

JAN 02 1990

AREA

FORM NO.

NC-046

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
80 BOYLSTON STREET
BOSTON, MA 02116

Town Newton (Newton Centre)

Address 374 Homer Street

Historic Name Boston Edison Power Station

Use: Present power station

Original same

DESCRIPTION

Date 1904-1913

Source water & building dept. records

Style Mannerist Classical Revival

Architect Bigelow & Wadsworth

Exterior Wall Fabric stuccoed concrete

Outbuildings none

Major Alterations (with dates) _____

building expanded 1910, 1913

Condition good

Moved no Date n/a

Acreage 31,125 sq.ft. C .7/A

Setting residential area; opposite City

Hall and backing up to Newton

Cemetery

Recorded by Candace Jenkins/Susan Abele

Organization Newton Historical Comm.

Date 12/1986; rev. 3/1988

Photo (3"x3" or 3"x5", black and white) Indicate address of property on back of photo. Staple to left side of form.

Sketch Map: Draw map showing property's location in relation to nearest cross streets and/or geographical features. Indicate all buildings between inventoried property and nearest intersection(s). Indicate north

see attached map

UTM REFERENCE 19/317910/4689280

USGS QUADRANGLE NEWTON

SCALE 1:25000

NATIONAL REGISTER CRITERIA STATEMENT (if applicable)

The Boston Edison Power Station possesses integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling and association. It is significant for its early role in the introduction of electricity to the city and for its associations with the street railway system. Its handsome eclectic design by the well-known firm of Bigelow & Wadsworth also makes it an important piece of industrial architecture. The Power Station thus meets criteria A & C of the NRHP.

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

The Boston Edison Power Station faces north on Homer Street toward the Newton City Hall (NC-041); adjacent to the east is a paved municipal parking lot; transformers are to the east and south. The building originated in 1904 as a small hip roofed structure with three bays on each side. Due to expansions in service, the building was enlarged in 1910 and again in 1913. The resulting building is over four times the size of the original, but remains faithful to the initial eclectic design which draws on various facets of the classical revival styles as well as other contemporary styles such as the Arts & Crafts. Overall, the architects approach to the structure may be classified as Mannerist since it makes unconventional use of classical elements.

(see continuation sheet)

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

When Newton's growing street railway system became electrified in 1886 power was provided by small local stations. In the next two decades, demand for electrical power grew as the street railway systems were enlarged and new uses for electrical power developed such as street and home lighting, and electrical household appliances (see sections 7 and 8). By 1901, The Edison Electric Illuminating Company had become the major sources of power in Boston and by 1922 its service areas reach cities and towns for more than 600 square miles around Boston. In Newton, the first section of the present Edison transfer station at 364 Homer Street was built in 1904, adjacent to an earlier street railway power house and carbarn. Part of Edison's expanding suburban service, it was designed by the firm of Bigelow and Wadsworth, which was also responsible for Edison's Boston Office Building, Power House and a number of other stations constructed in the early 20th century for the Edison Electric Illuminating Company. Although built by the Edison Company, the station appears to have been associated with the Newton and Watertown Gas and Light Company from about 1907 to 1909, but was again known as the

(see continuation sheet)

BIBLIOGRAPHY and/or REFERENCES
Building Records: 374 Homer Street, Annual Report of City Engineer - 1910, Atlases and City Directories, Original photographs of the building at the Edison Station, *Biographical Dictionary of American Architects*, Withy, *Boston Edison Company Centennial 1886-1986*

INVENTORY FORM CONTINUATION SHEETMASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
Office of the Secretary, Boston

Community: Newton (Newton Centre)	Form No: NC-046
Property Name: Boston Edison Power Station	

Indicate each item on inventory form which is being continued below.

ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE (cont.)

As it exists today, the Power Station is nearly square in plan and rises one story to an overhanging red tile hip roof with exposed rafters. It is constructed of stuccoed concrete with brick quoins defining bays, and cast stone trim elements, the most prominent of which is a coved cornice with acanthus leaves encircling the building. The main Homer Street facade (N) includes two slightly projecting end pavillions defined by brick quoins and cross-hip roofs flanking a narrower central section. Within this rigidly symmetrical framework, details vary in Mannerist fashion. The central bay contains a wide bricked-up opening with an elaborate leaf-molded surround incorporating an eared architrave. The left bay, which appears to incorporate the original structure, contains an entry framed by Mannerist influenced half-length pilasters carrying a window ensemble in an aedicular frame. In the right bay a window takes the place of the entry. The side elevations (E & W) are both divided into two bays by a central brick quoin strip. On the west, each bay incorporates a wide entry identical to that of the central facade bay, flanked by small square windows; the doors have been replaced by stationary paneling and the windows are louvered. On the east, each bay contains a Mannerist influenced entry identical to that of the east bay of the facade; they are also flanked by small square windows. Here, original four-panel double-leaf doors remain as does the four pane glazing of the windows.

HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE (cont.)

Edison Station by 1911. On November 30, 1910, the adjacent Middlesex Street Railway power station was discontinued and the Edison Station, newly enlarged, took over the job of providing power to the street railway system. In 1913, the building was again enlarged, bringing it to its present size. The transfer station converted AC power to DC for lighting and the street railways; today it is a distribution center for electrical service to the city of Newton.

Staple to Inventory form at bottom

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number _____ Page _____

Multiple Resource Area
Thematic Group

Name Newton MRA
State Middlesex County, MA

Nomination/Type of Review	Date/Signature
131. Old Chestnut Hill Historic District (Boundary Increase) <i>SRP</i>	Keeper <u>Beth J. Savage 02-16-90</u> Attest _____
132. Pine Ridge Road--Plainfield Street Historic District Entered in the National Register	Keeper <u>Arlene Byers 2/16/90</u> Attest _____
133. Saco-Lowell Shupe Housing Historic District Entered in the National Register	Keeper <u>Arlene Byers 2/16/90</u> Attest _____
134. West Newton Village Center Historic District Entered in the National Register	Keeper <u>Arlene Byers 2/16/90</u> Attest _____
135. Windsor Road Historic District Entered in the National Register	Keeper <u>Arlene Byers 2/16/90</u> Attest _____
136. Agudas Achim Anshei Sfard Synagogue Entered in the National Register	Keeper <u>Arlene Byers 2/16/90</u> Attest _____
137. Boston Edison Power Station Entered in the National Register	Keeper <u>Arlene Byers 2/16/90</u> Attest _____
138. Bruner Mayall, House Entered in the National Register	Keeper <u>Arlene Byers 2/16/90</u> Attest _____
139. Childs, Mayor Edwin O., House Entered in the National Register	Keeper <u>Arlene Byers 2/16/90</u> Attest _____
140. City Stable and Garage Entered in the National Register	Keeper <u>Arlene Byers 2/16/90</u> Attest _____

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: NOMINATION

PROPERTY Boston Edison Power Station
NAME:

MULTIPLE Newton MRA
NAME:

STATE & COUNTY: MASSACHUSETTS, Middlesex

DATE RECEIVED: 1/02/90 DATE OF PENDING LIST: 1/16/90
DATE OF 16TH DAY: 2/02/90 DATE OF 45TH DAY: 2/16/90
DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:

REFERENCE NUMBER: 90000023

NOMINATOR: STATE

REASONS FOR REVIEW:

APPEAL: N DATA PROBLEM: N LANDSCAPE: N LESS THAN 50 YEARS: N
OTHER: N PDIL: N PERIOD: N PROGRAM UNAPPROVED: N
REQUEST: N SAMPLE: N SLR DRAFT: N NATIONAL: N

COMMENT WAIVER: N

ACCEPT RETURN REJECT 2/16/90 DATE

Entered in the
National Register

ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:

RECOM./CRITERIA _____
REVIEWER _____
DISCIPLINE _____
DATE _____

DOCUMENTATION see attached comments Y/N see attached SLR Y/N

CLASSIFICATION

count resource type

STATE/FEDERAL AGENCY CERTIFICATION

FUNCTION

historic current

DESCRIPTION

architectural classification
 materials
 descriptive text

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

BIBLIOGRAPHY

GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

acreage verbal boundary description
 UTM's boundary justification

ACCOMPANYING DOCUMENTATION/PRESENTATION

sketch maps USGS maps photographs presentation

OTHER COMMENTS

Questions concerning this nomination may be directed to

_____ Phone _____

Signed _____ Date _____



Edison Electric Illuminating Co.

Newton, MA-MRA

374 Homer St.

Newton, MA

Boston Edison Power Station

C. Jenkins

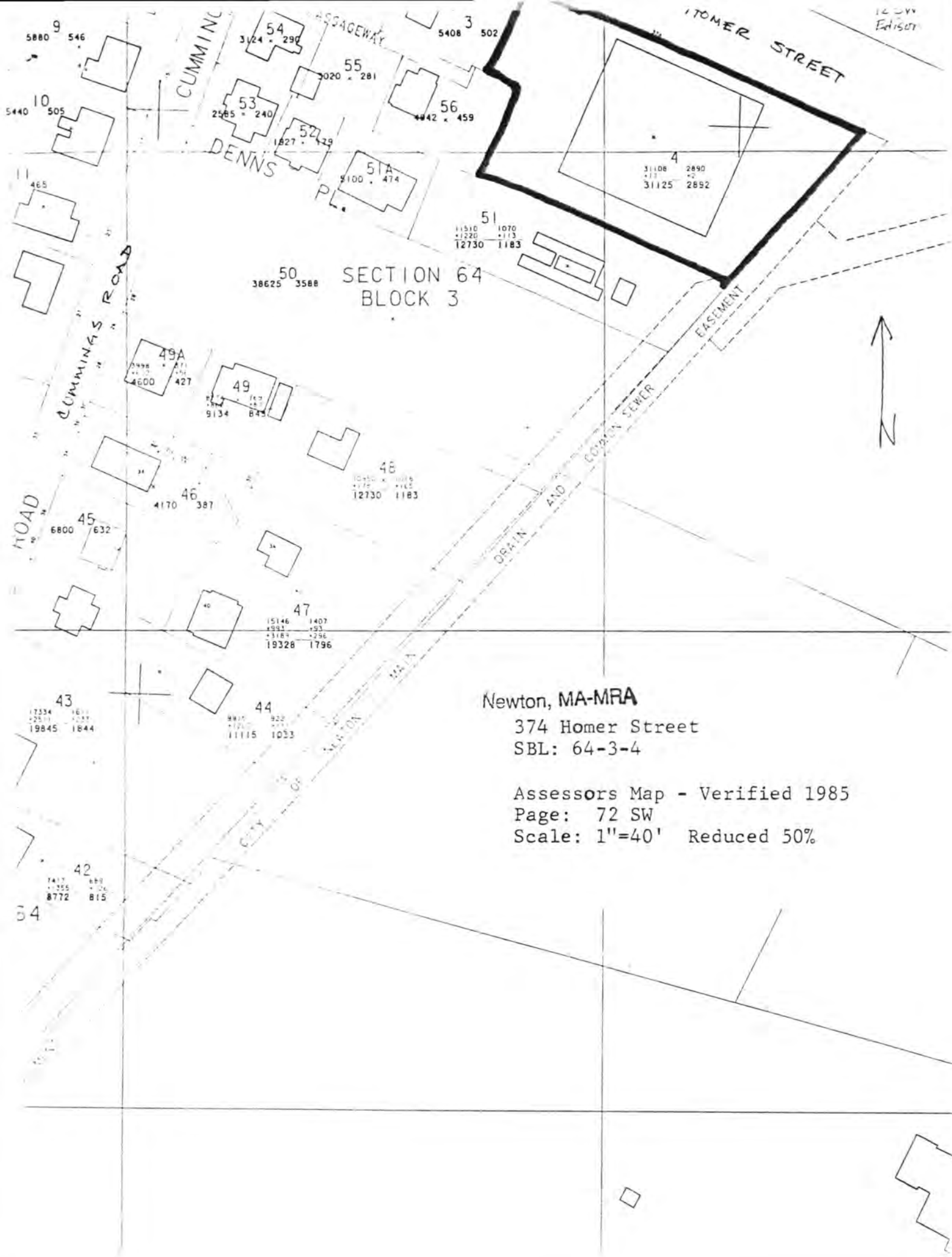
1/87

Neg. @ Jackson Homestead

view - south

NC-046

87-2-1



SECTION 64
BLOCK 3

Newton, MA-MRA
374 Homer Street
SBL: 64-3-4

Assessors Map - Verified 1985
Page: 72 SW
Scale: 1"=40' Reduced 50%