

Final Landmark Designation Study Report
Ellis School / North Cambridge Catholic High School
40 Norris Street, Cambridge, Mass.



Summary

The Ellis School / North Cambridge Catholic High School was constructed at 40 Norris Street in 1898. The 3-story brick building with a hip roof was designed by architect Aaron H. Gould in the Renaissance Revival style. It was one of five elementary schools constructed by the city between 1890 and 1900 in response to a burgeoning immigrant population, changing educational standards, and a concern for adequate ventilation and fireproof construction. No schools of this generation are still in use in Cambridge, having been replaced by a later wave of construction between 1914 and 1930.

The Ellis School is eligible for landmark designation under criterion (1) for its associations with the broad cultural, economic, and social history of the city due to the prominent role of the building in the North Cambridge community, and under criterion (2) for its architectural significance in terms of its period, style, and method of construction, for its rarity as one of the last intact examples of an elementary school building of its generation, and for its association with architect Aaron H. Gould, it being the last Cambridge example of school architecture by Gould.

Adaptive reuse of the Ellis School should respect the building's important exterior features, including its brick masonry walls and trim, fenestration pattern, pressed metal cornice, and slate roof. The Commission voted unanimously on November 3, 2011 to accept the staff recommendations regarding the significance of the building and to forward the final report to the City Council with a positive recommendation for landmark designation.

Cambridge Historical Commission
November 10, 2011

Ellis School / North Cambridge Catholic High School
40 Norris Street, Cambridge, Mass.
Final Landmark Designation Study Report

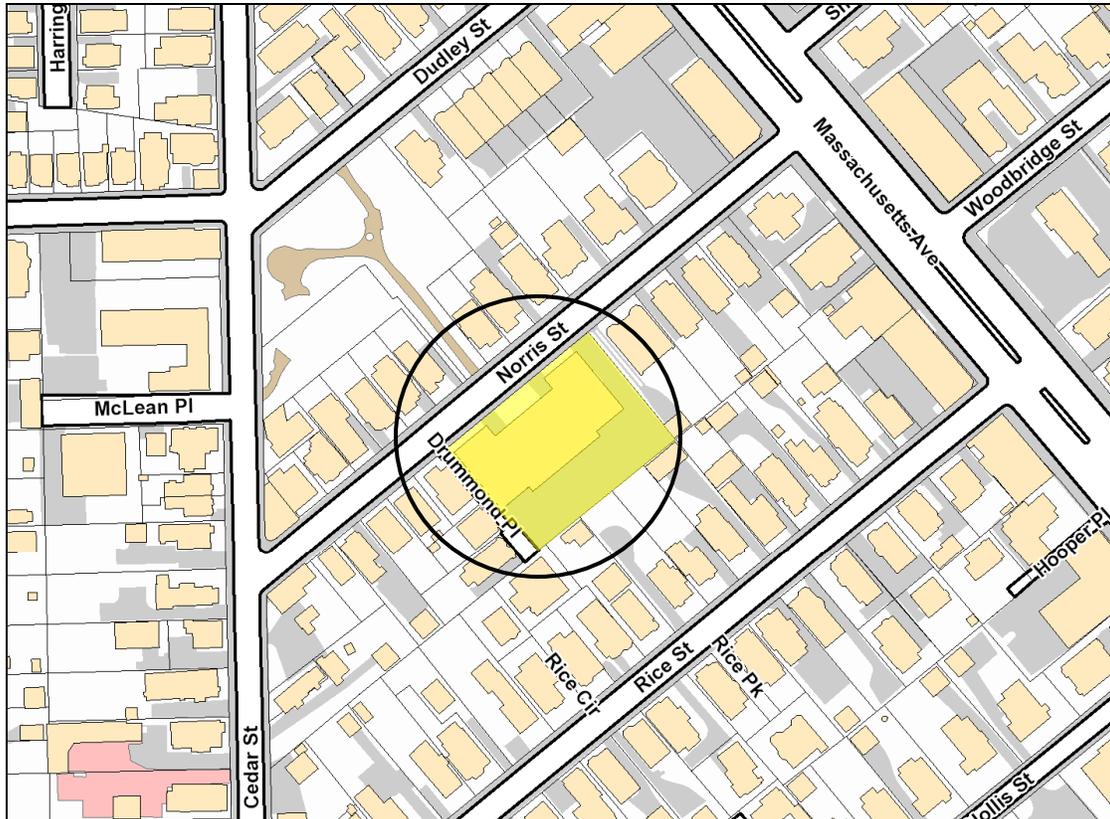
I. Location and Status

A. Address and Zoning

The Ellis School (later the North Cambridge Catholic High School) at 40 Norris Street is located on the midway between Massachusetts Avenue and Cedar Street on the south side of this one block street. It is the only building on the 25,700 square foot lot (Map 192/Parcel 151). The lot has a frontage of 185' on Norris Street and a depth of 140'. The total assessed value for the land and buildings is \$6,327,300. The property, which was formerly in institutional use, is located in a Residence B zoning district.

According to the Cambridge Assessors online database, the school contains 10,264 square feet of gross finished space in the basement and 10,384 and 15,584 gross square feet on the first and second floors, respectively. There are no accessory structures on the lot.

On August 1, 2011, the City Council passed amendments to the Cambridge Zoning Ordinance that have impacted the residential re-development at 40 Norris Street. The relevant sections that were amended or added are 4.29 (use regulations), 5.28.2 (Conversion of Non Residential Structures for Residential Use) and 6.35.3 (parking analysis). Conversion of a non residential structure for residential use in a residential zone requires a special permit from the Planning Board.



1. Site map of 40 Norris Street and vicinity, Cambridge GIS, October 29, 2011

B. Current Ownership and Occupancy

The former Ellis School is now owned by the LaCourt Family Limited Liability Company, which acquired the property from the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Boston in 2010 for \$3,600,000. Dr. Mouhab Rizkallah, a dentist and orthodontist in Somerville, has represented the LaCourt Family LLC at the Historical Commission's previous hearings.

The building is currently unoccupied, but the owner began a residential conversion in 2010. The project included division of the school into 33 to 38 residential units. The re-development project was blocked by a filing by neighbors of a petition to amend Section 5.28.2 of the zoning code regarding the conversion of non-residential buildings to residential use. An amended application for a special permit is anticipated to be filed with the Planning Board with an expected hearing date of December 2011 or January 2012. The amended application is anticipated to request 27 residential units with 28 parking spaces. Plans have not yet been filed with the Planning Board.

The deed from the Archdiocese, which was recorded in book 55397, page 563 at the Middlesex South Registry of Deeds, transferred the property to LaCourt Family LLC subject to specific Use Restriction that the premises shall not be used for a "church, chapel, or other house of religious worship...an abortion clinic...the operations of professional counseling services which advocate abortion or euthanasia...or the operation of any embryonic stem cell research facility or services implementing embryonic stem cell research." These use restrictions are binding on all succeeding owners, and do not expire until 2100. The deed also provides an "Unjust Enrichment Covenant," clause to recapture a percentage of any profit made in the case of a fair market conveyance of the property within the five years following the recording of the deed.

C. Area Description

The Ellis School stands on the south side of Norris Street in a residential block of North Cambridge, just west of the busy arterial of Massachusetts Avenue. The street is characterized by a variety of one-, two- and three-family residential buildings, built between 1870 and 1924. Most are two or three stories in height.

The lots on this block and the neighboring Rice and Hollis streets are characterized by a medium density, with the homes clustered close to the street with moderate front and side setbacks, but generous rear yards provide considerable light and air through the center of the block.

Other prominent buildings in this part of Cambridge include the St. John the Evangelist Church (1904) and rectory (1930) at 2254-2270 Massachusetts Avenue, the Trolley Square residences, built in 2004, and retail buildings of one story on the avenue. A stately Queen Anne house is situated at the southwest corner of Norris Street and Massachusetts Avenue (2336 Massachusetts Avenue, built 1883).

D. Planning Issues

Planning concerns for the Ellis School relate to its intended conversion for housing. The school is nonconforming because of its height, and conversion of the non-residential structure requires a special permit from the Planning Board. Though the amended proposal is still being

drafted, applicant has indicated that there should not be a need for zoning relief from the Board of Zoning Appeal.

In the fall of 2010, the Commission heard objections to the project based on concerns about the density of the project (number of units and related traffic and parking impacts on the street) as well as proposed exterior alterations to the building such as the addition of skylights to the slate roof.

E. Status

The Ellis School property is temporarily protected as if it were already designated as a landmark while the Cambridge Historical Commission (CHC) prepares a recommendation to the City Council concerning permanent designation. This temporary protection period will expire on December 3, 2011.

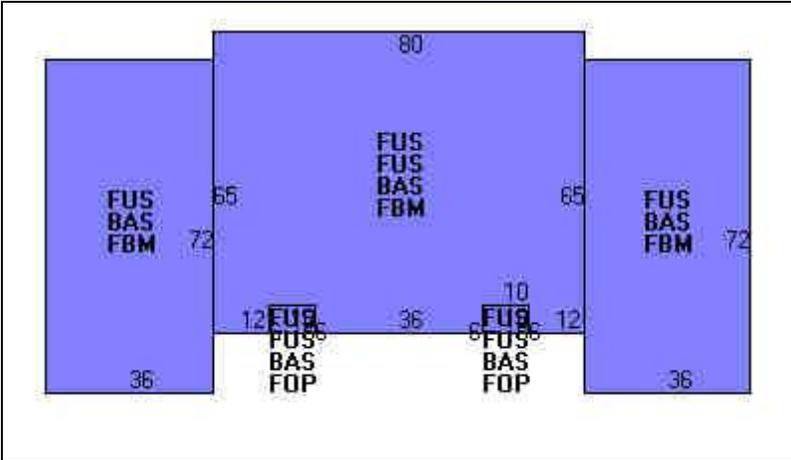
The Archdiocese of Boston sold the property to the LaCourt Family LLC on September 15, 2010. On October 19, 2010, the Cambridge Historical Commission (CHC) received a petition from 24 Cambridge registered voters requesting initiation of a landmark designation study; the petition was accepted and the study was initiated on December 3, 2010, bringing the property under the Commission’s jurisdiction for one year.

II. Description

A. Physical Description and Condition

The Ellis School was constructed in 1898 by F. G. Coburn from designs by architect Aaron H. Gould. The school has brick exterior bearing walls and interior cast iron posts on some floors. The hip roofs are framed with wood trusses with additional iron tension rods that provided a large clear span for the third floor auditorium.

The formal three-part massing of the building is unique among Cambridge school architecture, with a 3-story center block with a hip roof, flanked by two 2-story wings with hip roofs. The side wings extend forward of the main block creating a recessed front yard setback approximately 25 feet from the street. The two front entrances are located on the far left and right of the center block with 5 window bays centered between them. Each side wing is 3 bays wide and 7 bays deep.



2. Assessor’s plan view of 40 Norris Street, with overall dimensions given.

The exterior walls of the school are red brick laid in a common bond (five courses of stretchers interrupted with one course of a combined header and stretcher pattern). Brick quoins decorate each corner of the side wings. A limestone water table caps the raised basement level. The third floor level of the center block exhibits a limestone belt course. Limestone trim also ornaments the two front entrances and the Ionic capitals of the brick pilasters between the arched windows. Both the round arches and flat lintels of the windows are executed in a cream colored brick, which contrasts with the warm red brick but was no doubt a considerable cost savings over the use of additional limestone. The brick has been poorly repointed in areas, especially at the front of the building, probably as a misguided attempt at solving a gutter or downspout problem causing water penetration.

The fenestration pattern is reminiscent of the Romanesque style made popular by Richardson, with groups of round arched windows and two-story recessed bays. The overall massing and ornament of the building, however, is more classical and can be described as Renaissance Revival style. The first and third floors have flat-topped lintels. The divided lights of the sash (originally wood, but replaced in recent years with aluminum of the same pattern) are organized into 6-over-2 lights on the first floor. This pattern was duplicated on the second floor, where the original wood upper sash had been divided into an arched pattern. The third floor windows are triple sash. The pattern of these sash is hard to see in the survey photo, but appears to be 3-over-3-over-2 lights.

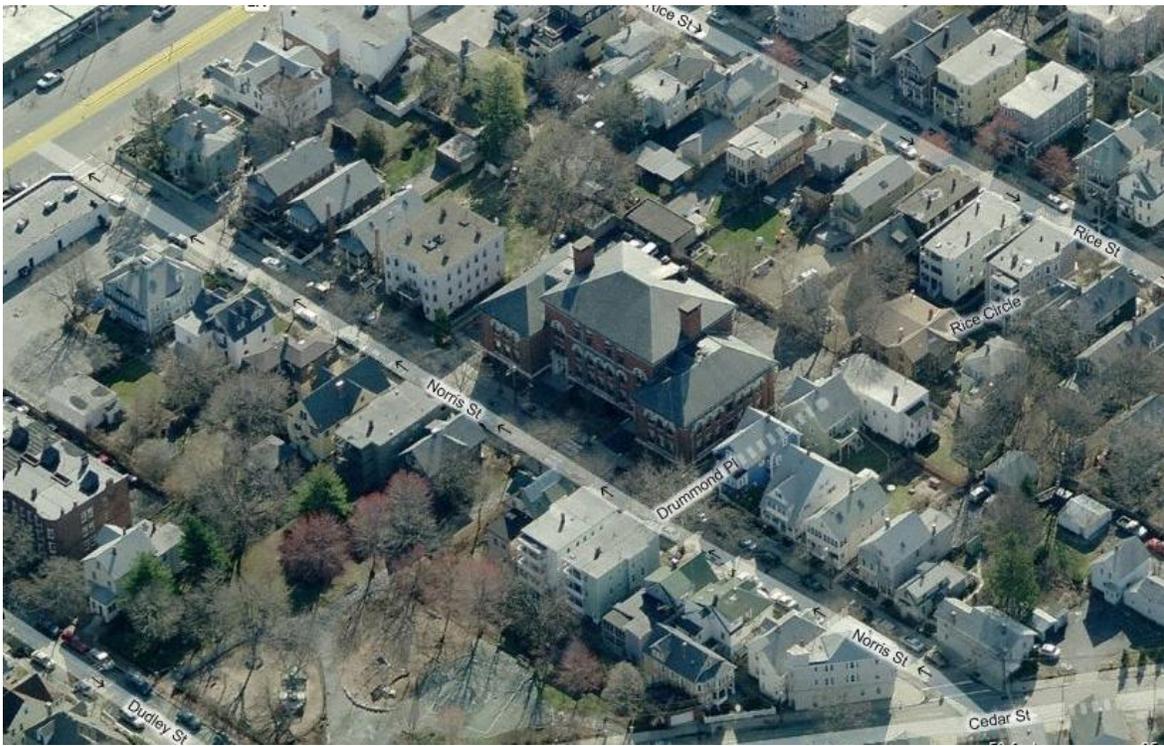
The two front entrance doors are recessed, with a glass transom at the same place as the wall. This transom originally had wrought iron decorative grillwork, which can be seen in the class of 1954 photograph on page 13 of this report.

The three hip roofs are covered in slate. Two tall brick chimneys flank the center block. A pressed metal cornice with modillions ornament the eaves and are topped with copper gutters. There are significant areas of deterioration in the metal cornice that will require careful restoration or replication.

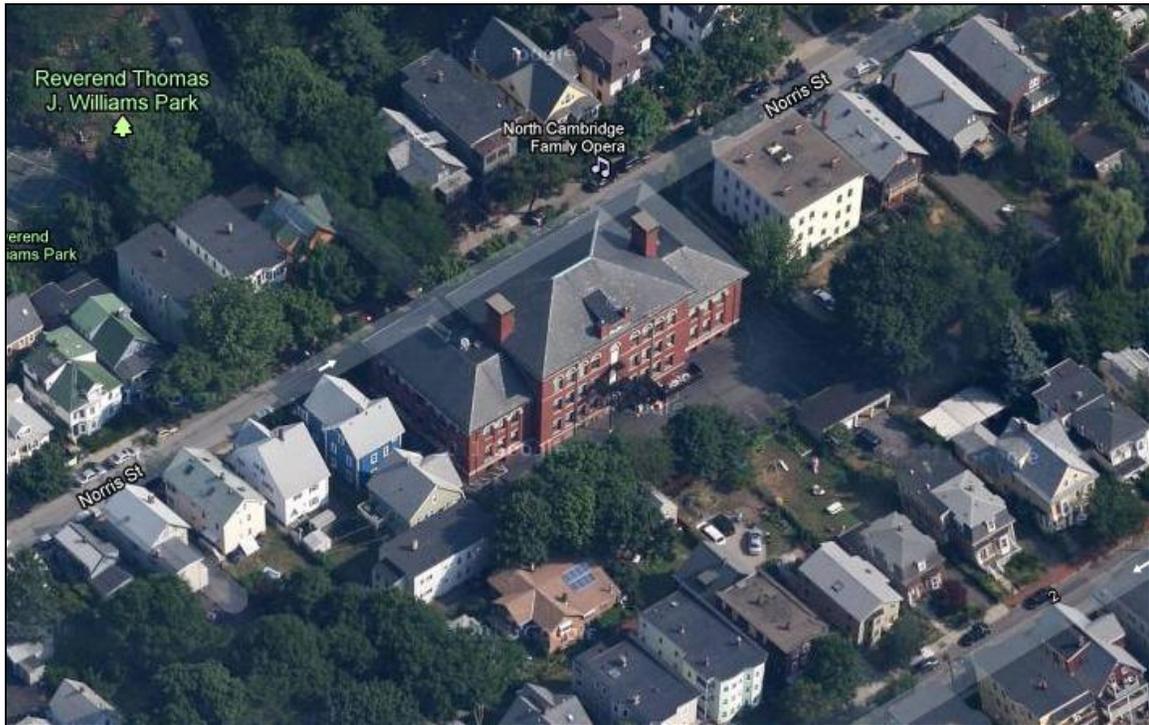
Elevations drawn by D. F. Valente Architect & Planner dated November 15, 2010 represent the proposed exterior conditions of the 2010 Planning Board application. These elevations, except for the addition of skylights on the roof planes and the removal of fire escapes, provide a good representation of the school's massing and design. (See appendix A).

The organization of the school's interior originally consisted of twelve classrooms measuring 28' wide by 32' long, additional smaller recitation rooms, a teachers' room, library, master's office, and a third floor assembly hall large enough to accommodate 700 students.

B. Recent Photographs



3. Ellis School / North Cambridge Catholic High School and vicinity, looking east.
Bing Maps, bird's eye view, 2011.



4. Ellis School / North Cambridge Catholic High School and vicinity, looking north.
Google Maps, satellite view, 2011.



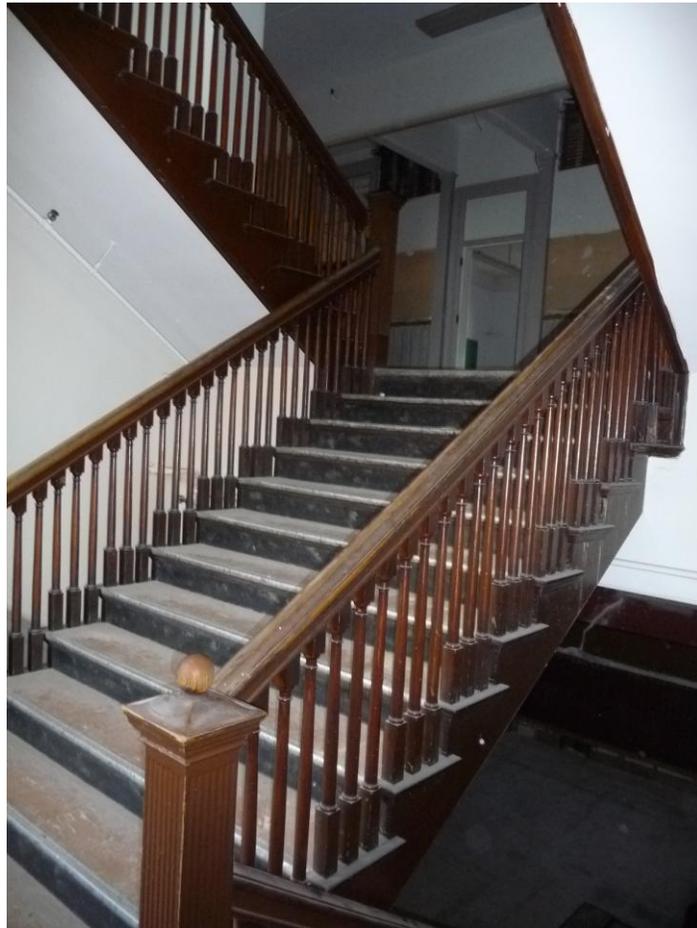
5. Ellis School, center block, 40 Norris Street, November 4, 2010



6. Ellis School, 40 Norris Street, November 4, 2010



7. Ellis School, interior corridor



8. Ellis School, one of two primary stairs



9. Ellis School, roof truss framing of side wing, with supplementary iron tie rods



10. Ellis School, roof framing above 3rd floor assembly hall, showing wood timbers and metal tension rod

III. History of the Area

The 1842 extension of the Charlestown Branch Railroad from Miller's River to Fresh and Spy Ponds opened up North Cambridge for the brick industry and for suburban development. Several remote subdivisions were platted by the owners of the brickyards for the mostly-Irish worker population, while middle-class subdivisions, such as at Norris Street, were platted closer to Massachusetts Avenue and marketed to the growing suburban commuter populations that arrived in North Cambridge with transportation improvements such as the horse railway line of 1857.

The triangular lot bounded by Massachusetts Avenue, Cedar Street, and Rindge Avenue was once part of the 100-acre parcel of common land known as the Ox Pasture during the Colonial era. This parcel was divided and sold into private hands in 1724.

The 1724 division of Watson's Plain laid out the bounds of the present-day Massachusetts Avenue and secured its width at 99 feet. In the late 18th century, as Boston and its suburbs recovered from the Revolution, private entrepreneurs built bridges and turnpikes leading to Boston. This brought heavier traffic into Cambridge and Somerville and increased the flow of traffic from the western farmlands into the city. The West Boston Bridge (1793) across the Charles River led to the Middlesex Turnpike (1813), which connected to the Concord Road at present-day Porter Square. As transportation to the city became easier, farmers in outlying areas of Middlesex County were better able to provide fresh vegetables, fruits, and milk to Boston. Better access to this land made its prices soar, while the smaller farms near Cambridge provided land for agriculture-related industries such as the cattle market on the highway to Concord in North Cambridge. Near the avenue, and reached by omnibus, was a popular entertainment venue from 1837-1855, the Trotting Park, a one mile race course bounded by Rindge Avenue and Cedar, Harvey, and Clifton streets. The race course hosted a variety of events, the most popular being horse trotting, which was a competition of the horses' endurance, not just their speed. The most-famous of the horses to race at the Cambridge course was Lady Suffolk, the "old gray mare." The former Park House Hotel at 39 Cedar Street remains in place though converted to apartments in the 1870s. It was designated a city landmark in 2000.

The importance of Massachusetts Avenue as a regional highway ensured a steady evolution of transportation-related activities. The major impetus for the residential development of the avenue came in 1843, when the Fitchburg Railroad was laid out from North Station through Porter Square to western Massachusetts. By 1845, passenger service was improved and hourly commuter trains to Boston were available, a development which boosted suburban residential development in North Cambridge.

Two neighborhoods developed on either side of the Avenue, on Watson's Plain between Rindge Avenue and Cedar Street and in the area around Beech Street. Joseph Rice subdivided his property and laid out Rice and Hollis Streets in 1844. However, residential development off the avenue and onto the side streets beyond Rindge Avenue did not commence in earnest until after the Civil War. Land on the avenue or closer to the railroad station at Porter Square was initially more desirable than the interior lots for residential and commercial development.

Though Norris Street was laid out in 1854 (original name not known), the earliest houses on the street were not built until the early 1870s. John L. Norris was a carpenter who resided on Mellen Street in the Agassiz neighborhood. He built the house at 23 Norris Street in 1869-70. This fine mansard home was constructed in an L-shape with a corner entry porch and pedimented dormers. When completed, Norris sold the property to Walcott Richardson, a cattle broker in Porter Square. The following year, Norris constructed a second house next door at #17. This gabled house appears to have been remodeled in the Queen Anne style in the mid 1880s. It was purchased by Frank Howe, who was employed in Boston as a draftsman. The other early house on the street was a 1½-story workers cottage built in 1873-1875.

By 1886 William Reardon owned most of the parcels on the street. He built the two earliest duplexes at #51-53 and #58 in 1885-86. His property passed to Edmund Reardon in the late 1880s, and in June 1897 the city purchased a 25,700 square foot parcel in the middle of the block. The plans and specifications for a new school building were prepared by Boston architect Aaron H. Gould, who had recently designed the Russell School on Larch Road.

The growing suburban population of North Cambridge resulted in the 1855 subdivision of the adjacent race course property. The flat land of the course was perfectly suited for residential development, and the 50-acre parcel was divided into 275 house lots. Five new north-south streets were created between Harvey Street and Rindge Avenue. From east to west, they were Reed, Montgomery, Clay, Jackson, and Clifton streets. The street names were derived from land owners and popular figures of the day. Kidder & Reed's "Race Course" development was the last of the brickyard subdivisions.

The house lots in the race course subdivision were first marketed to middle-class Irish in Boston and Charlestown. However, Kidder & Reed found a much more receptive market when they redirected sales toward Cambridge brickyard laborers. A building boom occurred in the 1890s, when an influx of French Canadians arrived to work in the brickyards and other North Cambridge industries.

The Ellis School was built in 1898 to supplement school facilities already existing in the area, which included the Sleeper School (1894, demolished 1957) on Cedar Street in the next block. The Sleeper School site is now a park, which includes a tot lot and playground that was used regularly by the North Cambridge Catholic High School.

The city closed the Ellis School in 1955, and in 1957 the City Council ordered that the property be sold to the Roman Catholic Archbishop of Boston, to be used only for religious or educational purposes for a period of 10 years. The North Cambridge Catholic High School occupied the building from 1957 to 2009.



11. Vicinity of Norris Street, 1894. Bromley Atlas of Cambridge, plate 28



12. Vicinity of Norris Street, 1903. Bromley Atlas of Cambridge, plate 29.

IV. Significance of the Property

A. Historical Significance

Little is known about the town's first school, except that it was started about 1639 in a private house on the west side of Holyoke Street, across from the present Hasty Pudding Club; this location continued to be used for school purposes until 1769. The first building in Cambridge specifically constructed as a schoolhouse was completed in 1648 on this site. Although it was a town school, it was erected with donations from private individuals, chiefly Henry Dunster, the president of Harvard College, on whose land the building stood.

In 1744, the town voted to establish its first school committee. In 1794, when it was apparent that a new village would develop downstream near the Cambridge end of the West Boston Bridge, the town was divided into school districts, and in 1802 the district of Old Cambridge was required to maintain a year-round grammar school and a "school for female children" for four months each year (Paige, 376). Girls evidently attended classes in a building at the north-east corner of Winthrop and Eliot streets until 1828, when girls could share classes with boys.

The 19th century was a period of rapid and almost continuous school construction. During the century of greatest growth, from 1830 to 1930, Cambridge erected fifty-six schools. As the population of Cambridge doubled and redoubled, many small schools were built to meet the immediate needs of the city's immigrant and middle-class neighborhoods. Small wooden primary schools like the Lowell School were erected in rapidly growing immigrant neighborhoods as late as 1883, while more substantial brick schools were built beginning in 1852. After the Civil War, newly-developing suburban neighborhoods received the most modern schools. In 1890, the city operated over thirty elementary schools for more than 10,000 pupils. At the end of the 2001-02 school year, by contrast, there were 5,064 students in grades K-8 and one year later the number of elementary schools was reduced to twelve.

The thirty years following the Civil War saw the construction of twenty-six new public schools city-wide. In North Cambridge, population increases caused serious overcrowding in the smaller Sleeper School on Cedar Street. Though the Sleeper School had only been built in 1894, it was already overcrowded by 1897. Supplementary space was rented in a building at the corner of Cedar and Dudley streets at considerable expense. In March 1897 the Sleeper School was damaged by a fire, which was determined to have been caused by a design flaw that put wood framing in direct proximity to the warm air ducts of the heating system. All the students were safely evacuated with no injuries, but the event was serious and repairs were immediately made to the building.

The Ellis School was built in 1898, when school design was evolving in response to a burgeoning immigrant population, changing educational standards, and a concern for adequate ventilation and fireproof construction. The school was named for Harry Ellis, the first superintendent of the Cambridge Manual Training School. It operated first as a combined primary and grammar school (1st – 8th grades) and later as a grammar school (4th – 8th grades). Night classes including English language and vocational courses were introduced sometime in the early twentieth century.

The city sold the Ellis School to the Archdiocese of Boston in 1957 for use as the North Cambridge Catholic High School. The parish church of St. John the Evangelist had suffered a fire in 1956 and it was determined that the high school associated with St. John's would be sepa-

rated from the parish and made part of the central school system of the Archdiocese so the parish could concentrate on its rebuilding efforts. As the number of high-school-aged students in the neighborhood began to decline in the 1980s, the school began to recruit students of limited means from outside Cambridge. In 2004, the school joined the Cristo Rey Network, a program that places students in entry level jobs to earn money for their tuition and to gain job experience. The North Cambridge Catholic High School occupied 40 Norris Street until it was relocated to Dorchester in 2009. The diocese sold the building to the LaCourt Family LLC in 2010.

Many of the students that attended the Ellis and North Cambridge Catholic High schools went on to have successful careers and make significant contributions to their community. Two of these notable graduates are Ruth Easterling, the first African American woman to be admitted to Tufts Medical School, from whence she graduated in 1921 and went on to have a successful medical career, and Thomas O'Neill, III, a former Lieutenant Governor of Massachusetts.



13. Ellis School Class of 1954 photo, showing door and transom details



14. North Cambridge Catholic High School, 40 Norris Street, ca. 1975. Photo by Richard Cheek.

B. Architectural Significance

The city built its last wood frame school (the Lowell School) in 1883, and thereafter decided to build only with masonry. Schools of this generation are marked by large windows to admit natural daylight, peaked roofs to allow a top floor assembly hall, large ventilation structures, and a large, spreading footprint to accommodate spacious classrooms for 50 or more children each. No schools of this generation are still in educational use in Cambridge, having been replaced by a later wave of construction between 1914 and 1930.

The Ellis School is the only remaining Cambridge school building designed by Aaron H. Gould, an important architect with an architectural office in Boston. Aaron H. Gould (1865-1930) was a Nova Scotia native who worked as a carpenter before moving to Maine about 1884. Gould became a building contractor and took on projects in Atlanta, Chattanooga, Fort Wayne, and elsewhere before relocating to Somerville in 1895. He opened an architectural office in Boston in 1895, specializing in municipal projects. Gould designed the Porter Square Fire Station in Cambridge, schools in Quincy and Somerville, a fire station in Malden, and the town hall in Whitman. In 1910 he closed his Boston practice and relocated to Portland, Oregon, where he spent six years designing commercial buildings, including at least one hotel, and then moved to Detroit, where designed still more buildings for Wayne County.

Gould designed a total of four schools in Cambridge including the Russell School (115 Larch Rd, built 1896, demolished 1978), the Ellis School (40 Norris Street, built 1898), the Otis School (125 Otis Street, built 1899, demolished 1960), and the Kelly School (48 Willow Street, built 1902, demolished 1967). Gould also designed two factories in Cambridge (the 1906 Seaverns piano action factory at 84 Sidney Street and a 1908 box factory at 37-43 Osborn Street); both have been demolished. The only other surviving example in Cambridge of Gould's work

is the Engine 4 firehouse at 2029 Massachusetts Avenue (built 1896). This was perhaps his most finely detailed project in Cambridge. The Martin W. Carr School at 35 Atherton Street in Somerville was also designed by Gould. It was constructed in the same year as the Ellis School and has many similar design features. The Carr School was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1984 and was locally designated in 1985 by the City of Somerville. A preservation restriction was donated in 1984 and the school was converted to residential use.

V. Relationship to Criteria

The enabling ordinance for landmarks states:

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 its 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 . . . (Cambridge City Code, Article III, Chapter 2.78.180a)

The Ellis School is eligible for landmark designation under criterion (1) for its associations with the broad cultural, economic, and social history of the city due to the prominent role of the building in the North Cambridge community, and under criterion (2) for its architectural significance in terms of its period, style, and method of construction, for its rarity as one of the last intact examples of an elementary school building of its generation, and for its association with architect Aaron H. Gould.

VI. Recommendations

The purpose of landmark designation is contained in the enabling ordinance, which is 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 . . . 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; [and] to foster appropriate use and wider public knowledge and appreciation of such . . . structures . . . (Cambridge City Code, Article III, Chapter 2.78.140)

A. Preservation Options

Landmark designation or donation of a preservation restriction are the only options for the permanent long-term protection and preservation of the Ellis School building. The building is not designated at the local, state, or federal level, nor is it within the boundaries of a local, state, or national historic district. There are no plans for historic district or neighborhood conservation district studies in the vicinity of the property.

B. Staff Recommendation

Adaptive reuse of the Ellis School should respect the building's important exterior features, including its brick masonry walls and trim, fenestration pattern, pressed metal cornice, and

slate roof. The staff recommended in the preliminary study report that the Commission 1) find that the Ellis School meets the criteria for landmark designation and 2) vote to recommend that the City Council designate the property as a protected landmark under Article III, Chapter 2.78.

A hearing was held on November 3, 2011 at which the Historical Commission considered the preliminary study report. The Commission voted unanimously to add language in the report's guidelines about roof penetrations and skylights, to accept the staff recommendations regarding the significance of the building, and to forward the final report to the City Council with a positive recommendation for landmark designation. At the suggestion of the owner's representative, the Commission also authorized the staff to enter into discussions with the owner about a preservation restriction. Although this might make landmark designation unnecessary, the Commission saw no reason to delay submitting its recommendation to City Council.

VII. Standards and Criteria

Under Article III, the Historical Commission is charged with reviewing any construction, demolition or alteration that affects the exterior architectural features (other than color) of a designated landmark. This report describes the exterior architectural features that are among the characteristics that led to consideration of the property as a landmark. Except as the order designating or amending the landmark may otherwise provide, the exterior architectural features described in this report should be preserved and/or enhanced in any proposed alteration or construction that affects those features of the landmark. The standards following in paragraphs A and B of this section provide specific guidelines for the treatment of the landmark described in this report.

A. General Standards and Criteria

Subject to the review and approval of exterior architectural features under the terms of this report, the following standards shall apply:

1. Significant historic and architectural features of the landmark shall be preserved.
2. Changes and additions to the landmark, which have taken place over time, are evidence of the history of the property and the neighborhood. These changes to the property may have acquired significance in their own right and, if so, that significance should be recognized and respected.
3. Deteriorated architectural features should be repaired rather than replaced. When replacement of architectural features is necessary, it should be based on physical or documentary evidence.
4. New materials should, whenever possible, match the material being replaced in physical properties, design, color, texture, and appearance. The use of imitation replacement materials is discouraged.
5. Surface cleaning of a landmark shall be done by the gentlest possible means. Sandblasting and other cleaning methods that damage exterior architectural features shall not be used.
6. Additions should not destroy significant exterior architectural features and should not be incongruous to the historic aspects, architectural significance, or distinct character of the landmark, neighborhood, and environment.

7. Additions should be done in such a way that, if they were to be removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the landmark would not be impaired.

B. Suggested Review Guidelines for Future Alterations

1. If the windows are replaced, the original fenestration pattern of the school should be reinstated. This could include replicating the arched division of lights in the arched window sash of the second floor and the organization of lights in the triple sash windows of the third floor.
2. If the front doors are altered, consideration should be given to replicating the original doors and transoms captured in class photographs of 1923 and 1954.
3. Contractors engaging in masonry cleaning, repairs, waterproofing or pointing should take care to match the original bricks, mortar, and joint profile, and may not proceed without approval of samples of the proposed work by the owner and Commission staff.
4. Signs should be consistent with the character and use of the building, and should conform to the Cambridge Zoning Ordinance.
5. Lighting should be consistent with the character and use of the building, but should carefully avoid spilling onto adjacent residential properties. Existing ambient street lighting should be taken into consideration when designing the lighting of the front of the property and excessive lighting of the area should be avoided.
6. Accessibility improvements should be designed with consideration for significant architectural features. Grading changes should be considered and implemented where possible to minimize the need for ramps and handrails. Paving and construction materials should be compatible with existing materials.
6. Interior or below grade accommodation of mechanical equipment is encouraged to the full extent possible. Exterior placement should minimize the visual impacts from the public ways and should conform to the noise requirements of the Cambridge Zoning Ordinance. Roof penetrations for vent pipes and the like should be minimized and grouped together to reduce their visual impact. PVC pipes should be covered with a dark-colored cover.
7. Skylights, though not prohibited, should be minimized in number and size and regularized in size and placement. New skylights should have flat glazing and be mounted in the same plane as the roof, with a minimal curb detail. Any slates removed for the installation of skylights should be salvaged and kept on site for future roofing repairs.

The Commission will take these review guidelines into consideration when reviewing future applications for Certificates of Appropriateness, Hardship or Nonapplicability.

VIII. Proposed Order Designating the Ellis School / North Cambridge Catholic High School as a Protected Landmark

ORDERED:

That the former Ellis School (later the North Cambridge Catholic High School) at 40 Norris Street be designated as a protected landmark pursuant to Chapter 2.78, Article III, Section 2.78.180 of the Code of the City of Cambridge, as recommended by vote of the Cambridge Historical Commission on November 3, 2011. The premises so designated are defined as parcel 151 of assessor's map 192 and are recorded in book 55397, page 563, of the Middlesex South Registry of Deeds.

This designation is justified by the important architectural and historical associations the school embodies, for its prominent role in the North Cambridge community, for its architectural significance in terms of its period, style, and method of construction, as one of the last intact elementary school buildings of its generation, and as the last Cambridge example of school architecture by architect Aaron H. Gould.

The effect of this designation shall be that review by the Cambridge Historical Commission and the issuance of a Certificate of Appropriateness, Hardship or Non-Applicability shall be required before any construction activity can take place within the designated area or any action can be taken affecting the appearance of the buildings at 40 Norris Street that would in either case be visible from a public way. The Commission shall not consider and shall have no jurisdiction over interior features or improvements, nor over any portion of the buildings not visible from a public way. The Commission shall not make any recommendation or requirement except for the purposes of preventing alterations that would appear to be incongruous with the historical aspects or other architectural characteristics of the building.

In making determinations, the Commission shall be guided by the Final Landmark Designation Study Report dated November 10, 2011, and by Section VII, Standards and Criteria, and by the applicable sections of Chapter 2.78, Article III, of the Cambridge Municipal Code.

IX. Bibliography

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Appendix A: Architectural elevations drawings by D. F. Valente Architect.

