

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**FOR NPS USE ONLY**  
RECEIVED DEC 11 1985  
DATE ENTERED JAN 21 1986

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**  
FOR FEDERAL PROPERTIES

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN *HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS*  
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

**1 NAME**

HISTORIC

United States Post Office , South Norwalk

AND/OR COMMON

Norwalk Main Post Office

**2 LOCATION**

STREET & NUMBER

16 Washington Street

N/A NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

Norwalk

N/A VICINITY OF

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

Fourth Congressional District

STATE

Connecticut 06856

0510

COUNTY

Fairfield

CODE

001

**3 CLASSIFICATION**

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE	
<input type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	<input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE	<input type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL	<input type="checkbox"/> PARK
<input type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> BOTH	<input type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL	<input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE RESIDENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> SITE	<b>PUBLIC ACQUISITION</b>	<b>ACCESSIBLE</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGIOUS
<input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT	N/A IN PROCESS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES: RESTRICTED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENTIFIC
	<input type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: UNRESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRIAL	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
		<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER:

**4 AGENCY**

REGIONAL HEADQUARTERS: *(If applicable)*

New England Field Real Estate and Buildings Office

STREET & NUMBER

1050 Waltham Street

CITY, TOWN

Lexington

N/A VICINITY OF

STATE

Massachusetts 02173

**5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE,  
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Norwalk City Hall

STREET & NUMBER

North Main Street

CITY, TOWN

Norwalk

STATE

Connecticut 06856

**6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE

None

DATE

FEDERAL  STATE  COUNTY  LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR  
SURVEY RECORDS

CITY, TOWN

STATE

## 7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED DATE _____
<input type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

### DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Norwalk Post Office is a one story with full basement building, rectangular in plan and sits on its own site detached from adjacent buildings, on a relatively quiet street, and located on the edge of the downtown commercial district, an area of moderate building density. A smaller historic Neo-Classical library occupies the site to the right. Its buff brick and stone exterior harmonize well with the Post Office's stone facing. To the left and directly across the street are low one and two story renovated commercial buildings housing newer shops. Diagonally across the street to the East, is a new high rise commercial structure, 50 Washington Plaza, which, as noted on a sign in front, was developed with funds from the National Park Service, Department of the Interior. One block East of the Post Office, under the elevated railroad tracks is a National Historic Register District which is currently undergoing extensive revitalization of seventeen (17) historic commercial buildings with each facade being restored to late 19th century elegance. The Post Office site has a large parking area to the rear with access from Madison Street. The area across this street has low residential apartments.

The Post Office building is reinforced concrete on masonry bearing walls. A steel and concrete composite flat roof framing structure was designed in anticipation of a future second floor. A mezzanine level at the rear contains the swing room and carrier's toilet room.

The exterior walls are clad in a buff, rubbed finish limestone, sitting on a pink granite base. The nine bay front elevation's central seven bay portion is projected to emphasize the public lobby behind. Tall steel sash are set in deep pier recesses. A short flight of granite steps lead up to the center entrance, which is trimmed in white marble with a handsome carved eagle above. A limestone cornice and parapet surround the building. Subtle carvings, medallions, and recesses enhance the otherwise flat walls. The rear of the building is clad in buff brick. The lobby floor is grey terrazzo with white marble borders. Bases are gray and white marble, with marble pilasters, plaster walls, and a unique concrete beamed ceiling. Diamond mesh grilles with medallion ornaments separate the upper screen line from the work room. Original lighting fixtures have been replaced by suspended fluorescents.

Several large wall murals by artist Kindred McLeary are in good condition, but are hidden from public view due to modifications to the lobby over the years. The end of the original lobby which contains the murals has been closed off to create offices. The opposite end of the lobby has also been closed off to create additional workspace. The original lock boxes have been relocated in this wall. In effect the former lobby area which extended back at each end around the work area, has been reduced by one half. The rear loading platform has also undergone a twenty (20) foot extension.

# 8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES	Designed: 1936	1937	BUILDER/ARCHITECT	Thomas Harlan Ellett, Architect Louis A. Simon, Sup. Architect for the U.S. Treasury Department
STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE			BUILDER:	William J. Lyons Co./Contractor 47 Wall St., Norwalk, CT

## Architecture

The Norwalk Post Office is a modest example of late classical Revival Architecture. Ornament and fine detail are spare, yet its classical proportions give it a sense of importance along the streetscape, and helps reinforce the Federal presence in the community. The building was built at a time when government policy was to design buildings using local materials and products in order to stimulate employment and spread the benefits of its building program. Standardized designs were used to save drawing time and place these projects on the market expeditiously in an effort to restore economic health. The simplified classical style characterized by the symmetrical massing and unornamented surfaces has been described as "Starved Classicism" by Lois Craig in The Federal Presence and represents a sort of synthesis of modern and classical stylistic elements.

The Treasury Relief Art Project of 1935 funded works of art in Government with grant money from the Works Project Administration. More highly skilled artists were hired than under other relief programs, in an attempt to subsidize local artists and bring art to the public with literal representations of the American Scene. The largest of the murals by Kindred McLeary, "The Old Well," depicts an ancient spring which supplied water to passing ships in the West Indies trade. The artist also created murals for Post Offices in New York and Pittsburgh, and a Federal Building in Washington.

The marble eagle sculpture at the front entrance was created by Gaetano Cecere, a New York artist who studied in Europe, and whose work can also be seen in the Post Office Department building in Washington, D.C.

In addition to reflecting the Federal presence in the community, this building has become more important today. Together with the adjacent historic Neo-Classical library, these landmark buildings anchor down the edge of a revitalized historic commercial district and help provide a sense of continuing history to the community.

# 9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

History of Post Office Construction 1900-1940, July, 1982

Craig, Lois, ed., The Federal Presence: Architecture, Politics, and Symbols in the United States Government Building, Cambridge, Massachusetts: The MIT Press, 1979

# 10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 1.25

UTM REFERENCES

A	1, 8	6 3, 2 5, 8, 0	4, 5 5, 0 7, 2, 0	B			
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING		ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
C				D			

### VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

West to East 130' along West Washington Street  
 North to South 306' along side lot line  
 West to East 234' along Madison Street  
 South to North 156' along side lot line  
 West to East 96' along rear of library  
 South to North 147' along side lot line

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

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

# 11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Sylvan Limon, Architect

ORGANIZATION

SULLIVAN DESIGN GROUP, INC.

DATE

July 17, 1985

STREET & NUMBER

44 Adams Street

TELEPHONE

(617) 848-1545

CITY OR TOWN

Braintree

STATE

Massachusetts 02184

# 12 CERTIFICATION OF NOMINATION

### STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER RECOMMENDATION

YES  NO  NONE

*[Signature]*  
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

*[Signature]* Director, Office of Real Estate

DATE

12/6/85

FDR NPS USE ONLY

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

DATE

1/21/86

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION  
 ATTEST:

DATE

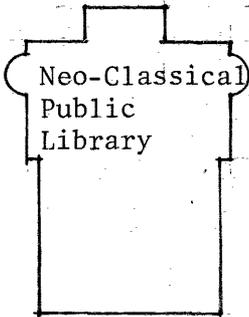
KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

1 Story  
Commercial  
Building

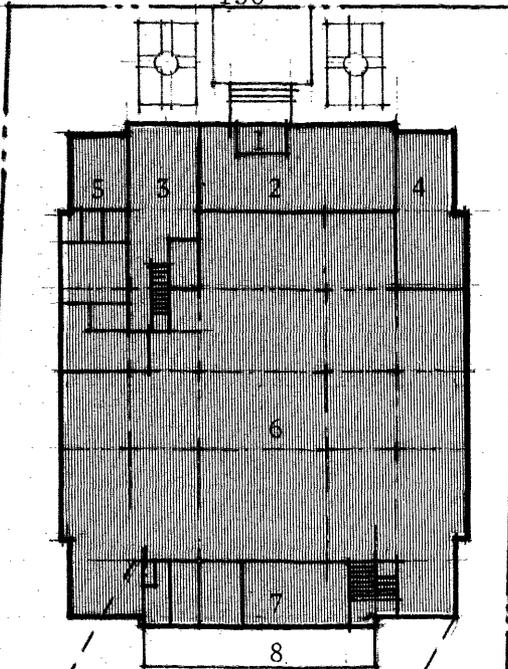
4 Story Older  
Commercial  
Building

West Washington Street

130'



147'



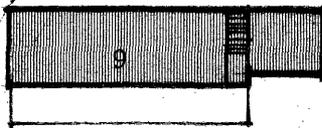
1 and 2 Story  
Commercial  
Building

306'

96'

Lots Added in  
Recent Years for  
Parking

156'



Mezzanine

Parking

1. Vestibule
2. Public Lobby
3. Offices (Former Lobby)
4. Work Area (Former Lobby)
5. Postmaster
6. Work Room
7. Mailing Vestibule
8. Platform
9. Swing Room

96'

138'

Madison Street

