

FORM B - BUILDING

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
Office of the Secretary, State House, Boston

NOV 14 1980

In Area no.
C'port

Form no.
CPT
IIB2

2. Photo (3x3" or 3x5")
Staple to left side of form
Photo number 1107-14

1. Town Cambridge

Address 780 Memorial Drive

Name B&B Chemical Co.

Present use industrial

Present owner Polaroid Corporation

3. Description:

Date 1937

Source deed records

Style International

Architect Coolidge, Shepley, Bulfinch & Abbott

Exterior wall fabric glazed brick/glass

Outbuildings (describe) one other manufacturing building; some storage bldgs. Other features modern stress on horizontal lines, emphasized by continuous band of windows. Central tower only vertical element. Three-storie

Altered No Date -----

Moved No Date -----

5 Lot size:

One acre or less Over one acre XX

Approximate frontage 370 feet

Approximate distance of building from street

50 feet

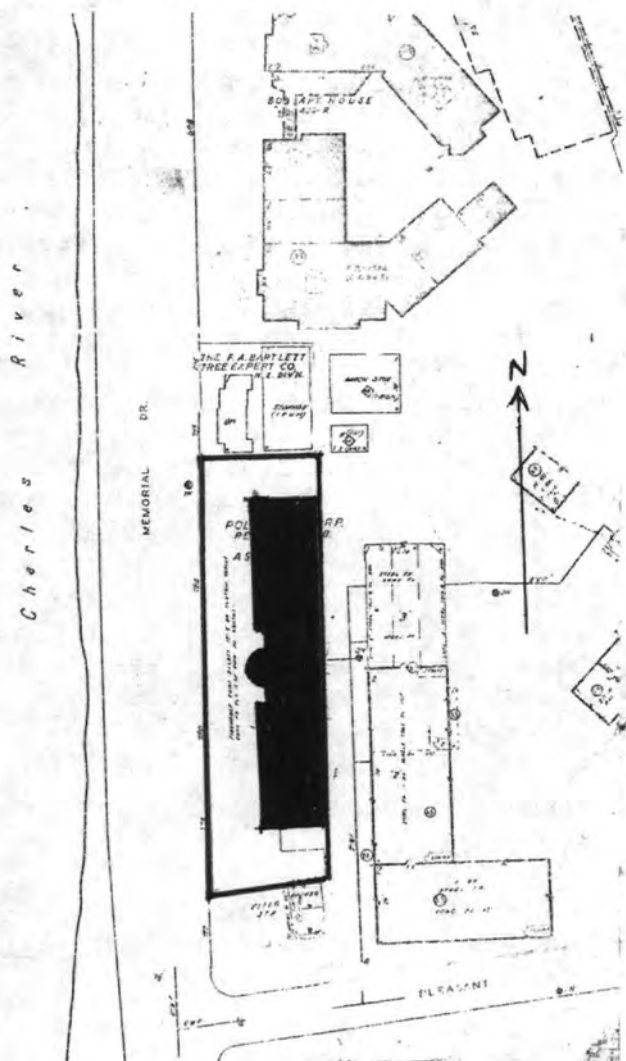
6. Recorded by Arthur Krim

Organization Cambridge Historical Comm.

Date 1968

UTM-BOSTON SOUTH

19/325750/4691680



ASSESSOR # 128-40

(over)

7. Original owner (if known) United Shoe Machinery Corp subsidiary: B&B Chemical Co

Original use experimental factory and offices

Subsequent uses (if any) and dates industrial use- Poloroid Corp.

8. Themes (check as many as applicable)

Aboriginal	_____	Conservation	_____	Recreation	_____
Agricultural	_____	Education	_____	Religion	_____
Architectural	_____	Exploration/ settlement	_____	Science/ invention	X
The Arts	XX	Industry	_____	Social/ humanitarian	_____
Commerce	_____	Military	X	Transportation	_____
Communication	_____	Political	_____		_____
Community development	_____				

9. Historical significance (include explanation of themes checked above)

This clean-lined industrial building is the earliest and best of the city's 1930's modern structures, characterized by sharp edges, horizontal strip windows which continue around corners, and rigidly symmetrical facades.

Built in 1937, it is the work of the firm of Coolidge, Shepley, Bulfinch & Abbott. It was intended as offices, laboratories, and an experimental factory by the B & B Chemical Co., a subsidiary of the United Shoe Machinery Corp. The Cambridge plant produced adhesives for use in shoe manufacturing and other industries.

The horizontality of this long, low structure is emphasized by continuous bands of windows: glass block on the ground floor and metal-framed divided sash above. The central tower is the only vertical element, and contains a curved canopy and two story glass window bay above the entrance. Above the tower-like vertical glass bay is a clock face originally topped by stylized lettering spelling B & B Chemical. Although obscured by the glass and glazed brick facade, the structural system is of reinforced concrete.

Measuring 50 feet by 270 feet, the building has three-story wings flanking a four-story central section. A separate two-story manufacturing building stands behind it, with steel frame, concrete brick walls and horizontal bands of windows. Because it cannot be seen from the river, it lacks the elegance of the principal building. Several other storage buildings complete the

10. Bibliography and/or references (such as local histories, deeds, assessor's records, complex, early maps, etc.)

Although the building is not 50 years old at the time of its nomination, the high quality of its architectural design meets the National Register criteria.

Building is discussed in Survey of Architectural History in Cambridge Series, Report Three; Cambridgeport, p. 123-4. appears in photos on p. 6 & 10.

EXP. 12/31/84

United States Department of the Interior
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form

For NPS use only

received

date entered

Continuation sheet

Item number

Page 4 of 17

Multiple Resource Area
Thematic GroupName Cambridge Multiple Resource Area
State MA

Nomination/Type of Review

Date/Signature

31. Bottle House Block

✓ Keeper

William H. Bracham 4.13.82

Attest

32. Building at 42 Edward J. Lopez
Avenue

✓ Keeper

William H. Bracham 4.13.82

Attest

33. East Cambridge Savings Bank

✓ Keeper

William H. Bracham 4.13.82

Attest

34. Hoyt, Benjamin, House

Substantive Review

✓ Keeper

William H. Bracham 4.13.82

Attest

35. Lechmere Point Corporation
Houses

✓ Keeper

William H. Bracham 4.13.82

Attest

36. Sacred Heart Church, Rectory,
School and Convent

✓ Keeper

William H. Bracham 4.13.82

Attest

37. Union Railway Car Barn

✓ Keeper

William H. Bracham 4.13.82

Attest

38. B and B Chemical Company

Substantive Review

✓ Keeper

William H. Bracham 4.13.82

Attest

39. Baker House

Substantive Review

Determined Eligible

✓ Keeper

Ly A. Bracham 1/27/87

Attest

40. Beth Israel Synagogue

✓ Keeper

William H. Bracham 4.13.82

Attest

DOE/OWNER OBJECTION

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

EVALUATION / RETURN SHEET

Property: Bard B Chemical Company
(Cambridge Multiple Resource Area)
State, County: MA - Middlesex
Federal Agency: _____

Working No. 11-14-80-286 2
Fed. Reg. Date: _____
Date Due: 4/17/82
Action: ☒ ACCEPT 4/13/82
☐ RETURN _____
☐ REJECT _____

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

photos ☒
maps _____

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

Reviewer's comments:

Return for statement of
exceptional significance.
See Attached Comments

Recom./Criteria Accept &
Reviewer SM Clifford
Discipline Arch. Hist
Date 4/13/82
see continuation sheet
Braunam 4.13.82

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

Exception is implicit in description & statement of significance - especially in context of prototypical early International style architecture.

9. Major Bibliographical References

10. Geographical Data

Address of nominated property _____

Quadrangle name _____

USPT 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 W.H. Braverman Date _____ Phone: 202 272-3504

Comments for any item may be continued on an attached sheet

An outstanding, well-preserved example
of industrial architecture in the
International Style by a well-known
architectural firm. International
Style was introduced in US in 1932
by Museum of Modern Art in form of
an exhibition and catalog. Thus, this bldg's
~~the~~ 1937 date; ~~and the~~ conformity
of design and use of materials
~~found in this building~~ appropriate to
the period's technology and ~~the~~ in keeping
with the international ~~and~~ adaptation
of this ~~modern~~ style make this building
particularly important.

The streamlined horizontal emphasis of
building broken only by the central
vertical tower make this building
a prime example of Moderne
design, which ~~adapted~~ was a variation
of International Style's ~~tenets~~ tenets,
as well. The linear bands of
industrial sash reinforcing the
horizontality of building; the use
of glass blocks and canopies on the
ground level; the smooth, unarticulated
surfaces; the ~~asymmetrical~~ but
harmonious disposition of masses and
intersecting planes; subordination
of design to functional needs of
an industrial building - all
contribute to this building's
total effect and ~~make it a~~ ^{make it a} fine example ^{locally}
of a style for which early ^{and pure} examples
are few in the United States.

McClelland / Graham, Hirst
4/13/82 Accept 6



1107-14

NOV 14 1980

Cambridge MRA, Ma

O G G C

B+B Chemical Co.

780 Memorial Drive

1107 - 14

Please refer to the map in the
Multiple Property Cover Sheet
for this property

Multiple Property Cover Sheet Reference Number: 64000275