

FORM B – BUILDING

Assessor's Number USGS Quad Area(s) Form Number

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
MASSACHUSETTS ARCHIVES BUILDING
220 MORRISSEY BOULEVARD
BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02125

2-1	Boston North	BU	BLM.538
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Town/City: Belmont

Place: (*neighborhood or village*):
Payson Park

Address: 191-203 Belmont Street

Historic Name: Kartun Block

Uses: Present: commercial

Original: commercial

Date of Construction: 1921

Source: building permit

Style/Form: Classical Revival

Architect/Builder: unknown

Exterior Material:

Foundation: concrete

Wall/Trim: brick, concrete

Roof: tar and gravel

Outbuildings/Secondary Structures:

none

Major Alterations (*with dates*):

1997 – new aluminum doors and storefronts

Condition: good

Moved: no yes **Date:**

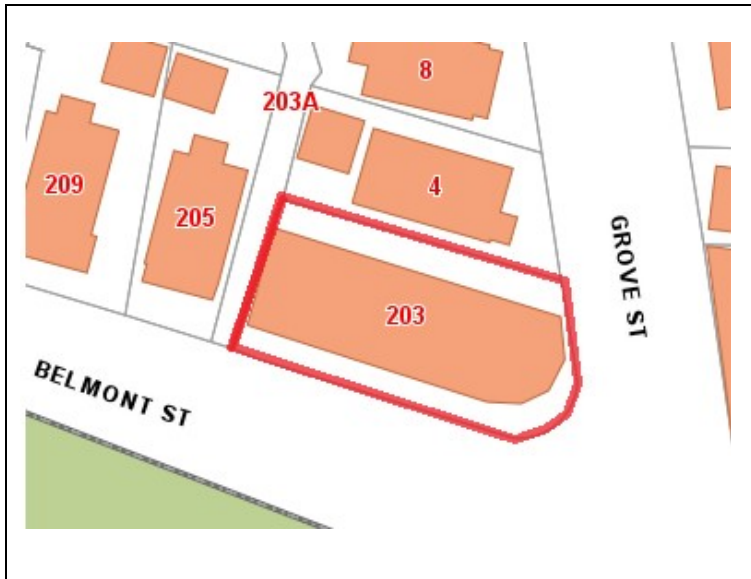
Acreage: 6,014 SF

Setting: commercial block on former streetcar route,
amidst neighborhood of two-family homes

Photograph



Locus Map (north at top)



Recorded by: Lisa Mausolf

Organization: Belmont Historic District Commission

Date (*month / year*): September 2014

INVENTORY FORM B CONTINUATION SHEET

BELMONT

191-203 BELMONT STREET

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Recommended for listing in the National Register of Historic Places.

If checked, you must attach a completed National Register Criteria Statement form.

ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION:

Describe architectural features. Evaluate the characteristics of this building in terms of other buildings within the community.

Located at the corner of Belmont and Grove Streets, 191-203 Belmont Street is a single-story block of stores with a rounded corner at the intersection of the two streets. Classical Revival in style, the cast stone front includes paneled pilasters with foliate capitals between the storefronts. Above each storefront there is an entablature band with a block with incised lines over the pilaster. The parapet alternates low gabled projections featuring raised shields and raised circular designs. Along Grove Street the wall is yellow brick. The aluminum-framed storefronts date to 1997 but retain the design of a recessed entrance between angled display windows and fit within the original arrangement of piers.

The block is an example of the typical commercial structure of the early 20th century, often called "taxpayers". As was often the case the building displays a cast stone or precast concrete façade with Classical details.

HISTORICAL NARRATIVE

Discuss the history of the building. Explain its associations with local (or state) history. Include uses of the building, and the role(s) the owners/occupants played within the community.

The construction of this single-story commercial block is a direct reflection of the impact of the streetcar and the growth of Harvard Lawn. In 1898 the Boston Elevated Streetcar Line was extended from Park Square to Waverley via Belmont Street and Trapelo Road resulting in the construction of countless two- and three-family homes. After the subway to Harvard Square opened in 1912 the area continued to expand and a commercial district developed and flourished on Belmont Street.

In July 1921 Harvey Kartun of Boston applied for a building permit for this group of stores. There is no architect indicated on the building permit. Kartun was born in Lithuania in 1891 and came to this country in 1911. He served with Navy Intelligence in World War I and was with the FBI for many years. He was also active in real estate. Kartun continued to own this property until his death in 1969. In 1983 it was sold by his son Franklin Kartun of Brookline and daughter Doris Baruch of Morristown, New Jersey to Donald Mercier and the Belgrove Realty Trust (Book 14917, Page 561).

As shown on the 1922 Sanborn map, the building as built included six small storefronts along Belmont Street with a larger store at the corner of Grove Street. The 1925 directory lists the following tenants: 191 – Perry & Tutton, confectioners; 193 – Henry Gibbs, baker; 195 – Ginler Co. grocers; 197 – A.G. Merrill – grocer; 199 – Chinese laundry; 201 – Charles Bedig, tailor; 203a – Belmont Upholstering; 203b. – F.W. MacFarland. By 1932 the Grove Spa was located at 191 Belmont. The store, operated by Hagop Demerjian, sold fruit and patent medicines and was still here in 1955.

BIBLIOGRAPHY and/or REFERENCES

Ancestry.com

Belmont Directories, various dates

Belmont, Massachusetts: The Architecture and Development of The Town of Homes. Belmont Historic District Commission, 1984.

Betts, Richard B. *The Streets of Belmont and How they Were Named (2nd edition).* Belmont: Belmont Historical Society, 2012.

Boston Globe, October 9, 1969 [obituary of Harvey Kartun].

Massachusetts Historical Commission. MACRIS database.

Middlesex County Registry of Deeds, Cambridge, MA

Sanborn Insurance Maps, 1915, 1922, 1931, 1949.

Town of Belmont, Building Department files.

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