

STATE OF CONNECTICUT

CONNECTICUT HISTORICAL COMMISSION

9 South Prospect Street, Hartford, Connecticut 06106
(203) 566-3005

HISTORIC RESOURCES INVENTORY FORM
for Buildings and Structures

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY			
TOWN NO.:	SITE NO.:		
UTM: 18/	/	/	/
QUAD:			
DISTRICT:	S	NR:	ACTUAL POTENTIAL

IDENTIFICATION

- 1. BUILDING NAME: Common: Old Middlesex Building Historic: Middlesex Mutual Assurance Building
- 2. TOWN/CITY: Middletown VILLAGE: _____ COUNTY: Middlesex
- 3. STREET & NUMBER (and/or location): 179-181 Main Street
- 4. OWNER(S): City of Middletown PUBLIC PRIVATE
- 5. USE: Present: Offices of Redevelopment Agency Historic: Offices & Fraternal Hall
- 6. ACCESSIBILITY TO PUBLIC: Exterior visible from public road: yes no
Interior accessible: yes, explain publicly owned no

DESCRIPTION

- 7. STYLE OF BUILDING: Renaissance Revival DATE OF CONSTRUCTION: 1867
- 8. MATERIAL(S) (indicate use or location when appropriate):

<input type="checkbox"/> clapboard	<input type="checkbox"/> asbestos siding	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> brick
<input type="checkbox"/> wood shingle	<input type="checkbox"/> asphalt siding	<input type="checkbox"/> fieldstone
<input type="checkbox"/> board & batten	<input type="checkbox"/> stucco	<input type="checkbox"/> cobblestone
<input type="checkbox"/> aluminum siding	<input type="checkbox"/> concrete: type: _____	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> cut stone: type: <u>brownstone</u>
<input type="checkbox"/> other: _____		facade & foundation
- 9. STRUCTURAL SYSTEM:

<input type="checkbox"/> wood frame: <input type="checkbox"/> post and beam <input type="checkbox"/> balloon
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> load bearing masonry <input type="checkbox"/> structural iron or steel
<input type="checkbox"/> other: _____
- 10. ROOF: type:

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> gable <input type="checkbox"/> slight <input type="checkbox"/> flat	<input type="checkbox"/> mansard	<input type="checkbox"/> monitor	<input type="checkbox"/> sawtooth
<input type="checkbox"/> gambrel <input type="checkbox"/> pitch <input type="checkbox"/> shed	<input type="checkbox"/> hip	<input type="checkbox"/> round	<input type="checkbox"/> other _____
material:			
<input type="checkbox"/> wood shingle <input type="checkbox"/> roll asphalt	<input type="checkbox"/> tin	<input type="checkbox"/> slate	
<input type="checkbox"/> asphalt shingle <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> built up	<input type="checkbox"/> tile	<input type="checkbox"/> other: _____	
- 11. NUMBER OF STORIES: 3 1/2 APPROXIMATE DIMENSIONS: 131'x50'
- 12. CONDITION: Structural: excellent good fair deteriorated
Exterior: excellent good fair deteriorated
- 13. INTEGRITY: Location: on original site moved, when: _____
Alterations: no yes, explain: Rear addition 1891; theater addition 1892; store-
fronts added
- 14. RELATED OUTBUILDINGS OR LANDSCAPE FEATURES:

<input type="checkbox"/> barn <input type="checkbox"/> shed	<input type="checkbox"/> garage	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> other landscape features or buildings: <u>Theater at-</u>
<input type="checkbox"/> carriage house <input type="checkbox"/> shop	<input type="checkbox"/> garden	<u>tached to rear of building</u>
- 15. SURROUNDING ENVIRONMENT:

<input type="checkbox"/> open land <input type="checkbox"/> woodland	<input type="checkbox"/> residential	<input type="checkbox"/> scattered buildings visible from site
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> commercial <input type="checkbox"/> industrial	<input type="checkbox"/> rural	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> high building density

16. INTERRELATIONSHIP OF BUILDING AND SURROUNDINGS: This three story commercial building faces east from the west side of Main Street on a block of 19th century buildings between College and William Streets. It is sited close to the street with passways on either side. The west side of Main Street in this area is included in a proposed historic district, while the east side is currently undergoing redevelopment.

17. OTHER NOTABLE FEATURES OF BUILDING OR SITE (interior and/or exterior):

Heavy denticulated cornices
Rusticated pavillion with pediment

SIGNIFICANCE

Builder: Caleb Johnson & D.N Arnold

Architect: _____

18. HISTORICAL OR ARCHITECTURAL IMPORTANCE: The Middlesex Mutual Assurance Co. was organized in 1836. It is one of Middletown's oldest and most firmly established institutions. This building was erected in 1867 to house its offices and provide space for commercial tenants. These included the First National Bank, Farmers & Mechanics Bank, Peoples Fire Insurance Co., and several small businesses. The third floor was rented to fraternal organizations as a meeting hall. In 1891 an addition to the rear was built to accomodate the Southern New England Telephone Co., and a year later a large theater was constructed at the rear of the new addition. (See Survey Form, 109-111 College Street.) The entrance to this theater was originally through the Middlesex Building from Main Street, and the third floor was converted for use as lounges for theater patrons. Middlesex Mutual Assurance Co. vacated the premises in 1927 when their present building on Court Street was constructed.

This building originally had five entrances from Main Street; a large raised central entrance flanked on either side by a raised and a basement entrance. The large central doorway was distinguished by a heavy pediment supported on elaborate consoles. This Main Street front is now covered by a glass and metal facade on the first floor.

(see continuation sheet)

PHOTOGRAPH

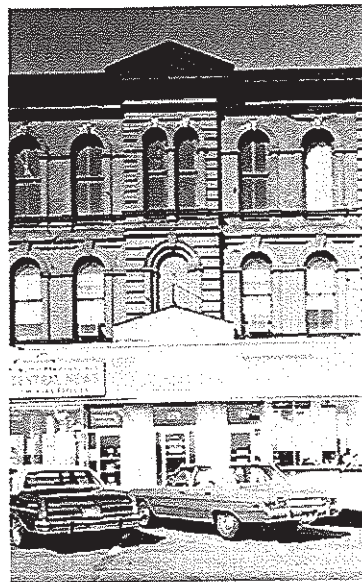
photographer: John E. Reynolds
date: 7/78 view: east
negative on file: Roll 29, #10A

COMPILED BY:

name: John E. Reynolds date: 6/78
organization: Greater Middletown Preservation Trust
address: 27 Washington St., Middletown, Ct. 06457

19. SOURCES: Middletown Land Records; Middletown City Directories; David R. Ransom, National Register Nomination Form, "Metro South National Register District"; Centennial Middlesex Mutual Assurance Co. (Hartford: Case, Lockwood & Brainerd Co., 1973); H.F. Donlan, Middletown Tribune: (see continuation sheet)

20. SUBSEQUENT FIELD EVALUATIONS: _____ sheet)



21. THREATS TO BUILDING OR SITE:

none known highways vandalism developers other: _____
 renewal private deterioration zoning explanation: _____

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CONTINUATION SHEET

Item number: 18&19 Date: 6/78

Middlesex Mutual Assurance Building
179-181 Main Street, Middletown, Ct. 06457

#18

For many years this Renaissance Revival building was "the pride of the city" due to its high style elegance and prominent tenants. A key architectural element on the block, it is now slated for restoration and rehabilitation.

#19

Souvenir Edition (Middletown: 1896); See also Survey Form, 109-111 College Street, "Middletown Theatre Entrance"(1978)

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CONTINUATION SHEET

Item number: _____ Date: 1/90

Middlesex Mutual Assurance Building
179-181 Main Street, Middletown, CT 06457

