CHURCH OF THE NEW JERUSALEM/SWEDENBORG CHAPEL
50 QUINCY STREET
LANDMARK DESIGNATION STUDY REPORT

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Cambridge Historical Commission
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Church of the New Jerusalem (Swedenborg Chapel) is a one-and-a-half story, gable roofed stone building in the Late Gothic Revival style, designed by H. Langford Warren of the firm Warren, Smith & Biscoe, and constructed in 1901. It housed the Cambridge Swedenborg congregation, established in 1888.

The chapel is importantly associated with the broad architectural, aesthetic, cultural and social history of the City and the Commonwealth as a rare example of Swedenborg church architecture in Massachusetts; for its connections to the Arts and Crafts movement, a major aesthetic force in early 20th-century Massachusetts; for its connections to the Swedenborg faith, which influenced Transcendentalism, an important component of the state's 19th-century cultural history; and as an extension of Cambridge's prominence as a center of intellectual influence in Massachusetts and beyond.

It is also significant in terms of its period, style, and association with a famous architect. The chapel was designed by Herbert Langford Warren (1857-1917), founder of the Harvard School of Architecture (now the Graduate School of Design) and an important figure in architectural pedagogy at a time when the architectural profession in the U.S. was in its formative period and when Boston was a major national center for architectural education and design. Stylistically, the Swedenborg Chapel is an early and, in Cambridge, rare example of the Late Gothic Revival style.

I. Location and Economic Status

A. Address

The Church of the New Jerusalem, also known as the Swedenborg Chapel, is located at 50 Quincy Street at the corner of Quincy and Kirkland streets in Mid Cambridge. It occupies a 19,564 square foot lot identified as parcel 19 on assessor's map 143. The property includes the 1901 masonry chapel building and a 1965 frame parish house wing. Because the property is in religious use, it is exempt from taxation. The land is valued at $1,173,000 and the buildings at $1,178,100 for a total valuation of $2,351,100.

The Swedenborg Chapel is located in a Residence C-3 zone and is also subject to the terms of the Institutional Overlay District. The Residence C-3 zone allows a height limit of 120' and an FAR of 3.0. With an FAR of approximately .44, the existing structure uses approximately 15% of the site's development capacity. The provisions of the Institutional Overlay would apply to any institutional owner of the property, but would not pertain if the ownership of the property were other than institutional. For additional information on the zoning status of the property, see the attached memo titled "Zoning Analysis for Swedenborg Chapel at Kirkland and Quincy Streets", prepared by Les Barber, Cambridge Community Development Department, and dated February 16, 1999.

The C-3 zone allows for single-, two-, and multiple-family residential use as well as transient accommodation residential use. A variety of institutional uses are also permitted as of right, among them religious, educational, social service, health care, and club uses.

B. Ownership and Occupancy

The record owner of the property at 50 Quincy Street is the Corporation of the New Church Theological School, 48 Sargent Street, Newton, Massachusetts 02458. The corporation now does business as the Swedenborg School of Religion. The property is occupied by the Cambridge Society of the New Jerusalem, the local congregation that worships in the chapel space and uses the parish house. Services are held weekly; other activities of the congregation include a reading room, open several days per week.

In the summer of 1998, the Swedenborg School of Religion listed the property for sale with Meredith & Grew Incorporated for $3.5 million.

C. Area Description

The Swedenborg Chapel is located at the corner of Quincy and Kirkland streets, a busy intersection at the northeastern edge of the Harvard campus. The area contains a mix of large-scale academic buildings interspersed with 19th-century residences converted to university uses. One block east of the chapel is Sumner Road, which forms a transition from the institutional uses of the university to the residential uses of the Mid Cambridge neighborhood. Immediately south of the chapel is the Graduate School of Design's five-story classroom, studio, and library building, Gund Hall (1969, John Andrews/Anderson/Baldwin); opposite the chapel to the west is Memorial Hall (1870, Ware & Van Brunt); and to the north are the former Busch-Reisinger Germanic Museum (1914, German Bestelmayer with Warren & Smith), now the Minda da Gunzberg Center for European Studies, and William James Hall (1963, Yamasaki & Associates), a 14-story high-rise building that houses the behavioral sciences department.

The area is architecturally diverse with monumental structures, such as Memorial, Gund, and William James halls, in close proximity to two much-smaller houses east of the chapel that are the remnants of a 19th-century residential enclave known as Professor's Row: the Luther Brooks House (1840, 34 Kirkland Street) and the Joseph Lovering House (1839-40, 38 Kirkland Street). The Treadwell- Sparks House (1839, 21 Kirkland Street, moved 1968 from 48 Quincy Street) stands opposite the chapel to the west of the Busch-Reisinger museum. The area's strong contrasts of scale are mediated by significant open spaces. The park-like setting of Memorial Hall, a landscaped sward at the rear of Gund Hall, and the combined back- and side-yards of 34 and 38 Kirkland Street soften the juxtapositions of these structures.

The chapel is set back approximately 75 feet on a grassy, roughly triangular lot bordered by a four-foot retaining wall along Kirkland Streets. Mature foundation plantings surround the entrance porch and extend around the south and east elevations. An asphalt-paved parking lot accessed from Kirkland Street abuts the 1965 wing on the west elevation.

D. Planning Issues

The Swedenborg chapel is individually listed on the National Register of Historic Places. It was listed as the Church of the New Jerusalem on June 30, 1983 as part of the Cambridge Multiple Resources Area comprehensive National Register listing.

Two major planning issues affect the Swedenborg Chapel property. The first is the decision of its record owners to sell the building in order to generate income for its educational program at the current headquarters in Newton; the Swedenborg School of Religion has not used the building since 1964. The second is Harvard University's announced plan to construct a new building for the Center for Government and International Studies near the current center in Coolidge Hall, 1737 Cambridge Street, southeast of the chapel site.

The Swedenborg Chapel was built by the New Church Theological School on part of the Jared Sparks estate purchased in 1889 for the purpose of housing both a school and a Cambridge congregation of Swedenborgians. The congregation initially worshipped in the Treadwell-Sparks House, the home of the Theological School. A separate chapel was not constructed until the Cambridge congregation had developed sufficient numbers to be instituted as a separate society, which occurred in May of 1901. In November, 1901, the first services were held in the new chapel building and the congregation was "invited [by the School] to occupy the chapel for religious services until otherwise ordered." (Taft, p. 197)

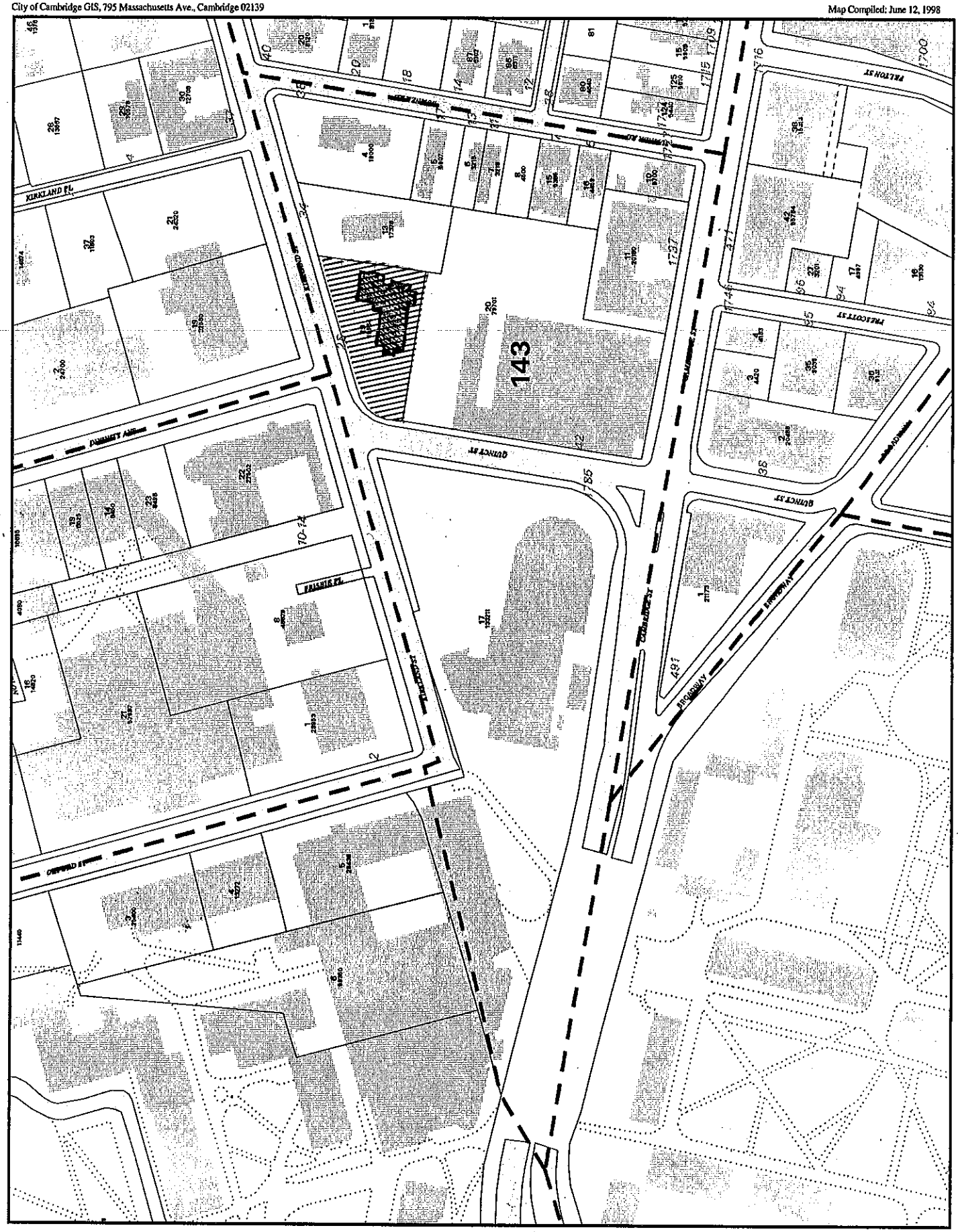
When the Sparks house was sold to Harvard in 1964, the Cambridge Society continued to worship in the chapel even though the New Church Theological School had relocated to its current headquarters in Newton. Recent correspondence between Richard B. Hatheway, Chairman of the Swedenborg School of Religion Board of Trustees, and Lars-Erik Wiborg, current president of the Cambridge Society, states the School's reasons for putting the chapel on the market: "We find it difficult, if not impossible, to fulfill our mission as the only seminary providing education for the ministry of the Swedenborgian Church unless we are able to redeploy this asset base [the Cambridge property] so as to generate income to help offset our operating deficit. The Board of Trustees has, therefore, voted to sell the Cambridge property at the earliest reasonable opportunity" (March 24, 1998). The Cambridge Swedenborg Society holds a right of first refusal on the sale of the chapel, while the President and Fellows of Harvard College hold a right of second refusal on the sale.

In 1997, Harvard announced plans to construct the Center for Government and International Studies and to use a gift from Sidney Knafel, a New York City venture capitalist, for planning purposes. Preliminary planning studies proposed an 80,000-square foot building, known locally as the Knafel Center, in the block bounded by Cambridge, Quincy, and Kirkland streets and Sumner Road. In these preliminary studies, the building occupied the open area at the center of the block and replaced Coolidge Hall, as well as some or all of the houses on Sumner Road. The firm of Pei Cobb Freed & Associates, with Harry Cobb as Principal Architect, was hired to design the center.

In response to intense neighborhood criticism and programmatic constraints, the firm now proposes to place the center on a split site on both sides of Cambridge Street, demolishing Coolidge Hall and the University Information Systems building to create a 75,000-square foot facility linked by an underground tunnel. While the Sumner Road residences would likely be integrated in some way into the overall complex, current plans indicate they would be preserved in situ; there is no indication that the Swedenborg Chapel would be part of the Knafel Center project.

In addition to these larger issues, the site is substantially affected by the specific conditions on its site, notably the discrepancy between the floor area of the existing structure and the allowable floor area contained in the C-3 zone. The shape of the triangular corner lot and relatively deep setback of the chapel building limit the capacity to create additional development on the site at a scale commensurate with its zoning without significantly impacting the building and its setting.

E. Maps



City of Cambridge, Massachusetts

Assessing Department

CHURCH OF THE NEW JERUSALEM/
SWEDENBORG CHAPEL

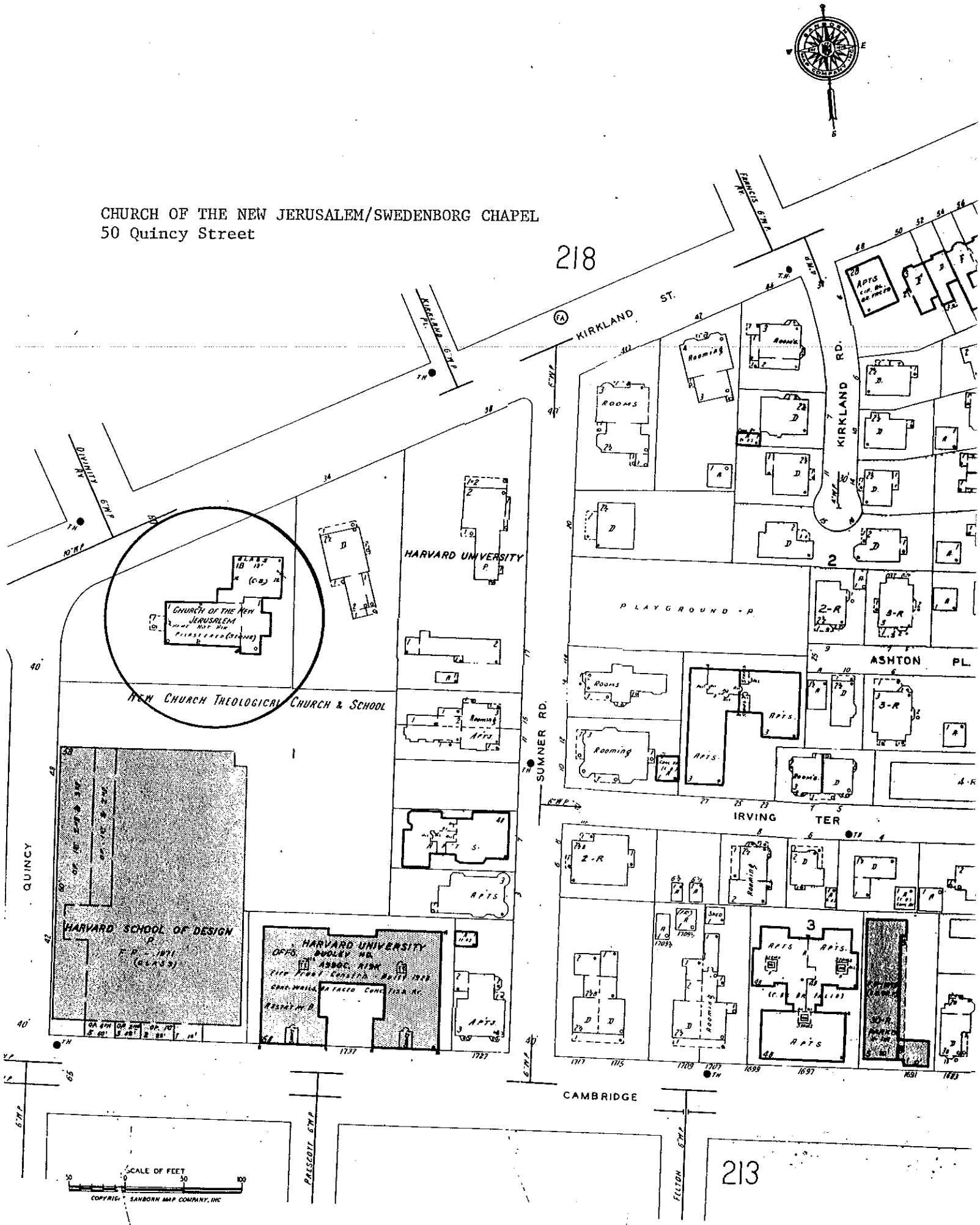
0 Feet 170

Approximate Scale

Parcel Map

Map: 143

CHURCH OF THE NEW JERUSALEM/SWEDENBORG CHAPEL
50 Quincy Street



II. Description

The Swedenborg Chapel is a one-and-a-half story, gable-roofed stone building in the English Gothic Revival style, designed by H. Langford Warren of the firm Warren, Smith & Biscoe, and constructed in 1901. A simple, symmetrical building in plan and massing, it conveys quality and substance through its materials and craftsmanship.

The building is constructed of rubblestone with Indiana limestone trim. The roof is of green and purple slate, in even courses that provide a visual contrast to the rugged, uncoursed quality of the walls below. In plan, it is a rectangle, oriented east west on the site in the traditional manner of ecclesiastical architecture. The building is entered through a one-story porch at the west end, and the altar is located in a shallow, projecting one-story gabled chancel bay at the east end. Subsidiary projections include a shed roofed side entrance and chimney on the south elevation at the chancel crossing and a hip roofed projection on the north side that is now obscured by the 1965 Parish House addition. (The Parish House addition is not considered contributing to the significance of the Swedenborg Chapel.) A basement bulkhead, in lead-coated copper, is also located to the south of the chancel bay.

The west end forms the visual and decorative focal point of the design with a gable-roofed, projecting entrance porch at the center bay. The porch is set against a very-shallow projecting section of the façade, which frames a large lancet window with geometric tracery above the porch and from which rises an open, gabled bell-cote.

The entrance porch is especially decorative and Warren added it to the original design when a $10,000 anonymous donation boosted the original $15,000 construction budget (Akutsu, Robinson and Williams). Granite steps lead to a buttressed, lancet-arched opening containing wrought-iron gates, a later memorial donation that was not part of the original design. The gates, with pierced panels in a quatrefoil design below trefoil pickets, enclose the entry, which is paved in tile and lit by small lancet windows in the side walls. Paired oak doors hung on decorative wrought-iron strap hinges open into the chapel. A wrought-iron lantern hangs overhead. A recent alteration is the introduction of an anodized aluminum and glass wall set back behind the gate for additional security. While it obscures the original entrance, the new wall is placed to recede into the shadow of the porch enclosure and is not obtrusive from the street.

Limestone trim further embellishes the exterior of the porch and the west wall. The buttresses and eaves of the porch wall are coped with limestone, and a carved limestone cross sits at the peak of the porch gable. The porch foundation is capped with a limestone water table (elsewhere on the building the water table is flashed but integrated into the masonry), and the roof drains into broad limestone gutters supported on corbels carved with foliage and human faces. The four corbels carved with human faces represent the "four ages of man": a child, a maiden, a man in the prime of life, and an old woman.

On the west wall at either side of the porch are lancet windows with limestone hood moulds whose carved corbels represent the allegorical beasts of the four evangelists. The two lancets contain stained glass memorial windows representing "The Good Shepherd" and "Behold, I stand at the door and knock." The west wall above the porch contains a large central lancet window whose corbels are carved with winged angel's heads, expressing a symbolic progression from the human and animal forms carved at the ground level to the evangelical beasts of the mid-level. Stained glass fills the flowing tracery of the lancet. Limestone panels at

the base of this lancet and at the base of the bell-cote are carved with foliage; a series of three blank shields in the bell-cote panel were perhaps intended for later carving.

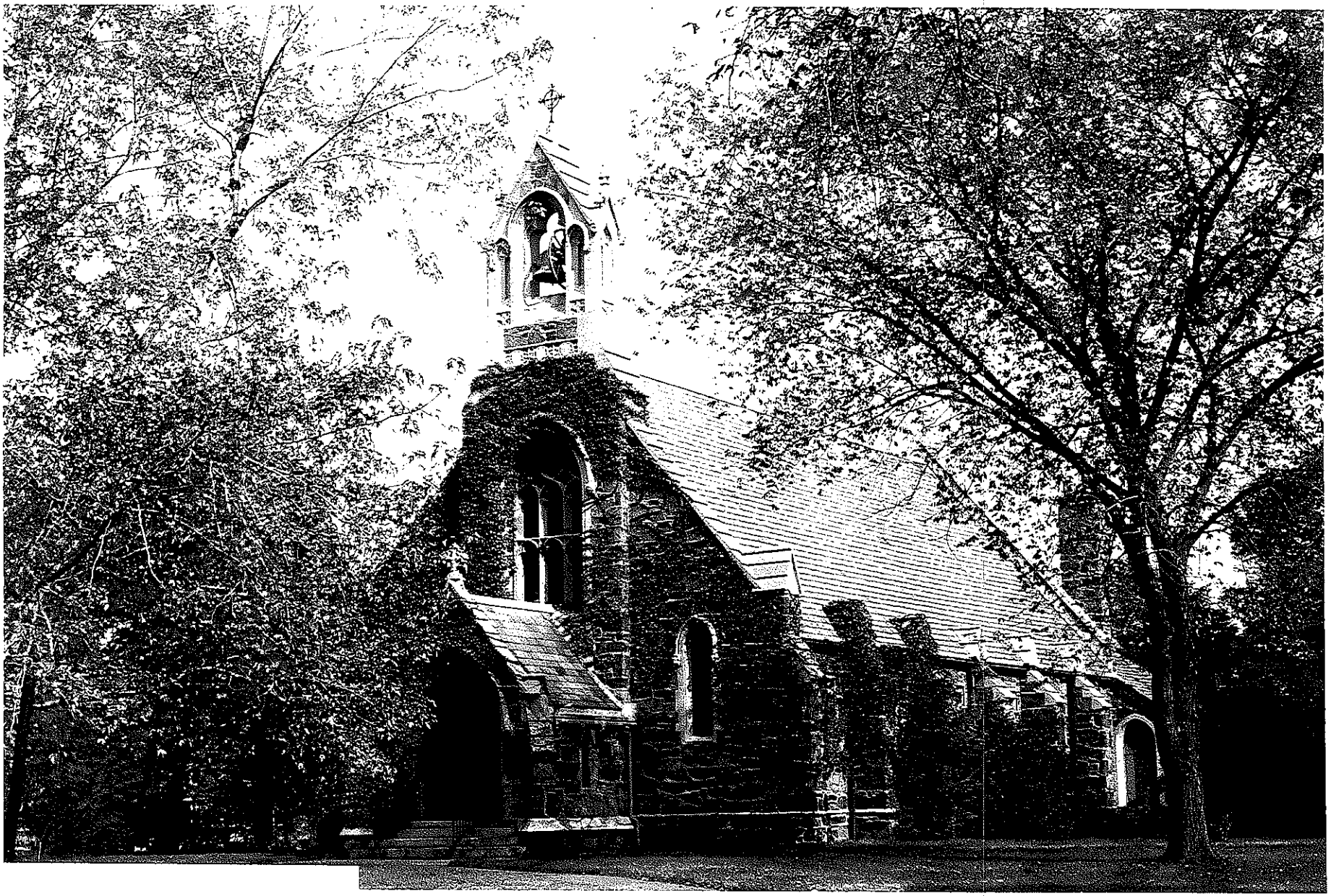
The limestone bell-cote consists of two small, blind lancet arches flanking a larger, open central lancet arch where a single bell on a wheel is hung. Of the façade elements, the bell-cote is treated most elaborately, with pinnacled gablets at the side, limestone coping and tracery, and a wrought-iron cross at the peak.

The side elevations of the chapel, by contrast, are simpler. The steep pitch of the gable roof renders the side walls quite low, while the deep projection of the buttresses along the nave shields the windows in each bay. The windows are set in rectangular limestone casings with hood moulds. Limestone mullions separate each window into three low, Tudor-arched lights filled with leaded sashes in grisaille. The south side entrance bay contains a lancet-arched entrance facing west (the wrought-iron door hinges are original; the door is a plywood replacement) and a three-part mullioned window with rectangular lights facing south. The rectangular lights of the side entrance, which light the minister's room, differentiate service space from the ceremonial space denoted by the arched lights of the nave.

While ritually significant on the interior, the east elevation is, on the exterior, subsidiary. Largely shielded from public view, it faces away from the street and into the center of the block. The major feature of the east elevation is a three-part lancet window with stained glass in tracery. The glass, in grisaille, contains words from the gospel of John and a representation of the Holy Spirit descending as a dove. A small limestone cross caps the peak of the gable at the chancel crossing and another smaller cross tops the chancel gable. Also on the east elevation and adjacent to the side entrance bay are a chimney for the heating system and the bulkhead entrance to the basement.

In 1965, a Parish House addition was constructed at the northeast corner of the chapel. Designed by Cambridge architect Arthur H. Brooks, Jr., and financed by the Theological School, the addition was intended to provide ancillary meeting and office space following the sale of the Sparks estate. The one-story frame structure faced with plywood, stucco, and glass is set into the grade of the site on a raised basement. The addition is entered at the half-story level through a glass and aluminum entrance vestibule at the west side. Stylistically, the design reinterprets in modern materials the Gothic Revival features of the chapel: peaked gables on the north side echo the buttresses of the chapel. It does not contribute to the historic or architectural significance of the site.

The interior of the chapel, while not a component of the landmark designation, is, like the exterior, simple in design but constructed of substantial materials in the Gothic tradition. The woodwork in the sanctuary dominates the space. The nave and chancel have open trussed timber roofs of hard pine and wrought iron light fixtures. Bench pews fill the nave on either side of a center aisle; at the chancel crossing is a carved rail, pulpit and font. The chancel contains a limestone altar with a carved limestone reredos and is paved with glazed terracotta tiles, some of which are ornamented with texts, animals, or symbols of the alpha and omega and evangelical beasts. To the south of the chancel is the minister's room, to the north is the organ chamber with an organ given in memory of the Reverend John Worcester, president of the theological school from 1881-94.



CHC Photo, Richard Cheek, 1968

Given Langford Warren's associations with the Boston Society of Arts and Crafts, it is likely that interior finishes, including liturgical objects, may be associated with firms or individuals prominent in the Arts and Crafts movement, but specific attributions have not been researched as part of this report. Plans for landscaping the New Church are listed in the papers of the Olmsted firm (job 2263) but were not consulted for this report.

III. History of the Property

A. Historic Development Patterns

1. Deed History of the Property

The deed history of the Swedenborg Chapel derives from that of 48 Quincy Street, the original location of the Treadwell-Sparks House, on which property the chapel was built in 1901. In 1837, Daniel Treadwell purchased a 59,000 square foot lot at 48 Quincy Street from William Hyslop Sumner, a Boston merchant and the owner of a large parcel of undeveloped land along Kirkland Street which Sumner had acquired from the Francis Foxcroft estate in 1808 (see Middlesex Deeds, Book 362, page 171). Treadwell, a professor of applied science, had master builder William Saunders construct an unusual, wide-pilastered house where Treadwell lived for a decade.

Subsequently the home of Jared Sparks, professor of ancient and modern history and president of Harvard (1849-53), the house was sold in 1887 by the Sparks heirs to the Corporation of the New Church Theological School through an intermediary, Charles M. Reed of Boston (see Middlesex Deeds, book 510, page 226; book 560, page 111; book 1898, pages 172 and 176). In 1901, the house was turned 90° and moved south on its lot to make room for the chapel's construction. The Treadwell-Sparks House remained in the New Church's ownership until 1966, when the Corporation sold the property, minus the chapel lot, to the President and Fellows of Harvard College (see Middlesex Deeds, Book 11133, page 218). The house was moved again, in 1968, to 21 Kirkland Street for construction of Gund Hall. The 19,000 square foot parcel containing the chapel and its 1965 parish house annex remains in the ownership of the Corporation of the New Church Theological School.

2. Development History of the Parcel and Surroundings

The Church of the New Jerusalem stands in an area that became popular for Harvard faculty residences during the administrations of presidents John Kirkland (1810-28) and Josiah Quincy (1829-45); nearly all of these houses have been either demolished or relocated for university expansion. Topographically, the area is an extension of a level plain that ran north from the village of Old Cambridge to Observatory Hill (Bond Street). Kirkland Street, connecting Harvard Square and the Charlestown peninsula, was a Native American trail predating English settlement. Through the 17th and 18th centuries, much of the surrounding area along Kirkland and Cambridge streets was part of the estate of Francis Foxcroft, a merchant. The Foxcroft heirs subdivided portions of the estate in 1804, at which time Quincy Street was laid out. As stated previously, the Swedenborg chapel was erected on the Treadwell-Sparks property, location of one of two houses on Quincy Street between Cambridge and Kirkland streets. The Treadwell-Sparks house (1838) and the neighboring Henry Greenough House (1855, Henry Greenough, architect; demolished 1928) occupied that section of Quincy Street until construction of the chapel in 1901.

In the 1840s, Quincy Street began to supplant Professor's Row (Kirkland Street) as a prime residential location for those connected to the college, and it remained so up to the end of the 19th century, as a cosmopolitan group of noted academics settled along the street's length. By the 1890s, its residential status was being challenged by institutional owners such as the New Church Corporation (which purchased the Treadwell-Sparks House in 1889) and the Colonial Club (which purchased the Henry James, Sr. House at 20 Quincy Street in 1891). But it was early 20th century university expansion under Harvard president Lowell that destroyed the

Perspective sketch, Cambridge Chronicle, 1900

residential character of the street, as the old houses were demolished or relocated for classroom buildings, the Harvard Union, and the Fogg Art Museum. More recent buildings, including Gund Hall (1968) and the Sackler Museum (1981), completed the street's transformation to institutional use.

Ironically, the Swedenborg chapel presently stands among buildings that, though not original to its setting, are nonetheless historically or functionally related to it in various ways. Gund Hall houses the Graduate School of Design which was founded by the chapel's architect, Langford Warren, and the Busch-Reisinger Museum (now the Gunzberg Center) was built from German plans that were adapted for construction by Langford Warren. Within sight of the chapel stand its original neighbor the Treadwell-Sparks House and William James Hall, named for the eminent psychologist and philosopher who resided on Quincy Street and whose family was Swedenborgian.

B. Historic Photographs, Maps

C. Bibliography

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Cambridge Historical Commission, architect files for H. Langford Warren

Massachusetts Historical Commission, MACRIS statewide data base listings for Swedenborgian churches

3. Personal Conversation

January 19, 1999 with Maureen Meister, Ph.D. candidate, Brown University, pending dissertation on "Herbert Langford Warren: Architecture, Harvard, and the Arts and Crafts Movement"

IV. Significance of the Property

A. Historical Significance

The Swedenborgian church as an institution derives its theology from the writings of Emmanuel Swedenborg (b. Stockholm,1688 - d. London, 1772). Swedenborg was the author of voluminous works on mathematics, physical sciences, philosophy and theology. Although he did not present himself personally as the exponent of a new religion, his visionary interpretations of Christian theology inspired the founding of the Church of the New Jerusalem in London in 1787 after his death. As early as 1792, a congregation had been established in the U.S., in Baltimore. The earliest Swedenborg congregation in Boston formed in 1818. The church nationally saw its peak in the wave of spiritual awakening that swept the country in the 1840s. A schism over organizational control resulted in the removal of the General Church of the New Jerusalem to Philadelphia in 1890, while the original General Convention of the New Jerusalem (established in 1817) remained in Boston and is now headquartered in Newton, Mass. Today, there are approximately 2600 Swedenborgians in 45 churches in the U. S.

The Encyclopedia of American Religions classifies Swedenborgianism as a Christ-centered, spiritualist religion. Among the doctrines the General Convention draws from the writings of Swedenborg are that the Trinity is embodied in the person of Jesus Christ, that the Bible contains writings inspired by God but not necessarily infallible, and that people pass into a spiritual world at death and ultimately proceed to heaven or hell based on the spiritual character and good actions of their life on earth (Melton, pp. 641-42). The individual's will to act for good is seen as deriving from the spirit of God that is present within him, and his salvation depends on his actions for good (Queen, Prothero, and Shattuck, p. 657).

Historically, the church attracted many notable followers, particularly among 19th-century social reformers and utopians. Lippy and Williams, in the Encyclopedia of American Religious Experience cite Swedenborgianism as a source for concepts that entered the American spiritual conscience in the 19th century: "that phenomena in the material world reflect spiritual counterparts" and "that spiritual and mental causes can effect material results" (p. 715). In mid-19th-century Boston, Swedenborg's writings influenced the Transcendentalists, especially Ralph Waldo Emerson, and other prominent religious and philosophical leaders.

In Cambridge, entrepreneur Andrew Craigie was an early convert (Pratt, CHS Proc. 27, p. 60), as was Margaret Cary, aunt of Radcliffe's first president, Elizabeth Cary Agassiz. Henry James, Sr. was introduced to Swedenborg's writings in England in 1844 and became a lifelong devotee. Helen Keller, who resided in Cambridge while studying at Radcliffe, was another famous Swedenborgian. Despite interest from Harvard students in the class of 1818, a Cambridge society of Swedenborgians did not assemble until 1888.

Among the members of the Cambridge congregation that formed in that year was a young geology instructor at Harvard, Thaddeus Harris, through whose influence the Sparks Estate was acquired for the use of the theological school (which had been established at the Chapel Hill School in Waltham in 1866) and a Cambridge chapel. The first pastor of the congregation was Theodore Francis Wright, dean of the Swedenborg Theological School, an active participant in Cambridge's No-License ordinance, and a long-time president of the East End Union settlement house in East Cambridge.

The historical associations of the Swedenborg congregation with the Boston area in general and with Cambridge and Quincy Street in particular are many. The Treadwell-Sparks House was owned by the theological school (1888-1964) for longer than it served as a residence on its original site; the chapel represents the last non-Harvard-owned structure on the street, which was said in 1925 to have been about to "become a part of Harvard College" (Farlow, p. 28); and the site has been affiliated with the Swedenborgian church for 111 years, longer than any other modern owner on Quincy Street.

In Massachusetts, seven Swedenborg churches are listed in the Massachusetts Historical Commission's survey files. These are located in Abington (1833), East Bridgewater (1854), Brookline (1860), Newton (1868), Yarmouth (1870), Lancaster (1881), and Cambridge (1901). Of these, four are still used by Swedenborg congregations. In addition, the 1866 Chapel Hill School complex (a Gothic Revival chapel, school and residence) survives in Waltham as the non-denominational Chauncy Hall School.

B. Architectural Significance

The architectural significance of the Swedenborg Chapel is closely linked to the career of its architect, H. Langford Warren. Warren, who founded the School of Architecture at Harvard and was a charter member and long-time president of the Boston Society of Arts and Crafts, also had lifelong associations with the Swedenborgian church. A founding member of the Cambridge church, he was the son of a Swedenborgian missionary. Warren's wife, Catherine Clark Reed, was the daughter of a Swedenborgian minister in Boston, the Reverend James Reed. Though Warren's impact as a practitioner was somewhat limited, his influence as a teacher of architecture, an architectural historian, and a proponent of the Arts and Crafts movement is broadly significant.

Herbert Langford Warren (1857-1917) was born in England of an American father and an English mother. He was educated in England and Germany and began his career as a draftsman in an architect's office in Manchester, England. After his family moved to the U.S. in 1876, he studied architecture at M.I.T. (1877-79) under William Ware and fine arts at Harvard (1884) under Charles Eliot Norton. He was employed as an assistant in H. H. Richardson's office from 1879-84, working on many notable commissions, including Austin Hall at Harvard. After a year of travel in France, Warren established his own practice, Warren, Smith & Biscoe, in 1885 (later Warren & Smith).

Warren's professional focus shifted in 1893 when he began teaching art and architecture at Harvard where, despite his lack of advanced degrees, his influence within the university and on the field of architecture and architectural history grew steadily until a separate faculty of architecture was established in 1914, with Warren at its head. He was noted above all as an exceptional teacher: an eloquent lecturer on the history of architecture, his pedagogy combined historical study with studio work in design, construction, and drawing (Alofsin). Warren's obituary in the Architectural Record stated "perhaps an even greater achievement [than establishing the School of Architecture] was his brilliant teaching of the history of architecture. It is not exaggerating to say that nothing surpassed it in any school in the world." (Boyd, p. 588)

A protégé of Charles Eliot Norton, Warren became an instructor in fine arts at Harvard in 1893, quickly rising to assistant professor in 1894 and finally to professor of architecture in 1899. Harvard conferred on him an honorary Master of Arts degree in 1902. In 1903, he received an endowed professorship (Nelson Robinson, Jr. Professor of Architecture) and in 1914,

was named the first dean of the new school of architecture. In addition, Warren was a Fellow of the American Institute of Architects (and its director from 1893 to 1896), secretary of the Boston Society of Architects, a fellow of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, president of the National League of Handicraft Societies (1907-1911), and president of the Boston Society of Arts and Crafts (1904-1917).

Warren's role and Boston's place in the development of architectural education and in the growth of the Arts and Crafts movement frequently meshed. William Ware established Boston's importance as a center of architectural training with the founding of the country's first school of architecture at M.I.T. in 1867. The presence of many nationally notable firms in Boston reinforced the region's design eminence and provided opportunities for "incubating" future talent. In Architectural Education and Boston, Floyd noted the number of practicing architects in Boston grew from 66 in 1867 to 140 by 1889 and she characterized the city as the architectural leader of the nation in the post Civil War period (pp. 12-13). Warren was one of a number of English, English-trained or English-influenced architects who dominated the profession locally.

Through the leadership of Charles Eliot Norton at Harvard, Boston also became a center of education in art and handicrafts. In Inspiring Reform, Cooke states, "Norton believed that close, firsthand study of historical artifacts would reveal the relationships of art and morals in past societies" (p. 20). To Norton and his followers, the study and practice of handcrafts offered the potential for reforming sensibilities cheapened and jaded by the effects of industrialization and capitalism. The Boston Society of Arts and Crafts brought together theorists and artisans around such a study.

Warren wrote in a 1902 article that "Architecture is essentially a Fine Art, the practice of which must be based on a thorough knowledge of construction" (quoted in Alofsin). His understanding of the historical link between the fine and applied arts underlay Warren's strong interest in the Arts and Crafts movement. In the design of the Swedenborg chapel, Warren's knowledge of medieval architecture and contemporary craftsmanship came together. While it is the interior (not a subject of this report) that most clearly illustrates the influence of the Arts and Crafts movement, in such elements as the flooring, woodwork and stone fittings, the exterior of the building also reveals the movement's tenets. Among these are a concern for veracity of materials and construction, seen in the masonry structure; historically-informed design, seen in the faithful rendering of the chapel's Gothic forms; and elements of hand craftsmanship, seen in the carvings of the porch in particular.

Of his architectural practice, it was said at Warren's death, "He designed with skill and restraint, and all his buildings are marked by the same scrupulous regard for historic precedent, consistency of character, and refinement of detail." (Pray, p. 45) The Swedenborg Chapel embodies many of these traits of restraint, attention to detail, and thorough basis in the historical uses of the style. It is a characteristic English country parish church, solid, low, and picturesque, and stands in marked contrast to Memorial Hall, the Ruskinian Gothic cathedral to Harvard's Civil War dead, across Quincy Street.

Warren's intent in the Swedenborg design may be revealed in a passage of his writing from an 1899 exhibition catalogue of recent architecture. He wrote, "the ecclesiastical work in and about Boston shows a loving study of the mediaeval parish churches of England and the influence of modern English church work, such as is found, perhaps, to the same extent, nowhere else in the United States." (quoted in Floyd, p. 35) His work of two years later at the

Swedenborg Chapel no doubt reflects Warren's own "loving study" of the English church form and added to the substantial body of notable ecclesiastical design around Boston.

Of the churches standing in Cambridge at the turn of the century, the Swedenborg Chapel was the first to reflect the emphasis on historical "correctness" that came to characterize the early 20th-century revival styles. At the time of the chapel's construction, 14 other masonry churches stood in Cambridge, seven of them stone buildings like the chapel: St. John's Catholic Church (1842, Richard Bond, demolished 1934); Old Cambridge Baptist Church (1867, A. R. Esty); St. John's Memorial Chapel at the Episcopal Divinity School (1868, Ware & Van Brunt); First Church Congregational (1870, A. C. Martin); Sacred Heart Catholic Church (1874, P.W. Ford); St. James Episcopal Church (1888, Henry Congdon); and Harvard-Epworth Methodist Episcopal Church (1891, A. P. Cutting). Of these churches, St. John's Church, Old Cambridge Baptist Church, St. John's Chapel, and Sacred Heart Church were Gothic Revival in style, the oldest having a meeting-house form with Gothic details and the others being polychromed Victorian Gothic designs with asymmetrical massing and offset towers.

By the turn of the 20th-century, revivalist architects were increasingly careful about rendering historical details according to their historical usage. While this effort was most often seen in Colonial and Georgian Revival domestic architecture, it was revealed in other areas of design as well. The Swedenborg Chapel was the first building in Cambridge designed in the "archaeological" approach that became typical of 20th-century Gothicism nationally, most widely through the work of Ralph Adams Cram. Because the institutional buildings in Cambridge are so dominated by the red-brick, neoclassical and Georgian Revival structures of Harvard, the historically "correct" Late Gothic Revival of Warren's Swedenborg Chapel is virtually unique in the city.

Of Warren's other professional work, he was known for the design of the Troy Orphan Asylum (1890-1901) in Troy, N.Y., and the Church of the Holy City (Swedenborgian, 1894-96 and 1908) in Washington, D.C. In Cambridge, Warren designed five stuccoed Colonial Revival residences (including his own house at 6 Garden Terrace, 1904). Warren also owned and restored an 18th-century Georgian house in Newton (Waban), Mass. His firm was also responsible for alterations to several classroom buildings at Harvard.

C. Historic Photographs

V. Relationship to Criteria

A. Criteria for Designation (Article III, section 2.78.180)

The criteria for designation contained in Article III state as follows:
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 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 . . .

B. Relation of Property to Criteria

The Swedenborg Chapel (exclusive of the 1965 Parish House addition) appears to meet both criteria for landmark designation. Under criterion (1), the Chapel is importantly associated with the broad architectural, aesthetic, cultural and social history of the City and the Commonwealth as a rare example of Swedenborg church architecture in Massachusetts; for its connections to the Arts and Crafts movement, a major aesthetic force in early 20th-century Massachusetts; for its connections to the Swedenborg faith, which influenced Transcendentalism, an important component of the state's 19th-century cultural history; and as an extension of Cambridge's prominence as a center of intellectual influence in Massachusetts and beyond.

Despite the significance of its associations with major 19th- and 20th-century historical forces, however, the Chapel is probably more directly significant for its architecture under criterion (2) in terms of its period, style, and association with a famous architect. The chapel was designed by Herbert Langford Warren, an important figure in architectural pedagogy at a time when the architectural profession in the United States was still in its formative period and when Boston was a major national center for architectural education and design. Stylistically, it is an early and, in Cambridge, unusual example of the Late Gothic Revival style.

VI. Recommendations

A. Purpose of Landmark Designation (Article III, 2.78.140)

> The purpose of landmark designation is defined in Section 140 of Article III as follows: The City Council finds it necessary to enact this article . . . in order 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 . . . 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; to foster appropriate use and wider public knowledge and appreciation of such . . . structures; and by furthering these purposes to promote the public welfare by making the City a more attractive and desirable place in which to live and work. To achieve these purposes, the City may designate . . . landmarks to be administered as set forth in this article.

B. Preservation Options

There are two options available to accomplish the long-term preservation of the Swedenborg Chapel. The first is through a City Council vote to designate the property a landmark, the second through the owner's voluntary donation of a preservation restriction or easement to the Historical Commission or some other qualified body. According to Article III, Chapter 2.78.190, designation of the Swedenborg Chapel as a landmark would establish a process wherein "the Historical Commission . . . shall review all construction, demolition or alteration that affects the exterior architectural features, other than color," of the landmark. Chapter 2.78.210 states, "No building permit for alteration of an exterior architectural feature of a landmark . . . and no demolition permit for demolition or removal of a landmark . . . shall be issued by the City or any department thereof until the certificate required by this article has been issued by the Historical Commission . . ." It should be noted that the Parish House addition is not

A certificate of appropriateness, hardship or non-applicability is issued by the Historical Commission depending on the nature of the alteration or construction proposed for the landmark. Applications for certificates of appropriateness or hardship are reviewed by the Commission at a public hearing, with 14 days notice provided to affected parties by legal notice and first class mail. The staff issues certificates of non-applicability administratively. The intent of the review process is to prevent "developments incongruous to the historic aspects, architectural significance or the distinctive character of the landmark" (2.78.220) The designation report may be drafted to allow specific development opportunities to take place.

Preservation easements may be donated to the Historical Commission or another qualified historic preservation organization under Chapter 184 of the Massachusetts General Laws. An easement is a "non-possessory right to control what happens to buildings or land owned by others." It is voluntarily conveyed by the property owner to an entity, such as the Historical Commission, which holds the right and enforces the terms. To be effective, the easement must protect the publicly visible features of the property from alteration without the Commission's prior review. It may also be drafted to allow specific development opportunities to take place or to protect significant interior features.

Donation of an easement encourages private investment in significant buildings with no corresponding expenditure of public funds. Under Internal Revenue Service regulations, the

value of an easement on a property listed on the National Register of Historic Places may be taken as a charitable deduction on personal income taxes. The value of an easement is calculated by taking the difference between "before" and "after" appraisals of the property. However, the rules for charitable contribution deductions for preservation easements are very technical. Any property owner considering the donation of an easement should consult a qualified tax consultant relative to the specific circumstances.

Preservation easements protect significant property in a similar manner to landmarking, that is, through review and approval of the Historical Commission and issuance of a certificate of appropriateness or hardship for any proposed repairs or alterations that affect protected portions of the property. Unlike landmarking, a preservation easement may have certain financial benefits for an owner and can address the protection of significant interior features.

C. Staff Recommendation

It is the staff recommendation that the Historical Commission pursue designation of the Swedenborg Chapel as a landmark concurrent with staff-level negotiations with potential buyers as to the possible utility of an easement donation. Since the current owner of the property is a non-profit institution, donation of an easement would not be expected to offer the institutional owner any financial benefit. It is possible that a new owner might also realize a financial benefit from restoration or adaptive use of the property through the joint Internal Revenue Service-Department of the Interior preservation tax incentive program. Certified rehabilitation of a certified historic structure may provide a 20% tax credit to income-producing property that is listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

VII. Standards and Criteria

A. Introduction

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 landmark. This 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 B and C of this section provide specific guidelines for the treatment of the landmark described in this report.

B. 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 shall be preserved.

2. Changes and additions to the landmark, which have taken place over time, are evidence of the history of the property and the neighborhood. These changes to the property may have acquired significance in their own right and, if so, that significance should be recognized and respected.

3. Deteriorated architectural features should be repaired rather than replaced.

4. When replacement of architectural features is necessary, it should be based on physical or documentary evidence.

5. New materials should, whenever possible, match the material being replaced in physical properties, design, color, texture, and appearance. The use of imitation replacement materials is discouraged.

6. The surface cleaning of a landmark shall be done by the gentlest possible means. Sandblasting and other cleaning methods that damage exterior architectural features shall not be used.

7. New additions shall not destroy significant exterior architectural features and shall not be incongruous to the historic aspects, architectural significance, or distinct character of the landmark, neighborhood, and environment.

8. New additions should be done in a way that if they were to be removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the landmark should be unimpaired.

C. Suggested Review Guidelines

1. Site

Additional development of the site should take place at the northeastern and eastern edges of the property and could include removal of the non-contributing 1965 Parish House addition. Every effort should be made to maintain visual access to the chapel, particularly as it is viewed from Quincy Street, and from the corner of Quincy and Kirkland streets. Efforts should also be made to maintain visual separation between the chapel building and any new construction on the site so that the chapel remains a distinct and comprehensible entity. Consideration should be given to accommodating additional square footage on the site through development of new space below grade; the east and south sides of the site contain limited scope for grade level changes to access additional space. The land area in the foreground west and northwest of the chapel should remain open and landscaped.

2. Current Conditions

The chapel property is generally in good condition and maintained adequately. No critical or threatening conditions are apparent either in the site or the building. Given the age of the building and its type of construction, a number of smaller maintenance items were identified at the time of this report.

Drainage: Gutters were missing in several locations on the chapel, including the chapel roof above the 1965 entrance vestibule, at the two front bays of the south wall, on the minister's room wall, and on the south wall of the chancel. The downspout is missing from the 1965 entrance vestibule. Downspouts in several other locations empty onto the ground adjacent to the foundation preventing water from being not directed away from the building.

Pointing: There is missing or loose mortar at several locations on the building, notably on the buttresses of the south wall. The pointing of other buttresses on the south wall have been repaired with incompatible mortar which should be inspected to ensure surrounding masonry is not being damaged.

Flashing: The flashing on most of the building appears to be in adequate repair. Flashing is loose at the chimney in the southeast corner and peeled back at the peak of the chancel gable.

Other: The entrance steps at the porch are out of alignment; they should be reset. The rake boards and rafters of the minister's room need painting. Exterior lighting and conduit has been haphazardly installed on the south wall. Ivy, shown covering large sections of the exterior in old photographs, has been removed but is beginning to reassert itself; it should be kept off the walls of the building.

VIII. Proposed Order for Designation

ORDERED:

That the Church of the New Jerusalem, 50 Quincy Street, be designated as a protected landmark 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 March 4, 1999. The premises so designated are defined as parcel 19 of assessor's map 143.

This designation is justified by the significant associations of this building with the architectural, aesthetic, cultural, and social history of the City and the Commonwealth as a rare example of Swedenborg church architecture in Massachusetts; for its connections to the Arts and Crafts movement, a major aesthetic force in early 20th-century Massachusetts; for its connections to the Swedenborg faith, which influenced important aspects of the state's 19th-century cultural history; and as an extension of Cambridge's prominence as a center of intellectual influence in Massachusetts and beyond. It is of further significance in terms of its period, style, and association with a famous architect, H. Langford Warren. Warren was an important figure in the teaching of architecture at a time when the architectural profession in the United States was still in its formative period and when Boston was a major national center for architectural education and design. In style, it is an early and, in Cambridge, unusual example of Late Gothic Revival architecture.

The effect of this designation shall be that no construction activity can take place within the designated area, and no action can be taken affecting the appearance of 50 Quincy Street, that would in either case be visible from a public way, without review by the Cambridge Historical Commission and the issuance of a Certificate of Appropriateness, Hardship or Non-Applicability, as the case may be. In making determinations, the Commission shall be guided by the terms of the landmark designation report, and by Section VII, Standards and Criteria, of the landmark designation report, and by the applicable sections of Article 2.78.

CITY OF CAMBRIDGE
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT

BETH RUBENSTEIN
Acting Assistant City Manager for Community Development

February 16, 1999

To: Sally Zimmerman, Historical Commission

From: Les Barber

RE: Zoning Analysis for Swedenborg Chapel at Kirkland and Quincy Streets

The Chapel sits on a lot of 19,564 square feet. In the Residence C-3 district 58,692 square feet of development is permitted (FAR of 3.0). If that development is residential dwelling units, the construction is subject to Section 11.200 of the Zoning Ordinance (Inclusionary Housing), which requires 15% of the dwelling units be affordable. In exchange, both a Gross Floor Area and dwelling unit bonus are granted. With the bonus, 76,299 square feet is allowed and 85 dwelling units (up from 65 without the bonus @ one unit per 300 square feet of lot area). No bonus would be granted for non residential construction.

The lot is quite regular in shape with two front yards (and two side yards), making development somewhat easier than if the lot had one front yard, two side yards, and a rear yard as is the case on a typical lot. The lot is very similar in size to that of 935 Massachusetts Avenue, which is slightly more than 19,000 square feet. A fifty unit apartment building 140 feet tall was built as of right on that more irregular lot under the same FAR and setback requirements as apply to this C-3 zoned lot; a 120 foot height limit has subsequently been applied to the Massachusetts Avenue lot as well as the Chapel lot.

Ignoring for the moment the existing chapel building, it seems likely that a building of at least the size permitted without the bonus could be constructed on the site. A building 85 feet tall and about 90 feet long facing Kirkland Street would only have to set back five feet from the street and about 28 feet from each of the two side yards, with more than 50,000 square feet of total gross floor area in the building (assuming eight floors). Taking advantage of the many provisions of the Ordinance related to formula yard calculations, e.g. average height, variable setback planes, etc., more gross floor area could certainly be achieved. And housing as a use is very flexible with regard to building form so that maximum advantage can be taken of these many provisions.

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Appendix A

The existence of the chapel building is of course a complication. Any extension of that building, if it is non conforming with regard to any dimensional requirement of Article 5.000 of the Zoning Ordinance, would be limited to 10% of its existing volume and area before a special permit was required, and limited to 25% of its volume and area before a variance would be required. Therefore attaching any new building to the chapel structure might encounter these limitations. The side yard setback opposite the Kirkland Street frontage would appear to be the most likely location for any non conforming situation but the available plans are simply too generalized and at too small a scale to make any judgment on the matter.

Housing is a permitted use and permitted as of right (except that the temporary IPOP regulations require a special permit for any development of 50,000 square feet or more until that provision's expiration, now scheduled for October).

Please let me know if this information is sufficient for your needs.