

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

FOR FEDERAL PROPERTIES

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED

MAY 16 1986

DATE ENTERED

JUN 18 1986

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN *HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS*
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

1 NAME

HISTORIC

United States Post Office

AND/OR COMMON

Medford Main Post Office

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

20 Forest Street

N/A NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

Medford

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

N/A VICINITY OF

Seventh Congressional District

STATE

Massachusetts 02155

CODE

0720

COUNTY

Middlesex

CODE

017

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY

DISTRICT
 BUILDING(S)
 STRUCTURE
 SITE
 OBJECT

OWNERSHIP

PUBLIC
 PRIVATE
 BOTH
PUBLIC ACQUISITION
 IN PROCESS
 BEING CONSIDERED

STATUS

OCCUPIED
 UNOCCUPIED
 WORK IN PROGRESS
ACCESSIBLE
 YES: RESTRICTED
 YES: UNRESTRICTED
 NO

PRESENT USE

AGRICULTURE
 COMMERCIAL
 EDUCATIONAL
 ENTERTAINMENT
 GOVERNMENT
 INDUSTRIAL
 MILITARY
 MUSEUM
 PARK
 PRIVATE RESIDENCE
 RELIGIOUS
 SCIENTIFIC
 TRANSPORTATION
 OTHER:

4 AGENCY

REGIONAL HEADQUARTERS: (If applicable)

New England Field Real Estate and Buildings Office

STREET & NUMBER

1050 Waltham Street

CITY, TOWN

Lexington

STATE

Massachusetts 02173

N/A VICINITY OF

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Middlesex County Registry, Cambridge Courthouse

STREET & NUMBER

208 Cambridge Street

CITY, TOWN

Cambridge

STATE

Massachusetts 02141

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

None

DATE

FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS

CITY, TOWN

STATE

7 DESCRIPTION

| CONDITION | | CHECK ONE | CHECK ONE |
|---|---------------------------------------|---|---|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT | <input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED | <input type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE |
| <input type="checkbox"/> GOOD | <input type="checkbox"/> RUINS | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ALTERED | <input type="checkbox"/> MOVED DATE _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> FAIR | <input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED | | |

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Overall, the building and its property are in very good condition. The Post office is located near the center of the site with a vehicle maneuvering area to the left. The site is cut into the sloping land, with a large retaining wall in the rear; it is landscaped with lawn, bushes, and several small trees. The building is of steel frame construction, with brick laid in alternating header and stretcher courses. In plan, a small original vestibule opens to the public lobby, flanked by the Postmaster's office to the left and service area to the right. Behind the service screen is the workroom with the mail vestibule and platform off to the left.

The front (southeast) elevation is a seven-bay structure with a three-bay raised, projecting central entranceway. A simple moulded brick watertable course defines the base. A raised area, with panels of brick paving, is accessed by four wide granite steps, leads to a smaller set of six entry steps flanked by granite wing walls and cast iron lampposts. The central portion of the building is topped by a plain, modillioned pediment and simple entablature of white marble. Three severe, deep recesses create four large flat brick pilasters separating the 30/15 light wood frame, double-hung windows with large marble lintels and thin sills. The replacement aluminum and glass doors are framed by thin wood pilasters and a wood entablature. A fixed sash 20 light window and lintel are above. The flanking bays are topped by a marble entablature with projecting architrave and have smaller, 12/12 light double-hung windows set in full-height recessed brick panels. The entryway is covered by an asphalt shingled pitched roof; the end bays are flat-roofed with parapet walls.

The other three sides of the building are similar in detail to the front elevation. The rear gabled end includes a large segmented, arched window. The left (southwest) elevation includes the covered mail platform.

One enters the building through a small, dark stained wood and glass vestibule. It has a terrazzo floor with a white marble border, brass bars, a low wood panel dado with panel glass windows above, and highly carved flat fluted columns supporting an ornamented entablature and projecting cornice. Doorways on each side give access to the two-story high lobby, five bays in length. The room has terrazzo flooring with white marble border, white marble wainscot and stool with a black marble base, plaster walls and ceiling, and dark stained wood service-height strip, denticulated cornice, and window frames. Long thin anthemion ornamental metal grilles opening to the workroom are located above the service area. The walls are moulded to give the effect of separate panels. The ceiling at the ends of the lobby is lower in height to accentuate their special services: the right being three large service counters, the left a stained wood door with architrave and broken pediment to the Postmaster's office.

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

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received

date entered

Continuation sheet MEDFORD MAIN POST OFFICE

Item number 7

Page 2

ALTERATIONS

The service counters to the right replaced original windows, the wood cornice in the lobby is painted over, a skylight in the workroom is covered over, and flourescent lighting has recently replaced original fixtures.

ART

Located above the service counters on the right wall of the lobby, a set of three paneled canvas murals are located. Depicting the town's historical rum and shipbuilding industries, they are in excellent condition.

8 SIGNIFICANCE

| PERIOD | AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW | | | |
|---|--|---|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC | <input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC | <input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING | <input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE | <input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499 | <input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC | <input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION | <input type="checkbox"/> LAW | <input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599 | <input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE | <input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS | <input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE | <input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699 | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE | <input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION | <input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY | <input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799 | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ART | <input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING | <input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC | <input type="checkbox"/> THEATER |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899 | <input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE | <input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT | <input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY | <input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900- | <input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS | <input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY | <input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT | <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY) |
| | | <input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION | | |

SPECIFIC DATES Excavation: Feb. 8, 1937 Louis A. Simon, Sup. Architect
 Dedication: Sept. 13, 1937 BUILDER/ARCHITECT Arthur L. Blakeslee, Chief Architect

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE Edmund J. Rappoli, Contractor

The Medford Main Post Office is situated on a side street in downtown Medford, near Medford Square. Architecturally it is significant as a Federal government building representative of Public Works Administration (P.W.A.) construction and design policies during the 1930's. Built in 1936, its form, design, materials, elements, plan and siting reflect P.W.A. advocacy of economy, efficiency and functionalism in post office architecture. Its simple, L-shaped form, local brick materials, ornamentation and logical, standardized 6-area plan facilitated quick construction. Indeed, the building was finished "way ahead of schedule." Stylistically, this post office represents a regional expression of classical tradition. Greek forms and surface treatments popular in New England during the 1830's and 1840's were revived for this building's design. Essentially L-shaped in plan, its main elevation is treated as a three-story Greek Revival temple with massive pedimented attic flanked by side wings. Its large, multi-pane windows exhibit simple stone sills and lintels and are set within recessed rectangular panels. Local brick was evidently used in this post office's construction. Brick yards had been operating in Medford since the late 17th century. Arthur L. Blakeslee, the chief Federal Architect responsible for this buildings plan and design was thoroughly familiar with local masonry Greek Revival Architecture. He was a native of Medford, born c. 1880 at the corner of High and Jerome Streets, Medford. He settled in Washington, D.C. in 1908. During the mid 1930's he was in charge of the Arlington Main Post Offices construction.

The Medford Main Post Office's siting is also of interest as a reflection of P.W.A. buildings policy. In this case, a location on a side street was chosen to facilitate more efficient mail distribution. Prior to the 1930's sites on prominent street corners and major thoroughfares were generally deemed suitable location for government buildings.

The Medford Main Post Office was completed on December 2, 1936. For the first time Medford's mail distribution was handled in a central location within the city limits. Prior to the mid 1930's Medford's mail was handled by Somerville's postal service. The Medford Main Post Office was built at a cost of \$149,500. It was dedicated on September 13, 1937. Ex-Senator Charles T. Daly, then President of the Chamber of Congress and Congressman Arthur D. Healy are credited with securing the funds for this structure. The Medford Main Post Office was the first Federal building in the city. Local newspapers noted that this building's construction provided

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

"Medford Mercury" September 16, 1937, P. 1,5,6,8; September 4, 1937 - p. 1;
 "Medford Mercury" Vol. XXII No. 103 - February 2, 1939

History of Post Office Construction 1900-1940, July, 1982

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 0.562

UTM REFERENCES

| | | | | | | | |
|---|------|-------------|---------------|---|------|---------|----------|
| A | 1 9 | 3 2 6 4 0 0 | 4 6 9 8 2 4 5 | B | | | |
| | ZONE | EASTING | NORTHING | | ZONE | EASTING | NORTHING |
| C | | | | D | | | |

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

South to Northeast - 180.71' along Forest Street
 Southeast to Northwest - 140.0' along side lot line
 Northeast to South - 169.55' along rear lot line
 Northwest to Southeast - 140.44 along side lot line

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

| STATE | CODE | COUNTY | CODE |
|-------|------|--------|------|
| STATE | CODE | COUNTY | CODE |

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Steven M. Smith, Project Manager

ORGANIZATION

SULLIVAN DESIGN GROUP, INC.

DATE

September 24, 1985

STREET & NUMBER

44 Adams Street

TELEPHONE

(617) 848-1545

CITY OR TOWN

Braintree

STATE

Massachusetts 02184

12 CERTIFICATION OF NOMINATION

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER RECOMMENDATION

YES

NO

NONE

Valerie Taenage

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

In compliance with Executive Order 11593, I hereby nominate this property to the National Register, certifying that the State Historic Preservation Officer has been allowed 90 days in which to present the nomination to the State Review Board and to evaluate its significance. The evaluated level of significance is State National X State X Local.

FEDERAL REPRESENTATIVE SIGNATURE

John S. Swanson

TITLE Realty Specialist, Sr.

DATE

May 13, 1986

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

Patrick Anders

DATE

6/18/86

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

ATTEST *Elizabeth George*

DATE

6-16-86

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service****National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form****For NPS use only**

received

date entered

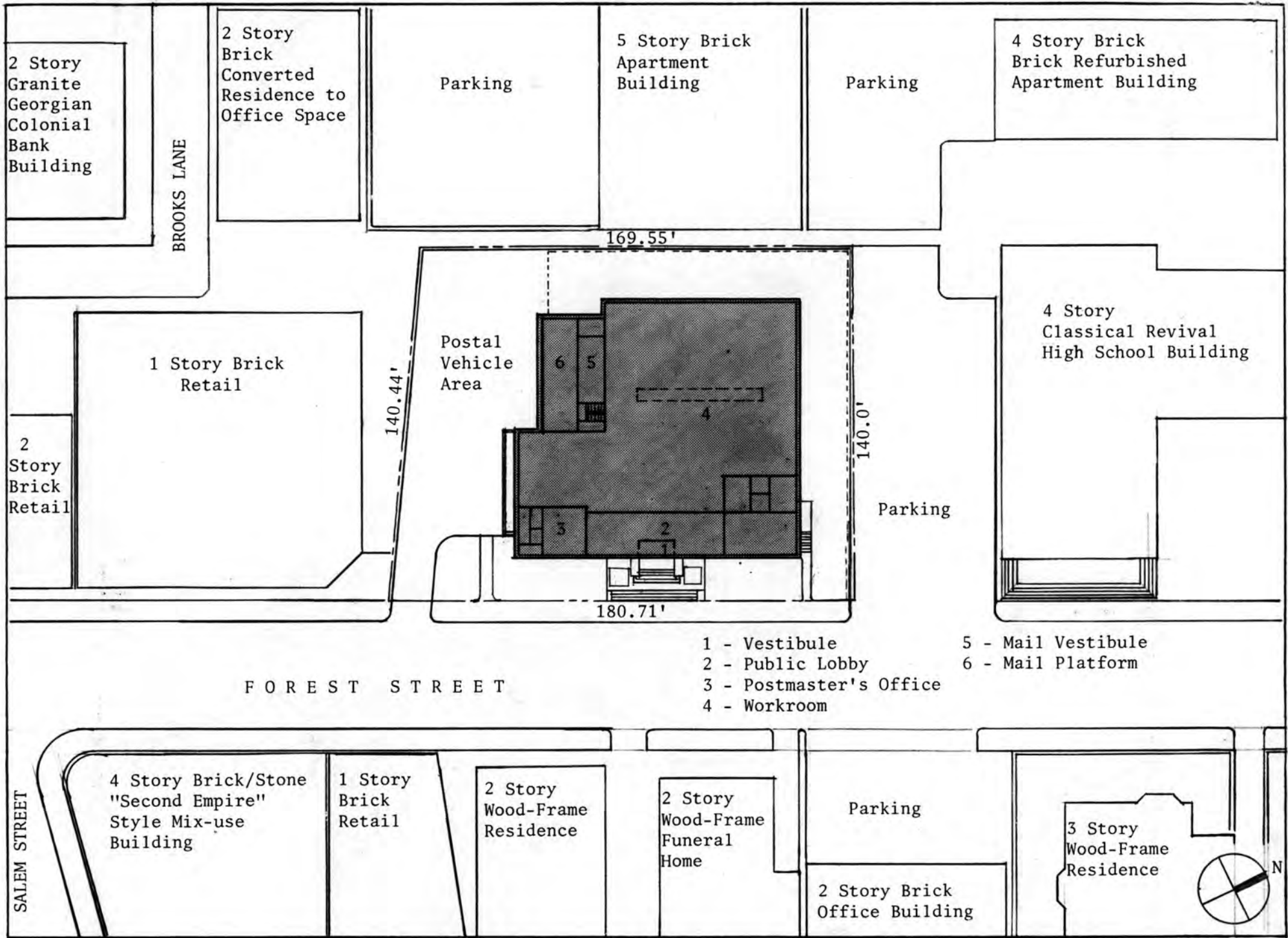
Continuation sheet Medford Main Post Office Item number 8

Page 2

jobs for many local men and permanent jobs for 70 post office employees. It was part of a building program that included the City Hall (1936) and a new municipal garage. Medford's building program was established to "return people to work". The Medford Main Post Office was a timely and complimentary addition to a commercial district which realized a retail business of \$11,000,00 in 1934 and \$13,000,000 in 1935.

This building contains a mural by Henry Billings of New York. It depicts the 18th century triangular trade between Medford, Africa and the West Indies, featuring scenes from the ever flourishing rum industry.

Finally, this building represents a product of the U.S. Supervisory Architect office in Washington, D.C. From 1933 until 1941 Louis Adolf Simon was the U.S. Supervisory Architect. Born in Boston c. 1870 and educated at M.I.T. he began a private practice in Washington D.C. in 1894. by 1896 he had been hired by the U.S. Treasury Supervising Architect's office. He was appointed chief Federal Architect in 1905 - a post which he held until 1933. In addition to numerous post offices, custom houses and court houses he was responsible for the design of the Federal Building at the New York World's Fair in 1939/1940. He died in 1941.



2 Story
Granite
Georgian
Colonial
Bank
Building

BROOKS LANE

2 Story
Brick
Converted
Residence to
Office Space

Parking

5 Story Brick
Apartment
Building

Parking

4 Story Brick
Brick Refurbished
Apartment Building

169.55'

1 Story Brick
Retail

Postal
Vehicle
Area

6

5

4

140.44'

140.0'

4 Story
Classical Revival
High School Building

2
Story
Brick
Retail

Parking

180.71'

F O R E S T S T R E E T

- 1 - Vestibule
- 2 - Public Lobby
- 3 - Postmaster's Office
- 4 - Workroom

- 5 - Mail Vestibule
- 6 - Mail Platform

SALEM STREET

4 Story Brick/Stone
"Second Empire"
Style Mix-use
Building

1 Story
Brick
Retail

2 Story
Wood-Frame
Residence

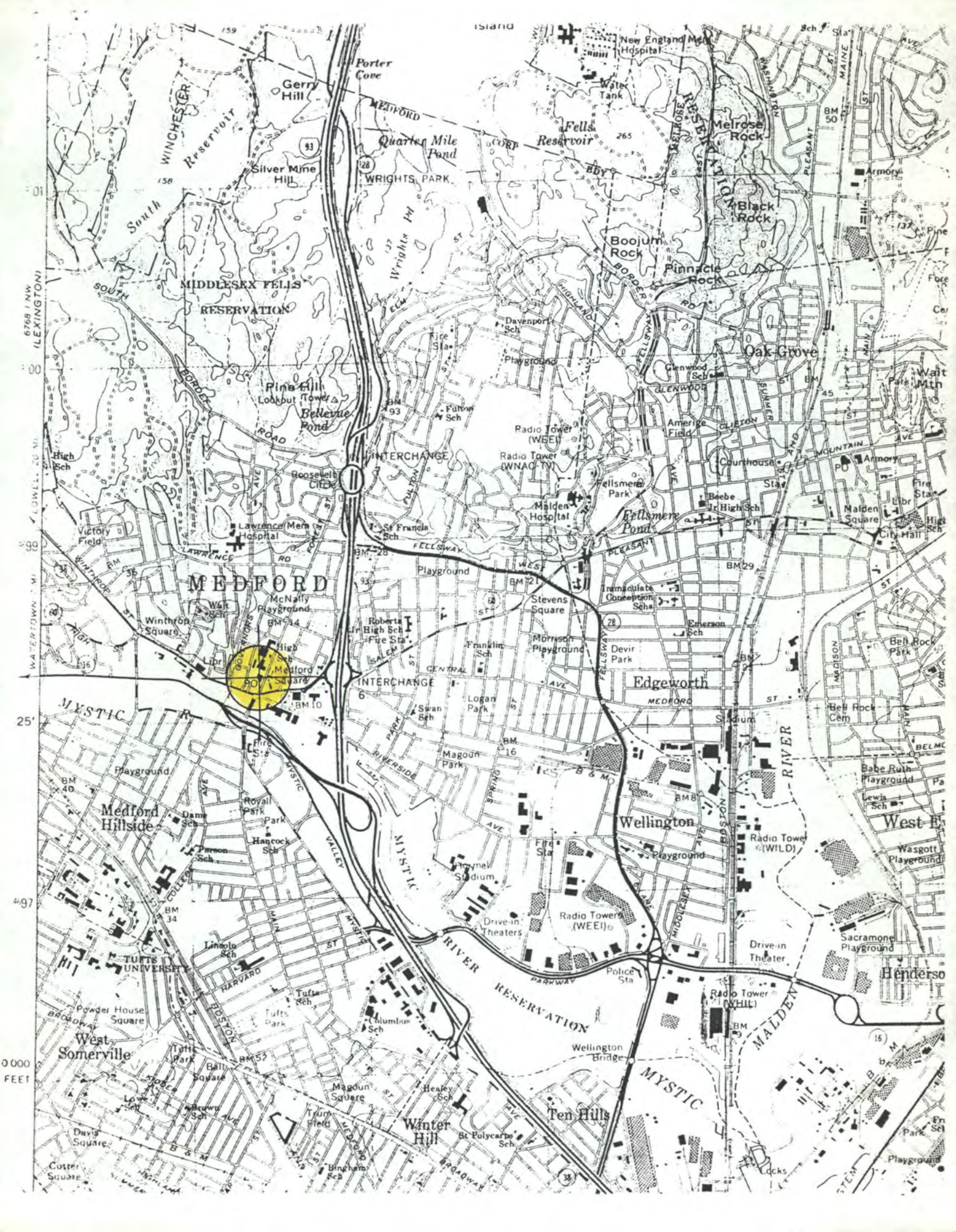
2 Story
Wood-Frame
Funeral
Home

Parking

2 Story Brick
Office Building

3 Story
Wood-Frame
Residence





86001346

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

Substantive Review

U.S. Post Office--Medford Main
Middlesex County
MASSACHUSETTS

Working No. MAY 16 1986
Fed. Reg. Date: 2/3/87
Date Due: 6/13/86 - 6/30/86
Action: ACCEPT 6-18-86
 RETURN
 REJECT
Federal Agency: USPS

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

Substantive Review: sample request appeal NR decision

Reviewer's comments:

Interesting local adaptation of Classical Revival Style executed in brick. Additionally significant for mural entitled "Triangle of Trade" by Henry Billings installed in 1939.

Recom./Criteria Accept A4C
Reviewer George
Discipline Architectural History
Date 6-16-86
see continuation sheet

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

1. Name

2. Location

3. Classification

| | | | |
|----------|---------------------------------|----------------------|-------------|
| Category | Ownership Public Acquisition | Status Accessible | Present Use |
|----------|---------------------------------|----------------------|-------------|

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 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> excellent | <input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated | <input type="checkbox"/> original site |
| <input type="checkbox"/> good | <input type="checkbox"/> ruins | <input type="checkbox"/> moved date _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> fair | <input type="checkbox"/> unexposed | |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> unaltered | |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> altered | |

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

Acreage of nominated property _____
Quadrangle name _____
UTM 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 _____

title _____ date _____

13. Other

- Maps
- Photographs
- Other

Questions concerning this nomination may be directed to _____

Signed _____ Date _____ Phone: _____



Medford Post Office
20 Forest Street
Medford, MA

MEDFORD MAIN POST OFFICE
Medford, MA
David R. Hooker
Earl R. Flansburgh and Associates
May 1983
Front elevation. Left view



Medford Post Office
20 Forest Street
Medford, MA

MEDFORD MAIN POST OFFICE
Medford, MA
David R. Hooker
Earl R. Flansburgh and Associates
May 1983
Front elevation. Right view



UNITED STATES POST OFFICE

WESTPORT
MASSACHUSETTS

Medford Post Office
20 Forest Street
Medford, MA

MEDFORD MAIN POST OFFICE
Medford, MA
David R. Hooker
Earl R. Flansburgh and Associates
May 1983
Front elevation



NOTHING
NO
NO MORE

POST OFFICE
CLOSING
TIME
11:30 AM
NOV 15 1964



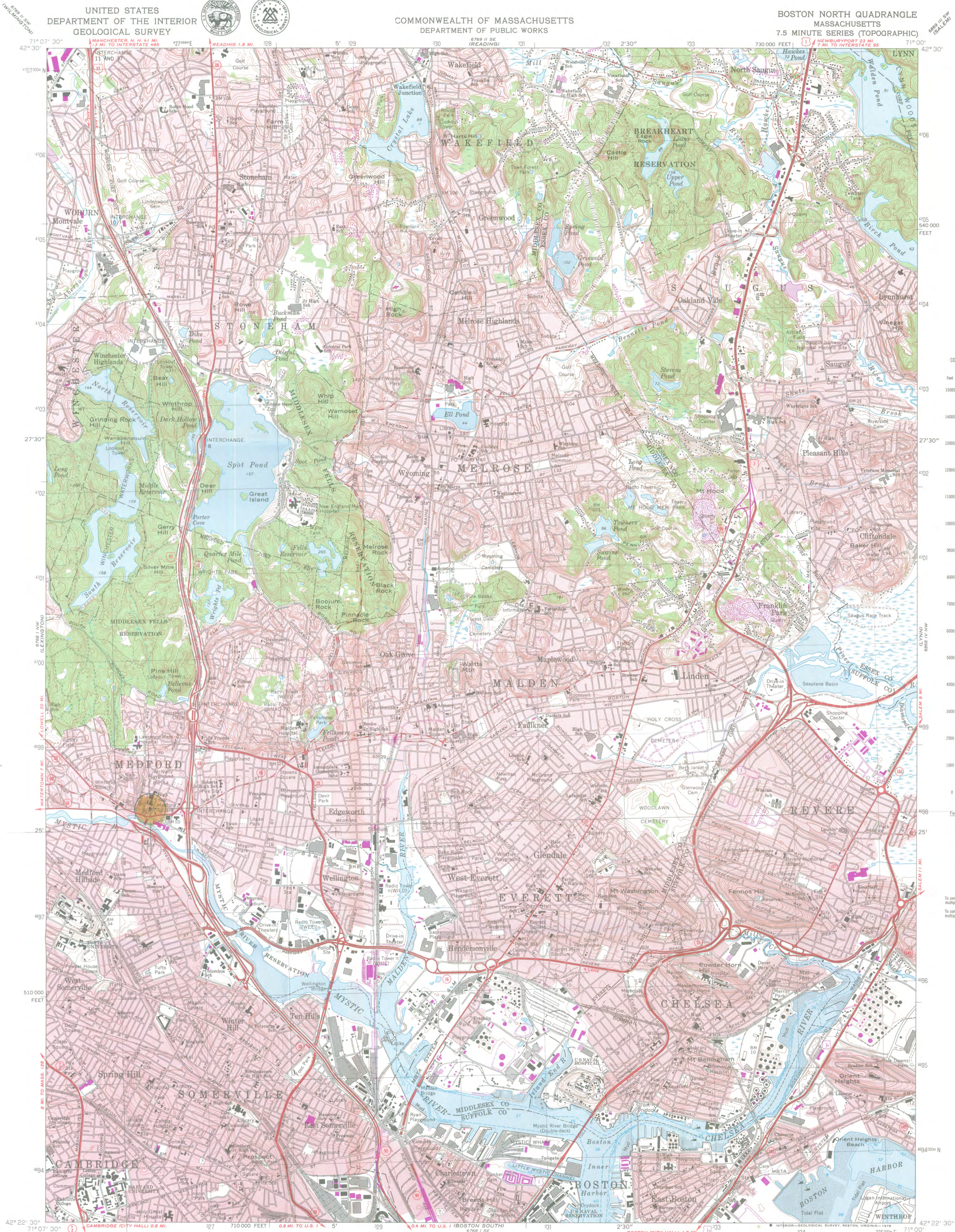
Medford Post Office
Medford, Massachusetts

MEDFORD MAIN POST OFFICE
Medford, MA
David R. Hooker
Earl R. Flansburgh and Associates
May 1983
Lobby



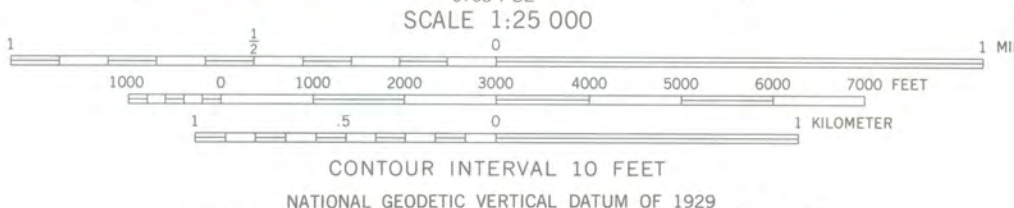
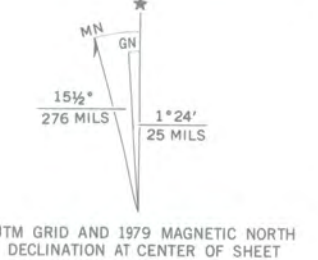
Medford Post Office
20 Forest Street
Medford, MA

MEDFORD MAIN POST OFFICE
Medford, MA
David R. Hooker
Earl R. Flansburgh and Associates
May 1983
Mural

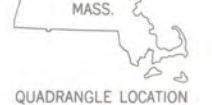
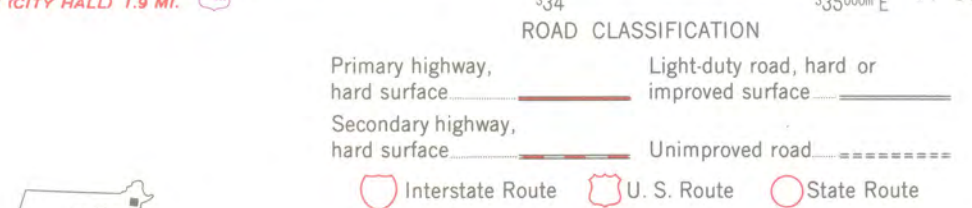


To convert feet to meters multiply by 3048
To convert meters to feet multiply by 3.2808

Mapped, edited, and published by the Geological Survey
Control by USGS, USC&GS, and Massachusetts Geodetic Survey
Topography by planetable surveys 1943. Revised from aerial photographs taken 1969. Field checked 1971
Selected hydrographic data compiled from USC&GS Chart 248 (1971)
This information is not intended for navigational purposes
Polyconic projection. 1927 North American datum
10,000-foot grid based on Massachusetts coordinate system, mainland zone
1000-meter Universal Transverse Mercator grid, zone 19
Boundaries in tidewater areas from information supplied by Massachusetts Department of Public Works
Red tint indicates areas in which only landmark buildings are shown
There may be private inholdings within the boundaries of the National or State reservations shown on this map



SCALE 1:25 000
CONTOUR INTERVAL 10 FEET
NATIONAL GEODETIC VERTICAL DATUM OF 1929
DEPTH CURVES AND SOUNDINGS IN FEET-DATUM IS MEAN LOW WATER
THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE TWO DATUMS IS VARIABLE
SHORELINE SHOWN REPRESENTS THE APPROXIMATE LINE OF MEAN HIGH WATER
THE MEAN RANGE OF TIDE IS APPROXIMATELY 9.5 FEET
THIS MAP COMPLIES WITH NATIONAL MAP ACCURACY STANDARDS
FOR SALE BY U.S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY, RESTON, VIRGINIA 22092
A FOLDER DESCRIBING TOPOGRAPHIC MAPS AND SYMBOLS IS AVAILABLE ON REQUEST



BOSTON NORTH, MASS.
N4222.5—W7100/7.5
1971
PHOTOREVISED 1979
AMS 6768 I NE—SERIES V814

U.S. POST OFFICE
MEDFORD, MA
UTM REFERENCE:
19/326400/4698245



FIELD REAL ESTATE AND BUILDINGS OFFICE

P.O. Box 324
Lexington, MA 02173-0324

August 19, 1985

The Honorable John A. Ghiloni
City Manager, City of Medford
City Hall
Medford, MA 02155

Dear City Manager Ghiloni:

The U.S. Postal Service in conjunction with the Massachusetts State Historic Preservation Officer in Boston has evaluated the Main Post Office in Medford and has determined it is significant from an historical viewpoint.

In view of the above evaluation, the U.S. Postal Service intends to nominate this building to the National Register of Historic Places. We would, prior to our taking formal action, appreciate receiving your concurrence.

If you concur with our proposed action, kindly return a signed copy of this letter in the enclosed envelope.

Sincerely,

Gregory Gilleland
General Manager

Concur: _____

Enclosures

JPC/ljr



UNITED STATES POSTAL SERVICE
Real Estate and Buildings Department
475 L'Enfant Plaza, SW
Washington, DC 20260-6400

May 13, 1986

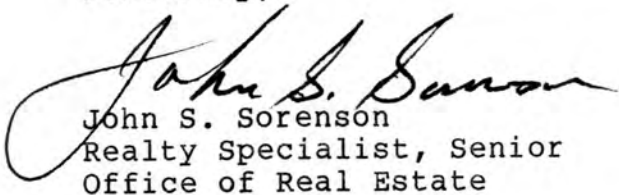
Ms. Carol D. Shull
Chief of Registration
National Register of Historic Places
National Park Service
Department of Interior
Washington, D.C. 20240-1002

Dear Ms. Shull:

The Postal Service hereby submits a nomination for the post office located at 20 Forest Street, Middlesex County, Medford, Massachusetts.

If you have questions concerning this nomination, please call me at 202/268-3107.

Sincerely,


John S. Sorenson
Realty Specialist, Senior
Office of Real Estate

Enclosure

Post office constructed 1936.
Not <50. Remove from
ally. 38. 6-16-86

Rec'd
MAY 16 1986