

HISTORIC RESOURCES INVENTORY - BUILDING AND STRUCTURES

Please send completed form to: National Register and State Register Coordinator,
State Historic Preservation Office, Department of Economic and Community Development,
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) Pelz Gymnasium, Southern Connecticut State University (SCSU)
 Building Name (Historic) Pelz, Irma M., Gymnasium, Southern Connecticut State College
 Street Address or Location 501 Crescent Street
 Town/City New Haven Village Westville County New Haven
 Owner(s) State of Connecticut, Southern Connecticut State University Public Private

PROPERTY INFORMATION

Present Use: EDUCATION/college: gymnasium
 Historic Use: EDUCATION/college: gymnasium

Accessibility to public: Exterior visible from public road? Yes No
 Interior accessible? Yes No If yes, explain During events or by appointment
 Style of building MODERN MOVEMENT: Bauhaus/International style Date of Construction 1952, 1958

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 type="checkbox"/> Cut Stone (Type _____) | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other <u>Glass block</u> | | |

Structural System

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

Number of Stories: 2 1/2 Approximate Dimensions 160' x 260'

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: Constructed in two phases: west (gym) 1952, and east (pool) 1958

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: Academic buildings, lawns, landscape plantings, paved walks and driveways.

Surrounding Environment:

Open land Woodland Residential Commercial Industrial Rural

High building density Scattered buildings visible from site

• Interrelationship of building and surroundings:

Pelz Gymnasium is located near the northwest corner of the SCSU campus on the east side of Fitch Street. The entrance faces south toward a circular driveway and an open area facing the north side of the science buildings. To the north is a modern parking garage, to the west is a cemetery, and to the east the grade slopes down to an artificial pond and natural Beaver Ponds.

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

Pelz Gymnasium has two tall blocks containing high-ceilinged spaces for athletics - a gym and a swimming pool. These are linked by a north-south corridor which is a campus circulation path connecting buildings to the north with the central campus to the south. Entry doors in the north and south facades access this corridor which opens to the gym and pool. A separate entry into the 1952 portion is at the southwest corner, with triple doors into a lobby. This provides access to the gym and a stair down. Classrooms and locker rooms are in the lower level beneath the main gym. The exterior is painted brick, with minimal trim consisting of a stone belt course below clerestory windows infilled with glass block and an overhanging cornice at the roof line. The southwest lobby and entry vestibule project out from the main mass, stepping down in height and terminating in a pair of brick-walled planting beds. A sunken outdoor patio outside the west elevation exposes the wall of the lower level classrooms. The building has good integrity, with many intact original features.

Architect Westcott & Mapes, Inc. Builder Fusco-Amatruda Construction Company

• Historical or Architectural importance:

The campus of New Haven State Teachers College relocated from central New Haven after the 1947 purchase of farmland surrounding Fitch and Crescent Streets. A campus plan was prepared by the office of Architect Douglas Orr, and the first buildings were Pelz Gym and Engleman Hall, built in the early 1950s. All campus buildings were Modernist in design though, as public institutional structures, they were economically constructed.

The abstract geometrical volume and spare use of ornamental trim mark the building as Bauhaus or International Style with characteristics such as the minimalist use of ornament and the extensive use of glass block for windows.

The building was named for Irma M. Pelz (1900-1962), a teacher of physical education at the New Haven State Normal School and its successor, New Haven State Teachers College.

See continuation sheet.

• 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 Charlotte Hitchcock Date 9/01/2016

View Multiple Views Negative on File NHPT

Name Charlotte Hitchcock Date 10/26/2016

Organization New Haven Preservation Trust

Address 922 State Street, P.O. Box 8968, New Haven, CT 06532

• Subsequent field evaluations:

Latitude, Longitude: 41.335173, -72.944314

Threats to the building or site:

None known Highways Vandalism Developers Renewal Private

Deterioration Zoning Other _____ Explanation _____

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Pelz Gymnasium, SCSU, 501 Crescent Street, New Haven, CT

Historical or Architectural importance (*continued*):

Architects:

Westcott & Mapes, Inc. established their practice as an engineering firm in 1916 and grew to also provide architectural services through the northeastern states. During the Modernist period, they were the designers of the Pelz Gymnasium at SCSU (1952), the Doctors Building at 2 Church Street South (1963), Southern New England Telephone Company Building Three at 400 State Street (1975), and the Fairbank Apartments at 355 Ferry Street (1973). In 1983 they were also the architects for Jennings Hall.

Sources (*continued*):

AIA Historical Directory of American Architects,
<http://public.aia.org/sites/hdoaa/wiki/Wiki%20Pages/What's%20here.aspx>

DeCarlo & Doll, Inc. 1992. Existing Facilities Condition Survey for Southern Connecticut State University.
SCSU Facilities Files.

Farnham, Thomas J. 2008. *A History of the Connecticut State University System*. Hartford: Connecticut State University System.

Maps and aerial views:

Bing Maps accessed at: <https://www.bing.com/mapspreview>

Google Maps accessed at: <https://www.google.com/maps/>

Westcott and Mapes, Inc. firm web site accessed 10/26/2016 at:
<http://www.westcottandmapes.com/about-us.shtml> .

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Pelz Gymnasium, SCSU, 501 Crescent Street, New Haven, CT



Figure 1. Location map of Pelz Gymnasium. Image from Google Maps accessed 10/27/2016.

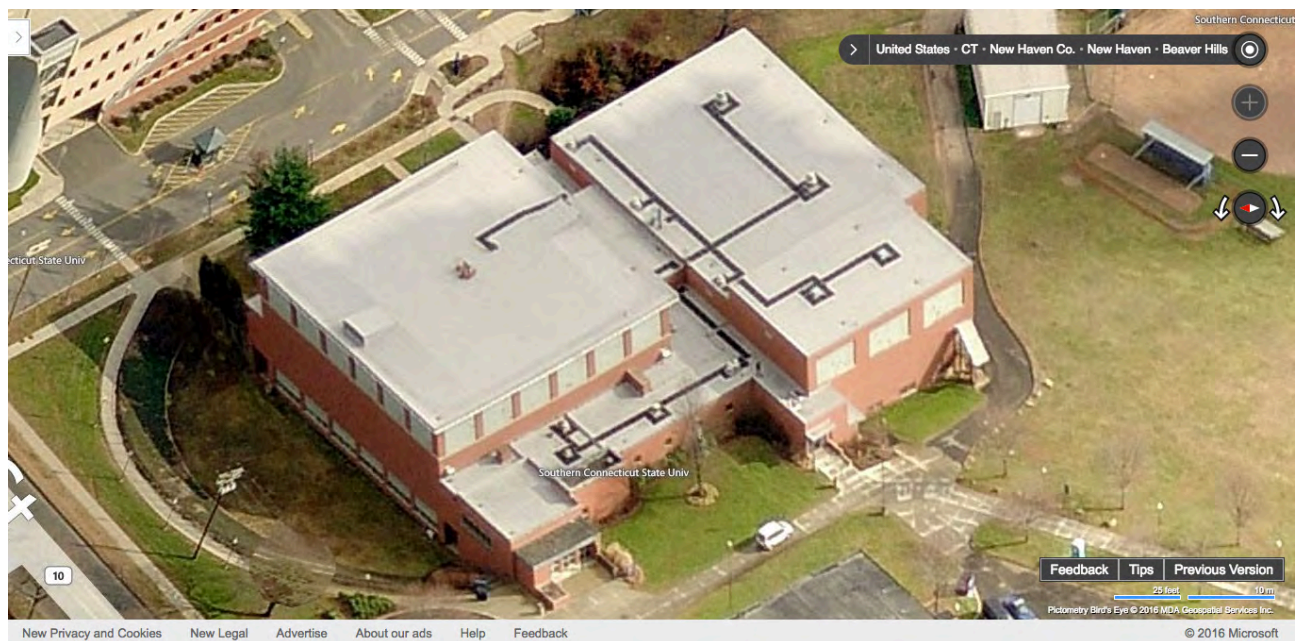


Figure 2. West aerial view of Pelz Gymnasium. from Bing Maps accessed 10/27/2016, camera facing east.

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Photo 3. South view of Pelz Gymnasium, camera facing north. The west (left) block dates from 1952; the east (right) block was added in 1958, with further additions in 1972.



Photo 4. Northwest view of Pelz Gymnasium, camera facing southeast. This is the west elevation of the 1952 building, consisting of a gymnasium at the upper level and classrooms below facing a sunken exterior landscaped area.

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Photo 5. Southeast view of Pelz Gymnasium; camera facing northwest. This 1958 block consists of the swimming pool at right rear and a small gym on an upper level over support spaces at the foreground.



Photo 6. Interior view of the large gym in the west block (1952); camera facing northwest.