



# 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 Walker Ice Skating Rink  
 Building Name (Historic) Ralph Walker Ice Skating Rink  
 Street Address or Location 1080 State Street  
 Town/City New Haven Village East Rock County New Haven  
 Owner(s) City of New Haven Department of Parks, Recreation, and Trees  Public  Private

**PROPERTY INFORMATION**

Present Use: Recreational Facility  
 Historic Use: Recreational Facility  
**Accessibility to public:** Exterior visible from public road?  Yes  No  
 Interior accessible?  Yes  No If yes, explain City-run recreational facility, open seasonally (winter).  
 Style of building Modernist Date of Construction 1968 Clubhouse  
1978 Roof structure

**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>masonry</u> ) | <input type="checkbox"/> Cut Stone (Type _____) | <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____ |                                       |  |

**Structural System**

- Wood Frame  Post & Beam  Balloon  Load bearing masonry  Structural iron or steel  
 Other Concrete, concrete masonry

**Roof (Type)**

- Gable  Flat  Mansard  Monitor  Sawtooth  
 Gambrel  Shed  Hip  Round  Other Stylized hybrid

(Material)

- Wood Shingle  Roll Asphalt  Tin  Slate  Asphalt Shingle  
 Built up  Tile  Other \_\_\_\_\_

**Number of Stories:** 1 Approximate Dimensions 130' x 220' and 50' x 110' (4300 square feet)

**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: Minor: replacement of some of the rooftop ventilators

**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: Asphalt parking lot, chain link fencing, park land.

**Surrounding Environment:**

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

• Interrelationship of building and surroundings: The site forms the southern tip of East Rock Park, and is bounded by State Street to the south, Mechanic Street to the west, Willow Street to the north, and the elevated I-91 highway to the east. The rink and adjacent Blake Field, a 10.4-acre section of the park, are adjacent to an area of medium-to-small commercial, civic, and residential buildings of predominantly 20th-century design.

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

See continuation sheet.

Architect Granbery/Cash & Associates, E. Carlton and Diana Granbery, George A. Cash - 1968 Clubhouse      Builder Franklin Construction - 1968 Clubhouse  
Cahn Engineers - 1975 Roof structure      J.H. Hogan - 1975 Roof structure

• Historical or Architectural importance:

See continuation sheet.

• Sources: Brown, Elizabeth Mills; *New Haven: A Guide to Architecture & Urban Design*, Yale U. Press, New Haven, 1976, p. 32.  
 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: 182/0420/0080, Building Department permit files.  
 Pannenberg, Frank, personal communication, 2011.  
 Granbery Archives, Whitney Library, New Haven Museum and Historical Society.  
 See continuation sheet.

Photographer Amy Gagnon      Date 8/15/2009

View Multiple views      Negative on File NHPT

Name Charlotte Hitchcock      Date 12/12/2010

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 exterior*):

Ralph Walker Rink consists of two blocks: the first is a small club/warming house that has a staggered rectangular footprint, is oriented in an east-west direction, and sits south of the larger main block. The building is one story and is constructed of light-colored ribbed concrete block masonry, infilling between steel columns. The roof is flat, but has a stylized mansard-like cornice roofed in red asphalt shingles. The second block, the ice skating rink and roof, has a rectangular footprint and is oriented diagonally to the warming house, extending northeastward from it. Large steel columns on concrete piers, evenly spaced under the eaves, support a massive stylized Mansard roof volume. A half-wall hockey enclosure encircles the ice rink. The roof is a massive sweeping abstract form that appears to almost reach ground level, and is covered in red asphalt shingles. The low eaves create a cave-like feeling inside and protect the ice from the heat of the sun, while cutouts in the roof edge on the northern and southern sides of the building allow shafts of light to the interior. Black chain link fencing surrounds the rink. A series of four large metal ventilators sits on the ridge of the roof, referencing the vocabulary of barns; three of these have been replaced, leaving one of the originals.

- Historical or Architectural importance:

The Ralph Walker Rink is a relatively new addition to the 19th-century East Rock Park. Blake Field, at the southern end of the park, was created in the early 1930s by filling marshland along the Mill River (Ransom). Later, the rink was built as a year-round skating facility (Brown, p.32) to serve the community at a time when park philosophy was turning from passive nature recreation toward organized sport facilities. The city took 33.5 acres of parkland in the 1950s for the construction of Wilbur Cross High School and the park lost 7.6 acres in the 1960s for the construction of the I-91 highway. The Ralph Walker Rink and Blake Field abut the elevated highway along State Street. The skating rink still functions as a public ice skating facility in winter only, although two other rinks, built in Edgewood and East Shore Parks (see Inventory forms for 740 Whalley Avenue and 300 Woodward Avenue), are no longer maintained for ice skating.

East Rock Park was nominated to the National Register of Historic Places in 1997. Ralph Walker Rink, like the English Shelter (see Inventory form, East Rock Summit Drive) was identified as a Non-contributing Resource at that time, due to its date of construction falling outside the designation's period of significance.

Architect: E. Carleton Granbery (1913-1998) received undergraduate and graduate degrees from Yale and practiced in New Haven with his wife, Diana, a graduate of the Harvard Graduate School of Design. Their practice included numerous Modernist residences as well as buildings for schools, commercial work, and municipal projects (for instance see 149 York Street, 70 Autumn Street, and 740 Whalley Avenue). During the 1960s architect George A. Cash was associated with the firm, which was known as Granbery/Cash & Associates.

- Sources, *continued*:

Granbery, E. Carleton & Diana, "Office of Carleton Granbery Architect," promotional brochure, 1970, courtesy of John Herzan.

Department of Parks, Recreation, and Trees, City of New Haven, web site:

<http://www.cityofnewhaven.com/parks/parksinformation/walker.asp>

Federal Writers' Project, American Guides Series. *Connecticut: A Guide to its Roads, Lore, and People*. Boston: The Houghton Mifflin Co., 1938.

Ransom, David F., East Rock Park National Register Nomination, No. 97000299, National Park Service, 1997.



1. View from parking area, northwest view of rink roof, camera facing northeast.



2. South view of club/warming house from State Street entrance, camera facing north.

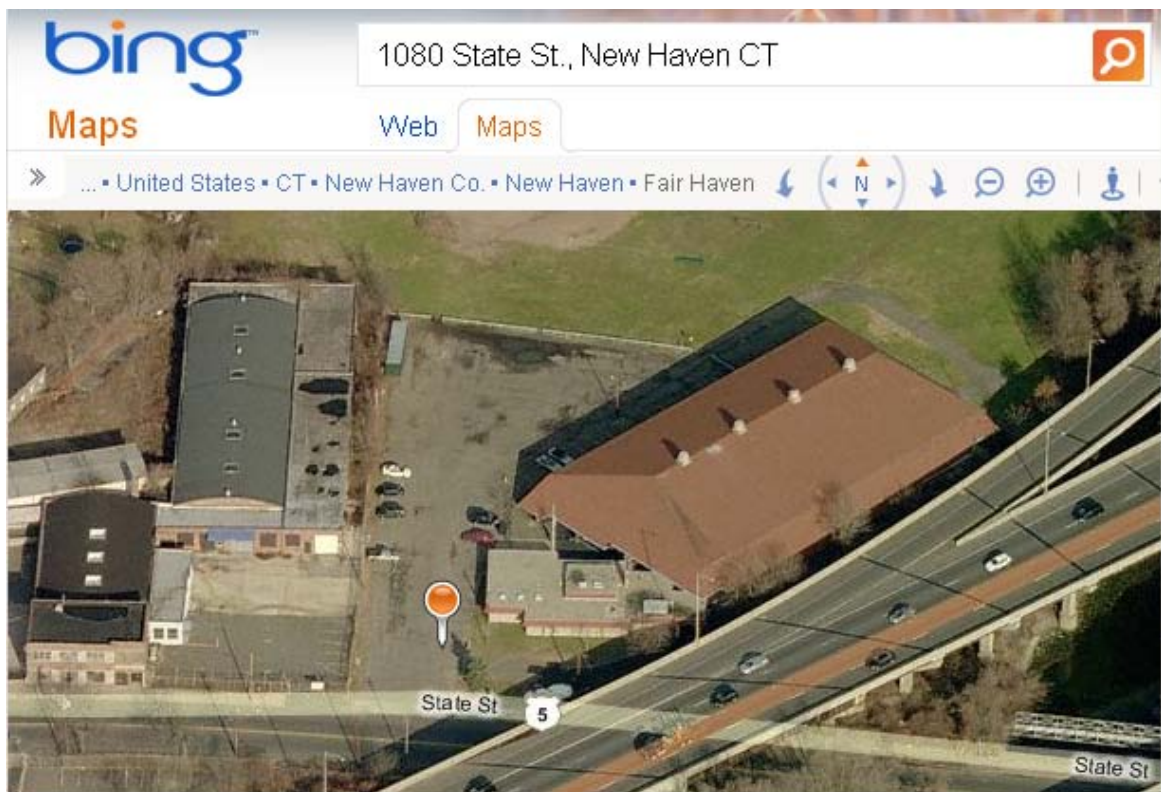


3. West view from parking area, showing southwest side of rink roof structure and west side of warming house, camera facing east.





4. Site Plan — detail from City of New Haven tax Assessor's Map 182/0420/0080.



5. South aerial view from Bing Maps, <http://www.bing.com/maps/> accessed 1/06/2011.