

Lowell Courier-Citizen

February 16, 1916 - Another joint meeting of the building committee and the advisory board of the new high school was held on Thursday evening, when, after due deliberation, the building committee decided to instruct Edwin R. Clark of the Centre to prepare the necessary plans for the construction of the new building. The style of the new building high school has not yet been decided upon, but it is the intention of the committee to follow the tendency of the more modern school buildings as far as the style of architecture is concerned, with the main object in view, however, that everything of an educational value should be adhered to rather than otherwise. Mr. Clark, who was present at the meeting, was informed of the decision arrived at by the committee, and he assured all present that he would take special pains, as a resident of the town, to prepare suitable plans which would provide for the erection of a school building that would prove a credit to the entire town when completed.

February 7, 1916 - The town of Chelmsford voted almost unanimously today, at its annual meeting, to build a new \$65,000 high school on the Adams site at the Centre. This means a consolidation of the two high schools now operated at the North village and the Centre, and puts an end to a two years' controversy.

When the article calling for \$65,000 for a new school at the Centre came up, every one drew a long breathe in recollection of the fight two years ago. It did not seem likely that the matter could have been ironed out by the special committee appointed recently. But it had. The Centre and the North had come together in the most amicable manner, every one ready to boost the town of Chelmsford and to place the school where the committee might recommend it.

Rev. C.H. Ellis of this committee made the motion that the article be adopted. Captain Monahan presented the report of the committee in a very capable manner. He told how the high school at the Centre was already overcrowded, and that at the North had about reached its capacity. New Buildings were needed in both places unless a central school of 12 rooms was built on the Timothy Adams lot. To rebuild both buildings would cost \$40,000 each. While there will be no saving in the operation of the proposed larger school, since it will undertake to perform a more efficient work, it will meet the needs of the future, and will send the boys and girls of Chelmsford out fitted to compete with graduates of other towns and cities. In 11 years, he said, the schools had increased from 55 to 161 pupils, and there was reason to believe that such an increase would continue, since in six years the rate of pupils to a thousand of the population has increased from 15 to 18. The transportation problem at the Centre would become an important one, but it could be solved. Pupils could be brought from the North village in special electric cars at a cost of 10¢ round trip per pupil, or by automobile, which latter method the committee was inclined to favor.

.....James P. Dunnigan won loud applause in an appeal in which he said that the time had come for the town to put aside its sectional and religious prejudices as well, and work together to produce good citizens in the public school.

With this ringing sentiment the meeting voted almost unanimously, a moment later, to authorize a committee of three to build the school as recommended, and there were no dissenting voices when the vote was put to borrow the money on a twenty year loan.

The building commission chosen was James P. Dunigan, Herbert E. Ellis and Fred A. Snow, they will be assisted by the following advisory committee, which will offer recommendations, but will not have a vote: C.C

Armstrong, Ulysses J. Lupien, Wilbur E. Lapham, Gabriel Audoin and W.H. Shedd.

February 11, 1916 - Annexation is being talked up rather strongly in North Chelmsford and the Sun has recieved several communications from well known citizens of the village requesting that the movement be given publicity. The annexation movement started just over a week ago when the majority of the voters became disgusted at the treatment accorded them at the annual town meeting. They claim that the voters in the Centre are running things despite the fact that North Chelmsford citizens pay most of the taxes. ... The annexation movement seems to have taken great strength since it was voted at the town meeting to erect a high school at the Centre village for the accommodation of all the school children of the town.

When the matter was taken up at the meeting several citizens made futile arguments against erecting the school in Chelmsford because of the cost of transporting the children from North Chelmsford to the Centre. They contended that if it were going to cost 72 cents per week to child a child to high school, many of the children would finish their education in the mills of the village. Their remarks were listened to with apparent interest, but when the vote was taken the majority was in favor of the Chelmsford site for the school.

Prominent North Chelmsford residents claim that there was not a good representation from the village at the town meeting because of the inclemency of the weather and that the North Chelmsford voters did not have the opportunity of voicing their sentiments relative to the school. Those who did attend and voted in favor of the site have undergone a radical change of mind since the meeting and are wondering how the transportation problem is to be solved, while others say the school cannot be erected and equipped for \$65,000, which was the amount appropriated for the purpose.....

February 25, 1916 - A meeting of the high school building and advisory committee was held on Thursday evening to decide upon the heating and ventilation. Details were very fully gone into and a system outlined by Edwin R. Clark, the architect of the building, was accepted by the committee and Mr. Clark instructed to include this part of the work with the building plans. The committee and Mr. Clark are giving thier very best efforts to secure for the town every worth while educational advantage known to modern school building and to do it within the appropriation. It is hoped that the work will be sufficiently advanced so that bids may be called for within a month.

March 19, 1916 - The auction sale of the Timothy Adams buildings in Billerica street, occupying the site purchased by the town for school purposes and upon which the new high school building will be erected, was successfully conducted by Auctioneer James P. Emerson on Saturday afternoon. There was a large attendance both local and out-of-town and with one exception the buyers were out-of-town parties. The purchasers are allowed two weeks to remove the property, with a reasonable extension granted for weather conditions. The house was sold to A.J. Simpson of Lowell for \$175, who was also the buyer of the tank in the attic for \$17 and the bath tub for \$12.50. The seat and lavatory in the bath room and the soap stone set tubs had previously been taken by the town for use at the town farm. John Jarek of Lowell bought the barn and lean-to for \$200 and the heating and piping went to Z.P. Coburn of Dracut for \$35. The slate sink was purchased by Ralph P. Emerson for \$ 12.

March 29, 1916 - Preparations for removing the Adams house from the site chosen for the new high school building, are being forwarded rapidly. This afternoon the big five flue chimney located in the centre of the building, had ~~almost~~ been almost taken down and the space that was left was equal to many a room in a modern dwelling. Although built many years ago, much of the timber used in the construction of the building is found to be in as good condition as ever. A.J. Simpson of Lowell, the purchaser, has secured a lot of land at the easterly corner of Perham street in Billerica street and will move the house onto it.

March 31, 1916 - The L of the Adams house in Billerica street has been detached from the main building and started on the journey to its new location, a few hundred feet easterly on the same street. Timothy Timbers have been placed under the main building and its removal will soon follow

May 3, 1916- Contracts for the several phases of building construction on the new high school building to be erected at the Centre were awarded this evening by the special committee appointed at the town meeting, as follows: Alway & Meloy, Lowell, brick work, carpentry, mason work, plastering and painting, amount of bid, \$41,996; heating and ventilation, H.H. Richardson, Chelmsford, amount of bid, \$7500; plumbing, Hobson & Lawler, Lowell, amount of bid, \$1587; electrical work, W.C. Hinckley, Lowell, amount of bid, \$784. The total of the lowest bids is \$51,867.

The other bids sent in were as follows.....

The building will be of brick construction and will contain 14 rooms, but will not contain an assembly hall. The land on which the building will be erected is the old Timothy Adams property in Billerica street and was purchased by the town two years ago. The land was cleared this year.

May 3, 1916 - The Timothy Adams house in Billerica street has been moved from its old lot and a new cellar is being dug for it on the new site chosen.

May 5, 1916 - Billerica street was closed today between the ends of Perham street to permit the moving of the Timothy Adams house. Before it started on the trip down the hill, the house was turned completely around to face north, as it will be when on its new foundation.

May 16, 1916 - Batters have been set for the new high school building in Billerica street and the ground is being made ready for putting in the foundations.

June 5, 1916 - The "L" of the Adams house, detached from the main building and allowed to remain at a convenient distance from where the excavating for the new high school is going on, is being utilized for office and storage purposes by Architect Edwin R. Clark and Contractor Alway & Meloy. A telephone has been installed and the situation is quite satisfactory.

August 29, 1916 - Work on the new school house is going on rapidly, the walls beginning to reach up quite high.

School building closure vote

By CAROL KOPP
Sun Staff

CHELMSFORD — In an economy measure, the school committee has moved to shut down the older building of the McFarlin school complex and reassign an estimated 246

children to other schools.

The cutback will leave the school in Chelmsford Center with about 10 classrooms in operation next year, including a Chapter 766 resource center, as well as the cafeteria and gymnasium.

The Highland School will be reopened by the school department to accommodate up to four classes of children that would have been assigned to the McFarlin.

The remainder will be dis-

tributed among the town's elementary schools. In most cases, they will be sent to the elementary schools in their districts, where they would have been sent if the McFarlin had not been redesigned as a sixth-grade

school several years ago.

In some cases, however, district lines will be redrawn to prevent schools from being overcrowded by the influx of new students.

PRELIMINARY ENROLLMENT figures indicate that the North and Center schools are among those that would not be able to house all the additional students.

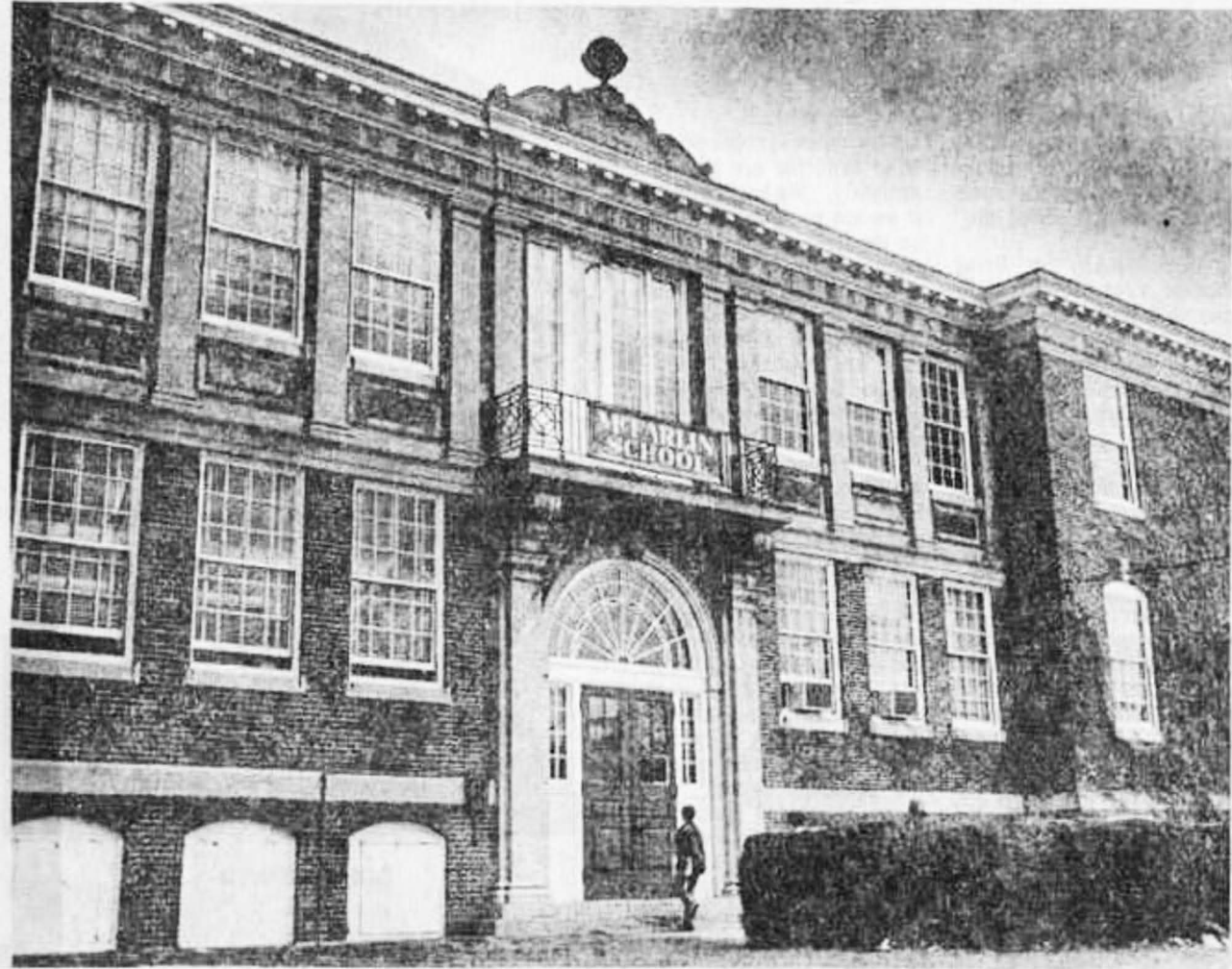
According to members of the school committee, the measure will not increase class size in any of the schools. They have used an ideal guideline of 25 students to a class at the elementary level, with the maximum limit in any class not to exceed "the 30 level."

That guideline was one of the factors used last night as the committee, with the school administration and finance committee, discussed a variety of proposals that would cut operating costs at the elementary level.

The measure finally approved by unanimous vote, closing of the McFarlin "A" building, is expected to save roughly \$75,000. It will reduce the McFarlin teaching staff by about eight. Up to four of them would be reassigned to the Highland School.

Other alternatives that were discarded as unfeasible next year included complete shutdown of the two-building school next year. Earlier this year, the decision had been made to close the second floor of the school.

In a second motion, also made by outgoing Committee Member Robert Hall, a meeting will be requested with the selectmen and finance committee to discuss future uses of the older sec-



OLD SECTION OF MCFARLIN SCHOOL
...board votes to close it

CHELMSFORD**Town To Get \$632,000****Grant For Renovations**

CMFD-Announcement was made this week that the town's pre-application for a federal grant from energy conservation funds amounting to \$632,000 had been approved. Although another final application must be completed, the pre-application approval, according to Admin. Asst. Norman Thidemann, is "tantamount to approval" of the entire project. The funds will be used for renovation of the old Town Hall and the McFarlin "A" building on Billerica Road which is proposed as the "new" Town Hall, providing the voters approve an appropriation whose amount is yet to be set with precision but which is in the neighborhood of \$50-60,000.

The work to be done at McFarlin "A" includes site work, concrete and masonry work, thermal and moisture protection projects, steel-framed doors and windows to replace the less-safe wooden frames, finish work, and mechanical, plumbing, heating, ventilating, air conditioning and electrical work.

At the "old" Town Hall, tentative plans call for restoration of the stage in the upstairs hall after the offices are removed, installation of the second stairway which was removed some years ago to make room for more office space in the Treasurer/Collector's rooms, changes in lighting, heating improvements, and so on.

The lower floor of the McFarlin "A" under the new plans would house the Youth Center, Board of Health, vaults, Building department, Civil Defense, Boiler room, and rooms for meetings.

The ground floor would provide space for the Town Clerk and Registrars of Voters, the Treasurer/Collector, the Selectmen, Assessors and Meeting Rooms.

The upper floor has office space for the Accounting office, Machine Room and Credit Union offices—plus a large meeting room and several smaller rooms. The plans also call for an elevator to this level from the ground floor.

Chelmsford is one of four cities and towns in the state to be asked to submit a final application for these funds. The federal money is available through the EDA

(Economic Development Administration) under a public works improvement project to conserve energy in public buildings (non-schools, non-hospitals, etc.)

As explained by Thidemann, \$450,000 of the grant money is slated for the McFarlin. Plans are to insulate the ceiling and exterior walls, install double thermal pane windows, lower ceilings, and install energy conserving light fixtures. \$340,000 is earmarked for Town Hall renovations which

would include a new central heating plant, rebuilding windows and doors, insulating the building and installing energy conserving light fixtures.

The EDA grant would cover 80% of the project costs, said Thidemann, with 20% to be provided by the town.

Thidemann said that much appreciation is to be extended to the Lt. Governor and his office for the help given the town with this application.

Chelmsford Newsweekly

McFarlin Conversion Plans Presented

CMFD-Architectural plans for converting the former McFarlin "A" school building into town hall offices were presented to the Board on Monday, February 25, by Sel. Emerson. Emerson is a member of the committee working on this project. Also at the meeting were Allan J. Boemer, Architect and Alfred Muccini, Engineer of Boemer Associates, the architectural firm engaged to work out the physical details of converting the old school building so it can accommodate town offices.

As explained by Emerson in his introduction, the McFarlin "A" building was once the town's High School and then for many years it was used as an elementary school now, it has been vacant for a while. It is available, he said, and it is logical to relocate town offices from their present place to the McFarlin.

Using architectural blueprints, Emerson described how the three floors of the McFarlin are to be used. The basement level, where the gymnasium is located, is to be used for Youth Center activities. There is a sub-level on this floor with rooms which can be used by various part-time committees for meetings. The Board of Health and Building Department will also be housed in this area.

On the first floor will be the Selectmen's offices and selectmen's meeting room, the Town Clerk's offices, the office of Town Treasurer, the Assessors office, the reception and switchboard area, and the photocopy equipment room. There are large rooms on the first floor which can accommodate heavily attended said meetings, Emerson added that in the event a particular meeting attracts a very large crowd, arrangements can be made to use the gymnasium.

The Selectmen's offices will be situated in the center of the first floor so as to be easily accessible to the public.

The Second floor (third level) will house the Town Accountant's office, The Credit Union, and the addressograph equipment. On this floor there are larger rooms, former study halls, which can accommodate groups of about 100

people, said Emerson.

Emerson indicated that plans call for installation of an elevator to be located on the left side of the building. This will provide the handicapped with access to all floors and eliminate the need to install a lift. The blueprints show ramps being constructed at all entrances of the building.

The McFarlin could be occupied late this year, said Emerson. He then spoke of costs. The costs presented are very rough estimates and subject to change. The total cost, he said, is estimated at \$498,053. This figure includes \$100,000 as an overhead contingency. It would cost more than \$2,000,000, said Emerson, if a new town hall building were to be constructed. The figure presented is 1/4 that amount he said. He expressed the hope that the people will support this project at town meeting.

The basic cost of converting the McFarlin (\$398,053) covers heating, ventilating, air conditioning, electrical work, doors and windows, masonry, etc. It has been decided to install central air-conditioning, said Emerson, and

eliminate units hanging out of windows all over the building.

The new town hall will have vault space which is essential, Emerson explained. He added that there will be three vaults. One will be used by the Town Clerk, one by the Treasurer and Assessors and the third will be used to permanently store records.

Hart, Towle, Carson and Shanahan commended Emerson and the architects for the work accomplished thus far. They asked questions about the costs and whether the figures quoted represented actual discussion with plumbers, electricians, etc. The architects responded that the figures were estimated by the architects and are based on standard formulas used for estimating. Definite costs will be obtained when bids are sought, they said. The figures quoted did not include hiring a Clerk of the Works. The architects indicated that a Clerk of the Works can be arranged for but inasmuch as the architectural firm is responsible for seeing that the work is done in accordance with the town's wishes, a Clerk might not be necessary. The Selectmen can make this decision. The architects will safeguard the town's interests, said Emerson.

Not all departments will move over to the McFarlin immediately. Emerson indicated that the Water and Welfare Departments will remain in the present town hall building and Civil Defense might also remain. The Highway Department offices will be moving to the new Highway Garage on Richardson Rd.

Again the Board commented on the professionalism of Emerson's presentation and acknowledged the fine work done by his committee.

After some further discussion it

was unanimously voted to proceed to seek bids for the renovation work. It is anticipated that bids will be in before town meeting which will enable the Selectmen to present townspeople with more concrete costs for the job.

Chelmsford
News weekly
Feb. 28, 1980

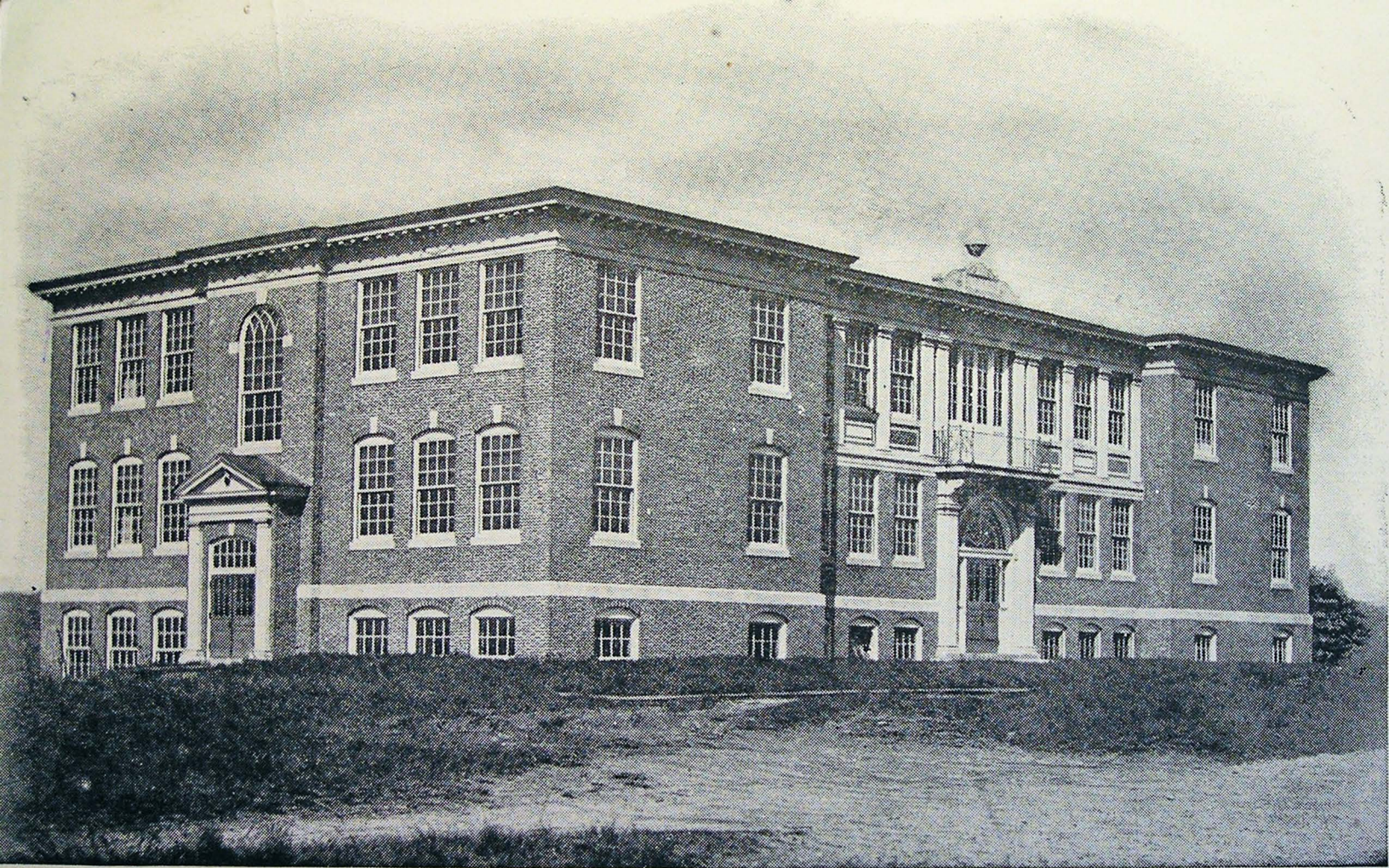


A HELPING HAND Town Clerk Mary St. Hilaire and Representative Bruce Freeman added their efforts to the groundbreaking ceremonies held at the old McFarlin School. (Photo by Micki Hilliard)

Chelmsford
Independent

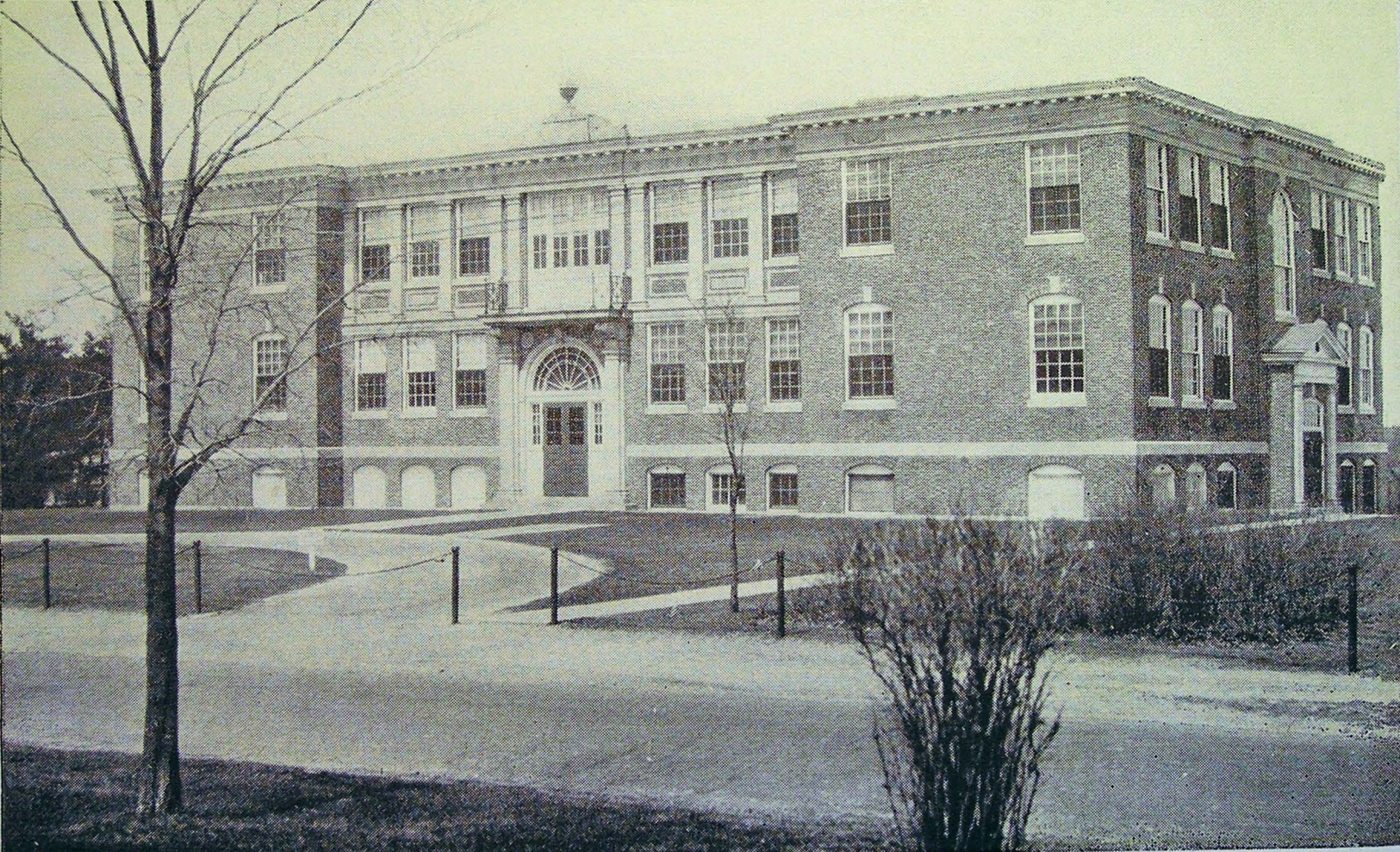


GRAND OPENING Selectmen Dennis Ready and Bonita Towle wielded the shovels at the official groundbreaking ceremonies for New Town Hall held on December 30th. See story on page 3 (Photo by Micki Hilliard)



HIGH SCHOOL, CHELMSFORD, MASS.

Postcard courtesy of Paul Pettazoni



HIGH SCHOOL, CHELMSFORD, MASS.

Postcard courtesy of Paul Pettazoni



10
MERRIAM MAYOR

CHILDFORD HOUSING DEPARTMENT
OFFICE

PERMIT
PARKING
ONLY



9/4/2004 F. Merriam



CHESTERFORD HIGH SCHOOL

1916

7/25/2004 F. Merriam



9/4/2004 F. Merriam



9/4/2004 E. Merriam