

PROPERTY REPORT

Property ID: **2003861825**

Property Name: Brainerd Institute **Ownership:** Private
Address: 96 N Main ST **Apartment #:** **ZIP:** 08512

PROPERTY LOCATION(S):

County:	Municipality:	Local Place Name:	USGS Quad:	Block:	Lot:
MIDDLESEX	Cranbury township	Cranbury	Hightstown	29	1.01

Property Photo:



Old HSI Number: **NRIS Number:** **HABS/HAER Number:**

Description:

Brainerd Institute at 96 North Main Street is a three-and-a-half-story, nine-bay, three-pile, frame institutional/educational building constructed circa 1865 in a vernacular Federal style. The building has a three-story exterior stair tower addition. The cross-gabled roof is sheathed with asphalt shingles; it features a centered cross-gable on the main (west) elevation, cornice returns on the end walls, and an exterior brick chimney on the north elevation. The cornice doubles as an interior gutter system, supported from below by a course of paired brackets on an expressed wood frieze. The exterior of the building is clad in aluminum siding. Regular fenestration consists of six-over-six, double-hung, wood sash windows (replacement units) with aluminum storm windows within molded wood surrounds with pediment lintels. The central entrance is a six-panel wood door with an aluminum screen door, flanked by sidelights and topped by a semicircular fanlight. The entrance is sheltered by an entablature portico with fluted Corinthian columns. The elevated basement has stone walls and small double-hung sash windows (replacement). The north elevation repeats the cladding materials of the front elevation (asphalt shingles on the roof and aluminum-clad walls). Fenestration is rigidly aligned, including a centered attic window and three ranks of windows on the lower floors. Like the main elevation, windows are six-over-six wood sash units, and first floor units have pediment lintels. The rear (east) elevation repeats the cladding of the main elevation, with asphalt shingles on the roof of the core and the stair addition and aluminum cladding on the core. A low gable over the stair tower addition is not visible from the public-right-of-way. Windows also repeat the pattern of the main elevation; they are six-over-six wood sash units that feature pediment lintels on the first floor. The stair tower section has a flat roof with a molded cornice and a low wall on each floor level. The steps are replacement frame units, and the foundation

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of the stair tower is stuccoed (possibly over concrete).

Character-defining elements of the rectangular building include a cross-gabled roof, a bracketed cornice, and molded wood window surrounds.

Setting:

Brainerd Institute at 96 North Main Street is sited on a rectangular parcel (Block 29, Lot 1.01) located on the east side of North Main Street in Cranbury Township, Middlesex County, New Jersey. The parcel is bounded to the west by North Main Street and to the north by Plainsboro Road. The building is oriented with its primary elevation facing west and is set back approximately 100 feet from North Main Street. A concrete sidewalk spans the west and north sides of the parcel. A gravel parking area adjoins the building to the north. A one-story frame garage is located southeast of the building. The property is lightly wooded with an expansive front lawn planted in grass. Brainerd Institute at 96 North Main Street is located in a primarily residential neighborhood surrounded by residential properties dating from the mid-nineteenth to the early twentieth century.

Registration and Status Dates:

National Historic Landmark?:

National Register: 9/18/1980

New Jersey Register: 8/9/1979

Determination of Eligibility: 3/25/1977

Certification of Eligibility:

SHPO Opinion:

Local Designation: 9/26/1988

Other Designation:

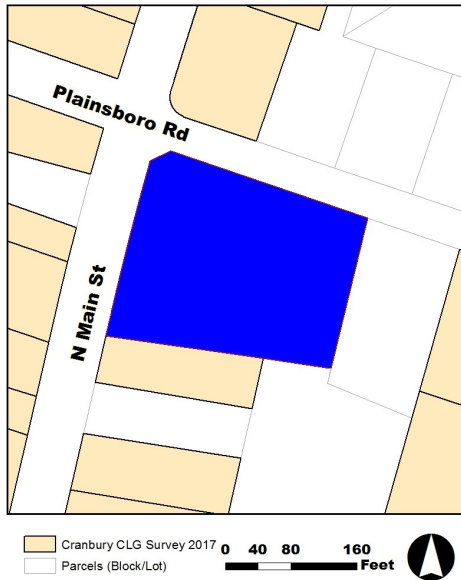
Other Designation Date:

Eligibility Worksheet included in present survey?

Is this Property an identifiable farm or former farm?

Location Map:

Site Map:



BIBLIOGRAPHY:

Author:	Title:	Year:	HPO Accession #: (if applicable)
Walsh, Ruth	National Register of Historic Places Nomination for the Cranbury Historic District, Cranbury Township, Middlesex County, New Jersey	1979	
Heritage Studies	Preserving Historic Cranbury Village	1989	
Cranbury Historical and Preservation Society	Property File, Brainerd Institute		
Chambers, John Whiteclay II	Cranbury: A New Jersey Town from the Colonial Era to the Present	2012	

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Additional Information:

More Research Needed? (checked=Yes)

INTENSIVE-LEVEL USE ONLY:

Attachments Included:	1 Building	0 Bridge
	0 Structure	0 Landscape
	0 Object	0 Industry

Historic District ?

District Name: Cranbury Historic District

Status: Key Contributing

Associated Archeological Site/Deposits?

(known or potential sites. If Yes, please describe briefly)

Conversion Problem? ConversionNote: 66

Date form completed: 7/27/2017

New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection
Historic Preservation Office

Property ID: 2003861825

Element ID: -348706287

BUILDING ATTACHMENT

Common Name: Brainerd Institute, 96 North Main Street

Historic Name: Brainerd Institute, 96 North Main Street

Present Use: Residential, permanent

Historic Use: Institutional, educational

ConstructionDate: 1865 **Source:** Walsh 1979

Construction Start Date:	Construction End Date:
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Style: Federal Vernacular Style?

Form: Apartment **Physical Condition:** Good

Type: Other **Remaining Historic Fabric:** Medium

Roof Finish Materials: Asphalt Shingle **Stories:** 3.5

Exterior Finish Materials: Metal, Aluminum--Siding **Bays:** 9

Exterior Description:

See Property Form

Interior Description:

Not accessible

Alteration Dates:

Architect/Designer::

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ELIGIBILITY WORKSHEET - Properties

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History:

Brainerd Institute at 96 North Main Street was constructed in 1865 to house a newly established private college preparatory school, named for the Reverend David Brainerd. Brainerd, a missionary, preached to members of local Native American tribes during the mid-eighteenth century (Chambers 2012:22-23). Brainerd Institute was the only such private academy in Cranbury, which also had five smaller, public schools (Chambers 2012:99-100).

Brainerd Institute promised to prepare students for bright academic futures at the region's most prestigious colleges, including Princeton, Harvard, and Yale. The school, which operated as a co-educational boarding and day school, offered courses in business, music, and art, in addition to standard academic classes (Cranbury Historical and Preservation Society n.d.). In 1893, Reverend Charles F. Garrison, pastor of the United Methodist Church of Cranbury, reorganized the Brainerd Institute and formed a home for the developmentally disabled. Garrison modeled this new institution after a similar organization he founded in Vineland during the late 1880s (Chambers 2012:106-108). Garrison's home operated until 1904, when the institution was renamed Larches Sanatorium (Cranbury Historical and Preservation Society n.d.).

In 1924, Dr. G. Leroy Dale of Battle Creek, Michigan, purchased the subject building and founded a residential health spa know as the Dale Golden Rule Healthatorium. Dale, a specialist in metaphysics and "drugless healing", managed a health resort in Michigan before coming to Cranbury. At the Healthatorium, Dale offered nutritional and exercise counseling in addition to lectures on metaphysical healing. In the late 1920s, the subject building was converted into apartments, known as Orton Apartments. Brainerd Institute has remained a residential property throughout the twentieth and early twenty-first centuries (Cranbury Historical and Preservation Society n.d.)

Statement of Significance:

Brainerd Institute at 96 North Main Street began in 1865 as a cooperative effort by Cranbury's most prominent citizens to prepare the township's students for successful academic careers. The building later served as educational and living facilities for the developmentally disabled. After a brief turn as a health spa, Brainerd Institute at 96 North Main Street was converted into residential apartments in the late 1920s and has remained a residential property. The building has thus served a variety of purposes in Cranbury Township.

Eligibility for New Jersey and National Registers: Yes No

National Register Criteria: A B C D

Level of Significance: Local State National

Justification of Eligibility/Ineligibility:

Brainerd Institute at 96 North Main Street is individually eligible for the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) under Criterion C for Architecture. The building is significant at the local level as an outstanding example of the late Federal style with Italianate elements.

Total Number of Attachments: 1

List of Element Names: Brainerd Institute, 96 North Main Street

Narrative Boundary Description:

N/A

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