

Fowler Clark Epstein Farm

487 Norfolk Street, Mattapan, House (1786-1806); Barn (c. 1860)

Owner

Urban Farming Institute of Boston (UFI)

Total Projected Development Costs

\$3.67 million

Project Size

- Farmhouse: 2,900 SF
- Barn/Stable: 3,000 SF
- Site: 30,000 SF

Proposed Uses

- Working urban farm with greenhouse and farm stand.
- Headquarters for the Urban Farming Institute of Boston

Status

Completed in 2018

HBI Role

Owner and Developer

Designations

Boston Landmark
National Register of Historic Places

Capital Sources and Development Cost Summary

State Historic Tax Credits	\$400,500
Federal Historic Tax Credits	\$398,000
Permanent Debt	\$750,000
City of Boston	\$150,000
Fundraising	\$1,823,863
HBI Cash Equity	\$200,000
TOTAL SOURCES	\$3,722,363

Acquisition Costs	\$250,447
Soft Costs	\$612,147
Hard Costs	\$2,461,062
Financing Costs	\$56,019
Development Fee	\$342,688
TOTAL COSTS	\$3,722,363

Community Impact

- Reactivates a long vacant historic property in Mattapan
- Repurposed as headquarters for urban farm and training center
- Provides health and wellness programs for community
- Provides green collar jobs and fresh produce



View of rehabilitated Fowler Clark Epstein Farm.

Background

The Fowler Clark Epstein Farm remains among the earliest, intact, vernacular examples of agricultural properties in Boston and in urban centers across the Commonwealth. Built between 1786 and 1806, the original farmhouse was once part of a large Dorchester estate encompassing over 330 acres. It has primarily been owned by three families, beginning with Samuel Fowler, a Dorchester yeoman in the late 18th century. In 1837, the land was sold to the Clark family and later subdivided into parcels as advancements in transportation hastened the development of Mattapan as a "streetcar suburb" of Boston. The original house and barn were sold to Jorge Epstein in 1941 where it remained in family possession until falling vacant in 2013.

HBI purchased the site in 2015 and repurposed it as headquarters for the Urban Farming Institute of Boston, who purchased the property in 2024.

