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Secretary of the Commonwealth

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January 12, 2016

**BEAMAN MEMORIAL PUBLIC LIBRARY, WEST BOYLSTON, 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 Beaman Memorial Public Library in West Boylston 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 the Beaman Memorial Public Library in the National Register will help to preserve a well-loved and remarkably preserved public building in West Boylston.”

Beaman Memorial Public Library, 8 Newton Street, is a Colonial Revival-style, red-brick building constructed in 1912 and designed by prominent Worcester architect Lucius Briggs. Construction of the public library was one of the highlights of West Boylston’s transformation following the creation of the Wachusett Reservoir between 1895 and 1904.

At the turn of the 20th century, several West Boylston buildings in the reservoir’s path were relocated to the relatively isolated old town center, which had stagnated during the Industrial Revolution as development in the town moved east to take advantage of waterpower in the Nashua River valley. While the Commonwealth of Massachusetts paid to replace some of the town’s public buildings, the West Boylston Public Library, originally founded in 1878 with a bequest from abolitionist David Lee Child, went without a building of its own for several years after the construction of the reservoir.

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In 1911, resident George Calvin Rice offered to give the town a library building worth at least \$20,000, on two conditions: that the townspeople purchase an open, triangular plot of land on the town common for the library's site, and that the building be named in memory of Rice's great-grandfather, Ezra Beaman, one of the town's founders. The people of the town willingly met both conditions, and the building was dedicated in September of 1912.

The library was refurbished in 1999, at which time a new addition on the south side of the building incorporated elevators and an accessible entrance. The building's interior is largely open in plan and retains much of its historic fabric, including the reading room's fireplace with ornate woodwork and polished yellow marble surround. In 2012 the town celebrated the library's 100th anniversary, which was the motivation for preparing the National Register nomination.

Beaman Memorial Public Library 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.

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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