



William Francis Galvin
Secretary of the Commonwealth

Contact: Brian McNiff
Telephone: 617-727-9180

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**SECRETARY GALVIN PRESENTS 2016 HISTORIC PRESERVATION AWARD TO
ROBERT MCCARROLL, SPRINGFIELD**

Secretary of the Commonwealth William F. Galvin, Chairman of the Massachusetts Historical Commission, announces the selection of Robert McCarroll of Springfield to receive a 2016 Massachusetts Historical Commission Historic Preservation Award.

Secretary Galvin presented the award at a recent ceremony in the Massachusetts Archives Building, Dorchester. Robert McCarroll is one of 12 individuals, projects, and organizations to be honored.

“The Massachusetts Historical Commission is proud to recognize the extraordinary accomplishments of this year’s awardees,” said Secretary Galvin. “The well-preserved buildings and neighborhoods of Springfield reflect local preservationist Robert McCarroll’s commitment to historic preservation, and to safeguarding their place in the community’s future.”

Robert McCarroll has been a significant force for the preservation of Springfield’s historic properties since the mid-1970s, when he was part of the reactivation of the Springfield Preservation Trust into an advocacy organization. In fact, Mr. McCarroll became passionate about preservation while he was still in high school, when he led the movement to save the historic West Springfield Town Hall. Though that effort was unsuccessful, it was the beginning of Robert McCarroll’s years of advocating for the preservation of historic buildings.

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Mr. McCarroll went on to work as the Springfield City Planner for 35 years, and he has served on the Board of Directors of the Springfield Preservation Trust for 40 years. He led the effort to revitalize Mattoon Street, serving on the board of the Mattoon Street Historic Preservation Association for more than twenty years. He has coordinated the Mattoon Street Arts Festival for decades, and in the 1970s, he took advantage of the drawing power of the Mattoon Street antique show to promote historic preservation by adding tours of the city's historic districts. He continued to coordinate citywide historic house tours for more than 35 years, even creating three cemetery tours featuring live actors portraying Springfield's historic figures.

Mr. McCarroll was on staff at the Springfield Historical Commission in the 1970s, when much of the work of creating the city's historic districts took place; he later served as a member of the historical commission for eleven years, and as its chair for part of that time. While a member of the commission, Mr. McCarroll oversaw and spearheaded the creation of four local historic districts to protect the Colony Hills neighborhood, Hope Church, the Immaculate Conception Parish complex, and the Willys Overland Building, which faced demolition following damage from a gas explosion.

In the 1980s, he helped set up a revolving fund utilizing community development resources, which led to the restoration of five seriously deteriorated houses in the McKnight neighborhood.

At his own expense, Mr. McCarroll has saved significant historic houses by purchasing them, and either restoring them or putting them in the hands of competent developers. He restored Springfield's second-oldest house, the Bliss House on Dale Street, and oversaw its designation as a protected, local historic district.

While fighting to save key buildings in the footprint of the MGM Casino, Mr. McCarroll was able to save a portion of the Union House Hotel and the atrium of the United Electric Company Building, also negotiating the moving of the First Spiritualist Church to avoid its demolition for the new casino complex.

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He frequently speaks about the city's architectural heritage to local neighborhood groups, at public forums, and at library events, and he has created the "Choose Springfield" website to feature new Springfield residents and encourage others to move to the city. Throughout the years, Mr. McCarroll's professional, personal, and volunteer pursuits have served and will continue to protect, preserve, and celebrate Springfield's rich history and culture.



L to R: Secretary William F. Galvin, Robert McCarroll

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