



William Francis Galvin
Secretary of the Commonwealth

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ACTON HIGH SCHOOL, ACTON, APPROVED FOR NOMINATION TO THE NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES

Secretary of the Commonwealth William Francis Galvin is pleased to announce that the Massachusetts Historical Commission approved Acton High School in Acton for nomination to the National Register of Historic Places at its September 14, 2011, meeting. The nomination will be submitted to the National Register of Historic Places at the National Park Service in Washington, DC, for final consideration and designation.

“The Massachusetts Historical Commission is dedicated to preserving the Commonwealth’s rich historic, architectural, archaeological, and cultural resources,” Secretary Galvin said. “Inclusion of Acton High School in the National Register will help to protect this important part of the town’s educational history.”

The former Acton High School, 3 Charter Road, is a two-story, red-brick building designed by Boston architect and engineer John H. Bickford in the Renaissance Revival style and built in 1925. The style is most pronounced in the rows of tall, arched windows dominating the second floor of the façade. The building is a well-preserved example of institutional architecture in Acton, as well as the town’s only surviving example of an early 20th-century school building. Much of the historic interior floor plan remains, with classrooms opening off a wide central corridor. The original auditorium space was altered in the 1970s to create two classrooms, but it retains much of its historic fabric, including coffered ceilings, baseboards, window trim, and a paneled-wood proscenium arch. The building was the first in the town constructed specifically to accommodate a high school, and it served that purpose for nearly thirty years. When a large regional high school was built in 1954 for the towns of Acton and Boxborough, the building was converted to use as an elementary school and was renamed for former Acton teachers Julia McCarthy and Marion L. Town. The building has been vacant since 2001, when the elementary school moved to a new building on an adjacent parcel of land. It is being rehabilitated for use as apartments.

Acton High School is one of 7 historic resources around the Commonwealth approved for nomination to the National Register of Historic Places by the Massachusetts Historical Commission at this meeting.

Secretary Galvin serves as Chairman of the 17-member board, which meets regularly and considers historic resources eligible for the National Register four times a year.

The National Register is the nation’s official listing of significant historic resources. In Massachusetts, there are over 70,000 properties listed in the National Register. The Massachusetts Historical Commission has been administering the National Register of Historic Places program in Massachusetts since 1966.

The Massachusetts Historical Commission is the office of the State Historic Preservation Officer and the State Archaeologist. It was established in 1963 to identify, evaluate, and protect important historical and archaeological assets of the Commonwealth. Visit our website to learn more about the Commission’s programs (www.sec.state.ma.us/mhc).

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State House, Room 337, Boston, Massachusetts 02133