



William Francis Galvin
Secretary of the Commonwealth

Contact: Brian McNiff
Telephone: 617-727-9180

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DISTRICT SCHOOL #4, PETERSHAM , 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 District School #4 in Petersham 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 the District School #4 in the National Register will help to preserve a remarkably intact one-room schoolhouse.”

The District School #4, 191 East Street, is one of two remaining one-room schoolhouses in Petersham. Built in 1846, the Greek Revival-style school sits on a small lot surrounded by trees on three sides; its entrance faces open fields that still look much like they did at the time of the school’s construction. Because of large rock outcroppings on the school’s site, the building was alternately known as the Ledgeville School throughout its history.

Charles Gates built the school and likely constructed the nearby District #5 School, which was approved by the Commission for listing in the National Register earlier this year. Gates lived next door to the District #4 School, and his children were students there. Besides serving as an educational building, the school has, since its construction, also hosted lectures, performances, holiday celebrations, and other community gatherings.

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State House, Room 337, Boston, Massachusetts 02133

The Ledgeville Association formed in 1915 to foster community fellowship and support the school. The association held socials and fundraisers at the school, and continued to do so after the school closed in 1943, while caring for and maintaining the building. The Ledgeville Association disbanded in 1998, and officially dissolved in 2010.

Today, the District School #4 retains a remarkable amount of its original historic fabric. The interior space is divided into two areas: the coatroom/vestibule at the front retains metal hooks and examples of student graffiti, and the classroom retains four layers of wallpaper, an unusual decorative element for a one-room schoolhouse.

The building was recently preserved through a sensitive rehabilitation project, and the Petersham Historical Commission and Petersham Historical Society hope to collaboratively create a small museum here.

The District School #4 is one of five 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 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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