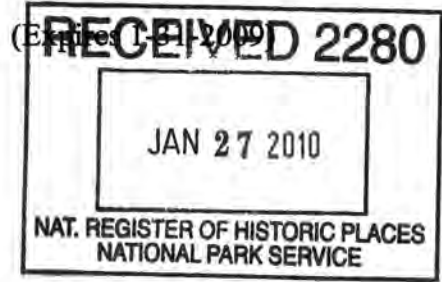


NPS Form 10-900
(Rev. Aug. 2002)

OMB No. 1024-0018



United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

09050329

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
REGISTRATION FORM

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name Connecticut General Life Insurance Company Headquarters

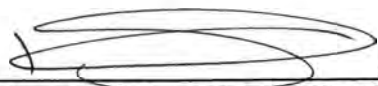
other names/site number CIGNA Wilde Building

2. Location

street & number 900 Cottage Grove Road not for publication
city or town Bloomfield vicinity
state Connecticut code CT county Hartford code 003 zip code 06002

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant nationally statewide locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)


Signature of certifying official Date 12-29-09

CC T - SHPO
State or Federal Agency or Tribal government

In my opinion, the property _____ meets _____ does not meet the National Register criteria. (_____ See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of commenting official/Title

Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification


I, hereby certify that this property is:

entered in the National Register _____
_____ See continuation sheet.

determined eligible for the _____
National Register
_____ See continuation sheet.

determined not eligible for the _____
National Register

removed from the National Register _____

_____ other (explain): _____
 _____
Signature of Keeper Date
of Action 1/27/10

5. Classification

Ownership of Property (Check as many boxes as apply)

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

Category of Property (Check only one box)

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

Number of Resources within Property

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>1</u>	<u>1</u>	buildings
-	-	sites
-	<u>1</u>	structures
-	-	objects
<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

Name of related multiple property listing (Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.) N/A

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: COMMERCE/TRADE Sub: Business

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

Current Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: COMMERCE/TRADE Sub: Business

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

7. Description

Architectural Classification (Enter categories from instructions)

MODERN MOVEMENT/International Style

Materials (Enter categories from instructions)

foundation CONCRETE
roof STONE/gravel
walls METAL/steel; GLASS
other _____

Narrative Description (Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria (Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing)

- A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations (Mark "X" in all the boxes that apply.)

- A owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B removed from its original location.
- C a birthplace or a grave.
- D a cemetery.
- E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F a commemorative property.
- G less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance (Enter categories from instructions)

Architecture
Community Planning and Development

Period of Significance 1954-1957

Significant Dates 1954-1957

Significant Person (Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

Cultural Affiliation _____

Architect/Builder Bunshaft, Gordon, architect
Bassett, Florence Knoll, interior designer
Noguchi, Isamu, landscape architect, sculptor

Narrative Statement of Significance (Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

9. Major Bibliographical References

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

Previous documentation on file (NPS)

preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested.

previously listed in the National Register

previously determined eligible by the National Register

designated a National Historic Landmark

recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____

recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

Primary Location of Additional Data

State Historic Preservation Office

Other State agency

Federal agency

Local government

University

Other

Name of repository: _____

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 30.52 acres

UTM References (Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

Zone	Easting	Northing	Zone	Easting	Northing
1) 18	<u>687419E</u>	<u>4631660N</u>	3) 18	<u>687005E</u>	<u>4631626N</u>
2) 18	<u>687271E</u>	<u>4631570N</u>	4) 18	<u>687080E</u>	<u>4631604N</u>

See continuation sheet.

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Description of Physical Appearance

The former Connecticut General Life Insurance Headquarters property, known today as CIGNA Corporation's Wilde Building, is situated in a rolling landscape in Bloomfield, Connecticut. Constructed between 1954 and 1957, the Wilde Building consists of a three-story steel framed main section (Main Building), a five-story north side extension (North Wing) and a single-story southeast extension (cafeteria), totaling approximately 820,000 square feet of space. The Main Building and North Wing feature flat roofs and bands of green-glass windows and black aluminum panels for curtain walls; the interiors are characterized mainly by open plan space. The cafeteria, architecturally different from the Main Building and North Wing, features exterior walls of blue-green tinted glass and is cantilevered outward from its base at all sides. In 1972, the size of the Main Building, as well as that of the cafeteria was increased by one half in seamless additions, planned for in the original design. A non-contributing parking garage (1972) and associated non-contributing pedestrian walkway (1972) are situated west of the Main Building.

Setting and Site

The Wilde Building is located at 900 Cottage Grove Road in the southwest of Bloomfield, Connecticut, approximately two miles west of Interstate-91 and approximately one mile south of Bloomfield's town hall. The building is oriented east-west, with its north elevation set back from Cottage Grove Road and its south elevation facing a man-made pond and undulating golf course greens. The building and its sections (Main Building, North Wing and cafeteria) slope down, from northwest to southeast, following the lay of the land.

In 1957 the Wilde Building was situated on a 280-acre tract of rambling farmland purchased by Connecticut General in 1951 (Historic Image 1). Bloomfield had long been an attractive and lucrative area for family farmers as a result of the fertility and variety of the soils which enabled farmers beginning in the 1600s to eventually exploit a diverse set of commodities including corn, vegetables, fruits, as well as dairy products and tobacco.¹ In fact, "Bloomfield remained a predominantly agricultural community until after World War II... Even as late as 1958, the *Connecticut State Register and Manual* gave exclusive reference to agriculture under the heading of 'Principal Industry' in Bloomfield.² With the additional native species of ornamental grasses, various goldenrods, and other Connecticut wildflowers within its midst, the modern design and construction materials of the 1957 Wilde Building provided a steep and new contrast to the agrarian landscape of Bloomfield in which it was situated.³

Despite serving as an indicator of Bloomfield's subsequent modern growth (refer to Section 8: Page 17 for discussion), the Wilde Building over time and today, continued and continues to remain set back from and to the south of Cottage Grove

1 Wintonbury Historical Society, ed. From Wintonbury to Bloomfield: Bloomfield sketches: a collection of papers on the history of the town of Bloomfield, Connecticut, formerly known as Wintonbury. (Bloomfield, Conn.: The Society, 1983), pp.207; 211-12.

2 *Ibid.*, 212.

3 For information related to local flora see: Connecticut Botanical Society. <<http://www.ct-botanical-society.org/index.html>> Accessed 14 November 2008.

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Road, still amid a rolling landscape (Historic Image 2 and Photograph 1). The building is accessible via a long drive --Cigna Campus Way. Traveling south down Cigna Campus Way from Cottage Grove Road one approaches the building's North Wing first and a circular ramped driveway associated with the North Wing's canopied entrance (Photograph 7). Cigna Campus Way also diverges both west of the building connecting to Simsbury Road at the southwest and east of the building providing access to the building's east side loading facilities (Photograph 6). Immediately northwest of the Wilde Building lies a paved parking surface. At the building's west (non-original) main entrance, a below-grade concrete pedestrian walkway (non-contributing) constructed in 1972 provides access to the non-contributing concrete parking garage (1972) located opposite the building (Photographs 9 and 10). Hall Boulevard and Tumble Brook Country Club (and golf course) lay further beyond the parking garage. Immediately to the northeast, east, southeast, south and southwest of the building is situated the 2004 developed Gillette Ridge Golf Club, an Arnold Palmer-designed golf course. Historic landscape features associated with the Wilde Building, however, such as the building's interior courtyards (Photographs 20-25) -- four of which date to 1957 remain intact, as does the building's south terrace, which is nestled west of the cafeteria connector (Photographs 4 and 26). Three of the original courtyards and the terrace were designed by landscape architect and sculptor, Isamu Noguchi (1904-1988), and appear to have only received limited modifications over time (i.e. alteration or removal of foliage and water features; the water features of the southeast courtyard and south terrace, however remain and are operated as such during warm months of the year).

Building Plan

The Main Building of the Wilde Building is three stories high (plus lower level). Originally 468 feet by 324 feet in plan, with the long axis running east-west, parallel to Cottage Grove Road, the building's size was increased by half in 1972. The rectangular footprint today is punctuated by six square interior garden courts, which measure 72 feet on each side. As a result, no work space is more than 30 feet from a glass wall. The structural steel work is not encased for fireproofing, but covered with a 14 gauge metal casing. Columns are located only in exterior walls, 12-feet on center, spanning up to 60 feet over work areas and are therefore absorbed in the depth of the wall, serving as mullions.⁴ The interior mass is organized into three lengthwise and four transverse elements, with the latter trisected in turn by eight utility cores featuring stairways, elevators and service facilities (i.e. restrooms and storage closets). Movement between the first and upper floors is also provided by two pairs of escalators (one at the east end and one towards the west end) (Photograph 11). A third escalator provides movement between the first floor and lower level. The building's structure is a steel frame with steel grid ceilings and a flat roof.

A three-story glassed-in bridge leads to the four-story (plus lower level) North Wing, which has the same characteristic features as the Main Building. This wing is 72 feet by 216 feet and features a fifth-story penthouse. Elevators, stairways and services (i.e. restroom facilities) form a "nucleus" extending from the center into the eastern half of the wing.⁵

⁴ "Office Buildings - Fenestration," *Architectural Record*, April 1955, 212.

⁵ Danz, Ernst. *Architecture of Skidmore, Owings & Merrill, 1950-1962*. (New York: Frederick A. Praeger, 1963.), 64.

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The one-story cafeteria today extends south from the southeast corner of the Main Building. It measures 152 feet by 102 feet in plan, with an intended seating capacity of 800 employees. Of reinforced concrete, this wing is composed of four central piers with square slabs cantilevered 15 feet above ground on all sides. The roof originally featured a diamond-pattern created using black- and white-colored gravel; this feature was removed as part of the 1972 expansion. Its envelope is formed of steel frames with laminated glass walls. The connector (connecting the cafeteria and the Main Building) is a single-story, flat-roofed, concrete, windowless structure faced in beige brick.

Exterior

Designed to serve as a low-rise suburban corporate insurance company headquarters, the Wilde Building features an architecture of "straightforward simplicity."⁶ Today it continues to "[glisten] with polished glass and stainless steel, the very image of an architecture of business efficiency..."⁷

The Main Building's ground floor plane of glass and mirror-like walls is recessed behind a row of concrete columns, creating the illusion that the upper two floors are floating (Photograph 2). Each bay of the top two floors consists of a wide, green tinted window, 8 feet by 12 feet, above and below which are two black aluminum panels, creating an exterior grid. Mullions are stainless steel, as are narrow bands delineating the stories and marking the cornice.⁸ The eastern two-thirds of the building date to 1957, but the western third is an expansion constructed in 1972, provided for in the original design.⁹ (For a discussion of the specific technologically advanced glazing panels utilized in the building's curtain walls, including manufacturer, specifications, thermal properties, as well as the method of their construction refer to Section 8: Page 15.) Multiple revolving doors are featured for movement to the building's main (west side) entry lobby and security area from the below-grade pedestrian walkway outside the entrance. At the east elevation, a below-grade drive provides access to the lower level loading facilities in the building's northern half. The center of the east elevation features a pedestrian egress and T-shaped covered patio that today fronts the Gillette Ridge golf course. A concrete smoke stack is situated towards the south end of the east elevation; the cafeteria and its one-story connector lay beyond.

The North Wing's exterior is like that of the Main Building (Photograph 9). Designed as the focal point and to serve as the main approach and main entrance to the building, a ramped and elevated circular drive provides access to the heavy steel canopied entry at the North Wing's second story. Access to its lower level executive garage facility is provided via a sloped drive at the west elevation.

As described above, the cafeteria is cantilevered 15 feet above its base on all sides and originally 'floated' above a pool, which operated in conjunction with the man-made cooling pond constructed south of the building, both serving the

⁶ "Connecticut General Life Insurance Co., Bloomfield, Conn., U.S.A.," *Bauen + Wohnen*, June 1958, 181.

⁷ Crosbie, 82.

⁸ "Connecticut General Life Insurance Company Building." *U.S. D.O.I. Draft National Register of Historic Places Nomination*, by Bruce Clouette, Public Archaeology Survey Team, Inc., Storrs, Conn., 2000, on file at MacRostie Historic Advisors, LLC, Washington, DC..

⁹ A fifty year program for east-west extension of the main block was provided for in the design. See "Insurance Company Headquarters, Hartford, Conn., U.S.A.," *Architecture and Design*, July 1958, 278.

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building's ventilation system. The pool below the cafeteria was removed at an unknown point in post-1972, and has thus compromised the integrity of the cooling feature.¹⁰ The cafeteria's exterior walls are blue-green tinted glass, arranged as a continued band and broken only by the steel framing that supports the two- and three-tiers of panes (Photograph 2). Egresses with short concrete steps (that appear to float) and metal railings are featured at the northeast and northwest corners. The cafeteria was expanded east by half its original size in 1972.

Interior

The design of the Wilde Building was the result of four years of collaboration between client, architect and builder. Consultation and analysis revealed that at the time of construction, Connecticut General needed two kinds of space -- a large area which would expand in fairly direct ratio to increases in business (the main section / Main Building); and a small area for operations, i.e. management and executives (the North Wing) that would remain more or less constant. A third space -- a cafeteria for employees -- would also be provided. This space division is reflected in the final design and remains today.

The main section (Main Building) of the building (at floors one through three) features columns located only in exterior walls, 12-feet on center and providing a clear span of up to 60 feet; the lengthwise and transverse elements are open plan and therefore, flexible in nature. Due to analysis of requirements for Connecticut General's 1957 workspaces (floors one through three), the layout was initially established on a 6-foot square module with a black grid outlined in the building's linoleum floor. Originally, moveable walls -- free-standing, flexible and covered in red, blue or yellow plastic were arranged and re-arranged overtime as various Connecticut General departments' deemed necessary, while also adhering to the grid outlined in the flooring. All original colored plastic movable walls have been removed. Modern low-scale office cubicles encompass the majority of the open office floors in their place. In select areas at the perimeter and along interior courtyard walls, individual offices are partitioned by full-height metal posts and plastic and/or glass partitions. Originally, the panels consisted of frosted-glass, however most have been replaced with plastic or clear-glass. The first floor features additional specialized enclosed, partitioned spaces such as training rooms along the north side and executive dining rooms in the southeast. The kitchen facilities are also located in this area. The lower level floor-plan features a north-south corridor towards the west end and an east-west corridor that bisects the building. Lower level office areas are partitioned into various sizes off of these corridors. The southeast corner of the lower level, accessible via an escalator is partitioned into conference rooms and a 400-seat auditorium. Interior walls along work areas, and some along utility cores at the first and upper floors are flanked in panels of light gray Formica (plastic); these once served as personal storage lockers. First floor ceilings vary; some areas feature dropped ceilings with surface fluorescent lighting; some areas feature acoustic tile ceilings with suspended fluorescent lighting (Photograph 10). Upper floor ceilings are exposed fluorescent tubes and piping above white metal baffles spaced every 24 inches, intended to allow for flexibility and ease of access and maintenance of systems above (Photograph 12). With the exception of the escalator landings, all office spaces at floors one through three have received carpeting. The lower level features a variety of finishes. Exposed ductwork and piping with open plan floor space is visible

¹⁰ A portion of the man-made cooling feature remains to the building's south, no longer part of the Wilde Building property (Photograph 1).

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is visible in some areas (i.e. mailroom); whereas modern office partitions and lowered ceilings or finished ceilings with recessed lighting (i.e. at the southeast corner) are featured elsewhere.

The North Wing—originally intended for executive offices and management—has similar interior plan characteristics as the Main Building, however, the North Wing's columns are spaced at 6-feet on center, intended to provide for more intensive subdivision of spaces. Elevators, stairways and services (i.e. restroom facilities) form the core extending from its center into the eastern half of the wing. Areas around the core are mainly open plan space with some individual offices delineated along the perimeter walls of the first through fourth floors. Partition materials forming the North Wing's offices vary from metal and teak to metal and frosted glass to metal and clear glass or plastic; some are original, others have been replaced and are recent (Photograph 12). The Wilde Building's original main lobby and reception area is at the North Wing's second floor level, northeast side (Photograph 15). (It is no longer used as such.) A travertine wall delineates this space from the office space at the west. The fifth floor or penthouse (Photograph 18) of the North Wing was intended for use by the Board of Directors' activities with open plan spaces allowing for flexibility for meetings, as well as dining and a lounge area located around the central utility core. A partial floor-width travertine wall delineates the space at the west end. The core of floors one through five of the North Wing is paneled with a teak wall with stainless steel joints (Photograph 16), rather than Formica as is featured in the Main Building. The North Wing's first floor ceiling is an acoustic tile ceiling with surface fluorescent lighting. Second through fourth floors feature fluorescent tubes alternated with white metal baffles spaced every 24 inches, however the baffles have been filled in with corrugated plastic pans in the reception area. Fifth floor ceilings are finished with recessed lighting. The second floor's reception area flooring features neutral gray terrazzo flooring; all other areas of the North Wing are carpeted. The North Wing's lower level features a variety of finishes. Exposed ductwork and piping with open plan floor space is visible in some areas; whereas modern office partitions and lowered ceilings are featured elsewhere.

The cafeteria, architecturally very different from the Main Building and North Wing, is a single interior open plan space with its four central piers exposed and faced in stainless steel. A recent 'fixings' bar (providing condiments and utensils) is located between the two northern-most piers; recent dining tables and chairs are featured throughout the remainder of the cafeteria. Its flooring is linoleum in a black and white geometric pattern. The cantilevered ceiling features recessed lighting.

Interior Courtyards and Terrace

Several additional components comprise the Wilde Building, including six interior courtyards and a terrace at the south of the building (Photographs 20-26). Three of the original (1957) four courtyards, as well as the south terrace (1957) were designed by renowned landscape designer and sculptor Isamu Noguchi. His designs for the courtyards and terrace were intended to reflect the simplicity in Japanese gardens.¹¹ Noguchi utilized water as an element, for example, such as in the case of the southeast courtyard with an occasional rising (vertical, elongated) stone. In contrast to the smooth surfaced water

¹¹ Ana Maria Torres. *Isamu Noguchi: Study of Space*. (New York: Monacelli Press, 2000), 91.

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and stones, Noguchi also utilized gravel beds and shaped grass areas to take the form of sculptural elements, such as in the (now) north center courtyard. Noguchi's design for the northeast courtyard was never constructed. His model for it (as depicted in historic photographs) shows a rectilinear vocabulary, similar to that of the terrace and perhaps a reminder of it, but sources note that the building's architect, Gordon Bunshaft of Skidmore, Owings, and Merrill (SOM), did not care for it.¹² An alternative design, proposed by Natalie de Blois (b. 1921), also an architect with SOM, was utilized instead. The design was a variant on that of Noguchi's northwest court. The subsequent two 1972 interior courtyard designs were also provided by SOM and include similar biomorphic landscape shapes seen in the others. The edge of Noguchi's terrace at the south was originally provided by that of a reflecting pool (now gone) which was situated below the cantilevered cafeteria at the southeast corner of the building and functioned as part of the cooling pond for the ventilation system. From the edge, the terrace, at a slightly higher elevation, extends west along a portion of the south elevation. It features a checkerboard of paving stones, interspersed with white gravel and planting beds. Foliage and plantings have been removed and replaced over time. Some sculptural elements, however, including Noguchi's caterpillar- and crescent moon-shaped stone benches, remain although they are deteriorated.

Additional Components of Property

In 1972, as part of the Wilde Building's western expansion, a concrete **Parking Garage** with an 1,800 vehicular capacity was constructed to the west of building. Rectilinear in shape and of concrete, the garage features ramps at its south, north and east sides for vehicular access. An associated below-grade concrete **Pedestrian Walkway** with escalators, also constructed in 1972 provides access from the building's west lobby, below Cigna Campus Way into the garage for employees. Constructed outside the period of significance of 1954-1957 and less than 50 years old, the parking garage and pedestrian walkway are a non-contributing building and structure to the property.

Alterations and Integrity

In 1972, the Main Building was extended at its west side, increasing the building's size by half, as was the cafeteria. These expansions had been planned for in the original design and both are virtually seamless from the original portions. Exterior modifications to the Wilde Building since 1972 have been minimal and limited to general maintenance.

Interior modifications over time have been limited to changes of interior furnishings and finishes. These have included removal of original furniture (i.e. desks, chairs, etc.) and changes to some ceilings. For instance, dropped ceilings have replaced original ceilings at the first floor level in both the Main Building and in the North Wing. The original movable colored plastic walls have been removed and changes to partition types along perimeter and courtyard walls have been made. With the exception of the auditorium, the welfare amenities (such as beauty salon and bowling alley, etc.) located in

¹² Alexandra Lange. *Tower Typewriter and Trademark: Architects, Designers and the Corporate Utopia, 1956-1964*. (Ph.D dissertation, New York University Institute of Fine Arts, 2005.) p. 64. It is not known if Noguchi's northeast courtyard model still exists.

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the lower level (refer to Section 8, Page 18) have also been removed and the areas captured for use as additional office space.

More recently, to accommodate the 2004 Gillette Ridge Golf Club and associated golf course, the original paved parking surface and service garage to the east of the Wilde Building were removed. The building's relationship, however, to a rolling landscape remains, although the landscape now functions as golf greens, tees and fairways, abutting the Wilde property along its north, east and south. The former cooling feature (1957; post-1972), located south of the Main Building, has been modified at an unknown date, post-1972. The reflecting pool (now gone) below the cafeteria was part of this feature. At the time of construction, the mechanical engineers had found they could cool the building's air-conditioning system by using the cold water that ran underground at the pool's location, but they needed additional space to accommodate the amount of 'run-off' water; the solution was to create a man-made pond with irregular contours that would work in conjunction with the reflecting pool.¹³ Intended to serve as part of the building's ventilation system with the pond, the reflecting pool has been removed, thus reducing the cooling feature in size. The remainder -the man-made pond- is also no longer part of the Wilde Building property. The Gillette Ridge Golf Club putting green, as well as the Hole 10 tee, interrupt the landscape between the cafeteria and pond. Altered, partially developed, and no longer part of the Wilde Building property, the cooling feature lacks sufficient integrity and has therefore been excluded from the nomination.

Situated on a promontory southeast of the pond and encircled by golf course greens and fairways (Holes 10 and 17), is an Isamu Noguchi sculpture group, "The Family," (1957). Comprised of three pink granite figural sculptures (Photograph 5), the sculpture group is separated from the building by the developed Gillette Ridge Golf Club's putting greens, fairways and tees, as well as the altered cooling feature, thus compromising its' view-shed. Because its' associated landscape is no longer contiguous or intact, "The Family" is excluded from the nomination.

Despite the aforementioned building alterations and nearby development, the Wilde Building retains a high degree of integrity. Flexibility and ease of change within the interior floor-plan was the intent of the Wilde Building's interior design. Use of office cubicles in flexible and moveable arrangements in the open spaces around the utility cores, as well as the continued allowance for individual offices delineated along selected perimeter and courtyard walls has in many ways, maintained the original spatial plan for the building. Additional architectural design components, including the North Wing and cafeteria remain intact. Historic landscape design elements by Noguchi including the interior courtyards, the south terrace as well as associated sculptural elements such as caterpillar- and crescent-shaped stone benches also remain intact. The original construction materials of the Wilde Building, namely steel, tinted glass, aluminum panels, and first floor concrete columns remain in good condition. Workmanship and feeling of an International Style building is clearly identifiable through presence of the building's simple geometric (rectilinear) form, repetitive modular exterior design, tinted glass curtain walls, cantilevered massing (i.e. of the cafeteria) and rejection of applied elements.

¹³ Carole Herselle Krinsky. *Gordon Bunshaft of Skidmore, Owings & Merrill*. (New York: Architectural History Foundation), 60.

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Statement of Significance

Evaluation of Significance / Summary Statement

The Connecticut General Life Insurance Company Headquarters, known today as CIGNA Corporation's Wilde Building is significant at the national and state levels in the areas of architecture (National Register Criterion C), and community planning and development (National Register Criterion A).

In the area of architecture, the Wilde Building is nationally significant for having become "a touchstone" for several generations of "office parks," essentially pioneering the suburban office campus.¹⁴ An award-winning project at the time of its construction, 1954-57, the building has been identified as one of two "important prototypes for suburban office buildings throughout the United States and Europe."¹⁵ The other, slightly earlier prototype, the General Motors (GM) Technical Center (1949-1956) in Macomb County, Michigan, is a 600-acre campus comprised of six independent building complexes, as well as individual structures and outbuildings where each building or complex houses a different activity. In contrast, the Wilde Building is a single, low-lying, inclusive building designed to accommodate the specific needs of the insurance industry. Because most insurance company staff does similar work, it was necessary to provide one comprehensive structure with a design that would allow for ease of flow of work, as well as flow of staff between departments, thus deviating from the earlier GM Technical Center prototype.¹⁶ At the time of completion, the Wilde Building's architect, Gordon Bunshaft (1909-1990), said of the design, "Architecture is serving the needs of the people who are using the building."¹⁷

At the state level in the area of architecture, the Wilde Building is significant as one of Connecticut's foremost examples of International Style corporate architecture. Other examples in the state are residential houses, such as the Henry F. Miller house (1948-49; National Register listed in 2001), the Landis Gores House (1948; National Register listed in 2002), and the Philip Johnson Glass House (1949; National Register listed in 1997). Although also a modern corporate headquarters, the Phoenix Life Insurance Company Building (1963; National Register listed in 2006), is a vertical skyscraper located in the urban setting of downtown Hartford. The Wilde Building stands out in Connecticut's inventory of modern architecture as a low-rise, corporate office in a suburban setting.

In the area of architecture, the building is furthermore an important work by noted architect Gordon Bunshaft of world-renowned Skidmore, Owings & Merrill (SOM), the architectural firm that "set the course for post-World War II corporate

¹⁴ Crosbie, Michael J. "Evaluation: Prototype in the Suburbs." *Architecture*. January 1988, p. 82; In 1955-1958, for example, the Reynolds Metals Company International Headquarters was also constructed by Gordon Bunshaft and SOM on a 121-acre campus west of Richmond's urban center to serve as a suburban corporate headquarters. This building was listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 2000.

¹⁵ Krinsky, 61.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 56.

¹⁷ "Building with a Future," *Time*, Sept. 16, 1957, p. 86.

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offices in America and throughout the world.”¹⁸ Additionally, like its high-rise counterpart Lever House (1952), also by SOM and also listed in the National Register of Historic Places (in 1983), the Wilde Building’s significance is augmented by the collaborative design team approach utilized that involved other leading artists of the period, specifically interior designer Florence Knoll (b. 1917) and landscape architect and artist Isamu Noguchi (1904-1988).

The building further stands as a testament to former Connecticut General Life Insurance Company President Frazar B. Wilde’s (1895-1985) expectations for the company’s new headquarters to be a building that would “epitomize America’s early visions for the suburbs” by improving employee moral, self-esteem, physical health and productivity.¹⁹ In this respect, the building is significant in the area of Community Planning and Development at both the national and state levels. A pioneer in the suburban office campus, the Wilde Building symbolizes the emergence of suburbanization after World War II, a transformation of the American lifestyle that included dispersal of residential neighborhoods, as well as industry, offices, and commercial outlets from cities to outlying areas. In Connecticut, the building represents the state’s emergence as an essentially suburban society. By the 1950s, the suburban exodus from Hartford had commenced, with not only firms, such as Connecticut General Life Insurance, exiting the city, but also the population.

The period of significance for the Wilde Building is its date of construction, which spans from 1954 to 1957. Contributing elements of the Connecticut General Life Insurance Company Building are those constructed during the period of significance and that have retained historic integrity of the features necessary to convey their significance, such as its North Wing and cafeteria. Non-contributing components are the 1972 parking garage and the associated pedestrian walkway because they are non-historic; the 1972 addition is also excluded because it duplicates the original design.

The Wilde Building remains highly intact and has a high degree of integrity. A project developed through collaboration of client and design team, the building continues to stand as one of the progenitors to generations of suburban office parks.

Resource History and Historical Context - Criterion C: Architectural Significance

International Style

The Wilde Building exemplifies the characteristics of the International Style or ‘modern’ movement as it was realized in corporate architecture. Developed in western Europe during the 1920s and 1930s and principally in Germany’s Bauhaus school under architect Walter Gropius (1883-1969), International Style emerged in mainstream America with the publication of Henry-Russell Hitchcock’s *Modern Architecture* (1929), followed by the landmark *Museum of Modern Art* exhibition in New York City (1939) organized by Hitchcock and Philip Johnson. Emigrés to the United States, including Gropius, Ludwig Mies van der Rohe, and Marcel Breuer in the 1930s and their subsequent positions at leading architectural

¹⁸ “Connecticut General Life Insurance Company Building.” *U.S. D.O.I. Draft National Register of Historic Places Nomination...*

¹⁹ *Ibid.*

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schools furthered the modern movement in the U.S. It was, however, the post-World War II corporate building boom that established the physical presence of International Style architecture on the American landscape. Following American architect's Louis H. Sullivan's (1856-1924) 1896 determination that 'form follows function,' the style rejected ornamentation in favor of a functional appearance that made use of modern materials, namely a steel structural skeleton covered by a thin, non-structural skin (i.e. glass). Proponents saw buildings as a volume of space enclosed by light, thin curtain walls and resting on slender piers.²⁰ Steel framing, glass curtain walls, regularity (repetitive modular exteriors) rather than symmetry, simple geometric forms (often rectilinear), and cantilevered upper floor(s) became hallmarks of the style.

The Wilde Building epitomizes these characteristics – glass walls, articulated framing system, modular design, cantilevering. With form truly following function, the Wilde Building's profile is three stories high and some 600 feet long, matching the needs of an insurance company in the 1950s.²¹ The long expanse of open plan interiors on each floor allowed for an assembly line effect as insurance forms and paper would flow from one desk to the next.

The building was lauded as a modern gem during construction and upon completion, winning many national awards. It received *Progressive Architecture's Design Award* in 1955. In 1957, the American Institute of Architects named it as one of "ten buildings in America's future," and in 1958 it won the Institute's *First Honor Award*. Since then the building has been identified as one of two "important prototypes for suburban office buildings throughout the United States and Europe."²² As author and architect Michael J. Crosbie noted in 1988, the Wilde Building was "virtually the first of its kind. [Although] Eero Saarinen's General Motors Technical Center of 1956 is regarded as the first suburban corporate facility sited on an expansive tract of land...because of its specialized program the Tech Center has fewer descendants than Connecticut General, which inspired several generations of 'office parks' and became for many architects [including SOM] the touchstone for design of such buildings."²³

Gordon Bunshaft and Skidmore, Owings and Merrill (SOM)

Gordon Bunshaft (1909-1990) and the firm of Skidmore, Owings and Merrill (est. 1936) had an immense influence on the course of modern corporate architecture in the United States and abroad. Their contribution to the modern movement began with the award-winning Lever House (1952) in New York City, a high-rise, blue-green glass tower with a stilted base and horizontal plaza, which has been described as a "prototype for a new era."²⁴ Following Lever House, SOM inspired

20 See "United States Air Force Academy, Cadet Area." *U.S.D.O.I. National Register Nomination*, listed 2004; and "Connecticut General Life Insurance Company Building." *U.S. D.O.I. Draft National Register of Historic Places Nomination*.

21 Carrie Conaway. "Preserving Our Past." *Regional Review*, Quarter 2, 2002, available online at <<http://www.bos.frb.org/economic/nerr/tr2002/q2/preserving.htm>> Accessed February 13, 2007.

22 Krinsky, 61. The other prototype is the General Motors Technical Center (1949-1956) in Macomb County, Michigan.

23 Crosbie, 82.

24 Carter Wiseman, *Shaping a Nation: Twentieth Century American Architecture and Its Makers* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1998), 320.

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hundreds of corporate headquarters in the same idiom.

In 1988 Gordon Bunshaft received the Pritzker Architectural Prize in recognition of his life's achievements. Architect Kevin Roche's remarks on that occasion reflect Bunshaft's importance among the international architectural community: "For many years, he has been the leading exponent and most influential practitioner of modern architecture in this country and almost single-handedly has created the current form and character of [the] high-rise office building and set the standard for large suburban headquarters..."²⁵

Bunshaft was born in Buffalo, New York, the son of Russian immigrants. He was educated at Massachusetts Institute of Technology (M.I.T.), where he received his bachelor's and master's degrees in architecture in 1933 and 1935, respectively. In 1935-37 he traveled in Europe and North Africa after being awarded the Rotch Traveling Scholarship. He worked briefly for Edward Durell Stone (1902-1978), a 20th-century modernist architect, before being hired by Skidmore, Owings & Merrill in 1939; Bunshaft continued to work with SOM until his retirement in 1979 (with the exception of his World War II service in the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers). Bunshaft became partner at SOM (in 1949) and was as Nathaniel Owings noted, the firm's "acknowledged designer."²⁶ Bunshaft's additional significant designs include Lever House (1951-52) and Chase Manhattan Bank (1961) in New York City; the Beinecke Rare Book Library (1965) at Yale University; the Lyndon B. Johnson Library (1970) in Austin, Texas; and the National Commercial Bank Headquarters (1981-83) and Haj Terminal (1972) in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia. His accolades include election into the College of Fellows of the American Institute of Architects in 1958. He was awarded the Brunner Memorial Prize, the Gold Medal from the American Academy and Institute of Arts and Letters (1984), and the Medal of Honor from the New York chapter of the American Institute of Architects.²⁷

The Wilde Building was Bunshaft's and SOM's first low-rise suburban design, but influenced subsequent SOM commissions, including the Ford Motor Company World Headquarters (1956) in Dearborn, Michigan and the Reynolds Metals Company International Headquarters (1958) outside of Richmond, Virginia, as well as buildings designed by many others. Seen as a horizontal embodiment of the firm's Lever House, the Wilde Building was considered a "paradigm for the office," "the epitome," and the "most elegantly designed [offices] and carefully crafted of the post-War period."²⁸

It was furthermore what Bunshaft referred to as "the ideal dream arrangement of architects, contractors, owners and designers."²⁹ The penultimate of collaboration, the building was designed via a team approach. The design team included Bunshaft as lead designer; William S. Brown (also of SOM), in charge of coordination; Florence Knoll, Director of the

25 Quoted in Krinsky, 334. See also "Connecticut General Life Insurance Company Building." *U.S. D.O.I. Draft National Register of Historic Places Nomination*.

26 Nathaniel Owings, *The Spaces in Between: An Architect's Journey* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1973), 75.

27 "Chicago Architects Oral History: Gordon Bunshaft," The Art Institute of Chicago.

<<http://www.artic.edu/aic/libraries/caohp/bunshaft.html>>, accessed February 12, 2007.

28 "From Grid to Growth," *Progressive Architecture*, November 1969, pp. 100-01.

29 "The Team Approach," *Industrial Design*, Vol. 5:9, September 1958, 51.

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Knoll Planning Unit (interior design); landscape architect and artist, Isamu Noguchi; as well as graphic designer Lester Beall.³⁰ Frazar B. Wilde, president of Connecticut General was also a major contributor to the design team. On the Wilde Building's distinctive collaborative approach, Bunshaft commented, "The owner is joint part of the venture... It wasn't a negotiation. We worked together -- collaborated... The whole point is collaboration."³¹ At the time, this approach was an "unusual client-designer relationship," but as *Industrial Design* declared, the Wilde Building was a "brand-new legend," not only for its architectural distinction, but also for using this collaborative method – this "uniqueness as a business structure" ... and the design team was proud for having sustained it.³²

The collaborative approach carried over in Bunshaft's future work and has been duly noted in the field. To quote the Pritzker Jury citation on Bunshaft again, "His astute perception that architecture is a joint venture between client and designer has generated mutual respect, and creative collaborations producing great building with an appropriate fusion of humanity and functionality for the people who inhabit and use his structures."³³

Florence Knoll Bassett (b. 1917)

Florence Knoll's work on the interior of the Wilde Building displayed what became the hallmark of the 'Knoll look' – "spare clean lines, touches of bright color, uncluttered elegance."³⁴ The look was International Style or 'modern' personified through interior design. As Frazar B. Wilde noted, if Knoll "hadn't led us away from the conventional, it wouldn't have worked."³⁵ Christine Gorby, an expert on Knoll has furthered, "Buildings like Connecticut General were the first where architecture and the interiors were literally one, designed as a complete whole."³⁶ Knoll's design for the Wilde Building's interior was essentially an open floor plan designed in six-foot modular units. Movable partitions covered in plastic allowed for flexibility in layout. All furniture was scaled to this unit. The color scheme included bright red, yellow, and blue to flash the sun and fluorescent-light-filled office floors. Executive areas featured neutral tones, with natural materials including travertine and teak. These interior design solutions retained a feeling of spaciousness, at the same time establishing a feeling of unity and continuity throughout, without becoming monotonous.³⁷

30 Lester Beall (1903-1969), graphic designer, was also a leading artist in his field. Considered a 'design pioneer,' "Beall was responsible for taking American graphic design of the 1930s out of its mundane, tasteless form into the beginnings of what we know now as effective visual communication." Some of his noted works include his poster campaign in the late 1930s for the Rural Electrification Administration and his art direction of *Scope* magazine for Upjohn Pharmaceuticals in the 1940s. See: *Design Pioneers: Lester Beall*. Communication Arts Magazine. <http://www.commart.com/CA/feapion_d/beall/> Accessed February 13, 2007.

31 "Oral History of Gordon Bunshaft, Interviewed by Betty J. Blum, 1989." The Art Institute of Chicago. <<http://www.artic.edu/aic/libraries/caohp/bunshaft.pdf>> Accessed February 12, 2007.

32 *Industrial Design*, pp. 47-8.

33 "Citation to Gordon Bunshaft from the Pritzker Jury." Gordon Bunshaft and Oscar Niemeyer Pritzker Architecture Prize Laureates 1988. <<http://www.pritzkerprize.com/bunnei.htm>>. Accessed February 12, 2007.

34 "Florence Knoll interior design sketch of Hans Knoll's office." Treasures from the Archives of American Art. <<http://artarchives.si.edu/exhibits/pastexhibits/treasures/0012.htm>> Accessed February 13, 2007.

35 *Industrial Design*, 54.

36 Quoted in Conaway.

37 "Office Interiors," *Arts and Architecture*, January 1958, 26.

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Florence Knoll is a space planner and interior designer who studied architecture under influential architects Eliel Saarinen and Ludwig Mies van der Rohe. She also worked briefly for the modernist progenitors Gropius & Breuer in Boston. In 1946, she became a full business and design partner and married Hans Knoll, after which they formed Knoll Associates (of which Knoll Planning Unit was a division). In addition to bringing the furniture designs of Mies van der Rohe, Marcel Breuer and Eero Saarinen to popularity, Knoll is credited as setting Knoll Associates (now Knoll, Inc.), "on the path to prominence."³⁸ Her tenure there produced the interiors of the Wilde Building and CBS headquarters, as well as the mid-1950s New Haven Railroad's distinctive new logo and red, black and white color scheme. Knoll was inducted into the Interior Design Magazine Hall of Fame in 1985. Similar to Bunshaft's strive for collaboration, Knoll believed in "total design" – design that encompassed architecture, manufacturing, interior design, textiles, and graphics. For her contributions to architecture and design, she earned the National Endowment for the Arts' 2002 National Medal of Arts – the highest award given to artists and arts patrons by the United States government.³⁹

Isamu Noguchi (1904-1988)

Considered a "master" landscape architect, Isamu Noguchi noted that his work at Connecticut General was his "first perfectly realized garden."⁴⁰ A Japanese-American landscape architect and artist renowned today for his sculptures and public art works, Noguchi's work developed at the "margins" of two cultures (East and West) and he borrowed symbolism and mythology from both cultures. Influenced by tutors such as sculptor Constantin Brancusi and Japanese potter Uno Jinmatsu, he combined his knowledge of the traditional Japanese or Zen garden with elements of Western avant-garde in the 1950s. It was during this time as well that Noguchi became an environmental designer, developing sculpture in relation to "architectonic" or structural space; with combined "knowledge of architecture, landscape, and space, Noguchi was capable of creating designs that were fully integrated with their associated architecture."⁴¹ These notions are evident in the courtyards and their sculptures created for Connecticut General. Using stone and water as elements, for example, and placing four courtyards symmetrically within the Wilde Building's grid-like floor-plan, Noguchi created a checkerboard effect; the viewer (as author Ana Torres describes), "perceives the water as flowing under the building from one courtyard to another," thereby fully integrating the landscape elements with the architecture.

The Connecticut General commission was also the first realized collaborative work between Noguchi and Bunshaft and would inspire additional collaborations, including sunken gardens for both the Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library at Yale University (1960-64) and the Chase Manhattan Bank in New York (1961-64). The Connecticut General

38 See "University of Vermont-Honorary Degree Recipient –Florence Knoll Bassett." Commencement 2004: University of Vermont. <<http://www.uvm.edu/~cmncmnt/commencement2004/?Page=bassett.html>> Accessed February 13, 2007.

39 See "Knoll: Designer." Knoll.com. <www.knoll.com/designer/designer_detail.jsp?designer_id=83> Accessed February 13, 2007; and "University of Vermont-Honorary Degree Recipient –Florence Knoll Bassett." Commencement 2004: University of Vermont.

<<http://www.uvm.edu/~cmncmnt/commencement2004/?Page=bassett.html>> Accessed February 13, 2007; and *New Haven Railroad Historical and Technical Association*. <<http://www.nhrhta.org/>> Accessed February 13, 2007.

40 See Marc Treib, ed. *Modern Landscape Architecture: A Critical Review* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1993), 57; and Isamu Noguchi, *A Sculptor's World* (New York: Harper & Row), 161 and 165.

41 Torres, 17, 83.

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commission gave Noguchi the opportunity to resolve the scale difference between large buildings and small courtyards through the use of elements of simplicity – i.e. water, stone, small gravel, low bushes. The landscape design work at Connecticut General clearly represented his finding balance between nature and art too, as evidenced by an earlier reflection, “I had a revelation in 1933 of the earth outdoors as a new way of conceiving sculpture.”⁴²

Technological Advances: Design Process, Products and Methods

Representing one of the largest glass installations at the time, the construction of The Wilde Building required and inspired several technological developments in the field of modern architecture; its construction also contributed to the post-war ‘model’ boom necessitated by these advances.⁴³

A set of American architects and designers, including those who designed the Wilde Building –specifically, Bunshaft and Knoll -- initiated a new post-World War II trend as a result of their belief and findings that, “the scale model was no longer enough for corporate work. To communicate with their clients, who needed to be led towards the latest architectural form, [and] to communicate with their contractors, who were required to construct these brand-new assemblies, and to communicate with the public, who needed to be educated about modernism, [the designers] needed to expand the definition of model...[therefore] these designers all began to present their work – the latest in American corporate design and architecture -- in new ways, including life-size mock-ups, abstract paste-ups, and animated film...”⁴⁴

In the case of the Wilde Building, a life-size mock-up of the building was constructed (the first full-scale mock-up created by SOM) and was intended to prove the architect’s idea that the “increasingly thin assemblies” (i.e. of its curtain walls) could and would “withstand wind, rain and cold.”⁴⁵

As described in Connecticut General’s 1950s monthly newsletter publication, *Life in General*, a full-scale section of the proposed headquarters was constructed in 1954-55 near the Cottage Grove Road site in Bloomfield; specifically this mock-up consisted of a two-story, 72 feet by 60 feet building, it being a replica of the proposed second floor area between the glass exterior wall on one side and a grass courtyard on the other side (Historic Image 3). Connecticut General’s Building Committee (comprised of the company president, Frazar B. Wilde, and five additional Connecticut General fellows) felt that due to the “numerous departures from the conventional and traditional” the building’s design was to make, it was “wise to see these departures in full scale before approving them;” as stated, the purpose of the mock-up was: to permit the

42 “The Noguchi Museum-Life and Work: Gardens and Playgrounds.” The Noguchi Museum. <<http://www.noguchi.org/gardplay.html>> Accessed October 12, 2009.

43 “Many Firsts in Glass Building,” *American Glass Review*, 15 January, 1958, p. 8; See also, Alexandra Lange, “This Year’s Model,” *Journal of Design History*, Vol. 19(3), 2006, p. 233.

44 *Ibid.*, p. 234. Additional contemporary designers of Bunshaft and Knoll who contributed to the post-war, life-size model trend included Eero Saarinen (1910-1961), Charles (1907-1978) and Ray (1912-1988) Eames, and Eliot Noyes (1910-1977).

45 *Ibid.* Eero Saarinen & Associates had constructed a life-size mock-up of the General Motors Technical Center (1949-56) in Warren, Michigan in 1949.

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company and the architects to see full size details of the interior finishing and furnishings; to practice the coordination of interior HVAC elements installation; and to practice the assembly of the exterior walls.⁴⁶

Testing was not limited to the full-scale mock-up constructed in Bloomfield. Intensive study and testing preceded the final specification for the building's skin and its method of assembly.⁴⁷ Rigorous weather tests were conducted in Garden City, Long Island by General Bronze – the glazing unit assembler company. These demonstrations were intended to test the glass wall units for water tightness and structural soundness; the units were exposed to *and* held up in hurricane "Carol" proportions – twelve inches of rain per hour at 130 miles per hour.⁴⁸

"Literally hundreds of new construction techniques were developed for this pioneering building effort," claimed Pittsburgh Plate Glass Company (PPG) in its 1958 products brochure.⁴⁹ Although an actual count of the number of new techniques developed has not been verified, several new products and installation methods are described in the literature available.

Over 170,000 square-feet of glass was employed in the Wilde Building, much of it technologically-advanced glazing by PPG.⁵⁰ The building utilized 712 lights (11 feet 2 inches by 8 feet 2 inches) of 3/8" heat-absorbent, glare-reducing *Solex* plate glass manufactured by Pittsburgh Plate Glass Company (now PPG Industries, Inc.) to enclose the upper floors of the building.⁵¹ According to a 1960 PPG cut-sheet, the *Solex* product "absorbs heat without significant interference with light transmission. Although it transmits 70-75% of the sun's total light, it admits less than 45% of the solar heat;" this reduces the heat entering a building through windows and is in contrast to clear glass, [which at the time], was found to admit 85% of the sun's total heat and light.⁵² The product brochure further stated that having a faint bluish-green tint (as a result of iron filings melted into the glass; it is the iron particles that help to absorb the solar heat), the *Solex* also tends to make other colors appear true and would therefore provide a comfortable, non-glaring interior space for employees.

In addition to use of large quantities of *Solex* glazing, the Wilde Building represented one of the largest *Spandrelite* installations completed at the time and was featured on the product cut-sheet shortly after construction.⁵³ Twenty-five

46 *Life in General: Connecticut General Life Insurance Company Home Office News Magazine*, January 1955, p. 3.

47 "Background of the Connecticut General Building," p. 16, n.d., internal Connecticut General Life Insurance Company document, on file in CIGNA Corporate Research Department - Archives, Bloomfield, Conn.

48 *Life in General: Connecticut General Life Insurance Company Home Office News Magazine*, January 1956, p. 1. (Hurricane 'Carol' – a Category 3 storm - struck New England in August, 1954 and at the time, was the costliest United States hurricanes in terms of damages caused.)

49 See "PPG Products," Pittsburgh Plate Glass Company product booklet, April, 1958, p. 16.

50 *Ibid.*, p. 19.

51 *Solex* plate glass was also utilized in the S.O.M.-designed Ford Motor Company Headquarters (1956) in Dearborn, Michigan. See Pittsburgh Plate Glass Company, 1958, p. 17; and "Pittsburgh Glass Products," Pittsburgh Plate Glass Company product booklet, 1960, p.7, both on file in CIGNA Corporate Research Department - Archives, Bloomfield, Conn.

52 "Pittsburgh Glass Products," Pittsburgh Plate Glass Company product booklet, 1960, pp. 6-7.

53 "Spandrelite: glass in color," Pittsburgh Plate Glass Company cut-sheet, n.d., on file in CIGNA Corporate Research Department - Archives, Bloomfield, Conn.

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hundred (2,500) smaller glass spandrels, 68 inches by 34 inches in size and 3/8" inches thick were installed in the building's spandrel areas. This glazing, specifically, PPG's *Spandrelite* glass featuring fused-on enamel color (gray), is heat-strengthened (with ceramic color fused to the back) and intended for curtain walls; the color of the *Spandrelite* is mounted to the interior [side] which provides the additional protection of 1/4" or more of glass. As an added measure, the spandrels are also backed with an additional two inches of prefabricated foam insulation panels manufactured by Pittsburgh Corning Foamglas. "Strong," and "durable," *Spandrelite* "has approximately twice the impact and thermal shock resistance of annealed base glass."⁵⁴

Other noted products utilized in the construction of the building's curtain walls include the use of PPG's *Twindow* insulating glass to enclose the North Wing's fifth floor level. Described as a "twin-glass-air-space sandwich" the *Twindow* combines the thermal insulation of storm windows with the prime window as single unit... installing like a single piece of glass; *Twindow* provides a 41-51% savings in heat transfer over similar area of single-glazed openings.⁵⁵ Clear, heavy plate glass, 3/8" thick, was used to enclose the first floor of the Main Building, which is shaded and protected by the 30" overhang of the upper stories; and PPG's *Herculite* glazing, which features an impact resistance of eight times greater than ordinary glass, was utilized in the exterior doors.⁵⁶ For longevity, copper (provided by Revere Copper and Brass Incorporated) was used for base flashing, as well as louvers, gravel stops and edge strips; roof copings of stainless steel flashed with lead coated copper were also utilized.⁵⁷

The use of the numerous modern products, as well as the sheer quantity, and in the case of the *Solex* lights, size (some weighing as much as 500 pounds) prompted new techniques for installation. The *Solex* lights ranked with the biggest sheets of glass ever set into a commercial building; to handle the heavy units, PPG's Hartford Distributing Warehouse devised a steel frame mounting eight rubber vacuum suction cups with a lifting capacity of upwards of 5,600 pounds.⁵⁸ This frame – which had never been used outside a glass factory prior – would be attached to the prefabricated glazing units and raised by a winch (an electric hoist) suspended from a "monorail" on the building's roof; each suction cup was connected to a vacuum tank and air pump by air hoses, with each controlled by its own air valve (Historic Image 4). Smaller, hand-operated winches were used to ease the glazing panels into the prefabricated *Alumilited* aluminum wall sections which were then bolted into steel frames.⁵⁹

54 Pittsburgh Plate Glass Company, 1960, p. 10.

55 The amount of heat which will pass through one square-foot of *Twindow* area per hour for each degree Fahrenheit temperature difference between air on the inside and air on the outside in BTU's is .55-.67. That of a single-glazing pane of the same thickness is 1.12-1.14 BTU's. See Pittsburgh Plate Glass Company, 1960, pp. 12-13.

56 Pittsburgh Plate Glass Company, 1960, p. 8.

57 Revere Copper and Brass Inc. product advertisement, n.d., on file in CIGNA Corporate Research Department - Archives, Bloomfield, Conn. See also, "Description of Construction and Mechanical Details of Connecticut General Life Insurance Company Home Office Building," p. 1, n.d., internal Connecticut General Life Insurance Company document, on file in CIGNA Corporate Research Department - Archives, Bloomfield, Conn.

58 *American Glass Review*, p. 9.

59 Pittsburgh Plate Glass Company, 1960, p. 19; see also *American Glass Review*, p. 8.

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A new sealant in the construction and also a “notable first” was the use of Thiokol, a trade name for polysulfide.⁶⁰ Thiokol (a rubber-like substance), made at the time by Minnesota Mining and Manufacturing Company (now 3M Worldwide) was injected between the glazing and aluminum frame surfaces; this was an added sealant as the glass and aluminum surfaces had also been chemically cleaned and received neoprene (synthetic rubber) tubing between the two.

Criterion A: Development of Suburbs and Corporate Office Parks

Suburbanization

The relocation of Connecticut General Headquarters from Hartford to the Town of Bloomfield is part of an important chapter in Connecticut history – the state’s emergence as an essentially suburban society.⁶¹ Starting post World War I, decentralization of America’s urban cores began, with a correlating exploding rise in the population of its cities’ suburbs post-World War II. City residents sought home ownership in the new suburbs, ownership having become available to more people than ever before via new mortgage and loan programs provided by states and the federal government. The new federal interstate highway system (planning that began in the 1930s and implemented in 1956) furthered suburban growth by providing access to these outlying areas. Connecticut’s cities, Hartford, New Haven and Bridgeport and their suburbs were no exception to the population changes. By the 1950s the suburban exodus from Hartford had commenced, and was accelerated by the construction of Interstate-91, providing Bloomfield highway access via Windsor to downtown Hartford. The completion in 1959 of I-91, located a short distance (approximately 2 miles) to the east of Bloomfield (and the Wilde Building), furthered the Town’s growth during that period and provided an ideal, accessible location for the new Connecticut General Life Insurance Company (Connecticut General) headquarters. In the period from 1950 to 1970, Hartford’s population declined from approximately 177,000 to 158,000, while the combined populations of six suburbs contiguous to Hartford rose from approximately 113,000 to 221,000. Bloomfield, in fact, experienced a 220% growth increase between 1950 and 1970. Its 220% growth rate topped all the others by a wide margin. The expanding population brought residential growth, as well as industrial and retail.⁶²

Frazar B. Wilde (1895-1985) and the new Connecticut General Life Insurance Company Headquarters

Re-named for Frazar B. Wilde in 1984, the Wilde Building is a testament to his “expectations for a building that paralleled the individual homeowner’s suburban dream.”⁶³

⁶⁰ *American Glass Review*, p. 9.

⁶¹ “Connecticut General Life Insurance Company Building.” *U.S. D.O.I. Draft National Register of Historic Places Nomination*.

⁶² “About Bloomfield.” Town of Bloomfield. <http://www.bloomfieldct.org/Pages/BloomfieldCT_WebDocs/about> Accessed February 13, 2007.

⁶³ “Connecticut General Life Insurance Company Building.” *U.S. D.O.I. Draft National Register of Historic Places Nomination*

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Described as a “brilliant man” by Bunshaft, Wilde became president of Connecticut General 1936.⁶⁴ In 1947 when Connecticut General made a study of the firm’s long-term space requirements it was discovered that despite fully using the existing offices in downtown Hartford, and renting supplementary space, the firm would have sufficient office space for a maximum of ten years only. Moreover, the company realized that because it was, “always needing more room,” it would not only need more room, but flexibility for expansion.⁶⁵ Breaking with tradition from other Hartford insurance companies by *not* proposing to expand vertically in the existing downtown space, Wilde proposed instead moving the company to Hartford’s suburbs – to Bloomfield on a 280-acre site the company subsequently purchased in 1951.

Additional studies further determined that “the issuing and service of an insurance policy resembled an assembly line operation in a factory.” Wilde noted, “The work doesn’t want to go upstairs.”⁶⁶ Wilde asked for a horizontal office building ‘in the country’ with ample parking for the increasingly automobile-dependent workforce and that could house up to 3,000 employees (including a 1,000 person expansion in the future). Wilde also wanted an economical building with no maintenance cost for 50 years; the main expense of the building’s cost would be in the initial build. Materials consultant Walter Voss (1887-1960?) was hired to assist in ensuring this necessity and as a result, little paint was used.⁶⁷ Exterior materials of glass and steel provided low maintenance and high durability (as described above in Section 8: Page 14).

To entice workers to the new location, away from downtown Hartford, Wilde also wanted an office building that provided all employees visual access to the outside and sunlight, an office where they could feel as if they were part of the [Bloomfield’s] countryside.⁶⁸ The Wilde Building’s glass curtain perimeter walls and interior courtyards, as well as its clear span of 60-feet provided this. The lack of columns further allowed for the additional requirement of flexibility for changes over time as the company would see fit. To diminish the monotony of the large open spaces, Wilde approved the modern materials (i.e. plastics) and colors (i.e. primary colors) as chosen by Knoll. These design details were intended to improve employee morale, health and production.

Furthering this intention, Wilde ensured that the suburban building would provide urban experiences, which would otherwise be missed by the employees once the move to the suburbs occurred – “A suburban plant must provide for

⁶⁴ *Oral History of Gordon Bunshaft, Interviewed by Betty J. Blum, 1989.*

⁶⁵ *Industrial Design*, 48.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*

⁶⁷ Walter Voss (1887-1960?), an engineer and professor was the first head of M.I.T.’s Department of Building Engineering and Construction, established in 1940. Professor Voss recognized the need for technically trained leaders in the building industry and during the post-World War II –era focused his studies on large scale house production. Later on he was materials consultant for various large-scale building projects, including the Bankers Trust Building (completed in 1962) in New York and Connecticut General Headquarters. M.I.T.’s ‘Tucker-Voss Award’ was established in memory of Voss and fellow professor Ross Tucker in 1962 and is presented annually to a student who shows particular promise in building construction. See *New York Times*, May 30, 1940; Nov. 2, 1941; and Dec. 25, 1960; See also “Civil & Environmental Engineering Awards – MIT News Office.” MIT News: Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

<<http://web.mit.edu/newsoffice/2007/awards-cee-tt0606.html>> Accessed September 17, 2007.

⁶⁸ *Oral History of Gordon Bunshaft, Interviewed by Betty J. Blum, 1989.*

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employee free-time.”⁶⁹ Noting that the old Connecticut General headquarters in Hartford overlooked Bushnell Park, the Bloomfield site was intended to provide a park-like experience with landscaped terrace, a man-made (cooling) pond, sculptural elements, and walking paths. Moreover, welfare amenities inside the building included what was akin to a city streetscape: an auditorium, bowling alley, beauty and barber shops, dry cleaners, game room, lounge, card room, snack bar, library, cafeteria, a Lord & Taylor-like Department Store (run by Connecticut General) and a club store. Day care facilities were also provided for employees’ children. The work experience in the suburban Wilde Building was comparable to, if not exceptional to that of a downtown city office. In September 1957 after the move to the new building, Connecticut General, in fact, reported hiring up 70%, turnover down 20%.⁷⁰ The dawn of a new era of office buildings (‘in the countryside’) had arisen with Connecticut General leading the way. Shortly after the building opened, Connecticut General even hosted a three-day symposium on the future of American cities that drew 400 leading architects, city planners and economists, including such icons as Lewis Mumford. A realization of his suburban ideal, Wilde believed that the building “may exert an influence on the office of the future, perhaps even on the city of the future.”⁷¹ Some social critics, however, including Jane Jacobs, criticized Connecticut General’s move to the suburbs because these corporate moves contributed to the subsequent economic decline of cities. The Wilde Building symbolizes a major element in America’s mid-20th-century social history. A touchstone in a new era of corporate architecture that would soon sweep the nation, the Wilde Building’s further symbolism -- representing industry’s and America’s shift to - and the ascendance of - the suburbs is clearly evident.

⁶⁹ *Interiors*, 83.

⁷⁰ “Building with a Future,” *Time*, Sept. 15, 1957.

⁷¹ *Ibid.*

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Section 10 Page 23 Connecticut General Life Insurance Company Headquarters
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UTM Coordinates Continued

	Zone	Easting	Northing	Zone	Easting	Northing	Zone	Easting	Northing		
5)	<u>18</u>	<u>687051E</u>	<u>4631472N</u>	6)	<u>18</u>	<u>687112E</u>	<u>4631260N</u>	7)	<u>18</u>	<u>687236E</u>	<u>4631266N</u>
8)	<u>18</u>	<u>687240E</u>	<u>4631372N</u>	9)	<u>18</u>	<u>687446E</u>	<u>4631380N</u>	10)	<u>18</u>	<u>687588E</u>	<u>4631370N</u>
11)	<u>18</u>	<u>687586E</u>	<u>4631535N</u>								

Verbal Boundary Description

To show the relationship between standing structures and both natural and man-made features, the nominated property is clearly delineated by the heavy line on the accompanying 1"=200' sketch map entitled, "Connecticut General Life Insurance Company Headquarters."

Boundary Justification

The boundary of the nominated property includes sufficient land to include the contributing historic components of the Connecticut General Life Insurance Company Headquarters (presently known as CIGNA's Wilde Building), as well as its 1972 components.

The Connecticut General Life Insurance Company Headquarters has been associated with Hartford County tax map 87- 4, lot 2017 since its construction in 1957. The original tract consisted of 280 acres and was bounded by Cottage Grove Road to the north, Hall Boulevard to the west, and Bloomfield Avenue to the east. Portions of the original 280 acres have since been sold and developed. The development of the Gillette Ridge Golf Club in 2004 reduced the size of the CIGNA campus, subdivided Lot 2017 and thereby changed the western, southern and eastern boundaries. The nominated property today incorporates 30.52 acres, shown on the attached sketch map as the heavy line.

The boundary is the legal lot lines of the Wilde Building and Parking Garage, specifically present-day Hartford County tax map 87-4, Lot 2017, which the Main Building and its components are located and Hartford County tax map 86-2, Lot 2014, upon which the Parking Garage is located. Hartford County, Town of Bloomfield parcel tax maps are available at the Town of Bloomfield Assessor's Office, Bloomfield Town Hall 800 Bloomfield Avenue, Bloomfield, CT 06002.⁷²

⁷² Refer to property field-cards: Account #s R01464 and R01474, which are also accessible on-line at http://www.bloomfieldct.org/dept_assessors.php.

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The boundary of the nominated property thus follows the legal lot lines of the Wilde Building and Parking Garage. Excluded from the property is Hartford County tax map 87-1, Lot 2000, which consists of the 2004-developed golf greens, fairways, tees, buildings, structures, and parking areas associated with and constructed for the Gillette Ridge Golf Club. This portion of the land is developed and is no longer part of the Wilde Building property. The integrity of the former cooling feature on this land has moreover been compromised as a result of its truncation (removal of the associated pool) and by the golf course development. Thus, the cooling pond and "The Family" sculpture further southeast of the pond are excluded from the nomination.

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Jennifer F. Hembree, Senior Associate

organization MacRostie Historic Advisors, LLC date Sept. 2007, revised Dec. 2008 and Oct. 2009

street & number 1400 16th Street N.W., Suite 420 telephone (202) 483-2020

city or town Washington state DC zip code 20036

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

A USGS map (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A sketch map for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative black and white photographs of the property.

Additional items (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)

name CIGNA c/o Frank Pina

street & number 1601 Chestnut Street, TL5G telephone (215) 761-1969

city or town Philadelphia state PA zip code 19192

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 et seq.). A federal agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to a collection of information unless it displays a valid OMB control number.

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Section Photographs Page 25

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Date of Photographs: January 2007 and October 2008

Photographer: Jennifer F. Hembree
MacRostie Historic Advisors LLC
1400 16th Street, NW, Suite 420
Washington, DC 20036
(202) 483-2020

Digital images on file at MacRostie Historic Advisors LLC, Washington, DC office.

Photo key is attached.

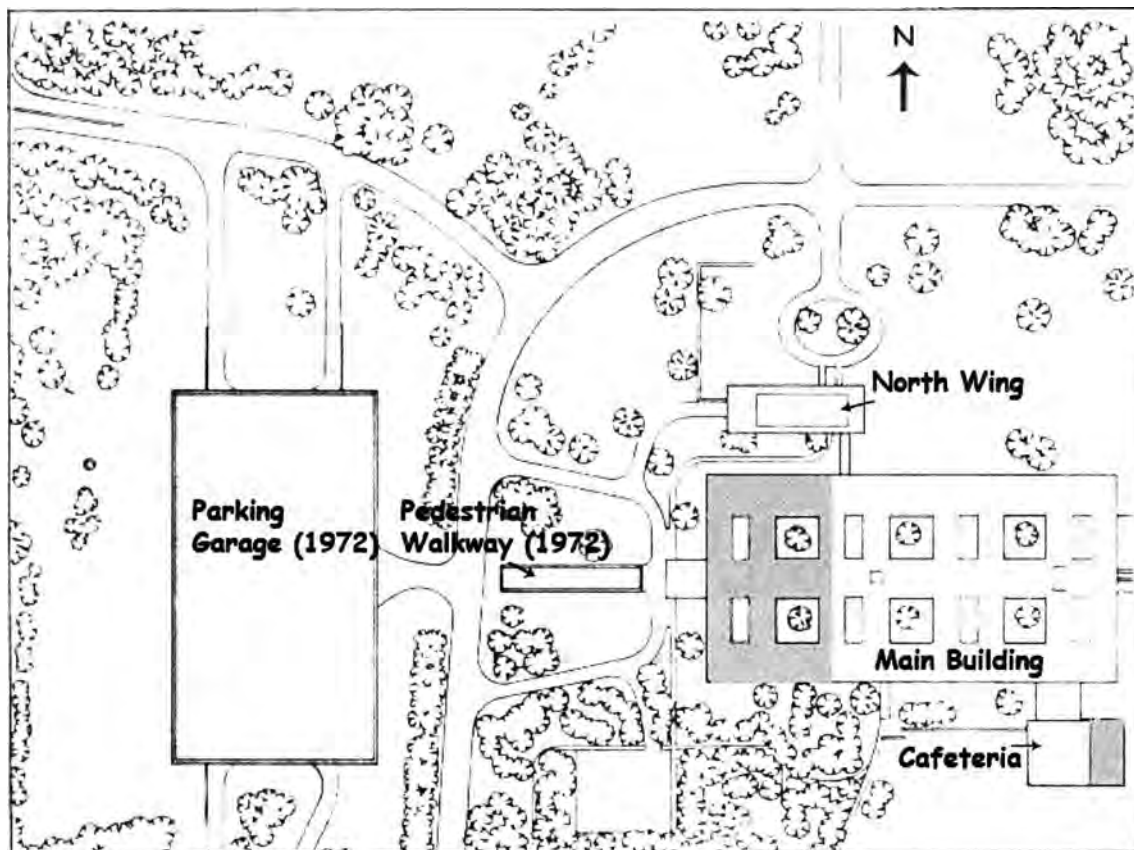
1. South elevation, view looking northwest; remaining portion of cooling feature (pond) in foreground
2. West and south elevations of cafeteria, view looking northeast
3. South elevation, view looking north from golf course
4. South elevation, view looking northeast; caterpillar-shaped bench at left
5. View looking north from golf course and Noguchi sculpture (not part of nomination) towards south side of Wilde Building
6. View looking south toward loading dock
7. North elevation of North Wing and main building, view looking southwest
8. North elevation of parking garage, view looking southwest
9. West elevation, view looking northeast across pedestrian walkway
10. First floor, northeast quadrant office space, view looking west
11. View of east end escalators from first floor
12. Second floor, view looking east toward northwest quadrant office space
13. Cafeteria, first floor, view looking southeast
14. Connector to North Wing
15. North Wing second floor reception area, view of north side
16. View of North Wing elevators, view looking north from connector
17. North Wing fourth floor, view looking west along north side
18. North Wing fifth floor, view looking northwest
19. Third floor northwest quadrant, view looking south along utility core
20. Interior Courtyard # 1, view northeast
21. Interior Courtyard # 6, view northeast
22. Interior Courtyard # 5, view south
23. Interior Courtyard # 4, view northwest
24. Interior Courtyard # 3, view northwest
25. Interior Courtyard # 2, view southeast
26. South terrace showing south elevation and water feature at right, view northwest

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■ Shaded areas indicate 1972 expansion(s)

Site-plan indicating 1972 expansion(s)

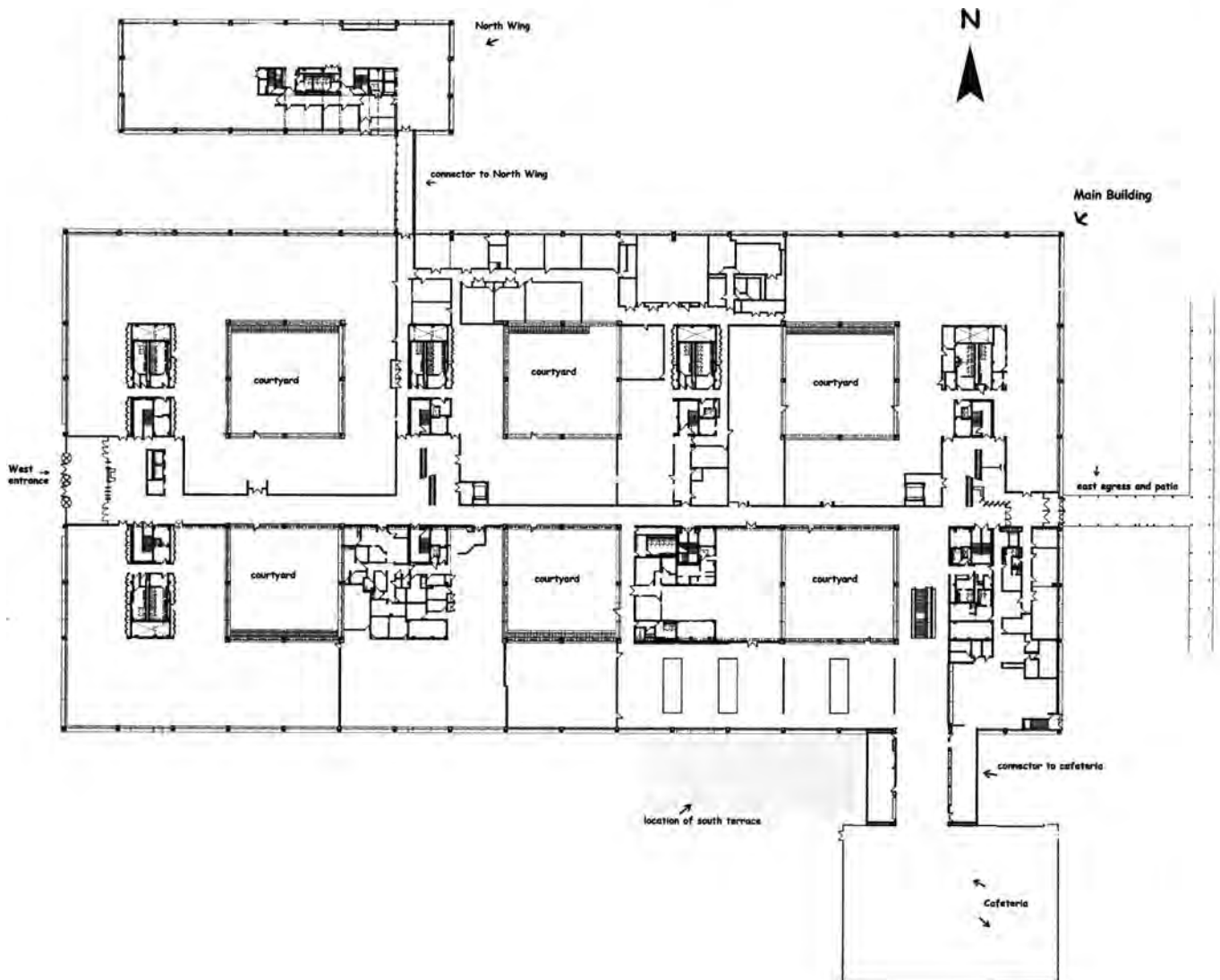
*(This plan is a compilation of images in Architecture, January 1988, p. 83;
and Google Earth, <http://earth.google.com>,
edited by MacRostie Historic Advisors, LLC,
October 2007.)*

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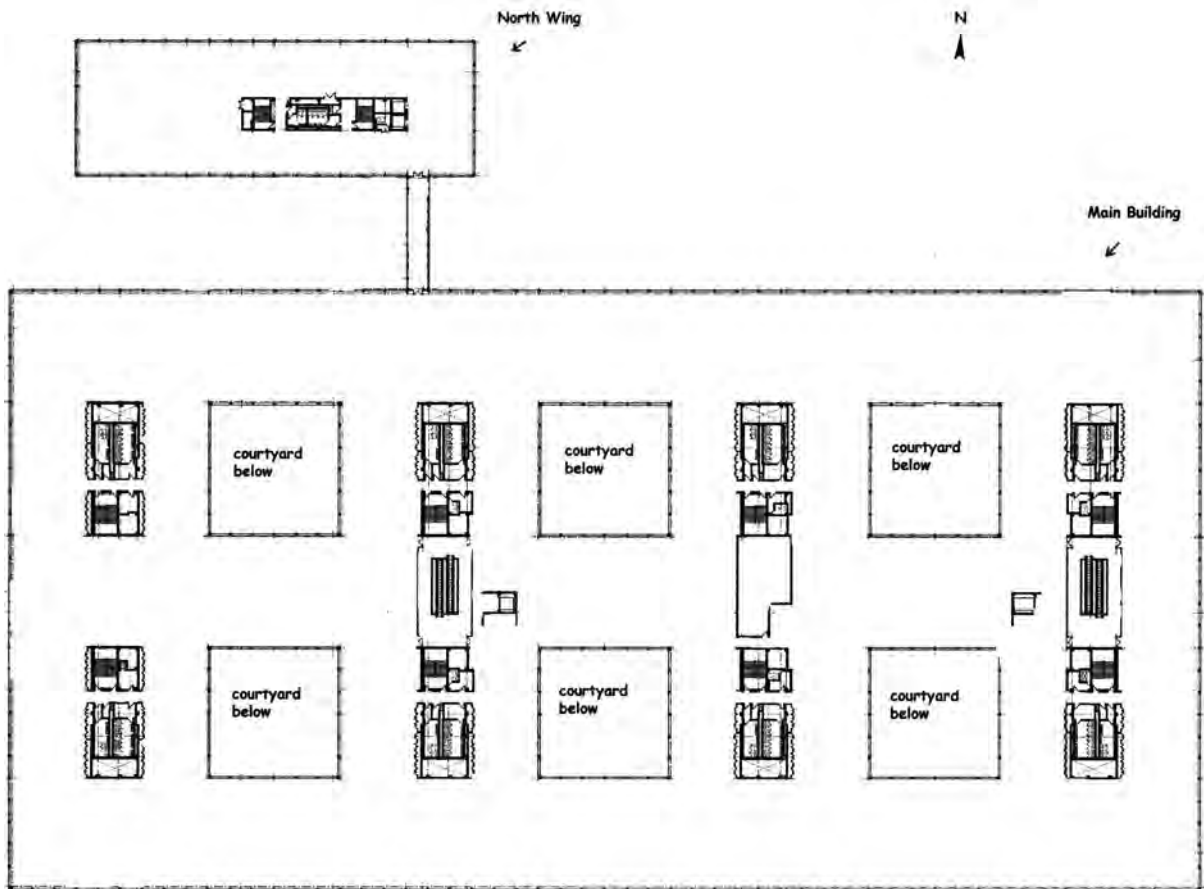
Sketch floor-plan (first floor)

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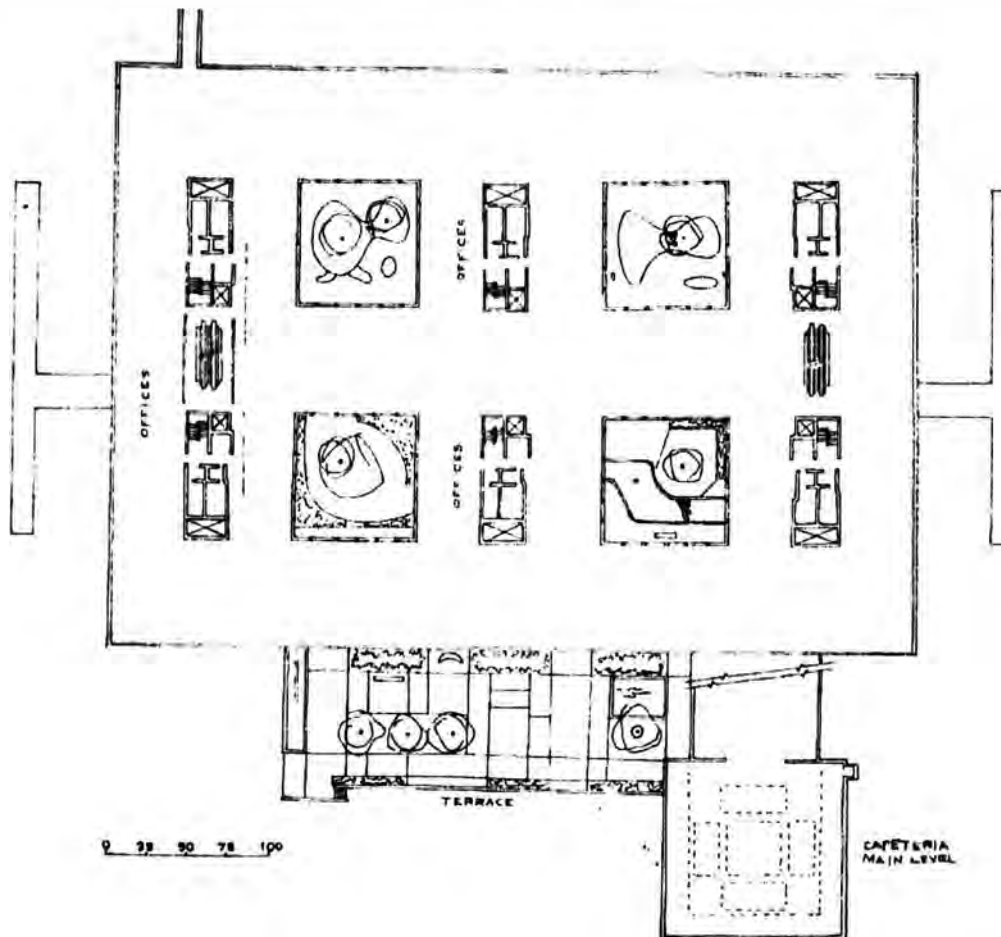
Sketch floor-plan (typical upper floor)

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Noguchi's courtyards plan, ca. 1956
(Noguchi's northeast courtyard was not used; see Section 7: Page 6.)

(from Torres, Ana Maria. *Isamu Noguchi: A Study of Space*. New York: Monacelli Press, 2000, p. 15.).

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Historic Image 1:

1957 aerial photo of Connecticut General Life Insurance Company Headquarters, view looking northwest; the pool (now gone) below the cafeteria is seen southeast of the building.
(courtesy CIGNA Corporate Research Department - Archives, Bloomfield, Conn.)

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Historic Image 2:

1972 aerial photo of Connecticut General Life Insurance Company Headquarters after construction of addition and parking garage, view looking northwest

(courtesy CIGNA Corporate Research Department - Archives, Bloomfield, Conn.)

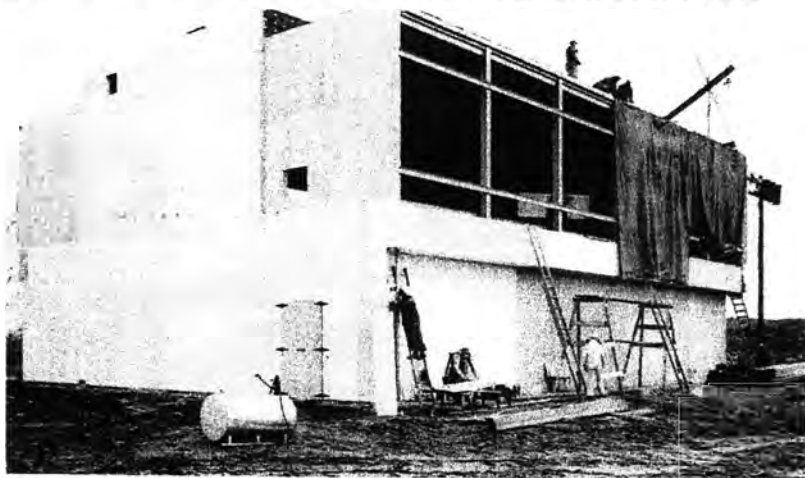
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EXPERIMENTAL BUILDING ERECTED AT BLOOMFIELD



Above is the mock up building under construction for experimental purposes at the new Home Office site. Lighting, acoustics, and interior finishing materials and arrangements, among others, will be tested, full size, to make sure we have the most efficient and pleasant combination for use in the final structure.

Historic Image 3:

Life-size mock-up of building constructed on-site, 1954-55, Bloomfield, Conn.

*(from Life In General: Connecticut General Life Insurance Company Home Office News Magazine,
January 1955.)*

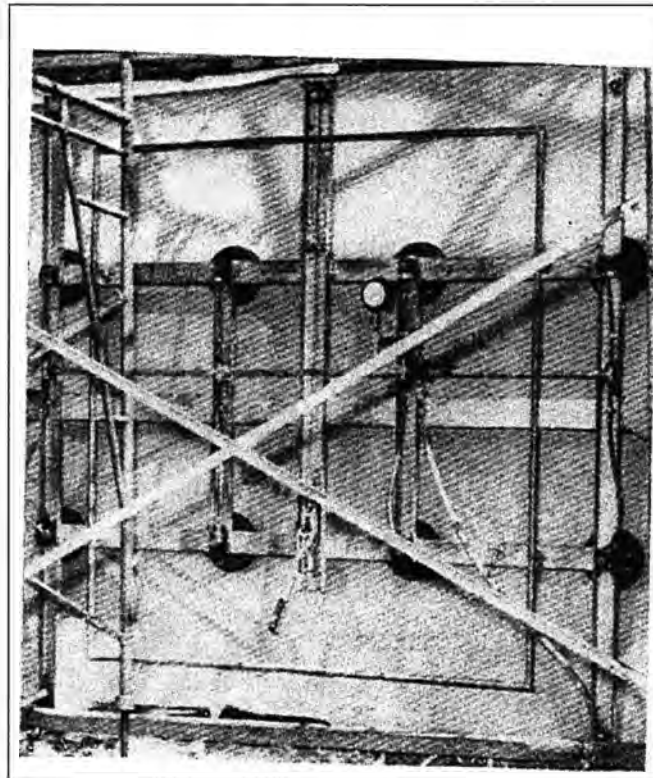
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Historic Image 4:

Image of the eight-cup vacuum frame utilized to handle the large glazing panels during construction

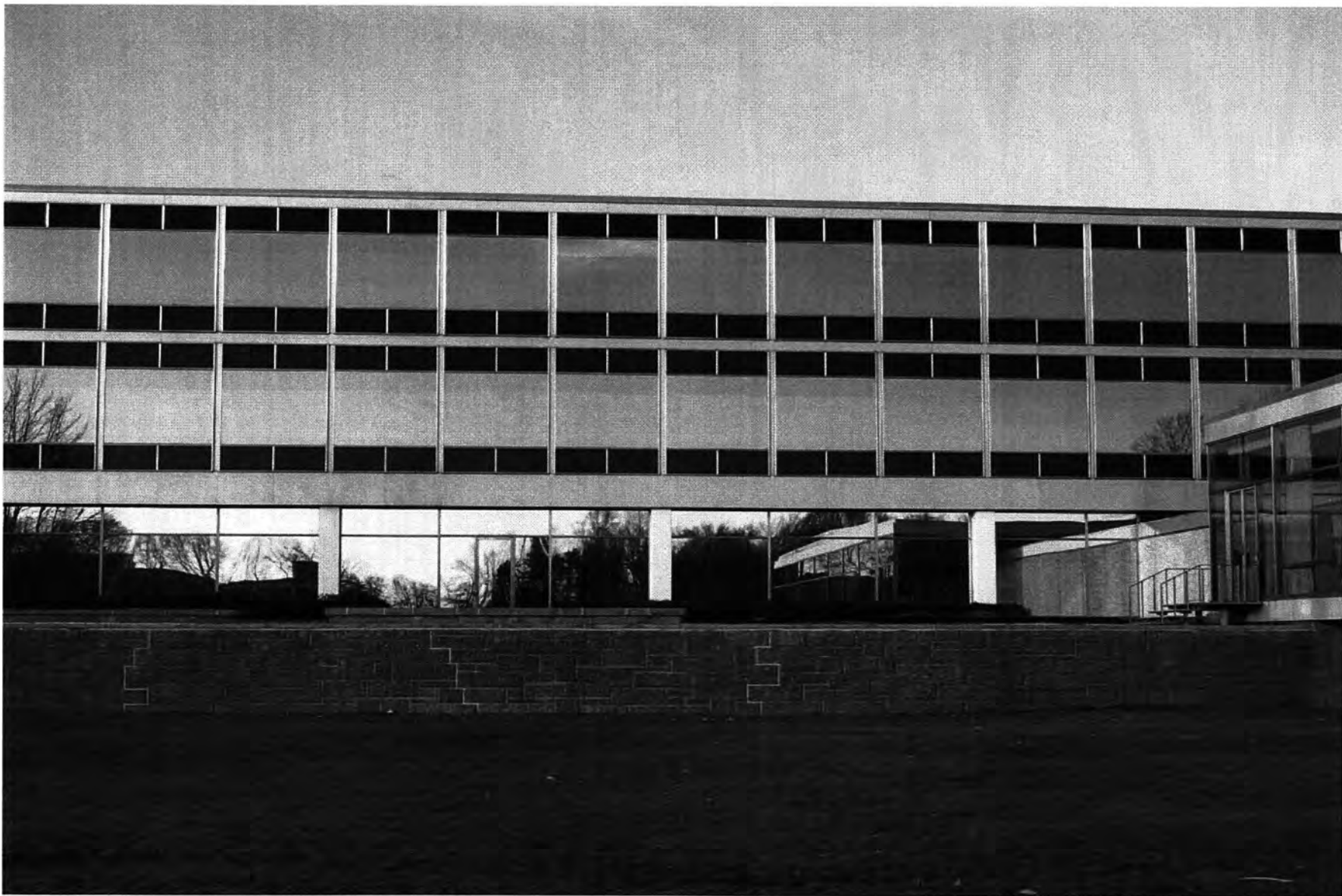
(from PPG Products, Pittsburgh Plate Glass Company product booklet, April 1958)



1. South elevation, view looking north from golf course; remaining portion of cooling feature (pond) in foreground



2. West and south elevations of cafeteria, view looking northeast



3. South elevation, view looking north



4. South elevation, view looking northeast; caterpillar-shaped bench at left



5. View looking north f from golf course and Noguchi sculpture (not part of nomination) towards south side of Wilde Building



6. View looking south toward loading dock



7. North elevation of North Wing and main building, view looking southwest



8. North elevation of parking garage, view looking southwest



9. West elevation, view looking northeast across pedestrian walkway



10. First floor, northeast quadrant office space, view looking west



11. View of east end escalators from first floor



12. Second floor, view looking east toward northwest quadrant office space



13. Cafeteria, first floor, view looking southeast



14. Connector to North Wing



15. North Wing second floor reception area, view of north side



16. View of North Wing elevators, view looking north from connector



17. North Wing fourth floor, view looking west along north side



18. North Wing fifth floor, view looking northwest



19. Third floor northwest quadrant, view looking south along utility cores



20. Interior Courtyard # 1, view northeast



21. Interior Courtyard # 6, view northeast



22. Interior Courtyard # 5, view northeast



23. Interior Courtyard # 4, view south



24. Interior Courtyard # 3, view northwest



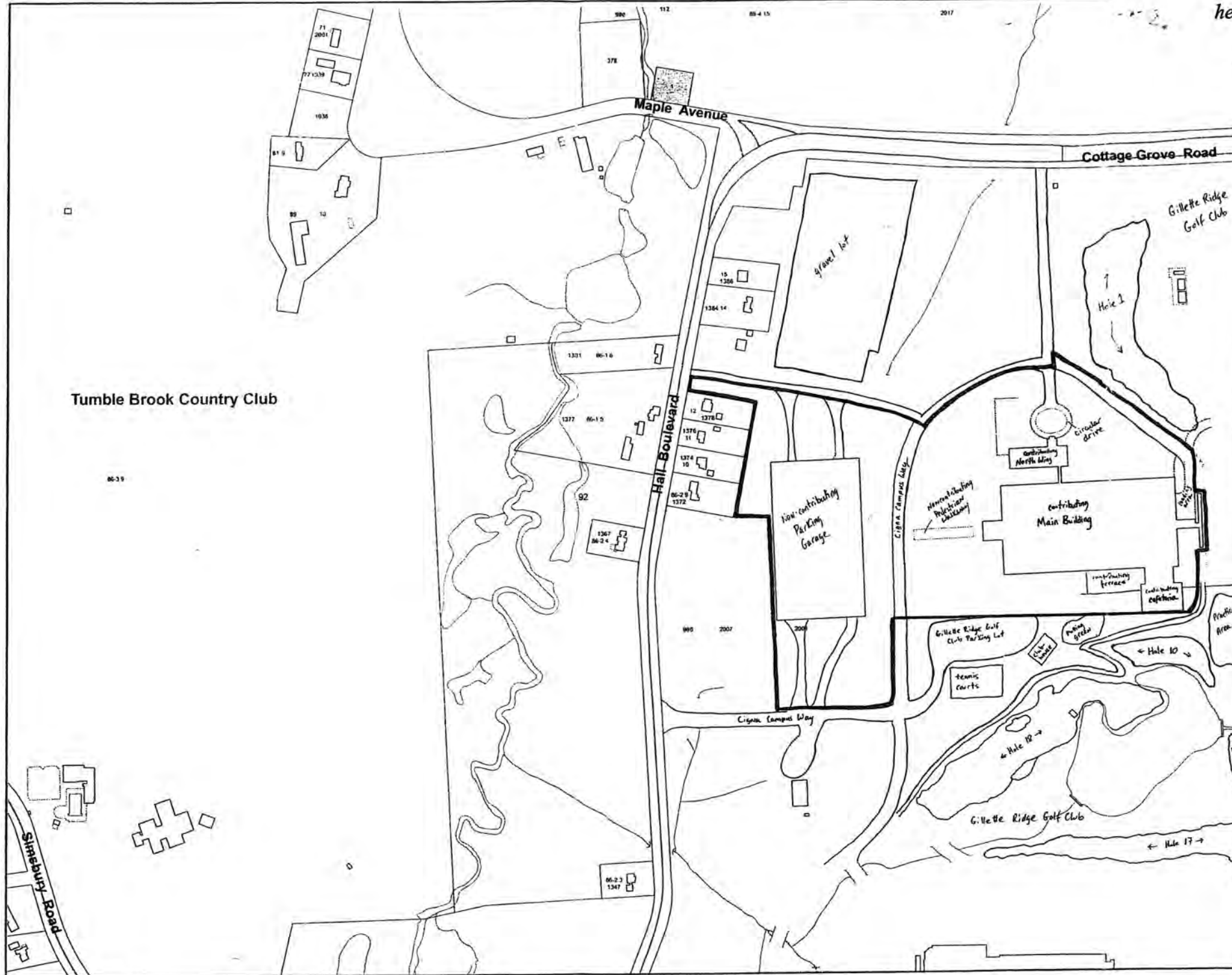
25. Interior Courtyard # 3, view northwest



26. South terrace showing south elevation and water feature at right, view northwest

TOWN OF BLOOMFIELD ASSESSOR MAP (DRAFT)

Connecticut General Life Insurance Company
Headquarters
Hartford County, CT
sketch map @ 1"=200'
heavy line indicates the boundary



Tumble Brook Country Club

Gillette Ridge Golf Club

House Nos. in Brown Lot Nos in Black



This map is for planning purposes only. The Town of Bloomfield makes no claims, representations, warranties, express or implied, concerning its validity, reliability or accuracy.

- Buildings
- CL&P
- State of Connecticut
- Town of Bloomfield

- State Highway; State Route
- Unpaved Town Roads
- Private

Scale 1:2400
(1 Inch = 200 Feet)
0 200 400 800 Feet
Data Sources: Metropolitan District Commission, 1995, 2002

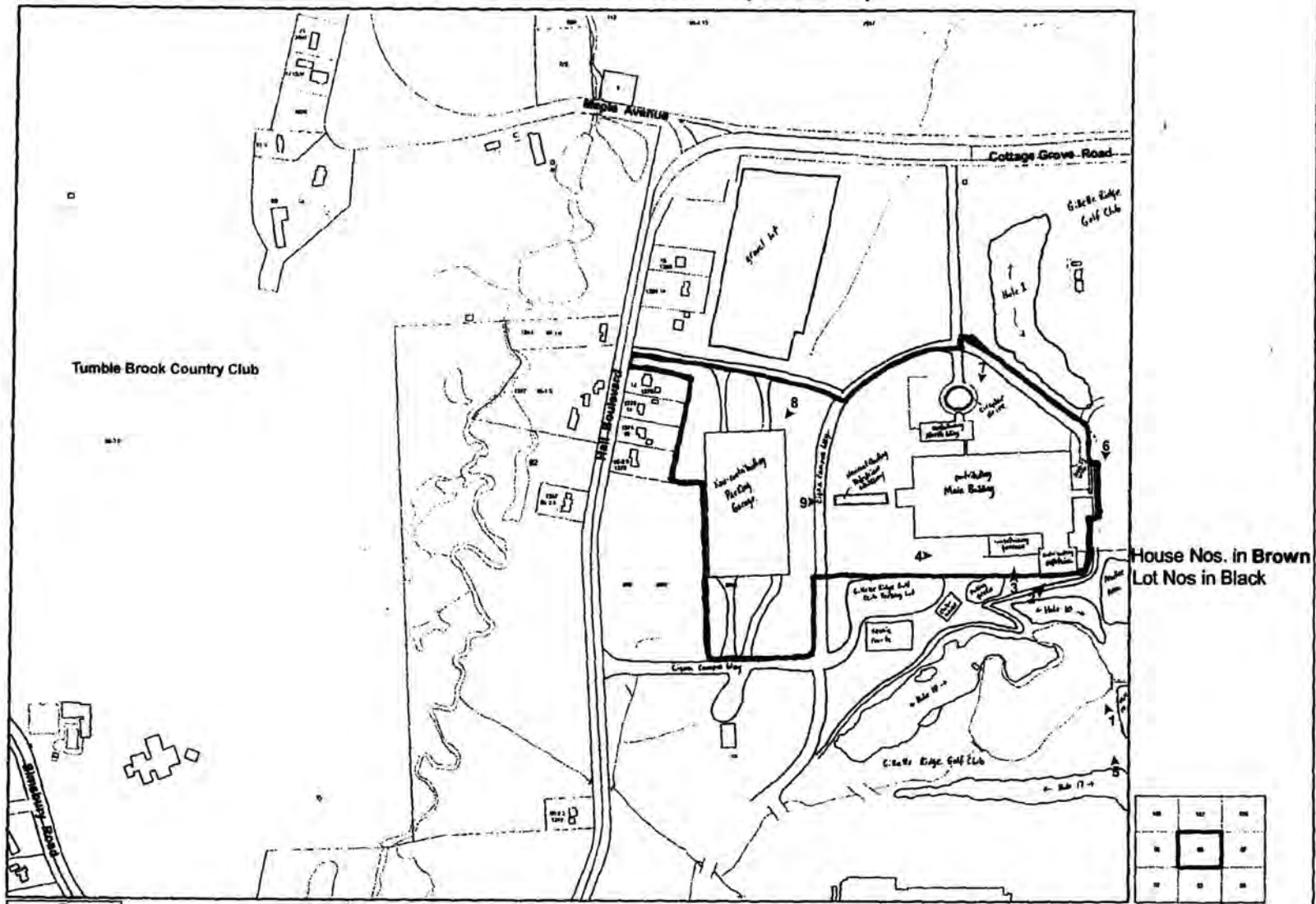
126	127	128
85	86	87
52	53	54



85

87

TOWN OF BLOOMFIELD ASSESSOR MAP (DRAFT)



House Nos. in Brown
Lot Nos in Black



This map is for planning purposes only. The Town of Bloomfield makes no claim, representation, warranty, express or implied, concerning its validity, reliability or accuracy.

	Buildings
	CL&P
	State of Connecticut
	Town of Bloomfield

	State Highway; State Route
	Unpaved Town Roads
	Private

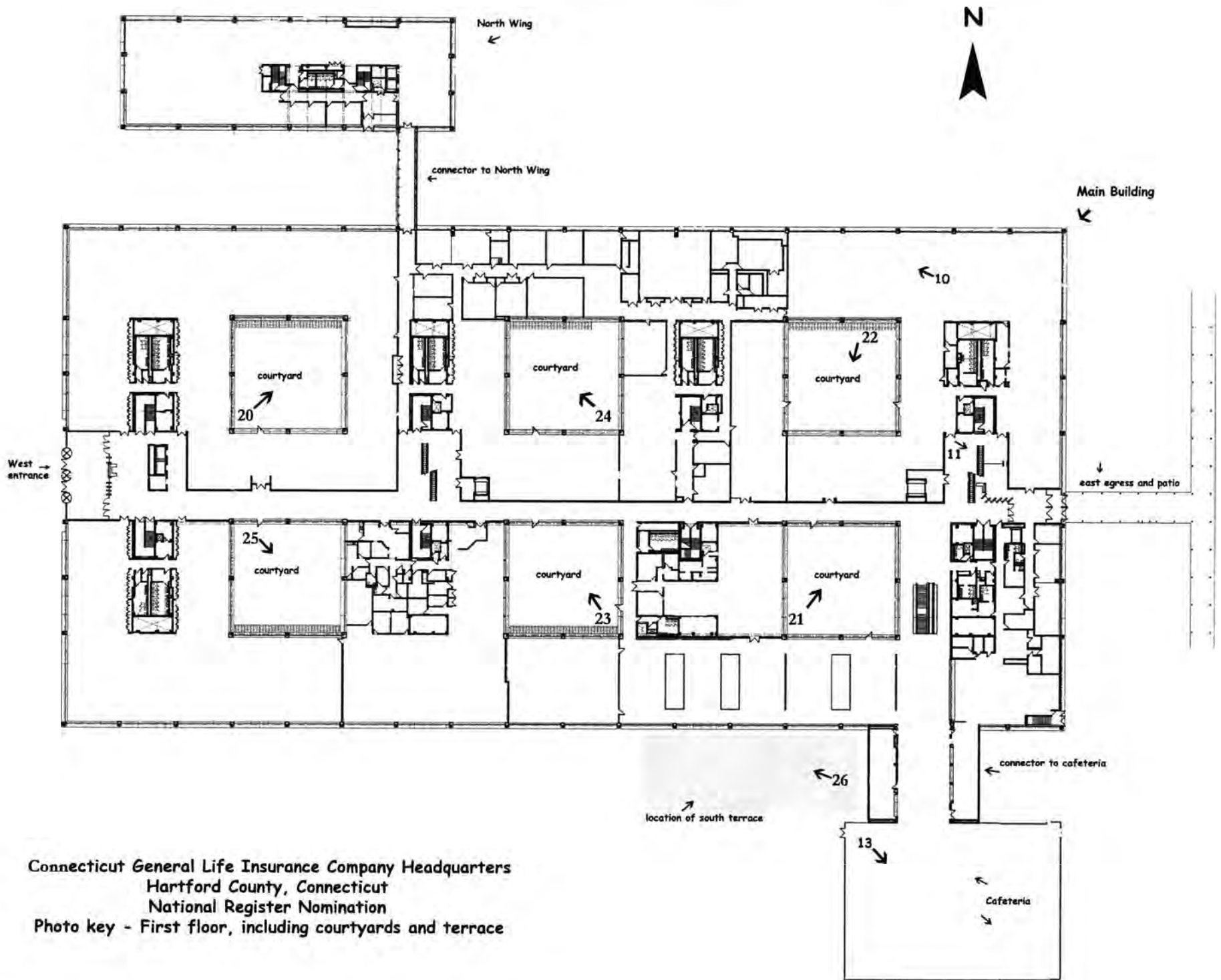
Scale 1:2400
(1 inch = 200 Feet)

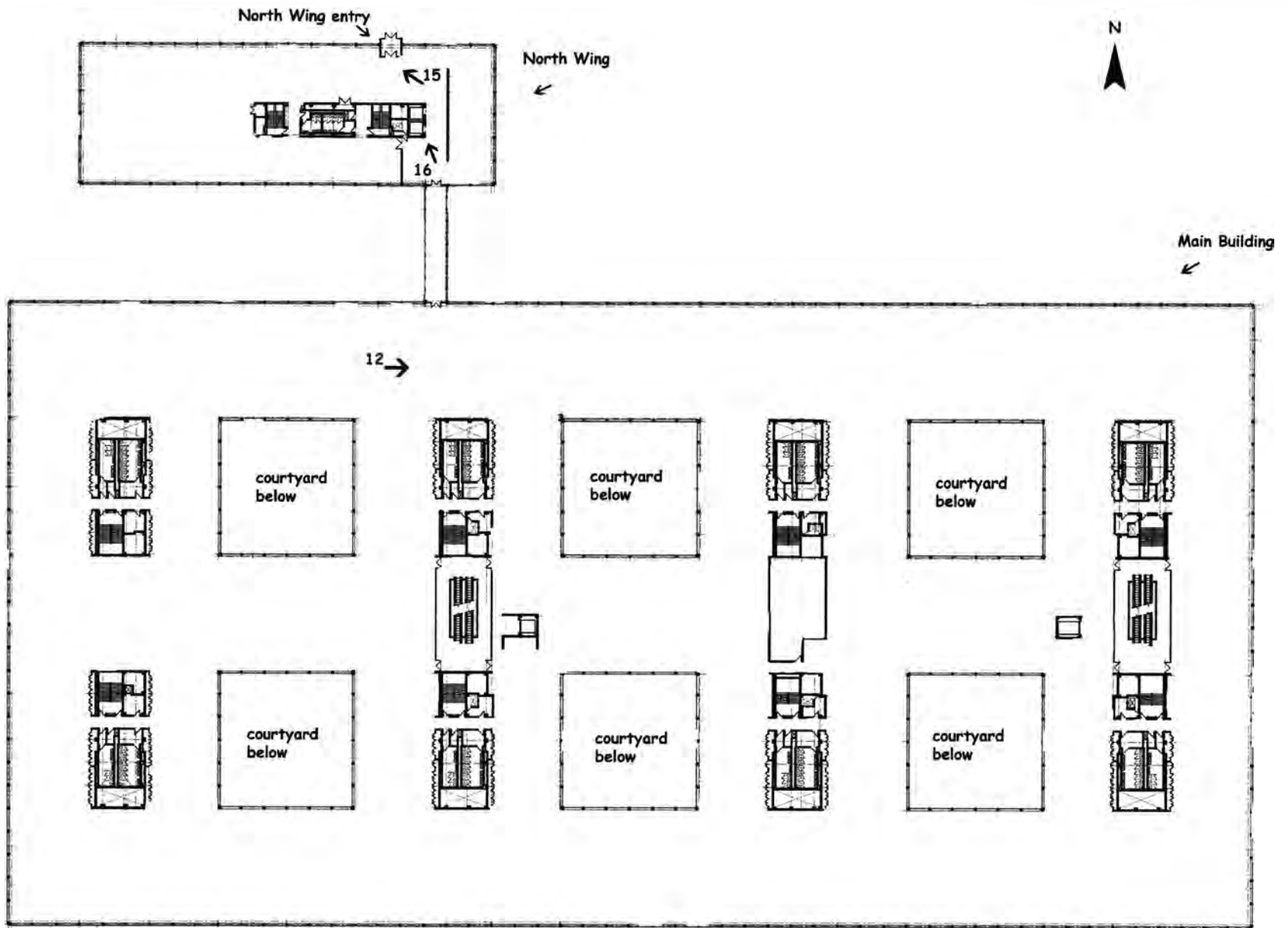
0 200 400 800 Feet

Data Sources: Metropolitan District Commission, 1995, 2002

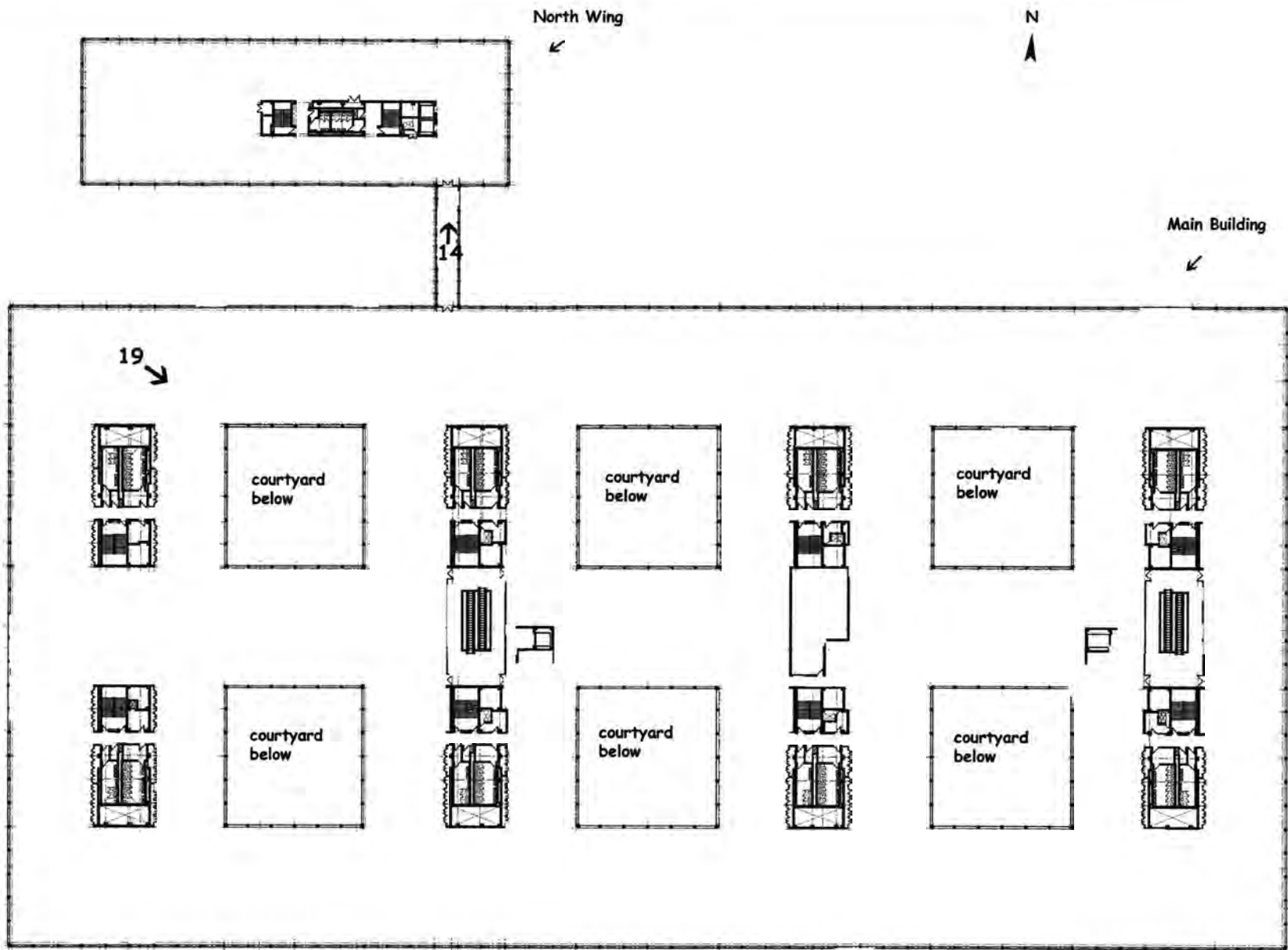


Connecticut General Life Insurance Co. Headquarters
 Hartford County, Connecticut
 National Register of Historic Places Nomination
 Photo Key - showing exterior photo views

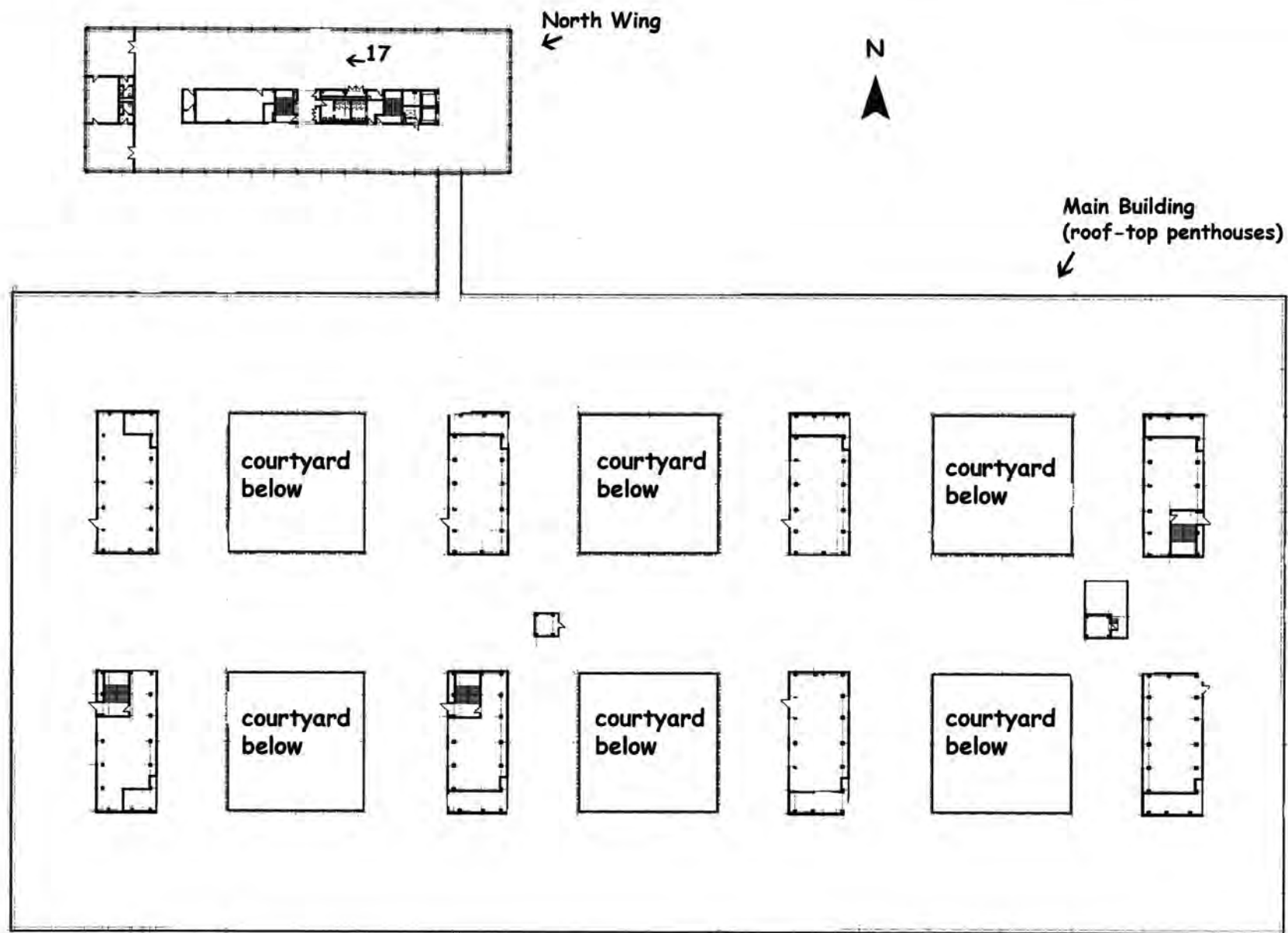




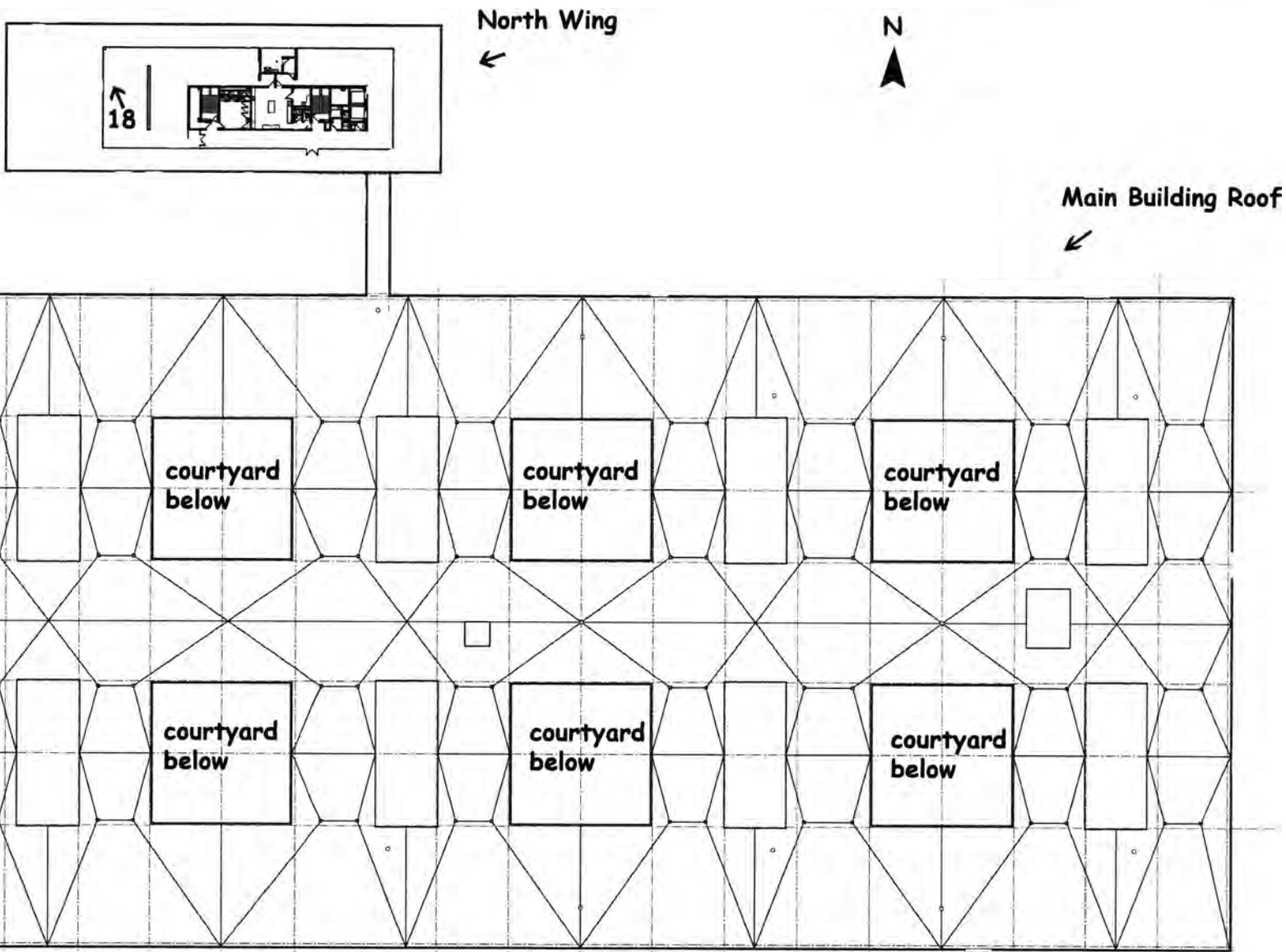
Connecticut General Life Insurance Co. Headquarters
 Hartford County, Connecticut
 National Register Nomination
 Photo Key - Second floor



Connecticut General Life Insurance Co. Headquarters
 Hartford County, Connecticut
 National Register Nomination
 Photo Key - Third floor



Connecticut General Life Insurance Co. Headquarters
 Hartford County, Connecticut
 National Register Nomination
 Photo Key - Fourth floor



**Connecticut General Life Insurance Co. Headquarters
Hartford County, Connecticut
National Register Nomination
Photo Key - Fifth floor**

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: RESUBMISSION

PROPERTY NAME: Connecticut General Life Insurance Company Headquarters

MULTIPLE NAME:

STATE & COUNTY: CONNECTICUT, Hartford

DATE RECEIVED: 11/13/09 DATE OF PENDING LIST:
DATE OF 16TH DAY: DATE OF 45TH DAY: 12/27/09
DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:

REFERENCE NUMBER: 09000324

DETAILED EVALUATION:

ACCEPT RETURN REJECT Dec. 23, 2009 DATE

ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:

*Not signed by SHRO of ad box not checked indicating it is
a nomination -*

RECOM./CRITERIA _____

REVIEWER *[Signature]*

DISCIPLINE *Holman*

TELEPHONE _____

DATE *12/23/09*

DOCUMENTATION see attached comments Y/N see attached SLR Y/N



United States Department of the Interior

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
1849 C Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20240

IN REPLY REFER TO:

United States Department of the Interior National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Evaluation/Return Sheet

Property Name: Connecticut General Life Insurance Company Headquarters, Bloomfield, CT

Reference Number: 08-324

Date of Return: 5.13.09

Reason for Return: The Connecticut General Life Insurance Company Headquarters nomination is being returned for three technical reasons and one substantive reason.

Section 3:

No box checked for levels of significance.

Section 8:

The year 1972 should not be included under Significant Dates as the 1972 addition duplicates the original design and the parking garage is noncontributing.

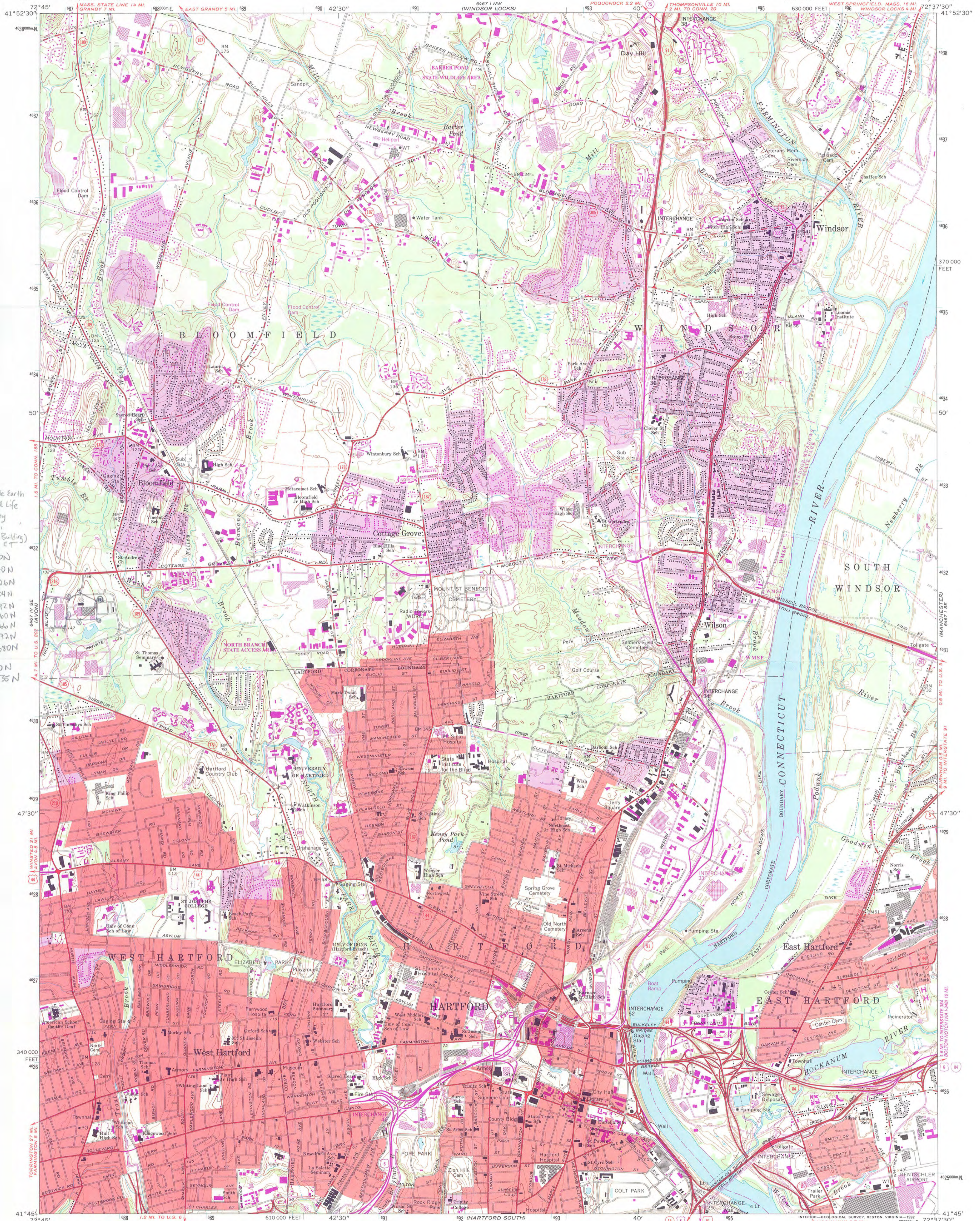
A national level of significance is implied in the Statement of Significance under Criteria A and C. This should be stated explicitly and include the national context in the summary statement under section 8. The first sentence, for example, quotes a monograph on the architect and references "one of two" without mentioning the other one. The only comparable example of an early office park that I am aware of is the General Motors Technical Center, which could be contrasted to illustrate why the Wilde Building is significant for different reasons. (The NR nomination for the General Motors Tech. Center is also a good model for its opening paragraph-although it is different in that the use of Criteria Consideration G came into play in that instance.)

Section 10:

The Town of Bloomfield assessor maps are provided for a sketch map. These documents either do not reflect the 17.9 acreage of the nominated property, or appear to include more buildings than are referenced in the nomination. The boundary of the nominated property must be delineated on the sketch map.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'R. Reed', with a stylized flourish extending to the right.

Roger G. Reed, Historian
National Register of Historic Places
202-354-2278
roger_reed@nps.gov

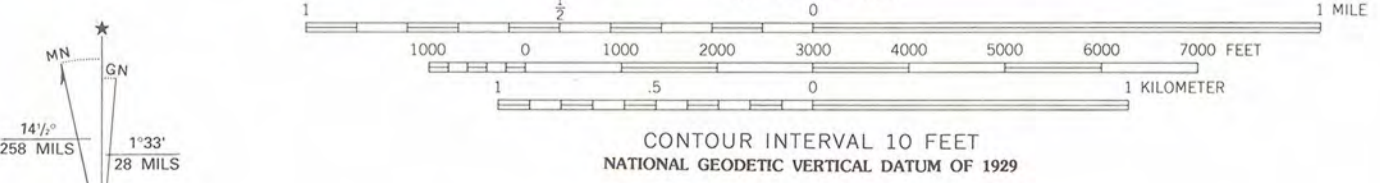


UTM coordinates per Google Earth
Connecticut General Life
Insurance Company
Headquarters
(CIGNA World Building)
Hartford County, CT

1. 18 687 419 E 4631660 N
2. 18 687 371 E 4631590 N
3. 18 687 005 E 4631626 N
4. 18 687 080 E 4631604 N
5. 18 687 051 E 4631472 N
6. 18 687 112 E 4631260 N
7. 18 687 236 E 4631266 N
8. 18 687 240 E 4631372 N
9. 18 687 446 E 4631380 N
10. 18 687 588 E 4631370 N
11. 18 687 526 E 4631535 N

Mapped by the Geological Survey and City of Hartford
Edited and published by the Geological Survey
Revised in cooperation with Connecticut Highway Department
Control by USGS, NOS/NOAA and Connecticut Geodetic Survey
Planimetry by photogrammetric methods from aerial photographs
taken 1941. Topography by planetable surveys 1943. Revised 1964
Polyconic projection. 10,000-foot grid ticks based on Connecticut
coordinate system.
100-meter Universal Transverse Mercator grid ticks,
zone 18, shown in blue
1927 North American Datum
To place on the predicted North American Datum 1983
move the projection lines 5 meters south and
38 meters west as shown by dashed corner ticks
Red tint indicates areas in which only landmark buildings are shown
There may be private inholdings within the boundaries of
the National or State reservations shown on this map

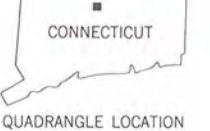
Revisions shown in purple and woodland compiled
from aerial photographs taken 1991 and other sources
Contours not revised. This information not field checked
Map edited 1992
Purple tint indicates extension of urban areas



THIS MAP COMPLIES WITH NATIONAL MAP ACCURACY STANDARDS
FOR SALE BY U.S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY
DENVER, COLORADO 80225, OR RESTON, VIRGINIA 22092
A FOLDER DESCRIBING TOPOGRAPHIC MAPS AND SYMBOLS IS AVAILABLE ON REQUEST

ROAD CLASSIFICATION

Heavy-duty	Light-duty
Medium-duty	Unimproved dirt
Interstate Route	U.S. Route
	State Route



HARTFORD NORTH, CONN.
41072-G6-TF-024

1964
REVISED 1992
DMA 6447 1 SW-SERIES V816





MACROSTIE HISTORIC ADVISORS LLC
Historic Building Development Planning

November 3, 2009

Stacey Vairo, National Register Coordinator
CT Commission on Culture & Tourism
One Constitution Plaza, Second Floor
Hartford, CT 06103

Via Federal Express

**RE: Connecticut General Life Insurance Company Headquarters, Bloomfield
National Register of Historic Places Nomination – revised per National Register staff request**

Dear Stacey:

On behalf of CIGNA and in response to the June 2009 National Register of Historic Places Evaluation Sheet regarding the National Register Nomination for the Connecticut General Life Insurance Company Headquarters (CIGNA Wilde Building) in Bloomfield, please find enclosed an updated nomination form. I have enclosed two (2) copies of the nomination, printed on acid-free, archival bond paper. As per your email, the nomination is on the previous form due to the fact the original submittal was sent in prior to the new form's establishment. The complete text is provided because the page numbers have changed as a result of the revisions. This version, dated October 2009, supersedes and should replace the earlier submitted version.

Thank you for your patience in awaiting the revised documentation. Some modifications, in addition to those requested by NPS have been required as a result of clarified information received from the owner. Specifically, the man-made cooling feature has been modified in the past due to the removal of the reflecting pool that once existed below the cafeteria. Furthermore, the golf course, which borders the building at the northeast, east and south, is not part of the Wilde Building (CIGNA) property. As stated in the nomination, the building's original lot was subdivided, sold and developed to accommodate the 2004 Gillette Ridge golf course. Therefore, corrections or edits within the individual building nomination specifically include the following:

- Section 3. The levels of significance for both nationally and statewide significance have been checked.
- Section 5. Number of Resources: The non-contributing resource type has been corrected to read: one (1) non-contributing building (parking garage) and one (1) non-contributing structure (pedestrian walkway). Previously, the number was incorrectly listed as two (2) non-contributing structures, however the National Register instructions list garages as examples of buildings. The contributing resource type has also been corrected to read: one (1) contributing building. (Refer to pages 6 and 23 in the text for further clarification.)
- Section 8. Area of Significance. The area of significance of Commerce has been removed; this was mistakenly confused with Function/Use of the building.
- Section 8. The year 1972 has been excluded under Significant Dates because the addition duplicates the original design and the parking garage and pedestrian walkway are non-contributing.
- Section 8. The Statement of Significance summary statement has been revised to explicitly state that the Wilde Building is significant under Criteria A and C at both national and state levels for the areas of Architecture, and Community Development and Planning. The property is contrasted with General Motors Technical Center – the other nationally significant early office park, as well as with other Moderne resources within the state of Connecticut. Ways the property meets the criteria and contributes to each area of significance are also described in the summary statement.

- o Section 10. The nominated property's boundary was incomplete on the previous submittal. Revised UTM coordinates are provided as is the associated new USGS map with the revised UTM coordinates clearly demarcating the nominated property. UTM coordinates have been established via the *GoogleEarth* geographic information program.
- o Section 10. The acreage has been corrected to accurately reflect the nominated property, inclusive of the Wilde Building and Parking Garage.
- o Section 10. The verbal boundary and the associated boundary justification have been revised to reflect and justify the specified bounds. Both the USGS map and sketch map indicate the bounds.
- o A sketch map (1"=200'), printed on archival paper is enclosed. It is based on the Town of Bloomfield Assessor's map. The boundary of the nominated property has been clearly delineated on the map by the heavy line. This sketch map supersedes and replaces the earlier submitted site-plan.
- o An enclosed revised exterior photo-key, printed on archival paper replaces the earlier submitted exterior photo-key.
- o Interior photo-keys have been reprinted on archival paper and provided with this package for your ease of submittal.

The enclosed nomination, updated USGS map, photo-keys, and sketch map should be married with the black and white archival quality photographs already in your possession.

With the above documents, we trust the nomination is ready to be signed by the State Agency and subsequently re-submitted to the National Register of Historic Places.

If you should have any questions, or require additional information, please feel free call me to discuss at (202) 483-2020.

Thank you for your assistance,



Jennifer F. Hembree, Senior Associate

Cc: Frank Pina, CIGNA



Connecticut Commission on Culture & Tourism



Arts
Tourism
Film
History

MEMORANDUM

One Constitution Plaza
Second Floor
Hartford, Connecticut
06103

860.256.2800
860.256.2811 (f)

TO: Roger Reed
National Register of Historic Places

FROM: Stacey Vairo, National Register Coordinator

DATE: November 5, 2009

SUBJECT: National Register Nomination Edits CIGNA, Bloomfield, CT

The following materials are submitted for nomination of the CIGNA
Headquarters, Bloomfield, CT

Connecticut to the National Register of Historic Places:

- Edited National Register of Historic Places nomination form
- Multiple Property Nomination form
- Photographs
- Original USGS maps
- Sketch map(s)/figure(s)/exhibit(s)
- Pieces of correspondence
- Other _____

COMMENTS:

- Please insure that this nomination is reviewed
- This property has been certified under 36 CFR 67
- The enclosed owner objections do _____ do not _____
constitute a majority of property owners.
- Other: Original Photographs are already on file with your
office

CONNECTICUT
www.cultureandtourism.org

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