A VISION FOR HISTORIC PRESERVATION IN BOSTON

Murray G. Miller, Director of Preservation, City of Boston
FIRST LOCALLY-DESIGNATED HISTORIC DISTRICT

Source: Peabody Essex Museum
"A plan of Boston, and its environs : shewing the true situation of His Majesty's army, and also those of the rebels", made by Richard Williams, 1776 via the Leventhal Map Center, Boston Public Library
Source: City Archives
66 PHILLIPS STREET (LEWIS AND HARRIET HAYDEN HOUSE)

Source: Historic New England
5 PINCKNEY STREET (LOUIS GLAPION/GEORGE MIDDLETON HOUSE)

Source: Historic New England

Greetings from
The Oldest House on Beacon Hill
STABLE AT SHIRLEY EUSTIS HOUSE

Inset photo; photo showing the original interior roof structure likely dating back to the structure's original construction.

Source: Boston Archaeology
EARLY DISPLACEMENT - MASSACHUSETT TRIBE

Source: A People’s Guide to Firsting and Lasting In Boston
100% OF STAFF TIME IS PROCESSING APPLICATIONS AND DESIGNATING LANDMARKS
A RESOURCE INTENSIVE APPROACH
A VISION FOR HISTORIC PRESERVATION IN BOSTON

CHALLENGES

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion
Information Gaps
Time and Resources
Traditional Practice of Historic Preservation
Legislation, Regulations, and Processes
Climate Change
Affordable Housing
Development Pressure
Different Values
Environmental Stewardship
Historic Resource Surveys
Education and Awareness
Customer Experience
Interdepartmental Collaboration

OPPORTUNITIES

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion
Information Gaps
Time and Resources
Traditional Practice of Historic Preservation
Legislation, Regulations, and Processes
Climate Change
Affordable Housing
Development Pressure
Different Values
Environmental Stewardship
Historic Resource Surveys
Education and Awareness
Customer Experience
Interdepartmental Collaboration
# OHP Organization (Existing Conditions)

## Department Staffing

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Director of Office of Historic Preservation</td>
<td>7%</td>
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<tr>
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</table>
11 HISTORIC COMMISSIONS

18 LANDMARKS COMMISSIONERS

76 DISTRICT COMMISSIONERS

94 TOTAL*

Volunteers drawn from a limited pool that increases with each district designation.

*Members & Alternates
A VISION FOR HISTORIC PRESERVATION IN BOSTON

LANDMARKS COMMISSION
KEY GOALS & PRIORITIES

GOAL: To ensure equity and inclusion in the identification, study, and protection of Boston's diverse historic resources in every neighborhood of the city and for the benefit and enjoyment of all Bostonians.

SHORT-TERM PRIORITIES

● Provide strong support for and participate in the planning initiative to revise or replace Article 85 (Demolition Delay Ordinance).
● Support efforts to revise the Boston landmarking state legislative language

LONG-TERM PRIORITIES

● Update and expand citywide survey of historic resources
OHP ORGANIZATION (EXISTING CONDITIONS)

DEPARTMENT STAFFING

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STAFF TIME
1. Designations
2. Design Review
3. Other
OHP ORGANIZATION (EXISTING CONDITIONS)

Design Review Staff Time 62%

- Design Review: 30.0%
- Hearing Preparation: 10.0%
- Hearing Agenda: 5.0%
- Application Review: 25.0%
- Intern/Volunteer: 5.0%
- Permit Review: 5.0%
- Special Projects: 5.0%
- Constituent Enquiries: 15.0%
- Hearing Management After Hours
95% of design review applications that are required to go to District Commissions are substantially appropriate as a result of staff’s design review with applicants before a public hearing.
95% of design review applications that are required to go to the Commission are substantially appropriate as a result of staff’s design review with applicants before a public hearing.

95% of the 13,000 applications to the Landmarks Preservation Commission receives in a typical year are resolved at the staff level.
THE PRACTICE OF HISTORIC PRESERVATION

Expedite any application that rescues/utilizes a threatened, underutilized, or distressed eligible or historic property for affordable housing in underserved communities.

RACE IN THE HISTORIC PRESERVATION PROFESSION


All Other Races
1.0%

White
99%
A VISION FOR HISTORIC PRESERVATION IN BOSTON

COMMENRATION COMMISSION
COMMENORATION COMMISSION

RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE BOSTON COMMENORATION COMMISSION (BCC)
To advise the Mayor and relevant departments on making Boston's celebrations of historic anniversaries, preservation policies, and tools, robust and inclusive of all history.

GOALS

- **EVENTS, EXHIBITS, AND TRAILS SUBCOMMITTEE**
  - producing recommendations for events and exhibits

- **TIMELINES, ARCHIVES, AND CURRICULA SUBCOMMITTEE**
  - timeline of significant historical events in Boston

- **LEGISLATION AND PRESERVATION TOOLS SUBCOMMITTEE**
  - Complete citywide historic building survey
  - Reforms for the Article 85 process
Policies and Tools
COMMENORATION COMMISSION

POLICIES AND TOOLS

TOURISM & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

EDUCATION & AWARENESS
UNDER SERVED COMMUNITIES

HISTORIC RESOURCE SURVEYS

TOURISM & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

EDUCATION & AWARENESS

POLICIES AND TOOLS
COMMEMORATION COMMISSION

POLICIES AND TOOLS

TOURISM & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

EDUCATION & AWARENESS

HISTORIC RESOURCE SURVEYS

REVOLUTIONIZED & INCLUSIVE APPROACH
COMMEMORATION COMMISSION

CITY OF BOSTON DEMOGRAPHICS

Racial Demographic

- Not Specified: 25.0%
- Multi-racial: 9.1%
- Asian: 2.3%
- Indigenous, America...: 7.2%
- N/A: 11.4%
- Other: 2.3%

- White: 43.2%
- Black: 25.0%
- Hispanic/Latino: 19.5%

52.1% White
24.2% Black
9.8% Asian
19.5% Hispanic/Latino
7.2% Other
A VISION FOR HISTORIC PRESERVATION IN BOSTON

ARCHAEOLOGY PROGRAM
ARCHAEOLOGY PROGRAM

FOCUS

- Battle of Bunker Hill, Charlestown
- Redout, landscape, burials, and homes destroyed by fires
- Diverse histories, including:
  - Native and Black participants in Battle
  - Native grave protection
  - Enslaved members of Charlestown households
  - Women and Children at home
  - Pre-1775 Institutional organizations of Charlestown that may represent diversity
“COMMUNITY ARCHAEOLOGY”

- Research questions designed/asked by communities impacted by the stories
- Archaeological dig designed by COB Archaeology to attempt to answer the questions
- Community participates in dig and analysis

Source: Boston Archaeology
First official meeting between the Massachusetts Tribe and any Mayor of the City of Boston

(Photo left by Bob Allison) Showing VP of the Massachusetts, Thomas Green, and City Archaeologist giving a Suffolk University class a tour of the archaeology and Native history of Boston Common
STRATEGIC PRIORITIES
(Proposed)
1. STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

- Streamlining Regulations and Processes
- Existing Resources Alignment
STRATEGIC PRIORITIES (PROPOSED)

REVIEW EXISTING REGULATIONS WITH THE BLC THAT COULD SUPPORT STREAMLINING

STREAMLINING THE DESIGNATION PROCESS

1. STRATEGIC PRIORITIES
   - Streamlining Regulations and Processes
   - Existing Resources Alignment
STRATEGIC PRIORITIES (PROPOSED)

REVIEW EXISTING REGULATIONS WITH THE BLC THAT COULD SUPPORT STREAMLINING

STREAMLINING THE DESIGNATION PROCESS

STREAMLINING THE DESIGN REVIEW PROCESS

1. STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

- Streamlining Regulations and Processes
- Existing Resources Alignment
2. ALLOWING FOR:

- Undertaking Historic Resource Surveys focused on Underserved Communities
STRATEGIC PRIORITIES (PROPOSED)

3. ALLOWING FOR

- Rethinking Article 85 (Demolition Delay) as a Climate Action Strategy
- Supporting Environmental Stewardship/Sustainability through Historic Preservation Pilot Projects
- Demonstration Projects that Leverage Historic Preservation in Support of Economic Development Objectives
- Exploring Underutilized/Distressed Homes as Affordable Housing Option
- Flood Mitigation Pilot Projects as a Climate Action Mitigation Measure
STRATEGIC PRIORITIES (PROPOSED)

4. PROVIDING OPPORTUNITY FOR

- Broadening the Historic Preservation Program/Relevancy
- Education & Awareness
- Excellence in Customer Service
- Interdepartmental Collaboration
RETHINKING ARTICLE 85

DRAW STRENGTH FROM

- Climate Action Plan (2019)
- Zero Waste Boston
- Historic Preservation Best Practices

SUSTAINABILITY
RETHINKING ARTICLE 85

ARTICLE 85
Incentivizing the optimization of embodied energy and providing for intensification that leaves a smaller carbon footprint.

INCENTIVES
Incentivizing interventions to mitigate climate change and facilitate energy efficiency actions in underserved communities.

PRESERVING HISTORY
Preserving the history of Boston that is inclusive with a focus on underserved communities.

DRAW STRENGTHS FROM
Preserving History  Recycling
RETHINKING ARTICLE 85

1. EMBODIED ENERGY
   Embodied Energy forfeited

2. DECISION TO DEMOLISH
   Influences Meaningful Consideration of Alternatives

3. NO DELAY
   No Delay in Demolition

4. FINANCIAL CONTRIBUTION
   Owner Contributes xx% of Fair Market Value to Fund for Use on Greening Older or Historic Structures

5. DEMOLITION
   Construction Waste to Landfill

Photo Source: Texarkana Gazette
RETHINKING ARTICLE 85

POTENTIAL INITIATIVES TO CONSIDER

**UPGRADES**
Repairing and upgrading older and historic properties in underserved communities to withstand future climate change

**RESHAPE BEHAVIOR**
Using funds from a potential “rethink” of Article 85 to shape behaviors from those that contribute to adverse climate impacts to those that increase better environmental outcomes

**INCREASE DENSITY**
Identifying opportunities to increase density in older and historic neighborhoods while creating affordable housing options that mitigate the prospects of displacement
HOUSING AFFORDABILITY

Source: Northeastern University
**UNERSERVED COMMUNITIES**

**AN AFFORDABLE HOUSING OPTION**

3

**43% OF DISTRESSED PROPERTIES IN BOSTON ARE SINGLE FAMILY HOMES**

43% of distressed properties are single family.

4

MOST OF THE DISTRESSED PROPERTIES ARE LOCATED IN DORCHESTER, ROXBURY, AND MATTAPAN
CLIMATE CHANGE

Source: WBUR
CLIMATE ACTION STRATEGIES

CURRENT STATUS
City of Boston has begun a partnership with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to complete a Coastal Storm Risk Management Feasibility Study.

OBSERVATIONS
Flood hazards would impact Eastern edge of South End Landmark District, Fort Point Channel HD, Fort Point Channel Seaport Blvd Protection Area, “A” Street Protection Area, and certain Downtown landmarks.

INITIATIVES TO CONSIDER

- Advance nominations for landmark designation that involve properties subject to sea level rise.
- Establish incentive program for property owners subject to sea level rise.
CLIMATE ACTION STRATEGIES

1. BUILDINGS ARE THE LARGEST CONSUMERS OF ENERGY - U.S. EPA

2. THE MOST SEVERE HARDS FROM CLIMATE CHANGE FALL DISPROPORTIONATELY UPON UNDERSERVED COMMUNITIES - U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

3. 70% OF EMISSIONS IN BOSTON COME FROM THE BUILDING SECTOR - City of Boston Environment Department
CLIMATE ACTION STRATEGIES

INITIATIVES TO CONSIDER

- Direct Grant Pilot Project in Underserved Communities such as Mattapan, Chinatown, etc.
- Energy Audits for Commercial, Institutional, Multi-Family Structures
- Weatherization, Decarbonization, and cooling of Older and Historic Buildings
- Hazardous Material Mitigation and Education on Basic Home Maintenance

Source: 2019 City of Boston Distressed Properties Report
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & HISTORIC PRESERVATION

CURRENT STATUS
While historic preservation contributes significantly to Boston’s local economy, the ability to capitalize and leverage its benefits is limited.

OBSERVATIONS
Historic preservation is a powerful tool for housing and economic development. Historic preservation makes a significant contribution to Boston through tourism and the rehabilitation of historic places.

INITIATIVES TO CONSIDER
Expedite any application that rescues/utilizes a threatened, underutilized, or distressed eligible or historic property for affordable housing in underserved communities.
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EYE ON INVESTMENT

UPLIFTING UNDERREPRESENTED COMMUNITIES AND MITIGATING ADVERSE EFFECTS OF CLIMATE CHANGE THROUGH HISTORIC PRESERVATION

City of Boston Historic Preservation
Expedite any application that rescues/utilizes a threatened, underutilized, or distressed eligible or historic property for affordable housing in underserved communities.

City of Boston
Historic Preservation

EYE ON INVESTMENT

EYE ON THE 250TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE UNITED STATES
Expedite any application that rescues/utilizes a threatened, underutilized, or distressed eligible or historic property for affordable housing in underserved communities.

EYE ON INVESTMENT

UPLIFTING UNDERSERVED COMMUNITIES AND MITIGATING ADVERSE EFFECTS OF CLIMATE CHANGE

City of Boston
Historic Preservation
21st CENTURY CHALLENGES

HEAT EMERGENCY
A heat emergency has been declared in Boston from Thursday, July 27 through Friday, July 28.

boston.gov/heat
Expedite any application that rescues/utilizes a threatened, underutilized, or distressed eligible or historic property for affordable housing in underserved communities.

- **STREAMLINING REGULATIONS, PROCESSES AND PRACTICES**
  - HISTORIC CONTEXT
  - HISTORIC RESOURCE SURVEYS
  - PRIORITIZING AND ADVANCING LANDMARK DESIGNATIONS
  - AFFORDABLE HOUSING OPTIONS
  - REVITALIZE UNDERSERVED COMMUNITIES
  - CLIMATE RESILIENCE
  - ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP
  - ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
  - EDUCATION AND AWARENESS
  - INTERDEPARTMENTAL COLLABORATION

City of Boston Historic Preservation

EYE ON STRATEGIC PRIORITIES
By 2030, Boston’s Office of Historic Preservation will be nationally known for its transformative efforts to uncover, share, and preserve local stories of the city's rich history, advancing environmental stewardship and uplifting underserved communities for the benefit of present and future generations.
THANK YOU
Q&A Session
NEXT STEPS

- Vision Feedback
- Community Engagement
- Action Planning
- Interdepartmental Engagement
- Community Engagement