

1208

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form

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 Shawmut Diner (The Diners of Massachusetts MPS)
other names/site number N/A

2. Location

street & number 943 Shawmut Avenue n/a not for publication
city or town New Bedford n/a vicinity
state Massachusetts code MA county Bristol code 005 zip code 02746

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 10/8/03
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): _____

[Signature] 11/28/03
Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

Shawmut Diner
Name of Property

Bristol 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	0	objects
1	0	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

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: Stainless Steel Diner

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation brick
walls stainless steel
roof rubber membrane
other

Narrative Description

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

Shawmut Diner
Name of Property

Bristol County, 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

1953 _____

Significant Dates

N/A _____

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A _____

Cultural Affiliation

N/A _____

Architect/Builder

Jerry O'Mahony Inc., Elizabeth, NJ _____

Primary location of additional data:

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

Name of repository: _____

Shawmut Diner
Name of Property

Bristol County, Massachusetts
County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property _____ less than one acre

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

1. 19	337840	4613530	3.		
Zone	Easting	Northing	Zone	Easting	Northing
2.			4.		
Zone	Easting	Northing	Zone	Easting	Northing
			_ See continuation sheet		

Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title _____ Kathleen Kelly Broomer, consultant, with Betsy Friedberg, NR Director, MHC

organization _____ Massachusetts Historical Commission date _____ October, 2003

street & number _____ 220 Morrissey Boulevard telephone (617) 727-8470

city or town _____ Boston state _____ MA zip code _____ 02125

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A **sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative **black and white photographs** of the property.

Additional items (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)

name _____ Philip Paleologos / ANP Realty Trust

street & number _____ 943 Shawmut Avenue telephone _____ 508-993-3073

city or town _____ New Bedford state _____ MA zip code _____ 02746

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including the time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Project (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503. NPS Form 10-900 OMB No.

1024-0018
(Rev. 10-90)

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

The Diners of Massachusetts MPS
Shawmut Diner
New Bedford (Bristol Co.), MA

Section number 7 Page 1

7. Description

Shawmut Diner, 943 Shawmut Avenue, New Bedford (1953) (MHC# 2262) is a fine example of a post-World War II stainless steel diner in Massachusetts, manufactured by Jerry O'Mahony Inc. of Elizabeth, New Jersey. The Shawmut occupies one corner of a major commercial intersection in north central New Bedford near State Route 140, a limited-access highway. The diner is set back from the street with parking on all sides.

Rectangular in massing, the steel-frame diner is nine bays wide and three bays deep, excluding the rounded front corners. The building has a brick foundation, stainless steel cladding with black vertical bands, and a stainless steel parapet wall at the monitor roof. As is common with stainless steel diners from the post-World War II era, the Shawmut has a pair of steel and glass entries located in a projecting center vestibule. Windows in the diner are steel-rimmed and contain fixed plate glass. Rooftop neon signage reads *SHAWMUT DINER* and includes a depiction of a Native American, also rendered in neon.

At the rear of the prefabricated diner is a one-story, stucco and concrete block that is two bays deep and houses the kitchen and restrooms. This rear block is a typical feature of post-World War II diners, and its presence does not compromise the integrity of the prefabricated section.

On the interior, there is booth seating along the front (east) wall and table seating along the side walls. The full-length counter has staff entrances at the center and on each side. The grill is in the back bar area, but most of the cooking is done in the kitchen at the rear, which is reached by way of a pair of steel swinging doors. To the right (north) of the counter is the entrance to restrooms, which also are located in the rear block. Immediately left (south) of the counter is a glass-enclosed booth, from which the owner's weekday morning radio show is broadcast (see significance). A cashier's area is located just inside the interior door.

The manufacturer's tag, which survives on the interior stainless steel door, reads *JERRY O'MAHONY INC., ELIZABETH, NEW JERSEY*. The monitor ceiling is finished in beige enamel and steel. Tables have steel legs and are topped with laminate in a faux marble finish. The counter displays a finish similar to that of the tabletops on both the top and the apron. There are fourteen steel counter stools. Both booths and counter stools are upholstered in vinyl. Behind the counter, the back bar features steel wall panels with sunburst motif and steel cabinets. Centered over the swinging doors to the rear kitchen is a stainless steel-rimmed clock. Walls have the same white, faux marble finish as the counter and tabletops. The floor retains its terrazzo tile in grey-green and dark green; the footrest at the counter is similarly finished.

Archaeological Description

While no ancient Native American resources are located on the property, sites may be present. Four sites are located in the general area (within one mile). Undisturbed environmental characteristics of the property have been obscured or destroyed by grading, filling, and historic building construction. Natural soils in the area may have been well drained, but are now characterized by udorthents and urban land whose physical characteristics are unknown. A level to moderately sloping landscape currently characterizes the property that is more than 1,000 feet from the nearest wetlands. Given the above information, the potential for recovering significant archaeological resources on the property, both

(continued)

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

The Diners of Massachusetts MPS
Shawmut Diner
New Bedford (Bristol Co.), MA

Section number 7/8 Page 2/1

ancient Native American and historic, is low. The relatively small size of the property (less than one-half acre) combined with impacts associated with construction of the diner, utilities, and parking on the site precludes the survival of archaeological sites that pre-date the diner at this location. No earlier historic buildings have been identified at this site.

(end)

8. Statement of Significance

New Bedford's Shawmut Diner (1953) is a fine example of a post-World War II stainless steel diner in Massachusetts, and one of only about a dozen diners in the state manufactured by Jerry O'Mahony Inc. of Elizabeth, New Jersey. The Shawmut is one of just two diners extant in New Bedford, a city that boasted at least ten diners in the years following World War II (the other extant diner in New Bedford is the Orchid Diner). The Shawmut Diner also is significant historically for its long association with the Mello family of New Bedford. Retaining integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association, the Shawmut Diner meets Criteria A and C of the National Register at the local and state levels.

The Shawmut Diner has been a fixture in New Bedford since its arrival in 1953. The 1952 street directory for New Bedford shows the diner site as vacant. Its history in 1953 and 1954 is sketchy due to lack of primary sources, but it is known that Joaquim Mello and Mrs. Mary Mello operated the diner in 1955, according to the city directory of that year. The Mello family resided at 210 Hathaway Road, between Shirley and Ayer, two blocks west of the diner, which occupies the southwest corner of Shawmut Avenue and Hathaway Road. At least ten other diners were operating in New Bedford in 1955. Mrs. Mary Mello ran the Shawmut Diner until at least 1971, according to city directories.

Long a center for textile manufacturing in southeastern Massachusetts, New Bedford was in a state of economic decline after World War II. Poor management in many local textile mills, coupled with labor strikes, cheaper manufacturing costs in the South, and the onset of a nationwide depression in the late 1920s, had led to the closure of most of the local factories. [Clayton and Whitley, 27-28] One boost to the local economy during these years, however, was the New Bedford airport on the northern outskirts of the city's central business district. The first commercial operations at the airport began in 1942. Later that year, the airport was transferred to the federal government for military use. In 1947, ownership reverted to the city. The administration and terminal building was completed in 1951. [New Bedford Regional Airport report] The Shawmut Diner (1953) is situated on a main access route between the municipal airport and the city's business district, about one mile south of the administration and terminal building en route to downtown New Bedford.

The manufacturer of Shawmut Diner, Jerry O'Mahony, Inc. of Elizabeth, New Jersey, was one of the leading diner manufacturers in the country. According to diner historian Richard Gutman, many dining car builders got their start with the company. O'Mahony produced "hundreds of diners in numerous styles too diverse to recap." [Gutman, 235-236] The Shawmut is one of about a dozen O'Mahony diners still in Massachusetts. Most, like the Shawmut, are stainless steel diners built after World War II.

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United States Department of the Interior
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National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

The Diners of Massachusetts MPS
Shawmut Diner
New Bedford (Bristol Co.), MA

Section number 8/9/10 Page 2/1

In 1981, Phil and Celeste Paleologos purchased and rehabilitated the diner. The Shawmut is the site of America's only radio show broadcasting from a diner, *America, Good Morning – Live from the Shawmut Diner*. Phil Paleologos, a thirty-year veteran of radio and television, hosts the weekday morning show, which features live news, sports, comedy, and commentary. Syndicated on the Talk America Radio Network, the show broadcasts to more than one hundred affiliates coast to coast.

(end)

9. Major Bibliographical References

- Bradley, James W., et al. *Historic and Archaeological Resources of Southeast Massachusetts*. Boston: Office of the Massachusetts Secretary of State, 1982 (reprinted 1985).
- Clayton, Barbara and Kathleen Whitley. *Guide to New Bedford*. Chester, Connecticut: The Globe Pequot Press, 1979.
- Cultrera, Larry. "Diner Hotline: Shawmut Diner goes coast to coast." *Society for Commercial Archeology Journal* (Fall 1998), p.32.
- 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.
- Manning's New Bedford and Fairhaven, Massachusetts Directory*. 1952, 1955, 1962, 1966, 1971.
- New Bedford, City of. "New Bedford Regional Airport Improvements Project. Purpose and Need Statement, 2.1 Historical Airport Activity." Via www.ci.new-bedford.ma.us.
- Web site for The Shawmut Diner and *America, Good Morning* (www.dinershow.com).

(end)

10. Geographical Data

Verbal Boundary Description

The boundary of the nominated property is shown on the accompanying detail of the City of New Bedford assessors' map 95, lot 233.

Boundary Justification

The boundary includes the land associated with Shawmut Diner since its placement on the site in 1953

(end)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: NOMINATION

PROPERTY NAME: Shawmut Diner

MULTIPLE NAME: Diners of Massachusetts MPS

STATE & COUNTY: MASSACHUSETTS, Bristol

DATE RECEIVED: 10/14/03 DATE OF PENDING LIST: 11/05/03
DATE OF 16TH DAY: 11/21/03 DATE OF 45TH DAY: 11/28/03
DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:

REFERENCE NUMBER: 03001208

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 11.28.03 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

SHAWMUT DINER



The Shawmut & Company

Diners of Mass. MPS
Shawmut Diner
943 Shawmut Ave
New Bedford, Bristol County, Mass.

KK Broome
Neg: MHC
September 2001

Photo 1 of 2



Diners of Mass. MPS

Shawmut Diner

943 Shawmut Ave

New Bedford, Bristol County, Mass.

KK Broome

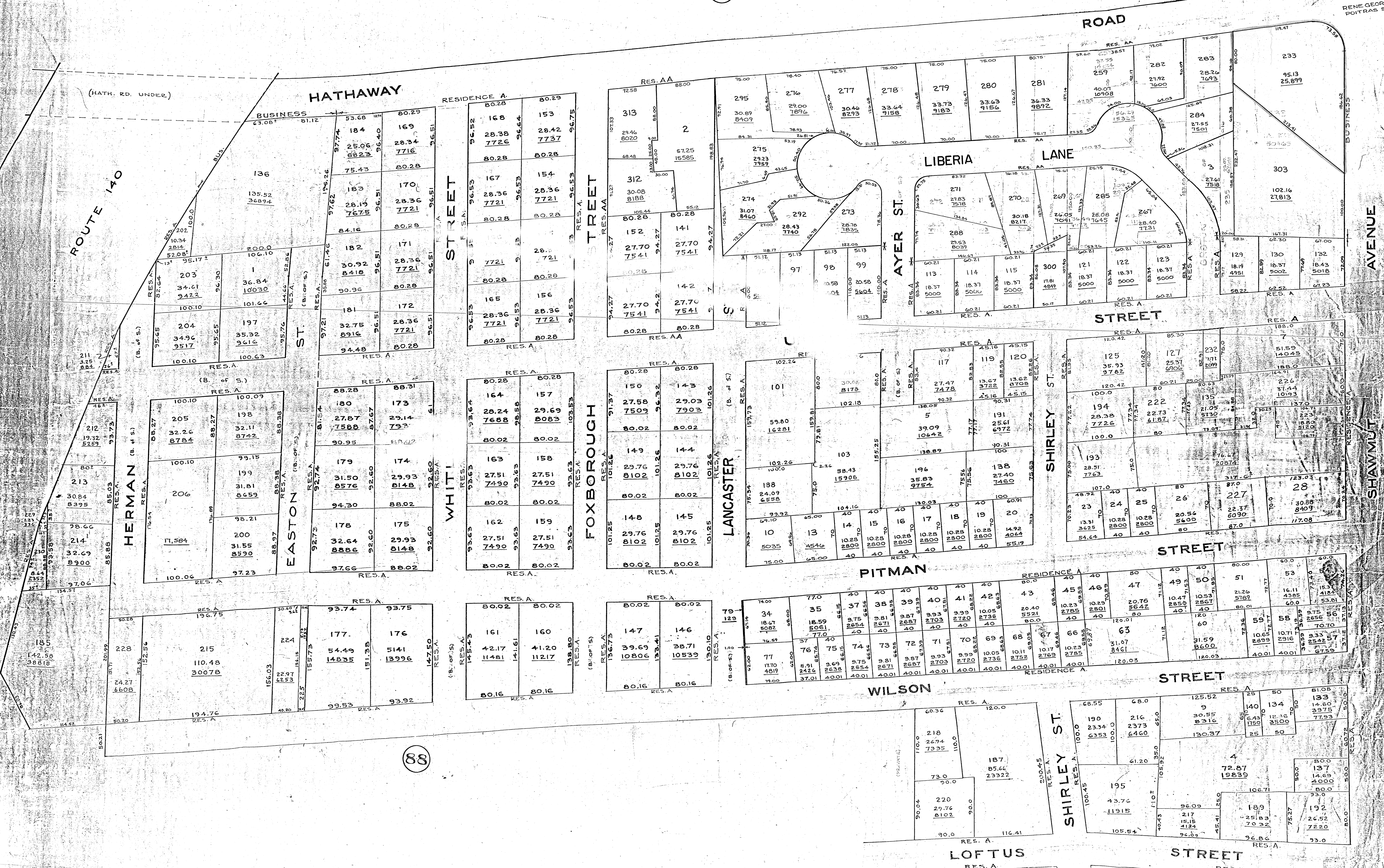
Neg: MHC

September 2001

Photo 2 of 2

The Divs of Massachusetts MPS
Shawmut Diner
942 Shawmut Avenue, New Bedford
Bristol County, Mass.
City of New Bedford Assessors Map
September 2001

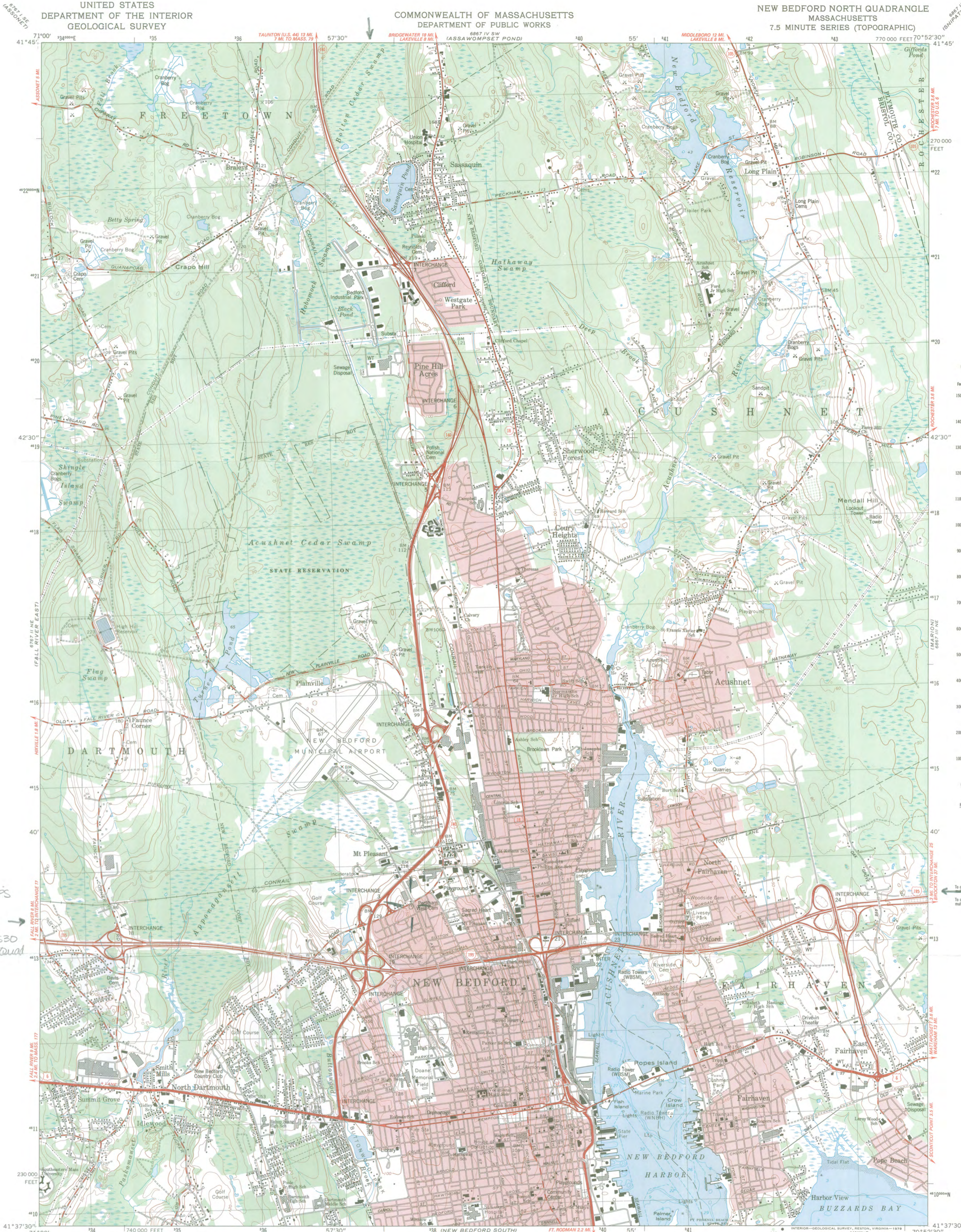
121



94

88

89



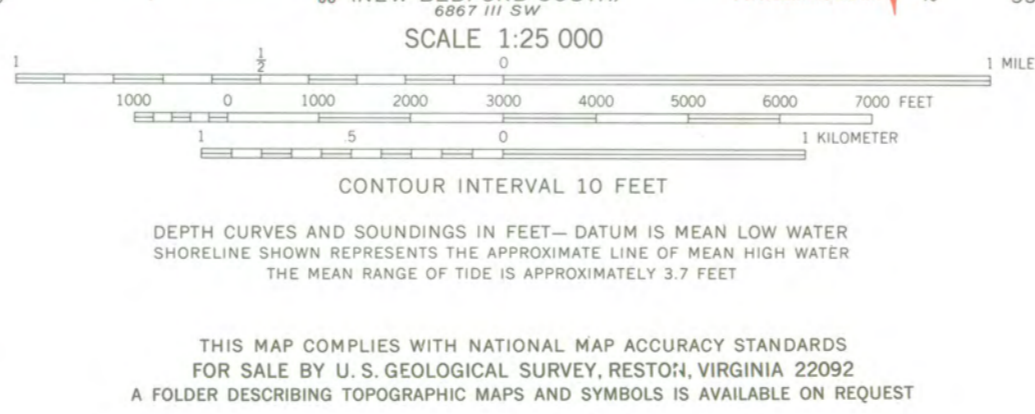
CONVERSION SCALES

Feet	Meters
0	0
100	30.48
200	60.96
300	91.44
400	121.92
500	152.40
600	182.88
700	213.36
800	243.84
900	274.32
1000	304.80
1500	457.20
2000	609.60
2500	762.00
3000	914.40
3500	1066.80
4000	1219.20
4500	1371.60
5000	1524.00
5500	1676.40
6000	1828.80
6500	1981.20
7000	2133.60
7500	2286.00
8000	2438.40
8500	2590.80
9000	2743.20
9500	2895.60
10000	3048.00

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

The Diners & Mass. MFS
Shawmut Diner
New Bedford
Bristol Co., Mass.
19 337840 4613530
New Bedford North Quad
1:25000

Mapped, edited, and published by the Geological Survey
Control by USGS, NOS/NOAA, and Massachusetts Geodetic Survey
Topography by planimetric surveys 1936. Revised 1964
Revised 1975 from aerial photographs taken 1974
Field checked 1975. Map edited 1979
Selected hydrographic data compiled from NOS 353 (1973)
This information is not intended for navigational purposes
Polyconic projection. 1927 North American Datum
To place on the predicted North American Datum 1983
move the projection lines 6 meters south and
42 meters west as shown by dashed corner ticks
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
Boundaries in tidewater areas from information furnished by
Massachusetts Department of Public Works
There may be private inholdings within the boundaries of
the National or State reservations shown on this map



ROAD CLASSIFICATION

Primary highway hard surface	Light duty road, hard or improved surface
Secondary highway, hard surface	Unimproved road
Interstate Route	U. S. Route
	State Route

NEW BEDFORD NORTH, MASS.
N4137.5—W7052.5/7.5
1979
DMA 6867 III NW—SERIES V814



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

October 8, 2003

Ms. Carol Shull
National Register of Historic Places
Department of the Interior
National Park Service
1201 Eye Street, NW, 8th floor
Washington, DC 20005



Dear Ms. Shull:

Enclosed please find the following nomination form:

Shawmut Diner, 943 Shawmut Avenue, New Bedford (Bristol), 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 owners of the property 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: Kathleen Kelly Broome, consultant
Antone Souza, New Bedford Historical Commission, CLG Coordinator
ANP Realty Trust
David A. Kennedy, City Planner
Frederick Kalisz, Jr., Mayor, City of New Bedford

220 Morrissey Boulevard, Boston, Massachusetts 02125
(617) 727-8470 • Fax: (617) 727-5128
www.state.ma.us/sec/mhc