

Offered by City Councilor Lydia Edwards



## CITY OF BOSTON IN CITY COUNCIL

### ORDER FOR A HEARING REGARDING PRESERVATION OF HISTORIC BOSTON

*WHEREAS:* Boston is a historic city whose legacy is intimately connected to the foundation of the nation, the industrial revolution, the marine economy, the abolitionist and civil rights movements, and other fundamental chapters of American history; and

*WHEREAS:* Hundreds of sites in Boston, including churches, monuments, forts, wharves and marine areas, open spaces, performance areas, places of business, commercial districts and historic homes are listed on the state and National Registers of Historic Places, designated as City or National Landmarks and showcase the character of the community; and

*WHEREAS:* Beyond its social and cultural importance, Boston's historical sites are an economic engine for the Commonwealth, providing a key backdrop for the state's \$1.2 billion tourism industry while attracting long-term residents, entrepreneurs and academic institutions to make their home in the City, and providing spaces for small businesses and the local economy; and

*WHEREAS:* Despite the broad recognition of Boston's history, challenges remain with preserving our history for future generations; and

*WHEREAS:* The preservation community has identified outstanding needs to protect Boston's history, including additional resources to survey and designate historic sites, renovate and repair buildings, and to educate the public; and

*WHEREAS:* Many of the city's historic homes and commercial areas are not designated as landmarks or granted other status that would protect them from demolition; and

*WHEREAS:* Preservation of the Boston's history is a priority of neighborhood residents and city government, and requires comprehensive strategic planning to coordinate efforts; and

*WHEREAS:* Failure to protect historic sites today may result in the permanent loss of invaluable and irreplaceable neighborhood assets and physical manifestations of our country's origins and culture;

*WHEREAS:* Agencies equipped with expert knowledge regarding Boston's historic sites may lack sufficient powers to stop the demolition of buildings under consideration for landmark status; and

*WHEREAS:* The Zoning Board of Appeals serves primarily to review exceptions to the zoning code and is also empowered to lift stays of demolition on historic buildings;

*THEREFORE BE IT ORDERED,*

That the appropriate committee of the Boston City Council hold a hearing on historic preservation and that the Boston Landmarks Commission, Boston Preservation Alliance, Historic Boston Incorporated and any other interested parties shall be invited to attend.

Filed in City Council: May 16, 2018