

FORM B – BUILDING

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

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

5-102	Boston North		BLM.826
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Town/City: Belmont

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

Address: 63 Trapelo Road

Historic Name: Harvard Trust Company

Uses: Present: office

Original: bank

Date of Construction: 1935

Source: Building Department Records

Style/Form: Georgian Revival

Architect/Builder: Wadsworth & Smith (1935)
Coolidge & Carlson (1953 add.)

Exterior Material:

Foundation: granite

Wall/Trim: brick/limestone/wood

Roof: slate

Outbuildings/Secondary Structures:
none

Major Alterations (*with dates*):

1953 – east and rear addition

1993 – converted to offices

Condition: good

Moved: no yes **Date:**

Acreage: 5,289 SF

Setting: lawn with minimal plantings and flag pole on corner lot in mixed use area, fronting on major commercial route

Photograph



Locus Map



Recorded by: Lisa Mausolf

Organization: Belmont Historic District Commission

Date (*month / year*): October 2014

INVENTORY FORM B CONTINUATION SHEET

BELMONT

63 TRAPELO ROAD

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION

220 MORRISSEY BOULEVARD, BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02125

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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 former Harvard Trust Company office at 63 Trapelo Road is a single-story, side-gabled building with historically-inspired and well-proportioned Georgian Revival detailing. The building is constructed of red brick laid in a common bond consisting of five courses of stretchers to a single course alternating headers (many of which are glazed) and stretchers. It rests on a foundation of smooth granite blocks with two rows of smaller blocks forming a water table. A two-sided, curved set of stairs fronts the main entrance with the original iron railings at the center bearing the bank's monogram. The corners of the main block are emphasized by limestone quoins and quoins also act as a backdrop for the pilasters and full entablature of the pedimented center entrance. A transom decorated by curved wooden tracery is located above the wooden and glass double doors which were originally painted crimson, symbolic of the university whose name the bank reflected. A dentil course embellishes the front cornice and the cornice ends in close returns on the gable ends. An exterior brick chimney rises on the west end and a square cupola with arched openings filled with louvers is centered on the ridge of the slate roof. Each arched opening is flanked by pilasters and the cupola is capped by a gold-leaf covered dome with eagle-topped weathervane. The rectangular window openings on the main block contain double-hung wooden 12/12 sash with splayed brick lintels and limestone keystones. Fenestration on the west gable end consists of an arched opening flanked by two smaller rectangular double-hung openings.

Attached to the east of the original building is a slightly-lower single-story (1953) addition which is capped by a hip roof. It presents a single bay to Trapelo Road and an arched end with three 12/12 windows to Willow Street. The addition utilizes the same materials as the original structure but lacks some of the extra detailing such as quoins and keystones.

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 building was constructed as a branch office for the Harvard Trust Company in 1935. The bank also had branch offices in Belmont Center at 10 Leonard Street and at 491 Trapelo Road in Waverley. In April 1935 Frederick Drew's two-family dwelling was moved from the site to the corner of Horne and Williston to make way for the new bank (*Belmont Citizen*, April 5, 1935). In May 1935 a building permit was issued for the building which was designed by architects Wadsworth & Smith. The estimated cost of construction was to be \$33,000. When work began in May 1935, the newspaper noted that the building "will be a departure from the conventional type of commercial or bank building. It will be a distinctive colonial structure which may serve as a model for future construction along this section of Trapelo rd." (*Belmont Citizen*, May 10, 1935).

As originally constructed the first floor of the 43' x 26' building contained working space and cages of marble and plate glass, a large public space, and a small conference room with safe deposit vaults located in a rear appendage measuring 12 x 16 feet. The basement held a large conference room, storage room, toilets and heating plant. The walls were painted a rich cream and the ceiling was turquoise green. The furniture was mahogany with green leather seated chairs and green curtains were hung at the window openings. An open house held on Saturday, September 21, 1935 drew nearly five thousand visitors. The bank opened for business the following Monday (*Belmont Citizen*, September 27, 1935).

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The Boston architectural firm of Wadsworth & Smith was a successor to Bigelow, Wadsworth, Hubbard, and Smith which underwent several iterations after the death of Henry Forbes Bigelow in 1929. Philip Wadsworth (1881-1961) graduated from Harvard in 1902 after which he attended MIT and studied at the Ecole des Beaux Arts in Paris in 1906 and 1907. Giles Milton Smith (1886-1950) attended Cornell University and was a Belmont resident who lived at 129 Leonard Street. Smith also designed a number of local residences, the Winn Brook School, additions to the Butler and Kendall Schools and the First Church of Christ Scientist in Cambridge. Smith was also the architect for the alterations to the Harvard Trust branch office at Belmont Center and for the remodeling of the Waverley Square office.

A small addition was made at the east end of the bank building in 1953 according to plans by architects Coolidge and Carlson. In 1982 Hugh Stubbins and Associates was responsible for alterations to the vestibule to accommodate an automated teller machine (ATM).

Harvard Trust became Bay Bank in the 1970s and this building served as a bank until 1993. It is now occupied by an insurance company (W.T. Phelan).

BIBLIOGRAPHY and/or REFERENCES

Belmont Citizen, April 5, 1935; May 10, 1935; Sept. 20, 1935; Sept. 27, 1935; July 21, 1950.
Betts, Richard B. *The Streets of Belmont and How they Were Named (2nd edition)*. Belmont: Belmont Historical Society, 2012.
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INVENTORY FORM B CONTINUATION SHEET

BELMONT

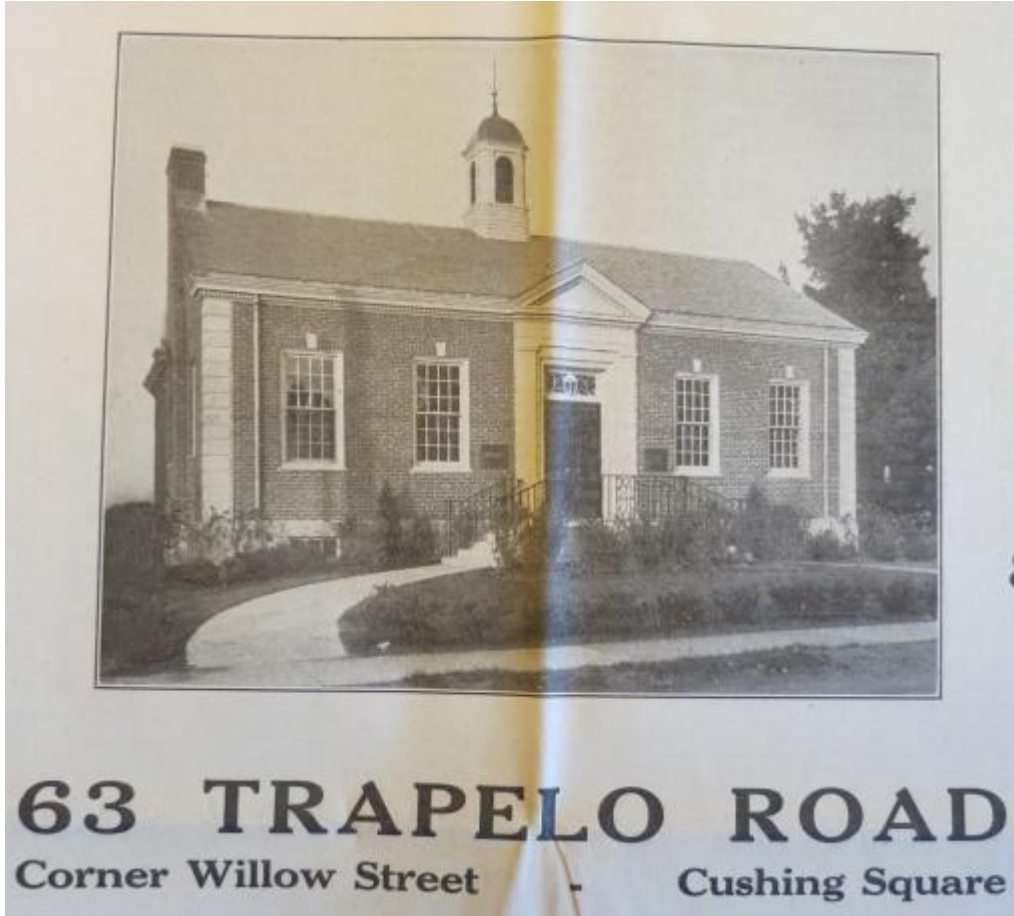
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Belmont Citizen, September 20, 1935.

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National Register of Historic Places Criteria Statement Form

Check all that apply:

- Individually eligible Eligible **only** in a historic district
- Contributing to a potential historic district Potential historic district

Criteria: **A** **B** **C** **D**

Criteria Considerations: **A** **B** **C** **D** **E** **F** **G**

Statement of Significance by Lisa Mausolf
The criteria that are checked in the above sections must be justified here.

The former Harvard Trust Company building at 63 Trapelo Road appears to be eligible for the National Register with local significance under Criterion C as a good example of the early 20th century Colonial Revival style as applied to a commercial (bank) building. It was designed in 1935 by local architects Wadsworth and Smith and retains a high level of integrity. Its construction in Cushing Square highlights the growing importance of this part of town in the early 20th century. Architecturally, the building reflects the desire to be compatible with the comfortable Colonial and Tudor Revival residential architecture of the surrounding neighborhoods.