



William Francis Galvin
Secretary of the Commonwealth

Contact: Brian McNiff
Telephone: 617-727-9180

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**SECRETARY GALVIN TO PRESENT 2012 HISTORIC PRESERVATION AWARD TO
FIVE BUILDINGS IN DOWNTOWN GREENFIELD**

Secretary of the Commonwealth William Francis Galvin, Chairman of the Massachusetts Historical Commission, announces the selection of five buildings in downtown Greenfield—the Allen, Arms, Pond, and Siano Blocks and Franklin Savings Bank—to receive a 2012 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 represent the many creative ways that significant historic resources are being preserved across the Commonwealth. The restoration and adaptive reuse of the Allen, Arms, Pond, and Siano Blocks and Franklin Savings Bank demonstrates the cumulative impact of coordinated rehabilitation of smaller buildings, a creative approach that brought new life to these buildings and to Greenfield’s downtown area.”

The rehabilitation and restoration of these five buildings in downtown Greenfield represents a collaborative effort, spearheaded by two persistent developers who worked together to secure public and private funding. Prior to the project the Allen Block, a 3 ½-story Georgian structure built in 1827, had exhibited an alarming bulge in its exterior walls, and its third floor had been unoccupied for decades. The Arms Block, built in 1876 by coal dealer George Arms, had undergone several alterations that obscured its original storefront windows and interior brick arches. The Pond Block, a Panel Brick, three-story building dating to 1874, had suffered significant neglect and fire damage by the 1980s, and its first floor was vacant prior to the project. The Siano Block, built in 1921, is a Colonial Revival-style building that over the years had suffered neglect and vacancy, numerous alterations, and a fire. The Classical Revival-style Franklin Savings Bank, built in 1911, retained an impressive amount of original fabric but had also been largely vacant in recent years. The buildings required extensive rehabilitation, including stabilization, masonry repair and repointing, and removal of paint from rustic granite pilasters and lintels. Many windows were deteriorated, boarded-up, or filled in; these have been replaced with historically appropriate wooden sash. Interior partitions and façade alterations were removed to reveal original layouts and storefront windows. Historic fabric such as cast-iron decorative frame posts, oversized timber roof trusses, painted signage, and marble paneling were restored. One of the most dramatic changes was the removal of a drop-ceiling from the interior of the Franklin Savings Bank, revealing a large skylight and decorative plasterwork. Most significantly, the rehabilitation and restoration of these buildings, which utilized state and federal historic rehabilitation tax credits, returned them all to full, active use. The buildings are now inhabited by a variety of users that include a bookstore, art gallery and performance space, performing studio, restaurants, and, on upper floors, residential units. This model project has revitalized this section of downtown Greenfield.

This is the 34th 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

State House, Room 337, Boston, Massachusetts 02133

Individual Lifetime Achievement and Local Preservationist. Secretary Galvin serves as the chair of the 17-member Massachusetts Historical Commission.

Secretary Galvin will present the awards at an afternoon ceremony on May 30, 2012, at the Massachusetts Archives Building at 220 Morrissey Blvd., Dorchester. The Allen, Arms, Pond, and Siano Blocks and Franklin Savings Bank restoration project is one of 12 projects, individuals, and organizations to be honored.

The Massachusetts Historical Commission is the office of the State Historic Preservation Officer and the State Archaeologist. It was established in 1963 to identify, evaluate, and protect important historical and archaeological assets of the Commonwealth. Visit our website to learn more about the Commission's programs (www.sec.state.ma.us/mhc).

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