Located on the north side of Farmington Avenue, the George Barber House is one of the oldest residential dwellings remaining in the southeast section of Unionville. The encompassing neighborhood comprises varieties of eighteenth-, nineteenth-, and twentieth-century domestic architecture.
Oriented gable-to-street, this three-bay dwelling features detailing of the Greek Revival style. The facade displays full-height corner pilasters supporting a fully-pedimented gable end. Large rectangular, grid-patterned windows highlight the facade. The side-hall facade entrance exhibits flanking pilasters, a full entablature, and projecting cornice. Note the unusual dentil course which extends around the pediment and below the entablature. The first-floor sash have been replaced with full-height windows. The original six-over-six sash remain throughout most of the house. The east elevation displays a modest single-story shed-roofed, open porch with supporting square posts. A 1 ½ story, three-bay ell extends from the eastern elevation and a small brick chimney rises from the center of the house.

Extensive research of this property suggests that this dwelling was erected by George Barber between 1836 and 1839. In September of 1836 Barber purchased an empty lot of land in Unionville from Edward Seymour and Austin F. Williams (FLR 46:441). The quarter-acre parcel is further described as "being Lot No. 5 on the village square on land formerly owned by Solomon Langdon" (FLR 46:411). An 1835 map of Langdon's estate, on file in the Farmington Town Hall, places Lot No. 5 approximately at the same location where this house stands today. Although there is no historical information available concerning Barber, it is believed he had migrated to Ohio by 1848. In 1839 the lot with buildings was sold to William Bradley of Farmington (FLR 46:573). Bradley, who married Adaline Griswold in 1841, was a founding member of Unionville's Congregational Church. Shortly before his marriage Bradley sold the house to Edward K. Hamilton for $900 (FLR 48:211). Around 1850 Hamilton purchased from Timothy Cowles the old Seymour, Williams, and Porter clock factory on the corner of West Avon Road and Farmington Avenue, producing wood and tin buttons. Later he operated a successful hook and eye factory from this site. A native of Vermont, Hamilton (1803-1963) and his wife, Marcia A. Hamilton (1806-1865), raised four children: Marcia Agnes, James E., Charles E., and Julia. After Hamilton's death, the business was operated by his son James E., who later sold the factory to S. and F. Sanford in 1884. In 1864 Carlos L. Mason (1839-1928) bought the house from the estate of Edward K. Hamilton (FLR 57:349). Mr. Mason, president of the American Plow Manufacturing Company which produced stove and other castings along Roaring Brook, was born in Simsbury. He married Frances E. Goodwin (1843-1884) of Farmington Land Records; Farmington Probate Records; Farmington Vital Records; Farmington Cemetery Inscriptions, W.P.A., 1934; Avon Cemetery Inscriptions, W.P.A., 1934; 1853 E.M. Woodford Map; 1855 E.M. Woodford Map; 1869 Baker and Tilden Map; 1878 O.H. Bailey & Co. Map.

Additional Sources: Hulbert, Mabel. Farmington Town Clerks and Their Times (1645-1940). Hartford: Finlay Bros., 1943.; Sanford, Frank W. "Sanford and Hawley, Inc. of Unionville,"
Litchfield in 1862. They raised four children: Carlos V. (b. 1864), Frederick Goodwin (b. 1866), Alfred James (b. 1872), and Edward C. (b. 1877). In 1880 the estate of Carlos Bates took title to the property (FLR 66:42) and six years later it was sold to Robert and Jane Fallow [?]. (FLR 66:643).

Architecturally the George Barber House is significant as one of Unionville’s early examples of the Greek Revival style. The house has historical associations with early manufacturing in Unionville including the Hamilton Hook and Eye Company and American Plow Manufacturing Company.

Sources continued:

The Lure of the Litchfield Hills 31, No.1 (Spring-Summer 1971).