



William Francis Galvin
Secretary of the Commonwealth

Contact: Brian McNiff
Telephone: 617-727-9180

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**FRELINGHUYSEN MORRIS HOUSE & STUDIO, LENOX AND STOCKBRIDGE, APPROVED
FOR NOMINATION TO THE NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES**

Secretary of the Commonwealth William F. Galvin is pleased to announce that the Massachusetts Historical Commission approved the Frelinghuysen Morris House & Studio in Lenox and Stockbridge for nomination to the National Register of Historic Places at a recent 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 historic, architectural, archaeological, and cultural resources,” Secretary Galvin said. “Inclusion of Frelinghuysen in the National Register will help to preserve a rare ensemble of modern art and architecture that maintains the vision, designs, and furnishings of its creators.”

The Frelinghuysen Morris House & Studio property, 92 Hawthorne Street (Stockbridge) and 159 West Street (Lenox), covers 46 acres and includes twenty-two historic resources built between 1885 and 1960. The earliest of these buildings date to the property’s 19th-century use as a country estate, and include agricultural outbuildings and a gatehouse. In 1908, Newbold and Helen Morris purchased the estate for use as a country residence. Their son, George Morris, born in 1905, studied at Yale and then traveled to Paris, where he studied painting with Cubist artists including Amédée Ozenfant. By 1930, Morris had returned to the United States, where he had a studio built for himself on the grounds of the family estate.

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Designed by George A. Sanderson, the International Style studio, rectangular and stucco-clad, with a sawtooth monitor roof, was directly inspired by the Le Corbusier-designed studio in Paris where Morris had studied under Ozenfant. Morris married Suzy Frelinghuysen in 1935. Suzy and George were both active as abstract artists, and today their works are in the collections of major museums such as the MOMA, the Metropolitan, the Whitney, and the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston.

Around 1940, the Morrises hired Berkshire architect John Butler Swann to design a residence attached to the Morris Studio. Completed in 1941, the house complements the studio's modern aesthetic, with a flat roof and walls of smooth, white stucco interrupted by glass blocks. The house's interior has frescos and murals painted by George in the living room and foyer, and by Suzy in the dining room and bedroom. The couple's paintings and sculptures are displayed throughout the house, studio, and outbuildings.

The property also houses their private art collection, which includes works by some of the 20th century's greatest artists, including Pablo Picasso, Juan Gris, Matisse, Fernand Léger, George Braque, Jean Arp, and Joan Miró. George Morris died in 1975, and Suzy maintained ownership of the property until her death in 1988. Before she died, Suzy set in motion the creation of a museum to preserve the property and collections. Since 1998, the nonprofit George L. K. and Suzy F. Morris Foundation, also known as the Frelinghuysen Morris Foundation, has managed the property as a public museum and art archives.

The Frelinghuysen Morris House & Studio is one of six 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.

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The National Register is the nation's official listing of significant historic resources. In Massachusetts, there are more than 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).

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