

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) Morse, Samuel F. B., and Stiles, Ezra, Colleges
 Building Name (Historic) Morse, Samuel F. B., and Stiles, Ezra, Colleges
 Street Address or Location 302-304 York Street (aka Tower Parkway)
 Town/City New Haven Village _____ County New Haven
 Owner(s) Yale University, PO Box 208372, New Haven, CT 06520-8372 Public Private

PROPERTY INFORMATION

Present Use: EDUCATION: dormitory
 Historic Use: EDUCATION: dormitory

Accessibility to public: Exterior visible from public road? Yes No
 Interior accessible? Yes No If yes, explain _____
 Style of building MODERN MOVEMENT: Expressionism Date of Construction 1958-62

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, rubble aggregate</u>) | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Cut Stone (Type <u>Random stone as aggregate</u>) | <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____ | | |

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 _____

Number of Stories: 5, 11, 14, B Approximate Dimensions 810' x 450' (entire complex)

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: Renovations in 2009-10 added space below north lawn, skylights.

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: Paved walks and steps, landscaped courtyards, lawn and shade trees, public art.

Surrounding Environment:

Open land Woodland Residential Commercial Industrial Rural

High building density Scattered buildings visible from site

• Interrelationship of building and surroundings: Located on the Yale University campus east of Tower Parkway facing the Payne Whitney Athletic facilities and accessible by a walkway west from York Street. The residential buildings face a lawn with trees along Tower Parkway and have interior landscaped courtyards. Claes Oldenberg's 1974 sculpture "Lispstick (Ascending) on Caterpillar Tracks" is in the Morse courtyard. Adjacent campus buildings include commercial shopping on Broadway, the neo-Gothic athletic buildings to the west, Graduate School of Arts & Sciences to the east, and campus power plant.

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

See continuation sheet.

Architect Eero Saarinen & Associates
Cesar Pelli, Chief designer

Builder E & F Construction Company
see below

• Historical or Architectural importance:

Structural engineer: Henry A. Pfisterer
Landscape architect: Dan Kiley

2009 Renovations: KieranTimberlake Architects

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.

Ryan, Susan. 1980. HRI 1113. New Haven Architectural Survey. Map/block/lot: 260/0307/0010.

See continuation sheet.

Photographer Charlotte Hitchcock Date 8/06/2016

View Multiple Views Negative on File NHPT

Name Charlotte Hitchcock Date 11/04/2016

Organization New Haven Preservation Trust

Address 922 State Street, P.O. Box 8968, New Haven, CT 06507

• Subsequent field evaluations:

Latitude, Longitude: Stiles College: 41.31247, -72.930975 Morse College: 41.312623, -72.930041

Threats to the building or site:

None known Highways Vandalism Developers Renewal Private

Deterioration Zoning Other _____ Explanation _____

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Other notable features of building or site (*continued*):

Two residential colleges are adjacent to each other, on an irregular site bounded on the north and west by the curve of Tower Parkway. An open pedestrian walk meanders through the site, separating the two self-contained colleges and connecting York Street on the east with Tower Parkway and the Paine Whitney athletic complex to the northwest. Each college includes a five-story irregularly curved block of dormitory rooms enclosing a landscaped courtyard at the northeast and southeast corners of the site. A taller block punctuates each college like a campanile; located at opposite ends of the complex, the towers frame the ensemble. A residence for the college Master (faculty in residence) is situated at the outer edge of each college beyond the tower, contributing to the geometric variety of the massing. The curving north façade frames an expansive lawn with shade trees.

The dormitory spaces were originally designed as single rooms, contrasting with the suite organization of the older colleges built in the 1930s. Each college has a double-height dining hall, a library, and other activity spaces. The original plan provided a shared kitchen located below the central walkway. The construction is a special concrete fabrication in which random-sized rough-cut stones in the formwork were encased in poured concrete. Later, high-pressure water jets were sprayed at the walls to erode the surface and expose the stones, resulting in a masonry-like texture. Abstract sculptures and reliefs by Costantino Nivola are embedded in the walls and located along paths throughout the complex. Added to the landscape of Morse College a few years after construction was the 1969 Claes Oldenburg sculpture *Lipstick (Ascending) on Caterpillar Tracks*.¹

The single rooms on double-loaded corridors were found less desirable than the suites in the older colleges, and recently were reconfigured in a major renovation project of 2009-10. Architects KieranTimberlake added additional below-grade spaces and inserted light courts and skylights to brighten the lower levels. These are visible as landscape walls and benches along the building facades in the north lawn area. The college courtyards were originally intended to be open but have since been gated like the other colleges.

Historical or Architectural importance (*continued*):

By 1953, President A. Whitney Griswold (1906-1963) had been president of Yale University for two years, and had begun sponsoring Modernist architecture and also the preference for alumni architects to design new campus buildings. The 30-acre Hillhouse estate, Sachem's Wood, had been purchased and donated to the university in 1910 (Scully et al, 186), but the crest of the hill remained undeveloped until after World War II. Architect Eero Saarinen (1910-1961), an alumnus, began developing a university master plan including the layout of Science Hill as well as the downtown blocks of the campus.

In the early 1960s a major building campaign by the university was ongoing (Carley, 54). The planning of extensive urban renewal in New Haven meshed with plans for Yale expansion. The university was able to acquire the former site of the city's three public high schools just to the east of the Paine Whitney athletic complex, and this became the land for two new residential colleges (Scully, 310). For a time, a plan for a ring road bypassing around the central city and campus, running behind Paine Whitney, made it seem possible for the new colleges to abut the athletic building (Plattus essay in Pelkonen et al, 319). However, eventually Tower Parkway remained between the two sites.

As the university planner, Eero Saarinen was intimately involved in the philosophy as well as the details of the building campaign. He had designed the Ingalls Rink (1957-8) and was chosen to be the architect for the

¹ This was the first of Oldenburg's large-scale Pop art sculptures. It was first placed in Hewitt Quadrangle near the Beinecke Library (Scully, 328-9) and later moved to Morse College.

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new colleges in 1958. He had come to think of college campuses as communities much like towns, and he was intrigued by historical towns as models for campus plans, which he developed in both suburban and urban settings across the country. Plattus has traced Saarinen's interest in the Italian city of Siena with its Piazza del Campo as a prototype for the plan of the new colleges. The public face of the complex is a curved façade facing an open space (a green here rather than a paved plaza) that visually focuses on the imposing façade and tower of Paine Whitney (as the Piazza in Siena does on the Palazzo Pubblico). Behind the façade a complex of building elements and interior courtyard spaces has the scale of a village, with a pedestrian "street" cutting between the buildings.

The design vocabulary of the colleges is one of irregularity of plan, vertical windows peeking through narrow openings, rough textures of stone and concrete in warm tones, surprising outcroppings of sculpture in odd places. In this, Saarinen continued to develop an expressionistic use of abstract forms that had begun with the Ingalls Rink design and that moved his work away from the more severe qualities of the International Style. These residential colleges are like nothing else on the Yale University campus. In their complete break from right angles they evoke medieval villages or desert adobes. Contemporary with the work of Paul Rudolph in New Haven, Saarinen's designs have a warmth and quirkiness that keeps them from being Brutalist in character.

Architects:

Eero Saarinen (1910-1961) was born to well-known Finnish architect and Cranbrook Academy of Art director Eliel Saarinen and textile artist Loja Saarinen. Saarinen grew up surrounded by design, helping his father design furniture and fixtures for the Cranbrook campus by the time he was in his teens. In 1929 Saarinen went to Paris to study sculpture before enrolling in the Yale architecture program the following year. In 1934, he returned to Michigan to teach at Cranbrook, work on furniture designs, and practice architecture with his father. At Cranbrook Saarinen met Charles Eames. The two young men became great friends, pushing each other creatively and collaborating on projects. Notable work was the collection of molded plywood chairs for the MoMA-sponsored 1940 Organic Design in Home Furnishings competition. Over the next 15 years Saarinen designed furniture for Knoll, including their Tulip chairs and tables and the Womb chair.

Eero Saarinen was a leader of the second-generation of Modernists. Constantly pushing material and aesthetic boundaries, Saarinen expanded the Modernist vocabulary to include curvilinear and organic forms which developed Modernism in an expressionist direction away from the International Style. Among his notable projects are the Dulles International Airport in Washington, DC, the Gateway Arch in St. Louis, Missouri, the TWA Terminal at Kennedy International Airport, and the CBS headquarters in New York. He moved his office to Hamden, Connecticut and was involved in master planning for Yale University as well as designing several individual projects, at the time of his early death.

Cesar Pelli (b. 1926) was born in Argentina where he earned a Diploma in Architecture from the University of Tucuman. He worked in the office of Eero Saarinen serving as Project Designer for the TWA Terminal and Morse and Stiles Colleges. After this apprenticeship, he was Director of Design at DMJM and, later, Partner for Design at Gruen Associates, both in Los Angeles. During these years, his designs included the San Bernardino City Hall and the Pacific Design Center in Los Angeles, both in California; and the United States Embassy in Tokyo, Japan. In 1977, Pelli became Dean of the Yale University School of Architecture and also founded Cesar Pelli & Associates, based in New Haven. He resigned as Dean in 1984. In 1995, the American Institute of Architects awarded Cesar Pelli the Gold Medal, recognizing a lifetime of distinguished achievement in architecture.

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Sources (continued):

AIA Historical Directory of American Architects,

<http://public.aia.org/sites/hdoaa/wiki/Wiki%20Pages/What's%20here.aspx>

Maps and aerial views:

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

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

Fitch, James Marston. 1973. *American Building: the Historical Forces That Shaped It, Second Edition*. New York: Shoken Books.

KieranTimberlake Architects. "Morse and Ezra Stiles Residential Colleges." Firm web site accessed 11/02/2016 at: <http://www.kierantimberlake.com/pages/view/10/>

McQuade, Walter. 12/1962. "The New Yale Colleges." *Architectural Forum* Vol. CXVII, pp. 104-111.

Metz, Don and Yuji Noga. 1966. *New Architecture in New Haven*. Cambridge: MIT Press.

New Haven Modern web site. New Haven Preservation Trust. Accessed at: <http://newhavenmodern.org/>

Pelkonen, Eeva-Liisa and Donald Albrecht editors. 2006. *Eero Saarinen: shaping the future*. New Haven: Yale University Press.

Pelli, Cesar, biography. Pelli Clarke Pelli Architects accessed 11/03/2016 at

<http://pcparch.com/firm/people/cesar-pelli-faia>

Rosen, Julie. 2011. Samuel F.B. Morse and Ezra Stiles Colleges, Yale University. Docomomo-us accessed 11/01/2016 at [http://www.docomomo-](http://www.docomomo-us.org/register/fiche/samuel_fb_morse_and_ezra_stiles_colleges_yale_university)

[us.org/register/fiche/samuel_fb_morse_and_ezra_stiles_colleges_yale_university](http://www.docomomo-us.org/register/fiche/samuel_fb_morse_and_ezra_stiles_colleges_yale_university)

Saarinen, Eero, biography. Knoll web site accessed 11/02/2016 at <http://www.knoll.com/designer/Eero-Saarinen>

Stephens, Suzanne. 11/15/2011. "Morse and Stiles Colleges," Yale U. *Architectural Record*. Accessed 11/02/2016 at: <http://www.architecturalrecord.com/articles/7573-morse-and-ezra-stiles-colleges?>

Wright, Gwendolyn. 2008. *USA: modern architectures in history*. London: Reaktion Books.

Yale University Manuscripts and Archives Digital Images Database. Accessed 11/03/2016 at:

<http://images.library.yale.edu/madid/showthumb.aspx?q=eero+saarinen>

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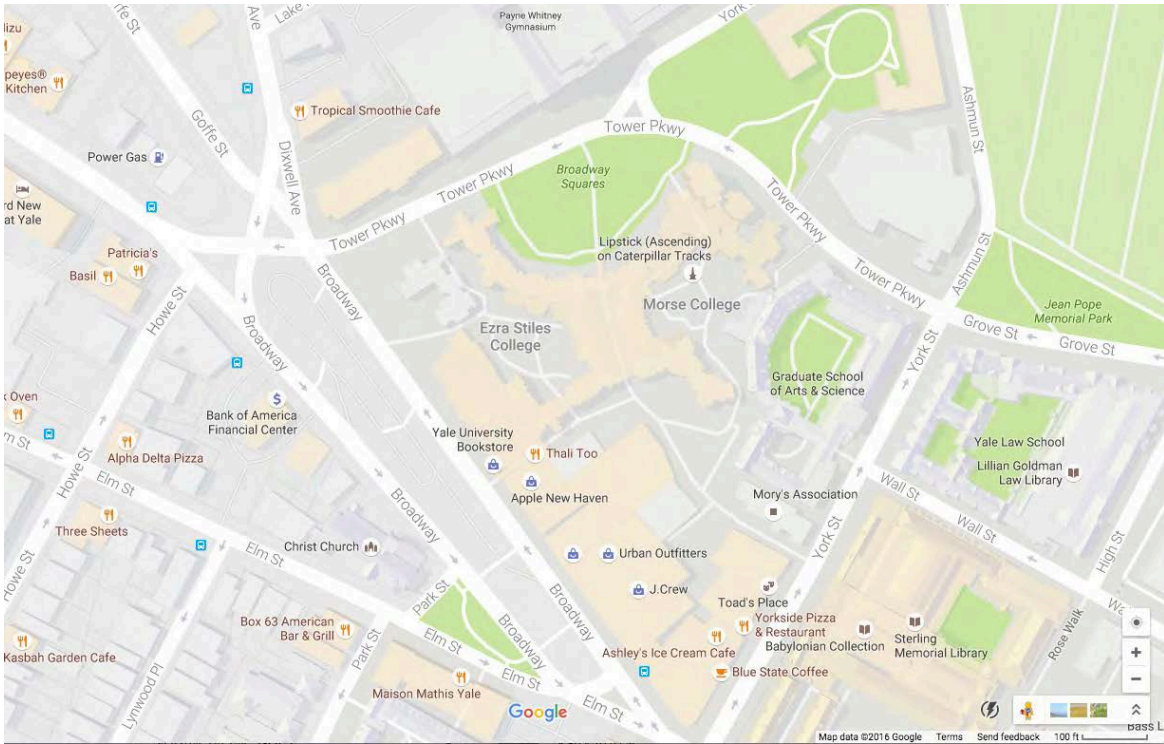


Figure 1. Location map of Morse and Stiles Colleges. Image from Google Maps accessed 11/02/2016.

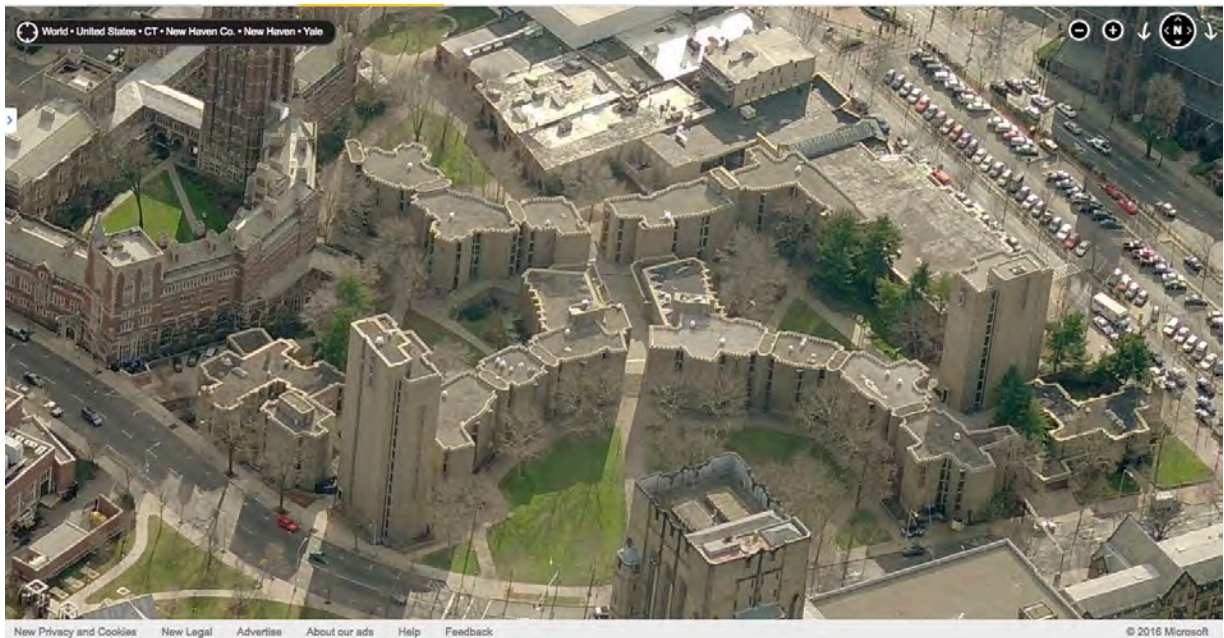


Figure 2. North aerial view of Morse and Stiles Colleges. Image from Bing Maps, accessed 11/02/2016.

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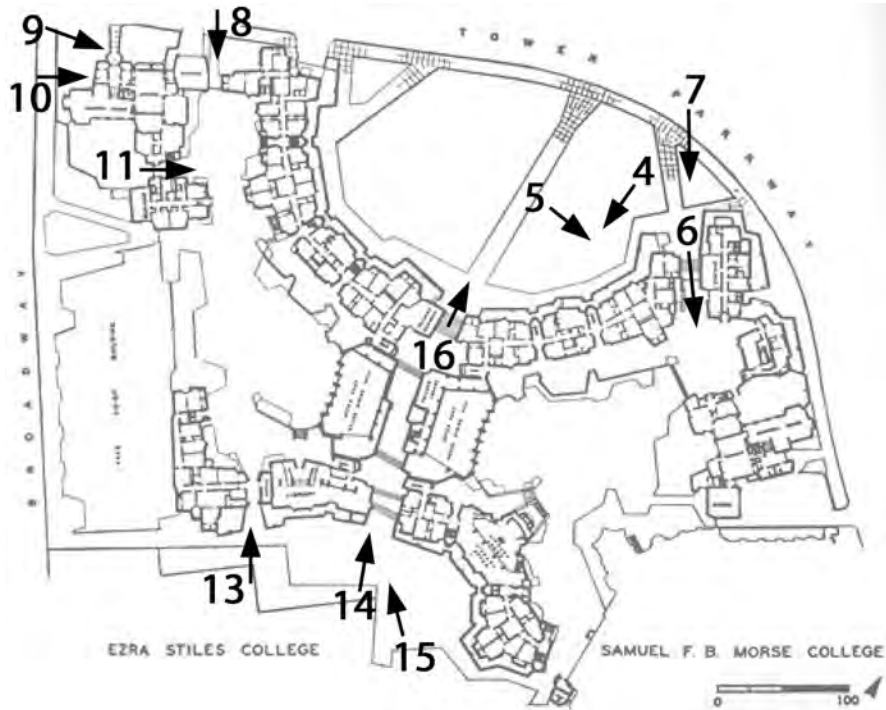


Figure 3. Plan of Morse and Stiles Colleges (Metz 1966, 14); keyed to the photographs that follow.



Photo 4. North view of Morse College from Tower Parkway, camera facing southwest.

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Photo 5. Northwest view of Morse College from Tower Parkway green, camera facing southeast.



Photo 6. North view of Morse College courtyard and Oldenburg's *Lipstick (Ascending) on Caterpillar Tracks*; camera facing south.

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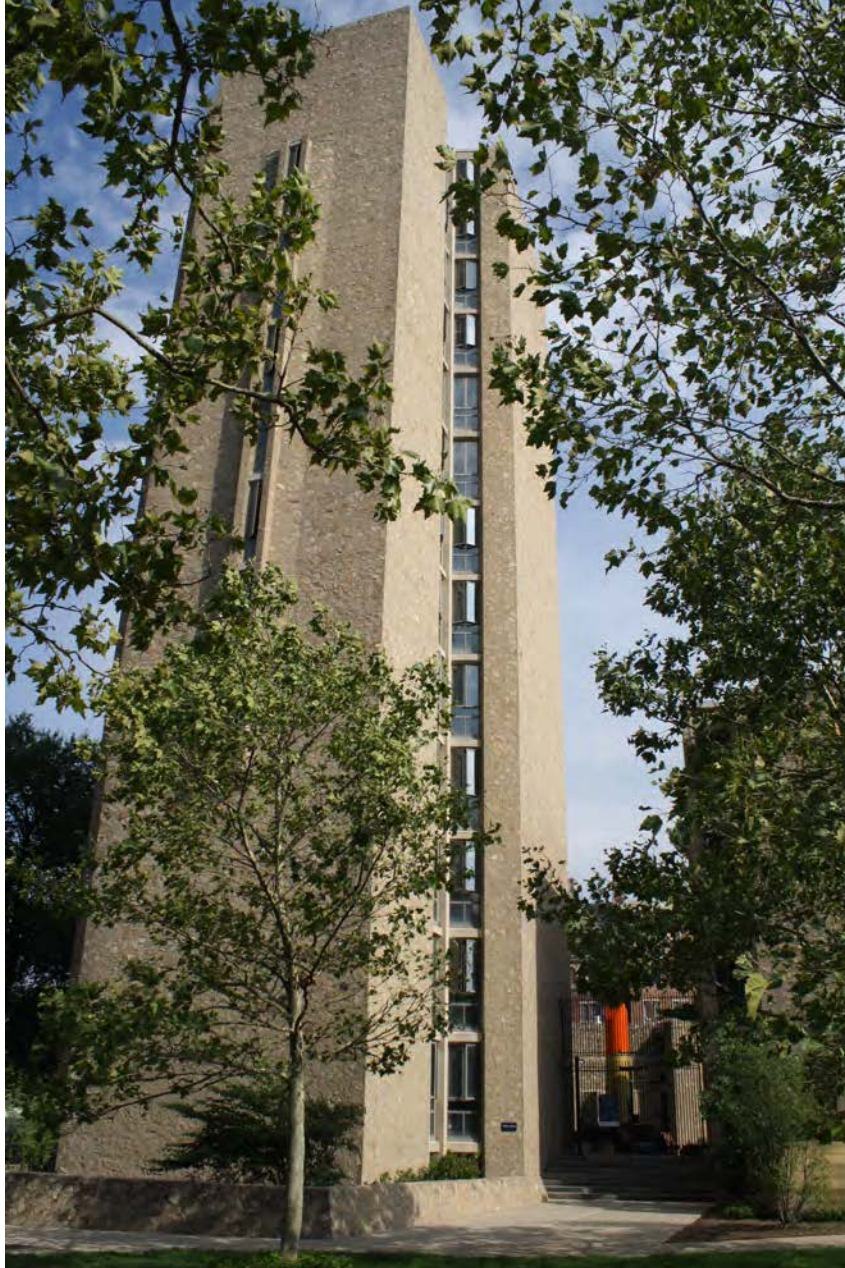


Photo 7. North view of Morse College high rise building; camera facing south from Tower Parkway green.

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Photo 8. North view of the entry to Stiles College from Tower Parkway; camera facing south.

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Photo 9. North view of the Stiles College Master's House from Tower Parkway; camera facing southeast.



Photo 10. Northwest view of the Stiles College Master's House from Broadway; camera facing east.

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Photo 11. West view of the Stiles College courtyard; camera facing east.



Photo 12. Detail view of typical wall with embedded Nivola sculpture; camera facing north.

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Photo 13. South view of the Stiles College gate from Broadway pedestrian walk; camera facing north.

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Photo 14. South view of the walk between Stiles (left) and Morse (right) Colleges; camera facing north toward the tower of Paine Whitney gymnasium at the rear.



Photo 15. South view of the walk between Stiles (left) and Morse (right) Colleges; camera facing north.

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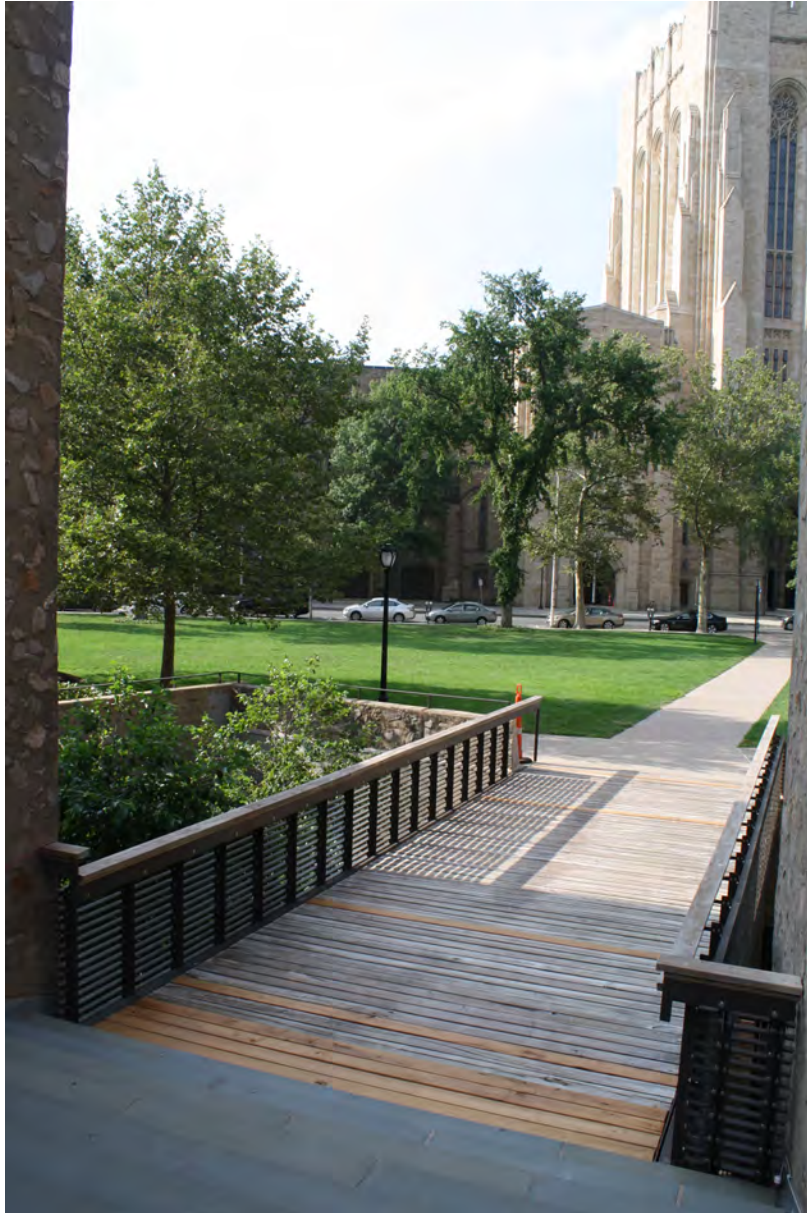


Photo 16. View of the new pedestrian bridge facing Tower Parkway green; camera facing north.