

FORM A - AREA

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
294 Washington Street, Boston, MA. 02108

Acre

Form numbers in this area

Area letter

H

56:22, 20, 19



Lowell

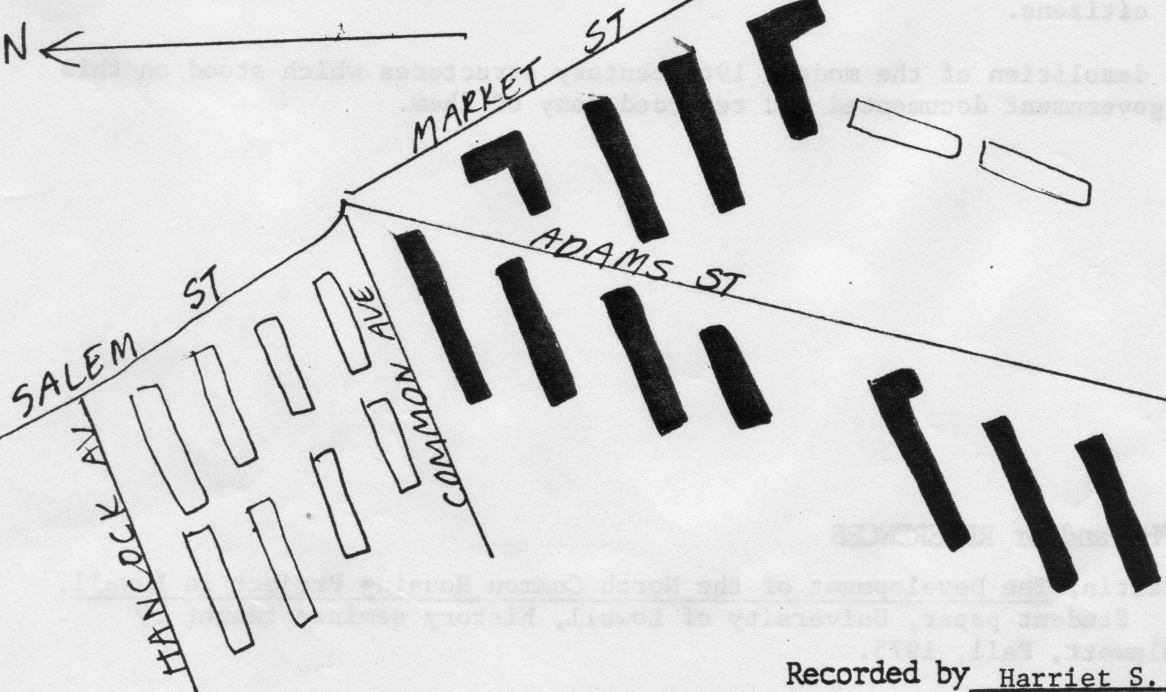
of area (if any) North Common

age) Housing Project

al date or period 1937-41

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) and indicate north. (Attach a separate sheet if space here is not sufficient)

N ←



Recorded by Harriet S. White

Organization DPD Architectural Survey

Date 11/80

(Staple additional sheets here)

ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE of area. (Describe physical setting, general character, and architecturally significant structures).

The North Common Housing Project consists of eleven long, low rectangular buildings arranged in two staggered rows, one on each side of Adams Street. The project covers 13 1/2 acres. The individual buildings are three stories high, flat-roofed, built of brick, and spaced at seventy-foot intervals. They were designed to provide parking, garages, playgrounds and other amenities. The builder was M. S. Kelleher of Boston; John Meagher was the landscape architect. There are a total of 536 modest apartments in the project.

HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE of area. (Explain development of area, what caused it, and how it affected community; be specific).

The North Common housing project is one of the earliest federally-funded housing projects in the U.S. and represents one of the first government attempts to provide adequate housing on a mass-scale for low-income families. The project was made possible by the approval (of Pres. Roosevelt and the U.S. Housing Administration) of a \$3 million appropriation to the Lowell Housing Authority in 1937. The project was built on land at the heart of Lowell's Greek community. Tremendous local controversy was generated concerning the upheaval and displacement of so many citizens.

Before the demolition of the modest 19th century structures which stood on this site, the government documented and recorded many of them.

BIBLIOGRAPHY and/or REFERENCES

Marian McCartin, The Development of the North Common Housing Project in Lowell, 1937-1941. Student paper, University of Lowell, history seminar taught by Dr. Mary Blewett, Fall, 1975.



NORTH COMMON HOUSING PROJECT

