



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) Harold and Miriam Ratner House
 Building Name (Historic) Harold and Miriam Ratner House
 Street Address or Location 135 Seneca Road
 Town/City New Haven Village Westville / Beverly Hills County New Haven
 Owner(s) Miriam Ratner Public Private

PROPERTY INFORMATION

Present Use: Residential - Single family dwelling
 Historic Use: Residential - Single family dwelling
 Accessibility to public: Exterior visible from public road? Yes No
 Interior accessible? Yes No If yes, explain _____
 Style of building Modernist - California Date of Construction 1955

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 type="checkbox"/> Concrete (Type _____) | <input type="checkbox"/> Cut Stone (Type _____) | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other <u>Vertical Board</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: one Approximate Dimensions 24' x 59'

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: _____

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: Driveway and car port

Surrounding Environment:

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

• Interrelationship of building and surroundings:

This triangular corner lot is located on a residential street at the northern edge of the city, adjacent to the Wilbur Cross Parkway, which is located on a raised embankment to the north of Seneca Road. The neighborhood, called Beverly Hills, was developed in the post-World War II decades, with small "Cape Cod" and ranch style homes on the Levittown model.

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

This is a 1-story house built on a lot that slopes down from west to east. The house faces north toward the street, with a sweeping gable roof whose eastern pitch slopes down along the grade to shelter a car port as an extension of the mass of the house itself. The roof form, with deep overhangs, is the dominant visual characteristic. Living spaces are ranged along the west (uphill) part of the site. Facing the street (north) is a solid wall of dark-stained vertical wood siding, with a single vertical window glazed in rippled glass. The entry door is on the east wall near the north corner, accessed by steps up from the parking. The living spaces open toward the rear part of the lot where there are several mature trees. At the center of the sweeping roof, an opening lets light into a small patio area.

Architect Harold L. Ratner Builder Harold L. Ratner

• Historical or Architectural importance:

This house was built in 1955 by Harold L. Ratner (1919-1965), a design-build contractor, as his own home. It was adapted from commercially-published house plans. His widow, Miriam Ratner continues to own and live in the house. Their son, Arthur Ratner (1949-2009), an architect who practiced locally, grew up in the house. The design of this house, characterized by the sweeping slope of the roof form covering both living and parking spaces, derives from styles popular in California in the 1950s and 60s. The single-story plan, integration of the car into the home, connections between inside and outside spaces, and turning away from the street for a self-contained private environment, are all features common to California Modernism in the post-World War II period.

• Sources:

Brown, Elizabeth Mills; *New Haven: 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: 434/ 1209/ 00100, Building Department permit files.
Interviews with Arthur Ratner, A.I.A., July 2009, and with Miriam Ratner, June 2011.

Photographer Charlotte Hitchcock Date 4/08/2010

View Northeast from Seneca Road Negative on File NHPT

Name Charlotte Hitchcock Date 7/22/2010

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:

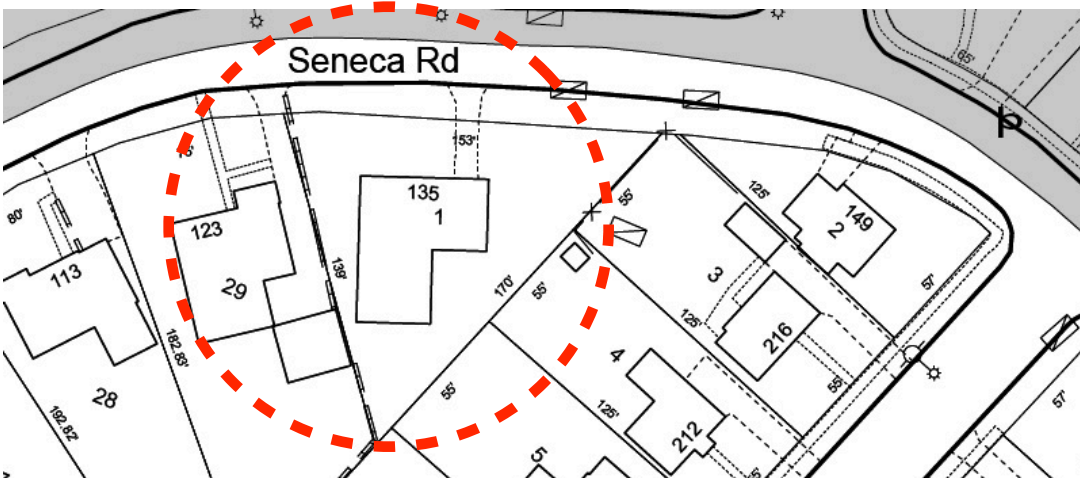
- None known Highways Vandalism Developers Renewal Private
- Deterioration Zoning Other _____ Explanation _____



1. Northeast view from Seneca Road, camera facing southwest.



2. North aerial view from Bing Maps, <http://www.bing.com/maps> accessed 7/22/2010.



3. Site Plan – detail from City of New Haven Tax Map 434/ 1209/ 00100, not to scale, North ↑.