

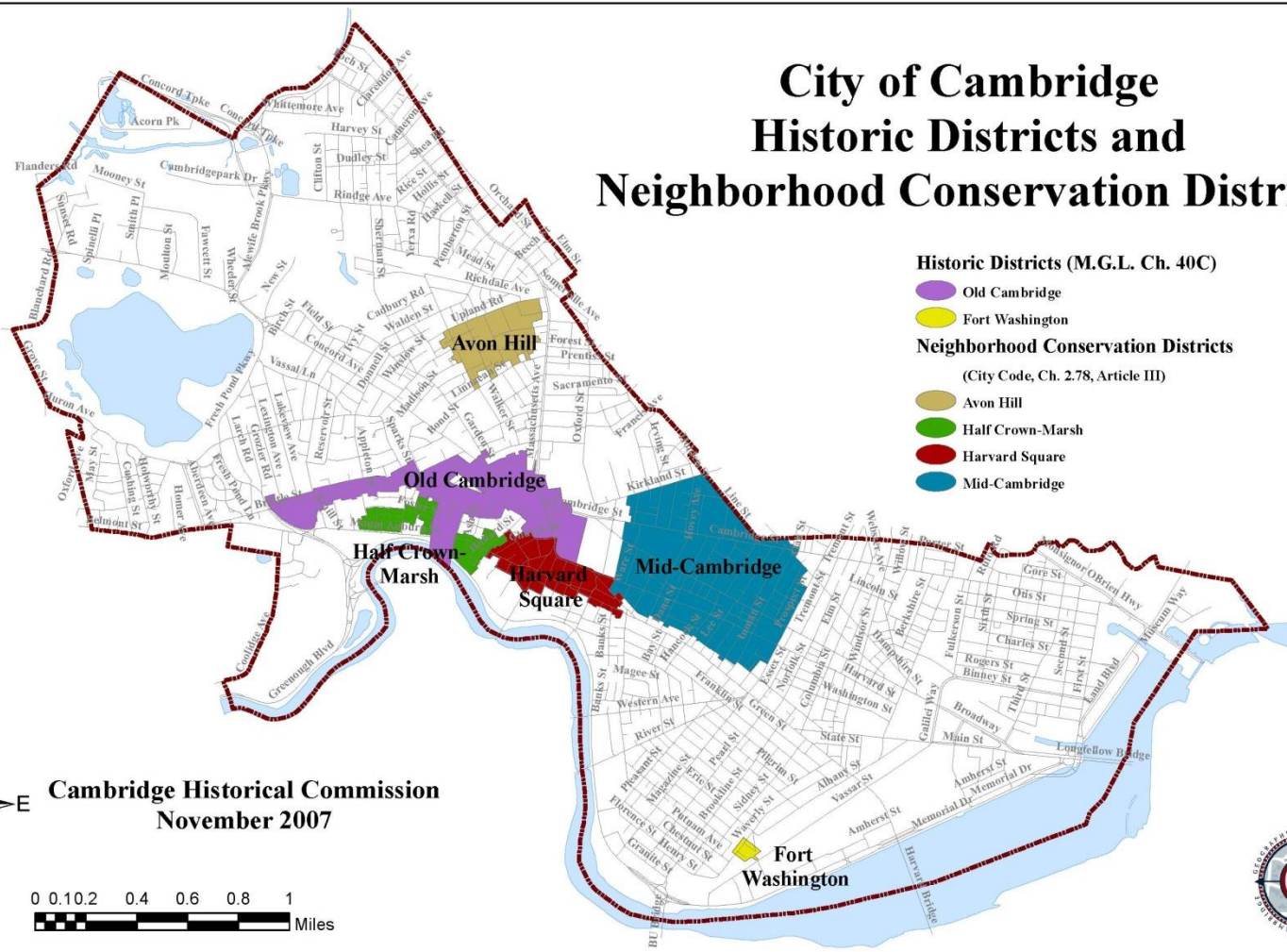
# Reservoir Hill District Studies

**District Comparison and Case Studies**

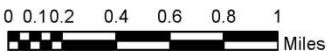
Cambridge Historical Commission

March 9, 2016

# City of Cambridge Historic Districts and Neighborhood Conservation Districts



Cambridge Historical Commission  
November 2007



# Ch. 40C Historic Districts: Tried and True

Established under M.G.L.  
Ch. 40 C (1960)

- Old Cambridge HD (1963-98)
- Fort Washington HD (1982)



## Ch. 40C Historic Districts

Established under M.G.L.  
Ch. 40 C (1960)

Authority over all publicly-visible new construction, demolition, and exterior alterations. Statute allows limited exemptions from review:

- Temporary structures
- Paint color
- Storm windows
- Fences
- Pavement, etc.



## Neighborhood Conservation Districts: A Tailored Fit

- Home rule ordinance, Ch. 2.78, Art. III of Municipal Code
- More flexible review criteria than 40C model
- Study process identifies unique characteristics and conservation goals
- City Council designation by simple majority



# Neighborhood Conservation Districts

- Administration by an NCD Commission of local residents, property owners, and HC member requires critical mass of population
- Binding vs. advisory review
- Design guidelines and training are important
- Assess after first 5 years



# Neighborhood Conservation Districts

- Mid Cambridge NCD
- Half Crown-Marsh NCD
- Avon Hill NCD
- Harvard Square  
Conservation District



# Neighborhood Conservation Districts

Mid Cambridge NCD

Established ca. 1980 to control infill development

Binding and Non-binding review

- 2500 structures
- Single-family houses to apartment complexes
- Major civic buildings
- Small mixed-use areas



# Neighborhood Conservation Districts

## Half Crown-Marsh NCD

Half Crown established ca. 1980 to control speculative demolition  
Marsh established ca. 1990 to protect dense vernacular housing  
Districts combined ca. 1997

## Binding and Non-binding review

- 200 structures
- Single-family houses and three-deckers

# Neighborhood Conservation Districts

## Avon Hill NCD

Established ca. 1990 to protect large houses on large lots

Binding and Non-binding review tied to National Register status

- 220 structures
- large houses on large lots

# Neighborhood Conservation Districts

- Harvard Square Conservation District
- Busy mixed-use area of commercial, institutional, and residential buildings
- Administered by citywide historical commission
- Layers of different regulations and boards



# Neighborhood Conservation Districts

- Harvard Square Conservation District
- Streamline process for storefronts (with four exceptions)
- Sign regulations flexible
- Notice placards for broader public awareness



# Ch. 40C vs. Ch. 2.78 Comparison

Category of Work	Historic District	Neighborhood Conservation District
Demolition	Yes	Yes
New Construction and Additions	Yes	Depends on guidelines; size could determine if exempt, binding, non-binding
Exterior alterations	Yes	Depends on design guidelines
Repairs in kind	Staff approval	Staff approval
Repairs with change of materials	Yes	Depends on design guidelines
Exterior paint color	Yes	No
Fences	Yes	Depends on design guidelines
Paving changes	Yes	Depends on design guidelines
Temporary signs	No if meets policy	No
Interior work	No	No
Exterior work, not visible from p. way	No, Certificate of Nonapplicability	No, Certificate of Nonapplicability usually issued by staff without hearing

# Avon Hill NCD Review Criteria

Binding Review	Non-binding Staff Review	Exemptions
Alterations within the Avon Hill NRD	Everything else	Alterations that do not increase or diminish the building envelope and that do not require the removal, enclosure, or addition of cornice, fascia, soffit, bay, porch, etc...
New building		
New accessory building depending on size and location		
Parking lot as principal use		
Addition over 300/500 sf in A-2/B, C-1 districts		Construction of terraces, walks, driveways, sidewalks, and similar Structures that do no involve a grade change and not to be used for parking between front wall plane and the street
Addition to the façade containing principal entrance		
Demolish structure over 150sf unless garage		

# Avon Hill NCD Review Criteria

Binding Review (continued)	Non-binding Staff Review	Exemptions (continued)
Install vinyl or aluminum siding or vinyl, vinyl-clad, aluminum or aluminum-clad windows where they do not already exist	Everything else	Construction of walls and fences less than 4' high at front and less than 6' high elsewhere
Alter add or remove protruding bays, covered porches or decks over 2.5' above grade		Signs, temporary Structures, lawn statuary, or recreational equipment subject to such conditions as Commission may reasonably specify
Alter, above eave, the height or shape of the roof of principal structure (includes dormers)		Storm doors and storm windows, screens, and window A/C
Alter the footprint or volume of the façade with principal entrance		

# Case Studies



**Case 3550: 121 Brattle St., by Margaret & Joseph Koerner.**  
Old Cambridge Historic District  
Construct a one-car detached garage at rear of property





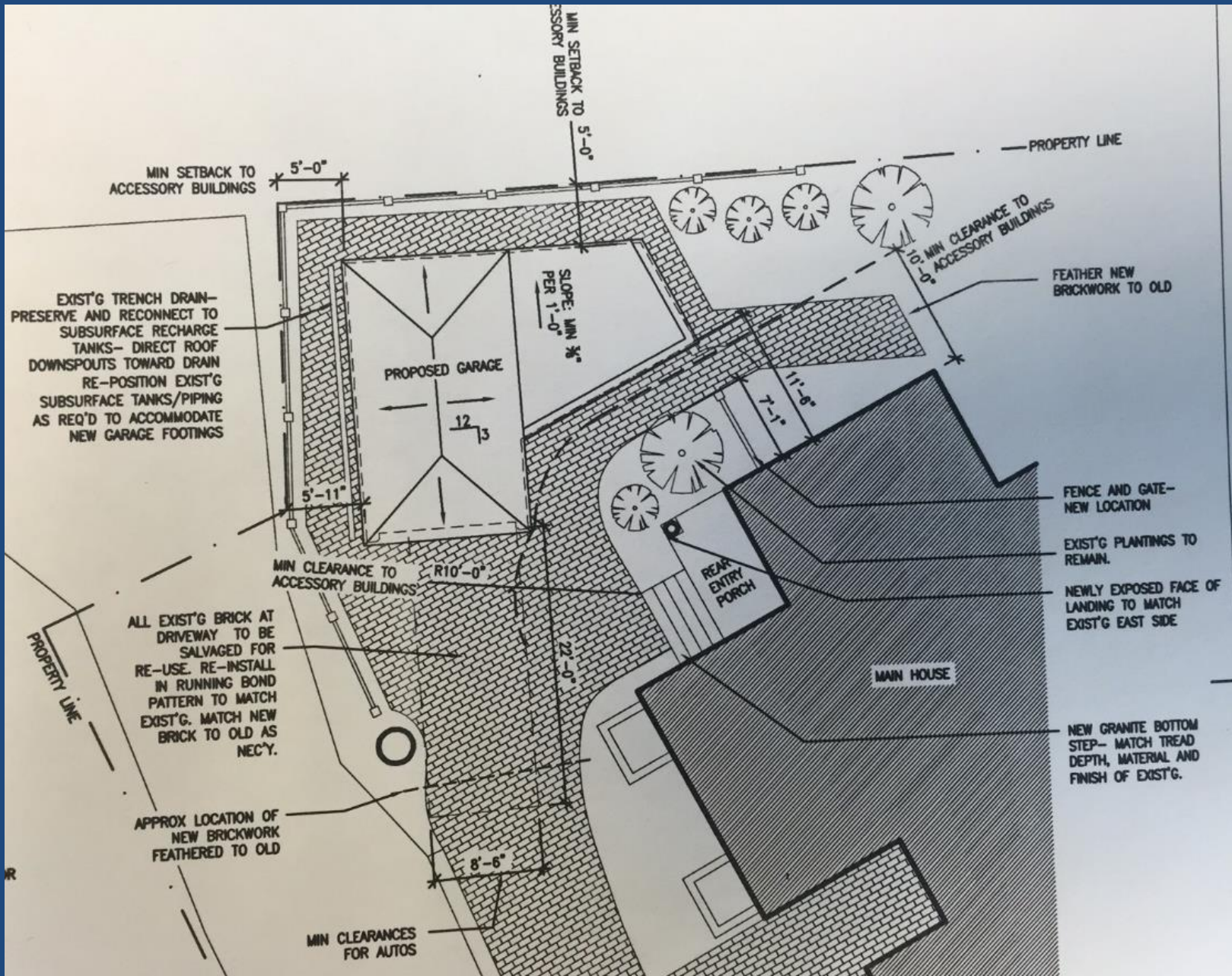
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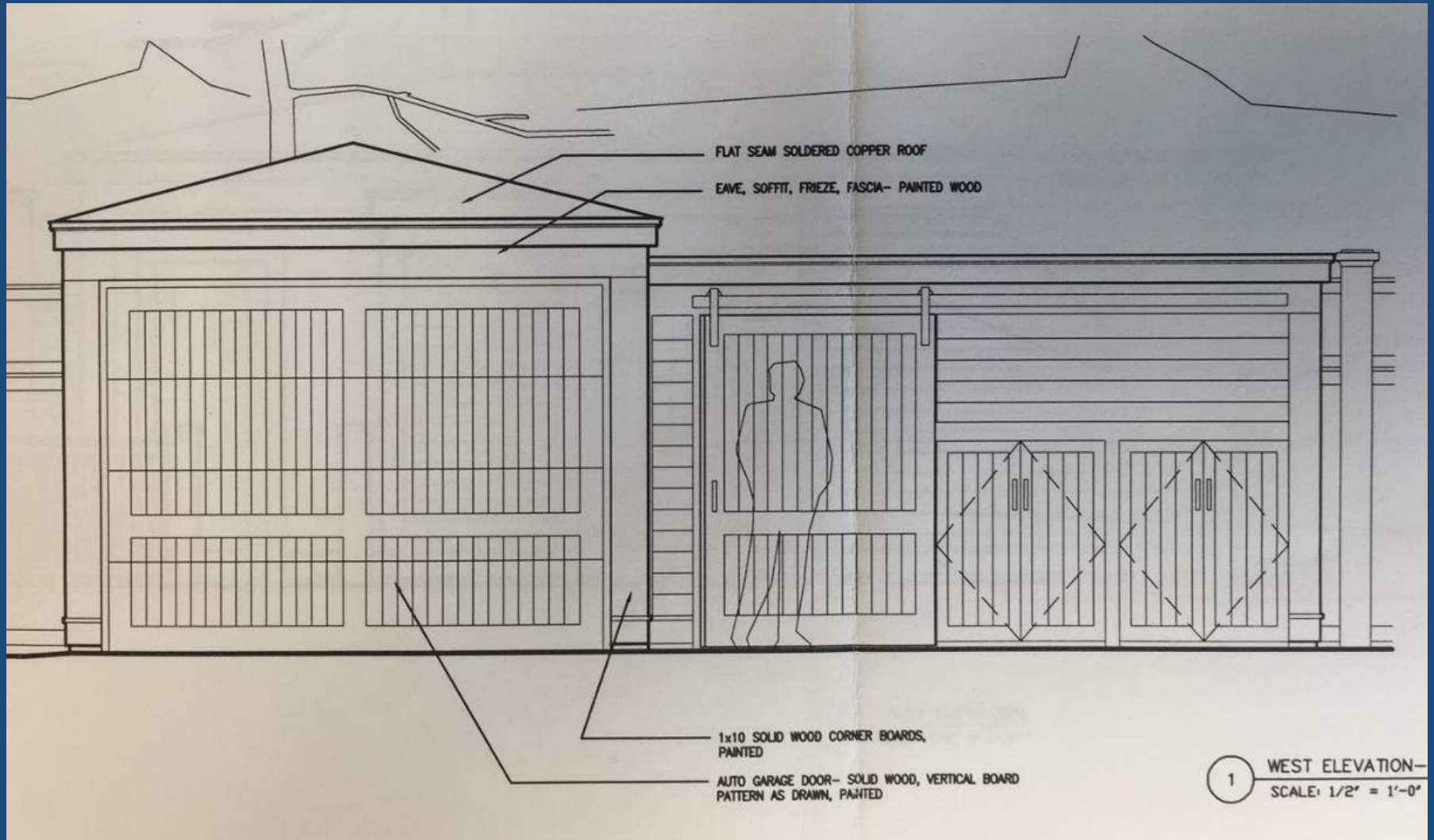




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FLAT SEAM SOLDERED COPPER ROOF

EAVE, SOFFIT, FRIEZE, FASCIA- PAINTED WOOD

1x10 SOLID WOOD CORNER BOARDS,  
PAINTED

AUTO GARAGE DOOR- SOLID WOOD, VERTICAL BOARD  
PATTERN AS DRAWN, PAINTED

1 WEST ELEVATION-  
SCALE: 1/2" = 1'-0"

**Case 3545: 134 Brattle St., by P.C.M. Teunissen (continued)**

Old Cambridge Historic District

Exterior restoration. Remove door and landing to 134A.

Rebuild rear deck. Remove 4 rear-facing windows and replace with doors and larger windows.









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**AH-508 (Amendment): 49 Washington Ave., by Derek & Ellen Reisinger.**

Amend plans to incorporate sloping driveway, partially below-grade garage and terrace.



Avon Pl

Hillside St

Hillside Ave

Hillside Ave

10 m

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**AH-513: 97 Avon Hill St., by Dr. Francis O'Sullivan.**

Remove modern angled bay on front elevation and replace with oval window; alter select windows on side; remove rear chimney; install new door and deck at rear





SLOW  
CHILDREN

SKINNER  
DEMO  
508-559-0123

All Size  
DUMPSTERS  
100 Yard  
TRAILERS

SKINNER  
SERVICES  
S-2





ONE WAY

PARKING BY PERMIT ONLY 8PM-5AM

RECYCLE



