

FORM A - AREA

**MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
80 BOYLSTON STREET, BOSTON, MA 02116**

AUG 21 1989

1526

NATIONAL REGISTER

Area Letter **Form numbers in this Area**

A	A1-A11
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WALTHAM, MA MRA

Town Waltham, Ma

Name of Area (if any) Central Square H.D.

Present Use commercial/municipal/residential

General Date or Period 1850-1938

General Condition good

Acreage 6.34 acres/ 276,186 sq.ft.

Recorded by Ed Gordon

Organization Waltham Historical Comm.

Date August, 1986

revised by C. Jenkins 3/88



Waltham Common

Sketch Map. Draw a general map of the area indicating properties within it. Number each property for which individual inventory forms have been completed. Label streets including route numbers, if any. Indicate north. (Attach a separate sheet if space here is not sufficient).



Fire and Police Stations

see attached map

RESOURCE COUNT:

14 buildings:	12C	2NC
1 landscape:	1 C	0NC
4 statues:	3 C	1NC
4 vacant lots:	0 C	4NC
Total	16C	7NC

23 resources

UTM REFERENCE A 191315 750 14693770
 B. 191315 950 14693840
 C 191315 820 14693560
 D 191316 020 14693590

USGS QUADRANGLE LEXINGTON

SCALE 1:25,000

NATIONAL REGISTER CRITERIA STATEMENT (if applicable)

The Central Square Historic District possesses integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling and association. It is significant as the first and only community center to develop in Waltham combining commercial and municipal functions around the centerpiece of the town common. The commercial blocks surviving today reflect the city's post civil war prosperity as a major industrial center, while its concentration of public buildings reflects growth and incorporation as a city in 1884. The district developed largely between 1850 and 1930, and includes many fine examples of contemporary architectural styles such as Italianate, High Victorian Gothic, Queen Anne and Classical Revival. Especially important are the four commercial blocks designed by noted architect Henry Hartwell over a fifty year period. The district meets criteria A and C of the National Register of Historic Places.

ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE Describe important architectural features and evaluate in terms of other areas within the community.

The Central Square Historic District includes 14 buildings and 2 vacant lots focused on the town common which is characterized by mature trees, a path system with reproduction lights and benches, 3 statues and an obelisk. The City Hall stands on the 2.39 acre common as well. One to three story commercial blocks, dating from the mid-19th to the mid-20th centuries, frame the common on Elm (E) and Main (N) Streets. The district also extends north on Lexington and Church Streets to include the Fire and Police Stations and the Fire Alarm Headquarters Building. Specifically excluded from the district are modern commercial blocks that face the common on Moody Street (W) and the Boston Manufacturing Company (NHL/NR) on the southern perimeter. Other boundaries have been drawn to exclude modern or altered commercial blocks, or residential properties. The potential Townpiece Historic District abuts the northeast corner of the Central Square Historic District on Church Street.

A wide variety of architectural styles are represented in the district ranging from Italianate to High Victorian Gothic to Queen Anne to Classical Revival. Many are the works of important

HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE Explain historical importance of area and how the area relates to the development of other areas of the community.

Although Waltham was settled during the 1630s and was incorporated as a town in 1738, it did not possess a recognizable center until the 1830s. The Central Square area's development as Waltham's commercial, municipal and social center was inextricably bound to the establishment and expansion of the Boston Manufacturing Company. Founded in 1813, the BMC was the first full process textile mill in the United States. Situated on the banks of the Charles River just south of the common, its choice of site was dictated by the presence of a waterfall with a ten foot drop sufficient to power the textile machinery. The present common was given to the town by the BMC during the period 1813-1886. In 1827, the BMC constructed Rumford Hall which stood on the site of the present City Hall until the 1920s. This Greek Revival style wood-frame structure housed shops and an auditorium, and later a library. The Rumford Institute's meetings were held in this building featuring speakers such as Ralph Waldo Emerson, Mark Twain and Oliver W. Holmes. In addition to this popular lyceum function, Rumford Hall also housed town meetings and other town business from 1850 on, thus establishing a municipal presence in the area. Other factors contributing to the rise of Central Square as the town center were the proximity of the Great Road (now Main Street), introduction of the Boston & Fitchburg Railroad in 1843, and construction of the Moody Street bridge in 1847. All of these conditions attracted residential growth which in turn spawned the commercial and social activities as well as public services that now make up the center.

Central Square's buildings reflect its late 19th century industrial prosperity and 1884 incorporation as a city. Individual buildings are discussed below:

BIBLIOGRAPHY and/or REFERENCES

- E.L. Sanderson. Waltham, 1634-1884. 1936
Berry, Jean. The Old Bricks of Waltham Common. 1978.
D.H. Hurd. History of Middlesex County. Vo. III.

INVENTORY FORM CONTINUATION SHEET

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
Office of the Secretary, Boston

Community: Waltham	Form No: A
Property Name: Central Square H.D.	

Indicate each item on inventory form which is being continued below.

Architectural Significance (cont)

Boston based architects such as George Meacham, Arthur Vinal and Kilham, Hopkins & Greely. Local architects are represented by George E. Strout and Captain Samuel Patch. Most importantly, the district provides an opportunity to view four important works by Waltham resident and Boston based architect, Henry W. Hartwell of Hartwell & Richardson, later Hartwell, Richardson & Greely. Few urban centers encompass buildings which constitute a fifty year retrospective of the designs of a single noted architect. Hartwell designed buildings include the Italianate style Central Block (1856; A5), the Queen Anne style Music Hall (1880; A2), the Queen Anne style Police Station (1890; A7) and the Georgian Revival style Buttrick Building (1902; A3).

Central Square's buildings provide a prominent and highly visible link with Waltham's illustrious past. The commercial blocks reflect its post civil war prosperity as a major industrial center, while its concentration of public institutional buildings reflects its growth and incorporation as a city in 1884. Over time several important buildings have been demolished or substantially altered, but the district nevertheless retains a fragile cohesiveness and sense of place.

Individual components of the district are described below:

Town Common and Statuary (A803, 12, 13) The town common is a 2.39 acre square parcel composed of land donated to Waltham by the Boston Manufacturing between 1813-86. Over time it was transformed from a cow pasture to an ornamental park dotted with mature shade trees, and crisscrossed by lighted paths. Civic sculpture was also added gradually, beginning with a granite urn surmounted obelisk designed in 1867 by George Meacham (A12). In 1909, the Henry Hudson Kitson designed statue of Governor Nathaniel P. Banks (A13) was placed on the common; it is a standing bronze figure in greatcoat in front of a Neo-classical chair. The third statue is the early 20th century Hiker dedicated to veterans of the Spanish-American War; this bronze foot soldier with rifle was designed by Kitson's wife, Theodora Ruggles Kitson. A Centennial Memorial was added in 1984.

Commercial Buildings

Perhaps more than any other building type, the commercial block, by virtue of its large scale, high quality materials, and considerable stylishness, symbolizes Waltham's late 19th and early 20th century industrial prosperity. The oldest building in the district is the Italianate style Central Block, 617-27 Main Street(1856; A5). It was designed by Henry Hartwell to house shops on the ground floor and a hotel on the upper floors. The original red pressed brick fabric is still intact on the upper floors, along with a range of plain brick pilasters, pedimented cast iron window heads and a deep bracketed cornice.

The district's only example of the High Victorian Gothic style is the Whitford Building, 653-63 Main Street (1877; A9). It features a highly polychromatic facade with sandstone stringcourses, segmental headed and arched lintels along with bands of red and black brick work. George Meacham, designer of Boston's Public Garden (NR: 7/12/72), was the architect of this building.

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Indicate each item on inventory form which is being continued below.

Architectural Significance (cont)

The Queen Anne style is represented by the Music Halls 14 Elm Street (1880; A2) whose design also blends elements of the Panel Brick style. It is a three story brick structure whose facade features brick piers, recessed panels and corbeled cornices; original cast iron storefronts are retained as well. These rather subdued design elements are focused on a once electrified copper screen over the two central bays that is ornamented with geometric panels, a diminutive gable oriel and tall pinnacles; it was added to the original Hartwell designed building in 1918.

Anchoring the northwest corner of the district at Main and Common Streets, is the Lawrence Building, 681 Main Street (1900; A10). Designed by Arthur H. Vinal, it is the largest block in the district rising three stories, and extending five bays on Main Street and eight bays on Common Street. It is constructed of buff brick and its Classical Revival design features Corinthian pilasters dividing broad arched window bays at the upper stories. Original storefront materials may remain behind the present aluminum panels. The Common Street elevation is characterized by irregular fenestration, multi-story oriels and secondary entries.

The Georgian Revival style is represented by two yellow brick corner blocks with curved facades addressing their respective intersections. The Collins Block, 633 Main Street (1902; A6) at Lexington Street, was designed by local architect George Strout and is the simpler of the two. Although its ground floor is missing, the original limestone Tuscan columns of its recessed entrance, the yellow brick fabric, two-story metal oriels and deep modillion block cornice of its upper floors is still intact. The more imposing Buttrick Block, 582 Main Street (1902; A3) at Elm Street is the district's most recent example of a Henry Hartwell designed business block. Like the Collins Block, it has been altered at the ground floor, but retains the rusticated brick piers, dentilated cornice and balustraded cornice of its upper stories.

Municipal Buildings

Waltham was incorporated as Massachusetts' 22nd city on June 2, 1884. Soon thereafter, the new city embarked on an ambitious municipal building campaign which produced new schools, a waterworks, and police and fire stations. Oddly enough, a new city hall was not built until 1924-26, even though it was badly needed as a replacement for the cramped quarters in the wood-frame Rumford Building of 1827. Many of these late 19th and early 20th century buildings are located in the Central Square Historic District.

The oldest municipal building in the district is the Lexington Street Fire Station, 25 Lexington Street (1887; A8). This Queen Anne style building, executed in red brick with rock faced granite trim, was designed by local architect Captain Samuel Patch. The three bay facade is articulated by brick piers that rise through the corbeled cornice and now culminate in added chimneys. The steeply pitched gable between these piers defines the central bay. Three engine bays occupy the ground floor. The two story building is enclosed by a slate hip roof with dormers on the side slopes. Adjacent is the Hartwell and Richardson designed Police Station, 23 Lexington Street (1890; A7). Constructed of red water-struck brick, this two story hip roofed building, with its tripartite gabled roof dormers, is designed in the Queen Anne style. It features a round arched entrance, a corbeled course beneath second story windows and a narrower corbeled course linking their segmental heads.

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Indicate each item on inventory form which is being continued below.

Architectural Significance (cont)

The district's most highly visible municipal building is the cupola-crowned Georgian Revival style City Hall (1924-26; A1). Together with the Waltham Common, the William Rogers Greely designed City Hall is the focal point of the district. Greely, a town hall specialist in the firm of Kilham, Hopkins and Greely, borrowed freely from the design of Arlington's town hall for his rendering of the Waltham City Hall. The original intention was to face this building with marble, but limestone was chosen for the sake of economy. The symmetrical thirteen bay main facade is focused on a three bay pedimented central pavilion, whose three entries lead into a handsomely appointed lobby. Other elevations are also highly symmetrical and chastely rendered. The building rises two stories from a high basement to a balustraded roofline.

The Wires Building or Fire Alarm Headquarters, 14 Church Street (1931; A4) is the most recent in the district's rich inventory of municipal buildings. It is a small, cubic structure whose compact design displays elements of the Classical Revival and Art Deco styles. It is constructed of brick laid up in Flemish bond, and is trimmed with limestone water-table and beltcourses. The recessed round arched entry is framed by verigated voussoirs and corners feature a stepped silhouette.

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INVENTORY FORM CONTINUATION SHEET

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Indicate each item on inventory form which is being continued below.

Historical Significance (cont)

A1) The Waltham City Hall, 614 Moody Street. Built in 1924-1926, the Waltham City Hall represents the work of townhall specialist William Rogers Greely, a partner in the Boston-based architectural firm of Kilham, Hopkins and Greely. Although a proposal for a new city hall had been made as early as 1872 (to be designed in the Victorian Gothic Revival Style), town/city meetings continued to be held in the cramped quarters of the old Rumford Hall (1827). The Waltham City Hall is based closely on the Arlington, City Hall. It is a good example of the Georgian Revival Style in municipal architecture.

A2) The Music Hall, 15 Elm Street. The Music Hall symbolizes Waltham Center's late 19th century status as the major cultural/social center in Waltham. From 1880-1900 the Music Hall was the setting for first class musical events and civic affairs. It had one of the largest stages in New England. By 1916 this theatre featured silent movies, vaudeville, etc. It was designed by Henry W. Hartwell.

A3) The Buttrick Building, 582-588 Main Street represents the last commercial block in Waltham designed by Henry W. Hartwell. Built in 1902-1903 it contained shops, offices and bowling alleys. It was named in honor of Frances Buttick, well-to-do Waltham lumber/coal dealer and major late 19th century land speculator.

A4) Wires Building, 14 Church Street. The Wires Building was built during the height of the Depression (1931) to house a more modern central fire alarm system for the city.

A5) The Central Block, 627 Main Street. Built in 1856, 627 Main Street was originally known as Miller's Block and contained shops and hotel rooms on its upper floors. It became known as the Central Block in 1867. This building represents the first brick masonry commercial block in Waltham and is an early work of Henry W. Hartwell.

A6) The Collins Block, 633 Main Street. The Collins Block represents an early work by local architect and Queen Anne house specialist George E. Strout. Its lower floors originally contained stores, and the upper floors housed its owner and namesake, real estate speculator Michael Collins.

A7) The Waltham Police Station, 23 Lexington Street. Built in 1890, this substantial, hip roofed brick masonry structure represents the work of Hartwell and Richardson. It is an important part of Waltham's outstanding collection of late 19th century municipal buildings.

A8) The Lexington Street Fire Station, 25 Lexington Street. Built in 1887, this fire station was the first of a half dozen or so municipal buildings erected in Waltham during the late 1880s-1890s. It represents the work of local architect (and for many years Waltham's Building Supt.) Captain Samuel Patch.

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INVENTORY FORM CONTINUATION SHEET

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Community: Waltham	Form No: A
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Indicate each item on inventory form which is being continued below.

Historical Significance (cont)

A9) The Whitford Building, 645 Main Street. This red pressed brick and sand stone faced structure was built in 1877. It represents the work of Boston-based architect and designer of the Boston Public Garden, George Meacham. For many years this building housed a regionally-known jewelry store--Whitford and Johnson, dealers in diamonds, watches, clocks, jewelry, silverware, etc.

A10) The Lawrence Building, 1900 is one of the largest commercial blocks in Waltham. It was designed by Boston City architect, Arthur H. Vinal in a manner which successfully mixes the Romanesque Revival with the Classical Revival.

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<u>Street Address</u>	<u>Assessor's #</u>	<u>Square Feet</u>	<u>Historic Name/Inventory #</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Style</u>	<u>Status</u>
^{OWNER OBJECTION} 600 Main Street	60-21-1	51,866	Buttrick Building/A3	1902-1903	Georgian Rev.	C
609-613 Main Street	60-9-6	6,450	vacant	n/a	n/a	NC
610 Main Street	60-20-1	2.39 A.	City Hall/A1	1924-1926	Georgian Rev.	C
"	"	"	Waltham Common/A803	1813-1886	Landscape	C
"	"	"	Obelisk/A12	1867	Statuary	C
"	"	"	N.P. Banks Statue/A13	1909	Statuary	C
"	"	"	Hiker Statue	early 20th	Statuary	C
"	"	"	Centennial Memorial	1984	Statuary	NC
617-627 Main Street	60-9-7	7,452	Central Block/A5	1856	Italianate	C
633 Main Street	60-9-8	9,137	Collins Block/A6	1902-1903	Georgian Rev.	C
637 Main Street	60-10-7	4,654	Waltham National Bank	1889/1960s	Modern	NC
645 Main Street	60-10-8	6,946	n/a	?	Altered	NC
649 Main Street	60-10-9	1,750	Curtis Building	c1930	Classical Rev.	C
653-663 Main Street	60-10-10	10,084	Whitford Building/A9	1877	High Victorian Gothic	C
665-675 Main Street	60-10-11	9,270	n/a	c1930	Classical Rev.	C
^{OWNER OBJECTION} 677-685 Main Street	60-11-10	13,390	Lawrence Building/A10	1900	Classical Rev.	C
7 Elm Street	60-21-38	2,671	Vacant	n/a	n/a	NC
8-13 Elm Street	60-21-37	5,603	Vacant	n/a	n/a	NC
15-19 Elm Street	60-21-30	7,590	Music Hall/A2	1880	Queen Anne	C

WALTHAM, MA MRA

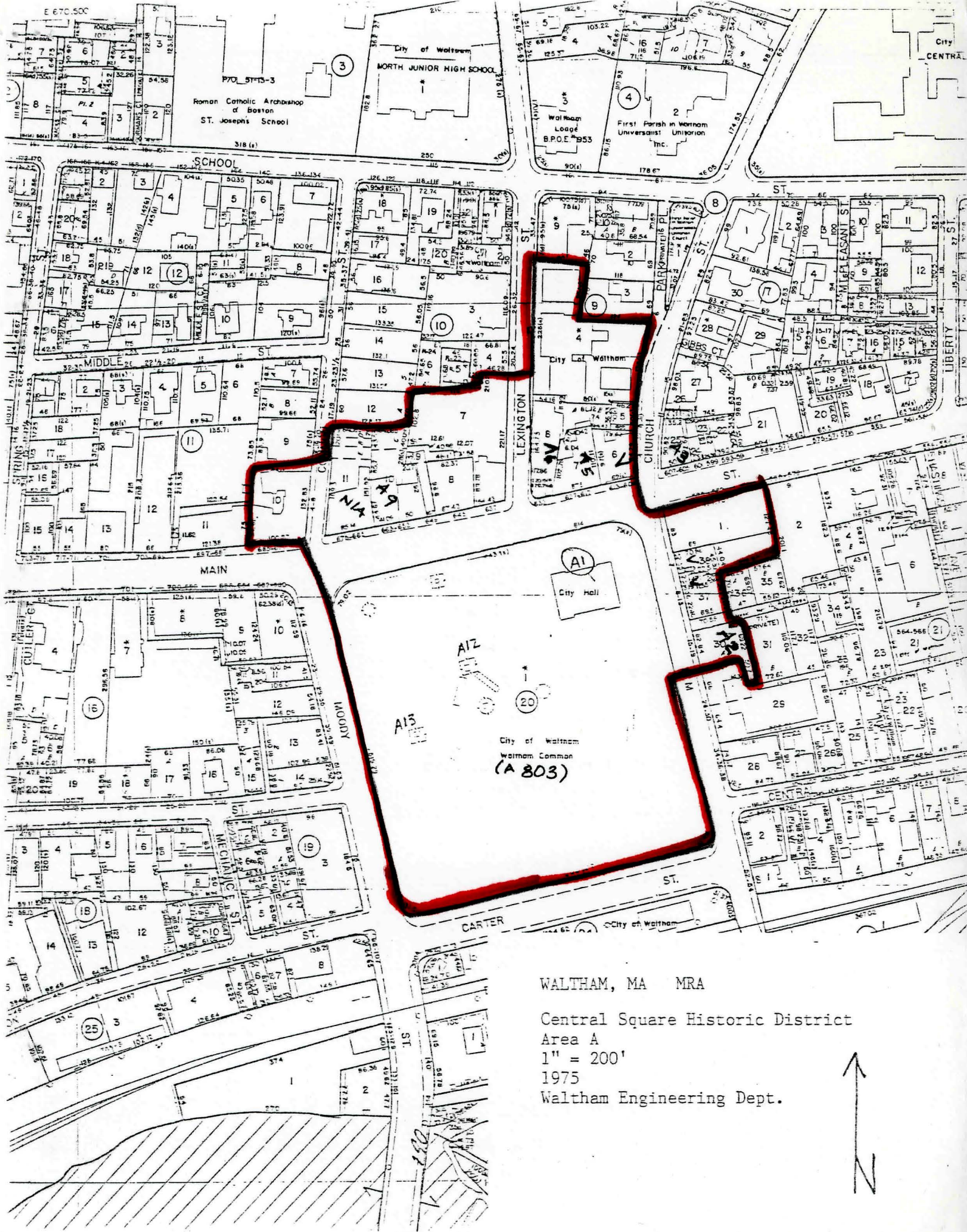
DISTRICT DATA SHEET

CENTRAL SQUARE HISTORIC DISTRICT (2)

<u>Street Address</u>	<u>Assessor's #</u>	<u>Square Feet</u>	<u>Historic Name/Inventory #</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Style</u>	<u>Status</u>
6-10 Church Street	60-9-5	1,855	Vacant	n/a	n/a	NC
14-22 Church Street	60-9-4	33,360	Wires Building/A4	1931	Classical Rev.	C
23 Lexington Street	"	"	Police Station/A7	1890	Queen Anne	C
25 Lexington Street	"	"	Fire Station/A8	1887	Queen Anne	C

TOTAL

276,186 sq.ft. or 6.34 acres



WALTHAM, MA MRA

Central Square Historic District
 Area A
 1" = 200'
 1975
 Waltham Engineering Dept.



Central Square Historic District, Waltham (Middlesex Co.), MA



Police Station (A7)



Collins Block (A6)



Central Block (A5)



Central Block (A5)

Central Square Historic District, Waltham (Middlesex Co.), MA



Buttrick Building (A3)



Wires Building (A4)

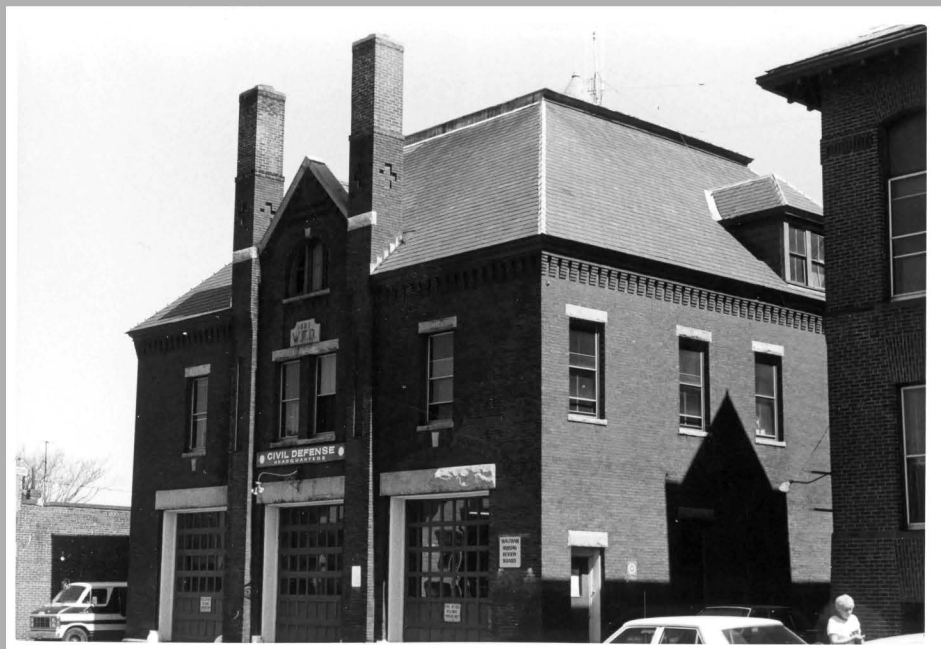


City Hall (A1)



Music Hall (A2)

Central Square Historic District, Waltham (Middlesex Co.), MA



Fire Station (A8)



Main Street facing northwest



Lawrence Building (A10)



Nathaniel Banks Statue (A13)

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

AUG 21 1989

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number _____ Page _____

Multiple Resource Area
Thematic Group

Name Waltham MRA
State Middlesex County, MASSACHUSETTS

Nomination/Type of Review Date/Signature

- 11. Boston Manufacturing Company Housing (153--165 River St.) Entered in the National Register Keeper Helene Byers 9/28/89
Attest _____
- 12. Brigham House Entered in the National Register Keeper Helene Byers 9/28/89
Attest _____
- 13. Building at 202--204 Charles Street Entered in the National Register Keeper Helene Byers 9/28/89
Attest _____
- 14. Buttrick, Francis, House Entered in the National Register Keeper Helene Byers 9/28/89
Attest _____
- 5. 15. Buttrick, Francis, Library Substantive Review Keeper Betty Savage 9/28/89
Attest _____
- 16. Byam, Charles, House Entered in the National Register Keeper Helene Byers 9/28/89
Attest _____
- 17. Central Square Historic District Entered in the National Register Keeper Helene Byers 9/28/89
Attest _____
- 18. Charles Street Workers' Housing Historic District Entered in the National Register Keeper Helene Byers 9/28/89
Attest _____
- 5. 19. Christ Episcopal Church Substantive Review Keeper Betty Savage 9/28/89
Attest _____
- 20. Clough, Benjamin F., House Entered in the National Register Keeper Helene Byers 9/28/89
Attest _____