



CITY OF TORRINGTON
Addenda # 3

**ADDENDA #3 HAS BEEN ISSUED REGARDING THE SITE WALK & REVIEW –
QUESTIONS AND INFORMATION**

RFP #CSS-013-091412 Consultant Services for the Condition Assessment, Site Survey and Archeological Survey of the Jacob Strong Jr. House and site located at 1167 Highland Avenue, Torrington, CT

Bid opening: **September 14, 2012** Time: **11:00 AM** Location: **City Hall, 140 Main St., Room 206, Torrington, CT**

Submit signed addenda with bid.

The City of Torrington reserves the right to accept or reject any or all bids or any portion thereof, to waive technicalities, and to award the contract as will best serve the public interest.

Dated in Torrington: Sept. 10, 2012 Purchasing Agent _____
Pennie Zucco

Bid Submitted By: _____

Name of Company _____ Signature _____

Date _____ Title _____

Item #1

A Site Walk was held Friday, September 7, 2012 at 2:00pm at 1167 Highland Avenue, Torrington, CT.

Attending the walk:

- Owner:** Walter Lippincott
- City Rep:** Kim Barbieri
- Joseph Alicata, Architect
- John Favazzo, LI Saltzman Architects, PC
- Eric E. Gradoia, Mesick-Cohen-Wilson-Baker Architects
- Travis Gulick, Gulick & Spradlin LLC
- John Spradlin, Gulick & Spradlin LLC
- Mary Joblonski, Jablonski Building Conservation, Inc.
- Rob Sanders, Rob Sanders Architects LLC
- Rob White, Rob Sanders Architects LLC
- Mark Thaler, AIA, Architect

General:

1. The period of significance for the project is the Paolo Abate Era.
2. The Archeological review will be a level 1 report.
3. Mark McEachern is the Director of the Torrington Historical Society, 192 Main Street, Torrington. They have a folder on the property and Mark wrote the State Historic Register application (attached).
4. The Torrington Plan of Conservation & Development is available on our website at:
http://www.torringtonct.org/Public_Documents/TorringtonCT_Planning/Plan%20of%20Conservation%20&%20Developm

Connecticut Commission on Culture & Tourism
 Historic Preservation and Museum Division/State Historic Preservation Office

CONNECTICUT STATE REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES REGISTRATION FORM

This form is for use in nominating individual properties and districts to the Connecticut State Register of Historic Places (C.G.S. Chapter 184b, Sec. 10-409c). See instructions in *How to Complete the Connecticut State Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets. Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name Strong, Jacob, Jr., House

other names/site number Fowler, Noah House; Abbate, Paolo, House

2. Location

street & number 1167 Highland Avenue

city or town Torrington

vicinity

county Litchfield

zip code 06790

not for publication N/A

3. State Agency Certification

I hereby certify that this nomination meets does not meet the documentation standards and criteria for registering properties in the Connecticut Register of Historic Places. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

State Historic Preservation Officer _____

Date _____

4. Classification

Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply)

- private
 public-local
 public-state
 public-federal

Category of Property

(Check only one box)

- building(s)
 district
 site
 structure
 object

Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in count.)

Contributing

Non-Contributing

2

buildings

3

sites

structures

objects

5

Total

Property Owner

name Lippincott Living Trust

address 1167 Highland Avenue

city Torrington state code CT

zip code 06790 phone 860-309-2273

Strong, Jacob, Jr., House

Name of Property

Torrington

Municipality

5. Historic Preservation Council

Approval date _____

Comments _____

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

1. Domestic/single dwelling

2a. Agriculture/agricultural outbuilding (barn)

& 2b. Commerce/professional (artist studio)

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

1. Domestic/single dwelling

2. Domestic/secondary structure (storage)

7. Description

Architectural/Archaeological Classification

(Enter categories from instructions)

Colonial

Postmedieval English (saltbox)

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation stone

walls wood

roof asphalt

other _____

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

SEE CONTINUATION SHEET

Strong, Jacob, Jr., House

Name of Property

Torrington

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8. Statement of Significance

Applicable Connecticut Register Criteria
(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for State Register listing.)

Levels of Significance (local, state)

1 That are associated with events that have made a significant contribution to our history and lives of persons significant in our past; or

Local and state

2 That embody the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or that represent the work of a master, or that possess high artistic values, or that represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction; or

Local and state

3 That have yielded, or may be likely to yield information important in prehistory or history.

Areas of Significance (Enter categories from instructions)

Significant Dates
1750, date built

Significant Person
Strong, Jacob, Jr. owned house from 1750-1776
Fowler, Noah owned house from 1797-1825
Abbate, Paolo owned house from 1927-1973
Cultural Affiliation (Complete if Criterion 3 is marked)

Architect/Bullder
Unknown

Narrative Statement of Significance
(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)
SEE CONTINUATION SHEET

Strong, Jacob, Jr., House

Name of Property

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9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 24.4 acres

Municipal Map, Block and Lot Number and UTM Coordinate (if possible)

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

	<u>217</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>7</u>
	Map	Block	Lot
1			
2	Zone	Easting	Northing

3	Zone	Easting	Northing
4			

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Mark McEachern & Carol Clapp

organization Torrington Historical Society

date 3-20-12

street & number 192 Main Street

telephone 860-482-8260

city or town Torrington

state CT zip code 06790

**CONNECTICUT STATE REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
REGISTRATION FORM – Continuation Form**

Strong, Jacob, Jr. House

Property

Torrington

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Narrative Description:

The Jacob Strong House is a mid-eighteenth century colonial period home which is located at 1167 Highland Avenue (Photograph 1). The house is set on a hilltop at one of the highest points in Torrington. Nevertheless, the land here is relatively flat and was well-suited to the eighteenth century agricultural work of its early residents.

The house has the form of a New England Colonial Farmhouse with a gable/salt box roof oriented with the ridge line parallel to the street. The house sits on a stone foundation and is sheathed with wooden clapboards. The structure is two stories high, three bays wide and two bays deep. It was built during the period of Torrington's earliest English settlement and is a well-preserved and significant example of the vernacular construction of the period. There is no doubt that it was one of the first timber-frame houses built in Torrington. Jacob Strong, Jr. moved from Windsor Connecticut to this property in 1739 and built a log cabin (Orcutt, 767). There is some written evidence that the present house was built around 1750 (Census of Old Buildings in Connecticut). The house has a massive center chimney made of field stone which is characteristic of the earliest period of framed houses in Torrington.

The wooden window sash on the facade are six-over-six and date from the nineteenth century. Historic photographs confirm that the original window sash were twelve-over-eight and were placed at the same openings as the more modern windows. The roof is covered with asphalt shingles. A modern block chimney rises up on the east side of the house toward the rear. This new chimney provides a vent for heating boiler. Other exterior characteristics include corner boards, flat window surrounds and a minimal 1 inch overhang of the roof on the gable ends.

The facade of the house was modified by owner Paolo Abbate ca. 1930. At this time Abbate extended the roof line in the front and supported it by four, tall, fluted, ionic columns that rise nearly to the original front roof line (Photograph 1). These columns create a portico along the entire front elevation. This classical feature must have appealed to Abbate since he was an Italian immigrant and classical scholar. Although the portico is much newer than the original house it has significance in its own right both as an expression of Abbate's heritage and its long standing as an identifiable feature of the house.

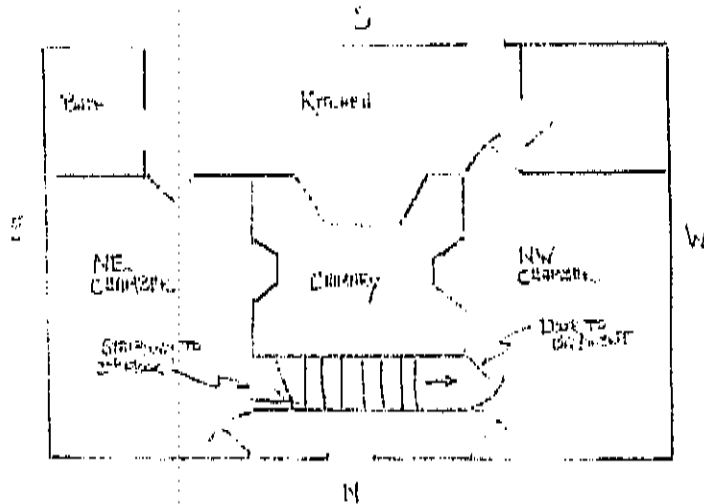
CONNECTICUT STATE REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES REGISTRATION FORM – Continuation Form

Strong, Jacob, Jr., House
Property

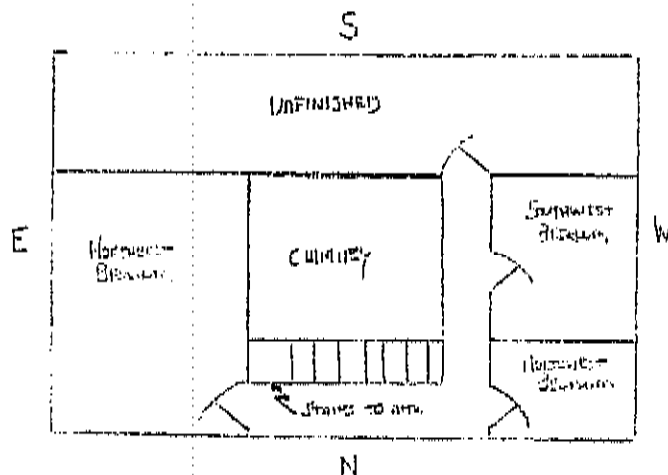
Torrington
Municipality

Interior

The interior floor plan is typical of the colonial, salt-box style farmhouse as illustrated in the drawings below (not to scale)



Floor plan, first floor



Floor plan, second floor

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Strong, Jacob, Jr., House

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Narrative Description page 2

A kitchen spans most of the rear of the house. The kitchen has a large fireplace with a built-in bake oven and original iron swing arm. This oven is set into the back of the kitchen fireplace (Photograph 13).

The front section of the house has two chambers; one on the northwest and one on the northeast. The northeast chamber has a small fireplace and a corner cupboard (Photographs 9,10). Raised panel doors provide access to the small front hall and to the kitchen area. This northeast chamber displays boxed corner posts and a boxed summer beam. The walls and ceiling are plastered and there is a wooden chair rail. Floors are wide board pine. The northwest chamber has a small stone fireplace with a built in oven (Photograph 12). The north and west walls of the room are covered with raised horizontal paneling that has exposures of 9" 11" and 16" (Photograph 11). The paneling is tongue and groove and the grooved edge is beaded. The 16 inch wide summer beam in this room is boxed with a beaded edge. The ceiling has exposed joists with a chamfered edge indicating that the ceiling was never plastered. There is a small room at the southwest corner of the house adjacent to the kitchen. It is separated from the northwest chamber by a wall with vertical paneling.

A central front entry door leads to a small front hallway. From here a stairway rises a few steps and turns 90 degrees before leading directly to the second floor along the exposed center chimney (Photograph 14). Originally there were two bedrooms on the second floor but the west bedroom has been divided into two chambers. The east bedroom retains its original size and has boxed beams and corner posts (Photograph 15). The northwest bedroom displays an exposed corner post and beams (Photograph 16). The southwest bedroom has a massive summer beam and exposed joists (Photograph 17). This bedroom has two walls of narrow beaded boards indicating that it may have been created later. There is unfinished attic space under the second floor lean-to roof at the rear of the house. In the attic above the second floor the roof rafters from the front and rear join at the ridge without a ridge beam. The stone chimney is five feet square in the attic and 16 feet square in the basement (Photograph 18). This well-preserved mid-eighteenth century house displays a large number of original features from the earliest period of timber frame construction in Torrington. It is a significant example of colonial period architecture in Torrington.

**CONNECTICUT STATE REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
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Strong, Jacob, Jr., House

Property

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Outbuildings

The barn which stands near the southwest corner of the house is of eighteenth century origin (Photographs 5,6). The earliest known reference to the barn appears in the deed from Benoni Leach to Noah Fowler in 1797 (Torrington land records vol. 7, 41). In that document the property is said to contain a house and barn. The hand-hewn, post and beam style of the barn supports this eighteenth century date of construction. Some time after Paolo Abbate purchased the property in 1927 he remodeled the barn as his sculpture studio. He cut a large window high in the east gable end to allow more light to enter. Abbate's exterior alterations were influenced by his ancestry. Abbate covered the exterior with stucco and added a Palladian style fanlight above the north entry door. Lastly, he built a large fieldstone fireplace and chimney on the interior of the north wall (Photograph 19). It is also probable that Abbate built the two existing dug wells for domestic water and for his goats. The above ground portion of the wells are built of field stone and have iron arches which supported pulleys used to fill water buckets (Photographs 7,8). The icehouse was built ca. 1900 and is a gable-roofed structure with vertical board siding (Photograph 7). At that time the homestead was used as a summer residence. It is not known whether there were cows or a creamery on the property at that time. Abbate used the ice house for storage of his sculpture supplies and crates.

CONNECTICUT STATE REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES REGISTRATION FORM – Continuation Form

Strong, Jacob, Jr., House

Property

Torrington

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Narrative Statement of Significance

The Jacob Strong, Jr. House is the oldest documented standing structure in Torrington and was one of the first timber-frame homes built in the area. Its location, near the triangular connection of Highland Avenue, Allen Road, and Klug Hill Road, was Torrington's most heavily populated area from its initial settlement until after the American Revolution and this house is significant in documenting the earliest settlement patterns of Torrington's first non-Native American inhabitants (Criterion 2). Additionally, the Strong House was the home of several generations of the Fowler family, one of Torrington's founding families and from 1927 until 1973, the home and studio of renowned artist Paolo S. Abbate (Criterion 1).

Jacob Strong, Jr. (1704-1776) purchased the property from Benjamin Eggleston, one of Torrington's first proprietors (Torrington land records vol. 1a, 14). Eggleston was one of those Windsor taxpayers who were awarded parcels of land in Torrington in a series of divisions that began in 1734. Strong came to Torrington in 1739 (Orcutt, 767); his first home on this site was a log cabin which he replaced with the wood-frame building now known as 1167 Highland Avenue. The timber-frame house may have been built as early as 1741, the year Strong married Mindwell Lyman, sister of Torrington's first English settler, Ebenezer Lyman Jr (Orcutt, 767). However, two references suggest a construction date of 1750. The WPA Census of Old Buildings in Connecticut provides a date of 1750 and lists Edgar L. Heermance as a reference. In addition, an article from the Torrington Register ca 1934 states that "the date marked at the top of the chimney at the Abbate place (Jacob Strong Jr. house) is 1750." At present no chimney date stone is known to exist.

Strong's house was one of several homesteads in the area which included the home of Asahel Strong, Jacob's brother, and that of John Cook. Cook's house, located a few hundred feet east of the Strong House was built ca. 1741. It was at the Cook House where the first church was organized and the first minister ordained in 1741 (Orcutt, 19). This localized concentration of homes speaks to the establishment of a community which was later to include a church building (1751), a tavern (1760) and, at some time after 1770, a small country store at the home of John Whiting. The Industrial Age saw Torrington's factories and commerce grow near the Naugatuck River Valley, several miles east of the Strong house, but Torrington's roots were planted in the western hills where Jacob Strong Jr. built his home.

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Strong, Jacob, Jr., House
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Narrative Statement of Significance page 2

After the death of Jacob Strong, Jr. in 1776 his house and property passed to his descendents and was later acquired by Benoni Leach, a cousin of Richard Leach who had married Jacob Strong's daughter, Mary. In 1797 Benoni Leach and Noah Fowler (1750-1824) traded homesteads (Torrington land records vol. 7, 41) Thus began the Fowler's long ownership of the property. When Noah Fowler died, the property passed to his son Norman (1777-1871) (Torrington land records vol. 11, 516). After Norman's death the property changed ownership a number of times but maintained connections to the Fowler family. At various times, it was owned by Addison Palmer, widower of Norman's daughter Phebe, and by Casimir Bronson, husband of Norman's granddaughter, Frances Palmer Bronson. The Bronson family lived in Waterbury and occupied the Torrington house only as a summer residence. As a result of the Fowler family's long history with the property, the house was commonly known as the Fowler House through the mid twentieth century. In 1927, Italian-born artist and sculptor, Paolo S. Abbate, purchased the house and its surrounding 24 acres to serve as his home and studio (Conway 1966, 8).

Born in Villarosa, Italy, in 1884, Paolo Abbate came to America in 1902, settling first in Winsted where he worked at a factory that made decorative household items. Abbate became a naturalized U.S. citizen in 1907 and soon after he moved to Massachusetts to study at the American International College in Springfield and then to serve as a minister in Pittsfield Ma. (Shanley 1964). In 1919, he moved to New York so that he could devote himself to his sculpture. Abbate gained wide recognition in the 1920s for his work such as his bust of Dante, sculpted in 1921 to commemorate the 600th anniversary of the poet's death, and his 1926 sculpture "Civic Virtues", done for Philadelphia's sesquicentennial celebration (Niven 1928). His New York studio was a gathering place for such notables as Enrico Caruso and poet Joyce Kilmer, both of whom Abbate sculpted. When Abbate decided to leave New York in the late 1920s, he chose his new home in Torrington with an artistic sensibility, drawn to the same land with its sweeping views that had been home to the Fowler family for generations (Shanley 1964). Following his move to Torrington in 1927, Abbate continued to sculpt and teach and during his later years sought to establish a peace center where the arts could inspire and help educate people in the way of peace. Abbate died at the age of 89 in 1973. His work endures in the building facades and cemetery monuments that Abbate sculpted, in his bronze bust of Dante that stands at Brown University and in the more than a dozen of his pieces which are in the collection of the University of Connecticut's William Benton Museum of Art.

**CONNECTICUT STATE REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
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Strong, Jacob, Jr., House
Property

Torrington
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Bibliography:

Baldwin, Joan and Geoffrey L. Rossano, A Historic and Architectural Resource Survey of Portions of Torrington's West Side (1994)

Conway, Jack, "A Sower of Beauty Dedicates All to Peace," The Sunday Republican Magazine 22 May 1966, 6-9.

Federal Writers Project WPA, Architectural Survey, Census of Old Buildings in Connecticut, (1935)

Manuscript Map of Torrington, Torrington Historical Society Archives, ca. 1750 with later additions.

Niven, John W., "Paolo S. Abbate," The Kadelgian Review VII, no. 4 (1928): 321-325.

Orcutt, Rev. Samuel, History of Torrington, Conn. Albany, NY: J. Munsell Printer, (1878) 19, 691-692, 767.

Shanley, Helen C., "Famed Sculptor, Now 80, Would Carve World Peace," The Waterbury Republican, 26 April 1964, 20.

Torrington Land Records (City of Torrington), Vol. 1a, 14. Vol. 7, 41. Vol. 10, 21. Vol. 11, 516. Vol. 71, 500-501. Vol. 92, 379-380. Vol. 102, 34.

**CONNECTICUT STATE REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
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Strong, Jacob, Jr., House
Property

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Verbal Property Description:

A certain piece or parcel of land, with the buildings thereon, situated in the town of Torrington, County of Litchfield and State of Connecticut, and bounded and described as follows:
Commencing at the Northeasterly corner of Olive M. Richardson, et al, on the southerly street line of Highland Avenue. Thence proceeding along the Westerly property line of the said Olive M. Richardson et al and the easterly property line of the herein described parcel by courses and distances to the southeasterly corner of the herein described parcel and the northeasterly corner of Marlene J. Latimer et al. Thence proceeding westerly along the southerly boundary of the herein described parcel and the northerly boundary of land owned by Marlene J Latimer by courses and distances to land owned by Nicholas F. Serra et al at the southerly corner of the herein described parcel. Thence proceeding by courses and distances northerly along the westerly boundary of the herein described parcel and the easterly property line of Nicholas F. Serra to Highland Avenue. Thence proceeding by courses and distances along the northerly line of the herein described parcel and the southerly street line of Highland Avenue in an easterly direction to the point or place of beginning. Said property is subject to a Hartford Electric Light Company right of way, 100 feet in width which crosses it's southwesterly corner. Being the same piece or parcel of land described in a warranty deed recorded in volume 629 page 203 of the Torrington land records.

Boundary Justification.

The boundaries were chosen to include the present size of the property which contains the Jacob Strong Jr. House. It is a piece of property that is largely unchanged in size since 1776. This lot was originally part of a 1734 proprietor's lot belonging to Benjamin Eggleston of Windsor. Eggleston's lot was 37 acres and since that time it has been reduced to the present lot size of approximately 24 acres. Most of this reduction in size took place after the death of Jacob Strong Jr. in 1776 when portions of the property were distributed to his heirs. A 1797 deed from Benoni Leach (a cousin of Strong's son-in-law, Richard Leach) to Noah Fowler refers to the property containing 27 acres (Torrington land records vol.7, 41). In 1825 when the property was transferred from the estate of Noah Fowler to his son, Norman Fowler, the lot was described as containing 23 acres (Torrington land records vol. 11, 516). From that time until the present the lot has been variously described as containing 20, 21, 23 or 24 acres.