



# City of Cambridge

COUNCILLOR DUEHAY

(Agenda Item No. 5A)

IN CITY COUNCIL

January 23, 1989

ORDERED:

That the Farwell-Russell Store, 12 Bow Street, be designated as a protected landmark pursuant to Chapter Two, Article XVI, Section 2-147(k) of the Code of the City of Cambridge, as recommended by vote of the Cambridge Historical Commission on December 1, 1988. The premises so designated are defined as Parcel 21 of Assessors' Map 133.

This designation is justified by its associations with the broad architectural and economic history of Harvard Square and the city and by its historic and architectural significance. As the only intact 19th century commercial building surviving in Harvard Square, the Farwell-Russell Store is a unique example of its period and type. Moved three times in its history, from the heart of federal period Harvard Square, out Massachusetts Avenue to Plympton Street and finally to its present location, the building reflects the expansion of Harvard Square commerce over the 19th century.

Architecturally, the store mirrors the changing character of the Square from an unassuming group of wood frame buildings to an urban center with stylish and substantial buildings.

The effect of this designation shall be that no construction activity can take place within the designated landmark area, and no action can be taken affecting the appearance of the Farwell-Russell Store, that would in either case be visible from a public way without review by the Cambridge Historical Commission and the issuance of a Certificate of Appropriateness, Hardship or Non-Applicability, as the case may be. In making determinations, the Commission shall be guided by the terms of the landmark designation report, and by section VII, Standards for Design Review, and by the applicable sections of Ordinance 1002.

In City Council January 23, 1989.

Adopted by the affirmative vote of 9 members.

Attest:- Joseph E. Connarton, City Clerk.

A true copy;

*Joseph E. Connarton*

ATTEST:-

Joseph E. Connarton, City Clerk.



# City of Cambridge

COUNCILLOR DUEHAY

(Agenda Item No. 5B)

IN CITY COUNCIL

January 23, 1989

ORDERED:

That the William Brattle House, 42 Brattle Street, be designated as a protected landmark pursuant to Chapter Two, Article XVI, Section 2-147(k) of the Code of the City of Cambridge, as recommended by vote of the Cambridge Historical Commission on December 1, 1988. The premises so designated are defined as Parcel 32 of Assessors' Map 168.

This designation is justified by the important associations of the building with historic persons and events and with the broad architectural and social history of the City of Cambridge. Specifically, it is associated with General William Brattle, scion of an important Colonial family and a prominent Tory political and military figure, and with the Revolutionary War in Cambridge, during which time the house served as the residence of Major Thomas Mifflin, aide-de-camp to General Washington and commissary-general of the Continental Army. For the last 99 years, the William Brattle House has been associated with the Cambridge Social Union and its descendant, the Cambridge Center for Adult Education, institutions that have made an important contribution to Cambridge's social and educational life. Architecturally and historically, the William Brattle House is a significant and rare surviving example of Early Georgian architecture and an important reminder of the city's 18th century character. The Brattle House and its setting are critical to the diversity and varied open spaces of this stretch of Brattle Street and contribute significantly to the streetscape.

The effect of this designation shall be that no construction activity can take place within the designated landmark area, and no action can be taken affecting the appearance of the William Brattle House, that would in either case be visible from a public way without review by the Cambridge Historical Commission and the issuance of a Certificate of Appropriateness, Hardship or Non-Applicability, as the case may be. In making determinations, the Commission shall be guided by the terms of the landmark designation report, and by section VII, Standards for Design Review, and by the applicable sections of Ordinance 1002.

In City Council January 23, 1989.

Adopted by the affirmative vote of 9 members.

Attest:- Joseph E. Connarton, City Clerk.

A true copy:

ATTEST:-

*Joseph E. Connarton*

Joseph E. Connarton, City Clerk.



# City of Cambridge

COUNCILLOR DUEHAY

(Agenda Item No. 5C)

IN CITY COUNCIL

January 23, 1989

ORDERED:

That the Dexter Pratt House, 54 Brattle Street, be designated as a protected landmark pursuant to Chapter Two, Article XVI, Section 2-147(k) of the Code of the City of Cambridge, as recommended by vote of the Cambridge Historical Commission on December 1, 1988. The premises so designated are defined as Parcel 57 of Assessors' Map 168.

This designation is justified by the important associations of the building with historic persons and with the broad cultural history of the City of Cambridge. Specifically, it is associated with Dexter Pratt, the hero of Henry Wadsworth Longfellow's poem, "The Village Blacksmith", and with the poem itself, as the only extant reminder of the site of Pratt's blacksmith house and chestnut tree, two of the best known and most enduring images of Cambridge literary life. Architecturally, the Dexter Pratt House is a well-preserved example of vernacular Federal architecture and an important reminder of the 19th century character of lower Brattle Street. The Pratt House and its setting are critical to the diversity and varied open spaces of lower Brattle Street and contribute significantly to the streetscape.

The effect of this designation shall be that no construction activity can take place within the designated landmark area, and no action can be taken affecting the appearance of the Dexter Pratt House, that would in either case be visible from a public way without review by the Cambridge Historical Commission and the issuance of a Certificate of Appropriateness, Hardship or Non-Applicability, as the case may be. In making determinations, the Commission shall be guided by the terms of the landmark designation report, and by section VII, Standards for Design Review, and by the applicable sections of Ordinance 1002.

In City Council January 23, 1989.

Adopted by the affirmative vote of 9 members.

Attest:- Joseph E. Connarton, City Clerk.

A true copy;

ATTEST:

*Joseph E. Connarton*

Joseph E. Connarton, City Clerk.



# City of Cambridge

COUNCILLOR DUEHAY

(Agenda Item No. 5D)

IN CITY COUNCIL

January 23, 1989

ORDERED: That the Hyde-Taylor House, 96 Winthrop Street, be designated as a protected landmark pursuant to Chapter Two, Article XVI, Section 2-147(k) of the Code of the City of Cambridge, as recommended by vote of the Cambridge Historical Commission on December 1, 1988. The premises so designated are defined as Parcel 19 of Assessors' Map 162.

This designation is justified by the important associations of the building with the broad architectural and social history of the City of Cambridge and for its architectural significance, in terms of its period, style and method of construction. It is significant individually and in the context of a well-preserved group of early 19th century houses on Winthrop Street. It is a good example of the Greek Revival style and evokes an important period in the city's history, when Cambridge changed from a small college town to a diverse, populous industrial city. In addition, the house is among the first houses built in the city that can be identified with a specific housewright, Isaac Hyde.

The effect of this designation shall be that no construction activity can take place within the designated landmark area, and no action can be taken affecting the appearance of the Hyde-Taylor House, that would in either case be visible from a public way without review by the Cambridge Historical Commission and the issuance of a Certificate of Appropriateness, Hardship or Non-Applicability, as the case may be. In making determinations, the Commission shall be guided by the terms of the landmark designation report, and by section VII, Standards for Design Review, and by the applicable sections of Ordinance 1002.

In City Council January 23, 1989.

Adopted by the affirmative vote of 9 members.

Attest:- Joseph E. Connarton, City Clerk.

A true copy;

ATTEST:-

*Joseph E. Connarton*

Joseph E. Connarton, City Clerk.



# City of Cambridge

COUNCILLOR DUEHAY

(Agenda Item No. 5E)

IN CITY COUNCIL

January 23, 1989

ORDERED:

That the Cox-Hicks House, 98 Winthrop Street, be designated as a protected landmark pursuant to Chapter Two, Article XVI, Section 2-147(k) of the Code of the City of Cambridge, as recommended by vote of the Cambridge Historical Commission on December 1, 1988. The premises so designated are defined as Parcel 18 of Assessors' Map 162.

This designation is justified by the Cox-Hick's House's important associations with the broad architectural and social history of the city and by its historic and architectural significance in terms of its period, style and method of construction. It is significant as the only surviving example of minimal housing for the poor in Old Cambridge and as one of very few surviving early 19th century cottages in the city. It is associated particularly with Elizabeth Nutting Hicks and Sarah Hicks Flagg, two widows of prominent 18th and 19th century Cambridge families. The house is architecturally significant for its vernacular Federal style and its unique two-room plan. Finally, it is important for the contribution it makes to the small-scale, 19th century residential character of the Winthrop Street streetscape.

The effect of this designation shall be that no construction activity can take place within the designated landmark area, and no action can be taken affecting the appearance of the Cox-Hicks House, that would in either case be visible from a public way without review by the Cambridge Historical Commission and the issuance of a Certificate of Appropriateness, Hardship or Non-Applicability, as the case may be. In making determinations, the Commission shall be guided by the terms of the landmark designation report, and by section VII, Standards for Design Review, and by the applicable sections of Ordinance 1002.

In City Council January 23, 1989.

Adopted by the affirmative vote of 9 members.

Attest:- Joseph E. Connarton, City Clerk.

A true copy;

*Joseph E. Connarton*

ATTEST:-

Joseph E. Connarton, City Clerk.



# Cambridge Historical Commission

City Hall Annex, 57 Inman Street, Cambridge, Massachusetts, 02139. 617/498-9040



Robert G. Neiley, *Chairman*; William B. King, *Vice Chairman*; Charles M. Sullivan, *Executive Director*.  
Dwight H. Andrews; Arthur H. Brooks, Jr.; James F. Clapp, Jr.; Charles W. Eliot, 2nd; Joseph G. Sakey; *Commission Members*.  
Allison M. Crump, Suzanne R. Green, John Lyons, *Alternates*.

December 12, 1988

To the Honorable, the City Council:

On December 1, 1988, the Cambridge Historical Commission voted to recommend five properties in Harvard Square to the City Council for landmark designation under Ordinance 1002. The five buildings represent the majority of the oldest surviving wood frame structures standing in Harvard Square. All but one building predate 1833 and all contribute significantly to an understanding of Harvard Square's early 19th-century history and architecture. They were jointly proposed for landmark designation by the Harvard Square Defense Fund and the Historical Commission.

Copies of the landmark designation reports are attached for the Farwell-Russell Store (ca. 1829, 12 Bow Street), the William Brattle House (1727, 42 Brattle Street), the Dexter Pratt House (1808, 54 Brattle Street), the Hyde-Taylor House (1846, 96 Winthrop Street), and the Cox-Hicks House (1806, 98 Winthrop Street).

## Justification of Landmark Designation

Ordinance 1002 was enacted to: "preserve, conserve, and protect the beauty and heritage of the City of Cambridge and to improve the quality of its environment through the identification, conservation, and maintenance of . . . structures which constitute or reflect distinctive features of the architectural, cultural, political, economic or social history of the City; [and] to resist and restrain environmental influences adverse to this purpose. . ."

Section 4 of the Ordinance states that the Commission: "may recommend for designation as a landmark any . . . structure . . . historically or architecturally significant [in terms of period, style, method of construction or association with a famous architect or builder] either by itself or in the context of a group of structures."

The Commission found that the five properties recommended for landmarking herein are worthy of preservation as an important remnant of pre-industrial Cambridge. All but one of the properties appear on an 1833 map of Old Cambridge. The map illustrates the loosely settled character of the Harvard Square commercial center just prior to the city's phenomenal growth as an industrial core in 19th-century Massachusetts. The buildings are rare survivors of traditional wood-frame construction in Harvard Square and are associated with significant persons and events in Cambridge's 18th- and 19th-century history.

## Issues Raised in the Public Hearing

The public hearing, held on December 1, 1988, was attended by members of the Harvard Square Defense Fund and three of the four owners of proposed landmark properties. The Harvard Square Defense Fund and the three owners attending spoke in favor of the designation and support the designation of their properties as landmarks. No comments were received from the fourth owner, the Cambridge Center for Adult Education.

The Cambridge Historical Commission staff met with all of the affected property owners in late Spring and early Summer of 1988 to explain the effects of landmark designation. Copies of the designation reports, in both draft and final forms, were submitted to property owners for comments and corrections. Technical corrections were received from the owner of the Cox-Hicks House (98 Winthrop Street), the President and Fellows of Harvard College. These have been incorporated into that report.

The initial petition of the Harvard Square Defense Fund included two additional properties proposed for landmark study. These were the Brattle Theatre, 40 Brattle Street (1889) and the Brattle-O'Connor Tenement Houses, 106 Winthrop/8 Eliot Street (ca. 1801/1828). The Historical Commission has accepted a Preservation Easement on the Brattle Theatre, thereby ensuring the preservation of that structure through Commission review of any changes to the building's exterior. Consideration of the Brattle-O'Connor Tenement Houses as a Landmark has been postponed at the request of the owner, Robert Banker, who is preparing plans for redeveloping his adjacent properties on Eliot Street in the aftermath of a fire at 16-18 Eliot Street.

### Effect of Designation

The effect of the designations would be that no new construction, alteration or demolition could take place on the premises of any of the recommended landmark properties without the review and approval of the Cambridge Historical Commission. However, the proposed orders take into account any construction now planned by the property owners and provide standards and guidance for the manner in which that construction may take place.

The Historical Commission has found that the five properties recommended herein meet the criteria established in Ordinance 1002 for landmark designation and have directed that these recommendations be transmitted to the City Council for its consideration.

Respectfully submitted,



Charles M. Sullivan  
Executive Director

## **Executive Summary**

### **Landmark Designation Reports for**

**Farwell-Russell Store (12 Bow Street)  
William Brattle House (42 Brattle Street)  
Dexter Pratt House (54 Brattle Street)  
Hyde-Taylor House (96 Winthrop Street)  
Cox-Hicks House (98 Winthrop Street)**

#### **Farwell-Russell Store (12 Bow Street)**

The Farwell-Russell Store was constructed in 1829 by prominent 19th-century businessman, Levi Farwell, in the midst of Harvard Square on a site now occupied by Nini's Corner newsstand. A modest commercial structure, the Store is the most intact pre-1833 commercial structure still standing in Harvard Square. Moved twice, its current appearance dates largely from 1868, when it was converted from Thomas Russell's furniture store to a single-family house. The Farwell-Russell Store meets criteria (a) and (b) of Ordinance 1002 for its associations with the architectural and economic history of Harvard Square and it is historically and architecturally significant in terms of its period and method of construction.

#### **William Brattle House (42 Brattle House)**

The William Brattle House of 1727 is one of the city's finest Early Georgian style mansions. Located at the base of Brattle Street, it was constructed by General William Brattle, a participant in pre-Revolutionary Tory politics, and was appropriated by General Washington for use as the Headquarters of the Commissary-General of the Continental Army, Major Thomas Mifflin, from July 1775 to March 1776. Since 1889, the house has been owned and occupied by the Cambridge Social Union and its successor, the Center for Adult Education.

The William Brattle House meets criteria (a) and (b) of Ordinance 1002 for its associations with the Brattle family and with the Revolutionary War in Cambridge and with the Cambridge Social Union, an important social and educational institution in late 19th century Cambridge. It is also historically and architecturally significant in terms of its period, style, and method of construction as one of only four Early Georgian style houses in Cambridge and is thus a rare surviving example of the city's 18th century residential architecture.

### **Dexter Pratt House (54 Brattle Street)**

The Dexter Pratt House is a very well-preserved example of the Federal style of architecture. One of the best examples of this style in Cambridge, it was built in 1808. It was purchased shortly thereafter by Dexter Pratt, a blacksmith whose shop stood adjacent to the house at the corner of Brattle and Story Streets. Pratt was immortalized in Longfellow's classic poem "The Village Smithy." Pratt's house is now the only element still standing to remind us of this important literary landmark in Cambridge. It meets criteria (a) and (b) for its associations with the cultural history of Cambridge and it is architecturally significant in terms of its period, style, and method of construction.

### **Hyde-Taylor House (96 Winthrop Street)**

Built in 1846, the Hyde-Taylor House is a good example of the Greek Revival style of architecture and was constructed by a housewright, Isaac Hyde, who lived next door at 98 Winthrop Street. The building is primarily significant in the context of a group of early houses on Winthrop Street, which is the only surviving streetscape that can still evoke Harvard Square's pre-1850 residential character and scale. The Hyde-Taylor House is also important because it abuts the Winthrop Street Retaining Wall, a late 18th-century stone wall that is the sole surviving element reflecting Harvard Square's original topography. The house meets criteria (a) and (b) for its contribution to an understanding of Harvard Square's early 19th-century residential character and is thus significantly associated with the broad architectural and social history of the city. It is also architecturally significant for its Greek Revival style.

### **Cox-Hicks House (98 Winthrop Street)**

The Cox-Hicks House is a diminutive vernacular Federal style cottage built ca. 1806 for a young widow and her children. Originally consisting of only two rooms, the house is the only surviving example of the smallest and most modest type of housing constructed for the poor in Old Cambridge. In the city as a whole, it is one of very few such examples of minimal housing to survive from its period. The Cox-Hicks House also abuts the Winthrop Street Retaining Wall and contributes significantly to the small-scale, residential character of Winthrop Street. It meets criteria (a) and (b) for its associations with the social and architectural history of the city and is architecturally and historically significant in terms of its period, style and method of construction.

12 BOW STREET  
FARWELL-RUSSELL STORE

LANDMARK DESIGNATION STUDY REPORT  
PREPARED BY SARAH ZIMMERMAN  
CAMBRIDGE HISTORICAL COMMISSION  
OCTOBER 21, 1988

CONTENTS

I. Location and Economic Status.....	1
II. Description.....	4
III. History of the Property.....	6
IV. Significance of the Property.....	9
V. Relationship to Criteria.....	11
VI. Recommendations.....	13
VII. Standards for Design Review.....	15
VIII. Proposed Order.....	18

The Farwell-Russell Store was constructed in 1829 by prominent 19th-century businessman, Levi Farwell, in the midst of Harvard Square on a site now occupied by Nini's Corner newsstand. A modest commercial structure, the Store is the most intact pre-1833 commercial structure still standing in Harvard Square. Moved twice, its current appearance dates largely from 1868, when it was converted from Thomas Russell's furniture store to a single-family house. The Farwell-Russell Store meets criteria (a) and (b) of Ordinance 1002 for its associations with the architectural and economic history of Harvard Square and it is historically and architecturally significant in terms of its period and method of construction.



## 12 Bow Street: Farwell-Russell Store

### I. Location

#### A. Address and Economic Status

The Farwell-Russell Store is located at 12 Bow Street on Assessors' Map 133, Parcel 21. It is assessed as a mixed commercial and residential use structure, with a valuation of \$205,000 in its commercial use and \$115,000 for residential. The combined valuations of the commercial and residential assessments for the land are \$310,000 and for the buildings, \$19,000.

It stands in an Office 3 zone, allowing for office and multi-family uses. There is no maximum height limit and the minimum lot area per dwelling unit is 300 square feet with an FAR of 3.0, thus allowing for high density residential development.

The building is, however, also a contributing property in the Harvard Square Overlay District and therefore subject to the provisions of the Harvard Square Overlay Zone. Projects requiring a special permit or variance must be approved by the Harvard Square Advisory Committee, which may impose additional use, height, parking, and setback limitations beyond those enumerated in the zoning code.

#### B. Ownership and Occupancy

The Farwell-Russell Store is owned by Eliodora Yanguas Perez. It houses the Cafe Pamplona Restaurant on the basement level and architectural and graphic design offices and an owner-occupied apartment above on the first and second floors.

#### C. Area Description

The Farwell-Russell Store stands on the edge of an area known historically as the Gold Coast, taking its name from the private dormitories that were built there to accommodate wealthy Harvard undergraduates at the turn of the century. It encompasses a four-block long stretch of Mount Auburn Street and includes an area delineated by Linden, Plympton, Bow, and Arrow Streets.

This area comprised a peripheral section of the original 1631 town plan, although no traces of the original street pattern are extant. During the 18th century, it acquired a densely-settled and diverse character with houses, stores and small workshops. It retained this diversity through much of the 19th century. In the 1860s, one of Harvard Square's larger industrial complexes, the Reversible Collar Factory, was constructed there. The early

20th century construction of numerous Harvard-related buildings drastically changed the character of the area. Private dormitories, expensive clubhouses, and buildings like the Harvard Lampoon were among the new structures added.

While Harvard-related dormitories and clubs center on Mount Auburn Street, the northern and eastern sections of the area are less uniform, with residential, commercial, office, and institutional uses intermingling. Three large structures or complexes dominate the blocks of Massachusetts Avenue, Bow, Arrow, and Mount Auburn Streets. These are the Romanesque Revival Saint Paul's Church and School (1915, 1889), the vernacular Italianate Reversible Collar Company factory (1866-1889), and the stucco Longfellow Court apartments, 1200 Massachusetts Avenue (1916). Other large and visually dominant buildings in the area are "The Quincy", an 1891 Queen Anne block of flats, and the Quincy Stable building (ca. 1900), 1234-36 Massachusetts Avenue.

The Farwell-Russell Store is flanked on the north by 1206 Massachusetts Avenue, a ca. 1960 A-frame store, and 1208-1210 Massachusetts Avenue, the altered 1842 Greek Revival Thomas Russell House (with bays and a third story added in the 1880s); on the west by 8 Bow Street, a ca. 1961 three-story store; on the south by 3-5-7 Bow Street, a one-story row of stores built ca. 1900, 9 Bow Street, an 1884-85 mansard double house, and Westmorly Court (15-19-21 Bow Street), an 1898-1902 brick Tudor dormitory; and on the east by 19-23 Arrow Street, the rear elevation of Longfellow Court.

#### D. Planning Issues

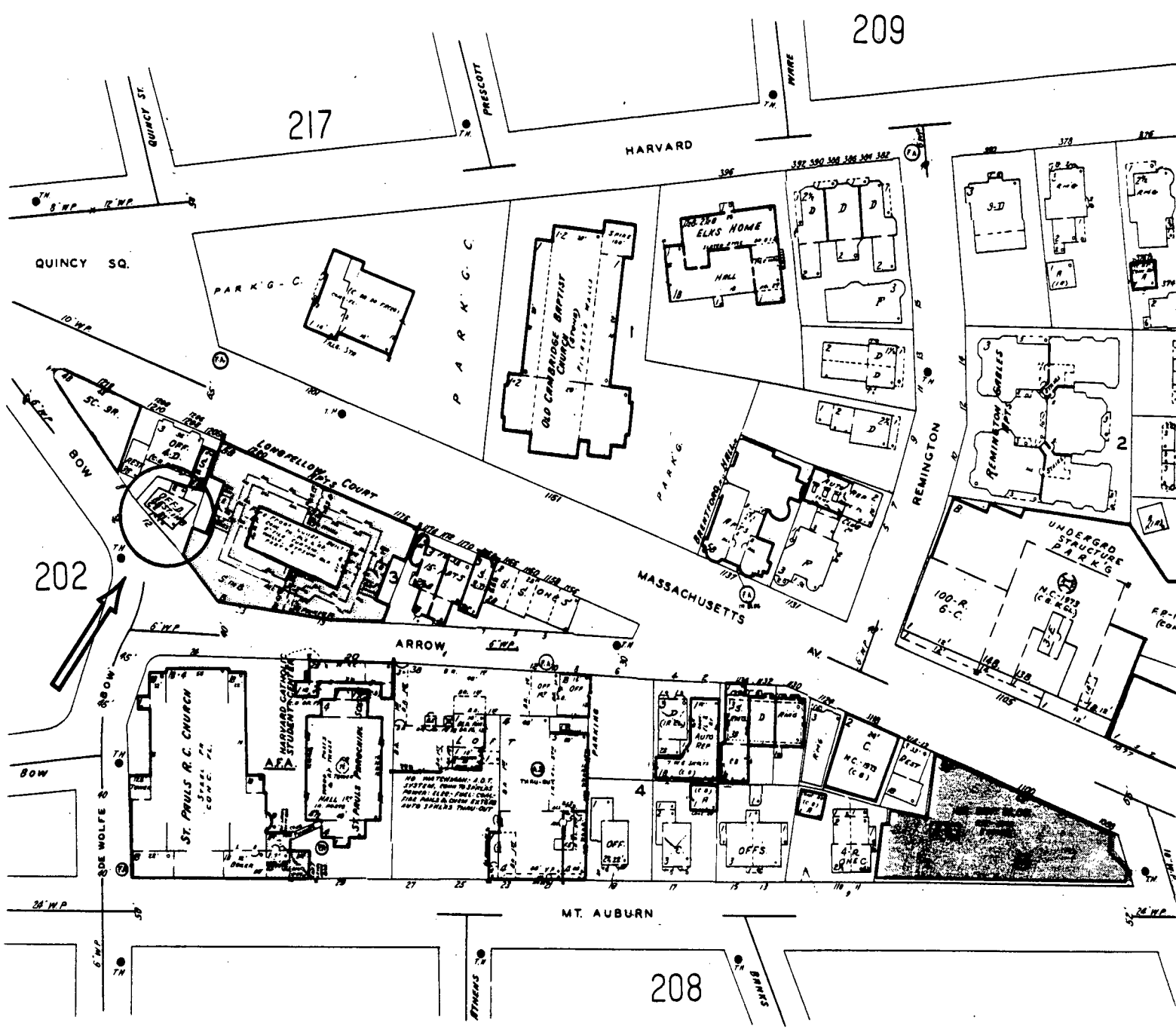
The Farwell-Russell Store stands in an area that has seen few changes in the last ten years but that faces some major development proposals in the near future. At this time, proposals for demolition and reconstruction on the Saint Paul's School site are well along in the planning stages. The Church proposes to raze the 1889 Saint Paul's School and construct a new four-story combined school, church office, and residential facility on the site. Funding for the project will come from the sale of the Rectory at 32-34-36 Mount Auburn Street for private development. Current proposals call for conversion of the Rectory to condominiums and construction of additional housing units on the remainder of the Rectory site. However, poor market conditions may affect the feasibility of the Church's plans.

A potential locus of new development is the Gulf Gas Station property at 1201 Massachusetts Avenue. The property, which encompasses 31,000 square feet, is owned by the President and Fellows of Harvard College. Harvard plans

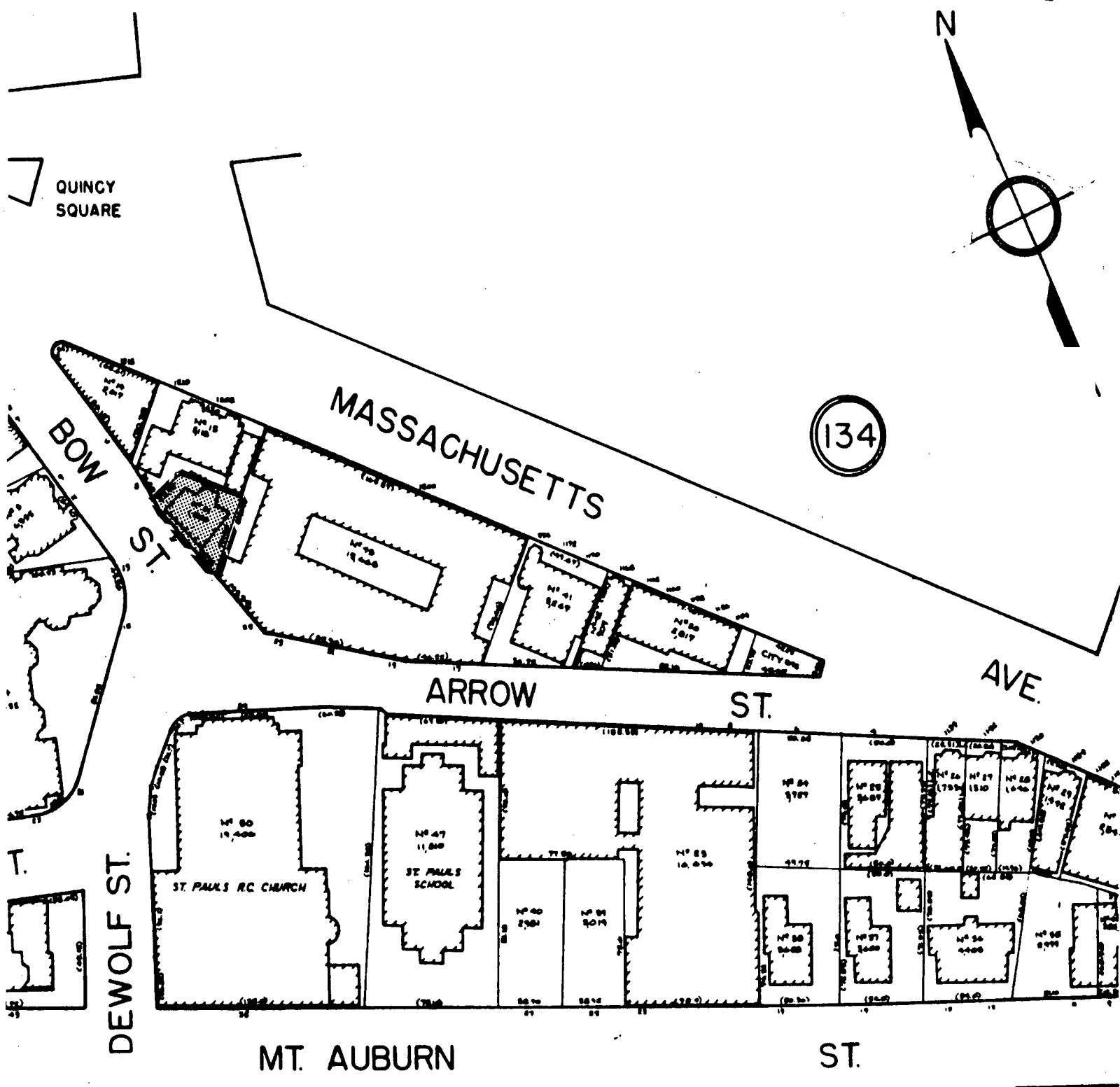
to develop the lot with a guest house facility for the use of the university.

New development on these two lots would indirectly affect the Farwell-Russell Store by raising the overall density and scale of the neighborhood.

E. Map



Farwell-Russell Store  
12 Bow Street  
Location Map



**CITY OF CAMBRIDGE**

SCALE: 1"=40' DECEMBER-1977

DIMENSIONS FROM DEED, LAND COURT OR LAYOUT PLANS ARE IN BRACKETS ( ).

LAND COURT MARKED L.C. ALL OTHER DIMENSIONS ARE MEASURED.

DRAWN BY: AL THOMPSON

Farwell-Russell Store  
12 Bow Street

## II. Description

### A. Type and Use

The Farwell-Russell Store is a frame building originally built as a store and now used for commercial, office, and residential use. Its most prominent use is the Cafe Pamplona, a student restaurant.

### B. Physical Description

The Farwell-Russell Store is a two-and-a-half story vernacular Federal style frame building with Italianate and recent Colonial Revival alterations. Trapezoidal in plan, it is sited gable end to the street on a very constrained 1500 square foot lot. The building is three bays across the facade and two bays deep and rests on a raised half-story basement. It is sheathed with narrow clapboards, painted red with white trim, and capped with a black asphalt-shingled roof. There are replacement blinds (consisting of paired vertical boards) on all of the windows. These were probably added in 1937 when the building was converted from a single family to a four-family residence. A two-story ell projects from the center of the rear elevation, covering much of the first two floors of this elevation. Abutting the ell at the northwest corner is a one-story, lean-to shed, possibly added in 1972. A narrow planting bed surrounds the foundation on the north and east and there is a tiny planted area at the northwest corner, but the remainder of the lot is brick-paved. A wrought iron fence defines the front lot line.

The main facade faces west and consists of a three-bay wide, two-story elevation with an entrance in the center bay. Entrance to the house is gained up a short flight of brick stairs located in a projecting stoop. The stairs leading to the basement are located in the southwest corner. This facade dates from the 1868 move, when the building was reoriented, its original entrance having been on the south elevation.

The facade is organized with two long six-over-six windows flanking the central entrance. There are three shorter six-over-six windows on the second floor and two small casement sash in the gable. The first and second floor windows retain sash of the Greek Revival period. Windows on the first two floors have plain casings from which the band mouldings have been removed. The casings of the gable windows retain band moulds, but these may date from 1868. The entrance and two first floor windows have bracketted hoods added in 1868; the entrance hood rests on a pair of heavy consoles. The main door is a ca. 1950 Colonial Revival replacement, while the cafe door is a more recent replacement. Narrow, flat cornerboards and a narrow

freize and crown-moulded cornice enframe the facade. Some original lapped clapboards survive above the first floor, but the lower clapboards are butt-jointed replacements.

The north elevation (originally the rear elevation) is two bays deep with a pair of six-over-six windows symmetrically placed on each floor. As with the facade windows, the casings lack their band mouldings and are framed by ca. 1937 vertical board blinds, but retain Greek Revival sash. Set back from this elevation at the rear is a one-bay deep ell, added in the 1868 move and now somewhat obscured by a ca. 1972 lean-to shed. A replacement one-over-one window is located in the second floor of the ell, above the corner lean-to. The building's two chimneys are located in the roof on the north side, one just behind the facade and the other just inside the rear wall.

The east elevation consists largely of the two-story ell, which is one bay deep by one bay wide. The main wall, which was the original exterior end wall, retains much of its original finish, including lapped clapboards and a narrow cyma rake moulding. There are two two-over-two windows in the ell and only one window in the main house, in the gable. The gable window is blocked by a ventilator shaft.

The south elevation, originally the building's facade, is two bays deep and contains two symmetrically placed six-over-six windows on each of the two floors. There is no direct evidence of the entrance location since the clapboards on this wall have been replaced on the first floor. There are two small, square fixed four-light sash in the front portion of the raised foundation and a single rectangular three-light sash at the rear of the foundation. There is an offset entrance to the ell at the rear of the property. A rectangular domed skylight has been added at the front of the roof on this elevation.

#### C. Current Photographs



12 Bow Street  
photo, 1988



12 Bow Street  
photo, 1988

### III. History of the Property

#### A. Historic Development Patterns

##### 1. Deed History

The Farwell-Russell Store has been moved twice in its history and was originally located in a block of three stores at 1-5 Brattle Street. The store was detached from the remainder of its original block and removed to 1260 Massachusetts Avenue (the northeast corner of Plympton Street) in 1847. It was moved to its present location some twenty years later, in 1868.

In its original location, the store occupied land owned by the heirs of the Blake family. The land was acquired by Levi Farwell in 1829, which is possibly the date of construction of the block of stores that contained the Russell Store. Other possible dates of construction (based on tax records) are 1825 (when one of the known tenants was assessed for his part of the block) and 1832 (when Levi Farwell was assessed for "3 Blake stores"). Thomas Russell, a furniture dealer, is believed to have occupied one of the stores from the time of its construction. He certainly occupied the store prior to 1847, and in that year moved his portion to land at the corner of Massachusetts Avenue and Plympton (then known as Chestnut) Street owned by the estate of Abiel Holmes.

The second move for the building, which took place in 1868, was occasioned by the construction of a mansard roofed house by the Holmes estate on the Plympton Street land. At that point, Thomas Russell's estate moved the store to their own land on Bow Street. The store was placed at the rear of the Thomas Russell House (1208-1210 Massachusetts Avenue). It was probably in 1868 that the store was remodelled for single family residential use. The property was acquired by Paul Adams through foreclosure on the Russell estate's mortgage in 1874. Adams in turn sold the property to Mary E. and Julia A. O'Connor in 1883.

##### 2. Development History of the Property

The Farwell-Russell Store is closely associated with Harvard Square's commercial history. It was initially located at the commercial center of Harvard Square at Brattle Street and Massachusetts Avenue in a block of stores probably constructed ca. 1829. When it was moved in 1847, it remained in the main commercial section of Massachusetts Avenue. But by 1868, when it was moved a final time, it was to a block then characterized primarily by residential uses. The residential character of the neighborhood lasted only to the turn of the century, when it was engulfed by the

expansion of both Harvard University and the Harvard Square commercial district.

In 1873, the block on which the Farwell-Russell Store stands consisted of seven houses facing Massachusetts Avenue, the Store, and a carriage house. This section of Bow and Arrow Streets was the "back street" for these buildings and for some of the houses that faced onto Mount Auburn Street to the south. The neighborhood retained some larger houses on landscaped lots (notably the Gordon McKay House, on the Saint Paul's Church site, and the East Apthorp House), but most structures were small frame houses. Evidence of the mixed character of the area was the presence of the Reversible Collar Factory (1868-1889) on Mount Auburn Street. By 1903, almost all of the small houses had been replaced with stylish private dormitories for wealthy Harvard students.

Through the early twentieth century, larger buildings continued to be built in the neighborhood, reinforcing the mixed uses now typical there. A concrete garage was built ca. 1905 at Massachusetts Avenue and Bow Street on the site of the earlier Quincy Stables, owned by John Holmes. The mammoth Longfellow Court apartments (with 87 flats) replaced three houses at 1200 Massachusetts Avenue in 1916. And in 1924, the handsome Romanesque Revival Saint Paul's Church complex on Arrow Street was completed.

Commercial uses did not expand significantly in the block until the 1950s and '60s. There was limited commercial use in the building at 1156-66 Massachusetts Avenue and on Arrow Street. The Cafe Pamplona was established at 12 Bow Street in the 1950s. A trend toward development of ground floor retail continued into the 1970s and now all of the buildings on the block contain some commercial use. Several previously residential buildings have been converted on the upper floors to office use. None of the buildings on the block remain exclusively residential. The expansion of commercial and office uses (and the construction of mid-rise buildings to accommodate them) is anticipated to continue, given the development history of Massachusetts Avenue in the 1980s.

#### B. Historic Photographs

#### C. Bibliography

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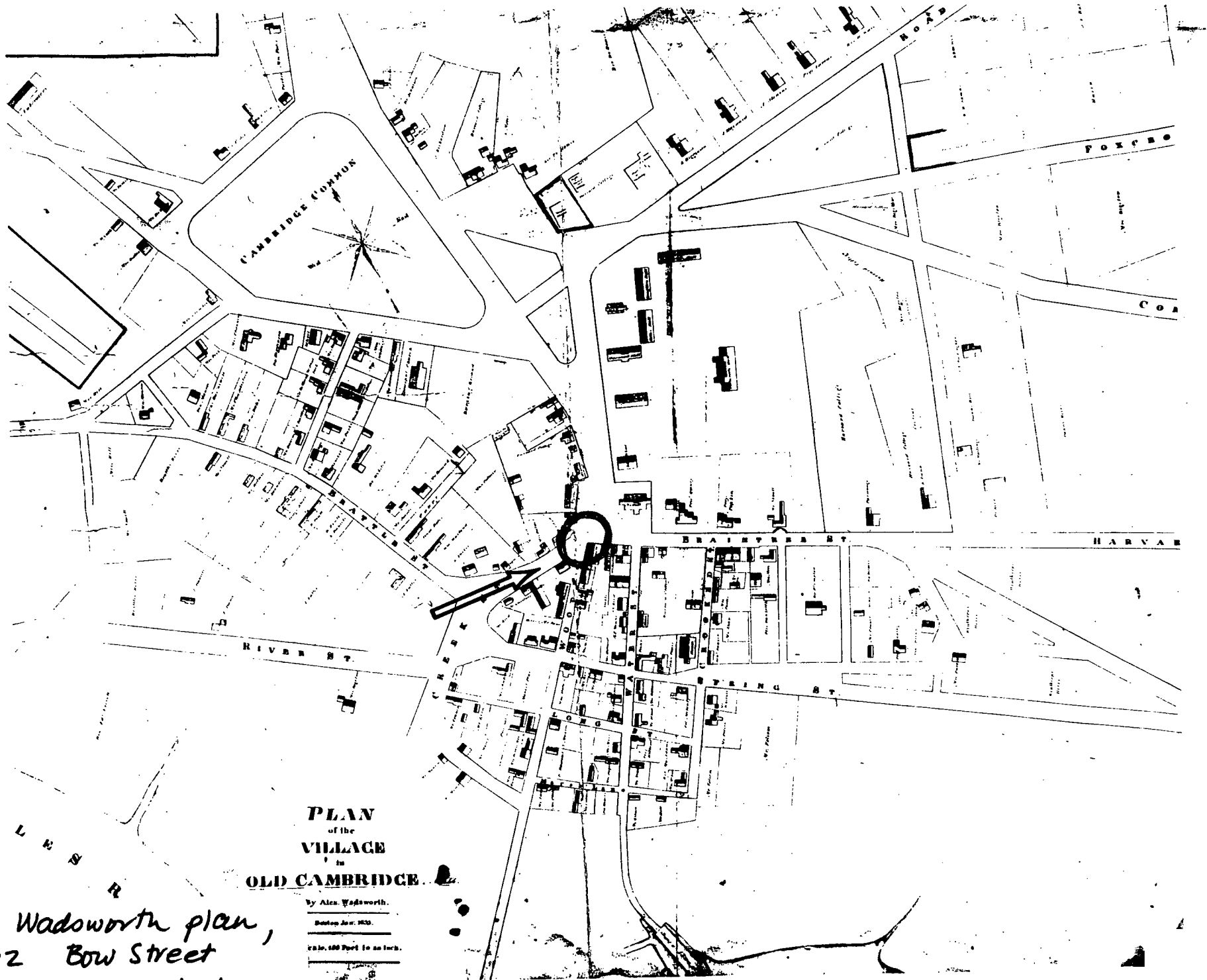
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Alexander Wadsworth plan,  
1833, 12 Bow Street  
original location circled

Fig. 6



Original location of Farwell -  
Russell Store, showing 1847  
replacement building on left.  
Photo. 1868

#### IV. Significance of the Property

##### A. Historical Significance

The historical significance of the Farwell-Russell Store lies primarily in its relationship to Harvard Square's commercial history. It is the only intact pre-1833 commercial building known to survive in the Square. It also reflects the expansion and upgrading of Harvard Square commercial space in the 19th century in its changing uses.

Less significant are the store's associations with its two 19th century owners, Levi Farwell and Thomas Russell. Farwell was very prominent in Old Cambridge in the early 19th century: long a Deacon of the First Baptist Church and a successful Harvard Square merchant, he also served for many years as Selectman, Town Clerk, and Treasurer. Farwell's associations with the Store are limited, but he may have constructed the block in which it first stood and he owned the building from 1829 to his death in 1844. Farwell's own business was conducted from a store at Boylston Street. About Russell, nothing is known, other than the facts that he lived from 1800 to 1857, married Cynthia Jones in 1828, and ran a furniture store.

The significance of the Farwell-Russell Store is in its ability to provide contextual information about Harvard Square commerce in the 19th century. The Store is one of two extant pre-1833 commercial buildings in Harvard Square (the other being the Read-Warland Block, 1380-92 Massachusetts Avenue and 8 Kennedy Street, 1796, altered 1896). Of these two, only the Farwell-Russell Store retains its early 19th century materials and appearance. Its sequence of moves reflects the expansion of commercial development in Harvard Square, from a small core of commercial buildings at the intersection of Brattle Street and Massachusetts Avenue to an extended area stretching from Church and Story Streets east to Putnam Avenue.

##### B. Architectural Significance

Architecturally, the Farwell-Russell Store is a well-preserved 19th century vernacular commercial building that retains integrity of design, materials, and workmanship. The original commercial function of the building is evidenced by its atypical entrance location and failure to conform to the standard residential floorplan. For three bay wide structures, the sidehall plan, entered from a side bay, was typical. The center entrance location appears to represent a design solution worked out in 1868 when the building was converted from commercial to single family residential use. In addition, the unusual trapezoidal shape, with an acute angle at the northeast corner, reflects the particular shape of the lot on which the building

originally stood at Brattle Street and Massachusetts Avenue. The angle of the northeast corner is maintained in the property line of 1-8 Brattle Street today.

The original appearance of the store in its Brattle Street location is unknown. It is unclear whether the block of stores in which the building was located were constructed as a single unit or as three separate but contiguous buildings. The Wadsworth map of 1833 shows a gable-roofed single structure. But the survival of lapped clapboards, typical of the federal period, on the upper floor of the store indicates that perhaps only the Farwell-Russell Store was a full two stories in height and that the other two sections of the original building were one story tall. It is also possible that lapped clapboards were used to sheath the building when it was moved in 1847 and that in 1868, or at some other later date, the first floor clapboards were replaced with butt-jointed clapboards. In any case, the exterior evidence of the building is inconclusive as to its original appearance.

In its present appearance, the building most fully reflects its 1868 changes, although material from the earlier construction is retained on several of the walls. Notable elements of the original construction are the lapped clapboards above the first floor, the rear wall rake moulding, and the trapezoidal plan. Despite its 1868 remodelling, the only up-to-date element of that effort was the bracketted Italianate door hood on the facade. Otherwise, the appearance of the building is strongly evocative of its original period of construction. Its small scale, unusual plan and shape, clapboard exterior, and multi-paned sash all convey a clear sense of the vernacular construction of the early 19th century.

## V. Relationship to Criteria

### A. Section 4, Ordinance 1002

Section 4 states the criteria for landmark designation. It states that the Commission:

. . . may recommend for designation as a landmark any . . . structure . . . either (a) importantly associated with one or more historic persons or events, or with the broad architectural, aesthetic, cultural, political, economic or social history of the City . . . or (b) historically or architecturally significant (in terms of period, style, method of construction, or association with a famous architect or builder) either by itself or in the context of a group of structures

### B. Relationship of Property to Criteria

The Farwell-Russell Store meets criteria (a) and (b) of Ordinance 1002 in that it is importantly associated with the broad architectural and economic history of Harvard Square and the City and is historically and architecturally significant in terms of its period. The Farwell-Russell Store is the only intact early 19th century commercial building surviving in Harvard Square. Its three moves, from the heart of federal period Harvard Square, out Massachusetts Avenue to Plympton Street at mid-century, and finally to its present sidestreet location, reflect the expansion of Harvard Square commerce. Architecturally, the moves mirror the changing character of the Square from a modest group of unassuming frame commercial buildings, like the Farwell-Russell Store, to an urban center with stylish and substantial buildings.

The Farwell-Russell Store is a unique survivor of commercial architecture in Harvard Square and one of fewer than a dozen pre-1860 commercial buildings in the city. The earliest examples of commercial building in the city were modest frame stores like the Farwell-Russell Store and these have not survived well. Other early special use structures like College House (1832) in Harvard Square, Dana (or South) Rowhouse (1806) in Central Square and the Bottle House Tenement Block (1826-7) in East Cambridge had limited commercial uses but were built primarily as residential structures. Thus, the Farwell-Russell Store stands as an important, early, and rare example of commercial construction that illustrates the simplicity of early 19th century commercial buildings.

The Farwell-Russell Store was constructed at a time when Harvard Square was beginning to coalesce as a commercial center. A market building was built in the middle of Harvard Square in 1812 and other commercial uses clustered around that location by the 1820s. In 1833, the

date of Alexander Wadsworth's map of Old Cambridge, a small group of approximately 10 commercial buildings stood in Harvard Square at the intersection of Brattle and Kennedy Streets and Massachusetts Avenue. That number had not grown substantially at mid-century, but by 1868, a solid wall of commercial structures lined Massachusetts Avenue from Church to Palmer Street, extending down Brattle Street nearly to Brattle Square on the west and down Kennedy Street to Winthrop Square on the south.

Several of these structures, in particular the Lyceum Building of 1841, were imposing and stylish brick buildings. The Blake stores were replaced with a three-story brick building with granite storefronts in 1847. The latter building was typical of those built in the middle decades of the 19th century. Photographs of Harvard Square in the 1860s show many three-story buildings, several of brick construction. The Farwell-Russell Store, a two-story frame building with little stylistic pretention, would have been outmoded and out of place amidst the more stylish commercial buildings in the heart of Harvard Square. By that time, the Store had been relegated to its present location and converted to residential use. The Farwell-Russell Store is a reminder of the expansion and upgrading of Harvard Square commerce in the mid 19th century and reflects in its moves the cycles of building and rebuilding that still characterize Harvard Square development.

## VI. Recommendations

### A. Section 1, Ordinance 1002

The purpose of landmark designation is stated in Section 1 of Ordinance 1002:

. . . to preserve, conserve, and protect the beauty and heritage of the City . . . and to improve the quality of its environment through identification, conservation, and maintenance of . . . structures which constitute or reflect distinctive features of the architectural, cultural, political, economic or social history of the City; to resist and restrain environmental influences adverse to this purpose.

### B. Preservation Options

The Farwell-Russell Store is currently listed on the National Register of Historic Places as a contributing building in the Harvard Square Historic District. As such, it is protected from the adverse effects of federally licensed, permitted, or funded projects and, through listing on the parallel State Register of Historic Places, from the adverse effects of state funded projects. At the local level, it is covered by the provisions of the Harvard Square Overlay Zone, in addition to the general zoning regulations of the city.

The National and State Registers provide limited protection from public projects through review by the Massachusetts Historical Commission. The Overlay District establishes zoning incentives for the preservation of contributing National Register properties and also calls for review of projects by the Harvard Square Advisory Committee. However, neither the Massachusetts Historical Commission's nor the Advisory Committee's powers allow for detailed, binding review of architectural designs. Nor can the Advisory Committee mandate the retention of a particular property.

Other options for preservation of the Farwell-Russell Store include designation as a Landmark under Ordinance 1002 and placement of a Preservation Easement on the property under MGL Chapter 184 and the applicable federal rules. Designation as a Landmark would provide for review of all changes to publicly visible exterior architectural features and could allow for specific changes within the designation order. Placement of an easement on the property would also provide for Historical Commission review of changes to exterior architectural features. The owner might also be able to realize a tax benefit from the donation of an easement. In the case of an easement, the owner would be

required to donate 5% of the value of the easement to the Historical Commission for administration of the easement.

The other major preservation options are protection of the property through inclusion in a Neighborhood Conservation District under Ordinance 1002 or in a Local Historic District under MGL Chapter 40C. Both of these options are foreclosed in the case of the Harvard Square National Register District as a result of the Historical Commission's prior agreement with the Harvard Square Business Association not to seek local district designation in exchange for listing on the National Register.

#### C. Staff Recommendation

It is the staff recommendation that the Farwell-Russell Store be recommended to the City Council for landmark designation. The staff further recommends that discussions with the owner regarding placement of a Preservation Easement be pursued if the owner so requests.

## VII. Standards for Design Review

### A. Introduction

The Commission's primary charge under Ordinance 1002 is to review "all construction, demolition, or alteration that affects the exterior architectural features, other than color, of any landmark." This landmark study report describes exterior architectural features that are among the characteristics which led to consideration of the property as a landmark. Except as the order designating or amending the landmark may otherwise provide, those features should be preserved and/or enhanced in any construction, demolition, or alteration of a landmark.

Section 8 of the ordinance sets general guidelines to be considered by the Historical Commission in reviewing changes to landmarks. Among other things, the Commission is directed to consider:

the historic and architectural value and significance of the site or structure, the general design, arrangement, texture and material of the features involved, and the relation of such features to similar features or structures in the surrounding area.

In all cases, a Certificate of Appropriateness, Hardship, or Non-Applicability must be issued by the Historical Commission prior to making any changes to a landmark. The Commission does not have authority to regulate the interiors of landmarks nor can they control changes to exterior architectural features not subject to public view. Nonetheless, Certificates of Non-Applicability must be issued for those changes. All applications are carefully reviewed by the Commission at a public hearing, in accordance with Ordinance 1002.

### B. General Standards

1. Historic and architectural features of the landmark shall be preserved.
2. Changes and additions to the landmark which have taken place over time are evidence of the history of the property and the neighborhood. These changes to the property may have acquired significance in their own right and that significance should be recognized and respected.
3. Deteriorated architectural features should be repaired rather than replaced.
4. When replacement of architectural features is necessary, it should be based on physical or documentary evidence.

5. New materials should, whenever possible, match the material being replaced in physical properties, design, color, texture, and appearance. The use of imitation replacement materials is discouraged.

6. The surface cleaning of a landmark shall be done by the gentlest possible means. Sandblasting and other cleaning methods that damage exterior architectural features shall not be used.

7. New additions must not destroy significant exterior architectural features and shall not be incongruous to the historic aspects, architectural significance, or distinctive character of the landmark, neighborhood and environment.

8. New additions should be done in such a way that if they were to be removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the landmark would be unimpaired.

### C. Statement of Standards

#### 1. General

a. Major alterations or construction should incorporate preparation of an historic structures report to determine the extent to which original materials, construction, and design survive in the building.

#### 2. Exterior Walls

a. Retain and repair clapboards, insofar as possible, particularly those on the upper stories and on the east elevation that may survive from the original building.

#### 3. Windows

a. Remove ca. 1937 vertical board blinds from windows.

b. Replace band mouldings on those windows from which they have been removed.

c. Relocate existing restaurant ventilators from east end gable.

#### 4. Roof

a. Replace existing domed skylight on south plane with dark, Velux-type flat skylight.

#### 5. Other Elements

a. Replace glazed front door and cafe entrance door with four-panel doors or other doors appropriate to

1868 renovation of the building.

## VIII. Proposed Order

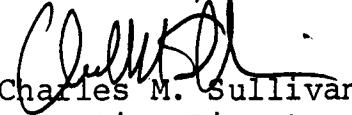
## ORDERED:

That the Farwell-Russell Store, 12 Bow Street, be designated as a protected landmark pursuant to Chapter Two, Article XVI, Section 2-147(k) of the Code of the City of Cambridge, as recommended by vote of the Cambridge Historical Commission on December 1, 1988. The premises so designated are defined as Parcel 21 of Assessors' Map 133.

This designation is justified by its associations with the broad architectural and economic history of Harvard Square and the city and by its historic and architectural significance. As the only intact early 19th century commercial building surviving in Harvard Square, the Farwell-Russell Store is a unique example of its period and type. Moved three times in its history, from the heart of federal period Harvard Square, out Massachusetts Avenue to Plympton Street and finally to its present location, the building reflects the expansion of Harvard Square commerce over the 19th century. Architecturally, the store mirrors the changing character of the Square from an unassuming group of wood frame buildings to an urban center with stylish and substantial buildings.

The effect of this designation shall be that no construction activity can take place within the designated landmark area, and no action can be taken affecting the appearance of the Farwell-Russell Store, that would in either case be visible from a public way without review by the Cambridge Historical Commission and the issuance of a Certificate of Appropriateness, Hardship or Non-Applicability, as the case may be. In making determinations, the Commission shall be guided by the terms of the landmark designation report, and by section VII, Standards for Design Review, and by the applicable sections of Ordinance 1002.

Adopted by a vote of 5-0, with 1 abstention  
December 1, 1988

  
Charles M. Sullivan  
Executive Director  
Cambridge Historical Commission

42 BRATTLE STREET  
WILLIAM BRATTLE HOUSE

LANDMARK DESIGNATION STUDY REPORT  
PREPARED BY SARAH ZIMMERMAN  
CAMBRIDGE HISTORICAL COMMISSION  
OCTOBER 21, 1988

CONTENTS

I. Location and Economic Status.....	1
II. Description.....	3
III. History of the Property.....	5
IV. Significance of the Property.....	10
V. Relationship to Criteria.....	13
VI. Recommendations.....	14
VII. Standards for Design Review.....	16
VIII. Proposed Order.....	19

The William Brattle House of 1727 is one of the city's finest Early Georgian style mansions. Located at the base of Brattle Street, it was constructed by General William Brattle, a participant in pre-Revolutionary Tory politics, and was appropriated by General Washington for use as the Headquarters of the Commissary-General of the Continental Army, Major Thomas Mifflin, from July 1775 to March 1776. Since 1889, the house has been owned and occupied by the Cambridge Social Union and its successor, the Center for Adult Education.

The William Brattle House meets criteria (a) and (b) of Ordinance 1002 for its associations with the Brattle family and with the Revolutionary War in Cambridge and with the Cambridge Social Union, an important social and educational institution in late 19th century Cambridge. It is also historically and architecturally significant in terms of its period, style, and method of construction as one of only four Early Georgian style houses in Cambridge and is thus a rare surviving example of the city's 18th century residential architecture.



## William Brattle House, 42 Brattle Street

### I. Location and Economic Status

#### A. Address

The William Brattle House is located at 42 Brattle Street on parcel 32 of assessors' map 168. It occupies a 7,030 square foot lot. Because of its non-profit ownership status, the property is not taxed.

The property lies in a Business B1 zone, thus allowing business, general retail, office, and multi-family uses. It is included as a contributing property in the Harvard Square National Register District and is part of the Harvard Square Overlay District. Thus, any projects requiring special permits or variances are subject to review by the Harvard Square Advisory Committee, which may impose additional conditions as to use, height, parking, and setback requirements beyond those enumerated in the zoning code.

#### B. Ownership and Occupancy

The William Brattle House is owned by the Cambridge Center for Adult Education. It is currently used as classroom and administrative space for the Cambridge Center, which maintains their headquarters there. The building has been owned by private, non-profit organizations since 1889.

#### C. Area Description

The William Brattle House is the only 18th century house still standing on its block. It is located on a narrow rectangular lot on the south side of Brattle Street closely bounded by the Brattle Theatre building on the east and by the International Style 44 Brattle Street on the west. The house stands on the western edge of the Harvard Square commercial district, nearly opposite the intersection of Church and Brattle Streets. With the exception of the 1889 Brattle Theatre (which is being protected under an easement ), the remainder of the immediately surrounding buildings are 20th century structures, of which the most distinguished is the Design Research Building (Ben Thompson Associates, 1969).

#### D. Planning Issues

The western side of Harvard Square is in the midst of a period of extensive reconstruction, spurred by the development of the former MBTA car yards with the Charles Square and University Park projects. These projects have increased pressure for new construction in the surrounding areas and there are now four projects in the planning stages

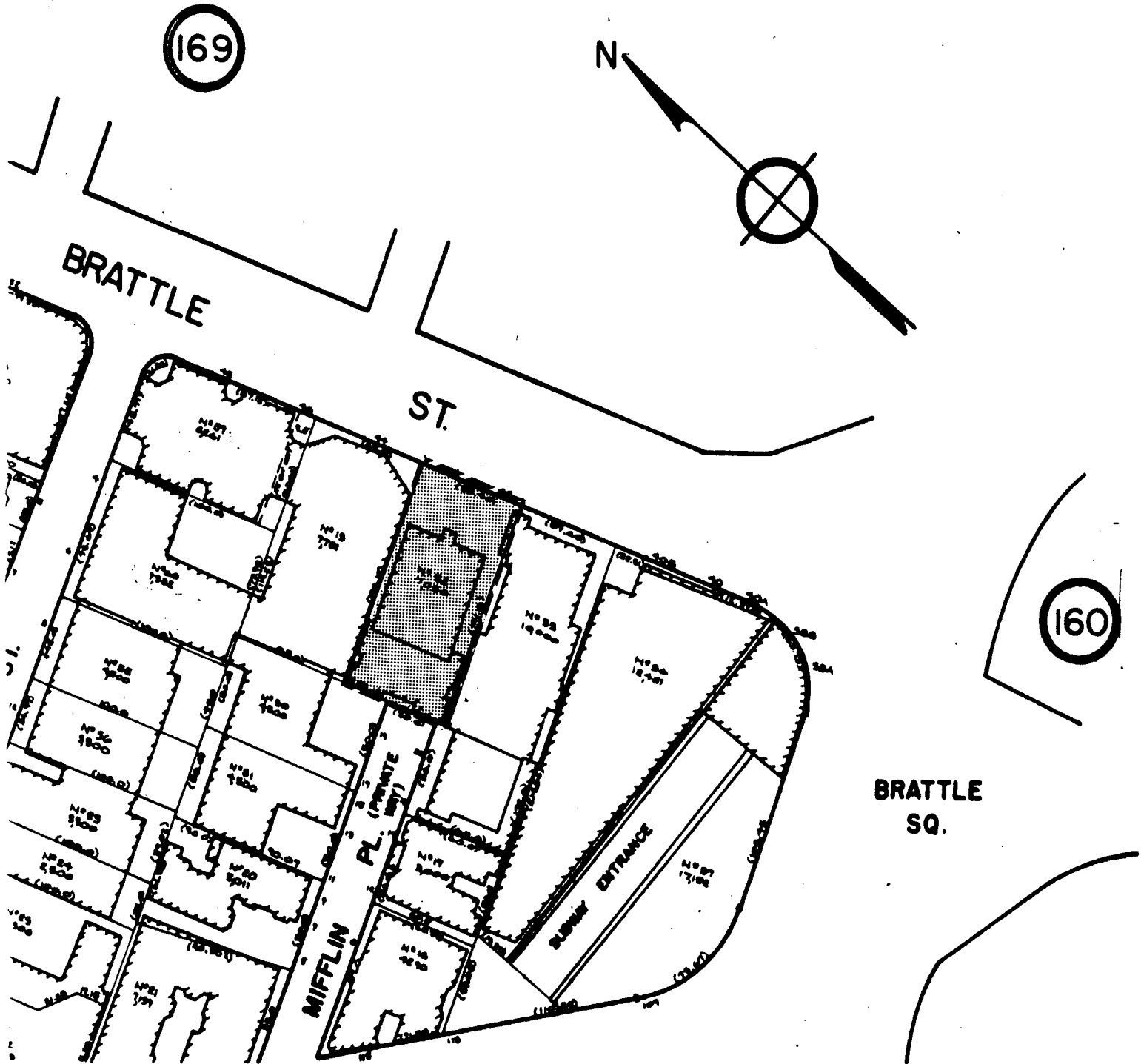
for the block bounded by Brattle, Story, Mount Auburn, and Eliot Streets. A five-story office building is proposed for the corner of Mount Auburn Street and Mifflin Place, the Cherry, Webb and Touraine site at Brattle and Eliot Streets will be redeveloped with a new retail and office building, a new office building will be constructed on Mifflin Place, and the Cambridge Center for Adult Education also plans a major addition at the rear of the Brattle House. The Post Office site at Story and Mount Auburn Streets may also be redeveloped at the end of the century.

The new projects will essentially complete Brattle Arcade, a system of interior-block pedestrian pathways connecting retail and office buildings that was initiated in the late 1960s. Between 1966 and 1971, six International Style buildings were built around the pedestrian pathway system. The current projects incorporate the extension of the Arcade throughout the block.

E. Map



William Brattle House  
 42 Brattle Street  
 Location Map



**CITY OF CAMBRIDGE**

SCALE 1" = 40'      JUNE-1978

DIMENSIONS FROM DEED, LAND COURT  
OR LAYOUT PLANS ARE IN BRACKETS ( )

LAND COURT MARKED L.C. ALL OTHER  
DIMENSIONS ARE MEASURED.

DRAWN BY AL THOMPSON

William Brattle House  
42 Brattle Street

## II. Description

### A. Type and Use

The William Brattle House was built as a single-family house and was used as such until 1889, when it was purchased by the Cambridge Social Union and then sold in 1938 to the Cambridge Center for Adult Education, both non-profit social institutions.

### B. Physical Description

The Brattle House (1727) is a two-and-a-half story, gambrel-roofed Georgian house which has been extended to the rear several times, most recently in 1962. It is set back some twenty feet from Brattle Street and faces northeast.

The house is sited on a deep rectangular lot of 7000 square feet, most of which is covered by the house and its ells and addition. It stands at the back of a fenced brick courtyard with perimeter plantings of privet, lilacs, and flowering trees. The fence, probably first erected ca. 1848 and reproduced in 1986, consists of diagonally-set pickets in a lattice pattern. Just inside the fence is a standing plexiglass distribution box for Cambridge Center catalogues. On the west, the house is nearly flush with 44 Brattle Street but a narrow, brick-paved pedestrian path along the east wall provides a setback on the other side. The house is clapboarded and painted yellow with white trim and a black asphalt-shingled roof.

The main house is five bays wide and one bay deep with a center entrance set in a one-story porch. The house stands on a granite rubble foundation faced with brick. The house retains approximately 25% of its original narrow clapboards with handmade nails and is enframed with narrow corner and sill boards. The windows contain replacement six over six sash, installed in the early 19th century. Crown mouldings surmount the first floor windows while the second floor windows are set flush with the cornice. Some of the window casings have simple Greek Revival bands and some are cyma-moulded Colonial Revival type, thus pointing to a second window replacement sequence, possibly ca. 1889-91 when the Social Union purchased the building. A single (presumably original) nine over nine window survived in the west gable until 1955, but no other original windows are left. Louvered blinds dating from the early 19th century, but reflective of blinds known to have been present by 1768, flank all of the windows on the facade.

Two prominent features of the facade are the entrance porch and the gambrel roof. The porch, a Colonial Revival addition of 1891, is elaborately detailed with pilasters, a

full Doric entablature with a cushioned frieze, and a pedimented gable. The door is a replacement six panel door painted dark green. In the vestibule are two small six over six windows in heavily moulded casings.

The gambrel roof is typical of early 18th century houses with a shallow upper gable and steeply pitched lower flanks. There are three pedimented dormers across the front of the gambrel roof, each with a six over six window. Scrolled dentils support the eave. One of the two original chimneys survives and it is located along the ridge of the roof to the rear of the right-most dormer. The other chimney was removed as part of the Cambridge Social Union's renovations to the house in 1889-90.

Both side elevations were altered in the 19th century from their original configuration, which apparently had a single window centered in the middle of the wall on each floor. Three additional windows of varying sizes were installed on the east elevation, along with an iron fire escape running down from the third floor. The windows appear in their present locations in a ca. 1878 view of the house. The west elevation survives in nearly original condition, with only the first floor fenestration changed. A rake moulding follows the roofline on both sides.

The present series of ells and additions represents a complex sequence of changes that occurred in the 19th and early 20th centuries. While an ell probably occupied the south corner of the building originally, none of that structure appears to have survived. By 1833, an ell of the length and height of the present ell at the south corner of the house had been constructed. At that time, the rear section of the gambrel was raised to accommodate the gable of the two-story ell. Gradually over the period from ca. 1873 to ca. 1907, the ell was enlarged until it occupied the full width of the main house and extended six bays back at a height of two stories. In 1907, a small one-story brick addition at the southeast corner was built. Finally, in 1962, a story-and-a-half, flat-roofed brick classroom wing was built across the rear of the ell, replacing portions of the earlier ell.

The interior of the building contains one notable example of Georgian panelling. The right (or west) parlor retains a bolection moulded mantel, a panelled overmantel, and arched panelled doors. These features are not subject to the commission's review.

#### C. Current Photographs



42 Brattle Street  
photo, 1988

### III. History of the Property

#### A. Historic Development Patterns

##### 1. Deed History

The earliest recorded owner of the Brattle House property is one Simon Crosby who resided at the corner of Brattle Street and Brattle Square until his death in 1639. Thomas Longhorn purchased the Crosby homestead in 1652, and he or his heirs then sold it to David Deming, who extended the property from Brattle Square to Ash Street.

On November 7, 1707, Deming sold the eastern seven acres of this property to William Brattle, clergyman, "for a valuable sum of money" (book 14, page 584), and on November 18, he sold the western portion (6 acres) to Andrew Belcher of Boston (book 14, page 389). Within a few days of purchasing the Deming property, Brattle sold a three-quarter-acre piece of the property which included outbuildings and a house fronting on Brattle Street (probably the original Crosby home) to Andrew Bordman (book 14, page 585). Bordman in turn immediately sold the property to Samuel Robinson who operated an inn and tavern on the site until 1721 when he sold it to William Bond, housewright (book 17, page 585).

William Brattle, Junior, inherited 4 3/4 acres of the original seven acre parcel in 1717, and he purchased Bond's three-quarter acre parcel in 1724/5 (book 24, page 278). Next, he bought a 1 1/2 acre parcel (book 30, page 127) from Andrew Bordman that Bordman had purchased from William Brattle, Senior, between 1707 and 1717. Thus, by 1728, William Brattle, Junior, again owned the entire seven acre parcel his father purchased in 1707.

Shortly after Brattle purchased the three-quarter acre parcel from Bond, construction began on the original portion of the William Brattle House, which is dated at approximately 1727. Brattle's interest in building a house at this time is clear because the Proprietor's Records of October 27, 1727 note that Brattle asked to purchase a "passageway" lying between his and James Read's land to have "a convenience for building." The Proprietors agreed to sell Brattle the strip of land and in all likelihood, Brattle built his house on the remains of the inn foundation on the parcel he acquired from William Bond in 1724/5.

Brattle acquired approximately eleven additional acres in four transactions between 1741 and 1768. Therefore, by 1768, the estate totalled approximately 18 acres and extended west from Brattle Street to Ash Street and south from Brattle Street to the Charles River. Just before his death in 1776, William Brattle sold the estate to his son,

Thomas Brattle, for 1500 pounds sterling (book 76, page 530). Thomas Brattle had already purchased a 1 1/2 acre tract of land adjacent to William Brattle's estate (book 72, page 52) in 1771. He later purchased an additional 1 1/4 acre parcel and straightened a property line, thereby increasing the estate to almost 20 acres.

Thomas Brattle did not marry and upon his death in 1801, his two nieces, Martha Fitch Wendell and Katherine Wendell, split the estate (Probate, 1st series 2498). In 1806, Francis Dana, Junior, son of Chief Justice Francis Dana, bought the Brattle estate for \$10,400. In 1807, Dana relinquished all claim to the deed and the deed was made over to William Watson, Josiah Hovey, Benjamin Bigelow, John Hayden, Josiah Mixer, Jonas Gleason, Junior, John Trowbridge, Thomas Bisco, Zaccherias Green, Nathaniel Livermore, Ebenezer Crafts, and John Coates (book 172, page 172). They divided the estate into two parts: the 6 1/2 acre homestead, which included the mansion, stables, and outbuildings, valued at \$6,600, and the remaining 13 acres, valued at \$4,750.

In May, 1809, Watson et. al. sold the homestead to Josiah Marshall for \$7500 and he in turn sold it with only six acres of land to David S. Eaton of Boston in June, 1811 for \$10,000 (book 185, page 80; book 194, page 73). Eaton immediately sold to Samuel Appleton, also of Boston, and Appleton sold the homestead with 5 3/4 acres of land to Abraham W. Fuller of Boston for \$5,500 in December of 1825.

The amount of land in the homestead decreased with each successive sale. In September, 1844, Fuller sold the homestead with only 4 1/4 acres to Edmund A. Chapman, chaisemaker, and Adam S. Cottrell, housewright, for \$4,000 (book 449, page 466). Two years later, they sold to Samuel Batchelder, Esq. for \$10,000 (book 481, page 29). In 1886, the executors of Batchelder's estate sold the Brattle Mansion and land to Isabella James for \$19,000, and in 1889, she in turn sold it to the Cambridge Social Union for \$9,000. By that time, the homestead included only the Brattle mansion house and a quarter acre of land (book 1920, page 23). In February, 1890, the Social Union sold the house to the Trustees of the Union.

## 2. Development History of Parcel

The original topography of Brattle Square was shaped by the Town Spring, a creek that occupied the site of the Cherry, Webb and Touraine store. With much of the area owned by the Brattle family after 1727, little change took place in the 18th century. The major feature of the area was Thomas Brattle's extensive garden, renowned in the Federal period for its beauty, size, and neatness. The Salem diarist William Bentley commented on October 4, 1792,

"the garden is laid out upon a very considerable descent & formed with terrace walks, abounding with Trees, fruits & the whole luxury of vegetation, & is unrivalled by any thing I have seen of the kind." The garden occupied most of the 20-acre estate and ran from Brattle Street down to the Charles River.

When Thomas Brattle died in 1801, the estate was broken up but did not develop significantly thereafter. Only seven houses appear south of Brattle Street between Eliot and Ash Streets on the 1833 Wadsworth map. A few single family houses were built near the Brattle House in the 1840s, notably the temple-front Chapman House at Eliot and Mount Auburn and the Gothic Revival Batchelder cottage on Mifflin Place, but after the construction of the huge, five-story Brattle Square Hotel in 1849 (facing on Brattle Square), the desirability of the area for single-family residences diminished. The conversion of the Brattle Square Hotel to the University Press printing plant by the 1860s reinforced the non-residential character of Brattle Square. The Hotel/Press was demolished in 1895 but not built on until after the turn of the century.

Story Street, at the western edge of the block, was laid out in 1840. Between 1854 and 1873, seven houses were constructed on the east side and a few more on the west. A similar development was contemplated for Mifflin Place, subdivided for seven house lots in 1889, however only a few three-deckers were built. These were joined at the turn of the century by Waverly Hall (1902) and Belmont Hall (1903), both private dormitories for Harvard students.

In addition to the dormitories, the only other pre-World War II buildings on the block were Brattle Hall, built by the Cambridge Social Union in 1889, the Cherry, Webb & Touraine store of 1924 (originally the Post Office), and the Northeast Federal Savings Bank (1937). The character of the block was similar to that of Hilliard, Revere, and Gerry Streets today: small scale, wood frame, vernacular houses of the 1840s through 1890s. In 1953, the present Post Office replaced a large three-decker.

Major change did not occur until the mid-1960s. Between 1966 and 1971, six four to six-story concrete and glass office buildings were built at the northwest corner of the block, radically transforming the character, use, and scale of their surroundings. Until the present, there has been no major new construction on the Brattle Square block, but four new buildings are planned. If those projects are completed as proposed, the only pre-1966 buildings remaining will be the Brattle House (1727), Brattle Hall (1889), the Cambridge College three-decker at 11-15 Mifflin Place (1901) and Waverly Hall (1902).

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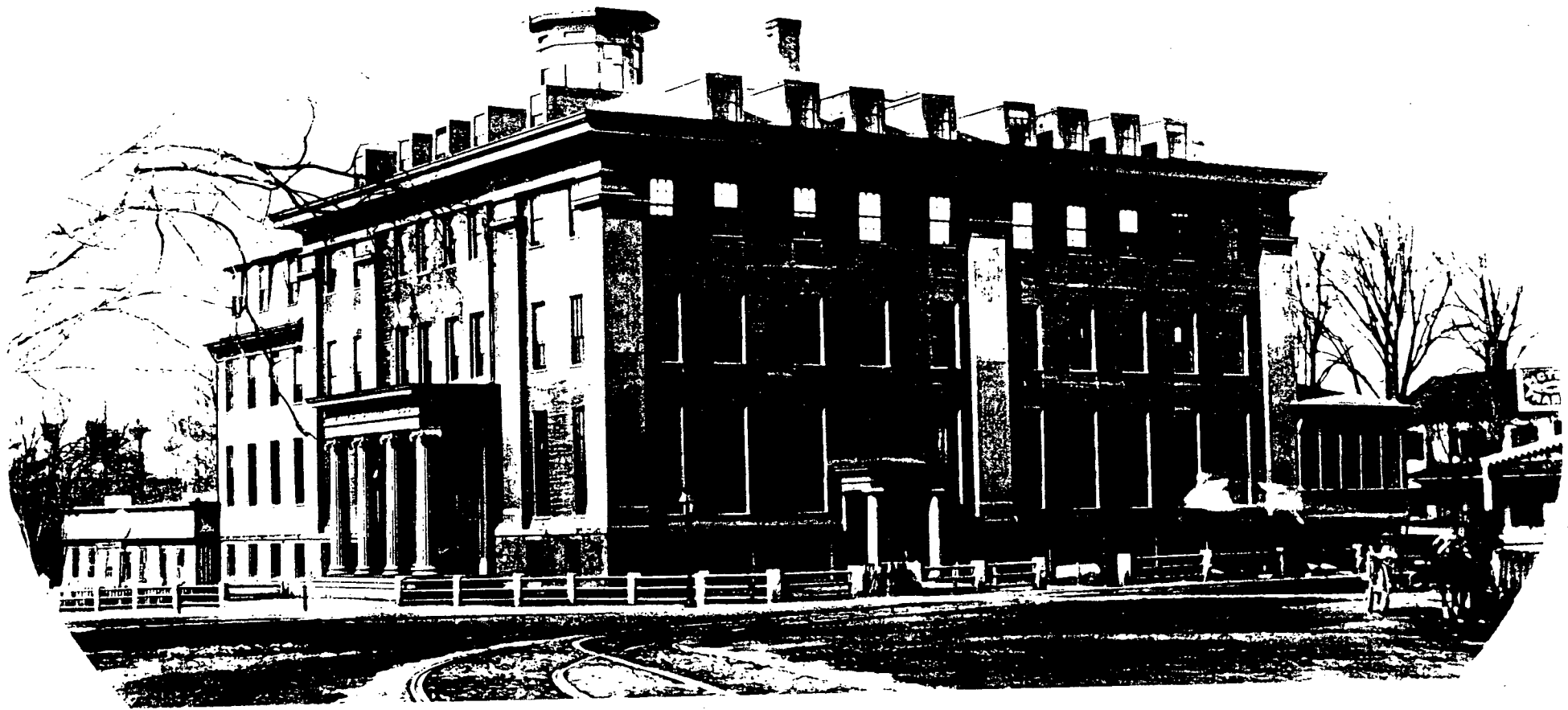
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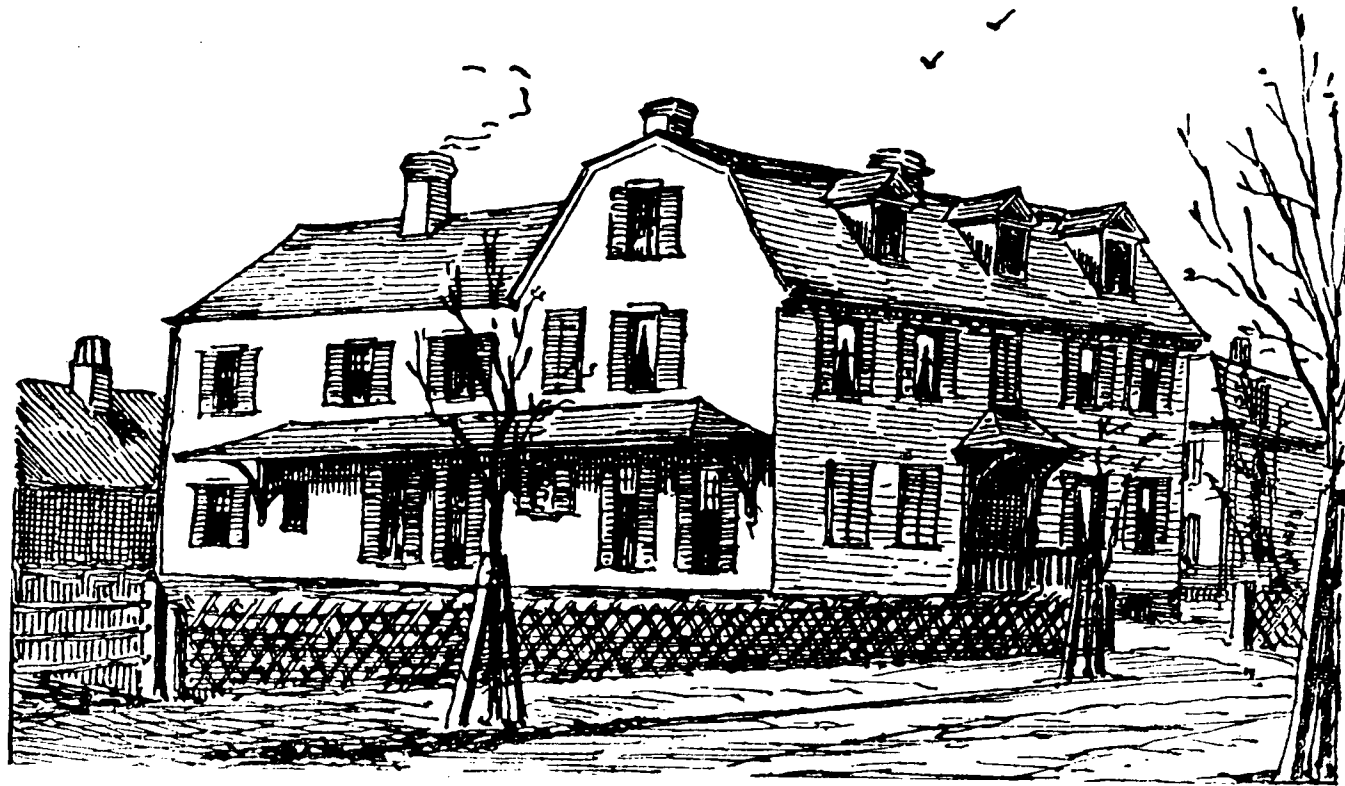
Middlesex County. Registry of Deeds. Land records.

Middlesex County. Registry of Probate. Probate records.





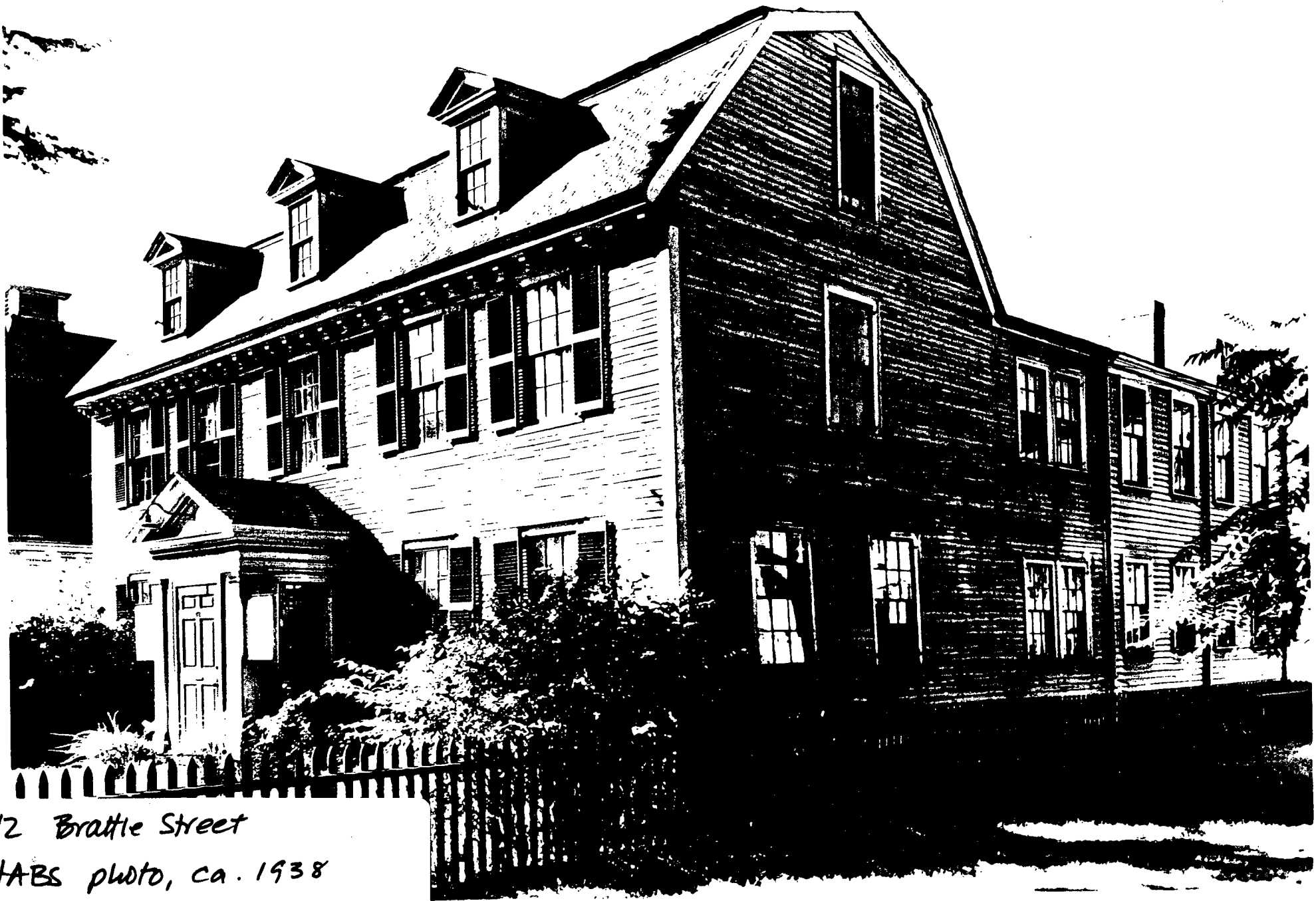
Brattle House / Riverside Press,  
42 Brattle at right  
Photo, 1869



42 Brattle Street  
Moses King view, 1878



42 Brattle Street (r.)  
Semi-Centennial  
Souvenir, 1896



42 Brattle Street  
HABS photo, ca. 1938

#### IV. Significance of the Property

##### A. Historical Significance

The William Brattle House is historically significant because of its associations with important persons and major political and social reforms throughout the City's history.

William Brattle, son of the Reverend William Brattle minister of the First Parish Church in Cambridge, was born in 1706 in Cambridge and died in Halifax, Nova Scotia in 1776. He graduated from Harvard College in 1722, and was at various times physician, preacher, lawyer, justice of the peace, and attorney-general. He served as a selectman for 21 years, as a representative to the Great and General Court for 10 years, and as a member of His Majesty's Council for 17 years. Styled "Major" as early as 1729, Brattle was an Adjutant-general of the Ancient and Honorable Artillery by 1758 and later a Brigadier-general. In 1771, he was appointed Major-general of the Massachusetts Bay province's forces. He worked for peace in the years following, but kept General Gage informed of matters in Cambridge. In 1774, he found it necessary to withdraw to Boston and then left for Nova Scotia, where he died two years later.

After Brattle left, General Washington appropriated the house to use as headquarters for Major Thomas Mifflin, commissary-general of the Continental Army. William Brattle's son, Thomas (1742-1801), returned to the house after the war. He enlarged the estate and substantially improved the grounds. Marshall Wilder in Justin Winsor's history of Boston states, "Mr. Brattle, with a native taste for horticulture, and with observation of foreign lands, no doubt laid out his grounds in the latest styles of Europe, having a spring of pure water, a marble grotto, a pond for goldfish, and a parterre for aquatic plants on a lower level, where the University Press now stands. His lawn was so velvet-like that it was said it could only be improved by combing it with a fine-tooth comb."

Thomas Brattle died unmarried in 1801 and, upon his death, his two nieces divided the estate. The house then passed through a multitude of owners and was rented to tenants until 1889, when the Cambridge Social Union bought the Brattle House and the adjoining lot for \$9,000.

The Cambridge Social Union, which began in 1871, provided a social outlet for young adults over 16 years of age. The Union had already outgrown several other Harvard Square locations before the members raised the money to buy the two Brattle Street lots, one of which included the Brattle House. The "ancient" Brattle House was found, in the words of a member of the Union, "to be so staunch and

strong that it was determined to put it into complete repair for the purpose of the Union, for which it was proved to be well adapted." After its renovation, the house contained classrooms, a library, and meeting rooms for various Cambridge social groups. On their second lot, the Union constructed Brattle Hall in 1889 with a theatre and meeting spaces. The organization combined entertainment with good works, such as provision of low-cost classes taught by Harvard students and a boys' club where young boys could gather for games and instruction.

In 1937, the Union's revenues began to fall, and after an extensive study, the Union decided to open the Cambridge Center for Adult Education in 1938. The Center became an independent organization in 1941. Today, the Cambridge Center for Adult Education continues to operate in the Brattle House. Housed in the William Brattle House, the Union and Center have thus devoted 117 years to serving the educational and social needs of the city and are an important institution in Cambridge.

#### B. Architectural Significance

The William Brattle House is architecturally significant because of its contribution to the broad architectural history of the city and for the importance of its period, style, and method of construction.

The Brattle House is a modest, one-room deep vernacular early Georgian house, less elaborate than the two-room deep Wadsworth House built as the Harvard President's House. It is one of four Early Georgian houses surviving in Cambridge, the others being the Hooper-Lee-Nichols House (ca. 1685, 1716, ca. 1740, ca. 1760, 1860, 1916), the afore-mentioned Wadsworth House (1726, 1783, 1810), and the Henry Vassall House (possibly as early as 1637, 1746, ca. 1825). Distinctive elements of the Early phase of Georgian architecture are the five-bay, center entrance plan, steep gambrel roof, window placement flush with the eave, and simple ornamentation. The Brattle House preserves several of these features well. Its steep-pitched gambrel roof, center entrance plan, windows tight to the eaves, and overall simplicity are hallmarks of its period. The elaborately detailed entrance porch is an 1891 addition and reflects the 19th century Colonial Revival taste for the more flamboyant expressions of the 18th century's Late Georgian architecture.

In addition, the Brattle House makes an important contribution to the streetscape. Its deep setback breaks up the building wall along Brattle Street while the landscaped courtyard provides green space in the urban setting. Architecturally, the Brattle House augments the diversity of this stretch of Brattle Street, one which spans the history

of this area's development from an 18th century residential enclave on the periphery of Harvard Square to a busy commercial district.

## V. Relationship to Criteria

### A. Landmark Criteria

Section 4 states the criteria for landmark designation. It states that the Commission:

. . . may recommend for designation as a landmark any . . . structure . . . either (a) importantly associated with one or more historic persons or events, or with the broad architectural, aesthetic, cultural, political, economic or social history of the City . . . or (b) historically or architecturally significant (in terms of period, style, method of construction, or association with a famous architect or builder) either by itself or in the context of a group of structures.

### B. Relationship of Property to Criteria

The William Brattle House meets criteria (a) and (b) of Ordinance 1002 for its important associations with historic persons and events, and with the broad architectural and social history of the City. It is also architecturally significant in terms of its period, style, and method of construction.

It is significant for its important associations with General William Brattle, scion of an important Colonial family and a prominent Tory political and military figure. It is also associated with the period of time in 1775 and 1776 when Cambridge was the headquarters of the Continental Army. During the Revolutionary War, the house was confiscated for use by Thomas Mifflin, aide-de-camp to General Washington and the Army's commissary-general. It is also significant in the city's social history for its associations with the Cambridge Social Union, an important social and educational institution in late 19th century Cambridge.

As one of only four Early Georgian houses in Cambridge, the Brattle House provides important evidence of the development of the Georgian style in Cambridge. As one of the earliest extant residences in the city, it is a rare reminder of the city's 18th century character. Despite alterations made to the house in the 19th and 20th centuries, the main house retains much of its original appearance and materials as well as its original framing. In addition, it is the sole remaining element of Thomas Brattle's gardens, noted in the Federal period as among the finest in New England. The Brattle House thus is architecturally significant for its period, style and method of construction, as well as for its capacity to commemorate an important landscape feature of Federal Cambridge.

## VI. Recommendations

### A. Section 1, Ordinance 1002

The purpose of landmark designation is stated in Section 1 of Ordinance 1002:

. . . to preserve, conserve, and protect the beauty and heritage of the City . . . and to improve the quality of its environment through identification, conservation, and maintenance of . . . structures which constitute or reflect distinctive features of the architectural, cultural, political, economic or social history of the City; to resist and restrain environmental influences adverse to this purpose. . .

### B. Preservation Options

The William Brattle House is listed on the National Register of Historic Places as a contributing building in the Harvard Square National Register District. It is protected from the adverse effects of federally licensed, permitted, or funded projects and, through listing on the parallel State Register of Historic Places, from the adverse effects of state funded projects. At the local level, it is covered by the provisions of the Harvard Square Overlay District, in addition to the general zoning regulations of the city.

The National and State Registers provide limited protection from public projects through review by the Massachusetts Historical Commission. The Overlay District establishes zoning incentives for the preservation of contributing National Register properties and also calls for review of certain projects by the Harvard Square Overlay Committee. However, neither the Massachusetts Historical Commission's nor the Advisory Committee's powers allow for detailed, binding review of architectural designs. The Advisory Committee also cannot mandate the retention of a particular property.

Other options for the preservation of the William Brattle House include designation as a Landmark under Ordinance 1002, or placement of a Preservation Easement on the property under the provisions of MGL Chapter 184. The property is now owned by a non-profit institution and therefore it is unlikely that a preservation easement would yield any value to the owner. If ownership of the property should change in the future, this option should be re-examined.

The other two major protective designations, a Neighborhood Conservation District or a Local Historic

District in Harvard Square, are foreclosed by the Commission's prior agreement not to impose local district controls on Harvard Square in return for the listing of the area on the National Register of Historic Places.

C. Staff Recommendation

It is the staff recommendation that the William Brattle House be recommended to the City Council for designation as a Protected Landmark.

## VII. Statement of Standards for Design Review

### A. Introduction

The Commission's primary charge under Ordinance 1002 is to review "all construction, demolition, or alteration that affects the exterior architectural features, other than color, of any landmark." This landmark study report describes exterior architectural features that are among the characteristics which led to consideration of the property as a landmark. Except as the order designating or amending the landmark may otherwise provide, those features should be preserved and/or enhanced in any construction, demolition, or alteration of a landmark.

Section 8 of the ordinance sets general guidelines to be considered by the Historical Commission in reviewing changes to landmarks. Among other things, the Commission is directed to consider:

the historic and architectural value and significance of the site or structure, the general design, arrangement, texture and material of the features involved, and the relation of such features to similar features or structures in the surrounding area.

In all cases, a Certificate of Appropriateness, Hardship, or Non-Applicability must be issued by the Historical Commission prior to making any changes to a landmark. The Commission does not have authority to regulate the interiors of landmarks nor can they control changes to exterior architectural features not subject to public view. Nonetheless, Certificates of Non-Applicability must be issued for those changes. All applications are carefully reviewed by the Commission at a public hearing, in accordance with Ordinance 1002.

### B. General Standards

1. Historic and architectural features of the landmark shall be preserved.
2. Changes and additions to the landmark which have taken place over time are evidence of the history of the property and the neighborhood. These changes to the property may have acquired significance in their own right and that significance should be recognized and respected.
3. Deteriorated architectural features should be repaired rather than replaced.
4. When replacement of architectural features is necessary, it should be based on physical or documentary evidence.

5. New materials should, whenever possible, match the material being replaced in physical properties, design, color, texture, and appearance. The use of imitation replacement materials is discouraged.

6. The surface cleaning of a landmark shall be done by the gentlest possible means. Sandblasting and other cleaning methods that damage exterior architectural features shall not be used.

7. New additions must not destroy significant exterior architectural features and shall not be incongruous to the historic aspects, architectural significance, or distinctive character of the landmark, neighborhood and environment.

8. New additions should be done in such a way that if they were to be removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the landmark would be unimpaired.

#### C. Statement of Standards

##### 1. General

a. Preserve and protect insofar as possible the setting and streetscape views of the Brattle House, in particular, the front setback and landscaping, and the low rise height of the surrounding buildings to the sides and rear.

b. Analyze and evaluate the construction sequence, age, and historic, architectural, and possible archeological significance of the ells to the rear of the main house prior to considering alteration, demolition or construction on the rear of the site. Preparation of an historic structures report on the ells is recommended.

##### 2. Exterior Walls

a. Retain clapboard exterior.

b. Relocate existing wall unit air conditioners from east end elevation.

c. Relocate existing iron fire escapes from east end elevation if possible.

##### 3. Windows

a. Retain and repair historic six-over-six windows where these survive.

##### 4. Roof

5. Other Elements

a. Retain perimeter fencing first installed ca. 1848 and reproduced in 1986.

## VIII. Proposed Order

## ORDERED:

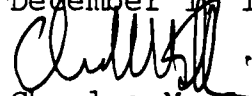
That the William Brattle House, 42 Brattle Street, be designated as a protected landmark pursuant to Chapter Two, Article XVI, Section 2-147(k) of the Code of the City of Cambridge, as recommended by vote of the Cambridge Historical Commission on December 1, 1988. The premises so designated are defined as Parcel 32 of Assessors' Map 168.

This designation is justified by the important associations of the building with historic persons and events and with the broad architectural and social history of the City of Cambridge. Specifically, it is associated with General William Brattle, scion of an important Colonial family and a prominent Tory political and military figure, and with the Revolutionary War in Cambridge, during which time the house served as the residence of Major Thomas Mifflin, aide-de-camp to General Washington and commissary-general of the Continental Army. For the last 99 years, the William Brattle House has been associated with the Cambridge Social Union and its descendant, the Cambridge Center for Adult Education, institutions that have made an important contribution to Cambridge's social and educational life. Architecturally and historically, the William Brattle House is a significant and rare surviving example of Early Georgian architecture and an important reminder of the city's 18th century character. The Brattle House and its setting are critical to the diversity and varied open spaces of this stretch of Brattle Street and contribute significantly to the streetscape.

The effect of this designation shall be that no construction activity can take place within the designated landmark area, and no action can be taken affecting the appearance of the William Brattle House, that would in either case be visible from a public way without review by the Cambridge Historical Commission and the issuance of a Certificate of Appropriateness, Hardship or Non-Applicability, as the case may be. In making determinations, the Commission shall be guided by the terms of the landmark designation report, and by section VII, Standards for Design Review, and by the applicable sections of Ordinance 1002.

Adopted by a vote of 6-0

December 1, 1988



Charles M. Sullivan

Executive Director

Cambridge Historical Commission

54 BRATTLE STREET  
DEXTER PRATT HOUSE

LANDMARK DESIGNATION STUDY REPORT  
PREPARED BY SARAH ZIMMERMAN  
CAMBRIDGE HISTORICAL COMMISSION  
OCTOBER 21, 1988

CONTENTS

I. Location and Economic Status.....	1
II. Description.....	3
III. History of the Property.....	5
IV. Significance of the Property.....	8
V. Relationship to Criteria.....	11
VI. Recommendations.....	12
VII. Standards for Design Review.....	14
VIII. Proposed Order.....	16

The Dexter Pratt House is a very well-preserved example of the Federal style of architecture. One of the best examples of this style in Cambridge, it was built in 1808. It was purchased shortly thereafter by Dexter Pratt, a blacksmith whose shop stood adjacent to the house at the corner of Brattle and Story Streets. Pratt was immortalized in Longfellow's classic poem "The Village Smithy." Pratt's house is now the only element still standing to remind us of this important literary landmark in Cambridge. It meets criteria (a) and (b) for its associations with the cultural history of Cambridge and it is architecturally significant in terms of its period, style, and method of construction.



## 54 Brattle Street: Dexter Pratt House

### I. Location and Economic Status

#### A. Address

The Dexter Pratt House is located at 54 Brattle Street. The parcel is identified as Number 57 on Assessors' Map 168. It is in non-profit use and thus is not taxable.

The building stands in a C-2 zone, which allows for multi-family residential use at an FAR of 1.75 and a height limitation of 85 feet. The building is a contributing structure in the Harvard Square National Register District and therefore subject to the provisions of the Harvard Square Overlay Zone. Projects requiring a special permit or variance must be approved by the Harvard Square Advisory Committee, which may impose additional use, height, parking, and setback limitations beyond those enumerated in the zoning code.

#### B. Ownership and Occupancy

The Dexter Pratt House is owned by the Cambridge Center for Adult Education. It houses the Blacksmith House Bakery and Cafe and classroom and gallery space for the Center's educational programs.

#### C. Area Description

The Dexter Pratt House stands at the extreme western edge of the Harvard Square commercial district in an area of small commercial buildings, larger multi-story apartment buildings, and Radcliffe College academic buildings. It is located at the transition point between the commercial zone of Harvard Square and the residential neighborhoods of the Half Crown and lower Brattle Street areas. Immediately adjacent to the Dexter Pratt House are the Brattle Arms apartment building (1946, Saul Moffie), a three-story commercial building (1958) at 52A-D Brattle Street, the Washington Court apartments (1905, Newhall and Blevins) and several residential buildings on Story and Hilliard Streets.

#### D. Planning Issues

There are several new buildings planned and under construction on the block of Brattle, Story, and Mount Auburn Streets, just to the south of the Pratt House. While these projects may have the effect of increasing development pressure in the Pratt House block, there are no known plans to redevelop any of the buildings surrounding the house.

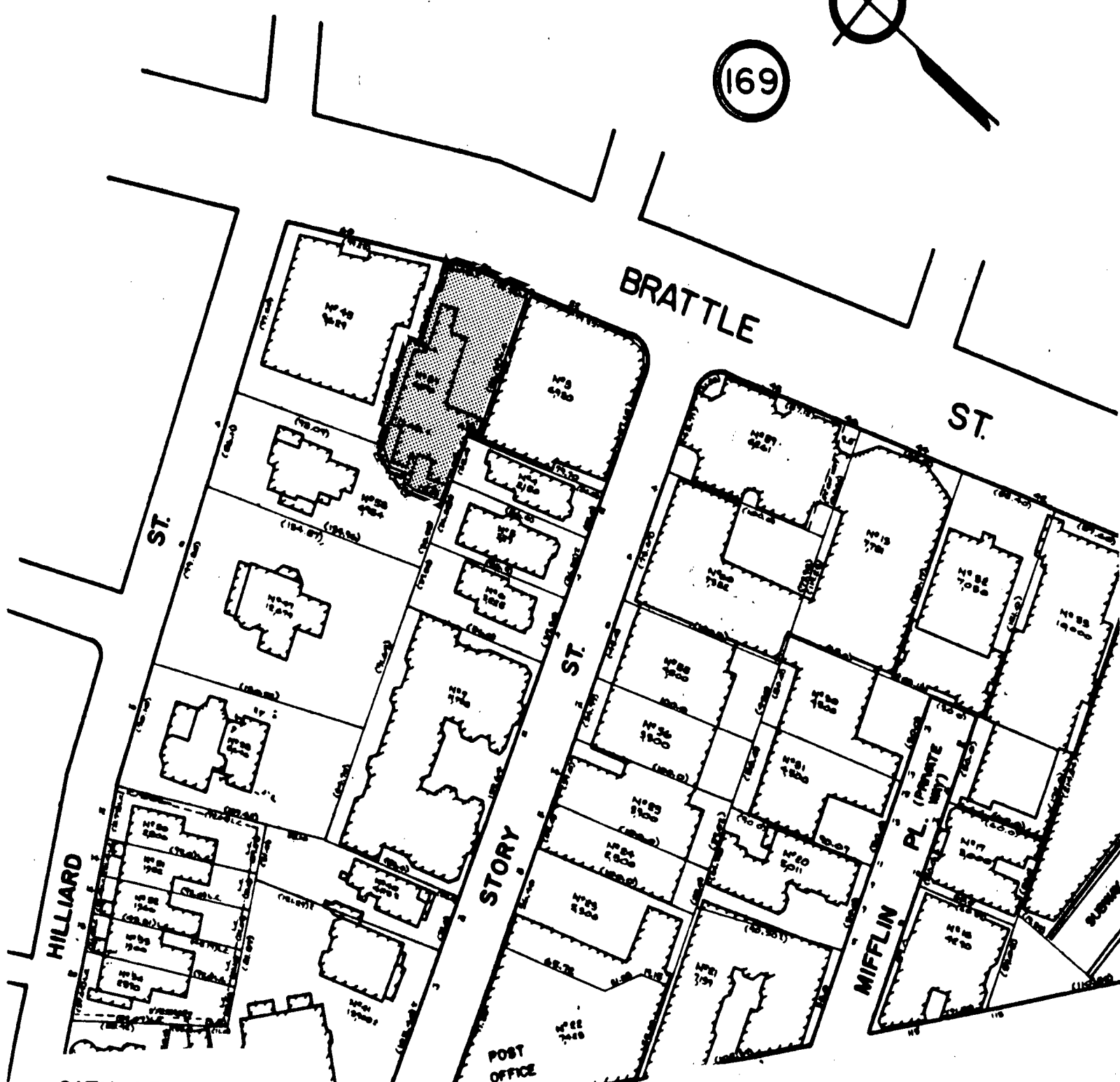
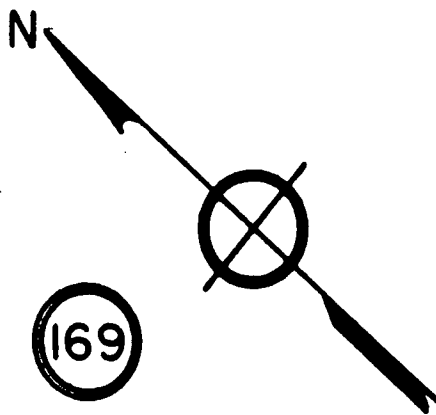
Given the presence of the Half Crown Neighborhood Conservation District along Hilliard Street, the north side

of the block bounded by Brattle, Hilliard, Mount Auburn, and Story Streets is well protected from major change. The current zoning along Story Street (C2) allows for multi-family residences to a height of 85' with an FAR of 1.75, thereby opening the possibility of larger scale, higher density residential construction on the southern half of the block. The corner lot (52A-D Brattle), zoned at Business A, carries a maximum height of 35' and an FAR of 1.0 for business, retail, and office use, with more generous allowances for residential use at C2 zoning. However, since the existing building exceeds the current zoning envelope, it is unlikely it will be demolished.

E. Map



Dexter Pratt House  
 54 Brattle Street  
 Location Map



**CITY OF CAMBRIDGE**

SCALE 1" = 40'      JUNE-1978

DIMENSIONS FROM DEED, LAND COURT

OR LAYOUT PLANS ARE IN BRACKETS ( )

LAND COURT MARKED L.C. ALL OTHER

DIMENSIONS ARE MEASURED.

DRAWN BY AL THOMPSON

Dexter Pratt House  
54 Brattle Street

## II. Description

### A. Type and Use

The Dexter Pratt House was built in 1808 by Torrey Hancock, who was, like Pratt, a blacksmith. Hancock purchased the land from John Gannett et al. early in 1808, and by 1809, Hancock was taxed for one house and one "other building." Therefore it seems likely that the shop, as well as the house, was built in 1808.

The house was built as a single-family house and remained in that use until the death of Dexter Pratt's widow, Rowena, in 1858. It appears to have been rented to tenants through the turn of the century and, in 1924, was purchased for use as a tea-room. In 1946, it was purchased by the Window Shop, a philanthropic group, for retail and restaurant use and has remained in non-profit use since then, the Cambridge Center for Adult Education having purchased the building in 1973.

### B. Physical Description

The Dexter Pratt House is a two-story, hip-roofed Federal house with rear wall chimneys. It is set end wall to the street. A traditional center entry structure, the house is five bays wide by one bay deep. A smaller, lower two-story, one bay wide ell with a half hip roof projects toward the street from the end wall. There is a modern one-story kitchen ell to the rear of the house and a 1973 two-story greenhouse-type addition located perpendicular to the house at the back of the lot. The house is sheathed with clapboards, painted yellow. The trim is white, with black blinds and door. The roof is gray asphalt shingle.

The house is set back some 25 feet from Brattle Street in a landscaped courtyard that extends across the front and down the side of the lot. It faces east onto the rear wall of the building at 52A-D Brattle Street. The lot is terraced up some 10 feet from grade level at the street. A simple iron fence sets the courtyard off from the street. The courtyard is paved with bluestone with granite retaining walls and edged with planting beds containing three small flowering trees and low-growing shrubs. Just to the left of the entrance to the house is a free-standing pergola over which an ancient wisteria, once trained against the house itself, now grows.

The facade (east elevation) is focussed on the center entrance, which contains a six-panel door set within a semi-circular arched surround with narrow reeded pilasters and a fanlight. A later door hood with triangular braces, added ca. 1875, surmounts the entry, which is shielded to the rear with a lattice screen on which an oval sign reading

"Blacksmith House" is hung. A granite platform with two steps leads to the entrance. Narrow cornerboards and a boxed cornice delimit the facade. The windows are six-over-six sash set in band moulded surrounds. The first floor windows are slightly elongated. The foundation, brick through the rest of the house, is faced with granite on the facade. Many of the clapboards on the facade are original.

The ell to the north is one bay wide by one bay deep and contains one room on each of its two floors. Entry is gained via a glazed, panelled door set in a plain frame. Adjacent to the ell entry, which now is used for handicapped access, is a half flight of stairs leading to the basement level. The windows in the ell are proportionally smaller, with six-over-six sash, with the exception of a blind window on the first floor window at the rear.

The rear (west) wall, containing the house's two tall chimneys, is of brick, laid in running bond with one header course for every five courses of stretchers. The one-story kitchen ell, which is a utilitarian frame structure with clapboard sheathing, projects from this wall and appears to have been added in the 1960s (building permits 63791, 1964, and 66823, 1968). The flat roof of the kitchen ell carries the heating and ventilating equipment for the building. There is a single window cut into the brick wall, at the north corner.

The south wall of the Pratt House is obscured by a two-and-a-half story glass and concrete classroom wing (1976, Cambridge Seven Associates) which connects to the house with a gable-roofed, two-story glass and aluminum stair tower.

The classroom wing replaces a wood and glass structure in the same location that was added to the house in 1946 to house the Window Shop store. This wing is considered non-contributing to the significance of the property but it is an inobtrusive and compatible design which does not detract from the historic character of the house. In its history, particularly since it has been in commercial use over the past sixty-four years, there have been numerous small alterations to the house, most of which were corrected in a 1977-79 restoration program directed by Ann Beha Associates.

#### C. Current Photographs



54 Brattle Street  
photo, 1988

VFD SHEET PROTECTOR MY-11

VFD SHEET PROTECTOR MY-11



entrance, 54 Brattle Street  
photo, 1988

### III. History of the Property

#### A. Historic Development Patterns

##### 1. Deed History of the Parcel

In 1808, John Gannett et al. sold Torrey Hancock, a blacksmith, a lot of land at 54 Brattle Street for \$187.50 (book 177, page 527). Then, in 1820, Hancock bought an adjacent lot of land (52 Brattle Street) from Samuel Appleton for \$500 (book 235, page 115). Hancock built a house on his property in 1808 and, in 1827, sold both parcels and the buildings thereon to Dexter Pratt, also a blacksmith, for \$4000. Pratt worked there as the "village smithy" immortalized in Longfellow's poem, "The Village Blacksmith," until his death in 1847.

The house appears to have been sold to Samuel F. Batchelder sometime after Rowena Pratt's death and was held by Batchelder or his heir, Marianna Washburn Batchelder, until 1924, when the property was sold to Frances D. Gage (book 4721, page 407). From the 1920s through the mid-1940s, the house served as the Cock Horse Inn, a restaurant and student dining establishment, and as Miss Gage's residence.

In 1946, the Window Shop, Inc., purchased the building and continued to operate a restaurant. The proprietors renovated the building to improve its facilities and added a new building in the rear to serve as a shop. In 1972, the Cambridge Center for Adult Education purchased the building, restoring it over the next nine years and running a restaurant and bakery in the facility.

##### 2. Development History of Parcel and Surroundings

The block on which the Dexter Pratt House stands was part of the Brattle Estate in the 18th century, in a parcel acquired by Thomas Brattle in 1771. It did not develop until after the disposition of Thomas Brattle's estate by his nieces in 1801. The land along Brattle Street was only sparsely developed thereafter, and only six houses are shown along the south side of Brattle Street between Eliot and Ash Streets on Wadsworth's 1833 map of Old Cambridge. The Dexter Pratt House (1808) and its neighbor, the Judge Joseph Story House (1808; demolished ca. 1945), were both oriented narrow, gable end to the street, reflecting the long, narrow configuration of several of the lots divided out of Brattle's holdings.

Through the mid-century, the character of the area was a more openly spaced version of Revere and Gerry Streets today. By 1854, Story Street (1840) and Hilliard Street (1851) had been laid out and a few additional houses

constructed. In addition, Ash Street Place and Hilliard Place had been subdivided and developed with small workers' cottages. The Washington School was built opposite the Dexter Pratt House in 1852 on Farwell Place. Much of Story Street was built up with small single family houses by the 1870, while ca. 1870, a large mansard roofed house, the Withey House, was built at the corner of Story and Brattle Street, replacing an earlier house that stood on the site of Dexter Pratt's blacksmith shop. In 1870, the Holmes School, a two-story mansard building, was built on Hilliard Street.

From the 1870s through the early 20th century, the block of Story, Brattle, Hilliard, and Mount Auburn Streets was characterized by larger houses set back from the street on large lots, but by 1916, multiple family housing replaced some of the older homes, particularly along Mount Auburn Street. Three-decker apartment buildings were built at 127-129 and 131 Mount Auburn Street in 1913 and 1902, while in 1911, the Holmes School was replaced by a Tudor style rowhouse at 12-20 Hilliard Street. "Washington Court," a luxury apartment building designed by Newhall and Blevins, was constructed on the site of the Washington School opposite the Pratt House in 1905.

Little change in the character of the block occurred until after World War II, when a new wave of construction began. Residential uses in the neighborhood declined, with the exception of Hilliard Street, and were replaced with commercial, office, and institutional uses. In 1946, the Story House was demolished for the Brattle Arms apartments (Saul Moffie). Twelve years later, the commercial block at 52A-D was erected on the site of the Withey House, boxing the Pratt House in on both sides with inappropriately scaled and architecturally undistinguished new buildings.

In 1959, the Loeb Drama Center (Hugh Stubbins) was built on the site of two small early 19th century houses at Hilliard and Brattle Streets, further adding to the non-residential character of the area. In the late 1960s and early 1970s, several large Brutalist structures were built adjacent to the Pratt House, including the Gutman Library (1970, Ben Thompson Associates) of Harvard University and the Design Research building (Ben Thompson Associates, 1969), both of which replaced Second Empire houses. Finally, there are presently planned for the area several large new development projects for the block east of the Pratt House that will increase the scale and density of that block, adding a large amount of new office and retail space.

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The "Spreading Chestnut Tree"  
from Poetic Localities of  
Cambridge (1876)

## THE VILLAGE BLACKSMITH.

BY HENRY WADSWORTH LONGFELLOW.

**U**NDER a spreading chestnut-tree  
The village smithy stands ;  
The smith, a mighty man is he,  
With large and sinewy hands ;  
And the muscles of his brawny arms.  
Are strong as iron bands.

His hair is crisp, and black, and long,  
His face is like the tan ;  
His brow is wet with honest sweat,  
He earns whate'er he can,  
And looks the whole world in the face,  
For he owes not any man.

Week in, week out, from morn till night,  
You can hear his bellows blow ;  
You can hear him swing his heavy sledge,  
With measured beat and slow,  
Like a sexton ringing the village bell,  
When the evening sun is low.

And children coming home from school  
Look in at the open door ;  
They love to see the flaming forge,  
And hear the bellows roar,  
And catch the burning sparks that fly  
Like chaff from a threshing-floor.

He goes on Sunday to the church,  
And sits among his boys ;  
He hears the parson pray and preach,  
He hears his daughter's voice,  
Singing in the village choir,  
And it makes his heart rejoice.

POETIC LOCALITIES OF CAMBRIDGE.

It sounds to him like her mother's voice,  
Singing in Paradise !  
He needs must think of her once more,  
How in the grave she lies ;  
And with his hard, rough hand he wipes  
A tear out of his eyes.

Toiling, — rejoicing, — sorrowing,  
Onward through life he goes ;  
Each morning sees some task begin,  
Each evening sees it close ;  
Something attempted, something done,  
Has earned a night's repose.

Thanks, thanks to thee, my worthy friend,  
For the lesson thou hast taught !  
Thus at the flaming forge of life  
Our fortunes must be wrought ;  
Thus on its sounding anvil shaped  
Each burning deed and thought !

#### IV. Significance of the Property

##### A. Historical Significance

The primary significance of the house at 54 Brattle Street lies in its literary associations as the home of Dexter Pratt, the "Village Blacksmith" of Henry Wadsworth Longfellow's well-known poem. While the house is not mentioned in the poem, it is all that remains to remind us of Longfellow's famous words: the spreading chestnut tree, the flaming forge inside the shop's open door, and the mighty smithy who begins his task in the morning and finishes it in the evening to earn his nighttime rest. The blacksmith shop itself stood just east of the Pratt House and was probably demolished when the Withey House was constructed ca. 1870.

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow (1807-1882) was one of the foremost poets of 19th century America and widely regarded as the country's "Poet Laureate." The first American poet to be memorialized in Westminster Abbey's Poets' Corner, Longfellow's best-known poems have entered the American literary vernacular and were recited by generations of schoolchildren. Among these are "Hiawatha," "Evangeline," "Paul Revere's Ride" from "Tales of a Wayside Inn," and "The Village Blacksmith." The images of the spreading chestnut tree and the mighty smithy remain among Longfellow's most enduring.

The Dexter Pratt House is also important in understanding the economy and development of federal period Harvard Square. Between the 1780s and the 1820s, a far-flung network of turnpike roads was constructed radiating out from the "hub" of Boston to towns and cities all over New England. The turnpikes, arrow-straight toll roads that cut a direct path from town to town, were the major transportation innovation of their time and gave rise to an important road-related economy of taverns, stables, and blacksmith shops established to serve travellers, merchants, and teamsters on the road. Harvard Square stood at the center of the turnpikes leading west from Boston, with the roads from both the West Boston (1793) and Craigie (1807) bridges intersecting there. Livery stables, carriage shops, and blacksmith shops located around the Square on Church, Bow, and Eliot Streets and along Massachusetts Avenue. The blacksmith shop at 54 Brattle Street was part of this aspect of Harvard Square's economy. In typical 18th century fashion, the smith lived adjacent to his workplace.

Dexter Pratt, the hero of Longfellow's poem, was born in Framingham, Massachusetts in 1799 and married Rowena Houghton of Bolton, Massachusetts in 1825. Two years later, he bought the blacksmith shop and house from Torrey Hancock, with whom he appears to have lived and worked for several

years in the 1820s. Pratt's poll tax shows that he was living at Torrey Hancock's house from 1821 to 1824. Pratt was a member of the First Parish. He died at the age of 48 in October of 1847. Contrary to the terms of Longfellow's poem, Pratt was not a widower (his wife outlived him by eleven years), none of three sons survived infancy, and only one of his four daughters (Ann Louise Houghton Pratt) lived to adulthood. It may be she who is noted in Longfellow's poem as singing in the choir of the First Parish Church (see attached).

Finally, Dexter Pratt is tangentially related to the history of the Valspar Company, a paint and lacquer company founded by his brother-in-law, Franklin Houghton. It is unclear where the Valspar Company, producers of the first commercial varnish made in the United States, was first located, but it appears possible that the shop where the varnish was first manufactured was on the land of Dexter Pratt. In 1830, Houghton's partner, David McClure, purchased land in Cambridgeport near the West Boston Bridge, and presumably this became their shop location. In any case, the company moved to Brighton in 1847 and was subsequently sold several times, finally to a man named Valentine, from whose name "Valspar" was taken.

## B. Architectural Significance

The Dexter Pratt House is significant as one of the city's few extant examples of vernacular Federal style architecture and for its contribution to the streetscape of lower Brattle Street. Its well preserved Federal characteristics make it a particularly good example of the simple houses built for artisans and the middle classes in early 19th century Cambridge.

The house is a typical example of its style, with a full five bay facade, a delicately scaled entrance treatment, hipped roof, and narrow clapboards, cornerboards and cornice. The vernacular Federal style retained the Georgian center entrance plan and five bay wide massing, lightening the scale of construction materials and trim to create a more attenuated design. The entrance of the Dexter Pratt House is a particularly pleasant example of the Federal style's small scale detail; tall, narrow reeded pilasters and a narrow cornice frame the door, which is further heightened with a high-arched wooden fanlight. The hood is a late 19th century addition.

There are several elements of the Pratt House's design that are especially adapted to its urban location and the specific conditions of its site. These are the orientation of the house end gable toward the street and a side, rather than a rear, ell. The lot on which the house stands is long and narrow, thus necessitating the siting of the house

length-wise down the side line, with the ell extending from the end wall. The rear wall chimney plan, with a brick rear wall into which the chimnies are incorporated, was a common Middlesex County variant on the more typical Federal design of chimneys along the roof ridge. Its use reflects the presence of clay and brickyards in the area and may have been perceived as a protection against fire in built up areas. In general, the rear wall chimney plan denotes a more modest house, since houses of this construction were of necessity only one room deep. The distribution of this plan and its reasons for being are not discussed in the literature and thus it is not well understood.

The Pratt House also contributes significantly to the Brattle Street streetscape. It is the only 19th century house left on Brattle Street between Hilliard Street and Brattle Square, a stretch of road once lined with 19th century residences. Set back from the street behind a landscaped courtyard, the Pratt House provides a welcome break from the commercial and office buildings that dominate the neighborhood. Built by and lived in by a blacksmith for the first half-century of its existence, the Pratt House is finally a good example of the modest but well-crafted housing a successful artisan could construct.

#### C. Historic Photographs



54 Brattle Street  
photo, 1973

## V. Relationship to Criteria

### A. Section 4, Ordinance 1002

Section 4 states the criteria for landmark designation. It states that the Commission:

. . . may recommend for designation as a landmark any . . . structure . . . either (a) importantly associated with one or more historic persons or events, or with the broad architectural, aesthetic, cultural, political, economic or social history of the City . . . or (b) historically or architecturally significant (in terms of period, style, method of construction, or association with a famous architect or builder) either by itself or in the context of a group of structures.

### B. Relationship of Property to Criteria

The Dexter Pratt House is importantly associated with Dexter Pratt and, tangentially, with Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, and with the broad cultural history of the City. It is also architecturally significant in terms of its period, style, and method of construction.

Dexter Pratt (1799-1847) was the second owner of the house and made his living as a blacksmith. The original owner, Torrey Hancock (1778-1852), with whom Pratt lived and may have apprenticed, built the house and a blacksmith shop in 1808. The blacksmith shop and Dexter Pratt are commemorated in one of the most memorable of Longfellow's poems, "The Village Blacksmith." Pratt resided in the house from 1825 until his death in 1847 and his widow remained there until her death in 1858. The blacksmith shop of Longfellow's poem appears to have been demolished by ca. 1870, when a large mansard house was built on its site at the corner of Story and Brattle Streets. The chestnut tree cited in the poem stood on Brattle Street until about 1875. The Dexter Pratt House is the only reminder of one of Cambridge's most celebrated literary images.

Architecturally, the Pratt House is the only extant 19th century house on Brattle Street south of Hilliard Street. It is a good example of vernacular Federal architecture in an excellent state of preservation. It is also an example of rear wall chimney construction, a variant of Federal house construction that seems to concentrate in Middlesex County and about which more study is needed. The house and its setting provide one of the few green open spaces along lower Brattle Street and make an important contribution to the streetscape.

## VI. Recommendations

### A. Section 1, Ordinance 1002

The purpose of landmark designation is stated in Section 1 of Ordinance 1002:

. . . to preserve, conserve, and protect the beauty and heritage of the City . . . and to improve the quality of its environment through identification, conservation, and maintenance of . . . structures which constitute or reflect distinctive features of the architectural, cultural, political, economic or social history of the City; [and] to resist and restrain environmental influences adverse to this purpose.

### B. Preservation Options

The Dexter Pratt House is listed on the National Register of Historic Places as a contributing building in the Harvard Square National Register District. It is protected from the adverse effects of federally licensed, permitted, or funded projects and, through listing on the parallel State Register of Historic Places, from the adverse effects of state funded projects. At the local level, it is covered by the provisions of the Harvard Square Overlay District, in addition to the general zoning regulations of the city.

The National and State Registers provide limited protection from public projects through review by the Massachusetts Historical Commission. The Overlay District establishes zoning incentives for the preservation of contributing National Register properties and also calls for review of certain projects by the Harvard Square Overlay Committee. However, neither the Massachusetts Historical Commission's nor the Advisory Committee's powers allow for detailed, binding review of architectural designs. The Advisory Committee also cannot mandate the retention of a particular property.

Other options for the preservation of the Dexter Pratt House include designation as a Landmark under Ordinance 1002, or placement of a Preservation Easement on the property under the provisions of MGL Chapter 184. The property is now owned by a non-profit institution and therefore it is unlikely that a preservation easement would yield any value to the owner. If ownership of the property should change in the future, this option should be re-examined.

The other two major protective designations, a Neighborhood Conservation District or a Local Historic District in Harvard Square, are foreclosed by the

Commission's prior agreement not to impose local district controls on Harvard Square in return for the listing of the area on the National Register of Historic Places.

C. Staff Recommendation

It is the staff recommendation that the Dexter Pratt House be recommended to the City Council for designation as a Protected Landmark.

## VII. Standards for Design Review

### A. Introduction

The Commission's primary charge under Ordinance 1002 is to review "all construction, demolition, or alteration that affects the exterior architectural features, other than color, of any landmark." This landmark study report describes exterior architectural features that are among the characteristics which led to consideration of the property as a landmark. Except as the order designating or amending the landmark may otherwise provide, those features should be preserved and/or enhanced in any construction, demolition, or alteration of a landmark.

Section 8 of the ordinance sets general guidelines to be considered by the Historical Commission in reviewing changes to landmarks. Among other things, the Commission is directed to consider:

the historic and architectural value and significance of the site or structure, the general design, arrangement, texture and material of the features involved, and the relation of such features to similar features or structures in the surrounding area.

In all cases, a Certificate of Appropriateness, Hardship, or Non-Applicability must be issued by the Historical Commission prior to making any changes to a landmark. The Commission does not have authority to regulate the interiors of landmarks nor can they control changes to exterior architectural features not subject to public view. Nonetheless, Certificates of Non-Applicability must be issued for those changes. All applications are carefully reviewed by the Commission at a public hearing, in accordance with Ordinance 1002.

### B. General Standards

1. Historic and architectural features of the landmark shall be preserved.
2. Changes and additions to the landmark which have taken place over time are evidence of the history of the property and the neighborhood. These changes to the property may have acquired significance in their own right and that significance should be recognized and respected.
3. Deteriorated architectural features should be repaired rather than replaced.
4. When replacement of architectural features is necessary, it should be based on physical or documentary evidence.

5. New materials should, whenever possible, match the material being replaced in physical properties, design, color, texture, and appearance. The use of imitation replacement materials is discouraged.

6. The surface cleaning of a landmark shall be done by the gentlest possible means. Sandblasting and other cleaning methods that damage exterior architectural features shall not be used.

7. New additions must not destroy significant exterior architectural features and shall not be incongruous to the historic aspects, architectural significance, or distinctive character of the landmark, neighborhood and environment.

8. New additions should be done in such a way that if they were to be removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the landmark would be unimpaired.

#### C. Statement of Standards

##### 1. General

a. Preserve and protect insofar as possible the setting and streetscape views of the Pratt House, in particular, the front setback and landscaping.

b. If replacement of the surrounding buildings at 52A-D or 58 Brattle Street is ever contemplated, care should be taken that the setting and fabric of the Pratt House are protected and enhanced.

##### 2. Exterior Walls

a. Retain clapboard exterior.

b. Relocate existing wall unit air conditioners from east end elevation.

c. Relocate existing iron fire escapes from east end elevation if possible.

##### 3. Windows

a. Retain and repair historic six-over-six windows where these survive.

##### 4. Roof

##### 5. Other Elements

a. Retain perimeter fencing first installed ca. 1848 and reproduced in 1986.

## VIII. Proposed Order

## ORDERED:

That the Dexter Pratt House, 54 Brattle Street, be designated as a protected landmark pursuant to Chapter Two, Article XVI, Section 2-147(k) of the Code of the City of Cambridge, as recommended by vote of the Cambridge Historical Commission on December 1, 1988. The premises so designated are defined as Parcel 57 of Assessors' Map 168.

This designation is justified by the important associations of the building with historic persons and with the broad cultural history of the City of Cambridge. Specifically, it is associated with Dexter Pratt, the hero of Henry Wadsworth Longfellow's poem, "The Village Blacksmith," and with the poem itself, as the only extant reminder of the site of Pratt's blacksmith house and chestnut tree, two of the best known and most enduring images of Cambridge literary life. Architecturally, the Dexter Pratt House is a well-preserved example of vernacular Federal architecture and an important reminder of the 19th century character of lower Brattle Street. The Pratt House and its setting are critical to the diversity and varied open spaces of lower Brattle Street and contribute significantly to the streetscape.

The effect of this designation shall be that no construction activity can take place within the designated landmark area, and no action can be taken affecting the appearance of the Dexter Pratt House, that would in either case be visible from a public way without review by the Cambridge Historical Commission and the issuance of a Certificate of Appropriateness, Hardship or Non-Applicability, as the case may be. In making determinations, the Commission shall be guided by the terms of the landmark designation report, and by section VII, Standards for Design Review, and by the applicable sections of Ordinance 1002.

Adopted by a vote of 6-0

December 1, 1988

  
Charles M. Sullivan

Executive Director

Cambridge Historical Commission

96 WINTHROP STREET  
HYDE-TAYLOR HOUSE

LANDMARK DESIGNATION STUDY REPORT  
PREPARED BY SARAH ZIMMERMAN  
CAMBRIDGE HISTORICAL COMMISSION  
OCTOBER 21, 1988

CONTENTS

I. Location and Economic Status.....	1
II. Description.....	3
III. History of the Property.....	5
IV. Significance of the Property.....	7
V. Relationship to Criteria.....	9
VI. Recommendations.....	11
VII. Standards for Design Review.....	13
VIII. Proposed Order.....	15

Built in 1846, the Hyde-Taylor House is a good example of the Greek Revival style of architecture and was constructed by a housewright, Isaac Hyde, who lived next door at 98 Winthrop Street. The building is primarily significant in the context of a group of early houses on Winthrop Street, which is the only surviving streetscape that can still evoke Harvard Square's pre-1850 residential character and scale. The Hyde-Taylor House is also important because it abuts the Winthrop Street Retaining Wall, a late 18th-century stone wall that is the sole surviving element reflecting Harvard Square's original topography. The house meets criteria (a) and (b) for its contribution to an understanding of Harvard Square's early 19th-century residential character and is thus significantly associated with the broad architectural and social history of the city. It is also architecturally significant for its Greek Revival style.



HENRI IV

Henri IV  
restaurant and co

## 96 Winthrop Street: Hyde-Taylor House

### I. Location and Economic Status

#### A. Address

The Hyde-Taylor House is located on a 2960 square foot lot at 96 Winthrop Street on Parcel 19 of Assessors' Map 162. It is assessed for commercial use at \$186,000 for the building and \$444,000 for the land, the value of the land reflecting the desirability of Harvard Square real estate.

The building is located in a Business B zone, thus allowing business, general retail, office, and multi-family uses. However, it is included as a contributing property in the Harvard Square National Register District and is part of the Harvard Square Overlay District. Thus, projects requiring a special permit or variance are subject to the review of the Harvard Square Advisory Committee, which may impose additional conditions as to use, height, parking, and setback requirements beyond those enumerated in the zoning code.

#### B. Ownership and Occupancy

The Hyde-Taylor House is owned by McMillan Realty Trust. It houses the Henry IV Restaurant on the first story, a lounge on the second floor, and the Henry IV Cafe in the basement.

#### C. Area Description

96 Winthrop Street is located in the southwestern section of Harvard Square. Like Harvard Square in general, the area is characterized by retail and office use, although Winthrop Street is residential in scale and character. Restaurants and specialty shops predominate. Limited residential use is found in the nearby Charles Square condominiums to the west, while the Harvard Houses dormitories are just to the east. The adjoining Cox-Hicks House was an owner-occupied single family residence until 1987.

96 Winthrop Street stands on a rectangular lot on the south side of Winthrop Street, a narrow, one-way passage running from Holyoke to Eliot Street. The section of Harvard Square in which it is located is a two-block large area defined by the curve of Eliot Street on the west and south, Mount Auburn Street on the north, and Kennedy Street on the east.

Immediately west of the house are 98 and 106 Winthrop Street, both early frame houses now in office use and both also proposed for landmark designation. Another early

feature proposed for designation is the Winthrop Street retaining wall, an 18th century boundary marker that runs through the center of the Winthrop-Eliot-Kennedy Street block. The Galleria shopping mall stands next door to the east. Opposite the house are the brick Georgian Revival Pi Eta Club (1908) and frame Pi Eta Hall (1896). To the south and west of the house are three three-story frame commercial buildings: 10-14 Eliot Street (1870); 14A-14B Eliot Street (ca. 1900), and 16-18 Eliot Street (1897-98). A parking garage of recent construction occupies the southeastern corner of the block.

Nearby, at 100 and 102 Mount Auburn Street, are the Holy Cross Armenian Catholic Church (built ca. 1919 as the Cantabrigia Club) and an 1869 frame mansard house, now in retail use. The Coolidge Bank, a 1985 three-story office block, stands at the northwestern corner of Winthrop and Eliot Streets. Winthrop Square, the city's original marketplace, lies opposite.

#### D. Planning Issues

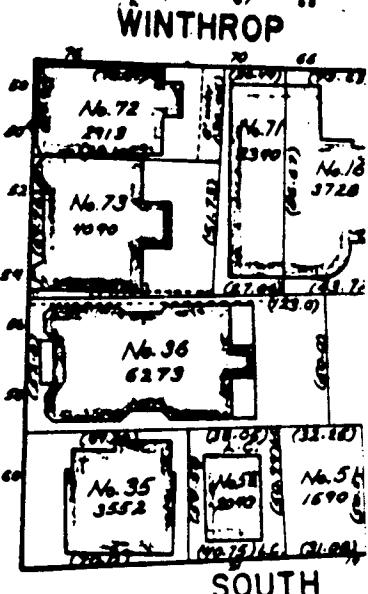
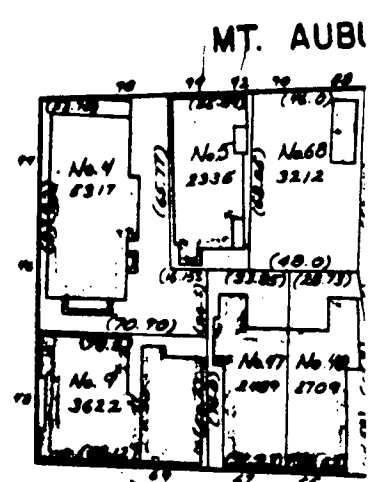
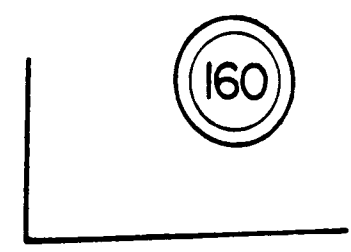
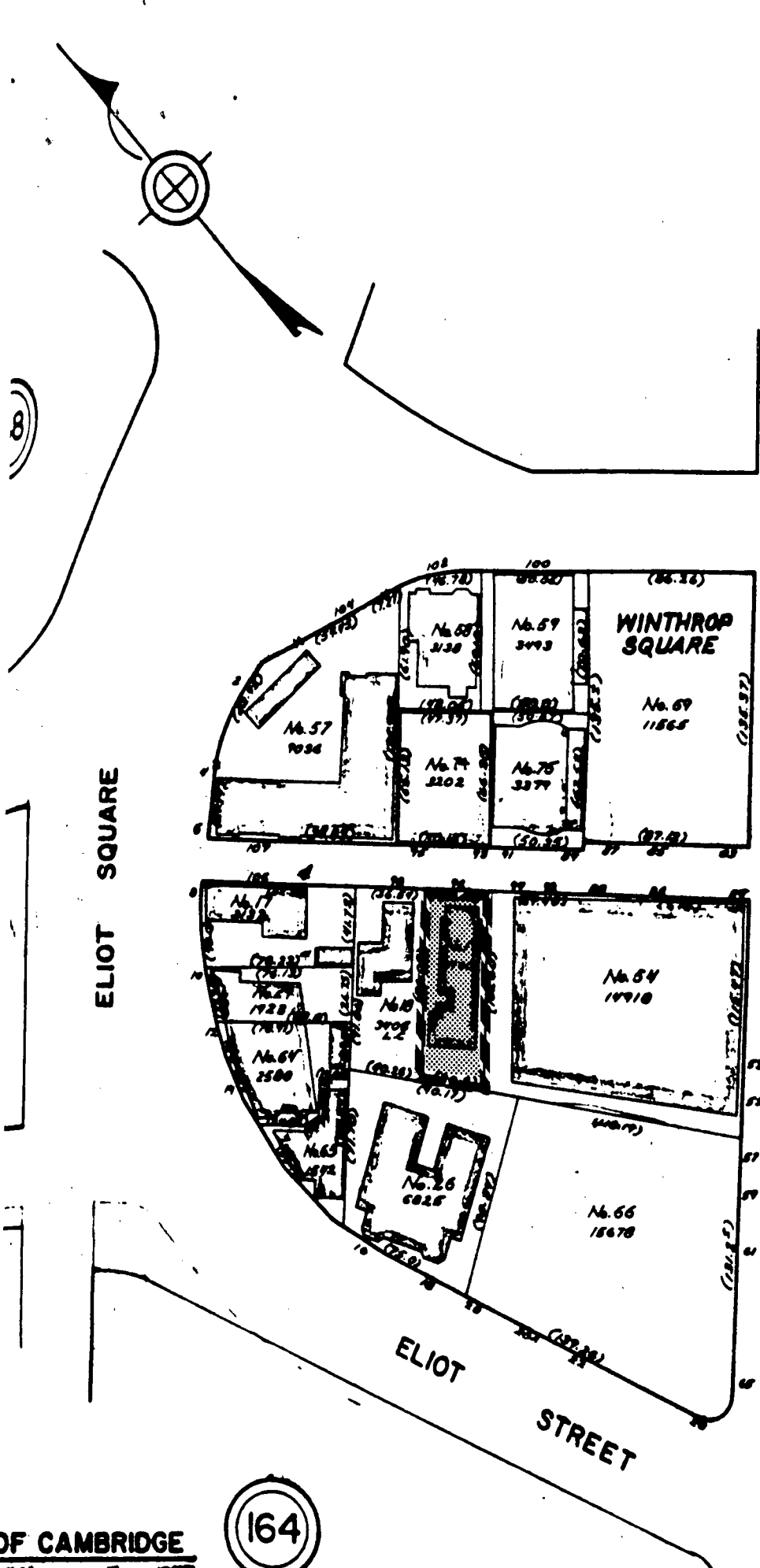
The Hyde-Taylor House stands in an area that has seen extensive redevelopment in the last ten years and that will continue to face development pressure into the foreseeable future. Major construction has concentrated on the former MBTA caryards and along Mount Auburn Street. In addition to the new construction already cited, four pending developments in Brattle and Eliot Squares will augment the mid-rise, high density character of recent projects. These are the redevelopment of the Cherry Webb Touraine site; concurrent development of "Brattle Way," a seven story office building in the interior of the Brattle-Story-Mount Auburn Street block; the redevelopment of the Harvard Motor House site; and Phase IV expansion of the Kennedy School of Government at the corner of Eliot Street and University Place. Though not imminent, the final Phase V construction of the Kennedy School will complete a wall of buildings in that area. Still unknown at this time is the future of the frame buildings at 10 to 18 Eliot Street, which may be affected by plans to build on that site. The building at 16-18 Eliot Street recently suffered a fire and may be subject to demolition.

Overall, the impact of these developments on 96 Winthrop Street is to increase the scale of the surrounding area, add to traffic and pedestrian activity, and encourage further new construction. Further development, particularly at 10 to 18 Eliot Street, should be carefully monitored to prevent the diminution of Winthrop Street's intimate, residential scale and protect the integrity of the houses and structures proposed for designation.

#### E. Map



Hyde-Taylor House  
 96 Winthrop Street  
 Location Map



**CITY OF CAMBRIDGE**  
 Scale: 1" = 40' June 1977  
 Dimensions From Deed Land  
 Court or Layout Plans Are In  
 Brackets. Measured Court Marked  
 L.C. All Other Dimensions Are  
 Measured  
 Drafted By  
 R. Schneiderman



Hyde-Taylor House  
 96 Winthrop Street

## II. Description

### A. Type and Use

The Hyde-Taylor House was built as a single-family rental property and is now in commercial use. Its primary use is as the Henry IV Restaurant, but it also incorporates a bar for the restaurant at the basement level and a lounge on the second floor.

### B. Physical Description

96 Winthrop Street, built in 1846, is a two-and-a-half story Greek Revival house that faces gable end to the street. It is a sidehall plan design with a two bay wide facade, entered on the left. The main house extends four bays back to a two-story ell. The house is sheathed with clapboards on three walls and shingles on the fourth (east) wall. It is painted gray with white trim and has a dark gray asphalt-shingled roof.

The lot of 96 Winthrop Street covers an area of 2960 square feet and is approximately 30 feet wide and 100 feet deep. Much of the lot is paved: on the east side, the area between the wall of 96 Winthrop and the Galleria is entirely asphalt paved as a service alley and for parking. The house is set back about five feet from Winthrop Street on the north side with a brick apron leading to the entrance, which is up a short flight of wooden stairs with a wrought iron balustrade. Access to the basement level bar is via a flight of concrete stairs. The western half of the front area is fenced off with a wrought iron fence. The west side of the lot is landscaped with a wooden trellis and gate leading to a gravel walk that runs along the west elevation. Sconces attached to the west wall of the house light the path. The rear yard of the building is also paved with gravel and serves as an outdoor waiting area for restaurant patrons. A tall wooden fence defines the western property line.

The facade, which faces north onto Winthrop Street, retains some elements of its Greek Revival design but has seen several later alterations. Original elements of the facade that survive are wide, Greek Revival pilasters with caps, a broad Doric cornice and frieze, and a pedimented gable. Changes to the facade include the addition of a bay on the second story, apparently constructed ca. 1860 but possibly original (before 1966, the bay extended to the first floor but enclosure of a porch eliminated that aspect of the bay); a Colonial Revival style entry porch and glazed six-panel door (built 1900); and, most recently (1966), a shed-roofed, jalousie-windowed one-story porch at the northwest corner. The porch stands on a one-story extension of the basement (probably added ca. 1963); the extension and

porch mar the appearance of the facade and obscure the original proportions of the house. Other replaced elements of the facade include two over two sash in the second floor windows and a one over one sash in the gable window.

The east elevation, which has been resided with cedar shingles, stretches in an unbroken plane from the front of the house to the rear: the rear ell is set flush with the main house, creating a long wall on this side. Both the main house and the ell are two bays deep.

The most prominent feature of the east elevation is a well-detailed gabled dormer centered in the roof of the main house. It contains a six over six window flanked with pilasters that support a pediment. Of the eight windows on this elevation, all have their original casings and six (including the dormer) their original six over six sash. The original windows are located on the second floor of the main house and in the ell. Both the location and the sash of the first floor windows in the main house have been altered: one window, with one over one sash, has been centered on the wall, while the other, just to the rear, has been turned on its side and a fixed four-light sash installed. A door in the ell has been blocked with ventilation equipment for the restaurant kitchen, which is located there. One of two chimneys in the house rises from the roof between the two bays of the ell.

The south elevation is the most heavily altered and was recently damaged in a fire that started at 16-18 Eliot Street. It has a one-story concrete block addition (1951) at the rear and this is surmounted by a more recent deck (ca. 1970) on the second story. Much of the mechanical and ventilating equipment for the restaurant is located here. It appears that the rear wall will have to be completely rebuilt to repair the fire damage.

The west elevation is irregular, with a recessed two-bay wide section connecting the four bays of the main house to the rear ell. A narrow two-story bay containing a staircase projects from part of the side wall of the ell. This elevation, which is clapboarded, contains eight windows in the main house, all with their original casings. Six of these contain six over six sash, while the other two are blind windows, clapboarded over. There are four windows in the connector, all with original six over six sash and casings. There is only one window in the ell, located between floors in the staircase bay. The second chimney is located at the rear of the main house along this elevation.

#### C. Current Photographs



96 Wintthrop Street  
photo, 1988

### III. History of the Property

#### A. Historic Development Patterns

##### 1. Deed History

The Hyde-Taylor House stands on land conveyed as a one-acre parcel from Rebecca Oliver to William Angier in 1746. The land at that time had a house and barn on it, probably at 63 and 65 Kennedy Street. Two small buildings, a blacksmith shop at 94 Winthrop and another shop at 106, were built on the property before the end of the century. In 1801, Thomas Brattle acquired much of the present Kennedy-Winthrop-Eliot Street block.

The Brattle lot was broken up in 1806 after Brattle's death. The parcel at 96 Winthrop Street was conveyed, in rapid succession, to William Gamage and then to John Mellen. Mellen divided his land (which then included 96, 98, and 106 Winthrop Street) in 1806 to Israel Porter, who built 98 Winthrop Street on the western two-thirds of the lot, and William Warland, who purchased the remaining third with its shop (then used as a school) at 106. The house and land at 98 Winthrop Street changed hands several times in the period between 1806 and 1846, when they were subdivided into two separate parcels (one at 98 and the other at 96) by their owner, Cambridge carpenter and housewright Isaac Hyde. Hyde built the house at 96 Winthrop Street himself in 1846.

In 1847, Hyde mortgaged the house to lumber dealer, builder and architect, Oliver Hastings. In 1867, Hastings took possession of the property through foreclosure. He then sold the house to George Mendall Taylor, an organist and music teacher. Although Taylor did not reside in the house after about 1904, it remained in the Taylor family until 1923, when it was purchased by a Boston resident, Sabato Mirra. The 1930 atlas identifies A.A. Lindberg as the owner.

##### 2. Development History of the Property

The Hyde-Taylor House is located in the earliest-settled section of Old Cambridge, in the southwestern corner of the original Harvard Square street grid. Though the immediate area surrounding the house was initially laid out with houselots, it also had an important commercial and municipal component: the marketplace, established in 1635, and the second jail of 1681 stood opposite the Hyde-Taylor House site, and several stores and taverns were located along nearby Kennedy Street. Kennedy (then Wood, later Boylston) Street was a major thoroughfare in 17th and 18th century Cambridge since it led to the causeway of the Great Bridge (1656). The Winthrop Street block is closest in

scale and configuration to the early character of Harvard Square.

There were a dozen small shops and houses standing on the Winthrop-Eliot-Kennedy Street block by the mid 19th century. In the 1870s and '80s, frame tenements and three deckers were built on the north side of Eliot Street at 10-14, 14A-14B, and 16-18 Eliot. Other three-deckers replaced smaller single-family houses on Eliot Street after the turn of the century. With the advent of the automobile, early houses along Kennedy Street were demolished for garages and used car lots. In the last ten years, Kennedy Street has been redeveloped with brick office and retail buildings. Thus, the Winthrop Street houses and wall are the sole surviving elements of the block's earlier development.

#### B. Historic Photographs

#### C. Bibliography

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Wintthrop Square, 96 Wintthrop  
Street at right, rear  
photo between 1890 and 1900



96 Winturop Street  
photo, ca. 1966



96 Wintrop Street  
photo, ca. 1966

## Significance of the Property

### A. Historical Significance

The Hyde-Taylor House was built in 1846 by a Cambridge housewright and carpenter, Isaac Hyde. Hyde, who was born in 1809, married in 1834 to Mary W. Lyon, and died in the 1870s, is listed in the Cambridge directories from 1846 through 1873. In the 1850s and '60s, he ran a planing mill located on a marsh lot off Kennedy Street; later deed records (book 875, page 505) indicate that Hyde also kept his carpenters' shop there. Hyde purchased the house at 98 Winthrop Street in 1836 and subdivided that lot to create a parcel for 96 Winthrop Street ten years later. Hyde probably occupied 98 Winthrop Street from 1836 to 1846. But it is unclear whether Hyde himself lived in either of the houses or whether they were rented. Both houses were mortgaged and in 1867 and 1868, Hyde lost both through foreclosure.

George Mendall Taylor, the second owner, held 96 Winthrop Street until 1923. Taylor, an organist and music teacher, lived and received pupils in his home on Winthrop Street. Taylor (1838-1925) was nationally known as an organist and teacher of both organ and piano. His obituary in the April 11, 1925 Boston Traveler noted that Taylor served as a church organist for the Harvard Street Unitarian Church for 35 years and also officiated as organist of the Old West and New Old South Churches in Boston. He also gave recitals prior to lectures at the Tremont Temple in Boston.

Despite Taylor's reputation at the time of his death, the house is primarily significant as an example of the type of middle class housing available in Harvard Square in the 19th century and as a reflection of a period in which single family houses characterized a neighborhood that no longer supports any residential uses.

### B. Architectural Significance

The Hyde-Taylor House is primarily significant for its Greek Revival architecture and for its contribution to the small-scale 19th century character of Winthrop Street. Individually, the house is a good example of Cambridge's vernacular Greek Revival style. The Greek Revival style reflects a period of great economic and geographic expansion in the city. As a class of buildings, Cambridge's Greek Revival houses delineate the extent of settlement in the 1830s, '40s and '50s. This style of house is the first to be linked with an identifiable group of Cambridge housewrights and carpenters. These housewrights, like Isaac Hyde, developed a characteristic idiom in this style, which has elements unique to Cambridge. The Hyde-Taylor House

contributes to an understanding of a distinctive element of the city's architectural history.

It is also critically important to the visual context of the complex of early 19th century houses on the south side of Winthrop Street. The Hyde-Taylor House establishes the eastern boundary of this assemblage, which is distinguished by its small-scale, densely-built, residential character. Winthrop Street was part of the original 1630 grid pattern of streets that constituted Cambridge's first settlement. The Winthrop Street block is the only surviving section of Harvard Square that retains its original configuration and scale. The block comprises four late 18th and early 19th century vernacular houses which retain integrity of setting, design, materials, and workmanship. The Hyde-Taylor House is an integral component of this complex and is of importance in defining the 19th century context of Winthrop Street.

The Winthrop Street Wall, which runs along the south property line, is also a critical feature of the property. A late 18th century retaining wall, the wall is a boundary marker constructed of granite, slate and puddingstone, none of which are stones available in Cambridge, which has no stone outcroppings. The wall represents the sole surviving remnant of the original topography of Harvard Square and demarcated the lower land along Eliot Street (the site of wharves for river shipping) from uplands at Winthrop Square.

## V. Relationship to Criteria

### A. Section 4, Ordinance 1002

Section 4 states the criteria for landmark designation. It states that the Commission:

. . . may recommend for designation as a landmark any . . . structure . . . either (a) importantly associated with one or more historic persons or events, or with the broad architectural, aesthetic, cultural, political, economic or social history of the City . . . or (b) historically or architecturally significant (in terms of period, style, method of construction, or association with a famous architect or builder) either by itself or in the context of a group of structures.

### B. Relationship of Property to Criteria

The Hyde-Taylor House meets criteria (a) and (b) of Ordinance 1002 as a structure that is importantly associated with the broad architectural and social history of the city and for its architectural significance, in terms of its period, style, and method of construction, both individually and in the context of a well-preserved group of early 19th-century houses on Winthrop Street. It is significant as a good example of the Greek Revival style, and as the work of a known housewright, Isaac Hyde.

The Hyde-Taylor House is significant in the context of Winthrop Street's early ambience and contributes importantly to its character. Though it is the youngest of the three buildings on the street, it is historically linked to 98 Winthrop Street, architecturally sympathetic to the smaller frame houses it adjoins, and visually shields 98 and 106 Winthrop Street from the larger scale and bulk of the Galleria building. The preservation of the Hyde-Taylor House is critical to the integrity of the Winthrop Street complex.

The Hyde-Taylor House is one of a large number of Greek Revival style houses located across Cambridge. Despite the fact that many of these still survive, they are nonetheless important to understanding the way in which early 19th century Cambridge was settled and grew. In the period from 1830 to 1860, major industries were established, the city was incorporated, and Cambridge changed from a small town focussed on Old Cambridge and Harvard College to a diverse, populous, industrial city. The city's Greek Revival houses are the primary visual reminders of this period.

In addition, it is with the Greek Revival style that the first identifiable group of housewrights and carpenters working in the city can be linked. Through the work of

individual craftsmen, a school of Cambridge's building techniques can be defined. The houses themselves serve as a "laboratory" for further research into these techniques. Hyde, the builder of 96 Winthrop, was a housewright. Although there are no other known examples of his work, the house gains significance through its identification with a known builder.

## VI. Recommendations

### A. Section 1, Ordinance 1002

The purpose of landmark designation is stated in Section 1 of Ordinance 1002:

. . . to preserve, conserve, and protect the beauty and heritage of the City . . . and to improve the quality of its environment through identification, conservation, and maintenance of . . . structures which constitute or reflect distinctive features of the architectural, cultural, political, economic or social history of the City; to resist and restrain environmental influences adverse to this purpose . .

### B. Preservation Options

The Hyde-Taylor House is listed as a contributing property on the National Register of Historic Places in the Harvard Square Historic District. As such, it is protected from the adverse effects of federally licensed, permitted, or funded projects and, through listing on the parallel State Register of Historic Places, from the adverse effects of state funded projects. At the local level, it is covered by the provisions of the Harvard Square Overlay Zone, in addition to the general zoning regulations of the city.

The National and State Registers provide limited protection from public projects through review by the Massachusetts Historical Commission. The Overlay District establishes zoning incentives for the preservation of National Register properties and also calls for review of certain projects by the Harvard Square Advisory Committee. However, neither the Massachusetts Historical Commission's nor the Advisory Committee's powers allow for detailed, binding review of architectural designs.

Other options for the preservation of the Hyde-Taylor House include designation as a Landmark under Ordinance 1002, or placement of a Preservation Easement on the property under the provisions of MGL Chapter 184 and the applicable federal standards. A preservation easement would provide protection and design review for the exterior architectural features of the building and could provide a tax incentive to the owner. Placement of an easement would require that the owner contribute 5% of the value of the easement to the Historical Commission for administration of the easement. If the owner so desired, the Historical Commission would be pleased to accept an easement on the property.

A Neighborhood Conservation or a Local Historic District in Harvard Square cannot be considered as

protective mechanisms for the Hyde-Taylor House. These options are foreclosed by the Commission's previous agreement not to impose local district controls on Harvard Square in return for listing the area on the National Register.

#### C. Staff Recommendation

It is the staff recommendation that the Hyde-Taylor House be recommended to the City Council for designation as a Protected Landmark under the provisions of Ordinance 1002.

## VII. Statement of Standards for Design Review

### A. Introduction

The Commission's primary charge under Ordinance 1002 is to review "all construction, demolition, or alteration that affects the exterior architectural features, other than color, of any landmark." This landmark study report describes exterior architectural features that are among the characteristics which led to consideration of the property as a landmark. Except as the order designating or amending the landmark may otherwise provide, those features should be preserved and/or enhanced in any construction, demolition, or alteration of a landmark.

Section 8 of the ordinance sets general guidelines to be considered by the Historical Commission in reviewing changes to landmarks. Among other things, the Commission is directed to consider:

the historic and architectural value and significance of the site or structure, the general design, arrangement, texture and material of the features involved, and the relation of such features to similar features or structures in the surrounding area.

In all cases, a Certificate of Appropriateness, Hardship, or Non-Applicability must be issued by the Historical Commission prior to making any changes to a landmark. The Commission does not have authority to regulate the interiors of landmarks nor can they control changes to exterior architectural features not subject to public view. Nonetheless, Certificates of Non-Applicability must be issued for those changes. All applications are carefully reviewed by the Commission at a public hearing, in accordance with Ordinance 1002.

### B. General Standards

1. Historic and architectural features of the landmark shall be preserved.
2. Changes and additions to the landmark which have taken place over time are evidence of the history of the property and the neighborhood. These changes to the property may have acquired significance in their own right and that significance should be recognized and respected.
3. Deteriorated architectural features should be repaired rather than replaced.
4. When replacement of architectural features is necessary, it should be based on physical or documentary evidence.

5. New materials should, whenever possible, match the material being replaced in physical properties, design, color, texture, and appearance. The use of imitation replacement materials is discouraged.

6. The surface cleaning of a landmark shall be done by the gentlest possible means. Sandblasting and other cleaning methods that damage exterior architectural features shall not be used.

7. New additions must not destroy significant exterior architectural features and shall not be incongruous to the historic aspects, architectural significance, or distinctive character of the landmark, neighborhood and environment.

8. New additions should be done in such a way that if they were to be removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the landmark would be unimpaired.

### C. Statement of Standards

#### 1. General

a. Remove later alterations where possible, including jalousie-windowed porch and basement extension, reinstating front setback.

b. Relocate and/or screen ventilating equipment.

#### 2. Exterior Walls

a. Determine whether shingles on east wall overlay clapboards and, if so, remove shingles and repair and replace clapboards.

#### 3. Windows

a. Reinstate six-over-six sash where these have been removed.

b. Remove window air conditioning units.

#### 4. Roof

#### 5. Other Elements

a. Winthrop Street Wall: Any landscape changes that would affect the wall should be carefully monitored so as to protect and preserve the integrity of the structure and materials.

## VIII. Proposed Order

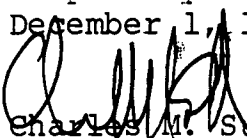
## ORDERED:

That the Hyde-Taylor House, 96 Winthrop Street, be designated as a protected landmark pursuant to Chapter Two, Article XVI, Section 2-147(k) of the Code of the City of Cambridge, as recommended by vote of the Cambridge Historical Commission on December 1, 1988. The premises so designated are defined as Parcel 19 of Assessors' Map 162.

This designation is justified by the important associations of the building with the broad architectural and social history of the City of Cambridge and for its architectural significance, in terms of its period, style and method of construction. It is significant individually and in the context of a well-preserved group of early 19th century houses on Winthrop Street. It is a good example of the Greek Revival style and evokes an important period in the city's history, when Cambridge changed from a small college town to a diverse, populous industrial city. In addition, the house is among the first houses built in the city that can be identified with a specific housewright, Isaac Hyde.

The effect of this designation shall be that no construction activity can take place within the designated landmark area, and no action can be taken affecting the appearance of the Hyde-Taylor House, that would in either case be visible from a public way without review by the Cambridge Historical Commission and the issuance of a Certificate of Appropriateness, Hardship, or Non-Applicability, as the case may be. In making determinations, the Commission shall be guided by the terms of the landmark designation report, and by Section VII., Standards for Design Review, and by the applicable sections of Ordinance 1002.

Adopted by a vote of 6-0  
December 1, 1988

  
Charles M. Sullivan  
Executive Director  
Cambridge Historical Commission

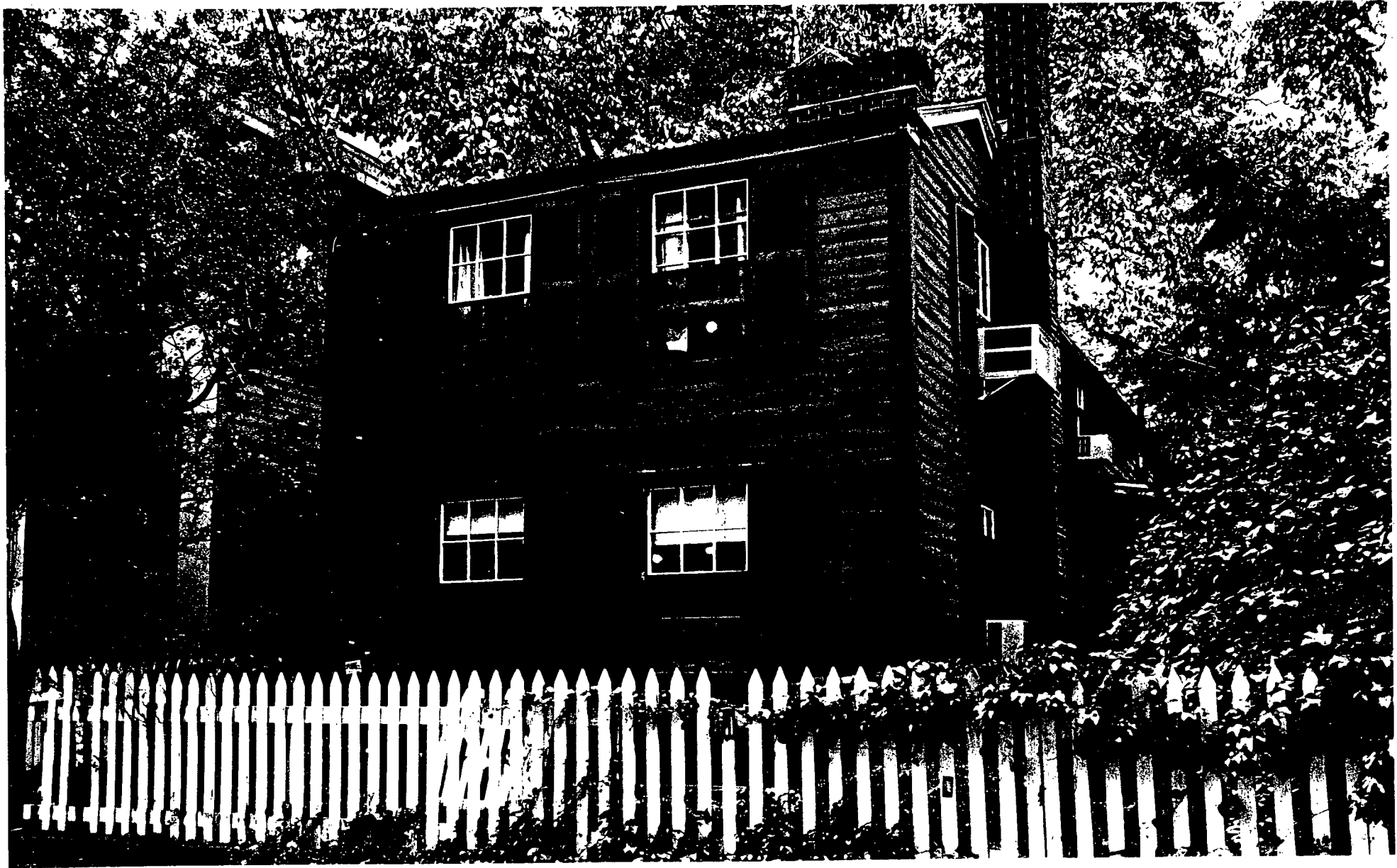
98 WINTHROP STREET  
COX-HICKS HOUSE

LANDMARK DESIGNATION STUDY REPORT  
PREPARED BY SARAH ZIMMERMAN  
CAMBRIDGE HISTORICAL COMMISSION  
OCTOBER 21, 1988

CONTENTS

I. Location and Economic Status.....	1
II. Description.....	3
III. History of the Property.....	5
IV. Significance of the Property.....	8
V. Relationship to Criteria.....	10
VI. Recommendations.....	12
VII. Standards for Design Review.....	14
VIII. Proposed Order.....	16

The Cox-Hicks House is a diminutive vernacular Federal style cottage built ca. 1806 for a young widow and her children. Originally consisting of only two rooms, the house is the only surviving example of the smallest and most modest type of housing constructed for the poor in Old Cambridge. In the city as a whole, it is one of very few such examples of minimal housing to survive from its period. The Cox-Hicks House also abuts the Winthrop Street Retaining Wall and contributes significantly to the small-scale, residential character of Winthrop Street. It meets criteria (a) and (b) for its associations with the social and architectural history of the city and is architecturally and historically significant in terms of its period, style and method of construction.



## Cox-Hicks House, 98 Winthrop Street

### I. Location and Economic Status

#### A. Address

The Cox-Hicks House is located at 98 Winthrop Street, on parcel 18 of assessors' map 162. It occupies a 3405 square foot lot and is currently assessed in residential use at a valuation of \$96,600 for the building and \$253,100 for the land, the high valuation of the land reflecting the building's prime Harvard Square location. It is expected that the valuation may change due to the recent sale of the property to the President and Fellows of Harvard College.

The property lies in a BB-1 zone, thus allowing business, general retail, office, and multi-family uses. However, it is included as a contributing property in the Harvard Square National Register District and is part of the Harvard Square Overlay District. Thus, projects requiring a special permit or variance are subject to the review of the Harvard Square Advisory Committee, which may impose additional conditions as to use, height, parking, and setback requirements beyond those enumerated in the zoning code.

#### B. Ownership and Occupancy

The Cox-Hicks House is owned by the President and Fellows of Harvard College and managed by Harvard Real Estate, 1350 Massachusetts Avenue, Cambridge, 02138. It is currently vacant but until 1987 was used as a single-family, owner-occupied residence. The building currently houses the offices of the University Development Office.

#### C. Area Description

98 Winthrop Street is a rare surviving single-family house in an area of retail, office, and multi-family uses. It stands on a small rectangular lot on the western half of Winthrop Street, a narrow, one-way passage running from Holyoke Street to Eliot Square. The section of Harvard Square in which the Cox-Hicks House stands is a two block area defined by the curve of Eliot Street on the west and south (originally Creek Lane, following a creek that ran from Harvard Yard to the Charles River), Mount Auburn Street on the north, and Kennedy Street on the east.

Immediately adjacent to the Cox-Hicks House are 96 and 106 Winthrop Street, both early 19th century frame houses now in commercial use. All three buildings and the Winthrop Street retaining wall, which runs through the center of the block, are proposed for designation. Opposite the Cox-Hicks

House are the brick Georgian Revival Pi Eta Club (1908) and frame Pi Eta Hall (1896). To the south and west of the house are three three-story frame commercial buildings: 10-14 Eliot (1870), 14A-14B Eliot (ca. 1900), and 16-18 Eliot (1897-98). Other buildings in the area are the "Galleria," 55 Kennedy Street, a three-story brick retail mall built in 1975; 104 Mount Auburn Street, a 1983 four-story brick office and retail complex; and 63-65 Kennedy Street, a 1985 brick five-story garage with ground-floor retail. All of these buildings fill their lots. At 100 and 102 Mount Auburn Street are the Holy Cross Armenian Catholic Church (built ca. 1919 as the Cantabrigia Club) and an 1869 frame mansard house, now in retail use. Winthrop Square, the city's original marketplace, stands opposite the Cox-Hicks House to the northeast.

#### D. Planning Issues

The Cox-Hicks House stands in an area that has seen extensive redevelopment in the last ten years and that will continue to face development pressure into the foreseeable future. Major construction has concentrated on the former MBTA caryards and along Mount Auburn Street. Recent projects in the area include the Kennedy School of Government, Kennedy Park, the Charles Square retail/hotel/residential complex, and the University Place office complex. The effect of these projects has been to create a new focus of retail and office activity in Eliot and Brattle Squares.

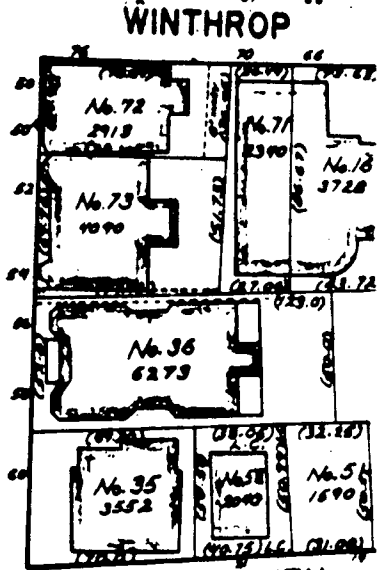
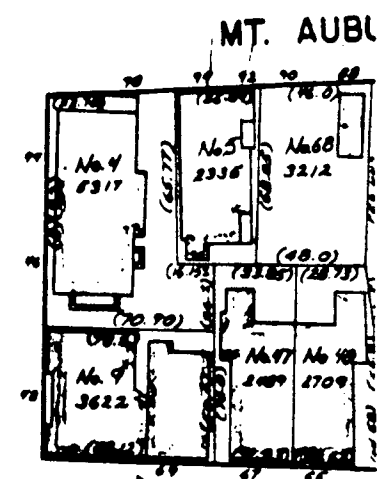
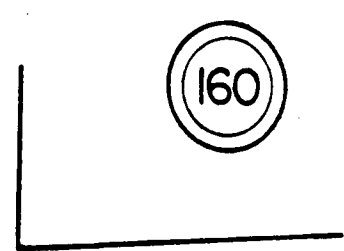
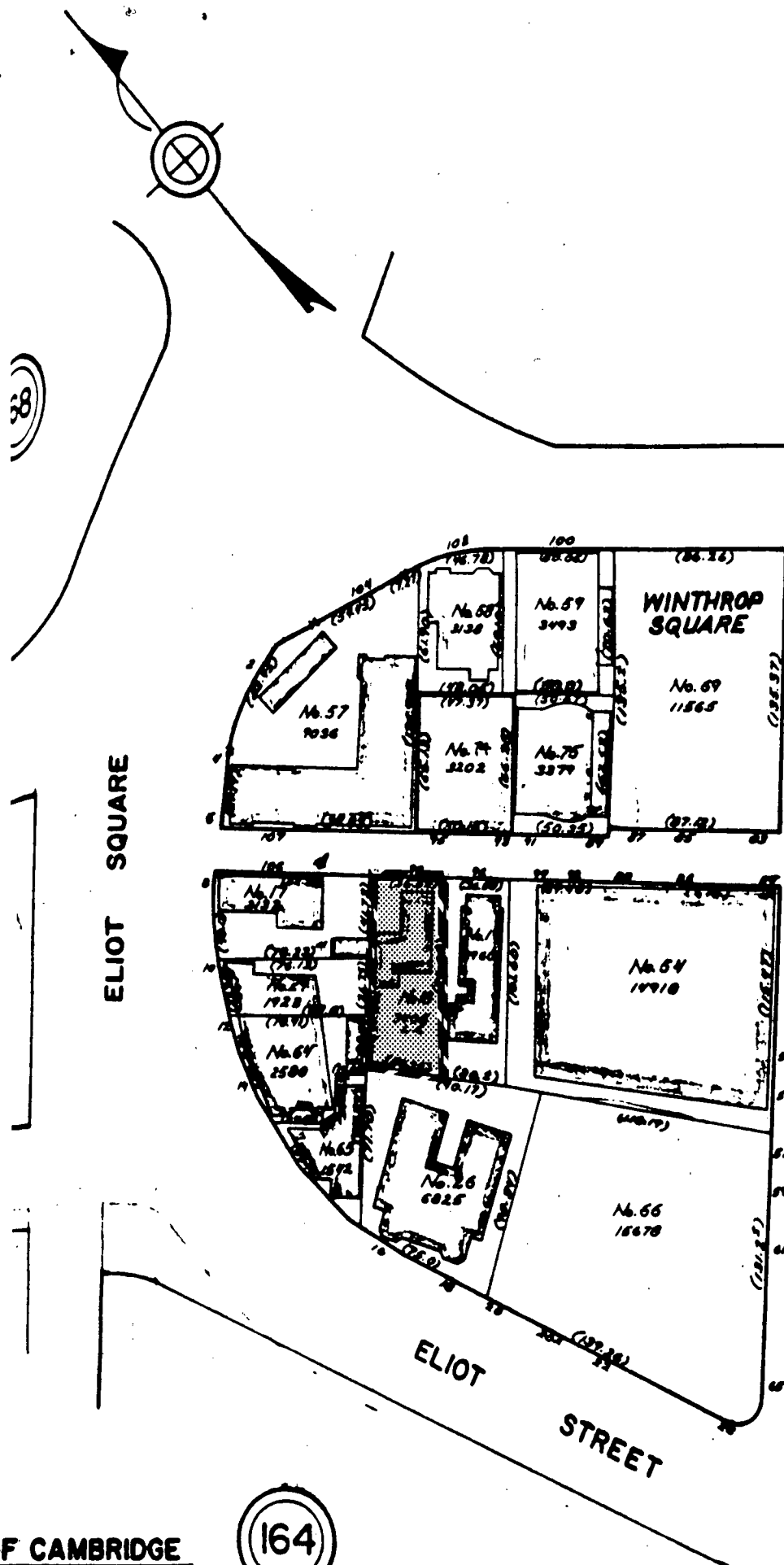
Four pending developments in Brattle and Eliot Squares will augment the mid-rise, high density character of new construction in the area. These are the redevelopment of the Cherry Webb, Touraine site; concurrent development of "Brattle Way" in the interior of the Brattle-Story-Mount Auburn Street block; the redevelopment of the Harvard Motor House site; and planned Phase IV expansion of the Kennedy School of Government at the corner of Eliot Street and University Road. Though not imminent, the final Phase V element of Kennedy School construction along the south side of Eliot Street will complete a wall of buildings in that area. Still unknown at this time is the future of the frame buildings at 10 to 18 Eliot Street, which may be affected by plans to build on that site.

Overall, the impact of these developments on 98 Winthrop Street will be to increase the scale of the surrounding neighborhood, add to traffic and pedestrian activity, and encourage further new construction. Further development, particularly at 10 to 18 Eliot Street, should be carefully monitored to prevent the diminution of Winthrop Street's small, residential scale.

#### E. Map



Cox-Hicks House  
 98 Winthrop Street  
 Location Map



ELIOT SQUARE

BOYLSTON STREET

ELIOT STREET

WINTHROP

SOUTH

CITY OF CAMBRIDGE

Scale: 1" = 40'  
 Date: June 1977  
 Dimensions From Dred Land  
 Court or Layout Plans Are In  
 Brecha's, Mass. Court Marked  
 L.C. All Other Dimensions Are  
 Measured

Drafted By R. Schneiderman

164

Cox-Hicks House  
98 Winthrop Street

## II. Description

### A. Type and Use

98 Winthrop Street is a single-family residence and is now vacant. Harvard University, the building's owner, has converted the space to office use since single-family residential use in this urbanized setting is no longer viable, given the heavily retail and commercial character of the neighborhood. The exterior of the building and its landscaping will be maintained.

### B. Physical Description

The Cox-Hicks House is a diminutive, two-story, gable-roofed late Federal style cottage that faces north on Winthrop Street with its ridge parallel to the street. The small, hip-roofed entrance porch on the east elevation is probably original. A two-story, shallow-gabled ell, built ca. 1836, extends from the rear (south) elevation. Two one-story, shed-roofed late 19th-century additions (ca. 1880) on the south and west walls of the ell complete the structure.

The Cox-Hicks House stands on a slightly irregular rectangular lot of 3405 square feet. The lot is approximately 40 feet wide and 90 feet deep and slopes down from the east toward Eliot Street. A granite and fieldstone retaining wall (capped along the Winthrop Street side with a picket fence) defines the south and west perimeter of the lot. On the west and south lot lines, the wall drops to a depth of some ten feet, retaining the grade differential between higher ground along Kennedy Street on the east and lower ground on Eliot Street to the south and west. The house is set back some six feet from Winthrop Street with shrubs, foundation plantings, and a small tree in the front yard. A brick path leads along the eastern edge of the lot to the entry porch. At the rear of the lot is a small, fenced back yard with a mature elm tree. The house is clapboarded and painted a dark red with white trim and has a dark gray asphalt shingle roof.

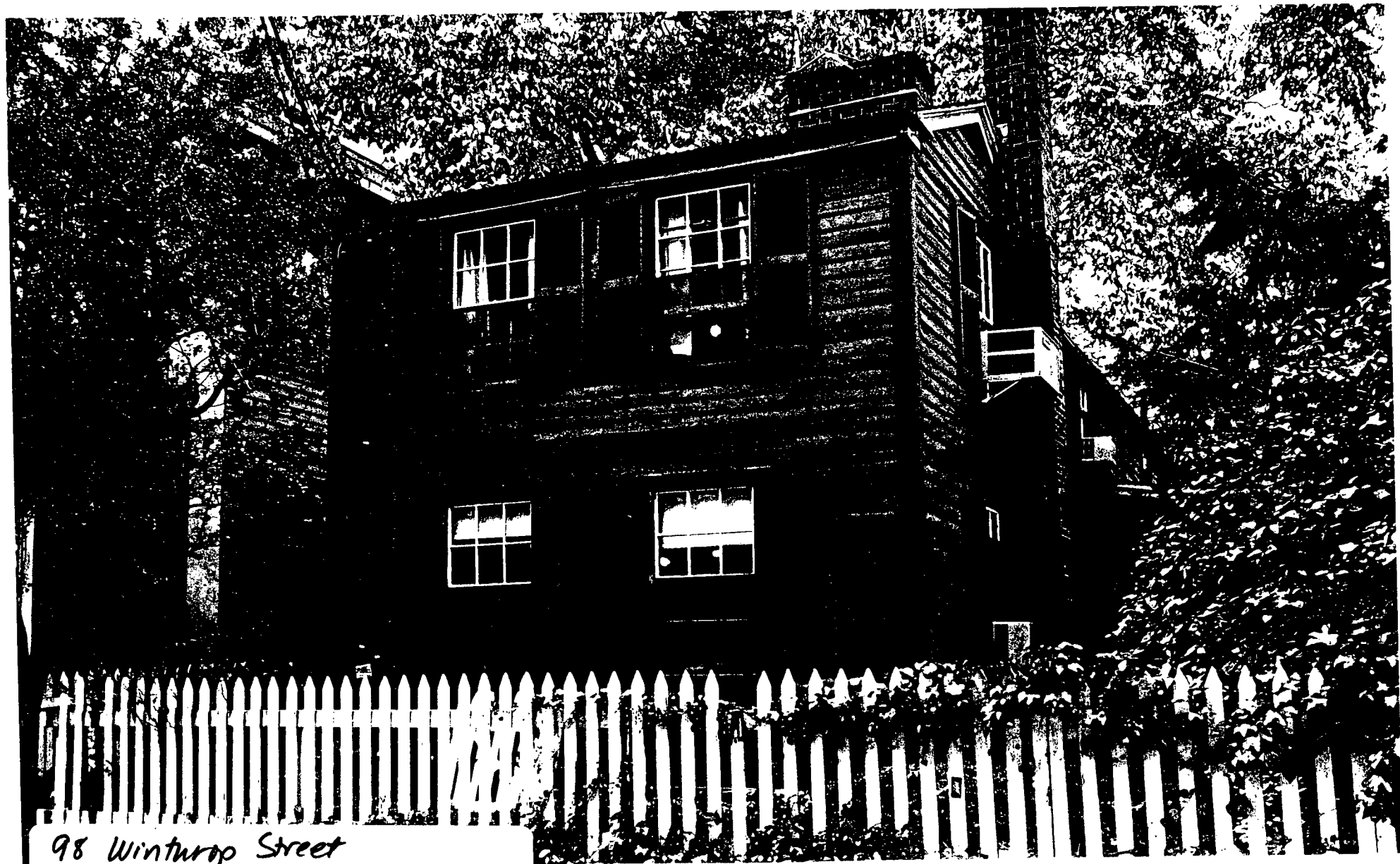
The main section of the house is two bays wide and one bay deep and contains one room on each floor. It stands on a fieldstone foundation and is entered at the rear of the east elevation. A large, brick chimney, rectangular in section, rises from just inside the south elevation. A smaller, square chimney, which is a 20th century addition, runs up the exterior of the west elevation, detracting from the appearance of the house. Narrow cornerboards and an ogee crown moulding at the cornice enframe the main house. The windows have double-hung, six over six sash with Greek Revival casings. All of the windows have louvered blinds.

The entry porch on the east elevation contains a six panel door. The porch may date from the time of the rear ell addition or may be a later replacement.

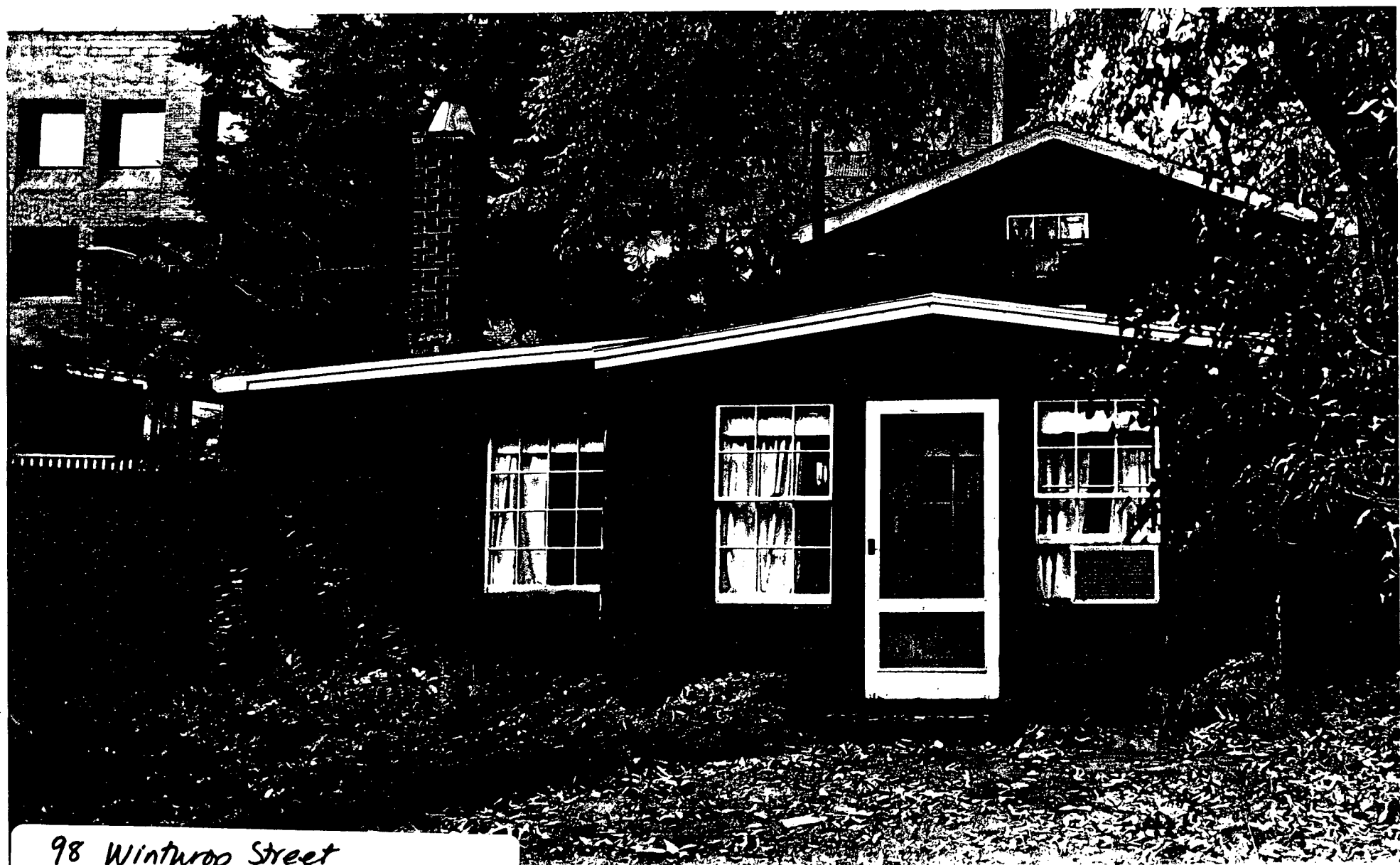
The rear ell is three bays long and two bays wide and rises a scant two stories in height to a shallow, gable roof. Windows on the first story contain six over six sash, but those on the second story are shorter, to accommodate the lower ceiling height, and contain three over six sash. There is a rectangular six-light fixed sash on the second story just behind the entry porch.

Two shed-roofed, one-story, additions lead off of the rear ell to the south and the west. The south addition is one bay wide and one bay deep and contains a large multi-light sash. The west addition is one bay wide and two bays deep and contains a pair of windows with six over six sash on the west wall. A modern six-panel door opens into the addition from the front yard.

#### C. Current Photographs



98 Wintthrop Street  
photo, 1988



98 Wintuop Street  
photo, 1988

### III. History of the Property

#### A. Historic Development Patterns

##### 1. Deed History

The Cox-Hicks House was probably built ca. 1806 as a tenant house for Mrs. Susannah Cox, a widow, by Israel Porter, innholder of the Blue Anchor Tavern on what is now Kennedy Street. The land on which the house is located was part of a one acre parcel conveyed by Rebecca Oliver to William Angier in 1746. The land at that time had a house and barn on it, probably at 63 and 65 Kennedy Street. Angier conveyed a quarter acre of this land along Winthrop Street to Isaac Bradish, who built a blacksmith shop at 94 Winthrop Street between 1775 and 1790. A second shop, still standing, was constructed sometime before 1801 at 106 Winthrop Street.

In 1801, Thomas Brattle assembled much of the present Kennedy-Winthrop-Eliot Street block into a one-acre parcel. The Brattle lot was broken up in 1806 after Brattle's death. A parcel comprising 96, 98 and 106 Winthrop Street (with its shop) was conveyed, in quick succession, first to William Gamage and then to John Mellen, who sold it in two lots: 96 and 98 to Israel Porter and 106 to William Warland. Three months after he purchased it, Porter sold his lot, with a building on it, to Susannah Cox. In 1810, Sarah Flagg, a widow, purchased the house and lived there with her mother, Elizabeth Hicks. The house remained in the Hicks-Flagg family until 1836, at which time Isaac Hyde, a Cambridge carpenter, purchased it. Hyde probably enlarged the house at that time by adding the rear ell and possibly the entrance porch. Hyde probably also retrimmed at least part of the house, since the window casings are Greek Revival in character. In 1846, Hyde subdivided the property and built the Greek Revival house at 96 Winthrop Street.

The property's late 19th century owner, George Mendall Taylor, purchased both 96 and 98, in 1867 and 1868. In 1925, Taylor's estate sold 98 Winthrop to Francis H. Bigelow. The most recent owner and last residential occupant, Mrs. David D. Rutstein, conveyed the property to Harvard College in 1987.

##### 2. Development History of Parcel

The Cox-Hicks House is located within the earliest-settled section of Old Cambridge, in the southwestern corner of the original Harvard Square street grid. Though the immediate area surrounding the house was laid out with houselots, it had an important commercial and municipal

component: the marketplace, established in 1635, and the second jail of 1681 stood opposite the Cox-Hicks House site, while several stores and taverns were located along nearby Kennedy Street. Kennedy (then Wood, later Boylston) Street was a major thoroughfare in 17th and 18th century Cambridge since it led to the causeway of the Great Bridge (1656). The Winthrop Street block retains more of its original configuration and scale than any other block of Harvard Square.

There were a dozen small shops and houses standing on the Winthrop-Eliot-Kennedy Street block by the mid 19th century. In the 1870s and '80s, frame tenements and three deckers were built on the north side of Eliot Street at 10-14, 14A-14B, and 16-18 Eliot. Other three deckers replaced smaller single-family houses on Eliot Street after the turn of the century. With the advent of the automobile, early houses along Kennedy Street were demolished for garages and used car lots. In the last ten years, Kennedy Street has been redeveloped with brick office and retail buildings. Thus, the Winthrop Street houses and wall are the sole surviving elements of the block's earlier development.

#### B. Historic Photographs, Maps

#### C. Bibliography

##### General Sources

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##### Maps and Atlases

Bromley, George W. and Walter S. Atlas of the City of Cambridge, Massachusetts. Philadelphia, 1894. 2nd ed., 1903, 3rd ed., 1916, 4th ed., 1930.

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Massachusetts. Philadelphia, 1873. 2nd ed., 1886.

#### IV. Significance of the Property

##### A. Historical Significance

As built and in the first 30 years of its existence, the Cox-Hicks House served as minimal housing for three widows, whose circumstances can be presumed to have been marginal. The original owner, Susanna Smith Cox, the widow of Walter Cox, had three children, aged ten and under, when she lived in the house. Mrs. Cox only occupied the house for four years before conveying it back to its builder, Israel Porter. Nothing further is recorded of the Cox family.

The second owner, Sarah Hicks Flagg, the widow of Timothy Flagg, lived there with her widowed mother, Elizabeth Nutting Hicks from 1810 until Mrs. Hicks' death in 1825 (at the age of 99). Mrs. Flagg remained in the house until her own death in 1836. While Mrs. Flagg's two daughters, Sarah Flagg Saunders and Elizabeth Flagg Wyeth, both married into prominent local families (William Saunders was a member of the city's first Common Council and father of three sons active in mid 19th century Cambridge politics and Jonas Wyeth was long the proprietor of the prosperous Fresh Pond Hotel), both she and her mother probably had to rely on the assistance of their children for their livelihood. The tiny cottage at 98 Winthrop Street is an example of the type of housing available for persons of such limited means in that period.

The house was subsequently owned by Isaac Hyde, a housewright, from 1836 to 1868 and after 1868 by George M. Taylor, a music teacher and organist who lived at 96 Winthrop Street (see Landmark Report for Hyde-Taylor House, 96 Winthrop Street) and rented 98.

In summary, the Cox-Hicks House has historical significance for its associations with the Hicks family of Cambridge. It is one of two surviving Hicks family houses in Harvard Square, the other being the John Hicks House (1762, NR 1985) on Kennedy Street. Elizabeth Nutting Hicks, the widow of one of six Cambridge natives slain on April 19, 1775, and Sarah Hicks Flagg, grandmother of a number of prominent mid-19th century Cambridge politicians, lived in the house from 1810 to 1836.

##### B. Architectural Significance

The Cox-Hicks House, built in 1806, is one of the earliest of perhaps a dozen early 19th century cottages surviving in Cambridge and is the only one retaining its original appearance. It predates the houses of East Cambridge and Cambridgeport, the other two areas of the city in which modest housing for the poor and working classes was

being built in the early 19th century. It is also the only extant early 19th-century house of its extreme small size. Only one room deep with a single room on each floor and a rear ell (which probably was not added until 1836), the Cox-Hicks House illustrates a type of minimal housing which has since disappeared from the city. Although other such tiny houses for the poorest classes must have existed in Cambridge in some numbers, their survival is rare due to what, in most cases, was probably poor construction, and to the inconvenience of their small size.

The Winthrop Street Wall, which runs along the west and south property line, is also a critical feature of the property. A late 18th century retaining wall, the wall is a boundary marker constructed of granite, slate and puddingstone, none of which are stones available in Cambridge, which has no stone outcroppings. The wall represents the sole surviving remnant of the original topography of Harvard Square and demarcated the lower land along Eliot Street (the site of wharves for river shipping) from uplands at Winthrop Square.

## V. Relationship to Criteria

### A. Section 4, Ordinance 1002

"The Historical Commission by majority vote may recommend for designation as a landmark any property within the City being or containing a place, structure, feature or object which it determines to be either (a) importantly associated with one or more historic persons or events, or with the broad architectural, aesthetic, cultural, political, economic or social history of the City or the Commonwealth or (b) historically or architecturally significant (in terms of period, style, method of construction, or association with a famous architect or builder) either by itself or in the context of a group of structures."

### B. Relationship of Property to Criteria

The Cox-Hicks House meets criteria (a) and (b) of Ordinance 1002 for its important associations with the broad architectural and social history of the City and for its architectural significance in terms of its period, style, and method of construction. It is significant in the city's social and architectural history as the only example of minimal housing for the poor in Old Cambridge and as one of very few surviving early 19th century cottages in the city. The house is associated with several widows and in its modesty illustrates the poverty that befell many widows of that time. It is particularly associated with Elizabeth Nutting Hicks (1726-1825) and her daughter, Sarah Hicks Flagg (1757-1830), members of prominent families in 18th and 19th century Cambridge.

Mrs. Hicks was the widow of John Hicks, said to have been a participant in the Boston Tea Party and an early victim of the Revolutionary War. Mrs. Hicks raised ten children, among whom were Jonathan (1752-1826), a regimental surgeon in the Revolutionary War, and John (1750-1794), a printer and publisher of the tory newspaper **The Post Boy**. Mrs. Flagg (1757-1830) raised two daughters, both of whom married into important Cambridge families and themselves had children who played active roles in mid 19th century Cambridge.

The Cox-Hicks House is architecturally significant in terms of its Federal period construction, its vernacular style and its unique, two-room plan. It is one of a half dozen Federal period houses in Old Cambridge, the earliest settled section of the city. Most of the other pre-1833 houses of Old Cambridge are two-story houses with the five bay facade and center entrance typical of fully realized Georgian middle class housing. By contrast, the Cox-Hicks House is of the simplest vernacular design, with an

extrememly modest plan. Entered on the end wall and with only two rooms in the main house, the Cox-Hicks House is atypical of Cambridge's surviving cottages. As a rare survivor, it has the capacity to evoke a sense of Cambridge's historic architectural character and the lifestyle of its poor citizens and thus contributes to the broad architectural and social history of the city.

## VI. Recommendations

### A. Section 1, Ordinance 1002

The purpose of landmark designation is stated in Section 1 of Ordinance 1002:

. . . to preserve, conserve, and protect the beauty and heritage of the City . . . and to improve the quality of its environment through identification, conservation, and maintenance of . . . structures which constitute or reflect distinctive features of the architectural, cultural, political, economic or social history of the City; to resist and restrain environmental influences adverse to this purpose.

### B. Preservation Options

The Cox-Hicks House is currently listed on the National Register of Historic Places as a contributing building in the Harvard Square National Register District. As such, it is protected from the adverse effects of federally licensed, permitted, or funded projects and, through listing on the parallel State Register of Historic Places, from the adverse effects of state funded projects. At the local level, it is covered by the provisions of the Harvard Square Overlay Zone, in addition to the general zoning regulations of the city.

The National and State Registers provide limited protection from public projects through review by the Massachusetts Historical Commission. The Overlay District establishes zoning incentives for the preservation of contributing National Register properties and also calls for review of certain projects by the Harvard Square Advisory Committee. However, neither the Massachusetts Historical Commission's nor the Advisory Committee's powers allow for detailed, binding review of architectural designs. The Advisory Committee also cannot mandate the retention of a particular property.

Other options for the preservation of the Cox-Hicks House include designation as a Landmark under Ordinance 1002, or placement of a Preservation Easement on the property under the provisions of MGL Chapter 184. The property is now owned by a non-profit institution, making the value of a Preservation Easement uncertain. However, if an Easement would be valuable to the owner at some time, the option of placing an Easement on the property should be considered.

The two other major protective designations, a Neighborhood Conservation or a Local Historic District in Harvard Square, cannot be considered for the Cox-Hicks

House. These options are foreclosed by the Commission's previous agreement not to impose local district controls on Harvard Square in return for listing of the area on the National Register of Historic Places.

#### C. Staff Recommendation

It is the staff recommendation that the Cox-Hicks House be recommended to the City Council for designation as a Protected Landmark.

## VII. Standards for Design Review

### A. Introduction

The Commission's primary charge under Ordinance 1002 is to review "all construction, demolition, or alteration that affects the exterior architectural features, other than color, of any landmark." This landmark study report describes exterior architectural features that are among the characteristics which led to consideration of the property as a landmark. Except as the order designating or amending the landmark may otherwise provide, those features should be preserved and/or enhanced in any construction, demolition, or alteration of a landmark.

Section 8 of the ordinance sets general guidelines to be considered by the Historical Commission in reviewing changes to landmarks. Among other things, the Commission is directed to consider:

the historic and architectural value and significance of the site or structure, the general design, arrangement, texture and material of the features involved, and the relation of such features to similar features or structures in the surrounding area.

In all cases, a Certificate of Appropriateness, Hardship, or Non-Applicability must be issued by the Historical Commission prior to making any changes to a landmark. The Commission does not have authority to regulate the interiors of landmarks nor can they control changes to exterior architectural features not subject to public view. Nonetheless, Certificates of Non-Applicability must be issued for those changes. All applications are carefully reviewed by the Commission at a public hearing, in accordance with Ordinance 1002.

### B. General Standards

1. Historic and architectural features of the landmark shall be preserved.
2. Changes and additions to the landmark which have taken place over time are evidence of the history of the property and the neighborhood. These changes to the property may have acquired significance in their own right and that significance should be recognized and respected.
3. Deteriorated architectural features should be repaired rather than replaced.
4. When replacement of architectural features is necessary, it should be based on physical or documentary evidence.

5. New materials should, whenever possible, match the material being replaced in physical properties, design, color, texture, and appearance. The use of imitation replacement materials is discouraged.

6. The surface cleaning of a landmark shall be done by the gentlest possible means. Sandblasting and other cleaning methods that damage exterior architectural features shall not be used.

7. New additions must not destroy significant exterior architectural features and shall not be incongruous to the historic aspects, architectural significance, or distinctive character of the landmark, neighborhood and environment.

8. New additions should be done in such a way that if they were to be removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the landmark would be unimpaired.

#### C. Statement of Standards

##### 1. General

a. Retain domestic character of landscaping, including fencing along front property line.

##### 2. Exterior Walls

a. Remove exterior heating system chimney on west wall, if possible.

##### 3. Windows

a. Remove window air conditioning units , if possible.

##### 4. Roof

##### 5. Other Elements

a. Winthrop Street Wall: Any landscape changes that would affect the wall should be carefully monitored so as to protect and preserve the integrity of the structure and materials.

## VIII. Proposed Order

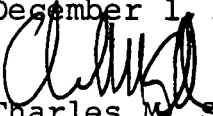
## ORDERED:

That the Cox-Hicks House, 98 Winthrop Street, be designated as a protected landmark pursuant to Chapter Two, Article XVI, Section 2-147(k) of the Code of the City of Cambridge, as recommended by vote of the Cambridge Historical Commission on December 1, 1988. The premises so designated are defined as Parcel 18 of Assessors' Map 162.

This designation is justified by the Cox-Hicks House's important associations with the broad architectural and social history of the city and by its historic and architectural significance in terms of its period, style and method of construction. It is significant as the only surviving example of minimal housing for the poor in Old Cambridge and as one of very few surviving early 19th century cottages in the city. It is associated particularly with Elizabeth Nutting Hicks and Sarah Hicks Flagg, two widows of prominent 18th and 19th century Cambridge families. The house is architecturally significant for its vernacular Federal style and its unique two-room plan. Finally, it is important for the contribution it makes to the small-scale, 19th century residential character of the Winthrop Street streetscape.

The effect of this designation shall be that no construction activity can take place within the designated landmark area, and no action can be taken affecting the appearance of the Cox-Hicks House, that would in either case be visible from a public way without review by the Cambridge Historical Commission and the issuance of a Certificate of Appropriateness, Hardship or Non-Applicability, as the case may be. In making determinations, the Commission shall be guided by the terms of the landmark designation report, and by section VII, Standards for Design Review, and by the applicable sections of Ordinance 1002.

Adopted by a vote of 6-0.  
December 1, 1988

  
Charles M. Sullivan  
Executive Director  
Cambridge Historical Commission



**CITY OF CAMBRIDGE**

CAMBRIDGE, MASSACHUSETTS 02139

TEL. 498-9011

EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT  
ROBERT W. HEALY  
City Manager

RICHARD C. ROSSI  
Deputy City Manager

January 23, 1989

To the Honorable, the City Council:

Enclosed please find copy of the recommendation of the Cambridge Historical Commission for approval of landmark designation under Ordinance 1002 for five buildings in the Harvard Square area.

Very truly yours,

Robert W. Healy  
City Manager

RWH/mbf

0-5

Re: Historical Commission's recommendation relative to the approval for landmark designation under Ordinance 1002 for the following 5 buildings in the Harvard Sq. : Farwell-Russell Store, 12 Bow St.; William Brattle House, 42 Brattle St.; Dexter Pratt House, 54 Brattle St.; Hyde-Taylor House, 96 Winthrop St. & the Cox-Hicks House, 98 Winthrop St.

In City Council,

January 23, 1989

1-23-89

Five Landmark  
Designations Approved  
on Voice Vote.