

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 NOV 5 1986

DATE ENTERED

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

WAKEFIELD MAIN POST OFFICE

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

321 MAIN STREET

CITY, TOWN

WAKEFIELD

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

STATE

MASSACHUSETTS 01880

VICINITY OF

CODE

1335

7TH CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

COUNTY

MIDDLESEX

CODE

017

3 CLASSIFICATION**CATEGORY**☐ DISTRICT☒ BUILDING(S)☐ STRUCTURE☐ SITE☐ OBJECT**OWNERSHIP**☒ PUBLIC☐ PRIVATE☐ BOTH**PUBLIC ACQUISITION**☐ IN PROCESS

N/A 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 BUILDINGS OFFICE

STREET & NUMBER

1050 WALTHAM STREET

CITY, TOWN

LEXINGTON

STATE

MASSACHUSETTS 02173

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTIONCOURTHOUSE,
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

MIDDLESEX COUNTY REGISTRY OF DEEDS

STREET & NUMBER

210 CAMBRIDGE STREET

CITY, TOWN

CAMBRIDGE,

STATE

MASSACHUSETTS 02141

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

NONE

DATE

☐ FEDERAL ☐ STATE ☐ COUNTY ☐ LOCALDEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS

CITY, TOWN

STATE

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
☒ EXCELLENT	☐ DETERIORATED	☐ UNALTERED	☒ ORIGINAL SITE
☐ GOOD	☐ RUINS	☒ ALTERED	☐ MOVED DATE _____
☐ FAIR	☐ UNEXPOSED	Addition 1969	

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Wakefield Post Office, constructed in 1936 and dedicated on January 27, 1937 is located on Main Street, at the corner of Yale Avenue, an area referred to as Upper Wakefield Square. The public library and the YMCA located on either side of the Post Office, were built some fifteen and thirty years before it. Both of these structures characterize the Classic Revival detailing. The Post Office Architect however, utilizing the similar basic components and details of that style, unified this building into a well proportioned, organized, bold statement that captures the power and dignity of Classical Revival architecture at the Federal level.

At the north end of the business district, near the Town Park and Lake Quannapowitt, the Post Office is sited near two quaint, nineteenth century, high spired wooden churches and several older brick and wooden residences on the wide tree-studded Main Street.

A flight of broad granite steps leads up to the front lawn terrace area, separated from the sidewalk by a granite retaining wall some four feet in height at the stair area. The lawn abuts the gradual incline of Yale Avenue on the right side of the property. The original herring-bone patterned, brick terrace between the two separate flights of granite steps has since been replaced with concrete.

The Post Office is of striking, Neo-Classic design with a dramatic front facade, featuring a high, three bay limestone center entrance, flanked by single brick wall bays on each side. The juxtaposition of the crisp limestone motif, with the inclusion of flemish bond brick panels, tends to enhance yet soften, the rigid, bold classical detailing. All bays are sharply defined by limestone pilasters at the corners and at the transition breaks. A pair of limestone Doric columns encompass the recessed limestone entrance unit with its distinctive and gracefully styled pediment. The new, aluminum framed glass doors, installed in 1972 to replace the original, heavy, dark bronze framed doors detract from the original intent of the design.

The multi-paned windows in the three bay, limestone center entrance are topped with blind, cut limestone panels with deep recesses to further accentuate the grand entrance and lobby approach. The single windows, centered in each corner brick bay, are void of stone surrounds or other ornamentation and carry a flat, brick arch. Two fine, round marble reliefs, set in a limestone surround, one each depicting Washington and Franklin and sculptured by Fortunato Tarquinio, are placed above each front corner window, corresponding to the height of the stone surrounded, grouped windows centered in each of the side brick facades

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

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

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11/5/84

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Continuation sheet

Item number 7

Page 1

The well proportioned detailed limestone Tuscan Entablature, which allows the early afternoon shadows to scale down the extended height of the structure, is highlighted by foliate, bas-relief over the pilasters at the front facade, and surrounds the original building, crowned by a stone capped brick parapet, with limestone panels that correspond to the location of the wall pilasters, further identifying each bay, and placing further emphasis on the center entrance.

Having been renovated and extended in 1969, the high lobby, pilastered to reflect the entrance portico design, reflects the modifications, evidenced by the aluminum and glass entrance vestibule which replaced the original wood muntined, glass screen. These modifications were a part of the work completed when the rear addition to the facility was erected and more than doubled the size of the building. The addition, constructed with materials similar to the original building and capped with a subdued limestone cornice, does not detract from the three primary facades of the front, original mass, but forms a simple, non-conflicting backdrop, calling particular attention to the original design.

8 SIGNIFICANCE

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/HUMANITARIAN	
☐ 1700-1799	☐ ART	☐ ENGINEERING	☐ MUSIC	☐ THEATER	
☐ 1800-1899	☐ COMMERCE	☐ EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	☐ PHILOSOPHY	☐ TRANSPORTATION	
☒ 1900-	☐ COMMUNICATIONS	☐ INDUSTRY	☐ POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	☐ OTHER (SPECIFY)	
		☐ INVENTION			

SPECIFIC DATES	Constructed 1936 Addition 1969	BUILDER/ARCHITECT	Edward M. Bridge, Architect A.J. Long Construction Co.
----------------	-----------------------------------	-------------------	---

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Although just fifty years old, the Wakefield Post Office was constructed during the darkest hours of the Depression. It possesses integrity of location, design, setting, materials and workmanship, as well as significant association with the efforts of the Federal Government to relieve unemployment and stimulate the economy through the rapid construction of governmental structures during the Depression era. This building is locally significant as tangible evidence to the community of the Government's activist role and a symbolic representation of its strength and ideals. Additionally, it exemplifies the high standard set for Federal Buildings designed by local architects, and is a fine example of the work of Boston architect, Edward M. Bridge, whose classic design harmonizes with the neighboring cityscape. It thus meets National Register criteria A and C.

The Town of Wakefield, identified as South Reading until opting for town status and being dedicated as a separate community on July 4th, 1868, was named for its most prominent citizen, Cyrus Wakefield. The town was primarily an agricultural community but with the advent of the Boston and Maine Railroad, which still runs to the immediate west of the business district, local industry became established on the eastern and southern borders of the commercial area.

The first Post Office in the community was established in 1812, with the appointed Postmaster John Rayner receiving the mails from the Boston or Charlestown stages. Postmaster Rayner opened the first office in a small building on Main Street, near the old Brown Block, and was succeeded in office by Messrs. Burrage Yale, Eli Yale, Charles Stearns and Lilly Eaton, all maintaining the office at the same location. In 1852, Samuel Kingman was appointed Postmaster and built a block of stores and offices at the corner of Main and Albion Streets, later known as Bourdan's Block, and moved the office to that location. Mr. Kingman instituted the first "free-delivery" when he took certain mail, tucked it into his high hat, and distributed it to those citizens going to church on Sundays. During the tenure of the following nine postmasters, the post office moved twice more; to the corner of Main and Richardson Streets and to the Municipal Light Building. Eugene J. Sullivan was appointed Postmaster in 1933,

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...under the Roosevelt Administration, succeeding Felix Pasqualino, who had been appointed by President Hoover.

During the Depression, the blue collar community of Wakefield experienced high unemployment. Each city and town in the nation was attempting to obtain relief from the Federal Government, with Federal Building construction being the more common form of aid. Communities without Federal offices or courts could look only to the Post Office as the only Federal representation in the community for new construction. Active negotiations took place between Wakefield's citizenry and The Treasury Department to establish a permanent Federal Post Office of sufficient size and character to meet the needs of the citizens, to demonstrate the activist role of the new administration and attempt to 'pump-prime' the economy. Local prominent citizens working towards those goals were Albert W. Rockwood, Dr. Curtis L. Sopher, Harriss M. Dolbeare and Postmaster Eugene J. Sullivan.

The site finally selected for the new Post Office was on Main Street, the former location of the Yale-Stearns homestead, on the corner of Yale Avenue. Two of the members of the Yale family and one member of the Stearns family, former owners of the property, had been postmasters in Wakefield. The property was situated between the Beebe Public Library and the Y.M.C.A., two of the newer structures in town, on a prominent location. This site must be considered unusual as the standard regulations at that time required that the land selected be of less value than comparative commercial property.

Construction began on March 2, 1936, the day after a heavy snowstorm. The Post Office was designed by local architect, Edward M. Bridge, under the auspices of Louis A. Simon, Supervising Architect for the Treasury. One of the few new construction projects in the area during the Depression years of the 1930's, it was hoped that the General Contractor, A. J. Long Construction Co., would hire sufficient local labor to ease the unemployment rate in the town. The final distribution of labor is unknown but, since the entire project was completed in ten months, the lasting effects were minimal.

The Wakefield Post Office was considered large in comparison to similar structures constructed during this period in comparable communities. Situated on the main thoroughfare between two neo-classic buildings of a slightly earlier design era, its imposing, strong Georgian styled Classical form demonstrates the Federal Presence in its monumentality, but the subtle interplay of vertical surfaces and shapes moderate the

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stern nature of its ediface. The building is aesthetically bolder and stronger than its neighbors, a fine statement of the intended power in the Federal theme, but carries a balancing effect that unifies the neighborhood.

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

The Federal Presence, Craig, Lois A. MIT Press 1980
Field Guide to American Architecture, Rifkind, Carole Bonanza 1980
History of Post Office Construction, 1900-1940 July 1982
History of Wakefield, Fulton, A.A.
Wakefield's Century of Progress, Woodbury, Ruth A. unp. 1968

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 0.944 A

UTM REFERENCES

A 19 321700 47071750
ZONE EASTING NORTHING

B
ZONE EASTING NORTHING

C

D

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

Beginning at a point on Main Street,

thence running: Easterly 107' ⁺ along Main Street
Northerly 370' ⁺ along Yale Avenue
Westerly 115' ⁺
Southerly 345' ⁻ to the point of origin

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

E. Brett Heenan, Preservation Coordinator

March 25, 1986

ORGANIZATION

DATE

THE BOSTON PARTNERSHIP, INC.

STREET & NUMBER

TELEPHONE

48 INMAN STREET

(617) 492-8866

CITY OR TOWN

STATE

CAMBRIDGE,

MASSACHUSETTS 02139

12 CERTIFICATION OF NOMINATION

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER RECOMMENDATION

YES ☒

NO ☐

NONE ☐

Valerie A. Tachmaz 5/1/86
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

TITLE Realty Acquisition Specialist, Principal

DATE November 4, 1986

FOR NPS USE ONLY

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

DATE

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION
ATTEST:

DATE

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

86003439

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

US Post Office--Wakefield Main
Middlesex County
MASSACHUSETTS

Substantive Review

Working No. NOV 5 1986
Fed. Reg. Date: _____
Date Due: 12/4/86 - 12/30/86
Action: ACCEPT
RETURN 12/18/86
REJECT
Federal Agency: USPS

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

Substantive Review: ☒ sample ☐ request ☐ appeal ☐ NR decision

Reviewer's comments:

Please note technical correction. Property represents locally significant classical revival post office also important as construction project of the Depression era which stimulated local economy.

Recom./Criteria Return
Reviewer Shapel
Discipline Architectural History
Date 12/10/86
_____ 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

- | | |
|------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| ☐ excellent | ☐ deteriorated |
| ☐ good | ☐ ruins |
| ☐ fair | ☐ 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

Please provide original full USGS map.

Questions concerning this nomination may be directed to Beth Savage (202) 343-9550

Signed Patrick Andrews Date 12/18/86 Phone: _____

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HISTORIC

UNITED STATES POST OFFICE

AND/OR COMMON

WAKEFIELD MAIN POST OFFICE

2 LOCATION

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NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

WAKEFIELD

VICINITY OF

7TH CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

STATE

MASSACHUSETTS 01880

CODE

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3 CLASSIFICATION**CATEGORY**☐ DISTRICT☒ BUILDING(S)☐ STRUCTURE☐ SITE☐ OBJECT**OWNERSHIP**☒ PUBLIC☐ PRIVATE☐ BOTH**PUBLIC ACQUISITION**☐ IN PROCESS

N/A BEING CONSIDERED

STATUS☒ OCCUPIED☐ UNOCCUPIED☐ WORK IN PROGRESS**ACCESSIBLE**☒ YES: RESTRICTED☐ YES: UNRESTRICTED☐ NO**PRESENT USE**☐ AGRICULTURE☐ MUSEUM☐ COMMERCIAL☐ PARK☐ EDUCATIONAL☐ PRIVATE RESIDENCE☐ ENTERTAINMENT☐ RELIGIOUS☒ GOVERNMENT☐ SCIENTIFIC☐ INDUSTRIAL☐ TRANSPORTATION☐ MILITARY☐ OTHER:**4 AGENCY**

REGIONAL HEADQUARTERS: (If applicable)

NEW ENGLAND FIELD REAL ESTATE AND BUILDINGS OFFICE

STREET & NUMBER

1050 WALTHAM STREET

CITY, TOWN

LEXINGTON

VICINITY OF

STATE

MASSACHUSETTS 02173

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,

REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

MIDDLESEX COUNTY REGISTRY OF DEEDS

STREET & NUMBER

210 CAMBRIDGE STREET

CITY, TOWN

CAMBRIDGE,

STATE

MASSACHUSETTS 02141

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

NONE

DATE

☐ FEDERAL ☐ STATE ☐ COUNTY ☐ LOCALDEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS

CITY, TOWN

STATE

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
☒ EXCELLENT	☐ DETERIORATED	☐ UNALTERED	☒ ORIGINAL SITE
☐ GOOD	☐ RUINS	☒ ALTERED	☐ MOVED DATE _____
☐ FAIR	☐ UNEXPOSED		

Addition 1969

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Having been renovated and extended in 1969, the high lobby, pilastered to reflect the entrance portico design, reflects the modifications, evidenced by the aluminum and glass entrance vestibule which replaced the original wood muntined, glass screen. These modifications were a part of the work completed when the rear addition to the facility was erected and more than doubled the size of the building. The addition, constructed with materials similar to the original building and capped with a subdued limestone cornice, does not detract from the three primary facades of the front, original mass, but forms a simple, non-conflicting backdrop, calling particular attention to the original design.

8 SIGNIFICANCE

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	
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☒ 1900-	☐ COMMUNICATIONS	☐ INDUSTRY	☐ POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	☐ OTHER (SPECIFY)	
		☐ INVENTION			

SPECIFIC DATES	Constructed 1936 Addition 1969	BUILDER/ARCHITECT	Edward M. Bridge, Architect A.J. Long Construction Co.
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STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Although just fifty years old, the Wakefield Post Office was constructed during the darkest hours of the Depression. It possesses integrity of location, design, setting, materials and workmanship, as well as significant association with the efforts of the Federal Government to relieve unemployment and stimulate the economy through the rapid construction of governmental structures during the Depression era. This building is locally significant as tangible evidence to the community of the Government's activist role and a symbolic representation of its strength and ideals. Additionally, it exemplifies the high standard set for Federal Buildings designed by local architects, and is a fine example of the work of Boston architect, Edward M. Bridge, whose classic design harmonizes with the neighboring cityscape. It thus meets National Register criteria A and C.

The Town of Wakefield, identified as South Reading until opting for town status and being dedicated as a separate community on July 4th, 1868, was named for its most prominent citizen, Cyrus Wakefield. The town was primarily an agricultural community but with the advent of the Boston and Maine Railroad, which still runs to the immediate west of the business district, local industry became established on the eastern and southern borders of the commercial area.

The first Post Office in the community was established in 1812, with the appointed Postmaster John Rayner receiving the mails from the Boston or Charlestown stages. Postmaster Rayner opened the first office in a small building on Main Street, near the old Brown Block, and was succeeded in office by Messrs. Burrage Yale, Eli Yale, Charles Stearns and Lilly Eaton, all maintaining the office at the same location. In 1852, Samuel Kingman was appointed Postmaster and built a block of stores and offices at the corner of Main and Albion Streets, later known as Bourdan's Block, and moved the office to that location. Mr. Kingman instituted the first "free-delivery" when he took certain mail, tucked it into his high hat, and distributed it to those citizens going to church on Sundays. During the tenure of the following nine postmasters, the post office moved twice more; to the corner of Main and Richardson Streets and to the Municipal Light Building. Eugene J. Sullivan was appointed Postmaster in 1933,

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UTM REFERENCES

A 19 321700 4707750
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B
ZONE EASTING NORTHING

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ZONE EASTING NORTHING

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ZONE EASTING NORTHING

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

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thence running: Easterly 107' ⁺ along Main Street
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Southerly 345' ⁻ to the point of origin

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
N/A			

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

E. Brett Heenan, Preservation Coordinator

March 25, 1986

ORGANIZATION

DATE

THE BOSTON PARTNERSHIP, INC.

STREET & NUMBER

TELEPHONE

48 INMAN STREET

(617) 492-8866

CITY OR TOWN

STATE

CAMBRIDGE,

MASSACHUSETTS 02139

12 CERTIFICATION OF NOMINATION

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER RECOMMENDATION

YES ☒

NO ☐

NONE ☐

Valerie A. Tamm 5/1/86

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

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FEDERAL REPRESENTATIVE SIGNATURE

TITLE Realty Acquisition Specialist, Principal

DATE November 4, 1986

FOR NPS USE ONLY

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

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

DATE 10/19/87

ATTEST: Betty L. Sarge

DATE 10/19/87

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

United States Department of the Interior
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form

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During the Depression, the blue collar community of Wakefield experienced high unemployment. Each city and town in the nation was attempting to obtain relief from the Federal Government, with Federal Building construction being the more common form of aid. Communities without Federal offices or courts could look only to the Post Office as the only Federal representation in the community for new construction. Active negotiations took place between Wakefield's citizenry and The Treasury Department to establish a permanent Federal Post Office of sufficient size and character to meet the needs of the citizens, to demonstrate the activist role of the new administration and attempt to 'pump-prime' the economy. Local prominent citizens working towards those goals were Albert W. Rockwood, Dr. Curtis L. Sopher, Harriss M. Dolbeare and Postmaster Eugene J. Sullivan.

The site finally selected for the new Post Office was on Main Street, the former location of the Yale-Stearns homestead, on the corner of Yale Avenue. Two of the members of the Yale family and one member of the Stearns family, former owners of the property, had been postmasters in Wakefield. The property was situated between the Beebe Public Library and the Y.M.C.A., two of the newer structures in town, on a prominent location. This site must be considered unusual as the standard regulations at that time required that the land selected be of less value than comparative commercial property.

Construction began on March 2, 1936, the day after a heavy snowstorm. The Post Office was designed by local architect, Edward M. Bridge, under the auspices of Louis A. Simon, Supervising Architect for the Treasury. One of the few new construction projects in the area during the Depression years of the 1930's, it was hoped that the General Contractor, A. J. Long Construction Co., would hire sufficient local labor to ease the unemployment rate in the town. The final distribution of labor is unknown but, since the entire project was completed in ten months, the lasting effects were minimal.

The Wakefield Post Office was considered large in comparison to similar structures constructed during this period in comparable communities. Situated on the main thoroughfare between two neo-classic buildings of a slightly earlier design era, its imposing, strong Georgian styled Classical form demonstrates the Federal Presence in its monumentality, but the subtle interplay of vertical surfaces and shapes moderate the

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

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

For NPS use only
received *11/1/84*
date entered

Continuation sheet

Item number 8

Page 2

stern nature of its ediface. The building is aesthetically bolder and stronger than its neighbors, a fine statement of the intended power in the Federal theme, but carries a balancing effect that unifies the neighborhood.

UNITED STATES POST OFFICE
321 MAIN STREET
WAKEFIELD, MA 01880

READING QUADRANGLE
UTM: 19-3/21/700-47/07/750



NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

US Post Office--Wakefield Main
Middlesex County
MASSACHUSETTS

Working No. 115-186
Fed. Reg. Date: 2/7/89
Date Due: 10/19/87
Action: ACCEPT 10-19-87
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:

*Locally significant Neo-Classical
Post Office which
illustrates the local impact
of Federal Construction programs during the
Depression and
subsequent economic recovery.*

Recom./Criteria Accept A+C
Reviewer Seager
Discipline Architectural History
Date 10/18/87
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
☐ excellent	☐ deteriorated	☐ unaltered
☐ good	☐ ruins	☐ altered
☐ fair	☐ unexposed	

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

- ☐ summary paragraph
☐ completeness
☐ clarity
☐ alterations/integrity
☐ dates
☐ boundary selection

*POs./gov.
should be
coded for
crit. A.
BS.*

86003439

RESUBMISSION

WASO Form - 177
("R" June 1984)UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICENATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEETUS Post Office--Wakefield Main
Middlesex County
MASSACHUSETTSWorking No. 115-86
Fed. Reg. Date: 2/7/89
Date Due: 10/19/87
Action: ACCEPT 10-19-87
RETURN
REJECT
Federal Agency: USPS

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

Substantive Review: ☒ sample ☐ request ☐ appeal ☐ NR decision

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5. Location of Legal Description

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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

X13. Other

- ☒ Maps
- ☐ Photographs
- ☐ Other

Please indicate property on full USGS maps

Questions concerning this nomination may be directed to _____

Signed _____ Date _____ Phone: _____



U. S. POST OFFICE
321 MAIN STREET
WAKEFIELD, MA 01880
PHOTO DATE: JUNE 1985

VIEW FROM EAST
FRONT ELEVATION

11/27/85



U. S. POST OFFICE
321 MAIN STREET
WAKEFIELD, MA 01880
PHOTO DATE: JUNE 1985

VIEW FROM NORTH
RIGHT SIDE ELEV. *115/16*

NEGATIVES @ USPS-FREBO
LEXINGTON. MA 02173



U. S. POST OFFICE
321 MAIN STREET
WAKEFIELD, MA 01880
PHOTO DATE: JUNE 1985

VIEW FROM SOUTH
LEFT SIDE ELEV.

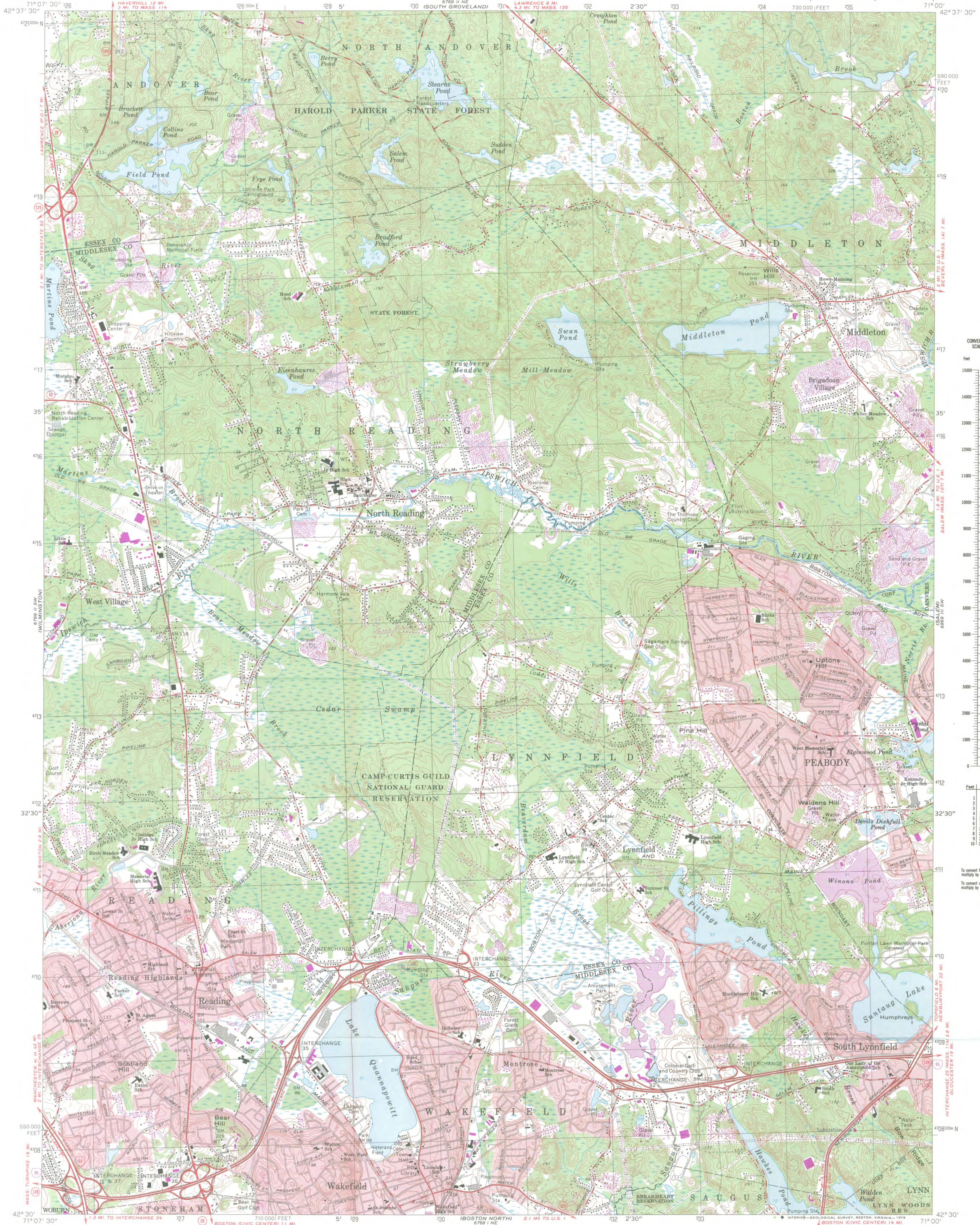
NEGATIVES @ USPS-FREBO
LEXINGTON, MA 02173



U. S. POST OFFICE
321 MAIN STREET
WAKEFIELD, MA 01880
PHOTO DATE: JUNE 1985

UPPER FRONT ELEV.
RELIEF SCULPTURE

NEGATIVES @ USPS-FREBO
LEXINGTON, MA 02173



CONVERSION
SCALES

Feet	Meters
15000	4500
14000	4000
13000	3500
12000	3000
11000	2500
10000	2000
9000	1500
8000	1000
7000	500
6000	1000
5000	1500
4000	1000
3000	500
2000	1000
1000	500
500	100
0	0

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 0.3048

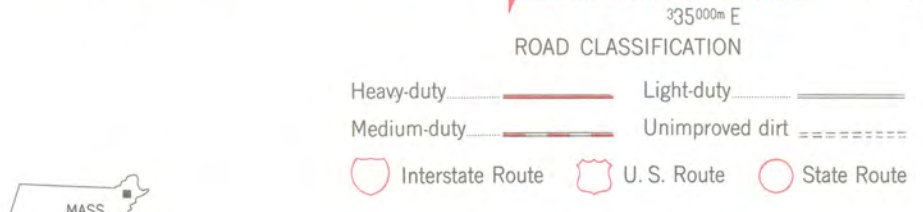
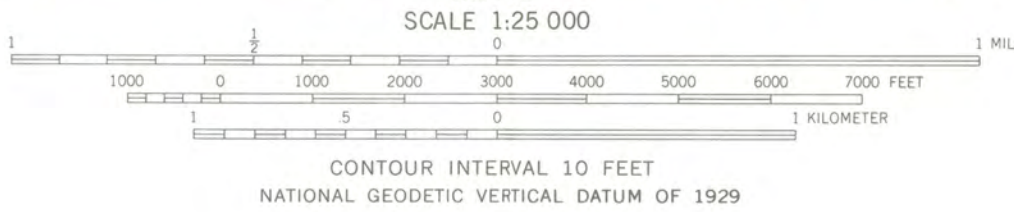
To convert meters to feet
multiply by 3.2808

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 planetable
surveys 1942. Revised 1966

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



READING, MASS.
N4230—W7100/7.5

1966
PHOTOREVISED 1979
AMS 6769 II SE—SERIES V814

Agenda 8/12/86



UNITED STATES POSTAL SERVICE
Facilities Service Office
P.O. Box 324
Lexington, MA 02173-0324



July 29, 1986

The Honorable Eugene Sullivan, Jr.
Chairman, Board of Selectman, Town of Wakefield
Town Hall
1 Lafayette Street
Wakefield, MA 01880

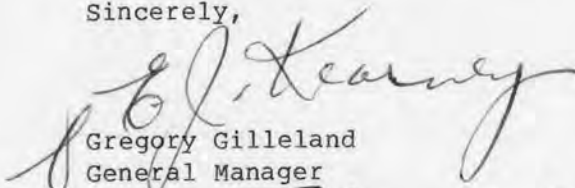
Dear Chairman Sullivan:

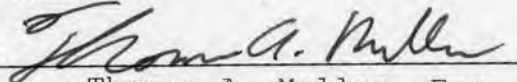
The U.S. Postal Service in conjunction with the Massachusetts State Historic Preservation Officer in Boston has evaluated the Main Post Office in Wakefield and has determined it is significant from an historical viewpoint.

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: 
Thomas A. Mullen, Esq.
Enclosure Chairman, Board of Selectmen

RECEIVED
U.S. POSTAL SERVICE
AUG 19 10 49 AM '86
NEW ENGLAND FIELD REAL
ESTATE & BLDGS. OFFICE
DESIGN & CONSTR.
BRANCH
LEXINGTON, MA 02173



UNITED STATES POSTAL SERVICE
Facilities Department
475 L'Enfant Plaza, SW
Washington, DC 20260-6400

November 4, 1986

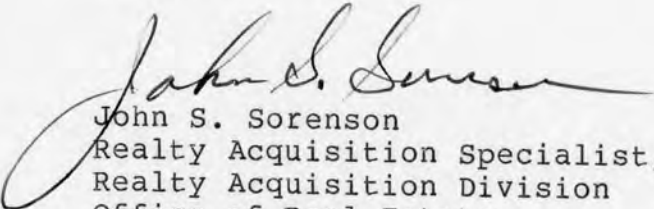
Ms. Carol D. Shull
Chief of Registration
National Register of Historic Places
National Park Service
Department of Interior
Washington, D.C. 20240-1002

Dear Ms. Shull:

The Postal Service hereby submits a nomination for the post office located at 321 Main Street, Middlesex County, Wakefield, Massachusetts.

If you have any questions concerning this nomination, please contact me at (202) 268-3107.

Sincerely,


John S. Sorenson
Realty Acquisition Specialist, Principal
Realty Acquisition Division
Office of Real Estate

Attachment

NOV 5 1986



UNITED STATES POSTAL SERVICE
FACILITIES SERVICE CENTER
REAL ESTATE DIVISION
WINDSOR, CONNECTICUT 06006-0330

September 1, 1987

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

Dear Ms. Shull:

The Postal Service is pleased to submit nominations for the following Post Office facilities:

1. 119 Elm St., Worcester County, Millbury, MA
2. 217 Commerical St., Branstable County, Provincetown, MA
3. 37 Taunton Green, Bristol County, Taunton, MA
4. 2 Abbott St., Middlesex County, Woburn, MA
5. 58 Church St., Worcester County, Whitinsville, MA
6. 321 Main St., Middlesex County, Wakefield, MA
7. 48 Waterford Rd., Middlesex County, Winchester, MA
8. 75 Park St., Bristol County, Attleboro, MA
9. 90 Center St., Plymouth County, Middleborough, MA

Some of these nominations were submitted previously and returned in order that full quadrangle maps could be included. This has been done in all cases.

Should there be any questions concerning these nominations, please do not hesitate to call me on 203-285-7181.

Sincerely,

William S. Noncrist
Real Estate Specialist, Principal

Enclosures

cc: John Sorenson
Realty Acquisition Specialist, Principal
Washington, DC

SEP 4 1987