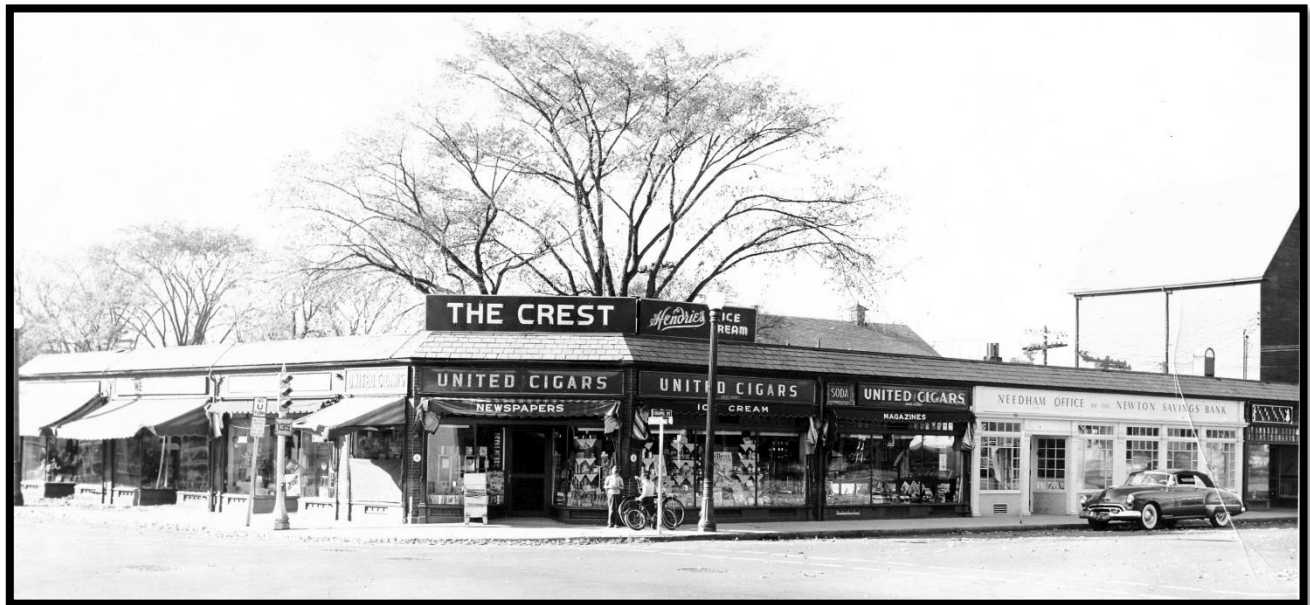


Site of The Crest



If you are a relatively recent resident of Needham, you must often be puzzled by long-time residents' frequent references to The Crest, and by the persistent tendency to call all stores at this corner "The Crest," even though the store itself closed nearly 30 years ago.

The Crest had something for everyone, so everyone went there – cigars and tobacco, greeting cards, magazines, newspapers, candy, ice cream, soda, and a range of general merchandise and sundries. The store was in business for nearly 80 years, from about 1916 until it closed in 1995, so it was a landmark for generations of Needham residents.

Before the Crest, there was an extravagant, three-plus story High Victorian retail block known as Odd fellows Hall (built 1880). Along with retail, it had held large rooms for meetings, as well as the War Museum of the Grand Army of the Republic, the Civil War veterans' organization. The Odd Fellows' Hall burned down in an arson fire in 1887, a fire so fierce that it completely reduced the structure to rubble, taking with it the properties and equipment of the resident businesses, a considerable portion of Needham's Civil and Revolutionary War memorabilia, and the wooden Center Station house (Site #15). Rubble from the Hall was pushed into the cellar hole, where it remained – abandoned and derelict - until the Crest's storefront was built on the site in 1916.