



The house at 132 Flax Hill Road is listed in the Norwalk Historic Resource Inventory as the Edward F. Knapp House. It was owned by Edward F. Knapp who, with his brother William H. Knapp, owned the Knapp Box Company at 132 Water Street in Norwalk. They made hat cases and various kinds of boxes, while also operating as lumber dealers at the same location. It is one of Norwalk's surviving examples of a modest Queen Anne style American home. It has many of the style's identifying features, including symmetrical cross gable massing, a steeply pitched roof and a front porch. The house is in very good condition, and clearly expresses this version of the style. However, there is a fire escape on its west elevation and its porch has been drastically altered. Its interior, despite having been converted into apartments years ago, also still has many original elements. Most notably is the detailed staircase in the entryway, which will be preserved as part of the project.

Front porches of these houses are one of their most important defining features. Workforce Partners proposes to recreate, as much as possible, the original front porch of this historic home by removing the existing out-of-character design and materials and replacing them with period-appropriate elements. No historic photos of the house could be found, but design and material cues from existing houses of the period, as well as images and text from architectural reference works, will be used to inform the design of the new porch. ADA required elements will harmonize with the new historically-inspired design. The third-floor fire escape will also be removed. This work will be a major change in the way the house is perceived and will improve the look of the entire streetscape in the area.