STATE OF CONNECTICUT
CONNECTICUT HISTORICAL COMMISSION
59 South Prospect Street, Hartford, Connecticut 06106
(203) 566-3005

HISTORIC RESOURCES INVENTORY FORM
For Buildings and Structures

IDENTIFICATION
1. BUILDING NAME: Common: St. Sebastian Church
   Historic: same
2. TOWN/CITY: Middletown VILLAGE: 
   COUNTY: Middlesex
3. STREET & NUMBER (and/or location): 147 Washington Street
4. OWNER(S): St. Sebastian Church Corporation
   PUBLIC X PRIVATE
5. USE: Present: Church
   Historic: same
6. ACCESSIBILITY TO PUBLIC: Exterior visible from public road: x yes no
   Interior accessible: x yes, explain open for public use

DESCRIPTION
7. STYLE OF BUILDING: Renaissance Revival
   DATE OF CONSTRUCTION: 1931
8. MATERIAL(S) (indicate use or location when appropriate):
   _ clapboard _ asbestos siding _ brick
   _ wood shingle _ asphalt siding _ fieldstone
   _ board & batten _ stucco _ cobblestone
   _ aluminum siding _ concrete: type: Weymouth granite
   _ other: random ashlar
9. STRUCTURAL SYSTEM:
   _ wood frame: post and beam _ balloon _ load bearing masonry _ structural iron or steel
   _ other:
10. ROOF: type:
     _ gable _ flat _ mansard _ monitor _ sawtooth
         _ gambrel _ shed _ hip _ round _ other:
     _ material:
         _ wood shingle _ roll asphalt _ tin _ slate
         _ asphalt shingle _ built up _ tile _ other:
     _ Nave 59'x99'; Transept 65'x30'
11. NUMBER OF STORIES: 2
    APPROXIMATE DIMENSIONS: Sanctuary 11'x44'
12. CONDITION: Structural:
    _ x excellent _ good
    Exterior:
    _ x excellent _ good
13. INTEGRITY: Location: _ x on original site _ moved, when:
    Alterations: _ x yes, explain: Two stained glass windows destroyed in hurricane;
    new bells at side of belfry
14. RELATED OUTBUILDINGS OR LANDSCAPE FEATURES:
    _ barn _ shed _ garage _ x other landscape features or buildings: Rectory
    _ carriage house _ shop _ garden
15. SURROUNDING ENVIRONMENT:
    _ open land _ woodland _ x residential _ scattered buildings visible from site
    _ x commercial _ industrial _ rural _ x high building density
16. INTERRELATIONSHIP OF BUILDING AND SURROUNDINGS: This monumental structure faces north
    from the south side of Washington Street. Its imposing appearance dominates the block between
    Broad and Pearl Streets. The east side of Washington Street in this area displays several
    large scale residences in various 19th century styles and a municipal parking lot.
17. OTHER NOTABLE FEATURES OF BUILDING OR SITE (interior and/or exterior):

Carrara marble in sanctuary: altars; flooring; pulpit and rail
Marble sculpture of Crucifixion group over altar
Ceiling murals of Apostles and St. Sebastian

SIGNIFICANCE

Builder: Salvatore Mazzotta, contractor

18. HISTORICAL OR ARCHITECTURAL IMPORTANCE: This church was built by the Italian community of Middletown during the midst of the depression. Italians arrived in Middletown in large numbers in the early 1900's and by the 1930's constituted a significant portion of the city's population. Comprising almost all of Middletown's masons, plasterers, and stonemasons, many of the parishioners contributed the labor for the erection of the church. During the initial phase of the building many local firms donated material and equipment. The first Mass was celebrated in December 1931.

The Italian Renaissance design of this building is rare in New England architecture. It is a close copy of the Church of St. Sebastian in Melilli, Sicily, from where many of Middletown's Italians emigrated.

St. Sebastian Church is of great architectural and historical significance to the city of Middletown. Its erection through the sacrifices of the parishioners illustrates the determination of the Italian immigrant population to have their own church. The unique character of the architecture is an important contribution to the city. Through its architectural beauty and the drama of its erection Saint Sebastian stands a monument to the substantial position attained by Middletown's largest ethnic community.

PHOTOGRAPH

photographer: John E. Reynolds

date: 9/78 view: northwest

negative on file: Roll 31, #16

COMPiled BY:

name: John E. Reynolds date: 4/78

organization: Greater Middletown Preservation Trust

address: 27 Washington St., Middletown, Ct. 06457

19. SOURCES: Middletown Land Records; "53rd Anniversary St. Sebastian Feast" (pamphlet, 1974); Report on St. Sebastian Church by Greater Middletown Preservation Trust (unpublished, 1974)

20. SUBSEQUENT FIELD EVALUATIONS:

21. THREATS TO BUILDING OR SITE:

X none known     highways     vandalism     developers     other:

renewal     private     deterioration     zoning     explanation:
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CONTINUATION SHEET
Item number: _____ Date: 1/90

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