

FORM B - BUILDING

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION  
294 WASHINGTON STREET, BOSTON, MA 02108

AREA	FORM NO.
	33

Robt 19:32A, 34A

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

Photo number \_\_\_\_\_

Town Stoneham

Address 474 Main Street

Historic Name Colonial Beacon Gas Station  
Present Owner: Thomas Mays, 27 Bear Hill Rd  
Original Owner: Colonial Beacon Stoneham Oil Company

Use: Present Fruit and flower shop

Original Filling station

DESCRIPTION:

Date ca. 1922

Source v/a; documentary research

Style Neoclassical gas station

Architect Coolidge and Carlson

Exterior wall fabric cinderblock/stucco

Outbuildings none

Major alterations (with dates) "Drive-through" enclosed and glazed, ca. 1975

Moved no Date n/a

Approx. acreage 8,539 square feet

Setting Main Street; southern edge of central business district

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 Carole Zellie, ed. Sarah Zimmerman  
Organization Landscape Research

Date May, 1979

Assessor's Map #18-237

UTM: Boston North Quad  
19/347310/4704560

(Staple additional sheets here)

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

The Neo-classical Colonial Beacon gas station is a well preserved example of early 20th-century, automobile-related commercial architecture. It is one of four surviving Neo-classical gas stations of the Colonial Oil Company chain in Massachusetts. These were designed as flagship stations for the company by the architectural firm of Coolidge and Carlson of Boston.

A one-story building of cinder-block construction with stucco finishing, the Colonial Beacon station has a two-part plan consisting of an open domed octagonal "drive-through" pump area and a two-bay, rectangular, flat roofed service area. Corinthian columns support the pump area dome which is surmounted by a tall lantern upon which rests an open grillework globe containing a light; when lit, that light became the "beacon" of the Colonial Beacon station. The pump and service areas are unified through the use of a Doric cornice and a parapet with starburst panels which encircles both areas. Subsequent alterations to the building consist of the enclosure and glazing of the octagonal drive-through, the addition of a glazed greenhouse shed to that area and the conversion of both areas to use as a fruit and produce stand. Until after World War II, the station retained its original usage; since that time, it has served a number of retail functions, none of which have negatively or irreversibly affected the integrity of the original structure, which remains intact.

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

The Colonial Beacon gas station possesses integrity of location, design, setting, materials and association. It is significant as the best preserved of four similar Neo-classical 1920s gas stations of the Massachusetts-based Colonial Oil Company (now defunct), which remain extant in Massachusetts. It is also important as an unusually sophisticated example of early 20th-century automobile-related commercial architecture by a noted Boston architectural firm, and for its associations with the development of automobile transportation in the Boston area. It meets criteria A and C of the National Register of Historic Places.

Located directly on Main Street (Route 28), the Colonial Beacon gas station occupies a site long identified as an important transportation corridor. Main Street was laid out in 1806 as the Medford-Andover turnpike and remains an important north-south route even today. In the early 20th century, Main Street was improved as Route 28 and became one of the earliest automobile highways in the Boston area.

Like many roadside businesses of the early automobile transportation era, the Colonial Beacon station served as both an advertising symbol and a service station.

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

Clipping file, Stoneham Public Library.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form

For NPS use only  
received 2/28/84  
date entered

Continuation sheet

Item number

Page 2 of 7

Multiple Resource Area  
Thematic Group

Name Stoneham Multiple Resource Area  
State Middlesex County, MASSACHUSETTS

Nomination/Type of Review

Date/Signature

11. Buswell, Clara, House

Entered in the  
National Register

Keeper Silvana Byers 4/13/84

Attest

12. Chamberlain, Samuel, House

Entered in the  
National Register

Keeper Silvana Byers 4/13/84

Attest

13. Cogan, Bernard, House

Entered in the  
National Register

Keeper Silvana Byers 4/13/84

Attest

14. Cogan, James, House

Entered in the  
National Register

Keeper Silvana Byers 4/13/84

Attest

15. Colonial Beacon Gas Station

Entered in the  
National Register

Keeper Silvana Byers 4/13/84

Attest

16. Cowdrey, George, House

Entered in the  
National Register

Keeper Silvana Byers 4/13/84

Attest

17. Daniels, Blake, Cottage

Entered in the  
National Register

Keeper Silvana Byers 4/13/84

Attest

18. Dean, Silas, House

Entered in the  
National Register

Keeper Silvana Byers 4/13/84

Attest

19. Dow Block

Entered in the  
National Register

Keeper Silvana Byers 4/13/84

Attest

20. Durgin, E. A., House

Entered in the  
National Register

Keeper Silvana Byers 4/13/84

Attest

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

Colonial Beacon Gas Station (Stoneham MRA)  
Middlesex County  
MASSACHUSETTS

Working No. FEB 28 1984  
Fed. Reg. Date: 3/5/85  
Date Due: 3-29-84 - 4-13-84  
Action:  ACCEPT 4-13-84  
 RETURN  
 REJECT  
Federal Agency: \_\_\_\_\_

Entered in the  
National Register

- 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

- excellent
- good
- fair
- deteriorated
- ruins
- unexposed

Check one

- unaltered
- altered

Check one

- original site
- moved date \_\_\_\_\_

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

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

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**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

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**9. Major Bibliographical References**

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**10. Geographical Data**

Acreage of nominated property \_\_\_\_\_  
Quadrangle name \_\_\_\_\_  
UTM References \_\_\_\_\_

Verbal boundary description and justification \_\_\_\_\_

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**11. Form Prepared By**

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**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 \_\_\_\_\_

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**13. Other**

- Maps
- Photographs
- Other

Questions concerning this nomination may be directed to \_\_\_\_\_

Signed \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_



Colonial Beacon Gas Station

Stonham MRT, MA

8130



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

Multiple Property Cover Sheet Reference Number: \_\_\_\_\_ 64000295