

Massachusetts Cultural Resource Information System

Scanned Record Cover Page

Inventory No:	NWT.DV
Historic Name:	Waban Village Center
Common Name:	
City/Town:	Newton
Village/Neighborhood:	Waban;
Local No:	
Year Constructed:	
Use(s):	Commercial District; Other Institutional; Residential District;
Significance:	Architecture; Communications;
Designation(s):	
Building Materials:	
Demolished	No



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Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Massachusetts Historical Commission
220 Morrissey Boulevard, Boston, Massachusetts 02125
www.sec.state.ma.us/mhc

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FORM A - AREA

NWT.DV

Area Letter Form numbers in this Area

IV-KDN	5370 - 5377
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MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
80 BOYLSTON STREET, BOSTON, MA 02116



Newton (Waban) TE

of Area (if any) _____

Waban Village Center _____

nt Use commercial, institutional,
residential

al Date or Period c1890-1950

al Condition good-excellent

ge _____

Recorded by Candace Jenkins/Susan Abele

Organization Newton Historical Comm.

Date January 1987

STRONG'S BLOCK EXT.

Inventory forms have been completed.
Label streets including route numbers, if any. Indicate north. (Attach a separate sheet if space here is not sufficient).



Waban Hall

UTM REFERENCE _____

USGS QUADRANGLE _____

SCALE _____

WABAN

NATIONAL REGISTER CRITERIA STATEMENT (if applicable)

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

Waban Village Center is a compact area consisting of c20 commercial, institutional and residential buildings. They are grouped around the irregular intersection of Beacon Street, which runs E-W and is the principle throughfare through the village, Windsor Road, Woodward Street, and Wyman Street. The tracks of the Highland Branch Railroad cut under Beacon Street just southwest of this intersection. Wyman Street, which parallels the tracks south of Beacon Street, is at a lower grade than the other village streets, and is thus somewhat visually separated. Three important public buildings- the Church of the Good Shepherd (1896), the Union Church (1912; #W-0104), and the Angier School (1921; #W-0102)- are located SW of the tracks and are also somewhat visually separated. Waban Center is unusual as a collection of individually distinguished buildings (two of which are already listed in the National Register) rather than as a grouping largely made up of background buildings.

Individual buildings are described on the continuation sheet.

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

In 1886, before completion of the Highland Branch of the Boston and Albany Railroad, the village now known as Waban did not exist. Less than a dozen families lived in the area, their farms scattered along Woodward and Beacon Streets. Although there had been some attempt to stimulate growth in the 1870s, full-scale suburban development, with its commercial amenities, was not assured until construction of the railroad. A small station, one of the original H. H. Richardson designs, was built near the intersection of Woodward and Beacon Streets and in 1890, Waban Hall, the first commercial block was built at the intersection of Woodward and Wyman Streets. The Dutch-gabled Strong's block (NR 9/4/86) on Beacon Street followed in 1897. Although a vigorous community was beginning to develop in Waban, organizing an Improvement Society as early as 1888, broad development of the area did not take place until after the turn of the century.

Signs of major growth in Waban came in the 20s and 30s as large numbers of new houses were built in the old sub-division laid out by Ernest Bowditch (#W-J) south of Beacon Street and the new subdivisions north of Beacon Street laid out in the teens and twenties. Several subdivisions east of Chestnut Street, although partially laid out before the turn-of-the century, were also substantially developed at this time. In the village center new stores were built beside the Strong Block on Beacon Street and around the corner on to Windsor Road. One story store fronts were also added to Waban Hall, partially concealing the facade of the old building. Other buildings such as the Neighborhood Club House (1917; 0100), the Angier School (1919-21; 0102) and the Waban Branch Library (1929; 0101) also attest to the growth and vitality of the Waban community.

BIBLIOGRAPHY and/or REFERENCES

- Building Department Records
- Engineering Department Subdivision Plans
- Shea, Newton's Nineteenth Century Architecture: Newton Highlands and Waban

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INVENTORY FORM CONTINUATION SHEET

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
Office of the Secretary, Boston

Community: Newton (Waban)	Form No: IV-K
Property Name: Waban Village Center	

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

Architectural Significance (cont)

Strong's Block (1641-49 Beacon St.; 1897; NR 9/4/86) is the visual anchor of the area. Located on Beacon Street, directly northeast of the Railroad tracks, it was commissioned by William Strong and designed by local architects Bacon & Hill. It is a handsome three story brick block with distinctive stepped Flemish gables.

5371
Strong's Block Extension (1629-39 Beacon St., 4 Windsor Road; 1924), developed by the Strong Estate and designed by architect Edward B. Stratton, confirmed the growth of Waban Center in particular and of the village of Waban in general. The extension consisted of seven one story brick stores designed to complement the earlier structure; they were estimated to cost c\$25,000. They extend eastward on Beacon Street and wrap around the corner of Windsor Road. The cornerpiece is particularly handsome with a large arched entry incorporating leaded sidelights and fan and verigated voussoirs, all surmounted by a stepped gable composition. During the late 20s and 30s, Stratton extended these stores at the rear and further along Windsor Street.

6372
Great Atlantic & Pacific Tea Co./First National (8-12 Windsor Road; 1938). Both of these chain grocery stores appear to have occupied the current location of the Waban Market. Extensive facade changes in the 1960s have completely obscured the original features of this one story building.

Staples/Crafts/Wiswall Farm (1615 Beacon St., c1750+; NR 9/4/86). This large Colonial farmhouse with Victorian and recent additions is located on the northeast corner of Beacon Street and Windsor Road, and provides an important link with Waban's agricultural past.

Waban Branch Library (1608 Beacon St., 1930) anchors the eastern end of the area in a prominent location at the intersection of Beacon and Woodward Streets. It was designed by Densmore, LeClear & Robbins of Boston in the Tudor Revival style so popular in Waban in the late 20s and 30s. It is a small-scale brick building with slate roof.

5375
Newton-Waltham Bank and Trust Co. (466 Woodward St., 1949) begins the group of structures on the south side of Beacon Street at the lower elevation of the Railroad tracks. It was designed by Howard L. Rich in the Colonial Revival style. It became a Bay Bank in 1972, and had its front entrance redesigned at that time.

5376
Waban Hall (474 Woodward St., 1890), at the corner of Wyman Street, was the first commercial block built in Waban; it was originally a two story wood-frame Queen Anne style block with distinctive round-arched display windows flanking a central entry with heavy segmental arched hood. In 1923 a one story brick Colonial Revival style storefront with large arched openings echoing the original design of the block was added by architect John Barnard. In 1933, the undistinguished one story stores at 89-93 Wyman Street were added according to plans by architect F.A. Burton.

5377
Waban Branch Post Office (93 Wyman St., 1944) terminates the southern end of the area and faces the Railroad tracks. It is a small, one story structure with cast stone trim in the Moderne style that replaced an earlier structure.

Staple to Inventory form at bottom

INVENTORY FORM CONTINUATION SHEET

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
Office of the Secretary, Boston

NWT.DV p2

Community: Newton (Waban)	Form No: WR
Property Name: Waban Village Center	

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

Historical Significance (continued)

Although development came to a standstill during the war a new Post Office was built at 83 Wyman Street in the 1943-4 and in the post-war period (1949) the Newton Waltham Bank and Trust located a branch office at 466 Woodward Street, adjacent to the old Waban Hall complex. Since then, although alterations to existing buildings have occurred with changes in tenancy, the number of commercial structures has remained stable, providing retail and service businesses aimed mainly toward the Waban community.

In 1958, the Boston and Albany discontinued rail service on the south side of Newton. Although the right of way was taken over by the MTA, Waban's H. H. Richardson railroad station was demolished at that time, leaving a parking lot in its place.

