



# City of Cambridge

Calendar Item No. 5  
~~Agenda Item No. 12~~

IN CITY COUNCIL

~~April 13, 1987~~  
 June 1, 1987

**ORDERED:**

That the St. Paul's Choir School at 29 Mount Auburn 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 April 2, 1987. the premises so designated are defined as Parcel 47 on Assessor's Plan 133.

This designation is justified by the important associations of the building with the architectural and social history of the City, as an important example of parochial school architecture, and by its historic significance as an example of the Romanesque style and for its associations with the architect Patrick W. Ford.

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 Choir School, 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 Nonapplicability, as the case may be. In making determinations, the Commission shall consider the necessity of the owner to rehabilitate or conduct new construction, and shall if requested allow the demolition of the Harvard-Radcliffe Student Center in conjunction with such construction.

In City Council June 1, 1987.

Failed of adoption by a yea and nay vote:-  
 Yeas 8; Nays 0; Absent 1.

Attest:- Joseph E. Connarton, City Clerk.

A true copy;

*Joseph E. Connarton*

ATTEST:-

Joseph E. Connarton, City Clerk.



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# 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*.

April 9, 1987

To the Honorable, the City Council:

On April 2, 1987, the Cambridge Historical Commission adopted by a vote of 4-3 the staff report recommending designation of the St. Paul's Archdiocesan Choir School as a landmark under Ordinance 1002. A copy of the proposed order implementing this designation is enclosed for your consideration.

## Justification for Landmark Designation

The purpose of the 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...

Section 4 states the criteria for landmark designation, 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...

Saint Paul's Archdiocesan Choir School is importantly associated with the broad architectural and social history of Cambridge, as the city's second oldest parochial school; as the oldest surviving building of one of the city's most prominent Catholic parishes; and as the site of a distinguished music school, the Archdiocesan Choir School.

The School is also architecturally significant in terms of its style, as an intact and well-developed example of Romanesque Revival architecture; its associations with its architect, Patrick W. Ford, whose practice for the Catholic Church in late 19th century New England includes numerous distinguished buildings (among them, Saint Anselm's College and Saint Joseph's Cathedral, Manchester, N.H., and Sacred Heart, East Cambridge); and its contribution to its setting in Harvard Square, on a site that is widely recognized as one of the most important urban spaces in metropolitan Boston.

All four buildings in the Saint Paul's Church complex are listed as contributing structures on the National Register of Historic Places.

#### Issues Raised in the Public Hearing

The major issues raised in the public hearing related to the significance of the school building and the costs of new construction versus rehabilitation of the school. The Commission heard testimony from the public both in favor and in opposition to the significance of the school. With regard to the costs of new construction versus rehabilitation, the Commission found that estimated figures provided by the Parish yielded costs that could be forecasted to be roughly comparable and that no undue economic hardship would be imposed on the Parish under the rehabilitation option.

#### Effect of Designation

The effect of the designation would be that no new construction, alteration or demolition could take place on the premises of the Choir School without review and approval of the Historical Commission. However, the proposed order takes the concerns of the parish into account by recognizing the necessity of alteration, limited demolition, and new construction to accommodate their program.

The Historical Commission has found that St. Paul's Choir School meets the criteria established in Ordinance 1002 for landmark designation, and has directed that this recommendation be transmitted to the City Council for its consideration.

Respectfully,

*Charles M. Sullivan*

Charles M. Sullivan <sup>5/2</sup>  
Executive Director

Proposed Designation Order for St. Paul's

Choir School, 29 Mount Auburn Street

ORDERED:

That the St. Paul's Choir School at 29 Mount Auburn 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 April 2, 1987. The premises so designated are defined as Parcel 47 on Assessor's Plan 133.

This designation is justified by the important associations of the building with the architectural and social history of the City, as an important example of parochial school architecture, and by its historic significance as an example of the Romanesque style and for its associations with the architect Patrick W. Ford.

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 Choir School, 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 Nonapplicability, as the case may be. In making determinations, the Commission shall consider the necessity of the owner to rehabilitate or conduct new construction, and shall if requested allow the demolition of the Harvard-Radcliffe Student Center in conjunction with such construction.

Adopted by an affirmative vote of 4-3  
April 2, 1987

*Nancy L. Doonan* sjr

Nancy L. Doonan, Secretary  
Cambridge Historical Commission

Supplemental Addenda to  
Landmark Designation Report

Saint Paul's Archdiocesan Choir School  
29 Mount Auburn Street

Saint Paul's Rectory  
34 Mount Auburn Street

Cambridge Historical Commission  
April 9, 1987

Supplementary Addendum  
Appendix C

Summary of Construction Figures received March 28, 1987  
from Saint Paul's Church Building Committee

On March 28, the Cambridge Historical Commission received a background report on the "Parish Building Project" from the Saint Paul's Church Building Committee. The information contained in the report was received too late for it to be included in the Commission's landmark designation report and is included here as an addendum to that study.

The "Parish Building Project" report includes background information relating to the development of design alternatives and decisions with regard to existing structural conditions, estimated construction costs, and rehabilitation options, as these were considered by the parish, and project budgets. Much of the material contained in the report had been excerpted at various times throughout the project, however, the "Parish Building Report" made this information available in a comprehensive format. The information in this Addendum derives solely from the "Report."

Comparable Square Footage Estimates for Rehab vs. New Construction

The following is a breakdown of square footage estimates based on: 1) the parish's ideal architectural program; 2) the rehabilitation alternative developed by the parish (which includes retention of the school and student center and construction of a new four-story, 14,500 square foot building adjacent to the school); and 3) the proposed Koetter/Kim design for new construction adjacent to the church. These estimates DO NOT include the square footage contained in the Rectory structure opposite the site at 34 Mount Auburn Street.

	Program	Rehab	New Const.
Rectory	4,982	7,503	6,557
Parish	3,918	5,459	3,812
School	9,336	10,453	8,787
Shared	6,511	9,033	6,674
Students	<u>5,979</u>	<u>5,797</u>	<u>6,281</u>
Sub-Total	33,726 sq. ft.	42,387 sq. ft.	35,111 sq. ft.
Parking	<u>10,500</u> sq. ft.	<u>10,500</u> sq. ft.	<u>10,500</u> sq. ft.
Total	34,226 sq. ft.	52,887 sq. ft.	45,611 sq. ft.

The above figures illustrate that the parish's rehabilitation option, providing 42,387 gross square feet of space,

would accommodate the broad programmatic goals and space needs of the parish while retaining the existing school building. It is likely that refinement of the parish's rehabilitation option could reduce the amount of new construction included in the option, thereby increasing the efficiency of the proposal.

Estimated Project Budgets

The "Parish Building Report" identifies two preliminary budget figures for new construction versus rehabilitation. The figures indicate a cost of \$6,396,126 for new construction and \$8,134,436 for rehabilitation. These totals are based on construction costs, for the Rehab Option, of \$113 per square foot of rehabilitation costs and \$115 per square foot for the new construction planned in the parish's rehab study. New construction costs for the New Construction option are estimated at \$111.57 per square foot.

Using the Burke Company's construction and soft cost estimates (see below for explanation of soft costs) for Rehab Option and estimating new construction costs for both the Rehab and New Construction Options at \$115 per square foot, the following figures are obtained.

**Rehab Option**

School and Student Center	25,248 sf x \$113 x 10%	\$3,138,326
New Construction	12,900 sf x \$115 x 10%	1,631,850
Parking	10,500 sf x \$ 60 x 10%	693,000
Soft Costs		<u>1,956,622</u>
Total		\$7,419,798

**New Construction Option**

New Construction Costs	45,611 sf x 115 x 10%	\$5,769,791
Soft Costs		<u>1,762,084</u>
Total		\$7,531,875

April 9, 1987

SOFT COST, ESTIMATE

REAL ESTATE CONSULTANT	\$30,000		
PROJECT MANAGEMENT	\$185,000		
PROGRAMMING	\$5,000		
ARCHITECTURAL AND ENGINEERING (12.5%)	<del>\$685,000</del>	596,271	
GEO TECHNICAL TESTING CONSULTANT	\$13,500		
PROPERTY SURVEY	\$15,000		
COST ESTIMATOR	\$5,000		
(REHAB PORTION)	\$6,500		
RELOCATION	\$140,000		
FUNDRAISING	\$150,000		
CONSTRUCTION INTEREST	\$65,000		
FINANCING FEES	\$2,000		
LEGAL FEES	\$40,000		
INSURANCE *	<del>\$10,000</del>		
PERFORMANCE BOND *	<del>\$12,100</del>		
ASBESTOS REMOVAL *	<del>\$40,000</del>		
LANDSCAPE CONSULTANT	\$20,000		
INTERIOR DESIGN CONSULTANT	\$100,000		
ACOUSTICAL CONSULTANT	\$6,000		
LIGHTING CONSULTANT	\$5,000		
BUILDING PERMIT*	<del>\$20,000</del>		
FURNISHINGS	\$262,000		
SITWORK ALLOWANCE	\$125,000		
VARIANCE APPLICATION FEE #1	\$350		
VARIANCE APPLICATION FEE #2	\$1,000		
		SUB TOTAL	\$1,946,050
		5% CONTINGENCY	\$97,303
		TOTAL SOFT COST	<del>\$2,043,353</del> 1,956,622

\* = included in Burke Company estimate

Supplementary Addendum  
Appendix D

Patrick W. Ford

Patrick W. Ford, the architect of Saint Paul's School, was an important ecclesiastical architect of the late 19th century. He was born in 1848 in Ireland, graduated from Queen's College, Cork, and came to the United States in 1866. He opened a practice in Boston in 1872, and died in 1900. He is credited with a large number of Roman Catholic churches, schools, convents and orphanages, including the House of the Good Shepherd, Roxbury (1870); Sacred Heart, East Cambridge (1874); Sacred Heart, Worcester (1879); Saint Catherine's, Charlestown (1887); Saint John's Church and School, North Cambridge (1891); Saint Anselm's College and Saint Joseph's Cathedral, Manchester, N.H. (both 1891); and Gate of Heaven Church, South Boston (1896). He ranks with P.C. Keeley and Maginnis and Walsh as a leading 19th century Catholic church architect during the period of the Church's greatest growth.

April 9, 1987

Landmark Designation Report

Saint Paul's Archdiocesan Choir School  
29 Mount Auburn Street

Saint Paul's Rectory  
34 Mount Auburn Street

Cambridge Historical Commission

Landmark Designation Report

Saint Paul's Archdiocesan Choir School  
29 Mount Auburn Street

Saint Paul's Rectory  
34 Mount Auburn Street

I. Location

The two structures that are the subject of this report are part of a complex of four buildings constructed for Saint Paul's Roman Catholic Church. Three of the buildings, the Choir School, the Harvard-Radcliffe Catholic Student Center and Saint Paul's Church, occupy a large rectangular lot bounded by Arrow Street on the north, DeWolfe Street on the west and Mount Auburn Street on the south. Extending east on Mount Auburn Street, at numbers 25 and 27 Mount Auburn, are two vacant lots also owned by the church. Opposite the main complex is Saint Paul's Rectory at 32-34-36 Mount Auburn Street. The church also owns a large open lot on DeWolfe Street behind the rectory running south to Grant Street; currently, that lot serves as a parking area. In total, the Saint Paul's property comprises an area of 69,901 square feet. The subject properties, the rectory and school, respectively, occupy lots of 12,197 and 11,810 square feet. The area is zoned O-3, allowing office and multi-family housing uses with a floor area ratio of 3.0 and a sixty foot height limit. The Saint Paul's complex is listed on the National Register of Historic Places as part of the Harvard Square Historic District. All four buildings are considered contributing structures within this district.

The church presently plans to demolish the Choir School and construct a multi-purpose building on the site that would contain a choir school, meeting rooms, student center, and clergy residence. To finance this project, the church proposes to sell the rectory and adjacent DeWolfe Street properties.

The Choir School is currently subject to a six month demolition delay imposed by the Cambridge Historical Commission on October 2, 1986 under the provisions of Ordinance 965. At its February 5, 1987 meeting, the Commission voted to accept petitions for the study of the Choir School and Rectory as potential landmarks.

## II. Description

The Saint Paul's Church complex consists of four buildings built over a 35 year period. These are the school, the earliest building on the site, built in 1889; the student center, at 20 Arrow Street, built within five years of the school's construction; the church, built between 1915 and 1924; and the rectory, built in 1924. The complex is uniform in the use of brick as a building material, while the individual buildings reflect a variety of styles which might loosely be defined as Romanesque and Renaissance Revival in origin.

### 1. Saint Paul's Choir School, 29 Mount Auburn Street 1889

Designed by Patrick W. Ford, a prolific architect of Catholic churches in late 19th century New England, Saint Paul's School is a tall, rectangular building of three-and-

a-half stories with a raised basement and hipped roof. It is five bays wide and seven bays deep, with projecting three-bay-wide entrance pavilions on the north and south elevations. Surmounting each entrance pavilion is a large attic story wall dormer; smaller roof dormers punctuate the side elevations. At the peak of the roof is a tall octagonal cupola clad in copper.

The building is characterized by a lively and eclectic use of varied masonry details and fenestration and by the juxtaposition of strong vertical and horizontal elements. Each floor is defined horizontally with string courses: the basement by a brownstone watertable, the first and second floors by staggered stretcher courses and the third floor by a rowlock course. Vertical emphasis is provided by tall banks of paired windows. While all the windows in the school have double hung sash with fixed transoms, they are treated differently on each floor: there are round arched windows on the first floor, segmental arched windows on the second, and flat arched windows on the third. Deep arcaded surrounds surmount the first and second floor windows, while the third floor windows support the base of the building's steeply corbeled cornice.

As constructed, the school contained twelve classrooms, four per floor, two large meeting rooms on the top floor, and a large hall in the raised basement floor. It served as an elementary school from 1889-1969 and as the Archdiocesan

Choir School from 1969 until 1985, when it was vacated because of reports that it was structurally unsound.

The condition of the school has been the subject of several conflicting reports. Repairs to the roof, gutters, masonry, and windows were estimated at \$108,000 in 1977. While the building was vacated in 1985 on the basis of an engineer's evaluation of failure in the bearing supports of the roof trusses, another engineer suggests that these repairs could have been made in a few days at a cost of about \$5,000. The engineering reports and rehabilitation cost estimates are evaluated in the appendix.

St. Paul's School's importance to its setting lies in the contrast provided by the texture and complexity of its vernacular Romanesque architecture against the 19th century industrial setting of the Reversible Collar factory on one side and the exotic Lombardic character of the church on the other. The school contributes importantly to the richness of the square formed by Bow and Arrow Streets, and to the agreeable complexity of architectural form of this part of the Harvard Square neighborhood.

2. Harvard-Radcliffe Catholic Student Center, 20  
Arrow Street (ca. 1894)

The Catholic Student Center is a narrow, two-and-a-half story, flat roofed brick building extending along Arrow Street across the north elevation of the Choir School. Roughly contemporaneous with the school, the Student Center building first appeared on the 1894 atlas of the city. It is a utilitarian building in appearance with corbeled arches

above the windows and a patterned brick string course around the eave. The brickwork of the Student Center alludes to the more exuberant use of masonry texturing in the school building. The designer is unknown.

In the context of its surroundings, the Student Center is not a success. It obscures the fully-developed north facade of the school and, by maintaining the street wall established by the Reversible Collar Factory contributes to a narrow, closed-in atmosphere on Arrow Street. A wider opening in the street wall here would provide a more appropriate setting for the church and school.

### 3. Saint Paul's Church, 24 Arrow Street (1915-1924)

Saint Paul's Church is an imposing Romanesque Revival style building in the northern Italian style. Rectilinear in plan, the church's dominant features are its tall, offset campanile and its arcaded and richly decorated facade. The architect for the church was Edward T. P. Graham, a Cambridge architect responsible for several other Catholic buildings in the city and the Boston region. This is an especially noteworthy building that contributes significantly to the character of its surroundings. The building will not be further evaluated as it is not the subject of any proceeding before the Historical Commission.

### 4. Saint Paul's Rectory, 34 Mount Auburn Street (1924)

The Rectory, also designed by Edward T. P. Graham, is a three-and-a-half story, red brick building with an H-shaped plan and slate roof. Renaissance Revival in style, the rec-

tory is five bays wide by five bays deep. The central three bays on the north and south elevations are recessed behind hipped roof end pavilions. The building rises from a limestone foundation with a rusticated first floor. Entrances to the building are located in the center bays of the north and west elevations. The principal entrance is on the west (DeWolfe Street) elevation. It features a Gibbs surround in limestone with a segmental pediment. The Mount Auburn Street entrance is simpler, with a rusticated limestone surround framing a paneled door with a round-arched transom. Registered quoins define the corners of the second and third floors, while a diapered cornice encircles the building. Segmental arched dormers punctuate the roofline. The sash throughout is double hung, with six over six on the first and third floors and six over nine sash on the second floor. The condition of the Rectory has not been documented in Commission proceedings, but is assumed to be good, based on the exterior appearance of the building.

In the context of its surroundings, the Rectory marks the transition from the commercial and institutional character of Harvard Square to the domestic character of the Banks Street neighborhood.

### III. History of the Property

The Archdiocese of Boston purchased the property on which the Choir School, Student Center and church are located in 1889. Known as the Gordon McKay estate, the property contained a large Federal-period house located in the

northwest corner of the lot. The house was converted by the church for use as a convent for the school's teaching sisters. The school was sited southeast of the convent.

At the time of the school's construction, Saint Paul's Church was housed in an 1830 Greek Revival church at 73 Mount Auburn Street. Originally the Shepard Congregational Church, it was purchased in 1873 when that congregation moved to a new church at Mason and Garden Streets. Saint Paul's occupied the building from 1873 until 1925, when the present church was completed.

At one time, the construction of a church at Massachusetts Avenue and Ellery Street was contemplated, but that location was not secured and the McKay house was demolished for the construction of the present church. Construction of a church on the rectory site was also contemplated but not realized. Other property owned by the church included a double triple decker at 32-34 Mount Auburn, demolished for construction of the Rectory in 1924, and a house at 25 Mount Auburn, now a parking lot. At various times, these properties must have served as residences for the priests and sisters of the parish.

#### IV. Significance

##### 1. Historical Development

The history of Saint Paul's Church is closely bound to that of another Cambridge parish, Saint Peter's. Located on Concord Avenue at Observatory Hill, Saint Peter's is Cambridge's second Catholic parish and was established in 1848

by Father Manasses Dougherty. Father Dougherty's impact on the spread of Catholicism in the region was great: he was responsible for founding numerous churches in Middlesex County, in which Saint Paul's was the first offshoot of Saint Peter's.

Saint Paul's Church was established at a time when the pace of expansion in the Archdiocese was accelerating. Through the 1840s, the number of Catholic churches in the Boston Archdiocese was relatively small and the established parishes served large geographical areas. As larger urban populations of Catholics emerged, new parishes were formed, especially in the manufacturing cities of the Archdiocese. Cambridge, by contrast with cities like Lawrence and Lowell, did not develop a large industrial sector until the end of the 19th century. The founding of Catholic churches in Cambridge, with a concentrated period of growth occurring after the 1890s, appears to have taken place somewhat later than was characteristic in the Archdiocese's largest cities. Within this sequence, Saint Paul's is the fourth Catholic church in Cambridge (Saint John's/Sacred Heart, 1843; Saint Peter's, 1848; Saint Mary's, 1864). It falls into a middle period, after the pioneering phase of the 1840s, but prior to the period of greatest growth in the city. Historically, the church is most significant within the context of the spread of the Catholic church in late 19th century Middlesex County, specifically as that process relates to the ministry

of Father Manasses Dougherty and his role in shaping parish development.

During this period, the provision of parochial schools for Catholic children was a stated policy of the Catholic church. However, the role of the Boston Archdiocese in developing a system of parochial school education was somewhat unclear: one Catholic scholar has noted the relatively passive stance of the Archdiocese toward the expansion of a parochial school system in this period. Debate over the importance of providing a Catholic education for Catholic youth seems to have been a perennial issue, some groups happily assenting to the integration of Catholics into the mainstream "Yankee" public school systems, and others asserting the importance of parochial school education in inculcating Catholic values. For whatever reasons, by 1889, only 42 parochial schools existed in the Boston Archdiocese, a comparatively small number given the size and stated goals of the Archdiocese.

Despite the fact that provision of a parochial school was clearly expected of them, many parishes opted not to operate schools. From 1889 to 1900, only two of Cambridge's four Catholic churches, Saint Paul's and Saint Mary's, had schools. Saint Mary's parish had an early and particularly strong commitment to parochial education that manifested itself in the parish's educational plant, which was one of the most extensive in the Archdiocese with a boys' and a girls' school, a gymnasium, and a college. In the period from 1900

to 1908, three more parochial schools were founded in Cambridge: Notre Dame de Pitie (1900), Saint Peter's (1902) and Sacred Heart (1902). However, the percentage of parishes with parochial schools in the Boston Archdiocese ran below that in many other regions of the country. In 1908, when there were 72 parochial schools in the Archdiocese, these constituted facilities in only 35.9 per cent of the Archdiocese's 209 churches. The fact that so few Boston area churches founded parochial schools to accompany them was a fact later decried by Cardinal O'Connell, a strong advocate of Catholic education for Catholic children.

With regard to its commitment to parochial education, Saint Paul's was something of an exception in the Boston Archdiocese. At the time of the establishment of the school, relatively few parishes in the region had parochial schools. Saint Paul's Church would have been considered a good example of the model parish complex, with a church, rectory, school and convent, albeit in scattered locations along Mount Auburn Street. By 1925, when the church complex was consolidated on two properties at Mount Auburn and DeWolfe Street, the image of the model parish complex was even stronger.

## 2. Architectural Significance

The Saint Paul's complex represents two distinct construction efforts: the first of 1889-1894, when the school and student center were erected, and the second twenty-one years later, when the church and rectory were completed be-

tween 1915-1924. In addition, the parish, like many others, also used existing buildings as necessary to accommodate the varied functions of the parish.

A. Saint Paul's School

Architecturally, Saint Paul's School is very closely related in design to a contemporaneous building designed by Patrick W. Ford for another Cambridge parish. This was the original Saint John's Church, North Cambridge, of 1891, demolished in 1959. With the exception of attic story wall dormers (which Saint John's lacked) and the shape of the cupola (square in the case of Saint John's), the designs are virtually identical. In the case of Saint John's, the structure combined both church and school functions in one building: the church was housed on the first floor with classrooms on the upper two floors. However, it seems likely that the building was designed primarily as a school and that its use as a church was considered to be only temporary, for the Catholic Church of New England (James Sullivan, ed., Boston, 1895), a summary of parish history in the Boston Archdiocese, noted that "sometime in the near future a new church will be erected, the school will be opened, and St. John's parish will be as well equipped as many others that antedate it."

A brief review of the Catholic Church of New England reveals that variations on the basic design used at Saint Paul's School (a tall, square plan with a hipped roof, central cupola and textured masonry) appeared at several other

churches in the Archdiocese, including the Saint Peter's, Dorchester, rectory; Saint Joseph's Boys' College, Lowell; Saint Joseph's, Amesbury, rectory; Saint Joseph's School, Somerville; and Saint Joseph's School, Waltham. The rectory of Sacred Heart Church, Cambridge, also evidences some similarities of design.

This general plan appears to have been used for residential, educational and ecclesiastical purposes, as indicated above, and probably was most widely used in the 1880s and early 1890s. It is in some ways comparable to public school design of the late 1860s and 1870s, which by the 1880s had shifted to lower, more rectilinear plans with elaborate, carefully considered systems for proper lighting, heating, and ventilation. Compared to public school buildings of the period, the multi-purpose Catholic buildings were retardataire in design. This may have reflected the overall conservatism of the church and the conscious conservatism of the parochial school curriculum, which was offered as an alternative to progressive educational reforms that were then being undertaken. Taken in this context, Saint Paul's School preserves important elements of late 19th century Catholic architecture that are not found elsewhere in Cambridge and may now be unusual within the Archdiocese.

The architect of Saint Paul's School, Patrick W. Ford (1848-1900), was a practitioner whose works are widespread and well known throughout New England but whose career is poorly understood and documented. Ford, an Irish immigrant,

was the second of a triumverate of architects whose combined work dominated Catholic architecture in New England from the 1840s through the 1920s. The first of the three, Patrick C. Keeley, is thought to have given Patrick Ford his start in this country. Ford may have served as Keeley's clerk of the works as early as 1872 and it is likely from the similarities in their designs that he learned much about design from him, either through direct experience or through awareness of his work. Keeley's influence on Ford can be seen in Ford's designs for Saint Paul's and Saint John's, which bear resemblance to Keeley's design for the Saint Peter's, Dorchester, rectory, the only one of the Catholic Church buildings listed above that is attributed to an architect.

Ford should probably be seen as the disciple of Keeley, carrying forward Keeley's work in a conservative historic revival idiom that did not change until the early twentieth century, when a new classically inspired style was introduced by the third major Catholic practitioner, Maginnis & Walsh. Future research will establish more definitively Ford's role in Catholic architecture, but it is clear that his designs have an important place in understanding the development of a specialized professional practice dealing almost exclusively with the Catholic church. As a well-developed and architecturally intact example of Ford's work, Saint Paul's School is a significant survivor.

### B. Saint Paul's Rectory

Saint Paul's Rectory, built in 1924, was designed by Edward T.P. Graham, a Cambridge architect whose lengthy career spanned a period of 53 years. In design, Saint Paul's Rectory bears similarities to another Graham rectory in Cambridge, that constructed for Saint Mary's Church at 130 Norfolk Street in 1922. Like Saint Mary's Rectory, Saint Paul's Rectory is an imposing brick residence in a restrained Renaissance Revival design. Though both buildings use elements of the Colonial/Georgian Revival style, neither one displays the robust massing and hefty details typical of that style. Rather, Graham's rectories are more finely drawn and lightly scaled with shallow reveals around the windows and narrow cornices. The treatment, at least of Saint Paul's Rectory, seems to derive from European rather than English architecture. The European character of the Rectory is appropriate to a Roman Catholic church, especially one located in an historic center of Anglo-America. While relating in its materials and overall plan to the Georgian and Georgian Revival surroundings of Harvard University, the Rectory is subtly different from its neighbors in such details as its diminutive segmental dormers, diapered cornice and shallow, registered quoins.

The Rectory is well related to the Saint Paul's complex and in particular to Graham's design for Saint Paul's Church. They were designed by the same architect, share the same building material and are roughly contemporaneous.

Both use European rather than Anglo-American designs. A major element that reinforces the relationship between the church and rectory buildings is the use of rustication on the ground floor. This feature helps to unite the two buildings on their opposing sites by visually bridging Mount Auburn Street. Another element shared by both buildings is the diapered cornice, a decorative contrasting glazed brick band used on the gable end parapet of the church and at the roofline of the rectory.

Edward T.P. Graham was responsible for the design of many 20th century Cambridge buildings, including several residences and a few municipal structures (including the Haggerty School, 1914), as well as nine commissions for Catholic churches in Cambridge. Graham's work for the Catholic church in Cambridge included construction of halls for Saint Peter's (1897) and Saint Mary's (1909), schools for Saint Mary's (1914) and Blessed Sacrament (1938), the Saint Mary's and Saint Paul's rectories, and Saint Paul's church. Of these commissions, that for Saint Paul's Church was the largest and most significant, architecturally.

In summary, Saint Paul's Rectory is locally significant as a well-executed example of Renaissance Revival style architecture, for its important functional and architectural relationship to Saint Paul's Church and for its associations with the career of Edward T.P. Graham.

## V. Relationship to Criteria for Landmark Designation

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 . . .

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 . . .

Saint Paul's School and Rectory are integral components of an architecturally distinguished Catholic church complex, one of three such architecturally notable complexes in Cambridge (the others being Saint Mary's and Sacred Heart). Though it lacks a convent, the Saint Paul's complex is a good example of this property type and reflects well the operational structure of the Catholic parish church. The focus of the complex is St. Paul's Church itself, and this building individually and the complex as a whole clearly meet both criteria (a) and (b) for landmark designation. The subjects of this report, however, are the school and rectory.

### 1. Saint Paul's Archdiocesan Choir School

Saint Paul's Archdiocesan Choir School is importantly associated with the broad architectural and social history of the city and is historically and architecturally significant in terms of its period, style and associations with a famous architect, P.W. Ford. Its primary social and historical associations are with the middle period of development of parochial school education in the Boston Archdiocese, and secondarily, with spread of Catholicism in Cambridge, especially through the efforts of such important community leaders as Father Manasses Dougherty.

The primary significance of Saint Paul's School in relation to the landmark criteria is architectural. The school is a good and unaltered example of the Romanesque Revival style. In its conservative design, the building reflects the educational philosophy of the Catholic church. Historically, the school reflects the commitment of the parish to the provision of parochial school education for its youth, an uncommon practice in the Boston Archdiocese at the time of the school's construction. It also has important associations with the career of Patrick W. Ford, the most prominent designer of Catholic architecture in late 19th century New England. Saint Paul's School is one of two Ford-designed parochial schools in Cambridge (the other being Saint Mary's School, 238 Harvard Street, 1893), both of which have equal architectural merit. Finally, the School is

significant in terms of its contribution to the character of its surroundings in Harvard Square.

## 2. Saint Paul's Rectory

Saint Paul's Rectory is primarily significant within the local architectural context as a well-preserved example of Renaissance Revival architecture and a fine complement to Saint Paul's Church. Saint Paul's Church has great architectural significance within Harvard Square and Cambridge as one of the finest Renaissance Revival structures in the area. The Rectory is an integral component of the church complex and an excellent example of the work of Edward T. P. Graham, a prominent local architect of the early 20th century. The Rectory is architecturally significant in terms of its style and associations with Graham, in the context of the group of structures that comprise the Saint Paul's Church complex.

## VI. Recommendations

The staff recommends that Saint Paul's Archdiocesan Choir School be recommended for individual landmark designation to the City Council. It is the earliest building in the complex and is significant for its associations with the early development of Saint Paul's parish, with parochial school education, and with its architect, Patrick W. Ford. These characteristics are strongly related to, but are not limited to, the school's presence within the Saint Paul's Church complex. The loss of this building by demolition would remove a significant contributing building from Har-

vard Square. For these reasons, Saint Paul's School can stand alone as an individual landmark.

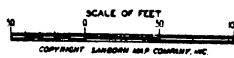
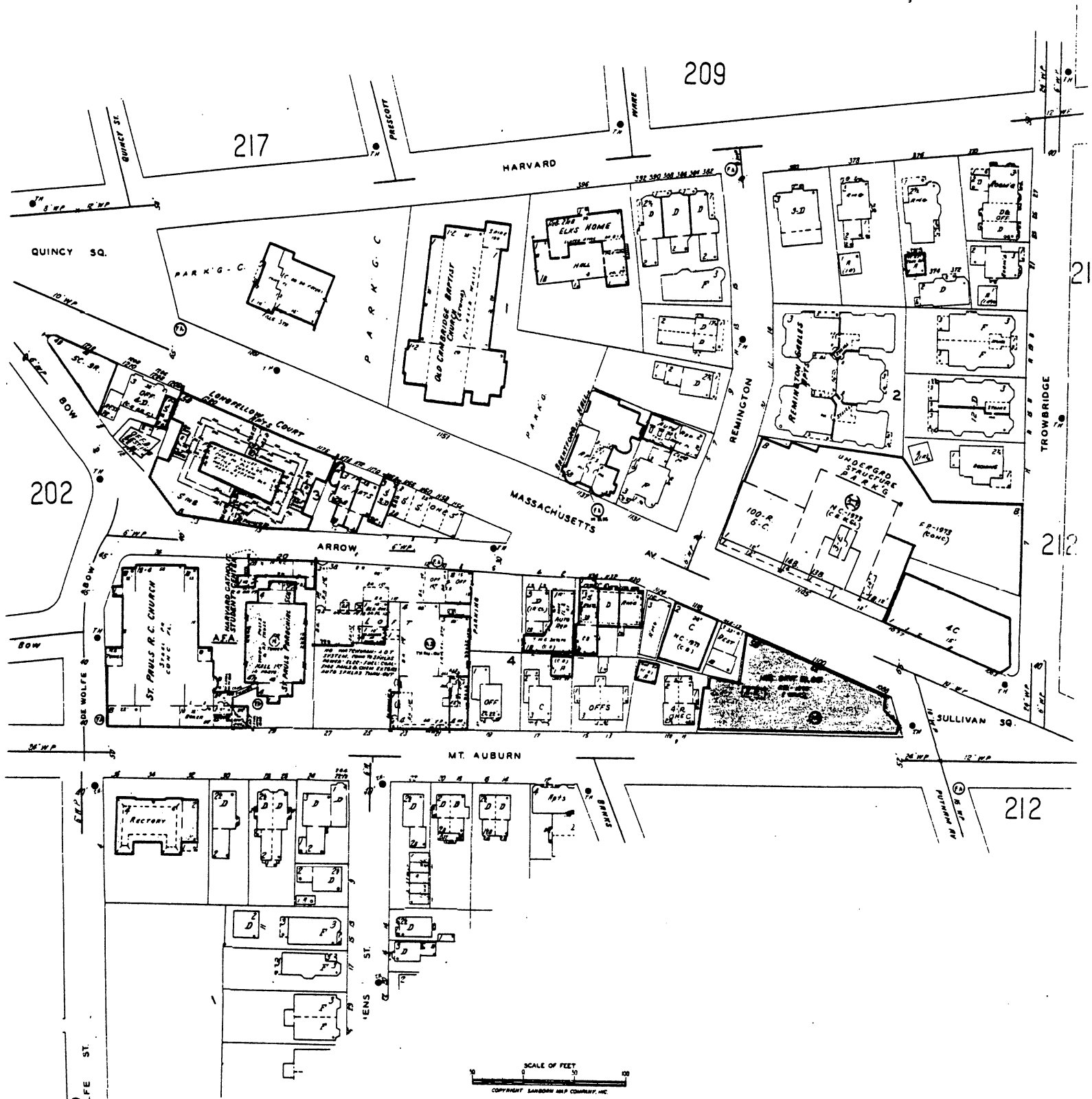
A great deal of testimony has been submitted to demonstrate the unsuitability of the Choir School for adaptive reuse. The conflicting claims are evaluated in Appendix A. It is the opinion of the staff that the building is suitable for reuse for the purposes desired by the parish, and that this may be a less expensive alternative to new construction.

The Commission's recommendation to the City Council should recognize the necessity for the parish to adapt the school to new uses if the designation is implemented. For this reason, it is suggested that the designation order for the premises recognize that the student center is an intrusive building that may be demolished, and that the school may be altered or added to as necessary to implement the present program, subject to the usual review and approval of the Commission. A proposed order is included as Appendix B.

The staff recommends that Saint Paul's Rectory be recommended for landmark status at such time as the Saint Paul's Church complex as a whole is studied for designation. Functionally, stylistically and temporally, the Rectory is bound to the complex as a whole, and in particular, to Saint Paul's Church. It should be considered for landmark designation in the context of the entire Saint Paul's Church complex and is not recommended for individual designation at this time. However, the Commission should take appropriate

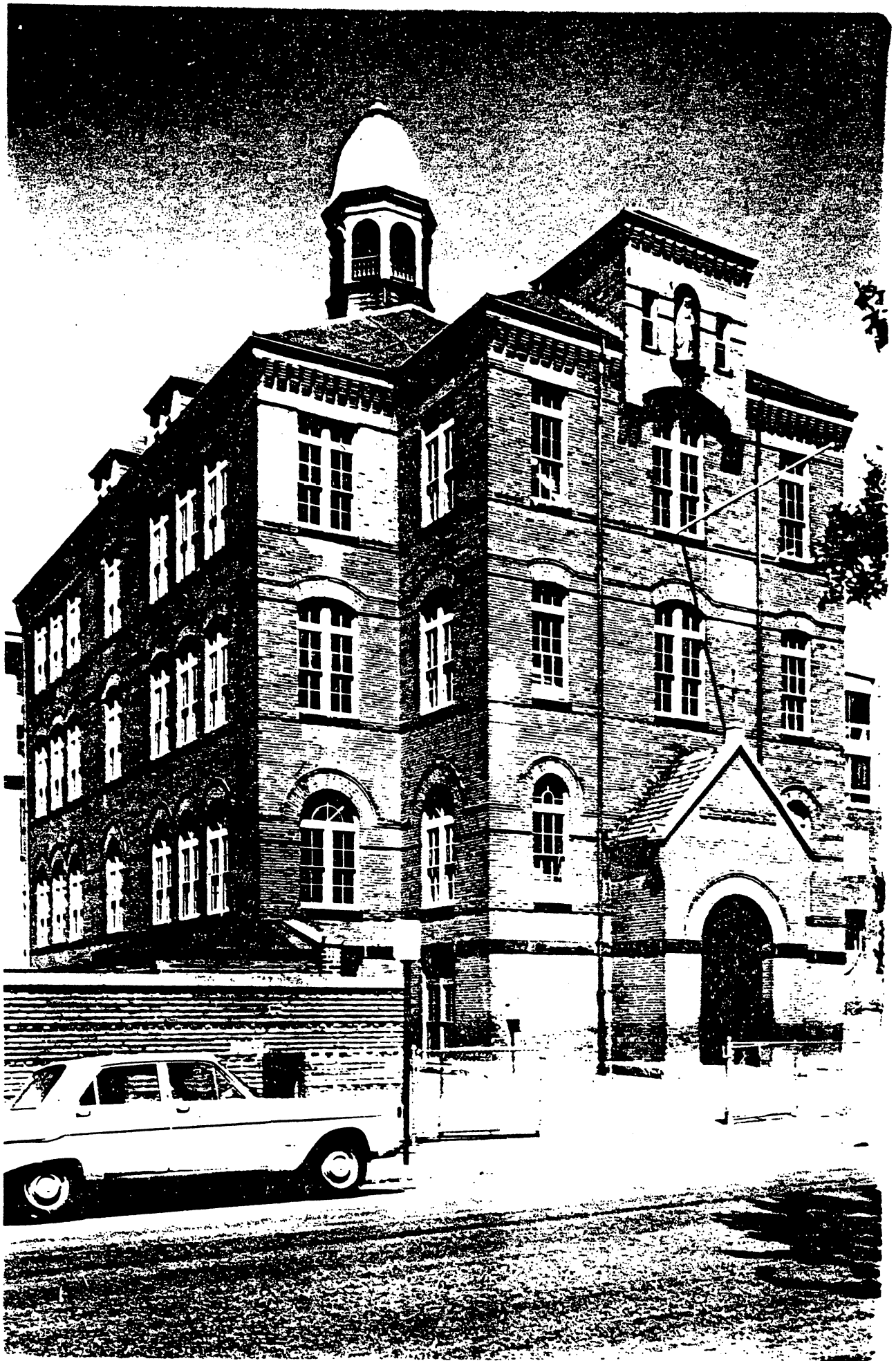
steps, such as requesting a binding legal commitment from the Church, to ensure the preservation of this building.

The staff also recommends that, at some point in the future, the entire Saint Paul's church complex be studied for landmark designation.

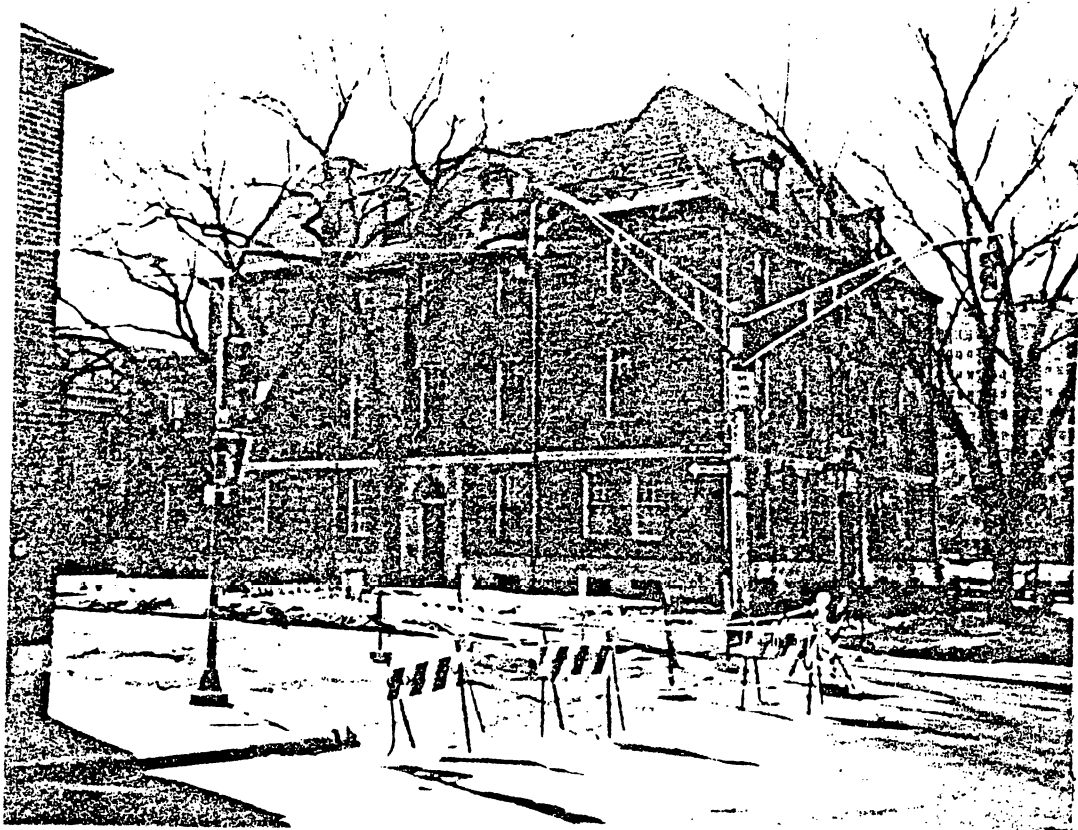




St. Paul's Roman Catholic Church, 24 Mount Auburn Street



St. Paul's Archdiocesan Choir School, 29 Mt. Auburn Street



St. Paul's Rectory, 34 Mount Auburn Street

Appendices

## Appendix A

### Engineering Assessments and Reuse Proposals

#### St. Paul's Choir School

The physical condition and suitability for reuse of the Choir School has been the subject of many conflicting reports. Engineering assessments and rehabilitation estimates obtained by the parish have been disputed by members of its building committee. Plans and estimates for reuse of the building were developed by the parish after a commitment was made to new construction, and have been criticized by professionally qualified members of the community. Proponents of preservation have been faced with countering increasingly complex arguments about the unsuitability and expense of reuse. The following discussion is intended to assess the conflicting claims.

#### 1. Engineering Assessments of Building Condition

The current condition of St. Paul's School is a matter of some dispute. An investigation in 1977 by Harry J. Keefe, P.E., of Kennedy, Kennedy, Keefe & Carney found that there was "an advanced stage of deterioration in most exterior elements", but that the building was "not presently in an unsafe and dangerous condition (regarding structural stability)." Repairs to roofing, masonry and windows were then estimated at \$300,000. The engineer suggested that the building had gone beyond reasonable economic recovery and should be razed.

Later in 1977, C.W.C. Builders of Boston offered to carry out all the work required for \$108,560. According to Lt. Col. Stanley L'Esperance, P.E. (U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, retired), a member of the church building committee, the project was approved by Cardinal Medeiros but not implemented because of objections by the Archdiocesan Construction Engineer. Instead, the Engineer ordered the erection of the chain link fence and the installation of plywood cladding over deteriorated sections of the masonry. No further work was done to correct defects in the building.

In 1985, Maurice A. Reidy, P.E., investigated the building and seconded the findings of the Keefe report. Reidy also found serious structural problems with the four main wood trusses that support the roof, cupola, and attic floor, and concluded that there was danger of collapse due to design inadequacies and subsequent deterioration of the support points of the trusses. In addition, it was found that the side walls had experienced outward movements of up to two inches in the first 25 years of the building's life.

To restore the building to service, Mr. Reidy prescribed a new system of steel framing to pick up the existing wood roof and new steel lintels over four of the third floor windows. For estimating purposes, Reidy suggested rebuilding the walls down to the third floor sills, although he acknowledged that this would not be necessary in all cases. Reidy also suggested replacement of all windows and an entire new roof, even though the existing slate was found

to be in fairly good condition. References were made to estimates in the Reidy report, but none from this firm have been submitted to the Commission.

In conclusion, Reidy said that only the lack of adequate truss support over the windows was "truly threatening", and recommended that the school be vacated until this condition was repaired. While Reidy did not estimate the cost of this work, Col. L'Esperance considered that this could be accomplished "in five or six days at a cost of approximately \$5,000". No work was done; the Choir School was evacuated, and the building remains vacant to the present.

## 2. Plans for Re-use

According to testimony by the parish, reuse of the school was not professionally evaluated as an alternative to new construction. According to a chronology prepared by the Banks Street Area Neighborhood Association (BSANA), about 1985 the parish building committee developed a long range plan that envisioned moving all parish activities to the Choir School site, and selling or leasing the Rectory site to finance the program. Testimony before the Commission indicated that when architect selection took place during the winter of 1985/86, reuse of the existing building was not seriously contemplated.

In March, 1986, the building committee published a space needs program that included accommodations for the Choir School, Rectory, the Harvard/Radcliffe Student Center,

offices, and shared spaces such as a hall and meeting rooms.

Approximate space requirements were projected as follows:

choir school	9,300
rectory	5,000
student center	6,000
parish offices	3,900
shared spaces	6,500
parking	<u>10,500</u>

Total 41,200 gross square feet.

Spaces in the existing buildings are as follows, except for the basement of the church, figures for which have not been submitted:

school	27,500
student center	<u>4,050</u>
subtotal	31,550
rectory	<u>15,200</u>

Total 46,750 gross square feet.

The architect selected by the parish, Koetter, Kim & Associates, developed a design that provides 42,611 square feet in a complex structure running from Arrow Street to Mount Auburn Street and including the presently vacant lots east of the school. The proposed structure includes spaces for the school, rectory and student center, as well as a chapel, hall, parking for 26 cars, and handicapped access to the church. Through-block access would be available to pedestrians as at present, and a bridge would link the new building with the church.

The total cost for the new construction alternative, as given by the parish, is \$6.549 million, or \$158 per square foot. Direct construction costs, exclusive of soft costs, would be \$115 per square foot.

The rehabilitation alternative was developed by the parish after the demolition permit was delayed. It provides a total of 52,887 square feet in the school, student center, and a new four story building on the vacant lot east of the school. Access to the church would also be provided by a bridge. Most parking needs would have to be met off-site.

The total cost is estimated by the parish as \$8.074 million, or \$152 per square foot. Direct construction costs for the rehabilitation are estimated at \$105 per square foot. However, some of the estimates for rehab are questionable. The specification calls for an extremely expensive window replacement program, interior doors and trim of custom milled oak, and replacement of the entire slate roof. These expensive materials are probably not included in the new construction program. Current Boston area costs for comparable rehab projects are \$65 per square foot.

The spaces provided by the alternatives are as follows:

space requirements	41,226
Koetter, Kim design	42,611
rehab alternative	52,887 square feet.

It is apparent that the rehabilitation alternative as designed by the parish is almost 12,000 square feet larger than the space requirements of the parish and 10,000 square feet greater than the Koetter, Kim design. While adapting existing spaces may be inherently less efficient than new design, the reasons for a discrepancy greater than 30% have not been documented.

The cost estimates prepared by the parish for the two alternatives do not appear to be entirely comparable. While a detailed estimate for rehab was prepared by a professional estimator, no such detail was submitted for the new construction alternative and it is not apparent that the two estimates used the same methodology. A line-by-line comparison of costs and space requirements indicates that the major difference in the cost of rehabilitation over new construction is due to the very high cost-per-square foot carried for rehab - \$105 versus \$65 - and the excess space planned for the rehabilitation alternative, 10,000 square feet greater than for new construction. Figure 1, a table prepared by Col. L'Esperance from figures supplied by the parish, summarizes the space requirements and costs of the two alternatives presented by the parish.

### 3. Alternative Reuse Proposals

Other rehabilitation alternatives have been proposed and appear feasible. As an illustration, a proposal by Philip Dowds, an architect representing the BSANA, suggested demolishing the student center and constructing a new full height, 12,000 square foot addition between the north side of the school and Arrow Street. His estimate of construction costs, figured at \$80 per square foot for rehabilitation, totals \$3.410 million (excluding soft costs), compared with \$4.755 million for new construction. The design provides 4,300 square feet more than the Koetter, Kim design, and al-

Figure 1. Construction cost estimates

CONSOLIDATED CONSTRUCTION COST ESTIMATE

ACTIVITY	PROGRAMMED SPACE SQ FT	NEW CONSTRUCTION			REHABILITATION		
		ACTUAL SPACE SQ FT	EST COST \$/SF	TOTAL SECTION COST	ACTUAL SPACE SQ FT	EST COST \$/SF	TOTAL SECTION COST
RECTORY	4,982	6,557	\$115	\$ 754,055	7,503	\$105	\$ 787,763
PARISH	3,918	3,812	\$115	\$ 428,380	5,459	\$105	\$ 573,169
STUDENT CENTER	5,979	6,281	\$115	\$ 722,315	5,979	\$115	\$ 687,585
CHOIR SCHOOL	9,336	8,787	\$115	\$1,010,505	10,453	\$105	\$1,097,513
SHARED SPACE	6,511	6,674	\$115	\$ 767,510	(8,478)	\$115	\$ 974,970
					(3,555)	\$105	\$ 373,275
LINK TO LOWER CHURCH					960	\$115	\$ 110,000
ARCADE							\$ 60,000
RENOVATIONS TO LOWER CHURCH							\$ 110,000
HANDICAP ACCESS TO CHURCH							\$ 100,000
PARKING	10,500	10,500	\$ 60	\$ 630,000	10,500	\$ 64	(\$ 668,850)
TOTAL	41,226	42,611		\$4,322,765	52,887		\$4,874,674
10% CONTINGENCY				432,277			487,467
TOTAL CONSTRUCTION COST				\$4,755,042			\$5,362,141

CONSOLIDATED TOTAL PROJECT COST ESTIMATE

	NEW CONSTRUCTION	REHABILITATION
TOTAL CONSTRUCTION COST	*\$4,755,042	**\$5,362,141
TOTAL SOFT COST	\$1,793,584	\$2,043,353
PARKING		\$ 668,850
TOTAL PROJECT COST	\$6,548,625	\$8,074,344

Prepared by Lt. Col. Stanley L'Esperance  
from documentation by St. Paul's Church

\*Includes PARKING cost of \$693,000

\*\*Does not include PARKING cost of \$668,850

lows surface parking on Mount Auburn Street. This is included as Figure 2.

Any rehabilitation proposal will present difficulties associated with adaptive reuse and new construction associated with older buildings. However, these issues have been successfully addressed in many other projects using former school buildings, and in this case pose no insuperable design problems.

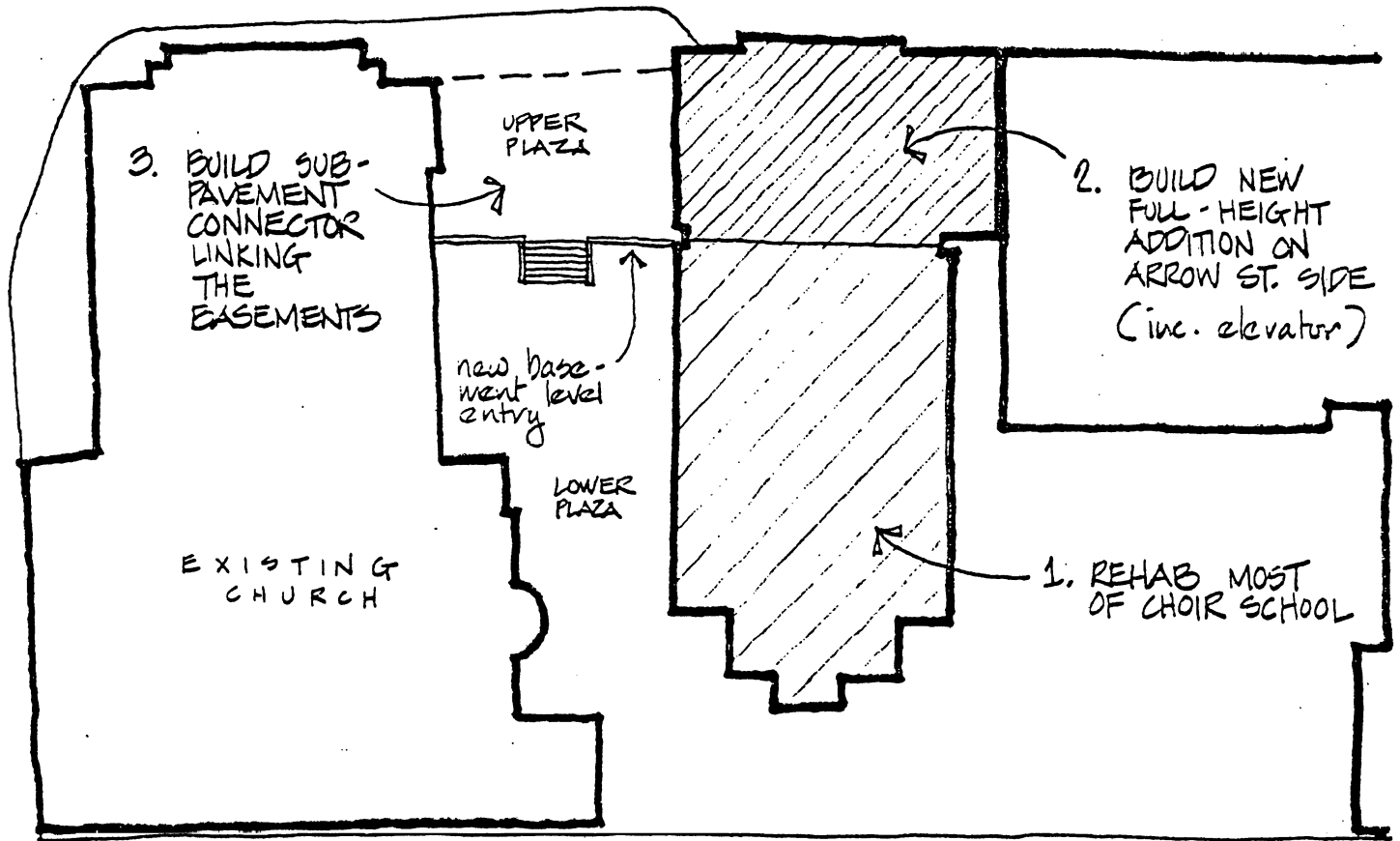
Figure 2. Illustrative Rehabilitation Proposal

SAINT PAUL CHOIR SCHOOL

# REHAB OPTION 1

RFD / 8 JAN 87

ARROW



1" = 40'0"

MOUNT AUBURN

## CONSTRUCTION COST ESTIMATES:

(NIC: PARKING / SITEWORK / SOFT COSTS)

	GROSS FLR AREA (SQ FT)	COST PER SQ FT	COST (IN \$1,000's)
ALL NEW CONSTRUCTION (the Koetter/Kim scheme)	32,000	\$ 120	\$ 3,840K
REHAB OPTION 1			
1. REHAB CHOIR SCHOOL	23,000	\$ 80	\$ 1,840K
2. ARROW ST. ADDITION	12,000	\$ 120	\$ 1,440K
3. BASEMENT CONNECTOR	1,300	\$ 100	\$ 130K
TOTAL:	36,300		\$ 3,410K
(4% re new construction)	(+13%)		(-11%)

Appendix B

Proposed Designation Order for St. Paul's

Choir School, 29 Mount Auburn Street

ORDERED:

That the St. Paul's Choir School at 29 Mount Auburn 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 (date). The premises so designated are defined as Parcel 47 on Assessor's Plan 133.

This designation is justified by the important associations of the building with the architectural and social history of the City, as an important example of parochial school architecture, and by its historic significance as an example of the Romanesque style and for its associations with the architect Patrick W. Ford.

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 Choir School, 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 Nonapplicability, as the case may be. In making determinations, the Commission shall consider the necessity of the owner to rehabilitate or conduct new construction, and shall if requested allow the demolition of the Harvard-Radcliffe Student Center in conjunction with such construction.



**CITY OF CAMBRIDGE**  
**INTEROFFICE CORRESPONDENCE**

**To** Charles Sullivan, Executive Director  
Historical Commission

**Date** April 22, 1987

**From** Joseph E. Connarton, City Clerk *JEC*

**Reference**

**Subject** Proposed Landmark Designation/St. Paul's Choir School

Pursuant to the above-referenced item, please be advised the City Council has scheduled a public hearing for Monday, May 4, 1987 at 6:00 p.m. in the Sullivan Chamber. You are requested to attend at this time.

Thank you for your cooperation in this matter.

JEC/mh

cc: Robert W. Healy, City Manager

# City of Cambridge

MASSACHUSETTS

*June 1*  
~~April 13,~~

In City Council

198<sup>7</sup>

AGENDA ITEM NO. 12

RE: PROPOSED ORDER TO DESIGNATE THE ST. PAUL'S ARCHDIOCESAN CHOIR SCHOOL AS A LANDMARK UNDER ORDINANCE NO. 1002.

	YEA	NAY	ABSENT	PRESENT
Mr. Thomas W. Danehy		✓		
Mr. Francis H. Duehay		✓		
Ms. Sandra Graham		✓		
Mrs. Sheila T. Russell		✓		
Mr. David E. Sullivan			✓	
Mr. Alfred Vellucci		✓		
Mr. William H. Walsh		✓		
Ms. Alice K. Wolf		✓		
Mayor Walter J. Sullivan		✓		

*VMU MS*  
Hearing Scheduled <sup>8</sup> May 4, 1987 at 6<sup>1</sup> P.M.



12.

**CITY OF CAMBRIDGE**  
CAMBRIDGE, MASSACHUSETTS 02139  
TEL. 498-9011

EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT  
ROBERT W. HEALY  
City Manager

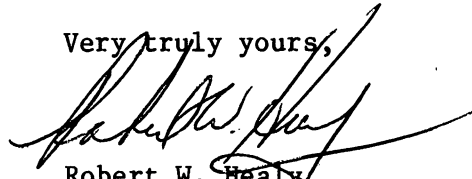
RICHARD C. ROSSI  
Deputy City Manager

April 13, 1987

To the Honorable, the City Council:

Enclosed please find copy of a communication from the Cambridge Historical Commission recommending designation of the St. Paul's Archdiocesan Choir School as a landmark under Ordinance 1002. Also enclosed is a proposed order implementing this designation for your consideration.

Very truly yours,



Robert W. Healy  
City Manager

RWH/mbf  
Encs.

Re: enclosed copies of two corrected pages  
of the submission letter from the Historical  
Commission for the St. Paul's School land-  
mark designation report previously submitted  
on April 13, 1987.

In City Council,

April 27, 1987

*Copy of landmark designation order  
which failed of adoption sent to  
Charles Sullivan, Historical Commission  
6/3/87 mh*