

# FORM B – BUILDING

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

28-136-A	Boston North	AF	BLM.741
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MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION  
MASSACHUSETTS ARCHIVES BUILDING  
220 MORRISSEY BOULEVARD  
BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02125

**Town/City:** Belmont

**Place:** (*neighborhood or village*):  
Waverley

**Address:** 22-26 Church Street

**Historic Name:** First National Store

**Uses:** Present: commercial

Original: commercial

**Date of Construction:** 1931

**Source:** building permit

**Style/Form:** Art Deco

**Architect/Builder:** F.A. Norcross (Wm. S. Russell)

**Exterior Material:**

Foundation: concrete

Wall/Trim: brick/concrete

Roof: tar and gravel

**Outbuildings/Secondary Structures:**  
none

**Major Alterations** (*with dates*):  
1997 – new storefront

**Condition:** good

**Moved:** no  yes  **Date:**

**Acreage:** 3,318 SF

**Setting:** commercial center

## 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

22-26 CHURCH STREET

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION

220 MORRISSEY BOULEVARD, BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02125

Area(s) Form No.

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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.*

22-26 Church Street is a one-story commercial building that was constructed in 1931 as a grocery store. The brick and concrete structure is capped by a low parapet alternating brick diamonds with molded concrete panels with raised diamonds. There is a concrete beltcourse above and below the band of diamonds and at each end of the parapet is a stylized Art Deco concrete pinnacle with stepped incised lines. It is set above a brick pier with a concrete base. The current storefront dates to 1997. The center entrance contains double doors that are recessed slightly and flanked by large display windows set on paneled bulkheads. The storefront originally probably had transom lights. It is not clear if these might survive under the reflective glass. Red panels may also cover transom lights or an original sign band.

The building at 22-26 Church Street is a one of the few surviving examples of the small neighborhood grocery stores that were once common in Belmont.

## 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.*

In April 1931 a two-story building that stood on this site was demolished to make way for a new building. According to the building permit, the new structure was owned by Anna Goldman of Brookline and was designed by F.A. Norcross of Boston. William Porter of Watertown was the builder and the cost of the new structure was \$10,000.

The new building served as a First National grocery store, one of eight in Belmont in 1934. The other stores were located at 169, 195, 241, 362, and 484 Trapelo Road as well as 771 Belmont Street. The First National was the largest chain operating in Belmont at the time but there were also grocery stores operated by the Atlantic and Pacific Tea Company, Cloverdale, Economy, S.S. Pierce, and Victory as well as many smaller family-owned stores.

The building was still occupied by First National in 1955. Anna Goldman owned the building until her death about 1970 and it is still owned by relatives today. In 1997 the storefront was replaced. The building was then owned by Ruth Chubanian. The architect for the storefront renovation was Black River Design of Cambridge. The building currently houses a cycling shop (Wheelworks Too).

Designer Fred A. Norcross (1871-1929) worked as a draftsman in Boston from about 1889 until 1894. He began an architectural practice about 1895 and continued as a sole practitioner until his death in 1929. His work focused primarily on apartment buildings and commercial structures. From 1930 to about 1938, William S. Russell, an engineer and architect, conducted business under his name. He had worked in Norcross's office since about 1915 ([backbayhouses.org](http://backbayhouses.org)). Constructed after Norcross' death, this commercial structure was undoubtedly actually designed by Russell.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY and/or REFERENCES

Belmont Directories, various years.

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

Massachusetts Historical Commission, MACRIS database.

Middlesex County Registry of Deeds, Cambridge, MA

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

Town of Belmont building permits

<http://backbayhouses.org/frederick-albert-norcross/>