



William Francis Galvin  
Secretary of the Commonwealth

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**ATHOL HIGH SCHOOL, ATHOL APPROVED FOR NOMINATION TO THE NATIONAL REGISTER  
OF HISTORIC PLACES**

Secretary of the Commonwealth William Francis Galvin is pleased to announce that the Massachusetts Historical Commission approved the Athol High School in Athol for nomination to the National Register of Historic Places at its December 8, 2010, meeting. The nomination will be submitted to the National Register of Historic Places at the National Park Service in Washington, DC, for final consideration and designation.

“The Massachusetts Historical Commission is dedicated to preserving the Commonwealth’s rich architectural, cultural, archaeological, and historic resources,” Secretary Galvin said. “Inclusion of Athol High School in the National Register will help preserve this important part of Athol’s educational history.”

Athol High School, 494 School Street, is a two-story building in the Art Deco style, with a warm red brick exterior. The town’s first high school was built on this site in 1856; by the 1890s, a new school was necessary. Despite its unified appearance today, the building was constructed over many decades, reflecting the continued growth of the school population in Athol, as well as the town’s response to educational needs. The school today is composed of two 1915 wings flanking a main central block and rear additions, all of which were constructed in 1937. The 1915 wings had originally been added to an 1892 central section, which was demolished in 1937 for a new central section; at the time that the new section was built, the existing wings were renovated extensively, creating the present structure that displays Art Deco features, particularly in the main entryway. The 1937 project was carried out with funds from the Public Works Administration, making the school significant for its association with Franklin D. Roosevelt’s New Deal. In 1957, the present building became the city’s junior high school. The school closed in 2003, leaving it vacant for the last six years; the building is currently being rehabilitated into senior housing.

Athol High School is one of 7 historic resources around the Commonwealth approved for nomination to the National Register of Historic Places by the Massachusetts Historical Commission at this meeting.

Secretary Galvin serves as Chairman of the 17-member board, which meets regularly and considers historic resources eligible for the National Register four times a year.

The National Register is the nation’s official listing of significant historic resources. In Massachusetts, there are over 70,000 properties listed in the National Register. The Massachusetts Historical Commission has been administering the National Register of Historic Places program in Massachusetts since 1966.

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](http://www.sec.state.ma.us/mhc)).

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