

FORM B - BUILDING

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
294 WASHINGTON STREET, BOSTON, MA 02108

AREA	FORM NO.
3000	25

PHOTO: (3x3" or 3x5", black & white)
staple to left side of form

Photo number _____

SKETCH MAP

Show property's location in relation to nearest cross streets and/or geographical features. Indicate all buildings between inventoried property and nearest intersection. Indicate north.

Recorded by Fred Clark/Ed Lonergan/ed.
Candace Jenkins
Organization Springfield Historical
Commission
Date 1980

UTM References: 18/698915/4663940
Springfield South Quadrangle
Assessor's Ma #315 (Staple additional sheets here)

✓ Town Springfield
✓ Address 1645-1659 Main Street
✓ Historic Name Olmsted/Hixon/Albion Block
(DSMA)
Original Owner: John Olmsted/ John Hixon
Patrick Meather
Use: Present retail/office
Original commercial/warehouse/boarding
House
DESCRIPTION:
Date 1875/1862/1866; 1892-1927
Source City Directories
Style Classical Revival
Architect Wallace Dibble/Jason Perkins
Exterior wall fabric brick
Outbuildings none
Major alterations (with dates) _____
rebuilding of facades (1890's); inter-
connection of three blocks (1927).
Moved no Date _____
Approx. acreage less than one acre
Setting urban context; form part of one of
the Main Streets only intact turn-of-
the-century commercial blocks.

ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE (Describe important architectural features and evaluate in terms of other buildings within the community.)

Interconnected since 1927, this five story block began as three separate buildings, a fact still obvious from their exterior appearances. The southernmost section (3 bays) is the most elaborate, including delicate Adamesque motifs on piers and spandrels. The central section (6 bays) is more austere, distinguished by a Panel Brick cornice and central oriel at the second and third stories. The northernmost section (two bays) is the latest in date and least prepossessing in design; it has a bracketed cornice and quoined corners, resulting from a 1927 remodeling.

HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE (Explain the role owners played in local or state history and how the building relates to the development of the community.)

Interconnected since 1927, the Olmsted/Hixon/Albion Block possesses integrity of location, design, setting, materials and workmanship. It is significant as a major block on Main Street and as an excellent representative of downtown Springfield's long history of buildings and rebuilding. With parts dating from 1862 to 1927 its history directly coincided with Springfield's major period of significance. The Block thus meets criteria A & C of the National Register of Historic Places.

Section A

John Olmsted had the block at 1645-1649 Main Street built as a combination office and warehouse. It was originally leased by the Bay State Paper Company. During 1895 Olmsted completely remodeled the facade. This corresponded with the move of the Springfield Board of Trade to this building. Their object was to have entire new businesses locate in Springfield and promote the ones that were already here.

John Olmsted was one of Springfield's leading businessmen in the late 19th century. He moved to Springfield in 1860 and became involved in the cotton waste and paper stock business. He was one of the original stockholders of the Springfield Street Railway Company and was president for over 25 years. It was during his administration that service was extended to cover much of the expanding city. In fact, the street railway was a prime cause of this expansion. He was also president of the First National Bank, a founder and director of the Board of Trade and vice president of the

BIBLIOGRAPHY and/or REFERENCES (name of publication, author, date and publisher)

Springfield Daily Republican February 8, 1982, p.6
Springfield Daily Republican April 27, 1892, p.6 & 9
Springfield E. William Birnie
Springfield Directory 1874-75, p.411
John C. B. Newell Scrapbook Volume 3, p.464-5
Springfield of Today 1898 page 7

INVENTORY FORM CONTINUATION SHEET

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
Office of the Secretary, Boston

Community:	Form No:
Springfield	25
Property Name: Olmsted-Birnie-Albion-Block	

Indicate each item on inventory form which is being continued below.

City Library Association. He was particularly instrumental in the fund raising for the GWVS Art Museum. His public service included six terms on the City Council and serving as chairman of the City's first Park Commission.

Section B.

The block at 1653-1655 Main Street was erected in 1862 for John Hixon, who was a manufacturer and wholesaler of boots and shoes. Soon afterwards he was joined by William Birnie. Birnie had a good number of business interests and after Hixon's death used the block for his Birnie Paper Co., which manufactured paper, envelopes, and papeteries. In 1892 a fire almost destroyed the block, but rebuilding began immediately. The plans for the five story block were drawn by Jason Perkins, and featured 19 foot wide bay windows on the second and third floors. The block was used primarily as an office building, and drawing on its proximity to the railroad terminal, also contained a number of "social rooms" and clubs, including Commercial Travelers Club.

William Birnie's main business interest was in masonry. He was involved very early in building railroad bridges throughout the country, and was well known locally for having built the stone arch and canal at the Watershops, and putting in the foundation for the iron fence surrounding the U.S. Armory grounds on the hill.

Section C.

The block at 1657-1659 Main Street was built in 1866 as a four story brick boarding house. The building acquired the name "Albion Block" in 1877 when it was purchased by the Bay State Paper Company principally for office use.

Interconnection - 1927

In 1927, the three buildings were unified. A fifth floor was added to the Albion Block and its facade was altered. All three buildings underwent internal changes which eliminated individual stairways, thus increasing office space in the narrow buildings. Architect for the consolidation was Wallace Dibble, who designed many of the buildings at American International College. The three buildings had been acquired in 1908, 1912, and 1922 by the Wilbur Young Realty Trust. Mr. Young was a major Springfield property owner and founder of the W.F. Young Company maker of Absorbine Jr.

Staple to Inventory form at bottom

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES

EVALUATION / RETURN SHEET

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

Olmsted-Hixon-Albion Block (Downtown Springfield

MRA)

Hampden County

MASSACHUSETTS

Working No. 11/10/82-3025

Fed. Reg. Date: _____

Date Due: 12/9/82 - 12/25/82

Action: ☐ ACCEPT ☒ RETURN 12/27/82
☐ REJECT _____

Federal Agency: _____

- ☐ resubmission
☐ nomination by person or local government
☐ owner objection
☐ appeal

Substantive Review: ☐ sample ☐ request ☐ appeal ☐ NR decision

Reviewer's comments: _____

Recom./Criteria _____

Reviewer _____

Discipline _____

Date _____

☐ see continuation sheet

Nomination returned for: ☒ technical corrections cited below
☐ substantive reasons discussed below

1. Name

2. Location

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
	Public Acquisition	Accessible	

4. Owner of Property

5. Location of Legal Description

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

has this property been determined eligible? ☐ yes ☐ no

7. Description

Condition	Check one	Check one
☐ excellent	☐ deteriorated	☐ original site
☐ good	☐ ruins	☐ moved
☐ fair	☐ unexposed	☐ date _____

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

- ☐ summary paragraph
☐ completeness
☐ clarity
☐ alterations/integrity
☐ dates
☐ boundary selection

8. Significance

Period _____ Areas of Significance—Check and justify below

Specific dates _____ Builder/Architect _____

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

- ☐ summary paragraph
- ☐ completeness
- ☐ clarity
- ☐ applicable criteria
- ☐ justification of areas checked
- ☐ relating significance to the resource
- ☐ context
- ☐ relationship of integrity to significance
- ☐ justification of exception
- ☐ other

9. Major Bibliographical References

10. Geographical Data

Address of nominated property _____

Quadrangle name _____

USIT Reference _____

Verbal boundary description and justification _____

Please provide VBI

11. Form Prepared By

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

☐ national ☐ state ☐ local

State Historic Preservation Officer signature _____

Title _____

Date _____

13. Other

- ☐ Maps
- ☐ Photographs
- ☐ Other

Questions concerning this nomination may be directed to _____

Signed *W. Byers*

Date 12/22/82

Phone: 202 272-3504

Comments for any item may be continued on an attached sheet

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form

For NPS use only
received
date entered

Continuation sheet

Item number

Page 2 of 5

Multiple Resource Area
Thematic Group

Name Downtown Springfield Multiple Resource Area
State MA

Nomination/Type of Review

Date/Signature

11. Downtown Springfield
Railroad District

Keeper

Bruce Lee Byers 5/27/83

Attest

12. Chapin National Bank Building ^{Entered in the}
National Register

Keeper

Delores Byers 2/24/83

Attest

13. Henking Hotel and Cafe

^{Entered in the}
National Register

Keeper

Delores Byers 2/24/83

Attest

14. Massachusetts Mutual Life
Insurance Company

^{Substantive Review}

^{Determined Eligible}

Keeper

Bruce Lee Byers 2/24/83

Attest

15. Old Post Office

^{Substantive Review}

Keeper

Attest

16. Olmsted-Hixon-Albion Block

^{Entered in the}
National Register

Keeper

Delores Byers 2/24/83

Attest

17. Hampden Savings Bank

^{Entered in the}
National Register

Keeper

Delores Byers 2/24/83

Attest

18. Fuller Block

^{Entered in the}
National Register

Keeper

Delores Byers 2/24/83

Attest

19. Stearns Building

^{Entered in the}
National Register

Keeper

Delores Byers 2/24/83

Attest

20. Morgan Block

^{Substantive Review}

Keeper

Bruce Lee Byers 5/27/83

Attest

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

Olmsted-Hixon-Albion Block (Downtown
Springfield MRS)

Hampden County

MASSACHUSETTS

Working No. 11-10-82-3025

Fed. Reg. Date: 2.7.84

Date Due: 4/1/83

Action: ☒ ACCEPT 2/24/83

☐ RETURN

☐ REJECT

Entered in the
National Register

Federal Agency: _____

- ☒ resubmission
☐ nomination by person or local government
☐ owner objection
☐ appeal

Substantive Review: ☐ sample ☐ request ☐ appeal ☐ NR decision

Reviewer's comments:

Recom./Criteria _____

Reviewer _____

Discipline _____

Date _____

☐ see continuation sheet

Nomination returned for: ☐ technical corrections cited below
☐ substantive reasons discussed below

1. Name

2. Location

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
	Public Acquisition	Accessible	

4. Owner of Property

5. Location of Legal Description

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

Has this property been determined eligible? ☐ yes ☐ no

7. Description

Condition	Check one	Check one
☐ excellent	☐ deteriorated	☐ original site
☐ good	☐ ruins	☐ moved date _____
☐ fair	☐ unexposed	

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

- ☐ summary paragraph
☐ completeness
☐ clarity
☐ alterations/integrity
☐ dates

8. Significance

Period _____ Area of Significance—Check and justify below

Specific dates _____ Builder/Architect _____

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

- ☐ summary paragraph
- ☐ completeness
- ☐ clarity
- ☐ applicable criteria
- ☐ justification of areas checked
- ☐ relating significance to the resource
- ☐ context
- ☐ relationship of integrity to significance
- ☐ justification of exception
- ☐ other

9. Major Bibliographical References

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property _____

Geographic name _____

UNIT References

Verbal boundary description and justification

11. Form Prepared By

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is

☐ national ☐ state ☐ local

State Historic Preservation Officer signature

Site _____ date _____

13. Other

- ☐ Maps
- ☐ Photographs
- ☐ Other

Questions concerning this nomination may be directed to _____

Signed _____ Date _____ Phone: 202 272-3500



DONALD & SONS
INSURANCE

JOHN E.
M. DONALD
& SONS
INSURANCE

LEASE
H. J. JONES

Californian
RESTAURANT
Spirits

Californian RESTAURANT

Main BO
CUSTOM T

25

Downtown Springfield MRT, Mo
Olmstead - Hixon - Albion block

Hixon - B



Main BOUTIQUE
CUSTOM TAILORING

DAY & NIGHT

NEWSROOM

PAPER BACKS
MAGAZINES

TOBACCOS
GROCERIES

GROCERIES CLEAR

MAGAZINES

COLD STORAGE

ADULT BOOKS ADULT BOOKS

Donation Springfield MRA, Ma
Olmstead-Hixon - Album Block

Olmsted - A



JOHN E. McDONALD & SON

AUTO INSURANCE



Californian RESTAURANT

JOHN E. McDONALD & SON
AUTO INSURANCE
4000 W. JACKSON

JOHN E. McDONALD & SON
AUTO INSURANCE
4000 W. JACKSON

LEASE
H. L. BROWN

26

1557-1559 Main St

Downtown Springfield MRA, MA
Olmstead-Hixon-Albion Block

Hixon-C

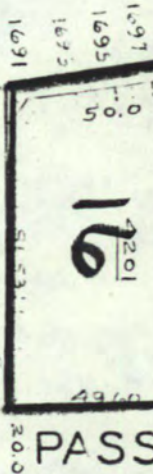
Olmsted/Hixon/Albion Block
1645-1659 Main St. #25
1"=50' Springfield MRA

HAMPDEN
ST.

304

293.49

MAIN



TAYLOR

LYMAN

