



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) WESCO International, Inc.
 Building Name (Historic) Westinghouse Electric Supply Company
 Street Address or Location 178 Wallace Street
 Town/City New Haven Village Wooster Square County New Haven
 Owner(s) WESCO Real Estate III, LLC Public Private

PROPERTY INFORMATION

Present Use: Commercial/Industrial - Electrical Supply Company
 Historic Use: Commercial/Industrial - Electrical Supply Company

Accessibility to public: Exterior visible from public road? Yes No
 Interior accessible? Yes No If yes, explain _____
 Style of building Modernist - International - Miesian Date of Construction 1962

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** 91' x 151' x 16' 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: _____

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: Front yard asphalt parking

Surrounding Environment:

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

• Interrelationship of building and surroundings:

The building stands at the northwest corner of Wallace Street and Grand Avenue, at the southern end of the block formed by Wallace Street, Grand Avenue, Hamilton Street, and the Amtrak Railroad line. The building reflects the commercial function of the surrounding buildings, all of which are 1- to 2-story mid-20th century construction. In the next block west is an early public housing complex, Farnam Courts, and DeLauro Park (see Inventory form for 657 Grand Avenue).

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

The building consists of a steel frame with concrete block infill walls 14 bays wide and 5 bays deep, with a reinforced concrete foundation base. The walls and foundation are painted white while the I-beams delineating the bays are painted blue. Two cantilevered awnings, each three bays wide, project from the building's facade on the east side and protect the main entrance and loading docks. The awnings are painted blue, matching the I-beams. A single window 1' wide by 3' high is placed to the lower-right of center in each of the bays of the building's side (north and south) elevations.

Architect Caproni Associates; Eliot Noyes, New Canaan CT; Builder Smith Construction Company, Derby CT
Hugh M. Neilson, Pittsburgh PA

• 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.194-5.
- 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: 200/0583/002, Building Department permit files.
- New Haven Register: 7/5/59, 8/14/59, 12/16/63, from New Haven Public Library local history files.
- New Haven Planning Department pamphlet, "Wooster Square Industrial District," undated.
- Bruce, Gordon, *Eliot Noyes*, London: Phaidon, 2006, pp. 188-199.

Photographer Lucas Karmazinas Date 6/24/2009

View Multiple views Negative on File NHPT

Name Lucas Karmazinas Date 8/27/2009

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 _____

HISTORIC RESOURCES INVENTORY FORM - BUILDING AND STRUCTURES continuation sheet

178 Wallace Street, New Haven, CT

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• Historical or Architectural importance:

The Westinghouse Electrical Supply Company building was built as a part of an 11-acre industrial development located north of Grand Avenue between the new elevated highway, the railroad line, and the Mill River. The industrial park was included as part of the larger Wooster Square Redevelopment Area, underway by the late 1950s. By locating the industrial park on the eastern side of the US Route 5 (eventually I-91) corridor, planners hoped to provide a divide between residential and industrial land uses in the Wooster Square area as determined by project architect and planner James Skerritt. The process of clearing the blocks of a stock of 2- and 3-story residential units began in 1958 and the majority of new construction was completed by 1964. Eventually twelve industrial and commercial structures were built, all characterized by Modernist designs. 178 Wallace Street continues to be used as an electrical supply wholesaler, thus maintaining the industrial nature of the block. This Modernist structure's design suggests International style influences in its horizontality, flat roof, and use of cantilevering. To this it adds Miesian features, such as the use of the visible steel frame to stress verticality and symmetry.

Architects: Eliot Noyes' involvement with 178 Wallace Street came through his role as Westinghouse's "Consultant Director of Design." Beginning in 1960, the company hired Noyes and his firm to oversee all design-related aspects of its operations-architecture, interiors, graphic design, industrial design, and product design. Noyes provided similar services to IBM, Mobil Oil, Cummins Engine, Xerox, and, in Connecticut, Torin. This service was a direct outgrowth of the Bauhaus-inspired training that Noyes received at Harvard under Walter Gropius, in which all students received training in painting, sculpture, architecture, and graphic and industrial design. For 178 Wallace Street, the original design apparently was by Pittsburgh architect Hugh M. Neilson (Westinghouse was based in Pittsburgh); Noyes certainly would have reviewed the design and apparently modified it. Caproni Associates would have provided local oversight of construction.



1. South (side) and east (front) elevations from Grand Avenue, camera facing northwest.



2. East (front) elevation from Wallace Street, camera facing southwest.

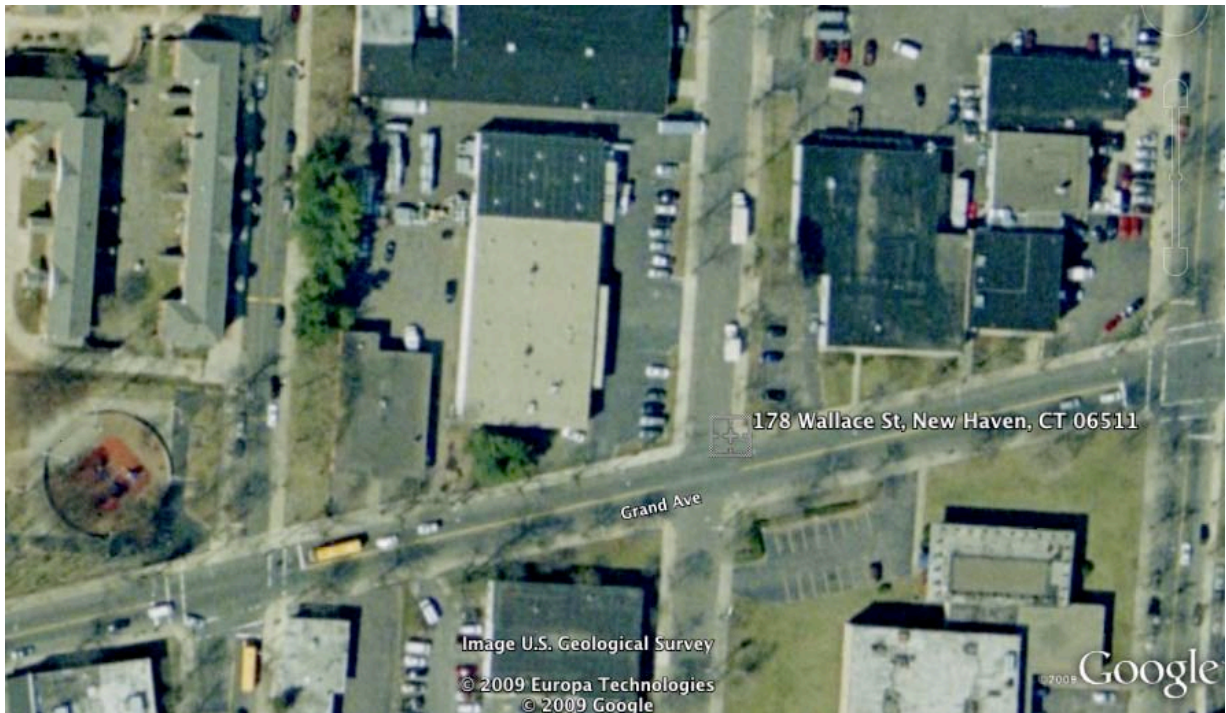


3. Detail of loading zone, east (front) elevation, camera facing southwest.



4. Detail of south (side) elevation, camera facing northwest.

5. Detail of steel corner feature, south (side) elevation, camera facing northwest.

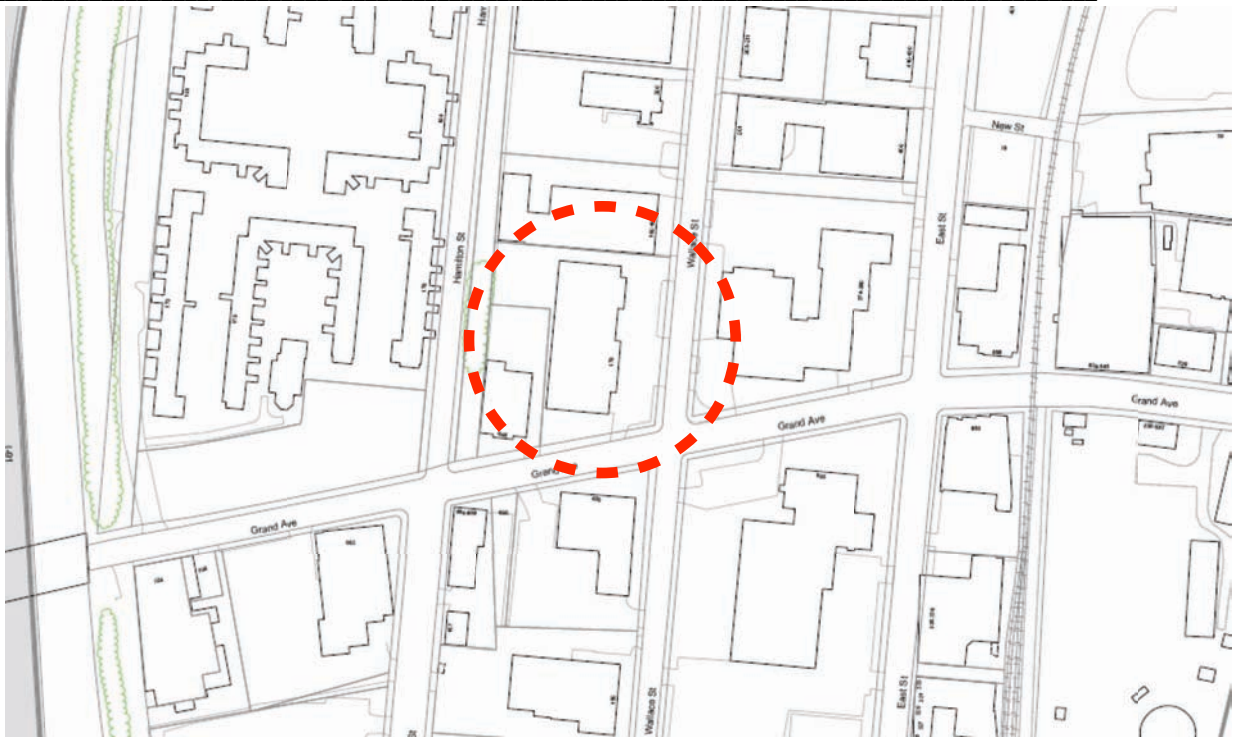


6. Aerial view from Google Earth <http://maps.google.com/> accessed 8/27/2009.

HISTORIC RESOURCES INVENTORY FORM - BUILDING AND STRUCTURES continuation sheet

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7. Site plan – from City of New Haven tax map, parcel 200/0583/00200, not to scale, North ↑