



HISTORIC RESOURCES INVENTORY - BUILDING AND STRUCTURES

Connecticut Commission on Culture & Tourism, One Constitution Plaza, 2nd Floor, Hartford, CT 06103

*** Note:** Please attach any additional or expanded information on a separate sheet.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Building Name (Common) Ralph Earl Hall, School of Fine Arts - Southern Connecticut State University
 Building Name (Historic) Ralph Earl Hall, School of Fine Arts - Southern Connecticut State College
 Street Address or Location 501 Crescent Street
 Town/City New Haven Village Westville County New Haven
 Owner(s) State of Connecticut Public Private

PROPERTY INFORMATION

Present Use: Institutional - Academic
 Historic Use: Institutional - Academic
 Accessibility to public: Exterior visible from public road? Yes No
 Interior accessible? Yes No If yes, explain During operating hours
 Style of building Modernist - International - Miesian Date of Construction 1959

Material(s) (Indicate use or location when appropriate):

- | | | | | |
|--|---|---|---------------------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Clapboard | <input type="checkbox"/> Asbestos Siding | <input type="checkbox"/> Brick | <input type="checkbox"/> Wood Shingle | <input type="checkbox"/> Asphalt Siding |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Fieldstone | <input type="checkbox"/> Board & Batten | <input type="checkbox"/> Stucco | <input type="checkbox"/> Cobblestone | <input type="checkbox"/> Aluminum Siding |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Concrete (Type <u>Precast Panels</u>) | <input type="checkbox"/> Cut Stone (Type _____) | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other <u>Metal Spandrel Panels, Glass</u> | | |

Structural System

- Wood Frame Post & Beam Balloon Load bearing masonry Structural iron or steel
 Other _____

Roof (Type)

- Gable Flat Mansard Monitor Sawtooth
 Gambrel Shed Hip Round Other _____

(Material)

- Wood Shingle Roll Asphalt Tin Slate Asphalt Shingle
 Built up Tile Other _____

Number of Stories: 2 Approximate Dimensions 200' x 64', 176' x 56'

Structural Condition: Excellent Good Fair Deteriorated

Exterior Condition: Excellent Good Fair Deteriorated

Location Integrity: On original site Moved When? _____

Alterations? Yes No If yes, explain: Elevator addition at southwest end of building.

FOR OFFICE USE: Town # _____ Site # _____ UTM _____
 District: S NR If NR, Specify: Actual Potential

PROPERTY INFORMATION (CONT'D)**Related outbuildings or landscape features:**

Barn Shed Garage Carriage House Shop Garden

Other landscape features or buildings: Planting beds at front of building; campus center plaza and other university buildings; parking and loading at rear (south).

Surrounding Environment:

Open land Woodland Residential Commercial Industrial Rural

High building density Scattered buildings visible from site

• Interrelationship of building and surroundings:

Located in the center of the Southern Connecticut State University campus facing the plaza which is the central campus space, the building stands just east of the intersection of Fitch and Crescent Streets. The building is surrounded by other university buildings, most of which are of mid-20th-century construction, with the exception of the Adanti Student Center, built since 2000. To the south is a residential area; to the east is the Beaver Ponds Park with a residential area beyond to the east.

• Other notable features of building or site (*Interior and/or Exterior*)

See continuation sheet.

Architect Pedersen and Tilney Builder Barba and Cimmino, Inc.

• Historical or Architectural importance:

See continuation sheet.

• Sources: Brown, Elizabeth Mills; *A Guide to Architecture & Urban Design*, Yale U. Press, New Haven, 1976.

Carley, Rachel D., *Tomorrow is Here: New Haven and the Modern Movement*, (Privately printed by the New Haven Preservation Trust, New Haven CT) June, 2008.

New Haven Tax Assessor's Record: Map/Block/Parcel: 323/ 0429/ 001, Building Department permit files.

"SCSC Names 3 Buildings: Plans Dedication Saturday", *New Haven Register*, October 19, 1959.

Photographer Lucas Karmazinas / Charlotte Hitchcock Date 8/20/2009

View Multiple Views Negative on File NHPT

Name Lucas Karmazinas / Charlotte Hitchcock Date 12/14/2010

Organization The New Haven Preservation Trust

Address 934 State Street, P.O. Box 1671, New Haven, CT 06507

• Subsequent field evaluations:

Threats to the building or site:

None known Highways Vandalism Developers Renewal Private

Deterioration Zoning Other _____ Explanation _____

• Other notable features of building or site (*Interior and/or Exterior*):

Southern Connecticut State University's Earl Hall consists of two, 2-story rectangular blocks laid out in parallel along a roughly north-south axis. The building has a flat roof. The 2nd story of the western, or main, block projects over a 1-story perpendicular wing, the projection supported by slender round steel columns. The secondary wing runs along an east-west axis connecting the main block to the eastern block and extending approximately 20' beyond the west (side) elevation of the main block. The north facade of the main block is faced with large rectangular precast concrete panels and acts as a background for the building signage. It is topped by a simple metal fascia. Large applied sans serif metal lettering located on the lower left corner of the facade reads, "RALPH EARL HALL / FINE ARTS". A long narrow 1-story, flat-roofed entry porch extends beyond the facade of the main block at its center, supported by slender round steel columns.

The side elevations of the main block, with the ground floor recessed slightly below the upper floor, consist of curtain walls with ribbon windows divided by aluminum mullions. There are 3 divisions from top to bottom. The upper and lower sections are filled with red and gray panels and the center portion is glass. The facade of the 1-story secondary wing is filled in a similar manner except in this case the wall is divided into 2 vertical sections. The upper two-thirds of the wall is filled with glass panels while the lower third has gray paneling similar to that on the main block. The corridor connecting the 2 blocks has 3 vertical sections, all filled with glazing and divided by aluminum mullions. The west end wall of the transverse wing is brick, as is the south wall of the main block. A 2nd transverse wing located near the rear (southwest) end of the building is one story in height and of solid brick construction.

The eastern block has a rectangular footprint and alternates between 1- and 2-story sections. The 2-story sections are of solid brick while the 1-story areas between them replicate the design of the ribbon windows found on the main block.

• Historical or Architectural importance:

Southern Connecticut State University's (SCSU) Earl Hall was completed in 1959 at a total cost of \$1,000,000. The building houses the university's school of Fine Arts and was named after Ralph Earl, a notable and prolific Connecticut portrait painter from the Revolutionary War period of the 18th century. The building was constructed and dedicated simultaneously with 2 other university buildings, Seabury Hall and the College Memorial Union (Old Student Center). See additional inventory forms for 501 Crescent Street.

The building represents an elegant and refined example of Miesian International style design. The articulation of horizontal volumes stacked on and sliding by each other makes for a Mondrian-like abstract composition. The use of curtain walls clarifies the structural nature of the steel frame and brick end walls, and the non-structural quality of the glazed infill walls. The slender steel columns allow the projecting mass above to appear to float and the concrete-faced facade wall makes a bold background for the sans serif typography of the signage (for similar treatment see Inventory forms for 438 East Street, 580 and 952 Grand Avenue).

Architects: William F. Pedersen (1908-1990) and Bradford Tilney (1908-1999) practiced architecture together from 1950 until 1964 (see Inventory forms for 438 East Street, 645 Grand Avenue, 34 Park Street, and 323 Temple Street) before starting separate offices. Each continued working through the next several decades.



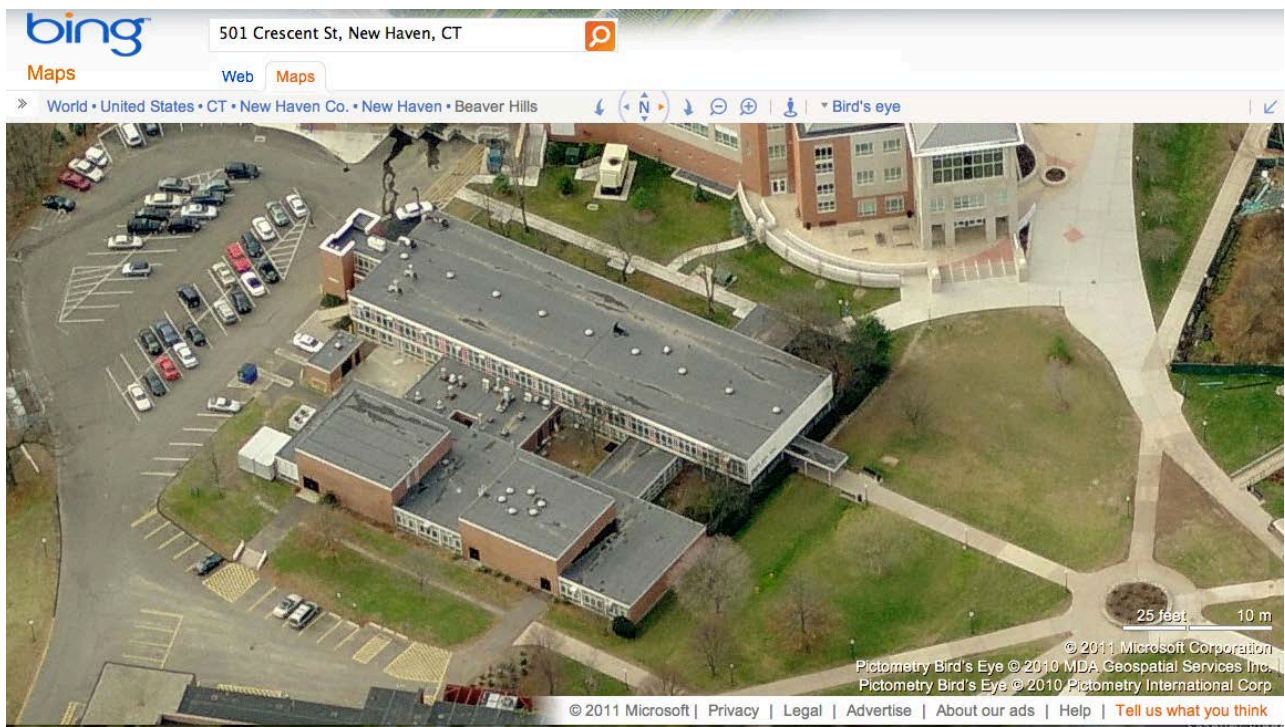
1. North (front) elevations from the central campus plaza, camera facing southwest.



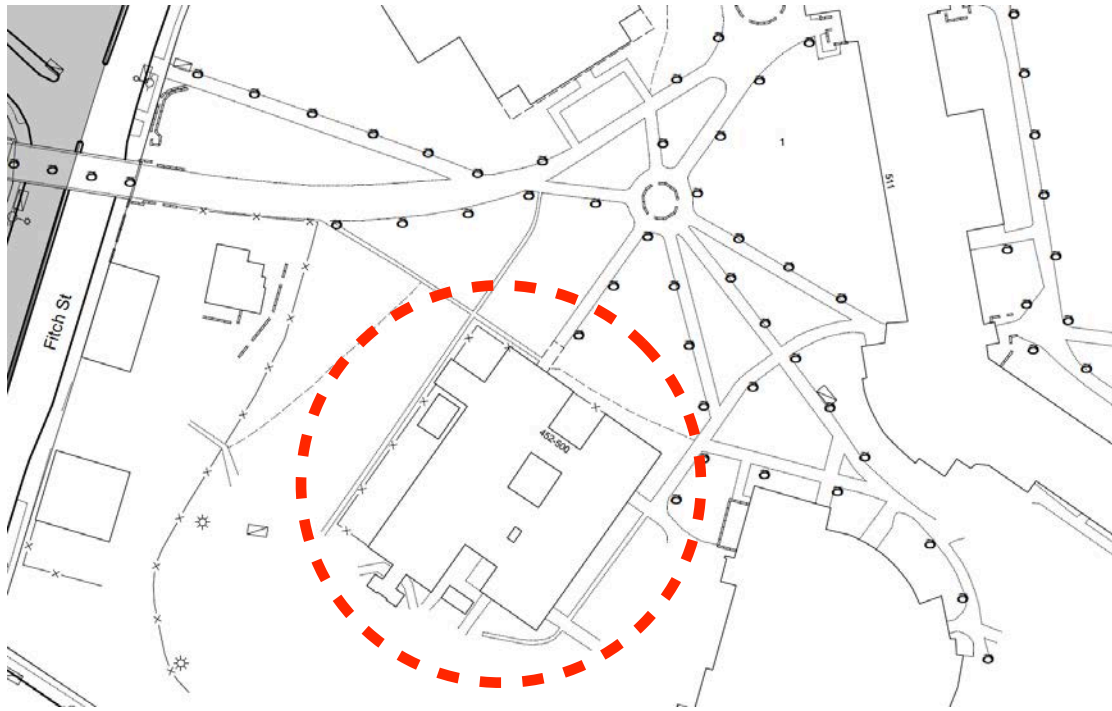
2. Northwest view from central campus plaza, camera facing east.



3. West view, camera facing northeast.



4. East aerial view from Bing Maps <http://www.bing.com/maps/> accessed 6/21/2011.



5. Site Plan – detail from City of New Haven Tax Map 359/1160/001, not to scale, North ↑ .
Buley Libaray is at the north edge of this view, Engleman Hall (1954, Office of Douglas Orr, the first campus building) to the right, and Lyman Auditorium (1968, Polak & Sullivan) at the lower right.