

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

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

STATE: Massachusetts	
COUNTY: Essex	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE
	APR 3 1973

1. NAME			
COMMON: Mechanics Block Historic District			
AND/OR HISTORIC: Mechanics Block			
2. LOCATION 5th Cong. District, F. Bradford Morse			
STREET AND NUMBER: #107-139 Garden Street, #6-38 Orchard Street			
CITY OR TOWN: Lawrence			
STATE Massachusetts	CODE 025	COUNTY: Essex	CODE 009



3. CLASSIFICATION			
CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
☒ District ☐ Building ☐ Site ☐ Structure ☐ Object	☐ Public ☒ Private ☐ Both	☒ Occupied ☐ Unoccupied ☐ Preservation work in progress	Yes: ☐ Restricted ☐ Unrestricted ☒ No
PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)			
☐ Agricultural ☐ Commercial ☐ Educational ☐ Entertainment	☐ Government ☐ Industrial ☐ Military ☐ Museum	☐ Park ☒ Private Residence ☐ Religious ☐ Scientific	☐ Transportation ☐ Other (Specify) ☐ Comments

4. OWNER OF PROPERTY			
OWNER'S NAME: Lawrence General Hospital and private owners			
STREET AND NUMBER: Garden and Orchard Streets			
CITY OR TOWN: Lawrence	STATE: Massachusetts	CODE 025	

5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION			
COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.: Essex County Registry of Deeds			
STREET AND NUMBER: 381 Common Law Ave.			
CITY OR TOWN: Lawrence	STATE: Massachusetts	CODE 025	

6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS			
TITLE OF SURVEY: Inventory of Historic Assets of the Commonwealth			
DATE OF SURVEY: ☐ Federal ☒ State ☐ County ☐ Local			
DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS: Massachusetts Historical Commission			
STREET AND NUMBER: State House, Beacon Street			
CITY OR TOWN: Boston	STATE: Massachusetts	CODE 025	

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

STATE: Massachusetts
COUNTY: Essex
ENTRY NUMBER: APR 3 1973
DATE: FOR NPS USE ONLY

7. DESCRIPTION

(Check One)

CONDITION

☐ Excellent ☒ Good ☒ Fair ☐ Deteriorated ☐ Ruins ☐ Unexposed

(Check One)

(Check One)

☒ Altered☐ Unaltered☐ Moved☒ Original Site

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (If known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Mechanics Block, 34 two-story brick rowhouses, faces Orchard Street on the north and Garden Street on the south, in Lawrence, Mass. Each house is three bays wide and has a small fenced-in garden area in front; 14' wide backyards now contain two-story wooden ells. An alley, running from east to west in the center of the block, divides these properties. Second and third alleys, at right angles to the center one, run north to Orchard Street and south to Garden Street on both the east and west boundaries of the Historic District, separating it from the rowhouses on Union and Newbury Streets.

Each unit of two rowhouses steps down about one foot because of the gradual slope of the streets. End chimneys are placed at the roof junctures of these double units, with a gabled dormer in the forward slope of each individual roof. The entranceways, paired alternately in the left or right bays, have sidelights and glass transoms. Granite lintels are above the doorways as well as above the first and second floor sash windows.

The few minor modifications of the past 125 years do not alter the architectural unity of the brick rowhouses. Sometime in the late 19th century, bracketed Italianate wooden hoods were mounted above the Garden Street doorways. At approximately the same time plain bracketed hoods were added to the Orchard Street homes. Other than the hoods, only two houses with enlarged dormers, one with two-story brick bays and four with an additional story alter the original design of the 34 dwellings.



SEE INSTRUCTIONS

8. SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- ☐ Pre-Columbian ☐ 16th Century ☐ 18th Century ☒ 20th Century
☐ 15th Century ☐ 17th Century ☒ 19th Century

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known) C. 1847

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- | | | | |
|--|--|---|--|
| ☐ Aboriginal | ☐ Education | ☐ Political | ☐ Urban Planning |
| ☐ Prehistoric | ☐ Engineering | ☐ Religion/Philosophy | ☐ Other (Specify) |
| ☐ Historic | ☒ Industry | ☐ Science | |
| ☐ Agriculture | ☐ Invention | ☐ Sculpture | |
| ☒ Architecture | ☐ Landscape | ☒ Social/Humanitarian | |
| ☐ Art | ☐ Architecture | ☐ Theater | |
| ☒ Commerce | ☐ Literature | ☐ Transportation | |
| ☐ Communications | ☐ Military | | |
| ☐ Conservation | ☐ Music | | |

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Mechanics Block, comprised originally of 50 two-story rowhouses, exemplifies the history of Lawrence's working people. From the founding of industrial Lawrence by the Essex Company in 1847, these single family dwellings accommodated the artisans and laborers, both natives and immigrants, who worked in Lawrence's textile mills.

These substantially unaltered rowhouses are excellent examples of New England factory dwellings. The proposed Historic District includes 34 units facing Orchard Street and Garden Street. The Mechanics Block, plus other boarding houses, three mills, a 35' dam across the Merrimack River, and a canal, were built by the Essex Company in the late 1840's. In 1853 the Essex Company sold the Mechanics Block to its affiliate, the Lawrence Machine Company. In keeping with Essex Company paternalism, the deed required that the rowhouses be used exclusively for the skilled craftsmen employed at the Lawrence Machine Company. It also prohibited any sale of the Mechanics Block independent of the entire plant and stipulated that, if not properly maintained, the property would revert to Essex Company care. This not only entailed responsibility for public health but also required that no one use the buildings for private commercial purposes.

The Machine Company reserved the rowhouses for the aristocrats of its labor force. These predominately English, Scottish and native American overseers, carpenters, mechanics and boilermakers worked on the locomotives, steam engines and McKay sewing machines produced in the Machine Company's nearby factory. Each of the 34 dwellings rented for \$80 annually.

The 1857 depression, labor shortages and outstanding bills bankrupted the Lawrence Machine Company. By 1859 the Everett Mills had purchased the company. Like its predecessor, the Everett Mills reserved the Mechanics Block for its highly skilled craftsmen. As the new city grew into a major textile center, native American, English, Scots and a few Irish workers occupied the Block.

By 1875 the Everett Mills and the Washington Mills owned most of the block. In keeping with tradition, the houses were used for skilled craftsmen. Since many of these people were Irish-Americans, ethnic solidarity encouraged them to stay in the Mechanics Block, rather than move to newer homes in other parts of Lawrence. During the 1890's the Block housed the Irish, British and French workers, who comprised Lawrence's middle and lower middle class. Although the Everett Mills owned ten of the houses along Orchard Street until the 1930's, all the Washington Mills' buildings were privately owned by 1896.

As Lawrence entered the 20th century, Irish-Americans dominated the Mechanics Block. Service rather than managerial personnel became the largest

(continued)

SEE INSTRUCTIONS



9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Essex Company State of Affairs and Committee Reports, Lawrence, 1847
History of the Labor Movement in the United States, Philip Foner, N.Y., 1965
Immigrant City, Donald B. Cole, Chapel Hill, 1921
The Essex Company on the Merrimack, Morton F. Smith, New York, 1947
We Shall be All, Melvyn Dubofsky, Chicago, 1970

10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY				OR	LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES			
CORNER	LATITUDE				LONGITUDE			
	Degrees	Minutes	Seconds		Degrees	Minutes	Seconds	
NW	0		"	0		"		
NE	0		"	0		"		
SE	0		"	0		"		
SW	0		"	0		"		

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: less than 1 acre

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE

11. FORM PREPARED BY

NAME AND TITLE: Mrs. Elizabeth R. Amadon, Regional Director	
ORGANIZATION: Massachusetts Historical Commission	DATE: 9/7/72
STREET AND NUMBER: State House, Beacon St.	
CITY OR TOWN: Boston	STATE: Massachusetts CODE: 025

12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION

As the designated State Liaison 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. The recommended level of significance of this nomination is:

National ☐ State ☐ Local ☒

Name: John F.X. Davoren
JOHN F.X. DAVOREN
Secretary of the Commonwealth
Title: Chairman of the Massachusetts Historical Commission
Date: 10/17/72

NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register.

Robert M. Utley
Chief, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

Date: 4/3/73

ATTEST: Wm. H. Hunt
Keeper of The National Register

Date: 3-26-73

UTM W 11 9-11 3
ZONE 19
E 323540
N 4730590

Lat/Long
reversed
WIC 5/24/74

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

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

(Continuation Sheet)

STATE Massachusetts	
COUNTY Essex	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE APR 3 1973

(Number all entries)

MECHANICS BLOCK, LAWRENCE (cont.)

8. Significance

occupational group. By 1917, the neighborhood was well on the way to becoming the Italian-American community it is today. Occupationally, increasingly large numbers of manual laborers lived in the Mechanics Block. When urban renewal reaches the area, the Mechanics Block will retain its 19th century function, the living place for Lawrence's workers, with the rowhouses an integral part of a community of rehabilitated and newly constructed units.



PROPERTY Mechanics Block Hist. Dist STATE Mass
Working number 10, 24.72, 1590

TECH REVIEW
5-3/-
73
Photos 1
Maps 1

Essex

REVIEW

HISTORIAN
seems OK - locally sign.

Accept - AMK
3/7/73

ARCHEOLOGIST

Accept - [signature]
3-14-73

ARCHITECT

accept
call
3-14-73

BRANCH CHIEF

OK Rg 3
3/22/73

EDITORIAL REVIEW

KEEPER

[signature]
3/26/73

National Register write-up _____
Federal Register entry 6-5-73
Acknowledge 10/26/72
Send-back _____
Re-submit _____
Register no. APR 3 1973



Mechanics Block Historic District, Lawrence, Mass.

NPS Number 4/3/73

Title: Mechanics Block Hist. Dist.

Loc.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES

PROPERTY PHOTOGRAPH FORM

(Type all entries - attach to or enclose with photograph)

STATE Massachusetts	
COUNTY Essex	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE
APR 9	

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

1. NAME

COMMON: Mechanics Block Historic District
AND/OR HISTORIC: Mechanics Block

2. LOCATION

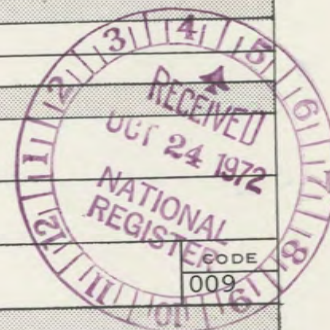
STREET AND NUMBER:
#107 - 139 Garden Street, #6 - 38 Orchard Street
CITY OR TOWN:
Lawrence
STATE: Massachusetts
CODE 025
COUNTY: Essex

3. PHOTO REFERENCE

PHOTO CREDIT: Mass. Historical Commission
DATE OF PHOTO: 1970
NEGATIVE FILED AT: Mass. Historical Commission

4. IDENTIFICATION

DESCRIBE VIEW, DIRECTION, ETC.
North side, fronting on Orchard Street, looking south



125

PROPERTY OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

LAWRENCE QUADRANGLE
MASSACHUSETTS-NEW HAMPSHIRE
7.5 MINUTE SERIES (TOPOGRAPHIC)

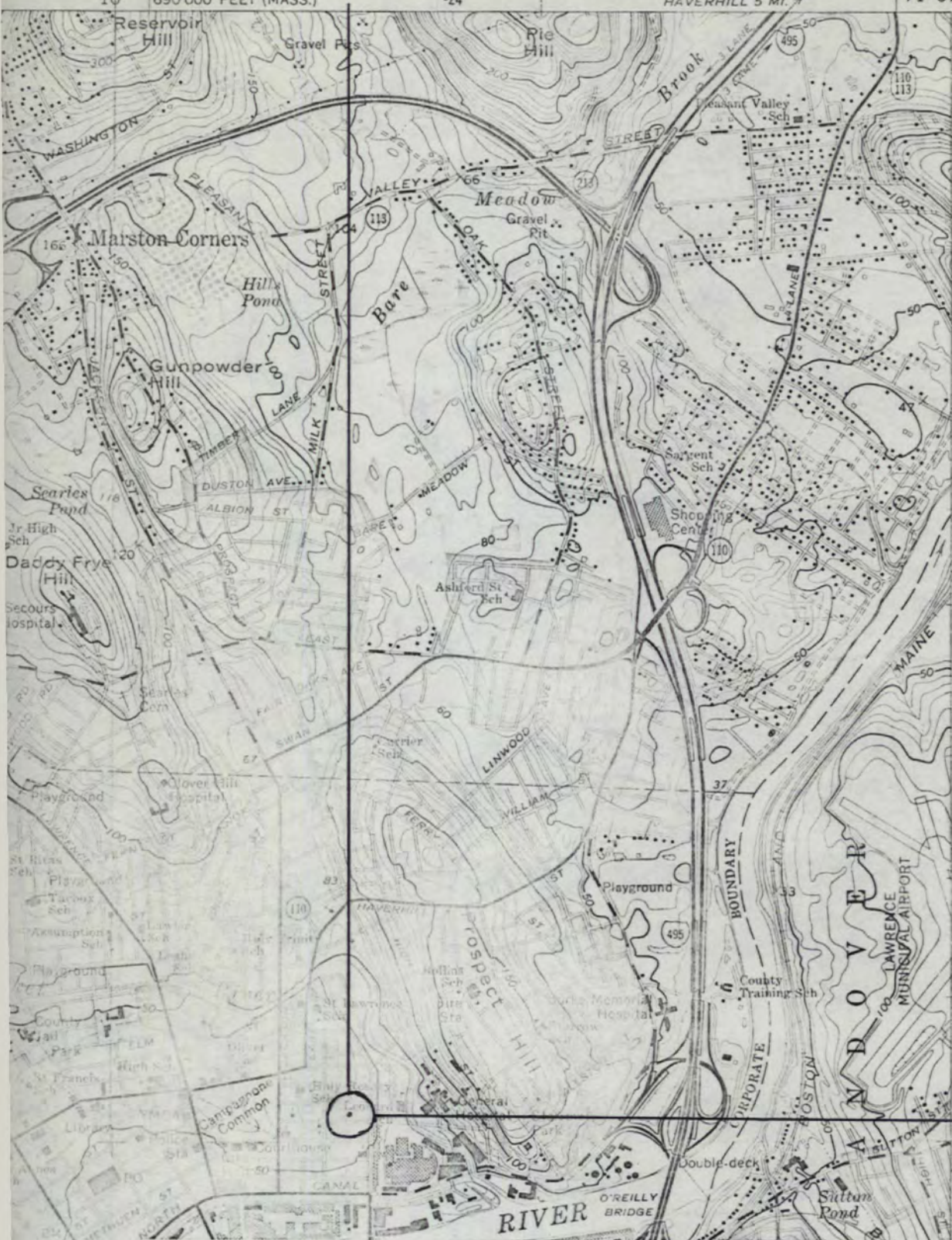
6769 I SE
(HAVERHILL)

10' 690 000 FEET (MASS.)

324

HAVERHILL 5 MI.

71°07'30"
42°45'



630 000 FEET
(MASS.)

Mechanics Block Historic District

LAWRENCE, MASS - N.H.

N4237.5 - W7107.5/7.5

1966

AMS 6769 II NW - Series V814

42 42' 34"

71 09' 17"

(SOUTH GROVELAND)
6769 II NE
ERHILL (VIA MASS. 125) 8 MI.

Form 10-301
(Dec. 1968)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES

PROPERTY MAP FORM

(Type all entries - attach to or enclose with map)

STATE
Massachusetts

COUNTY
Essex

FOR NPS USE ONLY

ENTRY NUMBER

DATE

APR 3 1973

1. NAME

COMMON: Mechanics Block Historic District
AND/OR HISTORIC: Mechanics Block

2. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER:

#107-139 Garden Street, #6-38 Orchard Street

CITY OR TOWN:

Lawrence

STATE:

Massachusetts

CODE

025

COUNTY:

Essex

CODE

009

3. MAP REFERENCE

SOURCE:

Supplementary material - street map of Historic District

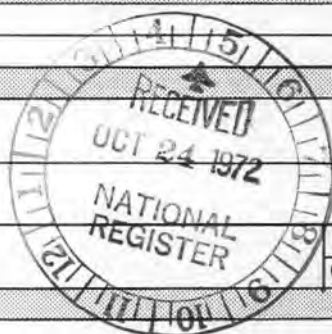
SCALE:

DATE: 1972

4. REQUIREMENTS

TO BE INCLUDED ON ALL MAPS

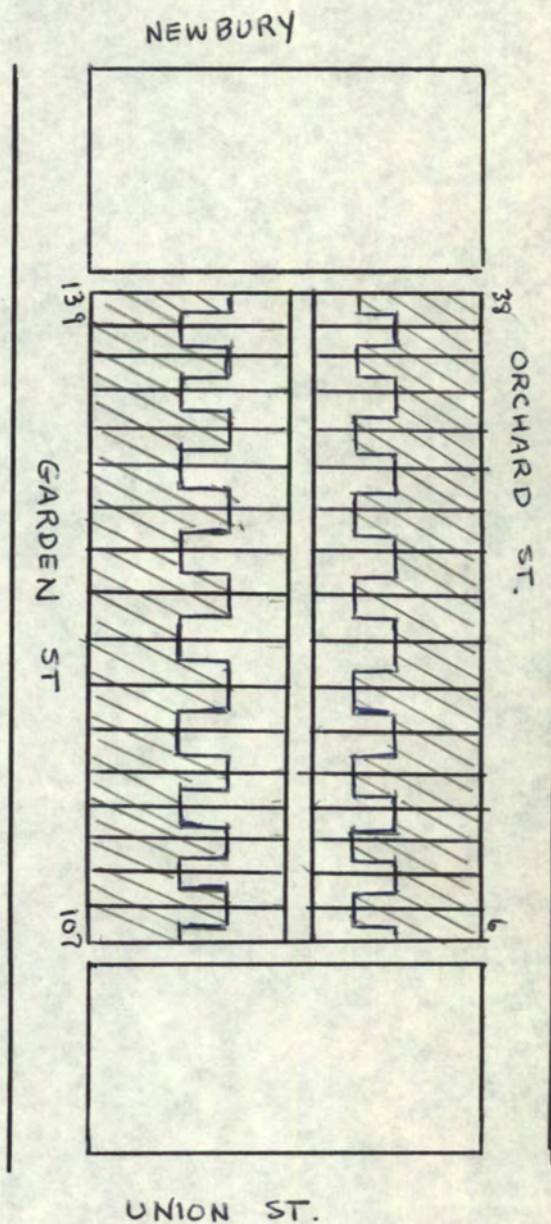
1. Property boundaries where required.
2. North arrow.
3. Latitude and longitude reference.



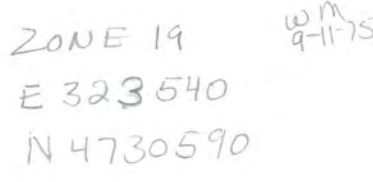
MECHANICS BLOCK HISTORIC DISTRICT

#107 - #139 Garden Street

#6 - #38 Orchard Street



N →



AMS 6760 II NW SERIES V914

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

Form 10-301
(Dec. 1968)UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES

PROPERTY MAP FORM

*(Type all entries - attach to or enclose with map)*STATE
MassachusettsCOUNTY
Essex

FOR NPS USE ONLY

ENTRY NUMBER 15 DATE

1. NAME

COMMON: Mechanics Block Historic District
AND/OR HISTORIC: Mechanics Block

2. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER:
#107-139 Garden Street, #6-38 Orchard StreetCITY OR TOWN:
LawrenceSTATE:
MassachusettsCODE
025

COUNTY:

3. MAP REFERENCE

SOURCE:
USGS Series V814, Lawrence Quadrangle

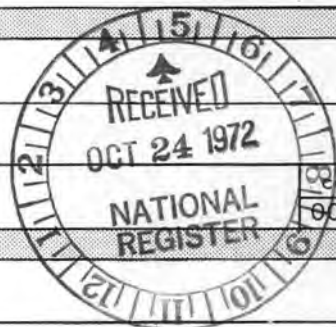
SCALE: 1: 24,000

DATE: 1966

4. REQUIREMENTS

TO BE INCLUDED ON ALL MAPS

1. Property boundaries where required.
2. North arrow.
3. Latitude and longitude reference.

CODE
609



The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

Office of the Secretary

Massachusetts Historical Commission

John F. X. Davoren

Secretary of the Commonwealth

3 Joy Street
40 Beacon Street

Boston, Mass. 02108

October 18, 1972

Registration and Nominations Branch
National Register of Historic Places
Room 3207 - A
1100 L Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20005



CERTIFIED MAIL

Attention: Mrs. Sally Marusin

Dear Mrs. Marusin:

Enclosed are National Register submissions for:

1. Essex County, Lawrence, Mechanics Block Historic District
2. Franklin County, Berkshire County, Charlemont, Florida, Savoy, Mohawk Trail

These have been declared eligible for submission by the Massachusetts Historical Commission, the State Review Board, and have been signed by Secretary of the Commonwealth, John F.X. Davoren, Chairman of the Massachusetts Historical Commission and designated the State Liason Officer.

Sincerely yours,

Robert B. Rettig

Robert B. Rettig
Executive Director,
Massachusetts Historical Commission

Enc.

ENTRIES IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

STATE MASSACHUSETTS

Date Entered APR 3 1973

<u>Name</u>	<u>Location</u>
City Hall	Salem Essex County
Lenox Library	Lenox Berkshire County
Mechanics Block Historic District	Lawrence Essex County
Bowe Village Historic District	Boxford Essex County
Claflin-Richards House	Wenham Essex County
Mohawk Trail	vicinities of Charlemont, Florida, and Savoy Berkshire and Franklin Counties
Fort Washington	Cambridge Middlesex County

Also Notified

Hon. Edward M. Kennedy
Hon. Edward W. Brooke
Hon. Michael J. Harrington
Hon. Silvio O. Conte
Hon. Paul Cronin
Hon. Thomas P. O'Neill, Jr.

State Historic Preservation Officer
Hon. John F. X. Davoren
Secretary of the Commonwealth
Chairman, Massachusetts Historical
Commission
40 Beacon Street
Boston, Massachusetts 02108

4/11/73

NRowland:mmm

PHR

Director, Northeast Region