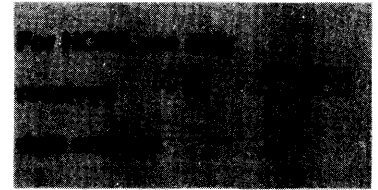


**United States Department of the Interior  
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service**



**National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form**

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*  
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

**1. Name**

historic N/A

and/or common Chapel Street Historic District

**2. Location**

street & number N/A N/A not for publication

city, town New Haven NA vicinity of congressional district 3rd

state Connecticut code 09 county New Haven code 005

**3. Classification**

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> district	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture
<input type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> commercial
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> both	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> educational
<input type="checkbox"/> site	<b>Public Acquisition</b>	<b>Accessible</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> entertainment
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial
	<u>N/A</u>	<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> museum
			<input type="checkbox"/> park
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private residence
			<input type="checkbox"/> religious
			<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
			<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> other: multiple

**4. Owner of Property**

name Multiple Ownership

street & number N/A

city, town New Haven N/A vicinity of state Connecticut

**5. Location of Legal Description**

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Town Clerk's Office

street & number 200 Orange Street

city, town New Haven state Connecticut

**6. Representation in Existing Surveys**

title State Register of Historic Places has this property been determined eligible?  yes  no

date 1983  federal  state  county  local

depository for survey records Connecticut Historical Commission, 59 So. Prospect Street

city, town Hartford state Connecticut

## 7. Description

<b>Condition</b>		<b>Check one</b>	<b>Check one</b>
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved date _____
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed	N/A	

### Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

New Haven is a large industrial city located on the northern shore of Long Island Sound, forty miles south of Hartford, the state capital.

The Chapel Street Commercial Historic District consists of approximately 5½ city blocks located in the center of downtown New Haven. The district is a mixed-use area including 102 commercial, residential and institutional buildings. Most of the building stock dates from the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The district as a whole is a good example of a mixed-use area with a strong commercial core and viable residential sections. The district represents the evolution of New Haven commerce, the growth of its cultural life through the construction of its theaters and the development of urban residential styles of architecture.

The district has 8 main streets; Chapel, Crown and George streets running east and west and Temple, College, High, York and Park streets running north and south. The distinctive character of the district contrasts strongly with its surroundings. On the north the 900 block of Chapel Street is bordered by the New Haven Green, which since the seventeenth century has played a major role in the social, educational, religious, political and commercial life of the city. It is important to note that in the district one is never further than a few blocks from this important New Haven landmark. The remainder of the northern boundary of the district is defined by the Yale University Campus. On the west, the district boundary runs north and south along Park Street, abutting the boundary of the Dwight Street Historic District. On the south, the district boundary is formed by Crown and George streets, with the high-rise buildings resulting from recent redevelopment efforts being excluded from the district. On the east, the district boundary runs north and south along Temple Street abutting the Chapel Square Mall/Park Plaza Hotel/Macy's and Malley's department store complex which was developed between 1965 and the early 1970s.

The terrain of the district is basically flat and the streets follow a simple grid pattern. The district is characterized by densely packed buildings typical of a downtown commercial environment. The dominant building material is brick and only a few frame structures exist within the district boundaries. The age of the buildings in the district ranges from the Ira Atwater House, built c.1817, to the Yale Center for British Art and the Crown Street Parking Garage, both built in 1973. Architectural styles represented in the district include Federal, Greek Revival, Second Empire, Queen Anne, Gothic Revival, Italianate, Collegiate Gothic, Colonial Revival, Georgian Revival, Neoclassical Revival, Renaissance Revival, Art Moderne and Art Deco. The majority of the buildings in the district are commercial, but there are numerous single and multi-family residences as well. The district is generally lowrise and the tallest building is the twelve-story Taft Hotel (#9),\* built on Chapel Street in 1911 facing the Green.

\*Numbers expressed in parentheses are inventory numbers assigned in the building list.

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Title New Haven Historic Resources Survey (Downtown)

Date 1981

Depository Connecticut Historical Commission, 59 S. Prospect Street,  
Hartford, CT. 06106

Listed on the National Register of Historic Places

Elisha Blackman Building December 20, 1978

Determined Eligible for Listing on the National Register

Shubert Theater June 17, 1981

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Original Appearance

The original seventeenth century town plan for New Haven was comprised of nine squares: eight squares surrounding a central square that became the New Haven Green. Nearly all the district was part of the southwestern section of this nine-part grid. The 1748 Wadsworth Map shows the area that comprised the district as residential. The houses were widely spaced, leaving room on the interior of the squares for outbuildings and gardens. By the mid-eighteenth century the main streets in what is today the Chapel Street Commercial Historic District consisted of Chapel, George, College and York streets.

By 1824 the street plan still in effect today had been established when Crown, Temple and High streets were cut through, subdividing the original nine squares. The 1824 Doolittle Map shows a denser concentration of buildings along Chapel Street than the 1748 map. The most densely built blocks within the district are those on the east side of College, the west side of Temple and the north side of George between Temple and College. Despite this higher density, the district area appears to have retained its residential character during the first quarter of the nineteenth century. No documented buildings survive from the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries and the Federal-style Ira Atwater House, built c.1817 (#93), is the sole surviving representative of the early nineteenth-century residential character of the district.

Between 1825 and 1845 the commercial core of New Haven began to expand, changing the residential character of the district, and introducing the commercial theme that still dominates the area. The Townsend Block (#10), a 4-story commercial block built on Chapel Street c.1831, is one of the earliest masonry commercial blocks still standing in New Haven. The residential character of the area was not completely swept away by the growing commercial core, and numerous residences were built in the district between 1840 and 1900. Most of these were on Temple, George, Crown, College, York, High and Park streets (Photographs #15 & 16). Chapel Street, especially the 900 and 1000 blocks, became increasingly commercial and it was on Chapel Street that Carrl's Opera House (later the Hyperion) was built in 1880 (Photograph #17). 1014-1018 Chapel Street (#11) and the Elisha Blackman Building (#20) are representative of the commercial buildings constructed on Chapel Street in the late nineteenth century. After the Civil War, as the city grew and space became an important commodity within the district, residential construction shifted from the single-family structures, more common in the first half of the century, to duplexes and multi-family townhouses. The growth of Yale also affected housing construction, and in the 1890s the first private dormitories for Yale Students were erected. Two of these, Warner Hall (#15, Photograph #4) and the Hotel Majestic/Hotel Duncan (#29), still stand on Chapel Street.

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The nineteenth century also marked a period of ecclesiastical building construction within the district. The Third Congregational Church was built before 1868 on the west side of College Street (demolished 1921), Calvary Baptist Church (now Yale Repertory Theater, #19) was built in 1871 on the corner of Chapel and York streets and the Trinity Church Home complex (#68, Photograph #14) was built on George Street in 1868.

The twentieth century brought the most significant changes to the fabric of the district. It was during this period that the commercial section of the district, previously concentrated along the 900 and 1000 blocks of Chapel Street opposite the Green and Yale, expanded west along Chapel Street toward Park Street, south along Temple and College streets and along Crown and George streets. Commercial buildings were also interspersed with residences along Park and York streets during this period, while only High Street was allowed to remain a residential street. High Street's residential character is mainly due to the construction of several early twentieth-century apartment buildings and the retention of many of its nineteenth-century houses. Similar apartment buildings were also built along the north side of the 1100 block of Chapel Street.

The popularity of the 900 block of Chapel Street facing the Green as the elite shopping area of New Haven led in the first quarter of the century to the construction of a number of fine Neoclassical Revival and Renaissance Revival commercial structures. After the first World War the old vaudeville theaters gave way to movie houses and the construction of the Roger Sherman on College Street (#90; Photograph #15) and the Crown Theater (#14) in the 1920s brought more commercial structures into an area that had been almost exclusively residential until the turn of the century.

Present Appearance

The present appearance of the district is largely a product of early twentieth-century construction and remodellings of older buildings during the same period. The densely packed lowrise commercial center of the district is centered along Chapel and Temple streets. The western end of Chapel, between High and Park streets, has seen the most alterations. The Yale Center for British Art (#18; Photograph #11) stands adjacent to the former Calvary Baptist Church (#19), now minus its spire and used as the Yale Repertory Theater. Chapel Street has only two major modern intrusions in the form of the Colony Inn (#30) on the north side of the street and the Jewish Community Center (#24) on the south side. Many of the buildings on the south side of the 1100 block are houses that have been transformed into commercial buildings through the addition of incompatible mid-twentieth-century storefronts. These intrusions are more than balanced by several good late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century commercial buildings and the El Dorado Apartments (#28), the Hotel Majestic/Hotel Duncan (#29), and the Monterey Apartments (#31), all on the north side of the 1100 block of Chapel Street.

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Temple Street retains much of its early twentieth-century appearance. The most notable buildings are the Beaux-Arts former YMCA/Liberty Building (#97), the Renaissance Revival former United Illuminating Co. building (#99; Photograph #16), and the massive Colonial Revival United Illuminating Co. building (#101; Photographs #1 & 12). The only intrusions are the Hartford National Bank (#98; Photograph #1), a modern building which nonetheless respects the scale of the block and continues the facade lines of the street, and the small parking lot on the southwest corner of Temple and Crown Street.

George Street continues the sense of the commercial district as the south facade of the United Illuminating building (101; Photographs #1 & 12) dominates the block. The smaller contemporary Colonial Revival building on the south side of the street (#102) mirrors the larger United Illuminating Company. In the middle of the block is Dyers Standard Cleaners (#66; Photograph #7), one of the rare examples of Art Moderne Commercial architecture in the district. The intrusions are excluded from this block except for a bland 1930s garage building (#67) with modern additions that stands on the same parcel as the Art Moderne building.

Crown Street is one of the least densely built of all the streets in the district. This is partly the result of demolitions of a number of Victorian residences and the installation of surface parking lots, and partly because a number of detached residences with small lawns still exist on the street. The mixture of commercial and residential styles is pleasant; most of the residences date from the nineteenth century except for a 1920s apartment house (#59), while most of the commercial buildings are of twentieth-century origin. Notable buildings include the P.J. Kelly Furniture Co. (#37), the Art Deco Crown Theater/LoRicco Tower (#41), the Art Deco Downtown Garage (#48; Photograph #8), the Italianate townhouse at 271 Crown (#52) and the Second Empire townhouses (#60; Photograph #21). The major intrusion on Crown Street is the parking garage on the corner of College Street (#49), which takes up much of the north side of the block between Temple and College streets. Another smaller garage (#61) and modern store-front additions to several Victorian townhouses are minor intrusions on the street.

College Street boasts the widest range of styles in the district. The west side of the street exhibits remnants of the area's nineteenth-century residential neighborhood in the form of the Federal Ira Atwater House (#93), the Thomas Merwin House (#92), and the High Victorian Gothic William Bartlett House (#91; Photograph #15) on the south end of the block. The center of the block is dominated by the huge Art Deco Roger Sherman Block (#90; Photograph #15), much altered in 1950. A delightful mixture of late nineteenth-and early twentieth-century

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commercial facades, including the Hyperion Theater (#89), terminates the block. The east side of the block is taken up by three large buildings: the Crown Street Parking Garage (see above), the Shubert Theater (#94) and the Taft Hotel (#9; Photograph #5).

High Street, as mentioned above, has retained its residential character better than any other street in the district. No intrusions interrupt the scale or rhythm of the streetscape. Notable buildings include the Cambridge Arms Apartments (#78) the Oxford (#77) and the Colonial Revival house at 15 High Street (#86; Photograph #8), probably the last single-family house to be built in the district.

York Street, like Crown Street, has a mixture of commercial and residential buildings. The nineteenth-century brick townhouses are especially abundant there, most notably #69 and #75. Several small surface parking lots and a modern office building (#74) are the major intrusions on the block while minor intrusions include a number of storefront additions obscuring the townhouse facades.

Park Street has a mixture of commercial and residential buildings, and though none of the buildings are individually distinguished, the streetscape, consisting of a nineteenth-century townhouse, an early twentieth-century apartment building and several late nineteenth- and twentieth-century commercial buildings, is a pleasant one that complements the rest of the district. There are two intrusive mid-twentieth-century commercial buildings on the block, but they contribute to the sense of a cohesive streetscape.

Contribution to District

Buildings constructed during the district's period of greatest significance are listed as contributing. That is not to say that some of the buildings listed as non-contributing do not have architectural significance or may not attain architectural significance at a later date. Most notable of the buildings which, although less than fifty years old, has already been recognized for its architectural significance is the Yale Center for British Art (#18), designed by Louis Kahn.\* Kahn is acknowledged to be one of America's leading twentieth century architects and the British Art Center, his last work, is thought to be his masterwork.

\* Elizabeth Mills Brown, New Haven: A Guide to Architecture and Urban Design, p.69.

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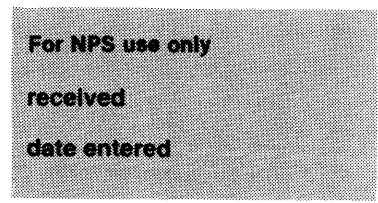
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Building List

Contributing = C  
Noncontributing = N

- N 1. 926-930 Chapel St. (1941). 2-story Art Moderne masonry commercial block. 5 bays wide by 9 bays deep. Stylized foliate motifs and geometric panels typical of the style enhance the facade.
- C 2. 934-942 Chapel St. (c.1912). 2-story brick commercial building with Colonial Revival details. 5 bays wide with 4 storefronts.
- N 3. 950 Chapel St. (c.1950). 2-story masonry bank building with a polished granite facade.
- C 4. 954-960 Chapel St. (1906). 4-story brick late Renaissance Revival commercial building. 5 bays wide built of narrow Roman brick with rich Neoclassical details. Storefronts heavily altered. (Photographs #5,6).
- C 5. 962-964 Chapel St. (facade: 1915; bldg. c. 1880). Bohan-Landorf Building. 3-story brick late Renaissance Revival building. 3 bays wide, remodelled storefronts (Photograph #5).
- N 6. 970 Chapel St. (c.1970). 1-story brick commercial building (Photograph #5).
- C 7. 976-982 Chapel St. (1923). Hamilton's. 3-story brick late Renaissance Revival commercial building with a terra cotta facade. 5-bays wide. Designed by Brown & Von Beren (Photograph #5).
- N 8. 986 Chapel St. (c.1970). 1-story brick commercial building with vertical wood siding facade (Photograph #5).
- C 9. 994-1000 Chapel St. (1911). Taft Hotel. 12-story brick Colonial Revival hotel with cut-stone and terra cotta details. Designed by F.M. Andrews of New York (Photograph #5).
- C 10. 1004 Chapel St. (c.1831). Townsend Block. 4-story Greek Revival commercial block. 7 bays wide, 6 bays deep. A 3-story ell 3 bays wide is oriented toward College St. (Photograph #5).
- C 11. 1014-1018 Chapel St. (1873). 4-story brick commercial building with cut-stone trim. Storefronts heavily altered.
- C 12. 1020 Chapel St. (1930). 2-story brick Collegiate Gothic commercial building with cut-stone trim. 3 bays wide sheltered by a slate tile pent roof. Designed by Brown & Von Beren.



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- C 13. 1026 Chapel St. (c.1880). 2½-story brick commercial building. Has a half-mansard roof with 4 dormers. Facade heavily altered through the addition of a false facade sheathed in carrera glass c. 1950.
- C 14. 1032 Chapel St. (1860; facade 1901). Union League Club, Sherman Tavern. 4-story blonde brick Beaux-Arts club building. 4 bays wide. Built in front of an Italianate townhouse designed by Henry Austin (Photograph #4).
- C 15. 1044 Chapel St. (1892) Warner Hall. 6-story brick Queen Anne commercial/residential building designed by Rufus G. Russell. 3 bays wide with 2 storefronts flanking a central entrance (Photograph #4).
- C 16. 1050-1062 Chapel St. (c.1930). 2-story brick Collegiate Gothic commercial block. 9 bays wide with 5 storefronts. Storefronts heavily remodelled (Photograph #4).
- C 17. 1066-1070 Chapel St. (c.1930). The Abbey. 2-story brick Collegiate Gothic commercial block. 3 bays wide (Photograph #11).
- N 18. 1080 Chapel St. (1973). Yale Center for British Art and British Studies. 4-story steel and concrete museum building designed by Louis Kahn (Photograph #11).
- C 19. 1120 Chapel St. (1871). Calvary Baptist Church/Yale Repertory Theater. Small brick Victorian Gothic church. The spires were removed when the church was deconsecrated.
- C 20. 1126-1134 Chapel St. (1881). Elisha Blackman Building. 4-story brick Victorian commercial block with wood-frame bay windows added to the upper stories in the 1920s. Listed individually on the National Register.
- N 21. 1142 Chapel St. (1938). 1142 Chapel Building. 2-story brick Georgian Revival commercial building with a cast stone facade. 4 bays wide.
- C 22. 1144 Chapel St. (c.1860). 2-story masonry Italianate villa. Stuccoed exterior scored to look like stone blocks. 2 commercial additions made to the 1st floor facade c. 1950.
- C 23. 1150 Chapel St. (c.1900). 2-story frame house. Asymmetrically massed with substantial one-and two-story commercial wings added to front facade (Photograph #10).

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- N 24. 1156 Chapel St. (1952). Jewish Community Center. 2-story brick structure designed by John Weinstein and Charles Abrahamowitz. Set back from the street with a deck running the width of the building (Photograph #10).
- N 25. 1166 Chapel St. (c. 1950). 2-story cinder block commercial building. Upper facade sheathed in pebble dash and the lower in brick veneer (Photograph # 10).
- C 26. 1172 Chapel St. (1922). The Georgian Building. 3-story brick Georgian Revival commercial building with cast-stone Neoclassical details. Lower facade heavily altered (Photograph #10).
- C 27. 1176 Chapel St. (c. 1880). 2½-story brick townhouse obscured by a 2-story 1950s addition to the front facade. Addition is 4 bays wide (Photograph #10).
- C 28. 1145 Chapel St. (1922). El Dorado Apartments, 6-story blonde brick apartment block with Neoclassical details designed by Brown & Von Beren. 8 bays wide with 2 storefronts flanking a central entrance. 1st & 2nd floors are faced with cut-stone blocks (Photograph #18).
- C 29. 1151 Chapel St. (1894). Hotel Majestic/Hotel Duncan. 6-story polychrome brick Romanesque style apartment block designed by Foote & Townsend. 6 bays wide with rounded and canted bays flanking a central canopied entrance (Photograph #18).
- N 30. 1157 Chapel St. (c. 1960). Colony Inn. 2-story steel and reinforced concrete frame hotel. 24 bays wide (Photograph #18).
- C 31. 1175-1177 Chapel St. (1925). Monterey Apartments. 6-story blonde brick apartment block with Neoclassical details. 7 bays wide by 6 bays deep. 1st floor is sheathed in ashlar blocks and 2 storefronts face Chapel St. (Photograph #18).
- N 32. 177 Park St. (1960). 1-story masonry commercial building (Photograph #9).
- C 33. 173-175 Park St. (c. 1890). 3-story brick townhouse. 4 bays wide. (Photograph #9).
- C 34. 165 Park St. (c. 1915). 3-story blonde brick apartment building. 5 bays wide (Photograph #9).
- C 35. 161 Park St. (c. 1890). 2-story brick commercial building. 4 bays wide. Heavily altered (Photograph #9).

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- N 36. 155 Park St. (c.1935). 2-story Art Moderne masonry commercial building. Cast concrete facade with a lion's mask medallion in upper facade.
- C 37. 196 Crown St. (1914). P.J. Kelly Furniture Co. 5-story brick Neo-classical Revival commercial building. Designed by William H. Allen. Upper floors added in 1919. Storefront remodelled c. 1960.
- N 38. 202 Crown St. (c.1880). 2½-story brick townhouse. 2-story brick addition to front c. 1950 and 2-story brick rear addition.
- N 40. 212 Crown St. (c.1910). 2-story brick commercial building. 7 bays wide. Facade heavily altered c.1950.
- Parking Lot
- C 41. 216 Crown St. (1929). Crown Theater/LoRicco Tower. 6-story blonde brick Art Deco theater designed by A.W. Boylen. 5 bays wide.
- Parking Lot - surface parking lot with small square brick attendant's booth with a red tile roof (c.1930).
- C 42. 230-234 Crown St. (c.1910). 3-story blonde brick late Renaissance Revival commercial building.
- N 43. 248 Crown St. (c.1959). 1-story cinder block commercial building attached to #44.
- C 44. 250 Crown St. (c.1845). 2-story brick Greek Revival townhouse. 3 bays wide with 2-story wing on east elevation. Last remnant of the Victorian residential neighborhood on this side of the block.
- C 45. 254 Crown St. (c.1920). 1-story blonde brick commercial building with cast stone trim. Lower facade greatly altered.
- C 46. 260 Crown St. (c.1925). 2-story brick garage with Colonial Revival details. 5 bays wide with two storefronts flanking central garage bay.
- N 47. 274 Crown St. (c.1940). 2-story brick Salvation Army building joined to a 1-story stuccoed masonry commercial building. 2-story and 1-story sections are each three bays wide.
- C 48. 280-284 Crown St. (1925). Downtown Garage. 3-story blonde brick Art Deco garage. 3 bays wide by 6 bays deep. Designed by Brown & Von Beren (Photograph #8).
- N 49. 215 Crown St. (1971). Crown St. Parking Garage. 7-story reinforced concrete parking garage.

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- C 50. 255 Crown St. (c.1900). 1-story brick commercial building. 4 bays wide with 2 storefronts. Rare survival of original storefronts.
- N 51. 261-263 Crown St. (1975). 1-story Post-Modern rustic brick diner. Built in 1950s and moved to this site in the 1970s when it was substantially changed.
- C 52. 271 Crown St. (c.1868). 3-story brick Italianate townhouse. Front facade altered c.1965 to accomodate storefronts.
- C 53. 277 Crown St. (c.1870). 3-story brick Italianate townhouse with sandstone facade. 3 bays wide. A 2-story cinder block addition (c.1975) obscurs the facade.
- C 54. 279 Crown St. (c.1870). 3-story brick Italianate townhouse with sandstone facade similiar to #53.
- C 55. 281 Crown St. (c.1870). 3-story brick Italianate townhouse similiar to #53 & #54.
- C 56. 283 Crown St. (c.1870). 3-story brick Italianate townhouse similiar to #53, #54 & #55. A 3-story brick storefront was added to front facade c.1930. During the 1920s it was converted into an apartment house and an entrance was installed on the High St. elevation. A 1-story brick commercial addition fronting on High St. was added to the rear c.1950.
- C 57. 295-297 Crown St. (c.1880). 3-story brick Queen Anne-style townhouse. 6 bays wide by 3 bays deep (Photograph #3).
- C 58. 301 Crown St. (c.1870). 2-story Italianate villa. 3 bays wide by 2 bays deep.
- C 59. 305 Crown St. (1928). 3-story Colonial Revival blonde brick apartment building. 7 bays wide.
- C 60. 313-319 Crown St. (c.1870). Pristine group of Second Empire brick row-houses. 2½ stories tall with a polygonal slate tile mansard roof. 8 bays wide (Photograph #2).
- N 61. 321 Crown St. (c.1960). 1-story masonry garage surrounded by a surfaced lot.
- C 62. 337 Crown St. (c.1840). 2-story frame Greek Revival house. 3 bays wide with a 2-story ell on the east elevation (Photograph #13).
- C 63. 341 Crown St. (c.1920). 1-story brick commercial building with a bracketed denticulated cornice. Lower facade has been recently remodelled (Photograph #13).

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- C 64. 353 Crown St. (c.1920). 1-story brick commercial building with a bracketed cornice. Lower facade remodelled in 1983 (Photograph #13).
- N 65. 365 Crown St. (c.1940). Undistinguished 2-story brick commercial building with corner entrance.
- N 66. 245 George St. (c.1940). Dyers Standard Cleaners. 1-story masonry Art Moderne commercial building. Pre-cast concrete facade with original sign band (Photograph #7) (on same lot as #67).
- N 67. 245 George St. (c.1935). 1-story brick garage building constructed in a L-shape. Cinder block and brick wings. Garage bays on the south elevation.
- C 68. 303 George St. (1868). Trinity Church Home. 2-story brick Victorian Gothic chapel and home for aged women; complex once part of a larger complex. Set back from street; spires have been removed from both buildings. Designed by Henry Austin (Photograph #14).
- C 69. 168 York St. (c.1870). Pair of 3-story brick townhouses. 6 bays wide. One entrance altered in the early 20th century.
- C 70. 166 York St. (c.1890). 2½-story brick townhouse with unusual gambrel roof. 3 bays wide; 1st floor fenestration altered by unsympathetic addition of a plate glass picture window.
- C 71. 148 York St. (c.1900). 2-story brick commercial building. Polygonal pebble dash-faced addition c.1960 obscures the main facade.
- C 72. 146 York St. (c.1870). One of a pair of identical 2½-story brick townhouses set on a raised basement. 3 bays wide. Facade obscured by a 2-story masonry commercial addition c.1960.
- C 73. 142 York St. (c.1870). One of a pair of identical 2½-story brick townhouses set on a raised basement. 3 bays wide. Retains original pedimented and bracketed door surround. A modern storefront addition c. 1950 is located at basement level.
- N 74. 149 York St. (c.1960). 3-story blonde brick office building. 14 bays wide. The top 2 floors are covered by a metal facade screen.
- C 75. 139-143 York St. (c.1870). Similiar to the townhouses at 313-319 Crown St. (inventory entry #50). 2½-story brick Second Empire townhouses. 6 bays wide.
- C 76. 38 High St. (c.1840). 2½-story brick Greek Revival house, formerly half of a double house. 3 bays wide; 2-story masonry ell.
- C 77. 36 High St. (1910). The Oxford. 4-story masonry late Romanesque Revival apartment building designed by C.E. Joy. Random ashlar-faced walls 4 bays wide.

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- C 78. 32 High St. (1925). Cambridge Arms Apartments. 6-story masonry Jacobean Revival apartment building designed by Lester Julianelle. 7 bays wide.
- C 79. 28-30 High St. (1922). 3-story brick Georgian Revival apartment building designed by John Weinstein. 5 bays wide.
- C 80. 26 High St. (c.1845). 2½-story brick Greek Revival House.
- C 81. 39 High St. (c.1930). High St. Garage. 4-story Art Deco brick garage. 3 bays wide; one storefront and 2 garage bays on street level.
- C 82. 37 High St. (c.1882). 2½-story brick Queen Anne style house. 3 bays wide.
- C 83. 35 High St. (c.1840). 3-story brick Greek Revival townhouse sheathed in stucco scored to look like stone blocks. 4 bays wide.
- C 84. 31-33 High St. (c.1865). 2½-story brick Italianate villa. 3 bays wide. Interior alterations and landscaping at rear designed by Paul Rudolph c.1958.
- C 85. 27-29 High St. (c.1875). Luther House. 2-story brick Queen Anne style duplex. 6 bays wide. Minor alterations have been made to front facade.
- C 86. 15 High St. (c.1910). 2½ story brick Colonial Revival house. 3 bays wide by 4 bays deep (Photograph #8).
- C 87. 268 College St. (c.1880). 3-story brick commercial building. 3 bays wide; storefront wing projects from original facade and has been heavily remodelled (Photograph #15).
- C 88. 266 College St. (c.1910). 3-story masonry Neoclassical Revival commercial building. Polychrome terra cotta facade. 4 bays wide. Unsympathetically remodelled storefront.
- C 89. 262-264 College St. (1880; facade 1915). Loews Theater (Carll's Opera House/Hyperion Theater/3 College St. Theater). 3-story brick theater with early 20th-century Neoclassical Revival terra cotta facade. One bay wide. Theater marquee shelters a recessed entrance (Photograph #15; for original entrance oriented on Chapel St. see Photograph #17).
- C 90. 254 College St. (1925; remodelled c.1950). Roger Sherman Block. 5-story blonde brick Art Deco theater. 27 bays wide. A projecting marquee dominates the central 7 bays (Photograph #15).

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- C 91. 230 College St. (c.1876). William Bartlett House. 2½-story brick High Victorian Gothic townhouse, once half of a duplex. Last remnant of late 19th-century residential architecture on College St. (Photograph #15).
- C 92. 226-228 College St. (c.1840). Thomas Merwin House. 3-story brick townhouse. 1st floor heavily altered and obscured by boarding.
- C 93. 218-224 College St. (c.1817). Ira Atwater House. 2½-story brick Federal-style house. 5 bays wide by 3 bays deep. Lower facade has storefront addition. Rare survival of Federal-style residential architecture in this district.
- C 94. 247-249 College St. (1914). Shubert Theater. 2-story brick theater. Handsome and well-preserved Neoclassical Revival interior. Adjacent commercial block which fronted on College St. in front of the theater demolished in 1978. Complex designed by Albert Swazey. Determined eligible for the National Register of Historic Places.
- C 95. 178 Temple St. (C.1910). 2-story brick Colonial Revival commercial building. 7 bays wide; 4 storefronts, all remodelled (Photograph #1).
- C 96. 162 Temple St. (c.1910). 2-story brick Beaux-Arts commercial building with stone-faced facade. 4 bays wide; 2 storefronts (Photograph #1).
- C 97. 152 Temple St. (1903). Former YMCA/Liberty Building. 6-story brick Beaux-Arts office building. 5 bays wide. Remodelled storefronts flank entrance (Photograph #1).
- N 98. 142-144 Temple St. (1973). Hartford National Bank. 3 story brick bank building. 7 bays wide and L-shaped with a facade on Crown St. Designed by Hirsch, Kaestle and Boos (Photograph #1).
- C 99. 124-132 Temple St. (1910). Former United Illuminating Co. 3-story masonry Late Renaissance Revival commercial building with elaborate marble and terra cotta details. 4 bays wide. 3rd floor was added in 1916. Building and addition designed by R.W. Foote (Photograph #1 & Photograph #16).
- C 100. 102 Temple St. (c.1910). 5-story brick Colonial Revival commercial building. 4 bays wide with 2 garage bays on 1st floor (Photograph #1 & Photograph #12).
- N 101. 80 Temple St. (1938). United Illuminating Co. 3-story Colonial Revival office building with dominant corner tower at the intersection of George St. 19 bays wide by 19 bays deep. Designed by R. W. Foote (Photograph #1 & Photograph #12).
- N 102. 60 George St. (c.1938). 3-story brick Colonial Revival office building attached to the Temple Medical Complex.

# 8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400–1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500–1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600–1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/ humanitarian
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700–1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> theater
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800–1899	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900–	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		

Criteria A & C

**Specific dates** See inventory      **Builder/Architect** See inventory

## Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The Chapel Street Commercial Historic District has always been part of the lively and important downtown core of New Haven. It reflects the growth of New Haven over a period of more than one hundred and fifty years (Criterion A). Within the boundaries of the district are numerous fine intact examples of various residential and commercial styles, and some of these were designed by nationally known architects and prominent New Haven firms (Criterion C). Many of the buildings in the district, though not historically significant, are good representative examples of nationally popular styles or contribute to an intact streetscape. The commercial, social and cultural life of New Haven is reflected by these buildings. The quality of the architecture in the district is fine; a number of leading New Haven and out-of-town architects lavished their attention and considerable skills on a number of buildings in the district. The consummate handling of mass, proportion, and detail by a number of unknown builder/architects is also apparent in the district, particularly in the nineteenth-century town-houses. Although a variety of styles, ranging from Federal through Art Deco, is represented in the district, the area's cohesiveness, reinforced by uniform set-backs, a general low-rise profile, common materials and few intrusive newer buildings and parking lots, is the dominant feature of the district. Hemmed in on two sides by modern redevelopment efforts, the district is defined in part by its contrasts with new construction and by its contrast with the more residential Dwight Street Historic District, the open space of the Green, and the academic plan and style of Yale University. The district is exciting because its buildings continue to function within the context of a mixed-use area. The contrast between the tightly packed, tall commercial buildings and, just a block away, a row of tree-shaded residences only enhances the strengths of the district.

## Early History

Most of the fabric of the district dates from the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries but the origin of the basic street plan and the use of the land for residential and commercial purposes extends back to the settlement of the New Haven Colony in the early seventeenth century.<sup>1</sup> All but the 1100 block of Chapel Street, on the western end of the district, was a part of the original nine squares included in the town plan of 1641. Chapel Street, the main artery within the district, was during the early period of the town's history a residential street facing the public space of the Green and extending past the westernmost limits of the nine squares to the West River, where it terminated in a dead end. During this early





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period the commercial core was concentrated south and east of the district along the waterfront.<sup>2</sup> Even though the 900 and 1000 block area of Chapel Street had yet to achieve the peak of commercial activity that it reached in the early twentieth century, the area was not without significance. Early maps show the presence of substantial dwellings within the district,<sup>3</sup> and most important, the area was either directly fronting on the Green or within easy walking distance of it. Henry T. Blake, a historian particularly interested in the Green, states that "New Haven Green has been identified...with all the important transactions and events connected with the religious, political and civil life of the surrounding community..."<sup>4</sup>

The commercial potential of Chapel Street began to develop in earnest in the eighteenth century. When Yale College was established at the end of the second decade of the century, it brought a new infusion of funds into the pockets of the citizens of New Haven. Students and masters had to be fed and clothed and entertained. With the construction of the Derby Turnpike at the end of the eighteenth century, Chapel Street became the only main street to run east and west straight through the town.<sup>5</sup>

Early Nineteenth Century Growth

The residential character of the district, however, continued to dominate until the second quarter of the nineteenth century.<sup>6</sup> Between 1825 and 1845 New Haven fulfilled the dreams of its founders and became a thriving commercial center. Small manufacturing concerns, especially carriage and guns works, prospered.<sup>7</sup>

Unfortunately, few buildings from the town's earliest period of growth survive and none of these are in the district. However, it is only fitting that as one of the chief commercial areas in New Haven, the district boasts one of the innovations of early nineteenth century commerce: the brick commercial block. The Townsend Block (#10) was built in the early 1830s on the north west corner of Chapel and College streets and is still used for commercial purposes. The large scale and exclusive use for commercial purposes distinguish it from its predecessors. The functional nature of the building is expressed by its regular fenestration, simple brick facade and modest unifying cornice. An early nineteenth-century commercial block of this type is a rarity in the state. New Haven has retained a greater proportion of this type of building than most large cities in the state and two other buildings of this general type and age still stand in the downtown core.

The residential architecture of the early nineteenth century is also represented in the district. The oldest structure, as well as the oldest residence in the district, is the Federal-style Ira Atwater House (c. 1817) on the corner of College and Crown streets. This substantial brick town-

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house is set with its gable end facing College Street and is the only Federal-style structure in the district. The early nineteenth-century prosperity of New Haven is expressed in the district by a number of Greek Revival townhouses. The Greek Revival style was popularized in New Haven largely through the work of Ithiel Towne and Alexander Jackson Davis, who designed a number of significant Greek Revival structures. Most notable of these designs in New Haven was the State House, designed by Towne and built on the New Haven Green in the late 1820s. Representative examples of Greek Revival architecture in the district are the houses at 250 Crown Street (c.1845) and at 26 High Street (c.1845). Although this district does not boast the oldest or the most complete collection of early nineteenth-century houses in New Haven, the houses from this period in the district are fine examples of the more substantial townhouses built in New Haven. The fact that most of these houses are constructed of brick, a more desirable and expensive commodity, is indicative of their owners' wealth, taste and needs.

Late Nineteenth Century

The mid-nineteenth century saw the shift of the commercial core away from the harbor, which declined in importance, and toward the Green.<sup>8</sup> With the completion of rail lines linking New Haven to Hartford, New York and New London, a new depot was constructed in 1848 outside the district on Chapel Street between Union and State streets. The depot's construction confirmed Chapel Street as one of the city's major commercial streets. Horse-drawn trolleys were introduced in the 1860s<sup>9</sup> and these brought suburban residents to the center of town, where all the lines converged at the Green, to congregate, work and shop. The Green took on more and more the appearance of a pleasure park. The two blocks of Chapel Street facing the Green contained by this period the "Unmistakable evidence of a growing urban community," according to New Haven historian Rollin G. Osterweis.<sup>10</sup> The eighteenth-century Beers Tavern was replaced in 1851 by "The New Haven House" (demolished in the 1910s), a commodious Italianate hotel designed by the town's premiere architect, Henry Austin.<sup>11</sup>

The population of the city was growing, and by 1861 New Haven, with 40,000 inhabitants, was the largest city in Connecticut.<sup>12</sup> Antebellum prosperity and an enlarged population undoubtedly increased the commercial activity of the district. Yale had also doubled in size between 1800 and 1861, providing more customers for local merchants. No documented mid-nineteenth-century commercial buildings survive within the district.

The Civil War stimulated the growth of industry and with the expanding labor force needed to man these industries, a serious upgrading in municipal services was in order. The Green was lit by gas by 1855 and after the Civil War cast-iron mains and pipes carried water to every city neighbor-

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hood. A town sewage system was begun in 1861 and expanded between 1872 and 1887. City garbage collection was begun in 1873 and professional fire protection services were founded in 1865. The police department was organized in 1861 and much expanded in 1874. The Chamber of Commerce, inactive since 1852, was revived in 1872.<sup>13</sup>

Osterweis describes the change in the fabric of the city during this period in this way: "A city of limestone, brownstone, and brick was springing up all about the original squares, with more of the old wooden structures disappearing every year."<sup>14</sup> In the district brick commercial buildings were being constructed and with time the commercial expansion of Chapel Street extended west toward Park Street. By 1881 the Elisha Blackman Building was constructed on the corner of Chapel and York streets. However, most of the building activity during this period was for residences. Notable examples of Italianate, High Victorian Gothic, Second Empire and Queen Anne styles are found in the surviving residences of the district. The Italianate townhouse with its cupola on Crown Street (#52) remains one of the most substantial residences in the district. The William Bartlett House, a High Victorian Gothic townhouse built c.1876 on College Street (#91), is the only surviving structure of this style in the district. The handsome Second Empire townhouses on Crown and York streets (#60 & #75), built c. 1870, are the best examples of the style in the district, and also show the tendency toward multi-family construction in the district after the Civil War. Second Empire townhouses of this scale and as richly detailed as these examples are rare in New Haven. Perhaps the best example in the district of a Queen Anne-style townhouse is #37 High Street, built c.1882. Although gable-to-the-street Queen Anne style townhouses abound in New Haven, few are built of brick and fewer still are as handsomely detailed as the example.

Several significant religious buildings were also constructed during this period within the district. The first and second baptist churches consolidated in 1871 and built Calvary Baptist Church on the northeast corner of Chapel and York Street. It is now used as the Yale Repertory Theater. Henry Austin's design for the Trinity Church Home, built in 1868, survives in part on the 300 block of George Street. The Trinity Church Home was originally part of a U-shaped complex commissioned by Joseph Sheffield. Two pairs of townhouses were located near the street and were occupied by Sheffield's daughters. Set back behind the courtyard was a chapel flanked by a home for aged women and a school. Today only the home and chapel survive. The construction of a townhouse/home for aged indigents/chapel complex appears to have been a rarity in New Haven. Although the integrity of the complex is much compromised by demolition of key structures and landscape features, the historical significance of Sheffield's effort and, to some extent, the architectural significance of a design by a leading local architect, Henry Austin, remain.

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Both the Trinity Church Home and Calvary Baptist Church were designed in the popular Victorian Gothic style and built of brick.

A major change during the last quarter of the nineteenth century was the introduction of legitimate theaters to downtown New Haven. The first theaters were remodelled beer halls and commercial buildings, like the Grand Opera House, once located one block east of the district, and opened in 1869. The oldest legitimate theater still standing in New Haven, the Hyperion, is located on College Street. Built as Carrl's Opera House in 1880 and originally oriented to face Chapel Street, the structure is still in use today (see Photograph #17&17A). During the late nineteenth century, it presented light operettas, concerts, recitals, dramatic works and touring dramatic shows, mainly to middle and upper class audiences. In 1886 G.B. Bunnell purchased Carrl's Opera House and renamed it the Hyperion. Bunnell became "the dean of the (New Haven) theatrical world." He provided a change from the bawdy songs and drinking man's atmosphere of the beer halls. Although Charles Dickens had presented A Christmas Carol during his 1868 visit to New Haven, a variety of more sophisticated entertainments was not brought to town until after 1880. In 1886 Sarah Bernhardt played Camille at the Hyperion and returned there in 1891 with La Tosca. During this period the legitimate theater experienced national popularity, but also the beginnings of competition. In 1885 B.F. Keith began running a continuous show made up of numerous short acts in his Boston theater. This type of program had been used as early as the 1840s but Keith lent it new respectability by encouraging the patronage of women and children. Vaudeville prospered and came to New Haven in 1892 in the form of Sylvester Z. Poli. Poli started his business in a beer hall east of the district and he became a leading theatrical entrepreneur in Connecticut. The introduction of moving pictures to a broad New Haven audience occurred in 1896 when they were screened between acts at Poli's Wonderland.<sup>15</sup>

The theaters in New Haven at the turn of the century offered a wide range of entertainment. Tickets started in price from about ten cents and cheaper matinees were shown most often to an audience of women and children. Some theaters had their own small orchestras and the Hyperion had its own stock company which performed the hits of the season.<sup>16</sup>

The late nineteenth century did not just bring theaters to the downtown; it also brought a change in the way that people lived and how the buildings were used. Yale was rapidly expanding and the need for student housing resulted in the construction of Warner Hall in 1892 (#13) and the Hotel Majestic in 1894 (#29), both along Chapel Street near the Yale campus. These two highly significant private dormitories remain almost entirely intact and because few communities in the state faced the same needs for housing numerous students during this period, they are an unusual adjunct to the usual downtown core. The quality of their design reflects the amenities they offered in their heyday, and the tastes of the people who lived there. The construction of these private dormitories foreshadowed the popularity of the apartment house during the early twentieth

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century. Many people moved to the suburbs during this period, but a staunch core of industrialists and Yale professors continued to live within the district.<sup>17</sup>

Turn of the Century

The popularity of classical styles at the turn of the century is readily observed in the many new and remodelled buildings constructed in the district during this era. The former YMCA/Liberty Building, constructed in 1903 in the Beaux Arts style, was part of this general trend which is also exemplified by the 1902 remodelling of one of Henry Austin's Italian villas by Richard Williams for the Union League Club at 1032 Chapel Street.

The Colonial Revival style is exemplified by the Taft Hotel, designed by F.M. Andrews and built in 1911 on the southeast corner of Chapel and Crown streets on the site of the 1851 New Haven House. Around the corner, the Hyperion Theater was reoriented and given a new classically-inspired terra cotta facade facing College Street.

Chapel Street District after World War I

The commercial character of the Chapel Street Historic District today is largely a result of the fact that most of the substantial commercial buildings in the district were built after 1900. Although most of these commercial buildings were constructed within a relatively short span - between 1900 and 1940 - they represent diverse and richly ornamented styles that contrast starkly with the more modern buildings to the east and south of the district.

During this period Chapel Street became the fashionable retail center for greater New Haven. The Lincoln Building, the Bohan-Landorf Building and Hamilton's, all Neoclassical or Renaissance Revival-style twentieth-century commercial buildings, continue to express the elegance and wealth of the period before the Second World War. Another notable building dating from this period is the 1909 former United Illuminating Company, designed by leading New Haven architect R.W. Foote to resemble a miniature Venetian palazzo. On the western end of Chapel Street the Collegiate Gothic style became popular in new construction and remodellings of commercial buildings opposite the campus. A good example of this trend is #1020 Chapel Street, designed by leading New Haven architects Brown & Von Beren and built by Jack Albert in 1930. Although Chapel Street retained its place as the city's most fashionable shopping street, the commercial core of the city grew rapidly during the first quarter of the twentieth century, extending south toward George and Crown streets along Temple, College, York and Park streets and changing what had once been a strictly residential neighborhood to a mixture of shops, houses and apartment buildings. A good example of the type of commercial building constructed in these newly developed commercial areas is (#45) on Crown Street, a one-story blonde brick structure with cast-stone trim. With the rise of automobiles,

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a parking garage became a necessity and the Downtown Garage at 280-284 Crown Street, built in the Art Deco style in 1925, is a reminder that downtown parking was a concern as long as sixty years ago. The construction of several large and commodious apartment buildings, most notably along High and Chapel streets, between 1910 and 1930, assured the vibrant commercial core of a captive audience.

With the expansion of Yale University the housing within the Chapel Street Commercial Historic District reflected the housing needs of the University's students and teachers. One of the first apartment houses to be built in the district was the Oxford, a late Romanesque Revival 4-story building, constructed on High Street in 1910. Other significant apartment buildings in the district include the El Dorado Apartments (1922) at 1145 Chapel Street, the Monterey Apartments (1924) at 1175-1177 Chapel Street, a Georgian Revival apartment building at 28-30 High Street (1922) and the Cambridge Arms (1925) at 32 High Street. This collection of early twentieth-century apartment buildings shows that not only was there a market for apartment space within the district, but that these buildings have largely continued to fulfill a need in the area. The quality and variety of their designs is unequalled in downtown New Haven apartment blocks of the same period.

The decade of 1910 to 1920 saw the rise of Hollywood, and vaudeville shows began to shift the emphasis from live entertainment to movies. The resultant show was cheaper for the owners of the theaters to produce and the improvements in film technology and the rise of nationally popular film stars helped to win the audiences over to this new kind of programming. Transportation restrictions during World War I seriously interfered with the travelling acts that had been so popular since the 1880s. Vaudeville declined in the 1920s and with the introduction of "talking" pictures in 1927 its demise was nearly complete. The Hyperion began to show movies under the ownership of Sylvester Poli by 1914, and gradually it became a movie house rather than a legitimate theater.<sup>18</sup>

The rise of the movie theater was marked in New Haven by a contrasting idea. In 1913 E.D. Eldridge, the manager of the Hyperion, convinced the New Haven Hotel Co., owners of the Taft Hotel, to construct the Shubert Theater. It was designed by Albert Swazey of New York and built behind the Taft Hotel. It was oriented toward College Street and was set behind a brick hotel, the Hotel Adams. It was named for the Shubert brothers, longtime theater operators in New Haven and major stockholders in the project. When completed the Shubert was the largest theater in the state with a capacity of 1,820 seats. It opened on December 12, 1914. Many musicals, dramas, and ballets over the years opened at the Shubert. Bunnell's New Haven theater, a competitor of the Shubert, was destroyed by fire in 1915, leaving the Shubert as the only legitimate theater downtown soon after it opened.<sup>19</sup>

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In 1926 the Warner Brothers Theater chain built the first theater in New Haven constructed specifically for movies, the Roger Sherman, located on College Street. Although the Roger Sherman was built as a movie theater, it also had a full stage and fly loft for vaudeville or theatrical performances. The huge auditorium seated 2,200 patrons in a Moorish Oriental setting. The Wurlitzer organ, a common theater adjunct, and the house orchestra furnished the music for silent films or before performance sing-alongs. The Roger Sherman also included a large ballroom where society orchestras and later big bands provided entertainment. Later this room was converted into a bowling alley, and still later, an art theater.<sup>20</sup>

The downtown theaters attracted their audiences from all parts of the city. Many Yale students attended, and trolleys brought in people from the outlying neighborhoods. Usually a film stayed at the theater for one week, and double features were popular. During the Depression people flocked to the movies as an escape from the harsh realities of life and by 1935 the Hyperion and the Roger Sherman represented two of the three first-run movie theaters in New Haven.<sup>21</sup>

With the Shubert Theater and the Roger Sherman both fronting on College Street, this block became the core of the New Haven theater area. In 1929 the Crown Theater was constructed around the corner on Crown Street and in 1933 the entrance to the Hyperion was moved from Chapel to College Street so that it could compete more readily with the Roger Sherman. The interior remodeling of the Hyperion emphasized the screen over the stage. Part of the reason behind this costly renovation effort was the growing popularity of movies, but also it was the result of competition. The University Theater was constructed in 1927.<sup>22</sup>

### The Depression

During the 1930s the theater district suffered. The fixed costs of building maintenance and film rentals meant that few owners could afford to lower ticket prices to attract audiences, and many people who in the 1920s had had spare cash to spend on movies and theaters now devoted their money to the necessities of life. The construction of new theaters downtown came to a halt and the Fox New England Theater chain went bankrupt in 1932. The second-run movie theaters in the suburbs and radio took away much business. The single most positive thing that occurred during this period was the involvement of the Shubert Theater in premiering Broadway shows. "Opening in New Haven" was a common fact of life for many Broadway shows through the 1970s. Many of the outstanding musical and dramatic successes of this period had their opening night in New Haven at the Shubert. Among these were: Arsenic and Old Lace, Life with Father, Porgy and Bess, Pygmalion, Ten Little Indians, Harvey, Finian's Rainbow, Death of a Salesman, Kiss Me Kate, The Diary of Anne Frank, The Music Man, My Fair Lady, Barefoot in the Park, A Man for All Seasons, Man of La Mancha, The Odd Couple, and many more.<sup>23</sup>



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With the stock market crash of 1929 came a temporary end to the expansion of the downtown commercial core. Few notable buildings were constructed within the district between 1930 and the end of the Second World War. Two small Art Deco commercial buildings, Dyers Standard Cleaners on George Street and Monarch Laundry on Park Street, were constructed in the 1930s and 1940s. They are rare examples of the commercial Art Deco style in the city. The only major building within the district to be constructed during this period is the monumental United Illuminating Company building, constructed in 1938 in the Colonial Revival style on the corner of Temple and George streets. United Illuminating became in the twentieth century a major land owner and employer in New Haven. New industries which were based on electricity came to New Haven because of the availability of power, and to this day the company maintains a strong influence over the city.<sup>24</sup>

Postwar Trends in the District

The next major building to be constructed in the district was the Jewish Community Center, built in 1952 and designed by John Weinstein and Charles Abrahamowitz. This large two-story brick community building is not distinguished, but because of its deep setback and size it commands attention. Because of declining inner-city population and because the remaining population consisted of the poor, the elderly, and students, few developers cared to invest in major new inner-city buildings between 1950 and the present. One exception to this trend was the construction of Chapel Square Mall, just to the east of the Chapel Street Historic District, in 1965. Other redevelopment efforts centered along the southern boundary of the district. Within the district itself recent redevelopment efforts have been limited to the construction of the Crown Street parking garage on the corner of Crown and College Streets in 1971. This massive concrete structure takes up nearly one-quarter of the block and was designed by Carleton Granberry Associates. In 1973 Yale University constructed the Yale Center for British Art and British Studies on Chapel Street. This was the last major work of nationally known architect Louis Kahn. The combination of a hollow inner-core surrounded by a border of small commercial shops is expressive of the strong university presence in the district while remaining consistent with its scale and character.

Today the Chapel Street Commercial Historic District is experiencing a major revitalization. The hotel adjacent to the Shubert Theater has been destroyed, but the interior of the theater is being rehabilitated and a contemporary foyer fronting on College Street has been placed on the vacant site of the hotel facade. Also slated for renovation are the Roger Sherman Theater, the Hyperion, the Crown Theater, Warner Hall, and the El Dorado Apartments, along with several nineteenth-century townhouses.

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No new residences have been constructed within the district boundaries since the 1920s, but in recent years the Taft Hotel has been renovated as apartments and a new influx of residents has come to live in the district.

End Notes

<sup>1</sup>Wadsworth Map of New Haven, 1748, showing the town plan of 1641. Reproduced in Vincent Scully, American Architecture and Urbanism (New York: Frederick A. Praeger, 1969), p.30.

<sup>2</sup>New Haven Historic Resources Survey, Phase I, Connecticut Historical Commission.

<sup>3</sup>See the Wadsworth Map of 1748.

<sup>4</sup>Henry T. Blake, Chronicles of the New Haven Green from 1638 to 1862 (New Haven: Morehouse & Taylor Press, 1898) p.10.

<sup>5</sup>Elizabeth Mills Brown, New Haven: a Guide to Architecture and Urban Design (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1976) p.64.

<sup>6</sup>Doolittle Map of 1824, New Haven, Reproduced in Vincent Scully, American Architecture, p.30.

<sup>7</sup>New Haven Historic Resources Survey.

<sup>8</sup>Ibid.

<sup>9</sup>Floyd Shumway and Richard Hegel, eds., New Haven an Illustrated History (Woodland Hills, CA: Windsor Publications, 1981) p.48.

<sup>10</sup>Rollin G. Osterweis, Three Centuries of New Haven 1638-1938 (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1953) p.314

<sup>11</sup>Ibid.

<sup>12</sup>Ibid, p.317.

<sup>13</sup>Osterweis, New Haven, pp.334-336.

<sup>14</sup>Ibid, p.332

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<sup>15</sup> James Saakvitne, "The New Haven Theater District: 1880-1940," unpublished manuscript, 1982, available at the Connecticut Trust for Historic Preservation.

<sup>16</sup> Ibid.

<sup>17</sup> Historic Resources Survey.

<sup>18</sup> Saakvitne, "The New Haven Theater District."

<sup>19</sup> Ibid.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid.

<sup>22</sup> Ibid.

<sup>23</sup> Ibid.

<sup>24</sup> Shumway & Hegel, New Haven, p.48.

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Geographical Data (continued):

UTM References:

A: 18/673500/4574640  
B: 18/673360/4574390  
C: 18/673300/4574380  
D: 18/673600/4574440  
E: 18/673280/4574460  
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G: 18/673280/4574560  
H: 18/673260/4574580  
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J: 18/673160/4574500  
K: 18/673120/4574510  
L: 18/673120/4574560  
M: 18/673110/4574580  
N: 18/673200/4574700  
O: 18/672900/4574780  
P: 18/672950/4574800  
Q: 18/673000/4574880  
R: 18/673110/4574484

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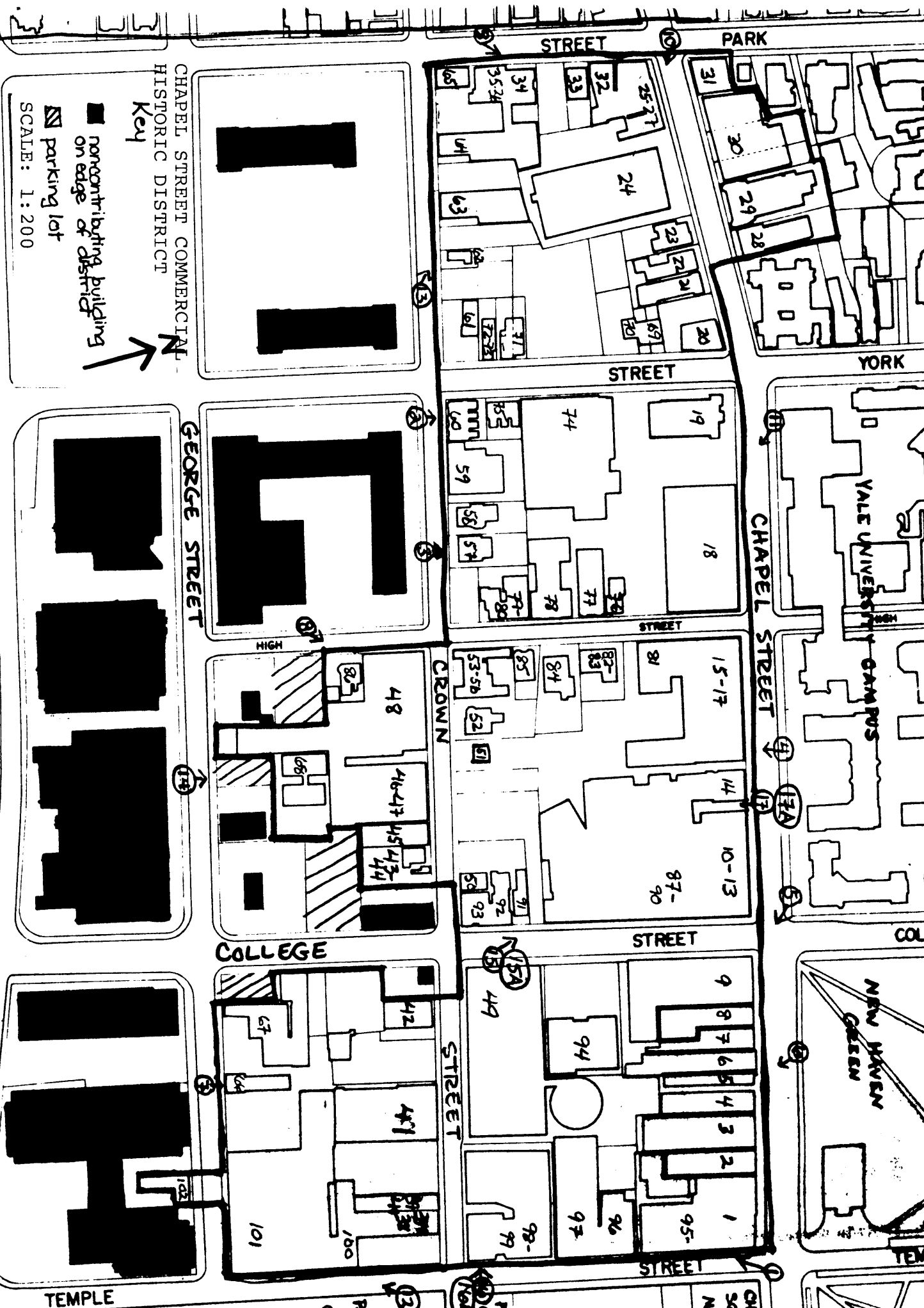
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Continuation sheet

The Chapel Street Historic Street consists of approximately five-and a-half city blocks located in the center of downtown New Haven. It has eight main streets; Chapel, Crown and George streets running east and west and Temple, College, High, York and Park streets running north and south. The district is bounded on the north by Chapel Street and only the south side of Chapel Street is included in the district except in the case of the 1100 block of Chapel, between York and Park streets where both north and south sides of Chapel Street are included in the district. The western boundary of the district follows the east side of Park Street and abuts the Dwight Street Historic District. The southern boundary of the district follows the most complicated line of any in the district; it proceeds east from Park Street following the north side of Crown, then it corners and runs south to include #15 High Street and the former Trinity Church Home, which fronts on George Street, the boundary then follows the back property lines of the south side of Crown Street, turns north to the north side of Crown and runs east along Crown Street, turns north to the north side of Crown and runs east along Crown. The boundary crosses Crown Street to include the Crown Theater and proceeds south to the north side of George Street, then it crosses George Street to include the late 1930s Colonial Revival office building included in the Temple Medical Complex at #60 George Street and recrosses George Street and proceeds along the north side of the street to Temple Street. The east boundary of the district includes of west side of Temple Street to the junction of Chapel.

The district is bounded on the north by the New Haven Green and Yale University, on the east by Chapel Square Mall, a mid 1960s commercial development, on the west by the Dwight Street Historic District and on the south by more recent high rise redevelopment efforts.



CHapel STREET COMMERCIAL  
 HISTORIC DISTRICT

Key  
 ■ noncontributing building  
 ▨ parking lot  
 SCALE: 1:200

GEORGE STREET

COLLEGE STREET

TEMPLE STREET

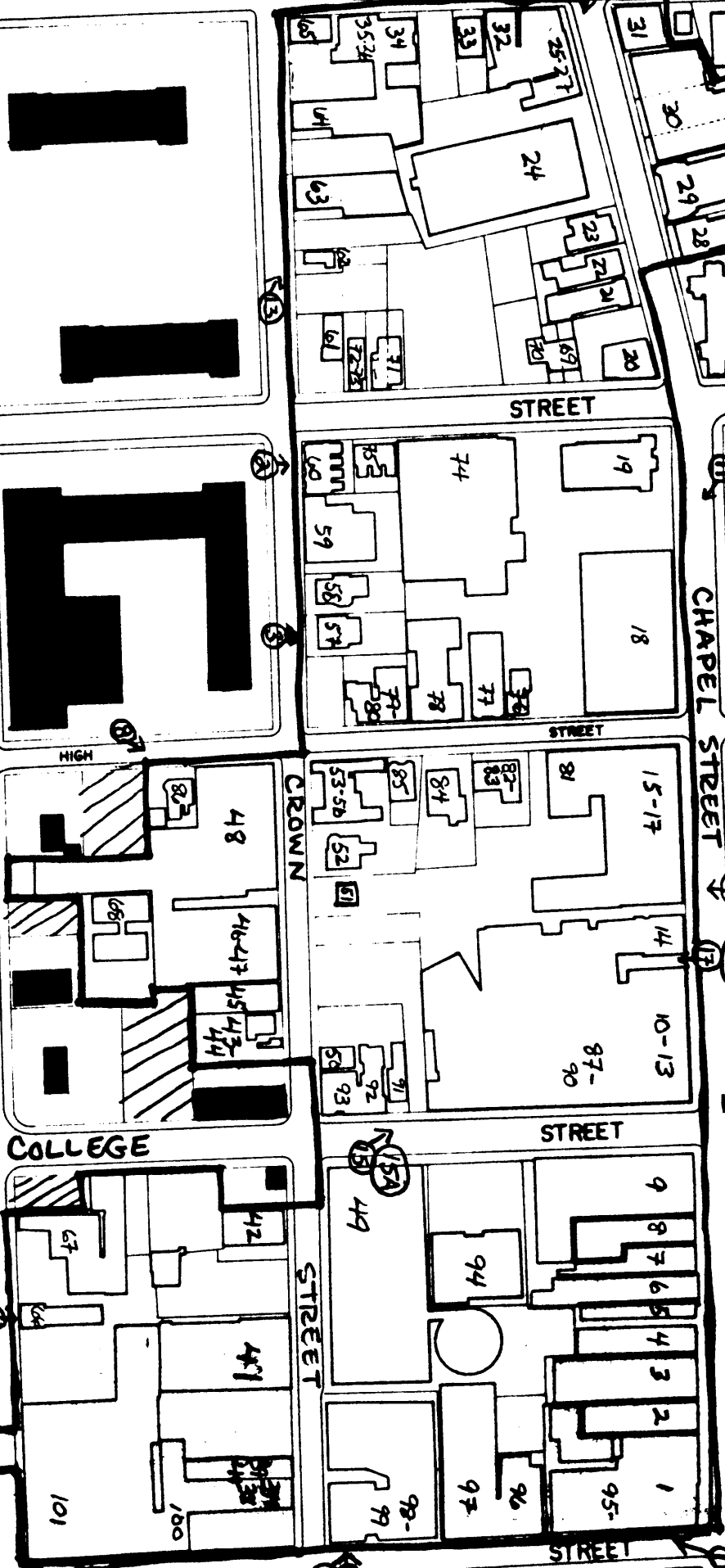
PARK STREET

YORK STREET

CHapel STREET

YALE UNIVERSITY CAMPUS

NEW HEAVEN GREEN



CH 4  
 SA 1  
 MA 1  
 PA 1  
 CA 1  
 (12) (13) (14) (15) (16) (17) (18) (19) (20) (21) (22) (23) (24) (25) (26) (27) (28) (29) (30) (31) (32) (33) (34) (35) (36) (37) (38) (39) (40) (41) (42) (43) (44) (45) (46) (47) (48) (49) (50) (51) (52) (53) (54) (55) (56) (57) (58) (59) (60) (61) (62) (63) (64) (65) (66) (67) (68) (69) (70) (71) (72) (73) (74) (75) (76) (77) (78) (79) (80) (81) (82) (83) (84) (85) (86) (87) (88) (89) (90) (91) (92) (93) (94) (95) (96) (97) (98) (99) (100) (101) (102) (103) (104) (105) (106) (107) (108) (109) (110) (111) (112) (113) (114) (115) (116) (117) (118) (119) (120) (121) (122) (123) (124) (125) (126) (127) (128) (129) (130) (131) (132) (133) (134) (135) (136) (137) (138) (139) (140) (141) (142) (143) (144) (145) (146) (147) (148) (149) (150) (151) (152) (153) (154) (155) (156) (157) (158) (159) (160) (161) (162) (163) (164) (165) (166) (167) (168) (169) (170) (171) (172) (173) (174) (175) (176) (177) (178) (179) (180) (181) (182) (183) (184) (185) (186) (187) (188) (189) (190) (191) (192) (193) (194) (195) (196) (197) (198) (199) (200)