

FORM A - AREA

Area Letter Form numbers in this Area

L	NN-316, NC-678-680
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MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
80 BOYLSTON STREET, BOSTON, MA 02116

Newton, Mass. MA

Town Newton (Newton Centre)

Name of Area (if any) _____

Union Street Historic District

Present Use commercial

General Date or Period 1890s

General Condition Very Good

Acreage 1.8 acres

Recorded by Harriet White

Organization Newton Historical Commission

Date March, 1986

Photos (3"x3" or 3"x5" black & white) - Indicate on back of each photo street addresses for buildings shown. Staple to left side of form.

Sketch Map. Draw a general map of the area indicating properties within it. Number each property for which individual inventory forms have been completed. Label streets including route numbers, if any. Indicate north. (Attach a separate sheet if space here is not sufficient).

UTM REFERENCE 19³19220. 4688410
319150. 4688440
319210. 4688510
319370. 4688550
319420. 4688500

USGS QUADRANGLE Newton

SCALE 1:25,000

NATIONAL REGISTER CRITERIA STATEMENT (if applicable)

The Union Street Historic District is one of city's only intact clusters of late nineteenth commercial structures, and illustrates the development of a small business district centered around a suburban railroad depot; it therefore meets Criteria A and C of the National Register of Historic Places.

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

The Union Street Historic District contains the city's best cluster of well-preserved commercial buildings dating from the nineteenth century. The district is dominated by its handsome commuter railroad station.

Beginning in 1881, major innovations in suburban railroad depot design occurred, with the trend continuing until the turn of the century. In 1884, when the Boston & Albany Railroad Company purchased a section of land that ran from the Fenway area of Boston to Newton Highlands for eventual use as a commuter line. H.H. Richardson and F.L. Olmsted the country's foremost architect and landscape architect of the 19th century were commissioned to design the twelve stations to be located in Newton. Only three of the original twelve have survived: the Newton Highlands Station, Woodland Station in Auburndale, and the Newton Centre Station. (All three N.R.H.P. 3/25/76).

HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE Explain historical importance of area and how the area relates to the development of other areas of the community.

By the 1850s Newton Centre showed little sign of development. There was no regular commuter rail service, and fewer than ten buildings stood clustered around the common. Farms surrounded the village center. Although street patterns were expanding, Newton Centre's growth even during the third quarter of the nineteenth century was slow and building was limited. The Newton Journal reported in September 1866 that few houses were available for sale or rent in Newton Centre. It was generally thought that improved railroad service would generate development activity. After the completion of the Back Bay landfill project in Boston, passenger service between Boston and Newton Centre became more frequent and reliable. In 1882, after many years of effort, a group of investors including James F. J. Hyde, formed the Newton Circuit Railroad Company. The project was eventually taken over by the Boston & Albany Railroad Company, and the tracks were renewed between between Newton Highlands and Boston, and extended with new stops at Eliot, Waban, and Woodland to Riverside where it linked up with the main Boston and Albany line. The new railroad station at Newton Centre was built in 1890 and reflected the importance to the village of the railroad. The ensuing years saw the appearance of new commercial structures in Newton Centre. Several two- and three- story wooden,

BIBLIOGRAPHY and/or REFERENCES

Newton's 19th Century Architecture, Newton Centre, Oak Hill, Chestnut Hill, & Commonwealth Avenue, 1985.

INVENTORY FORM CONTINUATION SHEET

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
Office of the Secretary, Boston

Community: Newton Centre	Form No: L
Property Name: Union Street	

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

Historical Significance:

commercial blocks were located near the Newton Centre depot and across from the Common. In 1893, Mellen Bray, inventor, investor and philanthropist, built a buff-colored brick commercial block on Union Street (formerly known as Station Street) which was regarded as a great community asset and catalyst needed for further development of the area. Bray also built a number of rental properties nearby and in 1913 built Newton Centre's first apartment building, Bradford Court, on Herrick Road in the district.

Staple to Inventory form at bottom

INVENTORY FORM CONTINUATION SHEET

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
Office of the Secretary, Boston

Community: Newton Centre	Form No: L
Property Name: Union Street	

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

Architectural Significance:

The Newton Centre Station was completed in 1890 after Richardsnn's death by his successor firm, Shepley, Rutan & Coolidge. Characteristic features include the granite and brownstone construction and large overhanging slate roof, as well as a covered platform on the trackside. On each slope of the roof are two arched eyebrow windows. A stone chimney rises between the two street side dormers. The flared eaves of the hip roof are supported by wooden braces. A Baggage & Express Building which stood next to the station was demolished in 1985. The original Olmsted landscaping does not survive.

A second major structure in the Union Street District is the building known as Bray's Block or Bray's Hall (1893) located at 93-105 Union Street. An L-plan commercial block, the building is 2½-stories in height and constructed of buff-colored brick with a copper-clad hip roof and heavy modillion cornice. The semi-circular dormers of the attic story are also articulated in copper. The building, designed in the Classical Revival style, originally contained a large assembly hall, a bowling alley, offices and storefronts.

The Union Building (1896) is located at 65-73 Union Street. Designed in the Georgian Revival style, the flat-roofed structure has a seven-bay facade with storefronts on the ground level. The recessed entrance is set within a round-arched opening flanked by brick pilasters supporting a full entablature. Notable features include the modillion cornice with a dentil course, and the keystone lintels of the windows on the upper story. A Palladian window on the second story is aligned with the entrance.

Staple to Inventory form at bottom

UNION STREET HISTORIC DISTRICT

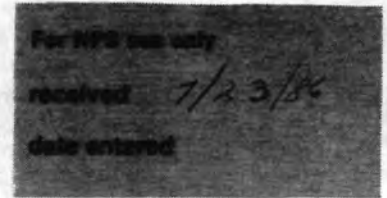
Address	S-B-L	Historic Name	Date	Style	C/NC	Inven.#	Area
17-31 Herrick St	61-35-6	Bradford Court Apts.	1913	Jacobean Rev.	NC	NC-316	22,980
49-63 Union St	61-36-7			Georgian Rev.	C	-----	8,735
65-73 Union St	61-36-8	Union Building	1896	Georgian Rev.	C	NC-680	4,148
75-105 Union St	61-36-9	Bray's Block	1893	Classical Rev.	C	NC-678	31,455
68-72 Union St	61-36-11A	Newton Centre RR Station (listed NRHP-1976)	1886	Richardsonian	C	-----	2,842
Union St	61-36-10	LOT					3,300
Union St	61-36-11	LOT					3,060
- Union St	61-36-11B	LOT					360
- Union St	61-36-11C	LOT					958
- Union St	61-36-11D	LOT					1,400

10 properties with an area of 79,238 square feet (acres)
 5 buildings, 1 non-contributing; 5 vacant lots

13-10
 260-25
 260-25

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form



Continuation sheet

Item number

Page

Multiple Resource Area
Thematic Group

Name Newton MRA
State Middlesex County, MA

Nomination/Type of Review

Date/Signature

- | | | | |
|---|-------------------------------------|------------|-----------------------------|
| 11. Newton Lower Falls
Historic District | Entered in the
National Register | for Keeper | <u>Delores Byers 9/4/86</u> |
| | | Attest | _____ |
| 12. Newton Theological Institution
Historic District | Entered in the
National Register | for Keeper | <u>Delores Byers 9/4/86</u> |
| | | Attest | _____ |
| 13. Newton Upper Falls
Historic District | Entered in the
National Register | for Keeper | <u>Delores Byers 9/4/86</u> |
| | | Attest | _____ |
| 14. Newtonville Historic District | Entered in the
National Register | for Keeper | <u>Delores Byers 9/4/86</u> |
| | | Attest | _____ |
| 15. Old Chestnut Hill
Historic District | Entered in the
National Register | for Keeper | <u>Delores Byers 9/4/86</u> |
| | | Attest | _____ |
| 16. Our Lady Help of Christians
Historic District | Entered in the
National Register | for Keeper | <u>Delores Byers 9/4/86</u> |
| | | Attest | _____ |
| 17. Putnam Street Historic
District | Entered in the
National Register | for Keeper | <u>Delores Byers 9/4/86</u> |
| | | Attest | _____ |
| 18. Sumner and Gibbs Streets
Historic District | Entered in the
National Register | for Keeper | <u>Delores Byers 9/4/86</u> |
| | | Attest | _____ |
| 19. Union Street Historic
District | Entered in the
National Register | for Keeper | <u>Delores Byers 9/4/86</u> |
| | | Attest | _____ |
| 20. Webster Park Historic
District | Entered in the
National Register | for Keeper | <u>Delores Byers 9/4/86</u> |
| | | Attest | _____ |

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

Union Street Historic District (Newton MRA)
Middlesex County
MASSACHUSETTS

Working No. JUL 23 1986
Fed. Reg. Date: 2/13/87
Date Due: 8/21/86 9/6/86
Action: ACCEPT 9-4-86
RETURN
REJECT
Federal Agency: _____

- resubmission
- nomination by person or local government
- owner objection
- appeal

Entered in the
National Register

Substantive Review: sample request appeal NR decision

Reviewer's comments:

Recom./Criteria _____
Reviewer _____
Discipline _____
Date _____
_____ see continuation sheet

Nomination 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

- 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

- 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 _____

X 13. Other

- Maps
- Photographs
- Other

Please provide scales for sketch map. District provides square, block & lot #s for all properties.

Questions concerning this nomination may be directed to _____

Signed _____ Date _____ Phone: _____



Union St. H/D

APR 1986

Newton, Mass. MRA

- View looking east on Union St. -
MR-A-3 (26)




Union St. H.D.

APR 1996

Newton, Mass. MRA

Newton Centre Railroad Station
MR-A-3 (23)



↑ NEWTON CENTER
↑ BUS STOP

Union St. H.D.

APR 1986

Newton, Mass. MRA

- 85-105 Union St, Bray's Block -
- Newton Centre, MR-A-3 (24) -



Vain ST. H.O.

APR 1985

APR 1986

Newton, Mass. ~~MA~~

- 17-31 Herrick Rd, Newton Centre
Bradford Court Apts MR-A-3 (25

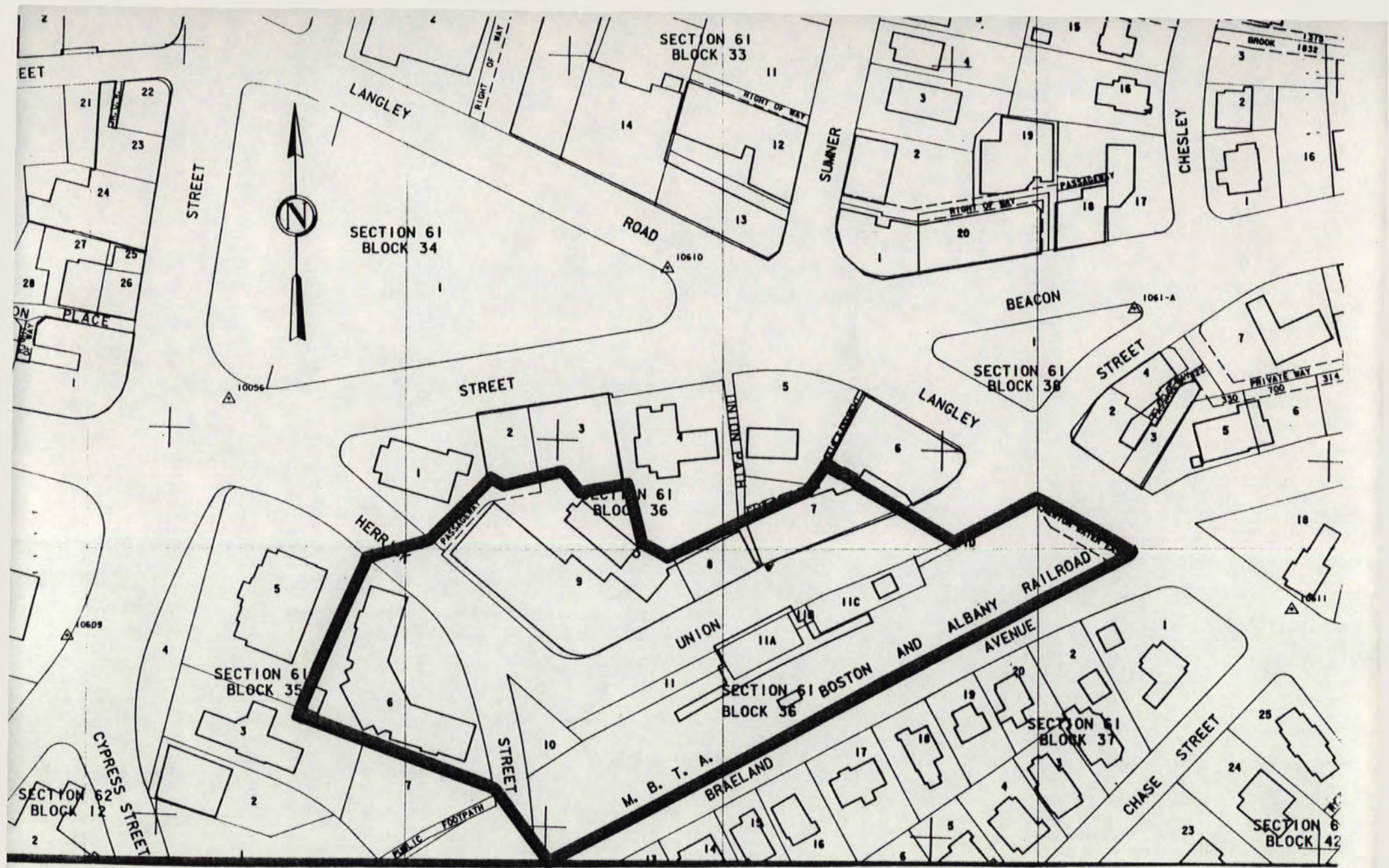


Union St. H.D.

APR 1986



N. Centre Railroad Station
- MR-A-3 (27) -



Newton, Mass. M.R.A.
 Union Street Historic District
 Newton Centre