



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) Central Service Building, Public Works Department, City of New Haven
 Building Name (Historic) Central Service Building, Public Works Department, City of New Haven
 Street Address or Location 34 Middletown Avenue
 Town/City New Haven Village Fair Haven County New Haven
 Owner(s) City of New Haven Public Private

PROPERTY INFORMATION

Present Use: Industrial - Public Works Offices & Warehouse
 Historic Use: Industrial - Public Works Offices & Warehouse

Accessibility to public: Exterior visible from public road? Yes No
 Interior accessible? Yes No If yes, explain _____
 Style of building Modernist - International Date of Construction 1957

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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> Concrete (Type <u>Precast Panels</u>) | <input type="checkbox"/> Cut Stone (Type _____) | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other <u>Steel</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 Rubber Membrane

Number of Stories: 2 and 3 Approximate Dimensions 120' x 180' ; 71' x 66' x 48' 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: Additions at east side, overhead door replacement

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: Warehouse, service garage, canopy, asphalt paving

Surrounding Environment:

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

• Interrelationship of building and surroundings:

The Central Service Building is located on a triangular plot of land bounded by Middletown Avenue and the I-91 highway to the south, railroad tracks to the northwest, and Fawn Street to the east. Residential areas are present south of I-91 and East Rock Park is located northwest across the railroad tracks. Nearby uses are light industrial including bus parking and auto repair.

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

The Central Services Building is composed of two rectangular segments- a large main building with a smaller section attached at the northwest corner. The main building is set into the grade so that it is 2 stories at the north side but only 1 1/2 stories at the south where grade is higher. It is faced with three materials: steel frame, glass and concrete infill. It is broken up into three horizontal bands, with rectangular panels of glass forming transparent walls at the top and bottom (lighting the sunken lower level) of the southeast and northeast facades and a vertical strip of smooth concrete infill between. Verticality of the structure is achieved through the use of blue-painted structural steel columns that appear to pierce through the glass and concrete. The projecting smaller wing is faced with large spandrel panels of glass separated by steel piers and lintels. Blue metal sans serif signage is superimposed on the southeast facade facing the street. Several vent hoods have been inserted into the glazed areas. A 1-story equipment shed is attached at the east side, at the lower level; it appears to be a later addition.

Architect Robert T. Coolidge and Henry Pfisterer (Engineer) Builder J. H. Hogan

• Historical or Architectural importance:

This is an increasingly rare local example of International Style design from the post-WWII period and reflects the industrial aesthetic of factory architecture. The horizontal strips of steel-sash glazing filling the bays of the structural grid, and the expression of the structural frame on the exterior, bespeak the ideal of structural honesty. Here the lower band of glazing under the weighty wall panels, emphasizes the fact that the concrete is not load-bearing. The applied sans serif lettering is a characteristic feature of the Modernists and is remarkably well-preserved here.

Robert T. Coolidge (1915-1955) and his wife Jean (1919-2008) were Harvard-trained Modernist architects who practiced both independently and for a short time with E. Carleton Granbery. The Coolidges' other architectural work was largely residential.

• Sources:

Brown, Elizabeth Mills; *New Haven: A Guide to Architecture and Urban Design*, Yale University 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.

See continuation sheet.

Photographer Julie Rosen / Charlotte Hitchcock Date 2/21/10

View Multiple Views Negative on File NHPT

Name Julie Rosen / Charlotte Hitchcock Date 2/21/10

Organization 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 _____

• Sources (*continuation*):

New Haven Tax Assessor's Record: Map/Block/Parcel: 155/ 0836/ 0030, Building Department permit files.

Biographical background on Robert Coolidge: courtesy of Robert T. Coolidge II.

Biographical background on Carleton Granbery: courtesy of William Raveis Real Estate - anthony.ardino@raveis.com



1. South view, camera facing north.



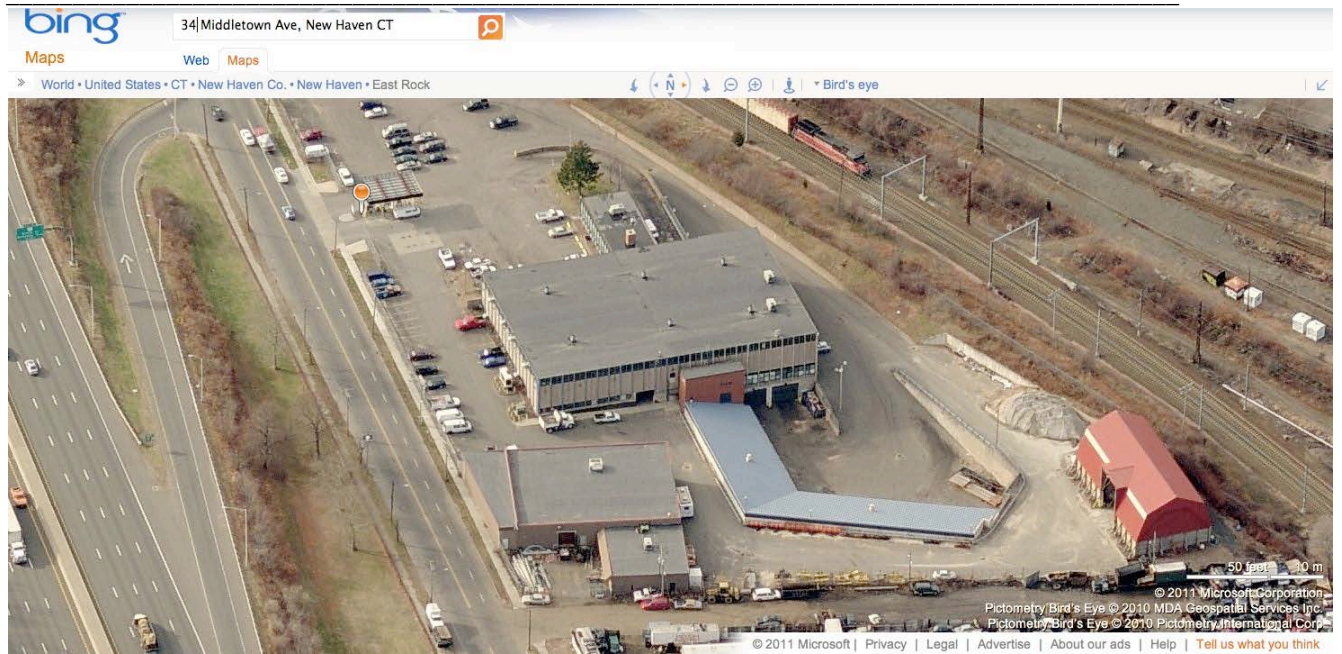
2. Southwest view from street, camera facing northeast.



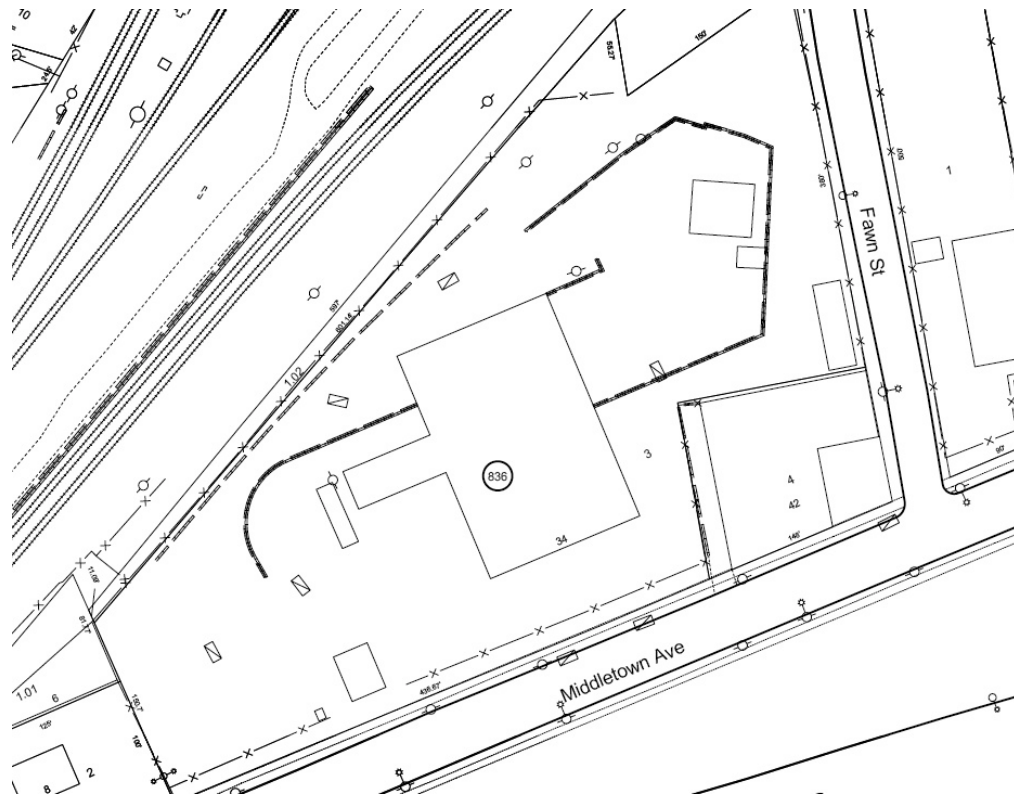
3. Southeast view from street, camera facing northwest.



4. South detail view, camera facing north.



5. East aerial view from Bing Maps <http://www.bing.com/maps/> accessed 6/14/2011.



6. Site Plan – detail from New Haven Tax Map: 155/836/03, not to scale, North ↑.