

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
80 BOYLSTON STREET
BOSTON, MA 02116

JAN 02 1990

AREA

FORM NO.

NC-041

Town Newton (Newton Centre)

Address 1000 Commonwealth Avenue

Historic Name Newton City Hall and War Memorial

Use: Present City Hall & War Memorial

Original same

DESCRIPTION

Date 1932

Source Building permit

Style Georgian Revival

Architect Olmsted Brothers (Landscape)
Allen & Collens

Exterior Wall Fabric brick

Outbuildings none

Major Alterations (with dates) none

Condition good

Moved no Date n/a

Acreage 432,308 sq.ft. C 9.9A

Setting triangular parcel defined by Walnu

Street (E), Comm. Ave. (N), Homer

Street (S); overlooking small pond

important
formed by damming site; landscape

Recorded by Candace Jenkins/Susan Abele

Organization Newton Historical Comm.

Date 3/87; rev. 5/88

Photo (3"x3" or 3"x5", black and white) Indicate address of property on back of photo. Staple to left side of form.

Sketch Map: Draw map showing property's location in relation to nearest cross streets and/or geographical features. Indicate all buildings between inventoried property and nearest intersection(s).
Indicate north

see attached map

A 19/317750 14689440

B 19/318150 14689480

C 19/318120 14689220

UTM REFERENCE C 19/318120/14689220

USGS QUADRANGLE NEWTON

SCALE 1:25000

NATIONAL REGISTER CRITERIA STATEMENT (if applicable)

The Newton City Hall and War Memorial possesses integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling and association. Constructed in 1931-32, it is a significant reflection of Newton's growth as a city and of civic pride. The monumental Georgian Revival style structure which served the dual function of City Hall/War Memorial, is also an important work of architecture. Designed by the noted firm of Allen & Collens, Newton City Hall won the Boston Society of Architect's coveted J. Hareston Parker Award in 1936 for the most beautiful building of that period. Finally, the building is enhanced by its park-like setting designed by Olmsted Brothers of Brookline. The Newton City Hall and War Memorial thus meets criteria A & C of the NRHP.

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

Newton City Hall is a monumental example of institutional Georgian Revival design that also accommodates the function of War Memorial. The patriotic associations of the style made it particularly popular for town and city halls in the 20th century. Here, even the Aldermanic Chamber is based on a famous Colonial model: Independence Hall in Philadelphia. The War Memorial side (W) of the imposing brick structure consists of a raised central section with a massive pedimented portico and crowning steeple. Appearing diminutive in comparison, are flanking three bay wings trimmed with quoins and baulstrades around their hip roofs. The City Hall side (E) is similar, but with different proportions and far less grandiose portico and steeple. Here the quatrastyle portico is centered on an eleven bay facade articulated with quoins and entablature.

(see continuation sheet)

HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE Explain the role owners played in local or state history and how the building relates to the development of the community.

When Newton became a city in 1873, the old town hall on Washington Street in West Newton was refurbished and became the City Hall. This building served for 59 years and was not replaced until 1932 when the new City Hall at the corner of Walnut Street and Commonwealth Avenue was built. The new building had a dual function, serving as a memorial to veterans and soldiers who died in World War I, as well as providing new quarters for the City Hall. Two cornerstones, one for the City Hall and one for the War Memorial, were laid on Armistice Day, November 11, 1931 and formal dedication of the combined buildings took place November 11, 1932. Use of the ten acre, triangular site between Commonwealth Avenue and Walnut and Homer Streets was particularly challenging as the dual function of the building demanded two major facades. The design was executed by the firm of Allen and Collens, whose principle architect Charles Collens lived at 200 Dudley Road in Newton Centre. Allen and Collens were particularly well known in the fields of collegiate and ecclesiastical architecture with buildings at

(see continuation sheet)

BIBLIOGRAPHY and/or REFERENCES

Building Department Records 1000 Commonwealth Avenue
Newton Graphic 8/16/31, Boston Society of Architects Archives

INVENTORY FORM CONTINUATION SHEET

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
Office of the Secretary, Boston

Community: Newton (Newton Centre)	Form No: NC-041
Property Name: Newton City Hall & War Memorial	

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

ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE (CONT.)

Multi-pane sash are set in rectangular openings at the first story and arched openings with keystones at the second. The flanking wings are identical to those of the west elevation, but project here to form a U-plan and do not appear dwarfed by the central composition. Pedimented entry porticos are also located on the side elevations which are treated with large arched windows in the War Memorial section. The building is greatly enhanced by its Olmsted Brothers designed landscape which was intended to soften the effect of the building. The pond in front of the City Hall side, which provides a reflection of that elevation is especially effective.

HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE (CONT.)

Middlebury, Williams and Vassar to their credit, as well as important churches such as Riverside Church in New York. In Newton they also designed the Second Church of Newton (1915-16, WN-0124). Olmsted Brothers of Brookline provided the park-like setting, completing development of the site.

The city had received permission from the legislature to borrow outside the debt limit in order to construct the building. Although some felt that construction of such a large building during the depression seemed unwise, Mayor Weeks rebutted criticism of the project citing the fact the President Hoover urged public works projects to relieve unemployment and noted that 80% of the men working on the project were Newton residents. In his remarks at the dedication, Weeks said that location of the city hall near the geographical center of the city was quite fitting and that it should mitigate the sectionalism which was sometimes apparent between the various villages. In 1936, Newton City Hall and War Memorial won the J. Hareston Parker Award of the Boston Society of Architects which deemed it the most beautiful building of that period.

Staple to Inventory form at bottom

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number _____ Page _____

Multiple Resource Area
Thematic Group

Name Newton MRA
State Middlesex County, MA

Nomination/Type of Review

Date/Signature

151. Luke, Arthur F., House ^{Entered in the}
National Register

Keeper *Delores Byers* 2/16/90

Attest _____

152. Newton Catholic High School
Substantive Review

Keeper *Beth L. Savage* 02-16-90

Attest _____

* 153. Newton Centre Branch Library
Substantive Review

Keeper *Beth L. Savage* 02-16-90

Attest _____

* 154. Newton City Hall and War Memorial
Substantive Review

Keeper *Beth L. Savage* 02-16-90

Attest _____

155. Noves, Charles W., House
Entered in the National Register

Keeper *Delores Byers* 2/16/90

Attest _____

156. Pierce, F. Lincoln, Houses
Entered in the National Register

Keeper *Delores Byers* 2/16/90

Attest _____

157. Plummer Memorial Library
Entered in the National Register

Keeper *Delores Byers* 2/16/90

Attest _____

158. Riverside Concrete Company--Lamont's
Market
Entered in the National Register

Keeper *Delores Byers* 2/16/90

Attest _____

159. Sawyer, C. A., House (Second)
Entered in the National Register

Keeper *Delores Byers* 2/16/90

Attest _____

160. Schraft, George F., House
Substantive Review

Keeper _____

Attest _____

ADDITIONAL DOCUMENTATION
TO: OUR LADY HELP OF CHRISTIANSH. D.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: NOMINATION

PROPERTY NAME: Newton City Hall and War Memorial

MULTIPLE NAME: Newton MRA

STATE & COUNTY: MASSACHUSETTS, Middlesex

DATE RECEIVED: 1/02/90 DATE OF PENDING LIST: 1/16/90
DATE OF 16TH DAY: 2/01/90 DATE OF 45TH DAY: 2/16/90
DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:

REFERENCE NUMBER: 90000020

NOMINATOR: STATE

REASONS FOR REVIEW:

APPEAL: N DATA PROBLEM: N LANDSCAPE: N LESS THAN 50 YEARS: N
OTHER: PDIL: N PERIOD: N PROGRAM UNAPPROVED: N
REQUEST: N SAMPLE: N SLR DRAFT: N NATIONAL: N

COMMENT WAIVER: N

ACCEPT RETURN REJECT 2/16/90 DATE

ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:

Designed by noted architectural firm of Allen & Collens, the Georgian Revival edifice was constructed for the dual purpose of memorializing World War I veterans and serving as a new City Hall. Constructed during the Depression, the construction project provided many jobs to local citizens and elicited praise from the Boston Society of Architects when it awarded the building its coveted

RECOM./CRITERIA Accept A+C
REVIEWER Swasey
DISCIPLINE Architectural History
DATE 02-16-90

J. Wareston Parker Award in 1936 for design excellence.

DOCUMENTATION see attached comments Y/N see attached SLR Y/N

CLASSIFICATION

___ count ___ resource type

STATE/FEDERAL AGENCY CERTIFICATION

FUNCTION

___ historic ___ current

DESCRIPTION

___ architectural classification
___ materials
___ descriptive text

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

BIBLIOGRAPHY

GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

___ acreage ___ verbal boundary description
___ UTM's ___ boundary justification

ACCOMPANYING DOCUMENTATION/PRESENTATION

___ sketch maps ___ USGS maps ___ photographs ___ presentation

OTHER COMMENTS

Questions concerning this nomination may be directed to

Phone _____

Signed _____

Date _____



Newton City Hall & War Memorial

1000 Commonwealth Avenue

Newton, MA

Medallion ③

Newton, MA-MRA

C. Jenkins

1/87

neg. @ Jackson Homestead

NC-041

87-2-25



Newton City Hall + War Memorial Newton, MA-MRA

1000 Commonweath Avenue

Newton, Ma

Gundalby C

C. Jenkins

1/87

neg. © Jackson Homestead

NC-041

87-2-76

Newton, MA-MRA
1000 Commonwealth Avenue
SBL: 64-1-1

Engineering Map - 1979
Page: 72
Scale: 1"=1000' Reduced 64%

