



City of Cambridge Office of the City Council

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For Immediate Release

Prince Hall Commemorated in Cambridge City Hall

Most Worshipful Grand Master, Anthony Jakes, of the Prince Hall Grand Lodge Presents a Plaque to Former Mayor E. Denise Simmons

Cambridge, Mass. (January 12, 2010)-On Thursday, December 17, 2009, former Mayor E. Denise Simmons accepted and unveiled a plaque that has been given to the City of Cambridge. The plaque was presented by the Most Worshipful Grand Master, Anthony I. Jakes, Sr. of the Most Worshipful Prince Hall Grand Lodge of Massachusetts F&AM. Alongside Grand Master Jakes, was the Past Grand Jr. Warden of the Grand Lodge of MA F&AM, Ernie Pearlstein, former Mayor E. Denise Simmons, and former Vice Mayor Sam Seidel. Simmons said, "It brings me great joy to see the Prince Hall initiative come to fruition. This commemoration has been long overdue. I am proud to serve as Mayor in a city that supports history."

On October 20, 2008, Red Mitchell, Chairman of Masonic Education for the MWPHGL of MA, spoke to the Cambridge City Council to consider Prince Hall a Founding Father of this nation. After passing the resolution by unanimous vote, on December 15th, 2009, a formal plaque was affixed to the walls of the foyer of Cambridge City Hall. Cambridge is the first municipality to proclaim and memorialize Prince Hall, a Founding Father of this nation.

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In December of 2007, Professor Gary Nash of the University of California, Los Angeles, wrote a letter in support of naming Prince Hall a Founding Father. He wrote, "I believe it is appropriate to refer him as a Founding Father. I have used the term myself in reference to Hall. Richard Allen, Absalom Jones, and other African Americans of the founding period overcame great obstacles and accomplished quite extraordinary things in the interest of community building. This included establishing black churches and schools –and-certainly-Masonic Lodges. It would be a long overdue recognition of his love of freedom and commitment to the people of his community to have a plaque where the term 'Founding Father' would appear."

Now, two years later, Dr. Nash, along with supporters of this initiative, can now realize this long overdue recognition.

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