

CT Trust Resource ID: 1695

HISTORIC RESOURCE INVENTORY – BUILDING AND STRUCTURES

State Historic Preservation Office, DECD, One Constitution Plaza, 2nd Floor, Hartford, CT 06103

*Note: Please attach any additional or expanded information on a separate sheet.

Inventory form modified for the Creative Places - Arts & Letters Project

GENERAL INFORMATION

Building Name (Common): Stone FieldOther Name(s) (Historic): Stone FieldStreet Address or Location: 60 Gold Street, HartfordTown/City: Hartford

Village:

County: Hartford

Designation(s):

Owner(s): City of HartfordPublic/Private: PublicLatitude: 41.7643 Longitude: -72.6745

PROPERTY INFORMATION

Present Use: LANDSCAPE: city park; RECREATION AND CULTURE: work of artHistoric Use: LANDSCAPE: city park; RECREATION AND CULTURE: work of artAccessibility to public: Yes Exterior visible from public road? YesInterior accessible? If yes, explain: NAStyle of building: Date of Construction: 1977Material(s) (Indicate use or location when appropriate) FieldstoneStructural Systems(s): Load bearing masonry

Roof(Type): (Material):

Number of Stories: n/a Approximate Dimensions: 60' x 320'Structural Condition: ExcellentExterior Condition: ExcellentLocational Integrity: Moved, When: NAAlterations?: If yes, explain: NARelated outbuildings or landscape features: GardenSurrounding Environment: High building density

Interrelationship of building and surroundings:

The site is a .2-acre trapezoid of land along the north side of Gold Street, a one-block-long street in downtown Hartford. The short eastern end of the site fronts the west side of Main Street while the long northern edge abuts the Ancient Burial Ground surrounding the 1807 First Church of Christ, or Center Church, at 785 Main Street. The southern and western property lines follow the curve of Gold Street. The adjacent Ancient Burial Ground is a 1.46 acre cemetery originally associated with the Center Church, in the Lewis Street National Register Historic District, and now owned by the City of Hartford Park Department.

The site is surrounded by a number of local landmarks, many listed on the National Register of Historic Places (NR). In addition to the adjacent Center Church (NR), the Wadsworth Atheneum (NR) is diagonally across the intersection of Gold and Main Streets, at the southeast corner. The Travelers Insurance Company (NR) is at the northeast corner. The Old State House (a National Historic Landmark) is one block north on Main Street. Bushnell Park (NR) is at the west end of Gold Street and connects to the State Capitol building (National Historic Landmark). This resource consists of an object and site, a work of sculpture installed on a parcel of land, created by sculptor Carl Andre, an individual working in Connecticut in the twentieth century. The object is a work of modernist Conceptual art, is located at the center of the historic core area of Hartford.

Other notable features of building or site: The site extends east-west along the north side of Gold Street and consists of a level grade planted with grass. The sculpture consists of 36 glacial boulders arranged on the ground. The stones were selected by sculptor Carl Andre to represent the mix of glacial rock typical of the Hartford area. They are arranged in an array of eight parallel north-south rows with size increasing and row length decreasing – from the smallest boulders in a row of eight (1,000 pounds each) near Main Street to the largest (a single 10-ton boulder) at the western tip of the site. Boulders range in color from the reddish-browns of weathered arkose and basalt to the grays of gneiss.

A cut stone marker at the west corner identifies the piece with its name, artist, date, and donors. Sidewalks ring the perimeter, lawn covers the ground around the boulders, and there are a few street trees at the Gold Street sidewalk and along a walkway at the north edge, which was the original alignment of Gold Street.

Architect: Carl Andre Builder/Maker: Carl Andre

Historical or Architectural importance:

As a place-specific sculpture, this work is highly significant for its relationship to the native glacial-period stone of the area of which it is representative, and to the historic Ancient Burial Ground adjacent to the site where the man-made gravestones evoke reflective comparisons. The work gains significance from its relationship to the geological history of the Connecticut Central Valley and the Colonial period history of Hartford and the Connecticut Colony (Wilkins 2011). The object is significant as a work of Minimalist art which was created through a community-based selection process and for its place in the Hartford's mid-twentieth-century history of urban renewal. It has additional local historic significance due to the interventions of the redevelopment period of the 1960s that altered the street pattern and left this particular site unbuilt at the center of downtown Hartford.

This property also derives significance from its association with sculptor Carl Andre, a nationally-known artist and one of the dominant figures in Minimalism during the post-World War II period, whose work is closely related with site and aspects of the local environment. Andre's work in Hartford is a rare instance where the work of this artist can be seen in a public space.

Carl Andre was born in Quincy, Massachusetts, in 1935, the son of a marine draftsman. He grew up in the environment of the Quincy naval shipyards during World War II. From local public schools, he went on scholarship to boarding school at Phillips Academy, Andover, Massachusetts from 1951-53. His high school art teachers, Maud and Patrick Morgan, provided his formal art education. After military service in the mid-1950s, Andre moved to New York City. He worked as a freight brakeman and conductor for the Pennsylvania Railroad, and shared studio space with Frank Stella, a classmate from school. He wrote concrete poetry for some years before he focused intensively on sculpture. He became widely known as a Minimalist, with exhibits in the United States and abroad, including shows at the Davison Art Center at Wesleyan University (1976) and Joseloff Gallery of Hartford Art School (1977).

Sources:

City of Hartford Assessor's Records and GIS Viewer <http://gis1.hartford.gov/propertyviewer/index.html> Parcel ID: 246348762 . First Church of Christ in Hartford web site. Accessed 8/04/2014 at <http://www.centerchurchhartford.org>. Gosselin, Kenneth R. 4/13/2014. Little Street, Big Plans: Effort to Realign Gold Street Again Riles Church, Condo Owners; Downtown Hartford. Hartford Courant. Hartford Architecture Conservancy (HAC). 1978. Hartford Architecture Conservancy Survey Volume One: Downtown. Kennedy, Randy. 7/14/2011. For Carl Andre, Less is Still Less. New York Times. McNally, Owen. 11/15/1997. Twenty Years after Critics Cast the first Stone, Carl Andre's Sculpture Stands. Hartford Courant. Paula Cooper Gallery web site. Carl Andre biography. Accessed 8/04/2014 at http://www.paulacoopergallery.com/static/0000/6622/CA_Bio_NEW.pdf. Persing, Stephen. 8/05/2007. On the Rocks: a Toast to Public Art. Hartford Courant. Accessed 7/28/2014 at HartfordInfo.org, a web site of the Hartford Public Library. Rider, Alastair. Carl Andre Biography. TheArtStory.org. Accessed 7/29/2014 at <http://www.theartstory.org/artist-andre-carl.htm> . Things in their Elements. 2011. Phaidon Press, London. Thorson, Robert. 10/20/2011. Hartford's Stone Field, Symbol of Resistance. Hartford Courant. Wilkins, Will. 6/26/2011. Hands Off Artwork: Leave Stone Field Alone. Hartford Courant.

Photographer: Charlotte Hitchcock **Date:** 8/04/2014

View: Multiple views

Form completed by: Charlotte Hitchcock **Printed On:** March 28, 2016

Organization: Connecticut Trust for Historic Preservation

Address: 940 Whitney Avenue, Hamden CT 06517-4002

Threats: Renewal

Subsequent field evaluations:



Stone Field, camera facing southeast

FOR OFFICE USE:

Town # _____ **Site#** _____ **UTM** _____

District ☐ S ☐ NR **If NR, specify:** ☐ Actual ☐ Potential