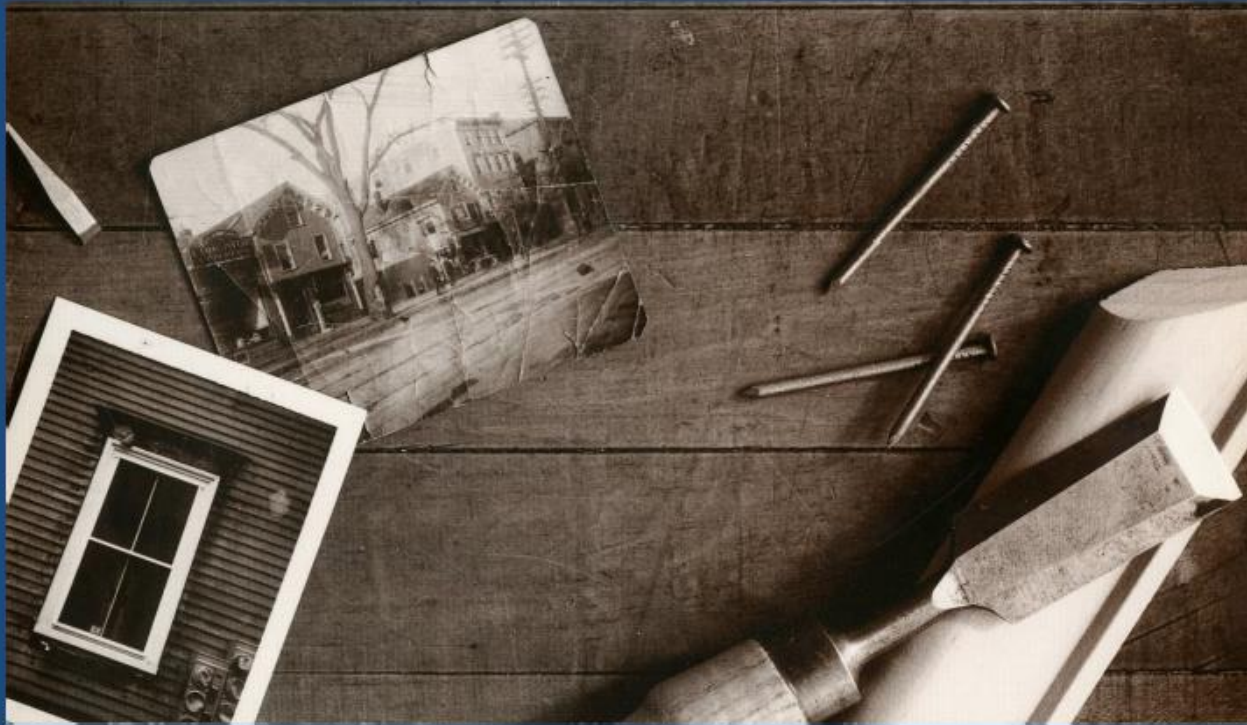


# Preservation Tools in Cambridge: The East Cambridge Neighborhood

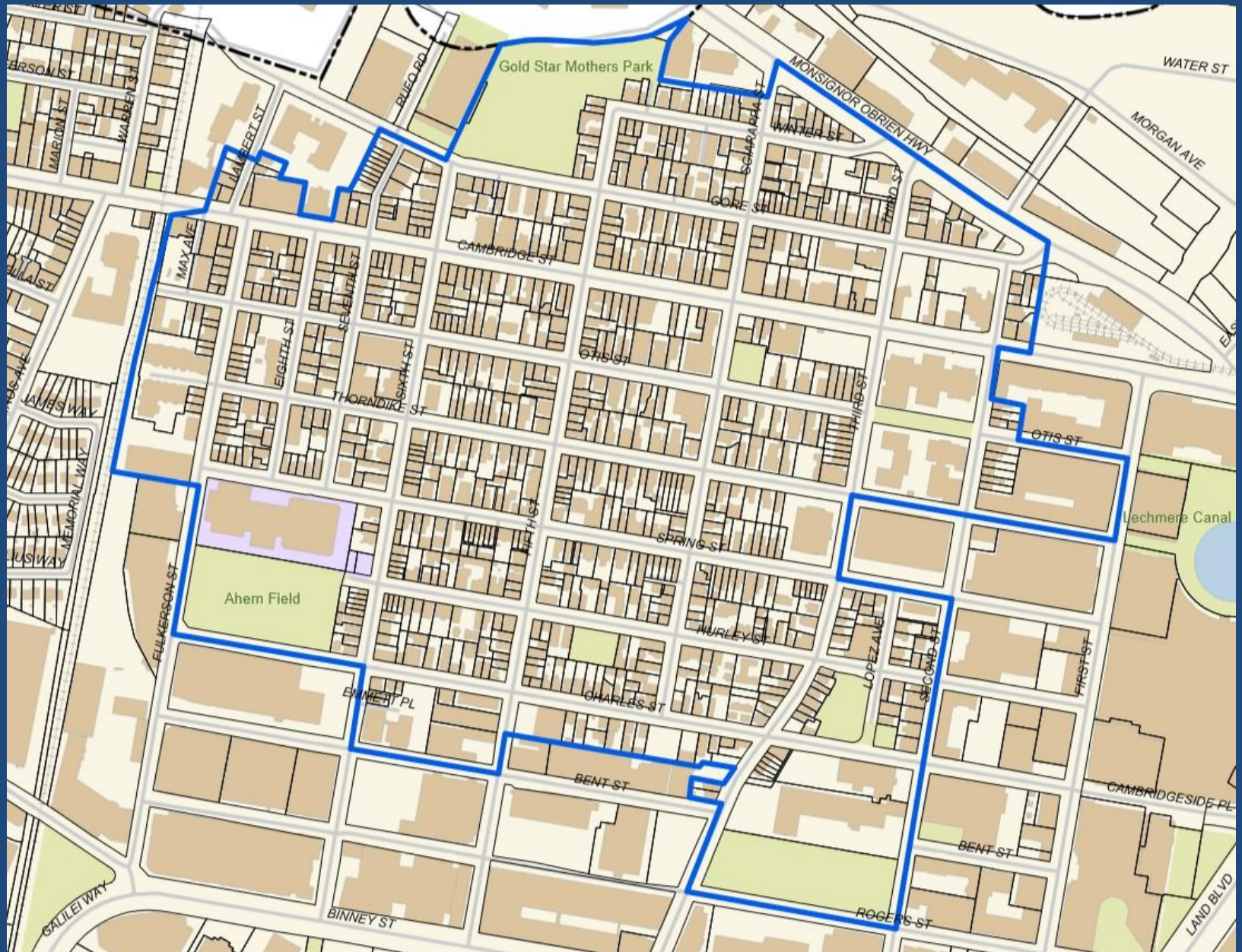
Charles Sullivan  
Cambridge Historical Commission  
February 3, 2020

# Preservation Tools in Cambridge



- National Register of Historic Places
- Demolition Delay
- Ch. 40C Historic Districts

- Neighborhood Conservation Districts
- Landmarks & Easements
- Community Preservation Act
- Education




East Cambridge NCD Study Area

# National Register of Historic Places

- A planning tool that protects properties from the adverse effects of Federal- or State-funded, licensed or permitted activities.
- No restrictions on property owners using their own funds.




Atlas of Properties Listed on the

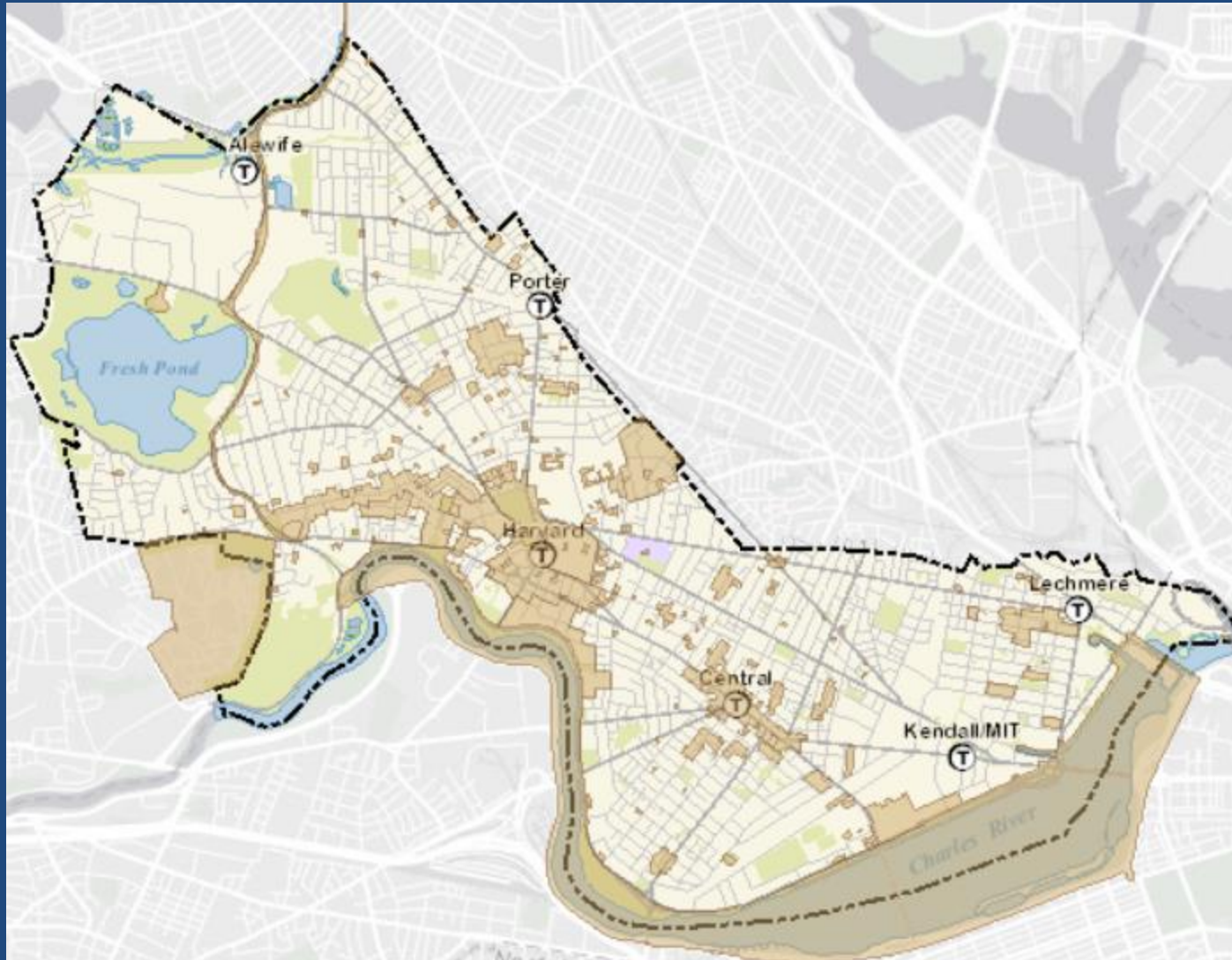
## National Register of Historic Places Cambridge, Massachusetts



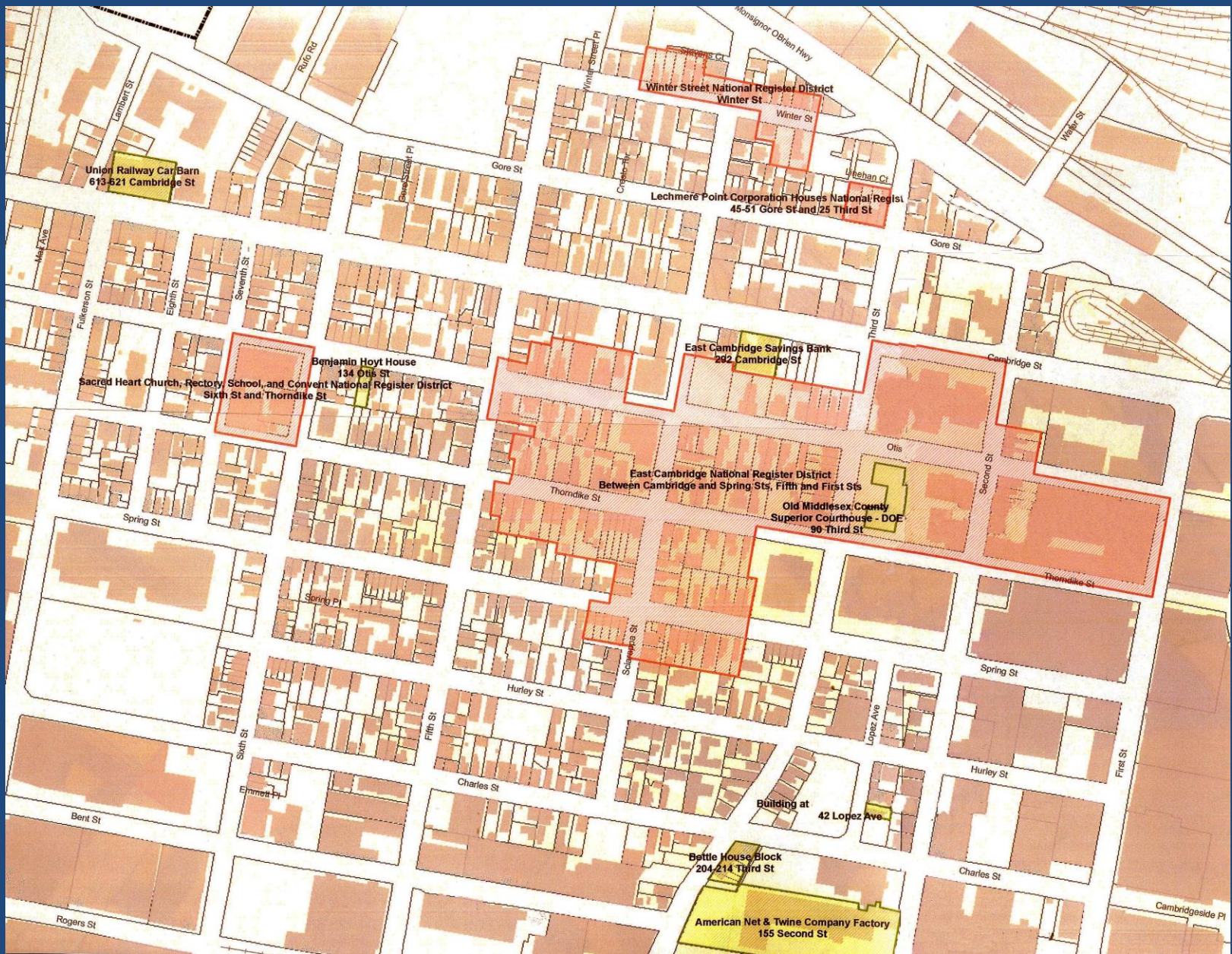
Cambridge Historical Commission  
Charles Sullivan, Executive Director

831 Massachusetts Ave., 2nd Floor  
Cambridge, Mass. 02139  
Phone: (617) 349-4683  
Fax: (617) 349-3116  
[www.cambridgema.gov/Historic](http://www.cambridgema.gov/Historic)





National Register Districts and Individual Listings



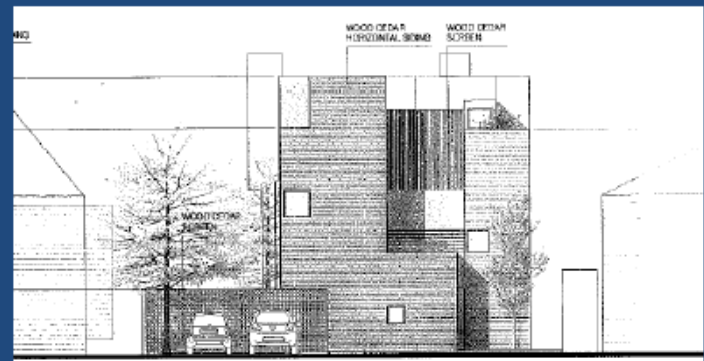
# East Cambridge National Register Properties

# National Register involvement in East Cambridge

- Most East Cambridge districts and properties were listed in 1982 in conjunction with a city-wide preservation plan
- No known findings of adverse effect under Section 106
- Three properties are known to have applied for Investment Tax Credits for Certified Rehabilitation:
  - American Twine Building
  - Davenport Building
  - Old Superior Courthouse complex

## Demolition Delay

- Applies to 50+ buildings determined by CHC staff to be significant.
- CHC evaluates in context of proposed replacement.
- Possible six month delay.
- Landmark study option adds twelve months.
- Encourages consideration of preservation alternatives.





# Demolition City-wide and in East Cambridge, 2000-2019

717 demolition permit applications city-wide

25 demolition permit applications in EC Study Area

12 “Not Significant” (<50, garages, ells, warehouses)

13 demolition delay hearings for Significant Buildings

# Demolition City-wide and in East Cambridge, 2000-2019

## 13 demolition delay hearings for Significant Buildings:

2000: 92-94 Gore	SPP	preserved
84-96 Winter Street	SPP	lost
90-92 Sixth Street	SNPP	preserved
2001: 40-48 Spring Street	SNPP	preserved
213 Hurley Street	SNPP	lost
2002: 66 Thorndike Street	SPP	lost
2005: 85 Gore Street	SNPP	lost
2016: 207 Cambridge Street	SPP	lost
217 Cambridge Street	SPP	Landmarked
24 Winter Street	SNPP	preserved
2019: 68 Spring Street	SNPP	preserved, altered
109 Gore Street	SPP	preserved
115 Spring Street	SNPP	preserved, altered

SPP = Significant and Preferably Preserved (demo delayed)

SNPP = Significant and Not Preferably Preserved (no delay)

# Structures Found Significant



92-94 Gore Street



90-92 Sixth Street



68 Spring Street



115 Spring Street

# Structures Found Not Significant



308 (1826) and 318 (1842) Hurley Street. Ells found not significant, 2016

# Structures Found Not Significant



115 Spring Street (1826). Ells found not significant, 2019

# Structures Found Not Significant

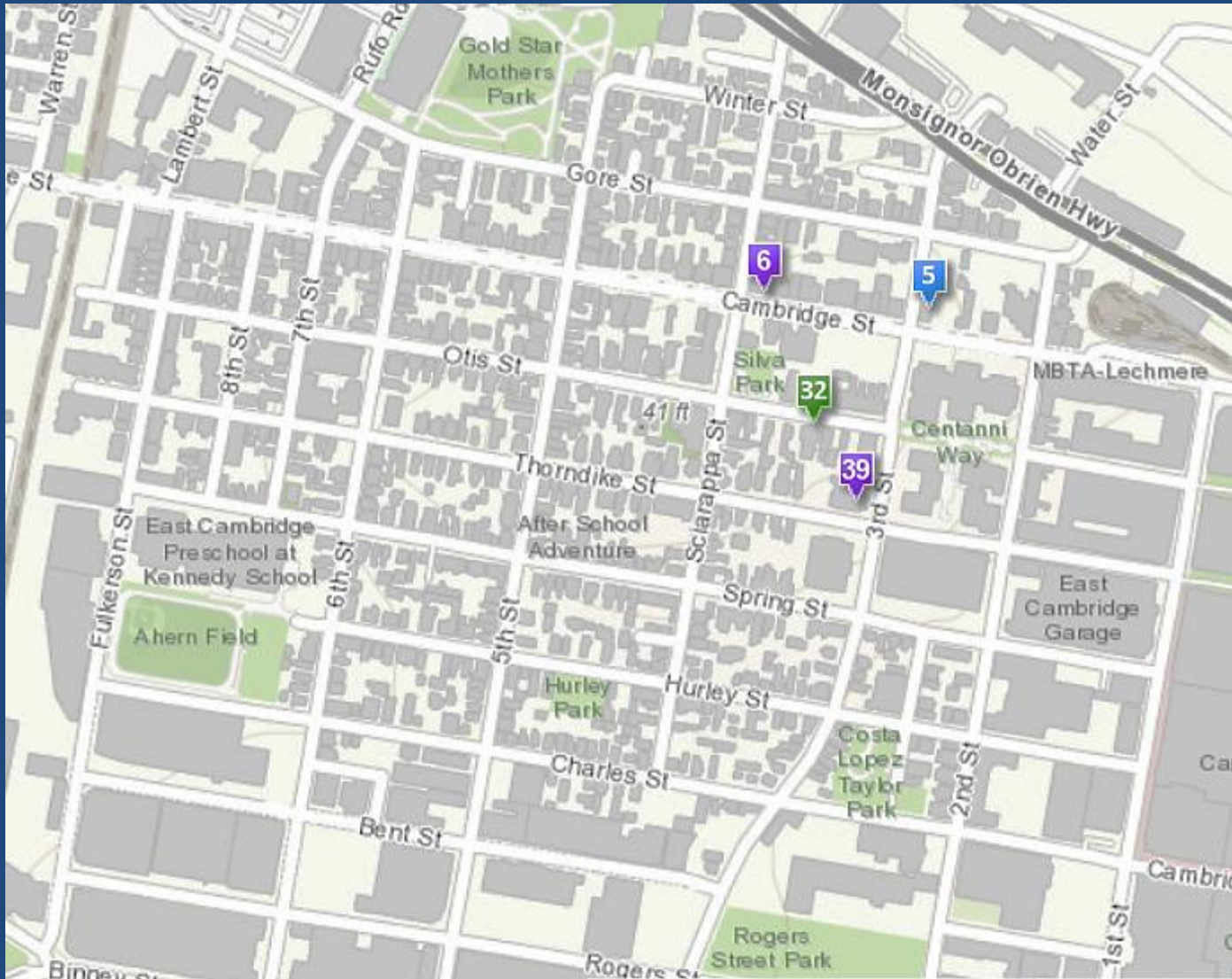


138 Thorndike Street (1855). Garage (1923) found not significant, 2017

# Landmarks and Preservation Easements

- Suitable for a wide variety of resources.
- Landmark designation under local ordinance.
- Reinforces demo delay.
- Preservation Easement may provide tax benefit.
- Interior features (with easement).





East Cambridge Designated Landmarks



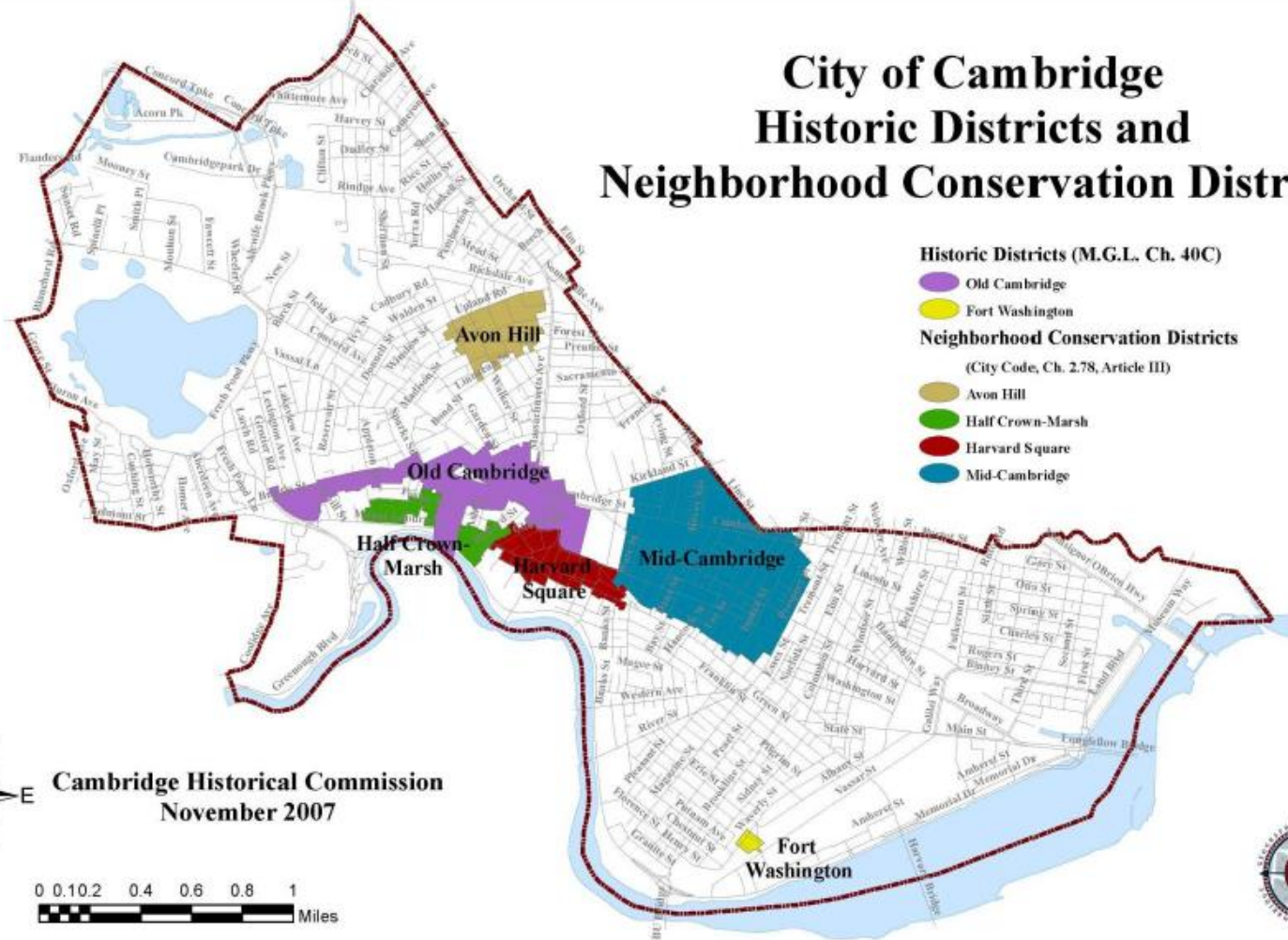
# City of Cambridge Historic Districts and Neighborhood Conservation Districts

## Historic Districts (M.G.L. Ch. 40C)

- Old Cambridge
- Fort Washington

## Neighborhood Conservation Districts (City Code, Ch. 2.78, Article III)

- Avon Hill
- Half Crown-Marsh
- Harvard Square
- Mid-Cambridge



Cambridge Historical Commission  
November 2007



## Ch. 40C Historic Districts

- Old Cambridge HD
- Fort Washington HD
- All publicly-visible alterations (including colors) are subject to review



71061 OLIVER HASTINGS ESTATE, BRATTLE STREET, CAMBRIDGE, MASS.

# Neighborhood Conservation Districts

- Home rule ordinance
- More flexible review criteria than 40C districts
- Study process identifies unique characteristics and conservation goals
- City Council designation
- Does not review paint color



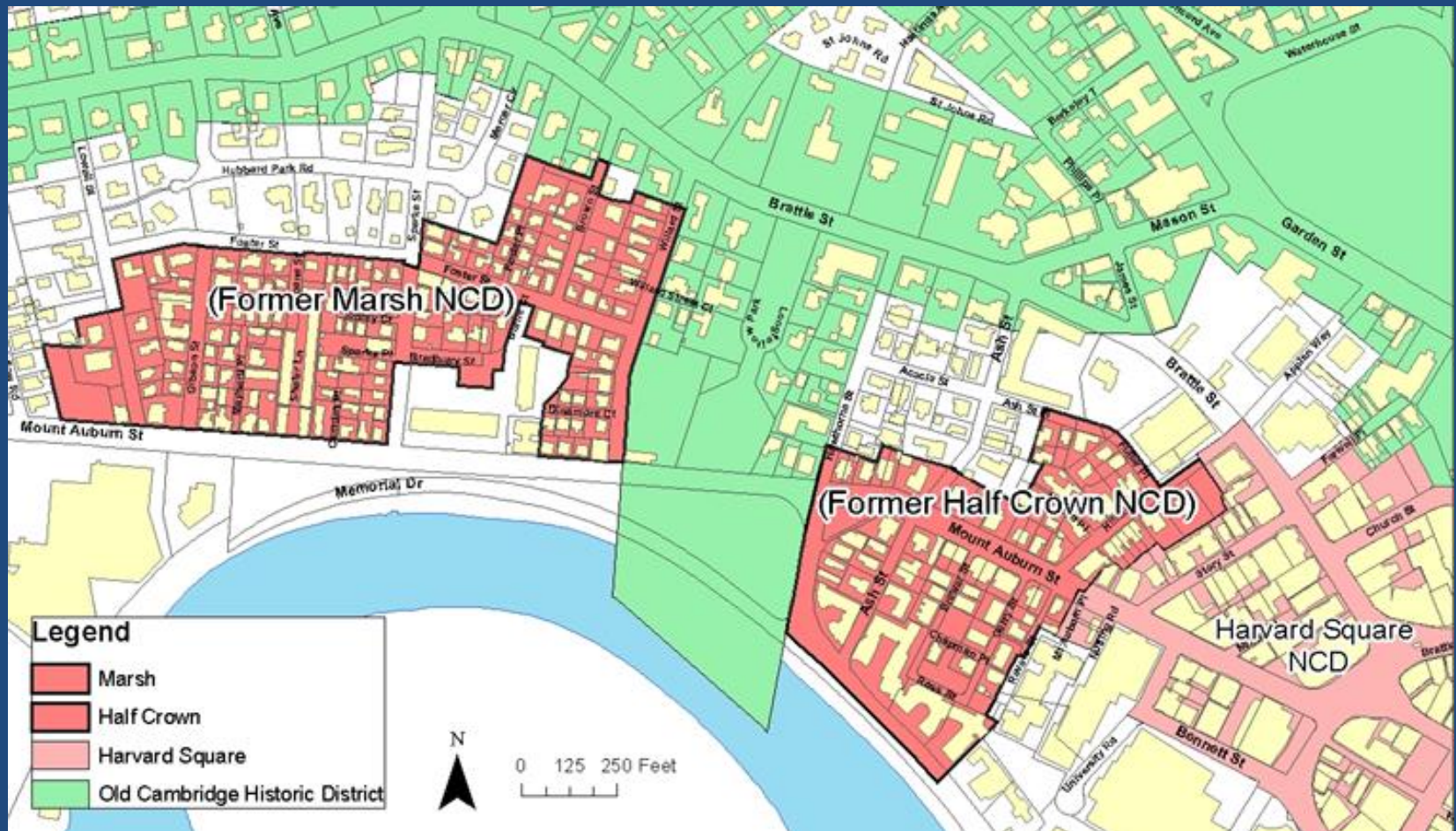
## Neighborhood Conservation Districts

- Requires critical mass of neighborhood support
- Commissions of local residents, property owners, and HC member
- Binding vs. advisory review
- Design guidelines and training are important
- Assess after first 5 years



# Half Crown-Marsh NCD

Marsh NCD established 2000; merged with Half Crown NCD in 2008. Approximately 220 buildings; many workers cottages constructed 1855-1880 on small lots. District also includes large apartment buildings along Memorial Drive.





# Half Crown-Marsh NCD

## Goals and Guidelines (condensed) in effect for residential areas of East Cambridge

1. Conserve the architectural character of the neighborhood, including the modest character that typifies its 19th-century workers' and suburban housing and the overall simplicity of its traditional wood-frame vernacular houses.
2. Conserve historic development patterns, including the neighborhood's dense network of short, through-block streets, courts, back streets, and ways.
3. Conserve views through yards and between houses to maintain the pattern of visual layering that characterizes streetscapes in the neighborhood.
4. Allow for architectural diversity and individualized alterations.
5. Encourage trees and greenery.
6. Encourage low fences to protect views of houses and yards.
7. Consider traffic impacts of proposed development.
8. Discourage the construction of parking lots as a principal use.

# Half Crown-Marsh NCD

## Jurisdiction:

All work reviewed is binding; however, some projects are exempt from review.

## *Binding Review:*

- New Construction, demolitions, additions.
- All alterations except in exempt categories.
- Construction of fences over 4'-0'.

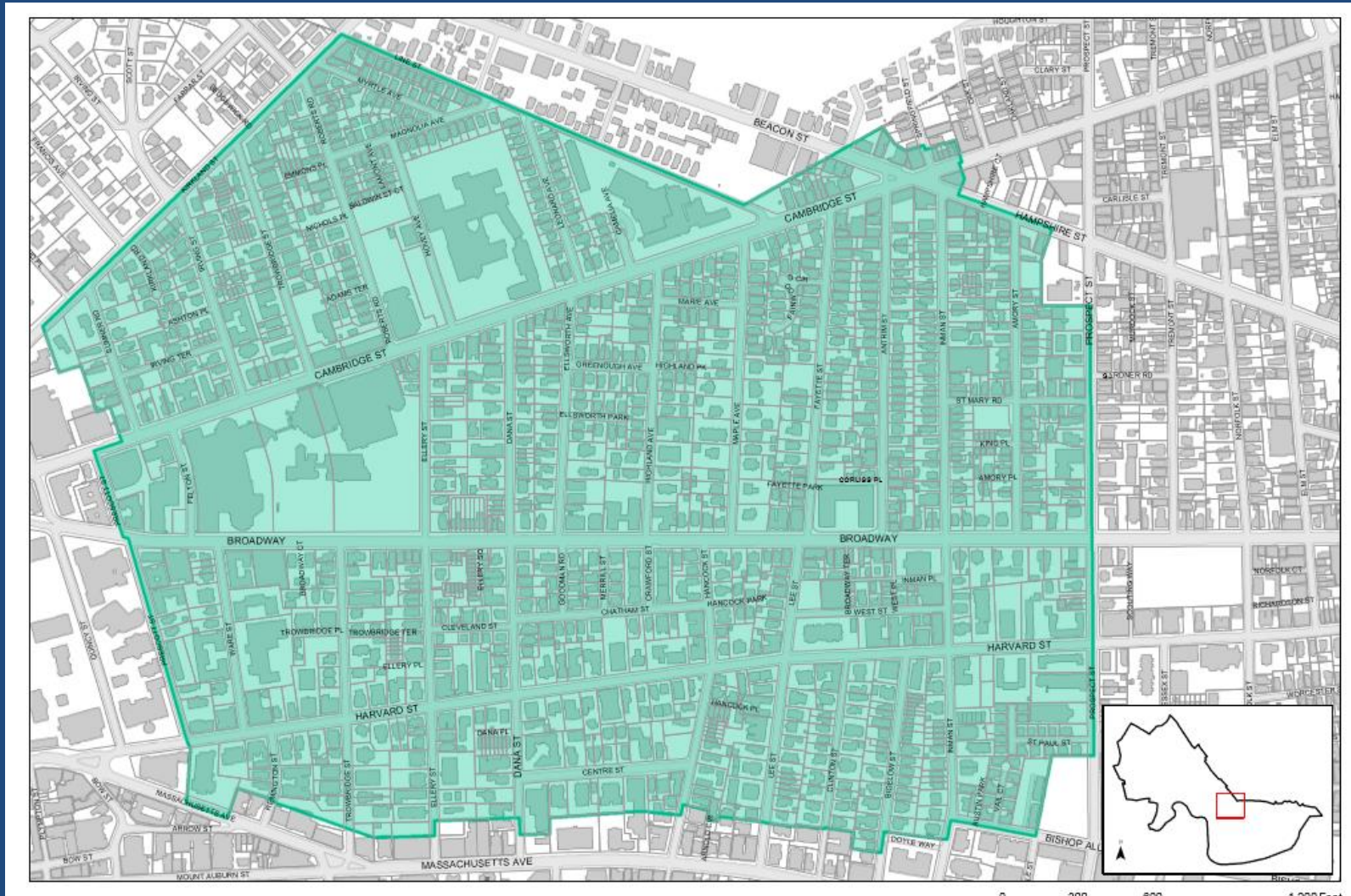
## *Exempt:*

- Flat skylights or solar panels.
- Landscaping and hardscaping (unless new parking).
- Storm windows and doors.
- Fences and walls 4'-0" or less.



# Mid Cambridge NCD

Established 1985. Approximately 2,000 buildings, including two hospitals, CRLS, CPL, several Harvard buildings. Mostly free-standing homes on large lots.



# Mid Cambridge NCD



Harvard Street between Lee and Dana streets; 1970s infill in red

# Mid Cambridge NCD

## Goals and Objectives

A. General Criteria. All applications shall be considered in terms of the impact of the proposed new construction or alteration, relocation or demolition of an existing building on the District as a whole, and in addition with regard to the potential adverse effects of the proposed construction, alteration, relocation or demolition on the surrounding properties and on the immediate streetscape and the economic assessment of the alternatives to the proposed action.

General objectives shall be to:

1. Avoid excessive infill;
2. Encourage new construction which complements existing buildings;
3. Encourage preservation of neighborhood buildings;
4. Protect National Register structures; and
5. Enhance the economic vitality of the neighborhood.

# Mid Cambridge NCD

## Jurisdiction:

Both advisory and binding reviews are conducted, depending on the scope of work.

## *Binding reviews:*

- New Construction >750 sq. feet or enlargement of an existing structure >33%.
- Demolition of more than 33% of an existing structure.
- Alterations of structures on the National Register or containing non-conforming uses.

## *Non-binding reviews:*

- New construction <750 sq. feet.
- Exterior alterations requiring variance or special permit; removing or enclosing decorative elements; changing locations or size of windows or doors; changing slope or pitch of a roof.

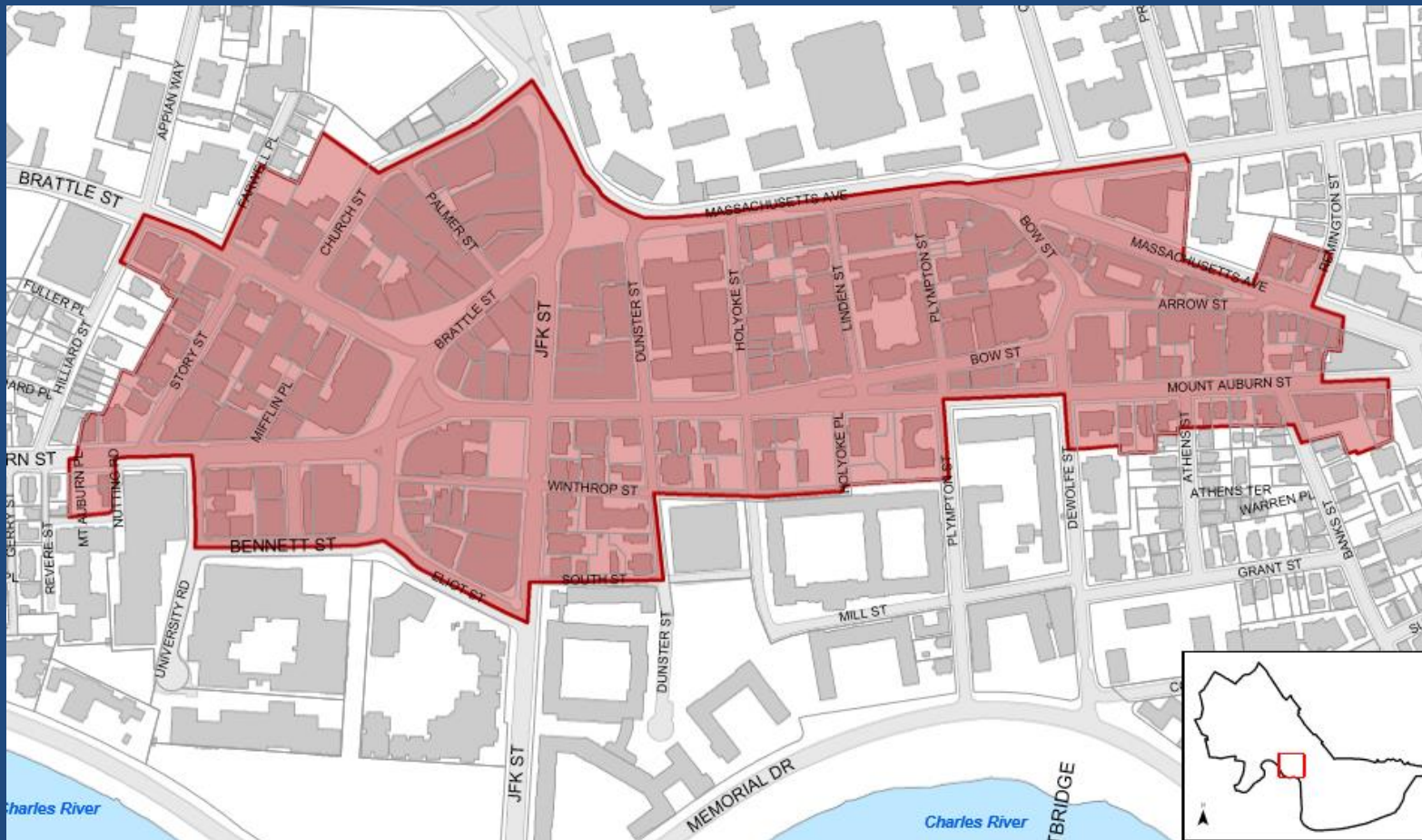
# Neighborhood Conservation Districts

- 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



# Harvard Square Conservation District

Established 2000. Approximately 200 buildings, including institutional buildings, office, retail, multi-unit residential, hotel, and mixed-use commercial buildings.



# Harvard Square Conservation District

The Goal of the District and of this Order is to protect the Harvard Square Conservation District's distinctive physical and experiential characteristics and to enhance the livability and vitality of the District. The Historical Commission should seek to enhance the unique physical environment and visual form of the District; preserve its architecturally and historically significant structures and their settings; encourage creative design that contributes to the richness of its environment; mitigate character-diminishing impacts of new development; and discourage homogeneity by encouraging diversity of development and open space patterns and building scales and ages. The District must remain a pedestrian-friendly, accessible, human-scale, quirky, mixed-use environment that supports dynamic urban experiences, complements nearby neighborhoods, and respects the history and traditions of its location.

# Harvard Square Conservation District

## Secondary Goals (condensed) in effect for Cambridge Street Business B District

1. Preserve historically or architecturally significant buildings
2. Sustain the vitality of the commercial environment.
3. Support creative, contemporary design for new construction.
4. Build on the diversity of existing building form, scale and material.
5. Create a high-quality public environment in the District.
6. Protect and enhance the pedestrian experience.
7. Enhance the all-hours neighborhood quality of Harvard Square by encouraging additional residential units in mixed-use buildings.
8. Encourage compatible design that supports a wide diversity of uses.
9. Encourage creative solutions to the District's transportation issues.
10. Encourage environmentally sustainable development.
11. Architectural lighting should reinforce definitive characteristics of buildings and create high quality 24-hour streetscapes.



# Harvard Square Conservation District

## Jurisdiction:

Guidelines streamline the approval process for first-floor retail alterations including zoning-compliant signs, new storefront glazing, and awnings. New construction, demolition, and additions require binding review by the Historical Commission.

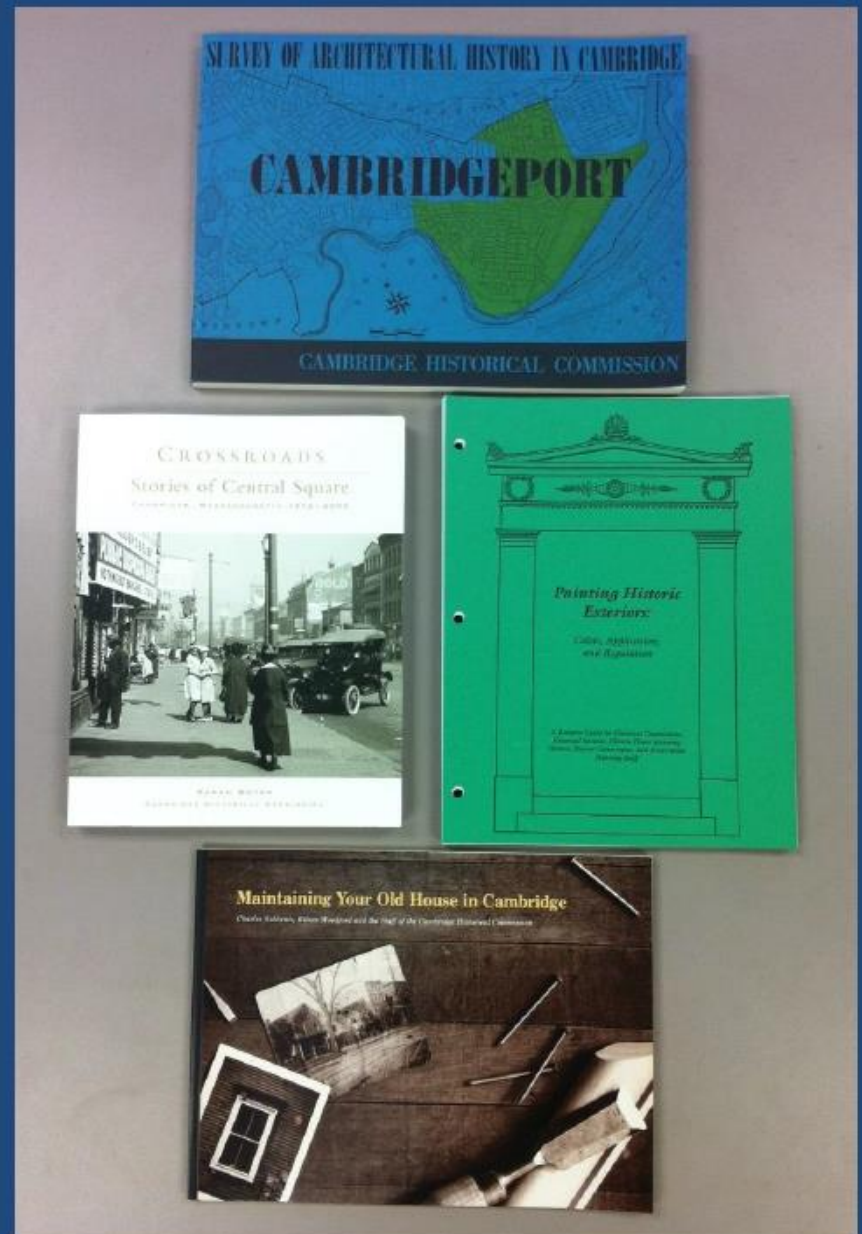
## *Storefront Guidelines:*

With the exception of four historical storefronts, staff approval is granted for the following types of retail alterations and do not require a public hearing:

- Alterations that do not alter, enclose, or extend further than the decorative or structural framework of the building originally intended to surround a storefront.
- Storefront alterations that do not obscure, remove, relocate, or replace historic or original exterior architectural features
- Signs that comply with zoning code regulations are exempt from review. Some variation from the base zoning requirements can be approved by the Historical Commission if determined to be appropriate, including number and illumination of projecting signs and the allocation of sign area per elevation.

# Education

- Survey of Architectural History in Cambridge
- Publications
- Historic markers
- Entering HD signs



Survey of Architectural History in Cambridge  
Cambridge Historical Commission

# East Cambridge

Revised Edition *Susan E. Maycock*



# Education

- Preservation Awards
- Neighborhood tours
- Technical assistance
- Paint color consultations



# Community Preservation Act

- Preservation Grants: Affordable and Institutional.
- Municipal projects: historic buildings and landscapes, document conservation.



# Applications for Building Permits to Date

Case Number	Address	Certificate	
4195	51 Gore St	C-NA	Re-roof front slope of roof; replace fascia with metal-clad fascia at front elevation.
4196	322 Hurley St	C-NA	Re-roof flat TPO membrane roof.
4198	71 Fulkerson St	C-NA	Repair brickwork over lintels.
4199	27 Lambert St	C-NA	Renovate interior space
4200	189 Cambridge St	C-NA	Alter storefronts.
4201	47 Thorndike St	C-NA	Replace subterranean utility tunnel roof and restore exterior courtyard.
4202	305 Hurley St	C-NA	Renovate interior spaces
4203	52 Sciarappa St	C-NA	Replace asphalt shingle roof.
4204	99 Otis St	C-NA	Repoint masonry
4205	131-137 Second St	C-NA	Extend front steps at front entry.
4206	126 Spring St	C-NA	Replace siding on main structure.
4207	57 Otis St, #1	C-NA	Insulate crawlspace.
4209	66 Thorndike St	C-NA	Renovate bathroom
4211	70 Gore St	C-NA	Exterior renovation including: re-siding with Hardie board; restore window openings on front elevation
4212	113 Charles St	C-NA	Replace flat rubber roof.
4215	90 Thorndike St	C-NA	Renovate brick rowhouse including: replace all previously replaced windows, repoint brick, restore brickwork
4216	113 Charles St	C-NA	Re-side structure with Hardieplank in smooth finish.
4217	133 Otis St, #1	C-NA	Weatherize and insulate unit. No impact to exterior.
4218	133 Otis St, #3	C-NA	Weatherize and insulate unit. No impact to exterior.
4226	303 Hurley St	C-NA	Interior remodel
4230	107 Otis St #2	C-NA	Construct deck at second floor.
4232	169 Spring St		new roof, new addition, alter windows, doors, and siding
4235	77 Thorndike St	C-NA	Replace windows on first floor side elevations; remodel interior.
4237	46 Seventh St	C-NA	Enclose three one-story porches at rear.
4240	303 Hurley St, #3	C-NA	Interior renovation and reconfiguring.
4241	7 Sixth St	C-NA	Replace vinyl windows in kind; interior renovation.
4246	102-104 Sciarappa St	C-NA	Replace door on south side elevation; convert door to window on south side elevation; replace door
4248	151 Cambridge St	C-NA	Renovate interior and replace exterior siding after fire damage.
4256	110 Seventh St	C-NA	Replace broken vinyl windows in kind
4257	226 Hurley St	C-NA	Replace flat membrane roof and roof deck flooring; replace damaged white siding panels in kind.
4258	222 Third St	C-NA	Interior fit out for new tenant, no exterior changes.
4259	76 Sixth St	C-NA	Kitchen renovation, no impact to exterior.
4260	22 Seventh St	C-NA	Replace asphalt shingle roof.
4267	118 Spring St		Exterior renovation including windows, siding, trim, and new rear decks and stairs.
4268	123 Second St	C-NA	Replace flat membrane roofing

C-NA: Staff issued a Certificate of Non-Applicability; no hearing necessary

# Questions?

Email Charles Sullivan at [csullivan@cambridgema.gov](mailto:csullivan@cambridgema.gov) or  
Eric Hill at [ehill@cambridgema.gov](mailto:ehill@cambridgema.gov)

Or call the office at 617 349-4683