



CAMBRIDGE HISTORICAL COMMISSION

831 Massachusetts Avenue, 2nd Fl., Cambridge, Massachusetts 02139
Telephone: 617 349 4683 TTY: 617 349 6112
E-mail: histcomm@cambridgema.gov URL: www.cambridgema.gov/Historic

APPLICATION FOR CERTIFICATE

- The undersigned hereby applies to the Cambridge Historical Commission for a Certificate of (check one box): Appropriateness, Nonapplicability, or Hardship, in accordance with Chapter 40C of the Massachusetts General Laws and/or Chapter 2.78 of the Municipal Code.
FIRST CHURCH IN CAMBRIDGE
- Address of property: 11 GARDEN STREET, 02133, Cambridge, Massachusetts
- Describe the proposed alteration(s), construction or demolition in the space provided below:
(An additional page can be attached, if necessary).

1. REMOVE AND SAFELY STORE THE COCKEREL WEATHERVANE FROM THE TOP OF THE BELL TOWER OF MAIN CHURCH BUILDING. THIS WOULD BE DONE AS SOON AS POSSIBLE, ~~BEFORE~~ TO PROTECT THE COCKEREL FROM FURTHER DETERIORATION, ~~REPAIR~~ AND REMOVE IT FROM HARM'S WAY AS IT PRESENTLY SERVES AS THE LIGHTENING PROTECTION FOR THE TOWER. THE COCKEREL WOULD BE STORED SAFELY UNTIL A DETERMINATION OF WHAT TO REPLACE IT WITH IS IN PLACE. THE COCKEREL HAS BEEN DETERMINED TO BE OF HIGH VALUE BOTH, MONETARILY & IN TERMS OF HISTORIC SIGNIFICANCE. A RECENT APPRAISAL HAS BEEN DONE WITH THE RECOMMENDATION TO REMOVE IT FROM ITS LOCATION PENDING DETERMINATION OF NEXT STEPS.

I certify that the information contained herein is true and accurate to the best of my knowledge and belief.
The undersigned also attests that he/she has read the statements printed on the reverse.

Name of Property Owner of Record: FIRST CHURCH IN CAMBRIDGE · PETER BYERLY · CHAIR PLANNING & GROUNDS

Mailing Address: 11 GARDEN STREET, CAMBRIDGE 02133

Telephone/Fax: 617-547-2724 E-mail: parishadmin@firstchurchcambridge.org

⇒ Signature of Property Owner of Record: [Signature] PETER BYERLY
(Required field; the application will not be considered complete without the property owner's signature)

Name of proponent, if not record owner: PETER BYERLY

Mailing Address: 25 MEDWAY STREET, APT D, DORCHESTER CT, MA 02124

Telephone/Fax: 617-201-3837 E-mail: p.byerly@comcast.net

(for office use only):

Date Application Received: 10/12/23 Case Number: 5029 Hearing Date: 11/2/23

Type of Certificate Issued: _____ Date Issued: _____

First Church Cambridge
Videos of Cockerel

Right side (damaged)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Xp1HIQmbbMk>

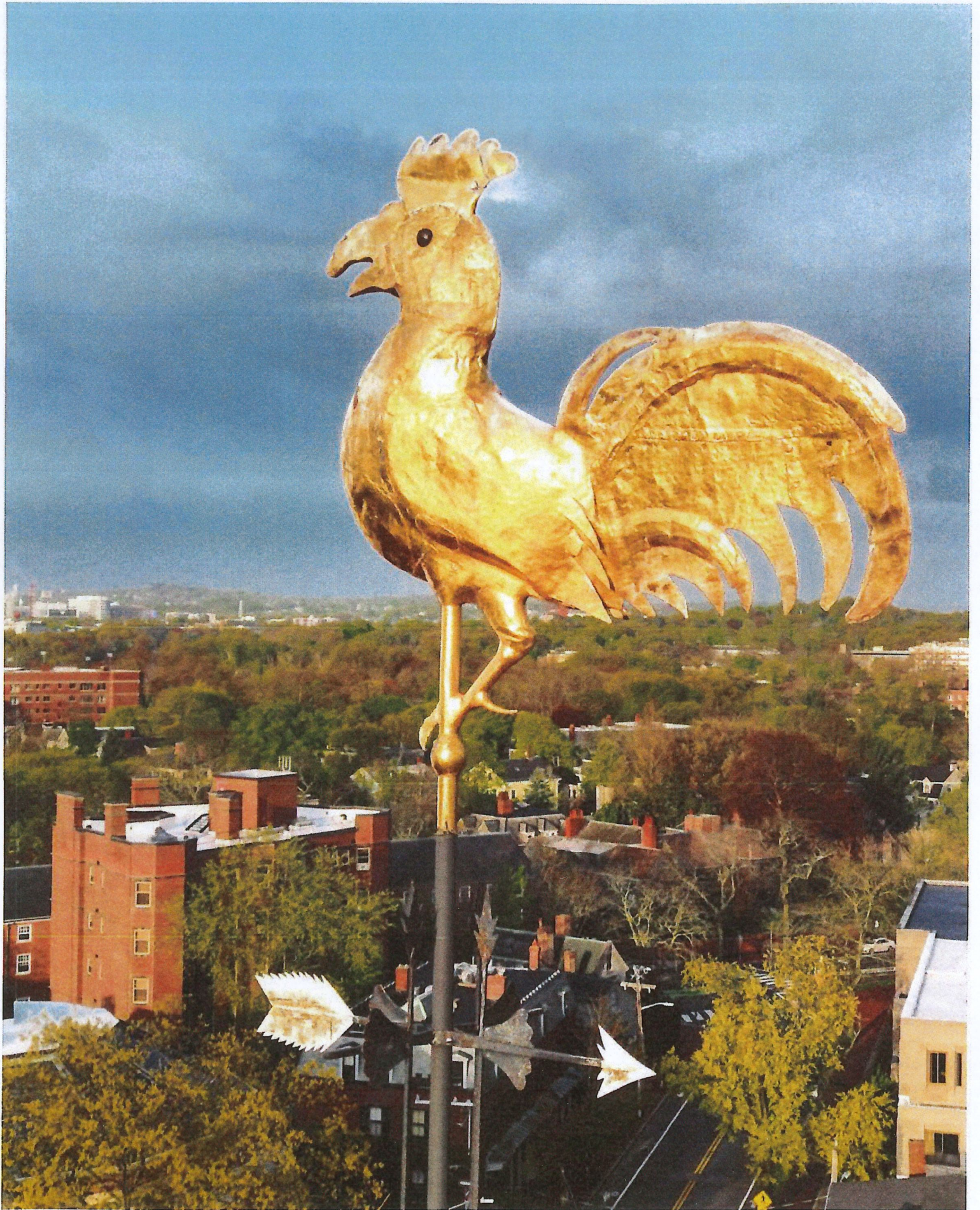
Left side good

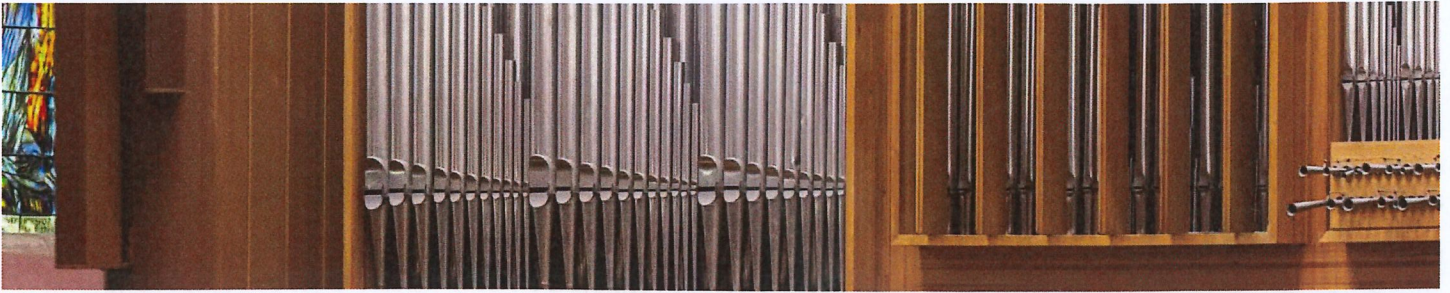
<https://www.youtube.com/shorts/8ymUskclxp4>

JULY 2023



JULY 2023





LATEST NEWS



Update on First Church Cockerel Weathervane

September 14, 2023

The great gilded cockerel weathervane that has stood atop First Church in Cambridge for the last 150 years is coming down to protect it from further damage caused by extreme weather, pollution, and its own venerable age. The decision to bring the much-loved cockerel down for its own safety was made in a unanimous vote by the First Church Executive Council and following extensive consultation with nationally recognized experts in the field of American Folk Art and historic weathervanes who strongly advised removal as soon as possible.

The cockerel is actually 302 years old, created in 1721 for a church in Boston's North End. It was made by Shem Drowne, the coppersmith who also made the grasshopper weathervane atop Faneuil Hall. One expert called the First Church cockerel a "magnificent example of an American weathervane, but more so, a magnificent example of American vernacular sculpture." The cockerel is a national treasure! The experts urged that for its protection from the elements and the safety of people and property around it, the cockerel be brought down as soon as possible. Drone videos revealed there is significant and dangerous erosion of the gilding on one side of the cockerel, especially its large tail feathers.

The date for its descent is still being determined, but the goal is to make the move as soon as possible. Once the cockerel is safely down and securely stored, church leaders and the congregation will need to consider next steps in the stewardship of this national treasure, including discerning whether the time has come to consider selling it. Another future decision is whether the Shem Drowne original should be replaced with a replica or something else.

Right now, however, the priority is to give the First Church community a chance to reflect on, ask questions about and consider next steps following the decision to remove the cockerel, which was announced to the congregation on Sunday, September 10, 2023. A first listening session will be on Sunday, October 8, at 12:30, followed by a weeknight Zoom session on a date to be announced.

Cambridge church to remove 302-year-old golden rooster weathervane

Boston Globe article – Oct 5, 2023

VIDEO 1 - LESS DAMAGED SIDE OF THE COCKEREL



Update on First Church Cockerel Weathervane

September 15, 2023

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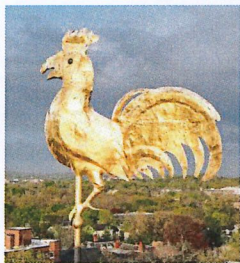
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Links to the drone videos:

Less damaged side:



More damaged side:

