

# FORM B – BUILDING

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

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

84/336/4	Billerica		CLM.330
----------	-----------	--	---------

**Town/City:** Chelmsford

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

## Photograph



**Address:** 17 Central Square

**Historic Name:** The Center Shop

**Uses:** Present: commercial

Original: commercial

**Date of Construction:** 1949

**Source:** *History of Chelmsford 1910 – 1970*

**Style/Form:** no style

**Architect/Builder:** unknown

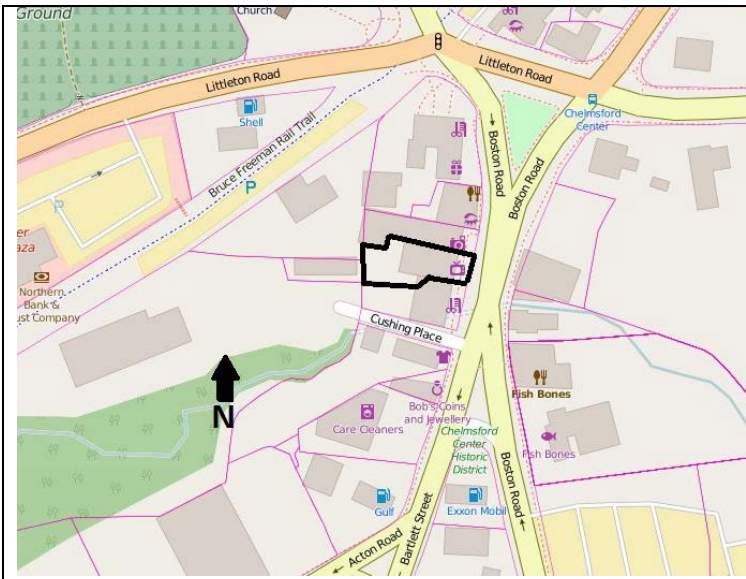
**Exterior Material:**

Foundation: unknown

Wall/Trim: brick veneer/concrete

Roof: flat

## Locus Map



**Outbuildings/Secondary Structures:** none

**Major Alterations (*with dates*):**  
Ca. 1970 replacement storefront materials

**Condition:** Fair

**Moved:** no  yes  **Date:**

**Acreage:** .25 A

**Setting:** The parcel includes buildings at 15 and 17 Central Square. This building is located on the west side of Central Sq. against the sidewalk. A small parking area is located behind the building. The surrounding area of Chelmsford Center includes 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> c. commercial development.

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

**Organization:** Chelmsford Historical Commission

**Date (*month / year*):** June 2016

# INVENTORY FORM B CONTINUATION SHEET

CHELMSFORD

17 CENTRAL SQUARE

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION

220 MORRISSEY BOULEVARD, BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02125

Area(s) Form No.

CLM.330

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 17 Central Square. The building at 17 Central Square was constructed in 1949 after a fire destroyed part of the previous building in this location. The two-story building has walls clad in brick veneer and a flat roof. The first story includes two storefront areas divided into five bays. The first two bays on the north side include an entry door and a plate glass storefront window. The bays are slanted into the building, which provides shelter to the entry door. The remaining three bays make up the other business location. Plate glass windows flank a recessed entry. The second story is three symmetrical bays wide with identical aluminum windows in each bay that consist of a large casement window flanked by four-pane casements. Space between the first and second stories is used for signage.

The building is a fair example of a mid-twentieth century commercial building that retains historic integrity of location, setting, design, feeling, 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 at 15 Central Square (CLM.329) 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 1948 a fire in the former post office building next to 15 Central Square ruined the first story. Since the second story was still useable, it was relocated to Perham Street off of Billerica Road. In 1949 then owner Fred Withington constructed the two-story building currently on the site. The 1949 Chelmsford City Directory lists The Center Shop gift shop at this address. Since its construction a number of businesses have occupied the building.

## 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](http://www.lowelldeeds.com).