

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED

JUN 26 1979

DATE ENTERED

AUG 21 1979

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORMSEE INSTRUCTIONS IN *HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS*
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS**1 NAME**

HISTORIC

The Bedford Building

AND/OR COMMON

Same

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER 89-103 Bedford Street

CITY, TOWN

Boston

VICINITY OF

9th

STATE

Massachusetts

CODE
025COUNTY
SuffolkCODE
025**3 CLASSIFICATION**

CATEGORY

OWNERSHIP

STATUS

PRESENT USE

☐ DISTRICT☐ PUBLIC☒ OCCUPIED☐ AGRICULTURE☐ MUSEUM☒ BUILDING(S)☒ PRIVATE☐ UNOCCUPIED☒ COMMERCIAL☐ PARK☐ STRUCTURE☐ BOTH☐ WORK IN PROGRESS☐ EDUCATIONAL☐ PRIVATE RESIDENCE☐ SITE**PUBLIC ACQUISITION****ACCESSIBLE**☐ ENTERTAINMENT☐ RELIGIOUS☐ OBJECT☐ IN PROCESS☐ YES: RESTRICTED☐ GOVERNMENT☐ SCIENTIFIC☐ BEING CONSIDERED☐ YES: UNRESTRICTED☐ INDUSTRIAL☐ TRANSPORTATION☒ NO☐ MILITARY☐ OTHER:**4 OWNER OF PROPERTY**

NAME

Bay-Bedford Company

STREET & NUMBER

184 High Street

CITY, TOWN

Boston

VICINITY OF

STATE

Massachusetts

02110

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTIONCOURTHOUSE,
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.Registry of Deeds
Suffolk County Courthouse

STREET & NUMBER

Pemberton Square

CITY, TOWN

Boston

STATE

Massachusetts

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE Inventory of the Historic Assets of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts

DATE

October 1978

☐ FEDERAL ☒ STATE ☐ COUNTY ☐ LOCALDEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS

Massachusetts Historical Commission

CITY, TOWN

Boston

STATE

Massachusetts

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

The Bedford Building is located at the intersection of Boston's financial and shopping districts and transportation centers at Church Green and Dewey Square (also the location of South Station Headhouse NR-1975). The area surrounding the building is characterized by a mixture of late 19th c., post-fire five-story commercial buildings and modern high-rise buildings.

Erected in 1874, the Bedford Building is a four-story plus mansard masonry structure. The building is trapazoidal in plan and appears freestanding; in fact, its rear elevation is attached to a later 20th c. parking structure. The two major dressed facades, bordering on Bedford and Lincoln Streets, meet at a beveled corner fronting on Church Green. Originally, this corner provided the major entrance to the building.

Built in the Ruskinian Gothic style, the building is distinguished from its contemporary temporary structures in the vicinity by the use of polychromatic materials and gothic detailing. Granite, marble, and brick are utilized in various combinations with degrees of ornamentation to create the unified yet distinct facades. Originally, the building was constructed with rough-hewn rusticated red granite ground floor bearing walls fitted with large storefront windows. Many ground floor elements remain. The upper walls are faced with polished white Vermont marble ornamented with bands of red polished granite, terracotta panels, and red pressed brick.

Of the two dressed facades, the Bedford Street facade is by far the most elaborate. It is twelve bays wide; two triple bay corner pavilions project slightly from the main plane of the facade and are emphasized at the roof level by peaked gable dormers fitted with pointed arch window openings. Between the pavilions, the fenestration pattern is symmetrical and consists of two triple window bays, each flanked by single bays. On the third story of the Bedford Street facade, polychrome voussoirs of the segmental arches, which bind the triple bays, provide a strong counterpoint to the series of horizontal band courses. The ground floor has been completely altered with modern storefronts.

Although altered, the beveled corner provides transition from the Bedford Street to the Lincoln Street facade and still projects the dramatic qualities of the original entrance tower. Pairs of windows, separated by an engaged columnette, occupied each floor of the beveled corner which ended with elaborate clock face in the mansard level topped originally by a peaked roof. This treatment remains at the third and fourth floors.

Around the corner on Lincoln Street, the sense of symmetry vanishes. The nine bay wide facade is organized in three unequal units separated by two projecting chimnies. Hip-roofed dormers protrude from the mansard roof, and along with the tall ornamental chimney stacks retain the lively roof silhouette despite the disappearance of the entrance tower roof.

Like the Bedford Street facade, the Lincoln Street facade is faced with white marble and red granite banding. The original rusticated red granite ground level is intact. Granite piers flank large display windows, which are largely unaltered, and the rear entrance formed by a gothic arch set into the rusticated granite remain as originally constructed.

Most of the Columbia Street elevation, also nine bays, is brick faced with granite banding and trim. The two bays at the Bedford Street corner continue the dressed marble of the major facades. Columbia Street provides the two service entrances. At both entrances, the granite Gothic arch treatment found on Lincoln Street is duplicated. A third modern service door leads to the rear shipping rooms. The fenestration pattern of the upper floors essentially repeats that of the Lincoln Street facade.

8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW

☐ PREHISTORIC	☐ ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	☐ COMMUNITY PLANNING	☐ LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	☐ RELIGION
☐ 1400-1499	☐ ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	☐ CONSERVATION	☐ LAW	☐ SCIENCE
☐ 1500-1599	☐ AGRICULTURE	☐ ECONOMICS	☐ LITERATURE	☐ SCULPTURE
☐ 1600-1699	☒ ARCHITECTURE	☐ EDUCATION	☐ MILITARY	☐ SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
☐ 1700-1799	☐ ART	☐ ENGINEERING	☐ MUSIC	☐ THEATER
☒ 1800-1899	☒ COMMERCE	☐ EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	☐ PHILOSOPHY	☐ TRANSPORTATION
☐ 1900-	☐ COMMUNICATIONS	☐ INDUSTRY	☐ POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	☐ OTHER (SPECIFY)
		☐ INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES

1874

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

Charles Amos Cummings

Willard T. Sears

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Bedford Building retains integrity of location, design, setting, materials and workmanship and is significant as an outstanding example of post-fire commercial architecture in Boston. Built in 1874, it is the best example of the remaining five or six Ruskinian Gothic style commercial buildings in Boston's central business district. It successfully adapts elements of neo-gothic style to available materials and post-fire technological innovations in order to meet the requirements of the growing commercial economy of the late 1800's. Red granite from St. George, New Brunswick, utilized for the first time in downtown Boston, white Vermont marble, and red Philadelphia brick were combined in polychromatic tradition.

In addition to its significance as a lasting representation of Ruskinian Gothic architecture, the Bedford Building is unique in its articulation of three distinct facades. Each facade utilizes different combinations of materials and varying degrees of ornamentation to articulate both form and structure while simultaneously maintaining a conceptual unity throughout.

The Bedford Building was designed by the firm of Cummings & Sears for Messrs. Henry and Francis L. Lee, members of a wealthy and prominent Boston merchant family. Charles A. Cummings (1833-1906) and Willard T. Sears (1837-1920) were partners from 1870-1889. They were well known for numerous public and residential commissions in Boston and its surrounding cities. The firm is best known for the design of Old South Church of 1876 in Copley Square (NHL) and the Cyclorama Building, built in 1884, in the South End (NR). They completed relatively few downtown Boston commercial buildings, and several of these were in the Ruskinian Gothic style. The majority of the firm's commercial structures have been destroyed. The Bedford Building survives as their only remaining Ruskinian Gothic commercial design in Boston.

Across Lincoln Street opposite the Bedford Building is the site of the start of the Great Fire of 1872, which entirely destroyed the center of Boston's commercial district. Seven hundred seventy-six (776) buildings in a 65 acre area were destroyed. Until the 1850's, the Church Green area was a desirable residential district centering on the New South Church designed by Charles Bulfinch in 1814. The growth of the new and increasingly prestigious Back Bay residential area and the increasing demand for commercial building space resulted in the change in land use patterns. The area destroyed in the Great Fire was rebuilt in a massive reconstruction effort from 1873-1874. The Bedford Building and other monumental commercial structures along Summer, Devonshire, Franklin, and Otis Streets became known as the "new palaces of Boston merchants." The area primarily housed the city's dry goods and publishing industries. While the new buildings repeated the size, height and massing of their predecessors, they displayed a variety of later 19th c. architectural styles-Renaissance Revival, Neo-Grec, Panel Brick, and Ruskinian Gothic. This variety represents a significant departure from the homogeneity of the pre-fire granite and cast iron Italianate styled structures, which they replaced.

As a result of the 1872 fire, the City of Boston instituted a Building Department and adopted numerous requirements intended to insure fire-resistant construction methods and

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

1. American Institute of Architects Journal, Vol. VIII, No.8, Aug. 1920, p.311.
2. American Architect and Building News, Vol. I, July 8, 1976, p.220.
3. "Bedford Building", student paper prepared for Prof. E. Seklar, Harvard University, 1974.
4. Harrell, Pauline Chase; Smith, Margaret, Victorian Boston Today, Boston: New England Chapter of Victorian Society, 1975, p.4-5.
5. Withey, Henry F. & Elsie Rayburn, Biographical Dictionary of American Architects (Deceased)

Los Angeles; New Age, 1956.

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY .4 - 15,971 sq.ft.

UTM REFERENCES

A | 1 9 | | 3 3 0 4 3 0 | | 4 6 9 0 8 0 0 |
ZONE EASTING NORTHING
C | | | | | | | | | | | | |

B | | | | | | | | | | | | |
ZONE EASTING NORTHING
D | | | | | | | | | | | | |

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

Beginning at the northwest corner of the property running easterly along the property line along Bedford St. to the corner of Lincoln St., thence turning and running southerly along the property line along Lincoln St., thence turning and running westerly along the rear lot line and party wall of the Bedford Building, thence turning and running northerly along the property line along Columbia St. until the beginning point.

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

By Bay-Bedford Company and
Boston Landmarks Commission

Candace Jenkins, National Register Coordinator

February 1979

ORGANIZATION

DATE

Massachusetts Historical Commission

(617) 727-8470

STREET & NUMBER

TELEPHONE

294 Washington Street

CITY OR TOWN

STATE

Boston

Massachusetts 02108

12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL ☐

STATE ☐

LOCAL ☒

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

Potter R. Weir

6/11/79

TITLE

DATE

Executive Director, Massachusetts Historical Commission

FOR NPS USE ONLY

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

Carol Stull

DATE

8-21-79

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

ATTEST: *Bruce McOrge*

DATE

8/20/79

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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

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DATE ENTERED

AUG 21 1979

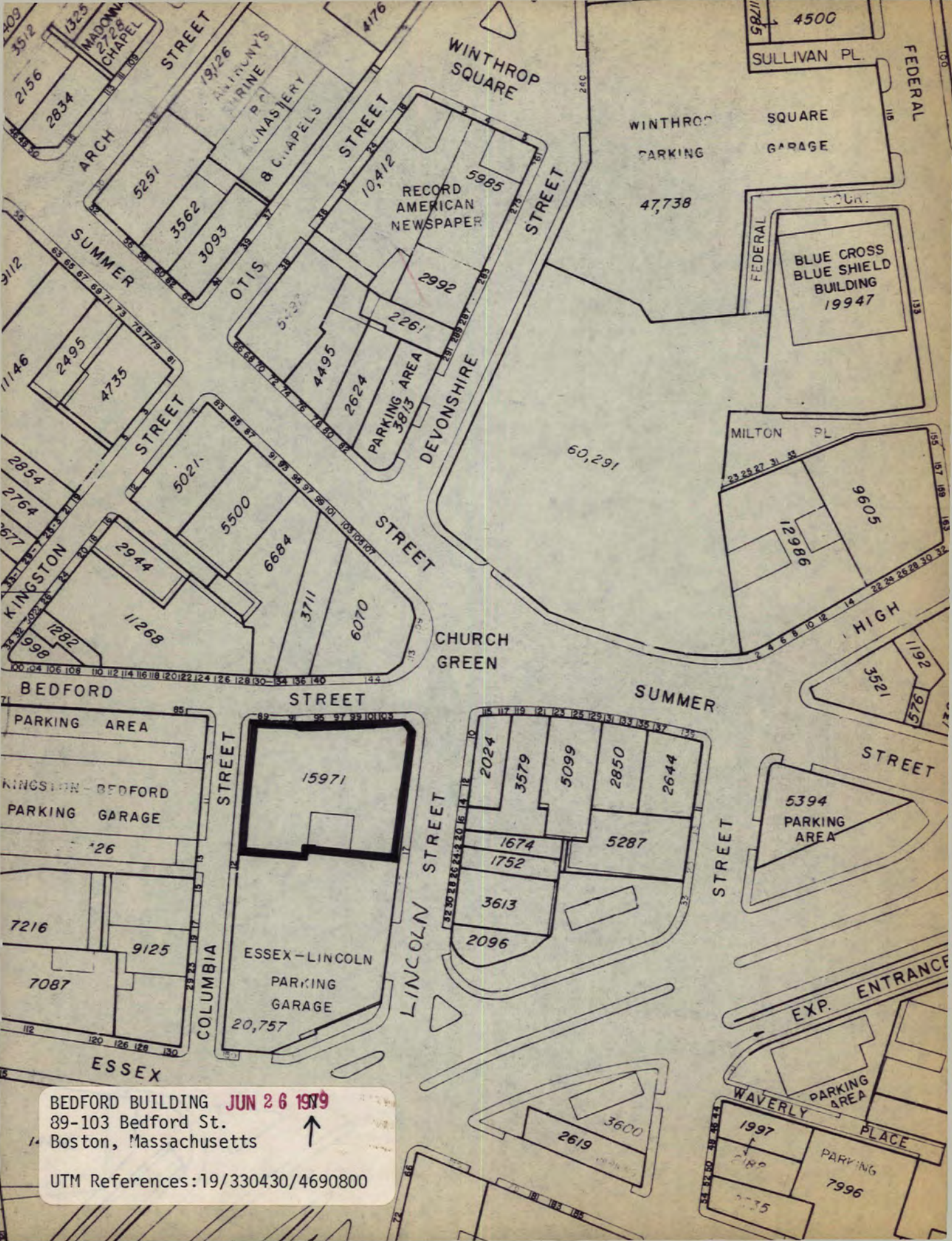
CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 8

PAGE 1

to prevent a repeat of the holocaust. Such structural innovations were included in the Bedford Building and are significant. Instead of undivided floor spaces leased to tenants, the building (and others like it) was divided vertically into four interior spaces by full height brick party walls. Each building housed light manufacturing and storage on the upper floors and commercial and display spaces on the ground and second floors. The resulting units, besides providing fire protection, were flexible enough to suit the needs of changing tenants.

The Bedford Building is undergoing renovation and is in the process of certification of rehabilitation for purposes of the Tax Reform Act of 1976, as amended. The building is part of a larger area, informally known as the Commerical Palace district, which appears to meet the eligibility criteria of the National Register. Because of the complexity of a downtown commercial district nomination and in order for the rehabilitation to proceed in a timely manner, the nomination of the Bedford Building is occurring first and separately. Individually, the building meets the eligibility criteria. Nomination of the rest of the Commerical Palace district will be undertaken at a future date.



BEDFORD BUILDING JUN 26 1979
39-103 Bedford St.
Boston, Massachusetts

UTM References: 19/330430/4690800

Property

The Bedford Building

State

Mass. (Suffolk)

Working Number

6.26.79.1545

TECHNICAL

Photos 1

Maps 1

CONTROL

OK 6.26.79

HISTORIAN

ARCHITECTURAL HISTORIAN

ACCEPT
MCDUGAN
8/20/79

THE BEDFORD BUILDING IS SIGNIFICANT AS THE BEST SURVIVING EXAMPLE OF A COMMERCIAL BUILDING BUILT IN THE RUSKINIAN GOTHIC STYLE IN BOSTON AND IS ALSO NOTABLE FOR ITS POLYCHROMED APPEARANCE ACHIEVED THROUGH THE USE OF DIFFERING FACADE MATERIALS. IN ADDITION IT IS AN EXAMPLE

OF POST 1872 FIRE CONSTRUCTION UTILIZING TECHNOLOGICAL INNOVATIONS. IT WILL EVENTUALLY BE PART OF A DISTRICT BUT IS INDIVIDUALLY ELIGIBLE AS WELL.

ARCHAEOLOGIST

OTHER

HAER

Inventory _____

Review _____

REVIEW UNIT CHIEF

ACCEPT
MCDUGAN
8/20/79

BRANCH CHIEF

KEEPER

National Register Write-up _____

Send-back _____

Entered AUG 21 1979

Federal Register Entry OCT 2 1979

Re-submit _____



Bedford Building
Boston, Mass., *Suffolk County, Massachusetts*
Bay Development Corp. 1978
184 High St., Boston

Photo #1⁴²
View looking southwesterly at Bedford
and Lincoln St. elevations

JUN 26 1979

DOE
AUG 21 1979

THE BEDFORD BUILDING
BEDFORD AND LINCOLN ST



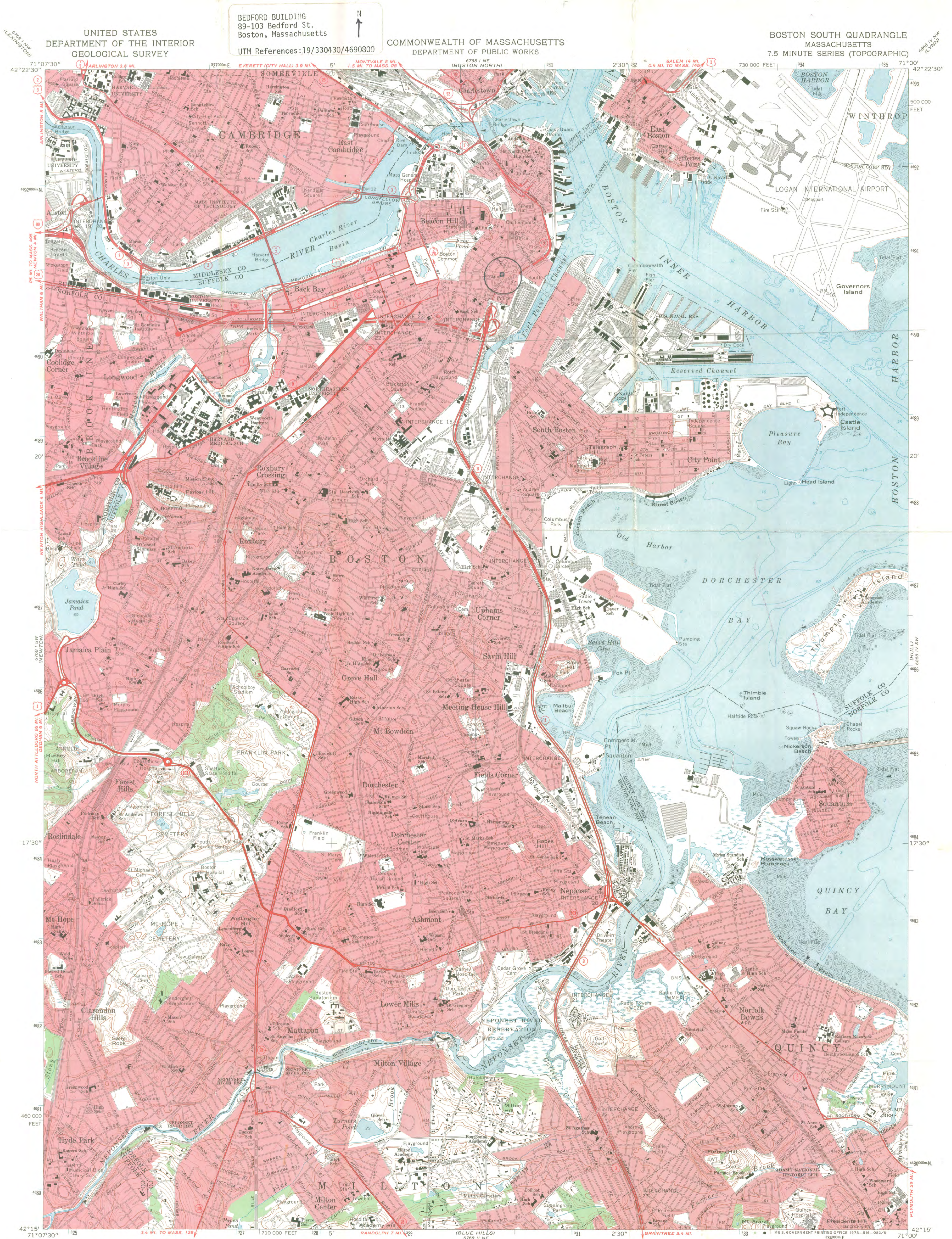
Bedford Building
Boston, Mass., *Suffolk County, Massachusetts*
Bay Development Corp. 1978
184 High St., Boston

Photo #2 *42*

View looking southeasterly at Bedford *and Columbia*
and Columbia St. elevations

JUN 26 1979

noe
AUG 21 1979



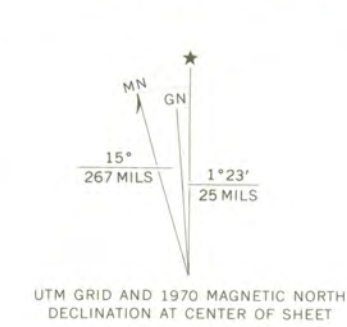
UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
GEOLOGICAL SURVEY

Control by USGS, USC&GS, and Massachusetts Geodetic Survey
Topography by planimetric surveys 1943. Revised from
aerial photographs taken 1969. Field checked 1970
Selected hydrographic data compiled from USC&GS Charts 246
and 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
1,000-meter Universal Transverse Mercator grid ticks,
zone 19, shown in blue

Boundaries in tidalwater areas from information supplied
by Massachusetts Department of Public Works

Red tint indicates areas in which only landmark buildings are shown



SCALE 1:24,000

CONTOUR INTERVAL 10 FEET
DATUM IS MEAN SEA LEVEL

DEPTH CURVES AND SOUNDINGS IN FEET—DATUM IS MEAN LOW WATER
SHORELINE SHOWN REPRESENTS THE APPROXIMATE LINE OF MEAN HIGH WATER
THE MEAN RANGE OF TIDE IS APPROXIMATELY 9.5 FEET



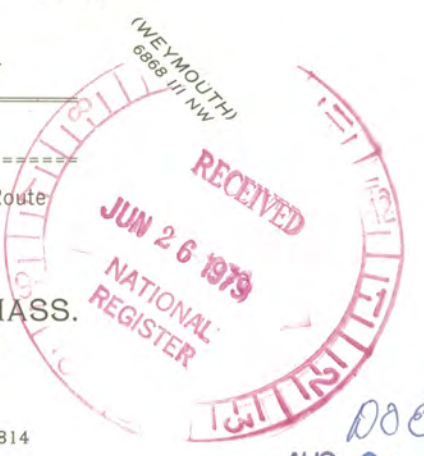
ROAD CLASSIFICATION

Primary highway,
hard surface —————
Secondary highway,
hard surface —————
Unimproved road —————

Interstate Route ——— U. S. Route ——— State Route ———

BOSTON SOUTH, MASS.
N4215—W7100/7.5

1970
AMS 6768 I SE—SERIES V814



AUG 21 1979



**MASSACHUSETTS
HISTORICAL
COMMISSION**

**COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS
Office of the Secretary of State**

294 Washington Street
Boston, Massachusetts
02108
617-727-8470

MICHAEL JOSEPH CONNOLLY
Secretary of State

June 15, 1979



Mr. Ronald Greenberg, Acting Chief
Registration Branch
National Register
OAHP, Heritage Conservation and
Recreation Service
440 G Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20243

Dear Mr. Greenberg:

Enclosed you will find the following nomination forms:

- Boston - Bedford Building
- Lynn - Masonic Hall
- Lynn - Public Library

All have been voted eligible by the State Review Board and have been signed by the State Historic Preservation Officer.

Sincerely,

Christine Boulding
Survey Director
Massachusetts Historical Commission

ENTRIES IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

STATE MASSACHUSETTS

Date Entered AUG 21 1979

Name

Location

Bedford Building

Boston
Suffolk County

Lynn Masonic Hall

Lynn
Essex County

Lynn Public Library

Lynn
Essex County

Also Notified

Honorable Paul G. Tsongas

Honorable Edward M. Kennedy
Honorable John J. Moakley
Honorable Nicholas Mavroules

State Historic Preservation Officer
Mrs. Patricia L. Weslowski
Executive Director
Massachusetts Historical Commission
294 Washington Street
Boston, Massachusetts 02108

NR Byers/bjr 8/22/79