The Commission

The MHC refers to both an appointed commission and its staff

- Established by state legislature in 1963
  - Within the office of the Secretary of the Commonwealth
- Designated the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) with the passage of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) in 1966
  - Is also the office of the State Archaeologist
- 17-member commission chaired by the Secretary of the Commonwealth
  - Two Governor’s appointees
  - Three state agencies – DCR, DHCD, EOHED
  - One trade organization – Home Builders Association
  - 10 historic, architectural, and archaeological organizations

- Museum of African American History
- Society of Architectural Historians
- American Antiquarian Society
- American Institute of Architects
- Massachusetts Archaeological Society
- Old Sturbridge Village
- Trustees of Reservations
- Historic New England
- New England Historic Genealogical Society
- Massachusetts Historical Society
Grants Division

- As the Massachusetts SHPO, receive annual funding from federal Historic Preservation Fund
- Manage two main grant programs

Survey & Planning Grants

- 50/50 reimbursable matching grant
- Municipalities, HCs and HDCs, non-profits, educational institutions
- Eligible activities include survey and inventory, preservation plans, design guidelines, National Register nominations
- Must pass-through 10% of yearly federal funding to Certified Local Governments – do this through S&P program

Massachusetts Preservation Projects Fund (MPPF)

- 50/50 reimbursable matching grant
- Municipalities and non-profits
- Building must be listed on the State Register
- Eligible activities include both pre-development work and “bricks and mortar” preservation projects
- Requires a preservation restriction be placed on the property after the work is completed
Preservation Planning Division (PPD)

- Make determinations of eligibility
  - Review 50-60 proposals a year
- Take in, review, edit National Register nominations
- Present final nominations to the State Review Board for submittal to the NPS
  - Submit around 25 nominations to the SRB a year

Southborough Center was listed on the National Register in 2021
Preservation Planning Division (PPD)

- Main point of contact for local communities
- Here to answer questions! A lot of phone calls and emails
- Present Preliminary Study Reports for local historic districts to the MHC
- State coordinator for our Certified Local Government program
A recent survey project in Lynnfield documented a subdivision designed by Royal Barry Wills.
• Manage all of our data on historic resources
  • As of December 31 there were 228,980 properties in MACRIS
    • 88% buildings
• Input inventory forms and other documentation into MACRIS
• Map inventory points, areas, districts onto MACRIS Maps
Technical Services Division (TSD)

- Undertake historic resources review required by federal and state law
- Review federal and state historic tax credit projects

*The Humboldt Avenue Historic District in Boston was a recent tax credit National Register of Historic Places listing*
Other MHC Responsibilities
How Can the MHC Help Your Community?

• Make use of MACRIS and MACRIS Maps
• Work to update your inventory of historic resources
  • We don’t know what we don’t know
• Attend virtual workshops – check our website for details!
• Apply for our grants
  • Survey & Planning – documentation and planning, announced in September
  • Massachusetts Preservation Projects Fund – pre-development and physical preservation, announced in December
• Respond to requests for comment on projects – you are the local expert on your community’s historic resources!
• Ask me questions!

The Mayflower II was listed on the National Register in 2020