

FORM B – BUILDING

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

Assessor's Number	USGS Quad	Area(s)	Form Number
49/16A			2283

Town/City: Lexington

Place: (*neighborhood or village*):
Lexington center

Address: 130 Waltham Street

Historic Name:

Uses: Present: Lexington Arts and Crafts Society

Original: Lexington Arts and Crafts Society

Date of Construction: 1954

Source: LASC Records

Style/Form: Colonial Revival

Architect/Builder: Marjorie Pierce

Exterior Material:

Foundation:

Wall/Trim: stucco and brick with wood trim

Roof: asphalt shingle

Outbuildings/Secondary Structures:
None

Major Alterations (*with dates*):
Additions in 1965 and 1972

Condition: excellent

Moved: no yes **Date:**

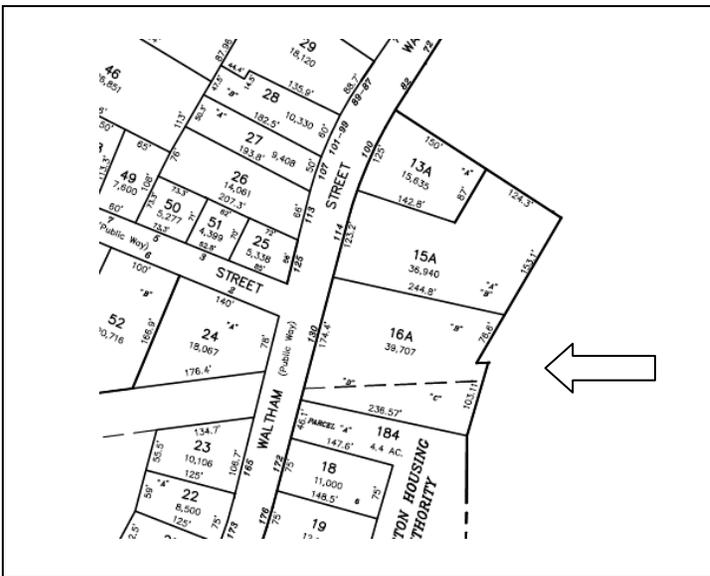
Acreage: 0.92

Setting: Located in central business district in a streetscape of commercial and converted residential buildings mostly mid to late 20th c construction.

Photograph



Locus Map



Recorded by:

Organization: Lexington Historical Commission

Date (*month / year*): November 2015

INVENTORY FORM B CONTINUATION SHEET

LEXINGTON

130 WALTHAM 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.

Use as much space as necessary to complete the following entries, allowing text to flow onto additional continuation sheets.

ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION:

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

The Lexington Arts and Crafts Society headquarters building at 130 Waltham Street is a small commercial building at the edge of Lexington's business district. The building, which faces west, occupies a flat lot which slopes down to the west, off Massachusetts Avenue at the intersection of Forest Street and is flanked by a large paved parking area on the south, accessed from Waltham Street. The building sits close to the street with a small yard with plantings and a mature tree, among other office uses on the south side of the business district.

The Arts and Crafts Society's headquarters is a modest, residentially scaled original structure, built in 1953, facing Waltham Street, with a long two-story addition, constructed in two phases (1965, 1972) to the rear. Due to the sloping site, the extensions, though larger than the original headquarters, do not overpower the earlier structure and are architecturally compatible with it.

The 1953 structure consists of a white-painted stucco, gable-roofed rectangular building set parallel to Waltham Street with a cross-gabled entrance bay of brick which is the decorative focal point of the complex. The brick entrance contains a large single-lite display window for the Society's gallery framed by wooden pilaster and topped with a sign board announcing the "Gallery." The entrance, which accessed by a long concrete and cast-iron handicap ramp, features a semi-circular arched opening with an attractive sky-blue spandrel accented with the Society's seal in carved and gilded wood. The double doors below are paneled with glazed panels on the upper half. Windows on the front facade have 8/8 double-hung sash with brick sills; a brick chimney sits on the ridge at the south end of the building.

The south elevation of the building, the end gable of which is sheathed in narrow clapboards, has been painted in a taupe color to resemble a colonial house and is accented with a painted tree motif at the corner, and a red door at the basement level. The basement entrance has a gabled hood on wrought iron brackets.

To the rear, the two story addition consists of a gable-roofed 1965 structure extending four bays east on the site to a secondary entrance in a cross gable midway down the building. The entrance is recessed within a shallowly-projected, brick gable-roofed porch. A further five-bay long extension of the building, added in 1972, is slightly offset to the north. The white-painted stucco walls, brick entrance portico and brick window sills of the extensions replicate the design features of the original headquarters structure.

Well preserved and well maintained, 130 Waltham Street is a handsome and unusually well-crafted example of Colonial Revival style commercial architecture in Lexington. It is notable for its comparatively moderate size, proportion, and distinctive facade.

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 Lexington Arts and Crafts Society was founded in 1935 when a group of artists and crafts-persons met and drew up a constitution with the objective "to foster in the community a more active interest in the arts and crafts and to encourage higher artistic standards in the arts and handicrafts". For nearly twenty years after its founding, the Society carried on its activities in members' homes and in various public buildings in Lexington. The Society was incorporated in May 1951, and two years later, in May 1953, the Society voted to build on the land it had previously purchased on Waltham St.

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The building is notable for its design by a woman architect. It was designed by architect and Arts and Crafts Society member Marjorie Pierce (1900-1999), who received her undergraduate architectural degree from MIT in 1922 and her MA a year later. She was active at MIT, was president of the MIT Women's Association and created the first fully endowed graduate fellowship in the MIT Department of Architecture.

The original building measured 25 feet by 40 feet and was constructed at a cost of \$15,000. Additions to the building were constructed in 1965 and in 1972, both built to the rear of the building because of a town easement where the parking lot was located. In addition to the studio space, the additions enabled the creation of a gallery, an administrative office and a library for the society. The library was funded by a trust fund of a member, the late Minnie Seaver, and bore her name for many years. The gallery is named for Phillip B. Parsons, a renowned painter who was a member of the Painters' Guild and taught at the Society. In 1984, the Gallery was renovated for the 50th Anniversary celebrations. In the early 1970s the Parsons Gallery was the only gallery in town.

The Lexington Arts and Crafts Society currently has over 370 artists and members, ranging from full-time commercial artists to retired art teachers, artists who practice their craft as a hobby and work fulltime in other fields and young artisans. The membership is organized by guild, including the Painters, Ceramics (Potters), Woodworkers, Metalworkers, Basketry, Needle Arts (Needleworkers), Decorative Arts, Weavers, and Polymer Clay Guilds.

BIBLIOGRAPHY and/or REFERENCES

Allaback, Sarah, *The First American Women Architects* (p175, Univ Illinois Press, 2008)

Lexington Arts and Crafts Society on line history at <http://www.lacsma.org/About/HistoryofLACS/1954-1960/tabid/415/Default.aspx>

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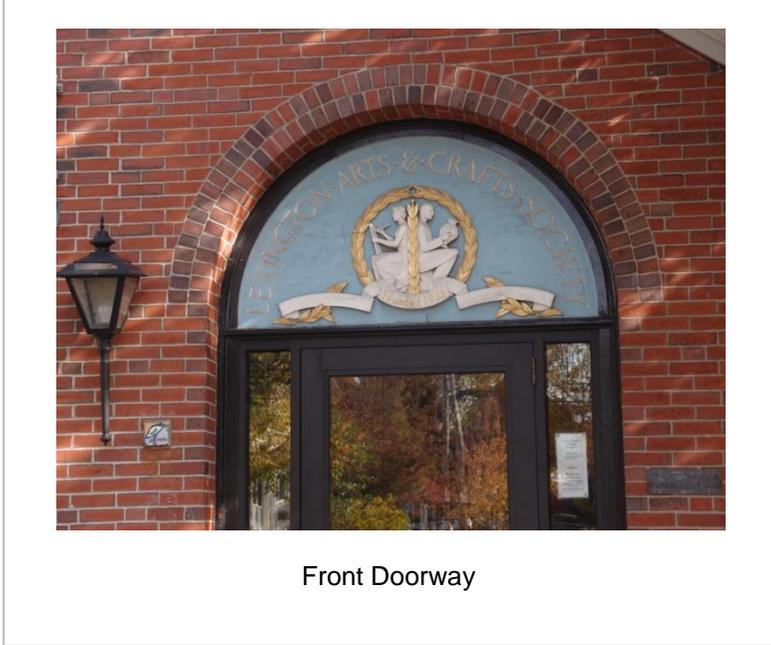
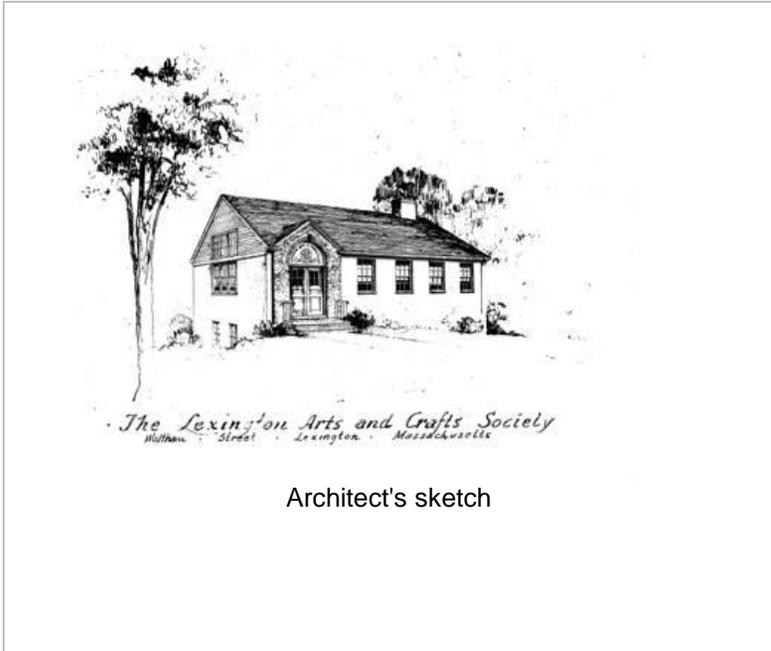
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SUPPLEMENTARY IMAGES



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