

**PRELIMINARY
LANDMARK DESIGNATION REPORT**

**Hovey & Markham Cottages
40 and 44 Cottage Street, Cambridgeport, Mass.**



The Hovey & Markham cottages at 40 and 44 Cottage Street are importantly associated with the economic and social history of Cambridge. Architect William Hovey and Boston housewright Leonard Markham's completion of the cottages, the first homes built in this block, prompted additional high quality development on this street. Their construction in 1839 was the start of a period of rapid development in the Cambridgeport neighborhood, which was growing and industrializing in the middle of the nineteenth century. The families that resided in these homes were and are leaders in local businesses and social and service organizations. The cottages are also architecturally significant examples of the Greek Revival style. The pattern of development set by these homes for this side of the block maximized the usable yard space by positioning the homes on the far west side of the lots.

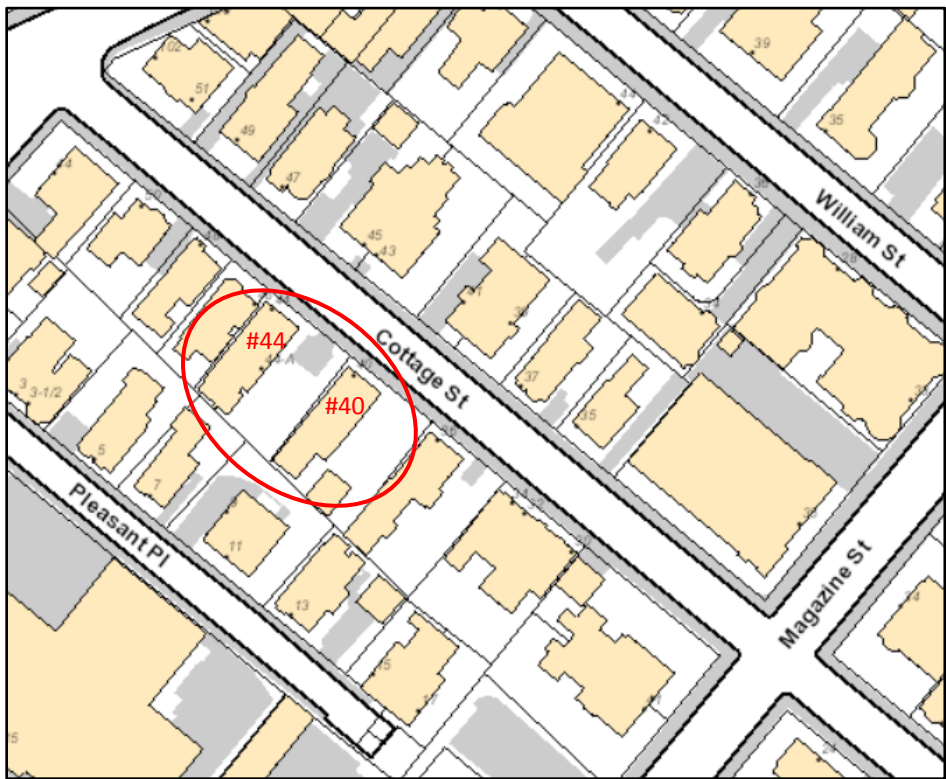
If implemented by the City Council, landmark designation would allow the Commission to review and approve publicly-visible exterior alterations with the goal of protecting the historic integrity of the buildings and their setting. The designation would not regulate use, plant materials, or alterations to interior features.

Susan Maycock and Sarah Burks
Cambridge Historical Commission
January 26, 2018

I. Location and Status

A. Address and Zoning

The Hovey & Markham cottages at 40 and 44 Cottage Street are located on the south side of Cottage Street between Pleasant and Magazine streets. No. 40 Cottage Street occupies a 4,846 square foot lot (Map 104/Lot 92) and 44 Cottage occupies a 4,537 (Map 104/Lot 91). The lots are located in a Residence C zoning district, which allows single to multi-family dwellings with a 0.60 Floor Area Ratio (FAR) limit, 35-foot height limit, and a density of 1,800 square feet per dwelling unit. The houses both have non-conforming west side and rear setbacks due to a historic pattern of placement of houses on their lots to maximize yard space.



Environs of 40 and 44 Cottage Street (top) and detail lot plans (right). Cambridge GIS, Assessor's database.





Aerial view of Cottage Street. ConnectExplorer™ <https://explorer.pictometry.com>

B. Ownership and Occupancy

The two properties are separately owned. Robin M. Chase and Roy P. Russell, Jr., purchased 40 Cottage Street in July 1994 from William H. Chafe. The deed is recorded in the Middlesex South Registry of Deeds in Book 24,692/Page 516. Charles E. Allen Jr. became a co-owner of number 44 with Anne M. Strong in December 1994 as recorded in a deed at Middlesex South Registry of Deeds in Book 25,092/Page 464. Ms. Strong had purchased number 44 from Georgianna C. Blasi in June 1992 (Book 22089/Page 78).

The assessed value for land and buildings in 2018 was \$1,247,600 for 40 Cottage Street and \$1,420,000 for 44 Cottage Street. Both were originally built as single-family houses but 44 Cottage Street is currently assessed as a two-family and the renovation proposal for 40 Cottage Street would result in a two-family residence.

C. Area Description

Cottage Street was laid out in 1816, five years after the opening of the River Street Bridge, but no buildings were constructed on this two-block-long street for another twenty years. The first house on Cottage Street was no. 24 at the southeast corner of Magazine Street, which was constructed in 1838 by Adoniram Wentworth, a Lynn housewright, and sold the next year to Flavel Coolidge. This was followed in 1839 by the two 1½ story Greek Revival cottages at 40 and 44 Cottage Street with full temple fronts with Doric columns. These were the first two houses on the block between Magazine and Pleasant streets, and their cottage form are considered to have established both the character and the name of the street. Other similar 1½- and 2-story Greek Revival houses with columned porches followed at nos. 8 (1843), 36 (1845) and 6 Cottage (1856).

A number of Greek Revival cottages and houses without columned porches were also added in the 1840s.

Cottage Street runs one way from east to west. The First Korean Church (formerly the Pilgrim Congregational Church) anchors the northwest corner of Cottage and Magazine streets. All the other structures in this block are residential, two-thirds of which were constructed between 1839 and 1846. A few infill structures dating from 1881 to 1914 complete the block. The houses here are in very good condition.



View of 36-44 Cottage Street, looking west.

D. Context of this Designation Report

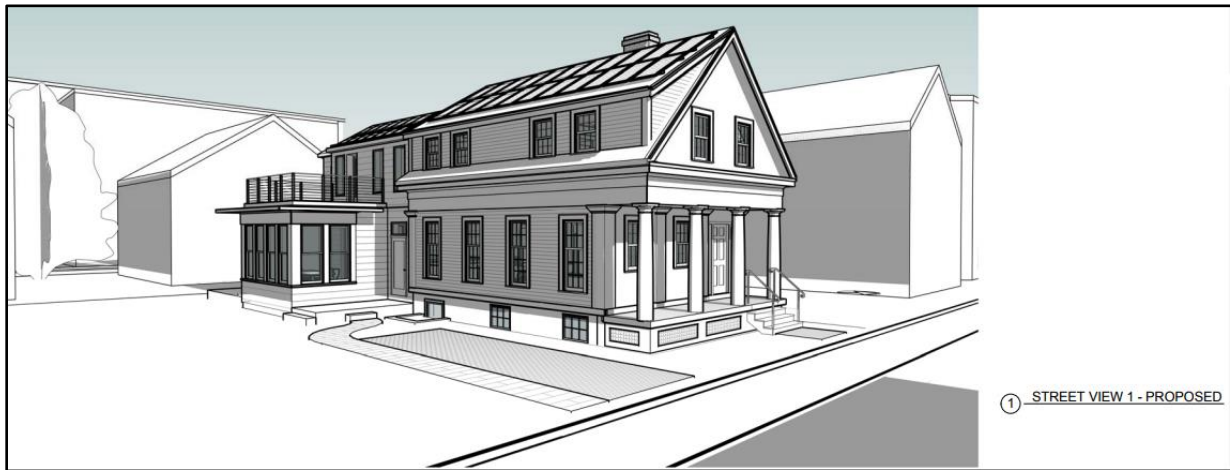
A demolition permit request for 40 Cottage was received on February 9, 2016 (Case D-1390). The house was found significant and preferably preserved in March 2016, causing a six-month delay in issuance of a demolition permit.¹ During the delay period the owners revised their plans so that only the ell would be demolished, a new ell built, and the front of the house renovated. The Commission waived the remainder of the delay, subject to receiving the other necessary approvals for a building permit for the replacement project. However, the owners withdrew their application for zoning relief and the project did not proceed.

In February 2017, a month before the expiration of the demolition delay, abutter Charles Allen submitted a petition for a landmark designation study of both 40 and 44 Cottage Street. The Commission voted to initiate landmark study of both properties. Acceptance of the petition initiated a one-year period in which the Historical Commission would regulate the property as if it were already designated.

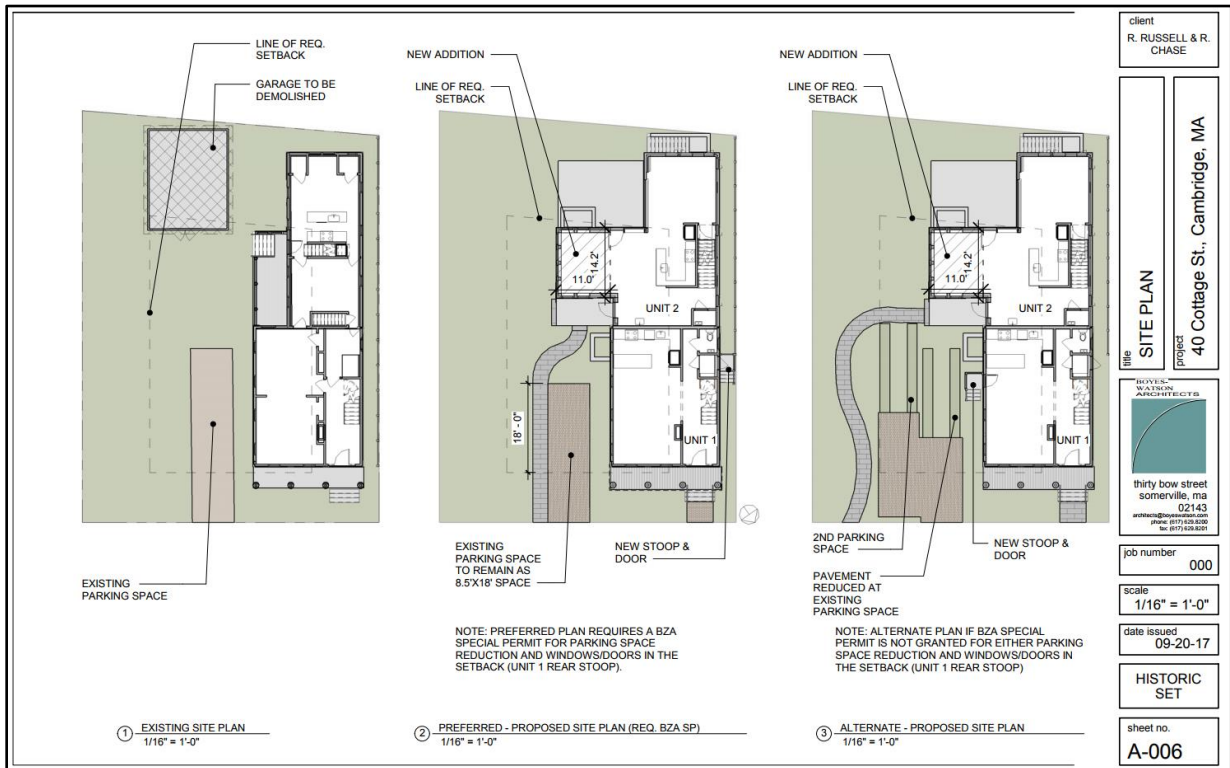
In August 2017, the owners of 40 Cottage Street filed an application for a certificate of appropriateness for a project that included renovation of both the existing house and the ell, demolition of

¹ The owners later explained that the demolition request and replacement project was intended to show the possibilities of a zoning as-of-right project and to encourage their neighbors' support for a renovation and addition to the existing house that would require zoning relief.

the garage, and construction of a new foundation and an addition on the east side of the house. Design refinements were reviewed by the Commission in September and October and the certificate approved at the October 5, 2017 hearing for plans dated September 20, 2017 (see renderings below). Both a zoning as-of-right design and a preferred design option, which would require a special permit from the Board of Zoning Appeal, were approved by the Commission. The main differences in the as-of-right and special permit designs are the location of the egress door and stair for the front unit, number of parking spaces, and window changes on the west elevation.



Rendering by Boyes-Watson Architects, 9/20/17 of approved preferred (requires zoning special permit)



Comparison of Existing, Preferred, and As of Right Site plans by Boyes-Watson Architects, 9/20/17.

II. Architectural Description



40 Cottage Street. North/front elevation (left) and west elevation (right). CHC photos 2017, 2018.

Forty Cottage Street is a 1½-story single-family frame house oriented with its gable end to the street. The three-bay side hall house was executed in the Greek Revival style with a broad gable, a temple front porch with four Doric columns, symmetrically placed 6-over-6 windows, a combination of flush board and clapboard siding, wide pilasters, and sidelights flanking the front door.

The main block of the house measures 23' wide by 28' deep. The 2-story ell extends another 34' to the rear of the lot and measures 16' wide. The house consists of approximately 2,284 square feet of living space (per assessment), not counting any finished space in the basement.

The house retains most of its original architectural features. One exception is the front porch deck and stairs, which were reconstructed in concrete in the early twentieth century. The house was sided with wood shingles in 1952. The current owners, Robin Chase and Roy Russell, removed the shingles, restored the wood clapboards and flush boards, and reworked the cornice under the dormer in 1997. They have maintained a garden in the large side yard on the east side of the house. They installed an array of solar panels on the roof in 2012.



44 Cottage Street. North/front elevation (left) and east elevation (right).

Likewise, 44 Cottage Street has the same placement on the lot, side hall plan, gable orientation, Doric-columned front porch, and six-over-six windows. It also has a large shed dormer on the east elevation and additions at the back of the house.

Significant renovations were completed in 1993. A garage on the property was demolished in 1995. Also that year, a two-story addition for a rental unit was constructed at the rear of the house, plans for which received a zoning variance. The staff is not aware of any anticipated alterations to 44 Cottage by current owner Charles Allen. A property sale is anticipated and the plans of any future owners are not known.

III. History

The settlement of Cambridgeport was made possible by the construction of the West Boston Bridge in 1793. Prior to that time, there were only three houses in Cambridge east of Quincy Street, and the area south of present Massachusetts Avenue was completely unpopulated. Most of Cambridgeport was controlled by two landowners, Leonard Jarvis and Chief Justice Francis Dana, while the rest - and all of East Cambridge - fell to Andrew Craigie.

In 1792 Leonard Jarvis acquired the Ralph Inman house and its vast adjoining lands that included most of Cambridgeport north of present Massachusetts Avenue. Justice Francis Dana, a descendant of an old Cambridge family, controlled land on Dana Hill near his house and also most of Cambridgeport south of Massachusetts Avenue. Jarvis and Dana worked with the Proprietors of the West Boston Bridge to lay out Massachusetts Avenue and Main Street, but did not otherwise develop a master plan for the area. Jarvis lost his land in 1801 due to financial reverses and it passed to Jonathan Austin who divided much of the estate into building lots. Austin was involved in promoting construction of the River Street Bridge that was completed in 1811. Dana's estate south of Massachusetts Avenue remained largely intact until his death in 1811,

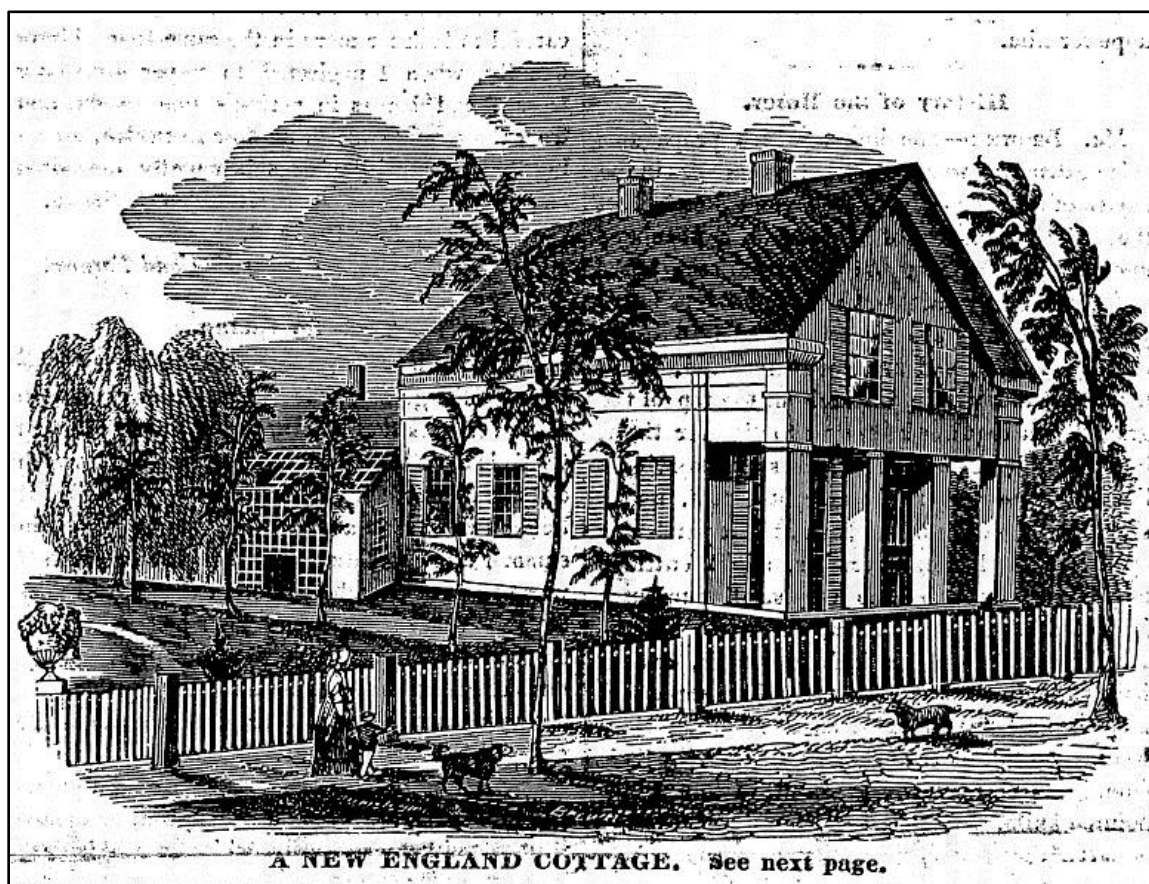
when his heirs divided his Cambridge landholdings. They carefully controlled subsequent development. They created parallel streets - Pleasant, Magazine, Pearl, and Brookline - leading from Massachusetts Avenue toward the river, and laid out and subdivided cross streets, beginning with Green and Franklin, as demand required.

The only substantial estate south of Massachusetts that was not owned by Francis Dana or his heirs was an L-shaped parcel of land between Western Avenue and Brookline Street that belonged to William Watson, a glazier who lived at the corner of JFK and Mt. Auburn streets. According to one source, Watson received the Cambridgeport tract as "compensation for maintaining an aged colored woman, formerly a slave, called Venus Whittemore; although by some defect in the written obligations, she finally became a public charge and died in the almshouse May 4, 1825, aged 107" (Paige, 681). Watson's land ran between Pearl and Brookline Streets from Massachusetts Avenue to Valentine Street, and along present William and Cottage streets to Pleasant Street. The complete title to this land has not been searched, but it may have originated with Deacon Samuel Whittemore (1693-1784), Watson's maternal grandfather who previously owned Watson's house in Harvard Square and possibly also Venus Whittemore. Watson died in 1811, the same year as Francis Dana; his son Abraham Watson and other heirs were responsible for laying out streets and selling building lots.



Early 19th century landholdings in Cambridgeport. Figure 13 of *Survey of Architectural History in Cambridge*, vol. 3 (1971).

Part of the development of Watson's land included Cottage Street, which was laid out in 1816 (five years after the opening of the River Street Bridge), but no buildings were constructed on this two-block-long street for another twenty years. The first house on Cottage Street was no. 24 at the southeast corner of Magazine Street, which was constructed in 1838 by Adoniram Wentworth, a Lynn housewright, and sold the next year to Flavel Coolidge. This was followed in 1839 by two 1 ½ story Greek Revival cottages at 40 and 44 Cottage Street with full temple fronts with Doric columns. These were the first two houses on the block between Magazine and Pleasant, and their cottage form are considered to have established both the character and the name of the street. A woodcut illustration of a typical New England cottage was published in the *New England Cultivator*, a Boston weekly journal featuring articles about agriculture, horticulture, literature, and mechanics. The article describes this home as, "...a story-and-a-half cottage in one of our suburban towns. The building has a piazza front, contains seven rooms, with pantry, clothes-press, etc., and is a convenient house for a small family. Its cost is about \$2000, the interior finish being very good. Other similar 1½ and 2-story Greek Revival houses with columned porches followed at nos. 6 (1856), 8 (1843), and 36 (1845), the latter later expanded from 1 ½ to two stories. A number of Greek Revival cottages and houses without columned porches were also added in the 1840s. Most of the rest of the street was built up by the 1880s, with a few infill three-deckers around the turn of the twentieth century.



Sketch of a New England Cottage. "American Cottage Architecture," *The New England Cultivator*, March 12, 1853.

Cambridge architect William Hovey and Boston housewright Leonard Markham purchased a parcel of land on Cottage Street measuring 126' wide by 83' deep from Abraham A. Watson and the other Watson heirs. They designed and built two similar Greek Revival cottages at 40 and 44 Cottage Street and sold them later that year to Andrew H. Newell and William Page, respectively. Hovey & Markham had collaborated earlier on houses on Green Street and Austin Street (demolished), as well as 40-48 William Street nearby. Hovey went on to design several dozen additional houses in Cambridge, primarily in Cambridgeport, while all of Markham's Cambridge work was in the 1830s with Hovey.

Andrew Newell, a Boston merchant, purchased **40 Cottage Street** just weeks before marrying Martha Valentine, the daughter of a local soap manufacturer. They remained in Cambridge for a number of years and started a family before relocating to Brookline.

Through the years, 40 Cottage Street was owned and occupied by a number of prominent Cantabrigians. Francis Hardy purchased the property in 1868. He had risen through the ranks at Henry Thayer & Co. (a pharmaceutical manufacturer) and was its owner until falling ill in 1896. Georgiana Robinson, wife of shoe stain manufacturer Fred O. Robinson, was active in the community including as the president of the local chapter of the Women's Christian Temperance Union, and member of the women's auxiliaries to the Y.M.C.A., Y.W.C.A., and the Margaret Fuller House. The property passed via probate to William R. Chafe. There was a family relationship between the Robinson and Chafe families, with William Chafe being listed as the step-son of Fred Robinson. William R. Chafe was an office manager at the United Farmer Milk Co. of Boston, an active member of the masons, a vocalist and member of the Handel & Haydn Society.

Prior to the current owners, the last owner of 40 Cottage was William H. Chafe (son of William R. Chafe). He grew up in the house, attended Cambridge High & Latin, and received a scholarship to Harvard. He attended college while living at home and did very well. He won a fellowship to travel one summer in Europe and then another to attend a year at a seminary. Preferring history over religious studies, Chafe went on to be a history professor and is currently the Alice Mary Baldwin Professor Emeritus of History at Duke University. He has written many books on American history, civil rights, and political figures.

Robin Chase, who purchased the property in 1992, co-founded Zipcar, a car sharing company, in 2000 and served as its CEO until 2003. She is a co-founder of Veniam, Inc., a network communications and self-driving vehicle company. Her husband, Roy Russell, was Vice President of Engineering and Chief Technology Officer of Zipcar and is a co-founder of Veniam.

No. 44 Cottage Street was sold in 1839 by Hovey and Markham to William Page, an iron dealer. Moses W. Fish bought the house from Charles S. Dudley ca. 1849. Fish was a dealer in hats, bonnets, and accessories. He had a retail establishment on Hanover Street in Boston and later sold wholesale millinery goods in New York City. Born in 1813 in Mason, New Hampshire, Mr. Fish lived until 1893. He retained the home at 44 Cottage Street even while doing business in New York and was described in his obituary in the Cambridge Tribune as "an old and respected citizen...remembered as a peculiar and interesting figure on the streets and was one of the old landmarks which one is apt to find sunning on Main street pleasant afternoons."

Fish's son, Charles C. R. Fish, sold the property in 1905 to William H. Chafe (father of William R. Chafe and Georgianna Chafe Blasi). Georgianna Blasi inherited the property from her mother, Annie Greelaw Chafe, and retained it until 1992 when she sold it to Anne M. Strong. Anne Strong and Charles E. Allen became co-owners of the property in 1994.

William H. Chafe was a sales manager for a sandpaper company in Boston and was an active Mason in Cambridge's Royal Arch chapter. His daughter, Georgianna Chafe, was a graduate of Radcliffe College and Boston University. She taught at Cambridge High & Latin before marrying John V. Blasi, a dentist in Chestnut Hill.

Anne M. Strong was a graduate of Smith College and Suffolk University Law School. She was the Affirmative Action Officer and the Rent Control Hearing Board Officer for the City of Cambridge. She founded CityKicks, a soccer program for underserved communities. She passed away in 2013. Charles E. Allen graduated from Harvard College. He founded Charlie Allen Renovations in 1978. The construction company on River Street in Cambridge specializes in historic renovations and restorations.

III. Relationship to Criteria

A. Criteria for Landmark Designation

The enabling ordinance for landmark designation states:

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 (1) 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 (2) historically or architecturally significant (in terms of its 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 . . . (City Code, Article III, Chapter 2.78.180.A)

B. Relationship of Property to Criteria

The properties at 40 and 44 Cottage Street meet criterion (1) for their associations with the economic and social history of Cambridge. Architect William Hovey and Boston housewright Leonard Markham's completion of the cottages, the first homes built in this block, prompted additional high quality development on this street. Their construction in 1839 was the start of a period of rapid development in the Cambridgeport neighborhood, which was growing and industrializing in the middle of the nineteenth century. The families that resided in these homes were and are leaders in local businesses and social and service organizations.

The cottages also meet criterion (2) as being architecturally significant examples of the Greek Revival style. The staff considers them eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places. The pattern of development set by these homes for this side of the block maximized the usable yard space by positioning the homes on the far west side of the lots. Though both homes sat vacant for a time before their purchase by their current owners in the 1990s, they retained

their architectural integrity and were successfully renovated by their owners to bring back original features of the homes.

IV. Recommendations

A. Article III, Chapter 2.78.140

The purpose of landmark designation is contained in the enabling ordinance, which is 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 . . . sites and 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; [and] to foster appropriate use and wider public knowledge and appreciation of such . . . structures . . .

B. Preservation Options

Landmark designation or donation of preservation restrictions are the two best options for the long-term protection and preservation. With property values continuing ever upward, lots such as these with potential for denser development will remain at risk of demolition. The demolition delay ordinance does not provide permanent protections.

C. Staff Recommendation

The staff recommends that the Commission find that the Hovey & Markham cottages are eligible for landmark designation as defined in the ordinance for the reasons stated above. The designation should incorporate the renovations and additions that were approved on October 5, 2017 as shown on plans titled Boyes Watson Architects titled, “40 Cottage St., Cambridge, MA,” and dated September 20, 2017.

If implemented by the City Council, landmark designation would allow the Commission to review and approve publicly-visible exterior alterations with the goal of protecting the historic integrity of the buildings and their setting. The designation would not regulate use, plant materials, or alterations to interior features.

V. Standards and Criteria

Under Article III, the Historical Commission is charged with reviewing any construction, demolition or alteration that affects the exterior architectural features (other than color) of a designated landmark. This section of the report describes exterior architectural features that are among the characteristics that led to consideration of the property as a landmark. Except as the order designating or amending the landmark may otherwise provide, the exterior architectural features described in this report should be preserved and/or enhanced in any proposed alteration or construction that affects those features of the landmark. The standards following in paragraphs A and B of this section provide guidelines for the treatment of the landmark described in this report.

A. General Standards and Criteria

Subject to review and approval of exterior architectural features under the terms of this report, the following standards shall apply:

1. Significant historic and architectural features of the landmark should be preserved.
2. Deteriorated architectural features should be repaired rather than replaced.
3. When replacement of architectural features is necessary, it should be based on documentary evidence. Restoration of missing architectural features should be considered when non-original fabric is proposed for alteration or replacement.
4. New materials should, whenever possible, match the original material in physical properties, design, color, texture, and appearance. The use of imitation replacement materials is generally discouraged.
5. The surface cleaning of a landmark should be done by the gentlest possible means. Sandblasting and other cleaning methods that damage exterior architectural features shall not be used.
6. Additions should not destroy significant exterior architectural features and should not be incongruous to the historic aspects, architectural significance, or distinct character of the landmark, neighborhood, and environment.
7. Additions should be designed in a way that, if they were to be removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the landmark would be unimpaired.

B. Suggested Review Guidelines

1. Site Development.

Additions to the Hovey & Markham cottages, if allowed, should respect the form, massing and materials of the original without slavishly imitating it.

Alterations to or additions of publicly visible landscape structures, including walls, fences, paths, driveways, and the like, should be complementary to the houses. Staff recommends that fencing and landscape structures behind the front wall plane of the houses (and not connected to them) be exempted from review.

2. Alterations

a. Exterior surfaces and ornamentation

Traditional exterior materials should be preserved insofar as practicable. Special care should be taken to protect and maintain the appearance of the wood windows, trim, cladding, and columns. Abrasive cleaning methods such as sandblasting should not be used. Restoration of missing architectural features, though not a requirement of owners of landmarked buildings, is encouraged and should be

based on documentary evidence such as historic photographs. Where modern materials are proposed for the approved addition at 40 Cottage Street, future alterations should be compatible with those materials and design details.

b. Fenestration

Alteration of existing or introduction of new window openings on the front portions of the buildings should be compatible with the Greek Revival style. More flexibility should be granted for alteration of window openings on the newer additions. Replacement sash should be compatible in pattern and appearance with the original. Storm windows may be installed without review, in conformance with current Commission policy.

c. Secondary Structures

Fencing at the front sidewalk should be kept below 48” so that views of the house are not obstructed.

VI. Proposed Order

That the Hovey & Markham Cottages, at 40 and 44 Cottage Street, be designated as protected landmarks pursuant to Chapter 2.78, Article III, Section 2.78.180 of the Code of the City of Cambridge, as recommended by vote of the Cambridge Historical Commission on _____. The premises so designated are the land defined as parcels 92 and 91 on assessor’s map 104 and the structures thereon and the premises described in the deeds recorded in Book 24,692/Page 516 (no. 40) and Book 25,092/Page 464 (no. 44) at the South Middlesex Registry of Deeds.

This designation is justified by the important associations of the properties with the economic and social history of Cambridge as well as by the architectural significance of the Greek Revival cottages.

The effect of this designation shall be that review by the Cambridge Historical Commission and the issuance of a Certificate of Appropriateness, Hardship or Non-Applicability shall be required before any construction activity can take place within the designated premises or any action can be taken affecting the appearance of the premises, that would in either case be visible from a public way. In making determinations, the Commission shall be guided by the terms of the Final Landmark Designation Report, dated _____ with respect to the designated premises, by Section VII, Standards and Criteria of said report, and by the applicable sections of Chapter 2.78, Article III, of the Cambridge Municipal Code.