

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

JUL 24 1987

National Register of Historic Places
Registration FormNATIONAL
REGISTER

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in *Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms* (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries.

1. Name of Property

historic name Emery Grover Building (preferred)
other names/site number Needham High School

2. Location

street & number 1330 Highland Avenue N/A not for publication
city, town Needham N/A vicinity
state Massachusetts code 025 county Norfolk code 021 zip code 02192

3. Classification

Ownership of Property

- ☐ private
☒ public-local
☐ public-State
☐ public-Federal

Category of Property

- ☒ building(s)
☐ district
☐ site
☐ structure
☐ object

Number of Resources within Property

Contributing	Noncontributing
<u>1</u>	<u> </u> buildings
<u> </u>	<u> </u> sites
<u> </u>	<u> </u> structures
<u> </u>	<u> </u> objects
<u>1</u>	<u> </u> Total

Name of related multiple property listing:
N/A

Number of contributing resources previously
listed in the National Register 0

4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this
☒ nomination ☐ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the
National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.
In my opinion, the property ☒ meets ☐ does not meet the National Register criteria. ☐ See continuation sheet.

Valerie A. Talmage July 20, 1987
Signature of certifying official Executive Director, State Historic Preservation Officer Date
Massachusetts Historical Commission
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property ☐ meets ☐ does not meet the National Register criteria. ☐ See continuation sheet.

Signature of commenting or other official

Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

5. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this property is:

- ☒ entered in the National Register.
☐ See continuation sheet.
☐ determined eligible for the National
Register. ☐ See continuation sheet.
☐ determined not eligible for the
National Register.
☐ removed from the National Register.
☐ other, (explain:)

Albion Byer

Entered in the
National Register

8/20/87

fu Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

6. Function or Use Emery Grover Building, Needham, Massachusetts

Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Education, Secondary School

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Educational, Administration

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(enter categories from instructions)

Second Renaissance Revival

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation granite

walls brick

roof slate

other

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

The Emery Grover Building is located at 1330 Highland Avenue in Needham, Massachusetts, on the primary thoroughfare between the town's two primary villages, Needham and Needham Heights. It was built in 1898 as the town's high school. The mixed-use neighborhood combines residential and small commercial establishments near the town hall. To the south is St. Joseph's Roman Catholic Church (1965-1966), and to the north the site of a more recent high school (1924), now occupied by Town House condominiums (1984). The building is set back about 75 feet from Highland Avenue, with a semi-circular drive.

The Emery Grover Building was built in the Second Renaissance Revival style and designed by Boston architects Whitman and Hood. It is a yellow brick, two-story building on a raised granite basement under a low hipped roof of monson granite and measures 66 by 102 feet. Cubic masonry was emphasized with strong horizontals articulated at cornice, belt courses, and foundation, with period inspired detailing at edges and openings.

The primary west facade features a projecting central pavilion three bays wide, approximately 3/5th of the full width, with the placement on the first floor level of two semi-elliptical windows on either side of a large arched entrance, and six arched windows on the second floor. The architectural surround of windows and entrance is a carefully articulated brick arch, each decorated by a large keystone. The impost blocks are a part of the belt courses at all upper levels. An additional granite belt course defines the level of the first floor. On either side of the central pavilion are two windows on each floor with brick lintels and keystones. Above the central pavilion in the hipped roof are three dormers. The center dormer has three windows and is decorated by a white painted wooden pediment with volutes on either side, all of which originally supported a large circular clock, which has been removed.

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Emery Grover Building,
Needham, Massachusetts

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The east (rear) of the building echoes the pattern of the facade's projecting central pavilion with three large arched windows on the first floor. Six slender arched windows on the second floor are false windows, filled in with brick with the exception of the four top semi-elliptical sections. On each of the north and south sides of the building is an entrance protected by a porch with arched opening and granite steps.

The interior of the original high school had three classrooms and offices for the superintendent of schools, the principal, the school committee, and the teachers on the first floor. On the second floor in the center, which would be the area contained within the projecting central pavilion as seen from the outside, was a large auditorium seating 275 and a stage placed against the rear wall of the building. Also on the second floor were two classrooms, a recitation room, and a room to be used as a library. On the third floor were laboratories and darkrooms, and in the basement, heating plant, manual training facility, and restrooms. The interior on both floors has been altered with the creation of office areas formed by temporary partitions in about 1972.

Archaeology

While no archaeological sites are recorded within the property several have been reported that are in close proximity. It is likely that sites may have been present, but the intense level of development and small size of the property suggests that the likelihood of significant prehistoric survivals is low. These factors also suggest that the potential for significant historic sites is low. Most of the towns early development appears concentrated west of the town center or along the Charles River. This area was not intensively developed until the middle of the nineteenth century. This property was built in 1898 and may contain occupation related features which could add to the understanding of the students social and cultural development during the period.

8. Statement of Significance Emery Grover Building, Needham, Massachusetts

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:

☐ nationally ☐ statewide ☒ locallyApplicable National Register Criteria ☒ A ☐ B ☒ C ☐ DCriteria Considerations (Exceptions) ☐ A ☐ B ☐ C ☐ D ☐ E ☐ F ☐ G

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)

Architecture
Community Planning and Development
Education

Period of Significance

1898-1924

Significant Dates

1898

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Significant Person

N/A

Architect/Builder

Whitman and Hood, Boston, Massachusetts

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.

The Emery Grover Building, Needham, built in 1898 to serve as the town's first high school, retains integrity of location, design, materials, workmanship, and association with the development--at times fractious--of Needham in the late 19th century. The building is architecturally significant as an imposing example of the Second Renaissance Revival style. The Emery Grover Building thus fulfills Criteria A and C of the National Register of Historic Places on the local level.

Twice in its history the town of Needham has been torn apart by disagreements and arguments over the site of a public building. The first of these, the argument between the east and west ends of the town over where the meetinghouse should stand, began in the eighteenth century, lasted a hundred years, and literally tore the town apart when in 1881 the west end was incorporated as the town of Wellesley.

The second argument, which began even before the first had ended, concerned where the town's first high school building should stand. It began in 1863 when the town first officially considered the need for a separate high school building, lasted until 1898, and still simmered for years thereafter. At that time the town of Needham consisted of two competing villages: Highlandville (now Needham Heights) to the north, and Needham Plains (now the present town center) to the south, with much empty land between them.

Over the years, the two villages had developed distinctly different characteristics. Highlandville was essentially an English village, populated and controlled by the English knitters who had migrated from England to set up their knitting shops and build their homes in the north end of town, some of them arriving before the Civil War. In 1875 there were thirty-eight separate knitting shops in the town, and most were in Highlandville. They were a clammy group, and a strong, sometimes acrimonious, rivalry grew up between them and the people of "the Plains," which was still a Yankee village, populated and largely controlled by descendants of the original Yankee settlers. Highlandville was becoming an industrial community, while "the Plains" still bore the traces of its agricultural beginnings.

☒ See continuation sheet

9. Major Bibliographical References Emery Grover Building, Needham, MassachusettsClarke, George D., The History of Needham. Cambridge: University Press, 1912

Needham Town Records, Needham Free Public Library.

Needham Historical Society files.

☐ See continuation sheet**Previous documentation on file (NPS):**☐ preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67)
has been requested☐ previously listed in the National Register☐ previously determined eligible by the National Register☐ designated a National Historic Landmark☐ recorded by Historic American Buildings

Survey # _____

☐ recorded by Historic American Engineering

Record # _____

Primary location of additional data:☒ State historic preservation office☐ Other State agency☐ Federal agency☐ Local government☐ University☐ Other**Specify repository:**MHC #54**10. Geographical Data**Acreage of property @ 1.1 acreQuad: Newton Scale 1:25000**UTM References**A

1	9	3	1	5	6	2	0	4	6	8	3	4	1	0
Zone		Easting				Northing								

C

Zone		Easting				Northing								

B

Zone		Easting				Northing								

D

Zone		Easting				Northing								

☐ See continuation sheet**Verbal Boundary Description**

Westerly by Highland Avenue by 187 ft. more or less; Northerly by the newly constructed Town Houses by 263 ft. more or less; Easterly by Oakland Avenue by 175 ft. more or less; Southerly by land of the Roman Catholic Church (St. Joseph's) by 263 ft. more or less. All as shown on Assessors plan No. 53, dated July 1975.

☐ See continuation sheet**Boundary Justification**

The lot described above is that historically associated with the property.

☐ See continuation sheet**11. Form Prepared By**name/title Mrs. Warner B. Hartford, Needham Historical Commission, Chair, with Claire Dempseyorganization Massachusetts Historical Commissiondate April 27 1987street & number 80 Boylston Streettelephone (617) 727-8470city or town Bostonstate Massachusetts zip code 02116

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The rivalry between the two villages took many forms, the most visible among them being public sites and buildings. When "the Plains" established a village green (now Needham Square), Highlandville cleared a space for its own green (now Avery Square). When "the Plains" erected a bandstand on its green Highlandville demanded and got a bandstand for its green. This rivalry reached its bitter peak in 1883, when the question arose as to where the new high school should be built. Highlandville chose a site for the building within its traditional limits, and "the Plains" picked another, well within its own limits. It was only after the appointment and dissolution of one building committee, a court injunction, and the appointment of a second building committee that the problem was resolved. The resolution came only when John Moseley, a public-spirited landowner, offered to donate to the town as a site for the high school a plot of land almost equidistant between the sites favored by the two villages.

The building committee submitted its majority report in the 1898 Annual Town Report. This report listed Whitman and Hood as the architects and F. G. Colburn and Co. as the builders. However, on the same page the Treasurer says that he paid \$570.36 to one "Mr. Brigham," the architect engaged by the first building committee who had been dismissed by the second committee. It is therefore not possible to discern which architect was responsible for the design of the exterior. The majority report listed the cost of the building, \$32,923, "seventy-seven dollars less than the original appropriation." The report noted:

"It (the High School) is well adapted to the purposes for which it was designed. Its exterior appearance is attractive, although rigid economy of ornament was imposed by the limits of the appropriation for its construction. It has been visited by many persons acquainted with high-school architecture and construction and declared to be unexcelled by any other high school building erected in Massachusetts for an equal amount of money."

However, a 47-page minority report was submitted by John Titus, a member of the building committee. Mr. Titus set the theme for his report by stating that the building committee was "a body conceived in sin and delivered in iniquity." The attack includes accusations of bid-rigging, illegal collusion in the award of contracts, political cronyism in the dismissal of one architect and the hiring of another, with studied hints of malfeasance. The last fifteen pages of the minority report examine the completed structure and list the faults in its design and construction. Mr. Titus was leading citizen and lawyer in Highlandville, and Mr. Pope, chairman of the Building Committee was a wealthy landowner in the Plains. There is little doubt that the personal and public feud between Mr. Pope and Mr. Titus was a continuation of the Highlandville-Plains feud.

continued

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National Park Service**

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Continuation Sheet**

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Emery Grover Building,
Needham, Massachusetts

The building housed all high-school activities until 1924, when increased enrollment required a larger building, and the second high-school building was erected on an adjacent plot. The building was then used to house special and overflow classes. And it was at this time that it was given its present name, in honor of Judge Emery Grover, who had been a member of the school committee for twenty-four years, from 1884 to 1904. The building has held the administrative offices of the school department since about 1972.

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEETGrover, Emery, Building
Norfolk County
MASSACHUSETTSWorking No. JUL 24 1987
Fed. Reg. Date: 2/2/88
Date Due: 8/20/87 - 9/2/87
Action: ☒ ACCEPT 8-20-87
☐ 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 sheetNomination 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 date _____
☐ fair	☐ unexposed	
	☐ unaltered	
	☐ altered	

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

9. Major Bibliographical References

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property _____

Quadrangle name _____

UTM 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

title date

13. Other

- ☐ Maps
- ☐ Photographs
- ☐ Other

Questions concerning this nomination may be directed to _____

Signed _____ Date _____ Phone: _____



Emery Grover Bldg.
1330 Highland Ave.

Needham, MA

Kenneth Watson; Dec. 1985

142 Hillcrest Rd.

Nat. of 2

West Facade

NEEDHAM HISTORICAL COMMISSION

Town Hall

Needham, MA 02192

KENNETH E. WATSON
142 HILLCREST RD.
NEEDHAM, MA 02192

89-8-85

Missing Core Documentation

Property Name

Grover, Emery, Building

County, State

Norfolk,
Massachusetts

Reference Number

87001393

The following Core Documentation is missing from this entry:

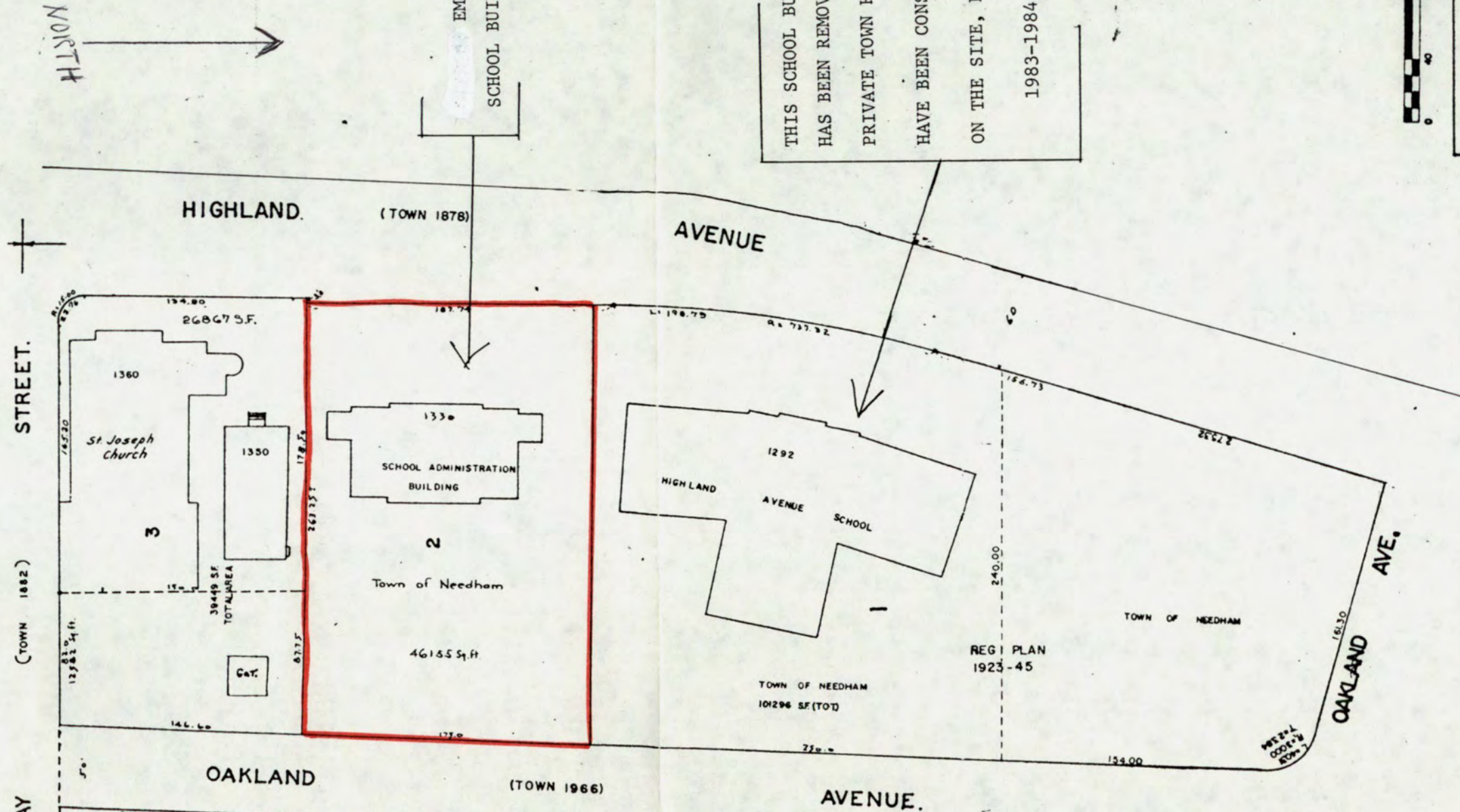
☐ Nomination Form

☒ Photograph #2

☐ USGS Map

Emery Grover Building
1330 Highland Avenue
Needham, MA 02192

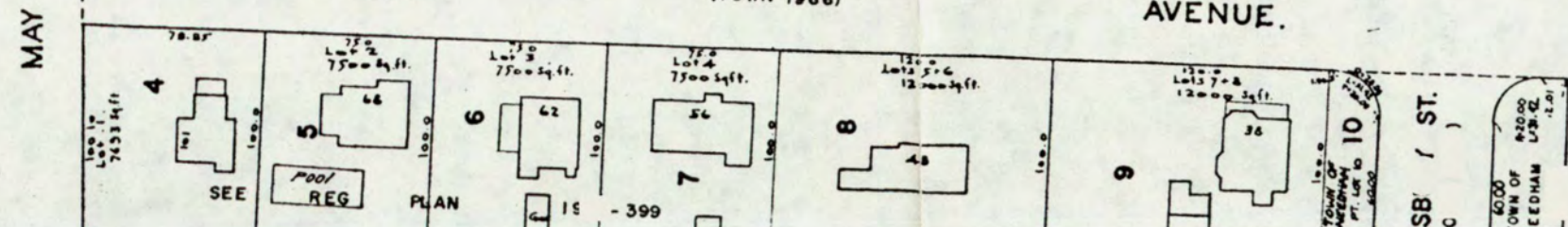
SEE PLAN 52

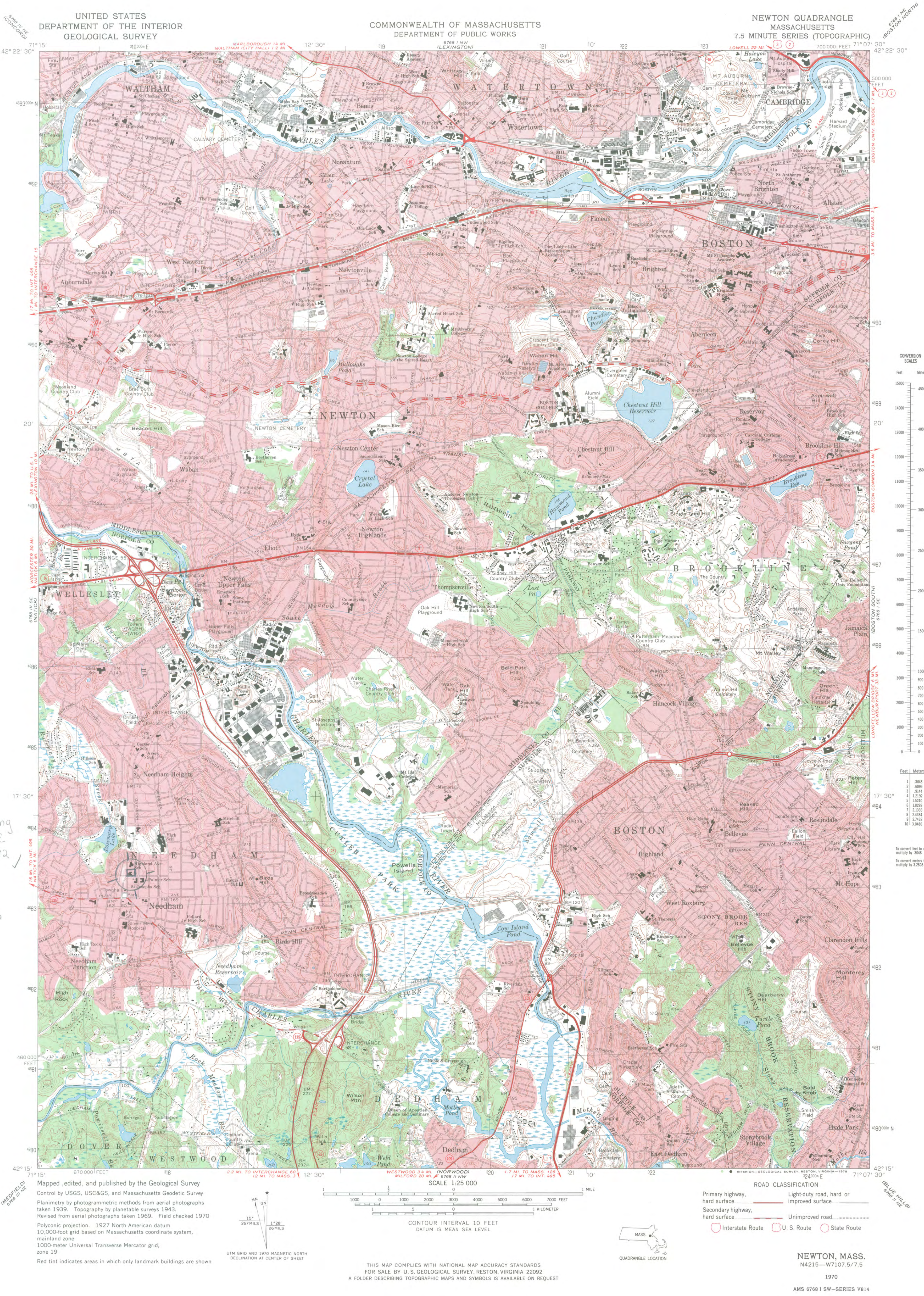


THIS SCHOOL BUILDING HAS BEEN REMOVED AND PRIVATE TOWN HOUSES HAVE BEEN CONSTRUCTED ON THE SITE, DURING 1983-1984



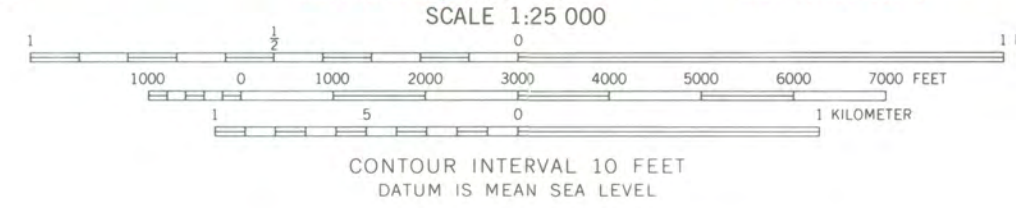
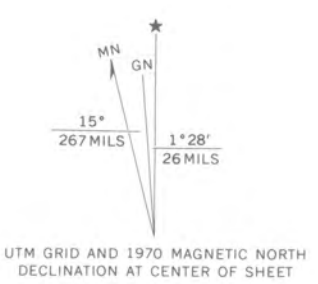
ASSESSORS PLAN NO. 53
SCALE: 1 IN = 40 FT JULY 1975
J.D. MARR, JR. - TOWN ENGINEER





Emery Grover Building
1330 Highland Avenue
Needham, MA 02192 ✓
Quad: Newton
Scale 1:25000
UTM References:
19 / 315620 / 4683410

Mapped, edited, and published by the Geological Survey
Control by USGS, USC&GS, and Massachusetts Geodetic Survey
Planimetry by photogrammetric methods from aerial photographs
taken 1939. Topography by planimetric surveys 1943.
Revised from aerial photographs taken 1969. Field checked 1970
Polyconic projection. 1927 North American datum
10,000-foot grid based on Massachusetts coordinate system,
mainland zone
1000-meter Universal Transverse Mercator grid,
zone 19
Red tint indicates areas in which only landmark buildings are shown



THIS MAP COMPLIES WITH NATIONAL MAP ACCURACY STANDARDS
FOR SALE BY U.S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY, RESTON, VIRGINIA 22092
A FOLDER DESCRIBING TOPOGRAPHIC MAPS AND SYMBOLS IS AVAILABLE ON REQUEST

ROAD CLASSIFICATION
Primary highway, hard surface
Secondary highway, hard surface
Unimproved road
Interstate Route
U. S. Route
State Route

NEWTON, MASS.
N4215—W7107.5/7.5
1970

AMS 6768 I SW—SERIES V814

NEEDHAM HISTORICAL COMMISSION
Town Hall
Needham, MA 02192

EMERY GROVER BLDG.



1685548137

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

Office of the Secretary of State
Michael Joseph Connolly, Secretary

Massachusetts Historical Commission

Valerie A. Talmage

Executive Director

State Historic Preservation Officer

July 20, 1987

Carol Shull

National Register of Historic Places

Department of the Interior

National Park Service

P.O. Box 37127

Washington, D.C. 20013-7127

Dear Ms. Shull:

Enclosed you will find the following nomination forms:

Boston (Jamaica Plain), 17 Cranston Street

Boston (West Roxbury), Westerly Cemetery, Centre Street

Boston, Timothy Hoxie House

Needham, Emery Grover Building, 1330 Highland Avenue

All have been voted eligible by the State Review Board and have been signed by the State Historic Preservation Officer. Owners were notified of pending State Review Board consideration 30-75 days before the meeting and were afforded the opportunity to comment. Comments received to date are attached to the nomination form.

Sincerely,

Betsy Friedberg

Betsy Friedberg

National Register Director

Massachusetts Historical Commission

Enclosure

