

MEETING MINUTES
MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
February 14, 2024

The Commission meeting was held remotely in a Zoom meeting.

Chairman Rosenberry announced the swearing in Oath of Ryan Wheeler and Heather Wilson to the Massachusetts Historical Commission, prior to joining the meeting.

Chairman Rosenberry called the meeting to order at 1:06 pm. On behalf of Secretary Galvin, he welcomed the Commissioners. Chairman Rosenberry next addressed the visitors, thanking them for attending. For those individuals who may not have attended commission meetings in the past, Chairman Rosenberry explained the structure of the meeting and when in the process the visitors could address the commission. Chairman Rosenberry then introduced the new commissioners, Ryan Wheeler, Heather Wilson, Derek Heidemann, and James McCurdy to the Commission. He then took attendance to determine that a quorum was met, asking also that each Commissioner take a moment to state the organization they represent, when introducing themselves.

Roll Call and Introduction of Commissioners

John Rosenberry introduced himself as Legislative Director at Secretary of the Commonwealth of MA and Acting Chair of the Massachusetts Historical Commission on behalf of the Secretary of the Commonwealth William Francis Galvin. The chair then called the roll, and those present followed with brief introductions.

Dennis DeWitt represents the Society of Architectural Historians.

Donald Friary represents New England Historic Genealogical Society.

Derek Heidemann represents Old Sturbridge Village

Anne Pride is a Governor's Appointee.

Ryan Wheeler represents the Massachusetts Archaeological Society.

Mark Wilson represents The Trustees of Reservations.

Michael McDowell represents The Home Builders Association of Massachusetts.

Charles Sullivan represents Historic New England.

Susan Ceccacci represents The American Antiquarian Society.

James McCurdy represents the Department of Housing and Community Development.

Ashley Stolba is Undersecretary of Community Development, Executive Office of Housing and Economic Development.

Heather Wilson represents the Massachusetts Historical Society.

The Chairman turned to the first item on the agenda, the **approval of the December 13, 2023 meeting minutes**. He called for a MOTION TO ACCEPT the minutes. A MOTION was made by Commissioner Friary and SECONDED by Commissioner DeWitt. Hearing no questions or comments, the chair moved the motion. The motion CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

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 PowerPoint presentation slides. A copy of the presentation is on file with these minutes.

Hutchinson Building, (Downtown) Boston

Ms. Doherty first presented the **Hutchinson Building in Boston**. The Boston Landmarks Commission is proposing to designate the Hutchinson Building in the Central Business District. The BLC voted to accept the petition for further study of the Hutchinson Building on October 27, 1987.

The Hutchinson Building is located at 29 Bromfield Street, near Downtown Crossing. The building fills its small lot.

There are numerous designated properties in the immediate area. Directly across Bromfield Street is the Ballard Block, designated a Boston Landmark in 1983. Also on Bromfield Street is the Wesleyan Association Building, determined eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places in 1988 but not listed, and the Publicity Building, individually listed in the National Register in 2003. At the west end of Bromfield Street is the Beacon Hill Historic District, designated a landmark district by the State Legislature in 1955, and at the east end of the street is the former Filene's building, designated a Boston Landmark in 2006.

The Hutchinson Building is part of a dense commercial area of late 19th and early 20th century buildings. Most feature a traditional tripartite façade with storefronts on the lower level often executed in cast iron or metal, rising up to a brick body with stone façade and often featuring an elaborate cornice. The neighborhood has been altered in the past fifteen years by the construction of a 32-story brick tower at 45 Province Street and by the partial demolition and facadectomy of the Filene's flagship store and the construction of the glass curtain wall Millennium Tower at the east end of Bromfield Street on Washington Street.

The Hutchinson Building is 1924 Classical Revival style commercial building designed by architect Ralph Harrington Doane. The three story building is very long and narrow, only two bays wide along Bromfield Street but extending 14 bays down Province Street. The building was designed to have storefronts on the first floor and storerooms and offices on the upper two floors. The storefronts are the most altered portion of the building, in various configurations of metal, wood, and glass.

The two floors above, clad in stone, retain much of the building's Classical Revival details. The long Province Street elevation features a row of double-height arched windows. Bays three through five and ten through twelve are set apart from the rest of the building by narrower side windows with pilasters set between the windows rising to a pediment with a blind fan center. On the ground floor, the center bays of these groups serve as the main entry doors to the building, set off by green marble cladding. The name of the Boston Casualty Company is marked in metal letters in four spots on the building. A layered stone cornice and metal parapet runs around the top of the building, with stone urns at either side of the two pediments.

The Hutchinson Building is located near Downtown Crossing, the heart of the City's Central Business District. The area was heavily redeveloped following the Great Fire of 1872, when rebuilding and the introduction of elevators and steel

frame construction methods led to the construction of taller brick and stone buildings. In the early 20th century, much of the block bound by Washington, Bromfield, and Province streets, and Province Court, was owned by the heirs of carpet importer Joseph Ballard. With the growth of the area into a dense commercial district, the heirs sought to profit from their holdings.

They sold the long, narrow lot along Province Street to real estate investor J. Murray Howe, who with other trustees known as the Hutchinson Trust, constructed the Hutchinson Building in 1924. A native of Brookline, Howe became active in real estate in the Central Business District following the Great Fire. In 1889, he was one of the founders of the Real Estate Exchange and Auction Board, today known as the Greater Boston Real Estate Board. This influential professional organization has had significant influence on the planning and development of the city, and today is a local board of the National Association of Realtors.

The Hutchinson Building was designed by Ralph Harrington Doane. Born in Canada in 1886, Doane emigrated to the United States with his family in 1889. He graduated from MIT in 1912, and by 1915 was listed as an architect in Boston directories. The following year, Doane was named consultant architect to the Philippines. The US was in the process of granting the country its independence, and Doane supervised the construction of over 100 buildings as part of the US's commitment to the Philippines' success as an independent country. Doane returned to Boston in 1918, where he lived and worked for the remainder of his life. Doane has 21 entries in MACRIS, perhaps the most famous of which is the Motor Mart Garage at Park Square, a late 1920s parking garage with spots for 2,000 cars.

Because of its significance as part of the early 20th century development of Boston's business district and its Classical Revival design by Ralph Harrington Doane, BLC staff recommends that the Hutchinson Building be designated as a Boston Landmark.

MHC staff recommends acknowledging receipt of the Landmark Study Report for the Hutchinson Building and providing the following advisory recommendations and comments:

The Massachusetts Historical Commission concurs with the recommendations of the Boston Landmarks Commission staff.

North Market Building, (Downtown) Boston

Ms. Doherty then presented the **North Market Building** in **Boston**. The Boston Landmarks Commission is proposing to designate the North Market Building at Quincy Market. The BLC voted to accept the petition for further study of the North Market Building on September 27, 1994.

The North Market Building is part of the larger Faneuil Hall Marketplace in downtown Boston. The marketplace and buildings are owned by the City but leased to a private management company. The three spaces shown as separate ownership units within the building were owned by the Durgin-Park restaurant, and were kept in private ownership through the urban renewal efforts covering the larger marketplace.

Quincy Market and the North and South Market buildings were designated a National Historic Landmark in 1966. Immediately to the west is Faneuil Hall, also designated a National Historic Landmark in 1966, and designated a Boston Landmark in 1994. To the north is the Blackstone Block Historic District, and to the south is the Custom House Historic District, both listed in the National Register in 1973. Within the complex, the central Quincy Market building was designated a Boston Landmark in 1996. This Commission previously reviewed the landmark study report for the South Market Building in October of 2021. The BLC intends to now take up the designation of the two market buildings together.

The complex sits at what was once the edge of solid land in the city. The surrounding neighborhood is a dense commercial area featuring buildings of a mix of dates. On its north side, across Clinton Street, the North Market Building is bordered by a large, modern parking garage. To the east is the Rose Kennedy Greenway and the waterfront, with Government Center to the west.

The North Market Building was sold as 23 small individual lots by the City at auction on September 29, 1824, a year before the lots for the South Market Building were sold. Owners were responsible for constructing their building to specifications prepared by architect Alexander Parris in consultation with Asher Benjamin. Construction had to be completed by July 1, 1825. Units were four bays across and four-and-a-half stories tall. The center unit is distinguished by its five-bay façade which includes a walkway through the building to the rear. There are three entrances to the upper stories throughout the building.

Constructed of Chelmsford granite and brick, the building is the first trabeated stone building in the city and ushered in a period of growth for that construction method. The building has been altered in a number of ways over the years, including the application of cast iron storefronts and the addition of stories to several of the units. Most of these later alterations were removed during the rehabilitation of the market complex in the 1970s.

The North Market building was designed by architect Alexander Parris, an early 19th century architect well known for his work in granite. A native of Halifax, Massachusetts, Parris initially started out designing primarily residences and commercial buildings in Portland, Maine. But after serving in Plattsburgh, New York, as a Captain of the Artificers in the War of 1812, he became familiar with the needs of military construction. He continued his residential and commercial construction after his move to Boston in 1815, until he was hired by the federal government to lay out plans for the expansion of the Charlestown Navy Yard. He worked later at the Portsmouth Naval Shipyard and also designed a number of lighthouses along the Maine coast. Parris has 62 entries in MACRIS, nearly all of which are in Boston.

In the 1820s Boston's Mayor Josiah Quincy proposed to expand Boston's existing market facilities, then centered at Faneuil Hall. The three-building complex opened on August 26, 1826. Individual units were owned by a variety of merchants in the North Market building. Seven of the lots in the North Market Building were owned by brothers Amos and Abbott Lawrence, likely used as space to warehouse and sell goods between their factories in Lowell and Lawrence and the Boston waterfront. Wholesale and retail transactions generally took place on the first and second floors, while upper stories were used for offices and storing goods. There was such heavy demand for space in the market that several units received additions beyond their rooflines. The market flourished through the mid-20th century, when additional land filling and the construction of the John F. Fitzgerald Expressway in the early 1950s severed the market's direct connection to the waterfront and wharves.

Perhaps the most famous tenant of the North Market Building was the Durgin-Park restaurant, which opened in the building in 1874 as the Durgin, Park & Company. With the more industrial, commercial nature of the market originally, the restaurant was designed to serve the many warehouse and dock workers in the area, hence its

more casual, communal setting and hearty fare. The restaurant was in operation at the site until it finally closed in 2019.

In 1960, Boston Mayor John Collins initiated a planning process for Boston's waterfront. The market complex was recommended for a complete rehabilitation as one of the significant buildings in the area. The City was able to use federal urban renewal funds to acquire the still privately owned complex. The complex's rehabilitation began in the early 1970s under the direction of architects Frederick Stahl and Benjamin Thompson and Associates. The North Market Building was reopened in 1978 with rehabilitated retail spaces on the lower floors and offices in the upper stories. The rehabilitation of the entire complex spurred the redevelopment of a number of historic marketplaces around the country in the later 20th century.

Because of its significance as part of Boston's early 19th century Greek Revival market complex, an early civic improvement within the city, and its role in spurring historic rehabilitation projects within late 20th century urban renewal efforts, BLC staff recommends that the North Market Building be designated as a Boston Landmark.

MHC staff recommends acknowledging receipt of the Landmark Study Report for the North Market Building and providing the following advisory recommendations and comments:

The Massachusetts Historical Commission concurs with the recommendations of the Boston Landmarks Commission staff.

Putnam Nail Company/George Lawley & Son Shipyard, (Dorchester) Boston

Ms. Doherty then presented the **Putnam Nail Company/George Lawley & Son Shipyard in Boston**. The Boston Landmarks Commission is proposing to designate the Putnam Nail Company/George Lawley & Son Shipyard. The BLC voted to accept the petition for further study of the factory and shipyard on July 11, 2006.

The nail factory and shipyard are located at Port Norfolk in Dorchester, where the Neponset River empties into Dorchester Bay. The complex was historically two buildings that are now connected. And while shown as two parcels today, the whole complex has one owner.

There are no designated properties in the immediate Port Norfolk area. West of the area is the Pierce House, a First Period house owned by Historic New England and listed individually in the National Register in 1974. To the north, the Dorchester Pottery Works was designated a Boston Landmark in 1980 and individually listed in the National Register in 1985. It is just south of the Harrison Square Historic District, listed in the National Register in 2002. Further afield, across the Neponset River in Quincy, is Quincy Shore Drive, listed in the National Register in 2003.

The nail factory and shipyard sit at the end of the Port Norfolk peninsula on Dorchester Bay. The long, rectangular peninsula has a street grid that is filled with late 19th and early 20th century dwellings, a mix of single- and multi-family. Many have seen maintenance alterations such as vinyl siding and windows that removed most historic style details although some buildings retain feature such as Second Empire style mansard roofs.

Many of the other historic industrial buildings at the end of the peninsula, where the nail factory and shipyard were located, have been demolished. There is now a large parking lot with an event space looking out across the water to downtown Boston.

The nail factory and shipyard were historically two buildings that were connected in the mid-20th century. Both were constructed around 1890. The larger of the two runs lengthwise along Ericsson Street. It is a simple, rectangular, three story brick building typical of 19th century mill construction. Simple elaboration includes a layered cornice executed in brick and segmental-arched windows. The windows have been replaced with one-over-one metal sash, but otherwise the building retains its integrity.

The rear building is a somewhat unusual shape, and it is unclear what its original purpose was. It is a long and wide one-and-a-half story gabled building with a monitor along the gable. The half story and monitor each have loft space. Like the front building, it is also constructed of brick with segmental-arched windows where the sash have been replaced.

The two buildings are connected by a two-story concrete-block structure with a flat roof.

Records indicate that both buildings were constructed by the masonry firm of Frederick Leeds Pierce and his son, who lived in Dorchester. They have no other commissions in MACRIS. The rear building was designed by architect Henry

Augustus Mears, about whom little is known. He has no entries in MACRIS, although his partner in his firm, Willard Michael Bacon, has a few commissions in MACRIS.

In 1859, Joseph E. Putnam acquired several parcels of land at the end of the Port Norfolk peninsula. Around that same time, his cousin Silas S. Putnam founded SS Putnam & Co, incorporated in 1877 as the Putnam Nail Company. A native of Connecticut, Putnam was a merchant and inventor based in Boston by 1843. Putnam developed a process to machine-forged horseshoe nails that would not splinter or break in a horse's hoof, which previously had only been produced by hand by farriers. By 1860 the company was producing 33 tons of these nails annually. The company had a complex of buildings at the end of Port Norfolk by the peak of its production in the 1890s, including the two subject buildings.

The complex was sold in 1910 to George Lawley & Son, a yacht-building firm founded in Scituate in 1866. The firm was known for building some of the highest-quality yachts and were in operation at the site until 1946. The firm produced over 8,000 vessels over seven decades, including work for the Navy during World War I.

From 1946 to 2002, the property was owned by a real estate company while the buildings were occupied by Seymour's Ice Cream Company. Founded by Michael M. Samuelian, later Seymour, a Turkish Armenian immigrant, the company produced ice cream novelties such as the Nutty Buddy. Seymour's constructed the connecting building between the two historic buildings. Since 2002 the property has been occupied by a variety of businesses.

In January of 2022, the Boston Planning and Development Agency approved plans for a large development north of the nail factory and shipyard buildings, to be known as Neponset Wharf. The proposed four buildings would include residential, commercial, office, and community space as well as a boatyard. Due to the development's location in an area frequently inundated during storms, the project will include restoration of the shoreline and upgrades to the site's flood storage capacity. The two historic buildings are not part of the proposed redevelopment.

Because of their significance as sites of important and major industrial activity, the innovations of these companies, and their intact, industrial architecture, BLC staff recommends that the Putnam Nail Factory/George Lawley & Son Shipyard be designated as a Boston Landmark.

MHC staff recommends acknowledging receipt of the Landmark Study Report for the Putnam Nail Factory/George Lawley & Son Shipyard and providing the following advisory recommendations and comments:

The Massachusetts Historical Commission concurs with the recommendations of the Boston Landmarks Commission staff.

The Ropewalk, (Charlestown) Boston

Ms. Doherty then presented **The Ropewalk in Boston**. The Boston Landmarks Commission is proposing to designate the Ropewalk at the Charlestown Navy Yard. The proposed landmark has been under study since 1988, when the study report was prepared. The BLC voted to landmark the building at their January 23 meeting. The 1988 study report originally recommended exterior and interior designation, but due to the rehabilitation of the building into apartments in recent years, the interior designation was removed at the final vote.

The Ropewalk was constructed as part of the Charlestown Navy Yard and forms its northern boundary. To the south are the historic buildings of the Navy Yard along Boston Harbor, while to the north, across Chelsea Street and elevated Route 1 leading to the Tobin Bridge, are the neighborhoods of Charlestown.

The whole of the Charlestown Navy Yard was designated a National Historic Landmark in 1966. After the federal government closed the Navy Yard in 1974, approximately 30 acres were designated a national historic site and today continue in ownership by the National Park Service. This area covers the western portion of the Navy Yard and includes the USS Constitution, the USS Cassin Young, and museum spaces.

Across the Tobin Bridge is the Bunker Hill Monument. The Monument was designated a National Historic Landmark in 1961, a Massachusetts Landmark in 1966, and is part of a larger National Register district around the monument park designated in 1987. Both the Navy Yard and the Bunker Hill Monument are part of a larger grouping of sites known as the Boston National Historical Park, listed in the National Register in 2015.

The Navy Yard is a mix of building dating from the early 19th century through to the modern day, with some infill construction. Buildings are of various sizes and heights, but are almost exclusively constructed of brick or stone. The 1830s

classical granite construction of the ropewalk is echoed in the immediate vicinity by several other granite and brick buildings from the same time period, but these are contrasted by two large warehouse buildings to the south of the ropewalk, several stories tall and designed in the International style.

As noted elevated Route 1 and the Tobin Bridge separate the Navy Yard from the residential neighborhoods of Charlestown. Here, at the east end of the Ropewalk, is the Boston Housing Authority's Charlestown development, a group of mid-rise brick buildings that is currently undergoing redevelopment. At the west end of the Ropewalk, the residential neighborhoods are single and multi-family buildings primarily constructed in the 19th century, corresponding to the development of the Navy Yard.

Similar in their Classical granite construction, like the North Market Building the Ropewalk was designed by architect Alexander Parris. The ropewalk was constructed as part of a second phase of construction at the navy yard. In 1827, Parris drew up a master plan for the yard based on the large-scale yards of Europe. Classical in style, these buildings were mostly constructed of granite between 1830 and 1851. The ropewalk was constructed between 1834 and 1838 and was designed to be a fireproof building, with granite-faced brick walls and a slate roof. The tar house, connected to the south elevation of the Ropewalk at its eastern end, was constructed in 1836-37 also to designs by Parris. It was used to tar the rope that was produced in the Ropewalk. The two were historically connected by a catwalk to send materials back and forth.

The development of the Charlestown Navy Yard began in 1799, when Congress authorized funding for the construction of ships and shipyards. Expansion of the shipyard proceeded in phases over the decades, through to its closure in 1974. The peak of work was reached during World War II, when 165 ships over 100 feet long were constructed, in addition to smaller vessels.

The ropewalk itself is significant as it is believed to be the only remaining masonry ropewalk in the country. It is also notable for its historic significance, as it was a major decision for the Navy to begin making its own rope rather than buying it. Ropewalks had existed in New England throughout the 18th century. They were typically enclosed wooden structures to protect ropewalkers from the weather, but often susceptible to fire due to the flammable materials used. The Charlestown ropewalk was significant for its 1300' length, allowing for the production of the Navy's desired 210 fathom cables; its fireproof construction; and the state-of-the-

art machinery inside that mechanized much of a process that had previously been done by men physically walking the rope to produce it.

The Ropewalk continued in production use into the 1960s, although by then was only producing around 20% of the Navy's rope needs due to the introduction of synthetic materials. The production of rope at the Ropewalk finally ended in 1971, when it was determined that it was no longer economically prudent to continue doing so.

Following the closure of the Navy Yard in 1974 and the transfer of the western 30 acres to the National Park Service, the eastern 100 or so acres were transferred to the Boston Redevelopment Authority for local redevelopment efforts. The BPDA continues to own the site and over the years has worked with a number of developers and tenants to rehabilitate the historic buildings and add infill construction. The area is now a mix of residential, office, and commercial spaces with an active, recreational waterfront.

Because of its unique configuration and challenging construction, the ropewalk was one of the last buildings in the area to be redeveloped. A 2002 fire damaged a portion of the building's interior, but due to its overall fireproof construction, had little impact on the structure itself.

Finally, in the 2010s and 2020s, the building underwent a sensitive rehabilitation using state and federal historic rehabilitation tax credits, and its 97 apartments opened to residents in 2021. The developer holds a long-term lease on the building from the BPDA.

Because of its significance as an early building at the federal Charlestown Navy Yard, its role in the Navy's production of its own rope, and its Classical Revival design by noted 19th century architect Alexander Parris, BLC staff recommends that the Ropewalk be designated as a Boston Landmark.

MHC staff recommends acknowledging receipt of the Landmark Study Report for the Ropewalk and providing the following advisory recommendations and comments:

The Massachusetts Historical Commission concurs with the recommendations of the Boston Landmarks Commission staff.

The Massachusetts Historical Commission encourages the Boston Landmarks Commission to produce updated baseline documentation for the Ropewalk and the Tar House.

Chairman Rosenberry then called for a MOTION TO ACCEPT the MHC staff recommendations on the Landmark Study Report for the **Hutchinson Building in Boston (Downtown)**. He noted again that there were no recusals. A MOTION was made by Commissioner DeWitt and SECONDED by Commissioner Friary. The chairman called for questions or comments from the commission. He recognized Commissioner DeWitt who said that he believes the building is made of cast stone not just stone; and it is an elegant building. He is delighted to see that it is being retained and not being made into a facadectomy. He wondered if the Commission could add to the vote to encourage restoration of the ground floor including the canopy that was original to the building. Chairman Rosenberry recognized Commissioner DeWitt's MOTION to amend the MOTION to include encouragement of the restoration of the ground floor and canopy of the Hutchinson Building in Boston. Commissioner Sullivan SECONDED. The chairman called for any other questions or comments from the commission. Hearing none, he moved the amendment to the MOTION. The amendment CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY. Chairman Rosenberry then called for a MOTION to acknowledging receipt of the Landmark Study Report and to encourage restoration of the ground floor, including the original canopy for the Hutchinson Building in Boston. A MOTION was made by Commissioner DeWitt and SECONDED by Commissioner Wheeler. The Chairman called for questions or comments from the commission. Hearing none, he moved the motion. The motion as amended CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Chairman Rosenberry then called for a MOTION TO ACCEPT the MHC staff recommendations on the Preliminary Study Report for the **North Market Building in Boston (Downtown)**. A MOTION was made by Commissioner McDowell and SECONDED by Commissioner Pride. The chairman called for questions or comments from the commission. The Chair recognized Commissioner Pride who said she was surprised that the building did not already have a designation. Ms. Doherty stated that the main middle Quincy Market Building was designated as a Boston Landmark back in the 90's, but it is not known why the BLC did not also designate the two side buildings. Commissioner Pride stated she was curious because of what it is and what is going on there. She commended Ms. Doherty on her presentations. The Chair recognized Commissioner DeWitt who said that he thought that Ms. Doherty had suggested that the South Building had already been designated. Ms. Doherty responded that she presented the South

Building to the commission in 2021, but the BLC has not yet moved forward with the actual vote. Now that they have the Study Report for the North Market Building, they are intending to move forward with both buildings at once. Commissioner DeWitt asked if it is possible the delay was related to the restaurant ownership inside the North Building. Ms. Doherty said she had not heard anything from BLC related to this. The Chairman called for any other questions or comments from the commission. Hearing none, he asked for any questions or comments from members of the public. Hearing none, he moved the motion. The motion CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Chairman Rosenberry called for a MOTION TO ACCEPT the MHC staff recommendation on the Preliminary Study Report for the **Putnam Nail Company/George Lawley & Son Shipyard in Boston (Dorchester)**. A MOTION was made by Commissioner Sullivan and SECONDED by Commissioner Heidemann. 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 called for a MOTION TO ACCEPT the MHC staff recommendation on the Preliminary Study Report for **The Ropewalk in Boston (Charlestown)**. A MOTION was made by Commissioner Wilson and SECONDED by Commissioner Friary. The Chairman called for questions or comments from the commission. The Chair recognized Commissioner Friary who said he is very glad to see this designation. Ropewalks were essential to the development of the maritime industry in New England, but they do not survive. This one is much larger than most of them, but they were as a key part of the economy, and he is delighted to see this proposal. The chairman called for any other questions or comments from the commission. Hearing none, he called for any questions or comments from the public. Hearing none, he moved the motion. The motion CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

This concluded the voting. Chairman Rosenberry then turned to the next item on the agenda, **Preview of the March 13, 2024 National Register Nominations**, and recognized Ben Haley, National Register Director, who informed the commission that there would be six nominations on the agenda for the March 13 meeting.

The Six Nominations Are:

Boston, Columbus Ave and Bragdon Street Historic District

Clinton, Clinton Wire Cloth Company Historic District

Fall River, Home for Aged Persons

Lancaster, Eastwood Cemetery

Lancaster, Old Common Burial Ground

Worcester, J. R. Torrey Razor Co. and J. R. Torrey & Co. Manufacturing Facility

Copies of the nominations will be sent to the Commissioners about two weeks prior to the meeting and Mr. Haley asked that any commissioners who would like them electronically to get in touch.

The Chairman thanked Mr. Haley for the preview of the National Register agenda for March, and he then turned to the next item on the agenda, the **Executive Director's Report**.

The Chairman then paused to note the recent turnover on the Commission including 4 new commissioners over the past two meetings and a slew of new commissioners in the past year or so post-pandemic. It's harder to connect with one another over a monthly virtual meeting. Someone among us is reaching a major milestone, and Secretary Galvin wanted me to recognize that this year Brona Simon, Executive Director of the Massachusetts Historical Commission is achieving over 40 years of service to the Commonwealth of Massachusetts as State Archaeologist. I want to thank Ed Bell, Michael Steinitz and Nancy Alexson for providing some biographical information to present some highlights of her career.

She first joined MHC as a preservation planner in 1982. Then in 1984 she was named the State Archaeologist of Massachusetts, and now with 40 years in that role. In this capacity she has developed a trusting relationship with the Massachusetts Commission on Indian Affairs, raising the standard for joint investigations of discoveries of unmarked burials. It is estimated that Brona has issued permits for around 3700 archaeological investigations, a feat which constitutes a truly profound impact on the inventorying and reporting of archaeological sites across the Commonwealth. She began Massachusetts Archaeology Month in 1992 and has raised the visibility and awareness of archaeology for tens of thousands of citizens and residents. Through all her efforts, she has consistently displayed an innate sensitivity towards the unique needs and

priorities of the Native American community, ensuring their voices are heard in her work.

Brona was a major force in the computerization of the MHC beginning in the 1980s with the design and development of the Massachusetts Cultural Resource Information System. She also served on the Computer Task Force of the National Conference of State Historic Preservation Officers starting in 1990. In 2006 she was named Executive Director and State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO). As SHPO she contributed her expertise to many legislative initiatives for historic preservation and maintaining MHC's strong legal authority – in particular; Chapter 254 of the Acts of 1988 which established MHC's State Register Review, and Chapter 386 of the Acts of 1989 which made improvements to the unmarked burial law.

Over the course of her career, she has overseen and directly participated in review and consultation for tens of thousands of development projects, many of them major and controversial. This includes conducting the archaeological data recoveries for the Central Artery Tunnel (better known as The Big Dig), overseeing historic rehabilitation projects at the Chestnut Hill Pumping Station and the Charles Street Jail (now known as the Liberty Hotel). Her work has cemented Massachusetts as a national leader in historic preservation, and has leveraged millions of dollars in federal tax credits and private investment.

Brona attended Girl's Latin School in Boston in her youth, then UMASS Amherst (where she did a brief stint as the sole female sports reporter for the Daily Collegian), and attended graduate school at the University of New Mexico.

This snapshot barely scratches the surface of Brona's impressive career. She has conducted fieldwork in Massachusetts, Rhode Island, New York, and New Mexico; and is the author of numerous articles and book chapters on preservation topics including the protection of archaeological sites on private land, local government archaeology, Native American collaboration, and ancient sites in Boston and Southeastern Massachusetts. Published works include technical scholarship and writings for the general reader. She has taught and trained preservation professionals, attorneys, state and federal agency staffs, and students in historic preservation law, regulation, and policy at many national and state seminars and workshops, and in university classrooms as an invited speaker and instructor.

On behalf of Secretary Galvin, Chairman Rosenberry thanks Brona for her service and looks forward to an additional forty years of service from her. All joined in to give Brona a digital around of applause thanking her for all her service.

He then turned the floor over to Brona Simon, Executive Director.

Ms. Simon began by remarking on how surprised she was with all the information the Chairman was able to gather about her without asking her. She noted in particular one of the photos that was for an archaeological investigation that led to one of the MHC's first occasional publications by Ed Bell on the Hudson Poor Farm Cemetery. It was her first experience working in a historic cemetery with no existing grave markers. She thanked the Chairman, Secretary Galvin, all of the Commissioners and MHC staff, past and present, for all their support and group effort, she stated she could not have done it without them.

Ms. Simon next reminded the Commissioners that the upcoming National Register nominations that Mr. Haley just announced, and the Survey and Planning full application grant awards will be voted on at the Commission's March 13th meeting. She also reminded commissioners DeWitt, McDowell and Mark Wilson on the Survey and Planning Grant subcommittee that there will be a subcommittee meeting at 11 a.m. the morning of March 13th before the full commission meeting to review the full applications received and staff recommendations for awards. The subcommittee will report its recommendations to the full commission meeting in the afternoon for individual votes on the awards. The March meeting will require a lot of votes and she hopes to see all the Commissioners there.

Finally, Ms. Simon announced the new National Park Service Sub-Grant program from the federal Historic Preservation Fund that MHC staff are administering called the Maritime Heritage Education Sub-Grant Program. This is a National Park Service grant program that was administered out of the D.C office of the National Park Service. But the D.C. office has decided that they want all the SHPO's to take on the administration, so they are establishing this as a sub-grant program to the SHPO staff. The grants are only for educational type projects, unfortunately not for preservation projects related to maritime history or maritime heritage. The funding is not sufficient to undertake the very expensive restoration projects on ships, boats and boatyards. However there is a great interest in this program, and it is now set to go, and MHC staff are looking for applications from

historic maritime properties in non-profit ownership, museums, ships, collections, and maritime trades and education groups. Information is available on MHC's website. Applications are due April 8th. Call the Grants staff at MHC if you need more information on this program. The National Park Service staff is providing MHC staff with instructions on how to administer the program. The Commission will not be deciding on the awards or the final products.

That concluded the Executive Director's report.

The Chairman then called for any new business. The Chair recognized Commissioner McDowell who is bringing up again the matter of the Preservation Planning Division Report bringing to the commission these applications for its vote on acknowledging receipt and making recommendations. He stated that while he agrees that voting on making recommendations is an appropriate action for the commission, when it comes to acknowledging receipt, he would like to see staff or legal counsel come up with a procedure for the board to give the staff the right to acknowledge receipt of the report. He is not asking for this today, but he would like to see a proposal on making this something that can be addressed by the staff. He is not recommending changing the procedure, just that the commission is now acknowledging receipt and making recommendations on the same day, even though the report may have come in months before for review, analysis and recommendation, and there is a time lapse between receipt and recommendations that doesn't make sense to him.

The Chair recognized Commissioner DeWitt who said he assumes we are talking about Chapter 40C, and from his reading of 40C, it's the commission's obligation to do it, and he's not sure he understands the problem.

Commissioner McDowell said that there's not a problem, and if everyone thinks we need continue to do it the way we are we can keep it that way. But we have the power as a board to give something like the acknowledgment of receipt of an application to the staff. We talked about this before, and he thought a majority of the board were in agreement on this, but we never came up with the procedure.

The Chair recognized Brona Simon who said she remembers the topic a few years ago, and did confer with MHC's counsel, and will consult with her again on getting a response for Commissioner McDowell. She can't remember the legal reasons, but Commissioner DeWitt is correct that we have to follow 40C, and with the BLC their Special Act that has its own specific language. The recommendations are friendly recommendations, and what is most important is for

the commission to acknowledge receipt under the Special Act for the BLC. Commissioner McDowell thanked Ms. Simon.

The Chairman then called for any other new business. The Chair recognized Commissioner Wheeler who said that he appreciates the tribute to Brona and the overview of her career. He said forty years is pretty impressive as a State Archaeologist and said he served seven years in Florida and it was about all he could manage. He mentioned Brona founding Archeology Month and noted that last year it didn't take place. He asked if there's anything the commissioners, or MAS could do to help with that commemoration every year.

The Chair recognized Brona Simon who thanked Commissioner Wheeler for bringing up archeology month. She explained that MHC has several vacancies for staff archaeologists for which we have been desperately seeking applicants, and haven't received any applications. The most recent staff person assigned to Archeology Month left before COVID, then during COVID we couldn't have in-person site visits, So our ability here is dependent on staffing, relative to the all the other demands on archaeology staff. We hope to mount a better Archeology Month and get it back on track, and appreciate your interest in it. The commissioners should know that Commissioner Wheeler, aside from being the former State Archaeologist in Florida, is also the Director of the R.S. Peabody Museum at Phillips Academy, which has a great archaeology education program. Commissioner Wheeler thanked Ms. Simon for her remarks. He said maybe there's potential for partnerships going forward and perhaps we can explore that. The Chairman thanked Commissioner Wheeler.

The Chairman then asked if any Commissioners had any other new business. Hearing none, he called for a MOTION to adjourn. A MOTION was made by Commissioner McCurdy and SECONDED by Commissioner Friary. The MOTION CARRIED, and the meeting adjourned at 2:18pm.

Commissioners Present

John Rosenberry

Charles Sullivan

Dennis DeWitt

Michael McDowell

Susan Ceccacci

Donald Friary

Mark Wilson

Ashley Stolba

Derek Heidemann

Ann Pride

Ryan Wheeler

James McCurdy

Heather Wilson

Staff Present

Brona Simon

Jennifer Doherty

Michael Steinitz

Ben Haley

Elizabeth Sherva

Peter Stott

Paul Holtz

Nancy Alexson

Shari Perry-Wallace

Liz King

A TRUE COPY ATTEST

Respectfully submitted,

Shirley Brown

