

## MEETING MINUTES

### MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION

September 13, 2017

Chairman Maresco called the meeting to order at 1:25 pm. On behalf of Secretary Galvin, he welcomed the Commissioners. Chairman Maresco next addressed the audience, thanking them for attending and participating. He emphasized the importance of hearing from people about the proposed National Register nominations, saying that during these meetings, it means a lot for the Commissioners to see audience members from the areas in which properties are nominated. For those individuals who may not have attended commission meetings in the past, Chairman Maresco explained the structure of the meeting and when in the process the public could address the commission.

Chairman Maresco then turned to the first item on the agenda, **approval of the June 14, 2017 meeting minutes**. He called for a MOTION TO ACCEPT the minutes. A MOTION was made by Commissioner McDowell and SECONDED by Commissioner DeWitt. Hearing no questions, the chairman moved the motion. The motion CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Chairman Maresco then turned to the next item on the agenda, the Executive Director's Report, and called for any recusals. Commissioner DeWitt recused himself from discussion and vote on The Town of Brookline.

**Executive Director's Report.** Executive Director Brona Simon began by thanking the subcommittee for meeting with MHC staff in the morning to review staff recommendations. She said that MHC had received 29 nominations for the Preservation Awards and that the staff recommended that eleven of them be awarded Preservation Awards. A list of the staff recommendations was distributed to commissioners, and is on file with these minutes. Ms. Simon introduced MHC intern Andrew Miller, who had helped prepare the PowerPoint presentation for the nomination. Ms. Simon gave the PowerPoint presentation showing the eleven recommended projects.

After she concluded her presentation, the chairman thanked Ms. Simon for her presentation and Andrew Miller for assisting. He then recognized the Subcommittee (Commissioners McDowell, DeWitt, and himself, Michael Maresco). He then turned the meeting over to Commissioner DeWitt to report on the subcommittee's findings. Commissioner DeWitt stated that he recused himself from the subcommittee discussion regarding the Fisher Hill Reservoir Gatehouse in Brookline and would not report on that project. He said that the subcommittee concurred with all the other staff recommendations for awards. He made observations on several of the nominations, saying that the work on these projects was particularly notable. With respect to the nominated projects that did not get recommended for awards, some projects involved

only a small part of a building, some projects were incomplete, and some of the projects were not really preservation projects. Chairman Maresco thanked Commissioner DeWitt. Commissioner DeWitt recused himself and left the room. Chairman Maresco gave the subcommittee report on the Fisher Hill Reservoir Gatehouse, stating that subcommittee agreed with the staff recommendation for a Preservation Award.

Chairman Maresco called for questions from the Commissioners regarding the Recommended Projects. Hearing none, he called for questions from the Commissioners from the Non Recommended Projects. Hearing none, he began the voting process on the awards. He called for A MOTION to accept the **Union Congregational Church in Amesbury**. A MOTION TO ACCEPT was made by Commissioner Pride and SECONDED by Commissioner Crowley. The chairman called for question or comments from the commission. Hearing none, he called for comments from the public. Hearing none, he moved the motion CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Chairman Maresco called for A MOTION to accept the **Old Chapel, University of Massachusetts in Amherst**. A MOTION TO ACCEPT was made by Commissioner McDowell and SECONDED by Commissioner Field. The chairman called for question or comments from the commission. Hearing none, he called for comments from the public. Hearing none, he moved the motion. The motion CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Chairman Maresco called for A MOTION to accept the **U.S. Customs House in Barnstable**. A MOTION TO ACCEPT was made by Commissioner Wilson and SECONDED by Commissioner Kish. The chairman called for question or comments from the commission. Hearing none, he called for comments from the public. Hearing none, he moved the motion. The motion CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

At this point in the meeting, Commissioner DeWitt recused himself and left the room. Chairman Maresco called for A MOTION to accept the **Fisher Hill Reservoir Park Gatehouse in Brookline**. A MOTION TO ACCEPT was made by Commissioner Field and SECONDED by Commissioner Bell. The chairman called for question or comments from the commission. Hearing none, he called for comments from the public. Hearing none, he moved the motion. The motion CARRIED with one recusal and twelve in favor.

Chairman Maresco invited Commissioner DeWitt returned back into the room. Chairman Maresco called for A MOTION to accept **The Harvard Lampoon in Cambridge**. A MOTION TO ACCEPT was made by Commissioner Pride and SECONDED by Commissioner Sullivan. The chairman called for question or comments from the commission. Hearing none, he called for comments from the public. Hearing none he moved the motion. The motion CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Chairman Maresco called for A MOTION to accept the **Norfolk House in Dedham**. A MOTION TO ACCEPT was made by Commissioner DeWitt and SECONDED by Commissioner Bell. The chairman called for question or comments from the commission. Hearing none, he called for comments from the public. Hearing none he moved the motion. The motion CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Chairman Maresco called for A MOTION to accept the **Apartments at 165 Winter Street (Winter Street School) in Haverhill.** A MOTION TO ACCEPT was made by Commissioner Sullivan and SECONDED by Commissioner Crissman. The chairman called for question or comments from the commission. Hearing none, he called for comments from the public. Hearing none he moved the motion. The motion CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Chairman Maresco called for A MOTION to accept the **Ames Chapel in Hingham.** A MOTION TO ACCEPT was made by Commissioner DeWitt and SECONDED by Commissioner Bell. The chairman called for question or comments from the commission. Hearing none, he called for comments from the public. Hearing none he moved the motion. The motion CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Chairman Maresco called for A MOTION to accept **The Howard (67 Federal St.) & Onota 74 (74 North St.) in Pittsfield** A MOTION TO ACCEPT was made by Commissioner Wilson and SECONDED by Commissioner Field. The chairman called for question or comments from the commission. Hearing none, he called for comments from the public. Hearing none he moved the motion. The motion CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Chairman Maresco called for A MOTION to accept the **Merrick Phelps House in Springfield.** A MOTION TO ACCEPT was made by Commissioner McDowell and SECONDED by Commissioner Kish. The chairman called for question or comments from the commission. Hearing none, he called for comments from the public. Hearing none he moved the motion. The motion CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Chairman Maresco called for A MOTION to accept the **Andrews Chapel in Swampscott.** A MOTION TO ACCEPT was made by Commissioner Pride and SECONDED by Commissioner DeWitt. The chairman called for question or comments from the commission. Hearing none, he called for comments from the public. Hearing none he moved the motion. The motion CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Chairman Maresco announced that the Executive Director's Report will be moved down the agenda, to be taken up after the Preservation Planning Division National Register nominations. He called for any recusals on the National Register nominations. Hearing none, he turned the meeting over to Director of the National Register Program Betsy Friedberg, who began the National Register nomination presentations.

The first nomination presented was for the **Robert Strong Woodward House**, in the **Town of Buckland.** The applicants are Dr. Mark Purinton and the Mark Purinton Trust, property owners, and the Buckland Historical Commission. Bonnie Parsons, preservation consultant, prepared the nomination; since she is unable to be here today, Betsy Friedberg will present the nomination.

The Robert Strong Woodward House and Studio is located on a 15-acre sloping site in the village center of Buckland, a rural hill town in Franklin County.

The property meets Criteria A and C at the local level, and Criterion B at the local and state levels. It has state-level significance as the home and studio of Robert Strong Woodward, an artist active in the mid 20<sup>th</sup> century whose work focused on the landscapes of Massachusetts and New England and appears in institutions such as Mt. Holyoke, Smith, and Amherst Colleges, and the MFA, and private collections throughout the United States. The property includes a ca. 1850 Gothic Revival house, a studio converted from a blacksmith shop, and a series of agricultural outbuildings.

Robert Strong Woodward was among a group of New England painters who worked in a style known as “romantic realism”--Realist in that their work focused on accurately capturing landscapes and still lifes; and romantic in that the paintings conveyed feeling through the chosen scenes and objects and through the colors and brushstrokes that they used. Some critics have placed Woodward in the mainstream of traditionalist landscape artists alongside Rockwell Kent, George Bellows, Andrew Wyeth, and William Lester Stevens.

Woodward took up painting as a career after an accident in which he became paralyzed from the waist down. He purchased this property in 1934 to use as both his home and studio.

Woodward’s studio was created from an early 19<sup>th</sup> century blacksmith shop that had been moved to the property when the house was built, ca. 1850. Woodward moved three other buildings from their original locations on the property in the mid 1930s: the chicken house was moved laterally to become a connector between the house and the studio. At the same time, the carriage barn was moved laterally to attach it to the studio, and the main barn was moved from the south side of the house to its present location on the north side. Relocating the main barn improved the view from the studio windows. The main barn’s original site became terraced gardens.

The hillside site, with buildings at different levels, meant that the property had to be adapted to Woodward’s needs, as he was confined to a wheelchair. Ramps and handrails on both the interior and outside allowed him to move freely from place to place. And a specially adapted car allowed him to paint throughout the region.

Here is Woodward’s art studio, as it is preserved today and as he painted it in 1946. Woodward was active as an artist from the 1920s through 1952.

Here are several examples of Woodward’s work that demonstrate romantic realism in his subject matter and his painting style—intimate local scenes, 18<sup>th</sup> century buildings of rural New England, a sun-dappled roadway on a summer day, and a farmstead on a cold winter afternoon, with smoke rising from the chimney

In addition to its associations with Woodward, the property is also locally significant as a representative Buckland farm. The farm was owned from 1848 to 1871 by carpenter Joseph Ballard Taylor, and then from 1883 to 1934 by Henry Southwick, a blacksmith.

Taylor and Southwick both also farmed the property, engaging in agricultural practices typical of the region, growing hay and potatoes, cultivating an orchard, raising livestock, and producing milk and butter. Here is a slat house for starting plants in the spring; on the right the main barn.

The property is a good local example of a Gothic Revival Style house, one of several in the town of Buckland, and as a representative farmstead with its connected buildings and gable-front New England-style barn. While Western Massachusetts did not take to the Gothic Revival style with the same enthusiasm as it did the Greek Revival, this property is set in an area of Buckland that includes a cluster of Gothic Revival houses, of which this is one of the better preserved examples.

After Woodward's death in 1957, the property passed to Dr. Mark Purinton, a physician and close family friend of the artist, who with his wife Barbara made this their home. From 1957 until he retired in the 1990s, Dr. Purinton maintained a single-physician medical practice, one of the last in the region, with his wife assisting him. The carriage barn served as medical offices, emergency room, and local health center.

The property Dr. Purinton inherited came complete with intact furnishings and art; he has preserved it as a rare ensemble that includes Woodward's artwork as well as the artist's collection of antique furniture, ceramics, pewter, basketry, and glassware. Many of these items are featured in his still life paintings.

The property continues to be the home of Dr. and Mrs. Purinton. They are converting the carriage barn's first floor to display Woodward's work. They are exploring how best to preserve the house and studio for the long term, hoping someday that the Woodward legacy will be open to the public.

The next nomination presented was for the **Russell-Garrison Site** in the **Town of Dartmouth**. The applicant is the town of Dartmouth, which owns the property, and its historical commission; Holly Herbster from PAL prepared the nomination and will present the nomination. Ms. Friedberg noted that the Town is committed to the long-term preservation of the Russell Garrison site.

The Russell Garrison Site represents a historic resource that has maintained its significance over a period spanning more than 350 years. As the homestead of John Russell, one of Dartmouth's most prominent early settlers and progenitor of a family with generations of subsequent Dartmouth residents, the Russell Garrison site is significant as one of few seventeenth century colonial house sites in the Dartmouth area that can be physically located with such accuracy. The importance of the homestead is made more significant by its association with specific events in 1675 and 1676 during King Philip's War, events that were recorded by eyewitnesses including Captain Benjamin Church and are reported in the original Plymouth Colony records. In 1951 the Old Dartmouth Historical Society purchased the property in order to preserve the site and archaeologist Oliver G. Ricketson, Jr. completed an excavation and partial reconstruction of the buried stone foundation after which the Garrison became a commemorative site open to the

public. The physical location of the homestead has been continuously visible on the landscape over three centuries; first as a standing structure, then as a cellar hole ruin, and finally as a reconstructed commemorative property.

The visible site components include the upper portion of the reconstructed 25-x-25 ft. North Room foundation. While adjacent residential construction has partially limited the view shed and likely destroyed the South Room portion of the foundation, the site's natural setting at the river's edge with long views to the opposite shore have been maintained. Portions of the site area have remained undeveloped, and there is the potential for additional archaeological deposits associated with the seventeenth century colonial occupation to be present as well as earlier Native American deposits.

The site is in an open grassy meadow maintained by the Town as a publicly-accessible property consisting of the visible reconstructed foundation surrounded by a series of cut granite posts to which an iron link chain is attached. A boulder with commemorative copper marker sits outside the southeastern foundation wall facing Fort Street.

The Town of Dartmouth has become the most recent steward of the Russell Garrison Site and is committed to its long-term preservation. As a National Register-listed property, the Russell Garrison Site will serve as an example of a significant seventeenth century New England historical site that is also important for its commemorative value to the regional community.

Ms. Herbster showed several view of the site, including historic views:

Photo 1. Ca. 1905 Fred Palmer negative of Russell Garrison;

Photo 2. Detail of Russell Garrison site plan;

Photo 3. Photo of south wall with "beehive oven," lintel, and commemorative boulder, looking southeast from interior of North Room;

Photo 4. Commemorative boulder and plaque, looking west; and

Photo 5. View north across site towards northeast corner, Fort Street in background.

The next nomination presented was for the **Moran Square Historic District** in the city of **Fitchburg**. The nomination was prepared by Rita Walsh, VHB; and Rita will present the nomination. Ms. Friedberg noted that two public informational meetings were held for this nomination, most recently last week; the nomination has enthusiastic support of the city

The Moran Square Historic District is historically and architecturally significant for its associations with the development of the city of Fitchburg in the mid and late 19<sup>th</sup> and early to mid-20th centuries as an important industrial and commercial center, and for its well-preserved buildings that remain from this period. Retaining integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association, the Moran Square area is eligible for listing in the National Register under Criteria A and C at the local level, with a period of significance from ca. 1850-1967. The Moran Square Historic District contains industrial, commercial, and residential resources that reflect the evolution in

Fitchburg's economic growth in the mid to late nineteenth century to the eventual decline of urban industry due to the expansion of suburban industrial and commercial development in the mid to late twentieth century. The rapid 19<sup>th</sup>-century growth was due to the intense expansion of industrialization brought about by the power of the Nashua River, the city's expansive rail network, the influx of immigrant labor to work in the city's mills, and the entrepreneurial ingenuity of its industrialists.

The boundaries of the district encompass a dense concentration of these resources, with more modern buildings or significantly altered buildings just outside the boundaries.

The evolution of development in the district is demonstrated by the presence of contributing resources from the mid 19<sup>th</sup> century, with a single Greek Revival residence followed by Romanesque Revival and Second Empire factories and residences in the 1860s and 1870s.

The last decade of the 19<sup>th</sup> century saw the completion of a new fire station, one single-family Queen Anne residence and two commercial buildings, one of which also hosted industrial concerns and the other multi-family residential.

As Main Street in this area became more commercially-oriented in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, one large factory, the C. H. Brown Co. buildings were moved north from Main Street to accommodate smaller commercial buildings.

By 1915, the area had additional factories, most concentrated along what is now known as Sawyer Passway in the southern part of the district. These included two buildings and a bridge erected around 1905 by the Fitchburg Gas and Electric Light Company north of their gas house. More commercial/residential buildings were developed, notably the 1908 Moran Building designed by H. M. Francis & Sons, Fitchburg's leading architectural firm. Others were built along Summer and Lunenburg streets, several by John Moran, whose name was bestowed on the wide intersection at summer, Lunenburg, and Main streets.

Buildings that followed include the 1918 industrial building of the Simonds Saw & Steel Co., the only remaining building of a much larger complex north of Main Street and a printing works building that now serves an industrial purpose.

Moran Square received its Spanish American War Memorial in 1924, the triangular island on which it stands also built at the same time.

Later buildings in the district include the Moran Square Diner from 1939 and several smaller buildings throughout the district erected from the 1920s to the 1950s to service and sell automobiles and parts. There is only one noncontributing building, a small convenience store on Main Street that dates to 1978.

The next nomination presented was for the **Tyringham Library** in the **Town of Tyringham**. The nomination was prepared by Neil Larson, Larson Fisher Associates,

Neil will present the nomination. Ms. Friedberg noted that letter of support was received from the Board of Selectmen.

In the words of its designer, John A. Scott, “the handsome library and town building... is constructed of round, lichen-covered field stone and red tile, with the interior finished in natural woods and a huge rustic stone chimney. The ground measurement is 54 x 33 feet... Besides the library apartments, consisting of one large room, an alcove and two spacious galleries, there are rooms for the selectmen and town clerk... The original plans, drawn by John A. Scott, were amplified and perfected by H. Neill Wilson.”

The building’s stonework is its most distinguishing feature. Specifications called for the walls to be built of native stone “laid as artistically as the sums raised shall allow.” Story has it that local volunteers helped collect the materials. Stones were to be naturally faced and free from drill or hammer marks with joints on the exterior raked out to a depth of two inches. The contractor awarded the job, Frank W. Kane of nearby Housatonic, Massachusetts, selected the largest and best stones for use on the front wall and laid in an irregular coursing to create a carefully-planned rustic appearance. The largest, flattest stones were used in the corners and jambs for the bay window.

Initially, the architect’s specifications called for “the best red cedar shingles” to cover the hipped roof. This cost-saving measure was later amended to a choice of material: tile or slate, dependent on the funding. Terra cotta tiles were preferred but more expensive, with the end result indicating the outcome. Part of the roof contract probably included the sheet metal entablature that distinguishes roof edges on all four sides of the building. Unusual in its contradictory Classical design, it is composed of a tall frieze with a thin molding band near the base and dentils along the top; closely-spaced stamped modillions run the length of the deep soffits.

The interior of the library is distinguished by the exposure of the trussed roof structure fabricated of native wood and a tall stone chimney in which a panel of fossilized stones is embedded just above a stone mantelshef. The oak woodwork in the room includes: door and window trim, window seats in the bay windows, upper gallery railings and stairs, and a number of surviving bookshelves were made by Henry W. Stedman, a local carpenter. Mission-style oak furniture was made by James A. Rice, a furniture maker and undertaker from Lee. Until 1920, heat was provided by a cast iron stove that local farmer William W. Hale donated in 1905. The building was wired for electric lights at the outset with lines running from the neighboring factory building. The original southern pine flooring has been covered with a vinyl material.

When built, the town section contained one large meeting room in the front with a smaller documents storage room and a toilet room partitioned in the rear. The post office took over the space in 1973 and, leaving the rear partitions in place, created a new enclosure in the front room with mailboxes on two sides accessed by passageways along the front and end walls. Floors and walls in the public areas have been resurfaced leaving a bead board ceiling intact but painted. Woodwork in the rear section, including the ceiling, remains intact and unpainted.

In 1937 a war memorial was constructed in the yard on the northerly side of the property, just beyond the library entrance. Designed by Henry Hudson Kitson, who lived in the town, it is comprised of a round plaque with an acanthus border cast in bronze. The roundel contains the text: TO THE MEN AND WOMEN OF TYRINGHAM WHO RESPONDED TO THE CALL OF THE NATION IN TIMES OF NEED / PEACE BE WITH YOU ALWAYS. The text is framed by two torches on the sides, a five-pointed star at the top and the dates 1739-1939 denoting the bicentennial of the incorporation of the town, the event that inspired the memorial. On the outside of the torches along the rim of the disc are the words BY DUTY DONE (left) IS HONOR WON (right). The casting is attached to the center of an oblong boulder mounted on a masonry base and set within an enclosing cedar hedge. Hydrangeas have been planted in front and grass has been permitted to grow on top of the boulder either by accident or design.

The Tyringham Library, completed in 1905, is architecturally and historically significant as a distinctive example of a small-town public library. As such, it meets National Register criteria A and C at a local level of significance and retains integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling and association to a high degree. Under criterion A, the library is the culmination of the rural community's effort to build a permanent home for its lending library and create a cultural landmark. Libraries were an important component in late-19<sup>th</sup>-century New England town planning, symbolizing the maturation of settlements, a commitment to literacy and continuing education and, along with other civic buildings on the town green, a pride of place. Libraries were also testaments to local philanthropy; they often were the product of the largess of a local benefactor. Such individualistic largess created local libraries of distinguished design throughout the region. After the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, Carnegie libraries became the norm, which changed the nature of library design and construction, as well as financing. The Tyringham Library was built through local philanthropy, but by no one individual. Rather, it was conceived and created through the dogged efforts of a committee of native and summer residents that raised the modest costs through local subscription.

By 1902, when the project was launched, Berkshire County in Western Massachusetts had become a major summer destination for wealthy New Yorkers who built architect-designed "cottages" akin to those on the North Shore of Long Island and Newport, Rhode Island. A rural backwater off the beaten track, Tyringham attracted summer residents with literary and artistic interests who appreciated its pastoral qualities; most took over and renovated existing farms and an abandoned Shaker colony. Richard Watson Gilder, editor of *Century Magazine*, who rubbed elbows with all sorts of celebrities in the arts, letters, and politics, was a central figure in the Tyringham summer community. Although to a far lesser degree, so was newspaperman John A. Scott, who with his father-in-law, Lucian B. Moore, proprietor of the boarding house that had been the first introduction many summer residents had to the town, organized the effort to build a new library. In contrast to their neighbors in Stockbridge and Lenox, the Tyringham group prided themselves in being a part of the native community. This perspective resulted in a library building modest in scale, yet rich in materials and craftsmanship. John A. Scott conceived a preliminary design for the library, passing those ideas onto country house architect H.

Neill Wilson of Pittsfield, Massachusetts. Wilson developed working plans and specifications and likely selected the contractors, to build a small, modest building with distinctive design characteristics and materials that were available only through the network of architects and builders involved in the construction of country houses. Neither the masonry, the tile roof, nor millwork employed in the construction of the library would have been available outside of the country house context. However, the Tyringham Library is a rare instance where those sophisticated elements were successfully conditioned to fit a historic rural town center.

The artist responsible for the Tyringham War Monument was Henry Hudson Kitson, an American sculptor known for his work on Civil War monuments and memorials. Kitson is best known for one of his earliest public sculptures: The Minuteman statue in Lexington, Massachusetts, erected in 1900. With its success, he was asked to create similar monuments in places like Framingham, Massachusetts and Cedar Rapids, Iowa. In the Boston area, he also created statues for David Farragut in South Boston (1881), Roger Conant in Salem, Robert Burns in the Back Bay Fens, and the Pilgrim Maiden in Plymouth (1922). He and his wife Theo Kitson, also a sculptor, contributed numerous statues and sculptural elements for monuments at Vicksburg National Military Park in Virginia.

This concluded the presentation of National Register nominations. Chairman Maresco thanked the presenters and Ms. Friedberg. The chairman called for a MOTION to accept the MHC staff recommendation that the nomination for the **Robert Strong Woodward House and Studio** in the **Town of Buckland** be forwarded to the National Park Service for final review. A MOTION was made by Commissioner Pride and SECONDED by Commissioner DeWitt. Chairman Maresco called for questions or comments from the commission. He recognized Commissioner DeWitt, who said it's not unusual to see properties where things have been moved and that almost everything was moved here, but it's inherent in the nature in this particular property and that the moving of all of these buildings was part of the story. He added that he is struck by the degree of intactness of all the interior furnishings. He said it reminded him of the property in Taunton, the Rhodes Factory, which had all of its equipment intact and we knew that the family was trying to memorialize it before it was sold and converted into something else. He said that the intent to keep the Woodward property intact is unusual, and that he finds this delightful, and that he strongly encourages whatever can be done to preserve both the property and its collections. The chairman thanked Commissioner DeWitt and called for any other questions or comments from the commission. Hearing none, he then called for any 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 **Russell Garrison** in the **Town of Dartmouth** be forwarded to the National Park Service for final review. A MOTION was made by Commissioner Bell and SECONDED by Commissioner Crowley. Chairman Maresco called for questions or comments from the commission. He recognized Commissioner DeWitt, who said that this property presents some interesting problems for us and asking Brona Simon to

comment on them. In particular he has questions about the walls—they are not the original walls but are a hypothetical reconstruction. Are they being nominated as a hypothetical reconstruction? He assumes that the site is eligible with or without the reconstructed walls. The chairman then recognized Executive Director Brona Simon, who said the reconstruction is based on archaeologist Oliver Ricketson's research and his theory of what the site would have looked like. The Harvard team did not dig the entire site, so there are still areas that may have the remains of outbuildings, trash and sheet refuse, and perhaps Native American camps. The chairman thanked Ms. Simon for her comments, and then called for follow-up comments. Commissioner DeWitt asked about the photos of the iron chain, which looked like some parts of the chain were not historic material. Ms. Herbster of PAL said the iron chain and the posts were installed in 1951, the same time the plaque was installed. The chairman thanked the commissioners and called for any other questions or comments from the commission and then called for any further 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 **Moran Square Historic District** in **Fitchburg** be forwarded to the National Park Service for final review. A MOTION was made by Commissioner Kish and SECONDED by Commissioner Field. The chairman called for any questions or comments from the commission. Hearing none, he called for 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 **Tyringham Library** in the **Town of Tyringham** be forwarded to the National Park Service for final review. A MOTION was made by Commissioner McDowell and SECONDED by Commissioner Wilson. The chairman called for any questions or comments from the commission. Hearing none, he called for comments from the public. Hearing none, he moved the motion. The motion CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

This concluded the National Register voting. Chairman Maresco thanked the audience for taking time out of their busy schedules to be present. He then turned back to Executive Director Brona Simon for the Director's Report.

Ms. Simon said that Preservation Planner Ryan Maciej has decided to leave his position as an architectural reviewer at the MHC and return to his home in Minnesota, to take on new preservation challenges there. This is his last week here at MHC. MHC will be searching for candidates to fill his position.

Ms. Simon said that Commissioner Friary asked that information regarding the passing of Abbott Lowell Cummings be distributed to the Commissioners. A memorial service will be held for him on October 12<sup>th</sup> at the Old West Church in Boston, followed by a reception.

Next Ms. Simon gave an update on the Acton Church CPA lawsuit (Caplan vs. the town of Acton) in the state's Supreme Judicial Court. The Plaintiff alleges that the Town of Acton violated the anti-aid clause in the Massachusetts Constitution, which prevents the state's aid to religious institutions or religious practice in our state, similar to the first amendment and the U.S. Constitution. In this case, the CPA funding in Acton had been given to the Acton Church to do exterior repairs including repairs on stained-glass window. The lower court had ruled against the Plaintiff because the work was done to preserve the exterior of the church, which is a historic building, in accordance with the historic preservation requirements of CPA funding. The Plaintiffs appealed to the SJC, which recently heard oral arguments. The attorney general filed an Amicus Brief and the MHC's general counsel assisted in its writing because the MPPF program is similar. The SJC decided to hear the case and have oral arguments presented to them even though two months ago the Supreme Court had made a decision on a case in Missouri that was very similar to this argument.

Ms. Simon then reported on a new bill regarding the state historic rehabilitation tax credit program. She explained that Secretary Galvin and Chairman Maresco worked with the Joint Committee on Revenue, where three bills had been filed to change the state tax credit program including one bill that proposed to move the program out of MHC and put it in DHCD. The three previous bills have been replaced with a new bill H3858. H3868 proposes to increase the annual cap from fifty million a year to sixty million a year and to extend the program to 2027. Chairman Maresco said each chair of the committee was helpful because they were aware of historic tax credit projects in their districts, recognizing the economic benefits. The bill has been referred to Ways and Means.

Ms. Simon reported on the status of the MHC's federal funding. The new federal fiscal year starts on October 1<sup>st</sup>. Congress passed a Continuing Resolution for FY18 to extend the spending cap to include relief for Hurricane Harvey and to keep the federal government operating until December. The continuing resolution is at FY17 level funding. She reported that a number of the legislators on the house side filed a new bill HR3354 to restore historic preservation funds to FY17 level to oppose the president's recommendation.

Finally, Ms. Simon announced that October is Archaeology Month and invited the commissioners to take posters and calendars. She thanked MHC staff Linda Santoro for all her hard work.

**New Business:**

Commissioner Fiori announced that he is retiring from the Massachusetts Historical Society in October 2017, but that he will remain a Commissioner for the rest of his term, staying until the spring.

Hearing no further discussion, the chairman called for a MOTION to adjourn. A MOTION was made by Commissioner DeWitt and SECONDED by Commissioner McDowell. The meeting adjourned at 2:57 pm.

Commissioners Present

MICHAEL MARESCO

GEORGE BELL

JIM CRISSMAN

SUANNA SELBY CROWLEY

DENNIS DEWITT

CY FIELD

DENNIS FIORI

MICHAEL MCDOWELL

ANNE PRIDE

CHARLES SULLIVAN

MARK WILSON

JONATHAN COSCO

PATRICE KISH

Staff Present

BRONA SIMON

SHIRLEY BROWN

BETSY FRIEDBERG

NANCY MAIDA

MICHAEL STEINITZ

PETER STOTT

SHARI PERRY-WALLACE

A TRUE COPY ATTEST

Respectfully submitted,  
Shirley Brown