**HISTORIC RESOURCES INVENTORY**

**BUILDING AND STRUCTURES**

**FOR OFFICE USE ONLY**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Town No.</th>
<th>Site No.</th>
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**STATE OF CONNECTICUT**

**CONNECTICUT HISTORICAL COMMISSION**

59 SOUTH PROSPECT STREET, HARTFORD, CONNECTICUT 06106

(203) 566-3005

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**IDENTIFICATION**

1. **BUILDING NAME**

   Masonic Hall

   Tryon's Block

2. **TOWN/CITY/VILLAGE/COUNTY**

   Farmington
   Unionville
   Hartford

3. **STREET AND NUMBER/land or location**

   22 Main Street

4. **OWNER(S)**

   Unionville Masonic Building Association

5. **USE (Present)**

   Commercial

6. **ACCESSIBILITY**

   EXTERIOR VISIBLE FROM PUBLIC ROAD: Yes
   INTERIOR ACCESSIBLE: Yes
   IF YES EXPLAIN: During business hours.

7. **STYLE OF BUILDING**

   Italianate

   Date of Construction: ca. 1850

8. **MATERIALS**

   - [x] Brick
   - [ ] Other (Specify)
   - [ ] Wood Shingle
   - [ ] Asphalt Siding
   - [ ] Fieldstone
   - [ ] Board & Batten
   - [ ] Stucco
   - [ ] Cobblestone
   - [ ] Aluminum Siding
   - [ ] Concrete Siding Type:
   - [ ] Cut stone Type:

9. **STRUCTURAL SYSTEM**

   - [x] Load bearing masonry
   - [ ] Structural iron or steel

10. **ROOF**

    - [ ] Gable
    - [ ] Flat
    - [ ] Mansard
    - [ ] Monitor
    - [ ] sawtooth
    - [ ] Gambrel
    - [ ] Shed
    - [x] Hip
    - [ ] Round
    - [ ] Other (Specify)

11. **NUMBER OF STORIES/Approximate Dimensions**

    - [3] 32' x 68'

12. **CONDITION**

    - [ ] Excellent
    - [x] Good
    - [ ] Fair
    - [ ] Deteriorated

13. **INTEGRITY**

    - [x] On original
    - [ ] Moved
    - [x] Yes
    - [ ] No
    - [ ] sandblasted; front porch removed

14. **RELATED OUTBUILDINGS OR LANDSCAPE FEATURES**

    - [ ] Barn
    - [ ] Shed
    - [ ] Garage
    - [ ] Other landscape features or buildings (Specify)
    - [ ] Carriage house
    - [ ] Shop
    - [ ] Garden

15. **SURROUNDING ENVIRONMENT**

    - [ ] Open land
    - [ ] Woodland
    - [x] Residential
    - [ ] Scattered buildings visible from site
    - [ ] Commercial
    - [ ] Industrial
    - [ ] Rural
    - [ ] High building density

16. **INTERRELATIONSHIP OF BUILDING AND SURROUNDINGS**

    Tryon's Block faces southeast onto the intersection of Lovely and Main Streets and Farmington Avenue. A small parking lot exists north of the building. Other buildings of similar age bound its property lines on all other sides.
This large commercial building is made of red brick and is three stories in height. It is decorated with Italianate-style brackets and window hoods. At one time it featured an open, one-story porch with Victorian-period detailing. However, today it has a modest entryway and has been sandblasted which has jeopardized the stability of the brick exterior.

In 1850 Franklin A. Tryon (1821-1894) purchased a piece of land "in the fork of the roads leading to Burlington and Canton" bounded north by Shattuck, Goodwin, and Platner, east and west by the highways, and south to a point between the highways with buildings for $500 from David A. Keyes (1813-1892) (FLR 52:164). Tryon, born in Glastonbury, was the merchant who established Unionville's earliest general store. Sometime after 1865 Tryon's store, commonly referred to as "Tyron's Block", burned. In the rebuilding its original appearance was changed. The gable roof was replaced by a hip roof and Italianate-style details were added. In 1896 the store was sold to Edward W. Keene after Tyron's death (FLR 70:630). Keene died in 1900 and the property passed to his heir, Catherine Keene (FLR 74:65). Keene sold the building to the Unionville Masonic Building Association in 1906 (FLR 77:65).

Tyron's Block is historically significant due to its association with Frank A. Tryon, and the Unionville Masonic Lodge.

This property was owned during the early 1800s by Abraham Parsons, the father of Luther T. Parsons and progenitor of many current Unionville residents. According to Samuel Pepper's history in Hurlburt's "Town Clerks and their Times", Abraham Parsons's house stood "...in the rear of the building now occupied by the Unionville Bank..." (Pepper wrote this in the early 1920s). There are also references in the town meeting minutes during the 1820s to a road north from Abraham Parsons's house, which would now be Lovely Street, and a road southeasterly from Perry's bridge to Parsons's house.

When Abraham Parsons sold this property for $360 to David Keys in 1847 (49-323), it was described as land and buildings "in the fork of the roads to Burlington and Canton". Three years later, when Keys sold it to Frank Tryon for $500, it had essentially the same description. Based upon the terminology of these deeds and the amounts of money involved, one can guess that the buildings probably were a modest house and perhaps a barn. This brick 3-story building had certainly not yet been built. However, it most certainly had been built by 1865; the picture of Unionville in "Town Clerks and their Times", pg.336, shows this building clearly. Frank Tryon did not take out a mortgage on this property during the 1850-65 period, so a definite date cannot be set. A good
A guess can be made though, because "FA Tryon's store" appears on both the 1853 and 1855 maps of Unionville. Thus this building was probably built between 1850 and 1853.

In any event, it was known as "Tryon's Block"; the upstairs hall was called "Tryon's Hall" or "Tryon & Sanford Hall". The first floor contained the Tryon & Sanford general store, the business run by Frank Tryon and Truman Sanford. Out in the back yard was a small house used by Tryon as a saw manufacturing shop. Frank Tryon lived at 100 Main Street, and Truman Sanford lived next door at 110 Main Street. See those two write-ups for their family history.

In 1863 Tryon & Sanford acquired the patent rights to make and sell "William Barrett's Patent Steam Cutter" (57-298); it cost them $100 plus $1 per cutter sold, but their territory was almost all of Connecticut. The author wonders if this "steam cutter" was the saw being manufactured in the saw shop. There are no records to indicate if it was, and none to show whether or not the enterprise was successful.

The Masonic Lodge, Evening Star No. 101, was formed in 1867 in Unionville; they had their first meetings in Tryon's Hall, and continued to meet here until a fire destroyed the interior of the building sometime between Dec. 21, 1874 and Jan. 4, 1875. The fire damage must have been repaired promptly, because a lien was filed in August 1875 by Dennis & Company against Frank Tryon for $734.56 for "services and materials in the construction and erection of the buildings and for repairs, June 1, 1875 to July 29, 1875" (62-354). It was at this time, the author thinks, that the Italianate brackets were put under the eaves.

Tryon sold two lots from this property in August 1887. The first sale was of ½ acre to Howard Humphrey (68-325); see 60 Main Street for further history of that property. The second sale was of another ½ acre to Anna Edgerton (68-345); see 56 Main Street for subsequent history of that property. Map 1 below shows the results of these sales.

When Frank Tryon died in 1894, his only heirs were nieces and nephews; the estate was ordered sold, and as part of the settlement a small 15' strip of land was sold to Howard Humphrey (70-516) and another piece was sold to Dr. Samuel Edgerton (70-503). Map 2 below shows the results of these transactions.
The store was sold in 1896 to Edward W. Keene (70-630); when Keene died four years later, ownership passed to his wife Catherine (P25-416,69-373). Six years after that, she sold it to the Unionville Masonic Building Association, and it has been the "Masonic Hall" since then. Detailed histories of the Masonic Evening Star Lodge No. 101 were written in 1917 by Dr. Edwin Ripley and in 1967 by Carl Pratt. Copies of those histories are attached to the end of this narrative. Also attached are reproductions of pictures of two groups of Masons - the charter members, and the past masters for the period 1867-1898.

In 1926 the 2-story frame building on this property was sold to Charles Nash (83-517); see 36 Main Street for further information about that building. This sale reduced the property to its present size, as shown in Map 3 below.

The first floor has been rented to various businesses since the turn of the century. At one time it was the home of Mutual Plate Glass Insurance Co. In 1922 the Unionville Bank & Trust opened for business here, but the bank soon moved to permanent quarters on School Street. The Plainville Bank & Trust was here from 1960 to 1970. The current tenant is an auto parts business. The rear part of the first floor, with a side entrance from Main Street, was the U.S. Post Office for Unionville from 1918 to 1957. The second floor had apartments for many years, and part of that floor held the corner office of Dr. Edward P. Dunne. After his death, the second floor was remodeled into a dining hall and kitchen for the Masonic Association. The Masonic Hall is on the third floor.

Map 3 - 1926

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12 Main Street - Masonic Hall

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BY-LAWS

AND

ROSTER OF MEMBERS

EVENING STAR LODGE No. 101 A. F. & A. M.

UNIONVILLE, CONNECTICUT

1976
100th Anniversary

Evening Star Lodge No. 101 A. F. & A. M.

October 14, 1967

Hartford Club                 Hartford, Conn.
### FIFTY YEAR MEMBERS

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<td>Royal J. Barter</td>
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<td>Raymond K. Brooks</td>
<td>May 8, 1911</td>
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<td>Truman F. Sanford</td>
<td>November 13, 1911</td>
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<td>Waldo D. Higgins</td>
<td>November 24, 1913</td>
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<td>Thomas J. Crockett</td>
<td>June 15, 1914</td>
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<td>Reuben P. Miller</td>
<td>November 23, 1914</td>
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Charter members of Lodge No. 101

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