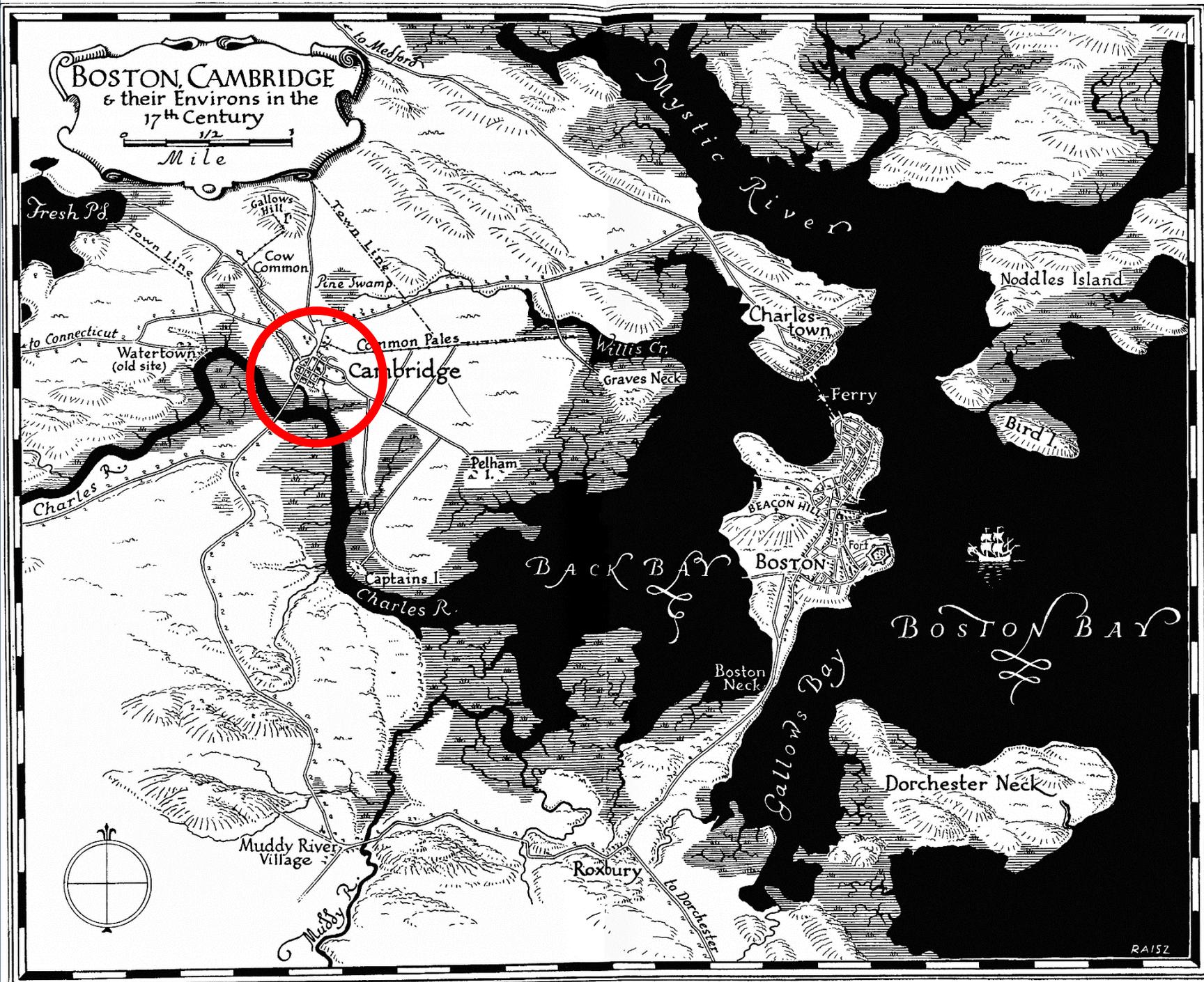


History and Preservation in Cambridge

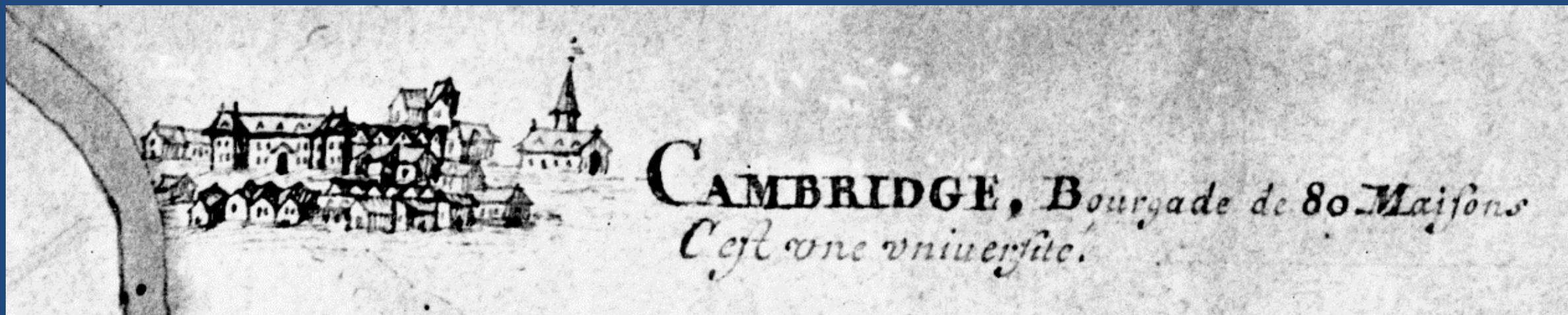
Charles Sullivan
Cambridge Historical Commission
July 11, 2025



Reconstructed plan of Cambridge and environs in the 17th century

Reconstructed plan of Newtowne in 1635, illustrating the “contrived streets” and “faire structures” described by William Woods in 1634.

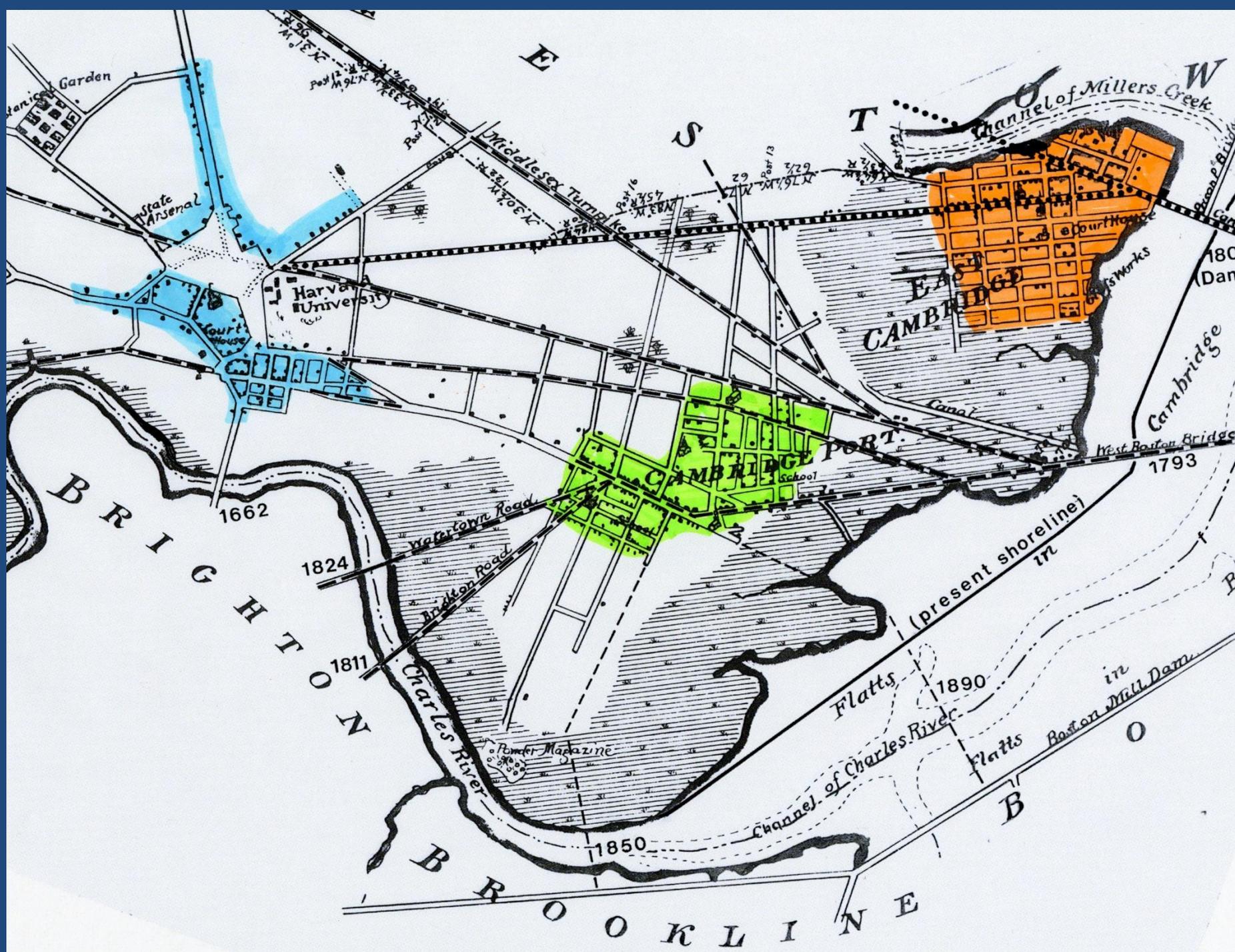




First known view of Cambridge, 1693



West Boston (Longfellow) Bridge, 1793



Three villages,
1830



OLD CAMBRIDGE

The village
(Harvard Square),
1833

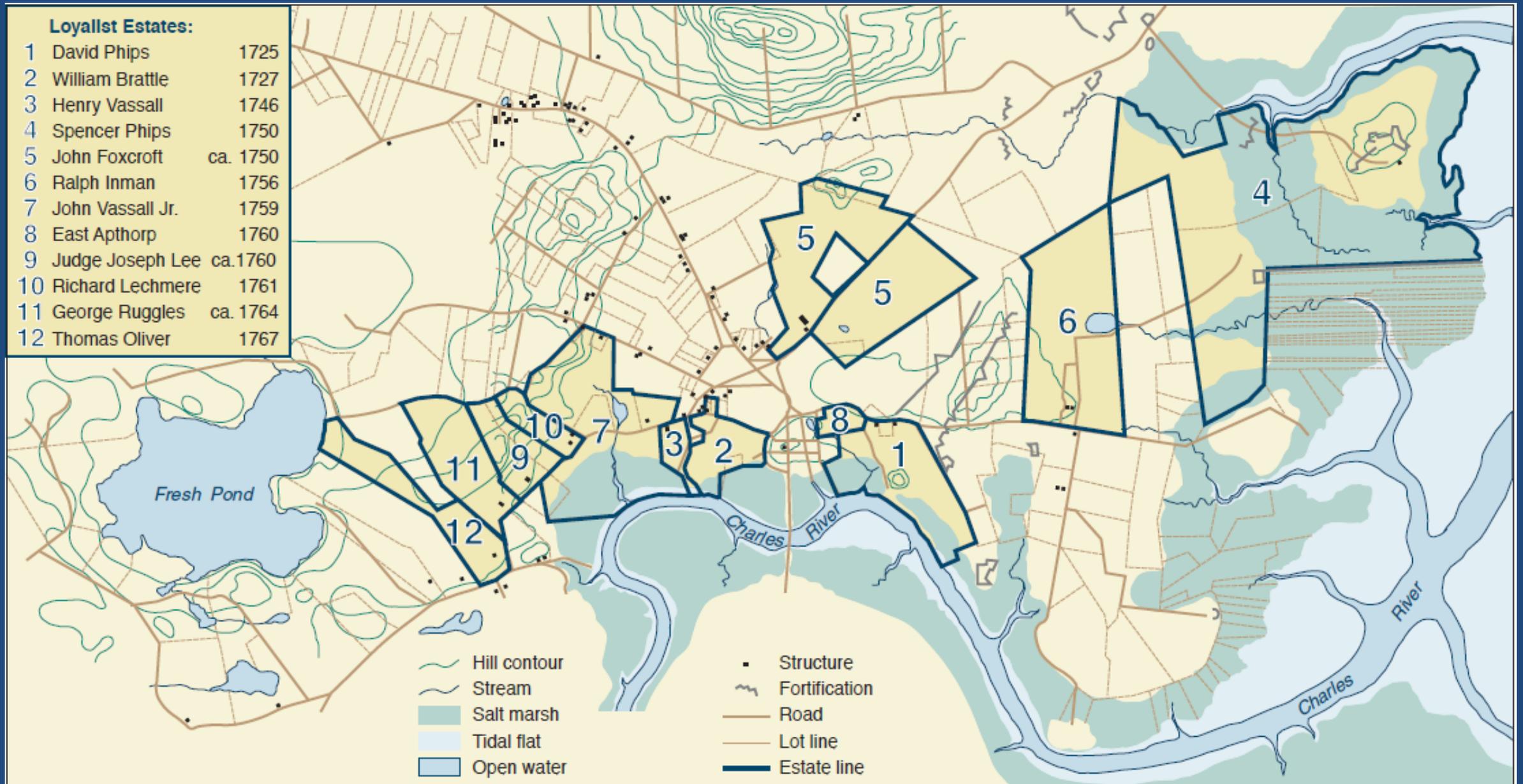
OLD CAMBRIDGE



Cambridge Common in 1821, with Harvard Yard and the village



64 J.F. Kennedy Street, ca. 1725; demolished 1900



Loyalist Estates in 1775



John Vassall house
105 Brattle Street,
1760

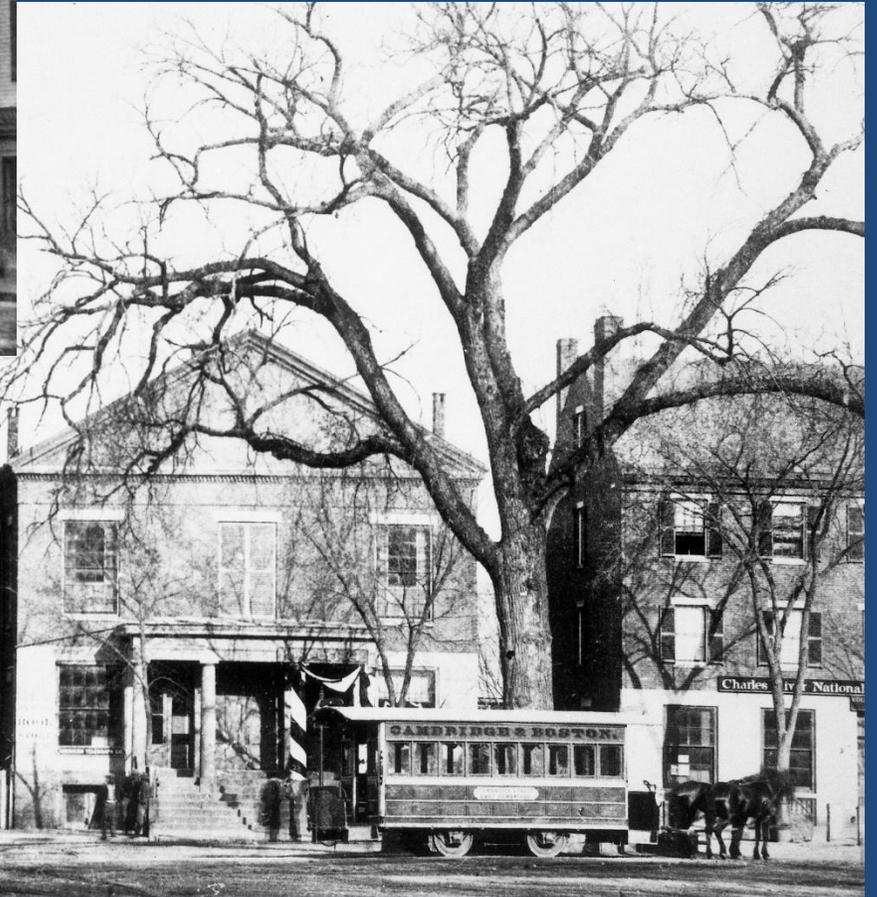


Massachusetts Avenue looking north from Cambridge Common, ca. 1875



Foster Place (1853-1855)

OLD CAMBRIDGE



Harvard Square in 1865-75





Harvard Square, ca. 1917

CAMBRIDGEPORT



Lafayette Square, looking east toward the intersection with Main Street, ca. 1825

CAMBRIDGEPORT



Central Square, ca. 1900

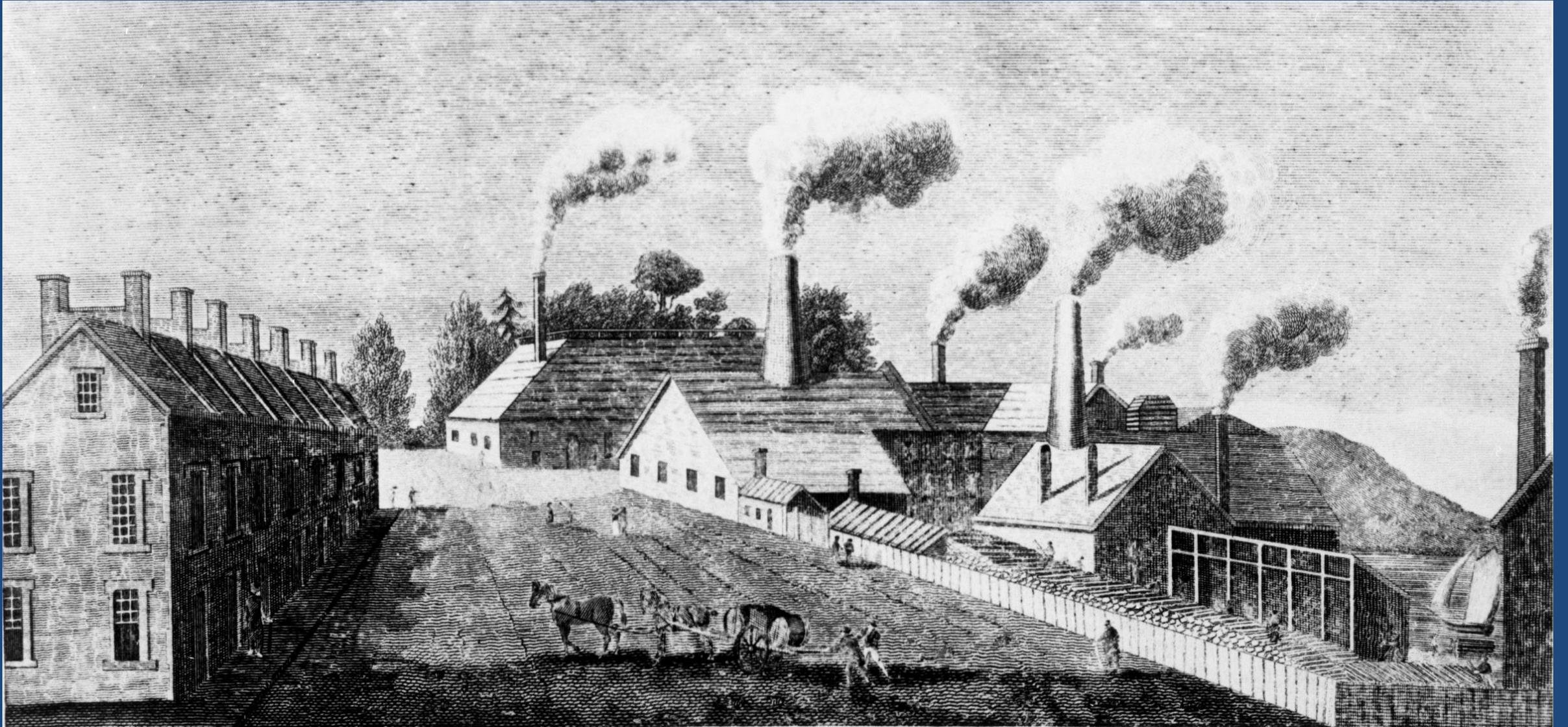


Inman Square, Cambridge, Mass.

1463

Inman Square, ca. 1920

EAST CAMBRIDGE



New England Glass Works, North Street, East Cambridge, ca. 1825



East Cambridge,
ca. 1935

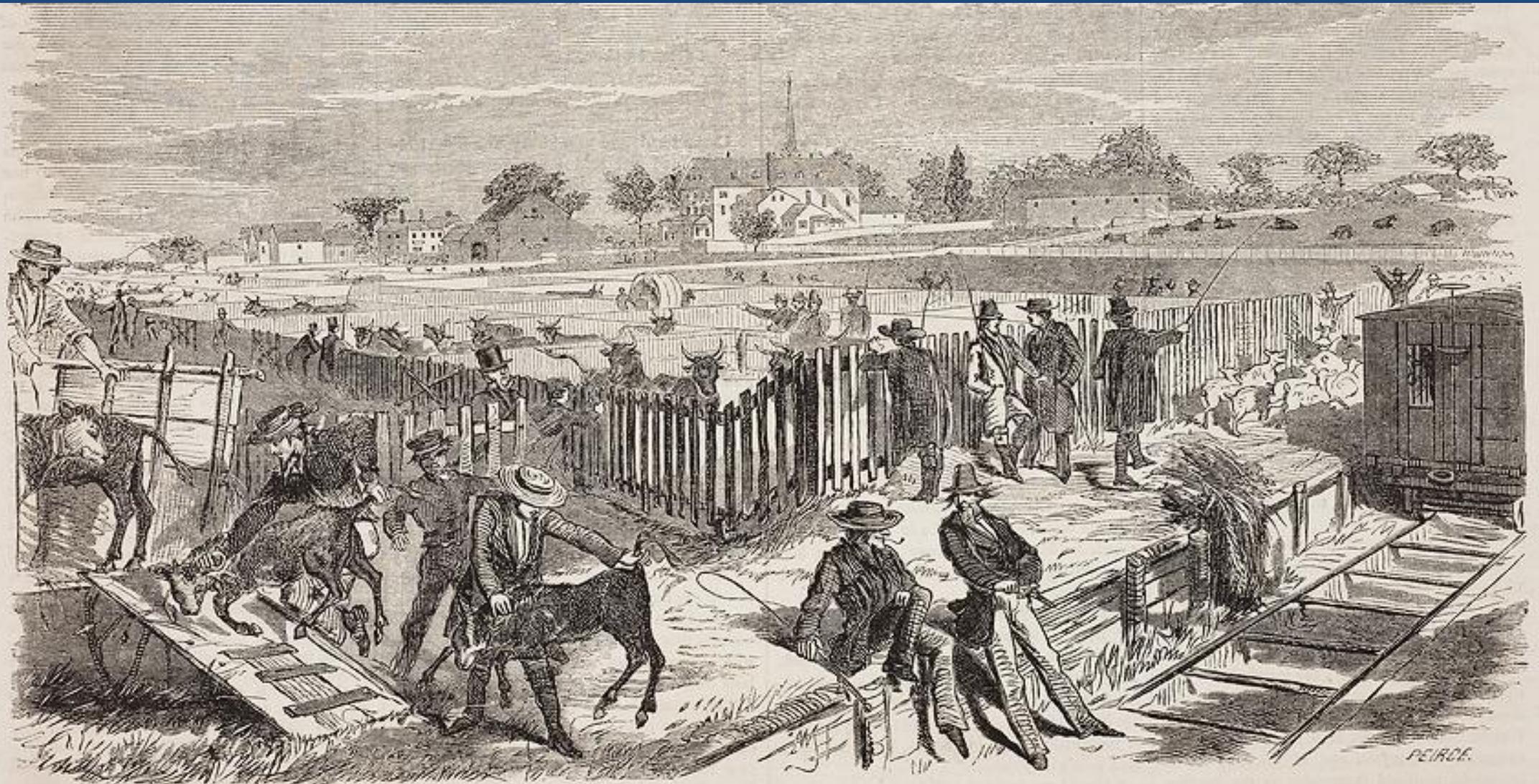


Winter Street, ca. 1930



Winter Street, 2016

NORTH CAMBRIDGE



CAMBRIDGE CATTLE MARKET.

Winslow Homer, *Cambridge Cattle Market* (1859)

NORTH CAMBRIDGE



Porter's Station, ca. 1856–69

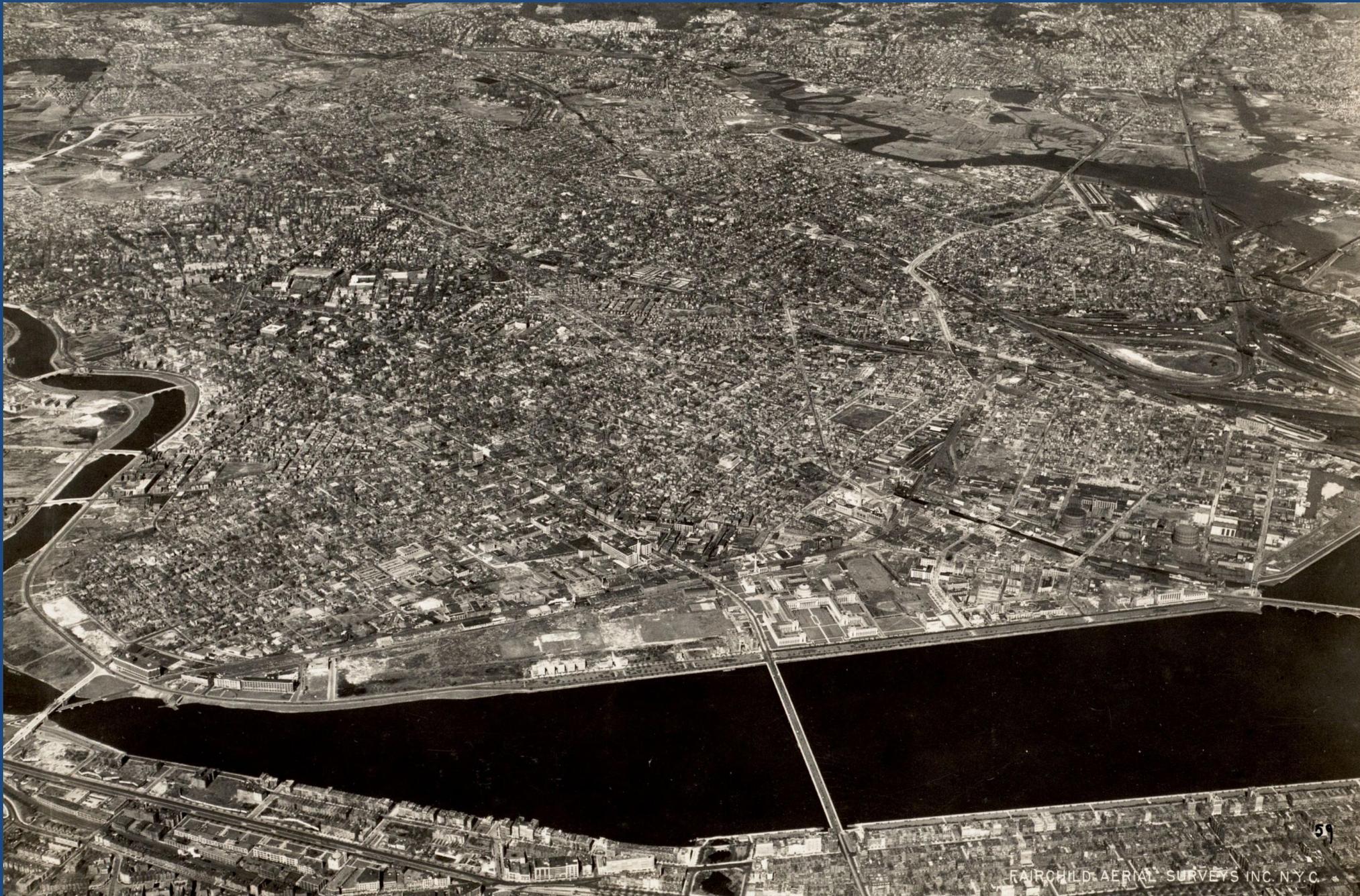


Three decker construction
in West Cambridge,
ca. 1925

CHARLES RIVER BASIN PLAN



CHARLES ELIOT FOR THE CAMBRIDGE PARK COMMISSION, 1894



1930



Grand Junction Corridor in 1947
Looking north, East Cambridge at right

KENDALL SQUARE URBAN RENEWAL



Kendall Square from the roof of E52 (Sloane School), ca. 1955

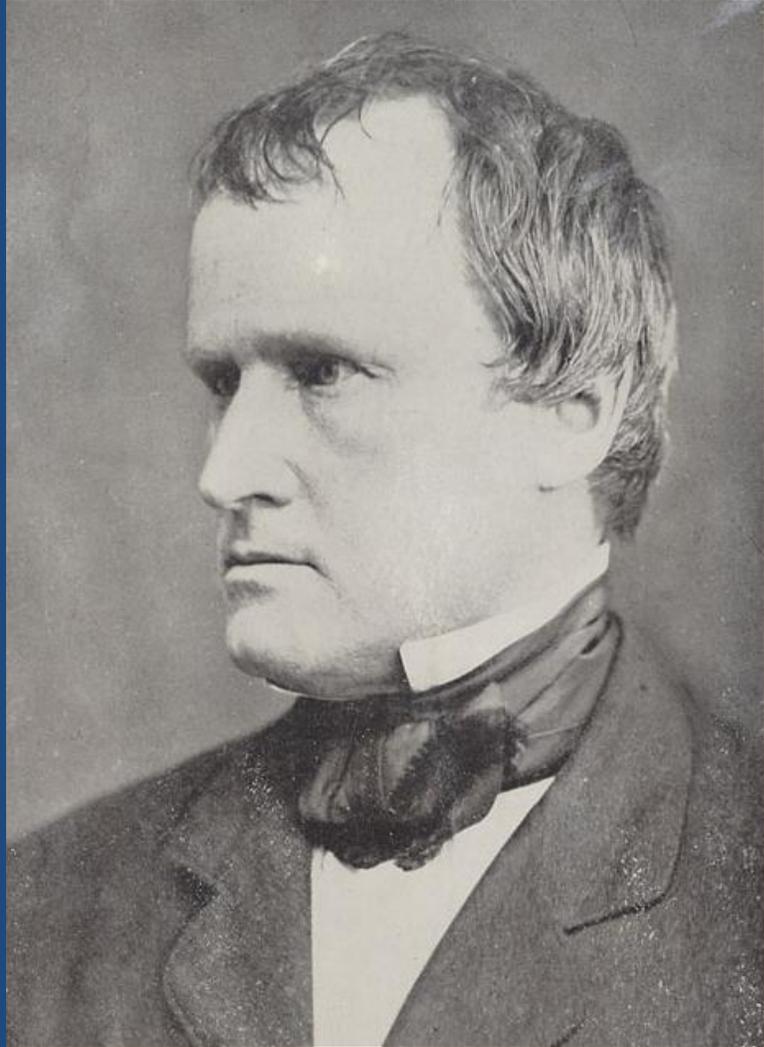


Kendall Square, 2011

Preservation Challenges



Austin Hall and the Hastings-Holmes House, 1884



Edward Austin, 1803-1898

Alice Longfellow, 1850-1928





Vassall-Craigie-Longfellow House, 1759



Courtesy Halliday Photograph Co. Boston

TO LET *from Sept. 1, 1914*

As a Tea Room or Gift Shop or for Some Other Appropriate Use

THE COOPER-AUSTIN HOUSE

21 LINNAEAN STREET, CAMBRIDGE, MASS.

This house — built about 1657 — was purchased by The Society for the Preservation of New England Antiquities in May, 1912. It has since been repaired and partially restored. It is a fascinating specimen of 18th century architecture and perhaps unique in its accessibility to a large centre of population, being easily reached from Park Street subway station in twenty to twenty-five minutes.



William Sumner Appleton, 1874-1947

Esther Stevens Brazer Compels Harvard to Preserve the John Hicks House, 1928



Esther Stevens Brazer
1898-1945



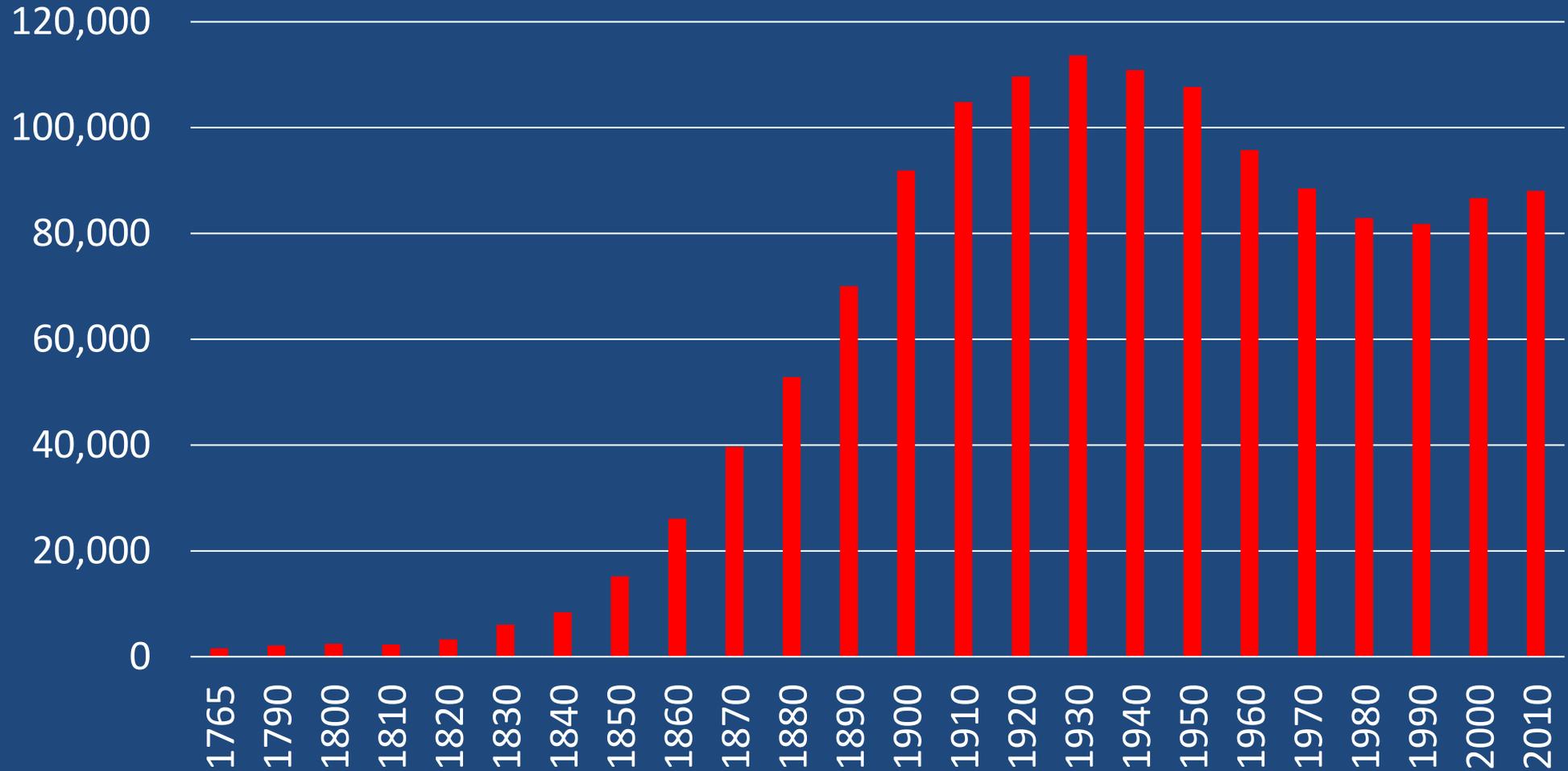
John Hicks house, 1760
Moved and attached to Harvard's Kirkland House, 1928



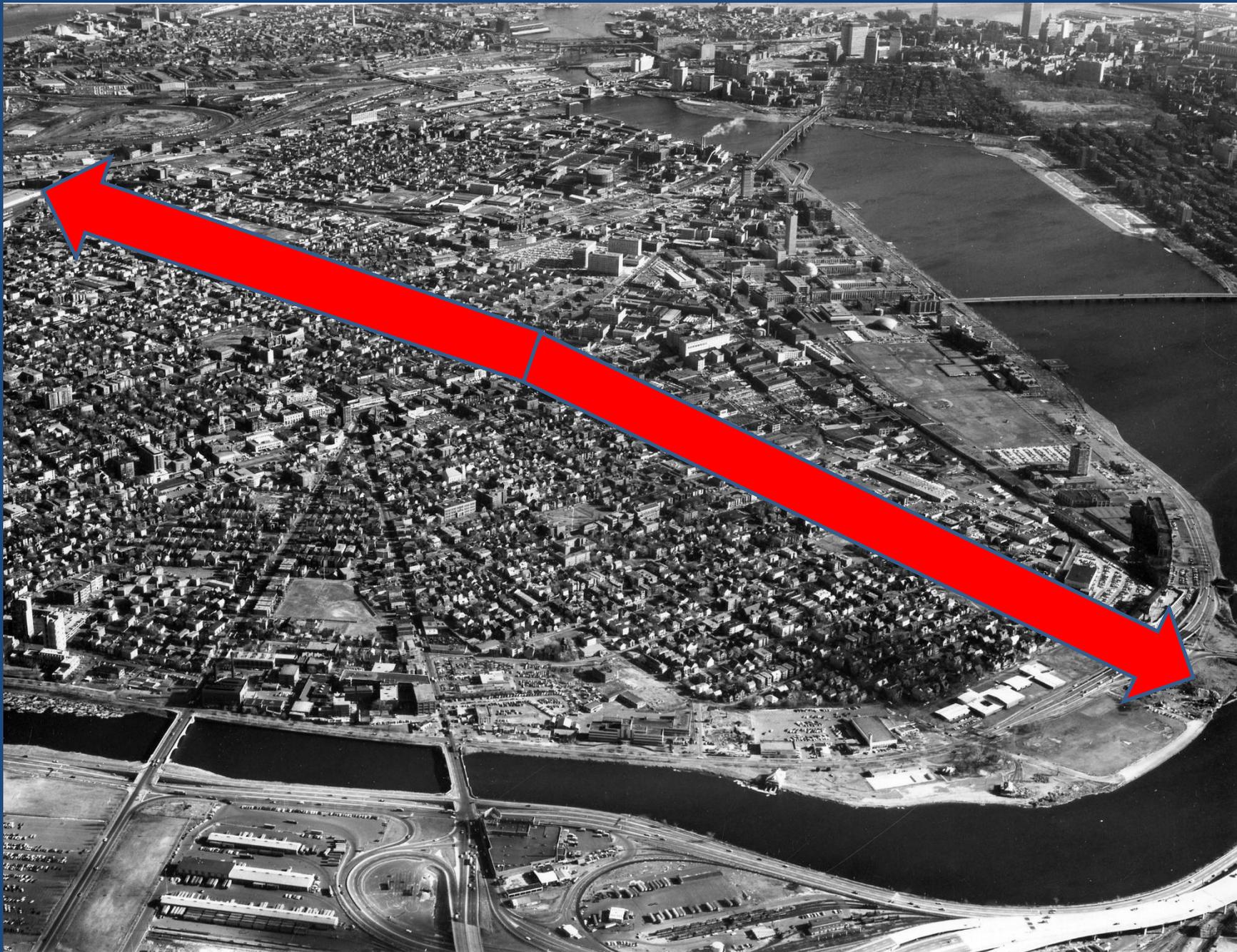
Barry's Corner from St. Paul's Church, ca. 1920



Cambridge Household Population, 1765-2010



(Excludes persons living in group quarters, such as dormitories)



INNER BELT HIGHWAY, 1947-1971

CAMBRIDGPORT
and EAST CAMBRIDGE,
ca. 1970

Inner Belt Fight To Finish Vowed By Cong. O'Neill

^{B130} By EDWARD M. MARTIN

Cong. Thomas P. "Tip" O'Neill, Jr., who, like members of the Cambridge City Council, is opposed to "any and all Inner Belt routes," declared today that he would "fight it to the hilt."

O'Neill, who planned the Thomas Coates, upon receipt of



MRS. ANSTIS BENFIELD NAILS PETITION ON CAMBRIDGE CITY HALL
Daughter, Rebecca, 2, Carried Papoose Style in Protest March

(Sunday Advertiser Photo, Carroll J. Myett)

Nail Belt Protest on City Hall

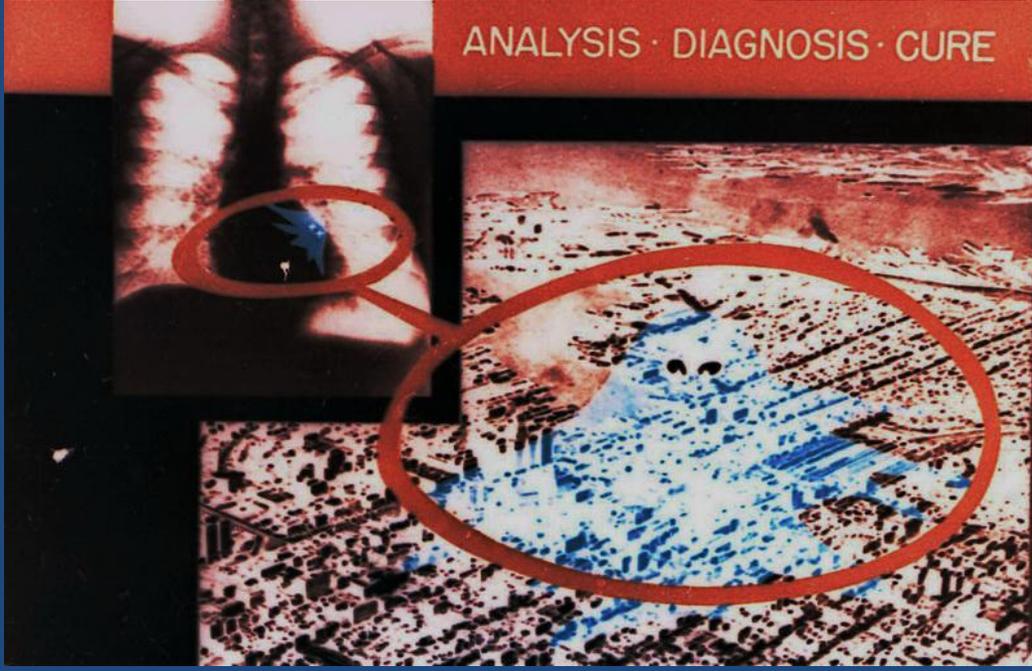
As a band played "Who Can I Turn To," some 250 Cambridge residents gathered in front of City Hall yesterday to protest the proposed Inner Belt route and submit an alternate plan.

The group arrived in front of the hall after marching through Cam-

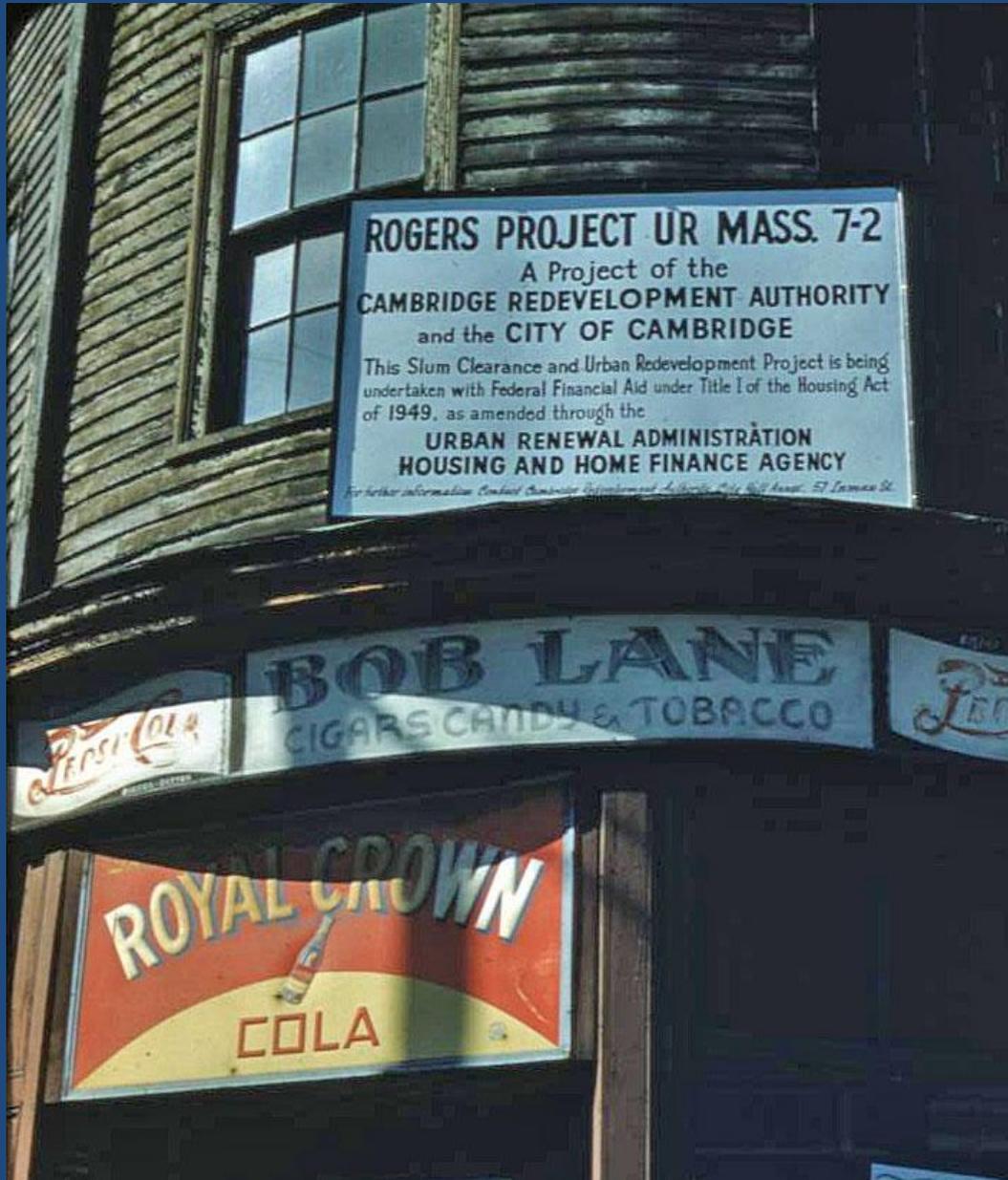
bridge streets carrying placards reading "Save Our Homes," and presented their plan to City Councilor Walter Sullivan.

A petition signed by the residents who said destruction of 1500 homes for construction of a road would be "inhuman," was nailed on the City Hall door.

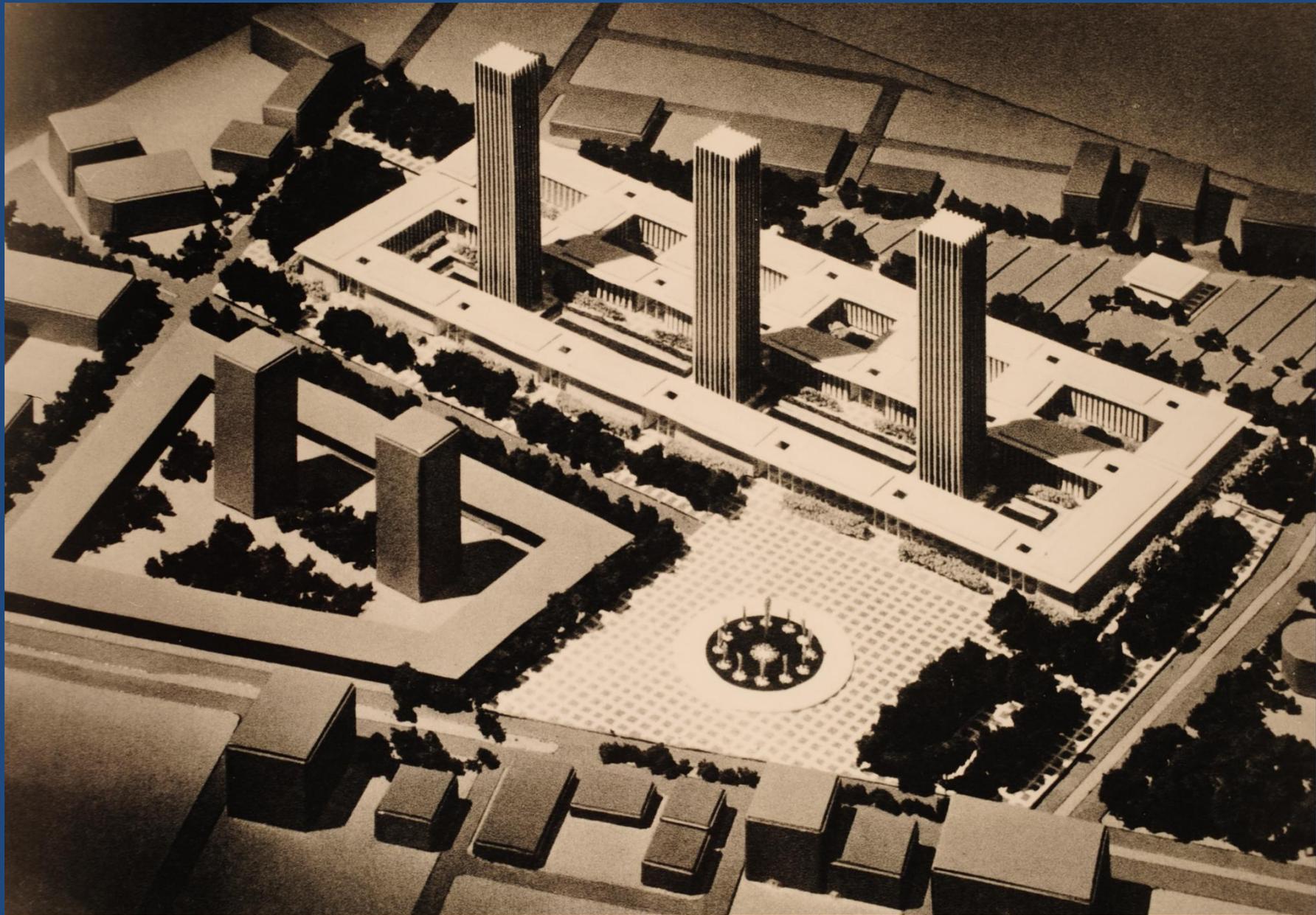
Sullivan assured the group their plan would be presented to the Council Monday night. It calls for the Inner Belt to go through the Portland-Albany st. section rather than Brookline-Elm st., as now proposed. The group said this would result in only 100 families displaced rather than 1500.



Urban Renewal in Cambridge, 1954



Rogers Block Demolition, Main Street



Edward Durrell Stone, NASA Electronics Research Center, Kendall Square (1966)

CAMBRIDGE SCRAPS AMITY

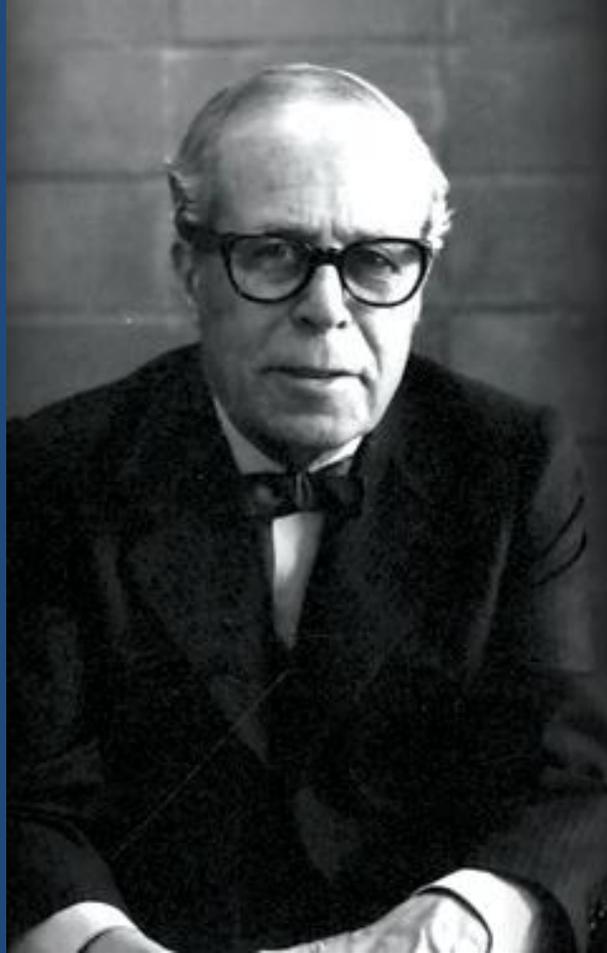
Skyscraper Foes Muster Forces for Long Battle

By EDWARD McGRATH

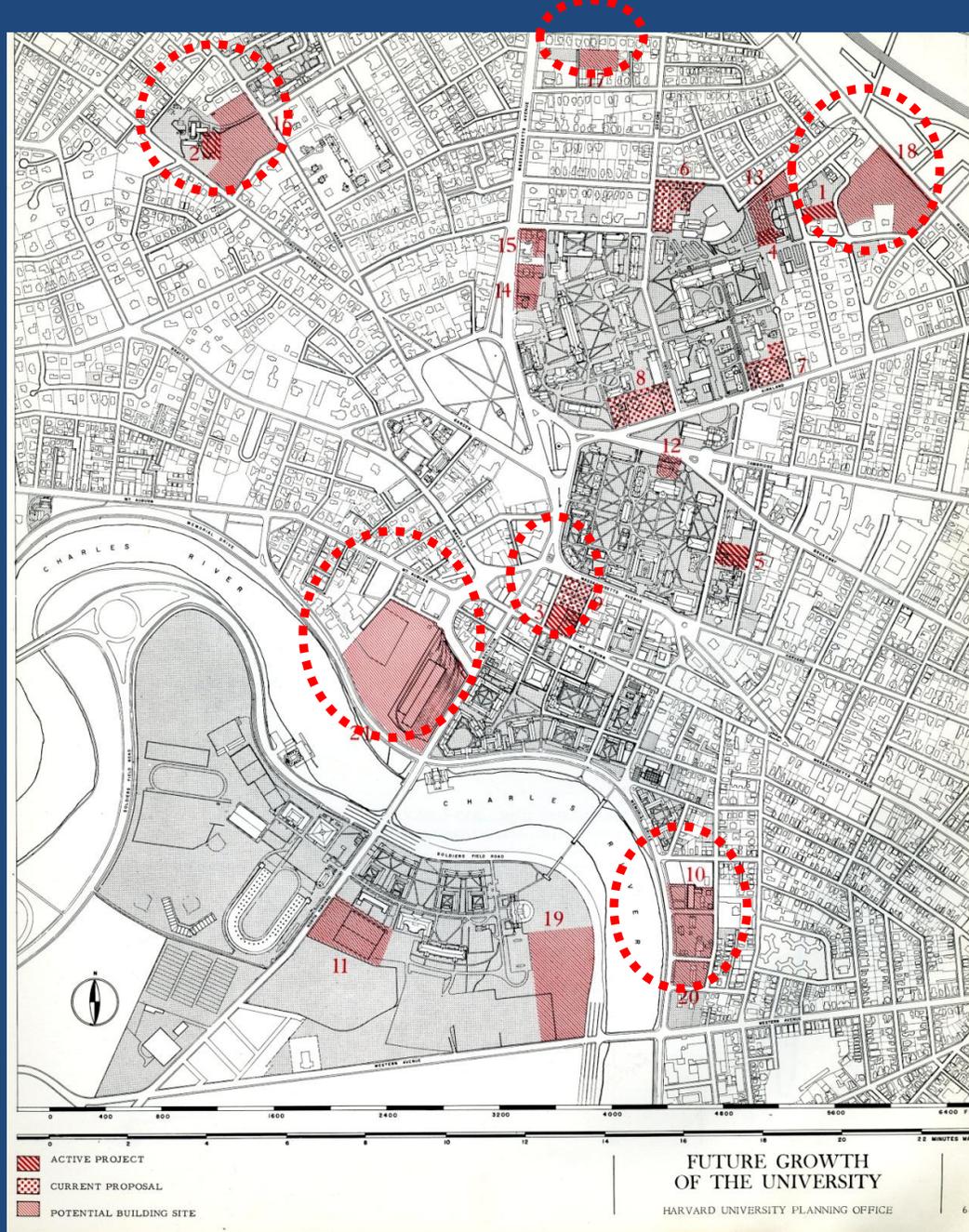
Smoldering pros and cons burst aflame yesterday in the political-civic battle to determine if Cambridge Common will lie in the unhampered shadows of history or in the deeper shadows of a 15-story office building on stilts.



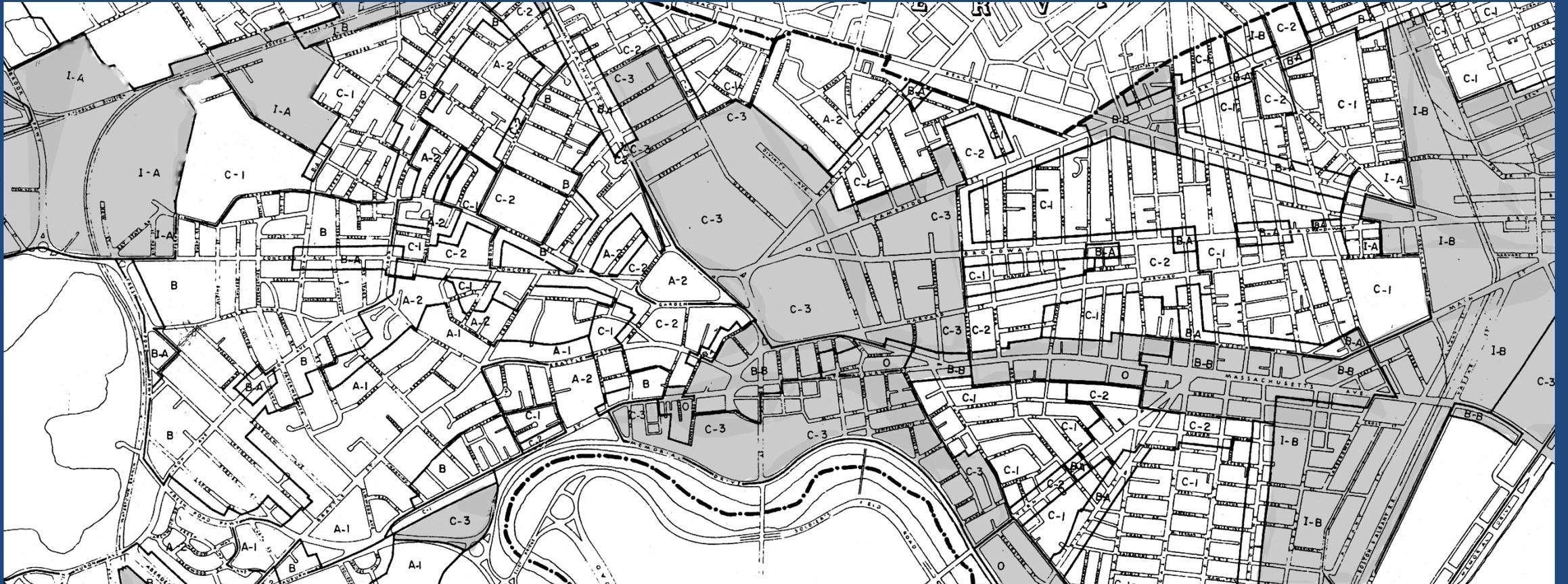
Proposed fifteen-story tower for Flagstaff Park with a bus station on the ground level, 1960



Josep Lluís Sert
1902-1983



Future Growth of the University, 1960



The 1962 zoning code abolished height limits in the shaded areas.
William James Hall (1963), Peabody Terrace (1963), and Mather House (1967)
conformed to the new code.

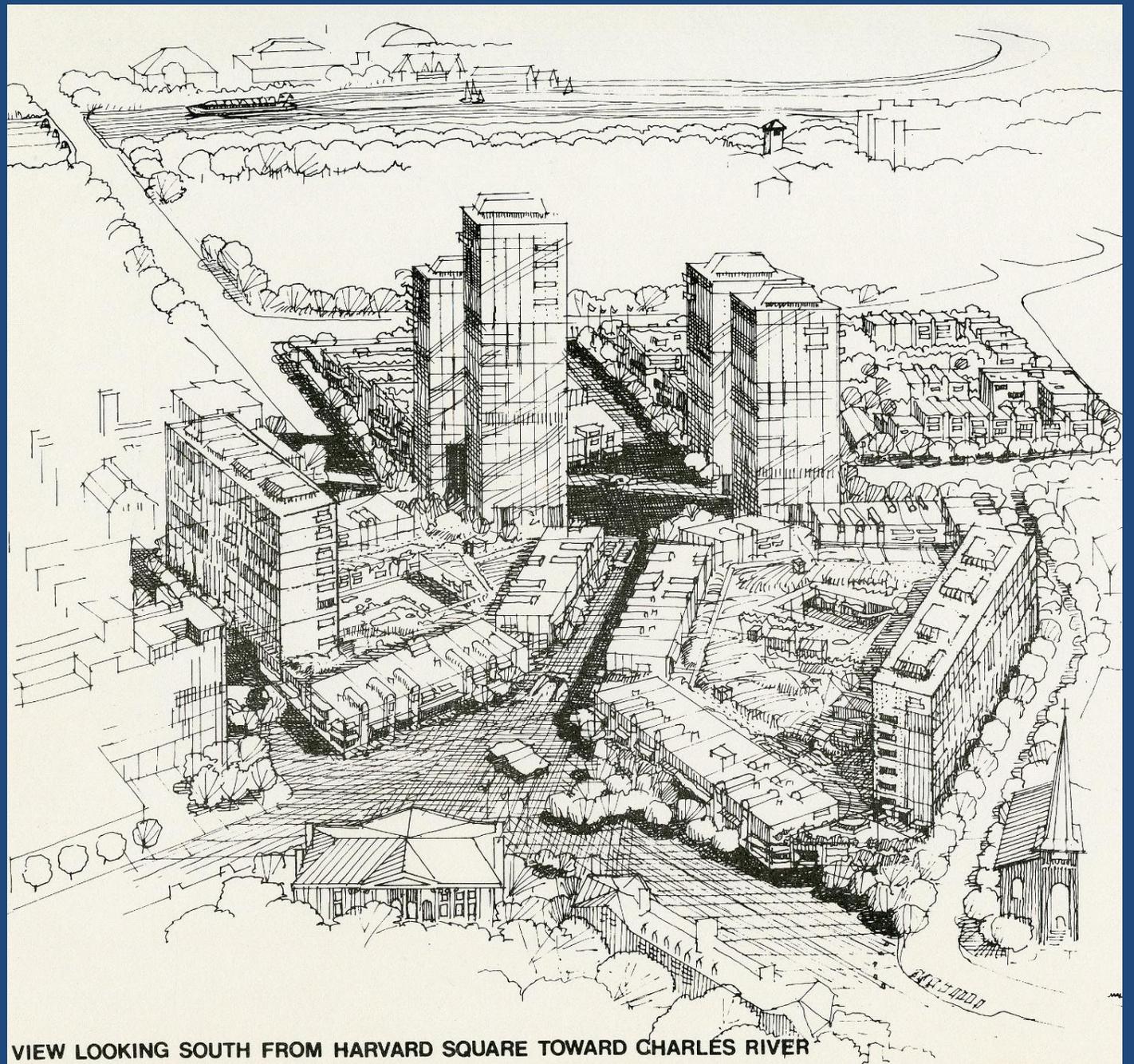


Massachusetts Avenue between Holyoke and Dunster streets, ca. 1958



Holyoke Center, 1962

Cambridge Redevelopment Authority
proposal for redevelopment
of the southwest sector, 1968
(Okamoto/Liskamm, architects)



VIEW LOOKING SOUTH FROM HARVARD SQUARE TOWARD CHARLES RIVER



Rindge Towers, 504 units, 1969



Gov. Foster Furcolo signing the Historic Districts Act, M.G.L. Ch. 40C, 1960
Charles W. Eliot 2nd (left)

Cambridge Acts to Preserve Historic Churches, Homes

By GEORGE CROFT

Cambridge has started a program to preserve the symbols of its history by protecting the historic sites, churches, buildings and lately homes from being destroyed or radically changed.

A committee appointed by the Cambridge City Council and headed by Atty. Albert B. Wolfe have completed a survey and study of Cambridge's historic sites.

In their 70-page report the committee recommends the establishing of four historic districts in Cambridge by ordinance under the Massachusetts Historic Districts Act.

The four districts are:

1. An area less than a block deep encircling the Cambridge Common. This includes part of the Harvard Yard, a portion of Radcliffe, the Old Burying Ground in Harvard sq., and the Christ Church where Gen George Washington once worshipped.

2. The Longfellow District which extends from the Charles River up to Longfellow's Home on Brattle st., and is about a block wide between Willard st., and Hawthorn st. It includes Longfellow Park, 17 homes, the Friends Meeting House, and the Mornion Church.

3. The Lowell Historic Dis-

trict is bounded by Brattle st., Elmwood av. and the Fresh Pond pkwy. It includes the famous Elmwood estate recently willed to Harvard University and the Lowell Memorial Park. Elmwood was constructed by Thomas Oliver in 1767. He was a wealthy West Indies planter who in 1774 was appointed lieutenant governor of the Massachusetts Bay Colony.

4. Fayerweather - Lee District extends from Fayerweather st., to Riedesel av., along the north side of Brattle st., and includes 14 houses. One of the houses is the Marrett-Ruggles-Fayerweather built about 1760 and used as a hospital caring for the wounded from the Battle at Bunker Hill. Another is the Lee-Nichols House built in the 1660s and occupied in 1721 by Dr. Henry Hooper, physician to Pres. Leverett of Harvard. It is now the headquarters of the Cambridge Historical Society.

The Cambridge Common, the committee states, is the most historic landmark in Cambridge and was the focal point of civic and religious activities from the earliest days.

Several of the Harvard Yard buildings are included in this district. They are Massachusetts Hall built in 1720, Harvard Hall (1766), Hollis Hall (1764) and Holden Chapel (1742). During the Revolutionary War these buildings were used as barracks and the Cambridge Common as a military training field.

An ordinance which would set up the four historic districts and a permanent Historical Commission presented to the Cambridge City Council will be discussed at a Council meeting Dec. 3.

Under such an ordinance permits to demolish or alter the exterior of historical designated buildings would not be granted without referring to the Historical Commission.

Issuance of such permits

could be delayed up to three months during which time efforts towards preservation would be made if the commission deems preservation feasible.

Other historic sites in Cambridge would come under the jurisdiction of the commission set up by ordinance and further historic districts may be set up.

Survey All Sites

The present committee, comprising Atty. Wolfe, real estate men Dwight H. Andrews

and John B. Sullivan; teachers William E. Edmonds and Rosamond C. Howe, Postman Hugh M. Lyons and architect Walter E. Campbell, made a survey of all historic sites in Cambridge.

They stated that Harvard "despite an occasional aberration has without a doubt preserved more of its physical heritage than any other university in America."

One of the most unusual historical sites in Cambridge is designated by a polished granite marker reading "On this

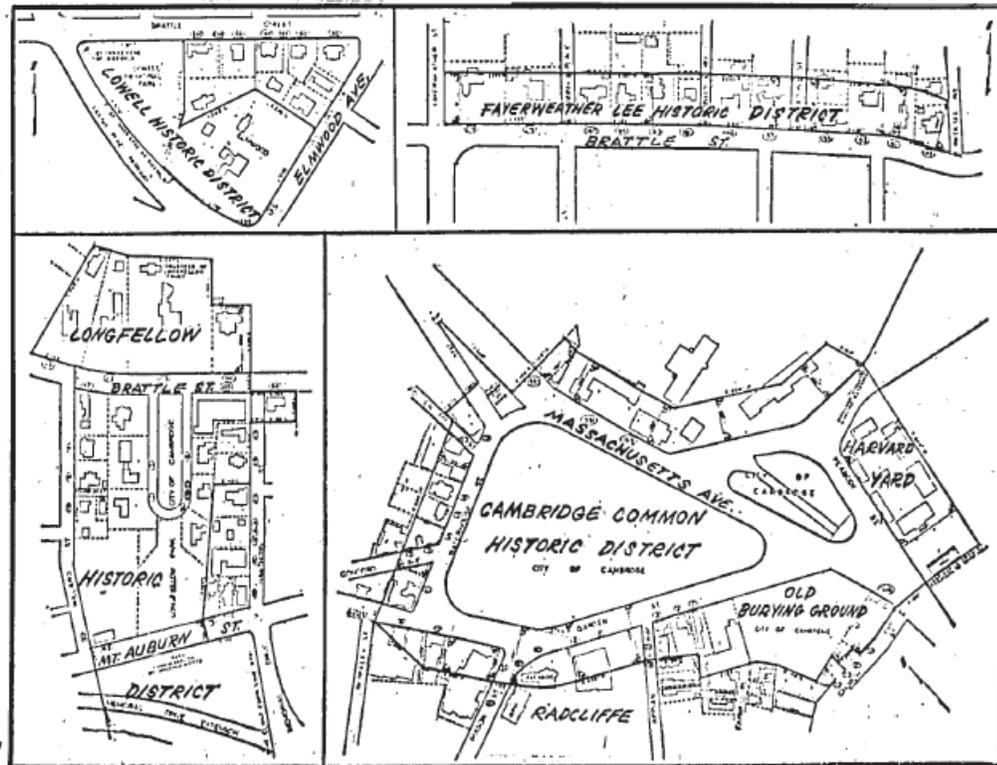
spot in the year 1000 Lief Erickson built his house in Vineland." It was placed on the banks of the Charles River by Prof. Eben N. Horsford near Gerry's Landing in the 1880's.

Horsford's theory was based on old Norse maps indicating the Vikings were familiar with Massachusetts Bay and the Charles River and that a paved pathway of large stones was found on the spot where he placed the marker. The paved pathway is similar to those found in Iceland and Greenland.

The committee also found in East Cambridge near the Courthouse some fine homes which appear to be pre-1830. Buildings erected after this date are not acceptable as historic.

These houses are along Otis Thorndike and Spring sts., between Third and Sixth sts. and along Gore st.

In the early 1800s, Otis st. was known as "Millionaires Row" and Second st. between Cambridge and Otis sts., was known as "Quality Row."



FOUR HISTORIC DISTRICTS OF CAMBRIDGE

HISTORIC DISTRICTS, 1963

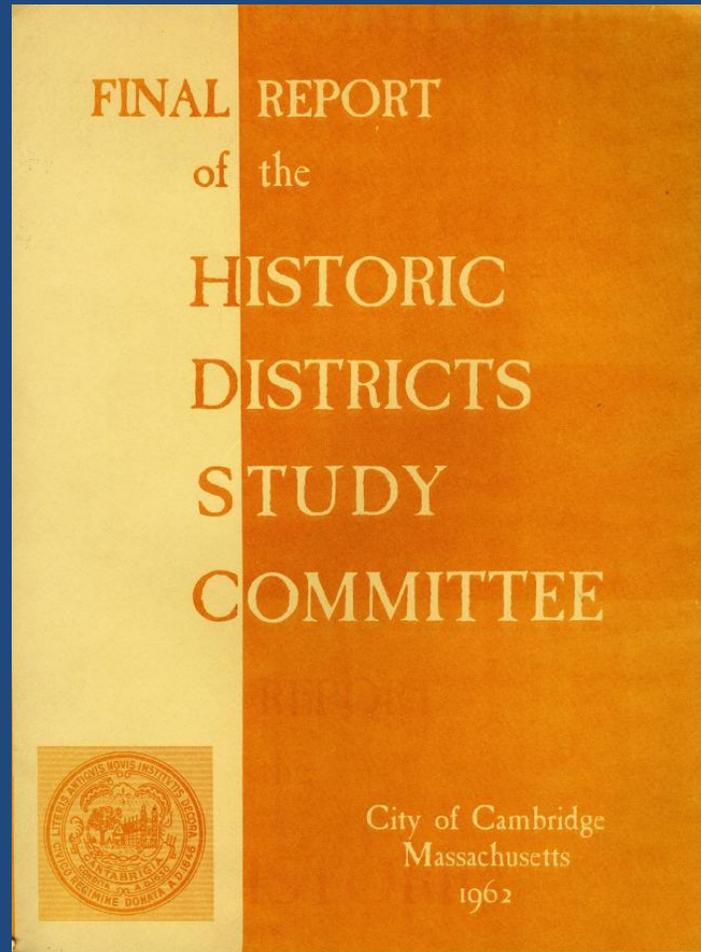
Boston Globe, November 18, 1963

Council Approves Historic District Study Resolution

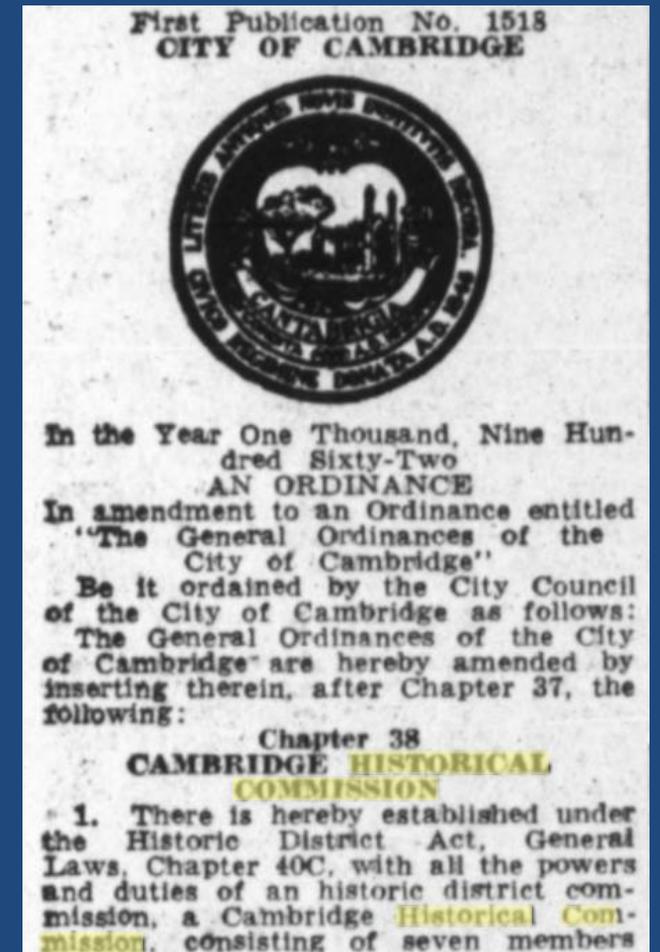
The city council Monday approved a resolution submitted by Mayor Crane calling for appointment by the city manager of a five-member Historic District **Study Committee**. The appointments would be subject to council approval.

The committee, under terms of the resolution, will make an investigation and report on the historic landmarks of the city, with recommendations for their care and improvement.

Cambridge Chronicle,
April 20, 1961



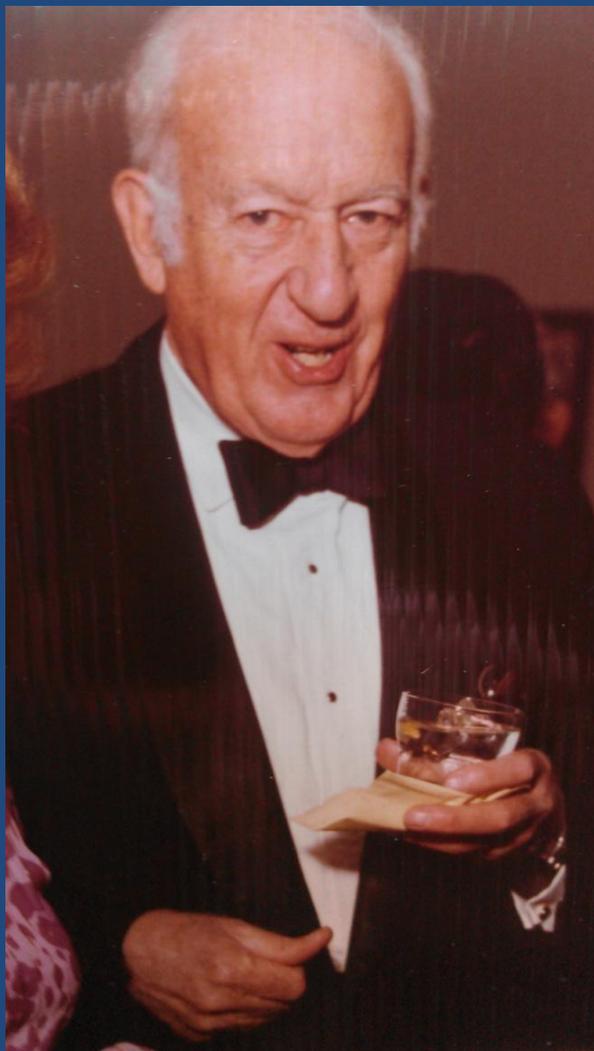
Final Report of the
Historic Districts Study Committee
June 19, 1962



Cambridge Chronicle,
September 27, 1963

The Historical Commission Ordinance adopted by the City Council in September 1963 established four historic districts and authorized the Commission -

- To conduct a survey of Cambridge buildings;
- To propose additional historic districts and changes in historic districts;
- To arrange for preparation and installation of markers for historic sites and buildings;
- To publish descriptive material about City historic sites and buildings;
- To arrange for construction of a model of Cambridge as it existed in 1775;
- To cooperate with and advise city agencies regarding historic sites and buildings;
- To engage with other agencies concerned with historic sites and buildings;
- To advise owners of historic buildings in the City on problems of preservation; and
- To make recommendations with respect to the National Register of Historic Places.



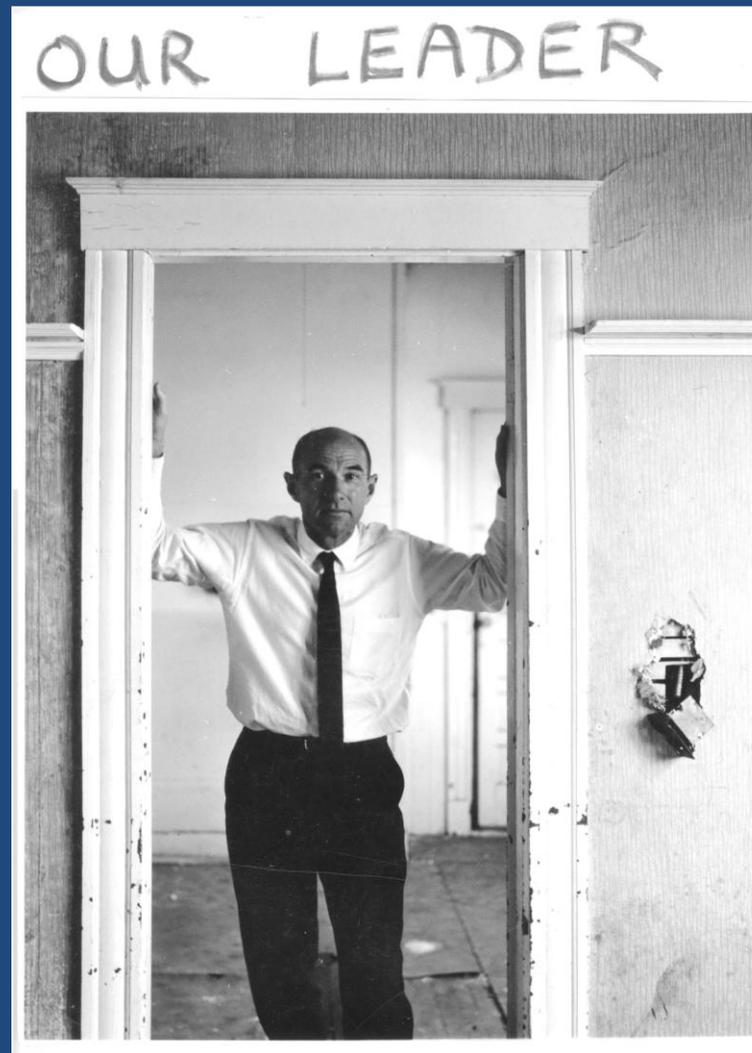
Albert B. Wolfe, (1909-1990)
CHC Chair, 1963-1974

They May Snap Photographs Of Your House

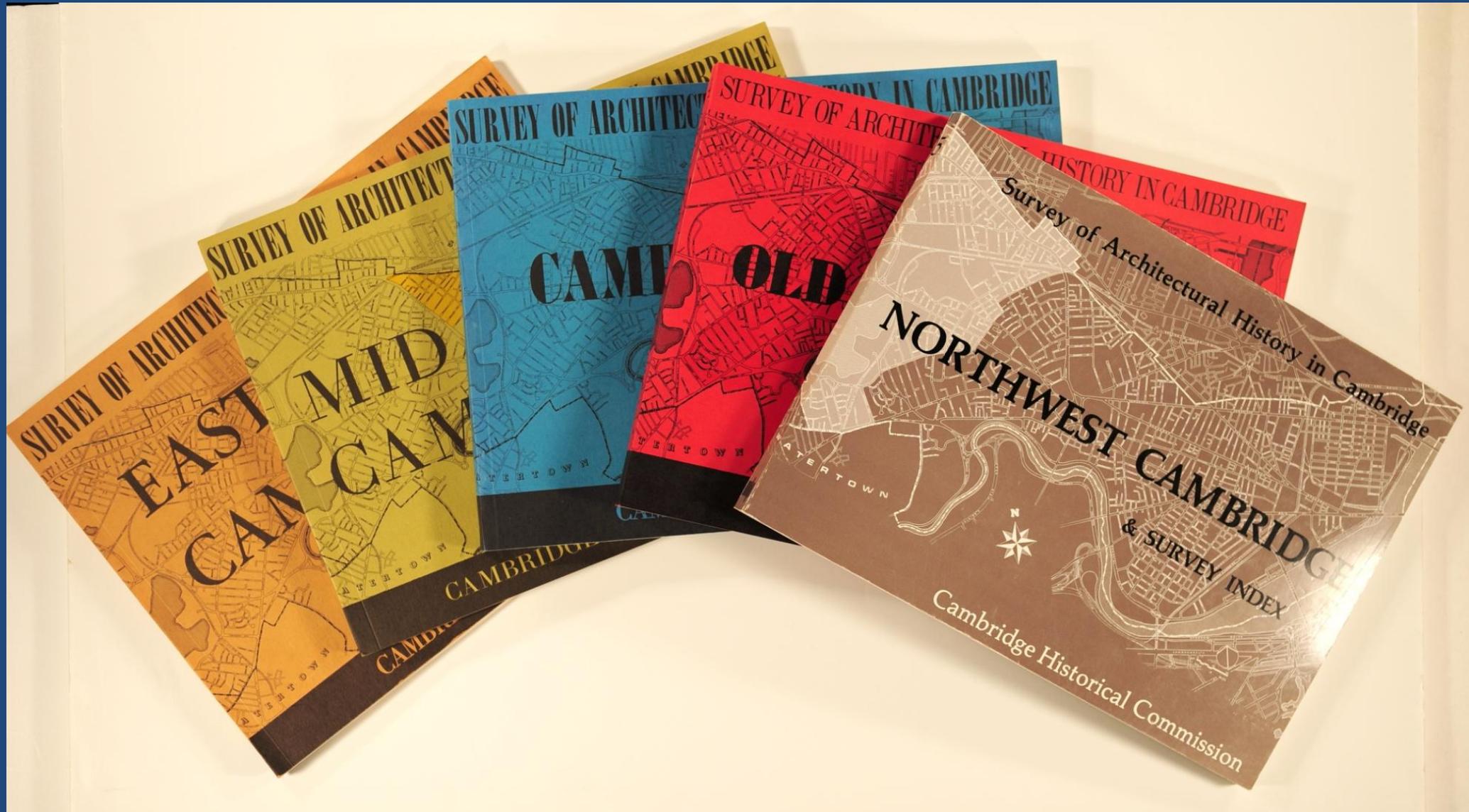
The **Cambridge Historical Commission** is continuing its city - wide architectural survey, familiar to readers of the first two survey publications — “East Cambridge” (1965) and “Mid Cambridge” (1967).

An essential part of the survey is photography, now under way in various parts of the city. If you see a photographer taking pictures of the outside of your house, chances are that he is working for the survey. If you have any doubts, please feel free to ask the photographer to show you a letter of authorization, or call the Commission office in City Hall Annex (876-6800, Ext. 345).

Cambridge Chronicle,
Oct. 3, 1968



Prof. Bainbridge Bunting (1913-1981)
CHC Survey Director, 1964-1974



Survey of Architectural History in Cambridge,
Reports One - Five, 1964-1977

DEMOLITION DELAY, 1979

Cambridge Chronicle

THURSDAY, MARCH 2, 1978

CAMBRIDGE (MA)

Buildings razed, councillors enraged

By Tom Nuttle

"I really felt our cumulative impotence," said City Councillor Mary Ellen Preusser.

"It's as if they came riding into Cambridge shooting off their six-guns," an Arsenal Square resident said.

A bulldozer began to demolish two Arsenal Square buildings at 42 Garden St. and 21 Concord Ave., on Monday, just hours before the City Council voted to favor a moratorium on building and demolition there. The final vote will come on March 13.

Neighbors had a building moratorium petition before the City Council, and had assurances from city councillors and city officials that the demolition wouldn't take place. At least not until after the Council spent several weeks on the issue.

City councillors and city officials thought they had an assurance from a lawyer for the lot's owner that the demolition wouldn't take place on Monday.

Haven O'More, identified as the owner of 42 Garden St. and 21 Concord Ave., two back-to-back lots, wants to build the Institute for Traditional Science on his property. To do that, he had planned to raze two of the four buildings there.

Morning meeting

City officials and neighbors, along with police, met at the site 6 a.m. Monday morning in order to stop the proposed demolition.

Robert Jones, an attorney for owner Haven O'More, told the group he would do what he could to stop the demolition. He would call

car. When she arrived, she found another lawyer for O'More there, taking pictures as the bulldozer destroyed.

"I went up the driveway yelling 'Stop that action! Stop that action!!' and he turned and laughed at me."

Permit revoked

The demolition permit was vanked by the

'What good are we?' asks one councillor

(Continued from Page 1)

Also moved Monday to the March 13 meeting for a final vote is a petition for a moratorium on the Alewife Brook Parkway area. That moratorium requires only five votes and would hold through April 14, 1978. The moratorium would allow the city planning department to complete their recommendations for zoning in that area.

Between now and March 13, city officials say they plan to find answers to questions

Taxpaying or not, a number of city officials and neighbors would like to stem the influx of educational institutes in the city.

"It seems that everyone who wants to have a non-profit institution wants to have a Cambridge address," said James Sullivan.

Neighbors claim there are 20 non-profit institutions in the two-block area around Arsenal Square.

City Councillor Frank Duehay, who joined Preusser in the 6 a.m. vigil on Garden Street, calls the Institute "an unknown educational



An Existential Moment, 1978

Council votes to save historical buildings

The Cambridge City Council last night changed the city ordinances to prevent indiscriminate demoli-

She said the ordinance didn't give communities within the city enough control over development in

Voting in favor of the ordinance were: Councilors Francis DuGraham, Mary Ellen Preusse and David V.

THURSDAY, JULY 26, 1979

CAMBRIDGE (MASS)

Greycroft demolition stayed by commission

By David McKay Wilson

The Cambridge Historical Commission (CHC) has granted a six-month reprieve to three 19th century rooming houses on Massachusetts Avenue, voting unanimously to deny apartment developers a permit to demolish the wood-frame structures.

The houses, at 1588-1600 Massachusetts Ave., were deemed "historically significant" and "preferably preserved" by the board, which

One petition requires a 35-foot height limit (28 units), the other has an 85-foot limit (57 units). Currently, there is no limit.

The Council will meet in special session Monday, August 6 to hear testimony on the petitions. The Planning Board has yet to give its recommendation following last Tuesday's hearing. A Council vote is expected sometime in September.

A&R partner Charles Raduano last week said

we no longer have any visual experience of what was once a magnificent residential neighborhood?"

Petrie, along with about 50 other Greycroft supporters at the hearing, including City Councilors David Wylie and Mary Ellen Preusser, were also concerned that an eight-story apartment building would further add to the neighborhood's growing density.

Unihab Renovate Inc., the city's leading

Jurisdiction Extended and Frustrated, 1979

NEIGHBORHOOD CONSERVATION DISTRICTS, 1983



“Cambridge Residents Block Demolition of House”
Boston Globe photo, May 17, 1982.

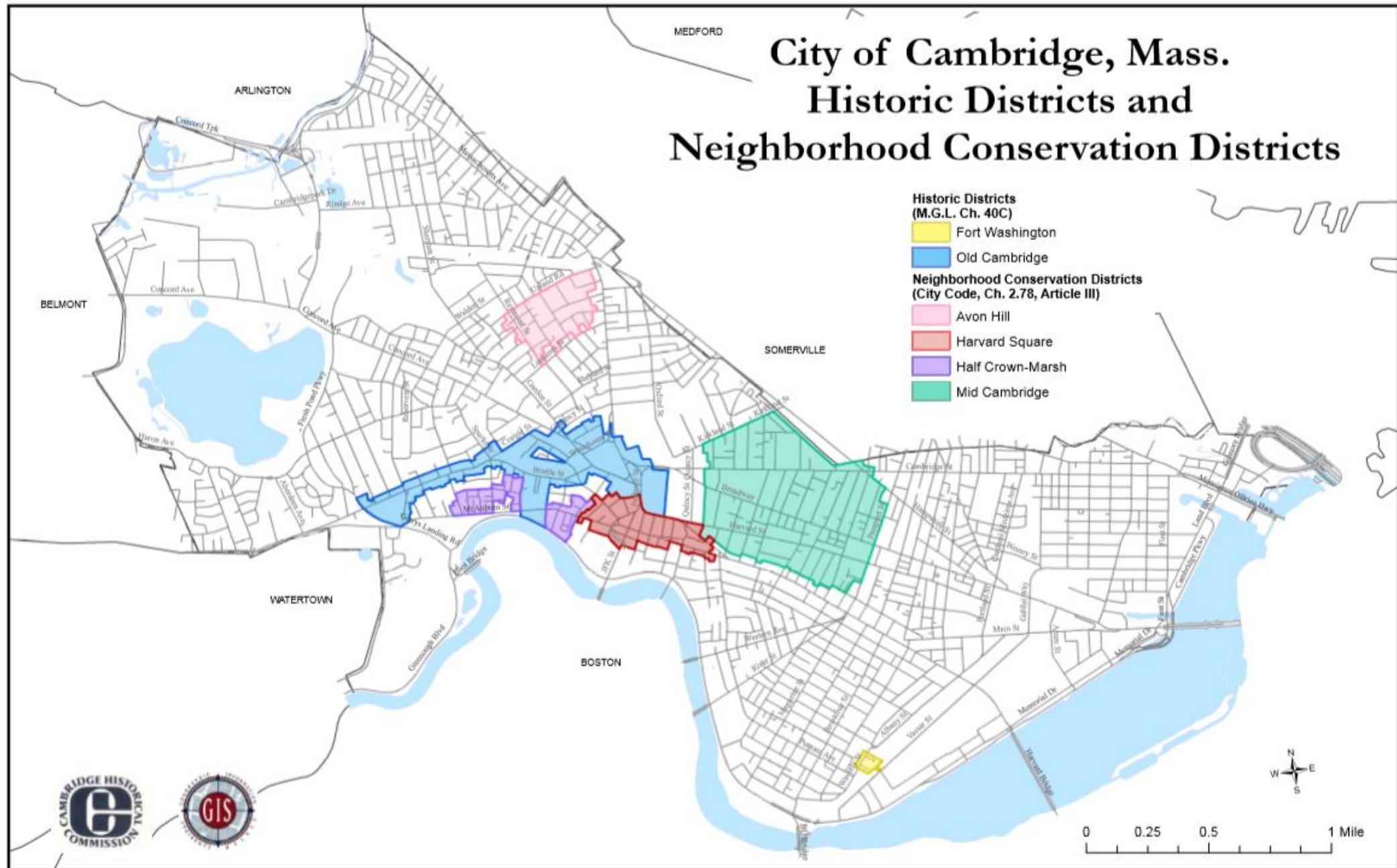
The Half Crown Neighborhood Conservation District
was established in 1983 following an attempt |
to demolish a house at 5 Revere Street.

NEIGHBORHOOD CONSERVATION DISTRICTS, 1983

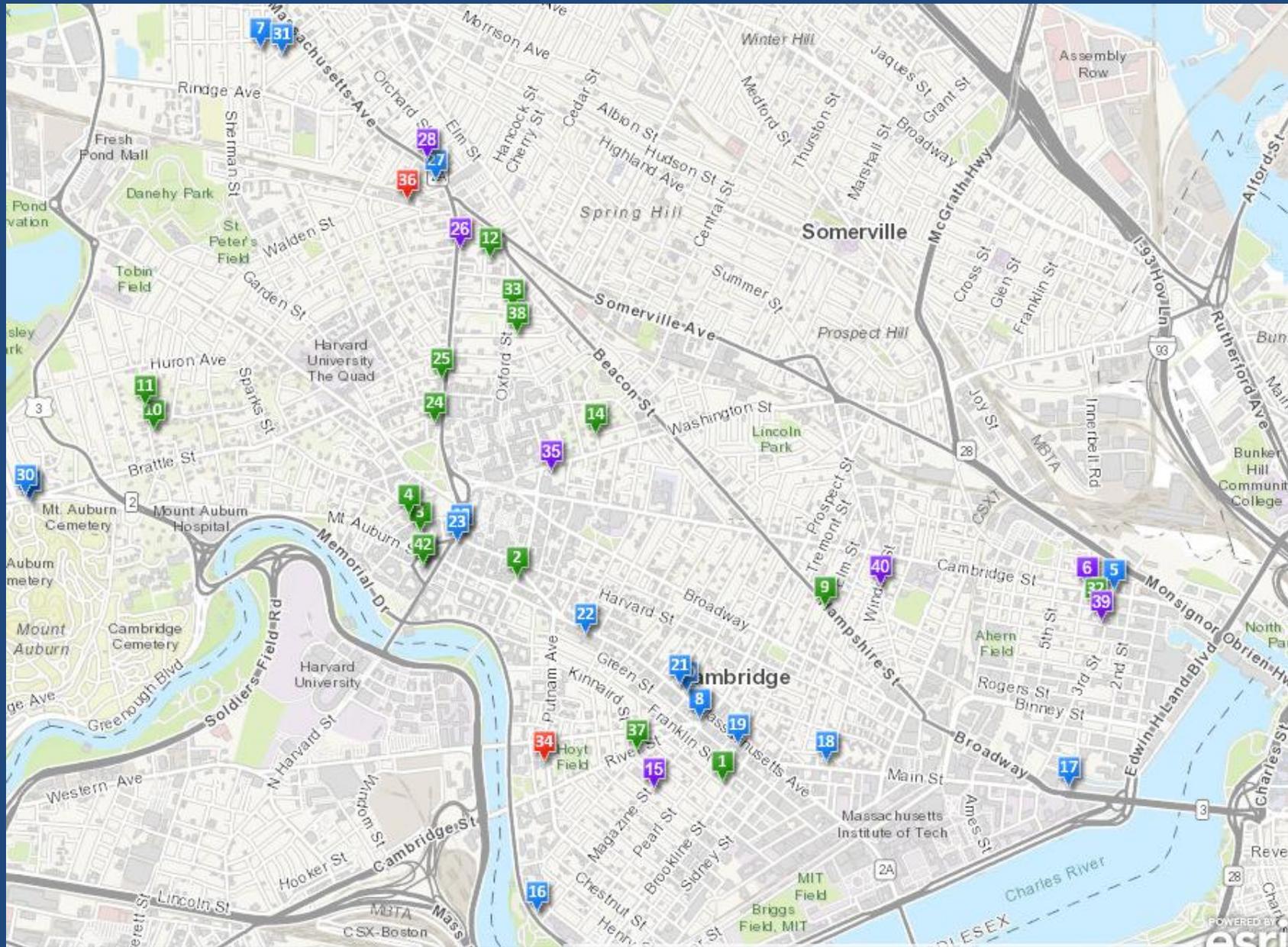


Harvard Street between Lee and Dana streets; 1970s infill in red

City of Cambridge, Mass. Historic Districts and Neighborhood Conservation Districts



DESIGNATED LANDMARKS AND PROPERTIES PROTECTED BY EASEMENTS



NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES, 1986



Preservation Activities and Wins

Community Preservation Act/Institutional Preservation Grants



Pentecostal Tabernacle Church

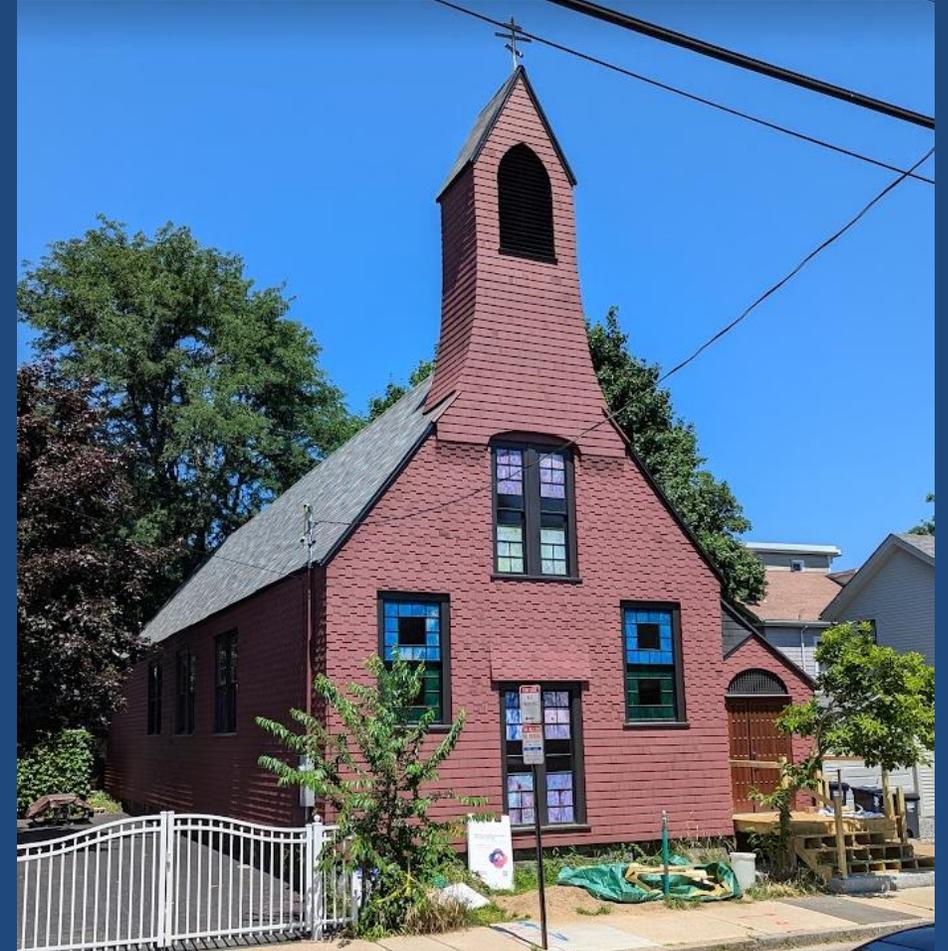


Longy School of Music, perimeter wall restoration

Preservation Grants – 1976 to Date



51 Norfolk Street, affordable housing restored with Preservation Grant assistance



St Augustine's Church, 137 Allston Street Restored with Preservation Grant Assistance

HARVARD UNIVERSITY-CAMBRIDGE HISTORICAL COMMISSION PROTOCOL, 1986



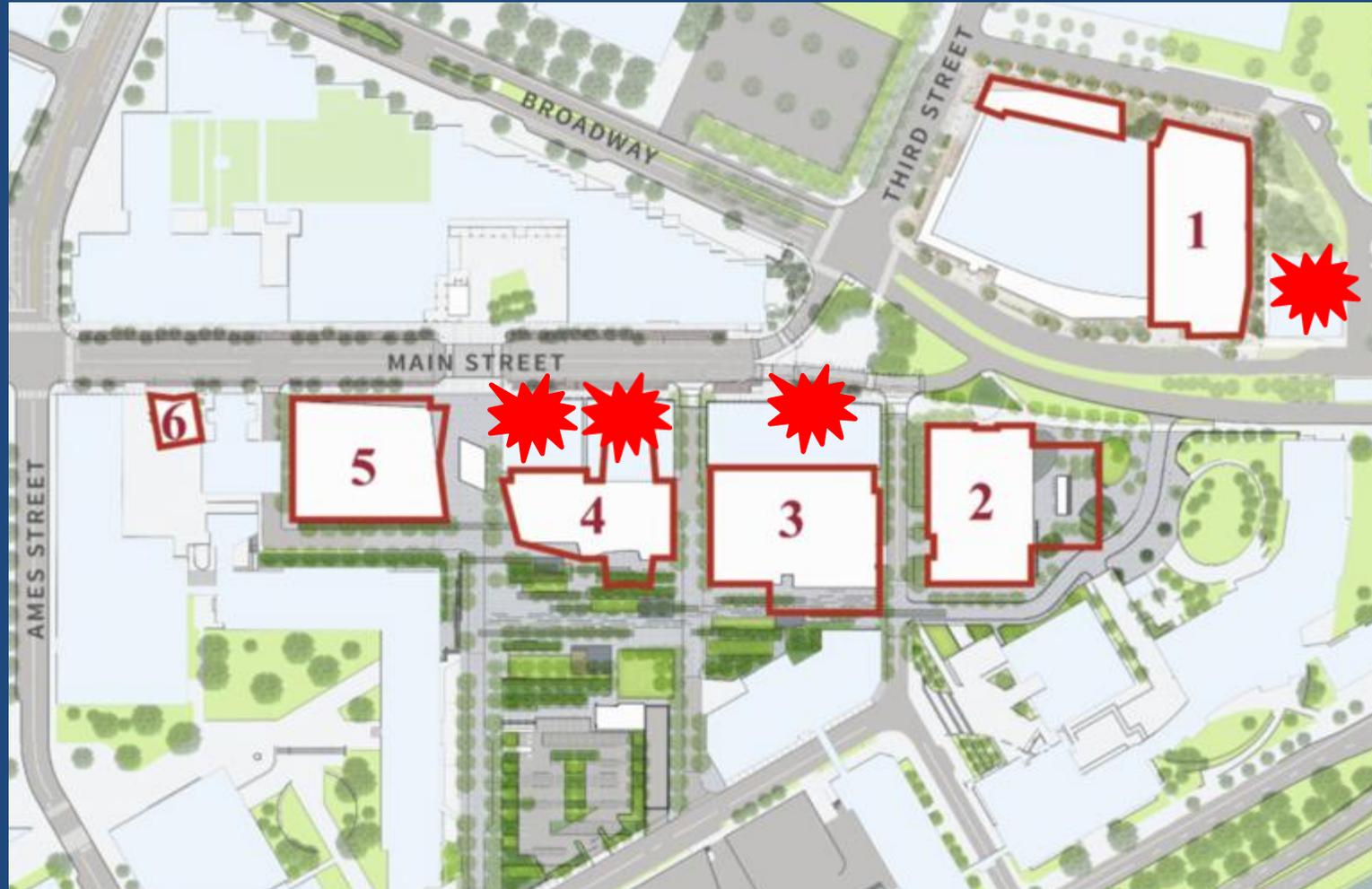
Memorial Hall (1870)
Tower Burned, 1958; Restored, 1999

M.I.T. – CAMBRIDGE HISTORICAL COMMISSION PROTOCOL, 2016



Metropolitan Storage Warehouse adaptive reuse

National Register/MIT Protocol



MIT's Kendall Square Initiative

9 million sf. of construction, four historic buildings preserved

National Register/MIT Protocol



SOMA Projects, Kendall Square

National Register/MIT Protocol



E & R Laundry, 211 Massachusetts Avenue (1904, C.H. McClare, architect)

Demolition Delay and Affordable Housing

**Affordable Living
in the Heart of Porter Square**




Frost Terrace consists of 40, 100% affordable apartment homes*, located in bustling Porter Square, Cambridge. The convenient location is close to many amenities such as local schools, places of worship, stores, eateries and public transportation. Surrounded by mature trees and lush landscaping, the apartments at Frost Terrace were meticulously designed between four buildings, three of which were existing and have been restored to their historic integrity. A new building located at the middle of the site encompasses a more modern design and a community room as an amenity to building residents.

*Rent and income restrictions apply.

**1785-1791 Massachusetts Avenue
Cambridge, MA 02140**

617.945.7531
FT@TrinityManagementCompany.com

**Studio, one, two
and three-bedroom
apartment homes**

Studio - 568 sf
1 bedroom - Between 626-692 sf
2 bedroom - Between 680-1,008 sf
3 bedroom - Between 988-1,285 sf




Three bedroom*
One bedroom*

*Sample floorplans reflected, sizes and layouts will vary.
Artistic renderings for visual purposes only.
Dimensions are estimates and are not guaranteed. May not be to exact scale.

www.FrostTerApts.com

Frost Terrace, 1785 Mass. Ave.



1627 Mass. Ave./4 Mellen Street

Advocacy and Technical Assistance



White Tower Restaurant, 25 Central Square (1932)

Adaptive Reuse



Biogen Headquarters, Binney Street, with adaptively reused warehouses

Adaptive Reuse



EMF Building, 116 Brookline Street (1920, 1948)

Restoration in the Mid Cambridge NCD



Benj. Colley & Co., 208-212 Hampshire Street (1868)

Bicentennial Restoration of Fort Washington, 1976-1982



Restoration of Longfellow Park, 1985-1995

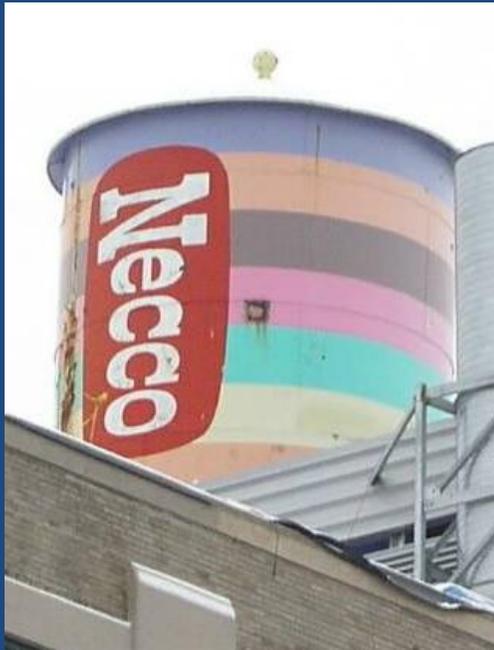


Cambridge Common Monuments



Gravestone Restoration, Old Burying Ground - Ongoing





BOSTON SUNDAY GLOBE

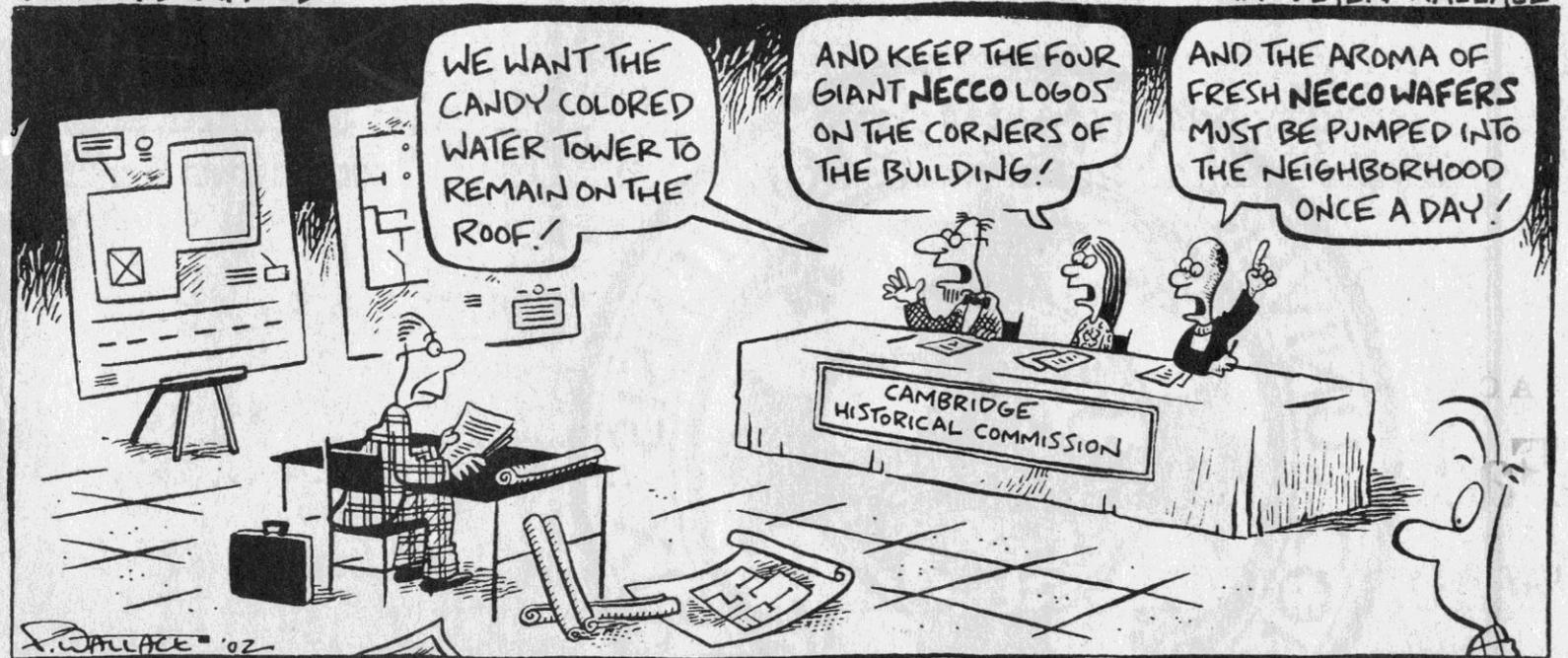
MAY 19, 2002

HARRY FIG'S NEIGHBORHOOD

BY PETER WALLACE

DEVELOPER
PLANS TO
CONVERT OLD
NECCO CANDY
FACTORY INTO
BIOTECH
CENTER

(NEWS ITEM)



The Commission Considers Adaptive Reuse of Necco Factory
The Boston Globe, May 19, 2002



“Nothing is Permanent, Accept Change”
Lake Street, Arlington ca. 1985

Public Hearing: Demolition Review Ordinance 2.78, Art. II of the City Code

Part I: Significance

- a. Staff report and recommendation
- b. Questions of fact re: significance only
- c. Public comment re: significance only
- d. Commission vote re: significance only

If the Commission confirms the existing building is significant, then we move on to Part II.

Part II: Preferably Preserved?

- a. Presentation of proposed replacement project.
- b. Questions of fact re: replacement project
- c. Public comment re: replacement or preservation
- d. Commission deliberation about the weighing of public benefits. Vote whether to find the existing building preferably preserved or not.

A vote to find it preferably preserved results in a demo delay.

MEETING PAUSED FOR A BRIEF RECESS



The meeting will resume at x:xx P.M.

TECHNICAL DIFFICULTIES



Thank you for your patience. The meeting will resume shortly.

TECHNICAL DIFFICULTIES



Thank you for your patience. The meeting will resume shortly.

