

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 OCT 31 1985

DATE ENTERED DEC 12 1985

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

Palmer Main Post Office

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

Park and Central Streets

N/A

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

Palmer

N/A VICINITY OF

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

Second Congressional District

STATE

Massachusetts 01069

CODE

990

COUNTY

Hampden

CODE

013

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY

- DISTRICT
- BUILDING(S)
- STRUCTURE
- SITE
- OBJECT

OWNERSHIP

- PUBLIC
- PRIVATE
- BOTH

PUBLIC ACQUISITION

- N/A IN PROCESS
- BEING CONSIDERED

STATUS

- OCCUPIED
- UNOCCUPIED
- WORK IN PROGRESS

ACCESSIBLE

- YES: RESTRICTED
- YES: UNRESTRICTED
- NO

PRESENT USE

- AGRICULTURE
- COMMERICAL
- 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

N/A VICINITY OF

STATE

Massachusetts 02173

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Hampden County Courthouse

STREET & NUMBER

Route 181

CITY, TOWN

Palmer

STATE

Massachusetts 01069

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	<u>S 1 330</u> <input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input 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

The United States Post Office at Palmer is a fine example of Neo-Classical design and is quite significant as a product of the U.S. Treasury Department. Designed in April of 1931 under the administration of Louis A. Simon and James A. Wetmore of the Treasury's Architectural Division, it is a two-story steel frame structure with buff-colored brick and limestone trimmings.

It is located on the outskirts of the Central Business District in what is presently, and has been historically, a predominately residential neighborhood.

There is a predominance of 2-1/2 story wood frame, one and two family houses to the South and East of the site. To the North diagonally across the intersection of Park and Central Streets, is the Gothic Style gray stone structure of St. Paul's Universalist Church. On the Northwest side of Park Street a small one-story brick and wood shingle office building sits. The remainder of the surrounding neighborhood is of a residential scale.

Although irregular in shape the building is primarily square in plan. However, when viewed from the major approach routes, its recessed colonade entry and corresponding side facades give the illusion of being rectangular.

The recessed entrance portico served by seven (7) full width granite steps consists of eight Ionic limestone columns some fifteen feet in height.

The central three bays consist of three pairs of wood doors with one glass light and a full height transom above each. The adjacent bays consist of four window openings of 12/12 double hung wood sashes (each with uncharacteristic aluminum storm windows). Over the transom of each door and window is a plain face limestone plaque. These 12/12 windows are repeated "outside" the portico with one at each of the flanking bays and on most of the other three sides.

On both sides of the granite entrance stairs are the original cast copper art deco lampposts set on limestone plinths. Safety handrails have been added to the stairway.

The columns support a limestone and brick frieze, cornice, and ballustrade that is continued around the perimeter of the building. A continuous limestone base supports the building in its entirety.

Aside from water stains along the bricks beneath the scupper areas, the limestone cap and ballustrade sections require repointing. Otherwise, the building is in excellent original condition. The only alteration is a small protective canopy over the rear loading bay. Supported by simple metal columns, the original building is easily discerned.

The lobby area is for the most part, in the original condition. In order to

**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 PALMER MAIN POST OFFICE

Item number 7

Page 2

meet the demand for additional box space, the money order counter was replaced with new compartments of a type and style that blend in with the original boxes. Typical with most of the post offices today, the original incandescent fixtures have been replaced by fluorescent ones.

White marble wainscoting surrounds the lobby perimeter with a gray marble base and border at the white terrazzo floors.

The wood trim at the window and box areas as well as the vestibule is of a natural finish and has been carefully maintained. The original brasswork and entrance doors also remain.

There are no other buildings on this half acre site. Mature maples and conifers grace the frontage along Central Street.

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 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 Designed: April, 1931 BUILDER/ARCHITECT L.A. Simon, Superintendent, Arch. Div
 Began Construction: Nov. 2, 1931 James A. Wetmore, Sup. Architect
 STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE Completed: May, 1932 Cianci Construction Co.: Contractors
 W. A. Newton & Company

This Post Office is a fine example of Neo-Classical design and warrants a place on the National Register of Historic Places.

Its location is a paradox. On the one hand it was conceived during the Depression Era at a time when the Federal Government wanted to reach out to local communities. The grand proportion of the structure and the quality of work certainly bespeak of pride and integrity. On the other hand it is lost in a forest of residential homes, away from the downtown area.

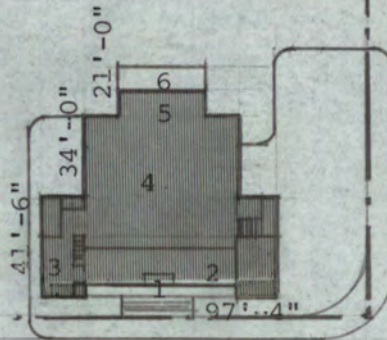
Symmetry and the use of classical elements such as the columns and the sizeable entablature they support give an aura of grandeur and artistic understanding. The utilization of the light brick achieves a sense of human scale even at the grand proportion of the structure.

The cost of construction in 1931 was \$75,945.00. Yet even at this princely sum, the contractor is reported to have gone bankrupt. Reports of close supervision created a building of beautiful construction but few profits. Indeed the original construction record photographs, on file at the Palmer Post Office, indicate a shift in the last remaining months from the Cianci Construction Company, originally awarded the project, the W.A Newton Company who completed it.

1. Vestibule
2. Lobby
3. Postmaster
4. Workroom
5. Mail Vestibule
6. Mail Platform

2 1/2 story
clapboard
residence

2 story
clapboard
residence



One story
brick office

2 1/2
story
wood-
siding
residence

Parking

Park Street

Central Street

2 1/2 story
asphalt
shingle
residence

2 1/2 story
wood shingle
residence

2 1/2
story
wood
siding
residence

2 1/2 story
wood
shingle
residence

Stone/wood
Universalist
Church

Maple Street



NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

85003336

United States Post Office
Hampden County
MASSACHUSETTS

Substantive Review

Working No. OCT 31 1985

Fed. Reg. Date: 2/3/87

Date Due: 11/25/85 - 12/15/85

Action: ACCEPT 12-12-85

RETURN

REJECT

Federal Agency: U.S. Postal Service

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

Substantive Review: sample request appeal NR decision

Reviewer's comments:

*Significant as local institutional brick
example of twentieth century
academic eclecticism manifested in
the Classical Revival mode.*

Recom./Criteria Accept C

Reviewer Savage

Discipline Architectural History

Date 12-11-85

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
<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
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed	date _____
	<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

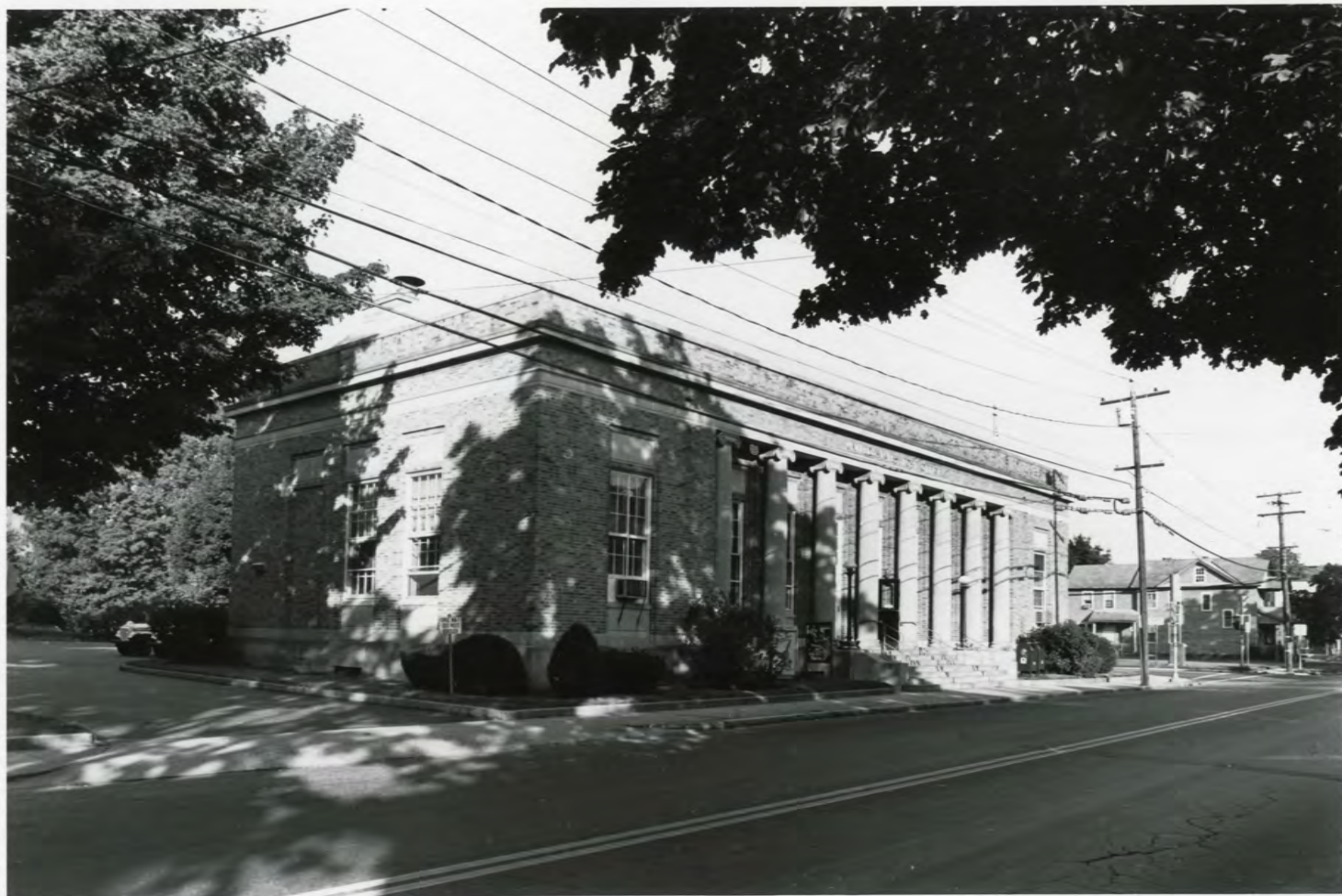
Questions concerning this nomination may be directed to _____

Signed _____ Date _____ Phone: _____



MAIN POST OFFICE
PALMER, MASSACHUSETTS

Palmer Main Post Office
Palmer, MA
Dennis Griggs
August 1983
Sullivan Design Group, Inc.
Front elevation. Right view



MAIN POST OFFICE
PALMER, MASSACHUSETTS 06069

Palmer Main Post Office
Palmer, MA
Dennis Griggs
August 1983

Sullivan Design Group, Inc.
Front elevation. Left view



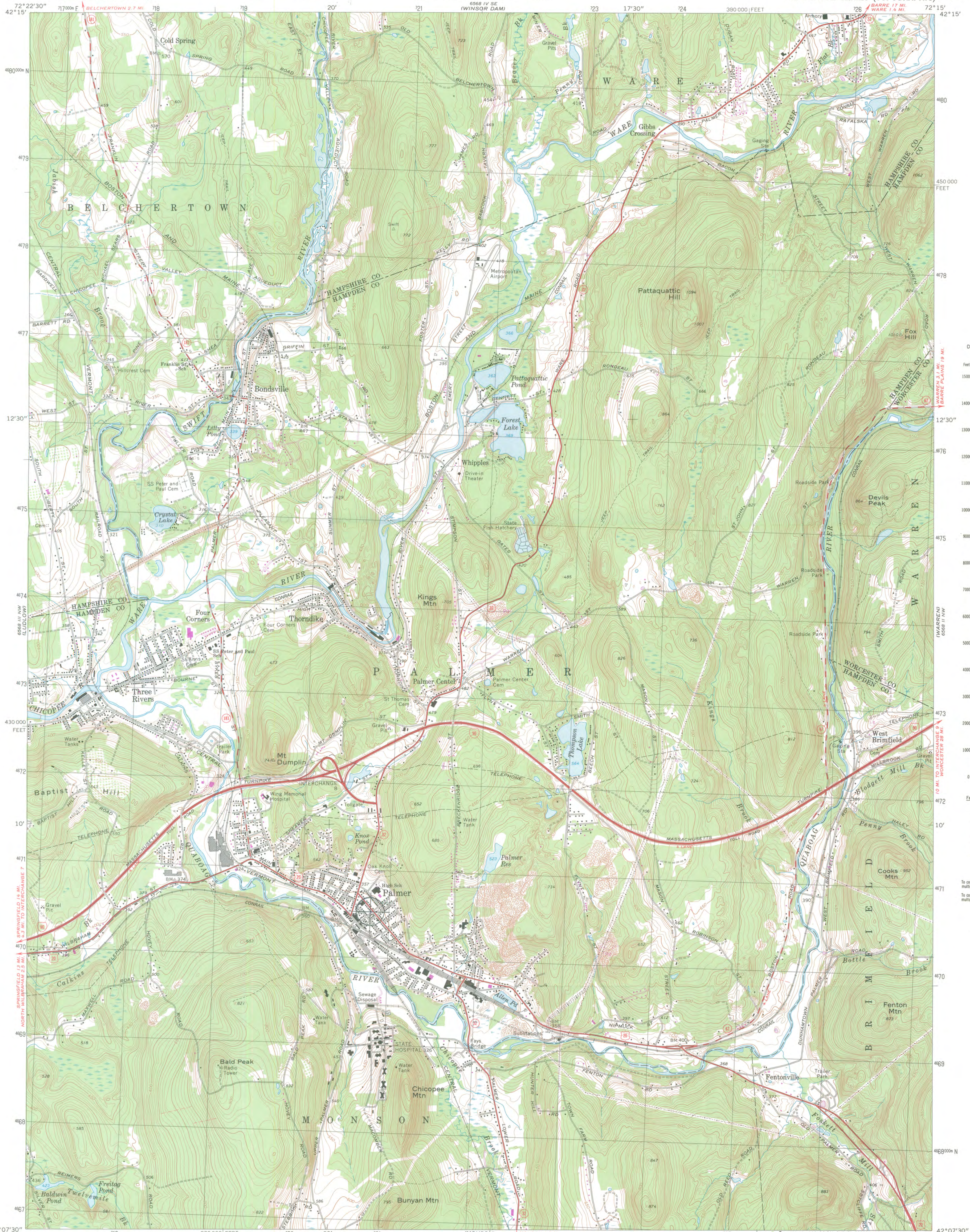
MAIN POST OFFICE
PALMER, MASSACHUSETTS

Palmer Main Post Office
Palmer, MA
Dennis Griggs
August 1983
Sullivan Design Group, Inc.
Front Elevation

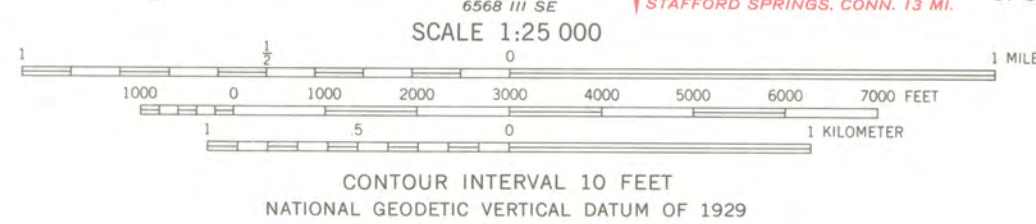


MAIN POST OFFICE
PALMER, MASSACHUSETTS

Palmer Main Post Office
Palmer, MA
Dennis Griggs
August 1983
Sullivan Design Group, Inc.
Front Entrance



Mapped, edited, and published by the Geological Survey
Control by USGS, USC&GS, and Massachusetts Geodetic Survey
Topography by planetable surveys 1943-1944. Revised from aerial
photographs taken 1967. Field checked 1969
Polycon projection, 1927 North American datum
10,000-foot grid based on Massachusetts coordinate system,
mainland zone
1000-meter Universal Transverse Mercator grid,
zone 18
Fine red dashed lines indicate selected fence and field lines where
generally visible on aerial photographs. This information is unchecked



ROAD CLASSIFICATION
Primary highway, all weather, hard surface
Secondary highway, all weather, hard surface
Light-duty road, all weather, improved surface
Unimproved road, fair or dry weather
Interstate Route
U.S. Route
State Route

U.S. POST OFFICE
PALMER, MA
UTM REFERENCE:
18/720800/4670535

Revisions shown in purple compiled in cooperation with the State of
Massachusetts agencies from aerial photographs taken 1975 and other
source data. This information not field checked. Map edited 1979

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



PALMER, MASS.
N4207.5-W7215/7.5

1969
PHOTOREVISED 1979
AMS 6568 III NE-SERIES V814



FIELD REAL ESTATE AND BUILDINGS OFFICE
P.O. Box 324
Lexington, MA 02173-0324

BOARD OF SELECTMEN
RECEIVED
JUN 20 1985
PALMER, MASS.

June 17, 1985

The Honorable Mark Benoit
Chairman, Board of Selectman, Town of Palmer
Palmer Town Building
Palmer, MA 01069

Dear Chairman Benoit:

The U. S. Postal Service in conjunction with the Massachusetts Historical Commission in Boston has evaluated the Main Post Office in Palmer and has determined it is significant from a 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: Mark E. Benoit (c)

Enclosure

JPC/ljr



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

October 28, 1985

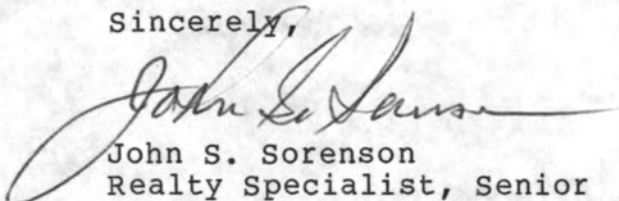
Ms. Carol D. Shull
Chief of Registration
National Register of Historic Places
National Park Service
Department of Interior
Washington, D.C. 20240-1002

Dear Ms. Shull:

The Postal Service hereby submits a nomination for the post office located at Park and Central Streets, Hampden County, Palmer, Massachusetts.

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

Sincerely,



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

Enclosure

OCT 31 1985