

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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

FOR FEDERAL PROPERTIES

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED MAY 12 1986

DATE ENTERED 6-26-86

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN *HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS*
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

1 NAME

HISTORIC

United States Post Office

AND/OR COMMON

Lexington Main Post Office

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

1661 Massachusetts Avenue

N/A NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

Lexington

N/A VICINITY OF

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

Seventh Congressional District

STATE

Massachusetts 02173

CODE

0615

COUNTY

Middlesex

CODE

017

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY

DISTRICT
 BUILDING(S)
 STRUCTURE
 SITE
 OBJECT

OWNERSHIP

PUBLIC
 PRIVATE
 BOTH
PUBLIC ACQUISITION
 IN PROCESS
 BEING CONSIDERED

STATUS

OCCUPIED
 UNOCCUPIED
 WORK IN PROGRESS
ACCESSIBLE
 YES, RESTRICTED
 YES, UNRESTRICTED
 NO

PRESENT USE

AGRICULTURE
 COMMERCIAL
 EDUCATIONAL
 ENTERTAINMENT
 GOVERNMENT
 INDUSTRIAL
 MILITARY
 MUSEUM
 PARK
 PRIVATE RESIDENCE
 RELIGIOUS
 SCIENTIFIC
 TRANSPORTATION
 OTHER:

4 AGENCY

REGIONAL HEADQUARTERS: (If applicable)

New England Field Real Estate and Building Office

STREET & NUMBER

1050 Waltham Street

CITY, TOWN

Lexington

N/A VICINITY OF

STATE

Massachusetts 02173

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Cambridge Registry of Deeds, Cambridge Courthouse

STREET & NUMBER

208 Cambridge Street

CITY, TOWN

Cambridge

STATE

Massachusetts 02140

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

None

DATE

FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS

CITY, TOWN

STATE

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> GOOD (exterior)	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED DATE _____
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> FAIR (interior)	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Post Office is on the front portion of the site with the vehicle maneuvering area to its rear accessed from Grant Street. The east side of the lot is bounded by a driveway for the town offices. The site is landscaped with lawn and shrubs. Prominent features include a pitched roof, wood cupola, and a strong architectural entrance. A 1964 addition wraps the rear two-thirds of the building, changing the original symmetrical plans and elevation into one of asymmetry. The lobby was completely remodeled at this time; it no longer possesses the robust quality of the original 1930's handcrafted interior. In plan, the building is fronted with a public lobby, behind which is the Postmaster's office, workroom, mail vestibule, and platform.

Four low granite steps and a deep landing create the main approach. They are framed by wrought-iron railings which terminate with a lamppost. The original building rests on a granite base topped with a band of ashlar granite stones. The public area of the building is marked by its asphalt shingled gable room (formerly of slate), five bays by two bays, with an added metal rain diverter above the entry doors and a wood cupola behind. The rest of the building is topped by a flat roof and parapet wall. The elevations are red brick laid in Flemish bond with a wood entablature and granite sills and lintels. The wood entablature surrounds the entire structure with a plain frieze and denticulated cornice. The wood cupola, square in plan, has fixed metal louvers and metal weathervane.

The front (south) elevation consists of the original five-bay building with a two-bay addition added to the east, recessed two bays from the original surface. The original building uses flat projecting brick pilasters to distinguish a three-bay entry from the outer bays; these pilasters also mark the corners of the old portion. All windows are wood frame, double-hung with 12/12 light; the original building has recessed brick panels below. The brick arched entrance, in a simple Georgian Style, has fluted engaged wood columns with a wood base and capitals flanking the double doors and rectangular fanlight above; the columns support a plain entablature. In the tympanum is a stucco and wood panel set behind a cast aluminum eagle with half-spread wings.

Within the gabled ends are half-circular, wood framed windows. The addition has a poured concrete base and continues the ashlar granite band from the original part. The north elevation contains the covered mail platform. The side elevations are similar in detail to the front of the building. The flat pilasters of the original building end abruptly at the new section.

One enters the building into the public lobby, separated into two sections by a plaster, glass, and wood partitions. The lobby, which now occupies the entire length of the original building, has a three bay postal box area to the west and lockable service area to the east. The floor consists of terrazzo panels with a black marble border; the walls have an off-white marble wainscot and window sills with a black marble base and

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

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date entered

Continuation sheet LEXINGTON MAIN POST OFFICE Item number 7

Page 2

plaster walls above. The ceiling is of suspended acoustical tiles. The Postmaster's office, once occupying the first bay along the front elevation, is now accessed through a small hallway connecting to the box area. The service area consists of two large aluminum-framed service counters with a marble-like Formica base.

ALTERATIONS

Alterations include the 1964 addition and lobby/Postmaster's office renovations, the roof addition of a metal rain diverter, and the covering of a skylight in the workroom

ART

A gold painted wood frame surrounds the heavy canvas mural hung above the doors of the lobby partition, on the service area side. Entitled "The Arrival of Paul Revere in Lexington, April 19, 1775," it was painted by Aiden Lassell Ripley of Lexington. The former location of the mural was over the Postmaster's office door to the west end of the original lobby. It is in excellent condition.

8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD		AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW				
<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION		
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE		
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE		
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN		
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER		
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)		
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION				

SPECIFIC DATES	Construction began: 1937 Dedication: Nov. 28, 1938	BUILDER/ARCHITECT	Louis A. Simon, Sup. Architect Sandros & Co., Contractor
STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE	Addition: 1964		Harold M. Turiello, Architect for Addition

Although less than 50 years old, the Lexington Main Post Office merits inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places as an example of the type of standardized construction and design advocated by the Public Works Administration (PWA) during the 1930's. Built in 1938, it is located in a transitional area between commercial and residential districts in Lexington Center. Its modest, domestic scale and red brick, white stone trimmed exterior treatments render their building compatible with residential and low-rise commercial buildings in the area.

Lexington's historical associations with the early British and American skirmishes of the American Revolution evidently dictated the choice of Colonial Revival for their building's style. It was designed within the office of supervising architect Louis A. Simon. Standardized construction procedure following a seven-area plan typical of 1930's post office buildings, is one of the key features of this building. This structure was started in late 1937. The cornerstone was laid on May 20, 1938 and only seven months later it was dedicated on November 28, 1938. Construction costs totalled \$65,000. The cornerstone reads "Henry Morgenthau Jr., Secretary of the Treasury; James A. Farley, Postmaster General; Louis A. Simon, Supervising Architect; Neal Melmick, Supervising Engineer, 1937."

This building is a product of the office of U.S. Supervising Architect Louis A. Simon. During his tenure (1933-1941), emphasis was placed on streamlined construction so as to bring economic benefits to a community during the Depression. Louis Adolf Simon was born in 1870 in Boston. He attended M.I.T. and entered private practice in Washington, D.C. in 1894. He began work in the office of the U.S. Treasury Supervising Architect in 1896. He served as the chief architect in their office from 1905-1933. From 1933 until his death in 1941, he was the U.S. Supervising Architect. He was responsible for numerous U.S. Post Offices, customs houses and courthouses. During his years as Supervising Architect 406 Post Offices were designed in his department. In addition he designed the Federal Building at the New York World's Fair of 1939-40.

This building contains a well-executed mural depicting Paul Revere's alerting the town folk of Lexington to the coming of the British. It is a product of the section of Fine Arts of the U.S. Treasury Department. It was painted by Aiden Lassel Ripley of Lexington. Born in Wakefield, Ripley

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

"Lexington Minute-Man", Vol. LXVII, No. 51, December 1, 1938; 5-19-38; 5-26-38; 11-24-38
 History of Post Office Construction 1900-1940, July, 1982

Lexington Historic Resources Survey, Ann Grady and Nancy Seasholer (section of 1920;s and 30;s residential development)

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 0.895

UTM REFERENCES

A	1,9	31,69,6,5	4,710,15,9,0	B			
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING		ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
C				D			
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING		ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

East to West - 142.0' along Massachusetts Avenue
 South to North - 282' along side lot line
 West to East - 139.4' along rear lot line
 North to South - 284.3' along Grant Street

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

Steven M. Smith, Project Manager

ORGANIZATION

SULLIVAN DESIGN GROUP, INC.

STREET & NUMBER

44 Adams Street

CITY OR TOWN

Braintree

DATE

September 24, 1985

TELEPHONE

(617) 848-1545

STATE

Massachusetts 02184

12 CERTIFICATION OF NOMINATION

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER RECOMMENDATION

YES

NO

NONE

Valerie Talmace

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

In compliance with Executive Order 11593, I hereby nominate this property to the National Register, certifying that the State Historic Preservation Officer has been allowed 90 days in which to present the nomination to the State Review Board and to evaluate its significance. The evaluated level of significance is National State Local.

FEDERAL REPRESENTATIVE SIGNATURE

John L. Simon

TITLE Realty Specialist, Senior

DATE

May 9, 1986

FOR NPS USE ONLY

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

[Signature]

DATE

6/26/86

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

ATTEST:

DATE

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service****National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form****For NPS use only**

received

date entered

Continuation sheet Lexington Main Post Office Item number 8

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studied at the School of Museum of Fine Arts, and received a Paige Travelling Fellowship and Logan prize and medal. He is represented in a number of American museums and painted a mural in the Winchester Public Library. He is known for his series of 14 paintings which constitutes a cycle depicting the life of Paul Revere - this work was commissioned by the New England Corporation.

The construction of the Lexington Main Post Office provided a boost to the local economy during the last years of the Depression. Lexington, however, did not suffer as severely as other eastern Massachusetts communities during the financial crisis of the 1930's. By the mid 1930's Lexington was well on its way to becoming an affluent "bedroom suburb" of Boston. During the 1920's several housing developments were constructed on former farmland. The Lexington Main Post Office was needed to serve these new residential enclaves. Farming of all kinds, including dairies and a profitable flower industry conducted in green houses scattered across the town provided jobs for local residents.

BOSTON AND MAINE RAILROAD OVERPASS

139.4'

2 Story
Brick
Colonial

Parking

2 Story
Brick
Colonial
Revival

Issac Harris
Memorial Bld'g
(meeting hall)

Town Offices

7

Transformer
Area

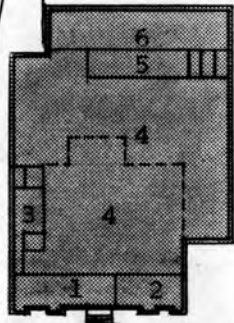
Edison Way (one way) -----

1 Story
Concrete/Stucco
Rusticated
Electric Company

GRANT STREET
284.3'

Driveway

Driveway



142.0'

MASSACHUSETTS AVENUE

1 Story Brick
Retail

New 2 Story Wood
Mix-Use
Arcade Building

Cobblestone Driveway

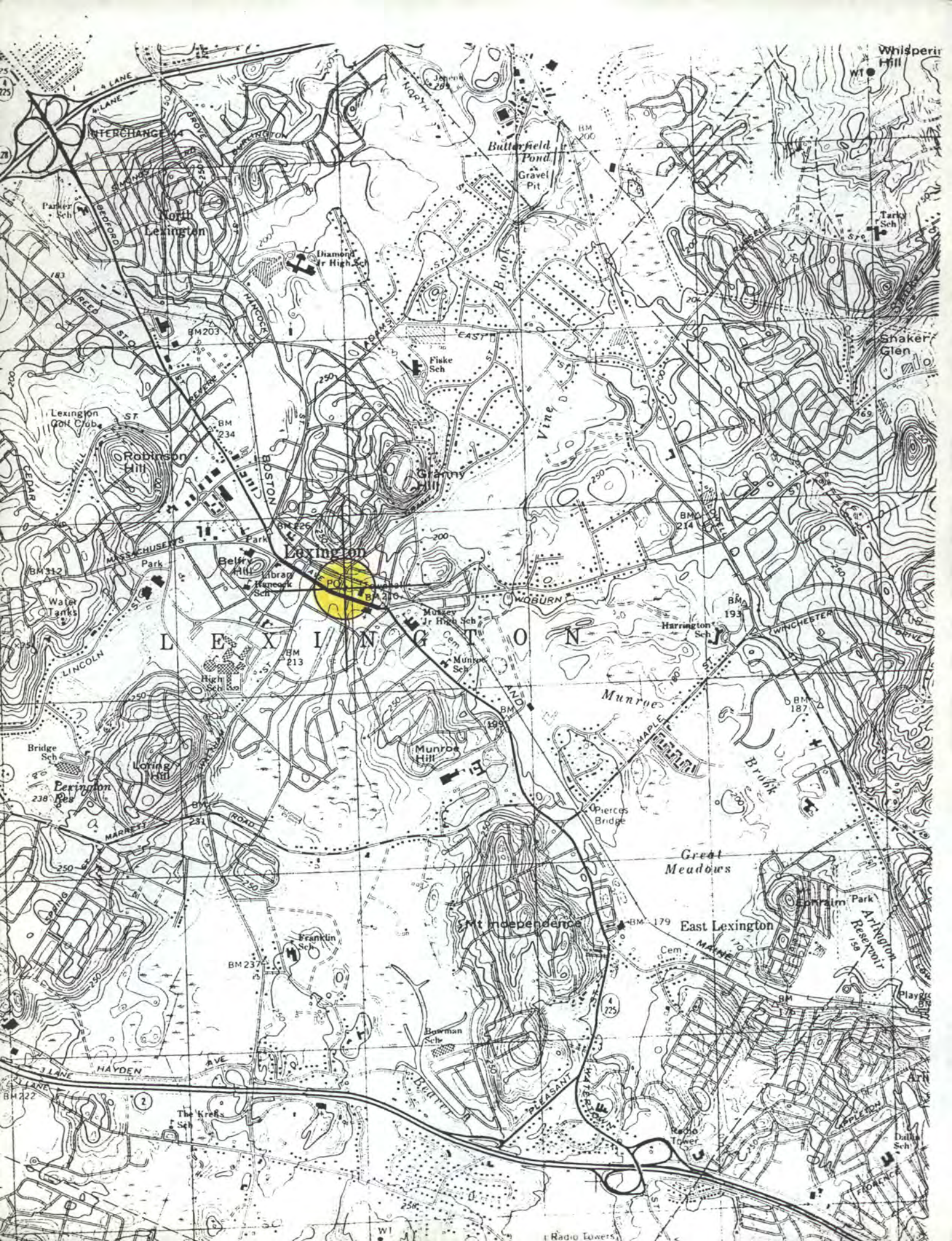
Both are 2 Story
Wood Frame
Retail/Residences

WALLIS COURT

- 1 - Post Office Boxes Lobby
- 2 - Service Lobby
- 3 - Postmaster's Office
- 4 - Workroom (original/added)
- 5 - Mail Vestibule
- 6 - Mail Platform
- 7 - Vehicle Area



UNITED STATES POST OFFICE - LEXINGTON, MASSACHUSETTS



86001377

less than 50 yrs.

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

Substantive Review

U.S. Post Office--Lexington Main
Middlesex County
MASSACHUSETTS

Working No. MAY 12 1986
Fed. Reg. Date: 2/3/87
Date Due: 5/13/86 - 6/26/86
Action: ACCEPT 6-26-86
 RETURN
 REJECT
Federal Agency: USPS

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

Substantive Review: sample request appeal NR decision

Reviewer's comments:

see attached sheet

Recom./Criteria Accept A+C
Reviewer Savage
Discipline Arch. History
Date 6-18-86
 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

- | | |
|------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> excellent | <input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated |
| <input type="checkbox"/> good | <input type="checkbox"/> ruins |
| <input type="checkbox"/> fair | <input type="checkbox"/> 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 _____

13. Other

- Maps
- Photographs
- Other

Questions concerning this nomination may be directed to _____

Signed _____ Date _____ Phone: _____

Review Comments

USPO--Lexington Main, Middlesex County, MA

Almost 50 years old, the 1937 United States Post Office at Lexington possesses exceptional historical and artistic significance for its lobby mural entitled "The Arrival of Paul Revere in Lexington, April 19, 1775" created in 1940 by acclaimed local artist Aiden Lassell Ripley under the auspices of the Treasury Department's Public Art programs of the 1930s-40s. The mural depicting Paul Revere's revolutionary ride is an important regional representative of artwork installed in Federal buildings during the 1930s and 40s in an effort to bring art to the public and to visually immortalize significant historical events. (This mural is listed in the Park and Markowitz, Democratic Vistas Appendix: Section Murals and Sculpture by State).

Additionally, the Post Office is an intact, locally significant, although modest, representative of the Georgian Revival Style.



UNITED STATES POST OFFICE

Lexington Post Office

LEXINGTON MAIN POST OFFICE

Lexington, MA

David R. Hooker

Earl R. Flansburgh and Associates

May 1983

Front elevation



UNITED STATES POST OFFICE

DANVERS, MASSACHUSETTS

Lexington Post Office

LEXINGTON MAIN POST OFFICE
Lexington, MA
David R. Hooker
Earl R. Flansburgh and Associates
May 1983
Front elevation. Left view



UNITED STATES POST OFFICE

1840 W. 10th Street

STOP

DO NOT ENTER

Lexington post Office

LEXINGTON MAIN POST OFFICE

Lexington, MA

David R. Hooker

Earl R. Flansburgh and Associates

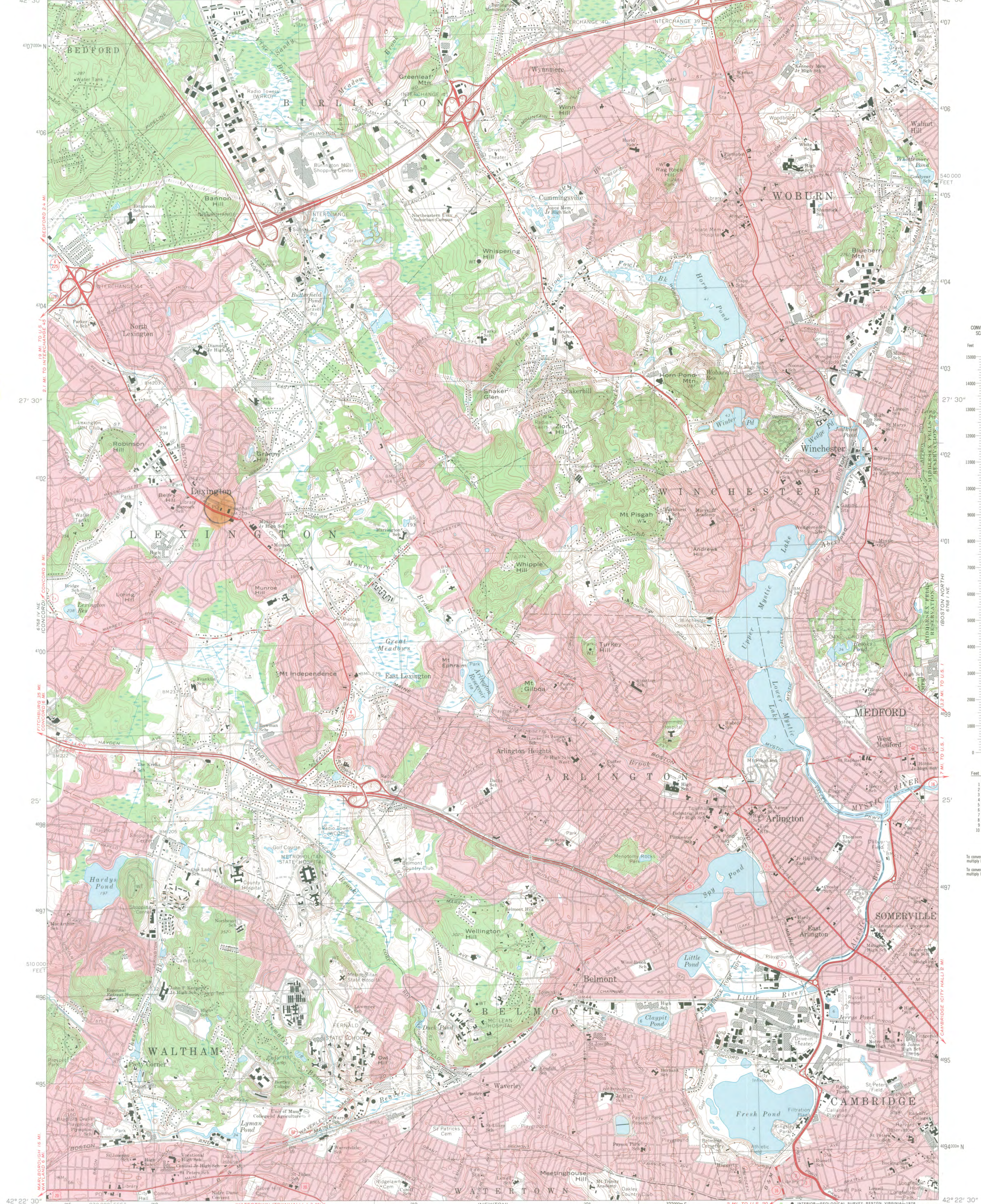
May 1983

Front elevation. Right view



Lexington Post Office
1661 Mass Ave
Lexington, MA

LEXINGTON MAIN POST OFFICE
Lexington, MA
David R. Hooker
Earl R. Flansburgh and Associates
May 1983
Mural



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 planimeter surveys 1943
 Revised from aerial photographs taken 1969. Field checked 1971
 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

SCALE 1:25 000
 CONTOUR INTERVAL 10 FEET
 NATIONAL GEODETIC VERTICAL DATUM OF 1929

UTM GRID AND 1971 MAGNETIC NORTH DECLINATION AT CENTER OF SHEET

ROAD CLASSIFICATION
 Primary highway, Light-duty road, hard or hard surface improved surface
 Secondary highway, Unimproved road
 Interstate Route U. S. Route State Route

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

LEXINGTON, MASS.
 N4222.5—W7107.5/7.5
 1971
 AMS 6768 1 NW—SERIES V814

U.S. POST OFFICE
 LEXINGTON, MA
 UTM REFERENCE:
 19/316965/4701590



FIELD REAL ESTATE AND BUILDINGS OFFICE
P.O. Box 324
Lexington, MA 02173-0324

August 19, 1985

The Honorable Robert M. Hutchinson, Jr.
Town Manager, Town of Lexington
Town Office Building
1625 Massachusetts Avenue
Lexington, MA 02173

Dear Town Manager Hutchinson:

The U.S. Postal Service in conjunction with the Massachusetts State Historic Preservation Officer in Boston has evaluated the Main Post Office in Lexington and has determined it is significant from an historical viewpoint.

In view of the above evaluation, the U.S. Postal Service intends to nominate this building to the National Register of Historic Places. We would, prior to our taking formal action, appreciate receiving your concurrence.

If you concur with our proposed action, kindly return a signed copy of this letter in the enclosed envelope.

Sincerely,

Gregory Gilleland
General Manager

Concur: _____

Enclosures

JPC/ljr



UNITED STATES POSTAL SERVICE
475 L'Enfant Plaza, SW
Washington, DC 20260

May 9, 1986

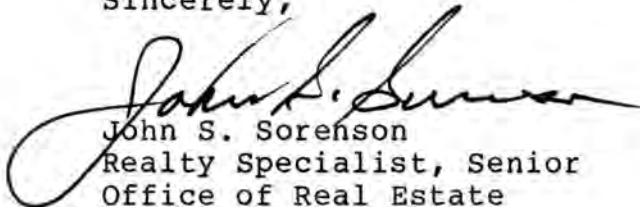
Ms. Carol D. Shull
Chief of Registration
National Register of Historic Places
National Park Service
Department of Interior
Washington, D.C. 20240-1002

Dear Ms. Shull:

The Postal Service hereby submits a nomination for the post office located at 1661 Massachusetts Avenue, Middlesex County, Lexington, Massachusetts.

If you have questions concerning this nomination, please call me at 202/268-3107.

Sincerely,


John S. Sorenson
Realty Specialist, Senior
Office of Real Estate

Enclosure

MAY 12 1986