



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) 135 College Street
 Building Name (Historic) WNHC Building
 Street Address or Location 135 College Street
 Town/City New Haven Village _____ County New Haven
 Owner(s) W E 135 COLLEGE LLC Public Private

PROPERTY INFORMATION

Present Use: Offices and retail bank
 Historic Use: Offices and retail
Accessibility to public: Exterior visible from public road? Yes No
 Interior accessible? Yes No If yes, explain Some areas during business hours
 Style of building Modernist - Miesian Date of Construction 1959

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

- | | | | | |
|--|--|---|---------------------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Clapboard | <input type="checkbox"/> Asbestos Siding | <input checked="" 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> Cut Stone (Type <u>Granite Chip Composite Veneer</u>) | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other <u>Glass Curtain Wall</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 Rubber membrane

(Material)

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

Number of Stories: Three **Approximate Dimensions** 80' x 262' x 40' height

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: New access stairs to lower parking, 2004

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: 2-level parking deck at rear (southeast)

Surrounding Environment:

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

• Interrelationship of building and surroundings: The building occupies the frontage of a full block of College Street between George Street and N. Frontage Road. It sits adjacent to the Route 34 "Oak Street" Connector, a highway depressed below street level bringing Interstate 95 traffic into the city center. Like the Temple Street Garage, when new, this linear building acted as a connecting link between the new highway and the Green at the city's center. Its 3-story height was consistent with the scale of existing buildings though shorter and more horizontal than many of the new structures built nearby.

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

The building is designed as a 2-story glass and metal box sitting on top of a slightly recessed ground floor level. The ground level is largely transparent, with glass walls punctuated by square columns set in from the plane of the upper floors, creating a sense of a sheltered loggia in front of the retail store windows. In the center of the long facade, a solid strip of wall faced in granite composite panels, in a medium gray color, is broken by the entrance doorway to the office lobby. The upper floors are faced with a curtain wall consisting of continuous glass window strips alternating with solid spandrel panels of lighter gray granite at the floor levels. A subtle rhythm of vertical lines is created by narrow two-story high metal fins alternating with metal window mullions. The pure rectangular solid is outlined by a dark accent band of nearly black granite at the edges - roofline, corners and the base of the second floor. The roof is flat, broken only by a roof access tower, not visible from the street. At the east side, a parking deck at ground level and another parking level below are accessed by ramps from Frontage Road.

Architect Charles H. Abramowitz Builder J.A. Halprin Inc.

• Historical or Architectural importance:

In the early years of the Redevelopment period, the construction of highways for automobile traffic was a top priority, and the Route 34 sunken highway drove a wide swath through the demolished Oak Street neighborhood. In the effort to replace the old jumble of buildings with a new geometric vision, this structure, known as the WNHC Building, and its mate, College Plaza, on the opposite side of the highway, were among the first to be completed. The two linear buildings, aligned as if reaching for each other across the gap, reflect a similar vision to Paul Rudolph's wish for his Temple Street Garage (see Inventory form for 21 Temple Street) to span across the highway. At the same time, this structure leads the eye, and the shopper, from the highway toward the symbolic center of the city, the New Haven Green. Like the SNET building next door at 300 George and the First National Bank at 1 Church Street (see Inventory forms), 135 College expresses modernity with its clean sleek materials, abstract shape, and subtle minimalist details, here making use of granite and glass. The Citizen Action Commission in its Annual Reports emphasized the number of local businesses that were finding new homes in this state-of-the-art structure.

• Sources: Brown, Elizabeth Mills; *New Haven: A Guide to Architecture & Urban Design*, Yale U. Press, New Haven, 1976, p.25-6. 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: 241/ 0204/ 00100, Building Department permit files.

Citizens Action Commission, Annual Report and Development Guide, 1959, 1961.

Pannenberg, Frank, personal communication.

Photographer Charlotte Hitchcock Date 8/02/2009

View Multiple views Negative on File NHPT

Name Charlotte Hitchcock Date 11/09/2010

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. West view from College Street, camera facing southeast.



2. West view of office entrance, camera facing east.



3. Northwest view from College and George Streets, camera facing south.

A.E. Alling Rubber Company sporting goods and WNHC building , Oak Street project area, New Haven.



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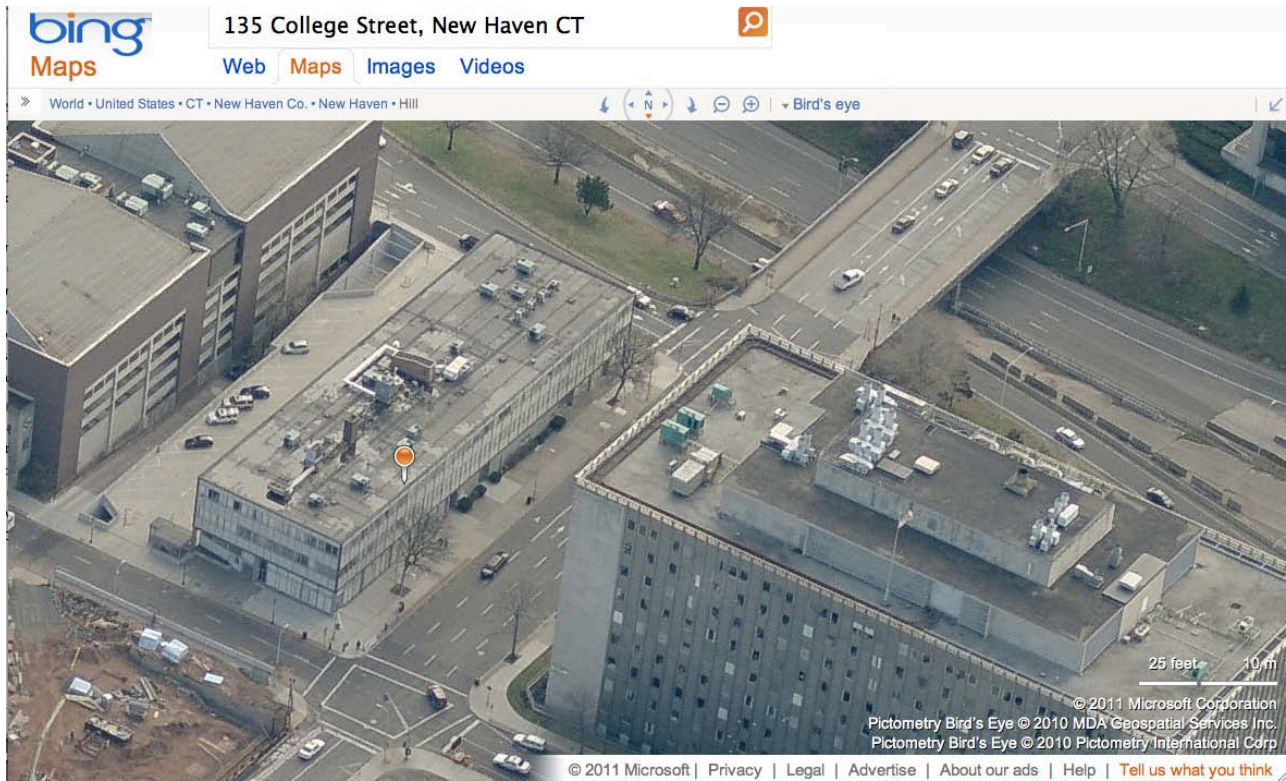
New Haven Museum and Historical Society

4. Northwest view as the building appeared in 1962.

HISTORIC RESOURCES INVENTORY FORM - BUILDING AND STRUCTURES continuation sheet

135 College Street, New Haven, CT

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5. Northwest aerial view from Bing Maps <http://bing.com/maps> accessed 11/09/2010, showing relationship to 300 George Street (at right) and Route 34 "Oak Street" Connector beyond.