



Cambridge Historical Commission

Cambridge Historical Commission, City Hall Annex, 57 Inman Street, Cambridge, Massachusetts 02139. 617/349-4683



William B. King, *Chairman*, Allison M. Crump, *Vice Chairman*, Charles M. Sullivan, *Executive Director*.
Charles W. Eliot 2nd, Dorothy LeMessurier, Robert G. Neiley, Joseph G. Sakey, John W. Whisnant,
Commission Members. M. Wyllis Bibbins, Suzanne R. Green, Anthony C. Platt, *Alternates*.

February 7, 1992

RECEIVED BY
OFFICE OF CITY CLERK
1992 FEB 11 AM 9:13
CAMBRIDGE MA.

To: Joseph Connarton, City Clerk

From: Charles M. Sullivan, Executive Director
Cambridge Historical Commission

Re: Possible Landmark Designation of 53 Church Street

The National Park Service has proposed to designate the former Cambridge School of Architecture and Landscape Architecture (known historically as the Torrey Hancock House) at 53 Church Street as a National Historic Landmark in conjunction with a nation-wide search for sites significant in the history of women in America.

The Cambridge School of Architecture and Landscape Architecture was founded to provide professional training for women. When Katherine Brooks was denied admission to Harvard's School of Architecture in 1915, Professor James Sturgis Pray recruited Henry Frost, a young instructor, to tutor her. In 1916, Frost began the Cambridge School in his architectural office on Boylston Street with six students, who took a three-and-a-half-year curriculum plus an apprenticeship to earn their degree.

In 1928, an alumna purchased the Torrey Hancock House from the Cantabrigia Club and leased it to the school. In the same year, Frost and his partner, Eleanor Raymond, a 1919 graduate, designed a two-story brick addition with steel factory sash for drafting rooms, which accommodated up to sixty students and a faculty of fifteen. The school was affiliated with Smith College in 1932 but closed in 1942.

The site has been owned by Harvard University for many years. It was listed on the National Register of Historic Places as a contributing building in the Harvard Square Historic District in 1988. Designation as a National Historic Landmark will not provide any further protection for the property unless the owner agrees to enter a binding agreement with the National Park Service.

COMMUNICATIONS & REPORTS
FROM CITY OFFICERS

5.146

Comm. from the City Clerk transmitting
a communication from Charles M. Sullivan,
Executive Director of the Cambridge
Historical Commission regarding the
possible landmark designation of 53
Church Street by the National Park
Service of the former Cambridge School of
Architecture and Landscape Architecture.

In City Council,

February 24, 1992

Placed on file