



Department of Economic and  
Community Development

State Historic Preservation Office

July 3, 2017

Jill Smyth, Executive Director  
Historic Neighborhood Preservation  
65 High Ridge Road  
Stamford, CT 06905

Subject: **High Ridge Park Corporate Center Campus, Stamford, Connecticut**

To Ms. Smyth:

The following is in response to your inquiry about the historic significance of the High Ridge Park Corporate Center Campus in Stamford, Connecticut. The State Historic Preservation Office staff understand that a potential project is proposed, which may involve the demolition of Building 3 on this 40-acre campus. The State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) is a state agency that is responsible for managing a program of historic preservation for Connecticut's citizens. We work to identify and increase appreciation for the buildings, structures, landscapes, archaeological sites, and places that form Connecticut's heritage. Much of that work is understanding why these resources contribute to our culture and how to maintain them.

The purpose of this letter is to express our support for the retention of the High Ridge Park Corporate Center Campus buildings and landscape, and to offer our technical services to help find solutions that do not result in loss of the property's notable features.

This campus is highly significant for its representation of Mid-Twentieth-Century Modern-style architecture and is potentially the largest, most intact example of its kind in Connecticut. Designed by internationally renowned architect Victor Hanna Bisharat (1920-1996) from 1967 to 1975, the campus exhibits innovative engineering and experimentation in the plastic qualities of concrete to achieve new, sculptural building forms. Experimentation in the abilities of contemporary building materials, efficiency in building systems, and development of non-traditional building forms are tenets of Modernist design masters.

Connecticut is important in the history of Modern architecture as a place where a concentration of influential designers lived, worked, networked, and tested new design concepts. Bisharat's work in the state is an important addition to this larger portfolio because his educational background differs from others in the Connecticut network, many of whom were affiliated with

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the Bauhaus-inspired architectural program at Harvard's Graduate School of Design, such as Marcel Breuer, or the Yale School of Architecture, such as Eero Saarinen. (Bisharat's contemporary Paul Rudolph is affiliated with both programs.) Unlike other designers in the Connecticut network, Bisharat originated from the Middle East and studied at the University of California under expressionist architect Erich Mendelsohn.

The architectural significance of the High Ridge Park Corporate Center Campus is heightened through the individual, rather than uniform designs of each of the six buildings, which are unified through color and an overarching landscape plan. The property is also notable for its association with the urban renewal-era relocation of corporate offices from New York City to Connecticut and the development firm of F. D. Rich, which was influential in attracting accomplished designers to Stamford. While other examples of Bisharat's work exist in the United States and internationally, Stamford has a well-known concentration of his buildings, produced at the height of his career.

SHPO considers the High Ridge Park Corporate Center Campus eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places for its architectural significance. Demolition of contributing components of this property would be a significant loss to our architectural heritage.

Please contact Jenny Scofield, [jenny.scofield@ct.gov](mailto:jenny.scofield@ct.gov) or 860-256-2766 if this office can be of assistance.

Sincerely,



Kristina Newman Scott, State Historic Preservation Officer

cc (via email): Lynn Drobbin, Stamford Historic Preservation Advisory Commission  
Colin Reilly, High Ridge Park Corporate Center  
David Woods, Principal Planner, City of Stamford

cc (via mail): High Ridge Real Estate Owner LLC