

FORM B – BUILDING

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

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

84/336/4	Billerica		CLM.329
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Town/City: Chelmsford

Place: (*neighborhood or village*): Chelmsford Center

Photograph



Address: 15 Central Square

Historic Name: Puritan Motors Sales Building

Uses: Present: commercial

Original: commercial

Date of Construction: 1916

Source: *History of Chelmsford 1910 – 1970*

Style/Form: altered beyond recognition

Architect/Builder: unknown

Exterior Material:

Foundation: unknown

Wall/Trim: concrete block/brick veneer

Roof: flat

Outbuildings/Secondary Structures:
none

Major Alterations (*with dates*):

Ca. 1970 storefront alterations, including removal of brick parapet

Condition: Fair

Moved: no yes **Date:**

Acreage: .25 A

Setting: The parcel includes building at 15 and 18 Central Square. This building is located on the west side of Central Sq. against the sidewalk. A small parking area is located behind the 18 Central Sq. portion of the lot. The surrounding area of Chelmsford Center includes 19th and 20th c. commercial development.

Locus Map



Recorded by: Jennifer Burden, Gray & Pape, Inc.

Organization: Chelmsford Historical Commission

Date (*month / year*): June 2016

INVENTORY FORM B CONTINUATION SHEET

CHELMSFORD

15 CENTRAL SQUARE

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.

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 lot includes two buildings with addresses of 15 and 18 Central Square. The older of the two is the one-story building on the north that was constructed in 1916 as an automotive supply and garage. The concrete block building has a brick veneer primary (east) façade and a flat roof. Originally the building had three bays across the façade with storefront windows in the outer bays and a recessed entry in the center. A brick false front provided signage space in three panels for the occupying business (see below). The storefront was replaced with its current configuration. A new brick veneer façade was installed with slated aluminum storefront windows that connect to the recessed aluminum double door with transom. A dentil molded cornice tops the façade and the area between the cornice and storefront provides space for signage. Additional historical photographs of the building are available in *History of Chelmsford 1910 – 1970*.

The building is an altered example of an early twentieth century commercial building that retains historic integrity of location, setting, and association.

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 building was constructed in 1916 by Ralph Emerson, who was previously a postmaster for Chelmsford Center, for his Chelmsford Garage business that sold automotive supplies in the front of the building and offered automotive repair space in the rear. In the 1920s Emerson and partner Loring Kew opened Puritan Motor Sales in this space, which was the first automobile showroom in Chelmsford Center. In the 1930s Sterling Pratt operated a Ford dealership and filling station at this location called Pratt Motors. During the 1940s Carroll Motors assumed operations. Soon thereafter Raymond Barrows obtained ownership of the property and opened a pickle plant in the building before moving it to the former Central House livery stables. In ca. 1946 then owner Fred Withington connected this building to the building to the south (former post office building). At this date the storefront of the 15 Central Square was altered, but not yet to its current configuration (see below). A used furniture store was then located in this building. From 1947 until 1952 the Purity Food Store occupied the space in this building. Once the grocery relocated to Boston Road across from the library, a five-and-ten type store moved to this location. By 1965 the Chelmsford Card Shop was in operation here by Mildred Pierce. She sold the business that year to Jack Handley. The card shop changed its name to Chelmsford Card & Gift and remains in operation at this address.

The building at 17 Central Square (CLM.330) was constructed in 1949 after a fire destroyed most of the building previously on the site.

BIBLIOGRAPHY and/or REFERENCES

Chelmsford Historical Commission. *History of Chelmsford 1910 – 1970*. Chelmsford Historical Commission, Chelmsford, MA. 2011.

Middlesex North Registry of Deeds. www.lowelldeeds.com.

INVENTORY FORM B CONTINUATION SHEET

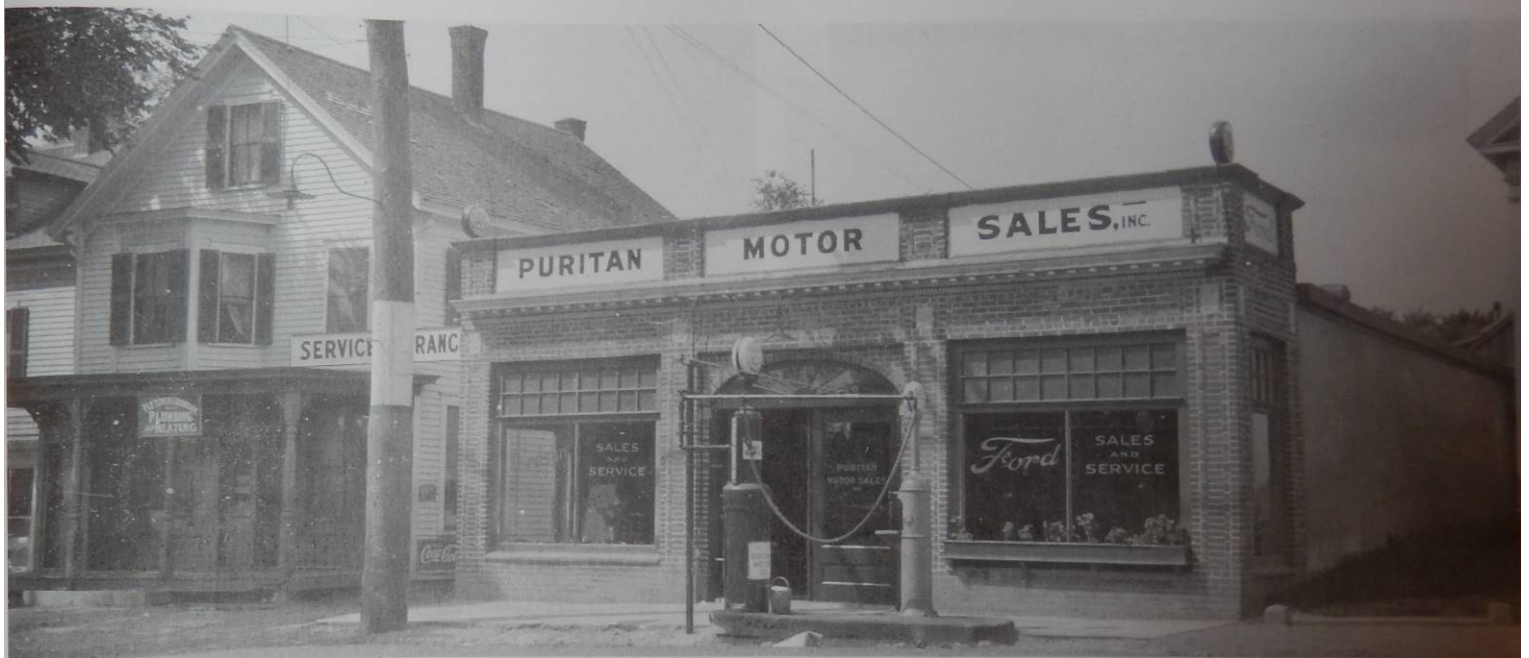
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1920s photograph of 15 Central Square on the right. (Chelmsford Historical Society.)