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This exchange of correspondence dated February 10 and 11, 1986, constitutes the protocol between Harvard University and the Cambridge Historical Commission

HARVARD UNIVERSITY

ROBERT H. SCOTT
VICE PRESIDENT FOR ADMINISTRATION

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617-495-4374

February 10, 1986

Robert G. Neiley, Chairman
Cambridge Historical Commission
57 Inman Street
Cambridge, MA 02139

Dear Chairman Neiley,

The Cambridge Historical Commission has proposed a number of properties in Harvard Yard, Harvard Square, and the Harvard houses and associated buildings for inclusion in the Cambridge Multiple Resource nomination to the National Register of Historic Places. The proposed Register nominations follow a comprehensive study process in which Harvard, the Cambridge Historical Commission and the Massachusetts Historical Commission reviewed possible National Register nominations for properties in the area of Harvard University. The study was very informative and has led to an extensive nomination proposal. We anticipate that further analysis for the National Register properties in this area will be needed only if new evidence of significance materializes.

We are pleased to assure you that we intend to rely on the National Register study in our planning process to emphasize consideration of the historic significance of our properties. Indeed, we have already done so. The National Register study also enhanced our awareness of the public concerns about historic preservation and highlighted the need for cooperation among public and private interests in guiding the City's future growth. The National Register is an appropriate mechanism for encouraging preservation in the Harvard Yard, Harvard Square and Harvard houses districts. We support the appropriateness of National Register listing and would like to provide consent for the majority of its properties which have been nominated.

However, Harvard is concerned that consent and listing might have ramifications involving Chapter 40C of the Massachusetts General Laws and Cambridge Ordinance 1002. We want to be assured that the Cambridge Historical Commission recognizes that Harvard's consent to National Register designation is an affirmation not only of the evaluation of National Register criteria but also of the suitability of the National Register as a planning tool. We would also like to know that, in view of Harvard's commitment to use the study information and the nomination

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forms, the Cambridge Historical Commission does not foresee designation of local historic districts or conservation districts for these National Register Districts.

Given the significance of all these properties to Harvard, it would be most unlikely that Harvard would make any fundamental changes, such as demolition, that would alter the nature of the districts. In any event, we would consult with the Commission prior to undertaking any such changes. While we recognize that the Commission must reserve the right to invoke local ordinances in the event of threats to particular properties, we wish to know that, with the placement of these districts in the National Register, the Commission understands that we can plan and carry out maintenance, repairs, and modifications necessary to meet changing needs at Harvard.

Of particular concern to us is the distinction between National Register districts and local historic and conservation districts. In residential neighborhoods of historic significance, consistency of use and character along with a diversity of ownership may lead to a need for the restrictive regulation which can be instituted in locally designated districts. However, in a changing and diverse commercial area like Harvard Square, Charles Sullivan, the Commission's Executive Director, has stated that a local district will not be recommended. Harvard's districts are yet another type of area in which consistent ownership and a continuous pattern of institutional change have provided for preservation of significant buildings without the restrictions of local districts. The National Register district designation is, therefore, an appropriate means of guiding future change.

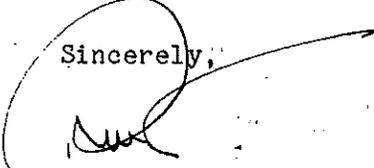
As a large landowner in the City, and particularly as an owner of numerous buildings that have architectural and historic significance, Harvard recognizes its responsibility to address the legitimate concerns that the City and its people have prior to undertaking any changes that affect them. We ask that the Commission in turn recognize that the University's property in the National Register district nominations has a mix of institutional uses, a long and dynamic history of growth, and a great range of architectural styles. We believe that Harvard and the Commission can and should work together to encourage informed decisions on necessary physical changes and to discourage irreversible changes that would destroy significant historical features. In fulfilling its mission to preserve and protect the City's historic and architectural integrity, we hope that the Commission will take full account of these demands upon Harvard and will make every attempt to reconcile these demands with the Commission's own important responsibilities.

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Harvard University and the City of Cambridge have been closely entwined for 350 years, during which time both have grown enormously. Today, Harvard is far more than a small group of students in a few isolated buildings, and Cambridge is far more than a college town. For years to come, Harvard will be a dynamic educational and research institution in a diverse and multi-faceted city. As both Harvard and the City face the common challenge of regulating growth while preserving history, we should do so together as neighbors, not as adversaries. In this spirit, we affirm our willingness to listen carefully to the concerns of the people of this City and to inform the City of our own needs and concerns. We hope you share our belief that the National Register nominations are a constructive step in this process.

We would appreciate a letter from you in response to the concerns we have raised. With adequate assurances, we will be able to consent to the proposed National Register nominations and strengthen our mutual planning activities in the future.

Sincerely,



Robert H. Scott

RHS/mc

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cc: R. Silverman
K. Spiegelman
C. Sullivan, Cambridge Historic Commission



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*.

February 11, 1986

Robert Scott
Vice President for Administration
Massachusetts Hall
Harvard University
Cambridge, Mass. 02138

Dear Mr. Scott:

The Cambridge Historical Commission has received your letter of February 10 concerning the nomination of additional Harvard properties to the National Register of Historic Places.

We feel that the study of the architecture of Harvard and its surroundings has already brought significant benefits to the University and the City. We appreciate Harvard's intention to incorporate the Register into its planning process, and we are pleased that the information from the study has been available to support the current nominations. The consent of the University to the nominations would be a desirable conclusion to this process.

Your letter expressed concern that implementation of these nominations might lead to designation of the same properties as historic districts, neighborhood conservation districts, or local landmarks under M.G.L. Chapter 40C or Ordinance 1002. From the Commission's point of view, local designations do not necessarily follow National Register nominations. Given Harvard's commitment to use the Register as a planning tool and to consult the Commission in advance of major external changes to the nominated properties, we do not foresee the need to pursue local designations. Furthermore, we recognize that Harvard's support for the nominations acknowledges the significant themes in the University's architecture and development, but does not represent support for other regulation of the same properties.

We are pleased to have your assurance that Harvard does not anticipate any action that would threaten the fundamental nature of the National Register districts. At the same time, we must retain the right to exercise our authority under state law and local ordinances to protect significant buildings and areas that are threatened by development or unacceptable change. We recognize the concentration of the Uni-

iversity's holdings, the diversity of its architecture, and the need to carry out maintenance, repairs and alterations necessary to meet pressures for growth and change. We hope that, as change occurs, it does not ignore or diminish the significant characteristics recognized by the National Register.

We feel that the National Register study provides a basis for a more effective joint planning process between the City and the University. We appreciate the difficult concerns that Harvard has faced in its decision to support these nominations, and we look forward to working productively with the University in the future.

Yours,

Robert G. Neiley
Chairman