



NEWS

William Francis Galvin
Secretary of the Commonwealth

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Boston, Massachusetts 02133

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SECRETARY GALVIN PRESENTS 2019 PRESERVATION AWARD TO THE LONGFELLOW BRIDGE

Secretary of the Commonwealth William F. Galvin, Chair of the Massachusetts Historical Commission, has announced that the Longfellow Bridge spanning the Charles River between Boston and Cambridge has received a 2019 Massachusetts Historical Commission Preservation Award.

“The Massachusetts Historical Commission is proud to recognize the extraordinary accomplishments of this year’s awardees,” said Secretary Galvin. “The projects the Commission recognizes this year are particularly diverse and represent the many creative ways that significant historic resources are being preserved across the Commonwealth. The rehabilitation and restoration of the Longfellow Bridge means that it is once again a jewel and shining landmark on the Charles River.”

The Longfellow Bridge first opened in 1906 and was dedicated in the summer of 1907. It was built in response to severe congestion over the existing late 18th-century bridge across the Charles following the advent of electric streetcars and increased traffic. Designed by Boston Chief Engineer William Jackson and Consulting Architect Edmund Wheelwright, the bridge carries trains, vehicles, and pedestrians. Inspired by the City Beautiful Movement, the 1893 World’s Columbian Exposition, and examples of European bridges, Wheelwright’s bridge recalls European precedents while incorporating contemporary designs.

The 1,900-foot-long bridge is supported by eleven steel-arch spans, with the central span flanked by four granite-faced towers that inspired the nickname of the “Salt and Pepper” Bridge.

The bridge was listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 1978 as a contributing structure in the Charles River Basin Historic District. The bridge suffered through many years of deterioration and deferred maintenance. Mass Highway and the Federal Highway Administration consulted with the Massachusetts Historical Commission, the Cambridge Historical Commission, the Boston Landmarks



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Commission, and the Department of Conservation and Recreation in developing a project that retained the historic character of the bridge. Many of the historic architectural details of the bridge had been lost, so a significant amount of the restoration work included replicating missing features.

In addition to the restoration work, the project included construction of a new, connected pedestrian bridge across Storrow Drive to the Charles River Esplanade; the new bridge's curving design relates to the main arches of the Longfellow Bridge. The restored Longfellow Bridge fully reopened in 2018.

This is the 41st year of MHC's Preservation Awards program. Projects are considered annually for awards in the categories of Rehabilitation and Restoration, Adaptive Reuse, Education and Outreach, Archaeology, Stewardship, and Landscape Preservation. Individuals are considered in the categories of Lifetime Achievement and Local Preservationist. Secretary Galvin serves as the chair of the 17-member Massachusetts Historical Commission.



Secretary Galvin is pictured presenting the award for the Longfellow Bridge at an afternoon ceremony on June 6, 2019, at the Massachusetts Archives Building at 220



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Morrissey Blvd., Dorchester (Left to right: Ken Coelho, Jeff McEwen, Mike McGrath, Secretary Galvin, Mike O'Dowd, John McInerney, and Mike Drew. Photo by Goodnough Photography.).

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