

MEETING MINUTES
MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
March 11, 2026

The Commission meeting was held starting at 1:00 p.m. remotely on Zoom.

Chairman Rosenberry called the meeting to order at 1:05 pm. On behalf of Secretary Galvin, he welcomed the Commissioners. Chairman Rosenberry next addressed the visitors, thanking them for attending. For those individuals who may not have attended commission meetings in the past, Chairman Rosenberry explained the structure of the meeting and when in the process the visitors could address the commission. Chairman Rosenberry then took attendance to determine that a quorum was met.

The Chairman turned to the first item on the agenda, the approval of the December 10, 2025 meeting minutes. He called for a MOTION TO ACCEPT the minutes. A MOTION was made by Commissioner Friary and SECONDED by Commissioner Ceccacci. Hearing no questions or comments from the commission, the Chairman called the motion. The motion CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Chairman Rosenberry then turned to the next item on the agenda, the National Register Program, and called for any recusals. Hearing none, he turned the meeting over to Ben Haley who presented the nominations with presentation slides. A copy of the PowerPoint presentation is on file with these minutes.

The first nomination presented was for the **Perry Hill Christian Church in Acushnet**. The applicant is Town of Acushnet with Wendy Frontiero as preservation consultant who prepared the nomination.

Located at 39 Perry Hill Road, the Perry Hill Christian Church stands in a semi-rural residential area in the east central part of Acushnet.

The building is eligible under Criterion C, for embodying distinctive characteristics of type and period as a rare surviving example of mid-19th-century institutional architecture in the town. The property meets Criteria Consideration A as a religious property that derives its primary significance from its local architectural importance.

Significant architectural features include the building's domestic scale and simple massing, characteristic of the Greek Revival style. The 1½-story wood-frame structure is sheathed in clapboards and features a symmetrical façade with two pedimented doorways and a small belfry rising from the front of the ridge line. Large, regular 12/12 double-hung sash windows provide natural illumination for the sanctuary.

The interior retains its original plan, including a small narthex, a balcony, and a sanctuary with original pews characterized by curvilinear, natural wood caps and scrolled ends. A substantial stone wall, constructed of irregular granite stones, lines three sides of the parcel.

Built in 1851, the Perry Hill Christian Church represents the deeply rooted role of independent local churches in the life of the town during a period of profound physical and economic change. The church appears related to the Second Great Awakening, a major religious movement characterized by evangelism, simplicity, and the importance of faith over ritual. Owing to the loss of many early records, not much is known about the early history of the building, but the congregation was formed by a breakaway group from the Baptist society who wished to emphasize the core principles of Christianity and self-governing congregations. Services were held in a nearby schoolhouse until the construction of this church was completed.

The congregation extended the right of franchise to women on church matters, and women played a conspicuous role in the governance of the organization. Prominent ministers associated with the church included William D'Arcy Haley, a journalist and author who popularized the legend of Johnny Appleseed, and Benjamin S. Batchelor, who later served as chaplain of New Bedford's Seaman's Bethel.

The building is the only surviving example of Greek Revival-style institutional architecture in Acushnet. It is one of only two surviving institutional buildings in the town pre-dating the 20th century and serves as the only surviving church of Acushnet's early industrial period. While the typology was once similar to the town's one-room schoolhouses, none of those educational structures remain, making this church a unique survivor of the era's built environment.

The Town of Acushnet acquired the property through eminent domain in 2012, and it is currently managed by the Acushnet Historical Commission. The town has undertaken significant work, including the reconstruction of the belfry and restoration of the pews. It is hoped that listing in the National Register will increase the understanding of this important civic building and attract additional sources of funding for rehabilitation.

The next nomination presented was for the **Harwich Port Library located at 49 Bank Street, in Harwich.** The applicant is Harwich Port Library Association with Wendy Frontiero as preservation consultant who prepared the nomination.

The Harwich Port Library is significant at the local level under Criterion A in the area of Social History for its role in the history of Harwich Port, as a library and a community gathering space, and under Criterion C for embodying distinctive characteristics of type and period, as an excellent and intact example of Colonial Revival architecture in Harwich, designed by a Boston architect.

The building is an unusual combination of library and civic functions in a purpose-built, early 20th century structure. It is a three-part, wood frame Cape consisting of the Library block at the

front, the Community Room at the rear, and a Hyphen structure that connects the two. All three building sections have gable roofs, wood-shingled walls with flat stock trim, and typically 12/12 wood window sash with flat trim. Fenestration is generally symmetrical. The fanciest exterior detail is found on the entrances on the Library volume and Community Room, which feature fluted pilasters and six-light transoms.

The interior of the Harwich Port Library survives virtually unchanged since construction and is characterized by wood flooring, fireplace walls with raised-field paneling, six-panel doors with reproduction colonial hardware, and built-in bookshelves. The Community Room has an inglenook with built-in seating at its west end, built-in seating along its long walls, and a small stage with dressing rooms at the rear.

The Town of Harwich was incorporated in 1694, with an economy based on farming, fishing, and coastal maritime trade for about two centuries. The railroad arrived in town in 1865, and summer resorts soon followed. Harwich Port's picturesque coastline was particularly desirable. Civic and social organizations flourished in the village in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, reflecting the interests of the summer people, increased leisure time in general, and the progressive social movements of the time.

The Harwich Port Library was established in 1920 with the donation of several hundred books by Anne Thorburn Van Buren, a wealthy widow who summered in Harwich. The incorporators of the library were a wide variety of local residents, both men and women, married and single people, and upper- and middle-class individuals. Local carpenter and builder Gideon Freeman donated the first \$1,000 for the new building; affluent summer people contributed the land and made additional substantial donations to the building fund. The building was designed by Boston architect Walter Trowbridge Littlefield, a graduate of MIT's architecture school who summered in Harwich. His other known designs include commercial and residential buildings, houses, schools (including one in Harwich, not extant), and a fire station. The building was dedicated on the Fourth of July 1925, with 500 people in attendance. Four hundred of them were treated to a catered clambake earlier in the day.

The library is distinctive for its unusual combination of library and civic functions in two connected buildings. It is Cape Cod's first known library to include in its original design a dedicated children's room, a space virtually unheard of before 1890. The Community Room hosted a multitude of events year-round, ranging from meetings of clubs and social and fraternal organizations to social events and parties, art exhibits, theater, musical performances, and dance.

The Harwich Port Library is privately owned and operated. The Community Room is presently rented to a ballet school. It is hoped that listing the National Register will increase appreciation of this important building and attract additional sources of funding for maintenance and rehabilitation.

The next nomination presented was for the **Home Farm Historic District in Lenox**. The applicant is Home Farm at Under Mountain with Neil Larson as preservation consultant who prepared the nomination.

The Home Farm Historic District in Lenox is situated at the northern end of a picturesque valley bounded by Lenox Mountain on its north and west sides, a large wetland on its southern end and by residential properties associated with Lenox center on the east side. It is a fertile agricultural area that has been in cultivation for centuries.

Resources in the district include a residential complex centered on a large stone-and-stucco mansion positioned on an elevated site overlooking the valley, and a model farm complex including a barn, outbuildings, agricultural land and wetlands. The farm has been reduced in size by the conveyance of 64 acres of marsh to a land conservancy, but the core buildings and 93 acres of farmland remain intact.

The Home Farm Historic District is significant under Criteria A and C at a local level as a distinctive example of an early 20th-century country seat with an architect-designed mansion and associated stock farm centered on a model barn and related buildings. It is a rare surviving example of a complete country estate characteristic of the Lenox resort community and retains integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association.

The property meets National Register Criterion A in the areas of Agriculture and Social History and Criterion C in the area of Architecture. The period of significance extends from 1902, when the house was completed, to 1946 when its operation as a model farm ended.

In the area of Social History, Home Farm is significant for association with the social network of country living in Lenox, which was a major resort destination for Brahmins from Boston and “Robber Barons” from New York City. Lenox was one of a number of locales in the northeastern United States favored by the idle rich as they traveled from place to place with the change of seasons or for the amenities of the ocean, lakes, or mountains. Lenox had been attracting intellectuals, artists, and literati from Boston since before the Civil War. The popularity of the resort grew over the rest of the century, bringing people of greater wealth and larger houses designed by some of the best architects at the time set within landscaped pleasure grounds oriented to the rural vistas. When the next wave of city people descended on Lenox at the turn of the 20th century, the scale of country houses increased dramatically and the “Gentleman’s Farm” was introduced. Highly social and competitive, these newcomers would entertain each other at house parties, and participate in coaching, foxhunting, horseracing, and other events. Model farmers would also frequent animal auctions, collect prizes at county fairs, supervise the breeding of horses, beef stock, and milk cows, and oversee farm operations. The owner of Home Farm, Henry P. Jaques, was a wealthy Boston surgeon and scion of a banking family. He was intimately involved in the elite social scene in Lenox. In addition to his Lenox estate, he spent part of the year in Paris. His Home Farm survives as a distinguished example of a model farm intact with its mansion, barn group, and agricultural landscape.

The district is significant in the area of Agriculture as a model farm developed by Henry P. Jaques and his brother Eustace Jaques at a time at the turn of the 20th century when some owners

of elite country estates created large stock farms employing the most advanced methods of the husbandry of the best breeds of stock, particularly dairy herds and horses. While the “model farm” moniker suggests there would be an altruistic outcome fostering the improvement of small farms, as in other categories of endeavors, these wealthy gentleman farmers were foremost in competition with each other creating elaborate barn groups of architectural distinction designed by architects specializing in model farms. The buildings and landscape of Home Farm appear to have been designed and engineered by Alfred Hopkins, who was identified with the best of them. As more estates developed model farms, they became a significant part of the Lenox landscape. Today, Home Farm is the only fully intact estate in Lenox with a house and model farm. One other intact model farm survives in the area, High Lawn Farm in the neighboring town of Lee. It now functions as a commercial dairy farm.

Under Criterion C, the Home Farm Historic District is significant in the area of Architecture, both domestic and agricultural. After purchasing the property, Henry P. Jaques erected a large country house around 1902 designed in the Tudor Revival style by Pittsfield architect George C. Harding. Prominently sited on a hillside at the north end of the property, the house overlooks the scenic valley and the farm, while also providing a favorable view of the picturesque mansion from the public road. With a stone first story, a stucco second story, and a series of gabled bays with lozenge-paned casement windows across the façade, the house evinced a sense of antiquity, as well as a status commensurate with other country estates in Lenox. The Tudor Revival theme was carried over into the interior of the house starting with a grand wood-paneled Hall with a strapwork ceiling, stone fireplace. And massive wooden staircase.

The design of the barn group followed the specifications for the development of model farms that became popular among the landed gentry. The model was conceived by Edward Barrett, a Massachusetts farmer committed to promoting progressive agricultural methods. Barrett hired architect Alfred Hopkins to design the barns and associated buildings on the elite farms he had laid out. Hopkins went on to specialize in farm building design independently. He believed that the design of the barn was as important as the house in estate planning and built a reputation around his particular expertise. He published a book, *Modern Farm Buildings*, in 1913. The barn group Hopkins likely designed for Home Farm (no documented association has been found) feature board-and-batten siding and jerkin-head roofs that complement the Jaques house. In addition to their uniform outward appearance, the buildings provided up-to-date facilities for stabling horses and husbanding dairy and beef cattle, as well as breeding these prize animals. A dairy was an important component and in this case was connected to the farm manager’s house. Outbuildings of contributing design accommodated swine, sheep, and poultry that rounded out the farm environment. All aspects of the farming operation were carefully planned out, down to feed and water systems, ventilation, and manure handling. The barn group at Home Farm is remarkably intact and a rare survivor with many having been lost after the passion for model farming among the elite evaporated with the Great Depression.

The next nomination presented was for the **Daniel Holbrook, Sr. House in Northborough**. The applicant is Normand and Linda Corbin with Jennifer Doherty as preservation consultant.

The Daniel Holbrook, Sr. House is located in the center of Northborough, part of a small local historic district established in 1973, and just to the south of the Howard Street Cemetery. The

house is significant at the local level under National Register Criterion C in the area of Architecture as a well-preserved example of a substantial two-story, hipped-roof, plank-framed, Federal-style house.

The house had long been assigned various dates, but research by Peter Stott and others at the MHC as part of this National Register nomination process has pinned down the likely date of construction. Deed research confirms that Holbrook acquired two parcels in Northborough Center, near the meetinghouse, in 1794 and 1796. Reference is made to the meetinghouse lot, a brook, and flowage rights; while the metes and bounds are not exact, they appear to correspond to known area landmarks. Notably, neither deed mentions a house. Holbrook is consistently identified in deeds as a blacksmith, and flowage privileges are mentioned in the 1794 deed along with a dam and sawmill, suggesting he made use of the falls on Howard Brook. While the 1798 Direct Tax for Northborough is incomplete, surviving records show that Holbrook owned property that could not have included the present house owing to the low valuation of his assets.

In 1820, Holbrook sold a parcel with a sawmill and trip hammer shop to his son, Lowell Holbrook (1794–1862), for \$800. Eight months later, in an instrument dated 10 Oct 1821, Daniel mortgaged the rest of the property (excluding the land sold to Lowell) to Rebecca Waldo of Worcester for \$1000. A month later, Daniel raised another \$2000 with the sale of his mortgaged property to his youngest son, Dexter Holbrook, age 22.

Based on Daniel Holbrook's need for additional capital, it seems likely that the plank-framed house was under construction in 1821, and probably completed in 1822. However, Holbrook was unable to repay the mortgage, and in July 1823, the property was auctioned off in a Sheriff's Sale. The property was purchased for \$800 by Gill Valentine of Northborough and his two younger brothers, Elliot and Elmer, "partners and traders of Boston." Gill Valentine in turn, sold the property to Lowell Holbrook for the same amount, returning the property to its original family ownership.

The house had a number of owners after the Holbrooks. Notable owners include local industrialist Wilder Bush, who set up an ornamental comb firm on the nearby waterway and who owned several of the properties in the area in the second and third quarters of the 19th century. Gilman Howe, who owned it for just under 20 years around the turn of the 20th century, was a historian and genealogist and served as first president of the Northborough Historical Society. Finally, Ruth Webb Lee, a historian and author of ten books on historic glass, owned the property from 1941 to 1952.

It seems likely that the Colonial Revival modifications, including the pedimented door surround that seems to have been added after a porch was removed in the mid-20th-century, as well as some interior features including the chair rails in the parlor, were added during Lee's ownership. These do not detract from the overall integrity of the property as an example of a substantial 1820s Federal house

That concluded the National Register presentations.

Chairman Rosenberry then called for a MOTION TO ACCEPT the MHC staff recommendation that the nomination for the **Perry Hill Christian Church** in **Acushnet** be forwarded to the National Park Service for final review. A MOTION was made by Commissioner Friary and SECONDED by Commissioner Dewitt. The Chairman called for questions or comments from the commission. The Chairman recognized Commissioner Adelman. He noted that he was impressed with the research on the nominations and is curious to know about the changes to the interior - the removal of the ceiling and the truss, and holes for insulation - is there any further review of the interior treatment? There's discussion about the town using the church for public use, which may require further modifications for restrooms and such. Is there any consideration of this at this point related to listing in the National Register? The Chairman recognized Ben Haley who said we first evaluated the property six to eight years ago, but it wasn't immediately nominated, and when the nomination came to us a year or two ago, some additional work had been done. The building was in poor condition when the town acquired it. We took another look and felt that while there had been some losses and modifications, it was sufficiently intact and retained sufficient integrity, and could be listed. If they decided to apply for grants for work to be done, for example to the MHC, they would have to meet professional preservation standards to do the work. Listing would enable them to apply for such grants. The Chairman then recognized Commissioner DeWitt who said in his the reading of the photographs of the interior it looked like a ceiling that was pitched had somehow been removed, which didn't make a lot of sense given the surface with the insulation between the truss elements. He is assuming that what he is seeing on the back wall that didn't suggest a pitched roof kind of ceiling that had been removed, rather some of artifact of the structure in the back wall. Is the three surfaced ceiling with the insulation panels probably what the ceiling looked like? The Chairman recognized Ben Haley who said that he can't answer the question at the moment, perhaps Wendy Frontiero, preservation consultant can answer the question if she's here or someone from the Town of Acushnet may know. He can look for additional photographs and get back to Commissioner DeWitt. The Chairman then called for questions or comments from the public, and recognized James Kelley, Town Administrator who expressed his appreciation to the Commission for recognizing the Perry Hill Christian Church, a very valuable asset to the town, and expressed the support of town government in completing this process in getting this designation for the Church. The Chairman thanked Mr. Kelley, and hearing no further comments, he moved the motion. Ben Haley then noted that we have 2012 photos with a pitched ceiling with significant water damage, so it was likely removed sometime after that. The motion CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Chairman Rosenberry then called for a MOTION TO ACCEPT the MHC staff recommendation that the nomination for the **Harwich Port Library** in **Harwich** be forwarded to the National Park Service for final review. A MOTION was made by Commissioner Adelman and SECONDED by Commissioner McDowell. The Chairman called for questions or comments from the commission. Hearing none, he called for questions or comments from the public. Hearing none, he moved the motion. The motion CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Chairman Rosenberry then called for a MOTION TO ACCEPT the MHC staff recommendation that the nomination for the **Home Farm Historic District** in **Lenox** be forwarded to the National Park Service for final review. A MOTION was made by Commissioner McCurdy and SECONDED by Commissioner Mark Wilson. The Chairman called for questions or comments

from the commission. Hearing none, he called for questions or comments from the public. Hearing none, he moved the motion. The motion CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Chairman Rosenberry then called for a MOTION TO ACCEPT the MHC staff recommendation that the nomination for the **Daniel Holbrook, Sr. House in Northborough** be forwarded to the National Park Service for final review. A MOTION was made by Commissioner McDowell and SECONDED by Commissioner Ceccacci. The Chairman called for questions or comments from the commission. Hearing none, he called for questions or comments from the public. The Chairman recognized the applicants and owners of the Daniel Holbrook House Norm and Linda Corbin who expressed their appreciation of the Commission staff for all the work they put into the nomination, noting that their house is the first private house to be nominated to the National Register and they hope it inspires others. They also thanked Massachusetts Historical Commission staff and Jenn Doherty for their help. The Chairman called for any further comments from the public. Hearing none, he moved the motion. The motion CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

This concluded the National Register portion of the agenda.

Chairman Rosenberry then turned to the next item on the agenda, the Local Historic District Preliminary Study Reports. The Chairman first called for any recusals. Hearing none, he turned the meeting over to the Director of the Preservation Planning Division, Michael Steinitz.

Mr. Steinitz presented the study reports with a PowerPoint presentation. A copy of the presentation is on file with these minutes.

Mr. Steinitz first presented the **Benjamin Lynde House Local Historic District** in Melrose. In the City of Melrose, the Melrose Historic District Commission is proposing to designate its second local historic district, the Benjamin Lynde House Local Historic District. The district would protect a single, 18,500 square foot parcel with a house and free-standing garage located at 244 Main Street.

The Benjamin Lynde House, built in 1820, is included in the City's Inventory of Historic Properties and is located about 4/10ths of a mile south of the existing Melrose Town Center Local Historic District, created in 1974, part of which was also designated a National Register district in 1982. (The green and red triangles on the map) It is located in the Wyoming neighborhood, where nearby inventoried historic properties (blue dots) to the east and west are part of residential subdivisions on higher terrain that were first developed in the mid-19th century after the arrival of the Boston & Maine Railroad, and that were more fully developed in the late 19th and early 20th centuries.

Immediately surrounding the Lynde House are single, and two-family residences on small lots, mostly appearing to date to the early 20th century. Two buildings to the north of the Lynde House on Main Street is a portion of its north ell that was detached, ca. 1924, relocated, and converted to a separate residence. It is not included in the proposed local historic district.

To the east of the Lynde House on the other side of Main Street, the terrain rises steeply to a suburban neighborhood subdivided and developed from the 1850s into the mid-20th century. The Alvin Lynde House, on the corner of Potomac and Mount Vernon streets, was built by Benjamin Lynde's son Daniel in 1829, and nicknamed "Little Mount Vernon". Long time occupant Alvin Lynde was Benjamin Lynde's grandson. South of the Lynde House, Main Street is characterized by free standing one and two family historic residences. North of the Lynde House however, the west side of Main Street beyond the relocated kitchen ell transitions to large, masonry three and four story apartment blocks, mostly from the 1960s and 70s, but including 2 classical revival blocks from 1905.

The Lynde family were the first settlers of the northern part of the Town of Malden, and a house is said to have been built at this location along the road to Reading in 1693. The 1795 map of Malden identifies the house, one of the few so labelled on the map, as that of "B. Linde". Benjamin Lynde was the 3rd generation to occupy this property. He served in the revolution, marching as a minuteman in April 1775. The 17th century house was destroyed by a fire in 1819, and the current building was built soon thereafter likely at least partially on the foundation of the earlier house. It is not known whether any framing from the earlier structure may have survived to be incorporated into the new building.

The house and land were inherited by Benjamin's son Warren Lynde who continued to farm here through much of the 19th century. The Boston & Albany Railroad, which brought significant development with its arrival through North Malden in 1845, was routed directly through the Lynde farm, as shown on this 1889 map. Melrose was incorporated as a separate town in 1850. Warren Lynde's son, Henry Lynde continued a market gardening operation here into the early 20th century. The 1900 census enumerated a large household of 14 members, including Henry and Sarah Lynde, their 4 adult and adolescent children, 6 male farm laborers, mostly Canadian, a female house servant from Wales, and an elderly female boarder. The apparent scale of the farm operation and size of the household may explain the size of the rear ell as it appears in a ca. 1900 photo. Henry Lynde sold the farm in 1921, and by 1924 the land had been subdivided, with the back part of the rear ell relocated on a separate lot as shown on this plan. The 1820 Lynde House had been occupied by 4 generations of the Lynde family for 100 years, and the property had been in Lynde family ownership for 230 years.

There are few surviving early buildings in Melrose in general, and the Benjamin Lynde House appears to be a rare extant example in Melrose – in fact the only surviving example - of a Federal style building form popular in the first quarter of the 19th century in eastern Massachusetts. Architecturally, the Lynde House has a two-story, five-bay, central-entry main block with a shallow, hipped roof. The main entry retains its elliptical fan light; the projecting covered entry porch dates to the second half of the 20th century. A two-story ell that is now two bays deep extends to the rear. An open porch with square posts and turned balustrade extends along the east wall of the main block. Both the ell and porch have been truncated from their late 19th/early 20th century configuration.

The two-story ell is further extended by a small one-story addition that post-dates the early 1920s. Another two-story addition (not visible in these photos) extends across the entire rear of

the main block. The west side of the main block is extended by a one-story sunroom addition that appears in the 1947 photo of the building and may post-date the early 1920s. The building is sheathed in wood clapboards. Windows are generally 6-over-6 double hung sash. A single brick chimney stack is located at the back of the main block where it meets the rear ell. It is not known what historic interior features or finishes survive. A free-standing, two-bay garage west of the house on the property probably dates to the 1920s or 30s.

The proposed local district was initiated relative to local concerns regarding a proposed development that would consolidate this and two adjacent lots to construct a 60-unit, four-story apartment complex. Given its historic associations and architectural significance in Melrose, the marketing of the property for sale garnered enough local interest that the City Council in December passed the City's first demolition delay ordinance, which would at least create a period to consider alternatives should a demolition permit be pulled for any building in Melrose built before 1900. However, Melrose has not yet achieved the 10% affordability housing threshold, which means that under Mass General Law 40B a development including the required proportion of affordable housing units would just be required to seek a single permit from the ZBA, bypassing the demo delay ordinance and any local historic district, should one be established here.

The developers are still doing due diligence, and months away from local permitting. In response to local concerns however, they have expressed an openness to preserving the Lynde House on the property as part of the development by reorienting it and relocating it close to the street. At recent meetings of the local historical commission, and of the local historic district commission they have presented some preliminary renderings for public comment. By submitting this preliminary study report to the MHC and the local planning board, and then by holding a public hearing the Melrose Historic District Commission is giving the City Council the option to consider establishing the Benjamin Lynde House Local Historic District either now or at some point in the future. Alternatively, there has been discussion that under the 40B single-permit process, which would bypass any local district review, the developer could offer, and/or the ZBA could require that a protective preservation restriction be put on the building.

MHC Staff recommendations:

MHC staff recommends acknowledging receipt of the Preliminary Study Report for the Benjamin Lynde House Local Historic District and providing the following advisory recommendations and comments:

The Massachusetts Historical Commission encourages the City of Melrose to establish the Benjamin Lynde House Local Historic District, or to seek alternative means available to assure the preservation of the Benjamin Lynde House.

Chairman Rosenberry then called for a MOTION TO ACCEPT the MHC staff recommendations on the Preliminary Study Report for the **Benjamin Lynde House Local Historic District in Melrose**. A MOTION was made by Commissioner DeWitt and SECONDED by Commissioner McDowell. The chairman called for questions or comments from the commission. Hearing none, the Chair then called for questions or comments from the public. Hearing none, he moved the motion. The motion CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Chairman Rosenberry turned to the next item on the agenda, the presentation of the **FY26 Survey & Planning Grant Awards**. The chairman first called for any recusals. Hearing none, he again turned the meeting over to the Director of the Preservation Planning Division, Michael Steinitz.

Mr. Steinitz thanked the sub-committee of commissioners Dewitt and McDowell for reviewing the FY26 Survey & Planning grant project applications and meeting with the MHC staff to review the full applications this morning. MHC annually awards grants through the Survey and Planning Grant Program, which is its means of providing funding for preservation planning projects in communities in Massachusetts, including such projects as historic properties surveys, National Register nominations, planning studies and reports, preservation planning staff support, and other sorts of planning and public education activities. Given MHC current Federal funding uncertainties, The FY26 grant program was limited to Certified Local Government applicants to which MHC is offering 60/40 matching grants. It is a two-step application process. From pre-applications submitted in November, at its December meeting the Commission voted to invite 6 projects to submit full applications. All 6 project did submit full applications.

Under the requirements of our federal funding agreement with the National Park Service, MHC must pass through a minimum of 10% of its federal funding award to Certified Local Governments, which it does through this grant program. There are presently 31 Massachusetts municipalities that participate in the National Park Service's CLG program, and the required 10% pass through for this grant round is anticipated to be approximately \$116,000. The total request for the 6 projects was for \$188,000.

The 6 projects include 3 targeted survey projects, a communitywide preservation plan, a targeted area preservation study, and a structural assessment and feasibility study.

Based on its review of the proposed projects, staff has made recommendations to the sub-committee on awards. Mr. Steinitz then turned the meeting over to Commissioner McDowell, who gave the following summary of the subcommittee's findings.

Commissioner McDowell reported that the Survey and Planning Grants subcommittee reviewed closely with the staff the full applications submitted, and that the subcommittee members agreed with the staff's recommendations for awarding grants to 4 of the 6 proposed projects. The applications for the 2 projects we are not recommending from Fall River needed more work, and with some further assistance from MHC staff could possibly move forward in the future. The

target of granting at least \$116,000 to CLG projects was met as we are recommending a pass through of \$119,000. Commissioner McDowell then asked if Mr. Steinitz wished to add anything. Mr. Steinitz added the Fall River Bank Street Armory Study, although an eligible Survey & Planning project, is more appropriately an MPPF project, and we have recommended that the City apply to that program, but we are recommending that project be designated an alternative in this S&P round, as a backup, to keep that option open pending the MPPF grant application review.

Chairman Rosenberry thanked Commissioner McDowell, Mr. Steinitz, and the members of the subcommittee, and then began the voting process for awarding CLG projects, calling for a MOTION to award a Survey and Planning grant in the amount of \$35,000 to the **Boston Landmarks Commission** for the **Chinatown Neighborhood Survey**. A MOTION was made by Commissioner Sullivan and SECONDED by Commissioner Ceccacci. There being no discussion, the motion CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Chairman Rosenberry next called for a MOTION to award a Survey and Planning grant in the amount of \$30,000 to the **Marblehead Historic Commission** for the **Old and Historic District Survey and Inventory Update – Part II**. A MOTION was made by Commissioner Friary and SECONDED by Commissioner McCurdy. There being no discussion, the motion CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Chairman Rosenberry then called for a MOTION to award a Survey and Planning grant in the amount of \$24,000 to the **Medford Historic Commission** for the **Brooks Estate Neighborhood Survey**. A MOTION was made by Commissioner Mark Wilson and SECONDED by Commissioner Adelman. There being no discussion, the motion CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Chairman Rosenberry then called for a MOTION to award a Survey and Planning grant in the amount of \$30,000 to the **Nantucket Historical Commission** for the **Nantucket Preservation Plan**. A MOTION was made by Commissioner Mark Wilson and SECONDED by Commissioner McDowell. There being no discussion, the motion CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Chairman Rosenberry then called for a MOTION to designate the **Fall River Historical Commission** for the **Waterfront Cultural District Historic Preservation Study** as an alternative for consideration if needed. A MOTION was made by Commissioner DeWitt and SECONDED by Commissioner Sullivan. There being no discussion, the motion CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Chairman Rosenberry then called for a MOTION to designate the **Fall River Historical Commission** for the **Bank Street Armory Feasibility Study and Structural Assessment** as an alternative for consideration if needed. A MOTION was made by Commissioner McDowell and

SECONDED by Commissioner Sullivan. There being no discussion, the motion CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

This concluded the voting. Chairman Rosenberry then turned to the next item on the agenda, the **Executive Director's Report**. He then recognized Brona Simon, Executive Director.

Ms. Simon began by reporting on funding for the current Federal fiscal year which started October 1, 2025. Both the House and the Senate approved the Historic Preservation Fund amount for SHPO's at level funding, the same amount as Federal fiscal year 2025. It was approved by the President, and now we are awaiting the notification from the Department of Interior to start the application process and apply for the funding. The amount will be the same for Massachusetts as the prior year. She clarified the confusion about partial Federal Government shutdown. The only agency shut down is the Department of Homeland Security due to their budget being in disagreement between the Senate and the House. The Department of Homeland Security and subsidiary agencies including FEMA are the offices that are closed. However, both agencies are still working, judging from the contacts that DHS and FEMA have made to the MHC for review of their projects. FEMA is still funding projects to prevent damage from sea level rise and sea level surges.

Ms. Simon said she is happy to answer any questions from the commission. She noted that MHC remains in good shape financially. MHC still has FY25 funding that has not been spent yet, as well as State funding.

Finally, Ms. Simon announced that the next Commission meeting will be on June 10th. The June 10th meeting will include the MPPF Round 32 selection of grant awards. It is expected to be a hybrid meeting.

Through the Chair, she indicated that Commissioner volunteers will be needed to serve on the MPPF subcommittee meeting in the morning of June 10th before the full Commission meeting, to review staff recommendations for the awards. The subcommittee will report its recommendations to the full Commission meeting in the afternoon for votes on the recommended awards. Commissioners Friary, DeWitt, and McDowell volunteered to serve on the MPPF subcommittee. Ms. Simon thanked the Commissioners for volunteering.

That concluded the Executive Director's report.

The Chairman also thanked the three Commissioners for volunteering. The Chairman then called for any new business. Commissioner Wilson asked whether there were any meeting prior to June 10? The Chairman recognized Ms. Simon who said that a meeting is scheduled for April 9, but at this point there are no pressing agenda items, so it may be cancelled.

Hearing no further new business, the Chairman called for a motion to adjourn. A MOTION was made by Commissioner Friary and SECONDED by Commissioner DeWitt. The meeting adjourned at 2:09 pm.

Commissioners Present

John Rosenberry

Dennis DeWitt

Michael McDowell

Donald Friary

Mark Wilson

Derek Heidemann

James McCurdy

Douglas Gutro

Charles Sullivan

Susan Ceccacci

Edward Adelman

Heather Wilson

Staff Present

Brona Simon

Michael Steinitz

Ben Haley

Peter Stott

Paul Holtz

Nancy Alexson

Joshua Dorin

Shari Perry-Wallace

Liz King

Robin Forham

A TRUE COPY ATTEST

Respectfully submitted,

Shirley Brown