



William Francis Galvin
Secretary of the Commonwealth

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**EAST PARISH MEETING HOUSE, HAVERHILL, 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 East Parish Meeting House in Haverhill 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 the East Parish Meeting House in the National Register will help to protect this remarkable part of Haverhill’s history.”

The East Parish Meeting House, 267 Middle Road, is a 1 ½-story, Greek Revival-style wood-frame building dating from 1838. The building’s architectural features include pilastered front doors and a front-gabled form defined by an undecorated triangular pediment. The structure is remarkably unaltered, lacking modern heating, plumbing, and electricity. The interior retains most of its early elements, including the concave lobby and gallery. The building’s bell, originally cast for the Haverhill Town Hall in 1848, was made by George Handel Holbrook and moved to the meetinghouse in 1861. The East Parish Meeting House is a prominent landmark in its neighborhood, and an important part of Haverhill’s religious history; it is also an element of the literary landscape created by 19th-century poet John Greenleaf Whittier, in his poems about his childhood home in East Haverhill. The East Parish Meeting House is owned and maintained by a volunteer neighborhood association, and over the last decade has become a community project: a rusted-out stove and vandalized woodbox have been replaced with near copies, and in 2001 the failing steeple was rebuilt by students at nearby Whittier Regional Vocational Technical School. The steeple, belfry, and 1848 bell are currently in storage as the neighborhood association seeks a way to restore the belfry tower in as historically correct a way as possible. Earlier this year, the East Parish Meeting House was listed as one of Massachusetts’ Most Endangered Historic Resources.

The East Parish Meeting House 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
State House, Room 337, Boston, Massachusetts 02133

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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