

FORM B – BUILDING

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

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

12-134	Boston North	C	BLM.756
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Town/City: Belmont

Place: (*neighborhood or village*):
Cushing Square

Address: 441-449 Common Street

Historic Name: Wolek & Yarros (McLaughlin) Block

Uses: Present: commercial

Original: commercial

Date of Construction: 1924

Source: building permit

Style/Form: Classical Revival

Architect/Builder: Maltzman & Moffie, arch.;
Wolek & Yarros. contractors

Exterior Material:

Foundation: concrete

Wall/Trim: brick, stone

Roof: rubber

Outbuildings/Secondary Structures:
none

Major Alterations (*with dates*):

1934 – #447 and 449 combined
various dates – alterations to storefronts,
add. to rear

Condition: good

Moved: no yes **Date:**

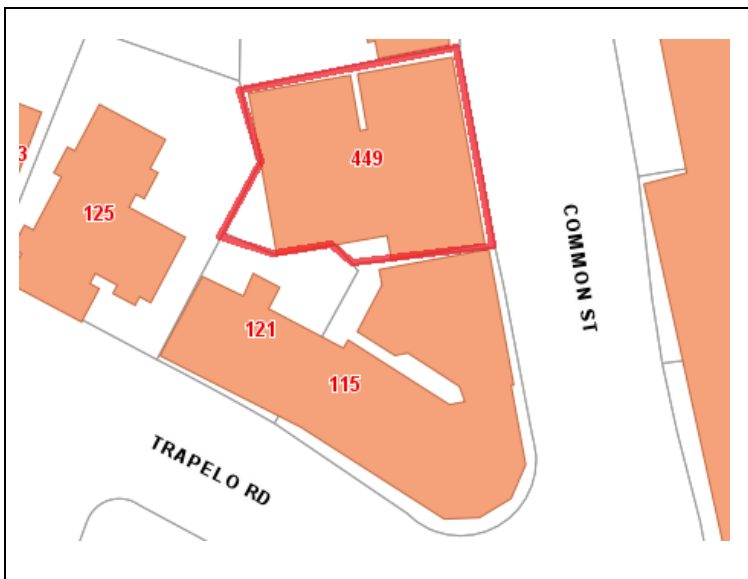
Acreage: 9,450 SF

Setting: Located in commercial area with a mixture of 1-3 story commercial blocks dating to the early 20th century.

Photograph



Locus Map (north at top)



Recorded by: Lisa Mausolf

Organization: Belmont Historic District Commission

Date (*month / year*): October 2016

INVENTORY FORM B CONTINUATION SHEET

BELMONT

441-449 COMMON STREET

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION

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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.

The block of stores at 441-449 Common Street is one of the more interesting examples of the single-story "taxpayer" commercial blocks built in Belmont during the early decades of the 20th century. Constructed of brick and cast stone, paneled pilasters separate the storefronts and a wide frieze runs above, capped by an entablature. The building is crowned by a stepped central parapet decorated by Classical motifs including shields with scrollwork, torches, ribbons and incised blocks with guttae below. In addition to the center parapet obelisks cap five of the pilasters. The storefronts for 447 and 449 were combined in 1934 and remain combined today. All of the storefronts have been altered multiple times over the years but retain recessed entries and still give an idea of the original designs with large plate glass windows and brick bulkheads below.

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.

This land was part of a larger parcel owned by the Palfrey Estate and subdivided in 1920. Barnet Wolek of Revere and Harry Yarros of Boston purchased this land from Ursula Ryan in December 1923. Wolek & Yarros, with offices at 73 Cornhill Street in Boston, were developers who erected a number of single story "taxpayer" commercial blocks in the Boston suburbs during this period. (See also Wolek Block, 161-169 Mt. Auburn Street, Watertown, WAT.372, 1925).

According to the November 1923 building permit, the building was designed by Maltzman & Moffie who had offices at 51 Cornhill Street. Saul E. Moffie (1898-1993) was a prolific designer of commercial blocks, apartment buildings and single family dwellings in the Boston area. He graduated from Tufts University School of Engineering in 1921. Most of his identified work is in Brookline and Newton but he also designed structures in Cambridge, Boston, Beverly, Chelsea, and Watertown (including the Wolek Block cited above).

The block originally incorporated six stores of equal size and was valued at \$23,000. Soon after construction, in June 1925, the block was sold to Fred L. and Frances McLaughlin of Cambridge. Fred McLaughlin worked in the insurance industry. The building remained in the McLaughlin family until 1956 when it was sold by Philip McLaughlin of New York to Almando and Carmella Manganello (Book 8699, Page 485). The Manganellos continued to own the property until 1975. It has had numerous owners since that time.

In 1925 the occupants of the block included a Chinese Laundry (443); the tailor shop of Louis Schneiderman (445); the Belmont Provision Co. (447); and Cloverdale Grocers (449). In 1934 #447 and 449 were combined to form a First National Store with Samuel Schein serving as architect for an addition and alterations. The First National grocery store was still here into the 1950s. The other shops contained a number of small businesses which changed with some frequency.

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BIBLIOGRAPHY and/or REFERENCES

Ancestry.com

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

Boston Globe, Feb. 16, 1993 [obituary of Saul Moffie]

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.