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By email: [selectboard@lexingtonma.gov](mailto:selectboard@lexingtonma.gov)

Jill Hai, Chair, Town of Lexington Select Board

Re: **Proposed Mount Independence Local Historic District**

Dear Madam Chair and Select Board members,

As a former Lexington resident and a practicing historical architect long engaged with assessment, repair, preservation and rehabilitation of National Register-listed and eligible properties (including current projects at Minute Man NHP), I write in enthusiastic support for establishment of a Mount Independence Local Historic District. I grew up at the edge of Merriam Hill, within the Hancock-Clarke Historic District and in the subdivision originally known as "Colonial Park." As a child, I joyfully accepted our neighbor Robert Outerbridge's invitations to ascend the campanile-like tower of his Italianate mansion (the General Samuel Chandler House) on Goodwin Road, which offered commanding Cambridge and Boston skyline views. Not unlike "Stonesides" (22 Summit Road), our 1920s English Tudor-style house on Hancock Street was built for a famous yacht designer and author.

Clearly, the proposed Mount Independence Local Historic District "checks all of the boxes" for its association with people and historical events important to the Town and the region and the significance of its landscape design. One could argue that the overriding theme and unifying thread is **community**. What could have been a forbidding castle at the summit was instead a privately-owned park graciously opened to the public for *community* events, and for the simple pleasure of taking a view from the observatory. Eli Robbins's family's progressive civic efforts nurtured a church *community* led by Reverend Charles Follen; a fundraiser at Mount Independence helped finance construction of Follen Church, a local treasure. As years passed, an artist *community* would form at Follen Heights and soon – in true Lexington fashion – scientists and engineers would mingle with the artists, and the already eclectic neighborhood would welcome Mid-century Modern style houses.

As a vibrant community with civic, artistic and historic roots that wend back to the Revolution, and weave together the Abolition movement, the Boston School of painting, fine early 20<sup>th</sup>-century landscape design and advanced research on subatomic particles(!), the Mount Independence neighborhood more than qualifies for designation as an Local Historic District.

Sincerely,

Jack Glassman AIA, LEED AP  
Historical Architect

*Mr. Glassman earned professional degrees in Architecture and Historic Preservation Planning at Cornell University. In 1990 (as a BRA Senior Architect), he served as Acting Staff Architect for the City of Boston's Landmarks Commission and Historic District Commissions. Glassman currently provides technical advice and manages building preservation projects in National Parks spanning from Maine to Virginia, and has served as Chair of the Boston Society of Architects (BSA) Historic Resources Committee since 2012.*

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