

MEETING MINUTES
MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
March 9, 2022

Due to the Coronavirus pandemic, the Commission meeting was held remotely in a Zoom meeting starting at 1:00 PM.

Chairman Rosenberry called the meeting to order at 1:04 pm. On behalf of Secretary Galvin, he welcomed the Commissioners. Chairman Rosenberry next addressed the audience, 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 public could address the commission.

The Chairman turned to the first item on the agenda, the approval of the January 12, 2022 meeting minutes. He called for a MOTION TO ACCEPT the minutes. A MOTION was made by Commissioner Early and SECONDED by Commissioner DeWitt. Hearing no questions, the chair moved the motion. The motion CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Chairman Rosenberry then turned to the next item on the agenda, the National Register nominations, and called for any recusals. Commissioner Early said she would recuse herself from discussion and voting on the Camden Street Development in Boston. Mr. Rosenberry then turned the meeting over to the Director of the National Register Program, Ben Haley, who began the National Register presentations.

The first nomination presented was for the **Camden Street Development in Boston**. The applicant is Beacon Communities with VHB as the preservation consultant.

The Camden Street Development Historic District covers 1.27 acres in the Boston's Roxbury neighborhood. It is bounded by Camden Street on the north, Shawmut Avenue on the east, and two dead-end access roads—Brannon Harris Way and Northfield Street—on the south and west, respectively. The housing development consists of three three-story brick residential blocks arranged in a U-shape around a central interior courtyard. Each building has its own street address, but all three buildings sit on one parcel land. The buildings are also designated as Buildings 14-16, which were given at the time of construction and is an extension of the building numbering system for the Lenox Street Apartments, another public housing development nearby.

The Camden Street Development Historic District is eligible for the National Register under Criteria A and C at the local level.

Under Criterion A, the district's Areas of Significance are Community Planning and Development and Ethnic Heritage, specifically with the Black community. The district is significant under Community Planning and Development in part because it was funded by the 1948 Massachusetts Veterans' Housing Program, which financed public housing exclusively for veterans. The Camden Street Development also overlapped with the Federal Housing Act of 1949, so it is also highly demonstrative of the challenges that the Boston Housing Authority faced as the United States struggled to find a public housing typology and philosophy that worked in this country. The district is significant under Ethnic Heritage because it was the sole housing project authorized under the Massachusetts Veterans' Housing Program in a predominantly Black area of the city and it was the first and the only public housing complex in Boston intended exclusively for Black veterans and their families. These characteristics reflect the racial segregation policies that had been widely adopted by the BHA since its establishment in 1935 and was closely associated with a major debate over segregation in Boston's public housing.

The district meets Criterion C in the area of Architecture as an intact, planned, post-WWII, apartment complex designed in the International Style. Its design is borrowed from the neighboring 1939 Lenox Street Apartments, and both exemplify how the BHA relied on European-influenced pre-war public housing concepts for quick construction. However, the complex also overlapped with the later wave of public housing developments financed by the federal Housing Act of 1949, when design was even more constrained by budget restrictions. The Camden Street Development remains in use as public housing managed by the Boston Housing

Authority. The historic district's period of significance extends from 1949, when construction commenced, through 1972, 50 years from the present.

Criterion A: Lower Roxbury, Public Works and the Boston Housing Authority

Black Bostonians began migrating to Lower Roxbury from the north side of Beacon Hill in the 1890s, likely attracted by employment opportunities available at nearby sites such as the Boston & Providence Railroad yards on the west side of Columbus Avenue. A large portion of the Black community became concentrated in “a narrow geographic strip bounded by Columbus Avenue, Washington Street, Dartmouth/West Dedham Streets, and New Dudley Street” (now Malcolm X Boulevard), which now contains the Camden Street Development. The neighborhood remained multi-racial into the 1920s, but by 1930, census records confirm that the Camden Street-Shawmut Avenue area was exclusively Black. The federal government became involved in the housing industry in 1933 when the National Industrial Recovery Act established the Housing Division of the Public Works Administration (PWA). The Federal Housing Administration (FHA) was created one year later. These policies were intended to address the nationwide housing crisis developing during the Great Depression (1929–1940). In developing its public housing projects, the federal government largely left their management to local entities. In Boston this entity was the Boston Housing Authority (BHA), established by the city in 1935 for the purpose of clearing substandard or blighted areas, providing housing for low-income families, and engaging in housing redevelopment projects. The authority began a program of public housing for low-income families in 1937 under the auspices of the Wagner-Steagall Act, in which the United States Housing Authority facilitated housing developments by making long-term loans to local public authorities. In Boston, housing developed under the Wagner-Steagall Act was generally intended to reflect and enforce the racial demographics of the neighborhoods in which it was located rather than encourage integration.

Criterion A: Post War Housing and Civil Rights

Due to several factors before and during World War II, including a hiatus of public housing construction, there was a severe shortage in housing for returning veterans and their families. In Boston, some of the earlier public housing projects developed under the Public Works Administration and US Housing Authority programs began prioritizing admission to wartime workers and their families, even expanding access to families who exceeded the low-rent standards normally required for residency.

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts authorized the Massachusetts Veterans' Housing Program (also referred to as "Chapter 200") in 1948. The state allocated an initial round of \$200 million for the Veterans' Housing Program, with one quarter of that amount earmarked for Boston. Under the act, the state prioritized veterans' housing and used the program to construct housing for an estimated 50,000 low-income families of veterans in Massachusetts who lacked adequate housing. For its veterans' housing complexes, the BHA remained partial to vacant, municipally owned land because it made projects faster and was deemed less detrimental to the surrounding neighborhood. Camden Street was built on a parcel that had formerly been occupied by a city grammar school (demolished 1932).

Civil rights activists had advocated for racial integration in public housing as early as 1937, when the (NAACP) attempted to mandate open occupancy in complexes funded by the Wagner-Steagall Act. In 1962 Melnea Cass, president of the Boston chapter of the NAACP, cited the Camden Street Development and the Lenox Street Apartments (adjacent to Camden) in a complaint against the BHA that was filed with the Massachusetts Commission Against Discrimination. Through the complaint, the NAACP argued for an end to the BHA's policy of segregation and advocated for better racial integration in the city's public housing. At the time the complaint was filed, the Camden Street Development had no white residents. While the changes that came from the NAACP lawsuit were substantial, the BHA complexes were still highly segregated by the late 1960s. This was the case within the Camden Street Development, where the percentage of nonwhite occupants remained above 95% throughout the 1960s. The demographics at the Camden Street Development fluctuated minimally in the 1970s and the tenant population remained over 90% nonwhite for the rest of the 20th century. In 1979 a Boston Housing Court judge placed the BHA in a receivership, asserting that extremely poor conditions at its properties were causing "incalculable human suffering". The receivership ended in 1984 and in the 1990s the BHA began to work with private companies on the redevelopment and management of their properties.

Criterion C: Architecture

The simple forms and stripped-down design of Camden Street resulted from two decades of public housing development in the United States, as the building forms and site plans adapted from European examples. In the United States, the minimalist building designs adopted for public housing most closely resemble the International Style. As a result, flat roofs, uniform fenestration, and little or no

exterior ornamentation became defining features of USHA-funded public housing complexes. The minimalist approaches to site plan and layout also proved economical. It also allowed for more of the community green space that was integral to the European precedents, and which also had an American precedent in the New England village green. In Boston, the pre-war concept of functional minimalism was still ingrained in the project design and planning processes for post-war developments. The Camden Street Development, designed by the John Gray Co. firm and completed in 1949, exhibits key characteristics of public housing design in the 1930s and demonstrates that the BHA was still reliant on pre-war designs for quick construction after WWII. The three buildings, nearly identical, have elevations of variegated red brick in random arrangements, and they each feature evenly spaced bands of dark, projecting soldier course brick. Each building has a recessed, street-facing main entrance at both corner intersections of its main block and offset wings. All the main entrances have aluminum-clad door hoods set across the entry corners. The surrounds the buildings and includes a courtyard, which runs north-south along a central paved walk from an oval, landscaped area behind Building 16.

Each building retains its original plan comprising twenty-four residential units. Two runs of steel stairs, located at either end of the main blocks in each building, provide access from the basements to the roofs. On every floor, all the stair runs are parallel to halls of a similar length. The property underwent a certified rehabilitation that was completed to the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation in 2020. The scope of the project included repair and cleaning of the exterior masonry, replacement of all windows and exterior doors with reference to historic plans, alterations to the interior stairs to meet safety and accessibility code requirements, and the replacement and installation of various mechanical systems.

The next nomination presented was for the **War Memorial Building in Holyoke**. The applicant is City of Holyoke with Kathy Kelly Broomer as preservation consultant. Mr. Haley presented the nomination.

Owned by the Soldiers' Memorial Commission of the City of Holyoke, the War Memorial Building is located in a mixed use area in downtown Holyoke, within three blocks of City Hall, the Public Library, and the Heritage State Park. The boundary of the North High Street Historic District, listed in the National Register in 1986, passes this site on the opposite side of Maple Street. Meeting Criteria A

and C of the National Register at the local level, the War Memorial Building has a period of significance from 1936 to circa 1971—areas of significance are architecture, military, and social history

The War Memorial Building was conceived in 1936 for the dual purpose of honoring Holyoke's veterans with a permanent memorial and providing a community center for use by veterans' groups, patriotic organizations, and the general public, uses that continue today. The steel-frame structure is faced with Indiana limestone and granite on the two street elevations, and red brick on the alley and rear elevations. Though symmetrical on the exterior, the interior plan is not symmetrically arranged, and consists of a double-height auditorium with a seating capacity of about 1,200 on the west side of the building, along with reception rooms, meeting rooms, and offices ranged over two stories on the Maple Street or east side of the building.

Described at the time of its construction as “modernistic classic” in style, the War Memorial Building exhibits a hybrid mode of 1930s American modernism known as stripped classical modern. Reflecting the traditional training of its architect, Fred Franz of Holyoke, the building displays balanced, symmetrical, and hierarchical forms, stripped of the classical orders and traditional ornament that were increasingly deemed a wasteful construction expense, especially for public buildings of the period. Instead, the design displays numerous stylized references to those classical details, such as fluted square pillars substituting for round columns in the portico, incised circles denoting traditional capitals over pillars and pilasters, and the Greek key and rosette band at the parapet wall, suggesting a traditional architrave. Both the exterior and interior are replete with military detailing, notably stylized eagles, seen here at the upper right executed in bronze between billowing clouds over the front entry doors.

Rendered in architectural rather than sculptural form, the War Memorial Building is Holyoke's most substantial tribute to the city's war dead. The building has been compared to a cemetery marker with its smooth stone surfaces, solemn design, and inscriptions, which are unique among Holyoke buildings. The parapet wall inscriptions inspired and reassured an anxious populace during the Depression era by celebrating American democratic principles, honoring the bravery exhibited by Holyoke veterans and their families, and acknowledging their sacrifices.

The War Memorial Building is Holyoke's signature public work designed and constructed under New Deal programs during the Depression. It has further

architectural significance as a model for architects and others studying new trends in public building design. This photograph and plan were published in a Federal study of the best and most representative projects nationwide that received funding from the Public Works Administration. The PWA completed more than 26,000 projects nationwide from 1933 to 1939, and assisted with the funding, but left the design and construction, as well as the hiring of workers, to the City of Holyoke. Other New Deal relief programs at work in Holyoke, like the Civilian Conservation Corps or the Work Projects Administration, hired the unemployed directly.

Veterans' groups, patriotic organizations, and veterans' services were brought together in a single location at the War Memorial Building with opportunities for socializing, recreation, and entertainment. The local United Service Organizations (USO) branch was headquartered here during World War II, offering activities for those stationed at the Westover U. S. Army Air Base in nearby Chicopee. Community activities included ceremonies, school dances, Scout meetings, trade shows, theatrical performances, and political rallies.

The Memorial Room at the upper left was designed to receive bronze tablets honoring World War I servicemen, and now displays six tablets through the Vietnam War. A companion Medal of Honor Room, shown at the lower right, was completed in the 1990s in tribute to three men with Holyoke associations who were awarded the nation's highest medal for military valor in action.

From 1984 through 2007, the City of Holyoke made accessibility improvements to the building, by constructing an entrance ramp, reconfiguring restrooms, and converting one stair hall for elevator use. The HVAC and electrical systems were upgraded, and granite steps on both street elevations were restored.

The War Memorial Building continues to serve the same purposes today for which it was designed in 1936 under the direction of the Soldiers' Memorial Commission of the City of Holyoke. Currently headquartered in the building are local posts and chapters of the Veterans of Foreign Wars, American Legion, Disabled American Veterans, Yankee Division Association, and Coast Guard Auxiliary, as well as the United Veterans of Holyoke and the City's Department of Veterans' Services. The auditorium is available for rental, and hosts large meetings, community events, and private receptions.

The building is also a stop on the Purple Heart Trail, part of a nationwide system of roads, highways, bridges, and monuments that honor men and women wounded or killed in combat while serving in the U. S. armed forces.

The next nomination presented was for the **Clarke School for the Deaf Historic District in Northampton**. The applicant is Historic Round Hill Summit LLC and 1924 LLC with Epsilon as preservation consultant. Mr. Haley presented the nomination.

The Clarke School for the Deaf Historic District encompasses a 13.3-acre area on Round Hill, a slight crest to the northwest of downtown Northampton. The district is within the Elm Street Historic District, a local historic district designated in 2013. The district represents the historic campus of the Clarke School for the Deaf, presently called the Clarke Schools for Hearing and Speech, and contains nine contributing buildings within three parcels.

The district satisfies Criterion C as a well-preserved collection of buildings that range in date from the late 19th to mid-20th centuries, and thus represent an assortment of architectural styles including Second Empire, Victorian Eclectic, Classical Revival, Tudor Revival, Colonial Revival, and International. Contributing buildings within the district possess integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling and association. The period of significance begins in 1871, marking the construction date of the earliest extant campus building, and ends in 1967, the year the school celebrated its centennial. This end date captures the construction of the last building within the district (ca. 1965) while reflecting the campus's continued role in the history of the Clarke School throughout the 20th century.

The district satisfies Criterion A in the Areas of Education, Social History: Disability History, and Health Care for the role it has played in the education of deaf students, training for teachers of the deaf, and development of technologies and therapies for the hearing impaired for over a century. Incorporated in 1867 as the Clarke Institution for Deaf-Mutes, the school merged with the privately-operated and financed Chelmsford School for the Deaf and opened in Northampton. Renamed the Clarke School for the Deaf in 1896, the school first purchased property on Round Hill in 1870 and the development of the campus commenced, continuing into the mid-20th century.

The school offered a different educational philosophy from other American schools for the deaf which utilized sign language for instruction. The Clarke School was predicated on the acquisition of oral skills including speech-reading and speech for communication. In 1889, it established a Teacher Education program with the goal of better preparing its educators. The program was expanded into the mid-20th

century through affiliations with various universities including Smith College and the University of Massachusetts, Amherst.

The district is significant for its history in advocacy for the hard of hearing community. Through the support of many locally and nationally prominent sponsors through the years, the school continued to expand, providing countless deaf children from Massachusetts and beyond with the skills needed to succeed in adulthood. The positive results of the school's history of advocacy for and training of the deaf is exemplified by Clarke School alumnus Abraham Lincoln Fechheimer, a Cincinnati-based architect who designed five buildings within the district. One such example is the 1933 Tudor Revival-style Coolidge Hall.

In 2013, the school consolidated its Northampton campus to a non-historic building located outside of the district. The school subsequently disposed of the buildings within the district, and under new ownership, six of the nine buildings underwent rehabilitation for continued or new residential or office. Utilizing state and federal historic rehabilitation tax credits, all work was completed to the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation and has been reviewed and approved by the Massachusetts Historical Commission and National Park Service. Completed in 2017, Gardiner Greene Hubbard Hall was converted for use as 23 residential apartment units. The Classical Revival-style building was built in 1912 with an addition constructed in 1929.

Gawith Hall is a Second Empire building constructed in 1871 to the design of Ware and Van Brunt and enlarged in 1877. It was converted for office use in 2019 and a sympathetic new addition replaced a ca. 1960 addition at its west elevation.

Also completed in 2019 was the rehabilitation of the Victorian Eclectic-style Adams House, built in 1891. It remains residential with two units containing updated interior finishes and furnishings.

The Colonial Revival-style Engineer's Cottage was built in 1935. Completed in 2020, interior modifications and reconfigurations updated the single-family residential building.

Skinner Hall, a Tudor Revival-style building dating to 1932, was converted for use as eight residential units in 2020. Also in 2020, three residential units were created within the Boiler House, a Classical Revival building constructed in 1929. The National Register nomination for the Moseley School was prepared on behalf of

Historic Round Hill Summit LLC and 1924 LLC as part of their pursuit of historic tax credits for the project.

The next nomination presented was for the **Indian Hill School in Worcester**. The applicant is North Village Lofts LLC with VHB as preservation consultant. Mr. Haley presented the nomination.

The Indian Hill School is located in the northern part of Worcester in the neighborhood of Indian Hill, which stretches from the north shore of Indian Lake to Malden Street. The school is situated on a sloping, two-acre open lot, adjacent to the playing field in Indian Hill Park and the tracks of the former Boston, Barre & Gardner Railroad at the corner of Ararat Street and Indian Hill Road.

The Indian Hill School is significant under Criterion A in the Areas of Education and Community Planning and Development for its association with broad patterns of development in North Worcester and the Worcester School Building Program in the first quarter of the twentieth century, and Criterion C in the Area of Architecture.

The Indian Hill School consists of a rectangular, side-gabled main block, two perpendicular end wings, and a long, flat-roofed rear extension that connects the two end wings. The basement and first story of the building are brick with cast-stone trim, while stucco and wood half-timbering distinguish the gables. The main block is interrupted by a center cross gable over the front entrance that terminates at the ridge line. A single-story, projecting brick portico provides access to the center entrance.

The school was constructed between 1923–1924 as part of the City's school building program and was one of the first schools to be completed under this program. Historically, the area known as Indian Hill consisted of a number of smaller villages and undeveloped land. The hill southeast of the school (now referred to as Indian Hill) was known as Mt. Ararat. To the east of Mt. Ararat was Greendale, which became home to the Norton Company, a manufacturer of grinding wheels, in 1887.

In 1915 the Norton Company, which was Worcester's largest employer at the time, established the Indian Hill Company with the goal of buying and developing land on Indian Hill. The increase in population in the area necessitated a larger school to replace a small schoolhouse at the corner of Indian Hill Road and Ararat Street. Plans for the construction of a new schoolhouse at Indian Hill appear to have been underway when, on October 7, 1921, the Worcester School Committee submitted a

request to the City Council to purchase 36,150 square feet of land, east of the existing schoolhouse. In 1922, the City purchased an additional 2,550 square feet of land from the Norton Company and the School Committee requested that the City Council erect an eight-room schoolhouse on Ararat Street that would be ready for occupancy on September 1, 1923.

The school served its neighborhood well for decades; in a 1948 study, the school received a grade of 564 out of 1000, which was high enough to make it one of the top 10 schools in the district. Sometime between the mid-1950s and 1963, the school expanded its outdoor spaces by enlarging its acreage from 1 2/3 to nearly six. By the mid-60s, concerns were raised about the quality of the building and site, and later, population decline raised additional problems. In 1964, the League of Women Voters described two new basement classrooms at Indian Hill “poorly ventilated”, criticized the general “shabbiness” of the interior, and asserted that the playground needed a better drainage system. After the overcrowding of the 1960s, the Worcester School system faced a significant decline in student enrollment in the 1970s. On October 1, 1981, the School Committee voted to approve a move to relinquish six surplus schools, including Indian Hill. The school building was sold to Salter Secretarial School, a private school founded in 1937 where women trained to be professional secretaries. The building was sold in 2010 and again in 2017, to the current owner, North Village Lofts.

The school is excellent surviving institutional example of the Tudor Revival style that is unique among the other schools constructed as part of the Worcester School Building Program of the 1920s and 1930s. The building was designed by Worcester-based architecture firm Fuller & Delano. The firm became prominent in the late-nineteenth century and was known for its designs of institutional buildings, especially schools and libraries, in Worcester and other nearby towns. While the firm was responsible for several other schools in earlier decades, Indian Hill appears to be a later example and the only one they designed in the Tudor Revival style. Despite its exterior differences, the Indian Hill School was similar in plan to two one-story Spanish Eclectic-style schools that followed it, the Blithewood Avenue School (demolished) and the Thorndyke Road Schoolhouse. The design of all three schools was symmetrical and featured a projecting front entrance between a series of grouped windows and end wings with windows only on the side elevations of the first story.

The design lent itself to the eight-classroom minimum requirement and met other specifications of the Worcester School Building Program, including that each classroom could not be greater than 24 by 30 feet in size, and that each classroom have a book closet, teacher's closet, blackboard, cork bulletin board, and one square foot of window glazing for every five square feet of space. Most of the other Worcester public schools built during this period were designed in the Classical Revival style, with symmetrical forms and classically inspired details that differ significantly from the form and features of the Indian Hill School.

Between 2018 and 2019, the property was the subject of a certified rehabilitation that converted it into 20 market-rate apartments using the Massachusetts Historic Rehabilitation Tax Credit and Federal Historic Preservation Tax Credit programs. The project included the cleaning, repairing, and repointing of all exterior elevations (where necessary), the repair of the slate shingle roof, and the installation of historically appropriate doors, and aluminum sash replacement windows. All of the blocked and infilled window openings were reopened, and windows were installed where missing. The existing rooms were subdivided, and a significant portion of the historic wood trim and hardwood floors were retained or replaced in kind. The existing building's systems were replaced to meet modern building codes.

The next nomination presented was for the **Main & Franklin Street Historic District in Worcester**. The applicant is Worcester Franklin Holdings with PAL as preservation consultant. Mr. Haley presented the nomination.

The Main and Franklin Streets Historic District is a predominantly commercial district in Worcester's historic central business district. The 3.98-acre district encompasses twelve contributing resources and four noncontributing resources bounded by Franklin Street on the northeast, Salem Street on the southeast, Federal Street on the southwest, and Main Street on the northwest.

The District is a roughly two-block area in the center of Worcester's downtown, adjacent to the City Hall and Worcester Common (which comprises the Worcester City Hall and Common National Register District, listed in 1978) to the north and anchoring the northern end of the Main Street commercial area. It predominantly comprises commercial buildings, with a small number of mixed-use commercial and residential buildings, dating from the mid-19th to the early 20th centuries. The buildings are set flush with the sidewalk and occupy their entire lot, except for the

Bancroft Hotel at 50 Franklin Street and the Houghton Building at 80–84 Franklin Street.

The district is significant at the local level under Criterion A in the area of Commerce for its associations with the industrial, social, economic, and cultural forces that fostered the growth of Worcester's downtown commercial core adjacent to the Worcester Common during the late 19th and early 20th centuries. The Main and Franklin Streets Historic District housed many important local businesses and institutions that has supported Worcester's economy for over 100 years and helped to augment its economic importance as the second largest city in Massachusetts.

The District is also significant under Criterion C in the area of Architecture as a locally significant and remarkably intact collection of late nineteenth and early twentieth-century commercial buildings within Worcester's historic downtown commercial core. The District's predominantly classical-style architecture illustrates the rapid and relatively complete transition of the area from a predominantly residential area into a thriving commercial block during an important period of the city's growth.

The period of significance begins with the construction of the Holbrook-Sawyer Building, a portion of which may have been constructed as early as 1851, and extends to 1971, when the Worcester Galleria Mall opened and Filene's Department Store relocated from the Main and Franklin Streets Historic District to the mall.

During the mid-19th century, the expansion of the regional railroad network in and around Worcester coupled with the establishment and rapid growth of a robust manufacturing sector and a population boom transformed it into the second largest city in Massachusetts. These combined industrial, social, economic, and cultural forces fostered the growth of a downtown commercial corridor along Main Street north of the Worcester Common. Beginning in the 1860s, commercial development, spurred in large part by a major industrial boom ushered in by the Civil War, began to spread south toward Federal Square and Franklin Square and east and west of Main Street. Dense rows of four- and five-story commercial buildings lined the east and west sides of Main Street by 1870. The first four commercial buildings in the District were constructed during this period. Executed in the popular mid-19th-century Italianate and Second Empire styles, these buildings rose four stories from their foundations and housed storefronts at the street level with offices or apartments on the upper floors. The blocks to the east and west of Main Street along

its cross streets, including Franklin Street, however, remained largely residential in 1870.

As public transportation became more widely available at the turn of the 20th century, new residential development primarily occurred on the outskirts of Worcester in increasingly popular streetcar suburbs. At the same time, the city's continued economic prosperity spurred the reconstruction of earlier civic buildings, such as the Courthouse and City Hall, and the expansion of the surrounding central business district, which developed with buildings that housed the growing number of banks, office buildings, department stores, and manufacturing outlets that served the city's growing population. Due to evolving building technology, new steel-frame buildings were designed to be taller, at 10 or 11 stories, compared to the three- to six-story buildings of the early 19th century. Several of the buildings within the District were constructed during this second wave of building activity that occurred between ca. 1870-1915. The most notable of these were the Bancroft Hotel and the Park Building, which rose 10 and 11 stories, respectively, and towered above the neighboring buildings.

Beginning ca. 1915, the District experienced a third and final sustained burst of development that cemented its layout and density with the construction of six large commercial, institutional, and recreational buildings. The Worcester Building Trust Company erected the Worcester Evening Post Building at the northeast corner of Federal Street, and Allen Court ca. 1915, and local developers and corporations erected five new buildings in the district in the 1920s. By 1926, all of the contributing resources within the District had been constructed. The arrival of William Filene's Sons Co., which rented the Morgan-Sawyer Building at the northeast corner of Main and Federal streets and transformed it into their second largest department store in New England, cemented the District's local prominence.

In the mid- to late 20th century, efforts to stem disinvestment in Worcester led to the construction of the Galleria Mall one block from the District. This led to the relocation the Filene's Department store, which helped to shift the city's commercial retail core from the District to the Galleria.

The commercial architecture of the Main and Franklin Streets Historic District is reflective of the architectural styles popular in the mid-19th and early 20th centuries, including Italianate, Second Empire, and Classical Revival. As noted above, the District contains an intact concentration of masonry commercial, institutional, and mixed-use multi-story buildings. The prevalence of Classical Revival architecture

in the District speaks to the rapid transformation of Worcester's downtown during the late 19th and early 20th centuries.

Constructed between 1865 and 1875, the Cheney-Ballard Building is a five-story, four-bay-wide Second Empire-style building. It is one of the few Second Empire-style buildings remaining in downtown Worcester and is identified by a characteristic mansard roof. Rehabilitation of the building using state and federal historic tax credits is currently underway and expected to be complete in 2022.

Located at the corner of Franklin and Salem streets, the Houghton Building is a five-story, eight-bay-by-six-bay, rectangular masonry Classical Revival-style building constructed in 1888. With commercial space at the first floor and residential units on the upper levels, the building is typical of other Worcester apartment blocks from the late 19th century. The rehabilitation of the Houghton Building using state and federal historic tax credits was completed in 2018.

The grand Bancroft Hotel was constructed at the intersection of Franklin and Portland streets in 1912–1913. One of Worcester's most opulent hotels, the Classical Revival-style building was built by the Bancroft Realty Company and designed by the Buffalo architecture firm Esenwein & Johnson. It was individually listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 1980 as part of the Worcester Multiple Resource Area. The Bancroft Hotel was rehabilitated using state and federal historic tax credits in 2020.

The Park Building was constructed as a bank and office building by the Park Trust Company between 1914 and 1915. The Classical Revival-style building was designed by architects Cross & Cross with Daniel H. Burnham acting as a consulting architect and anchors the northwest corner of the district at the intersection of Main and Franklin streets. The building remained the most prominent element of the Worcester's skyline until the construction of Worcester Center in the 1970s. It was individually listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 1980 as part of the Worcester Multiple Resource Area. Rehabilitation of the Park Building using state and federal historic tax credits was completed in 2020.

This concluded the presentation of the March National Register nominations. Chairman Rosenberry thanked the presenter, Mr. Haley. He asked whether any commissioners needed to recuse themselves from voting on any of the nominations. The chairman recognized Commissioner Early, who said she would recuse herself from discussion and voting on the Camden Street Development in Boston.

At this point in the meeting, Commissioner Early recused herself and left the Zoom meeting.

The Chairman called for a MOTION TO ACCEPT the MHC staff recommendation that the nomination for the **Camden Street Development in Boston** be forwarded to the National Park Service for final review. A MOTION was made by Commissioner Friary and SECONDED by Commissioner DeWitt. Chairman Rosenberry called for questions or comments from the commission. The chair recognized Commissioner Kleespies who asked if the residents were in support of the nomination, or if anyone had worked with them during this process. The chair recognized Mr. Haley who said he assumes that the consultants and applicants would have consulted the residents, but since the owners are the applicants, he's not aware of what the renters are thinking. Commissioner Kleespies noted that he was just thinking about the history of the Boston Housing Authority. There have been some transformative re-imaginings of spaces, Orchard Park to Orchard Gardens being a great example. Were people aiming for something like that, or are people happy with the way things are? Mr. Haley said he didn't know, but the consultants are here; perhaps they may know. Quinn Stuart from VHB, preservation consultant, said she has been working with Beacon Development on both the Camden and Lenox projects. With residents of both those complexes Beacon Development has been open about the rehab process and what's involved. They've had many public events to let people know about what's going on. There has been active construction while people have been shifting between buildings. She's not aware of how much has been explained about the history of the site. The residents understand that this is for historic tax credits, and that some of the decisions that were made were done to fulfil the requirements of the tax credit program. She said that the residents had the opportunity to be in the know, ask questions, and understand what was happening. The Chairman called for any other 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.

At this point Commissioner Early returned to the meeting.

The Chairman called for a MOTION TO ACCEPT the MHC staff recommendation that the nomination for the **War Memorial Building in Holyoke** be forwarded to the National Park Service for final review. A MOTION was made by Commissioner McDowell and SECONDED by Commissioner Wilson. Chairman Rosenberry 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.

The Chairman called for a MOTION TO ACCEPT the MHC staff recommendation that the nomination for the **Clarke School for the Deaf Historic District in Northampton** be forwarded to the National Park Service for final review. A MOTION was made by Commissioner McDowell and SECONDED by Commissioner Friary. Chairman Rosenberry called for questions or comments from the commission. Hearing none, he called for questions or comments from the public. The chairman recognized Mike Sidall. Mr. Sidall thanked Secretary Galvin and the Commission for the tax credits allocated to this project that were vital to making the project successful, and he hopes the Commission supports the nomination. He further thanked the chairman for answering his questions. Hearing no further questions or comments from the public, the chairman moved the motion. The motion CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

The Chairman called for a MOTION TO ACCEPT the MHC staff recommendation that the nomination for the **Indian Hill School in Worcester** be forwarded to the National Park Service for final review. A MOTION was made by Commissioner DeWitt and SECONDED by Commissioner Kish. Chairman Rosenberry called for questions or comments from the commission. Hearing none, he called for questions or comments from the public. Hearing none, the chairman moved the motion. The motion CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

The Chairman called for a MOTION TO ACCEPT the MHC staff recommendation that the nomination for the **Main and Franklin Streets Historic District in Worcester** be forwarded to the National Park Service for final review. A MOTION was made by Commissioner Friary and SECONDED by Commissioner Kleespies. Chairman Rosenberry called for questions or comments from the commission. The chair recognized Commissioner Ceccacci, who noted the metal covering over the façade of the Warner Building at 521 Main St., which is considered non-contributing to the district. It's not known what is underneath, but it is one of the oldest buildings in the district, and the non-historic covering on it obscures the original façade. Earlier photographs show that it might have had a cast-iron facade. There were a number of cast-iron buildings built in Worcester by architect Elbridge Boyden, who early on was interested in modern materials like cast iron. She is concerned that there could be no concern about a non-contributing building being demolished, and it would be a shame if this building were demolished to find out

that it was one of the last cast-iron-front buildings surviving in Worcester. The chairman recognized Ben Haley who noted that with the covering the building is non-contributing, but the National Register documents are working documents and can be living documents. The nomination could be updated if the covering is removed and intact elements are underneath; and if there is a desirable tax credit project, the status could be changed to contributing from non-contributing. He understands the concern about non-contributing status leading to the perception of it being non-important and thus possibly threatened with demolition. The chair then recognized Commissioner DeWitt who asked if the tax credit consultants working for the developers could contact the owner of the building to try to find out what may be behind the skin, and then add an amendment to the nomination. The chair recognized Alisa Augenstein, from the Public Archaeology Laboratory - PAL, who noted that her client, Joe Donovan, is also present. Ms. Augustine said they could to reach out to the current property owners to see if they could do some exploratory demo to try to see what's underneath the surface. The chairman thanked Ms. Augenstein. The chair then asked Commissioner DeWitt if he is proposing a motion. Commissioner DeWitt said he would be prepared to make a motion that the exploration be done and reported back to staff in order to amend the nomination. The chair then recognized Mr. Haley who said that the staff would agree to amend the nomination if the consultant finds the façade is intact; if the metal is removed it could then become a contributing building. The chairman then asked for a recap of the motion before the commission to AMEND the National Register nomination for the Main and Franklin Street Historic District in the City of Worcester to add a brief recommendation. The chair again recognized Mr. Haley, who said there would need to be exploratory work to see what's under the façade of the building. If the historic façade is intact staff would need to consider whether or not the building could be considered contributing; he would need to consult with colleagues and make a judgement call based on findings, once we know what's under the façade. The chair recognized Commissioner DeWitt who suggested that if there is such a façade and if it's there, and reasonably intact, covered or not covered, it would seem logical to be considered contributing. After all, we put things with aluminum siding on the NR all the time.

The Chair and Commissioner DeWitt then recapped Commissioner DeWitt's MOTION TO AMEND the MOTION to accept the staff recommendation to forward the nomination for the **Main and Franklin Streets Historic District in Worcester** to the National Park Service for final review, to provide for exploratory

work to determine whether the Warner Building, presently non-contributing, might be considered contributing based on the façade that may exist under the post-war “modernization” of the building.

The Chair recognized Mr. Haley, who noted that there is National Park Service National Register guidance that staff would need to reference, but this would start an effort to see what is there.

The Chair then asked for a second for the amended MOTION. Commissioner Ceccacci seconded. Chairman Rosenberry 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.

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, first calling for any recusals. Hearing none, he turned the meeting over to Jennifer Doherty, Local Government Programs Coordinator. Ms. Doherty presented the study reports with presentation slides. A copy of the slides is on file with these minutes.

Ms. Doherty began with a reminder that she was presenting the districts for the Commission’s review and comment and that the MHC does not have the power to approve or deny a local historic district. That power lies with the local legislative body of the community, which in the case of all four of the presented districts, is the local City Council.

Highland Park Architectural Conservation District, Boston

Ms. Doherty then presented the **Highland Park Architectural Conservation District (ACD) of Boston**. The petition for the district was initially filed in 1978, and the neighborhood reinitiated the process for designation in 2018. It would be the City’s fifth architectural conservation district.

The proposed Highland Park ACD is located in the Roxbury neighborhood of Boston. It is roughly bound by Malcolm X Boulevard on the north, Washington Street on the east, Marcella and Highland streets to the south, and Columbus Avenue to the west. John Eliot Square is at the north end of the district, while Highland Park, the highest point in the district, is in the southwest corner. The

proposed district encompasses approximately 1200 parcels, of which almost a third are vacant land.

As noted, the petition for this district was initiated in 1978. Since that time, numerous community organizations and neighborhood groups have pursued the proposed district, and there have been several reports produced highlighting the area's architectural significance and making proposals for its preservation. Efforts since 2016 have been spearheaded by the Highland Park Neighborhood Council and their Preservation Committee. The City of Boston received a FY19 Survey & Planning Grant from the MHC to document the neighborhood and prepare the Landmark Study Report. Much of the concern in the area relates to development pressures on the many vacant lots, often City-owned, reminders of the decades of disinvestment and deterioration the neighborhood experienced in the second half of the 20th century.

The edges of the neighborhood, primarily the northern section, are a mix of commercial, institutional, and residential buildings. The bulk of the rest of the area is residential, but includes a wide variety of building forms and styles, from standalone early 19th century country estate houses to mid-19th century row houses to later 20th century apartment blocks. The neighborhood is interspersed with numerous green spaces, often vacant lots that once held buildings. It is likely less dense than it was in the 19th century. Development pressures have been increasing, leading to infill construction and the demolition of some historic structures.

The boundaries of the proposed Highland Park ACD roughly correspond to those of the Roxbury Highlands Historic District, listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1989. Within the National Register district, there is also a smaller, older district at the north end of the neighborhood covering John Eliot Square.

There are seven properties individually listed on the National Register, including the Cochituate Standpipe, listed in 1990; the William Lloyd Garrison House, designated a National Historic Landmark in 1966; and the Edward Everett Hale House, listed in 1973.

Six properties in the area have preservation restrictions, two held by Historic Boston, Inc., and four held by the MHC.

Finally, there are three previously-designated Boston Landmarks in the area as well as three pending landmarks, including First Church of Roxbury and the Bond-Hampton House, both of which were presented to the MHC in September.

Residential dwellings span the history of the district and include popular styles such as the Greek Revival, Italianate, Second Empire, and Queen Anne. The oldest residential building in the district is the Georgian style Dillaway-Thomas House, dating to the 1750s. Single-family dwellings predominated in the early years of the district, while the mid-19th century saw the rise of brick row houses, similar to other Boston neighborhoods. The later 19th and early 20th century brought the construction of triple-deckers throughout the neighborhood.

Commercial buildings are primarily at the edges of the district and are mixed-use in structure. They were constructed beginning in the middle of the 19th century into the early 20th century. There was limited industrial activity in the neighborhood, and much of it is no longer extant. One of the remaining industrial buildings is the Louis Prang Chromolithograph Factory, converted to apartments in the 1980s.

There are several churches and schools in the Highland Park neighborhood serving the community's residents. Perhaps the most prominent is the First Church of Roxbury at John Eliot Square, marking the north end of the district. The St. James African Orthodox Church, on Cedar Street near the middle of the neighborhood, was constructed in 1910 for a Norwegian Evangelical congregation. It was acquired in 1955 by the African Orthodox Church, an offshoot of Marcus Garvey's Universal Negro Improvement Association. Threatened with demolition in recent years, the church was acquired by Historic Boston in 2018. The organization is rehabilitating the building with affordable housing units and a neighborhood workspace.

Highland Park is within the territory of the Massachusetts tribe. A stone fish weir from the Late Woodland period was found at Jackson Square just southwest of the district.

Europeans settled in the Highland Park area in 1630, building their first meetinghouse in the area of John Eliot Square in 1632. Initial settlers were primarily farmers. The town gained prominence as the last town before the spit of land one would take to enter Boston, with roads to neighboring communities dividing at John Eliot Square. The Highland Park area also played an important role in the American Revolution, with two earthen forts established by the Americans within the neighborhood, at Linwood Street and in Highland Park itself.

During the early decades of the 19th century, development in the wider Highland Park neighborhood shifted from farms and agricultural spaces to larger suburban estates primarily focused in the southern part of the district around Highland Park. The district had several prominent 19th century residents, including real estate

developer Alvah Kittredge, abolitionist William Lloyd Garrison, and author, historian, and Unitarian minister Edward Everett Hale. The neighborhood as a whole remained primarily residential, with commercial uses located at its northern edges while to the north and east in lower Roxbury more industrial uses developed on the filled land near Boston Neck. The area was connected to Boston by various forms of early public transportation, including a stagecoach stop on Washington Street operated by a former enslaved Black man, and later in the 19th century horse-drawn omnibus service and the Boston & Providence Railroad, just outside the district. The Town of Roxbury incorporated as a city in 1846, and in 1868 was annexed by the City of Boston.

With its growing population, the neighborhood shifted from country estates to a fashionable residential suburb, with housing transitioning from single-family dwellings to row houses and other forms of multi-family dwellings. By the end of the 19th century, the population had also shifted to include immigrants from Western Europe and the Canadian Maritimes as well as a significant Jewish population. The growing population necessitated new services, such as schools, fire stations, and water service. Public transportation also increased, with first an electrified streetcar system and in 1901, elevated rail service just outside the district at Nubian Square.

In the years following World War I, the neighborhood experienced a dramatic population shift. With transportation to outer suburbs increasing and many immigrants establishing themselves and becoming more affluent, they moved out of the neighborhood. They were replaced by Black residents moving up from the South, turning Roxbury into the center of Boston's Black community. They were joined in the 1950s and 1960s by Latino immigrants from the Dominican Republic and Puerto Rico.

The neighborhood was drastically impacted by the banking, housing, and planning policies directed towards these groups in the second half of the 20th century. Highland Park residents and property owners were denied loans and charged high insurance rates, leading to disinvestment and abandonment of the neighborhood's properties. In the 1960s, the neighborhood was targeted for urban renewal under the then-Boston Redevelopment Authority's Model Cities program, with improvements made to the standpipe and Highland Park, and some dilapidated buildings cleared, but none of the larger-scale clearance efforts seen in other parts of the city. More clearance occurred in the southeast section of the neighborhood in anticipation of

the Southwest Expressway, but demolition efforts were limited as the project was ultimately stopped.

Neighborhood activists took it upon themselves to undertake work in the community, led primarily by the Roxbury Action Plan's work to rehabilitate deteriorated buildings. They owned the Alvah Kittredge House, where their offices were located. Spurred by the lack of services and attention from the City, other community groups and mutual aid organizations developed in the neighborhood, several of which still exist today, including Paige Academy and several community gardens.

Since the 1980s the neighborhood has mostly stabilized, with ongoing efforts by community organizations such as Historic Boston to redevelop the area's historic buildings. The population has also begun to shift, with the proportion of Black residents decreasing and the number of Latinx residents increasing. Current concerns relate to development pressures and the displacement of long-time residents as outsiders discover the architecture and culture of the neighborhood.

Because of its social, cultural, and military significance to Roxbury, Boston, and the United States; notable residents such as Edward Everett Hale, William Lloyd Garrison, and Richard Bond; and its architectural history dating from the 18th to the late 20th century, the Highland Park Study Committee recommended that the Highland Park neighborhood be designated as a Boston Architectural Conservation District.

MHC staff recommended acknowledging receipt of the Landmark Study Report for the Highland Park Architectural Conservation District and providing the following advisory recommendations and comments:

The Massachusetts Historical Commission concurs with the recommendations of the Highland Park Study Committee.

Centre Common Historic District Expansion, Framingham

Ms. Doherty then presented the **Centre Common Historic District Expansion in Framingham**, an addition of a single property.

The single property to be added is located at 110 Edgell Road, on the north side of the district. Abutting properties are already part of the Centre Common Historic District.

When the Centre Common Historic District was initially established in 1978, the Nancy Eaton Jennings House at 110 Edgell Road was under private ownership. Due to objections from the owner, the property was excluded from the district. First Parish Church, located directly to the south of the Jennings House, acquired the property in 2002 and used it as program space. The church can no longer maintain the house and put the property up for sale. In the past the church has been hesitant to add the property to the district even though the main church building and parish hall are already in the district. However, the church is aware of the proposed designation and noted it in the listings for the property. The church has received an offer for the property with closing scheduled for the end of March. The new owner has already attended a Framingham Historic District Commission meeting to discuss their plans for the site.

As noted, the Centre Common Historic District was established in 1978, and expanded by several properties in 2015. The focus of the district at roughly the geographic center of Framingham is the Centre Common. It is surrounded by several institutional and ecclesiastical buildings, including the 1834 Village Hall, Edgell Memorial Library, and two historic churches. A larger Centre Common Historic District was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1990. Directly to the west of the Centre Common area is the Jonathan Maynard Local Historic District, designated in 1995. This mostly residential district includes the 1825 First Baptist Church, individually listed on the National Register in 1980. To the south of the district is Route 9 and the campus of Framingham State University, which includes St. John's Episcopal Church, individually listed on the National Register in 1990.

The Nancy Eaton Jennings House is a ca. 1840 Gothic Revival style dwelling. The one-and-a-half story main block features a two-room plan, with the house enlarged by ells at the rear and an enclosed porch to the south. The house retains its wood clapboards and windows as well as wood Gothic Revival style shutters. The house is one of the smallest residential buildings at Framingham Center, where many buildings are large, high-style single family dwellings. The house is one of only 10 documented Gothic Revival style buildings in the city, roughly split between residences and ecclesiastical buildings.

A native of Framingham who lived in Natick during her marriage, the widow Nancy Eaton Jennings began acquiring land in the area of the Centre Common in 1840. By 1841, deeds of abutting properties reference her house, suggesting the

building had been constructed by then. In 1861, she sold the house to her only child, daughter Nancy Jennings Howe, but continued to live in the house until her death in 1878. The Howes retained ownership of the property until 1920, although they did not live at the house. The property was then acquired by the Bent family, who owned and lived in the house until it was sold to First Parish Church in 2002.

MHC staff recommended acknowledging receipt of the Preliminary Study Report for the addition of 110 Edgell Road to the Centre Common Historic District and providing the following advisory recommendations and comments:

The Massachusetts Historical Commission encourages the City of Framingham to add 110 Edgell Road to the Centre Common Historic District.

First Universalist Church Local Historic District, Somerville

Ms. Doherty then presented the **First Universalist Church Local Historic District in Somerville**. The City currently has over 200 single-property local historic districts.

The district would protect the single property at 125 Highland Avenue in the Central Hill neighborhood of Somerville.

The First Universalist Church is currently for sale. A prospective owner applied to demolish the building and it was reviewed by the Somerville Historic Preservation Commission (SHPC) under the City's demolition delay ordinance. The Commission voted in April, 2021 to impose a 12-month demolition delay. Legal counsel for the proposed developer has submitted a letter to the MHC expressing their opposition to the proposed designation.

The First Universalist Church is located in Somerville's Central Hill neighborhood, an area of mixed residential, commercial, and institutional uses. The First Universalist Church was listed individually on the National Register of Historic Places in 1989. There are several other locally- and nationally-designated properties nearby, including the First Unitarian Church across the street, designated a local historic district in 1985, listed individually on the National Register in 1989, and with a preservation restriction held by the MHC; to the west, the Samuel Gaut House, designated a local historic district in 1985 and individually listed on the National Register in 1989; and to the east, the house at 117-119 Highland Avenue, designated an individual local historic district in 1989. To the southwest, the Westwood Road area was designated a local historic district in 1985 and the Spring Hill area was listed on the National Register in 1989.

The First Universalist Church was constructed between 1916 and 1923 in the Romanesque Revival style and designed by architect Ralph Adams Cram. The stucco and brick building features a tall central nave with a projecting entry pavilion at the west end and a four-story bell tower, also with an entry door, at the east end. Buttresses accent the wall of the nave, while most of the windows feature a brick arched lintel. The windows in the nave retain their stained glass. A large two-story ell projects from the rear of the building on its west side.

Ralph Adams Cram was one of the most prominent and prolific architects of the early 20th century. He worked primarily in the Gothic style, known for his campus architecture with buildings at Princeton, Williams, the University of Richmond, Rice University, and Ms. Doherty's alma mater of Sweet Briar College. Cram also designed ecclesiastical buildings throughout the United States, perhaps most famously the Gothic Revival St. John the Divine in New York City. He and his firms, Cram & Ferguson and later Cram, Goodhue, & Ferguson, have over 100 entries in MACRIS. This is the only Cram-designed building in Somerville.

The subject building was the final home of Somerville's First Universalist Church, a Unitarian congregation first organized in 1854. Funds for the first building were donated by Charles Tufts, while Gilbert H. Hood, of the Hood Milk Company family, served on the building committee of the subject building. During the late 19th century, the congregation worshipped at a brick building in East Somerville that has since been heavily modified. By the early 1900s, this stretch of Highland Avenue had developed into a premiere neighborhood in Somerville, with numerous large residences and institutional buildings. With the decision to build a new church building, Somerville's First Universalist Church raised \$12,000 and began to move forward with constructing their building. The congregation worshipped here until they merged with the Unitarians in the 1960s; the congregation no longer has a place of worship in Somerville. The church is owned by the Masons, who currently meet in the building along with a Brazilian church.

MHC staff recommended acknowledging receipt of the Preliminary Study Report for the First Universalist Church Local Historic District and providing the following advisory recommendations and comments:

The Massachusetts Historical Commission encourages the City of Somerville to establish the First Universalist Church Local Historic District.

The Massachusetts Historical Commission encourages the protection of additional significant historic resources through a larger district or additional local historic districts.

La Marquise Local Historic District, Springfield

Ms. Doherty then presented the **La Marquise Local Historic District, Springfield**.

The district would protect the single property at 2612 Main Street, north of Springfield's city center.

The building has been in poor condition for some time, and the property was taken via tax title by the City in 2015. The City sought proposals for the building's redevelopment in 2020 and have selected a developer. The developer is proposing to redevelop the site using a combination of state and federal historic rehabilitation tax credits, Housing Development Incentive Program credits, and Community Preservation Act (CPA) funding. For private projects receiving historic preservation CPA funds, the City of Springfield requires the site to be designated a local historic district, which is the impetus for this designation.

La Marquise sits to the north of Springfield's downtown area, separated from it by Interstate 291, with 91 directly to the west. This commercial stretch of Main Street features some low-rise historic buildings, additional apartment buildings further north, and low-rise infill commercial buildings, often separated by parking lots and vacant lots. The side streets have two- and three-family residential buildings in late 19th century styles. Several blocks to the south is the Memorial Square National Register of Historic Places district, designated in 1977. A few blocks to the north, the Hooker Apartments were individually listed on the National Register in 2013. There are no other designated properties in the immediate area.

La Marquise is a four-story brick apartment building designed in the Classical Revival style. The façade features an elevated basement of red sandstone with yellow brick walls accented by red sandstone lintels and door trim. The metal cornice features stamped swags and modillions. The building has a roughly U-shaped footprint, allowing for light and air to circulate inside.

La Marquise was constructed in 1907 by Louis Ducharme, a Springfield carpenter and real estate dealer. The building cost \$35,000. It is one of the more ornate apartment blocks in the immediate area. It was used as an apartment block until the early 2000s, and as noted was taken via tax title by the City in 2015.

MHC staff recommended acknowledging receipt of the Preliminary Study Report for the La Marquise Local Historic District and providing the following advisory recommendations and comments:

The Massachusetts Historical Commission encourages the City of Springfield to establish the La Marquise Local Historic District.

The Massachusetts Historical Commission encourages the protection of additional significant historic resources through a larger district or additional local historic districts.

Chairman Rosenberry thanked Ms. Doherty, and called for a MOTION TO ACCEPT the MHC staff recommendations on the Preliminary Study Report for the **Highland Park Architectural Conservation District in Boston (Roxbury)**. A MOTION was made by Commissioner Kleespies and SECONDED by Commissioner 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 recommendations on the Preliminary Study Report for the **Centre Common Historic District Expansion in Framingham**. A MOTION was made by Commissioner Ceccacci and SECONDED by Commissioner DeWitt. 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 recommendations on the Preliminary Study Report for the **First Universalist Church Local Historic District in Somerville**. A MOTION was made by Commissioner DeWitt and SECONDED by Commissioner Ceccacci. The Chairman called for questions or comments from the commission. The Chairman recognized commissioner DeWitt who said he would like to reiterate what staff reported about the church and the architect Ralph Adams Cram. He said it is not often the MHC have an architect of the stature of Cram in front of them for any kind of district. The Chairman thanked Commissioner DeWitt for his comments. The Chairman called for any other questions or comments from the commission. Hearing none, he called

for questions or comments from the public. The Chairman recognized Kathleen Heyer, attorney at Pierce Atwood LLP representing Waypoint Companies DB, LLC, and the intended purchaser of the property currently owned by the Masonic Temple. Ms. Heyer noted that she submitted a letter to the MHC supporting the purchaser's position, and recognized the limited power the MHC has in the local historic district process. She stated her client has concerns about how the City has gone through the designation process as well as concerns about the merit of the structure itself, especially given Ralph Adams Cram's reputation as a white supremacist. She stated that her client has been working since February 2021 through the demolition process required by the City, with the Somerville Historic Preservation Commission deeming the building preferably preserved at the end of April. She stated that her client believes they are entitled to a demolition permit when the 12 months expires as they have completed all requirements for the permit, and that they view the City's attempts to designate the property over their objections, as well as the objections of the property owner and neighbors, as an end-run around the City's own demolition delay ordinance.

The Chairman thanked Ms. Heyer for her comments and called for any other questions or comments from the public. The Chairman recognized Tony Barros, potential developer of the property. Mr. Barros noted Ms. Heyer's letter and spoke more about architect Ralph Adams Cram's beliefs. He stated that we as a society are starting to address some of these issues, and he is a Black developer himself having to work on this property. He noted the City's own staff report acknowledged Cram's beliefs as well as all the buildings he had designed. He stated that we have to acknowledge our dark past and the realities that people do not always have a pretty past. He stated that he plans to fight this battle as long as he can as it is bigger than just this project. There are not a lot of other Black developers and beating around the bush saying we will do the right thing is not enough; we should make changes instead. He is in opposition to the designation and believes he has done everything he has needed to do. He worked with the Somerville Historic Preservation Commission to develop a memorandum of agreement on the architecture of the new building, adding a tower, arches, and other features they requested. He was disappointed to hear that nine months of work and money will be pointless with the proposed designation. He understands that Cram is a big name but would like to dig a little deeper and do the right thing. The Chairman thanked Mr. Barros for his comments and again reminded the attendees that the MHC has no approval or veto power; the presentation and discussion are about their acceptance

of the report as drafted. He then called for any other questions or comments from the members of the public. The Chairman recognized Jason Mackey, member of the Masons' King Solomon Lodge that owns the property. Mr. Mackey thanked the MHC for their time and noted that while Cram was a prolific architect, the church at 125 Highland Avenue is not the cathedral that he is known for. He also noted Cram's racist history, stating that Cram is not someone who should be memorialized for his work, and if he is the only reason Somerville is designating the building a local historic district, that should be questioned. Mr. Mackey noted that the building is in poor condition. He stated that as a Black and gay resident of Highland Avenue, he does not think the building should be preserved as a memorial to a person whose views are questionable, noting that the SHPC's own report stated that Cram "comes with some baggage." He urged the Commissioners to vote against, or abstain from, the vote. He noted the irony of a Mason, one of the most historic organizations in the country, urging the MHC to not preserve the building, and that the Masons do not believe the building should be preserved as a landmark. The Chairman thanked Mr. Mackey for his comments and once again reminded the public that the motion is on acceptance of the preliminary study report. He stated that there have been questions and comments from the commission and from members of the public, then called for any other questions or comments from the members of the public. The chair recognized Chris Kenney, president of the building association in charge of maintaining the property. Mr. Kenney stated that designating the building would be ruination for the Masons organization, tying their hands in what they could do. He noted that they have been in the city since 1783 and own the land that the Bunker Hill Monument stands on. He stated that they received the building in poor condition and have been trying to maintain it. He stated that it is difficult to maintain both the organization and building at the same time and hopes that the MHC will consider that when making their recommendation. The Chairman thanked Mr. Kenney for his remarks. The Chairman then called for any other questions or comments from the members of the public on the motion to accept the preliminary study report. The Chairman recognized Sarah White, senior planner for the City of Somerville. Ms. White stated that she is representing the City and is available to answer any questions. She stated that the building is already on the National Register and is really a monument to the Universalists who occupied the building rather than the architect who designed it. The City also recognizes that there are differing opinions about the building and is looking forward to a robust discussion at the required public hearing. The Chairman thanked Ms. White for her comments. The Chairman then called for any

other questions or comments from the members of the public. Hearing none, he moved the motion. The motion DID NOT CARRY with two in favor and eight nays. Voting in the affirmative were commissioners DeWitt and Ceccacci. Voting in the negative were commissioners Crowley, Early, Friary, Kish, Kleespies, McDowell, Perille and Wilson.

The Chairman then asked for any further comments from the commission. The Chairman recognized Commissioner DeWitt, who said he was deeply troubled about some of the points that were raised. He stated his point of view was that the process was a political one that will be addressed in Somerville, but that the MHC was looking at the building simply from an architectural perspective. However, he stated that staff was likely aware of the situation before the meeting and should have prepared the Commissioners better, not in relation to the condition of the building but rather on the question of racism and Cram. He would like the commissioners to be better briefed in the future. The Chairman recognized Ms. Doherty stated that she will notify/brief the commission on any upcoming issues in the future. She then requested the Commissioners vote to acknowledge receipt of the preliminary study report without any recommendations. The Chairman recognized Commissioner McDowell, who stated that they took a vote on the motion of its receipt and that will reflect that they received it. The chair thanked Commissioner McDowell for his remarks. The chair called for any other questions or comments from the commission, and recognized Commissioner Crowley, who said she would second Commissioner DeWitt request, wishing the commission would have been better prepared with the letter that the attorney had referenced beforehand to provide more context regarding the vote. The Chairman thanked Commissioner Crowley for her comments. The Chairman called for any other questions or comments from the commission. Hearing none, he turned to the next Study Report.

Chairman Rosenberry then called for a MOTION TO ACCEPT the MHC staff recommendations on the Preliminary Study Report for the **La Marquise Local Historic District in Springfield**. A MOTION was made by Commissioner McDowell and SECONDED by Commissioner 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.

This completed the Local Landmark and Local Historic District Preliminary Study Reports.

Chairman Rosenberry turned to the next item on the agenda, the presentation of the **FY22 Survey & Planning Grant applications**. 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 noted that the commissioners had before them a spreadsheet with the subcommittee's recommendations. A copy of this spreadsheet is on file with these minutes. Mr. Steinitz next thanked the Survey and Planning Subcommittee commissioners DeWitt, and McDowell for meeting with staff before the commission meeting to review the applications for the FY22 grant round.

MHC passes through a portion of its annual federal budget to eligible applicants through matching grants from its Survey and Planning grants program. Projects that receive grant funding include for example historic properties surveys, National Register nominations, communitywide preservation plans, and development of design guidelines, professional staff support, and other eligible projects.

MHC is required to pass through 10 percent of its annual federal funding to Certified Local Governments (CLGs), of which there are presently 26 in Massachusetts. For FY22 the 10 percent pass through requirement is anticipated to be \$115,000.

Where funding has been available the survey and planning grant program has also been open to qualified applicants who are not CLGs. MHC's budget circumstances for FY22 have allowed us to make the program available to both Certified Local Governments and other eligible applicants.

MHC received full applications from 7 Certified Local Governments and 11 non-CLGs. The 18 projects include 12 communitywide or targeted surveys, 3 communitywide preservation plans, 2 National Register nomination projects, and one design guidelines project. The total request was for \$284,500.

Based on its review of the proposed projects, staff has made recommendations to the sub-committee on awards. Mr. Steinitz then turned to Commissioner McDowell who presented the subcommittee report and findings.

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 agree with the staff's recommendations for awarding grants to all of the proposed Certified Local Government applications and all but two of the non- CLG projects, the two non-recommended projects having substantially incomplete or inadequate applications. Commissioner McDowell noted that the round began with 32 pre-applications, from which 21 full applications were invited, 18 were submitted, and 16 awards are now proposed; so a process that brought the number of projects before you to half of what we started with. The funding level is where it should be, and we are comfortable the recommendations that you have before you.

Chairman Rosenberry thanked Commissioner McDowell, 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 \$17,500 to the **Marblehead Historic Commission** for the **Devereux Neighborhood Historic Properties Survey**. A MOTION was made by Commissioner Friary and SECONDED by Commissioner Crowley. 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 \$17,500 to the **Medford Historical Commission** for the **Fulton Heights Neighborhood Historic Properties Survey**. A MOTION was made by Commissioner Kish and SECONDED by Commissioner Wilson. 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 \$20,000 to the **Nantucket Historical Commission** for the **Town of Nantucket Community-Wide Historic Resources Survey – Phase 1**. A MOTION was made by Commissioner Wilson and SECONDED by Commissioner DeWitt. 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 \$15,000 to the **City of New Bedford** for the **Abolition Row & Mechanics Lane Survey Update**. A MOTION was made by Commissioner DeWitt 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 \$17,500 to the **Newton Planning Department** for the **Newton Architectural Survey 1946 to 1971**. A MOTION was made by Commissioner DeWitt 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 \$15,000 to the **City of Salem** for the **North Salem – Mack Park Cultural Resources Survey**. A MOTION was made by Commissioner Friary and SECONDED by Commissioner Wilson. 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 \$15,000 to the **City of Worcester** for the **Design Review Guidelines for Worcester Local Historic Districts**. A MOTION was made by Commissioner Kish and SECONDED by Commissioner DeWitt. There being no discussion, the motion CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Chairman Rosenberry, turning to the non-CLG projects, then called for a MOTION to award a Survey and Planning grant in the amount of \$20,000 to the **Beverly Planning Department** for the **Cabot – Rantoul Neighborhood Survey – Phase 1**. A MOTION was made by Commissioner DeWitt and SECONDED by Commissioner Ceccacci. There being no discussion, the motion CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Chairman Rosenberry next called for a MOTION to accept the MHC staff recommendation to award a Survey and Planning grant in the amount of \$5,000 to the **Beverly Planning Department** for the **Lynch Park National Register Nomination**. A MOTION was made by Commissioner Friary and SECONDED by Commissioner Kish. 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 \$15,000 to the **Lancaster Historical Commission** for the **Lancaster Historic Cemeteries Surveys**. A MOTION was made by Commissioner DeWitt and SECONDED by Commissioner Ceccacci. 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 \$16,000 to the **Lee Historic Commission** for the **Town of Lee Historic Properties Survey**. A MOTION was made by Commissioner McDowell and SECONDED by Commissioner Early. 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 \$15,000 to the **Lenox Historical Commission** for the **Lenox**

Historic Property Form B Update Project. A MOTION was made by Commissioner McDowell and SECONDED by Commissioner DeWitt. 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 \$20,000 to the **Middleborough Office of Economic & Community Development** for the **Historic Properties Survey Update – Phase 1.** A MOTION was made by Commissioner Friary and SECONDED by Commissioner Kish. 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 \$15,000 to the **Spencer Historical Commission** for the **Spencer Historic Preservation Plan.** A MOTION was made by Commissioner Ceccacci and SECONDED by Commissioner Perille. 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 \$15,000 to the **West Newbury Historical Commission** for the **Historic Properties Survey – Phase 3.** A MOTION was made by Commissioner Friary and SECONDED by Commissioner DeWitt. 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 \$15,000 to the **Weston Historical Commission** for the **Weston Modern Architectural Survey – Phase 1.** A MOTION was made by Commissioner McDowell and SECONDED by Commissioner Kish. There being no discussion, the motion CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY. This concluded the voting.

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

Ms. Simon set aside her planned report to the Commission on federal and personnel updates, requesting instead better direction from the commissioners on what types of projects they wished to receive background information. She stated that the MHC did not receive the attorney's letter for 125 Highland Avenue, Somerville, until 4:30 pm the previous day, and she apologized for not sending it around. She asked the commissioners if, in the future, there were questions about a person's reputation, would they like to receive that information in advance?

The Chairman recognized Commissioner DeWitt, who said he did not realize the MHC had not been notified until the previous afternoon, but stated that yes, it would have been helpful to receive the letter. He stated that he was not totally surprised by Cram's views, typical of other conservatives of the period. However, Commissioner DeWitt did not feel he was in a position to weigh that, believing that the MHC is to review the architectural character of proposed local historic districts only. He used the example of a house owned by someone who owned slaves, asking if the commissioners would erase that house to erase that history, and arguing that it could be a dangerous decision. In regards to the Somerville case, he noted that the power to establish a local historic district lies with the local legislative body and is a political process where the issues raised in the meeting should be raised. He reiterated that the letter from the 125 Highland Avenue attorney should have been sent to the commissioners.

The Chairman recognized Commissioner Early. She stated that she understood staff received the letter late, but that it would have been helpful to be aware of the objections.

Ms. Simon thanked the commissioners for their comments. She noted that there have been previous preliminary study reports for properties under demolition delay that the MHC has voted in favor of. She stated that the commissioners' comments will be taken into account, and that staff cannot anticipate what architects will come up with similar situations. She will be sure to send any future letters or objections to the commissioners beforehand.

The Chairman recognized Commissioner McDowell, who stated that he is always more interested in what the seller and potential buyer's issues are, as well as the condition of the property. In the subject case, both the seller and buyer do not want the church building and stated that it is in poor condition, which were both reasons for him to vote against recommending. If it was a unique building in better condition he may have voted differently, but the discussion about racism did not factor into his vote.

The Chairman recognized Commissioner Friary, who stated that it is a question of judgment – if something is going to be controversial, we would like to know ahead of time. He stated that he has great admiration for Ralph Adams Cram, but that if the commissioners had been informed of his thoughts on race before the meeting they could have weighed it differently. He noted that the church was not a particularly distinguished Cram design, but if it were All Saints Church in

Dorchester or the Marsh Chapel at Boston University, or any of Cram's other buildings, the commissioners would consider them the creations of the parish or the institution and not just Ralph Adams Cram. He reiterated that it is a question of judgment and anticipating controversy, allowing the commissioners to clarify their own opinions.

The Chairman thanked Commissioner Friary and recognized Commissioner Ceccacci. She noted that the buyer spoke of plans and work to be done on the site, which sounded as though he was interested in keeping the building. Ms. Simon said that her understanding was that it would be demolition and new construction. She noted that the MHC's purview in the local historic district process is acknowledging receipt of the preliminary study report. While in the past motions were made just to acknowledge receipt, commissioners had requested that staff make recommendations and wanted to include more than just acknowledging receipt. Staff have information on preparing study reports and it is their job to let the commissioners know if the study report is acceptable.

The Chairman asked for any other questions or comments from the Commission then asked Ms. Simon if she had any other remarks. She stated that she will send the attorney's letter out to the Commissioners.

This completed the Executive Director's report.

Hearing no further discussion, Chairman Rosenberry called for any new business.

The Chairman informed the Commissioner and Staff that the supplemental budget that was signed in February gives the authorization for remote options for meetings to be extended until July 15th. We can continue our online zoom meeting under this format for the time being and it may be further extended sometime after.

The Chair then called for any other new business, Hearing none, he called for a MOTION to adjourn. A MOTION was made by Commissioner McDowell and SECONDED by Commissioner Friary. The motion CARRIED. The meeting adjourned at 3:34 pm.

Commissioners Present

John Rosenberry

Dennis DeWitt

Donald Friary
Michael McDowell
Mark Wilson
Suanna Selby Crowley
Gina Perille
Susan Ceccacci
Simone Early
Galvin Kleespies
Kellie Carter Jackson
Patrice Kish

Staff Present

Brona Simon
Nancy Alexson
Michael Steinitz
Peter Stott
Elizabeth Sherva
Shari Perry-Wallace
Paul Holtz
Josh Dorin
Jennifer Doherty
Karen Davis
Ben Haley
A TRUE COPY ATTEST

Respectfully submitted,

Shirley Brown