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MHC RECONNAISSANCE SURVEY REPORT

DATE: April 1982

COMMUNITY: Agawam

I. TOPOGRAPHY

Agawam is located on the western side of the Connecticut River Valley. The town's northern and eastern boundaries are demarcated by the Westfield and Connecticut Rivers, respectively. All of the town, excluding its western periphery is characterized by slightly undulating plains. The floodplains of the Westfield and Connecticut Rivers extend along the northern and eastern edges of the town, and are generally of moderate elevation averaging approximately 150 feet above sea level. The western periphery of Agawam is dominated by a trap ridge which is part of the Provin Mountain Range. The ridge has a maximum elevation of 600 feet. Isolated areas of marshland are situated in the westernmost and easternmost portions of the town. Local soils consist of the sandy loam of the plains or the gravelly clay of Agawam's uplands. The town is located within the Connecticut and Westfield River drainages. Streams situated within eastern Agawam drain to the south and east into the Connecticut River. The Westfield River is fed by several small streams draining north into the river. A small number of ponds are present in Agawam; several oxbow ponds located near the confluence of the Westfield and Connecticut rivers demarcate the previous course of the latter river.

II. POLITICAL BOUNDARIES

Agawam was originally settled by William Pynchon in 1635 as Agawam Plantation, and it was included as part of the Springfield grant during the 17th century. The Westfield boundary was drawn at the mountain ridge in 1670, with later adjustments. It was included as part of West Springfield parish in 1696 with a boundary at the Connecticut River, and in the survey of the Massachusetts state line with Connecticut in 1713. Feeding Hills parish was formed in 1760, included with West Springfield town in 1774, and formed as Agawam parish in 1800. Incorporated as the Town of Agawam in 1855, the Westfield River was its northern boundary with West Springfield.

III. HISTORIC OVERVIEW

Agawam was a suburban agricultural town in the periphery of metropolitan Springfield. Located on the west bank of the Connecticut, with native planting fields reported on the Agawam delta at the mouth of the Westfield River. Initially settled as the original site of Springfield, farmsteads were established along the Connecticut River meadows and Feeding Hills by the mid 17th century. Agricultural economy expanded during the Colonial Period, with surviving 18th century houses on West Street (Feeding Hills) in their authentic landscape setting. An early textile industry was attempted during the Federal Period on Three mile

Brook with no surviving trace. The Agawam civic center was established on Main Street during the early 19th century with well-preserved houses of high style Federal design in the extended street village. Commercial tobacco production was introduced during the mid-19th century on fertile lands near the Connecticut border with several surviving period barns maintained at Hubbard and Shea Corners. A secondary center developed at Feeding Hills with examples of Greek Revival and Italianate styles on the Westfield Street axis.

There was increasing expansion of suburban-industrial activity to Agawam from West Springfield during the late 19th century. North Agawam developed as a residential district for the Mittineague mills, with period housing and Queen Anne churches. Springfield Street emerged as a street car suburb with modest tract housing centered at O'Brien's Corner. Residential development continued during the Early Modern Period, expanding to West Agawam and Agawam Center with agriculture maintained on the fertile bottom lands. An early airport was constructed on Silver Street as Bowles Field for the Springfield region, which includes an important surviving example of the Art Deco/Modern hangar and outbuildings. Present development threatens the integrity of historic centers at Agawam (Route 150) and Feeding Hills. Tobacco growing is still viably maintained on outlying roads near the Connecticut line.

IV. CONTACT PERIOD (1500-1620)

Transportation Routes:

The regional focus of routes was to the crossing of Connecticut Agawam (Westfield) rivers. There was a documented fordway at the Agawam delta across the Connecticut at low water reported at the South Bridge location (Wright 1911: Fig. 1), with trail connections to the interior along the Connecticut appears to follow Main Street (Route 159) with a loop at North Cemetery to Agawam ford on Federal-Cooper Streets (Route 147 bridge). A secondary trail from the Agawam ford to western interior (Feeding Hills) is conjectured along the axis of Route 147 following segments of Springfield-Colemore-Popular Avenues to Philo Brook. An alternate interior route along the Westfield River was possibly located through Robinson State Park around White and Miller brooks to the Paucatuck fordway at May Hole. Secondary north-south trails from Paucatuck ford (Westfield River) appear to follow Westfield-South Streets (Route 187) through Feeding Hills and North West/ South West Streets through Johnson Corner along the topographic grain. Other likely trail routes may have connected east to west along Worthington Brook to the Connecticut River as Shoemaker Lane- South Street from Feeding Hills.

B. Settlement Patterns:

There were no reported Contact Period sites. However, as with West Springfield, native period settlement was very likely heavy, considering the area's large amount of excellent agricultural land and two major rivers. Native settlement probably concentrated on

the Westfield and Connecticut River floodplains during the spring fishing months. Several unidentified and Woodland Period native sites were located a short distance west and south of the Connecticut and Westfield rivers, respectively. In addition, Mittineague Falls is reputed to have been a major native fishing site. The interior plains were probably the site of larger semi-permanent villages, primarily because of this area's protection from the annual flooding prevalent on the floodplains.

C. Subsistence Patterns:

Planting grounds were available in virtually all of Agawam excluding the town's western uplands and scattered marshlands. Mittineague (Agawam) Falls (slightly west of North Agawam) and the mouth of the Westfield River were likely the focal points of native fishing. English settlers noted the presence of natives setting up fish traps at Mittineague Falls when first present in the area (ca. 1635) (La Francis 1980:5). Hunting and gathering probably occurred primarily in Agawam's marshlands and wooded uplands.

D. Observations:

Agawam, along with West Springfield immediately to the north, appears to have been a major native settlement and resource area in the Connecticut River Valley study unit. The former town was the central location of the Agawam, a native group who by the 17th century are said to have claimed control of land situated within the Connecticut River drainage between Enfield Falls (Enfield, Connecticut) and South Hadley Falls (South Hadley) (Events 1879:I,20). Regional control was more ambiguous. Several sources suggest the Agawam were connected with the Pocumtucks who are thought to have controlled territory roughly encompassing an area bounding Nipmuck territory to the east and Mohican territory to the west in the early 17th century (Thomas 1979:37). The Pocumtuck's northern and southern boundaries followed the Connecticut River Valley into Vermont and Connecticut respectively (Ibic.). There is an excellent likelihood of surviving native Contact Period sites, particularly in Agawam's interior and at the Westfield River mouth, considering the town's limited development.

V. PLANTATION PERIOD (1620-1675)

A. Transportation Routes:

Native trails remained as regional highways with the primary north-south route along Main Street (Route 159) to Agawam ford and West Springfield (Route 147). The road to Feeding Hills was apparently located along Springfield Street (Route 147). The Connecticut river crossing functioned at low water from the mouth of the Agawam (Westfield) river to Springfield (Wright 1911:Fig. 1).

B. Population:

Agawam's native population was extensive enough in ca. 1635 that William Pynchon chose Springfield rather than Agawam as the

primary settlement site of Old Springfield. None of the secondary sources noted the devastating epidemic that struck Connecticut River Valley native communities in the mid 1630s, but it is likely that it had serious consequences for local natives.

There were no figures for the area's colonial population.. It appears no more than a handful of families occupied Agawam during this period.

C. Settlement Patterns;

The only specific reference to native period sites was the fishing area adjacent to Mittineague Falls.

Agawam was the site of the first house erected in the Springfield grant of 1635. The structure was built in 1635 on the south side of the Westfield River, approximately a half mile from the river's confluence with the Connecticut River. However, the site was abandoned several months after its occupation. Pre 1675 colonial settlement was limited and appeared to be confined to river-front lots situated in the easternmost quarter of Agawam. Permanent colonial settlement was not initiated until ca. 1660, and was restricted to the Springfield Proprietors. Property selection was determined by lot. Local residents attended the Springfield meetinghouse since the Agawam Plantation lacked its own facility.

D. Economic Base;

The native population maintained their traditional subsistence patterns. Some natives participated in the fur trade operation established by William Pynchon in Springfield in the late 1630s.

Agriculture was the economic mainstay of the colonial settlement. A large portion of the floodplains adjoining the Connecticut and Westfield rivers were divided into individual lots for use as planting grounds by Springfield, Longmeadow, and Agawam residents during the Plantation Period. By the early 1640s, the Feeding Hills area was being utilized as cattle grazing land. Local residents relied on fish caught in the Connecticut and Westfield rivers as a major food source. The only references to local industrial operations were a sawmill established in ca. 1664 in the southeastern portion of Agawam on Three mile Brook, and a second sawmill in ca. 1672 on a stream immediately south of South Street (LaFrancis 1980:93,94).

E. Observations;

Agawam remained the site of a major native valley village until late in the Plantation period, when the majority of the area's native population resettled on the eastern side of the Connecticut River in southern Springfield. The Agawam Plantation was primarily a resource area for Springfield. Agawam residents were closely tied to Springfield, due to the settlement's general absence of industrial, commercial, and civic/religious facilities. Archaeological vestiges of period settlement are most likely to survive in an area bounded by the West

Springfield/Agawam line, the Connecticut River, School Street, and Route 5A. Portions of the ca. 1635 homestead situated near the Westfield River mouth may still survive.

VI. COLONIAL PERIOD (1675-1775)

A. Transportation Routes:

There was improvement of the north-south highways as regional roads from Connecticut by 1750 with Main Street (Route 159) as the Hartford-Springfield turnpike through Agawam, and South-Westfield-North Streets (Route 187) as the Hartford-Northampton turnpike through Feeding Hills and the Agawam Bridge as Mill-Cooper Streets. Other major roads include River Street along the Connecticut levee to Springfield's south ferry (Route 57 bridge), and Southwick Street (Route 57) as the east-west highway to Southwick. Secondary connectors during the period included North Street to Feeding Hills, Barry Street to Shea Corner, Adams Street to Tarkill Brook, and the north-south division road as Suffield Street (Route 75 in part).

B. Population:

There were no figures for the surviving post-1675 native population. The colonial population did not appear to undergo considerable growth until the turn of the 17th century. In ca. 1695, Old Springfield's west side settlements were comprised of approximately 32 families, more than 200 individuals. Agawam began attracting former Connecticut (e.g. Suffield, Windsor) residents in addition to Springfield area residents. By ca. 1727, a small number of Baptists were scattered within Agawam's predominantly Congregationalist population.

C. Settlement Patterns:

No information exists concerning native settlement locations. The colonial community underwent considerable expansion from its original riverfront location. Pre 1700 settlement continued to be concentrated in the vicinity of the Connecticut and Westfield rivers and Three mile Brook. Scattered settlement took place as far west as the Feeding Hills area and South West/North West Street. By the early 18th century, a primary settlement node had developed in the proximity of the junction of Route 5A and Meadow Street, a site only a mile south of the West Springfield parish (ca. 1702) meetinghouse. A smaller, roughly contemporary settlement node existed in the village of Feeding Hills. Later 18th century settlement continued to increase to the west of Main Street, as evidenced by the construction of Agawam's first parish meetinghouse (ca. 1760+) which was probably situated on Mill Street, midway between its junction with Poplar and Cooper Streets. Local residents attended the Springfield (ca. 1643) and West Springfield (ca. 1702) meetinghouses before the construction of the local parish facility.

D. Economic Base:

Agawam maintained its strong agricultural base throughout this period. There was some evidence of local industrial development; a sawmill was constructed on a stream just below South Street in ca. 1672. A ca. 1680 fulling or cloth finishing mill was also erected, downstream of the sawmill (LaFrancis 1980:94).

E. Architecture:

Residential: Just over a half dozen Colonial Period residences survive in Agawam. Of these, almost half are houses; the others are cottages. Only one house incorporates double interior chimneys; the remaining structures all have center chimneys. Most are simply detailed, although one house (on North Westfield Road) retains the double-eaved doors and heavy consoled entablature typical of the 18th century Connecticut Valley. Full five bay, center entrance plans predominate. The earliest house in the town is dated 1718 (Noble House) and is a gambrel roofed center chimney cottage; the gambrel, which has a kicked eave, may be original or may date from a later alteration. The town's early settlement date would suggest that a number of houses of the first and second quarters of the 18th century might have survived, but most of the period houses seem to date around the mid century. At least one brick house was built before the Revolution; this was the Jesse McIntire House at Feeding Hills, a 20-foot square, story and half structure.

Institutional: Although Agawam was settled in the mid-seventeenth century, Agawam residents attended meetings in the Springfield or West Springfield until 1757. In 1757, the Agawam Parish was founded as the Sixth Parish of Springfield until 1757. In 1757, the Agawam Parish was founded as the South Parish of Springfield. The first meetinghouse was built in 1760, but it was taken down in 1799 and moved to Feeding Hills. The only other religious organization active in the period was Baptist congregation at Feeding Hills, which first met in 1727.

Commercial: Eight taverns were known to have operated in Agawam in the period: three in Agawam and five in Feeding Hills. All of these were located along the two turnpikes (Hartford-Springfield, Route 159 and Hartford-Northampton, Route 187).

F. Observations:

Agawam, along with West Springfield, continued to maintain its position as a key agricultural area within the Connecticut River Valley study unit. The importance of these two communities is illustrated by Springfield's resistance to the "west side's" attempts to establish themselves as a semi-autonomous parish, and later as a separate town (West Springfield). However, the town continued to maintain close commercial/industrial ties with Springfield, due to the area's limited development. There is also some evidence of developing with Connecticut communities adjacent to the Connecticut River.

VII. FEDERAL PERIOD (1775-1830)

A. Transportation Routes:

Relocation of the meetinghouse to Agawam by 1799 required an additional set of connecting roads with Elm and Silver Streets from Suffield Corner. There was continued improvement of the north-south corridor to Connecticut with the rebuilding of the Agawam toll bridge in 1803 (Swift 1969: p. 101) and the extension of Suffield Street as a regional turnpike (Route 75). Local connectors also extended to North Agawam mill sites as Maple and Walnut streets.

B. Population:

Agawam's population is inseparable from that of West Springfield until 1855. Based on 38.1% of the land area of the old town of West Springfield (modern Agawam, Holyoke, and West Springfield), the town's population may have risen from around 900 in 1790 to 1200 in 1830 - a rise of about 33% in forty years.

C. Settlement Patterns:

The civic center relocated from Mill Street (West Agawam) to Main Street by the early 19th century, with the focus at Elm and School Streets. Textile mills were established during the early 19th century on Threemile Brook (South Street) with agricultural expansion around Feeding Hills to Shea Corner (Connecticut line).

D. Economic Base:

Throughout its history, Agawam has been an important agricultural town. In the Federal Period, some of the town's produce was distilled. As early as 1801, Elijah Porter established a distillery used initially for distilling peppermint, later for manufacturing whiskey from potatoes. The adjacent grist mill on Threemile Brook was also owned by Porter and it ground the grain used to produce Agawam Gin, a product that is said to have developed a national reputation by mid century (LaFrancis, 96).

Porter was also involved in the town's first textile mill, a small cotton mill built on Threemile Brook (now the site of Riverside Amusement Park) by Thomas Belden of Hartford and four Agawam men. (This may be the Agawam Cotton, Woolen and Linen Mfg., incorporated 2/24/1810; whose name was changed to the Agawam Mfg. Co. in 1812).

The town's second textile mill was built on threemile Brook at Elm Street as a fulling mill. By 1812 it was producing woolen broadcloth, but like the lower mill at Riverside Park, seems to have had a checkered history, passing through numerous owners before becoming a success at mid-century.

E. Architecture:

Residential: A little more than a dozen Federal Period houses are documented in Agawam; perhaps as many as another two dozen period houses have survived and have not been recorded. The latter category consists primarily of cottages, which tend to be overlooked in favor of houses. Although most houses of the period incorporate the more up-to-date double interior and double end chimney, center hall plan, more traditional center chimney houses continued to be built in the Federal period. The most stylish houses are located along Main Street at the town center between Meadow and Leonard Streets. Most of these incorporated hip roofs, entrance surrounds with semi elliptical fanlights and second story Palladian windows. Among the finest houses of the period are the Colton-Cooley House is attributed to Asher Benjamin; although other Benjamin commissions are knowing the area (notable commissions of 1796 and 1797 in Northampton and Greenfield and the Alexander House of 1811 in Springfield), after 1802, Benjamin's practice was located in Boston. Thus, further research would be needed to confirm the attribution.

Institutional: Several churches were founded in the period, including the Methodist Episcopal, Feeding Hill (1802) and Second Congregation (1819). The first meetinghouse of the original Congregational Society was moved in 1821 to Feeding Hills, where it was used by the Methodist Episcopalians there. The Second Congregational Church acquired the old Suffield (Connecticut) meeting house for its use. In 1830, the Baptist Society at Agawam Center built a church. This is the only period ecclesiastical structure known to survive. A one and a half story Greek Revival building with a projecting porch and square belfry, the church has since been greatly altered. In addition to the churches built, nine schoolhouses were known to have existed in the town at the end of the Federal Period.

VIII. Early Industrial Period (1830-1870)

A. Transportation Routes:

There was continued improvement of connectors to North Agawam village from Mittineague (West Springfield) with the Westfield River bridge (Bridge Street) in 1840 and the location of the Western Railroad through West Springfield by 1842 (Swift 1969: pp. 99-101). Local improvement of farm roads included the North Street Extension to Feeding Hills, Pine Street to Suffield, Connecticut (Route 187), and Garden Street to Suffield Corner.

B. Population:

Agawam's population, again, is inseparable from that of West Springfield until 1855. In that year, its population, 1,543 persons, represented 42.4% of the combined West Springfield-Agawam territory, implying that the new town was somewhat more sparsely populated than its neighbor to the north).

Slightly more than 16% of the town's population were foreign born, substantially below the county and state average. Of the 260 immigrants, 75% were Irish, with another 13% from Germany and Holland.

Between 1855 and 1870, despite a loss of population, during the Civil War years, Agawam grew by about 30%, reaching 2,001 in 1870. A good part of this growth may have been at North Agawam, which was close to the mills at Mittineague and had begun to turn into a mill village.

C. Settlement Patterns:

The civic center remained at Agawam village along the Main Street axis with a secondary center at Feeding Hills. Industrial activity was abandoned at Threemile Brook with a reorientation to the Westfield River axis in North Agawam after the opening of the Western Railroad in Mittineague (West Springfield) during the 1850s. Agriculture expanded on the fertile plains to the Connecticut line with the introduction of commercial tobacco during the mid 19th century, which was centered around Feeding Hills and Hubbard Corner (Suffield Street).

D. Economic Base:

The Early Industrial period saw the diversification of Agawam's interests: in the 1850s at least three paper mills appear to have been in operation; and both the Worth Paper Company and the Agawam Woolen Mill were established on a permanent and prosperous basis. The H. Porter and Company distillery was shipping Agawam Gin to California, and worth \$117,000 in 1865, it had much the highest value of any manufactured product in the town.

Despite this activity, agriculture remained the largest employer. In 1865, 284 farms employed 516 persons. In 1855, it was one of only four towns in the Valley to report commercial milk sales. Ten years later, of the fifteen towns in the county reporting milk sales, Agawam ranked fourth, with 10.6% of the total produced in the county. Harvey Porter, who prior to the arrival of the Western Railroad had sent herds of cattle overland to Brighton market outside Boston, became the first (in the Valley?) to ship cattle by rail (LaFrancis, 98).

Cigar making had been introduced into the Connecticut Valley at nearby Suffield in 1810. By the 1850s, the Valley towns of Agawam, Southwick, Springfield, and Westfield all produced substantial quantities of cigars. (Neither Hampshire nor Franklin counties reported any cigar production.) Of these towns in 1855, Agawam ranked first, production one third of all cigars manufactured in the Valley, employing 56 men and 20 women. The largest of these cigar shops was that of Dudley Lane at Feeding Hills, whose shop employed 28 men and 15 women. Lane's shop was said to manufacture 50,00 cigars a week.

Agawam also grew a substantial quantity of tobacco. Between 1855 and 1865 the acreage planted grew from 23 acres to 105 acres,

though the town maintained a rank of third in the county in tobacco production, following Westfield and West Springfield.

E. Architecture:

Residential: A fair amount of residential construction occurred in the period with most houses built along South and North West Streets and Pine Street in Feeding Hills, and along Main Street in Agawam Center. Most of these are sidehall Greek Revival and Italianate houses, but at Agawam Center are located several more pretentious period houses of brick and frame construction. Probably the most elaborate of these is the Bemis House (1862), a two-story Greek Revival house embellished with a monumental Ionic portico with pediment. Also known are several brick Greek Revival houses with end chimneys and five-bay plan continued to be built through the end of the period in more rural areas of the town, particularly in the southern half of Feeding Hills.

Institutional: The first church built in the period is the Feeding Hills Congregational Church (1834), a two-story Greek Revival church with a two-stage square belfry. This is the only church of the period believed to still stand. Other churches constructed were the Methodist Episcopal church at Feeding Hills (1851) and another Methodist Episcopal church at South Agawam (1840).

IX. LATE INDUSTRIAL PERIOD (1870-1915)

A. Transportation Routes:

Improvement of the north-south corridor to Springfield occurred with the Central New England Railroad through Feeding Hills in 1900, with remains of West field River trestle in Robinson Park (abandoned). The opening of the South End Bridge across the Connecticut River in 1879 replaced the ferry operation to Springfield with a connector to Agawam town center as School Street. There was extension of the suburban trolley routes during the 1890s from West Springfield with local lines to Agawam Center on Main Street, including the amusement complex at Riverside Park, and a loop to North Agawam and Feeding Hills on Walnut-Maple-Springfield streets through West Agawam.

B. Population:

Between 1870 and 1900, Agawam's population fluctuated. On the whole, the town grew only 26% in the thirty years up to 1900, although in the succeeding fifteen years it grew by nearly 80%, reaching 4,555 in 1915. In 1905, 22% of the town's residents were foreign born, of whom the majority were French Canadians (31%), followed by the Irish (22%), and Italians (18.4%). The development of North Agawam as a mill village for the factories at Mittineague was said to contain a third of the town's population.

C. Settlement Patterns:

Continued expansion of economic activity along the Westfield River axis from West Springfield occurred during the late 19th century. A secondary center developed at North Agawam from Mittineague mills, and suburban residential growth developed along the Springfield Street trolley line to West Agawam. Commercial Agriculture was maintained on the fertile plains to Feeding Hills. Tobacco and market gardening for the Springfield area were the primary crops.

D. Economic Base:

Although the Worthy Paper Mill, the Agawam Woolen Mill, and the Porter distillery all remained in operation throughout the period, Agawam's principal growth was in agriculture, particularly in the western part of town. By 1880, only Westfield had a greater number of farms than Agawam. Agawam led the county that year in the production of milk, eggs, tobacco, Irish potatoes, an Indian corn. Its milk production was the highest in the Valley (although in other census years, 1875-95, it is generally ranked second after Westfield). Like West Springfield, Agawam had one of the earliest retail milk routes to Springfield, and in the last quarter of the century, three-fourths of Springfield's milk was said to come from Agawam farms. Poultry products by 1895 were valued at \$25,889, giving the town the lead place in that industry. Agawam retained its lead in tobacco: with a crop valued at \$120,349, it had 38% of the county's production and was the third highest tobacco producing town in the Valley after Hatfield and Hadley. In 1915 there were 217 tobacco barns. The largest of the growers was the Cuban Connecticut Tobacco Company, with 416 acres.

Cigar making, however, is no longer in evidence. By 1880, the business had migrated to Westfield and Springfield, leaving only two men employed in Agawam.

Much of the agricultural economy appears to have peaked about 1900 as the pressure on real estate grew, particularly in the eastern and northern parts of the town.

E. Architecture:

Residential: Three distinct types of residential construction occurred in the Late industrial Period. The first was infill of existing neighborhoods. This occurred at Feeding Hills and At Agawam Center, where earlier linear settlements became more dense. At Agawam Center, residential side streets of closely spaced houses were developed. Because this process spanned the entire period a variety of plans and styles are represented in the two areas. These include late Italianate and simple Stick Style and Queen Anne cottages and houses, pyramidical hip roof Colonial Revival houses and bungalows of the turn of the century and, occasionally, a two-family house or three-decker. The second type of development identified for the period is the streetcar or autoroute-related, located along previously undeveloped roads in both linear and clustered fashions. Most of this development

consists of one and one half story hip or gable roofed workers' cottages and bungalows built after 1900. Typically, these are shingled and incorporate simple Colonial Revival or Craftsman details. Springfield, Mill, Suffield, and Meadow Streets are all characterized by such development. The third type of residential construction was the establishment at North Agawam of a comparatively dense neighborhood of workers' housing in conjunction with development of paper mills at Mittineague, situated opposite Agawam in West Springfield. Housing at North Agawam includes: Late Italianate, Stick Style, and Queen Anne houses and cottages; Stick Style, Queen Anne, and Colonial Revival two-family and double houses; and Queen Anne, Colonial Revival, and Craftsman three-deckers.

Institutional: In 1874, two brick town halls were built, one in Agawam and one in Feeding Hills. In addition to being municipal offices, these housed the upper grades of the Agawam schools as well. Neither is known to survive. Other institutional buildings of the period include the Granger, Pierce, and Phelps Schools, all brick Georgian Revival buildings one story tall, built around 1910. Churches of the period include the French Canadian Catholic parish of St. William (founded 1874) at North Agawam, housed in a yellow brick Gothic Revival building, and St. John's Catholic Church at Agawam Center, a story and a half frame Gothic Revival building of ca. 1900.

Commercial: Commercial development for the period is concentrated at O'Brien's Corner, at Feeding Hills, and to a lesser degree at Agawam Center. Commercial structures at O'Brien's Corner include several two-story masonry commercial blocks built ca. 1915. Other commercial structures of the period are one story frame buildings of little architectural distinction. At Feeding Hills are located a few two story Italianate commercial buildings of ca. 1890.

X. EARLY MODERN PERIOD (1915-1940)

A. Transportation Routes:

There was improvement of regional highways as auto roads, with a primary north-south connector from Hartford as Route 5A (now Route 159) over the South End Bridge to Springfield, and east-west connector to the interior as Route 57 through Feeding Hills, and a local connector to Suffield as Route 187 from Westfield. Construction of the Springfield regional airport complex sponsored by Major Bowles in 1930 (Bauer 1975: p. 105) in West Agawam (Silver Street) was abandoned during the Great Depression (although the original hangar and administration building are still intact as Bowles Agawam Airport). Suburban streetcar service to Feeding Hills and Riverside Park was abandoned in 1936.

B. Population grew by 72% in the 24 years 1915-40. Much of this growth occurred in the 1920s when the town grew by over 200 persons a year. In 1940 the number of residents was 7,842 - about a third of the population in 1975.

C. Settlement Patterns:

Continued suburban expansion from West Springfield occurred along the Springfield Street axis (Route 147) to West Agawam with a local center at North Agawam. The civic center was maintained on Main Street with a secondary center at Feeding Hills. Tobacco growing remained active along the fertile plains to the Connecticut line, with the conversion of Silver Street fields to airport and fairgrounds during the 1930s (Bowles-Agawam Airport)./ COmmercial strip development formed along the Springfield Street axis from West Springfield with a local business district at O'Brien's Corner.

D. Economic Base:

No agricultural statistics were encountered for the Early Modern Period. By the 1920s, the eastern half of the town was rapidly becoming a residential suburb of Springfield, although farms at Feeding Hills remained engaged in market gardening, dairying, poultry raising, and tobacco farming. No new manufacturing industries were identified, although both the Worthy Paper Company and the Agawam Woolen Mill remained in operation throughout the period.

One of Agawam's principal landmarks. Riverside Park, was developed primarily during this period. Initially opened in 1870 by John Gallup as Riverside Grove, the park, like its upstream neighbor, Calla Shasta, catered largely to riverboat excursions from Springfield and other river town. In 1912 Henry Perkins organized the Riverside Amusement Company, which further developed and operated the park until its purchase by the present owners in 1939.

E. Architecture:

Residential: A fair amount of residential construction occurred in the Early Modern period, particularly in the eastern half of Agawam. Most of this consisted of small workers' cottages, one and one-and-a-half stories in height with hip or gable roofs and shed dormers. Concentrations of such houses are located on Springfield, North, Main, and Meadow Streets. Larger and more elaborate Colonial, Dutch Colonial, and Tudor Revival houses are located on River Road, which began to develop as an elite neighborhood in the period, and on Main Street at Agawam Center.

Institutional: Among the period's institutional buildings are the Danahy School and St. Theresa's Catholic Church, both at North Agawam. The Danahy School, a well-detailed two-story brick Georgian Revival building built ca. 1920, is at present abandoned. The church is a one-story Tudor Revival structure.

Commercial: The most noteworthy commercial building of the period is the Bowles-Agawam Airport (1930) on Silver Street. A concrete Art Deco/Modern terminal and hangar are extant.

XI. SURVEY OBSERVATIONS:

Industrial: The town's survey omitted its principal industrial structure: the brick Agawam Woolen Mill on Elm Street, built 1889-90 after a fire destroyed the early wooden building. Also observed were the ruins of the Worthy Paper Company (burned 1975), and a group of distinctive round brick access chambers built in the 1930s on the route of the Springfield Aqueduct from Proving Mountain reservoir. The Bowles Airport hangar and administration building (both 1929) also survive.

Agawam's existing inventory includes only the most elaborate and historically significant dwellings, primarily those dating before 1830. Very few institutional buildings are included and no industrial or commercial buildings were recorded. Area forms should be completed for North Agawam; Late Industrial Period institutional buildings (schools and churches) should be recorded along with Late Industrial and Early Modern period commercial and industrial structures. The existing inventory for the town was completed in 1967 and should be updated to current forms and standards (particularly maps). In addition, many forms are photostats of originals and do not include second page historical information.

XII. SOURCES:

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