

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICEPH0678929
FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED MAR 12 1979

DATE ENTERED

MAY 10 1979

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORMSEE INSTRUCTIONS IN HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

1 NAME

HISTORIC

(Paramount Theater)

AND/OR COMMON

Julia Sanderson Theater (preferred)

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

1676-1708 Main Street

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

Springfield

VICINITY OF

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT
Second

STATE

Massachusetts

CODE

025

COUNTY

Hampden

CODE

013

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY

☐ DISTRICT☒ BUILDING(S)☐ STRUCTURE☐ SITE☐ OBJECT

OWNERSHIP

☐ PUBLIC☒ PRIVATE☐ BOTH

PUBLIC ACQUISITION

☐ IN PROCESS☐ BEING CONSIDERED

STATUS

☒ OCCUPIED☐ UNOCCUPIED☐ WORK IN PROGRESS☒ ACCESSIBLE☒ YES: RESTRICTED☐ YES: UNRESTRICTED☐ NO

PRESENT USE

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

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME

Mr. Ronald Goldstein, Mr. Abbott Roberts

STREET & NUMBER

c/o Stearns Realty Inc. 293 Bridge Street

CITY, TOWN

Springfield

VICINITY OF

STATE

Massachusetts 01103

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Hampden County Registry of Deeds

STREET & NUMBER

State Street

CITY, TOWN

Springfield

STATE

Massachusetts

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

Inventory of the Historic Assets of the Commonwealth

DATE

1978

☐ FEDERAL ☒ STATE ☐ COUNTY ☐ LOCALDEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS

Massachusetts Historical Commission

CITY, TOWN

Boston

Massachusetts
STATE

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

The Julia Sanderson Theater is located in the North Blocks commercial area of downtown Springfield. The building is situated at the southwest corner of Main and Gridiron Streets, adjacent to the Railroad Arch.

The Julia Sanderson Theater is a four-story, tan brick structure with limestone trim, designed in the Classical Revival style. The office/commercial sections facing on Main and Gridiron Streets date from 1912. The 3,200 seat theater in the interior portion of the block was built in 1926-29 by the Ernest F. Carlson Company to designs by theater designer A. W. Johnson of New York.

The building facade extends 175 feet along the west side of Main Street. The ground floor consists of a series of altered storefronts and the boarded theater entrance, above which is a large marquee. Above the ground floor, the facade is decorated between each of the eleven paired-window bays with three-story brick pilasters with low-relief capitals and bases. Within each bay, a narrow, full-height pilaster separates the two windows, creating a strong rhythm of alternating wide and narrow pilasters. Below the third and fourth story windows, there are rectangular cast stone panels with a central oval framed by beaded mouldings with projecting cylindrical banding.

The entrance bay, the seventh bay from the southerly end of the facade, has a single window at each story framed with Classical relief. The second story opening has a projecting cornice supported by small brackets. The third story window has a moulded architrave with a scrolled keystone, above which is a low-relief rectangular panel. At the top floor, the opening has a projecting sill supported by brackets and an ornately carved lintel with a floral medallion. The fenestration in the facade is a mixture of one-over-one and two-over-one lights.

The building is capped by a wide Classical entablature with a moulded architrave and a frieze decorated with inlaid brick above each bay. The dentilled cornice has dropped pendants centered between bays. Above this is a row of projecting round knobs alternating with moulded panels. The upper edge of the cornice is articulated with a miniature crenellated motif.

The north elevation of the building is 17 bays long and is decorated with a simplified version of the ornate details on the facade. The bays consist of: one bay at the easterly end which matches the facade; five bays with paired one-over-one lights separated by pilasters with simple mouldings in place of capitals; six narrow bays with single one-over-one lights separated by pilasters with ornate low-relief capitals; followed by five bays with paired one-over-one lights and separated with pilasters with simple mouldings. Below each of the third and fourth story windows is a rectangular stone panel with two recessed square panels as decoration. The entablature repeats the same details which are used on the facade.

The interior of the theater has undergone several renovations but still retains much of its lavish decoration and architectural detail.

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 1912, 1926-1929

BUILDER/ARCHITECT 1926: Ernest F. Carlson

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Julia Sanderson Theater possesses integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, and association. The building is associated with events that made a significant contribution to the cultural development of Springfield; it is associated with the lives of persons significant in the past; and it embodies the distinctive characteristics of a period of architecture.

The property is significant as the home of two local landmark institutions, the Massasoit Hotel and the Paramount Theater. Each of these entities played a prominent role in the social and cultural life of the city. Architecturally, the structure is a fine example of an early twentieth century commercial building, in the Classical Revival style. The theater is renowned for its lavish decoration and for the innovative theatrical systems which were used here for the first time in the city's and region's history.

The office/commercial portion of the structure facing on Main and Gridiron Streets was constructed in 1912 on the site of the former Massasoit House, the city's most popular hostelry. The site was acquired in 1912 from William H. Chapin, proprietor of the Massasoit House, by the Dunlap Realty Trust Company for \$750,000. This was reported to be the largest real estate transaction in the city's history. The entire ground floor of the new building was devoted to commercial storefronts, the upper floors facing on Main Street were outfitted as modern offices, and the Massasoit Hotel occupied the upper floors facing north on Gridiron Street. The hotel, which was across the street from the train depot, continued as a popular hostelry and social gathering place until it closed in 1926. The hotel space was converted to offices shortly thereafter.

In 1926 plans were announced to construct a new theater at the rear of the site. A fourteen-year contract for \$100,000 per year was signed with the Famous Players - Lasky Corporation of New York. The theater took three years to build at a cost of \$1,118,000. It was named the Paramount as one in the chain of Class A deluxe theaters operated by the Famous Players, Inc. The Paramount was considered to be the most lavish and extravagant theater in western Massachusetts. It was the last of the big downtown theaters and the first theater in the region designed expressly for sound pictures.

The theater seated 3,200 people and featured several innovative mechanical systems. These included a scientific air cooling system designed by Raymond S. Graham, which was the first of its kind in the city, and an elevator platform on which the organ console and organist could be raised up under a spotlight to create a dramatic effect. A full remote control lighting system and an emergency lighting system with a two-hour capacity were also featured. The balcony is supported by a 100-foot steel beam to eliminate obstructing columns and provide good vision and acoustical quality from every seat.

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Paramount Theater, historic photograph file, Springfield City Library.
SALT Magazine, December 6, 1972, p. 2A.
Springfield City Directories, 1912-1929.
Springfield Daily Republican, October 21, 1912, p. 9; September 29, 1929, special section.
Springfield Scrapbooks, Vol. 28, p. 127; Vol. 36 pp. 191, 196; Vol. 38, p. 177.
Springfield Union, December 30, 1926, p. 4; February 2, 1927, p. 4.

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY .81 acres

QUADRANGLE NAME Springfield South

QUADRANGLE SCALE 1:24000

UTM REFERENCES

A 18 69881210 416161391010
ZONE EASTING NORTHING

B
ZONE EASTING NORTHING

C

D

E

F

G

H

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

Please refer to the attached map which is block #304 of the city assesment plan.
The boundary is deliniated in red.

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

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
-------	------	--------	------

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
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11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Margo Weber

Anderson, Notter Feingold Ass.

Candace Jenkins, National Register Coordinator

ORGANIZATION

DATE

Massachusetts Historical Commission

February 1979

STREET & NUMBER

TELEPHONE

294 Washington Street

(617) 727-8470

CITY OR TOWN

STATE

Boston

Massachusetts

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 R. Weslowski

3/1/79

TITLE

Executive Director, Mass. Historical Commission

DATE

FOR NPS USE ONLY

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

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE 5-10-79

ATTEST:

CHIEF OF REGISTRATION

DATE 5/9/79

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

FOR NPS USE ONLY	
RECEIVED	MAR 12 1979
MAY 10 1979	
DATE ENTERED	

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 8 PAGE 2

The Paramount Theater attracted high quality movies and performances to the city. Gloria Swanson, Mary Pickford and Douglas Fairbanks were among the Hollywood stars whose Class A films played at the Paramount. As well as for motion pictures, the theater was popular for its vaudeville shows and "big band" concerts, and hosted such talents as Ethel Barrymore, Jack Benny, Eric Von Stroheim and Alexander Wolcott.

The theater was renamed the Julia Sanderson Theater in 1975 in memory of Springfield's most famous show business personality, Julia Sanderson. Julia Sanderson was born in Springfield in 1887, made her first Broadway appearance as a chorus girl in 1902, and went on to star in over 20 consecutive hit shows, including "The Ziegfield Follies" and the original "No, No, Nanette." In 1927 she married Frank Crumit and for the next 16 years, the husband-wife radio team hosted the nationally popular quiz show "Battle of the Sexes." The renaming of the theater coincides with recent interest in reopening the theater for a wide range of community theater, concert, and cinema productions.

Property

Sanderson, Julia, Theater (Paramount Theater)

State

Mass. (Hampden)

Working Number

3.12.79.502

TECHNICAL

Photos

Maps

1
2

CONTROL

OK 3.14.79

HISTORIAN

ARCHITECTURAL HISTORIAN

ARCHEOLOGIST

OTHER

HAER

Inventory

Review

CONSIDERED TO BE ONE OF THE MOST LAVISH AND EXTRAVAGANT THEATRES
IN WESTERN MASSACHUSETTS AT THE TIME OF ITS CONSTRUCTION ~~THE~~ IN 1926-29
THEATRE INCLUDED INNOVATIVE MECHANICAL AND STRUCTURAL SYSTEMS. ITS EARLIER
COMMERCIAL AND HOTEL SECTION CONTAINED THE LOCALLY NOTABLE MASSADOT HOTEL AND
OTHER COMMERCIAL USES.

REVIEW UNIT CHIEF

ACCEPT
JAC DOUGLAS
5/8/79

BRANCH CHIEF

KEEPER

National Register Write-up

Federal Register Entry

6-5-79

Send-back

Re-submit

Entered

MAY 10 1979



Julia Sanderson Theater

Main Street

Springfield, MA

Margo Weber

1978

Anderson, Notter, Feingold, *Boston*

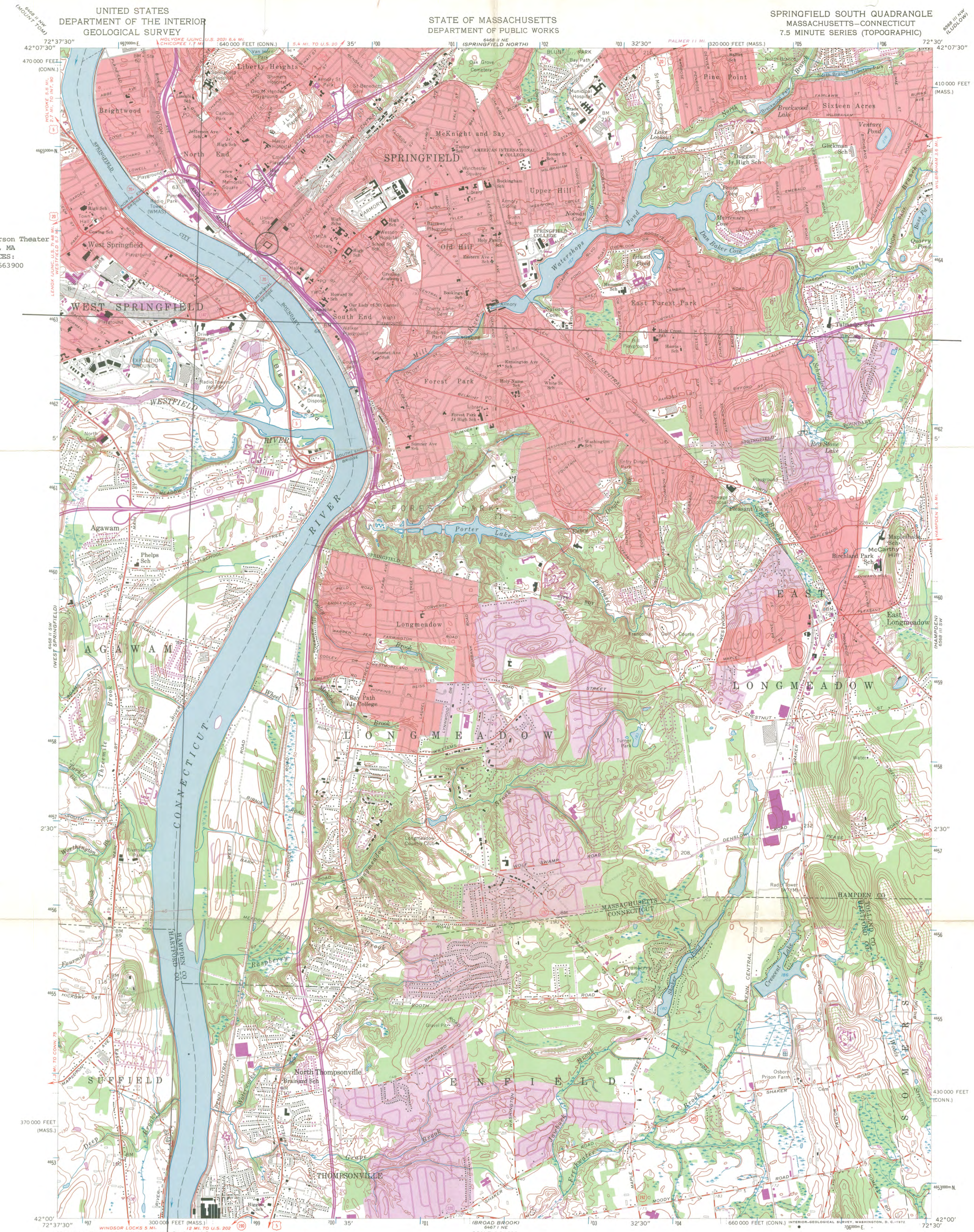
North Washington Street, Boston

MAY 10 1979
(Paramount Theater)
MAR 12 1979

Photo #1

Facade. looking southwest

Julia Sanderson Theater
Springfield, MA
UTM REFERENCES:
18/698820/4663900



Maped, edited, and published by the Geological Survey
Control by USGS, USC&GS, Massachusetts Geodetic Survey,
and Connecticut Geodetic Survey
Topography by planetable surveys 1933 and 1942
Culture revised from aerial photographs by photogrammetric
methods. Aerial photographs taken 1957. Field check 1958
Polyconic projection. 1927 North American datum
10,000-foot grids based on Massachusetts coordinate system,
mainland zone, and Connecticut coordinate system
1000-meter Universal Transverse Mercator grid ticks,
zone 18, shown in blue
Red tint indicates areas in which only
landmark buildings are shown

Revisions shown in purple compiled in cooperation with
Connecticut Highway Department from aerial photographs
taken 1970. This information not field checked
Purple tint indicates extension of urban areas

THIS MAP COMPLIES WITH NATIONAL MAP ACCURACY STANDARDS
FOR SALE BY U.S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY, WASHINGTON, D. C. 20242
A FOLDER DESCRIBING TOPOGRAPHIC MAPS AND SYMBOLS IS AVAILABLE ON REQUEST

ROAD CLASSIFICATION
Heavy-duty ——— Light-duty ———
Medium-duty ——— Unimproved dirt ———
U. S. Route ——— State Route ———

SPRINGFIELD SOUTH, MASS.-CONN.
N4200 - W7230/7.5
1958
PHOTOREVISED 1970
AMS 6468 II SE-SERIES V814



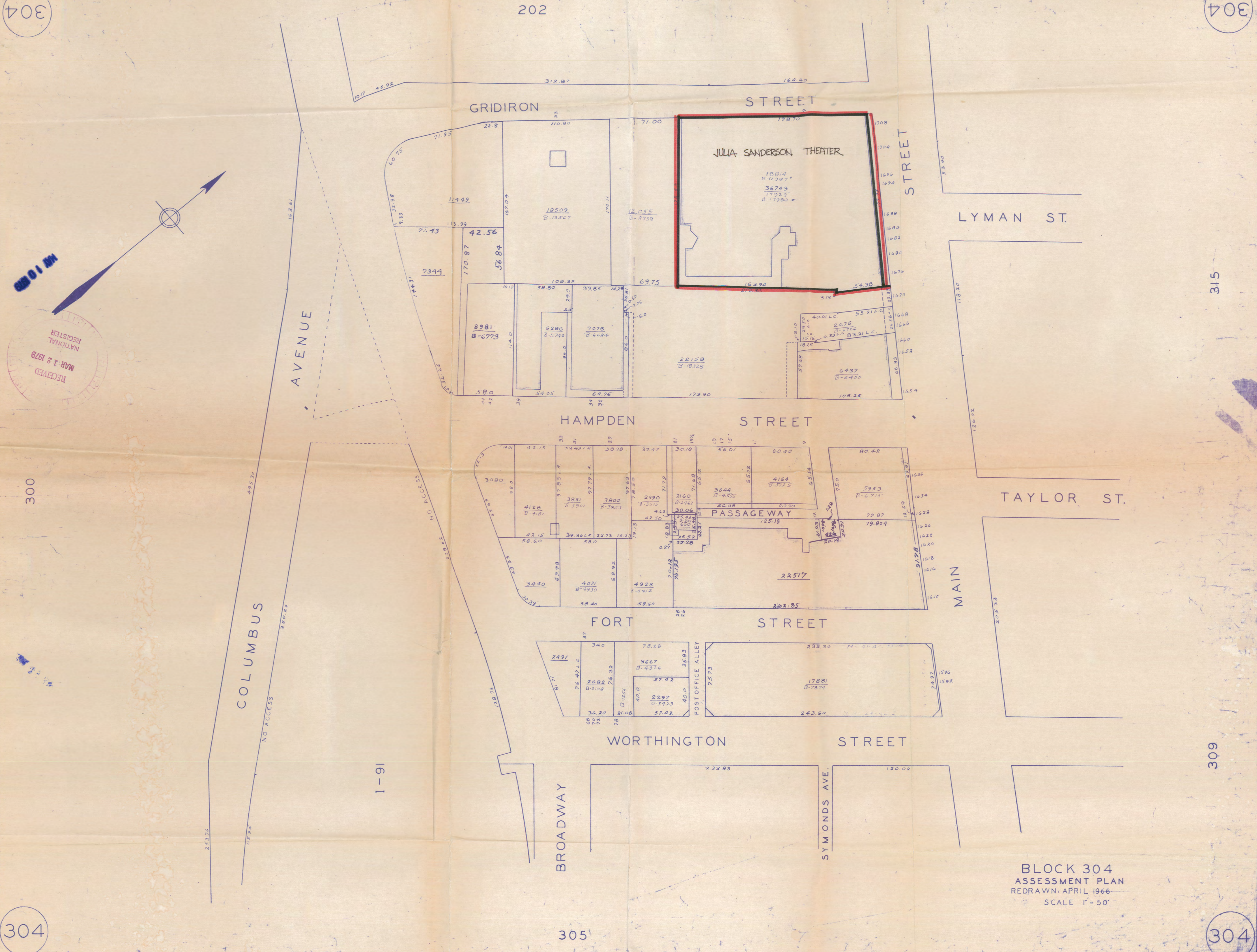
MAY 10 1979

304

304

304

304



BLOCK 304
ASSESSMENT PLAN
REDRAWN: APRIL 1966
SCALE 1" = 50'



PAUL GUZZI

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

Office of the Secretary

Massachusetts Historical Commission

Secretary of the
Commonwealth

294 Washington Street Boston, Massachusetts 02108

(617) 727-8470

RECEIVED

PROPOSED NATIONAL REGISTER NOMINATION NOTIFICATION TO OWNER

JAN 24 1979

DATE: November 28, 1978

MASS. HIST. COMM.

TO: Messrs. Ron Goldstein and Abbott Roberts

ADDRESS: Stearns Realty Inc., 293 Bridge Street, Springfield, Massachusetts 01103

FROM: MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION

SUBJECT: NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES

THIS IS TO NOTIFY YOU THAT THE FOLLOWING PROPERTY:

NAME: ~~Julius Rosenberg Theatre~~ Paramount Theatre

ADDRESS: 1676-1708 Main Street Springfield

NOMINATED BY: Springfield Historical Commission

is being considered by the Massachusetts Historical Commission for nomination to the National Register of Historic Places.

The National Register affords recognition and protection for districts, sites, buildings, structures and objects significant in American History, architecture, archeology and culture. Listing in the National Register places no restrictions on the owner's actions unless Federal funding or licensing is involved. However, certain Federal Tax consequences may result from listing in the National Register. Please refer to section 2124 of the Tax Reform Act of 1976 for an explanation of these provisions.

Please acknowledge receipt of this notification by signing below and returning this form to Candace Jenkins, National Register Coordinator, Massachusetts Historical Commission at the address above. The State Review Board will not consider this nomination until we receive your comments or thirty days have passed from the date of notification.

Written comments on the significance of this property are encouraged and may be attached to this form.

Signature

James J. Lohli

Date

Jan 20, 1979

2/2/77





**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 20, 1979

Mr. Charles Herrington, Chief
Registration Branch
National Register
Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service
Washington, D.C. 20243

Dear Mr. Herrington:

Enclosed you will find the following nomination forms:

Amherst:	Conkey-Stevens House
Cambridge:	Edwin Abbot House
Lawrence:	Essex Company Offices and Yard
Lynn:	G.A.R. Hall
Rowley:	Chaplin-Clarke House
Springfield:	Julia Sanderson Theater
Springfield:	Kennedy-Worthington Blocks
Springfield:	Winchester Square Historic District
Wilbraham:	Academy Historic District

All have been voted eligible by the State Review Board and have been signed by the State Historic Preservation Officer. They have also been reviewed by our professional staff representing the disciplines of architecture, architectural history, archeology and history.

Sincerely,

Christine Boulding
Survey Director
Massachusetts Historical Commission

Enclosures

CB/ts



ENTRIES IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

STATE MASSACHUSETTS

Date Entered MAY 10 1979

<u>Name</u>	<u>Location</u>
Odd Fellow's Hall	Shelburne Falls Franklin County
Conkey-Stevens House	Amherst Hampshire County
Sanderson, Julia, Theater (Paramount Theater)	Springfield Hampden County
Winchester Square Historic District	Springfield Hampden County
Turner, Stephen, House	Norfolk Norfolk County
Abbot, Edwin, House (Longy School of Music)	Cambridge Middlesex County
Chaplin-Clarke House	Rowley Essex County

Also Notified

Honorable Paul G. Tsongas

Honorable Edward M. Kennedy

Honorable Silvio O. Conte

Honorable Edward P. Boland

Honorable Margaret M. Heckler

Honorable Thomas P. O'Neill

Honorable Nicholas Mayroules

State Historic Preservation Officer

Mrs. Patricia L. Weslowski

Executive Director

Massachusetts Historical Commission

294 Washington Street

Boston, Massachusetts 02108

NR Byers/bjr 5/14/79

For further information, please call the National Register at (202)343-6401.