

1306  
AUG 21 1989

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION  
80 BOYLSTON STREET, BOSTON, MA 02116

NATIONAL REGISTER

Area Letter Form numbers in this Area

J	
---	--

WALTHAM, MA MRA

Town Waltham

Name of Area (if any) Waltham Gas Light Co.

Present Use industrial

industrial/utility

General Date or Period 1853-early 1900s

General Condition good

Acreage 132,437 sq.ft. 3.040 Acres

Recorded by Ed Gordon

Organization Waltham Historical Comm.

Date July 1986

revised by C. Jenkins 3/88

see attached map

RESOURCE COUNT:

building: 1C

structure: 7NC

Photos (3"x3" or 3"x5" black & white) - Indicate on back of each photo street addresses for buildings shown. Staple to left side of form.

Sketch Map. Draw a general map of the area indicating properties within it. Number each property for which individual inventory forms have been completed. Label streets including route numbers, if any. Indicate north. (Attach a separate sheet if space here is not sufficient).

UTM REFERENCE A 19131603014693310  
B 19131601014693240  
C 19131617014693700  
D 19131611014693340

USGS QUADRANGLE NEWTON

SCALE 1:25,000

## NATIONAL REGISTER CRITERIA STATEMENT (if applicable)

The Waltham Gas Light Co. possesses integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling and associations. It is significant as the oldest utilitarian/industrial complex on the South Side. Incorporated in 1853, the Waltham Gas Light Co. has kept pace with the development of the city and its industries, and its executives and directors included some of Waltham's most prominent 19th century citizens. The complex itself is an interesting example of a small-scale, industrial plant that has evolved from the mid-19th to the early 20th century. It meets criteria A and C of the National Register of Historic Places.

## ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE Describe important architectural features and evaluate in terms of other areas within the community.

The Waltham Gas Light Co. is a rambling structure displaying brick, wood-frame and metal components that range in height from one to two stories. The oldest part of the structure is the northernmost of the pair of brick gable roof buildings with oculi that are visible on the north or river-side. This building appears to date to the company's founding in 1854. Its mate to the south also appears to date to the 1850s. Both are characterized by walls with large rectangular recessed brickwork panels, and gable oculi. Particularly noteworthy is the long south elevation which dates from c1854-1874. It is characterized by rugged brickwork with corbeling, pilasters and stilted segmental window openings. Many windows still retain original 12/12 wood sash. The easternmost portion of the structure, closest to the railroad tracks, consists of metal sheds and is non-contributing. The main structure is surrounded by several small, one-story metal and concrete block sheds that are also non-contributing.

## HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE Explain historical importance of area and how the area relates to the development of other areas of the community.

The Waltham Gas Light Co. was incorporated in 1853 for "the purpose of supplying gas for illumination, fuel and power." Its surviving complex includes the oldest industrial/utilitarian buildings still extant on Waltham's South Side. Organized in January of 1854, the following Waltham citizens were chosen as the new company's directors: Horatio Adams (president of the Boston Watch Co. during the 1850s), R.P. Davis (credited with the construction of this company's buildings), F.R. Scott, R.S. Warren (prominent local doctor), and Horatio Moore. Thomas Page was chosen to serve as clerk and treasurer. Horatio Adams was elected President. The authorized capital was \$150.00. Gas was first supplied to customers in October of 1854, the price set at \$4.00 per 1000 cubic feet. In 1855, the production was 3,000,000 cubic feet.

The Waltham Gas Light Co. evidently did not buy its land until April 10, 1855 (deed 707: 473). At that time, the company paid the Newton Chemical Co. \$856.00 for "all that piece or parcel of land with the buildings thereon, situated on the South Side of Waltham and bordering the Charles River beginning at a corner on the line of the Watertown Branch R.R. near a steam mill owned by said grantors containing 1,375 sq.ft. more or less." This deed also mentions that the Newton Chemical Co. reserved the right to lay a water pipe from the Charles River to its steam mill through the Waltham Gas Light Co.'s property.

(cont)

## BIBLIOGRAPHY and/or REFERENCES

- Iphriam L. Barry. The City of Waltham, MA Its Advantages to Manufacturers. 1887.  
E.L. Sanderson. Waltham Industries. Waltham Historical Society. 1957.  
Waltham Daily Tribune. Sept. 8, 1891. Souvenir Edition  
Maps/Atlases. 1854, 1874, 1881, 1886, 1898, 1900, 1911, 1915.

INVENTORY FORM CONTINUATION SHEET

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION  
Office of the Secretary, Boston

Community: Waltham, MA. MRA	Form No: 52
Property Name: Waltham Gas Light Co. 2 Cooper St.	

Indicate each item on inventory form which is being continued below.

HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE (cont'd)

In 1886, an electric light plant was added--on December 24th of that year the electric light was first used for "street and store illumination in the city." By 1887 four large circular gasometers with a capacity of 200,000 cubic feet were located on this property.

In the decades following Waltham's incorporation as a city in 1884, the demand for electricity in the new municipality was constantly increasing--in 1890 for example, a contract was made to supply power to the Newton St. railroad. In 1891, it was noted in the Waltham Daily Tribune Souvenir that "the works are situated on Pine St. and cover an area of two acres. They are fully equipped with all the latest improved appliances. apparatus and machinery for the carrying on of a large and successful business. The electric plant is located in a handsome 2-story brick building, 40x117 feet and has now in operation 145 arc and a capacity for 2000 incandescent lights." In 1887 this company's officers included: Lowell Clark, President, George A. Stearns, Georgia A. Stearns, treasurer and general manager, John D. Farnum, Arthur T. Lyman, A.M. Goodale, George A Stearns of Lowell Clark, Wm. Roberts and Augustus Flagg, directors. During the late 19th century, this company had its officer at No.1 Welch's Block (no longer extant). This company was also a dealer in gas stoves.

In 1909, this firm ceased operations. Its gas business was transferred to the Newton and Watertown Gas Co. while the electric business went to Boston Edison. The gas plant was eventually leased and then sold to the Waltham Bag and Paper Co., recently formed by Theodore E. Jewell. Now a subsidiary of Longview Fibre, the plant continues to manufacture paper bags today (1984).

VERBAL BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION & DESCRIPTION

This nomination is confined to the Waltham Gas Light Company Complex and the lot on which it stands. The non-related industrial and commercial buildings that surround it are excluded.

WALTHAM, MA MRA

DISTRICT DATA SHEET

WALTHAM GAS LIGHT CO. HISTORIC DISTRICT

<u>Street Address</u>	<u>Assessor's #</u>	<u>Square Ft.</u>	<u>Historic Name/Inventory #</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Style</u>	<u>Status</u>
2 Cooper Street	60-28-21	132,437	Waltham Gas Light Co./#52	1853	Utilitarian metal sheds	C 7NC

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

AUG 21 1989

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section number \_\_\_\_\_ Page \_\_\_\_\_

Multiple Resource Area  
Thematic Group

Name Waltham MRA  
State Middlesex County, MASSACHUSETTS

Nomination/Type of Review

Date/Signature

scr

81. St. Mary's Roman Catholic Church Complex  
Substantive Review *SK* Keeper *Betty L. Swane* 9/28/89

Attest \_\_\_\_\_

82. Stanley, Leonard W., House  
Entered in the National Register Keeper *Alfred Byers* 9/28/89

Attest \_\_\_\_\_

83. Stark Building  
Entered in the National Register Keeper *Alfred Byers* 9/28/89

Attest \_\_\_\_\_

84. Stark, Robert M., House  
Entered in the National Register Keeper *Alfred Byers* 9/28/89

Attest \_\_\_\_\_

85. Stearns, Amos, House  
Entered in the National Register Keeper *Alfred Byers* 9/28/89

Attest \_\_\_\_\_

86. Stewart, Henry, House  
Entered in the National Register Keeper *Alfred Byers* 9/28/89

Attest \_\_\_\_\_

87. Swasey, James, House  
Entered in the National Register Keeper *Alfred Byers* 9/28/89

Attest \_\_\_\_\_

88. Tyler, Frank J., House  
Entered in the National Register Keeper *Alfred Byers* 9/28/89

Attest \_\_\_\_\_

89. United States Watch Company  
Entered in the National Register Keeper *Alfred Byers* 9/28/89

Attest \_\_\_\_\_

90. Waltham Gas Light Company  
Entered in the National Register Keeper *Alfred Byers* 9/28/89

Attest \_\_\_\_\_

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: NOMINATION

PROPERTY NAME: Waltham Gas Light Company

MULTIPLE NAME: Waltham MRA

STATE & COUNTY: MASSACHUSETTS, Middlesex

DATE RECEIVED: 8/21/89                      DATE OF PENDING LIST: 9/05/89  
DATE OF 16TH DAY: 9/21/89                      DATE OF 45TH DAY: 10/05/89  
DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:

REFERENCE NUMBER: 89001506

NOMINATOR: STATE

REASONS FOR REVIEW:

APPEAL: N    DATA PROBLEM: N    LANDSCAPE: N    LESS THAN 50 YEARS: N  
OTHER: N    PDIL: N    PERIOD: N    PROGRAM UNAPPROVED: N  
REQUEST: N    SAMPLE: N    SLR DRAFT: N    NATIONAL: N

COMMENT WAIVER: N

ACCEPT     RETURN     REJECT    9/28/89 DATE

Entered in the  
National Register

ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:

RECOM./CRITERIA \_\_\_\_\_  
REVIEWER \_\_\_\_\_  
DISCIPLINE \_\_\_\_\_  
DATE \_\_\_\_\_

DOCUMENTATION see attached comments Y/N see attached SLR Y/N

---

CLASSIFICATION

count       resource type

---

STATE/FEDERAL AGENCY CERTIFICATION

---

FUNCTION

historic       current

---

DESCRIPTION

architectural classification  
 materials  
 descriptive text

---

SIGNIFICANCE

Period      Areas of Significance--Check and justify below

Specific dates      Builder/Architect  
Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

summary paragraph  
 completeness  
 clarity  
 applicable criteria  
 justification of areas checked  
 relating significance to the resource  
 context  
 relationship of integrity to significance  
 justification of exception  
 other

---

BIBLIOGRAPHY

---

GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

acreage       verbal boundary description  
 UTM's       boundary justification

---

ACCOMPANYING DOCUMENTATION/PRESENTATION

sketch maps       USGS maps       photographs       presentation

---

OTHER COMMENTS

Questions concerning this nomination may be directed to

\_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Signed \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_



south elevation  
Waltham Gas Light Co.  
Waltham, MA MRA  
note # 52



2 Cooper St. (near)

north elevation  
Waltham Gas Light Co.

W & I Shaw <sup>MA</sup> WRA  
MTC #52

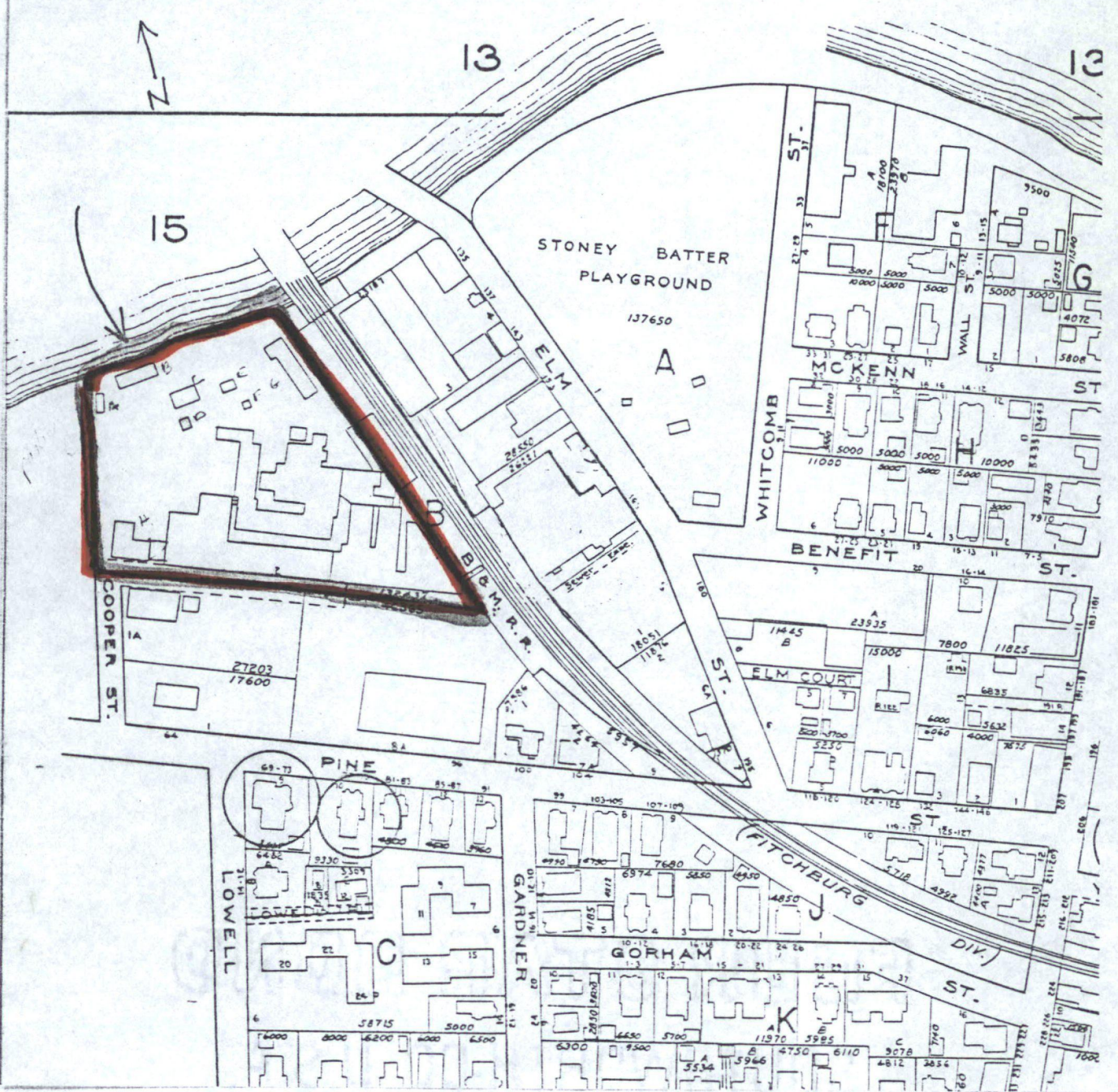


south elevation facing east  
Waltham Gas Light Co.

MTC 52

Waltham, MA MRA

2 COOPER ST



1970 Atlas, City of Waltham  
 Compiled by the Waltham  
 Engineering Division  
 Scale: 1 inch = 140 ft

Waltham, Massachusetts MRA  
 2 Cooper Street  
 Waltham Gas Light Co.  
 3-B-2 M+C 52



Please refer to the map in the  
Multiple Property Cover Sheet  
for this property

Multiple Property Cover Sheet Reference Number: 64000301