

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Inventory—Nomination Form

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

For NPS use only

received

MAR 2 1983

date entered

1. Name

historic Ames Schoolhouse

and/or common Ames Schoolhouse

2. Location

street & number 450 Washington Street

~~N/A~~ not for publication

city, town Dedham

~~N/A~~ vicinity of

state Massachusetts

code 025

county Norfolk

code 021

3. Classification

Category

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

Ownership

☒ public
☒ private
☐ both

Public Acquisition

~~N/A~~ 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: Vacant

4. Owner of Property

name Nash Hirschfeld Associates Allan Nash

street & number 450 Washington Street

city, town Dedham

~~N/A~~ vicinity of

state MA

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Norfolk County Registry of Deeds

street & number High Street

city, town Boston

state MA

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Inventory of the Historic Assets
of The Commonwealth #201

has this property been determined eligible? ☐ yes ☒ no

date 1978

☐ federal ☒ state ☐ county ☐ local

depository for survey records Massachusetts Historical Commission

city, town Boston

state MA

7. Description

Ames Schoolhouse, Dedham, MA

Condition

☐ excellent
☒ good
☐ fair

☐ deteriorated
☐ ruins
☐ unexposed

Check one

☒ unaltered
☐ altered

Check one

☒ original site
☐ moved date N/A

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The Ames School faces northwest on Washington Street (now Route 1A) just south of Dedham's Business District. Set back 120 feet from the street, on a 2.04 acre plot, the Schoolhouse is a freestanding structure presently surrounded by an asphalt playground which gradually slopes to the rear (photos 1 and 2). To the north and east stand the Dedham Fire Station, Town Offices, two gasoline stations, and densely packed commercial buildings; architecturally they comprise Modern, 19th century and Colonial Revival styles. Across the street, and to the west, 19th century houses, separated from the road and each other by lawns, shrubs, and large trees, impart a domestic, suburban atmosphere. Several Greek Revival homes of brick or wooden frame construction lead from the west, along Washington Street, to the Ames Schoolhouse. Residences also abut the southern property line, but most of them are separated by back yards and a screen of deciduous trees.

Occupying the largest site on this part of Washington Street, and standing larger than any of its neighbors, the Ames Schoolhouse physically dominates this area. By its restrained monumentality, and good state of preservation, it emerges not only as a functionally valuable link in Dedham's suburban fabric, but also as a commendable example of school architecture at the turn of the 19th century.

Constructed in 1878, the Ames School is an imposing structure exhibiting elements of Colonial Revival and Shingle Style design. It is symmetrically organized with a recessed central bay flanked by classroom wings, thus creating a H-Shaped plan which satisfied the requirements of a grammar school. It rises two stories from a foundation of roughfaced pink Dedham granite to overhanging hip roofs currently covered with asphalt shingles. Above the basement, the wood frame building is sheathed with brown stained cedar shingles, and is trimmed with a molded watertable, fluted Ionic pilasters and a modillion cornice, all painted white. Windows are grouped in three's and contain 6/2 double-hung sash. The roof is pierced by eight dormers and each classroom wing is crowned by an arched cupola. A single chimney rises from the center of the building.

The facade (northwest) is highlighted by a two-story entrance unit (photo 3) within the recessed central bay. A recessed double entry is spanned by a commemorative terra cotta panel, which is in turn topped by a modified Palladian window. Here, the town leaders recalled their 17th century school and 18th century Congressman with a didactic inscription, "1644; The Ames Schoolhouse, 1897 Named in honor of Fisher Ames, a native of Dedham, a wise statesman, and a friend of Washington". The doors themselves are paneled and headed by leaded transoms; they are flanked by leaded sidelights as well. A pair of two-story engaged, Ionic columns, enframes the entire composition. At the attic level, a gabled dormer accentuates the verticality of this central bay. The entire central pavillion is in turn enframed by six bay classroom wings which project by three windows' width. This design provided each room with two exterior walls for maximum sunlight and ventilation.

The eastern and western elevations (photo 1) echo the treatment of the facade. Here, recessed entries are enframed by columns and windows in a Palladian motif; unfortunately, the original doors were replaced (probably within the past decade) by modern ones. Because the eastern classroom bay has a large assembly hall unit on its second floor, the central third of the eastern elevation has no upper windows. Instead, a frieze of swags and the inscription "UNION" bridges two giant pilasters. The western elevation articulates its threestory staircase with five windows grouped beneath the cornice.

Continued...

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National Park Service**

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

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received

date entered

Continuation sheet Ames Schoolhouse, Dedham Item number 7 Page 1

The southern elevation (photo 4) matches the northern facade in its attic story and classroom bays, though here a steel fire escape (an addition) rises along the eastern bay. Because the Ames School plot slopes towards the rear, the granite basement is one full story high, and has two doorways in each side bay, and one in the recessed central section. A coal bin projects from this bay, and a red brick wall stretches between its flat roof and the shingles of the first floor. Above, the fenestration is irregularly arranged, for the rooms behind were a laboratory and offices, rather than classrooms.

Inside, on the first level, eight classrooms open to a generously proportioned hallway which runs laterally, parallel to Washington Street. At both ends, staircases rise to the second floor, where there are five classrooms and an assembly hall with a recessed stage. The original four foot high fluted wainscotting (repainted bright blue and butt) and foliate ceiling brackets survive intact throughout the classrooms and corridors. The attic story was never occupied. Once this heavy timber framed space is finished, it will be usable. As suggested by the entrance facade, the central staircase is the circulatory and aesthetic focus of the interior. A half flight of stairs in the entry vestibule links grade level with the first story. Here, two wooden Tuscan columns and carved balusters lend the paired flights of stairs a comfortable domestic atmosphere. Above, the generously proportioned Palladian window floods this well with light. A glazed fire wall was later erected where the staircase opens on the second level, but here, as in the rest of the schoolhouse, the original ornament and the structure itself, is remarkably well-preserved.

8. Significance

Ames Schoolhouse, Dedham, MA

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
☐ prehistoric	☐ archeology-prehistoric	☐ community planning	☐ landscape architecture	☐ religion
☐ 1400-1499	☐ archeology-historic	☐ conservation	☐ law	☐ science
☐ 1500-1599	☐ agriculture	☐ economics	☐ literature	☐ sculpture
☐ 1600-1699	☒ architecture	☒ education	☐ military	☐ social/
☐ 1700-1799	☐ art	☐ engineering	☐ music	☐ humanitarian
☒ 1800-1899	☐ commerce	☐ exploration/settlement	☐ philosophy	☐ theater
☐ 1900-	☐ communications	☐ industry	☐ politics/government	☐ transportation
		☐ invention		☐ other (specify)

Specific dates erected in 1898 **Builder/Architect** Luther Greenleaf and Albert W. Cobb

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The Ames School possesses integrity of location, design, materials, workmanship, feeling and association. Built on the site of Dedham's first school, it possesses romantic associations with the town's illustrious seventeenth century origins. As an impressive public building it directly represents the town's development as a prosperous suburb. Finally, it is an excellent example of a monumentally scaled turn-of-the-century school in a Colonial Revival/Shingle style design. Thus, the Ames School meets criteria A and C of the National Register of Historic Places.

The Ames Schoolhouse was dedicated on June 17th, 1896 to serve children in grades 1-6. It was erected on the site of a free school established in 1645 and tried to evoke Dedham's past in both its architectural style and its motto ("1664", The Ames Schoolhouse 1897, named in honor of Fisher Ames, a native of Dedham, a wise statesman, and a friend of Washington"). Records of the dedication reveal that the style of the school was expected to inculcate patriotic virtues in the children who attended it.

Funded by general taxation of the entire population, the first Dedham school predated the 1648 statewide decree establishing local public schools. By 1649, a schoolhouse with a watch tower was built on the site of the present Ames School. Over the years, this became the First Middle School district, an institution which continued until 1981, when the Ames School closed.

While Dedham is perhaps best known as a Colonial and Federal period town, it continued to develop in the late 19th and early 20th centuries as a prosperous Boston suburb. During the 1880's and 1890's, Dedham outgrew its rural character. Then 6,000 people lived there, several factories rose in East Dedham, and each day 55 trains shuttled commuters to and from Boston.

During this period, many fine buildings were constructed, including some highly sophisticated public buildings by major architects. These included a high Victorian Gothic/Second Empire style Memorial Town Hall by Ware and Van Brunt in 1867 (demolished), a Romanesque Revival Style Public Library by Van Brunt and Howe in 1885 and a Neo-Classical style Registry of Deeds by Peabody & Stearns in 1905. In addition, a number of Renaissance and Colonial Revival style schools were commissioned by the town at the turn of the century. These included the Oakdale School of 1902-04, the Quincy School of 1910 and the Dedham High School of 1915. The earliest and finest was the Ames School of 1898. Unique in its wood frame, shingled construction, the Ames School represented the best in monumental turn-of-the-century schoolhouse design. It reflects the change from the medieval Romanesque and Gothic Revival styles to the classically inspired Renaissance and Georgian Revival styles and represents a fully developed two story/raised basement formula with H-shaped plan to allow maximum air and light in the classrooms.

continued....

9. Major Bibliographical References

Hanson, Robert Brank. Dedham, MA: 1635-1890. Dedham: 1976
Proceedings at the Dedication of the Ames Schoolhouse, Dedham, MA, June 17, 1898.
Dedham: 1899.
Stevens, John Calvin, and Cobb, Albert Winslow, Examples of American Domestic Architecture
New York, NY 1889

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property 2.04

Quadrangle name Norwood

Quadrangle scale 7.5. minute;
1:25000 scale

UTM References

A 19 320570 4679100
Zone Easting Northing

B
Zone Easting Northing

C

D

E

F

G

H

Verbal boundary description and justification

Please see attached copy of Dedham's assessor's map. Current lot division excludes the firestation referenced on that map. See also attached topographical map.

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state	code	county	code
N/A			

state	code	county	code
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11. Form Prepared By

name/title Candace Jenkins, Registration Director with Philip Arcidi, Tufts University CBT, Architects

organization Massachusetts Historical Commission date December, 1982

street & number 294 Washington Street telephone 617-727-8470

city or town Boston state MA

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

☐ national ☐ state ☒ local

As the designated State Historic Preservation 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.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature Patricia L. Weslowski

title State Historic Preservation Officer date 2/24/83

For NPS use only

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

for Alvina Byers
Keeper of the National Register

Entered in the
National Register

date 3/31/83

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

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

**National Register of Historic Places
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date entered

Continuation sheet Ames Schoolhouse, Dedham Item number 8

Page 1

Architects Luther Greenleaf and Albert Cobb maintained an office in Springfield, MA. from the 1890's through the early 20th century. Although little is known about Mr. Greenleaf, Cobb's career is somewhat better known. Cobb was born in Boston in 1868 and graduated from Tufts College in Medford. He studied architecture at M.I.T. and continued his training in the Boston offices of Peabody & Stearns, and later, Shepley, Rutan and Coolidge. At the age of 21, he formed a partnership with John Calvin Stevens, erecting buildings in the Boston area and Maine, and publishing a book entitled "Examples of American Domestic Architecture" in 1889. In the early 1890's, Cobb moved to Springfield and joined forces with Greenleaf. His obituary of 1941 cites the Ames School as their finest work.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

Ames Schoolhouse
Norfolk County
MASSACHUSETTS

Working No. MAR 2 1983
Fed. Reg. Date: 2-7-83
Date Due: 3/31/83 - 4/16/83
Action: ☒ ACCEPT 3/31/83
☐ RETURN
Entered in the ☐ REJECT
National Register
Federal Agency: _____

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

Entered in the ☐ RETURN
National Register ☐ REJECT
Federal Agency: _____

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		Check one	Check one
☐ excellent	☐ deteriorated	☐ unaltered	☐ original site
☐ good	☐ ruins	☐ altered	☐ moved date _____
☐ fair	☐ unexposed		

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

Address of nominated property _____

Geographic name _____

USIT 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: 202 272-3504

Comments for any item may be continued on an attached sheet



Ames Schoolhouse

4⁵⁰ Washington St., Dedham MA

credit: Nash-Hirschfeld Assoc.

4⁵⁰ Washington St., Dedham MA

photo #1 of 4

northern (front) and eastern elevs.



Ames Schoolhouse

450 Washington St., Dedham, MA

credit: Nash-Hirschfeld Assoc.

450 Washington St., Dedham MA

photo # 2 of 4

northern (front) elevation



Ames Schoolhouse

4.56 Washington St., Dedham, MA

credit: Nash-Hirschfeld Assoc.

4.59 Washington St., Dedham MA

photo # 3 of 4

detail of main entrance, northern
(front) elevation



Ames Schoolhouse

450 Washington St., Dedham, MA

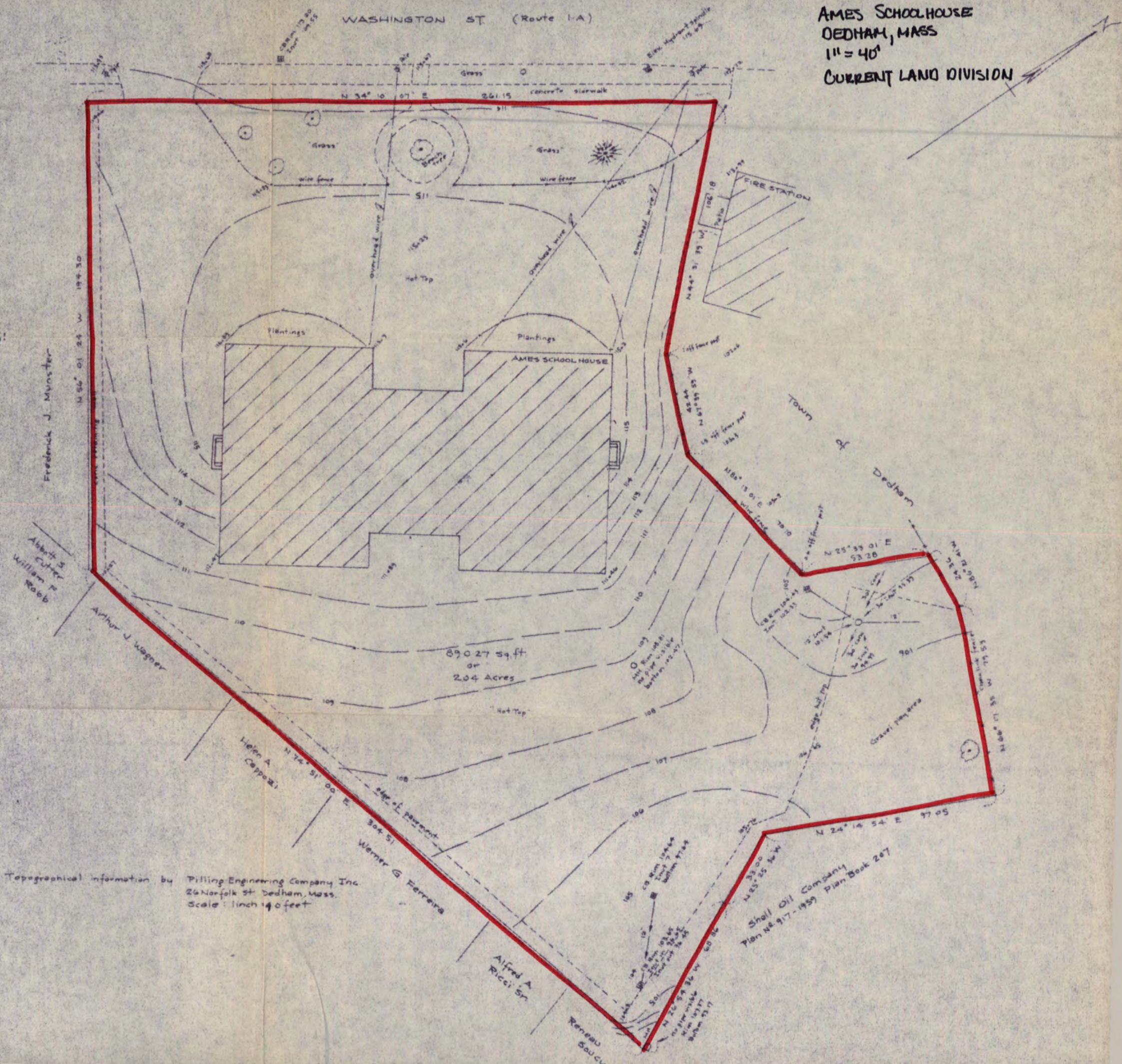
credit: Nash-Hirschfeld Assoc.

450 Washington St., Dedham, MA

photo # 4 of 4

eastern and southern elevations

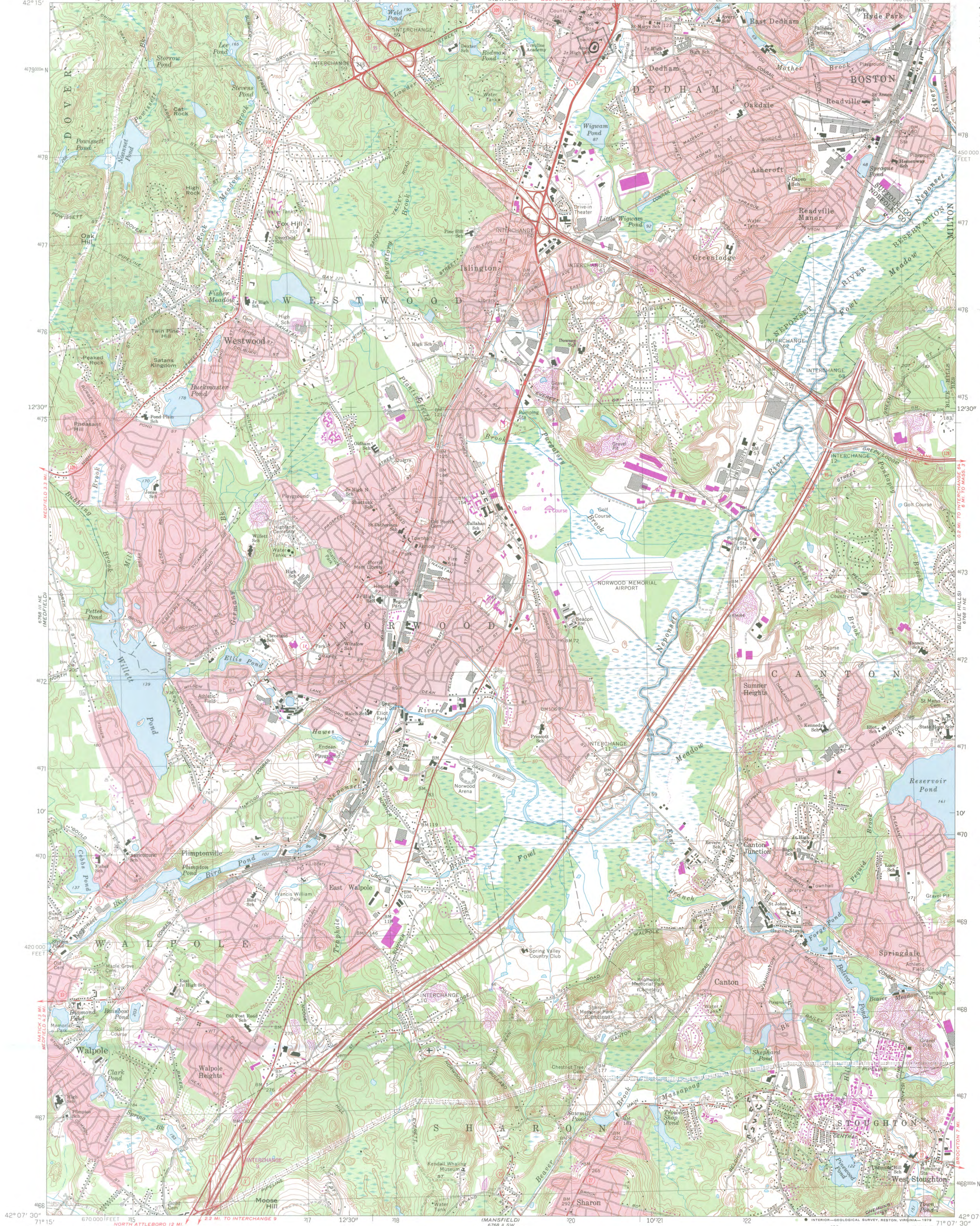
CURRENT LAND DIVISION





Property owners names - as of 1967

RECEIVED
AUG 1 9 1982



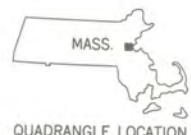
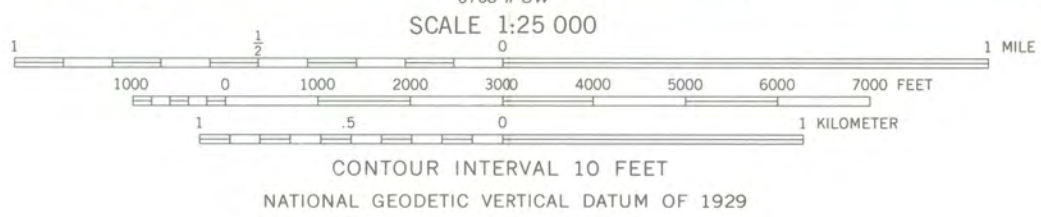
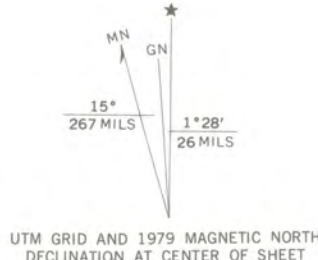
CONVERSION
SCALES



Feet	Meters
1	3048
2	6096
3	9144
4	12192
5	15240
6	18288
7	21336
8	24384
9	27432
10	30480

To convert feet to meters
multiply by 3.048
To convert meters to feet
multiply by 3.2808

Maped, edited, and published by the Geological Survey
Control by USGS, USC&GS, Massachusetts Harbor and Land
Commission, and Massachusetts Geodetic Survey
Topography by planetable surveys 1936. 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
There may be private inholdings within the boundaries of
the National or State reservations shown on this map
Revisions shown in purple compiled in cooperation with State of
Massachusetts agencies from aerial photographs taken 1977 and other
source data. This information not field checked. Map edited 1979



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

NORWOOD, MASS.
N4207.5-W7107.5/7.5
1970
PHOTOREVISED 1979
AMS 6768 II NW-SERIES V814

DEDHAM HISTORICAL SOCIETY
DEDHAM, MASSACHUSETTS 02026

12 July 1982

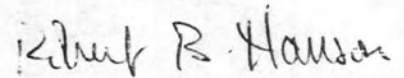
Mr. Charles N. Tseckares
Childs Bertman Tseckares & Casendino Inc.
306 Dartmouth Street
Boston, Mass. 02116

Dear Mr. Tseckares:

The Dedham Historical Society is pleased to hear of your proposed work on the Ames School Building, and is further delighted by the sensitivity and concern you have shown for architectural and historic aspects of the building's impact on the neighborhood and the Town. It is always a pleasure to note the vibrant re-use of a local landmark (not to mention an architecturally significant structure), rather than to mourn its uncereemonious demolition or aesthetic butchery.

We fully support your endeavors with the Ames school, including your proposal to submit the building for National Register status, and we hope that you will feel free to call upon us for any assistance that we may be able to render.

Yours truly,



Robert B. Hanson, President



**MASSACHUSETTS
HISTORICAL
COMMISSION**

**COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS
Office of the Secretary of State**

294 Washington Street
Boston, Massachusetts
02108
617-727-8470

MICHAEL JOSEPH CONNOLLY
Secretary of State

February 24, 1983

Ms. Carol Shull, Chief
National Register of Historic Places
National Park Service
Department of the Interior
Washington, D.C. 20243

Dear Ms. Shull:

Enclosed you will find the following nomination forms:

Boston - Harvard Avenue Fire Station (Local)
Dedham - Ames School (Local)
Needham - Amos Fuller House (Local)
Newbury - Hale-Boynton House (Local)
Northbridge - Rockdale Common Housing District (Local)
Springfield - Upper Worthington Historic District (Local)
Winchester - Town Hall (Local)

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 forms.

Sincerely,

Candace Jenkins

Candace Jenkins
Registration Director

CJ/lk

RECEIVED

NATIONAL
REGISTER