Chapter IV. Preservation and Development Goals for the Harvard Square Conservation District

After a review of the Report of the Harvard Square Historic District Study Committee and the 1986 Harvard Square Development Guidelines, which shape the deliberations of the Advisory Committee in the Harvard Square Overlay District, the Study Committee agrees that the following goals originally formulated by the Harvard Square Historic District Study Committee are the appropriate goals for regulating preservation and development in Harvard Square. .

> **The goal of the Harvard Square Conservation District as a whole and the Order designating the District is to guide change and encourage diversity in order to protect the distinctive characteristics of the District's buildings and public spaces, and to enhance the livability and vitality of the District for its residents and all Cambridge residents, students, visitors, and business people. The Cambridge Historical Commission will seek to preserve and enhance the unique functional environment and visual form of the District; preserve its architecturally and historically significant structures and their settings, and encourage design compatible therewith; mitigate the impact of new development on adjacent properties and areas; and discourage homogeneity by maintaining the present diversity of development and open space patterns and building scales and ages. The District must remain a pedestrian-friendly, accessible, human-scale, mixed-use environment that complements nearby neighborhoods and maintains the history and traditions of its location.**

The following secondary goals for the Harvard Square Conservation District are intended to provide general guidance to the Historical Commission in a wide variety of situations, and are not intended to be applied to every project that will come before it. They are statements of policy, not prescriptive measures that must be applied equally in each situation.[27]

1. **Preserve historically or architecturally significant buildings and structures as well as those that contribute to the distinctive visual character or historical significance of the District.**

2. **Sustain the vitality of the commercial environment by preserving architecturally-significant or original building fabric where it currently exists. When this is not possible, support creative, contemporary design for storefront alterations and additions.**

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[27] The secondary goals originated as part of "General Development Guidelines for the Harvard Square Overlay District" in the 1986 Harvard Square Development Guidelines. They were updated and expanded by the Harvard Square Historic District Study Committee to link development with preservation concerns and to identify individual goals for alterations and new construction.

3. **Support creative, contemporary design for new construction that complements and contributes to its immediate neighbors and the character of the District. Recognize and respect creativity of design during the review process and mitigate the functional impacts of development on adjacent areas.**

4. **Build on and sustain the diversity of existing building form, scale and material. Preserve and encourage flowers, green yards and courtyards and small, free-standing and wood-frame buildings where that character prevails. Encourage streetwall buildings where that character has been set. Encourage ground-level, small-scale storefronts to preserve the vitality and character of the streets.**

5. **Expand the high quality public environment established in the heart of the District with attractive and compatible materials, lighting, and street furniture.**

6. **Expand the network of pedestrian walkways and paths wherever they can conveniently provide alternate routes through the District. Increase public access to alleys and interior spaces where appropriate, and upgrade paving and landscaping of such pathways and spaces. Enhance accessibility and safety for pedestrians throughout the District.**

7. **Encourage new residential projects in the District, especially in mixed-use buildings, and support existing residential uses.**

8. **Encourage projects that will maintain a wide diversity of uses serving the needs of surrounding neighborhoods, students, and visitors from around the world.**

9. **Encourage creative solutions to the District's parking and transportation issues, including the problem of on-street deliveries. Discourage loading docks, which do not generally contribute to the historic character of the street.**

These preservation and development goals, in conjunction with Chapter V of this report ("Guidelines for Demolition, Construction, and Alterations"), should be incorporated into the Order establishing a Harvard Square Conservation District. The Study Committee also recommends that they be included in a revised publication of the Harvard Square Development Guidelines for the use of the Harvard Square Advisory Committee and the Planning Board.

Chapter V. Guidelines for Demolition, Construction, and Alterations in the Harvard Square Conservation District

Chapter 2.78, Article III, Section 220 describes the factors to be considered by neighborhood conservation district commissions:

> A. In passing upon matters before it, the Historical Commission or neighborhood conservation district commission shall consider, among other things, the historic and architectural value and significance of the site or structure, the general design, arrangement, texture and material of the features involved, and the relation of such features to similar features of structures in the surrounding area. In the case of new construction or additions to existing structures a commission shall consider the appropriateness of the size and shape of the structure both in relation to the land area upon which the structure is situated and to structures in the vicinity, and a Commission may in appropriate cases impose dimensional and setback requirements in addition to those required by applicable provision of the zoning ordinance. A Commission shall not consider interior arrangements or architectural features not subject to public view.

In making its determinations, the Cambridge Historical Commission will also operate under goals and guidelines designed by the Study Committee to protect historic resources while encouraging the architectural diversity that characterizes Harvard Square. Guidelines that are clear, detailed, and easy to apply will help maintain consistent interpretation of urban design and preservation priorities for Harvard Square.

All applications will be reviewed by Cambridge Historical Commission staff for compliance with the guidelines, and the staff will actively engage the applicant in discussions about the objectives and nature of the project. The staff will advise the applicant throughout the application process, and will coordinate reviews by the Cambridge Historical Commission and the Harvard Square Advisory Committee. Historical Commission and Community Development Department staff will continue to advise both boards.

The following guidelines for demolition, construction, and alterations expand upon the language of the Ordinance to provide additional guidance for administration of the Harvard Square Conservation District.

A. Demolition

Although the City's demolition delay ordinance will not apply in a Harvard Square Conservation District, demolition will be similarly defined as "the act of pulling down, destroying, removing or razing a structure or commencing the work of total or substantial destruction with the intent of completing the same".[28] The Cambridge Inspectional Services Commissioner has interpreted "substantial destruction" as including removal of a roof or one

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[28] City Code, section 2.78.080.F. Demolition is categorized in Chapter 40C as an "alteration;" moving a building categorized as "construction."

or more sides of a building, gutting the interior to the point where exterior features are impacted, or removal of more than 25% of a structure. Work of this sort will be reviewed under the following demolition guidelines, while the removal of building components, including signs and storefronts, will be reviewed as alterations.

The purpose of reviewing demolition within the Conservation District will be to preserve significant buildings and the diversity of building ages, styles, and forms that help to define the historical character of the Square. Other benefits will include the opportunity to review the significance of individual buildings in the context of specific development proposals, to consider creative re-use possibilities, and to encourage the care and maintenance of the building stock.

The Cambridge Historical Commission will issue a Certificate of Appropriateness to an applicant seeking to demolish a structure in the Conservation District if the project, including both the demolished and the replacement buildings, is determined to be "appropriate for or compatible with the preservation or protection of the . . . district."[29] Approval of demolition will be dependent on a finding by the Cambridge Historical Commission that a) the demolition of the structure will not adversely impact the district, subdistrict, or abutting properties in the sense described in secondary goal #1, and b) the replacement project meets the purposes of the Conservation District with respect to secondary goals #3 through #9, where these are applicable.

The history of Harvard Square suggests some specific criteria that may be applied to demolition proposals. Buildings that are over fifty years old, that are contributing structures in the Harvard Square National Register District, or that are part of the Square's dwindling inventory of wood-frame structures, are generally valued for their contribution to the character of the Square, and it may be presumed that preservation will be strongly preferred to demolition (secondary goal #4).[30] However, all such applications will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis, and the Cambridge Historical Commission will not necessarily protect all such structures from demolition.

B. Construction

Creative design solutions to development and renovation requirements will be encouraged to ensure that the unique resources and character of Harvard Square are protected.[31] Coordination with the Harvard Square Advisory Committee's large project review will be essential.

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29 Chapter 40C, Section 10a. This language is incorporated by reference in the Neighborhood Conservation District and Landmark Ordinance, Ch. 2.78.170.

30 "Build on and sustain the diversity of the existing building form, scale and material. Preserve and encourage flowers, green yards and courtyards and small, free-standing and wood-frame buildings where that character prevails. Encourage streetwall buildings where that character has been set."

31 Secondary goals #2, #3, #6, #9.

1. New Construction/Additions to Existing Buildings

Harvard Square is a kaleidoscopic urban environment. The Cambridge Historical Commission will recognize the continuing evolution of architectural design and the necessity of keeping the Square fresh, vibrant, and economically viable. Contemporary design expression will be encouraged in new construction (secondary goal #3).[32]

Proponents of projects requiring special permits on sites with little apparent impact on historic resources will be encouraged to initiate their public review process with the Harvard Square Advisory Committee. To the extent feasible, the Cambridge Historical Commission will seek to hold joint meetings with the Advisory Committee on projects that fall within both jurisdictions. The existence of parallel reviews by the Historical Commission and the Advisory Committee is seen as a productive application of both zoning and historic preservation disciplines in a complex urban environment; in the event of conflict, however, conservation district protection, which requires Cambridge Historical Commission approval of building permits, will prevail. Because the specific circumstances of every development project cannot be predicted, it is not possible to specify an exact regulatory protocol governing the sharing of reviews between the Historical Commission and the Advisory Committee. The inherent logic of the project review process will guide the proponent.

The Cambridge Historical Commission will begin its review of a new construction project or addition with an analysis of the historic significance and architectural value of the premises and its immediate surroundings. New construction that accommodates older structures on or adjacent to the site will be encouraged. Construction that incorporates significant major portions of older structures may be acceptable; however, use of isolated historic architectural elements will be discouraged. Demolition involving retention of facades to allow replacement of historic structures with new construction (mis-named "facadectomies") will be discouraged unless the supporting historic fabric is found to be unsalvageable.

In reviewing new construction or additions to existing buildings, the Commission "shall consider the appropriateness of the size and shape of the structure both in relation to the land area upon which the structure is situated and to structures in the vicinity."[33] Review of new buildings will be guided by considerations such as the appropriateness of the structure's height, scale, mass, proportions, orientation, and lot coverage; the vertical and horizontal emphasis, rhythm of openings, transparency, texture, and materials of the publicly-visible facades; sunlight and shadow effects; relationship to public open space; and landscaping.

Review of new buildings and additions will be further guided by the subdistrict goals in Chapter VI regarding the relationship of a proposed building to the site and to other buildings and structures in the vicinity.

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32 "Support creative, contemporary design for new construction that complements and contributes to its immediate neighbors and the character of Harvard Square. Recognize and respect creativity of design during the review process and mitigate the functional impacts of development on adjacent areas."

33 Ch. 2.78.220.A.

Under the City Code, the Historical Commission acting as a neighborhood conservation district commission "may in appropriate cases impose dimensional and setback requirements in addition to those required by the applicable provision of the zoning ordinance."[34] Implementing such a measure could result in a reduction of the Floor Area Ratio (FAR) allowed by zoning. The appropriate circumstances for imposing dimensional and set-back reductions could include a wide disparity of scale and density between the proposed project and its surroundings, or a situation in which the proposed project would destroy or diminish the historical resources of the site.

2. Alterations to Existing Buildings

Alterations to exterior architectural features visible from a public way will be subject to binding review by the Cambridge Historical Commission, guided by secondary goals #1, #2, and #4. Storefronts will be treated more flexibly than building facades or upper stories. The goals of the district favor retention and repair, rather than replacement, of original or significant exterior fabric.

While irreversible changes will be subject to review and approval of the Cambridge Historical Commission, certain other visible exterior alterations will be reviewed by the staff or exempted from review entirely. Chapter 2.78, Article III identifies seven other categories of construction and alterations that may be exempted from review.[35] From that list, the Study Committee recommends that the following features be categorically exempt from review and not trigger an application process:

- Storm doors and storm windows (subject to specific design guidelines).
- Signs that conform to the Cambridge sign code as amended in the Harvard Square Historic Overlay District.

The Historical Commission will adopt procedures delegating review and approval of some reversible alterations which have the potential to adversely affect historic fabric to the staff. Applications for projects that do not meet these criteria will be considered by the Commission at a public hearing. A Certificate of Nonapplicability will be issued by the staff if Conservation District guidelines are followed. These categories will include:

- Ordinary repairs or maintenance using similar materials and construction details to those existing.

- Reconstruction replicating the exterior design of a building, structure, or exterior architectural feature damaged or destroyed by fire, storm, or other disaster, provided such reconstruction is begun within one year thereafter and carried forward with due diligence.[36]

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34 Ch. 2.78.220.A.

35 Ch. 2.78.190.B. Exterior color is categorically excluded from review in neighborhood conservation districts.

36 Such replacement work will still be subject to review of the staff and issuance of a Certificate of Appropriateness.

- Roof repairs and HVAC equipment not visible from a public way.

- Window replacement in conformity with guidelines to be adopted by the Commission after public hearing.

a. Interior Work and Alterations Not Visible From a Public Way

Interior arrangements and alterations to architectural features not visible from any public way are exempt from review in a neighborhood conservation district and a Certificate of Nonapplicability for such work will be issued by Commission staff without delay.

b. Storefronts

Storefronts are a source of Harvard Square's continuing vitality, and the Cambridge Historical Commission will seek to encourage creativity in this regard (secondary goal #2).[37] Most storefronts will be regarded as impermanent and the Historical Commission will look favorably on creative alterations that meet the particular needs of the retailer or office tenant, as long as the original structure and finishes are maintained or recovered (where they still exist). Alterations to upper stories will be regarded as having the potential for significant and permanent adverse effects and will be reviewed accordingly. Reversible changes to storefronts will not be discouraged as long as they do not obscure or damage the structure or any original architectural features. Opaque glass will not be allowed in display windows unless specifically permitted.

The Cambridge Historical Commission will adopt procedures delegating review and approval of two categories of storefront alterations to the staff. Applications for storefront alterations that do not meet these criteria will be considered by the Commission at a public hearing. A Certificate of Nonapplicability will be issued by the staff for:

- Alterations that do not alter, enclose, or extend further than the decorative or structural framework of the building or retail space originally intended to surround a storefront. The framework consists of such elements as piers, columns, cornerboards, quoins, cornices and similar structural or decorative features.

- Storefront alterations that do not obscure, remove, relocate, or replace historic or original exterior architectural features. Exterior architectural features may include, but are not limited to, such features as brackets, window and door casings, fascia, hoods, bays, and window sash.

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[37] "Help sustain the vitality of the commercial environment by supporting creative, contemporary design for storefront alterations and additions, while preserving architecturally significant or original building fabric and character."

Recent storefront alterations that comply with the proposed guidelines are at College House (1420-1442 Massachusetts Avenue); Origins at 8 Brattle Street; and Tess at 20 Brattle Street. In all three cases, structural members or decorative finishes of the original first floor facades were uncovered or restored, and new storefronts were inserted within them. In the case of College House, this involved both restoring and replicating the original granite piers and lintels of 1832 and inserting a plate glass storefront system that recalls a traditional storefront with a horizontal wooden sill applied to the glass (Fig. 5). At Origins, a ca. 1930 storefront was removed and the original marble-clad pier and fascia restored; the new storefront was installed within this frame (Fig. 6). Finally, at Tess several generations of storefronts were removed, the brick piers of the original facade were restored, and a new fascia recalling the destroyed original was installed. Within this reconstructed framework is a radically original glass storefront that respects the original architecture of the building but makes a strong and exciting statement (Fig. 7). All three alterations would have merited Certificates of Appropriateness, issued by the Commission staff from a conservation district review.

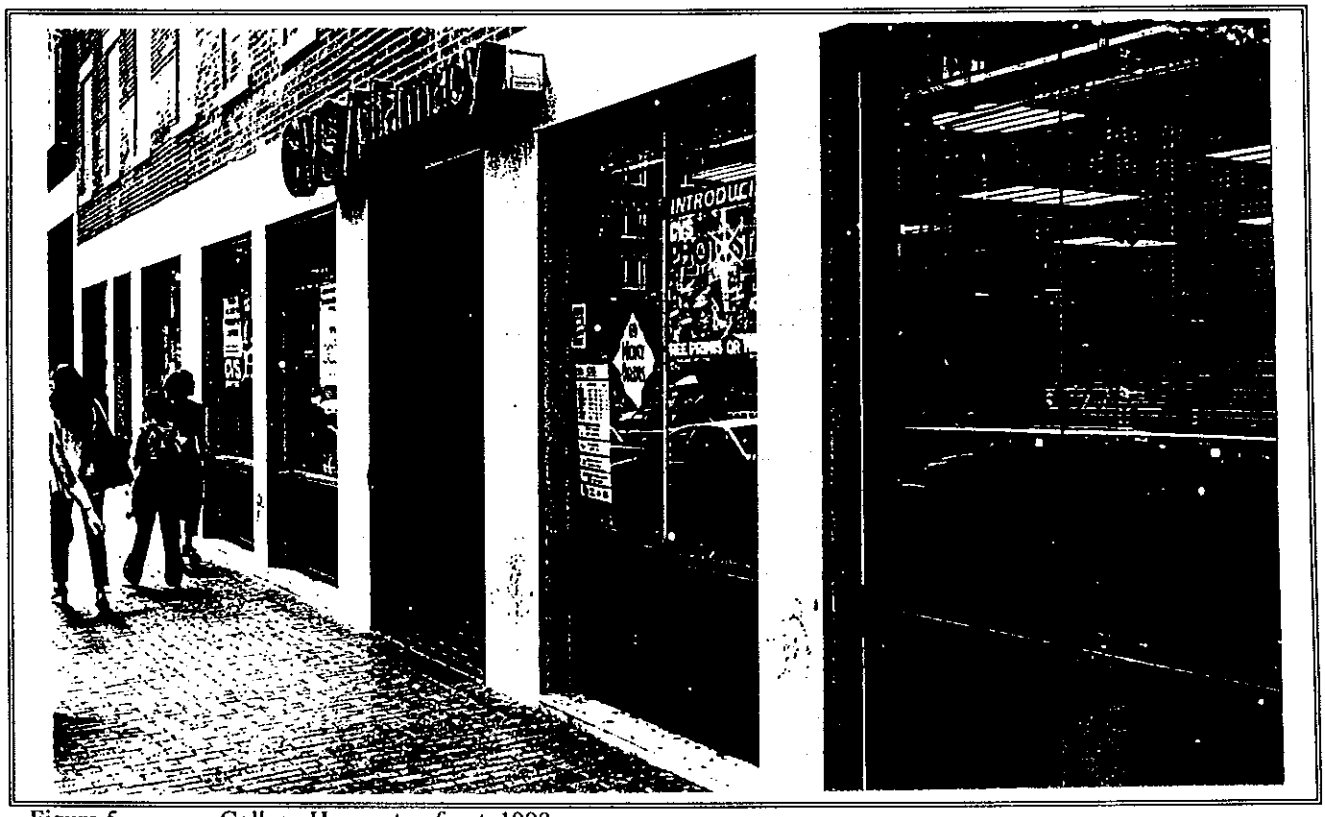

Figure 5. College House storefront, 1999.

Figure 6. Origins storefront, 8 Brattle Street, 1999.

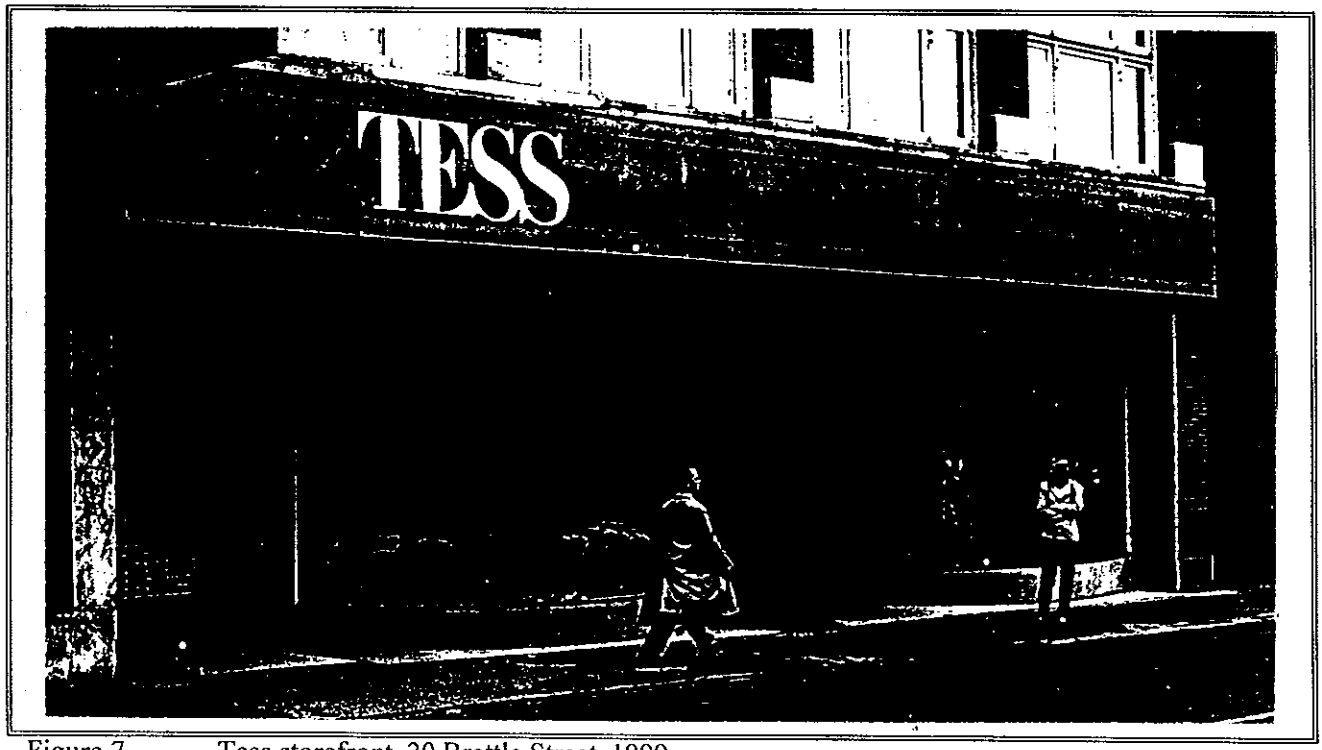

Figure 7. Tess storefront, 20 Brattle Street, 1999.

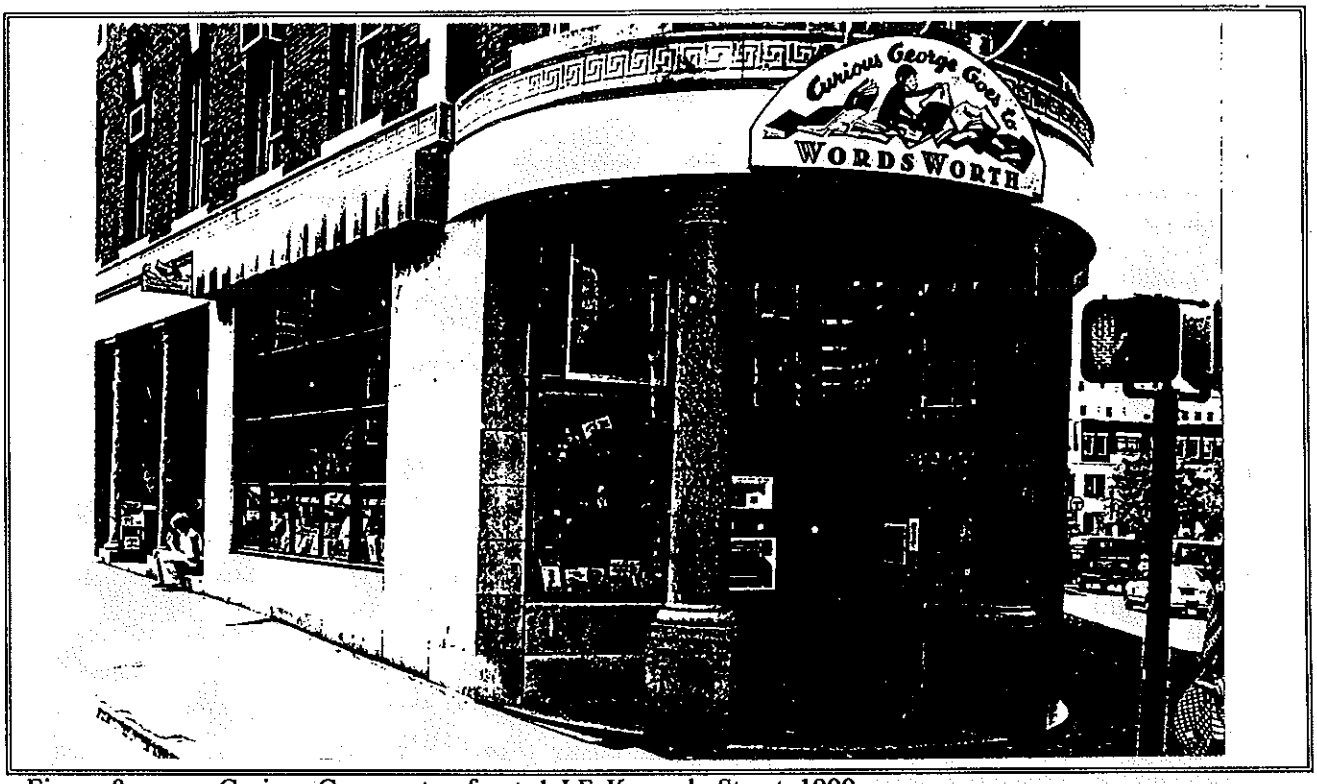

Figure 8. Curious George storefront, 1 J.F. Kennedy Street, 1999.

A contrasting example of an approveable storefront alteration exists at the Abbot Building, where Wordsworth Books has a specialized branch selling children's' books (Fig. 8). The business occupies a storefront that was not original to the building. The alterations involved a metal sign band across the stone cornice above the storefront and bright colors on the window trim. In the Conservation District, color changes will not be reviewed. The sign band is above the storefront and obscures the original fabric of the building; however, the sign is only pinned to the masonry and stands about six inches from it. This would have required review, but might have been viewed favorably as a reversible change.

A few storefronts in the Square retain their original design or have a subsequent design that is significant in terms of architectural or historical significance. The following storefronts and/or the buildings in which they are located will be specifically designated in the Order as requiring Commission rather than staff approval of alterations:

- 1304 Massachusetts Avenue (Gnomon Copy) (Fig. 9)
- 1316 Massachusetts Avenue (Leavitt & Pierce)
- 1320-22 Massachusetts Avenue (J. August)
- 30-30A Plympton Street (Bow Street Flowers)

Alterations to these storefronts, including installation or alteration of signs, will require a Certificate of Appropriateness from the Commission.[38] Additional significant storefronts may

[38] See Appendix for a description and additional photographs of these storefronts.

be identified in the future, and the Cambridge Historical Commission may recommend to the City Council that they be added to the protected list.

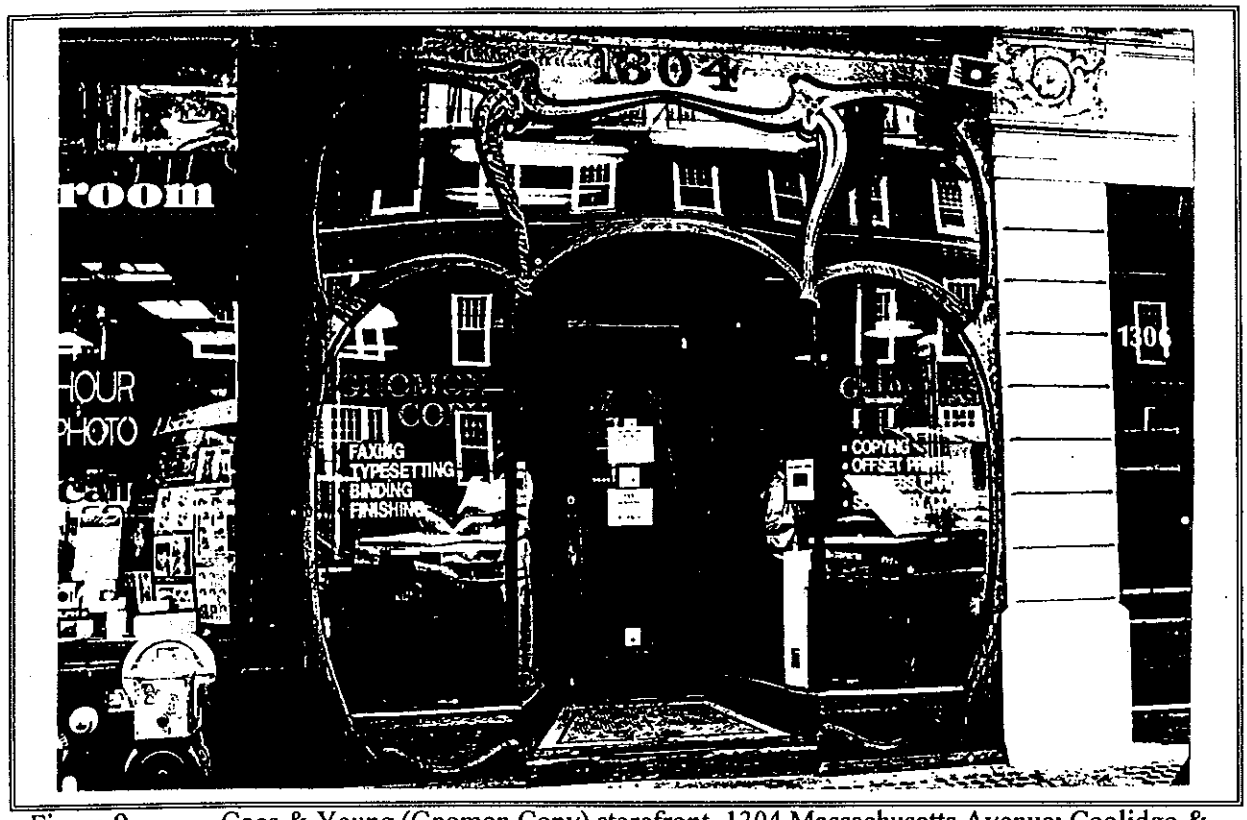

Figure 9. Coes & Young (Gnomon Copy) storefront, 1304 Massachusetts Avenue; Coolidge & Carlson, architects, 1907

c. Windows

Windows are critical to maintaining the characteristic appearance of significant buildings. Replacement of wood windows with inappropriate modern units can destroy the traditional appearance of a building. The Commission will establish design guidelines for window alterations governing materials, muntin patterns, panning, and reflectivity.

In almost all cases, modern replacement windows are available that match the originals in appearance while offering significant energy efficiency. The Commission will, in most cases, allow window replacement routinely as long as design guidelines are met. Applications to replace windows that are ornamental in design or that contain significant original sash will require review by the Commission.

Review and approval of certain window alterations may be delegated to the staff. For example, applications for window alterations that do not change the size of the opening, configuration of the muntins, material, or transparency will receive a Certificate of Nonapplicability in the same manner as the exempted storefront alterations.

d. Masonry

Harvard Square contains many outstanding examples of brick masonry construction. Because the appearance of masonry can be irreversibly altered by improper pointing or cleaning, Cambridge Historical Commission approval will be necessary for these operations. Review will include approval of specifications for cleaning, cutting joints, mortar composition, and joint profiles. Replacement masonry units will be reviewed for color, size, and finish. Painting of masonry surfaces without a Certificate of Appropriateness will be prohibited.

e. Signs

Signs in Harvard Square should contribute to the commercial vitality of the area. Uniformity of signs and conformance to conjectural "historic" designs will not be encouraged. However, signs should not obscure any original architectural features of the structure on which they are located. Signs should be fastened to structures in the least destructive way possible.[39]

The Study Committee recommends that the Harvard Square Overlay District should be amended to transfer jurisdiction over signs which do not conform to the sign code applicable elsewhere in the City to the Cambridge Historical Commission (see discussion of Zoning Amendments). Limitations on the number of projecting or free standing signs on a lot; limitations on the size of individual wall, freestanding, or projecting signs; and limitations on the height of signs above the sidewalk, and placement of signs, would be deleted from the zoning ordinance with respect to the Harvard Square Overlay District and made subject to Cambridge Historical Commission review.

Under Chapter 2.78, Article III, the Cambridge Historical Commission will have binding jurisdiction over size, materials, dimensions, illumination, and appearance of new or altered signs.[40] However, signs that conform to the provisions of the zoning code regarding the total area of signs on each building and the height at which signs can be placed will be exempted from review. Decorative banners and temporary signs will be prohibited unless specifically approved "subject to such conditions as to duration of use, dimension, location, lighting, removal and similar matters as the commission may reasonably specify."[41]

C. Public Spaces

Municipal and utility company modifications to sidewalks, streets, and street furniture will be subject to the jurisdiction of the Cambridge Historical Commission. Review will be undertaken with consideration to the appropriateness of such materials and structures as paving and curbing, light standards, traffic and parking structures and signs, and utility structures visible at or above grade from any public way.

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39 Sandwich board signs are subject to permitting by the Department of Public Works when placed on a sidewalk and will not be subject to Historic District review.

40 Content, color, and graphics used on signs - the commercial message - will be exempt from review in the Historic District.

41 Chapter 2.78.190.A.7.

The Cambridge Historical Commission may adopt a master plan for the treatment of publicly-accessible private open spaces in Harvard Square and suggest public improvements of sidewalks, crosswalks, and lighting. The Commission will encourage privately-initiated efforts to improve the public spaces of the Square and will serve as a public forum for discussion of alterations and coordination of privately- and publicly-funded improvements.

Proposals for public art installations, whether private donations or public projects, will be referred to the Cambridge Public Art Commission for a recommendation in accordance with established city policies.[42] For the purposes of conservation district review, three-dimensional artworks will be considered to be structures, and murals will be considered to be signs if they contain an explicit message. In general, such installations must also be found to be appropriate for their setting and for the district as a whole.

[42] See "City of Cambridge Art Gifts and Donations Policy", adopted May 17, 1999, and Chapter 2.114 of the City Code, "Public Development Arts Projects."

Chapter VI. Proposed Harvard Square Conservation District Boundaries

Harvard Square can be defined in many different ways. Harvard Square proper is the intersection of Massachusetts Avenue, Brattle Street, and J.F. Kennedy Street, but today Harvard Square is the name given to a much larger mixed-use area that contains one of three commercial districts in Cambridge. "Harvard Square" is now synonymous with "the village" of the 1830s as denoting the core of Old Cambridge.

For planning purposes, Harvard Square is defined in one way by the Harvard Square Overlay District and in another, slightly different way, by the National Register of Historic Places. The Overlay District was first established in 1976. In 1986 it was extended to include more of the Gold Coast along Mount Auburn Street as well as Putnam Square (see Fig. 34).

The Harvard Square National Register District boundary was determined in 1986 by examining six broad themes in the history of the area to organize features and structures into coherent patterns. These themes were:

1) First period layout and topography, which are significant in the early history of settlement and community planning (Fig. 2);

2) Buildings from 1800 to 1833, which are significant in the areas of architecture and social history (Fig. 5);

3 Commercial and industrial buildings between 1833 and 1903, which are significant in the areas of architecture, social history, and transportation (Fig. 11);

4) Harvard clubs and private dormitories from 1882 to 1930, which are significant in the areas of architecture, social history and education (Fig. 14); and

5) Post-subway commercial development from 1912 to 1941, which is significant in the areas of architecture and community development (Fig. 22).

Buildings and features from each of these periods that were historically associated with Harvard Square were mapped out and overlaid to produce the National Register District boundary. The presence of other National Register districts (the Cambridge Common, Harvard Yard, and Harvard Houses districts) introduced some artificiality into the boundary by excluding, for example, the north side of Church Street from the Harvard Square National Register District. Although there are intrusions, the district possesses integrity of location, design, setting, materials, feeling and association, and was accepted by the Massachusetts Historical Commission and the National Park Service in 1988 as a geographically-definable

area possessing "a significant concentration of sites, buildings, and structures united by a continuity of events, plan, or physical development".[43]

The boundary of the Harvard Square Conservation District does not need to be the same as either the Overlay District or the National Register District, although these give the general outlines of the area. Boundary criteria that have been adopted for the Harvard Square Conservation District include the desirability of meeting the adjoining Old Cambridge Historic District and the Mid Cambridge and Half Crown Neighborhood Conservation Districts. Other criteria include:

> The boundary generally follows the rear lot lines of edge properties, and properties on both sides of streets are included when possible.
>
> The west side of Story Street is included because it is not protected by the Overlay District, the Half Crown Neighborhood Conservation District, or the Harvard Square National Register District.
>
> University Green, the Charles Hotel, and the Kennedy School of Government are located in a Planned Unit Development (PUD) administered by the Planning Board, and are all recent structures not suitable for inclusion in the Conservation District.
>
> The Harvard houses are excluded because they are now geographically and historically separate from the Harvard Square neighborhood, and are subject to the HU-CHC agreement for review of alterations to National Register buildings.
>
> Residential properties on the south side of Mount Auburn Street from DeWolfe Street to Putnam Avenue are included because they directly abut commercial Harvard Square and need protection from inappropriate development.
>
> Putnam (Sullivan) Square, which is in the Harvard Square Overlay District, is excluded from the Conservation District because it was almost entirely redeveloped in the second half of the 20th century.
>
> Massachusetts Avenue and Arrow Streets from Remington to Bow Streets is included because it is a mixed-use area that contains many significant older buildings and a fairly low density.

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[43] Massachusetts Historical Commission. Harvard Square National Register District nomination, 1986.

The Study Committee's recommended boundaries are shown on the attached plan (Fig. 10).

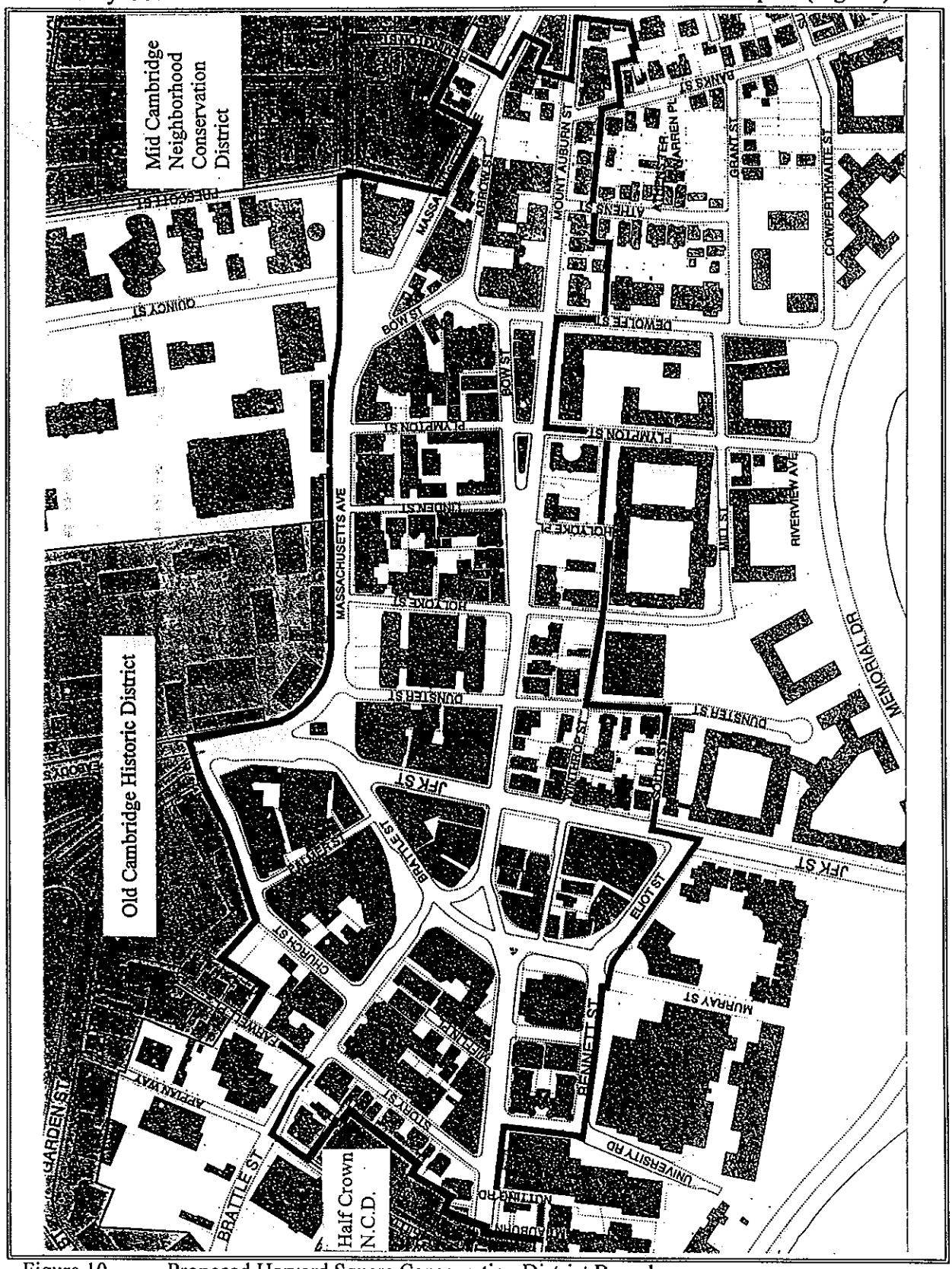

Figure 10. Proposed Harvard Square Conservation District Boundary.

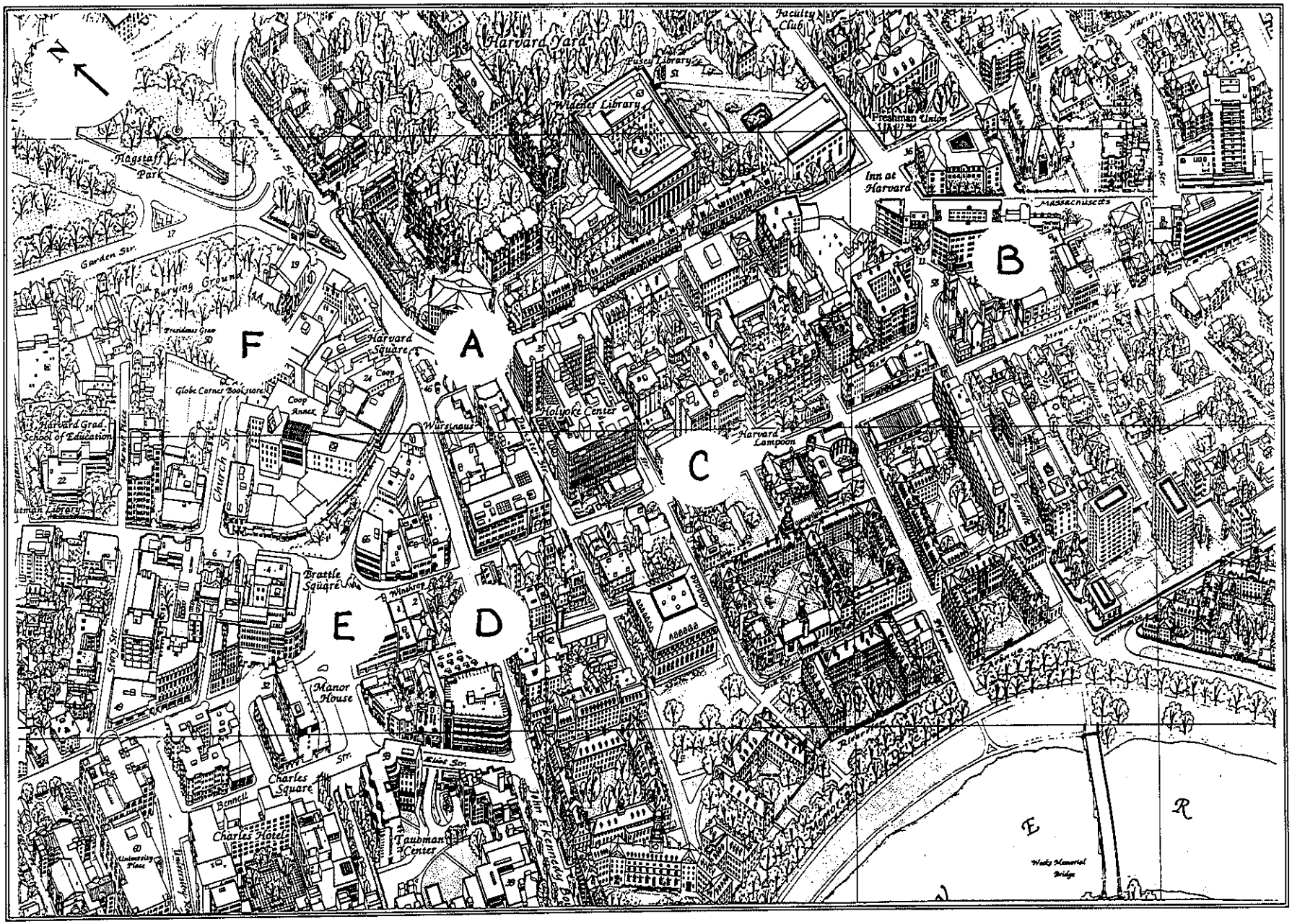

Fig. 44 Map of Harvard Square Indicating Location of Subdistricts A-F

Chapter VII. Goals for Harvard Square Subdistricts

The 1986 Development Guidelines, developed for the Harvard Square Overlay District, divided the Overlay District into six subdistricts based on architectural characteristics, historical development patterns, and modern usage trends. This method has proven to be a useful portion of the Development Guidelines and the study committee unanimously agreed that revised and updated subdistrict descriptions and goals should be included as part of the guidelines for a Harvard Square conservation district and for continued use in administering the Overlay District.

Because Harvard Square is such a diverse environment, defining the context of subdistricts is important both in developing long-range planning goals and in making determinations of appropriateness for alterations to the physical environment. The six subdistricts are:

A. Harvard Square/Massachusetts Avenue
B. Bow Street and Arrow Street/Putnam Square
C. The Gold Coast
D. Winthrop Square/JFK Street
E. Brattle Square
F. Church Street

The subdistricts do not have precise boundaries, as the characteristics of neighboring subdistricts tend to overlap. In considering some sites, the guidelines for more than one subdistrict should be considered together and weighed according to the individual needs of the site.

A description of the unique qualities of each subdistrict and specific goals for each follows. The description is organized with a historical and physical description, followed by a focused discussion on the treatment of public spaces and private sites. A site map accompanies each description. Specific goals for each subdistrict have been identified to help boards and applicants apply the general goals and guidelines of the larger district to the special needs and circumstances of a particular site. Revisions to this document include updating the discussions of private development sites, summarizing recent discussions for improvements of public spaces, expanding the discussion of site and architectural history, and reinforcing the recommendations for preservation of significant structures.

Subdistrict A: Harvard Square/Massachusetts Avenue

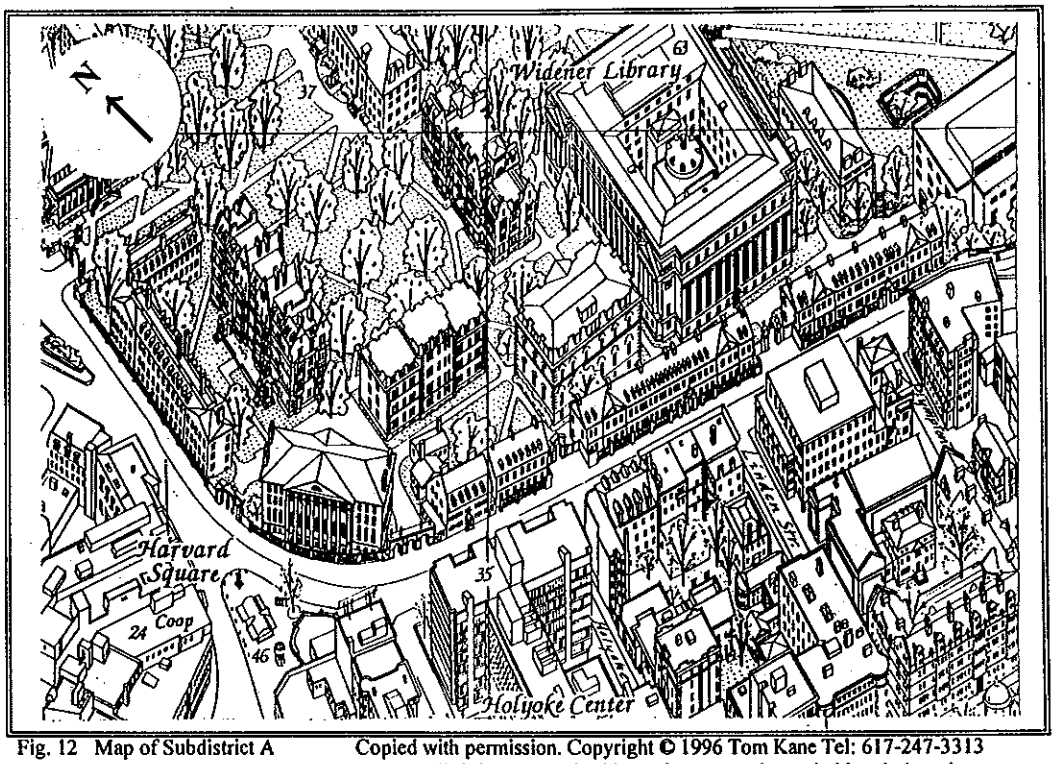

Fig. 12 Map of Subdistrict A

Historical and Physical Description

This subdistrict includes the center of Harvard Square and the south side of Massachusetts Avenue to Quincy Square. The area marks the intersection of town and college with Harvard Yard on the north side of Massachusetts Avenue and mixed-use commercial, office, and residential structures on the south side. The strong presence of the MBTA subway station at the center of the Square reflects Harvard Square's long history as a transportation hub. In the early years of the Newtowne (later Cambridge) settlement, the area was an open space to the north of the grid-patterned town, south of the Burial Ground, and adjacent to the highway. By 1790, structures built in this area began to orient themselves toward the Square. Development in Harvard Square has always been for mixed uses. Residences, college buildings, several meetinghouses, two courthouses, and a market building were constructed around the Square in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

Three- to five-story structures built out to the sidewalk predominate the south and west sides of Massachusetts Avenue near Harvard Square. The historic structures facing on the south and west sides of the Square itself include the Read Block buildings, the Harvard Cooperative Society, College House, and the Harvard Square Kiosk. Certain mid-twentieth-century structures, such as Holyoke Center and the Fleet Bank (Harvard Trust Company) facade, have attained their own architectural significance. Although the architectural significance of Holyoke Center is acknowledged, another development of its size in the Square is not recommended. Efforts in this subdistrict should focus on the retention of the small retail storefronts that add vitality to the streetscape.

Public Space

All publicly-accessible open spaces on private and public properties should be preserved. The public space in the center of Harvard Square should be well maintained for the general enjoyment and safety of its pedestrian users. The materials and design of the public space at the center of the Square can be used as a reference when designing future improvements to open spaces in the district.

A long-range plan, called "Polishing the Trophy," for public and private sidewalk, crosswalk, and lighting improvements throughout the Square was commissioned in 1997 and funded by a combination of public and private resources. The study recorded existing conditions and makes recommendations for improvements in most of the subdistricts, except Bow Street and Arrow Street/Putnam Square and part of the Gold Coast. The improvements in the Harvard Square/Massachusetts Avenue subdistrict which were proposed by this study include sidewalk replacement in front of the Read Block and College House, a new crosswalk in front of Holyoke Center, and lighting improvements to Cambridge Savings Bank, Holyoke Center, and the Omphalos statue near the news kiosk. The sidewalk at the Read Block was renewed and the curb extended in conjunction with the redevelopment of that building.

Private Sites

As evidenced by the recent Read Block development proposal, large redevelopment potential does exist in the heart of the Square and along Massachusetts Avenue. Rehabilitation of existing structures should be carefully considered as a first alternative by developers. Historical photographs can often be valuable references during the design of facade restoration or rehabilitation projects. Investigation of the collections of the Historical Commission is a good starting point for this kind of historical research. The rehabilitation of the Read Block included restoration of the 1896 facade, renovation of the forward portions of the original structures, and construction of a new 3-story structure at the rear. The renovated space accommodates both retail and office uses.

Retention of the small-scale retail environment, with narrow storefronts and interesting signs should be encouraged in this subdistrict. Careful attention should be paid to materials, storefront design, and signage in this area. The 1907 Art Nouveau storefront at 1304 Massachusetts Avenue by Coolidge and Carlson is an example of exceptional storefront design. The unique lines, transparency, and high-quality materials of this storefront can be used as an example of a creative, contemporary approach to retail design in the district. Not every new storefront design in the Square can or should aim to be this unique, but it demonstrates the timelessness of an exceptional design.

Subdistrict B: Bow Street and Arrow Street/Putnam Square

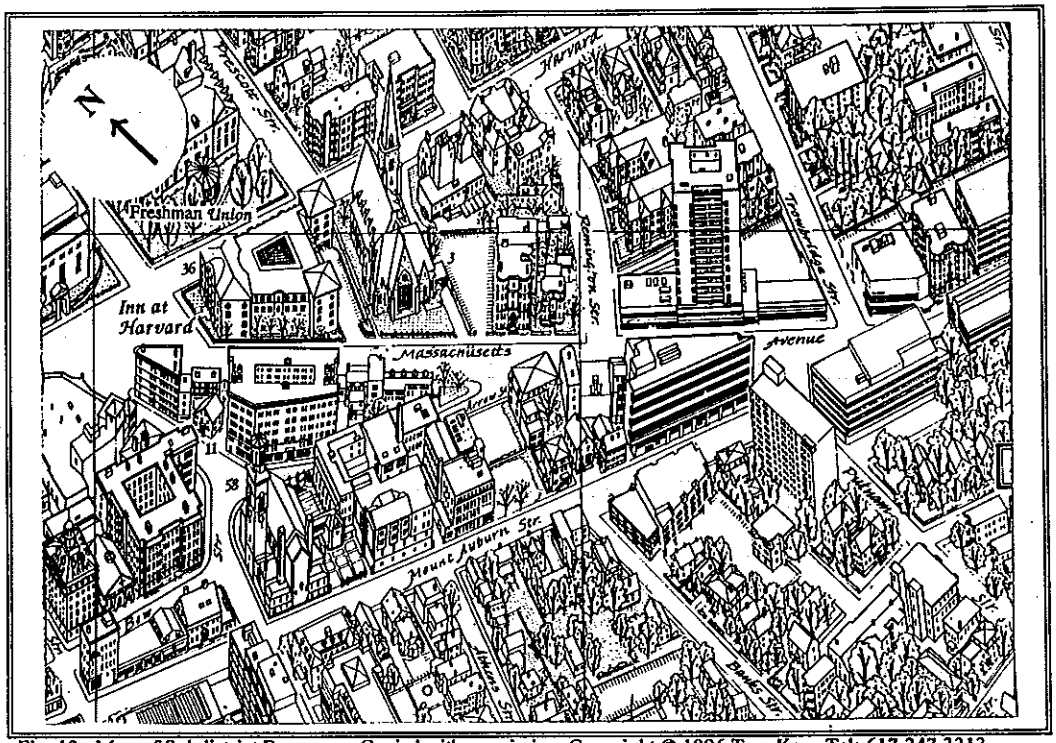

Fig. 13 Map of Subdistrict B

Historical and Physical Description

This subdistrict includes the properties along Bow Street, Arrow Street, and along the converging lines of Massachusetts Avenue and Mount Auburn Street, including Putnam Square. It is the easternmost edge of the existing Harvard Square Overlay District. Putnam Square and the eastern portions of Massachusetts Avenue and Mount Auburn Street are not included within the boundaries of the Harvard Square National Register District.

The highest structures in this subdistrict are the campanile of St. Paul's Catholic Church, the stone spire of the Old Cambridge Baptist Church, and the office tower at 1105 Massachusetts Avenue. The locations of these towers correspond with the triangular boundaries of this subdistrict. The careful siting of the Old Cambridge Baptist Church at the intersection of Massachusetts Avenue and Harvard Street allows for the spire to be seen from several different viewpoints, thus making it a prominent landmark in historic and contemporary photographs. The transition from dense Putnam Square and the intersection of Massachusetts Avenue to the smaller scale of the residential Riverside neighborhood is evident traveling east to west along Mount Auburn Street. This transition of mass, scale, and use complicated discussions for the development of the Zero Arrow Street site. The Harvard Square Advisory Committee worked with the developer, Gunwyn Company, through several designs and over a number of years to try to address the special needs of this site.

Historically, construction in this area has included small residences, light industry, and churches. Though the industries are no longer active, the Reversible Collar factory at 8-20

Arrow Street and 21-27 Mount Auburn Street is still a dynamic structure in this subdistrict. It was adaptively re-used for retail and office space in the late 1960s and was renovated through the federal tax act program in the mid-1980s. The commercial nature of Putnam Square and Quincy Square developed primarily in the mid-twentieth-century. The larger office buildings there were constructed in the mid-1970s.

Public Space

The largest public space in this subdistrict is Quincy Square, which was redesigned and landscaped in 1997. The project's purpose was to enhance the area for pedestrians while maintaining vehicular access to all of the streets. The prominent location of the park also provided the designers the opportunity to create an attractive gateway to Harvard Square and Harvard Yard. This project was a particularly-successful collaboration between a landscape architect (The Halvorson Company) and an artist (David Phillips). The Quincy Square Design Review Committee reviewed the design during a long, and often contentious, community process. The design included plantings of trees, shrubs, perennials, ground covers, and grasses along with stone walls, boulders and sculptures. Sidewalk improvements on the surrounding streets were also part of the total design concept.

Putnam Square, a very busy traffic intersection, did not contain many amenities for the pedestrian until 1998. The small island with a memorial plaque that is located in the middle of Putnam Square benefited from a new landscaping plan that uses grasses and other landscaping elements to make it a much more pleasant place.

The tip of land at the corner of Arrow Street and Massachusetts Avenue was landscaped by the city in 1991 after an unsuccessful attempt by the abutting restaurant to privatize the use of the land.

Private Sites

The major development sites identified in the 1986 guidelines have since been developed or are currently in process. The Inn at Harvard filled in the former Gulf gasoline station site and city boards have recently approved an office building design at Zero Arrow Street. The approval of plans for the Zero Arrow Street site is currently being appealed, so the outcome of this site is uncertain. An important site not identified in the 1986 guidelines is the historically and architecturally significant 1906 garage concrete garage building at 1230 Massachusetts Avenue. This building is now being sensitively redeveloped with two new stories above a restored original facade.

The Old Cambridge Baptist Church spire and St. Paul's Catholic Church bell tower are important visual landmarks that should be respected by any new development. The recent restoration of the tower at St. Paul's Church and the repairs to the slate roof at Old Cambridge Baptist Church have been recognized by the Historical Commission. The development potential at St. Paul's Church was largely filled up in the late 1980s, with the construction of the new choir school.

Development or adaptive re-use proposals should recognize and be sensitive to the fact that a transition from commercial to residential uses occurs in this subdistrict.

A transition of building materials and scale is also evident at the intersection of Massachusetts Avenue and Bow Street. The rare grouping of six small-scale frame and brick buildings at that intersection represents a 140-year span of residential and commercial building construction in Harvard Square. The earliest buildings in the cluster, 12 Bow Street (ca. 1820) and 1208 Massachusetts Avenue (1842) are examples of residential buildings that were later converted to commercial uses.

Denser development should be confined to Putnam Square. The quiet, residential character along Mount Auburn Street should be maintained, and the wood-frame structures there should also be preserved.

Restoration and/or renovation potential exists in this subdistrict. Prime candidates include the triple-decker residence at 1131 Massachusetts Avenue at the corner of Remington Street the Hong Kong restaurant at 1234-1238 Massachusetts Avenue, Longfellow Court at 1200 Massachusetts Avenue, and the frame and brick rows at 1156-1166 and 1168-1174 Massachusetts Avenue.

Subdistrict C: The Gold Coast

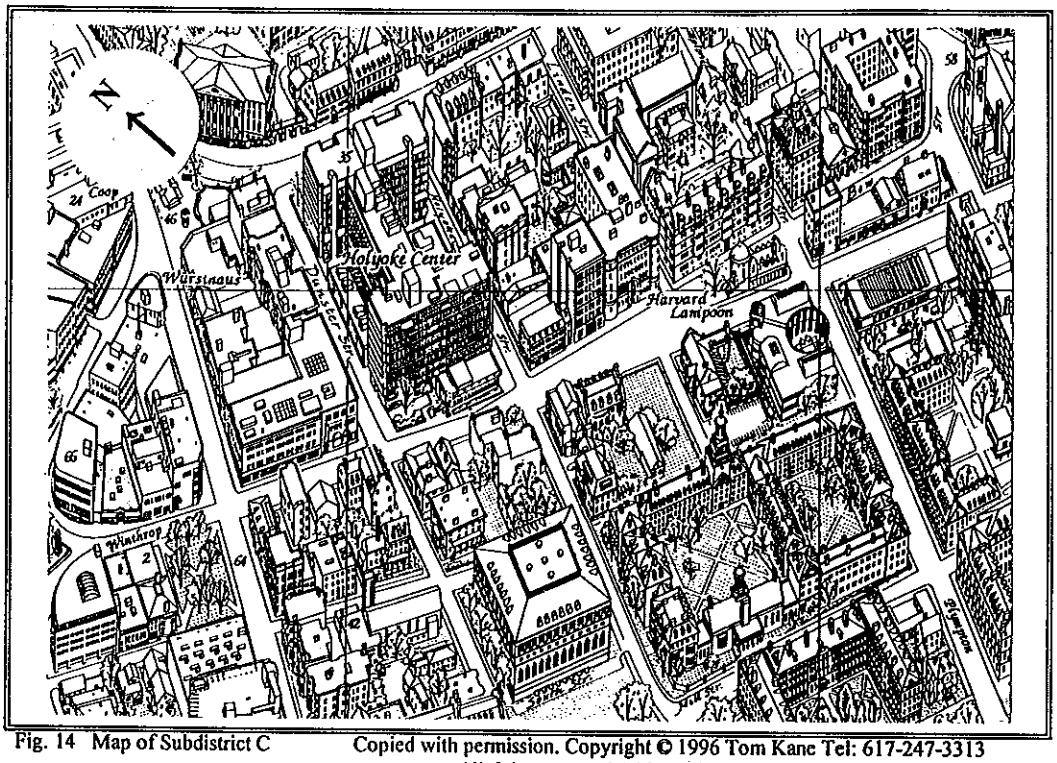

Fig. 14 Map of Subdistrict C

Historical and Physical Description

The boundaries of this subdistrict stretch from Massachusetts Avenue on the north, Mount Auburn Street on the south, Dunster Street on the west and Bow Street on the east. The name of the area reflects the affluent students for whom the private luxury dormitories and undergraduate clubs were constructed during the last quarter of the nineteenth century. The quality of the buildings' designs and materials matched the means of the private investors and wealthy students, making the Gold Coast an area as rich in architectural merit as it was rich in assets. Many of the private dormitories were converted to apartments in the 1920s. The architectural character of this subdistrict today is still dominated by these dormitories and clubs. For the most part, commercial establishments remain oriented toward Massachusetts Avenue and Mount Auburn Street.

Public Space

Although the Gold Coast does not contain any public parks or squares, the relationship of architectural facades, courtyards, and sidewalks provide visual interest to the pedestrian. Alterations to the landscape and transportation plan should respect the historic street pattern. Pedestrian safety concerns should be studied at Bow Street and Mount Auburn Street. Parking and loading issues should be investigated and a plan developed for efficiency. Street trees, an important commodity in this dense subdistrict, have been planted and are maintained by the City.

Private courtyards in the Gold Coast subdistrict, though not open to the public, do provide a welcome relief to the otherwise dense area. Property owners should be encouraged to preserve these spaces and upgrade the paving and landscaping materials therein. Exemptions to parking requirements could be offered, where necessary, to ensure the preservation of these urban green spaces. Another important open space in this subdistrict is the open lot at 68 Mount Auburn Street, owned by Harvard University. The lawn provides the only expanse of green along this stretch of Mount Auburn Street.

The Polishing the Trophy study recommends new brick crosswalks on Mount Auburn Street at the intersections of Dunster Street and Holyoke Street and new street lighting on Mount Auburn, Dunster, and Holyoke streets.

Private Sites

Many of the Harvard clubs have donated preservation easements to the City, granting review of alterations to the Historical Commission. Though buildings in the Gold Coast are predominantly of masonry construction, a few examples of wood frame construction remain. The Greek Revival house at 43-45 Mount Auburn Street is a prime candidate for a careful restoration. Improvements to this structure would greatly enhance the subdistrict.

Other examples of wood-frame architecture that should be preserved are:

- 20 Holyoke Street, a pre-1854 residence, remodeled in the Stick style in 1870s;
- 9 Bow Street, a Mansard with elaborate Queen Anne ornamentation; and
- 30 Plympton Street storefronts, rare survival of 19th-century with few alterations.

Commercial development on the south side of Mount Auburn Street should continue to be carefully regulated. Restorations and renovations of existing storefronts along Mount Auburn Street are encouraged. Any new development in this subdistrict would require a sensitive approach to architectural context and open space considerations. The open lot at 68 Mount Auburn Street and the commercial buildings at 45 1/2-49 Mount Auburn Street are two potential development sites to monitor.

Sites that have been redeveloped in the last decade include the Hillel Center at 52 Mount Auburn Street, which was designed by architect Moshe Safdie to complement the Lampoon's architecture, and the St. Paul's Catholic Church complex, which was designed by Koetter Kim & Associates to include a European-styled courtyard that accommodates both cars and pedestrians. A substantial expansion project and the restoration of the bell tower have been completed at St. Paul's. The Harvard Lampoon building has also undergone a restoration in recent years.

Subdistrict D: Winthrop Square/JFK Street

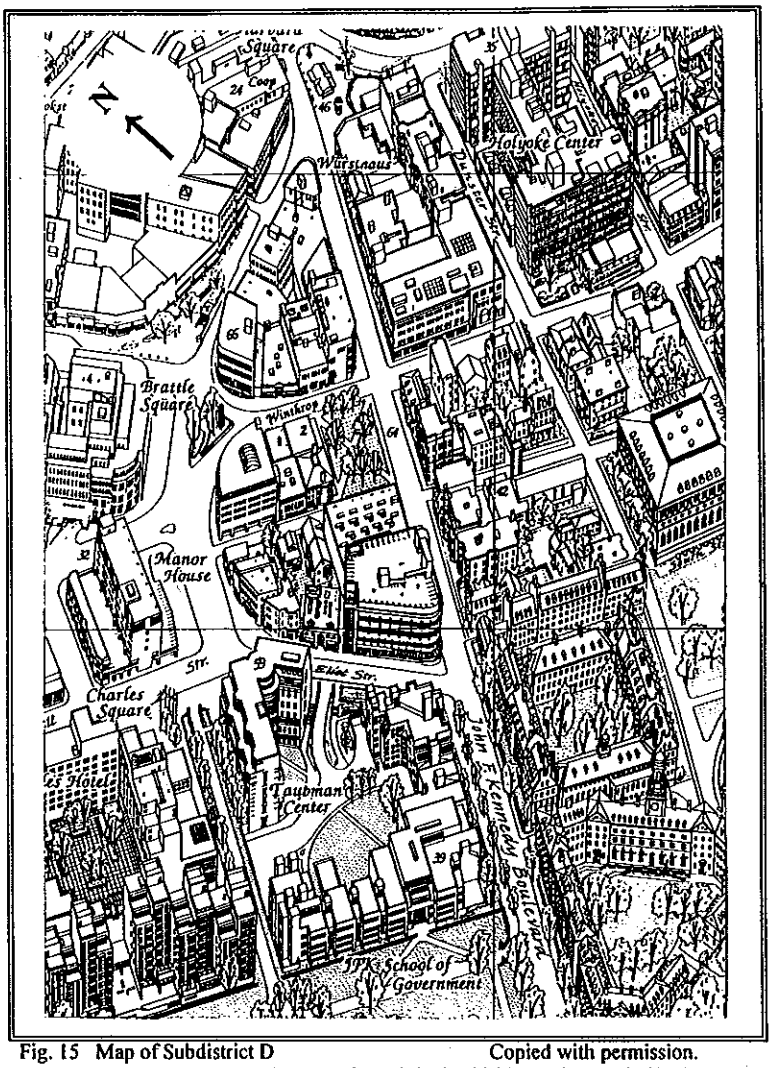

Fig. 15 Map of Subdistrict D

Historical and Physical Description

John F. Kennedy Street (formerly Boylston Street) is the primary entryway into Harvard Square from Memorial Drive and Boston. The subdistrict includes the properties along JFK Street and around Winthrop Square. This subdistrict includes an eclectic mix of architecture that spans 200 years of Cambridge history. At the center is Winthrop Square, a house lot of the original settlement that was never built upon and was used as a public market place in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. The buildings located around Winthrop Square and on the northern section of JFK Street represent a mixture of frame and masonry construction. Most of the older buildings, including residences and light-industrial buildings have been converted to commercial uses. The built environment along JFK Street near the river has undergone a dramatic transformation in the twentieth century. The Harvard residences, Kirkland House and Eliot House, were constructed in 1913 and 1930, respectively. The

Kennedy School of Government, constructed in the 1970s and 1980s, dominates the other side of JFK Street.

Public Space

Winthrop Square has been renovated within the last ten years. A ten-foot wide strip of paving was returned to turf and grass, the pathways through the park were returned to an earlier configuration, and a new post fence was installed along the perimeter. A public artwork, designed by Carlos Dorrien, stands at the center of the park.

As indicated in the 1986 Guidelines, consideration should be given to excluding passenger vehicles from the block of Winthrop Street between JFK Street and Eliot Square. The result would reduced traffic congestion on this narrow street with several small-scale historic structures, thus enhancing the pedestrian's experience and making it a safer place.

The recommendations made by the Polishing the Trophy study include repair of sidewalks along much of JFK Street, new brick crosswalks at the intersections of Mount Auburn Street and Eliot Street, and new street lights along the length of JFK Street.

Private Sites

The mixed-use redevelopment of Winthrop Square is a model of restoration, adaptive reuse, and sensitive infill construction. The relocation of the Chapman Heirs' House to face Winthrop Square and the renovation of the Pi Eta Club (Grendel's) at 91 Winthrop Street secures the setting of this important open space. Potential development sites in this subdistrict include the Banker properties on Eliot Street, which were proposed for redevelopment in the late 1980s. The small houses on Winthrop Street are underdeveloped, but are largely protected as individual landmarks or through preservation restrictions. The 18th century wall that runs behind the properties on Winthrop, Eliot, and South Streets is a critically-important artifact of early development in Harvard Square and should be protected and exposed to public view in any future development

Storefront and signage designs vary widely along JFK Street. While the bold 1980's remodeling of the triple-deckers at 52-56 JFK Street with two-color striped siding is valued by many as a product of its era and for its eccentricity, similar treatment of other wood-frame buildings in the Square is not encouraged. The house at 98 Winthrop Street (c. 1800) is an important historical structure. Any redevelopment of that site should be sensitive to the limitations of the small, wood-frame house. An office or residential re-use would be more suited to the building than a busy commercial enterprise.

Aggressive signage can be noted throughout the subdistrict, from the eclectic collection seen on the JFK Street triple-deckers to the integral new signage program developed for The Garage building. New proposals for signage should follow the general design guidelines for the district, but it would not be out of character for signs in this subdistrict to be more dynamic than in the quieter subdistricts of the Square such as the Gold Coast.

Subdistrict E: Brattle Square

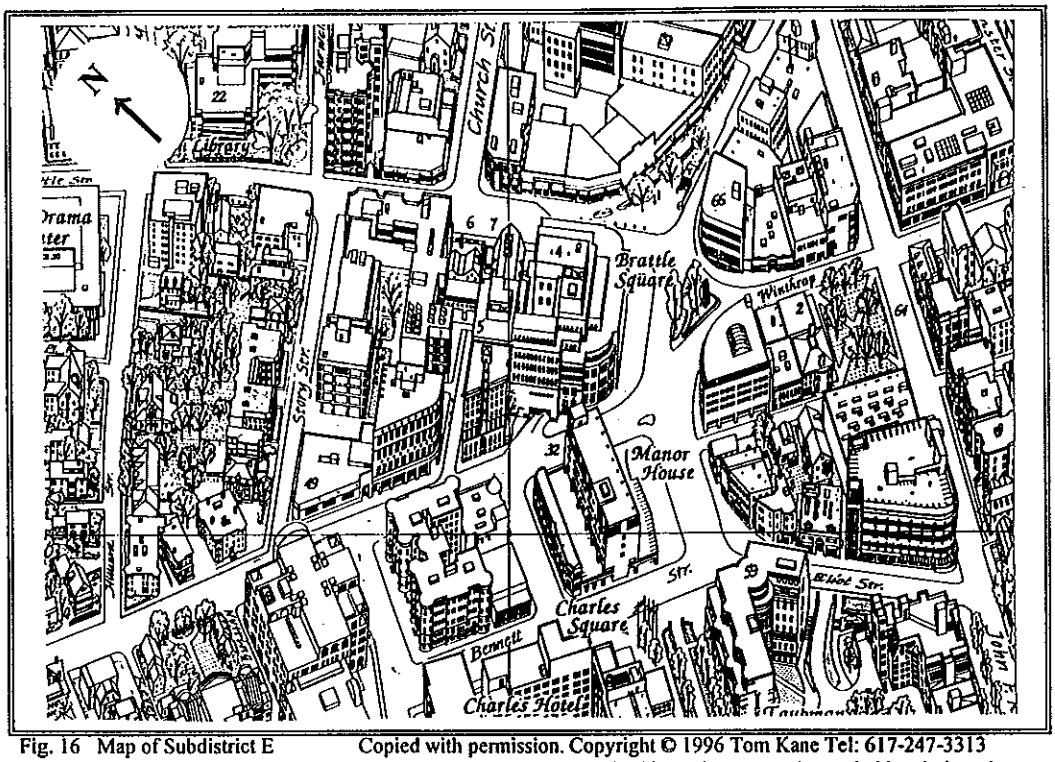

Fig. 16 Map of Subdistrict E

Historical and Physical Description

This subdistrict includes the properties around Brattle, Mount Auburn, and Eliot streets and at Brattle Square, where these three streets intersect. The north (or west) side of Story Street is recommended to be included in a district, as it is now left completely unprotected by its exclusion from the Harvard Square Overlay District, the Harvard Square National Register District, and the Half Crown Neighborhood Conservation District.

In 1810, Mount Auburn Street was extended west, through the former Brattle estate. By 1840, it seemed that a neighborhood of homes would be built near the Brattle mansion (42 Brattle Street), but the residential character of Brattle Square changed when the Brattle House, a 106-room hotel, was constructed there in 1849. Brattle Square, Palmer Street, and Church Street became the favored locations for stables, blacksmiths, carriage shops, and saloons. The hotel soon failed, and the building became the University Press printing plant. The site of the University Press was largely vacant from 1893 until the mid 1980s, when University Place was constructed.

After World War I, the Harvard Square shopping district expanded to include Brattle Square, where a new post office was built in 1919, and the Sage family replaced the old Jacob Bates House with a Georgian-style market in 1926. George Dow assembled most of the remaining frontage on Brattle Street between Palmer and Church streets, which was occupied by a collection of storefronts and one substantial building at 11-25 Brattle Street. By 1941, the Dows had removed the upper stories of 17-25 Brattle Street and refaced the entire row with a

cast-stone Moderne facade. This complex is sometimes called the Brines Block, which refers to the Brine's Sporting Goods store, a long-time retailer in the block.

The recommendations made by the Polishing the Trophy study include new brick sidewalks at the intersection of Eliot and Bennett streets, and at either end of Story Street, and street lighting improvements throughout the subdistrict.

Public Space

In the 1980s, the curve of Brattle Street was narrowed to form a T intersection and to create the plaza and sidewalks in front of the Brines Block. The historic street pattern is still discernable by the strong visual effect of the curve of the buildings of the Brines Block. This curve should be maintained in future. The terraced public space created a buffer for pedestrians, and it is now a vibrant part of the Square, providing space for street performances.

The One Brattle Square building was designed with multiple street-level entrances to the retail stores, but most of those entrances have been closed off by the retailers. Future re-developments should respect the historical tradition of narrow storefronts and multiple entrances along a large facade. The Brines Block would make an excellent reference to inform new retail construction.

Private Sites

The study committee analyzed two potential development sites in this subdistrict: the Harvard Motor Inn and the Brines Block. The committee reviewed schematic drawings that depicted the maximum build-out potential allowed under current zoning. Suggestions for the composition of the design guidelines grew out of that discussion. The 1986 goals for this subdistrict outlined ways to maximize the pedestrian experience in the square:

In general, all of these projects should be built to the property line, respecting the vitality of the sidewalk and plaza spaces. Improved mid-block connections, such as at Mifflin Place, would be welcome as complementary to the subdistrict's public open spaces in the area. (1986 Harvard Square Development Guidelines)

The north (or west) side of Story Street contains several wood-frame residential buildings. It is important that these buildings be maintained because the street is a transition point from the mixed-use character of Harvard Square to the primarily-residential nature of the Half Crown Neighborhood Conservation District. The siting of 127 Mount Auburn Street (17 Story Street, an important mansion of 1846, should be respected.

Subdistrict F: Church Street

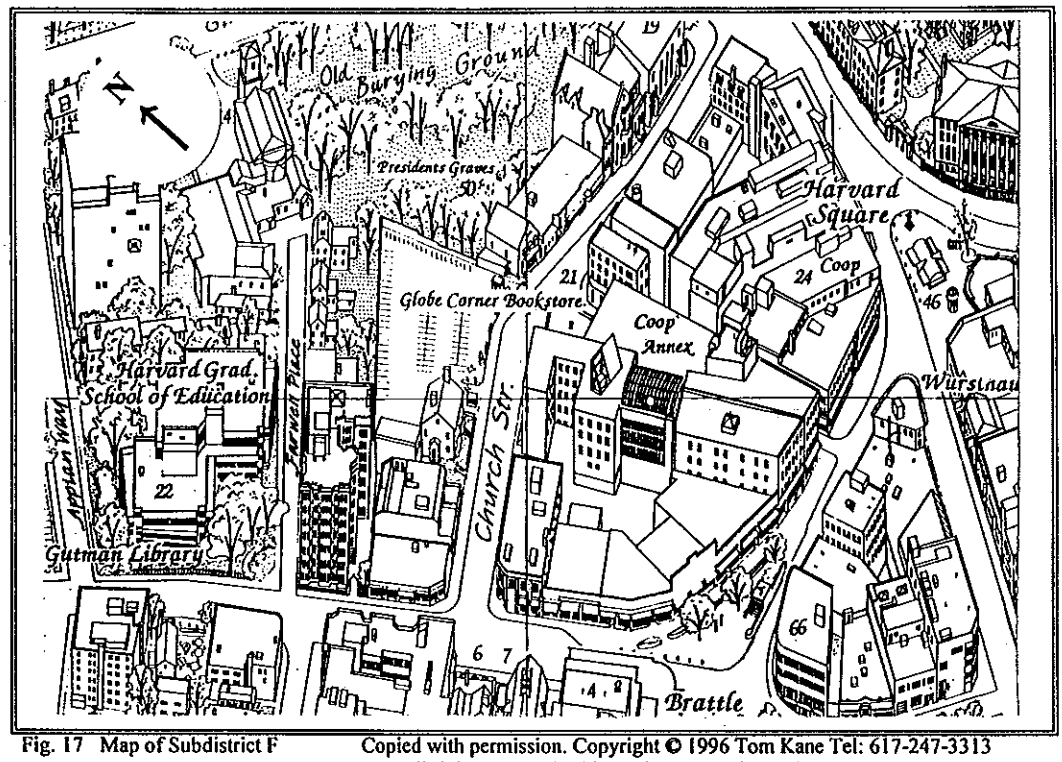

Fig. 17 Map of Subdistrict F

Historical and Physical Description

This subdistrict includes both sides of Church Street, Brattle Street to Farwell Place, and the whole of Palmer Street. The structures along the north side of Church Street from Massachusetts Avenue to the Church Street parking lot and the eastern half of Farwell Place are located within the boundaries of the Old Cambridge Historic District and are thus under the jurisdiction of the Cambridge Historical Commission. The sites of the greatest historical significance in this small subdistrict are the First Church Unitarian, the Burying Ground, the Torrey Hancock House/Cambridge School of Architecture building (53 Church Street), and a former police station at 31-33 Church Street (now Starbucks). Farwell Place is a small residential enclave that is protected as part of the Old Cambridge Historic District.

As in Brattle Square, Palmer Street and Church Street in the nineteenth century were home to stables, blacksmiths, carriage shops, and saloons. The industrial character of the subdistrict has been successfully translated to retail uses. The former carriage factory at 26 Church Street (1857) has been renovated and now serves as the home to the Globe Corner Bookstore and Club Passim. A brick police station was constructed at 31 Church Street in 1864 and is now occupied by a Starbucks coffee shop and a hair salon. A controversial proposal to close Palmer Street in the 1960s was defeated by community opposition, and the street was paved with granite blocks and brick sidewalks in 1964-67. This urban design improvement added interest to the narrow side street, though more retail storefronts would help enliven it.

Public Space

The street and sidewalk improvements suggested in the 1986 Guidelines have not yet been realized. The sidewalk on the east side of Church Street is so narrow that it does not meet ADA requirements. More pedestrians need to be accommodated on the busy sidewalks.

The recommendations made by the Polishing the Trophy study for this area include sidewalk replacement on Church, Palmer, and Brattle streets, new brick crosswalks at the intersection of Church and Brattle streets, and new street lighting along Church, Palmer, and Brattle streets.

Private Sites

The Church Street parking lot was analyzed by the study committee as a potential development site. Abutting the parking lot on the west is the Torrey Hancock House. The Cambridge School of Architecture and Landscape Architecture addition to the Torrey Hancock House is an important site to American women's history. These two structures are historically significant and should be preserved. Any new development on the parking lot site should emphasize retail storefronts, and the mass should be broken up to avoid a severe street presence on the expansive site. The architecture of a new development should take cues from the scale, massing, and setbacks of the historic structures on either side of the lot. Special consideration should be given to the development's relationship to the Old Burying Ground and the smaller-scale residences on Farwell Place.

APPENDICES

Appendix A: Cambridge City Code, Chapter 2.78, Article III

Appendix B: Architectural Significance of Protected Storefronts

Appendix C: Harvard-CHC Protocol

Appendix A: Cambridge City Code, Chapter 2.78, Article III

Building Commissioner are each specifically authorized to institute any and all actions and proceedings, in law or in equity, as they may deem necessary and appropriate to obtain compliance with the requirements of this article or to prevent a threatened violation thereof.

B. Building Permit to be Withheld. No building permit shall be issued with respect to any premises upon which a building fifty years or more old has been voluntarily demolished otherwise than pursuant to a demolition permit granted after compliance with the provisions of this article for a period of two years after the date of the completion of such demolition. As used in this article "premises" refers to the parcel of land upon which the demolished building was located and all adjoining parcels of land under common ownership or control.

C. Securing of Building Required. Upon a determination by the Commission that a building is a preferably preserved significant building, the owner shall be responsible for properly securing the building in compliance with the regulations of the Building Department. Should the owner fail so to secure the building, the loss of such building through fire or other cause shall be considered voluntary demolition for the purposes of subsection B of this section. (Ord. 965 § 7, 1981: Ord. 909 (part), 1978: prior code § 2-147(j) (part))

2.78.130 Conflicts with Historic Districts Act.

Nothing in this article shall be deemed to conflict with the provisions of the Historic Districts Act, General Laws Chapter 40C, with respect to requirements as to notice, hearing and issuance by the Commission of a certificate of appropriateness, a certificate of nonapplicability or a certificate of hardship prior to demolition of any building in an historic district; provided, however, that any temporary building erected or maintained in an historic district pursuant to a certificate issued by the Commission may be demolished in a manner not inconsistent with the terms of such certificate. (Ord. 965 § 6, 1981: Ord. 909 (part), 1978: prior code § 2-147(j) (part))

Article III. Establishment of Neighborhood Conservation Districts and Protected Landmarks

2.78.140 Purpose.

The City Council finds it necessary to enact this article under Section 6 of the Home Rule Amendment 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 neighborhoods, areas, sites and structures which constitute or reflect distinctive features of the architectural, cultural, political, economic or social history of the City; to resist and restrain environmental influences adverse to this purpose; to foster appropriate use and wider public knowledge and appreciation of such neighborhoods, areas or 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 neighborhood conservation districts and landmarks to be administered as set forth in this article. (Ord. 1002 (part), 1983: prior code § 2-147(k)(1))

2.78.150 Definitions for Article III.

In addition to the terms defined in Section 2.78.080 of this chapter, the following terms, when used whether or not capitalized in this subsection, shall have the meanings set forth in this section, unless the context otherwise requires:

A. "Demolition" means the act of pulling down, destroying, removing or razing structures, or commencing the work of total or substantial destruction with the intent of completing the same.

B. "Exterior architectural features" means and includes such portion of the exterior of a structure as is open to view from a public street, way, park or body of water, including but not limited to the architectural style and general arrangement and setting thereof, the kind, material and texture of exterior building materials, and the type and style of windows, doors, lights, signs and other appurtenant exterior fixtures.

C. "Historic district" means an area so established under the authority of Chapter 40C of the General Laws.

D. "Landmark" means any property within the City so designated in accordance with Section 2.78.180 of this article.

E. "Neighborhood conservation district" means any area within the City so designated in accordance with Section 2.78.180 of this article.

F. "Neighborhood conservation district commission" or "district commission" means a commission provided for by Section 2.78.160 of this article.

G. "Structure" means a combination of materials including a building, sign, fence, wall, terrace, walk, driveway, street, bridge, statue, monument or other manmade feature.

H. "Gross floor area" means the floor area so defined in Article 2.000 of the Zoning Ordinance of the City of Cambridge. (Ord. 1166 §§7, 16, 1995; Ord. 1002 (part), 1983: prior code § 2-147(k)(2))

2.78.160 Neighborhood conservation district commission—Established—Membership requirements.

A. Upon designation as provided in Section 2.78.180 of this article of any neighborhood conservation district, and unless the designation provides that the Historical Commission itself shall exercise authority with respect thereto, the City Manager shall appoint a neighborhood conservation district commission to consist of five members and three alternates. The members shall include three residents of the neighborhood, not less than two of whom shall be homeowners; one neighborhood property owner (who may or may not be a neighborhood homeowner); and one member or alternate of the Cambridge Historical Commission. The three alternates shall all be neighborhood property owners. The neighborhood conservation district commission shall act solely in the exercise of those functions described in this article which are applicable to the district under its administration.

B. Any member or alternate of the Historical Commission may be appointed to a neighborhood conservation district commission for a term coterminous with such person's term as a member or alternate of the Historical Commission. Members and alternates of a neighborhood conservation district commission who are not members of the Historical Commission shall by reason of experience or education have demonstrable knowledge and concern for improvement, conservation and enhancement of the district, and at least two of the members or alternates shall have professional qualifications related to real estate or architecture or historic preservation. The members of the neighborhood conservation district commission shall be appointed by the City Manager with regard to the diverse viewpoints expressed in the creation of the district. Such members shall serve for a term of three years, except that the initial appointments shall be for one member to serve one year and one member to serve two years, and vacancies shall be filled for the unexpired term of office. Each member and alternate shall continue in office after expiration of his or her term until a successor is duly appointed and qualified, except that no member shall serve more than two consecutive terms.

C. The neighborhood conservation district commission shall elect annually a Chairman and Vice-Chairman from its own number. In the case of absence, inability to act, or unwillingness to act because of self-interest on the part of a member, his or her place shall be taken by an alternate member designated by the Chairman, if available, otherwise by the Vice-Chairman if available, otherwise by a majority vote of the members and alternate members of the Commission present. The person exercising the function of Executive Director of the Historical Commission shall serve as secretary of each neighborhood conservation district commission. Persons serving as members or alternate members of a neighborhood conservation district commission shall, as a result of such service, be considered as "special municipal employees" for purposes of Chapter 268A of the General Laws. (Ord. 1166 §8, 1995; Ord. 1002 (part), 1983: prior code § 2-147(k)(3))

2.78.170 Powers and duties.

The Historical Commission and each neighborhood conservation district commission shall have like powers, functions and duties with respect to each landmark and neighborhood conservation district over which it has jurisdiction as is provided Historic District Commissions under clauses (a) through (g) under Section 10 of Chapter 40C of the General Laws with respect to historic districts, including without limitation with respect to the approval and disapproval of certificates of appropriateness, nonapplicability and hardship, the dating and signing of such certificates, the keeping of records and adoption of rules and regulations, the filing with the City Clerk and Building Department of certificates and determinations of disapproval by it, and the determination of designs of appurtenances (excluding colors) which will meet the requirements of the landmark or neighborhood conservation district. (Ord. 1002 (part), 1983: prior code § 2-147(*k*)(9))

2.78.180 Designation procedures.

A. 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; may recommend for designation as a neighborhood conservation district any area within the City containing places and structures which it determines are of importance to the architectural, aesthetic, cultural, political, economic or social history of the City, and which considered together cause such area to constitute a distinctive neighborhood or to have a distinctive character in terms of its exterior features; and may recommend amendments to any designation of landmark or neighborhood conservation district theretofore made.

B. Prior to the recommendation of designation or amendment of designation of any landmark or neighborhood conservation district an investigation and report on the historical, architectural and other relevant significance thereof shall be made. The report shall recommend the boundaries of any proposed landmark or neighborhood conservation district and shall recommend for incorporation in the order of the City Council designating each landmark or neighborhood conservation district general and/or specific standards and appropriate criteria consistent with the purposes of this article and the provisions of Section 2.78.190 of this article that are to be applied in making any determination of the type referred to in Sections 2.78.170, 2.78.210 and 2.78.220 of this article, with respect to the designated landmark or within the designated neighborhood conservation district.

C. In the case of a landmark, the report shall be prepared by the Historical Commission. In the case of a neighborhood conservation district, the report shall be prepared by a study committee consisting of three members or alternates of the Historical Commission and four persons appointed by the City Manager, including at least one person who resides in the district under consideration, at least one person who owns property in the district under consideration, and one person who owns property or resides elsewhere in the City and has demonstrated knowledge and concern for conservation and enhancement of those exterior features of the City which are important to its distinctive character.

D. Any ten registered voters of the City may petition that the Historical Commission initiate, or the Historical Commission on its own may initiate, the process of designating a landmark or neighborhood conservation district or amending or rescinding any such designation theretofore made. The Commission shall within forty-five days following the filing of such request or petition hold a preliminary hearing and arrange for the preparation of a report and, if required, request the appointment of a study committee. The Historical Commission shall not reconsider a proposed designation, amendment or rescission of designation within one year of its

previous hearing thereon, unless two-thirds of all its members vote to do so. No later than forty-five days after the transmittal of a report to the Commission pertaining to a proposed designation, the Commission shall hold a public hearing. The Commission shall give not less than fourteen days notice of such public hearing by publication in a newspaper of general circulation in the City and by mailing notice thereof to the owner of the proposed landmark and to every owner abutting the proposed landmark or within the proposed neighborhood conservation district, each such owner to be determined from the then current records of the Assessing Department, and to the City Manager, the Planning Board and the City Clerk.

E. Prior to the public hearing, the Commission shall transmit copies of the report to the Planning Board for its consideration and recommendations.

F. The recommendation of the Historical Commission with regard to any designation, amendment or rescission shall be transmitted to the City Manager and to the City Clerk with a copy of the approved designation report. Designation of a landmark or a neighborhood conservation district or amendment or rescission of designation shall be by order of the City Council. In the case of a designation, the order shall include a statement of the reasons for such designation and a statement of standards which the Historical Commission or neighborhood conservation district commission is to apply under Sections 2.78.170 and 2.78.190 through 2.78.220 of this article.

G. No designation, amendment or rescission of designation shall become effective until a map setting forth the boundaries of the landmark or neighborhood conservation district or change in the boundaries thereof, has been filed with the City Council and has been recorded with the Registry of Deeds for the South District of Middlesex County.

H. If the order establishing or amending a neighborhood conservation district contains provisions for both regulatory and educational/incentive programs, the regulatory provisions of the order shall not be effective unless and until the educational/incentive provisions of the order are funded.

I. Following acceptance of a designation petition by the Historical Commission, no application for a building permit for new construction or alterations on the premises of a property being considered for designation shall be granted until reviewed by the Commission as though the property were designated as a landmark or a neighborhood conservation district under this Article III. Beginning with the acceptance of a designation petition and until (a) the Historical Commission makes a negative recommendation on a proposed designation, (b) the City Council determines not to enact the proposed designation, or (c) one year has elapsed, whichever is less, the Commission shall review all proposed construction, demolition, or alteration that affects the exterior architectural features, other than color, of the structures on the premises of a proposed landmark or within a proposed neighborhood conservation district. (Ord. 1166 §§9, 10, 17, 18, 1995; Ord. 1009A (part), 1984; Ord. 1002 (part), 1983: prior code § 2-147(k)(4))

2.78.190 Review procedures.

A. Except as the order designating or amending a landmark or neighborhood conservation district may otherwise provide in accordance with this article, the Historical Commission or neighborhood conservation district commission having jurisdiction shall review all construction, demolition or alteration that affects the exterior architectural features, other than color, of any landmark or within any neighborhood conservation district.

B. The order designating or amending a landmark or neighborhood conservation district may provide that the authority of the Historical Commission or neighborhood conservation district commission having jurisdiction shall not extend to the review of one or more of the following categories of structures or exterior architectural features of the landmark or within the neighborhood conservation district in which event the structures or exterior architectural features so excluded may be constructed or altered without review by the Commission:

1. The application of exterior wall material in a manner that does not require the removal or enclo-

sure of any cornice, fascia, soffit, bay, porch, hood, window or door casing, or any other protruding decorative element;

2. Alternations to the exterior of existing structures that do not increase or diminish the size and location of windows and doors, cause the removal of any bay, porch, hood, window or door casing or any other protruding decorative element, or alter the appearance of a roof;

3. The exterior appearance of a new structure that does not require a variance or special permit under the zoning ordinance then in effect;

4. Signs, temporary structures, lawn statuary, or recreational equipment, subject to such conditions as to duration of use, dimension, location, lighting, removal and similar matters as the Commission may reasonably specify;

5. Terraces, walks, driveways, sidewalks and similar structures substantially at grade level;

6. Walls and fences;

7. Storm doors and windows, screens, window air conditioners, lighting fixtures, antennae, trelliswork and similar appurtenances.

C. The Historical Commission or a neighborhood conservation district commission may determine from time to time after a public hearing that certain categories of exterior architectural features or structures, including, without limitation, any of those enumerated in this section, if the provisions of the applicable order do not limit the authority of such commission with respect thereto, may be constructed or altered without review by such commission without causing substantial derogation from the intent and purposes of this article.

D. If the order establishing or amending a neighborhood conservation district provides, the determination of a neighborhood conservation district commission shall be binding only with regard to applications to construct a new building, to demolish an existing structure if a demolition permit is required, to construct a parking lot as a principal use, and to construct an addition to an existing structure that would increase its gross floor area, and in all other cases the determinations of a commission shall be advisory only and not binding on an applicant. In no case shall a building permit be issued until the commission has made a determination under the applicable provisions of this article. (Ord. 1002 (part), 1983: prior code § 2-147(k)(5))

2.78.200 Maintenance, repair and reconstruction.

Nothing in this chapter shall be construed to prevent the ordinary maintenance, repair or replacement of any exterior architectural feature of a landmark or within a neighborhood conservation district which does not involve a change in design or material or the outward appearance thereof, nor to prevent landscaping with plants, trees or shrubs, nor construed to prevent the meeting of requirements certified by duly authorized public officer to be necessary for public safety because of an unsafe or dangerous condition, not construed to prevent any construction or alteration under a permit duly issued prior to the effective date of the order which designates that landmark or district, nor construed to prevent the reconstruction, substantially similar in exterior design, of a structure or exterior architectural feature damaged or destroyed by fire, storm or other disaster, provided such reconstruction is begun within one year thereafter and carried forward with due diligence. (Ord. 1002 (part), 1983: prior code § 2-147(k)(6))

2.78.210 Certificates of appropriateness, nonapplicability or hardship.

A. Except as the order establishing or amending a landmark or neighborhood conservation district may otherwise provide, no structure designated a landmark or within a neighborhood conservation district shall be constructed or altered in any way that affects exterior architectural features unless the Historical Commission or neighborhood conservation district commission having jurisdiction shall first have issued a certificate of appropriateness, a certificate of nonapplicability or a certificate of hardship with respect to such construction or alteration.

B. Any person who desires to obtain a certificate from the Historical Commission or neighborhood

conservation district commission shall file with the Commission an application for a certificate of appropriateness, a certificate of nonapplicability or a certificate of hardship, as the case may be, in such form as the commission may reasonably determine, together with such plans, elevations, specifications, material and other information, including in the case of demolition or removal a statement of the proposed condition and appearance of the property thereafter, as may be reasonably deemed necessary by the Commission to enable it to make a determination on the application.

C. No building permit for alteration of an exterior architectural feature of a landmark or construction of a structure or for alteration of an exterior architectural feature within a neighborhood conservation district and no demolition permit for demolition or removal of a landmark or of a structure within a neighborhood conservation district shall be issued by the City or any department thereof until the certificate required by this article has been issued by the Historical Commission or neighborhood conservation district commission having jurisdiction. (Ord. 1166 §§11, 12, 1995; Ord. 1002 (part), 1983: prior code § 2-147(k)(7))

2.78.220 Factors considered by Commissions.

A. In passing upon matters before it, the Historical Commission or neighborhood conservation district commission shall consider, among other things, the historic and architectural value and significance of the site or structure, the general design, arrangement, texture and material of the features involved, and the relation of such features to similar features of structures in the surrounding area. In the case of new construction or additions to existing structures a commission shall consider the appropriateness of the size and shape of the structure both in relation to the land area upon which the structure is situated and to structures in the vicinity, and a Commission may in appropriate cases impose dimensional and setback requirements in addition to those required by applicable provision of the zoning ordinance. A Commission shall not consider interior arrangements or architectural features not subject to public view.

B. A Commission shall not make any recommendation or requirement except for the purpose of preventing developments incongruous to the historic aspects, architectural significance or the distinctive character of the landmark or neighborhood conservation district. (Ord. 1002 (part), 1983: prior code § 2-147(k)(8))

2.78.230 Public meetings and hearings.

The Historical Commission and each neighborhood conservation district commission shall adopt rules for the reasonable conduct of its meetings and public hearings, which rules shall not be inconsistent with the procedures provided for meetings of and hearings by historic district commissions under Section 11 of Chapter 40C of the General Laws; and in the absence of the adoption of any such rules, meetings and public hearings of the Historical Commission and of each neighborhood conservation district commission shall be in conformity with the provisions of Section 11 of Chapter 40C applicable to historic district commissions. (Ord. 1002 (part), 1983: prior code § 2-147(k)(10))

2.78.240 Appeal procedure.

Any person aggrieved by a designation of a landmark or district may appeal to the superior court within thirty days after such designation. Any applicant aggrieved by a determination of a neighborhood conservation district commission or ten registered voters of the City opposing a determination under this article may appeal to the Historical Commission within twenty days after the filing of the notice of such determination with the City Clerk. The Historical Commission may overrule the determination and return it for reconsideration consistent with that finding. If the applicant is aggrieved by the determination of the Historical Commission, or if action is not taken by the Historical Commission within thirty days of filing for review, the applicant may appeal to the superior court. Appeal from a Historical Commission determination shall be taken within thirty days of the formal decision; appeal

from a failure to act shall be taken within sixty days after the filing for review. The superior court may reverse a determination if it is not supported by substantial evidence in the record. In all other respects, the appeal shall be made in the same manner as provided under Section 12A of Chapter 40C of the General Laws. (Ord. 1166 §13, 1995; Ord. 1002 (part), 1983: prior code § 2-147(k)(11))

2.78.250 Historical Commission authority not limited.

No provisions of this article shall alter or diminish the duties and functions of the Historical Commission under the authority of Chapter 40, Section 8D and Chapter 40C of the General Laws, or apply to any historic district currently administered by such commission, or restrict the establishment of any future historic district under Chapter 40C of the General Laws. (Ord. 1002 (part), 1983: prior code § 2-147(k)(13))

2.78.260 Limitation on applicability.

The provisions of Article II of this chapter (relative to procedures for demolition permits for significant buildings) shall not be applicable with respect to the demolition of any structure within a neighborhood conservation district if the appropriate neighborhood conservation district commission has issued a certificate of appropriateness or a certificate of hardship permitting the demolition of such structure. (Ord. 1002 (part), 1983: prior code § 2-147(k)(14))

2.78.270 Enforcement and remedies.

The Historical Commission and any neighborhood conservation district commission are each specifically authorized to institute any and all actions, proceedings in law and in equity, as they deem necessary and appropriate to obtain compliance with the requirements of this article or to prevent a threatened violation thereof. Any violation of any provision of this article may be punished to the like extent provided in Section 13 of Chapter 40C of the General Laws for a violation of said Chapter 40C. In addition to the foregoing, no building permit shall be issued, with respect to any premises upon which a landmark or a structure within any neighborhood conservation district has been voluntarily demolished otherwise than pursuant to a certificate granted after compliance with the provisions of this article, for a period of two years after the date of the completion of such demolition (the word "premises" for the purposes of this sentence referring to the parcel of land upon which the demolished structure was located and all adjoining parcels of land under common ownership or control.) (Ord. 1002 (part), 1983: prior code § 2-147(k)(12))

Appendix B: Architectural Significance of Protected Storefronts

The Harvard Square Neighborhood Conservation District Study Committee identified four storefronts in the proposed district that are of exceptional significance for their architecture and historical associations. These structures will be exempt from the goals and guidelines intended by the committee to allow flexibility in reviewing reversible changes to storefronts, and all alterations will require approval of the Cambridge Historical Commission in the form of a Certificate of Appropriateness, Nonapplicability, or Hardship.

1. 1304 Massachusetts Avenue

The storefront presently occupied by Gnomon Copy was constructed in 1907 as the shoe shop of G. Henry Bonner, but shortly became the Cambridge branch of a Boston shoe retailer, Coes & Young. The architectural firm of Coolidge & Carlson designed an elaborate curvilinear Art Noveau shopfront, to replace an earlier shopfront that may have dated from the construction of the building in 1869. The immediate motivation for this unique design is unknown, but, beginning in 1900 the owners of the building renamed it The Fairfax and began to upgrade it as an expensive private dormitory for wealthy undergraduates. The prestige and sophistication of the Art Noveau design presumably was intended to impart a Continental air to the building and its tenants.

The storefront has been occupied by its present tenant since about 1970, and is well maintained by Harvard Real Estate. It is remarkably intact, down to the original door hardware, and is considered to be unique in the Boston area if not in America as an original example of this style (see Fig. 42).

2. 1316 Massachusetts Avenue

Also located in The Fairfax, but placed in a part of the structure that was built in 1885, the storefront occupied by Leavitt & Pierce is one of the few intact cast-iron fronts in Harvard Square. Essentially unchanged from its original appearance (except for the addition of retractable security grilles in about 1970), it has been occupied by the same tenant since 1887.

Leavitt & Pierce is a quintessential smoke shop and billiard parlor that has served countless generations of undergraduates and townspeople. Regardless of the tenant, however, the storefront itself is a significant element in Harvard Square (Fig. 45).

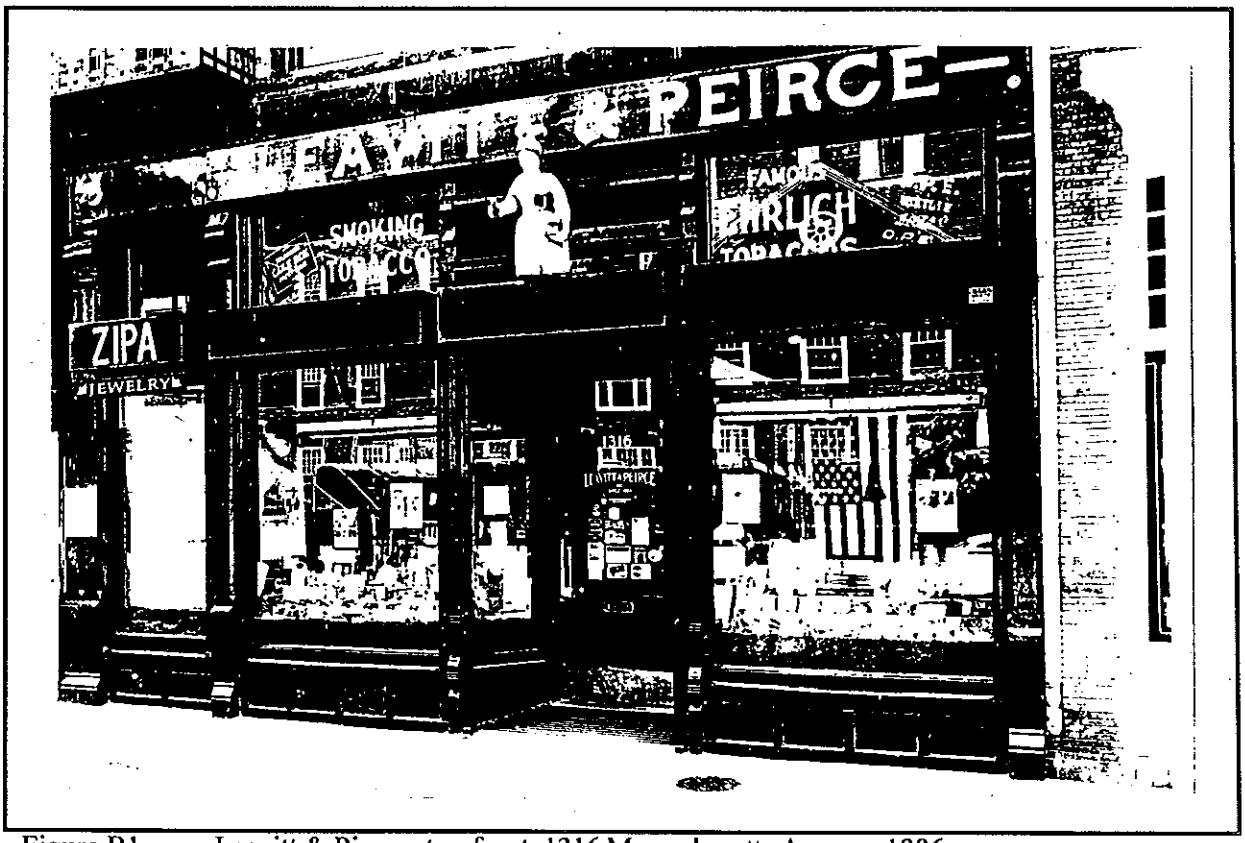

Figure B1. Leavitt & Pierce storefront, 1316 Massachusetts Avenue, 1886.

3. 1320 Massachusetts Avenue

The storefront presently occupied by J. August is an original feature of the Porcellian Club, which was designed in 1890 by the Boston architect William Y. Peters. Peters, an 1881 graduate of the college and a member of the club, designed a highly refined Georgian Revival building in buff Chicago brick with four floors of club rooms above the ground floor.

The Porcellian is considered the most prestigious of Harvard's undergraduate organizations, and Peters gave the club an elegant presence on Massachusetts Avenue directly opposite the Yard's Porcellian Gate. The storefront is completely original and intact (Fig. 46).

Figure B2. J. August storefront, 1320 Massachusetts Avenue, 1890.

4. 30 Plympton Street

The four-story frame building at 30 Plympton Street was built in 1888 as a six-family tenement with stores on the ground floor. The owner, Hyacinth Purcell, was a cement manufacturer in Cambridgeport who lived nearby on Mount Auburn Street in a single-family house next to the Reversible Collar factory. As the Gold Coast developed in the 1890s, Purcell saw greater opportunities in renting to students and converted the building to a private dormitory in 1900.

The architect of 30 Plympton Street, George Fogerty, was one of the most prolific designers Cambridge has ever seen; he and his son John were responsible for over 200 houses and apartment buildings in every corner of the City. The building at 30 Plympton Street is intact except for the aluminum siding that covers the original clapboards and trim, and is significant as a rare example of a frame tenement in Harvard Square. The storefront remains unaltered despite the siding and appears completely original In terms of significance and state of preservation, it is comparable in Cambridge only to a storefront at River and Auburn Streets in Cambridgeport of 1874 (Fig. 47).

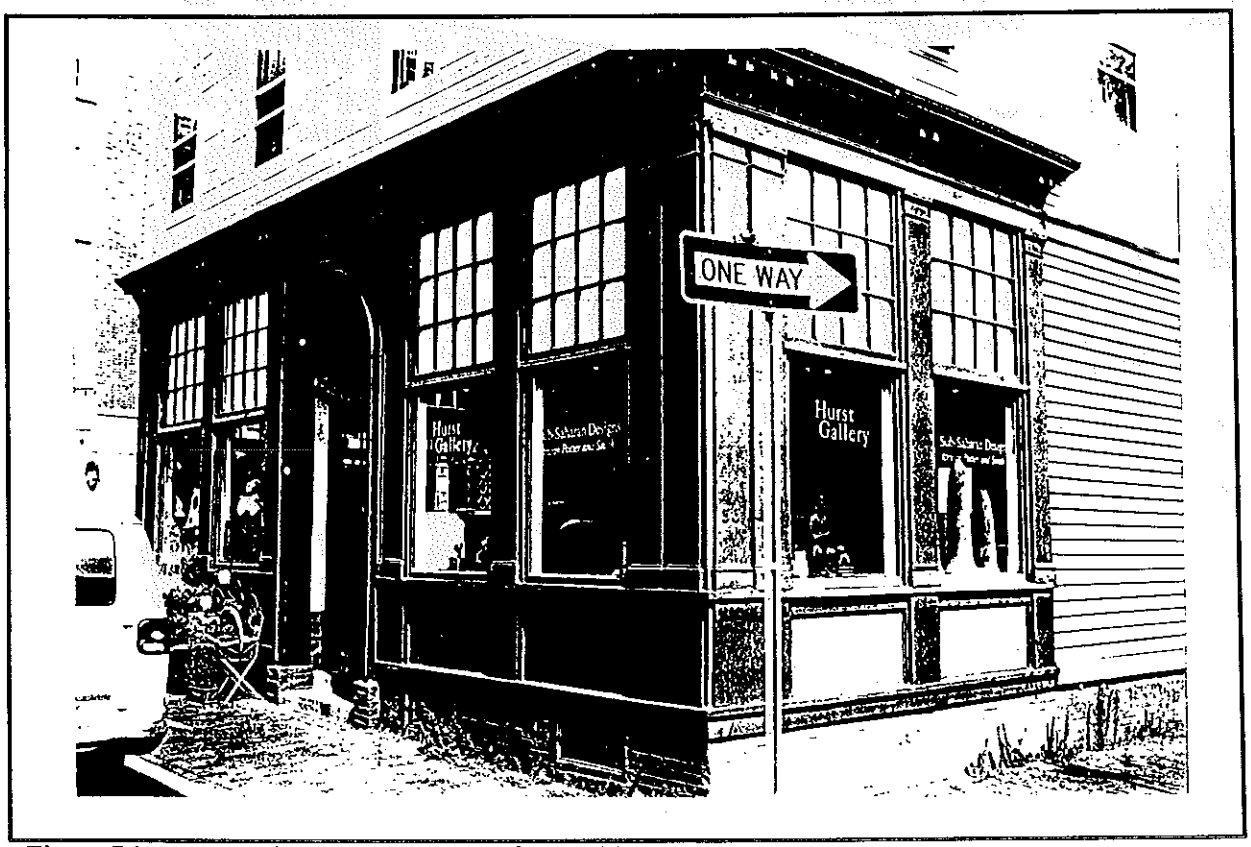

Figure B3. 30 Plympton Street storefront, 1888.

Appendix C: Harvard-Cambridge Historical Commission Protocol

The following documents, which include a an exchange of letters between Harvard University and the Cambridge Historical Commission on February 10 and 11, 1986, represent an understanding between the University and the Commission regarding the historic preservation of Harvard properties in Cambridge. In essence, the Commission agreed not to pursue local designation of Harvard properties listed on the National Register of Historic Places, and the University agreed to consult with the Executive Director of the Commission regarding changes to these properties.

The documents also include a letter from Harvard University dated August 6, 1999, in which the University agreed to modify the agreement and allow its buildings in the proposed Harvard Square Historic District to come under the jurisdiction of the Cambridge Historical Commission. Harvard University has not yet sent a formal communication regarding the Harvard-CHC protocol and its relationship to the now-proposed Harvard Square Conservation District.

Harvard University and the City of Cambridge have been closely entwined for 350 years, during which time both have grown enormously. Today, Harvard is far more than a small group of students in a few isolated buildings, and Cambridge is far more than a college town. For years to come, Harvard will be a dynamic educational and research institution in a diverse and multi-faceted city. As both Harvard and the City face the common challenge of regulating growth while preserving history, we should do so together as neighbors, not as adversaries. In this spirit, we affirm our willingness to listen carefully to the concerns of the people of this City and to inform the City of our own needs and concerns. We hope you share our belief that the National Register nominations are a constructive step in this process.

We would appreciate a letter from you in response to the concerns we have raised. With adequate assurances, we will be able to consent to the proposed National Register nominations and strengthen our mutual planning activities in the future.

Sincerely,

Robert H. Scott

RHS/mc
3.83
cc: R. Silverman
K. Spiegelman
C. Sullivan, Cambridge Historic Commission

Cambridge Historical Commission

City Hall Annex, 57 Inman Street, Cambridge, Massachusetts, 02139. 617/498-9040

Robert G. Neiley, *Chairman;* William B. King, *Vice Chairman;* Charles M. Sullivan, *Executive Director.*
Dwight H. Andrews; Arthur H. Brooks, Jr.; James F. Clapp, Jr.; Charles W. Eliot, 2nd; Joseph G. Sakey; *Commission Members.*
Allison M. Crump, Suzanne R. Green, John Lyons, *Alternates.*

February 11, 1986

Robert Scott
Vice President for Administration
Massachusetts Hall
Harvard University
Cambridge, Mass. 02138

Dear Mr. Scott:

The Cambridge Historical Commission has received your letter of February 10 concerning the nomination of additional Harvard properties to the National Register of Historic Places.

We feel that the study of the architecture of Harvard and its surroundings has already brought significant benefits to the University and the City. We appreciate Harvard's intention to incorporate the Register into its planning process, and we are pleased that the information from the study has been available to support the current nominations. The consent of the University to the nominations would be a desirable conclusion to this process.

Your letter expressed concern that implementation of these nominations might lead to designation of the same properties as historic districts, neighborhood conservation districts, or local landmarks under M.G.L. Chapter 40C or Ordinance 1002. From the Commission's point of view, local designations do not necessarily follow National Register nominations. Given Harvard's commitment to use the Register as a planning tool and to consult the Commission in advance of major external changes to the nominated properties, we do not foresee the need to pursue local designations. Furthermore, we recognize that Harvard's support for the nominations acknowledges the significant themes in the University's architecture and development, but does not represent support for other regulation of the same properties.

We are pleased to have your assurance that Harvard does not anticipate any action that would threaten the fundamental nature of the National Register districts. At the same time, we must retain the right to exercise our authority under state law and local ordinances to protect significant buildings and areas that are threatened by development or unacceptable change. We recognize the concentration of the Uni-

versity's holdings, the diversity of its architecture, and the need to carry out maintenance, repairs and alterations necessary to meet pressures for growth and change. We hope that, as change occurs, it does not ignore or diminish the significant characteristics recognized by the National Register.

We feel that the National Register study provides a basis for a more effective joint planning process between the City and the University. We appreciate the difficult concerns that Harvard has faced in its decision to support these nominations, and we look forward to working productively with the University in the future.

Yours,

Robert G. Neiley
Chairman

HOLYOKE CENTER
1350 MASSACHUSETTS AVENUE
CAMBRIDGE, MASSACHUSETTS 02138

TELEPHONE 617.495.2234
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HARVARD PLANNING AND REAL ESTATE

August 6, 1999

Mr. M. Wyllis Bibbins, Chair
Harvard Square Historic District Study Committee
Cambridge Historical Commission
831 Massachusetts Avenue
Cambridge, MA 02139

Re: Proposed Harvard Square Historic District

Dear Mr. Bibbins,

I understand that the Harvard Square Historic District Advisory Committee is nearing completion of its Study process and is planning to file a Study Report recommending a Harvard Square Historic District with associated proposed zoning amendments under the provisions of MGL Chapter 40C. Harvard University has been an active participant in the Study Committee as authorized by City Council order in July 1995 and we have appreciated the opportunity to be involved in this process.

As you know, in 1984 the Cambridge Historical Commission ("CHC") proposed the nomination of a number of Cambridge buildings, including over 200 Harvard buildings, to the National Register of Historic Places. Harvard initially opposed this nomination. In an exchange of letters dated February 10 and 11, 1986, and referenced in Chapter II of the Study Report, Harvard agreed to drop its opposition to most of the nominations and further agreed to consult with the CHC Executive Director before undertaking exterior alterations to Harvard-owned properties that are individually listed or eligible for listing on the National Register, or located within National Register Districts. In return, the Commission agreed not to include any of Harvard's National Register properties within any future state or local historic district without Harvard's consent (Exhibit A). This arrangement has been the basis of an effective working relationship between Harvard and the Historical Commission with regard to renovations of Harvard's National Register buildings.

Harvard agrees with the Study Committee that Harvard Square is a unique and vital mixed-use community. We value these qualities and are well aware that our National Register buildings contribute to Harvard Square's historic character. Harvard owns 43 buildings within the boundaries of the proposed historic district, 36 of which are within the Harvard Square National Register District (Exhibits B and C) and therefore subject to the 1986 CHC/Harvard agreement. Throughout the study process, we have been concerned about the implications of further regulations governing these National Register buildings that are already protected under the 1986 agreement.

However, we are in agreement with the Study Committee's focus on projects that would create permanent damage to the historical integrity of a building. The exemption from district review of interior alterations, exterior work not visible from a public street, painting, and most reversible first floor storefront changes will allow for flexibility in response to the needs of the various property owners in Harvard Square. This approach protects significant buildings, promotes design creativity, and encourages public dialogue without creating an unnecessary regulatory burden on merchants and landowners. Therefore, Harvard will support the establishment of the new Harvard Square historic district with the following understandings.

1. Harvard's National Register buildings located within the district will be subject to CHC historic district jurisdiction under the regulations of MGL Chapter 40C. It is our understanding that this jurisdiction will replace the 1986 CHC/Harvard consultation agreement as it pertains to Harvard's National Register buildings within the new historic district.

2. The protocols developed subsequent to the 1986 agreement will continue to govern exterior renovations of Harvard's National Register properties outside the proposed Harvard Square historic district. It is our understanding that the agreements implicit in those protocols also remain in force and that the Commission will not seek to landmark or pursue further historic designation of those properties without Harvard's consent.

3. The regulations for the new Harvard Square historic district will exclude review of interior building changes and will reference the Study Report for guidance on CHC decision-making regarding review of renovation projects within the district.

We request that the modification of the 1986 CHC/Harvard agreement be documented by an exchange of letters between Harvard and the Commission. Please provide us with your written response in confirmation of this understanding.

We have appreciated the leadership shown by the Historical Commission and members of the Advisory Committee during this lengthy and sometimes complicated study period. Your thoughtful and consensus-based approach has resulted in a proposal that is realistic and workable. We believe that the proposed historic district will provide effective protection for Harvard Square's historic resources while accomodating the complex reality of this mixed-used community.

Please feel free to call me at 495-2234 if you have any questions or would like any further discussion about Harvard's support of the proposed Harvard Square historic district.

Sincerely,

Kathy A. Spiegelman

Kathy A. Spiegelman
Associate Vice President
for Planning and Real Estate

cc: Charles Sullivan, Cambridge Historical Commisson
Harvard Square Study Committee Members
Sally Zeckhauser, Vice President for Administration
Paul Grogan, Vice President for Government, Community, and Public Affairs
Mary Power, Director of Community Relations, Cambridge
Robert McGaw, Office of the General Counsel
Tanya Iatridis, Director of Project Approvals
Dorrie Pizzella, Public Approvals Manager

Attachments

BLDNAME	ST#	STNAME	DesigDescript	NRDName	C/NC
HOLYOKE CENTER	75	MOUNT AUBURN STREET	NATIONAL REGISTER DISTRICT	Harvard Sq.	NC
HARVARD SQUARE HOTEL	110	MOUNT AUBURN STREET	NATIONAL REGISTER DISTRICT	Harvard Sq.	NC
THE INN AT HARVARD	1201	MASSACHUSETTS AVENUE	NATIONAL REGISTER DISTRICT	Harvard Sq.	NC
FAIRFAX HALL	1300-131	MASSACHUSETTS AVENUE	NATIONAL REGISTER DISTRICT	Harvard Sq.	C
HAMPDEN HALL (8 PLYMPTON)	1246-125	MASSACHUSETTS AVENUE	NATIONAL REGISTER DISTRICT	Harvard Sq.	C
MANTER HALL - 2 HOLYOKE	1326-132	MASSACHUSETTS AVENUE	NATIONAL REGISTER DISTRICT	Harvard Sq.	C
TAC BUILDING	4-12	STORY STREET	NATIONAL REGISTER DISTRICT	Harvard Sq.	NC
51 BRATTLE STREET	51	BRATTLE STREET	NATIONAL REGISTER DISTRICT	Harvard Sq.	C
90 MOUNT AUBURN STREET	90	MOUNT AUBURN STREET	NATIONAL REGISTER DISTRICT	Harvard Sq.	NC
HOLYOKE CENTER - BANK	1350	MASSACHUSETTS AVENUE	NATIONAL REGISTER DISTRICT	Harvard Sq.	NC
HOLYOKE CENTER - SHOPS	1350	MASSACHUSETTS AVENUE	NATIONAL REGISTER DISTRICT	Harvard Sq.	NC
HOLYOKE CENTER - GARAGE		DUNSTER/HOLYOKE STREE	NATIONAL REGISTER DISTRICT	Harvard Sq.	NC
94 MT. AUBURN STREET	94	MOUNT AUBURN STREET	NATIONAL REGISTER DISTRICT	Harvard Sq.	NC
77 DUNSTER STREET	77	DUNSTER STREET	NATIONAL REGISTER DISTRICT	Harvard Sq.	C
60 KENNEDY STREET	60	J. F. KENNEDY STREET	NATIONAL REGISTER DISTRICT	Harvard Sq.	C
54 DUNSTER STREET	54	DUNSTER STREET	NATIONAL REGISTER DISTRICT	Harvard Sq.	C
9 BOW STREET	9	BOW STREET	NATIONAL REGISTER DISTRICT	Harvard Sq.	C
5-7 LINDEN STREET	5-7	LINDEN STREET	NATIONAL REGISTER DISTRICT	Harvard Sq.	C
53 CHURCH STREET	53	CHURCH STREET	NATIONAL REGISTER DISTRICT	Harvard Sq.	C
32-42 CHURCH STREET	32-42	CHURCH STREET	NATIONAL REGISTER DISTRICT	Harvard Sq.	C
69 DUNSTER STREET	69	DUNSTER STREET	NATIONAL REGISTER DISTRICT	Harvard Sq.	C
74 MOUNT AUBURN STREET	74	MOUNT AUBURN STREET	NATIONAL REGISTER DISTRICT	Harvard Sq.	C
41 WINTHROP	41	WINTHROP STREET	NATIONAL REGISTER DISTRICT	Harvard Sq.	C
22 PLYMPTON STREET	22	PLYMPTON STREET	NATIONAL REGISTER DISTRICT	Harvard Sq.	NC
65-67 WINTHROP STREET	65-67	WINTHROP STREET	NATIONAL REGISTER DISTRICT	Harvard Sq.	C
17-19 SOUTH ST	17-19	SOUTH STREET	NATIONAL REGISTER DISTRICT	Harvard Sq.	#17: C; #19: NC
ADVOCATE BUILDING	21	SOUTH STREET	NATIONAL REGISTER DISTRICT	Harvard Sq.	NC
UNIVERSITY SQUASH COURTS	8	LINDEN STREET	NATIONAL REGISTER DISTRICT	Harvard Sq.	C
ADAMS HOUSE	26	PLYMPTON STREET	NATIONAL REGISTER DISTRICT	Harvard Sq.	C
APTHORP HOUSE - ADAMS		PLYMPTON STREET	NATIONAL REGISTER DISTRICT	Harvard Sq.	C
ADAMS HOUSE D/C & LIB		PLYMPTON STREET	NATIONAL REGISTER DISTRICT	Harvard Sq.	C
WESTMORELY CT. - ADAMS	13-21	BOW STREET	NATIONAL REGISTER DISTRICT	Harvard Sq.	C
APLEY COURT - (DUDLEY HS)	16	HOLYOKE STREET	NATIONAL REGISTER DISTRICT	Harvard Sq.	C
CLAVERLY HALL	63	MOUNT AUBURN STREET	NATIONAL REGISTER DISTRICT	Harvard Sq.	C

BLDNAME	ST#	STNAME	DesigDescript	NRDName	C/NC
53 DUNSTER ST.-(DUDLEY H)	53	DUNSTER STREET	NATIONAL REGISTER DISTRICT	Harvard Sq.	C
78 MT. AUBURN STREET	78	MOUNT AUBURN STREET	NATIONAL REGISTER DISTRICT	Harvard Sq.	C
HOLYOKE CENTER HEALTH SE	75	MOUNT AUBURN STREET	NATIONAL REGISTER DISTRICT	Harvard Sq.	NC
HOLYOKE PL. SUB-STATION	27	HOLYOKE PLACE	NATIONAL REGISTER DISTRICT	Harvard Sq.	NC
65 REAR MT.AUB -TELE BLDG	65 REAR	MOUNT AUBURN STREET	NATIONAL REGISTER DISTRICT	Harvard Sq.	NC