

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Registration Form



1178

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name Miss Worcester Diner (The Diners of Massachusetts MPS)  
other names/site number Worcester Lunch Car Co. # 812

2. Location

street & number 302 Southbridge Street not for publication  
city or town Worcester vicinity \_\_\_\_\_  
state Massachusetts code MA county Worcester code 027 zip code 01608

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, as amended, I hereby certify that this  nomination  request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant  nationally  statewide  locally. ( See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Betsy Friedberg National Register Director 10/2/03  
Signature of certifying official/Title Cara H. Metz, Executive Director Date  
Massachusetts Historical Commission, State Historic Preservation Officer

State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register criteria. ( See continuation sheet for additional Comments.)

Signature of certifying official/Title \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

- I, hereby certify that this property is:
- entered in the National Register  
 See continuation sheet.
  - determined eligible for the National Register  
 See continuation sheet.
  - determined not eligible for the National Register
  - removed from the National Register
  - other (explain): \_\_\_\_\_

Edson H. Beall Signature of the Keeper 11/21/03 Date of Action

Miss Worcester Diner  
Name of Property

Worcester County, Massachusetts  
County and State

**5. Classification**

**Ownership of Property**

(Check as many boxes as apply)

(Check only one box)

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

**Number of Resources within Property**

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1	0	building
0	0	sites
0	0	structures
0	1	objects
1	1	Total

**Name of related multiple property listing**  
(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

Twentieth-Century Commercial Architecture:  
The Diners of Massachusetts MPS

**Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register**

N/A

**6. Function or Use**

**Historic Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions)

COMMERCE/TRADE/restaurant  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Current Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions)

COMMERCE/TRADE/restaurant  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**7. Description**

**Architectural Classification**

(Enter categories from instructions)

Other: New England Barrel Roof Diner  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Materials**

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation brick  
walls porcelain enamel  
\_\_\_\_\_  
roof metal  
other  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Narrative Description**

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

Miss Worcester Diner

Name of Property

Worcester, Massachusetts

County and State

**8. Statement of Significance**

**Applicable National Register Criteria**

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- A** Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B** Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C** Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D** Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

**Criteria Considerations**

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- A** owned by religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B** removed from its original location.
- C** a birthplace or grave.
- D** a cemetery.
- E** a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F** a commemorative property.
- G** less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

**Narrative Statement of Significance**

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

**9. Major Bibliographical References**

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

**Previous documentation on file (NPS):**

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # \_\_\_\_\_
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # \_\_\_\_\_

**Areas of Significance**

(Enter categories from instructions)

Architecture \_\_\_\_\_

Commerce \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Period of Significance**

1948-1953

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Significant Dates**

N/A

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Significant Person**

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

**Cultural Affiliation**

N/A

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Architect/Builder**

Worcester Lunch Car Company

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Primary location of additional data:**

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Name of repository:

\_\_\_\_\_

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

The Diners of Massachusetts MPS  
Miss Worcester Diner  
Worcester (Worcester Co.), MA

Section number 7 Page 1

---

### 7. Description

Miss Worcester Diner, 302 Southbridge Street, Worcester (1948) is a well preserved and late example of the traditional barrel-roofed diner form in Massachusetts. Manufactured in 1948 as #812 by the Worcester Lunch Car Company, the Miss Worcester displays the form for which the company is best known. The diner is located in a historic industrial area dominated by the elevated tracks of the Providence & Worcester Railroad on the west side of Southbridge Street. The Miss Worcester is situated adjacent to the sidewalk at the intersection of Southbridge Street and Quinsigamond Avenue, with its narrow end fronting Southbridge Street. Directly south across Quinsigamond Avenue is a brick industrial building that once housed the manufacturing operations of the Worcester Lunch Car Company. Occupying the same parcel as the diner, and extending north and northeast of the diner, is a brick mill (1870s) that was used to process wool waste in the late 1940s, when the Miss Worcester was installed. For the purpose of this nomination, the property boundary has been drawn to exclude the brick mill.

The Miss Worcester is seven bays wide and three bays deep, on a brick foundation, with a rounded hipped roof clad in metal, and porcelain enamel wall panels in pale yellow with light blue detailing. Entries with short staircases and canopies projecting from the barrel roof are located at either end of the diner. These entries contain wood doors. Windows have single-hung steel sash. Signage appears on the exterior wall panels and in a contemporary, internally lit standing sign (ca. 1980, non-contributing) on the west side of the diner. A one-story, concrete block kitchen wing projects from the north (rear) wall of the diner, away from the intersection. The wing dates to ca. 1948 and includes a passage lined with glass block at the diner's northeast corner. Due to the placement of the diner on its lot, the wing is a secondary feature that does not compromise the integrity of the factory-built diner.

On the interior, the Miss Worcester retains its full-length marble counter with staff entrances at the ends. Seating consists of fourteen steel counter stools with red enamel accents, and five booths at the windows along the south (front) wall. The booths are laminated plywood replacements. Grill and food prep areas are located behind the counter, with additional kitchen operations in the rear wing. In contrast to the pale yellow and light blue color scheme of the exterior, the interior finishes are principally dark red, cream, and brown with steel accents, as seen at the counter apron, the back bar, and the walls beneath the windows. The end walls and grill hood have a wood finish, the barrel ceiling is plastic laminate with wood braces, and some enamel cabinets remain in the back bar. The floor tiles—brown, tan, and cream—extend to the footrest at the counter stools.

### Archaeological Description

While no ancient Native American sites are located on the nominated property or in the general area (within one mile), sites may be present. The diner is located in a historic industrial area of Worcester where the natural environmental characteristics of the landscape have been obscured by mill, transportation-related, and diner construction. While the diner's site may have originally been nearly level and well drained, the nearest wetlands are currently located over 1,000 feet away. Given the above information, the size of the parcel (less than one acre) and the presence of the existing diner and earlier diner on the site, a low potential exists for locating significant ancient Native American resources on the property.

A moderate to high potential exists for locating historic archaeological resources on the property. Additional documentary studies combined with archaeological survey and testing may identify archaeological evidence of

(continued)

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

The Diners of Massachusetts MPS  
Miss Worcester Diner  
Worcester (Worcester Co.), MA

Section number 7/8 Page 2/1

---

outbuildings and other industrial related structures associated with the brick mill built on the same parcel as the diner in the 1870s. Similar research may locate evidence of the earlier diner that predated the Miss Worcester diner on the same property. Historical evidence indicated the earlier diner was extant until after the Miss Worcester was constructed indicating evidence of the earlier diner may exist on the adjacent site. Archaeological evidence may exist from occupational related features associated with industrial activities conducted at the brick mill from the 1870s to the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century.

(end)

#### 8. Statement of Significance

The Miss Worcester Diner(1948) is a fine and late example of the traditional barrel-roofed diner produced by the Worcester Lunch Car Company, the state's premier diner builder and a major force in the design and construction of Massachusetts diners before World War II. As a postwar example of the company's handcrafted work, the Miss Worcester illustrates the diner form most closely associated with the history of Massachusetts diners since the 1920s. Locally, Miss Worcester Diner has long been considered the city's signature diner, situated directly across the street from the Worcester Lunch Car Company factory building and serving as a working model for prospective diner buyers. Retaining integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association, Miss Worcester Diner meets Criteria A and C of the National Register at the state and local levels.

According to the records of the Worcester Lunch Car Company, the Miss Worcester was diner #812 built for Dino Soteropoulos [*sic*] and delivered on June 14, 1948. The diner was installed at 302 Southbridge Street, directly across the street from the company's factory at 4 Quinsigamond Avenue. Several individuals had operated a diner at the Southbridge Street address since at least the late 1930s. Worcester directories indicate that at least one diner building preceded the Miss Worcester on this site. Fred Gramm operated Carroll's Diner at this address in 1939, and in 1940, John P. Holden began operating the Star Diner. From the mid-1940s to 1948, George L. C. Bianchi of Worcester was proprietor of the Star Diner. Bianchi was also manager of Bianchi Tile & Marble Company, based at his residence at 5 Pine Tree Drive, Worcester. The company was a supplier of marble, tile, slate, rubber tile, "lino-tile," and asphalt tile. In 1949, Dino Soteropoulos [*sic*] operated the Star Diner at 302 Southbridge Street, according to the directory of that year. Soteropoulos resided on Central Street.

Though the Miss Worcester was delivered to Soteropoulos in 1948, the diner is not listed by name in the Worcester directory until 1950. This may indicate that the owner had not yet disposed of the previous diner on the site when construction of the Miss Worcester was completed. The 1949 Sanborn map for Worcester shows the present building, with its concrete block kitchen annex, on the site.

In 1950, Dino Soteropoulos and Theo C. Soter, both of Central Street, were the operators of the Miss Worcester, joined by Andrew T. Soter in 1951. It seems likely that Soteropoulos was related to the Soters and that sections of the family had shortened the name. The three men continued to run the diner until about 1963, when Costa Mitro of Webster acquired the diner. George Army, who resided at 397 Massasoit Road, ran the Miss Worcester from 1968 until his

(continued)

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

The Diners of Massachusetts MPS  
Miss Worcester Diner  
Worcester (Worcester Co.), MA

Section number 8/9 Page 2/1

---

retirement in 1979, after which he continued, until at least 1985, as the president of the business known as Miss Worcester Inc. The (2001) operator of the business was Tina Budzinski, a former waitress at the Miss Worcester and the Corner Lunch, 133 Lamartine Street (mid-1950s, NR 2000), located one block away, and the current [2003] owner is Frank Riggeri.

Worcester Lunch Car Company built 651 lunch cars and diners between 1907 and 1957. [Gutman, 161 and 243] The Miss Worcester represents the wood-frame, New England barrel roof diner for which the company was best known. This traditional diner form failed to compete successfully, however, with the larger stainless steel and sectional diners available from several out-of-state manufacturers, particularly after World War II. In fact, the exterior design of the company's barrel-roof diner had seen few updates since the late 1930s, as illustrated by a comparison of the Miss Worcester and another Worcester-built diner in the city, the Boulevard Diner, 155 Shrewsbury Street (1936, NR 2000). [Ceccacci] The Worcester Lunch Car Company sold its last new diner in 1957 and closed in 1961.

#### Archaeological Significance

Historical archaeological resources described above may contribute significant information relating to the industrial development of Worcester from ca. 1870 through the mid-twentieth century. Potential archaeological evidence of outbuildings, structures and occupational related features associated with the brick mill (1870) may contribute information on the internal configuration of the mill site and its activities. Documentary resources and archaeological testing may identify the full range of textile activities that occurred at the mill and technologies used during those operations. Important archaeological information relating to wool processing and/or manufacture may survive in the area. Structural and locational information may survive from the diner that preceded the Miss Worcester Diner at this location. This information may have limited research value, however, archaeological information may help clarify information in the documentary record. Apparently, it is unclear whether the Miss Worcester physically replaced the earlier diner or whether the previous diner remained until construction for the Miss Worcester Diner was completed. Archaeological resources may clarify the land use history and locations of the two diners.

(end)

#### 9. Major Bibliographical References

- Diner Finder Deluxe: Massachusetts*. Watertown, MA: Coffee Cup Publications, 1991.  
Gutman, Richard J. S. *American Diner Then and Now*. New York: Harper Collins Publishers, 1993.  
MHC Inventory Form for Miss Worcester Diner (prepared by Susan Ceccacci), September 1983.  
*Polk's Worcester City Directory: 1939-1985*.  
*Roadside Magazine*, October 1996 (clipping on display at Miss Worcester Diner).  
*Sanborn Fire Insurance Map* for Worcester, 1936 corrected to 1949.  
Worcester Lunch Car Company records, index cards showing diner numbers, original owners, and delivery dates for the company's diners. Worcester Historical Museum.

(end)



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

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

**The Diners of Massachusetts MPS  
Miss Worcester Diner  
Worcester (Worcester Co.), MA**

**Section number** 10 **Page** 1

---

**10. Geographical Data**

**Verbal Boundary Description**

The nominated property occupies a portion of parcel 13, book 5, sheet 12 (see accompanying detail of the City of Worcester assessors' map). For the purpose of this nomination, an arbitrary boundary line has been drawn ten feet behind the diner's eastern side to encompass the diner and adjoining kitchen wing but to exclude the brick mill building that is also on the same parcel.

**Boundary Justification**

The boundary includes a portion of the parcel that has been historically associated with the diner. For the purpose of this nomination, the brick mill building (1870s) that shares the parcel has been excluded.

(end)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: NOMINATION

PROPERTY Miss Worcester Diner  
NAME:

MULTIPLE Diners of Massachusetts MPS  
NAME:

STATE & COUNTY: MASSACHUSETTS, Worcester

DATE RECEIVED: 10/06/03      DATE OF PENDING LIST: 11/05/03  
DATE OF 16TH DAY: 11/21/03      DATE OF 45TH DAY: 11/20/03  
DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:

REFERENCE NUMBER: 03001178

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      11/21/03 DATE

ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:

Entered in the  
National Register

RECOM./CRITERIA \_\_\_\_\_

REVIEWER \_\_\_\_\_ DISCIPLINE \_\_\_\_\_

TELEPHONE \_\_\_\_\_ DATE \_\_\_\_\_

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

PEPSI  
MISS WORCESTER  
DINER

LOW CLEARANCE  
14 ft 1 in

BOOTH  
SERVICE

Miss Worcester

BOOTH  
SERVICE

OPEN

OPEN



Diners of Mass. MPS

Miss Worcester Diner  
302 Southbridge Street  
Worcester, Worcester County, Mass.

KK Broomer  
Neg: MHC  
September 2001

Photo 1 of 2



Diners of Mass. MPS

Miss Worcester Diner  
302 Southbridge Street  
Worcester, Worcester County, Mass.

KK Brauner

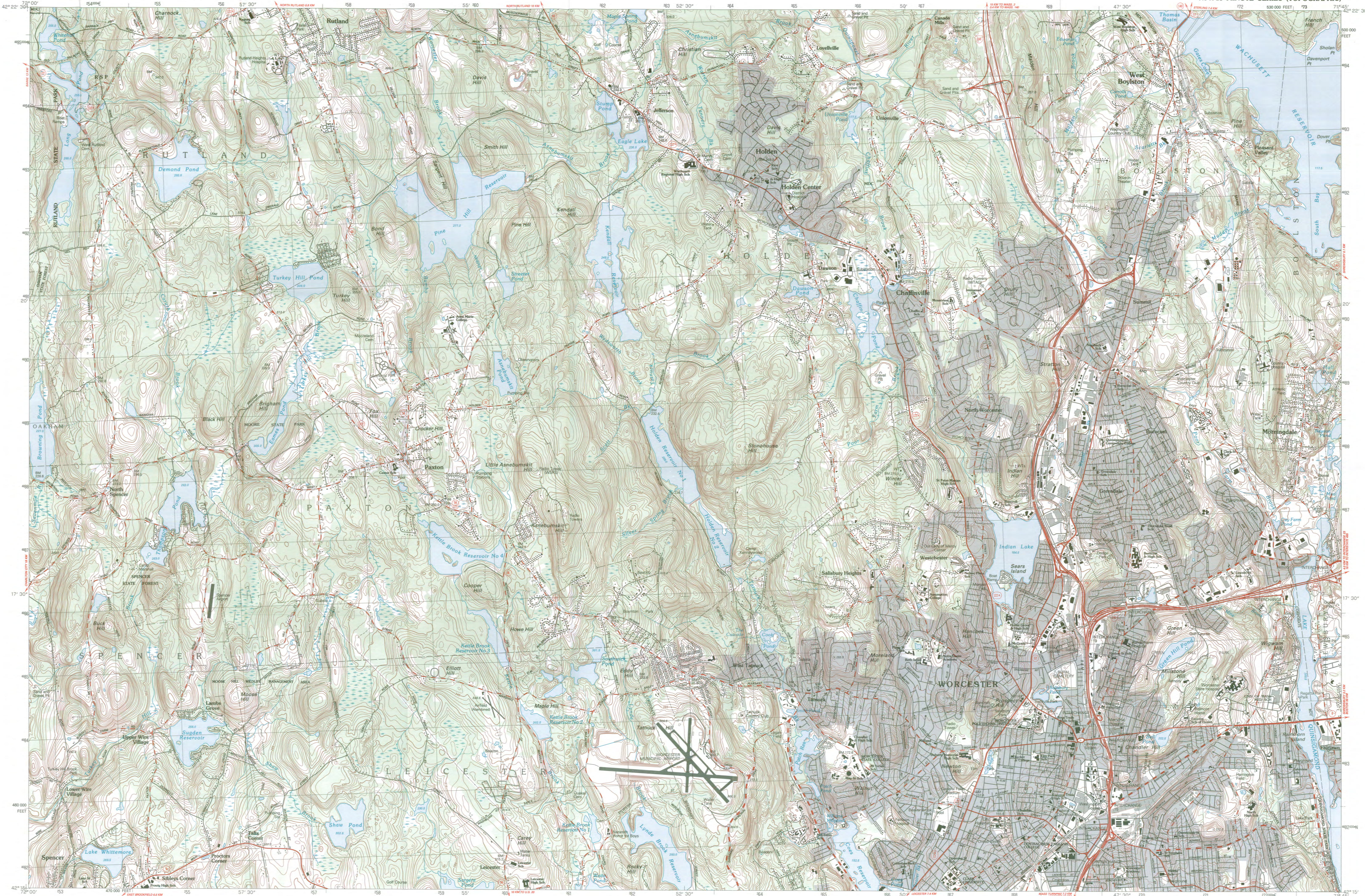
Neg: MHC  
September 2001

Photo 2 of 2

XIV / 11-11A

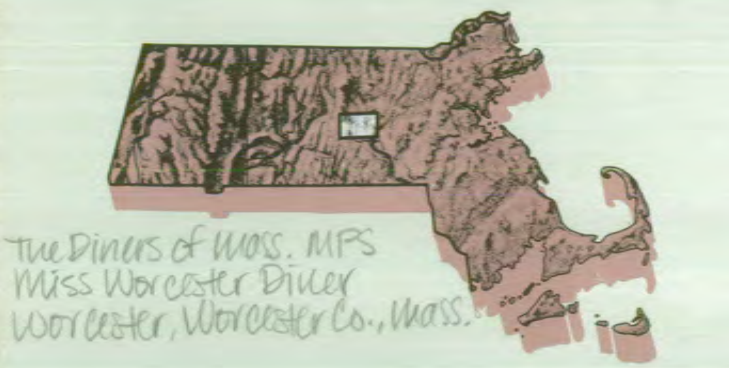
WORCESTER NORTH, MASSACHUSETTS WORCESTER COUNTY

7.5 X 15 MINUTE SERIES (TOPOGRAPHIC)



# Worcester North

MASSACHUSETTS  
1:25 000-scale metric  
topographic map



The Diners of Mass. MFS  
Miss Worcester Diner  
Worcester, Worcester Co., Mass.

- 7.5 X 15 MINUTE QUADRANGLE SHOWING
- Contours and elevations in meters
  - Highways, roads and other manmade structures
  - Water features
  - Woodland areas
  - Geographic names



Produced by the United States Geological Survey in cooperation with Massachusetts Department of Public Works  
 Control by USGS, NOS/NOAA, and Massachusetts Geodetic Survey  
 Compiled by photogrammetric methods from aerial photographs taken 1980. Field checked 1982. Map edited 1983  
 Supersedes Paxton and Worcester North 1:25,000-scale maps dated 1965 and 1974

Projection and 1000-meter grid, zone 19: Universal Transverse Mercator  
 10,000-foot grid ticks based on Massachusetts coordinate system, mainland zone. 1927 North American Datum  
 To place on the projected North American Datum 1983 move the projection lines 6 meters south and 40 meters west as shown by dashed corner ticks  
 There may be private inholdings within the boundaries of the National or State reservations shown on this map  
 CONTOUR INTERVAL 3 METERS  
 NATIONAL GEODETIC VERTICAL DATUM OF 1929  
 CONTROL ELEVATIONS SHOWN TO THE NEAREST 0.1 METER  
 OTHER ELEVATIONS SHOWN TO THE NEAREST 0.5 METER

THIS MAP COMPLES WITH NATIONAL MAP ACCURACY STANDARDS

Meters	Feet
1	3.2808
2	6.5617
3	9.8425
4	13.1234
5	16.4042
6	19.6850
7	22.9659
8	26.2467
9	29.5275
10	32.8084

To convert meters to feet multiply by 3.2808  
 To convert feet to meters multiply by 0.3048

DECLINATION DIAGRAM	ADJOINING MAPS
	1 2 3
	4 5
	6 7 8

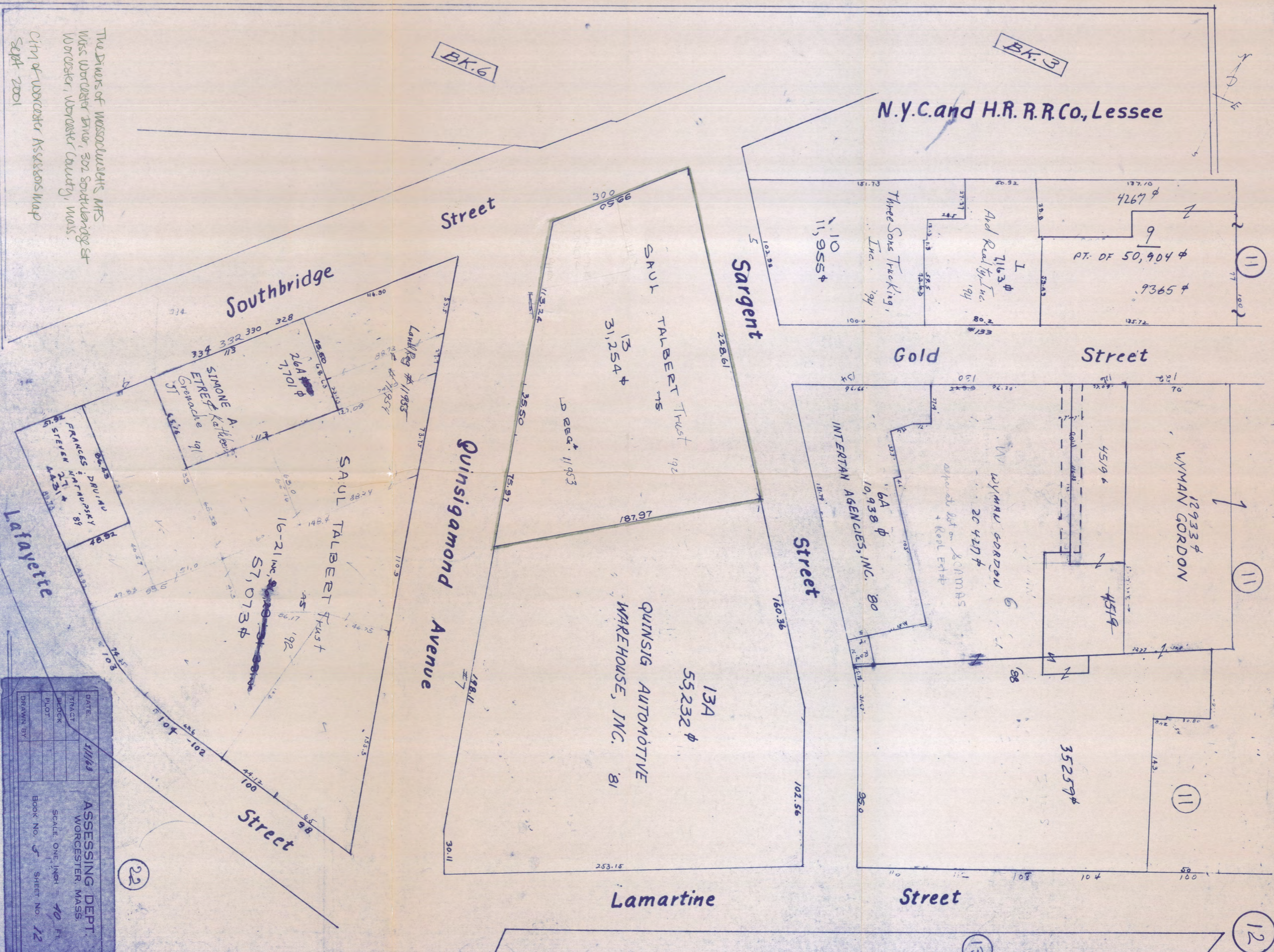
1. Barn  
2. Spacing  
3. North Block/Id  
4. Mainland  
5. Warren  
6. Worcester South  
7. Millard

FOR SALE BY U.S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY  
DENVER, COLORADO 80225, OR RESTON, VIRGINIA 22092

### Topographic Map Symbols

Primary highway, hard surface	
Secondary highway, hard surface	
Light-duty road, hard or improved surface	
Unimproved road; trail	
Route marker: Interstate; U. S.; State	
Railroad: standard gauge; narrow gauge	
Bridge: drawbridge	
Footbridge; overpass; underpass	
Built-up area: only selected landmark buildings shown	
House; barn; church; school; large structure	
Boundary	
National, with monument	
State	
County, parish	
Civil township, precinct, district	
Incorporated city, village, town	
National or State reservation; small park	
Land grant with monument; forest section corner	
U. S. public lands survey: range, township, section	
Range, township, section line: location approximate	
Fence or field line	
Power transmission line, located tower	
Dam; dam with lock	
Cemetery; grave	
Campground; picnic area; U. S. location monument	
Windmill; water well; spring	
Mine shaft; prospect; adit or shaft	
Control: horizontal station; vertical station; spot elevation	
Contours: index; intermediate; supplementary; depression	
Distorted surface: strip mine, levee, sand	
Bathymetric contours: index; intermediate	
Perennial lake and stream; intermittent lake and stream	
Rapids, large and small; falls, large and small	
Submerged marsh; marsh; swamp	
Land subject to controlled inundation; woodland	
Scrub; mangrove	
Orchard; vineyard	

A pamphlet describing topographic maps is available on request



BK. 3

BK. 6

BK. 5

N.Y.C. and H.R.R. Co., Lessee

110  
11,955 ±  
Three Sons Trucking, Inc. 194  
Ard Realty, Inc. 194  
716.3 ±  
4267 ±  
PT. OF 50,904 ±  
9365 ±

Street

Sargent Street

Gold Street

Street

Quinsigamond Avenue

Street

QUINSIG AUTOMOTIVE WAREHOUSE, INC. 81

13A  
55,232 ±

Lamartine Street

Street

Southbridge

Lafayette

Street

The Dividers of Massachusetts are Messrs. Wm. S. Worcester, Surveyor, 302 Southbridge St. Worcester, Worcester County, Mass.  
Sept 2001  
City of Worcester Assessor's Map

DATE:	3/1/63
TRACT:	
PROJECT:	
PLOT:	
DRAWN BY:	
ASSESSING DEPT. WORCESTER, MASS.	
SCALE: ONE INCH =	40 FT.
BOOK NO. 5	SHEET NO. 12

22

12

13

11

11

11

5/12



**The Commonwealth of Massachusetts**  
William Francis Galvin, Secretary of the Commonwealth  
Massachusetts Historical Commission

October 1, 2003

Ms. Carol Shull  
National Register of Historic Places  
Department of the Interior  
National Park Service  
1201 I "Eye" Street, NW  
Washington, DC 20005

Dear Ms. Shull:

Enclosed please find the following nomination form:

Miss Worcester Diner, 302 Southbridge Street, Worcester (Worcester), MA  
(The Diners of Massachusetts MPS)

The nomination has been voted eligible by the State Review Board and has been signed by the State Historic Preservation Officer. The owner of the property in the Certified Local Government community of Worcester were notified of pending State Review Board consideration 60 to 90 days before the meeting and were afforded the opportunity to comment.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Betsy Friedberg".

Betsy Friedberg  
National Register Director  
Massachusetts Historical Commission

enclosure

cc: Bruce Bunke, Chair, Worcester Historical Commission  
Kathleen Broomer, Preservation Consultant  
Hon. Raymond Mariano, Mayor, City of Worcester  
Joanne Kennedy Valade, Worcester CLG Coordinator  
Preservation Worcester  
Frank Riggeri  
Saul Talbert Trust