

# FORM B – BUILDING

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

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

13/19/7	Nashua South		CLM.417
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**Town/City:** Chelmsford

**Place:** (*neighborhood or village*): Vinal Square

## Photograph



**Address:** 20-28 Vinal Square

**Historic Name:** North Chelmsford Duckpin Bowling

**Uses:** Present: commercial

Original: commercial

**Date of Construction:** between 1938 and 1950

**Source:** 1938 aerial and 1950 Sanborn maps

**Style/Form:** no style

**Architect/Builder:** unknown

**Exterior Material:**

Foundation: concrete block

Wall/Trim: vinyl siding/asphalt shingle

Roof: flat/asphalt shingle

**Outbuildings/Secondary Structures:** none

**Major Alterations** (*with dates*):

Ca. 1990 replacement siding

Ca. 1990 false front roof addition

**Condition:** Fair

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

**Acreage:** .16 A

**Setting:** The building is located on the east corner of Vinal Sq. and Wotten Rd. in the Vinal Square area of North Chelmsford. The building encompasses most of the lot with a small grassy area on the west side with a walkway that leads to the basement. The surrounding area includes 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> c. commercial and residential developments.

## Locus Map



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

**Organization:** Chelmsford Historical Commission

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

# INVENTORY FORM B CONTINUATION SHEET

CHELMSFORD

20-28 VINAL SQUARE

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION

220 MORRISSEY BOULEVARD, BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02125

Area(s) Form No.

CLM.417

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 one-story building with basement has a concrete foundation, walls clad in replacement vinyl siding, and a flat roof with an asphalt-shingled pent roof across the primary (southwest) façade. The building is divided into three commercial spaces on the first floor and a duckpin bowling alley in the basement that is accessible from the west bay of the first story and from an entry in the basement on the northwest wall. The second bay from the west is a single storefront area with plate glass storefront windows that flank a recessed entry. The east bay features a larger storefront area with larger windows that flank a double entry with anodized aluminum doors topped with a transom. This doorway provides access to the other two commercial entities in the building. Currently all of the commercial spaces are occupied.

The resource is a fair example of a mid-twentieth century commercial building that retains historic integrity of location and setting.

## 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 does not appear on the 1938 aerial map of the area, but is present on the 1950 Sanborn map; therefore, it was constructed between these dates. Deed research traced the ownership to three deeds Joseph and Ella Ryan received for land in this area from 1901, 1925, and 1948. The 1920 US Population Census lists Joseph (ca. 1869-1950, born in Rhode Island) and Ella (ca. 1877-1967, born in Ireland) Ryan living on Middlesex Street with three sons William, Joseph, and Fred (born ca. 1899, 1900, and 1903) and daughter Rita (born ca. 1915). At this date Joseph was a manager of a taxi service company. By 1940 they relocated to Sherman Street and Joseph was the chief of the fire department; children Joseph, Fred, and Rita continued to reside with them at this date. In 1943 the North Chelmsford Lanes Duckpin Bowling relocated to 22 Vinal Square from 21-25 Quigley Avenue. Duckpin bowling is more commonly found in Maryland, Rhode Island, and Connecticut. From 1949 through 1960 the bowling alley hired local boys to rest the pins, but installed an automatic setter in 1960. In 1974 John DePalma purchased the business, which remains in the basement of the building. The 1949 city directory lists Westlands Taxi service operating from 28 Vinal Square by William J. Sullivan at this date. The 1950 Sanborn map shows that commercial space was on the first story with the bowling alley in the basement, like the current configuration. In 1967 the heirs of Ella Ryan sold the property to Neil R. Traub. Traub retained the property until 1981 at which date he sold it to Terrence A. Goode, who kept it until 2010.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY and/or REFERENCES

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

Genealogical research, including U.S. and Massachusetts census records; birth, marriage, and death records; and city directory records from ancestry.com.

Merriam, Fred. *Images of America: North and West Chelmsford*. Arcadia Publishing, Charleston, South Carolina. 2016.

Middlesex North Registry of Deeds. [www.lowelldeeds.com](http://www.lowelldeeds.com).

Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps of Lowell, MA. 1907 and 1950.