

FORM B - BUILDING

Area	Form no.
	323

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
80 Boylston Street, Boston, MA 02116

PHOTO (3x3" or 3x5", black & white)
Staple to left side of form
Photo number _____

SKETCH MAP

Draw map showing property's
location in relation to nearest
cross streets and other buildings
or geographical features.
Indicate north.

Recorded by Betsy Friedberg
Organization Mass. Historical Commission
Date 12/84

Town Arlington, MA
Address 202-208 Massachusetts Avenue
Historic Name Capitol Theater Building
Use: Original movie theater with commercial and residential adjunct.
Present same usage
Ownership: Private individual
Private organization
Public
Original owner Albert J. Locatelli

DESCRIPTION:

Date 1925
Source Arlington Advocate
Style Classical Revival
Architect William J. Drummey
Exterior wall fabric brick & composition stone
Outbuildings None

Major alterations (with dates) None

Moved No Date N/A

Approx. acreage Less than one acre

Setting This building anchors the north-west corner of the intersection of Massachusetts Avenue and Lake Street

UTM: 19/323630/4696820

(Staple additional sheets here)

ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE (describe important architectural features and evaluate in terms of other buildings within community)

The Capitol Theater Building houses one of the best-preserved early 20th century moving picture theaters in the Boston area. Vaguely Baroque, with a liberal dose of later stylistic touches including early Art Deco, the theater is the most important part of the building. The building also includes office and commercial space, as well as apartments. The exterior is also well preserved. The storefronts retain much of their original Classical Revival detailing, while the upper floors are enlivened by an impressive center bay of recessed coupled columns, broken pediments, quoins, cartouches, and numerous other classical elements.

HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE (explain the role owners played in local or state history and how the building relates to the development of the community)

Built in 1925, the Capitol Theater Building was designed by architect William J. Drummey. It was originally part of the Albert Locatelli theater chain, which included the Ball Square and Central Square Theaters in Somerville. Costing \$500,000, the building contained 11 stores, 12 offices, a theater with a seating capacity of 1,700, and 15 apartments on the third floor. Publicity releases listed among the notable features the theater's organ, which the management claimed was "the largest of its kind in New England" (made by Robert Morton Co. and capable of producing 150 "effects"). In its early years, it was also said to have "the largest electric sign in New England" and "a stage equipped to turn to vaudeville."

When the theater opened to the public in 1925, its interiors were much praised by the press. It was noted that "above the organ chambers were two frescos, copied from postcards brought by Mr. Locatelli from Italy. One depicted Lake Maggiore, and the other the Fort of St. Gotard in the Italian Alps."

The Capitol Theater symbolized East Arlington's 1920s transition from a market gardening center to a densely populated suburban neighborhood, an area noted at the time as "the most rapidly growing section of Arlington."

CRITERIA FOR EVALUATION

The Capitol Theater Building possesses integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association. It meets Criteria A and C of the National Register of Historic Places.

BIBLIOGRAPHY and/or REFERENCES

Arlington Advocate, November 27, 1925 p.1; August 28, 1925, p.7.

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 Arlington Multiple Resource Area
State Middlesex County, MASSACHUSETTS

Nomination/Type of Review

Date/Signature

11. Bassett, Maria, House

Entered in the
National Register

for Keeper Melora Byers 9/27/85

Attest

Name change
already listed
DIST
12. Buildings at 1334 and
1339 Massachusetts Ave.

Substantive Review

Keeper

Attest

13. Call-Bartlett House

Entered in the
National Register

for Keeper Melora Byers 4/18/85

Attest

14. Capitol Theater Building

Entered in the
National Register

for Keeper Melora Byers 4/18/85

Attest

15. Chapel of St. Anne

Entered in the
National Register

for Keeper Melora Byers 4/18/85

Attest

16. Cushman House

Entered in the
National Register

for Keeper Melora Byers 4/18/85

Attest

17. Cutter, Jefferson, House

Entered in the
National Register

for Keeper Melora Byers 4/18/85

Attest

18. Cutter, Second, A.P.,
House

Entered in the
National Register

for Keeper Melora Byers 4/18/85

Attest

19. Damon House

Entered in the
National Register

for Keeper Melora Byers 4/18/85

Attest

20. Farmer, Kimball, House

Entered in the
National Register

for Keeper Melora Byers 4/18/85

Attest

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

Capitol Theater Building (Arlington MRA)
Middlesex County
MASSACHUSETTS

Working No. MAR 6 1985
Fed. Reg. Date: 2/4/86
Date Due: 7/4/85 - 4/20/85
Action: ACCEPT 4-18-85
 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 sheet

Nomination returned for: _____ technical corrections cited below
_____ substantive reasons discussed below

1. Name

2. Location

3. Classification

Category	Ownership Public Acquisition	Status Accessible	Present Use

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
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> original site
<input type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> moved date _____
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed	
	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	
	<input type="checkbox"/> 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

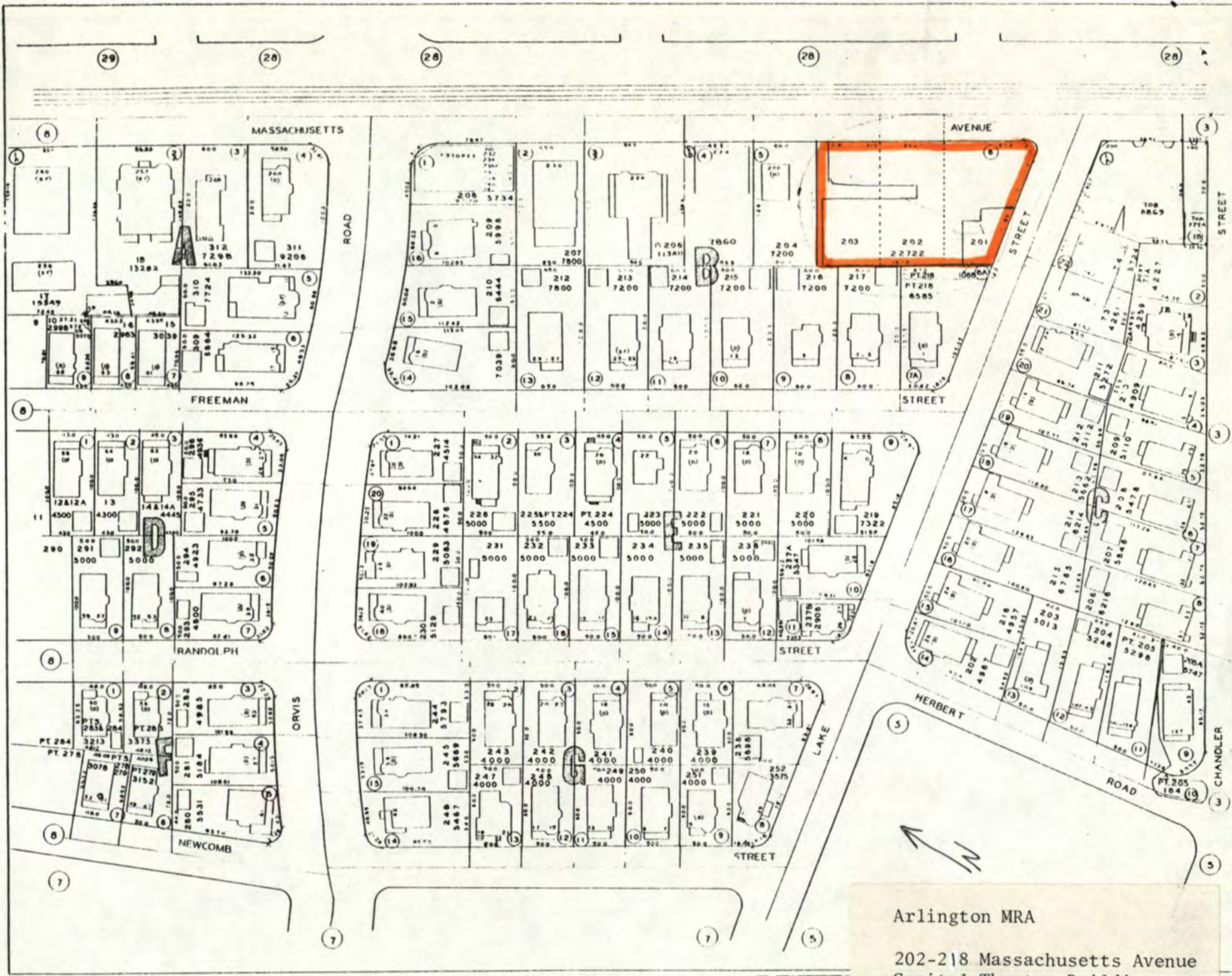
Questions concerning this nomination may be directed to _____

Signed _____ Date _____ Phone: _____



Capitol Theater Building

202-208 Massachusetts Ave



Arlington MRA

202-218 Massachusetts Avenue
 Capitol Theater Building

SCALE 0 50 100