



## 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) Connecticut Hall (Southern Connecticut State University dining facility)

Building Name (Historic) Connecticut Hall (Southern Connecticut State College dining facility)

Street Address or Location 501 Crescent Street / 93 Farnham Avenue

Town/City New Haven Village Westville County New Haven

Owner(s) State of Connecticut  Public  Private

### PROPERTY INFORMATION

Present Use: University dining facility

Historic Use: College dining facility

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

Interior accessible?  Yes  No If yes, explain During hours of opening

Style of building Modernist - International - Brutalist Date of Construction 1970

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>Cast-in-place</u> ) | <input type="checkbox"/> Cut Stone (Type _____) | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other <u>Glass</u> |                                       |  |

### Structural System

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

### 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 Standing Seam Metal

Number of Stories: 2 Approximate Dimensions 160' x 160'

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: Addition of ramped exits for accessibility from upper level.

**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: Surrounded by landscaped campus grounds belonging.

**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, the building stands at the southeast corner of the T-shaped intersection of Wintergreen and Farnham Avenues and west of a pedestrian bridge over Fitch Street. The building is surrounded by other university buildings, most of which are of mid-20th-century construction, and lawns, walkways, and parking.

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

See continuation sheet.

Architect Carl R. Blanchard Jr. Builder P. Francini & Company, Inc., Derby CT

• 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.
- 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 Buildings Opened at Southern Connecticut State College," *New Haven Register*, May 24, 1970.
- New Haven Assessor's Record: Map/Block/Parcel 359/1160/001, Building Department permit files.

Photographer Lucas Karmazinas Date 8/20/2009

View Multiple Views Negative on File NHPT

Name Lucas Karmazinas Date 5/4/2010

Organization The New Haven Preservation Trust

Address 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 \_\_\_\_\_

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

Connecticut Hall, Southern Connecticut State University's dining facility, has a square footprint, concrete base level sheltered by landscaped earth berms, an upper level with deep concrete fin-shaped piers framing window openings, and a flat roof. The building's upper floor is comprised of full-height windows infilling between the projecting, textured, concrete fins. The fins form six-foot bays with three vertical glass panels per bay. Above the windows is a tall nearly-vertical stylized mansard element clad in dark bronze metal panels with prominent standing seam joints. The mansard extends above the roof to form a parapet that conceals mechanical equipment from the street-level view. This dark metallic element is the dominant feature of the building's design and visually creates a massive-looking weight over the occupied floor.

At the four corners, lozenge-shaped concrete forms project diagonally from under the corners of the mansard. These flat-roofed elements are suggestive of towers and give the building a fortress-like character. The building's entry is found at the lower level of the north elevation, facing the pedestrian route between residential quads and academic buildings. A wide concrete hood surrounds an entryway of glass doors and sidelights. These are aluminum-framed and lead through a vestibule into the lobby on the lower level. On the south elevation the lower level opens to a loading area reached from Fitch Street by a driveway. Lush landscaping around the lower level berms reduces the apparent bulk of the building and ameliorates the severity of the roof feature. Several additional ramps have been added over time to provide accessible exits from the upper level dining rooms.

• Historical or Architectural importance:

Connecticut Hall opened as the Southern Connecticut State College dining facility in May 1970. The two-story concrete and glass building was designed by New Haven architect, Carl R. Blanchard Jr., and constructed by P. Francini & Company, Inc. of Derby, Connecticut. Built at a cost of \$1.95 million, the facility was part of a \$30 million expansion project authorized for the campus by the Connecticut General Assembly. The facility consists of several large student dining areas, three small modular dining rooms enclosed by moveable partitions, and a faculty dining room. Dining spaces are located in the upper level, while the entrance, storage areas, and kitchens are found on the lower floor. The building was designed to be aesthetically pleasing as well as economical — a contemporary article from the *New Haven Register* stated that, "Constructed to take advantage of the beauty of the site, Connecticut Hall provides diners with a panoramic view of the campus and picturesque West Rock." The views of West Rock Ridge have been partially blocked by subsequent dormitory construction. The dining hall accommodates 2,400 patrons, in three shifts per meal, and was built to serve both resident and commuting students.

The corner turrets and the monolithic roof, along with the very deep-set recessed glazing behind its screening fins (known in Modernist vocabulary as "brises-soleils" when arranged to serve as sun shades) create a somewhat forbidding fortress-like effect, with the berm serving as moat. This makes the interior experience of high ceilings and floor-to-ceiling windows the more surprising. The use of concrete recalls Corbusian International style design which came to be known as Brutalist for the exposed concrete or "beton brut" while the metal mansard attempts to relate the form to a more historical vocabulary.

Architect: Carl Richard Blanchard, Jr. (1912-1996) was a New Haven native who studied architecture at Pratt Institute and returned to Connecticut to practice. He worked first for Fletcher-Thompson before establishing his own office; Blanchard associated on some work with local architect Lester Julianelle, and with Schilling and Goldbecker on several projects including Katharine Brennan School in New Haven. He had previously designed the Memorial Student Union at Southern Connecticut State College (now known as the Old Student Center – see Inventory form) as a project in 1959, pre-dating the Connecticut Hall design.



1. North (front) and east (side) elevations from the pedestrian walkway over Fitch Street, camera facing southwest.



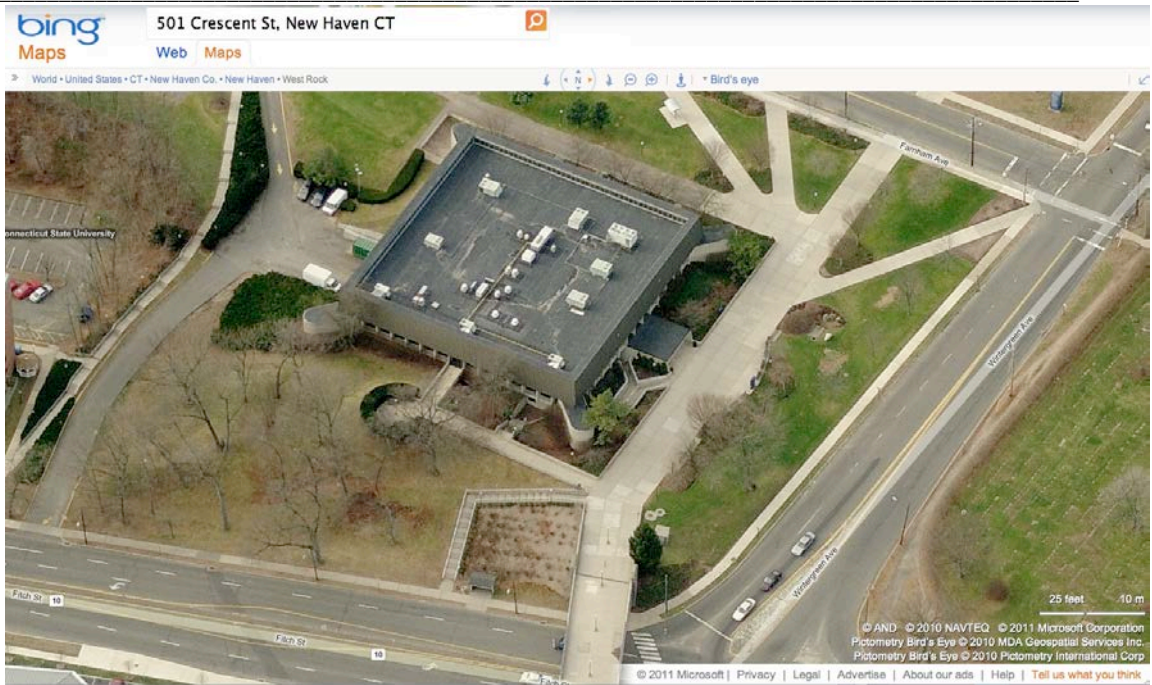
2. South (rear) elevation from Farnham Avenue, camera facing northeast.



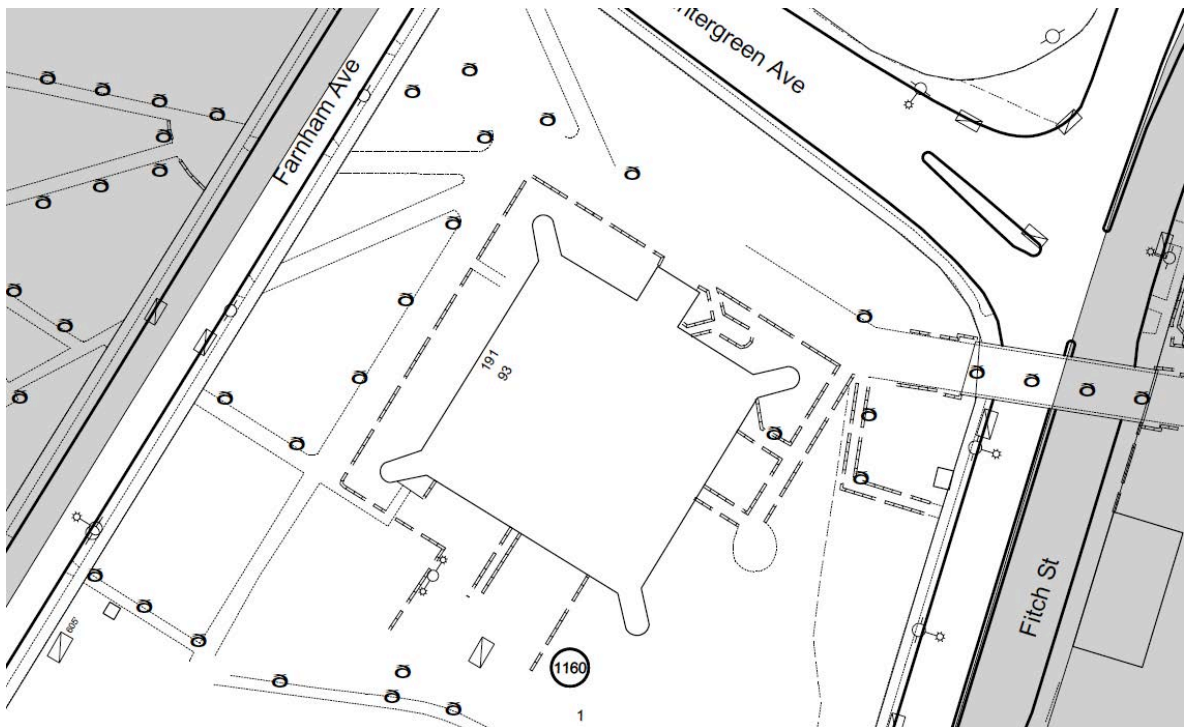
3. North (front) and east (side) elevations from the pedestrian walkway over Fitch Street, camera facing southwest.



4. Detail of entry, camera facing south.



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



6. Site Plan – detail from City of New Haven Tax Map 359/1160/001, not to scale, North ↑