



## 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) Morningstar UFWB Church

Building Name (Historic) B & L Plaza

Street Address or Location 119-139 Dixwell Avenue

Town/City New Haven Village Dixwell County New Haven

Owner(s) Morningstar UFWB Church  Public  Private

### PROPERTY INFORMATION

Present Use: Religious - church

Historic Use: Commercial - retail stores

**Accessibility to public:** Exterior visible from public road?  Yes  No

Interior accessible?  Yes  No If yes, explain Limited hours when open for congregation

Style of building Modernist - Brutalist Date of Construction 1974

**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>Block 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 \_\_\_\_\_

#### 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:** 1 **Approximate Dimensions** 142' x 47'

**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: Parking lots on south and east sides of building.

**Surrounding Environment:**

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

## • Interrelationship of building and surroundings:

Located on Dixwell Avenue, the building stands at the southeast corner of Dixwell Avenue and Webster Street. The building is one of several religious institutions located on Dixwell Avenue, all of which are 20th-century construction. Adjacent to the north originally was a public housing development of the early 1940s; this has been demolished and replaced with new rental housing. Dixwell Avenue is a main through route from New Haven to Hamden, as well as a neighborhood commercial street.

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

The building at 119 Dixwell Avenue is rectangular in plan and has 1-story ribbed concrete block masonry walls, and a flat roof. Projecting fins break up the wall surface at roughly twenty-foot increments, framing 7 14-foot wide bays alternating between window openings and solid masonry walls. The fins are battered, resulting in a buttress-like appearance. The original windows have been filled with ribbed sheet metal. In the upper portion of the bays similar sheet metal panels canted to follow the batter of the fins, form hoods above the openings. The entry, in the 3rd bay from the south, utilizes similar elements; entry is through a pair of glass storefront-type doors. These are flanked by 27-light, glass-block sidelights. Parking at the south and east of the building is accessed by 2 curb cuts on Dixwell and Webster Streets. The building is set close to the sidewalk, with a narrow planting strip along the west and north walls.

Architect Edward Cherry and Associates

Builder \_\_\_\_\_

## • Historical or Architectural importance:

Formerly known as the B & L Plaza, this building was constructed in 1974, some 10 years after urban renewal efforts formally began in the Dixwell neighborhood. Opened by "three minority businessmen," the B & L Plaza housed, B & L Records and Gift Shop, Dozier's La Boutique, and Adele's Bakery. The building was owned by the respective owners of the businesses, Hank Green Jr., Edward Dozier, and Robert Jenkins. Construction was funded by a number of local small business investment groups and banks. The building's single-story design is Modernist in its use of scored or ribbed concrete block, a popular way of attaining a Brutalist surface at lower cost than cast-in-place concrete. The treatment of window openings as abstract voids in the structure, infilled by a curtain wall of metal and glass, is also characteristically Modernist.

Architect: Edward E. Cherry (1926- ), a native of North Carolina, studied at Howard University following service in the Army during World War II, and opened his office in Hamden CT in 1963. He designed residential and commercial work (see Inventory forms for 254 Goffe Street, 100, 110 Dixwell Avenue) and associated with others on several projects (see 197 Dixwell).

## • 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 Assessor's Record: Map/Block/Parcel 281/0349/02600.

"New Haven Redevelopment Agency Annual Report; 1975," *New Haven Register*, October, 1975.

Photographer Lucas KarmazinasDate 11/12/2009View Multiple ViewsNegative on File NHPTName Lucas KarmazinasDate 6/03/2010Organization The New Haven Preservation TrustAddress 934 Street 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 (front) and north (side) elevations from Dixwell Avenue, camera facing southeast.



2. West (front) elevation from Dixwell Avenue, camera facing southeast.



3. Aerial view from Google Maps <http://maps.google.com/> accessed 6/03/2010 .



4. Site plan detail – from City of New Haven tax map, Map/Block/Parcel 281/0349/02600 not to scale, North ↑.