

United States Department of the Interior
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination FormSee instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

For NPS use only

received JUL 16 1984

date entered AUG 16 1984

1. Name

historic The Claflin School

and/or common The Claflin School

2. Location

street & number 110-112 Washington Park N/A not for publication

city, town Newton N/A vicinity of

state Massachusetts code 025 county Middlesex code 017

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use	
☐ district	☐ public	☒ occupied	☐ agriculture	☐ museum
☒ building(s)	☒ private	☐ unoccupied	☐ commercial	☐ park
☐ structure	☐ both	☐ work in progress	☐ educational	☒ private residence
☐ site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	☐ entertainment	☐ religious
☐ object	N/A in process	☒ yes: restricted	☐ government	☐ scientific
	☐ being considered	☐ yes: unrestricted	☐ industrial	☐ transportation
		☐ no	☐ military	☐ other:

4. Owner of Property

name Penthouse Associates

street & number c/o Paul F. McDonough, Jr., 28 State Street

city, town Boston N/A vicinity of state Massachusetts

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Middlesex County Registry of Deeds

street & number 208 Cambridge Street

city, town Cambridge state Massachusetts

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

Inventory of the Historic Assets of
title the Commonwealth #2545 has this property been determined eligible? ☐ yes ☒ nodate 1984 ☐ federal ☒ state ☐ county ☐ local

depository for survey records Massachusetts Historical Commission

city, town Boston state Massachusetts

7. Description

Claflin School, Newton, MA

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 Claflin School is a late Victorian masonry structure (1891, J. Merrill Brown) that faces north on a corner lot at the intersection of Washington Park and Walnut Street in Newtonville. It is located on a relatively flat plain bounded on the west by West Newton Hill and on the east by the Commonwealth Avenue Hills. It is about one mile north of Bullough's Pond, the geographical center of Newton.

The school is set back approximately twenty-five feet from both of the streets on which it faces. Part of the village of Newtonville, it is situated on a large lot in an area which retains its 19th century suburban streetscape. The surrounding neighborhood consists of residential buildings on Washington Park and civic and low rise commercial buildings on Walnut Street.

The building, essentially rectangular in plan, rises three stories to a rather complex roof-line which is punctuated by two prominent chimneys on the east and west, and several transverse gables of different sizes that rise from all four elevations. Standing on a granite foundation, the school is sheathed in brick and capped by a steeply pitched hip roof covered in slate with copper ridges.

Particularly rich in decorative detail, the school is encircled by a corbelled brick cornice and a rusticated brownstone watertable. Pressed yellow brick and brownstone are also often used as trimming elements surrounding window and entries. Throughout much of the building, fenestration is arranged in groups of three with rectangular and arched openings glazed by 1/1 sash. Windows are generally headed by brownstone lintels and brick corbelling or by yellow brick voussoirs.

The north elevation is the facade of the building. Three symmetrically aligned gable pavillions are its most distinctive feature. The central or principal transverse gable is flanked by two secondary ones. Within the major pavilion is a set of three windows on each floor. They include a group of arched openings on the first story, rectangular windows on the second level, and a tripartite Palladian in form arched opening on the third floor. Also of note, below this third set group of windows is a brownstone plaque on which is carved "Claflin Grammer School." The secondary gable pavilions contain windows similar in form to those on the main pavilion, with the exception that the ones here are placed only on the second and third story, and the central opening in a cluster of windows is larger than those flanking it.

Located between the pavilion on this elevation are the two principal entries to the school. They are framed by rusticated brownstone blocks and headed by pressed yellow brick voussoirs which contain semi-circular lights within their arches. Now recessed, doorways were originally set flush with the brownstone entry surrounds.

The east and west elevations form the sides of the building and are identical in composition. Asymmetrical in format, the dominate feature on these elevations is a transverse gable located on the southern end and similar in design, detail and fenestration to others found on the building.

The south elevation is the rear of the building. Similar in design to the principal facade, it contains a central gable pavilion flanked by two smaller ones. On these secondary secondary pavilion, however, a hip roof is used rather than the gable form that is found on the facade. Fenestration on this face consists of five bays on the central

8. Significance

The Claflin School, Newton, MA

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/
☐ 1700–1799	☐ art	☐ engineering	☐ music	☐ humanitarian
☒ 1800–1899	☐ commerce	☐ exploration/settlement	☐ philosophy	☐ theater
☐ 1900–	☐ communications	☐ industry	☐ politics/government	☐ transportation
		☐ invention		☐ other (specify)

Specific dates 1891 **Builder/Architect** J. Merrill Brown

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The Claflin School possesses integrity of design, location, setting materials, workmanship and feeling as well as associations with Newton's suburban development in the late 19th century. It is also significant as a fine example of late Victorian institutional architecture as designed by the locally prominent architect, J. Merrill Brown, who is known primarily for his school and residential designs in late 19th century suburban Boston. The Claflin School thus meets Criteria A & C of the National Register of Historic Places.

The Claflin School is located in Newtonville, one of thirteen villages in the City of Newton. Located on one of its major north/south thoroughfares, Walnut Street, it stands near the historic center of this community which developed in the second half of the 19th century as part of Boston's suburban movement. Newtonville particularly attracted residents because it combined a fine transportation system with an excellent public school program.

Constructed in 1891, the Claflin School was built during a period of major growth in Newton which had begun in the 1880s and continued through the early 20th century. The school, in fact, is named for a successful Boston businessman and politician, William Claflin, who settled in Newtonville in the 1850s and was responsible for the subdivision of much of the area's farmland.

The need for the construction of this school in 1891 came from an expansion in the school-age population which had increased by almost 1000 pupils from 1881–1890. When new, the school was considered a model educational structure and reflected the city's commitment to the development of an excellent school system. The building contained six classrooms and was used by the upper grammar school grades. In 1953, having outgrown the facility, the student body moved to a new schoolhouse, also called the Claflin School. The older building was subsequently purchased by Newton Junior College which remained here until the facility closed in 1976.

Now the oldest school in Newton, Claflin was the first to be built of masonry. It takes its place within a slightly larger context of public buildings designed by architects trained in the offices of H.H. Richardson and Peabody and Stearns. The Claflin School is on a modest scale, but clearly manifests its architectural antecedents. Its architect, J. Merrill Brown (1853–1909) was one of the early students at the MIT School of Architecture before working in the offices of H.H. Richardson and Peabody and Stearns. His own practice began in Boston in 1882 and for many years he designed mainly residential buildings in the Boston suburban area. In addition, he designed Gov. Flower's Watertown, NY home as well as the commercial Massasoit National Bank in Fall River and the Eddy Building in New Bedford.

Brown was a well respected late 19th century Boston architect who managed to adapt his Beaux-Arts training and Richardsonian experience to the practicalities of educational, residential, and commercial buildings without sacrificing the period's high standards of design.

(continued)

9. Major Bibliographical References

Boston Public Library, Department of Fine Arts, Architects' File, "J. Merrill Brown."
City of Newton, Public Documents, 1886-1891.
Historic Newton Inc., Newton's 19th Century Architecture, Newtonville, 1980.

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property 80.981 sq. ft.

Quadrangle name Newton Quadrangle

Quadrangle scale 1:25000

UTM References

A

1	9	3	1	8	2	4	0	4	6	9	0	6	5	0
Zone		Easting				Northing								

B

Zone		Easting				Northing								

C

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D

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E

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F

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H

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Verbal boundary description and justification

See Attached Assessor's Map

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 Kathryn Kubie, Preservation Planner with Architectural Preservation Associates

organization Massachusetts Historical Commission date February, 1984

street & number 294 Washington Street telephone (617) 727-8470

city or town Boston state 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 W. Weslow

State Historic Preservation Office
title Massachusetts Historical Commission

date 5/10/84

For NPS use only

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

Entered in the
National Register

date

8-16-84

for Melrose Byers
Keeper of the National Register

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

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

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

For NPS use only
received
date entered

Continuation sheet Claflin School Item number 7 & 8 Page 1

bays on the smaller ones. Windows are simply treated and are generally rectangular in form except for the arched tripartite opening which is found within the central gable.

The building has generally remained intact over the years with only a door added in the 20th century at the basement level on the east facade. Recently, however, the school was rehabilitated and converted into apartments. This reconstruction followed the Secretary of Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation and the work was certified by the National Park Service in 1983.

Section 8 Significance (Con't)

A stylistic blend of Richardsonian Romanesque and High Victorian Gothic which were current in Newton and Boston at the turn of the century, the exterior of the building remains intact as it was constructed. Minor exceptions are a new door on the east facade, an elevator penthouse on the roof, two recessed dormers on the west roof and new entrance stairs and rails. The only loss on the exterior is a band of decorative corbelling on the entrance arches which was removed to attach wooden porticoes in the early 20th century. Exterior alterations throughout the building's history have been minor and reversible. The interior of the building retains only a few original details such as the Assembly room trusses. Although vacant since 1976, the building remains generally intact. It has recently been converted through private development into residential apartments with the rehabilitation work certified by the National Park Service in 1983.

42 344 346

7460 693

23 10300 957

105

97

WASHINGTON
PARK

110

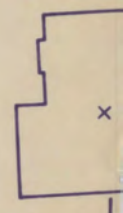
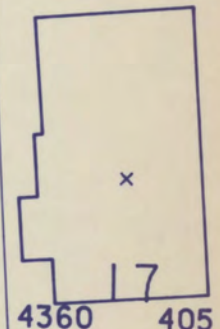
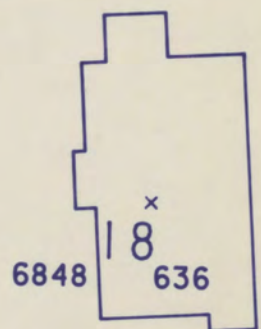
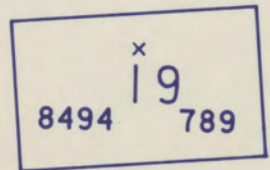
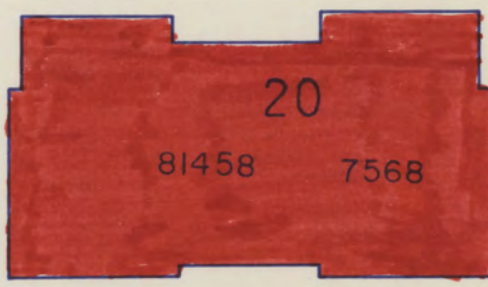
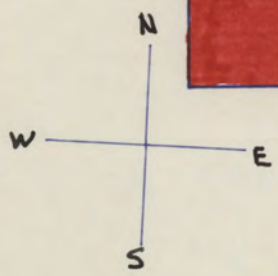
WALNUT
STREET

355

363

369

377



CLAFLIN

PLACE

3 5

9 11

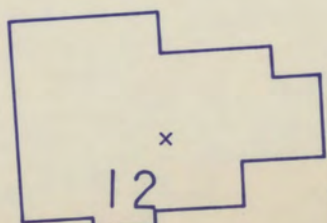
15 17

21 22

14

18

13
6755 628



Plan page 44 NE
Scale 1" = 40'
Section 22, Block 17, Lot 20
The Claflin School

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

Claflin School
Middlesex County
MASSACHUSETTS

Working No. JUL 16 1984
Fed. Reg. Date: 2/5/85
Date Due: 8/16/84 - 8/30/84
Action: ☒ ACCEPT 8-16-84
☐ RETURN
☐ REJECT
Entered in the National Register
Federal Agency: _____

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

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

Reviewer's comments:

Recom./Criteria _____
Reviewer _____
Discipline _____
Date _____
_____ see continuation sheet

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

1. Name

2. Location

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	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	Check one
☐ excellent	☐ deteriorated	☐ unaltered
☐ good	☐ ruins	☐ altered
☐ fair	☐ unexposed	☐ 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

Questions concerning this nomination may be directed to _____

Signed _____ Date _____ Phone: _____

Comments for any item may be continued on an attached sheet



The Claflin School
110-112 Washington Park
Newtonville, Massachusetts

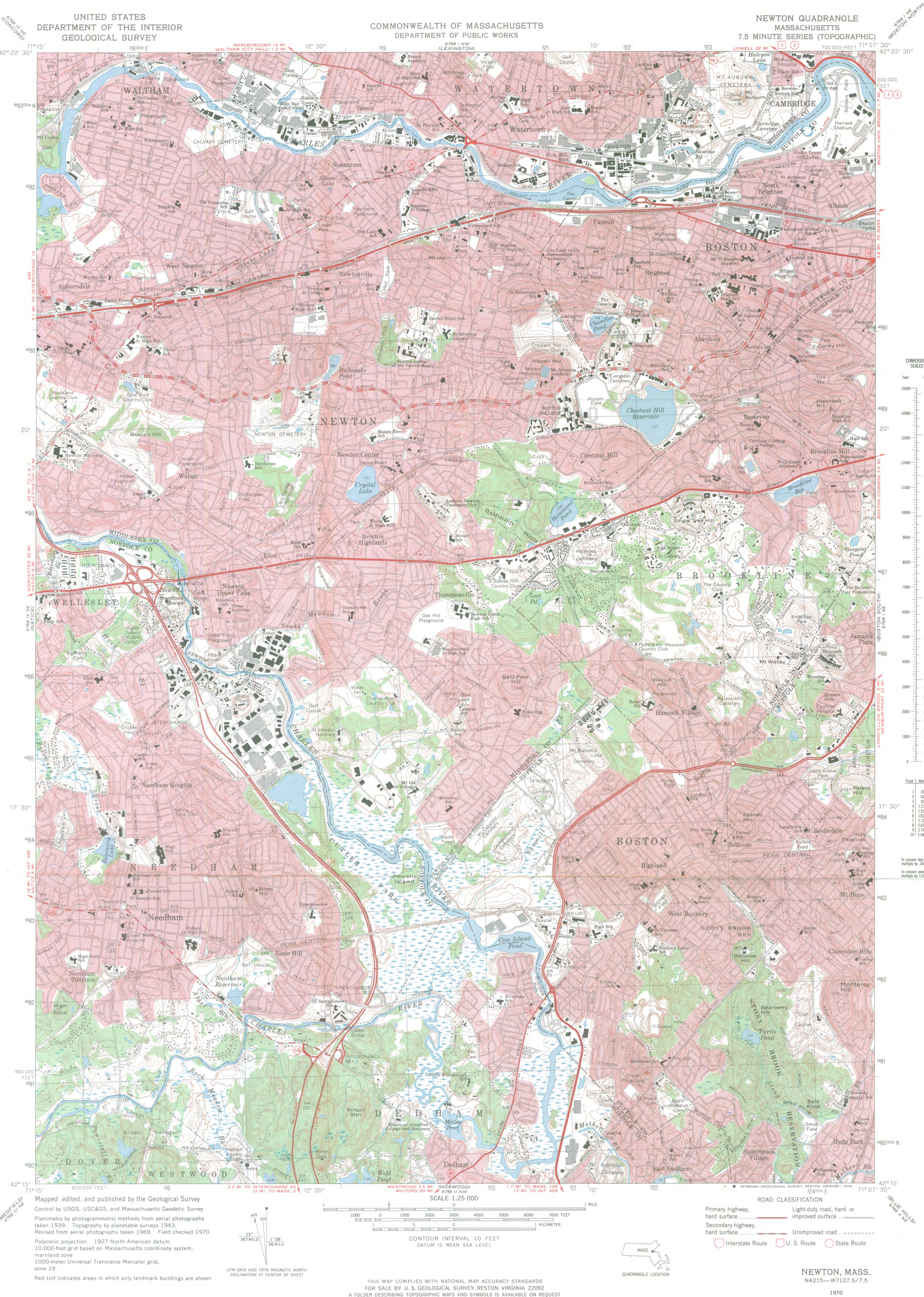
View from northwest
Architectural Preservation Associates
December, 1983

UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
GEOLOGICAL SURVEY

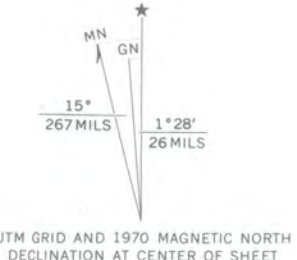
COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS

NEWTON QUADRANGLE
MASSACHUSETTS
7.5 MINUTE SERIES (TOPOGRAPHIC)

The Claflin School
Newton, MA
19 318240 4690650



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 planimetric surveys 1943.
Revised from aerial photographs taken 1969. Field checked 1970
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



CONTOUR INTERVAL 10 FEET
DATUM IS MEAN SEA LEVEL

THIS MAP COMPLIES WITH NATIONAL MAP ACCURACY STANDARDS
FOR SALE BY U.S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY, RESTON, VIRGINIA 22092
A FOLDER DESCRIBING TOPOGRAPHIC MAPS AND SYMBOLS IS AVAILABLE ON REQUEST



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

NEWTON, MASS.
N4215—W7107.5/7.5

1970

AMS 6768 1 SW—SERIES V814



Barbara Thibault
Chairman

City of Newton, Massachusetts

Incorporated 1873

CITY HALL

1000 COMMONWEALTH AVENUE, NEWTON CENTRE 02159

TELEPHONE (617) 552-7135

RECEIVED

JUN -8 1984

4 June 1984

MASS. HIST. COMM.

Ms Kathryn Kubie, Preservation Planner
MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
294 Washington Street
Boston Massachusetts 02108

Re: Claflin School - National Register Nomination

Dear Ms Kubie:

Enclosed is a copy of a motion passed at our last meeting supporting the nomination of the Claflin School to the National Register. The school is the finest of Newton's remaining 19th Century Schools and has been sensitively and appropriately adapted for multifamily housing.

We hope that our support of this project will encourage other developers to follow suit.

Sincerely,


Lawrence C Bauer, Secretary
Newton Historical Commission

sg



Barbara Thibault
Chairman

City of Newton, Massachusetts

Incorporated 1873

CITY HALL

1000 COMMONWEALTH AVENUE, NEWTON CENTRE 02159

TELEPHONE (617) 552-7135

RECORD OF ACTION

MOTION NO. 84-6

DATE: 3 May 1984

SUBJECT: Claflin School - National Register Listing

AT A MEETING on 3 May 1984, the NEWTON HISTORICAL COMMISSION,

by a vote of 5 to 0, passed the following motion:

Resolved, that the Newton Historical Commission in recognition of an admirable job of adaptive reuse of one of Newton's finest nineteenth century school buildings, wholeheartedly supports nomination of the Claflin School to the National Register of Historic Places.

MEMBERS VOTING: Thibault, Bauer, Arthur, Husher for Berkman,
Schilder for Pauler.

FURTHER ACTION REQUIRED:



Secretary of the Commission

COPIES TO: Kathryn Kubie
Massachusetts Historical Commission