



CAMBRIDGE HISTORICAL COMMISSION

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APPLICATION FOR CERTIFICATE

1. The undersigned hereby applies to the Cambridge Historical Commission for a Certificate of (check one box): ☒ Appropriateness, ☐ Nonapplicability, or ☐ Hardship, in accordance with Chapter 40C of the Massachusetts General Laws and/or Chapter 2.78 of the Municipal Code.

2. Address of property: 159 Brattle Street, Cambridge, Massachusetts

3. Describe the proposed alteration(s), construction or demolition in the space provided below:
(An additional page can be attached, if necessary).

History Cambridge is submitting this proposal for the temporary re-installation of the powerful public art project, "Forgotten Souls of Tory Row: Remembering the Enslaved People of Brattle Street," to be located on the front lawn of 159 Brattle Street.

More information is attached.

I certify that the information contained herein is true and accurate to the best of my knowledge and belief. The undersigned also attests that he/she has read the statements printed on the reverse.

Name of Property Owner of Record: History Cambridge

Mailing Address: 159 Brattle Street

Telephone/Fax: 617-547-4252

E-mail: info@historycambridge.org

Signature of Property Owner of Record: *M. Van Dune*
(Required field; application will not be considered complete without property owner's signature)

Name of proponent, if not record owner:

Mailing Address:

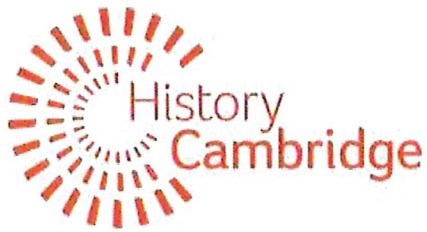
Telephone/Fax:

E-mail:

(for office use only):

Date Application Received: _____ Case Number: 5371 Hearing Date: 12/4/25

Type of Certificate Issued: _____ Date Issued: _____



**Application to Cambridge Historical Commission
for Certificate of Appropriateness**
November 2025

**Proposal for Temporary Installation Art
on the Front Lawn of 159 Brattle Street**

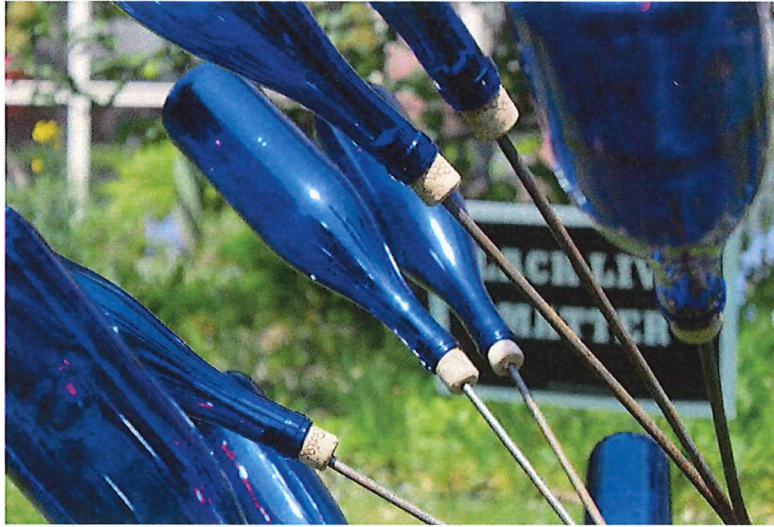
Project	Re-installation of "Forgotten Souls of Tory Row" art exhibition
Property Owner	History Cambridge, 159 Brattle Street
Artists	Pamella Goncalves and Gail Bos (lead artists from 2022 installation)
Duration	December 20, 2025-June 30, 2026
Concept	Reinstallation of the 2022-2023 exhibition of bottle trees. Two circles of "trees" — exterior circle with a smaller interior circle. Seven trees in the exterior circle and eighteen "saplings" in the interior circle. Blue glass bottles will be attached with corks to the end of the branches to form bottle trees. Trees will be lit with solar lights. Interpretation will be offered through four lawn signs (18" x 24") arranged 2-3 feet from the inside of the Brattle Street fence in front of the trees.
Historical Context	The trees are representative of multi-generational knowledge and symbolic of the eternal nature of life. The root represents the strength of our ancestors, to the fruit representing the passing of each generation. The leaves represent the changeable multicolored and stored information of each transitory soul. The bottle trees will be decorated with blue bottles as representing the forgotten history and spirit of the neighborhood. Less than a mile away from Tory Row lies a community where black descendants of the Caribbean enslaved resided. This community encompassed the spirit of a variety of cultures seeking the American dream. Freed slaves to earliest immigrants all aspired to rise above their stations. This installation will invite its viewers to learn about and reflect on this aspect of Tory Row's hidden history.

Dimensions	Exterior circle trees — 6 ft high Interior circle trees — 3 ft high Circumference — 30 ft
Materials	Iron tree frames; glass bottles sealed with corks; plastic lawn signs
Installation	Trees secured by cables and stakes to the ground
Location	Southwest corner of HLN House lawn

Feedback from previous installation

- It did not surprise me, but I'm very glad that the piece is there and that it will, hopefully, spark conversation and deeper investigation.
- The installation is quite striking along the shaded manicured lawns of Brattle Street. I work here as a gardener tending these gardens and was struck by a feeling of kinship with those souls who also labored here.
- The piece is truly striking and beautiful. It draws the viewer in and then educates!
- I had never really considered how much of the wealth broadly across New England is anchored in enslaved labor. I knew about Newport and the \$\$ there but hadn't thought of it in Cambridge.
- The art itself was very visually moving. I was glad to see many people stopping to read the literature, as I was out on a warm June day and folks were out to explore gardens and sights. I felt hopeful that people were stopping and spending time to look at this visually arresting and deeply meaningful exhibit.
- The installation is beautiful although slavery is ugly and violent. It's an interesting juxtaposition.
- I really appreciate this effort to raise public awareness of the history of our community
- Thank you for doing this! It is moving and beautiful. Please do it again!
- Thank you for this type of art and engagement, which is historical and accessible to different ages. I knew about this project from social media and was driving by with my two kids (3 and 6) and stopped to view, read, and talk about it. Very interesting to view in person on Brattle Street!

Photos of the 2022 Installation





Photos courtesy Hakim Raquib

Additional information:

<https://historycambridge.org/online-exhibits/forgotten-souls-of-tory-row/>