



William Francis Galvin
Secretary of the Commonwealth

Contact: Brian McNiff
Telephone: 617-727-9180

May 16, 2014

**SECRETARY GALVIN TO PRESENT 2014 HISTORIC PRESERVATION AWARD TO
NORTHBRIDGE TOWN HALL**

Secretary of the Commonwealth William F. Galvin, Chairman of the Massachusetts Historical Commission, announces the selection of Northbridge Town Hall, Northbridge, to receive a 2014 Massachusetts Historical Commission Historic Preservation Award.

“The Massachusetts Historical Commission is proud to recognize the extraordinary accomplishments of this year’s awardees,” said Secretary Galvin. “The projects the Commission is recognizing this year are particularly diverse and reflect the many creative ways that significant historic resources are being preserved across the Commonwealth. Northbridge’s preservation and restoration of its Town Hall shows an extraordinary commitment to its municipally owned historic resources.”

The Northbridge Town Hall, located in the village of Whitinsville, has served as the seat of local government since its construction in 1876. The Whitin family, after which the village is named, owned most of the town’s industrial mill complexes for many years, and their family home once stood on the lot now occupied by the Town Hall. John and Charles Whitin financed the construction of the Classical Revival-style Town Hall as a memorial to their parents, Paul and Betsey Whitin.

-more-

Prior to the recent rehabilitation of the Northbridge Town Hall, its original doors, fascia, gutters, roofing, and masonry all needed repair. The original windows, which had been fabricated in the Whitin Mills, displayed the most serious deterioration: several windows were stuck in partially open positions, and a high percentage of paint had peeled, exposing the bare wood to the elements. Replacement windows on the ground floor of the building also presented a problem. The ground floor originally featured very narrow, paired, four over four double-hung windows. At some point during its history, a renovation resulted in replacement of these windows with single, one over one windows, recessed behind eight-inch-wide granite piers.

With the help of Massachusetts Preservation Projects Fund pre-development and development grants, Northbridge was able to restore its Town Hall to its original appearance. Repairs included masonry and associated roofing and flashing work, painting and associated carpentry repairs to the wood elements including the portico entrances, and restoration of the wood windows. The awkward, ground-floor replacement windows were removed, and the originals replicated. An unnecessary, deteriorated fire escape was removed, and the original auditorium window that it had replaced was replicated. And the building's original paint scheme was restored, its two tones of brown providing a dramatic contrast to its recent all-white appearance.

This is the 36th year of MHC's Preservation Awards program. Projects are considered annually for awards in the categories of Rehabilitation and Restoration, Adaptive Reuse, Education and Outreach, Archaeology, Stewardship, and Landscape Preservation. Individuals are considered in the categories of Individual Lifetime Achievement and Local Preservationist. Secretary Galvin serves as the chair of the 17-member Massachusetts Historical Commission.

Secretary Galvin presented the awards this afternoon, May 16, in a ceremony at the Massachusetts Archives Building, 220 Morrissey Blvd., Dorchester. The Northbridge Town Hall is one of 10 projects, individuals, and organizations to be honored.

-End-