

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 29 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

Stamford Main Post Office

**2 LOCATION**

STREET & NUMBER

421 Atlantic Street

N/A NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

Stamford

N/A VICINITY OF

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

Fourth Congressional District

STATE

Connecticut

CODE  
0700

COUNTY

Fairfield

CODE

001

**3 CLASSIFICATION**

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE
<input type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE <input type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	<input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE	<input type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL <input type="checkbox"/> PARK
<input type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> BOTH	<input type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL <input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE RESIDENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> SITE	<b>PUBLIC ACQUISITION</b>	<b>ACCESSIBLE</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT <input type="checkbox"/> RELIGIOUS
<input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT	N/A IN PROCESS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES: RESTRICTED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT <input type="checkbox"/> SCIENTIFIC
	<input type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: UNRESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRIAL <input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
		<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY <input type="checkbox"/> 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.

City Offices

STREET & NUMBER

429 Atlantic Street

CITY, TOWN

Stamford

STATE

Connecticut 06904

**6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE

Stamford, Connecticut - Survey for National Registry of Historic Places

DATE

July 28, 1978

FEDERAL  STATE  COUNTY  LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR  
SURVEY RECORDS

Connecticut Historical Commission,

CITY, TOWN

Hartford

STATE

Connecticut

# 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

The Stamford Post Office is an individual structure occupying a corner lot fronting on a major commercial street on the edge of a district which has undergone much redevelopment in recent years, and is located midway between the commercial center of the City a few blocks to the North and the Connecticut Turnpike and major railroad lines a couple of blocks South. (The building can easily be seen while driving over the Turnpike). Several earlier office and commercial buildings, two to seven stories in height, remain on the same side of the street as the Post Office, but the area is changing to one of large scale contemporary developments such as the high rise office structure (Champion International Corporation) and Parking Garage Complex across the wide street.

Essentially rectangular in plan, of one monumental story height with a full basement level, the building is constructed with steel framing and masonry walls of light buff color with common bond coursing, set on a pink granite base and trimmed in off-white cast terra cotta ornament with bright colored accents. The main facades are generally broken up into bays, each containing a monumental arched bronze window outlined with colored ornamental terra cotta set in a masonry panel outlined by ornamental terra cotta quoins and topped by a continuous ornamental terra cotta entablature. A hipped red clay tile roof sits atop a dark brown bracketed wood projecting eave.

A pair of monumental granite steps and balustrades provide access from both approaches to the Post Office up to a landscaped terrace protected by two projecting wings of the structure. This entrance plaza features two symmetrically placed bronze and white glass lantern-type light fixtures of monumental scale as well as unusual and interesting plantings.

Entrance doors to the lobby are located in the three arched windows of the front facade (the center door has been blocked by a permanently installed plastic sign). The lobby runs the width of the terrace and is backed by the work room and flanked by office areas, and features a high vaulted plaster ceiling (said to have been originally decorated with colorful murals) and bronze vestibules and windows. The brown clay tile lobby floor is trimmed in pink and white marble. Inappropriate modernistic light fixture clusters hang from the ceiling.

A major addition was constructed in 1939, to the rear, doubling the size of the facility and providing additional work space. The rear structure is sympathetic in detailing and only slightly less elaborate in exterior ornamentation. At the same time, the lobby was altered with the addition of bronze vestibules, relocation of original lock boxes to a new box lobby extension, and addition of more service counters.

Later alterations extended offices into the left end of the lobby, dropped a ceiling in the main work room under original light monitors, added an elevator and office mezzanine in the work area, and extended a wood shed structure at the rear loading dock area.

# 8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input checked="" 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: 1915	BUILDER/ARCHITECT	Oscar Wenderoth, Supervising Architect and James A. Wetmore, Acting
	Constructed: 1916-1917		
STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE	Supervising Architect, U.S. Treasury Dept. Builder: Charles McCaul Company Philadelphia, PA Louis A. Simon, Supervising Architect U.S. Public Buildings Administration		
	Extension and Remodelling: 1939		

## Architecture

The Stamford Post Office is of Italian design and represents a style choice unusual for New England Post Offices. The heavy influence of Mediterranean architecture is evident in the deft use of color and ornament integrated into the building facades, and in the way the building embraces the raised entrance space creating the feeling of an outdoor atrium. With the restoration of the central door (by removal of the modern sign) the integrity of the building's original appearance would be the same as when it was constructed.

This unique building would appear to be one of the last Post Offices to be built as an individual design, reflecting the policies of James Knox Taylor (Supervising Architect of the Treasury through 1912) and Oscar Wenderoth (1913 to 1914). The year of its design, 1915, was a transition period to new policies initiated the following year by James Wetmore, Acting Supervising Architect, in which planning was standardized to produce similar designs in many communities, for reasons of economy in constructing government buildings.

## Community Planning

The monumental scale and strong symmetrical raised entrance court of the Stamford Post Office has enabled it to hold a strong position as an important city landmark both in the past with the older low rise commercial buildings, and in the present with the growing high rise towers spreading along Atlantic Street. This has been clearly recognized by the Architects for the new Champion International Corp building complex across the street. These high rise structures have been arranged to frame a large open plaza directly across and centered on the Post Office. As future high rise buildings move into the area, this space defined by the plaza, street, and Post Office will become more important as an urban space and reminder of the older scale and history of the City.

# 9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

History of Post Office Construction 1900-1940, July 1982

Craig, Lois, ed., The Federal Presence: Architecture, Politics, and Symbols in the United States Government Building, Cambridge, Massachusetts: The MIT Press, 1979

# 10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 1

UTM REFERENCES

A	1, 8	6 2, 2 7 4, 0	4, 5 4, 5 10, 0	B			
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING		ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
C				D			

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

North to South 140' along Atlantic Street  
 East to West 337' along Federal Street  
 South to North 140' along rear lot line  
 West to East 337' 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

Sylvan Limon, Architect

ORGANIZATION

SULLIVAN DESIGN GROUP, INC.

DATE

July 15, 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

*[Signature]*  
 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 \_\_\_ National \_\_\_ State  Local.

FEDERAL REPRESENTATIVE SIGNATURE

TITLE

*[Signature]* Director, Office of Real Estate

DATE

October 24, 1985

FOR NPS USE ONLY

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

*[Signature]*  
 DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

DATE

12/12/85

ATTEST: *[Signature]*  
 KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE

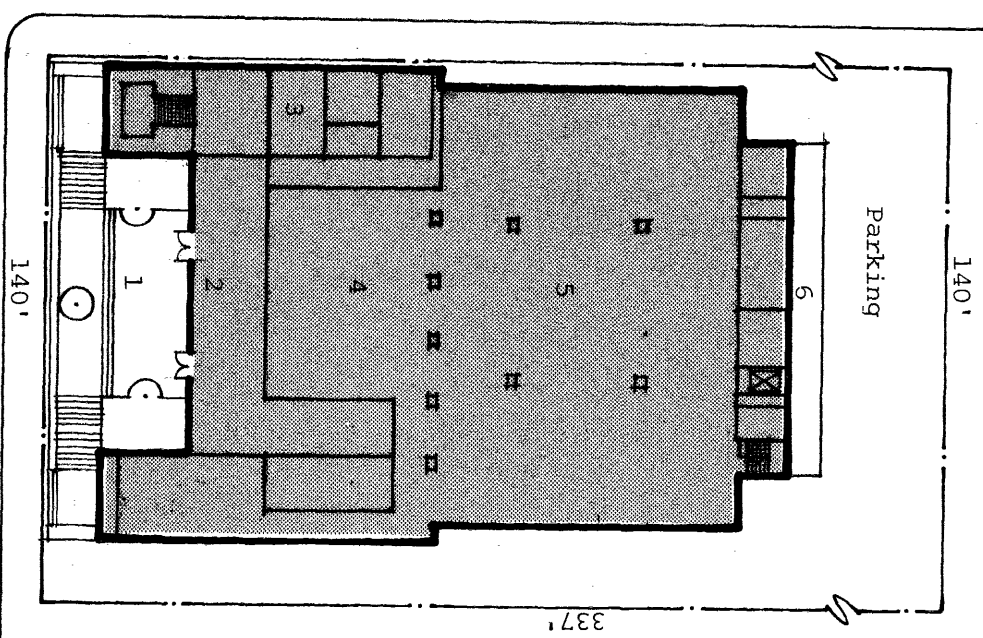
12/11/85

1. terrace
2. public lobby
3. postmaster
4. work room
5. work room
6. mailing platform

older  
commercial  
building

older  
office  
building

Federal Street



Atlantic Street

parking garage

plaza

commercial building

high rise office building