

MEETING MINUTES
MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
September 11, 2024

The Commission meeting was held remotely in a Zoom meeting starting at 1:00 PM.

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

The Chairman turned to the first item on the agenda, the approval of June 12, 2024 meeting minutes. He called for any comments or amendments from members of the Commission. He then offered his own MOTION to amend the minutes to correct a typo in the title of the first National Register nomination from **High** Park High School to **Hyde** Park High School. Chairman Rosenberry's MOTION was SECONDED by Commissioner Friary. Hearing no questions or comments from the Commission, the Chairman moved the motion. The motion to approve the minutes as amended CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

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

The first nomination presented was for the **David S. Lynch Memorial Park in Beverly**. The applicant is the City of Beverly with Wendy Frontiero and Martha Lyon as preservation consultants. The nomination was funded in part through an MHC Survey and Planning grant.

Located at 55 Ober Street, Lynch Park occupies the Woodbury Point peninsula on the eastern edge of downtown Beverly.

The park is eligible for the National Register at the local level under Criterion A in the areas of Community Planning & Development and Entertainment/Recreation, and under Criterion C in the areas of Architecture and Landscape Architecture. Although the residences that existed on this property in the summer estate period have not survived, the property's significance is evident in what survives of the historic design features: its long estate drive, stone boundary walls, large and stylish carriage house, and vernacular laundry house, formal walled garden including a teahouse, expansive lawns, and numerous mature specimen trees. During the period of municipal ownership, which began in 1943, the city constructed a strikingly modern band shell to augment entertainment opportunities.

The period of significance is ca. 1865 to 1974: The starting point is related to construction of the earliest surviving estate features—the stone walls and estate drive—and the end point is 50 years before the present date to reflect continued significance as a public park.

Lynch Park is an iconic symbol of Beverly, representing its status as the city's premier public park and its contribution to the history of summer estates in Beverly from the mid-19th through early 20th centuries. An extraordinary variety of summer residents who were influential in business, politics, naval architecture, the arts, and philanthropy were associated with the property.

These include the celebrated, late 19th-century yacht designer Edward Burgess; President William Howard Taft, who summered here for the first two years of his presidency; and the prominent Boston businessman and philanthropists Robert D. Evans and his wife Marie A. Evans at the turn of the 20th century.

Although the primary residences that existed on this property in the summer resort period have not survived, the property retains significant historic design features, especially the large and stylish carriage house, vernacular laundry house, and Italian Garden, featuring a teahouse.

After private ownership, the property was associated for several years with the growth of Beverly Hospital, a major local institution. When the property became a

municipal park in the 1940s, the city added a wide range of cultural, social, and recreational activities and constructed a band shell to expand entertainment opportunities.

Principal contributing resources of Lynch Park include the stone walls along Ober Street and the stone seawalls ringing most of the peninsula; the estate drive that leads from the street to the promontory on the south end of Woodbury Point; the high-style, Classical Revival Carriage House that rises from the seawall on the west side of the property; the vernacular Laundry House that once supported the mundane aspects of the lifestyles of the rich; the Italian Garden (1911), which was famed in the early 20th century and is unparalleled in Beverly today; and the mid-20th-century Band Shell, which boldly departs from the classical bandstand design that is typical of municipal parks in Massachusetts.

Expectations of integrity for properties of this type take into consideration the threats inherent to their setting and the requirements of changed uses. Lynch Park retains rare estate-period outbuildings that are significant as an extraordinary example of their style—in the Carriage House—and as a highly uncommon surviving example of a support building—the Laundry House. Alterations to these buildings over their lifetimes have principally involved sections of changed fenestration. These changes reflect the adaptive re-use necessary for continued functionality within a public park, as well as the more limited financial resources of municipal ownership. In addition, the waterfront location of the Carriage House poses constant challenges for maintenance.

Historic gardens are especially vulnerable to loss. The Italian Garden has a seaside location that is susceptible to wind and storm surges, and it has withstood two hurricanes. The historic framework of the garden remains substantially intact to the early 20th century, although the level of plantings within it has changed. It still reads as a high-style garden, distinguished by its complex shape, brick enclosure walls, stepped terraces, teahouse, marble lions, and the focal sculpture of *The Falconer*. Its level of integrity exceeds other comparable examples of historic garden design that are known to survive in Beverly.

Climate change and limited municipal resources for maintenance are the major threats to Lynch Park. The seawalls, Carriage House, and Italian Garden are vulnerable to storm surges and sea level rise. It is hoped that National Register

listing will increase appreciation of the property and funding for needed repairs and climate-change mitigation.

The next nomination presented was for the **Dixwell Street Apartments Historic District** in **Boston**. The applicant is Bancroft Dixwell LLC with Epsilon Associates as preservation consultants. The nomination is being pursued as part of a federal rehabilitation tax credit project.

The Dixwell Street Apartments Historic District is an ensemble of three early 20th century brick apartment buildings constructed in the Egleston Square section of Boston, an area straddling Roxbury and Jamaica Plain.

The district is on the northernmost section of Dixwell Street, immediately south of Columbus Avenue, a major north-south corridor. Within the boundaries of the district is a vacant parcel at 17–19 Dixwell Street, which currently functions as a community garden and is noncontributing to the district. The surrounding area is generally residential and institutional.

The district satisfies Criterion A in the area of Community Planning and Development as a representative collection of transit-oriented residential development that followed the 1898 completion of Columbus Avenue's expansion and improvement. Development in what would become Egleston Square was limited into the late-19th century, prior to Boston's annexation of Roxbury and West Roxbury in 1868 and 1874, respectively. These formerly independent and largely rural towns gained access to Boston's municipal public health and public works programs, promoting development. The first wave of high-density residential development was generally characterized by pockets of wood-frame single- and two-family dwellings, although many larger estates remained during this period, including that which would later be redeveloped, encompassing the Dixwell Street Apartments Historic District.

The neighborhood's character changed significantly following the 1893 establishment of the Boston Metropolitan Park Commission. Among the Commission's first projects, Columbus Avenue was extended south from its original terminus in the South End to Franklin Park beginning in 1895. The southernmost section of the widened and improved Columbus Avenue replaced the part of Seaver Street between Washington Street and Walnut Avenue, now abutting the district. Featuring electrified streetcar lines, Columbus Avenue

provided a premier path between downtown Boston and Franklin Park, forming a section of the Emerald Necklace, a chain of parks linked by continuous parkways. Following the 1898 completion of Columbus Avenue, many streets, including Dixwell Street, were formally laid out through the area's former expansive country estates, and lots were subdivided and subsequently developed.

The Columbus Avenue project also brought expanded sewage and water lines, improving sanitation in Egleston Square and prompting speculative development in anticipation of working- and middle-class residential growth. Turn-of-the-century transit-oriented development continued into the early 20th century following the extension of the Washington Street Elevated line from Dudley Street to Forest Hills via Egleston Square between 1906 and 1909. The area encompassing the Dixwell Street Apartments Historic District was fully developed with five such apartment buildings between 1904 and 1912, three of which are extant.

The district satisfies Criterion C in the area of Architecture as a representative group of apartments built on speculation during the wave of residential development that took hold in Egleston Square during the late-19th and early 20th centuries in response to transportation improvements. Predominantly masonry and designed in popular revival styles from the period, such apartment's added density and diversified the building stock. The Dixwell Street Apartments Historic District is an architecturally cohesive group of Classical Revival-style apartments that retain architectural integrity and embody characteristics distinctive to the resource type and the period of significance. Both common forms of apartment construction are represented in the district, the decker-style and the large apartment block form, and quintessential Classical Revival details, such as classical entrances and contrasting cast-stone trim, are emblematic of the style.

The district retains integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association and is significant at the local level. The period of significance begins in 1904 with the construction of the earliest building, and ends in 1912, marking the completion of the other two buildings. The nomination was prepared in support of the certified historic rehabilitation of two buildings in the district: the Dixwell Apartments / Dixwell Chambers and the Elizabeth J. Gleason Apartments. Completed in 2023, the rehabilitation of these buildings met the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation and utilized state and federal historic tax credits. Work included the repointing, repair, and select replacement of exterior masonry, the replacement of non-historic aluminum

windows, and upgrades to interior lobbies, stairwells, kitchens, and bathrooms. All three buildings in the district continue to provide much-needed quality, affordable housing in Eggleston Square.

The next nomination presented was for the **Haverhill Powder House** in **Haverhill**. The applicant is City of Haverhill with David Lewis, a Boston University Preservation Studies Master's student as part of his capstone project, and MHC staff.

The Haverhill Powder House is sited on a small triangular parcel on Powder House Avenue atop Golden Hill (also known as Powder House Hill), in a residential neighborhood east of downtown Haverhill.

The parcel abuts residential plots to the southeast and to the north. A small wood barrier to the southeast protects the powder house from road traffic.

At the time of the powder house's construction in 1840, Golden Hill was an undeveloped area that overlooked Haverhill's downtown and industrial core. Today, the surrounding vegetation and 20th-century residential development obscure views of downtown Haverhill from the powder house.

The powder house is a single-story cylindrical structure with a conical roof. Its walls are constructed of red brick laid in common bond, which have been visibly patched, repointed, and replaced in several areas. The walls rise to a brick saw tooth cornice, and the conical brick roof is covered in concrete and protected with a plastic tarp.

The powder house formerly featured a single rectangular door opening with a granite threshold. This opening was sealed with red brick in 1883, making the interior inaccessible.

The structure has local significance under Criterion A in the area of Military as Haverhill's only surviving powder house, a crucial component to the militia system of the colonial and Federal periods. Derived from its English counterpart, local militia companies were responsible for towns' defense and public safety from the 17th century, through the Revolutionary War, and into the 19th century.

In the Massachusetts Bay Colony, towns held public stores of weapons and munitions to provide for militia members that could not afford their own, and to utilize in training exercises to ensure preparedness for future military activity and engagement. The keeping and distribution of publicly stored supplies—including gunpowder—was vital to the functionality and success of the colonial militia. Powder houses were critical to the success of the colonists' defeat over the British in the Revolutionary War and were often the target of attacks by the British army.

Haverhill first designated a place for the storage of powder in 1672 in the town's first meetinghouse; the powder was reportedly kept in a storeroom under the pulpit. This practice was not uncommon in Massachusetts in the 17th or 18th century.

In 1767, Haverhill erected its first purpose-built powder house, a structure that measured eight feet square. In 1805, the town voted to construct a second powder house. This structure was made of brick and, like its predecessor, measured eight feet square. Shortly after its construction was approved, the town passed a bylaw that each militia soldier be supplied four ounces of powder at every muster.

Haverhill's 1805 powder house was located very close to the town's industrial core. As the area developed, the risk of accidental ignition and explosion led the town to seek a new location for a powder house.

On March 9, 1840, the town voted "to have the Powder house removed to some more remote place in said town." A committee was also instructed to remove the previous powder house and have its bricks reused in building the new structure. The new powder house was erected at the peak of Golden Hill, ensuring that Haverhill's industrial core and downtown about a mile to the east could be densely settled and developed safely.

For associations with Haverhill's rapid growth and development in the 19th century, the Haverhill Powder House has local significance under Criterion A in the area of Community Planning and Development.

The dates that the Haverhill Powder House was in use are unknown, but it likely was not an extended period of time. Like many states in the mid-19th century,

Massachusetts voted to reorganize its state militia system on March 24, 1840, two weeks after Haverhill voted to erect a new powder house. The reorganization removed the conscription requirement and retained a much smaller number of active volunteers than were previously enrolled.

In addition to the state militia reorganization, major advances were being made in firearm technology. Percussion-lock rifles and Minié balls replaced older flintlock muskets and musket balls, and by the late 19th century, further advances all but eliminated the need for a powder house.

For these reasons, the period of significance is limited to the year 1840, the date of its construction and the year that the militia system it was associated with was reorganized.

By 1867, the Haverhill Powder House was vacant, vandalized, and in disrepair. In 1883, the City of Haverhill undertook repairs to seal, preserve, and effectively mothball the powder house. The door opening was sealed with bricks, and town artifacts and records were placed inside for preservation purposes. Once the powder house was decommissioned, the Golden Hill area was no longer dangerous to develop. The area surrounding the powder house was subdivided in the early 20th century and developed into a residential neighborhood.

The powder house also has local significance under Criterion C in the area of Architecture, as it embodies the characteristics and design of brick cylindrical powder houses in Massachusetts, extant examples of which are rare. It is also an unusually late example of a powder house, constructed almost 20 years after all other inventoried powder houses.

There are sixteen other extant powder houses inventoried in Massachusetts. Many examples outside of Essex County are square in form with hipped roofs. These were constructed in the late 18th and early 19th centuries and resemble descriptions of Haverhill's previous two powder houses, which both measured eight feet square.

Two cylindrical examples in Somerville and North Attleborough predate the Haverhill Powder House.

The date of construction does not seem to influence the powder houses' forms. Both square and cylindrical designs are found at either end of the construction period; the Somerville Powder House shown here is the oldest extant example in the state.

Most examples within Essex County are cylindrical, except for the Beverly Powder House, which is octagonal. It is not clear if there is a correlation between northeastern Massachusetts and the circular form as a more prevalent powder house design.

Most inventoried powder houses were constructed prior to 1820. The most recently constructed example after the subject property is the Godfrey's Hill Powder House in Newburyport in 1822, almost two decades before the Haverhill Powder House. Constructed in 1840, the Haverhill Powder House appears to be the most recently constructed extant structure of its type in the state.

The next presentation was for **North Village Cemetery** in the **Town of Lancaster**. The applicant is the Town of Lancaster with The Public Archaeology Laboratory, Inc. as preservation consultants. The nomination was funded in part through an MHC Survey and Planning grant.

North Village Cemetery is eligible for the National Register under Criterion A in the area of Community Planning and Development and Criterion C in the area of Art. The cemetery meets Criteria Consideration D for its distinctive design features, with gravestones from the 19th century reflecting the influence of the Romantic Movement, and for association with historic events, in particular the growth of North Village, a substantial population center in Lancaster that reached its peak in mid-19th century.

The North Village Cemetery is at the northeast end of North Village. The approximately four-acre, roughly triangular cemetery is bounded on the south by Otis Street; on the north, east, and west by Fort Devens; and on the west by a paper street. Ponakin Brook runs approximately east–west north of the cemetery, marshland surrounds the cemetery on the north and east, and successional-growth forest is to the west. There is some recent development to the south and west. The parcel consists of hilly terrain, with the land sloping upward from the road edge

along the south side of the cemetery, dipping down into a shallow valley in the center, and sloping upward to a high point at the north end.

North Village developed primarily in the late 18th through mid-19th centuries around the intersection of two major roads through the north and west parts of Worcester County. With the establishment of the Lancaster-Bolton Turnpike after 1806, the village extended along Main Street and included cottage industries, hotels to accommodate travelers along the turnpikes, and numerous residences. Between 1831 and 1857, Otis Street was laid out extending east–west between Main Street and Shirley Road. In this period residents discussed the need for burial grounds near village centers throughout the town, including North Village, at a March 1854 town meeting. The following year, the town acquired a parcel of land along Otis Street close to the village center cemetery. The cemetery was initially laid out with 100 burial plots, averaging 24 feet by 15 feet. It was the first cemetery established by the town for more than 50 years.

Established in the middle of the 19th century, the cemetery appears to reflect some influences of the rural (garden) cemetery movement in its circulation network and plot arrangements, although direct inspiration cannot be proven. No evidence has been found of a landscape architect or designer involved in the layout of the cemetery, and no town records discuss designing the cemetery in this manner, but given the time when it was established, the possibility remains that the movement had an influence. It is also possible that the portions of the cemetery with irregular pathways were designed to follow the topography and boundaries out of necessity rather than design intent and, regarding plot plans, plenty of non-rural cemeteries from this period feature similar family plot arrangements.

The cemetery's circulation system consists of both rectilinear and curvilinear avenues and paths that provide cart and pedestrian access to the burial plots. Grass and dirt roads extend northward from two entrances along Otis Street and run along the edges of the cemetery and east–west through the cemetery to grass paths between the burial plots. An entrance gate and hitching posts, consisting of a large arching iron gateway supported by massive granite posts, mark the main entrance from Otis Street at the southwest corner of the cemetery. Twenty-first-century cemetery signs are at the main entrance and a secondary entrance from Otis Street at the southeast corner.

According to records, the cemetery contains approximately 600 gravestones marking 800 burials. Most of the burial plots are family plots and contain multiple

burials. Gravestones are primarily marble and granite, with a few examples of slate. Interments began with the cemetery's establishment in 1855. Approximately 65 stones mark pre-1855 burials for people reinterred from elsewhere or commemorating pre-1855 burials elsewhere. Examples of plots with reinternments include the Richardson-Lane family, whose plot consists of the Richardson-Lane Family Marker, which identifies the family plot, and the 17 Lane Markers inside the family plot boundary walls.

Burials continue to the present in plots where space is available. Some stones in the cemetery are broken or dislodged, and many have biological growth on them. The root systems of mature trees have caused some stones to become dislodged from the ground or shift on their bases, and some trees have grown around stones.

Some of the earliest gravestones in the cemetery are slate tablets with rounded tops, straight shoulders, and urn-and-willow motifs. This motif consists of an incised urn, typically under an arch created by a weeping willow. Stones with this motif typically have the urn and willow in the tympanum, either alone or in a temple form with flanking columns and urns, and other decorative elements, such as columns and garlands, in the side borders.

The cemetery contains numerous examples of markers and monuments that represent the shift to a more commemorative nature of burials as the 19th century progressed. The markers vary in complexity, based on size and time period.

At least 45 Civil War veterans are buried in the cemetery. The unprecedented scale of the Civil War changed and expanded commemorative practices in the United States. Local commemorative efforts generally took the form of grave markers that listed the details of military service for the deceased. Some towns also erected monuments to commemorate individual soldiers or all local casualties. A particularly complex example of a commemorative memorial is the Francis and Edward Washburn Monument, erected for two brothers who served in and died during the Civil War.

Numerous marble obelisks mark family burials in the cemetery, including the Burbank Family Plot, Whittemore Family Monument, and Willard Monument. They exemplify the mid-19th-century use of obelisks to mark family burials. The Burbank monument is an obelisk on a large pedestal base, the Whittemore monument is an obelisk topped by an urn on a pedestal base, and the Willard monument is a short and squat obelisk on a small stepped base. The family names are carved in bas-relief on the obelisks, and the four faces of the pedestals are

polished with beveled edges and contain inscriptions for the family members interred in the plot. Most of these plots also contain separate markers for the people named on the obelisks and are bound by granite curbing or retaining walls.

Examples of marble and granite pedestal monuments in the North Village Cemetery include the Dodge Family Plot, Gordon Family Monument, Gould-Pierce Monument, and Fisher Family Plot. They consist of pedestals on wide bases with the family names carved on them. The central panels on all four sides contain the inscriptions for family members interred in the plot. The pedestals have stepped capitals with varied decorative molding and tops with neoclassical-inspired elements. The Dodge monument is elaborately designed with a cross draped in robes on the top of the pedestal, the Gordon monument is topped by an urn, and the Gould-Pierce monument is topped by a polished sphere. Many of the plots include short tablets and slant markers for the individual family members.

This concluded the presentation of the September National Register nominations. Chairman Rosenberry thanked the presenter, Mr. Haley. He then asked again whether any commissioners needed to recuse themselves from voting on any of the nominations.

Hearing none, Chairman Rosenberry called for a MOTION TO ACCEPT the nomination for the **DAVID S. Lynch Memorial Park in Beverly** to be forwarded to the National Park Service for final review. A MOTION was made by Commissioner Friary and SECONDED by Commissioner DeWitt. The chairman called for questions or comments from the commission. 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 nomination for the **Dixwell Street Apartments Historic District in Boston** to be forwarded to the National Park Service for final review. A MOTION was made by Commissioner Pride and SECONDED by Commissioner McDowell. The chairman called for questions or comments from the commission. Hearing none, he called for questions or comments from the public. The chairman recognized **Kathleen Magee, Associate Project Manager representing Urban Edge**, sponsor of the Dixwell Street Apartments Historic District and owner of two buildings in the district. She noted that the application was prepared in association with the renovation of the two buildings as well as six other properties. Ms. Magee thanked the commissioners as well as Secretary Galvin for considering the nomination and

allocating \$1.3 million dollars of State Historic Rehabilitation Tax Credits to the project, which helped to support the renovation of five historic buildings that include 75 units of affordable housing for low-income families in Roxbury and Jamaica Plain neighborhoods in Boston as well as three market rate units. The chairman thanked Ms. Magee for her comments. The chairman called for any other question or comments from the public. Hearing none, he moved the motion. The motion CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Chairman Rosenberry called for a MOTION TO ACCEPT the nomination for the **Haverhill Powder House** in **Haverhill** to be forwarded to the National Park Service for final review. A MOTION was made by Commissioner DeWitt 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 nomination for the **North Village Cemetery** in **Lancaster** to be forwarded to the National Park Service for final review. A MOTION was made by Commissioner McCurdy and SECONDED by Commissioner Sullivan. 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 concluded the National Register portion of the agenda, and 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.

City of Boston, Eben Jordan Jr. House (Interior)

Ms. Doherty first presented the **Eben Jordan Jr. House (Interior)**, in the **City Boston**.

The City of Boston proposed landmarking the interior of the Eben Jordan Jr. House. The petition for this landmark designation was accepted by the Boston Landmarks Commission on September 27, 1977. The Study Report was submitted to the MHC in April, but amended twice, in May and August. At its August 27 meeting, the BLC voted to accept the Study Report but did not landmark the interior.

The house is a double house located at 46-47 Beacon Street.

The Eben Jordan Jr. House stands at the edge of Beacon Hill facing south onto Boston Common. There are numerous designated properties in the Beacon Hill, Back Bay, and downtown areas. The exterior of the house is protected by the Beacon Hill Historic District, established in 1955 as one of the first local historic districts in the state. The area was designated a National Historic Landmark district in 1962, and became a National Register district when the National Register was established in 1966.

To the east of the Jordan House is the Third Harrison Gray Otis House and Carriage House, which both have a preservation restriction held by Historic New England. At least five other properties within a block or so of the house have preservation restrictions as well. Further east is the Massachusetts State House, also in the Beacon Hill district, designated a National Historic Landmark in 1960, and a Massachusetts Landmark in 1966. Boston Common and the Public Garden to the south were listed in the National Register in 1972 and designated local landmarks in 1977. Further to the southwest is the Back Bay Architectural District, designated a local landmark district in 1966 and listed in the National Register in 1973.

The Jordan House forms part of the solid street wall of 19th century brick buildings along the north side of Beacon Street. To the south are the greenspaces of Boston Common and the Public Garden. Neighboring brick row houses display a variety of 19th and early 20th century revival styles, all in a very well-preserved state due to the early protection of the Beacon Hill district in 1955. While some are still residences, others have been converted to professional office or commercial spaces.

Sources vary on if the double house today known as the Eben Jordan Jr. House was constructed as two separate dwellings in the early 19th century and then combined into one, or if earlier row houses on the site were demolished and the present double house was built in the 1890s.

Today, the house presents a brick Renaissance Revival façade. The basement is clad in granite, the first floor sandstone, and the upper stories are executed in brick with matching sandstone trim. The entry door is highlighted by Corinthian columns while Classical caps top the windows on the upper stories. Notably the detailing on the two halves of the building differs, and different window levels at the third through sixth stories suggests that the floors are not level at those stories.

Initial 1897 alterations to the exterior of 46 Beacon Street, the right half of the house, were done by Winslow & Wetherell. Walter T. Winslow and George H. Wetherell were responsible for many significant late 19th century Boston buildings including the Baker Chocolate factory complex, Hotel Touraine, the Steinert & Sons building, the Shreve, Crump & Low building, and the Jewelers Building, which this commission reviewed in 2021.

It is believed the left half of the building, 47 Beacon Street, exterior and interior, was originally designed by Richard Morris Hunt. Hunt was one of the most famous architects of the 19th century, with commissions including the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York and Biltmore, among other works for the Vanderbilt family.

After Eben Jordan Jr. purchased the left half of the house in 1913, he hired the firm of Haven & Hoyt to redesign the exterior and combine the interiors. Jordan had worked with a predecessor firm, Wheelwright, Haven, & Hoyt, to design Jordan Hall at the New England Conservatory. Haven & Hoyt also designed Horticultural Hall, which this commission reviewed in 2021.

The first and second floors of the house are believed to be a mix of works by Richard Morris Hunt and Haven & Hoyt. The Renaissance Revival style of the exterior is carried into the ornate finishes of the interior, which include paneling and carving executed in walnut.

Perhaps the most significant space in the house is the second floor Music Room which features wood paneled walls and ceiling. Haven & Hoyt worked with Wallace C. Sabine on the acoustics of the space. Sabine is considered to be the founder of modern architectural acoustics and gives his name to the measurement used to account for units of sound absorption. It is believed that the ceiling may have been imported from an older building in Italy and installed in the Music Room.

Aside from its notable architecture, the Eben Jordan Jr. House is significant for its association with various individuals and groups notable throughout the 19th and 20th century. The right half of the house was acquired in 1866 by Eben Jordan, founder of the Jordan Marsh department store. It was his son, Eben Jordan Jr., who heavily modified the house into what we see today.

In 1924, his heirs sold the house to the Women's Republican Club, formed in 1922 after the passage of suffrage for women. The group was a very active and progressive organization with many notable members. It was intentionally founded as an interracial organization, with Black activist Harriet C. Hall as a co-founder. Fellow founder Anna Julia Child Bird was active in various women's organizations and was the first woman to represent Massachusetts at the Republican National Convention. The club used the Jordan House as a home base, with space for women to stay and to hold public events, including a popular lecture series, a "Negro Guest Night" series featuring Black speakers, and speeches by rising female politicians. The Music Room also played host to famed conductor and composer Igor Stravinsky in 1940.

In 1951, the Women's Republican Club sold the property to the Boston Club, which also used the house as a private clubhouse and gathering space.

The 1970s saw a few different owners and uses for the building, including an art gallery, a set for scenes from "The Thomas Crown Affair," and local headquarters of the international "est" movement under Werner Erhard.

In 1976, the property was sold to Rev. Sun Myung Moon's growing Unification Church as part of their efforts to acquire property throughout the United States and expand the church. The church used the historic public spaces for worship services and events.

In late 2023, the Unification Church sold the property to a developer, who announced their plans to convert the double house into four condo units with a garage underneath. While the exterior of the property is protected by the existing Beacon Hill landmark district, the significant interior spaces that remained were not. Due to these concerns, neighbors worked with Historic New England to prepare a landmark study report for the property and presented it to the Boston Landmarks Commission, to move forward with the landmark designation that had been pending since 1977. The interior designation would have protected the first and second stories of the building, acknowledging that the third through sixth

floors had already been heavily modified and the first two floors contained the most significant public spaces.

After the draft Study Report was prepared and published for public comment in April, the current owner submitted several additional rounds of photographs to the BLC showing that the significant interior spaces had been heavily damaged and demolished. The Study Report does not provide any context or information about where the damage came from or why features were removed. Water is shown pooled on the floor in several images.

So while earlier drafts of the Study Report recommended landmark designation, the draft posted by the BLC on August 15 does not. Instead, it recommended that the owners develop interpretive materials describing the history and significance of the building, and install them in the building.

The BLC voted at their August 27 meeting to not landmark the building due to the damage and removal of interior finish.

Due to the current condition of the interior spaces on the first and second floors of the Eben Jordan, Jr. House, BLC staff recommends that the spaces not be designated a Boston Landmark. Instead, they recommend that the owner install interpretive materials at the site to tell the history and significance of the house.

MHC staff recommends acknowledging receipt of the Landmark Study Report for the interior of the Eben Jordan Jr. House and providing the following advisory recommendations and comments:

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

Ms. Doherty next presented updates on local historic districts and local landmarks that have already been presented to and voted on by the commission. She reminded the Commissioners that any proposed local historic district or local landmark must go through a local legislative process, town meeting or city council, before it is established.

In Boston, the Boston Landmarks Commission voted to landmark the Putnam Nail Company Factory/George Lawley & Son Shipyard in April, and the designation was signed by the Mayor. However, in May, the City Council unanimously vetoed the proposed designation due to owner concerns. Since the BLC was established in

1975, the City Council has only vetoed three other proposed landmarks and one district amendment presented by the BLC.

In Medford, the City Council approved the South Street Historic District at their August 13 meeting. This is Medford's first new local historic district since 1985, and it will protect a number of 19th century houses associated with Medford's shipbuilding industry. Ms. Doherty noted that she had presented the proposed district to the Commission last September.

Chairman Rosenberry thanked Ms. Doherty, and called for a MOTION TO ACCEPT the MHC staff recommendations on the Preliminary Study Report for the **Eben Jordan, Jr. House (Interior)** in the **City of Boston**. A MOTION was made by Commissioner Wilson and SECONDED by Commissioner Kish. The chairman called for questions or comments from the commission. The Chairman recognized Commissioner DeWitt who stated that he was pleased about receiving feedback regarding the local historic districts and hopes we will get more feedback in the future. He then stated that he was deeply troubled by the photos of the Eben Jordan Jr. House, and that he has followed this closely, because he has written extensively about the architects and the client. The building was in perfectly good condition last spring, and whatever damage was done from water has happened subsequently. There was a neighborhood tour through the building from which there are photographs showing that none of that damage had occurred. The City, knowing that the landmarking process was ongoing, allowed the developers to proceed with the work inside the building, which had been on hold from his understanding. Whatever we saw on the photos was done by the developer. Commissioner DeWitt said that he cannot vote on this and will abstain from voting. He cannot endorse what has happened here. Hearing no further comments from the Commissioners or the public, the chairman moved the MOTION, calling for a Roll Call from the Commissioners. The vote was Yes-5, No-1, Abstain-8. As a majority of the Commissioners present did not vote in favor, the motion DID NOT PASS.

Yes

Anne Pride
Heather Wilson
Michael McDowell
Patrice Kish

No

Ryan Wheeler

Abstain

Charles Sullivan
Dennis DeWitt
Derek Heidemann
Donald Friary

Kellie Carter Jackson

Mark Wilson
Susan Ceccacci
Ashley Stolba
James McCurdy

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

Ms. Simon began by giving an update on the good news about the **State Historic Rehabilitation Tax Credit Program** that is part of the new housing bill the Senate and the House were working on in conference. She said while on recess the Senate adopted the House version that increases the annual cap for the Historic Rehabilitation Tax Credit awards and extends the life of the program. She said this bill has resulted in \$110 million for MHC to award every year. Since this bill became law the summer, it will apply to this tax year. In the last round, which was awarded in the middle of August, MHC awarded over \$40 million to over 200 projects. The program has been extended to expire on December 31, 2030.

She noted that in the most recent round that started the first week in September over 230 applications were received. The word is out and the competition is still high but we are feeling much more positive about helping to get these projects going, especially in relation to the creation of new housing units and affordable housing units.

The chair recognized Commissioner Pride who asked Ms. Simon when the new round of applications will begin. Ms. Simon said September 3, 2024 and closes whenever we are finished reviewing the projects. She then asked Ms. Simon is it closed for this round. Ms. Simon said yes and that the next round of applications will be due on January 15, 2025. All of the application forms are available on Secretary Galvin's website/MHC.

Ms. Simon then informed the Commissioners that MHC's website moved to a new URL. The Secretary's IT department reorganized the division's websites. **The new URL is: sec.state.ma.us/divisions/mhc.htm**. Commissioner Pride asked Ms. Simon to please send the Commissioners the link to the website.

Ms. Simon then updated the Commissioners on the status of the Federal Historic Preservation Fund for federal FY25 budget. As the Federal budget has still not been passed, there is a Continuing Resolution funding the federal government that

will expire September 30th. It is expected that the Senate and the House will keeping the federal government open through another Continuing Resolution. She said the Historic Preservation Fund (HPF) for the state programs continues to need authorization and is expected to be extended for only one year as opposed to the previous 10 year authorization. She mentioned there is a mismatch between the Senate recommendation for the HPF which would increase SHPO funding across the country by a million dollars, and the House recommendation, which is level funding, same as last year's budget.

Ms. Simon then announced that Caitriona Parker is now on MHC's staff as an archaeologist /preservation planner in the Technical Services Division. Cait served as an intern at MHC during her graduate studies at UMass Boston. She was recently awarded her MA degree. Cait's thesis was an excellent study on the Seneca Boston -Florence Higgenbotham House in Nantucket using the archaeological investigation of that site as well as historical documents, particularly looking at Native American women who had married into the free Black community. Ms. Simon recommended this study to anyone is interested in the subject of indigenous cultures and free Black communities and how they were integrated into the local economies.

Commission Sullivan requested that a link to the reference be posted to the chat.

This completed the Executive Director's report.

The Chairman then called for any other new business, Hearing none, he called for a MOTION to adjourn. A MOTION was made by Commissioner DeWitt and SECONDED by Commissioner Friary. The MOTION CARRIED, and the meeting adjourned at 2:10 pm.

Commissioners Present

John Rosenberry

Charles Sullivan

Derek Heidemann

Dennis DeWitt

Donald Friary

Heather Wilson

Kellie Carter Jackson

Mark Wilson

Michael McDowell

Susan Ceccacci

James McCurdy

Ashley Stolba

Ryan Wheeler

Patrice Kish

Anne Pride

Staff Present

Brona Simon

Jennifer Doherty

Michael Steinitz

Ben Haley

Elizabeth Sherva

Joshua Dorin

Peter Stott

Paul Holtz

Nancy Alexson

Shari Perry-Wallace

Liz King

Justin Malcom

Cait Parker

A TRUE COPY ATTEST

Respectfully submitted,

Shirley Brown