

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 JAN 31 1986  
DATE ENTERED MAR 17 1986

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

Bridgeport Main Post Office

**2 LOCATION**

STREET & NUMBER

120 Middle Street at Golden Hill Street

\_\_NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

Bridgeport

N/A VICINITY OF

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

Fourth Congressional District

STATE

Connecticut

CODE  
0080

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 Building 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.

City Hall, City Clerk's Office

STREET & NUMBER

45 Lyon Terrace

CITY, TOWN

Bridgeport

STATE

Connecticut 06602

**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		

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

The Bridgeport Post Office is situated on the eastern edge of the downtown commercial district, an area of high building density and is bounded on three sides by city streets. Across from the main facade on Middle Street to the West, and Golden Hill Street to the North, lie older multi-story commercial buildings of some architectural interest. The Post Office shares its block with a newer two story commercial building on Middle Street of no distinction and a one story commercial building on Water Street to the rear, which exhibits Art Deco detailing sympathetic to the Post Office. Both buildings are separated from the Post Office by parking and loading dock areas along the side lot line. The rear of the building on Water Street faces a decaying abandoned railroad station at the intersection of two elevated railroad lines. Across Middle Street to the South there is extensive construction of new high rise buildings as well as major renovations to existing structures. This revitalization appears to be moving towards the Post Office neighborhood.

The entire downtown district, including the Post Office facility, has been under study by the City for a possible National Register Historic District, indicative of its rich architectural heritage.

The building is approximately rectangular in plan, with one rear corner cut out at the loading dock side. The three main facades are parallel to the three surrounding streets.

Golden Hill Street slopes down from Middle Street at the front two story elevation to Water Street at the rear three story elevation.

The Post Office is entered from two entrances on Middle Street, towards each end of the building, which lead into the main second floor public lobby, a long tunnel-like space which runs almost the full length of the building. The lobby is internal with offices between it and the street and a large work room to the rear.

The first story floor has on-grade access to the mailing platform, elevators connecting to the second floor, and also contains a large work area as well as mechanical and storage rooms.

The third floor consists of offices on the three street sides of the building, served by a single loaded corridor which overlooks the roof of the second story, and is connected to the public lobby by two enclosed stairways. These offices house a variety of Federal agencies as well as Post Office functions.

The structure is of reinforced concrete and employs both terra cotta arch and metal pan floor systems. The exterior is clad in smooth finish limestone with flush narrow joints, containing steel sash painted yellow. Only the South face (mailing platform side) is clad in common brick. The front facade has a central projected portion containing seven two-story high

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window bays framed with limestone pilasters, each with a simplified acanthus leaf decoration at the top. The public entrances at each side of this projected area are reached by a short flight of stone steps and are framed in ribbed polished purple marble, where Art Deco inspired aluminum and glass transoms provide virtually all the ornament on the building's plain exterior. The second and third floor roofs are flat. The chimney has some Art Deco grillwork.

The public lobby is impressive and unexpected from the simple exterior of the building, for its scale and richness in materials and detail.

Flooring is black and tan terrazzo, with an eight foot high wainscot in gray variegated marble. This is interrupted with marble pilasters which support a rib molded plaster "tray" ceiling which slopes up on both sides to a flat center portion containing flush fluorescent lights. This was once a continuous skylight area the full length of the lobby. Most of the original glass transoms between pilasters have been replaced with painted panels.

The South end of the lobby contains three panel murals by Artist, R.L. Lambdin of Westport, Connecticut dated 1936 depicting the history of mail transportation. The North end contains three panel murals by Arthur Covey of Torrington, Connecticut dated 1935 depicting local industries (Bridgeport Brass Co., and Singer Sewing Machine Co.)

The integrity of the exterior facade has been maintained as originally constructed, but the interior has undergone continuing alterations. In 1964 glass skylights over the lobby and the second floor work area were eliminated. Third floor office areas were revised in 1974, and extensive HVAC work was done in 1976.

# 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 checked="" 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: 1932 Completed: 1934	BUILDER/ARCHITECT	Louis A. Simon, Sup. Architect U.S. Treasury Department Charles Wellington Walker, Arch. Bridgeport, Connecticut New York, NY
STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE			

## Architecture

The Bridgeport Post Office was designed during the early depression years when the government's policies stressed building programs to help unemployment. Design policy remained one of using standardized floor plans wherever possible for economic reasons and to minimize the number of drawings in order to achieve speedy construction in the interest of economic recovery. In keeping with the goal of alleviating unemployment in the architectural profession, private architects received contracts to design Government buildings after 1930.

Nevertheless, this facility appears to be on an individual design plan probably due to its size, site, the inclusion of other Federal offices and the use of private Architects.

Government architecture of the period was often a simplified classical style characterized by symmetrical massing unornamented surfaces which has been described by Lois Craig in The Federal Presence as "starved classicism", a sort of synthesis of modern and classical stylistic elements.

The Bridgeport Post Office is a significant example of the Art Deco/Art Modern stylistic influences prominent during the late twenty's and thirty's. Its taut stone exterior is daringly devoid of ornament. Subtle symmetrical projections and height variations of the skin are used to break up the stark mass and emphasize main functional areas of the building. The lobby is classical in overall design and layout, but features originally designed ornament which is unique and only reminiscent of classical order.

The integrity of the exterior and the strong scale of the structure will continue to maintain The Federal Presence in the City as the character of the district changes with the newer high rise structures and revitalized older buildings; and will provide an historic example of Government policy during the early depression years.

## ART

Under the Treasury Relief Program of 1935, highly skilled artists were hired through competitions to bring art to the American people by producing

# 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

Newspaper Article: The Telegram, Bridgeport, Connecticut, April 20, 1983  
 Article on Arthur Covey and Post Office Murals

# 10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 1.25

UTM REFERENCES

A	1, 8	6, 5, 1, 9, 2, 0	4, 5, 6, 0, 1, 6, 9	B			
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING		ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
C				D			

## VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

South to North 217' along Middle Street  
 West to East 209' along Golden Hill Street  
 Northwest to Southeast 213' along Water Street  
 Northeast to Southwest 170' along lot line  
 North to South 70' along lot line  
 East to West 88' along lot line

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

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
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STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
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# 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

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

*Jam T. Coe*

Director, Office of Real Estate

DATE

1-27-86 (2/17/86)

FOR NPS USE ONLY

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

*Patricia Andrews*

DATE

3/17/86

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

ATTEST *Beth D. Savage*

DATE

3/14/86

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

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literal representations of the American Scene in public buildings, in a program which attempted to subsidize local artists. The two sets of three panel murals at each end of the lobby are excellent examples of this effort and will provide future generations a picture of Bridgeport's and the United States Postal Service's history.

The South wall murals by R.L. Lambdin depicts mail delivery through the ages:

- First Panel Clerk operating cancelling machine, sorting and pouching mail.
- Second Panel Pony Express - Pilot - Carrier on bicycle -  
Foot Carrier - Parcel Post Carrier
- Third Panel Stagecoach with four (4) horses - airplane in sky -  
modern railroad train.

The North wall murals by Arthur Covey depicts local industrial activity.

- First Panel Bridgeport Brass Company workers stamping out brass shells.
- Second Panel Singer Sewing Machines - workers completing assembly of machines.
- Third Panel Bridgeport Brass Company workers rolling sheets of brass.

5 Story Older Commercial Building

2 Story Older Commercial Building

Parking

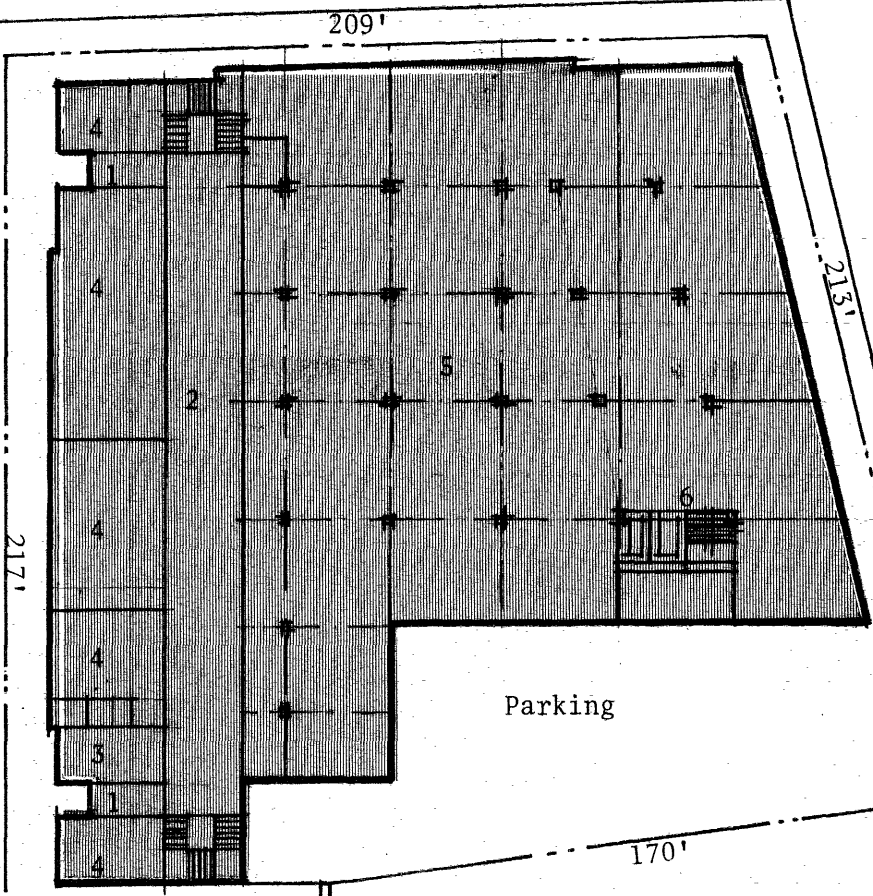
Golden Hill Street

Rail Road Tracks (Elevated)

Water Street

2 Story Older Commercial Building

Middle Street



Parking

2 Story Commercial Building

1 Story Commercial Building

