



The Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Secretary of the Commonwealth
State House, Boston, Massachusetts 02133

William Francis Galvin
Secretary of the Commonwealth

APR 22 2013

April 17, 2014

Theodore Kozak
Town Manager
Town of Northbridge
7 Main Street
Whitinsville, MA 01588

Dear Mr. Kozak:

The Massachusetts Historical Commission is pleased to recognize the rehabilitation of the Northbridge Town Hall with a 2014 Massachusetts Historical Commission Preservation Award. Kenneth Warchol of the Northbridge Historical Commission nominated this project for an award.

The Massachusetts Historical Commission sincerely appreciates all efforts to preserve the Commonwealth's valuable historic properties. The careful restoration of the Northbridge Town Hall demonstrates a strong commitment to historic preservation that goes well beyond what is normally expected. It is for this significant achievement that the Northbridge Town Hall has been selected to be honored this year at the Massachusetts Historical Commission's 36th Annual Preservation Awards ceremony on May 16, 2014.

On behalf of the Massachusetts Historical Commission, I applaud this outstanding contribution to historic preservation. Details about the ceremony on May 16, 2014 at the Massachusetts Archives Building will be forthcoming.

Once again, congratulations.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "W. Galvin", written over a blue ink stamp of the name "WILLIAM FRANCIS GALVIN".

WILLIAM FRANCIS GALVIN
Secretary of the Commonwealth
Chairman, Massachusetts Historical Commission

xc: Kenneth Warchol, Chair, Northbridge Historical Commission



36th ANNUAL PRESERVATION AWARDS

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
William Francis Galvin, Secretary of the Commonwealth
220 Morrissey Boulevard, Boston, Massachusetts 02125

AWARD NOMINATION Rehabilitation & Restoration Category



Northbridge Memorial Town Hall
Whitinsville, MA
February 14, 2014

Northbridge Memorial Town Hall Statement of Achievement

The Northbridge Memorial Town Hall was designed by an architect or builder who remains unidentified. The building is designed in the classical revival style having a slate roof with red brick pedimented gables, red brick masonry bearing walls, granite stringcourses, keystones, sills and rock faced granite foundation. Construction on the building began in 1872, and was completed in 1876. The property is listed on the National Register of Historic Places as a contributing building to the Whitinsville Historic District. In the year 2000, a preservation restriction in perpetuity was recorded.

The Town Hall was conceived and financed by two sons of the Whitin family, John C and Charles P Whitin, and was built as a memorial to their father Paul Whitin and mother Betsey Whitin. For many years, the Whitin family owned most of the industrial mill complexes located in the town. The Whitin family homestead used to occupy the current town hall site, until the two sons had it moved to a new location on Linwood Avenue. The business of the town was moved from the meeting hall at Northbridge Center to the new town hall of 1876. Meetings and town offices were now located in the village of Whitinsville. The Memorial Town Hall has functioned as the local seat of town government since 1876. On May 13, 1958 the care of the town hall was transferred from a Board of Trustees to Selectmen of the Town. The only major changes to the building have been aluminum doors put at the front entrance, a fire escape addition and an enclosed stair and elevator addition

The Northbridge Memorial Town Hall project started with a successful Pre-Development Grant application to MHC's MPPF program. This matching grant funded the selection of a preservation architect and the detailed inspection and assessment of the Northbridge Memorial Town Hall. This inspection and assessment prioritized a wide variety of exterior conditions

The most serious conditions were found in the original windows that were fabricated in the Whitin Mills. The windows were in quite poor condition with several windows frozen in a partially open position. A high percentage of paint had peeled, exposing bare wood. Fortunately the double hung windows were fabricated of first growth Eastern White Pine and most were structurally sound and restorable.

In addition to the windows, doors, fascia, gutter, roofing, and a deteriorated and unneeded fire escape, as well as masonry issues, were identified and the most significant of these items were included in a repair and restoration program.

A successful MPPF Development Grant application proved to be a key step in securing broad support for a successful Town Meeting vote to fund a larger project for a comprehensive exterior repair and restoration program. The citizens of Northbridge overwhelmingly approved the expenditure of \$635,000 towards the restoration of the town hall.

Because of the MPPF grant schedule and the need to maximize the impact of available funds, the project was organized into three separate projects. The projects were as follows:

1. Masonry cleaning and repointing including associated roofing and flashing work.
2. Painting and associated carpentry repairs to all of the non-window wood elements of the Town Hall including the West and North portico entrances.
3. Shop restoration of the wood windows, which was partially funded by the MPPF grant and included replicating a missing auditorium window that had been removed when a fire escape was added in ca.1900 and replicating paired Ground Level windows that had been replaced with a recessed one-over-one double hung windows.

Several key features of this project helped to distinguish from more common exterior repair and restoration projects.

For more than one hundred years, all of the trim had been painted a series of whites and off-whites. These color schemes created a very different appearance than the original paint schedule, which was two slightly different shades of brown. After receiving support from the Northbridge Historical Commission, this dramatic change in appearance was approved by the Town of Northbridge. The original historic paint scheme has been well received by the citizens of Northbridge.

In the early Twentieth Century, building codes and an increased concern for fire safety prompted the addition of many fire escapes to public buildings, especially those with second floor auditoriums. These utilitarian fire escapes usually detracted from the appearance of the historic buildings. Not only was Northbridge's fire escape unattractive, it was deteriorated and no longer needed since an enclosed stair and elevator addition was constructed in 1998. This fire escape was removed and the original auditorium window replicated.

The south side of the Ground Floor is at grade and originally had very narrow paired four-over-four double hung windows. At some time when the Ground Floor was renovated these windows were replaced with a single one-over-one recessed double hung window. These windows were located behind an 8" wide granite mullion and created a very awkward appearance. Removing the one-over-one recessed window and replicating the paired four-over-four double hung windows helped to eliminate one of the more unfortunate changes that had occurred to the Northbridge Town Hall.

The Town of Northbridge was and is facing many of the economic challenges that face many communities in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts that helped lead the American Industrial Revolution. Even with these economic constraints, the Town of Northbridge has shown both pride and commitment in the recently completed exterior repair and restoration of the Northbridge Town Hall, which focused on meeting the Secretary of the Interior's *Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties*.

Northbridge Memorial Town Hall

List of Contributors

TOWN OF NORTHBRIDGE

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Thomas Pilibosian- Chairman BPCC

William Mello - BPCC

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Robert Van Meter- DPW Highway Superintendent

DESIGN TEAM

McGinley Kalsow & Associates Inc. - Preservation Architects

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Jack Aniceto – Owner



NORTHBRIDGE HISTORICAL COMMISSION

Fletcher House, 1 Elm Place, Whitinsville, MA 01588

January 29, 2014

Brona Simon, Executive Director
Massachusetts Historical Commission
220 William Morrissey Boulevard
Dorchester, Mass 02125

RE: PRESERVATION AWARD NOMINATION LETTER
Northbridge Memorial Town Hall

Dear Executive Director Simon:

The Northbridge Historical Commission is proud to nominate the Northbridge Memorial Town Hall for a 2014 Preservation Award from the State Historical Commission.

Our Town Hall was built in 1876 with funding from the Whitin family after their father and mother, Paul and Betsy Whitin passed away. It was built on the site of the original Whitin Homestead of 1800. This beautiful monumental Italianate structure was to become the political center of the town. It was a true architectural gem at the center of the Village of Whitinsville surrounded by the Whitin Mills and the falls of the Mumford River. It was always kept up by the Whitin family until the 1960's with trust funds set aside for that purpose.

Beginning in the 1970's with the trust funds depleted, this beautiful structure started deteriorating over the next 30-40 years as the roof, windows and trim fell into disrepair due to lack of funds. A number of years ago, the old slate roof was finally replaced with a new slate roof. However, the windows and trim continued to fall into a sad state of disrepair. As Chairman of the Northbridge Historical Commission for the past 33 years, I was saddened to see such a deterioration of this beautiful structure. A number of attempts over the past 20 years to have the windows and trim repaired and painted ended in failure.

The Commission was elated when we received word from the State Historical Commission a year and half ago that we were accepted for a state matching grant to finally repair the windows and trim. I was able to watch this beautiful structure return to its former grandeur of the past with its original colors.

I watched this restoration taking place over the past year in an orderly and expedient manner as all parties involved worked together in a cooperative manner and consulted with the Commission every inch of the way to make sure the authenticity of the building was not compromised.

The Commission would like to commend all the parties involved in this effort from the town officials who take great pride in our heritage down to the architects, and to the restoration people who made the restoration of this building possible. This project brought "pride" back to Memorial Square which is our Heritage Zoning District with all of its monumental brick and granite civic and mill buildings where 5 main roads converge right at our beautiful Town Hall. It is once again the gem that it was with this beautiful restoration.

I would be remiss not to mention the voters of Northbridge and how they came together to financially support this project even in this severe economic climate. It reflected their pride in our heritage in restoring this beautiful building that was left to us by the Whitin family. I continue to get emails from citizens on the beautiful restoration of the Town Hall.

When I first saw the original colors being put onto the restored windows and trim, it immediately brought me back to 1876 thinking of the pride that town's citizens back then must have had entering this beautiful architectural building for the first time for their first town meeting in the Great Hall upstairs looking out of those beautiful windows upon their community. The citizens of Northbridge can now do the same; we can now look out these same Town Hall windows at our historic community with pride for what we accomplished in this project.

Finally, I cannot say enough about Secretary Galvin's Office and the Massachusetts Historical Commission for the support and guidance they have given us not only in this project but the many other restoration projects which have allowed us to keep up the beautiful historic district that we have.

I ask the State Historical Commission strongly consider this project for a Preservation Award.

Respectfully,



Ken Warchol, Chairman
Northbridge Historical Commission



1. Undated Historic Photograph of “Whitinsville Social Library, Northbridge”



2. 2012 Photograph of East Elevation of Northbridge Town Hall before restoration



3. 2013 restored East Elevation showing historic two-tone dark brown paint scheme and restored original windows, doors and woodwork.



4. Deteriorated slope cornice with mold. This mold was prevalent throughout all cornices.



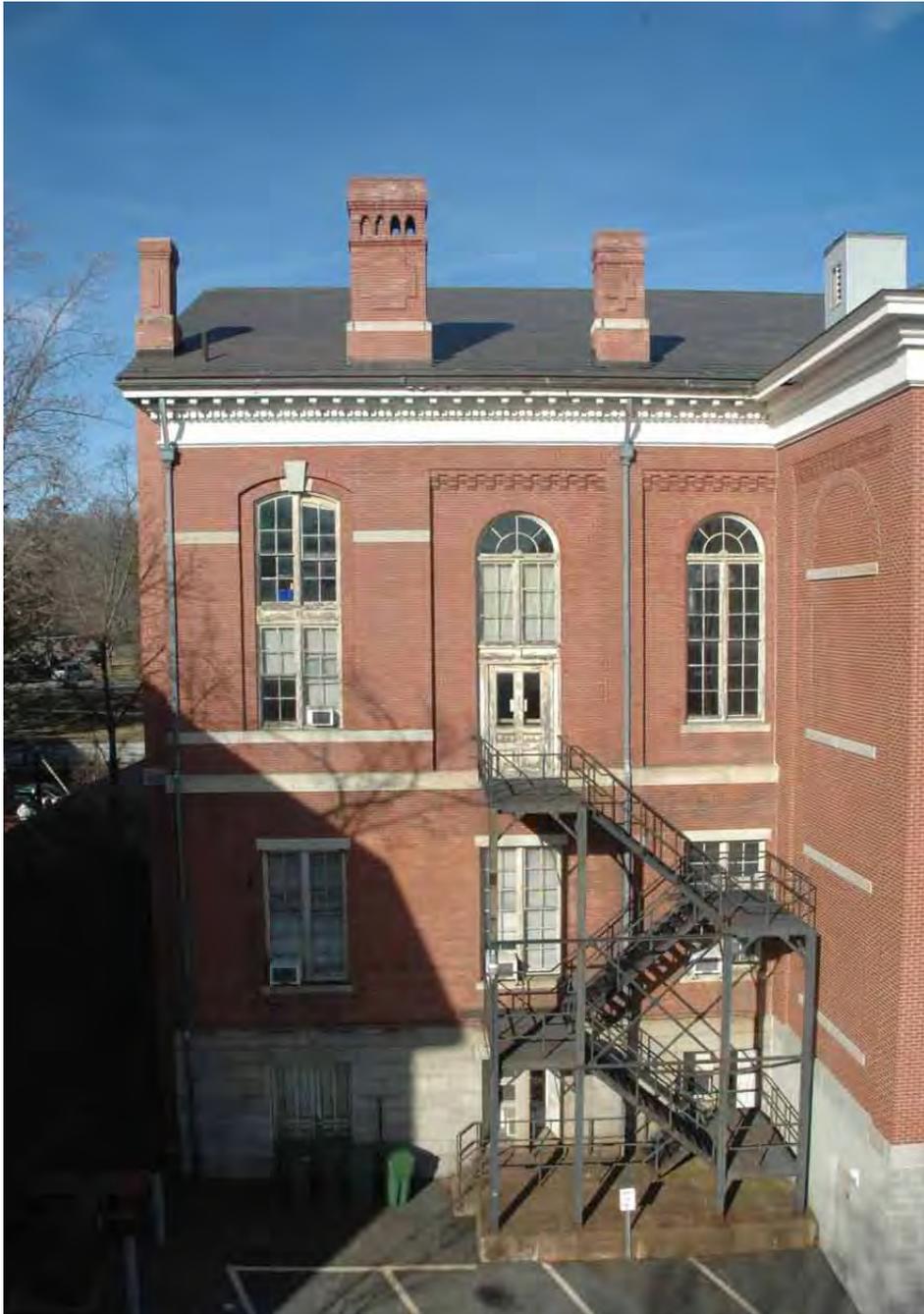
5. Deteriorated Interior of Circular Window Sill



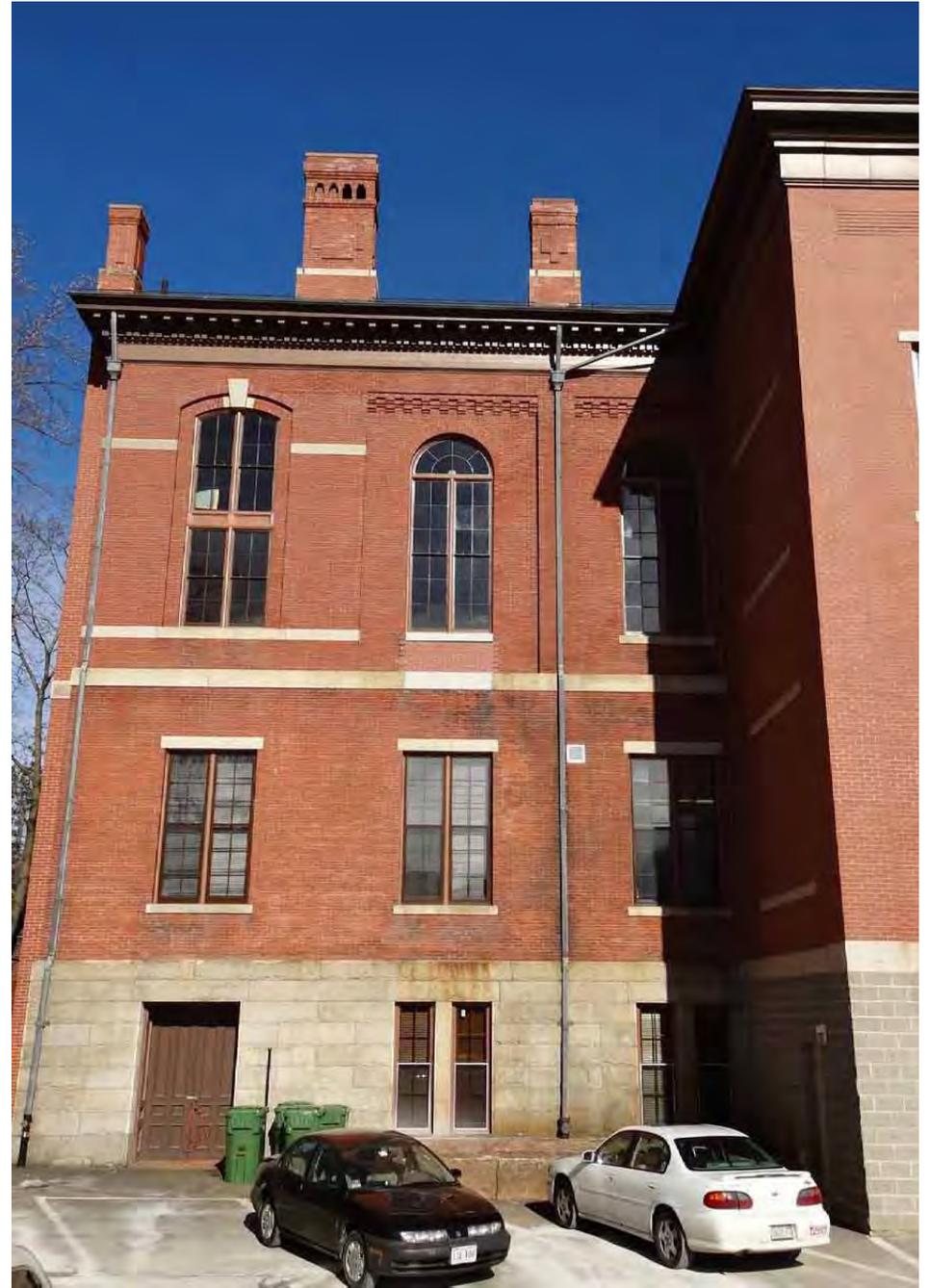
6. Restored East Gable End showing restored woodwork and original paint scheme.



7. Restored Horizontal Cornice and Windows



8. Southwest Elevation with ca.1900 Fire Escape



9. Southwest Elevation with Fire Escape Removed and Original Paint Color on Restored Windows and Doors



10. Rotted East Portico Gable.



11. Restored East Portico Cornice and Columns



12. 2012 photograph of typical window with failed glazing putty and sealants at window perimeters and failed paint.



13. Closeup of Failed Meeting Rail



14. Severely Weathered Window Sill and Half-Round Mullion.



15. Sills on the south side of the building were much more deteriorated than the sills on the north side. Damaged sill surfaces were consolidated and patched with epoxy materials.



16. Once removed, window sashes were individually numbered to make sure they were reinstalled in the correct opening. Before being removed from the site, all glazing putty and glass was removed during an abatement process. Approximately two-thirds of all original glass was removed without breakage, and saved for reinstallation. W.W. Millworks performed the restoration of the windows in its shop.



17. These window sashes have had loose connections mechanically repaired, and deteriorated wood areas repaired with epoxy wood consolidants and patching compounds.



18. As part of the restoration work, kerfs were cut into the stiles of each sash to receive new metal weatherstripping.



19. A number of different window sashes were inspected to confirm their original paint color.



20. A number of different paint colors and pigmented stains were explored to get the closest match.



21. Deteriorated Window Muntin



22. Restored Window Muntin



23. Typical First Floor Window (Interior): Window finish is water damaged due to missing glazing putty, sash cords are broken, and there is glass breakage.



24. Typical Restored Window Interior with interior sash finish matching unweathered original finish.



25. Arched window sash frozen in partially open position. Failed glazing putty and sealants at window perimeters also contributed to water and air infiltration.



26. Restored Arched Window Assembly showing two-tone original paint scheme.



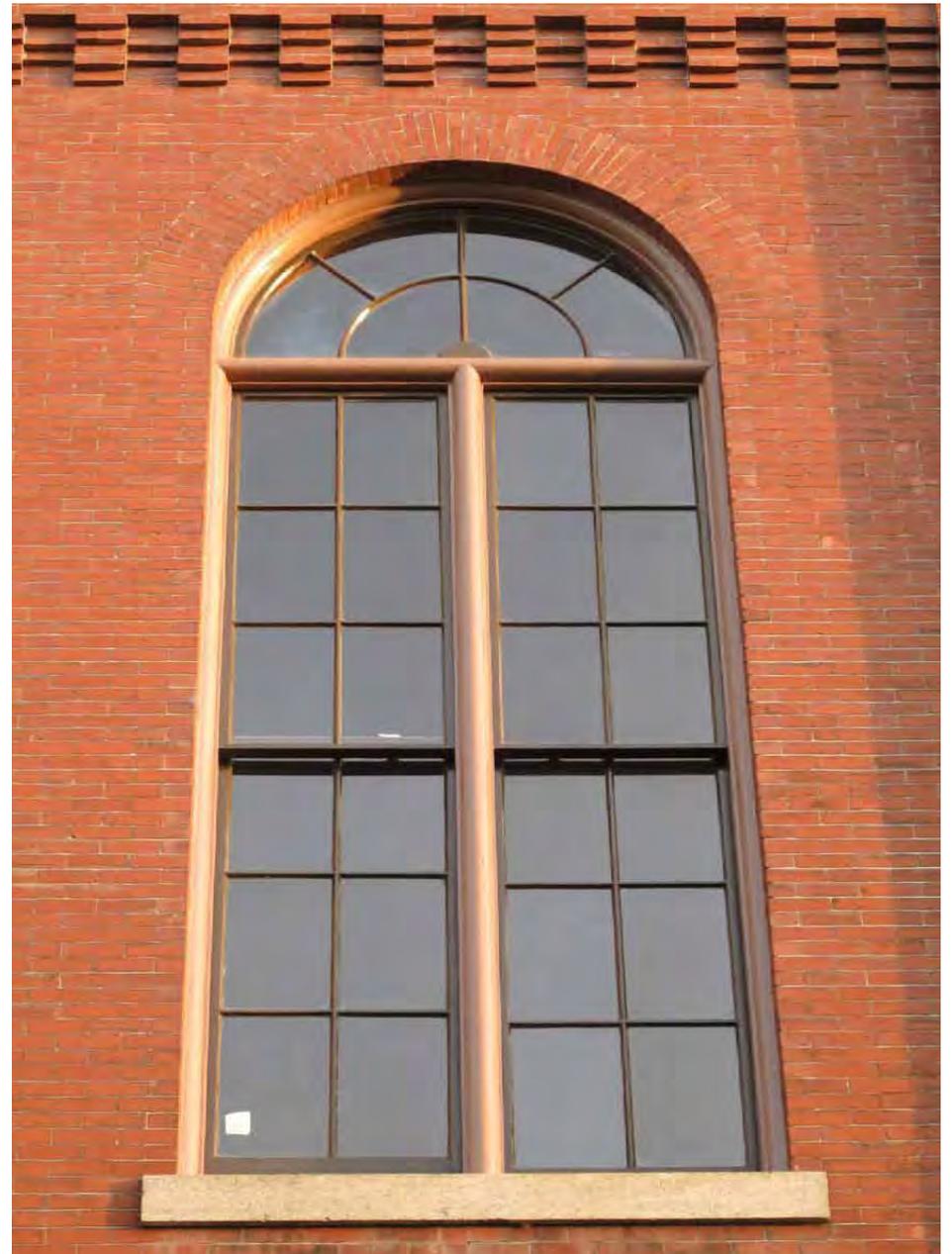
27. Pre-restoration round top window assembly showing severely weathered mullions, window sashes, sub-transom, frame and overlight.



28. A window sash mock-up was installed for review by MK&A, the Town, and MHC, before authorizing a full-scale production effort at the woodwork shop and installation of completed units.



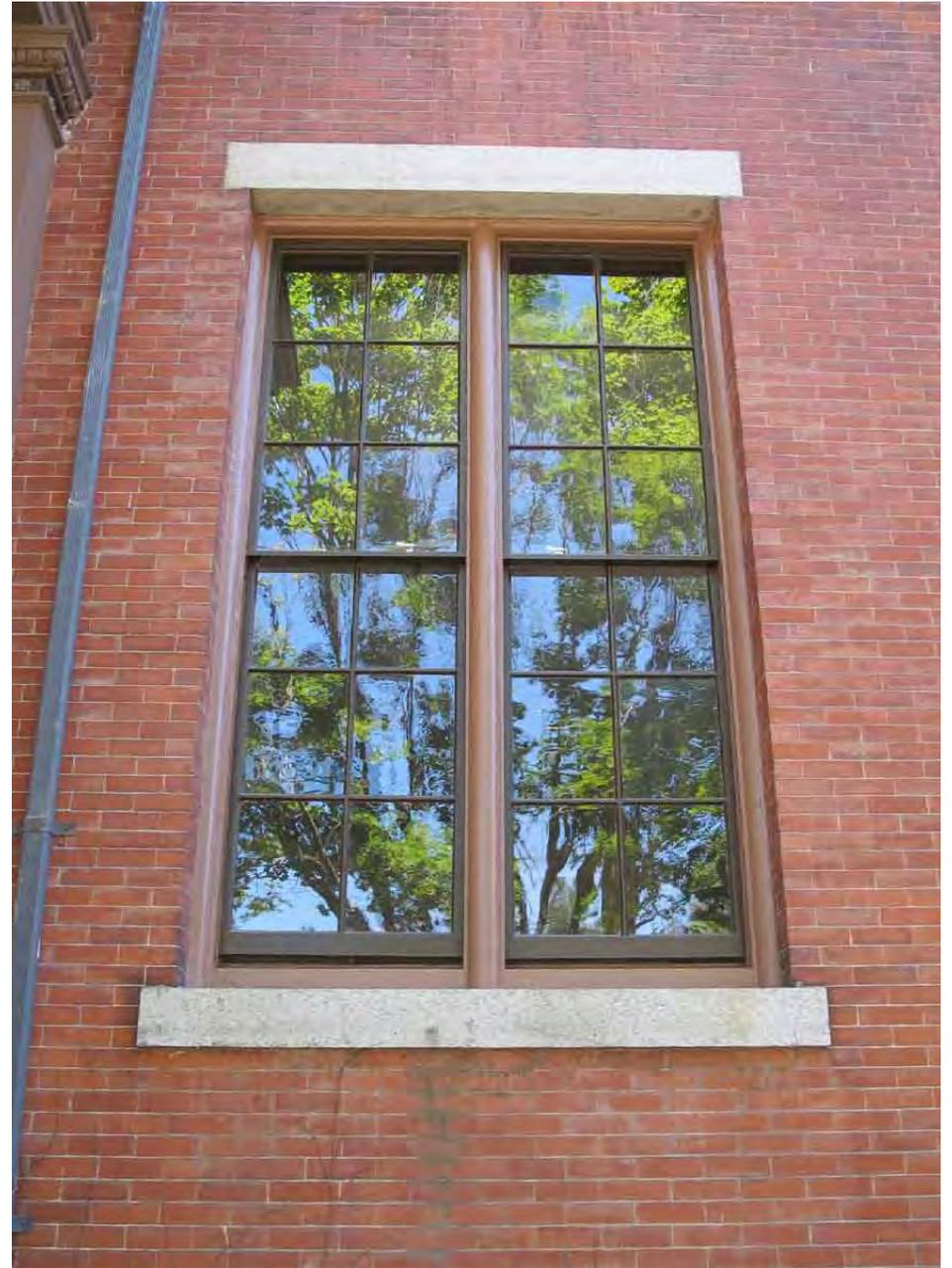
29. The interior of the mock-up was reviewed for paint colors, sash locks and sash lifts, sash chains and pulleys, weatherstripping, glazing appearance, and ease of operation.



30. Restored Round Top Window Assembly



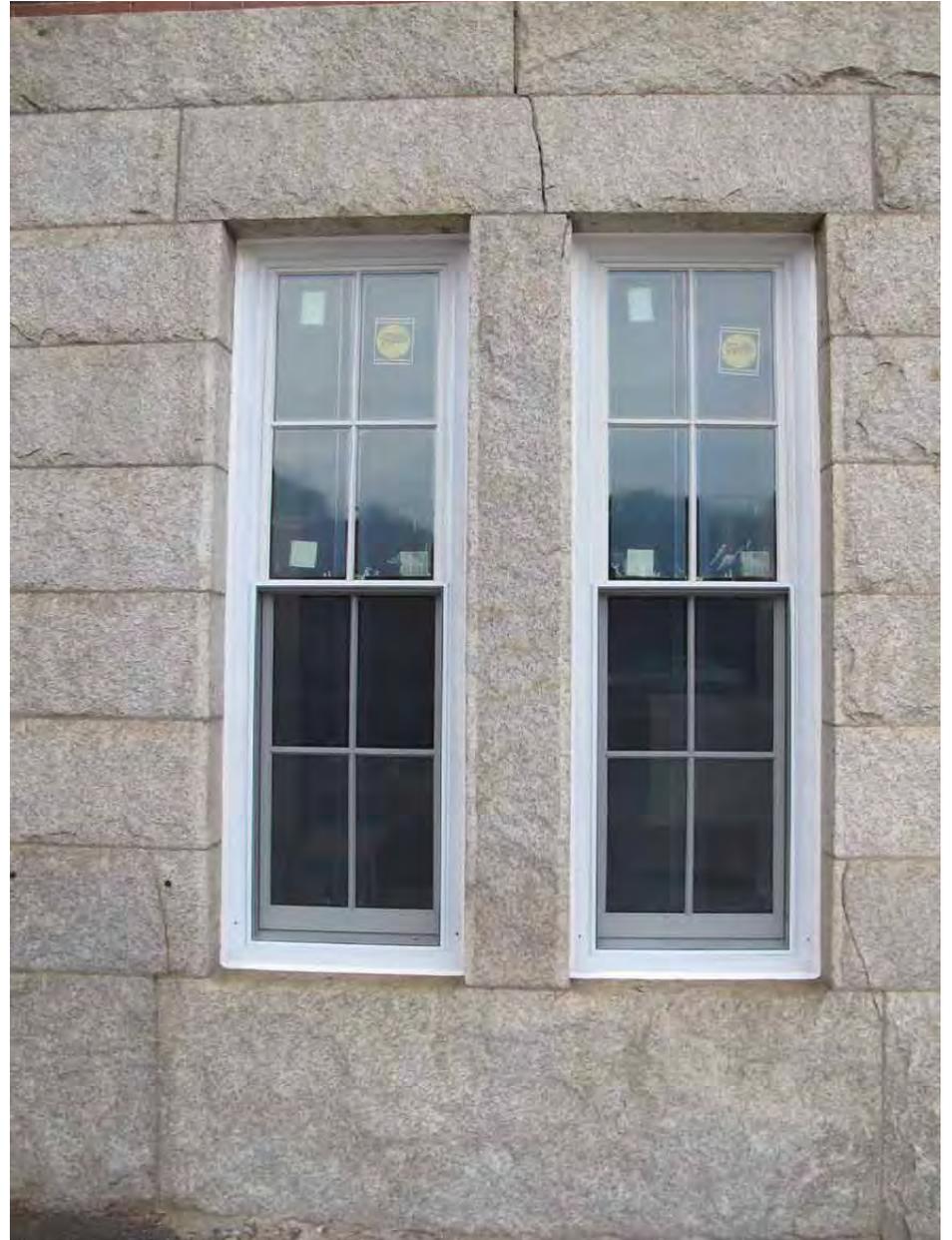
31. Pre-restoration window with window sashes, mullions, sills and frame all severely weathered.



32. Restored window: The operation of the restored window sashes is relatively easy, considering that the sash weights only exist at the masonry opening side of each window, and not within the central vertical mullion. The narrow proportions of the new windows probably make this possible.



33. Ground Floor Replacement Window and Air Conditioning



34. Construction Photo Showing Replica Historic Windows Prior to Field Painting



35. 20th Century Replacement Attic Sash with Original Severely Deteriorated Window Sash to Right, which was found in Attic.



36. 20th Century Replacement Attic Sash Showing Severe Deterioration.



37. The original eastern round window had previously been replaced with a simplified new design. After restoration, this window was relocated to the more protected west end of the attic. The newly constructed round window was placed at the east end, which has more exposure to the elements.



38. Restored East Elevation returning the Northbridge Memorial Town Hall to its original elegant appearance.

Northbridge Town Hall Photographic Credits

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