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Old Chapel at UMass. recognized by Mass. Historical Commission

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Amherst, MA According to Finegold Alexander Architects, The Old Chapel at the University of Massachusetts, Amherst has been recognized by the Massachusetts Historical Commission with a 2017 Historic Preservation Award. The building's two-year, \$21 million renovation transformed the shuttered Chapel into a vibrant student and event center. Finegold Alexander Architects served as the architect for the project. Secretary William Galvin presided over an awards ceremony on November 2, 2017.

The project was championed by chancellor Kumble Subbaswamy with support from the UMass Amherst administration, University of Massachusetts Building Authority, and Preserve UMass, and the Massachusetts Historic Commission. "The preservation of UMass Amherst's Old Chapel guarantees the campus centerpiece for future generations," Secretary Galvin said.

"The project is representative of the evolving role of preservation on college campuses across the country," said Regan Shields Ives, principal, Finegold Alexander Architects. "We were able to preserve the beauty of the building while at the same time transform the underutilized campus icon to a dynamic campus center used by the entire University of Massachusetts Amherst community."

The Old Chapel building at the University of Massachusetts Amherst campus is the university's most iconic building and a lasting reminder of its early history as the Massachusetts Agricultural College. Originally designed by prominent Worcester architect Stephen Carpenter Earle and completed in 1885, it is a richly detailed Richardsonian Romanesque-style building. Two and a half stories in height, with a square footprint, the building features a four-story bell tower, cross-gable roof, round-arched window and door openings, rough-cut gray Pelham granite blocks, and red-brown Longmeadow sandstone trim.

The Old Chapel was originally conceived as a multipurpose building, with a chapel for assemblies with a library and reading room. The chapel quickly became the pride of the campus. By 1936, the ever-increasing number of students enrolled, combined with the opening of the Goodell Library, led to the renovation of the first-floor library into additional classrooms, seminar rooms, and a lecture hall. The Old Chapel served as a classroom building for the next 60 years, as well as the home of the Minuteman Marching Band in the 1960s, but it was closed in 1996 due to the deterioration of the tower as well as code and access deficiencies. Although not in use for almost 20 years, the Old

Chapel's location at the heart of the campus meant that it was passed by most students each day, and continued to be a symbolic centerpiece of the university.

In 2014, a committee began the process of evaluating the building for both restoration and rehabilitation. Its goal was to find a design solution that met accessibility and code requirements while still keeping the building's historic integrity. The solution devised by Finegold Alexander Architects, known as the "The Pavilion," creates an integrated, landscaped terrace with accessible ramps and a glass entry pavilion on the south elevation. "The Pavilion" also balances the addition of contemporary systems without disturbing the historic fabric. Creative interventions such as lowering the basement floor, adding an underground mechanical vault, and a strategic elevator insertion further solved code, access, and building performance goals while preserving the distinctive features of the building. The building is LEED Gold certified.

The careful balancing of historic preservation with contemporary needs has positioned the building as a sought-after venue for hosting programs that extend learning outside of the classroom, from lectures to presentations and special events. In between programs, the building functions as a student gathering place for groups and individuals to study, socialize, and relax. This restoration and rehabilitation project has returned the Old Chapel, with its distinctive stone tower, clock, and carillon, to its rightful place as the actively used, emblematic center of the UMass Amherst campus.

This was the 39th 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 Individual Lifetime Achievement and Local Preservationist. Secretary Galvin serves as the chair of the 17-member Massachusetts Historical Commission.

Secretary Galvin presented the awards at an afternoon ceremony on November 2, 2017, at the Massachusetts Archives Building at 220 Morrissey Blvd., Dorchester. The Old Chapel at University of Massachusetts Amherst, was one of 11 projects to be honored.

Design and Engineering Team Members

Client	University of Massachusetts, Amherst University of Massachusetts Building Authority
Architect	Finegold Alexander Architects
Contractor	Barr & Barr, Inc.
Structural Engineer	RSE Associates, Inc.
M/P/FP Engineer, Acoustics & Audiovisual	ARUP

Security, Electrical, Telecommunications & IT	ART Engineering Corp.
Accessibility Consultant	Kessler McGuiness & Associates
Sustainability Consultant	The Green Engineer, Inc.
Civil Engineering & Environmental Permitting	Vanasse Hangen Brustlin, Inc.
Building Code Consultant	Hughes Associates, Inc.
Landscape Architect	Stephen Stimson Associates
Historic Preservation Consultant	Preservation Technology Associates
Industrial Health Hygienist	Fuss & O'Neill EnviroScience
Cost Estimator	VJ Associates
Food Service/Kitchen Consultant	Crabtree McGrath Associates, Inc.
Stained Glass Window Restoration	Rohlf's Stained & Leaded Glass Studio
Interior Design	Stefura Associates
Photography	Robert Benson Photography
Historical Review	Preserve UMass
Massachusetts Historic Commission	

Shown (from left) are: Joseph Naughton, director of Capital Projects, UMass.; Shane Conklin, associate vice chancellor for Facilities & Campus Services; William Galvin, The Secretary of the Commonwealth; Regan Shields Ives, AIA, LEED AP, principal, Finegold Alexander Architects ; Jim Alexander, senior principal, Finegold Alexander Architects ; and Joseph Larson, Preserve UMass.