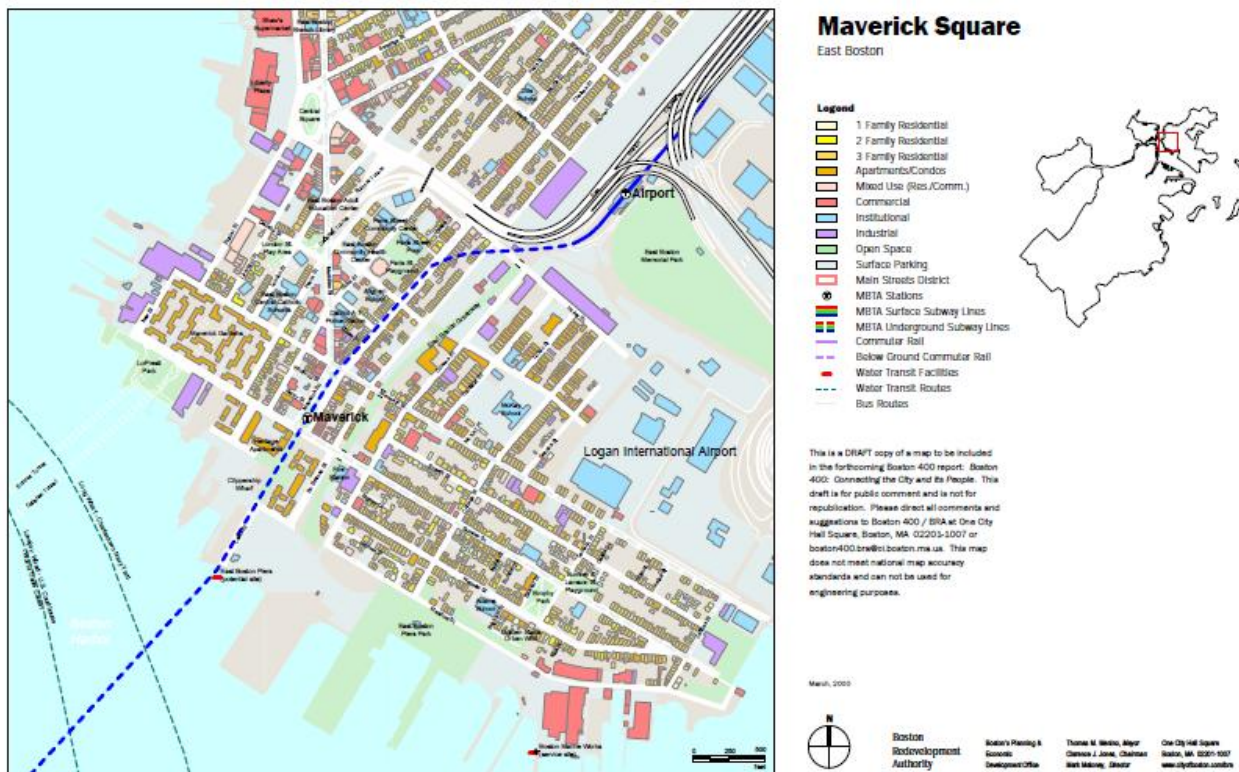


Maverick and Central Squares, East Boston



Introduction to District

Though East Boston has several significant commercial districts, the City's Main Street program focuses on the area around Maverick and Central Squares. The district is a mostly linear stretch along Meridian Street, anchored on each end by Maverick Square to the west and Central Square to the east. Running parallel to the island's northwestern waterfront, the district features many fine commercial and ecclesiastical buildings from the second half of the 19th century, particularly in each of the two squares. East Boston has been the home to waves of new immigrants for closet to 150 years, and their presence has helped shape this district into a very unique neighborhood.

The buildings that are highlighted in this casebook chapter reflect the significant historic resources found within the commercial districts of Maverick and Central Square. The buildings, ranging from an early commercial building from East Boston's first period; to a significant church that represents a building type that has almost been lost in the neighborhood; to several important institutional buildings- all reflect the development of East Boston over time.

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Narrative of Boundaries and District Context

The linear district, which is a bit more than a half-mile long, starts at the Lewis Mall, a small park located between the waterfront and Maverick Square, and extends up Meridian Street to Lexington Street, just past Central Square. The district also bleeds out one block on each side of Meridian Street and the two squares. The district runs parallel to the waterfront, with industrial buildings located in between the commercial district and the water.

Maverick Square is the entry point to East Boston for many, as the newly renovated MBTA station is located at the northern head of the square. This end of the district is also surrounded by a new linear waterfront park that connects Border Street to Jeffries Point. The new parks, built by MassPort, give East Boston an excellent vantage point across Boston Harbor towards the city.

The neighborhood is connected to the rest of the city by the MBTA Blue Line via Maverick Square, which also serves as a hub for bus lines. Three tunnels connect East Boston, but the Sumner and Callahan Tunnels serve the immediate Main Street district. Logan Airport, located on the southern section of East Boston, influences the surrounding area and the island as a whole, with low-flying planes, large airfields, enormous rental car properties, and parking lots. However, the airport's presence isn't felt as much in the commercial district as in the residential neighborhood located directly around the airport.

Historical Narrative

Boston Harbor Islands to Boston's First Planned Community

Until the first decades of the 19th century, today's East Boston was actually a collection of five small islands in Boston Harbor, privately owned and mostly used for farming, grazing livestock, and military fortifications. Noddle's and Hog's (or Breed's) Island, the two largest of the group, form the current residential and commercial section of East Boston. Noddle's Island, which was first became part of Boston in 1636, forms today's Maverick and Central Squares and the surrounding residential areas, while Hog's (also called Susanna, Belle and Breed's Island), forms Orient Heights. The three smaller islands- Governor's, Apple and Bird- have been incorporated, along with filled land, into Logan Airport.



Figure 1 View of East Boston, Mass. 1879.

In 1833, the owner of Noddle's Island, General William H. Sumner, formed the East Boston Company with the goal of developing the island for residential and industrial purposes. Sumner also sought to bring the Eastern Railroad from Salem through East Boston and onto the mainland. He proposed that the route through Chelsea and East Boston would be faster than through Charlestown.

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Sumner, along with investors, eventually gained control of all the land and drew up plans for the new section of the city. The East Boston Company divided Noddle's into six sections and laid straight, wide streets that were named differently in each section (directors of the East Boston Company in the first; European Ports and Revolutionary War generals in the second; generals and battles in the third; poets in the fourth. The fifth and sixth sections were once Wood Island Park and the Basin, but are underneath Logan Airport today.

The East Boston Company recognized that they would not be able to attract residential and industrial development without fast and easy transit to the mainland, so they quickly established ferry service from East Boston to the main part of the city. The Company also built a long wharf and a large hotel in Maverick Square for summer guests and to encourage tourism similar to what was seen in nearby Chelsea and Nahant. The Company also convinced Samuel Cunard to make East Boston the American terminus for his transatlantic mail service by offering him free wharfage.

East Boston's Maritime Past: Shipbuilding and Hospitality

The East Boston waterfront soon became developed by various industries, including Donald McKay's shipbuilding enterprise. Other industries such as iron foundries, saw and planing mills, dye wood works, fish packing, cold storage, and chemical works and a pottery could also be found on or near the waterfront.

The East Boston Company had planned for industry to be located on the waterfront, taking advantage of easy transportation provided by ships and eased by the construction of large piers. The Border Street area, north of today's Main Street district, was home to most shipbuilding activity, for which East Boston became famous. Between 1848 and 1858, more than 170 vessels were built at East Boston; of which 99 exceeded 1,000 tons each, and 9 were above 2,000 tons. Others belonged to the Liverpool packet-line, and made regular trips across the Atlantic. The Atlantic Works on the island had built iron steamships for Russia, Egypt, Paraguay, China, and the East Indies; the warships *Nantucket* and *Casco*; the turrets of several other iron clads; the engines for many American frigates; and entire fleets of ferry-boats and tugs. Other neighboring shipyards and works also had their share in creating famous American ships from East Boston.

Cunard Line

In 1840, when Samuel Cunard began a transatlantic steamship mail service, he chose to make Boston the company's only American port. The East Boston Company lobbied to become the builders of the wharf and to locate it on their land in East Boston. However, just a few years later, Cunard refocused their business growth towards New York City, because that harbor was ice-free for a greater portion of the year. The company still sent their ships to Boston, and remained an important source of growth and development for East Boston. Cunard ships brought many of the immigrants who came to Boston during that period to the wharf in East Boston. Cunard continued to operate out of a wharf near today's Piers Park into the 1930s.

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Boston Sugar Refinery

The Boston Sugar Refinery was the first production industry established in East Boston. Incorporated in 1834, the company set out to build an eight-story brick building on Lewis Street on the water's edge. The building was powered by a steam engine to power the refinery, which produced loaves of refined sugar. The company continued to expand along Lewis Street and towards Marginal Street. The company remained an anchor industry throughout most of the 19th century, but by 1900, the sugar refinery buildings were used as warehouses for other industries.

Religious Buildings and Meeting Spaces

While Maverick Square became the commercial and banking center of East Boston, several churches and meeting halls were built along Meridian Street and in Central Square. Toward the end of the 19th century, this section of the district featured the Central Square Baptist Church, the Maverick Congregational Church, a Universalist Church, Church of Our Father Unitarian Church, a Bethel M.E Church, the Saratoga Street M.E church, St Johns Episcopal Church (which later became the Congregation Ohel Jacob), a Presbyterian Church, and likely several more.

The Central Square area also was home to Walcott (aka Pythian) Hall, two Masonic Halls, the Grand Army Hall, and later a Knights of Columbus Hall, housed in the Stevenson Block. Back towards Maverick Square, one could find the large Lyceum Hall, next door to Maverick House. These meeting halls served an important purpose in the community, providing space for groups and clubs to meet, discuss issues of the day, and provide important social services, such as early forms of health insurance.

These social clubs remained popular throughout the 19th century and into the first decades of the 20th century. Soon, clubs dedicated to certain ethnic groups sprung up as East Boston became a center for new immigrants.

Maverick and Central Squares

As East Boston became the center for the area's maritime trades, with shipbuilding, manufacturing and shipping commanding the waterfront, Maverick and Central Squares were developed to support the waterfront. Maverick Square, named for the area's earliest known settler, Samuel Maverick, was the significant center for commerce in the 19th century. With both squares fronting onto the waterfront and adjacent



Figure 2 Maverick Congregational Church ca 1880s



Figure 3 example of an East Boston commercial building, likely with a meeting hall inside

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Historic Boston Incorporated, 2015

to the long piers that housed warehouses and shipping terminals, commercial development was quick to follow.

The construction of the Maverick House Hotel, first built in 1833 as a wood frame building that dominated Maverick Square, marked the beginning of the development of the commercial area. The hotel served passengers traveling on the Eastern Railroad from Salem and eventually guests associated with the Cunard Line and other nearby industries. The building burned twice, and after the second time (in 1856), it was replaced by the Sturtevant House, a five story brick and brownstone structure. The last hotel on this site was demolished in 1927. Today, the parcel is a construction site for a future community health care center.



Figure 4 Maverick House

Elsewhere in Maverick and Central Squares, the development of brick commercial and residential buildings throughout the second half of the 19th century transformed the district from a somewhat haphazard, quickly-built temporary district to a more permanent commercial and residential center. The rapid economic development that accompanied the maritime trade boom in East Boston required sufficient capital to fuel growth, which led to the establishment and construction of numerous banking institutions during the 1840s and 50s. The banks' original Maverick Square buildings are mostly gone, though East Boston



Figure 5 Sturtevant House

Savings Bank's first location, the Winthrop Block, still partially remains as the first floor of the building on the corner of Maverick Street and Maverick Square, housing Sultana's Bakery and Eddie C's today. The banks were largely rebuilt at the turn of the 20th century, and today are centered around the north side of Maverick Square, including the Columbia Trust Company, the Metropolitan Trust Company and the East Boston Savings Bank. Together with the District Court, the Police Precinct and the Post Office on this block, these buildings give this area of the neighborhood a decidedly institutional character. The Public Welfare Building on Maverick Street and the East Boston Relief Station on Meridian add another layer to this institutional infrastructure.

Boston's Ellis Island: East Boston as the first stop in America

Attracted by affordable housing, plentiful employment, and the presence of other immigrants made East Boston a center for several immigrant communities. A great influx of Irish immigrants started in the

Commercial Casebook: East Boston

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1850s, helping to increase the population of the island from 5,018 in 1845 to 18,356 in 1860, (23% of which were Irish immigrants). The Irish population continued to grow, and they dominated East Boston politics and built churches and parochial schools. However, other groups began to make an impact in East Boston. By 1905, the growing group of European Jews had made East Boston home to the largest Jewish community in New England. The Jewish population was soon surpassed by the Italians, who first came to East Boston from the North End, and then directly from Italy. By 1915, East Boston's population was 27% Italian. While today there is still a large population of Italian Americans living in East Boston, mostly centered around Orient Heights, other populations, mostly from South and Central America, have become the largest immigrant group to call East Boston home.

As Boston's home to many immigrants, there are several physical reminders of the neighborhood's immigration history. The Immigrants Home, on Marginal Street near the wharves was first built in 1881, and replaced by a new building for that same purpose in 1912. The Immigration Station was built in 1919 by the Federal Government to process immigrants as they first arrived in Boston. The station may have replaced an earlier station on the same site. The Station served both as a processing station and as a detention center, increasingly for those considered to be "undesirable immigrants" in the 1930s. The Immigration Building still stands today, though it is scheduled to be demolished in early 2011.

The Transportation Crucible?

Isolated East Boston was created with railroad transportation goals in mind and could only succeed with creative transit solutions, making the island at the forefront of transportation innovation. First, the construction of the long ferry wharf in the 1830s allowed for efficient ferry transit to the mainland. At the turn of the 20th century, efforts to build the world's longest underwater subway tunnel began in order to connect East Boston with the main city via trolley. The submarine tunnel was completed in 1904.

Ferry transport remained important to the island, particularly with car transport, until the first tunnel built for automobile transportation was constructed in 1934, the Sumner Tunnel. Another feat of engineering, the Sumner was followed by the construction of the Callahan Tunnel in 1964. A third Boston Harbor tunnel was completed as part of the larger Big Dig project, and the Ted Williams Tunnel was opened to the public in 2003.



Figure 7 Submarine Tunnel, connecting East Boston to Atlantic Avenue (1903)



Figure 6 East Boston, near the airport, ca 1970

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Meanwhile, East Boston also became home to Boston's airport. Land around Governor's and Apple islands began to be filled in as early as 1915 for the construction of a large port that was planned for the area, which was soon transformed into plans for the airport, which opened in 1923. Large expansions to the airport were made in 1943 and 1946, and in 1966, the airport expanded again over what was then the Olmsted designed Wood Island Park. In the late 1960s, the Bird Island Flats were filled in for further expansion of the airport.

While East Boston was the home of much transportation innovation and advances in technology, it has often caused strife within the neighborhood. Building projects associated with the tunnels and with the airport have led to the taking of houses and land, excessive noise and pollution.

District Demographics

Today, a look at the storefronts along Maverick and Central Squares will tell you that the population of East Boston today is heavily Spanish-speaking composition. As we wait to get the final reports from the 2010 census, we can look back a decade and see then that nearly 50% of the households in 02128 were Hispanic, and 55% of that tract spoke a language other than English at home. At that time, about 20% of the individuals were listed under the poverty line. It is likely that this section of East Boston will have even more Spanish speaking households in the 2010 census data. (* This will be updated as soon as possible).

Neighborhood Success Stories and District Challenges

There have been several positive advances in the East Boston Main Street district with the development (or simply the maintenance and continued use) of historic resources within the district along with new construction projects. These can provide a role model as well as serving as a foundation to spur further preservation and development efforts.

What is going right for Maverick and Central Squares:

- The new MBTA station and the reconfiguration of the square and Lewis Mall have greatly improved the appearance and the flow of car and pedestrian traffic in the area.
- With this upgraded infrastructure, Maverick Square has remained the transportation hub for East Boston, featuring the blue line and several bus lines that connect throughout East Boston and surrounding communities (Chelsea, Everett, Revere)
- East Boston Health Center, one of the most active and successful community health centers in Boston, has started construction of a new healthcare center in Maverick Square, which will offer an important service and fill a massive hole in the street wall right in the square.
- There are currently about 280 active businesses in the Main Street district
- The district features a very low vacancy rate (which also is a detractor, because it is tough for new businesses to move into district)
- There have been 46 Main Street supported or funded façade improvement projects in the past 4 years
- The district features a great deal of pedestrian traffic

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- According to Main Street Executive director Clark Moulaison, residents express a feeling of belonging in East Boston, many shop locally
- Also according to Moulaison, the district is a safe place and the feeling is that neighbors look out for one another

District Challenges

While previous redevelopment projects and strong community engagement provide a solid foundation, there are still challenges for historic preservation related to economic trends and overall attitudes. They include:

- East Boston's lower median income makes it difficult to attract new anchor businesses, particularly regional/national tenants.
- Undocumented residents who are business owners are often afraid to ask for help from the police, the city- which can dissuade them from applying for Main Street funding support or reporting crime or bad activity in the district.
- There is low vacancy in the district, but the ownership turnover can be high.
- Presence of a language barrier- owners and employees who only speak Spanish or Portuguese can make it difficult for customers that only speak English- and vice versa.
- Solid metal security grates and other out of code issues with buildings (business owners find the city process cumbersome)
- Large opportunity to reach millions of airplane passengers each year, yet little is done to encourage tourists/visitors to check out East Boston

Historic Preservation-Specific Challenges:

- There are no National Register districts that cover the commercial districts (though there is a National Register district on Eagle Hill and the Princeton Street Architectural Conservation District).
- There are no Boston Landmarks in the district.
- There are no protections for any of the buildings included in this casebook chapter
- There are no historic overlay districts that could help add a layer of review to projects that could affect historic buildings.

Commercial Casebook: East Boston

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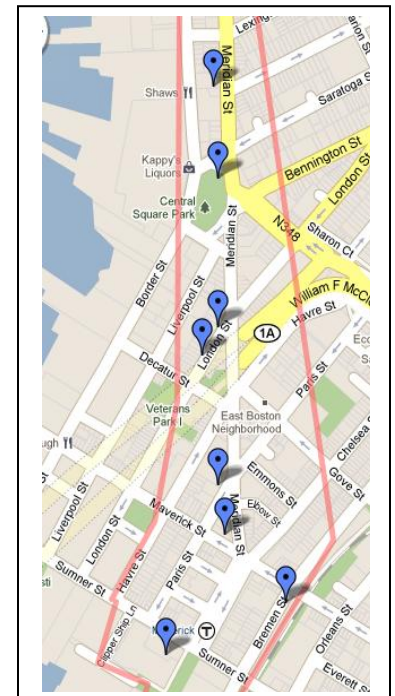
District Recommendations

- Nominate the district to be included on the National Register of Historic Places, or take the necessary steps to earn the state's designation of eligibility. This will make buildings eligible for historic tax credits, providing equity to make rehabilitation projects more feasible. Another angle would be to examine the possibility of thematic district nominations (ie "East Boston's Industrial Waterfront Historic District")
- Identify the "high impact" buildings and establish goals/plans for their redevelopment or continued maintenance.
- Continue the work that has already been taking place in enlivening spaces throughout the district- see great examples of preservation work that has already taken place (ZUMIX, Scups' on the Waterfront, some of the lofts along Border Street, etc)
- Plan to create connective corridors to the waterfront, including planning for visually connecting the district to the waterfront with view corridors.
- Work towards securing design guidelines that address traditional appearances with emerging communities design sensibility.

Preservation Opportunities

There are several properties that could benefit from restoration and renovation. This would help bring additional positive attention to the district and spur further neighborhood development. Details of each building are below and further information can be found in the property summaries included in this casebook chapter.

Name	Address	Approx YB
Woodbury Building	201 Sumner Street	1841
East Boston Public Welfare Building	154 Maverick Street	1936
First Presbyterian Church	130 London Street	1870
Engine 9 Fire House	60 Paris Street	1891
East Boston Savings Bank	2-8 Meridian Street	1913
Meridian Street Commercial Block	120-138 Meridian Street	Pre 1884
Stevenson Building	238 Meridian Street	c. 1880
East Boston Branch Library	276 Meridian Street	1914
75 Meridian Street -- DEMOLISHED	75 Meridian Street	c. 1870



Commercial Casebook: East Boston

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Methodology

The properties in this chapter of the Commercial Casebook were chosen to represent the opportunities for historic preservation in this commercial district. By including them in this Casebook, we have identified them as places that are historically, architecturally or culturally significant to this district. The selected buildings and resources deserve attention, interpretation, protection, and to become part of a district's overall economic success and revitalization.

Sources:

- East Boston: Exploring Boston's Neighborhoods (Boston Landmarks Commission), 1994
- Sites for Historical Interpretation on East Boston's Waterfronts, Nancy Seasholes for the City of Boston and the Boston Redevelopment Authority, April 2009
- Boston Landmarks Commission Survey Forms (particularly those for the tunnels), 1989/1990
- East Boston Immigration Station Study Report, Boston Landmark Commission, 2010
- Traces of the Past in Maverick Square: Illustrating Economic, Social and Political Trends using Artifacts, Layers, and Traces by Andrew Lukmann, MIT (<http://web.mit.edu/lukymann/www/city/trends.pdf>)
- King's Handbook of Boston Harbor, 1883 by M.F. Sweetser

Commercial Casebook: East Boston

Historic Boston Incorporated, 2015

Woodbury Building

SITE INFORMATION

Address: 191 -201 Sumner Street (3-13 Lewis Street)

Neighborhood: East Boston

Main Street District: East Boston Main Street

Owner: Woodbury-Cunard Associates

Property Type: commercial/residential

Lot Size: 16,265 sq ft

Approximate Building Size: 48,000 square feet

Parcel Number: 0105398015

Ward: 01

Assessment (2010):	Land	\$ 624,200
	Building	\$1,174,800
	Total	\$1,799,000



Commercial Casebook: East Boston

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ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION:

Date Built: 1841-1844

Architect: Sparill

Designations: None

SIGNIFICANCE:

The Woodbury Building is the oldest commercial building in East Boston. The three story Greek Revival brick and granite building is an important visual anchor for Maverick Square. Built between 1841 and 1841, the Woodbury Building reflects an early phase of commercial development in East Boston directly associated with this ferry slip and warehouse location. The block was built by East Boston Wharf Company, which was incorporated in 1833, and was responsible for the improvement of the significant Lewis Wharf and the construction of many brick warehouses that lined the wharf in the 19th century.

By 1858, the company's wharf included forty-five brick buildings used as warehouses, stores, shops and dwellings. Most of these warehouse buildings (including the Woodbury Building) were owned and operated by the National Dock and Warehouse Company from the mid-19th century through at least the 1920s. The Woodbury Building is the only remnant of these warehouses.

The building is a fine example of this type of early commercial/waterfront construction that was once prevalent in the surrounding area. The simple granite post and lintel system is a distinctive architectural feature from this era, and is retained on the Woodbury Building.

After experiencing years of neglect and a bad fire, the building was rehabilitated in the 1970s by the Woodbury Cunard Associates- a corporation of the East Boston Community Development Corporation.

CURRENT STATUS/EXISTING CONDITIONS:

The building is in fine condition and is well maintained currently. The building is a mix of commercial and elderly low income housing. It is surrounded by public housing development. The building has received some Main Street funded grants in recent years.

PRESERVATION STRATEGY: The Woodbury Building, based on its age, architecture, and significance as one of the only remaining buildings from this important era of East Boston history, would likely be eligible for Boston Landmark Status. Though the building is in good condition and is fully occupied, more could be done to articulate its significance as an important piece of East Boston's built environment.

The Woodbury Building is a great candidate for National Register listing, based on architectural and historic significance, and as its position as one of the only remaining buildings from East Boston's first period of development. Moreover, if the building were listed on the National Register, it would also be eligible for historic tax credits, which could be used to offset a rehabilitation project that would make improvements to the fenestration, storefronts and further preserve this significant building.

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PHOTOGRAPHS:



These photographs, while not of the Woodbury Building, show a few of the warehouses that lined Lewis Street that have since been demolished. The Woodbury Building is the only remaining building of this group that remains standing.

Commercial Casebook: East Boston
Historic Boston Incorporated, 2015

Public Welfare Building

SITE INFORMATION

Address: 154 Maverick Street

Neighborhood: East Boston

Main Street District: East Boston Main Street

Owner: One 54 Maverick LLC, Melissa Tyler

Property Type: institutional

Lot Size: 4121 square feet

Parcel Number: 0103868000

Approximate Building Size: 12,300 square feet

Ward: 01

Assessment (2010):	Land	\$ 137,800
	Building	\$ 540,200
	Total	\$ 678,000



Commercial Casebook: East Boston

Historic Boston Incorporated, 2015

ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION:

Date Built: 1936

Architect: Joseph McGann

Designations: None

SIGNIFICANCE:

An example of a depression-era municipal building, the front façade of the building still bears the words “Overseers of the Public Welfare.” There is evidence that this site has been long-held by the city of Boston, as maps show a wood frame Boston Armory building on this site as early as 1884. The Armory was replaced in 1936 by the three story brick and concrete Public Welfare building.

The Public Welfare building was identified in HBI’s 1999 Casebook as a building to monitor in the future.

CURRENT STATUS/EXISTING CONDITIONS:

The building, which has been vacant for many years, is slated to be redeveloped into a multi-use building that will include small business incubator space on the first floor, office space on the second floor, and a residential apartment on the top (third) floor. While these are excellent plans and a great use for the building, the project is complex and may require technical and funding assistance.

PRESERVATION STRATEGY:

The Public Welfare Building is a great candidate to be included in a National Register district that could be centered around the institutional buildings in and around Maverick Square. Listing the Public Welfare building on the National Register would allow the current owners to apply for historic tax credits, which could help bring equity to the project. HBI could be helpful in preparing the Part 1 form, which starts the process of getting a building on the National Register.

Commercial Casebook: East Boston

Historic Boston Incorporated, 2015

Engine 9 Fire House

SITE INFORMATION

Address: 60 Paris Street

Neighborhood: East Boston

Main Street District: East Boston Main Street

Owner: Italian American War Veterans

Property Type: institutional

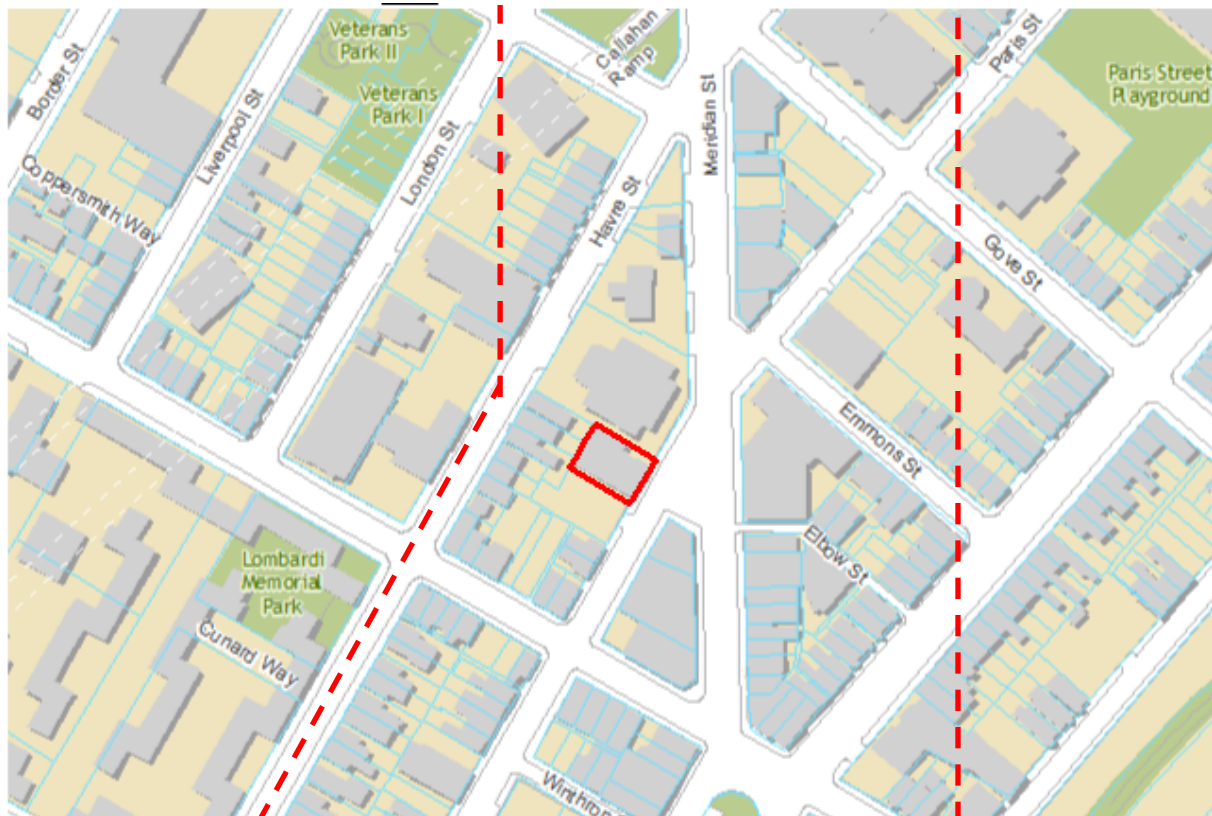
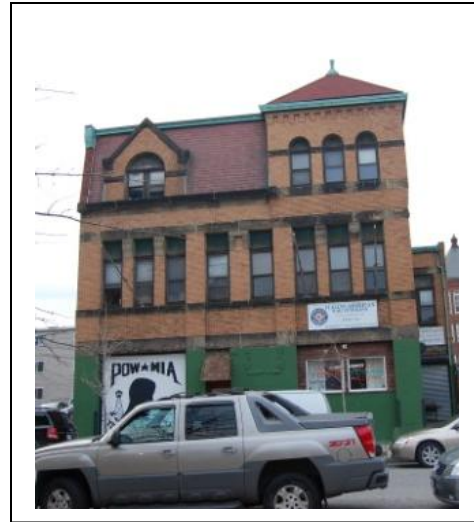
Lot Size: 4720 square feet

Approximate Building Size: 12,000 square feet

Parcel Number: 0105486000

Ward: 01

Assessment (2010):	Land	\$ 108,600
	Building	\$ 302,300
	Total	\$ 410,900



Commercial Casebook: East Boston

Historic Boston Incorporated, 2015

ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION:

Date Built: 1891

Architect: Harrison Henry Atwood, Charles J Bateman, and Henry J Stevenson

Designations: None

SIGNIFICANCE: Designed by architects Harrison Henry Atwood, Charles J Bateman, and Henry J Stevenson, this yellow brick fire house was built in 1891. The firehouse was built on the site of a previous firehouse that had been constructed in 1851 and occupied by a hand-pulled apparatus. In 1892, Ladder Company 2 moved in from their previous quarters at 64 Marion Street.

Engine 9 and Ladder 2 stayed at this firehouse until May 13, 1977 when the firehouse was closed and the fire companies moved into a new firehouse at 239 Sumner Street, several blocks away.

CURRENT STATUS/EXISTING CONDITIONS:

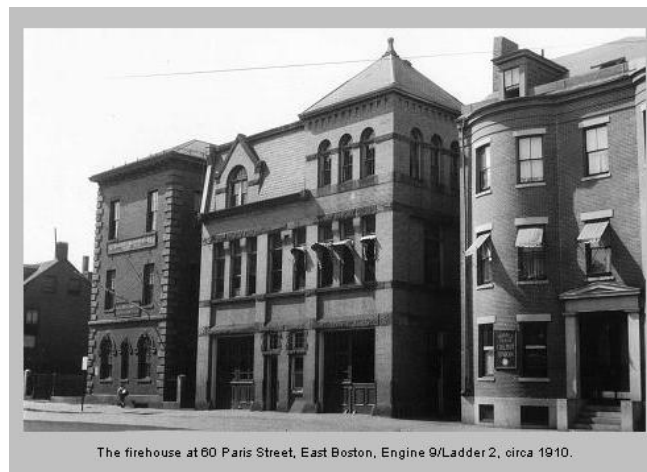
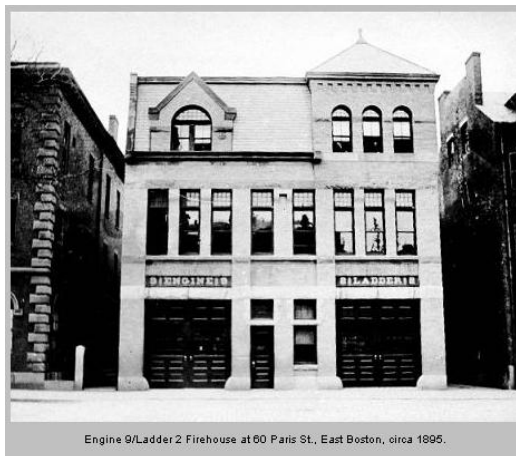
The building was sold by the City and is now occupied by a veterans group, the Italian-American War Veterans. The building is not threatened at this time, but is included here due to its significance and to be monitored in the future.

PRESERVATION STRATEGY:

This building could be included in a National Register District that is based in and around Maverick Square, making it eligible for historic tax credits.

HBI and/or East Boston Main Street should approach the Italian American War Veterans group to learn more about their plans for the future of the building and if there is any way that either group can be helpful.

PHOTOGRAPHS:



Commercial Casebook: East Boston
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First Presbyterian Church

SITE INFORMATION

Address: 130 London Street

Neighborhood: East Boston

Main Street District: East Boston Main Street

Owner: Presbytery of Boston

Property Type: Institutional

Lot Size: 4,400 square feet

Parcel Number: 0105438000

Ward: 01

Assessment (2010):	Land	\$ 335,700
	Building	\$ 826,100
	Total	\$ 1,161,800



Commercial Casebook: East Boston

Historic Boston Incorporated, 2015

ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION:

Date Built: 1870

Architect: unknown

Designations: None

SIGNIFICANCE: This high-Victorian Gothic church was constructed in 1870-1871. The First Presbyterian Church first gathered in 1853 in East Boston, erecting a wooden church in 1860, which burned down in 1870. As the first Presbyterian congregation in East Boston, the church is important as an institution closely associated with religious development of the East Boston community. The current building is the sole survivor of the numerous High Victorian Gothic style churches that once clustered in the Central/Maverick Square area. The steeple was removed in the 1950s.

CURRENT STATUS/EXISTING CONDITIONS: The current congregations, Iglesia del Dios Vivo and La Luz del Mundo have done some repair work over the past decade, including painting the interior in 2004 and during the summer of 2010, emergency repairs were completed to the stained glass windows facing London/Meridian Streets. According to area residents, the building needs significant structural repairs and is suffering from severe water infiltration at the street level.

PRESERVATION STRATEGY:

The building, which appears to be suffering from structural inefficiencies, needs to be studied by an architect. HBI should consider supporting a comprehensive building assessment in coordination with the current congregation and the owners of the building.

The building could also be included in a National Register district, which might help the congregation obtain planning grant funding or emergency stabilization funding from the Massachusetts Historical Commission.



Commercial Casebook: East Boston
Historic Boston Incorporated, 2015

East Boston Branch Library

SITE INFORMATION

Address: 276-280 Meridian Street

Neighborhood: East Boston

Main Street District: East Boston Main Street

Owner: City of Boston

Property Type: institutional

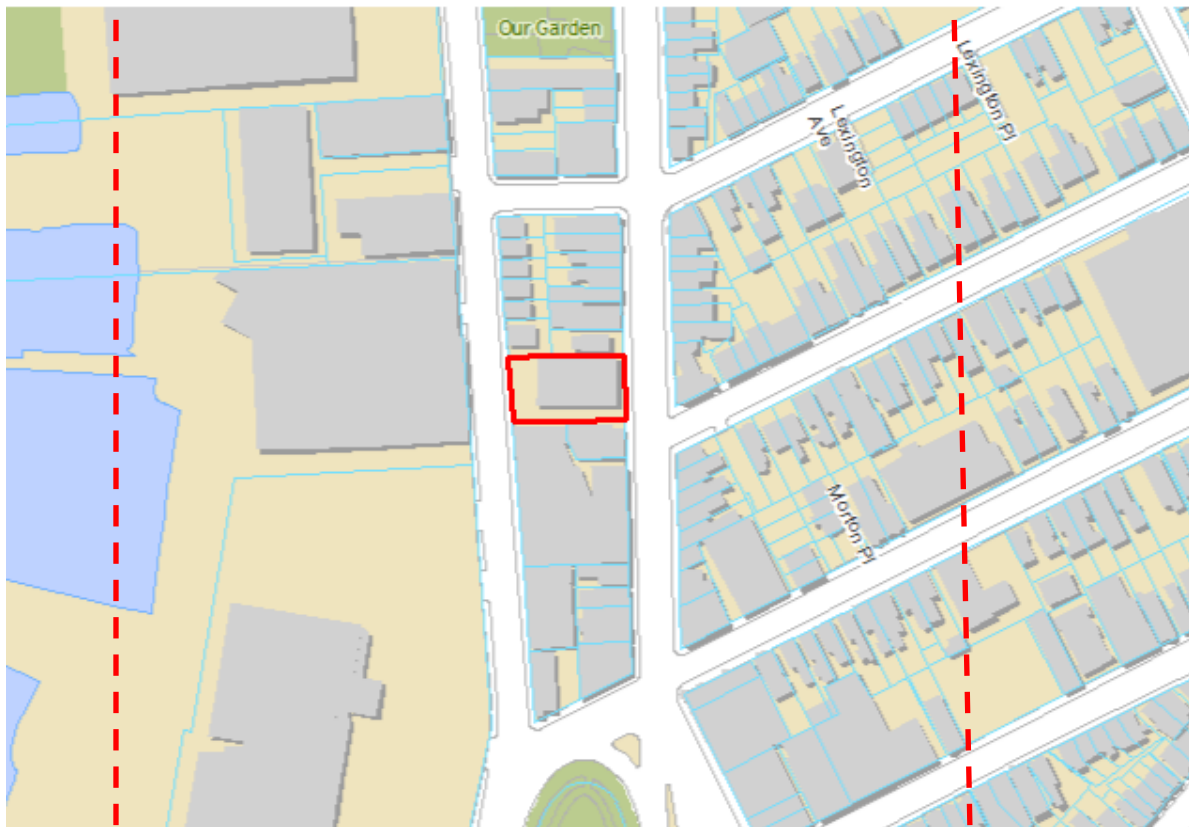
Lot Size: 10,486 sq ft

Approximate Building Size: 20,000 square feet

Parcel Number: 0105935000

Ward: 01

Assessment (2010):	Land	\$ 1,841,300
	Building	\$ 2,560,200
	Total	\$ 4,401,500



Commercial Casebook: East Boston

Historic Boston Incorporated, 2015

ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION:

Date Built: 1914

Architect: James E McLaughlin (architect) John F Griffin and Company (builders)

Designations: None

SIGNIFICANCE: The East Boston branch of the Boston Public Library system is reportedly the first free branch library in the US. The EB library first opened in 1870 in another building, and soon outgrew the space.

This East Boston Branch Library building was built in 1914 in the Classical Revival style by John F Griffin and Company (builders) and James E McLaughlin (architect).

CURRENT STATUS/EXISTING CONDITIONS: An alternate site was selected for a new EB branch library in September 2010, and this century-old, significant community building's future remains unknown.

PRESERVATION STRATEGY: Find out more about the plans for the new branch library and if the Department of Neighborhood Development has issued plans for the City's use of the current branch buildings, or if there is a disposition plan for the current branch library on Meridian Street. Work with East Boston Main Street and the East Boston community to come up with a use plan for the building. The building is likely to be eligible for National Register listing, which could make this library branch building a good candidate for historic tax credits, which could help in any rehabilitation/reuse project. HBI could assist in feasibility planning and with the listing of the building on the National Register, either individually or part of a larger district.



Commercial Casebook: East Boston

Historic Boston Incorporated, 2015

East Boston Savings Bank

SITE INFORMATION

Address: 2-8 Meridian Street

Neighborhood: East Boston

Main Street District: East Boston Main Street

Owner: S-Bank East Boston LLC

Property Type: commercial/institutional

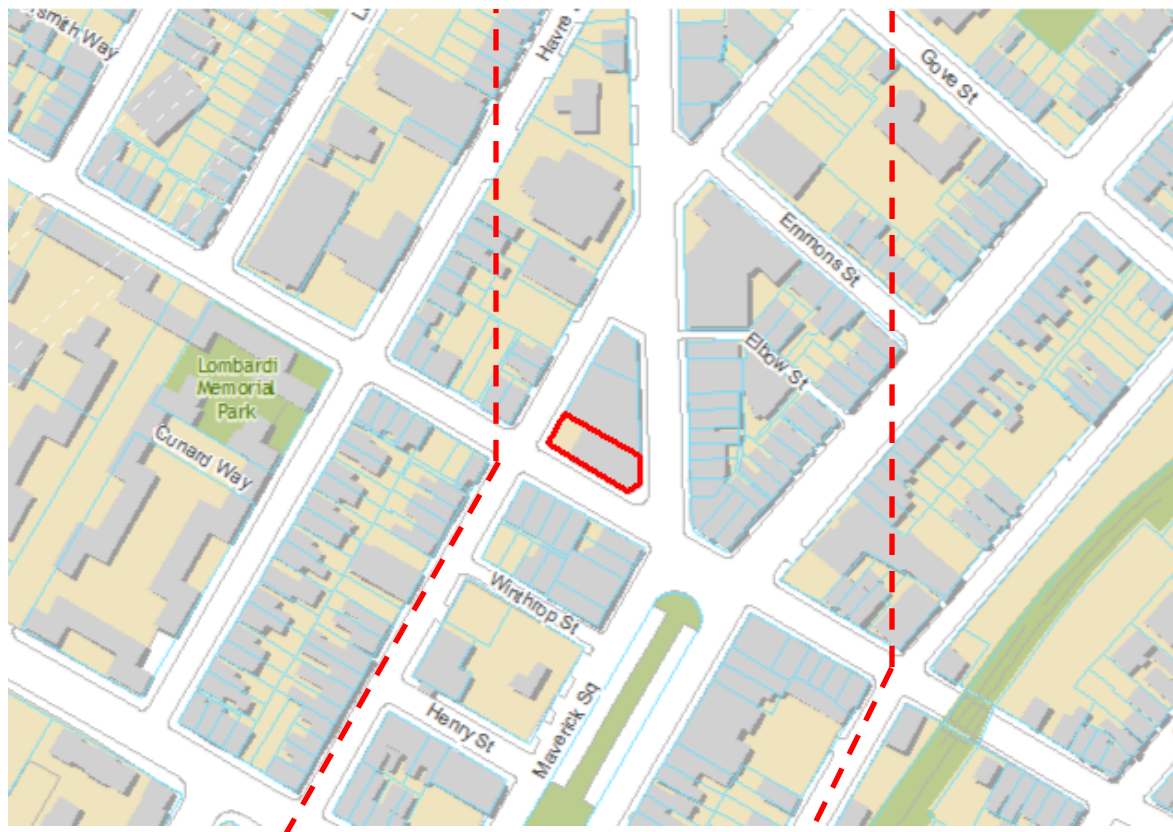
Lot Size: 4708 square feet

Approximate Building Size: 9,000 square feet

Parcel Number: 0105674000

Ward: 01

Assessment (2010):	Land	\$ 210,800
	Building	\$ 490,700
	Total	\$ 701,500



Commercial Casebook: East Boston

Historic Boston Incorporated, 2015

ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION:

Date Built: 1913

Architect: Edward B Stratton (architect), Leighton Mitchell (builder)

Designations: None

SIGNIFICANCE: The East Boston Savings Bank opened for business in 1849 on the Winthrop Block at 32-40 Maverick Square. The bank is East Boston's oldest financial institution and one of the oldest consecutively operating banks in the region. Sitting on a prominent corner of Maverick Square, the current bank building was constructed in 1913 in the Beaux Arts style. It is one of two structures of this style in East Boston (the other being the East Boston branch library on Meridian Street, also included in this casebook).

CURRENT STATUS/EXISTING CONDITIONS: The building is well used and not threatened at this time, but is included here because of the building's significance and prominence as a gateway into the Maverick Square commercial district. There are several bank buildings in this node, showing the significant financial growth of the area as it became a shipbuilding and manufacturing center around the turn of the 19th to 20th centuries.

PRESERVATION STRATEGY: While the building is not threatened at this time, it is also not protected from future threats. This building is quite significant, and may be eligible for Boston Landmark status, which would give it the highest protection possible. The East Boston Savings Bank would also likely be eligible for National Register listing, either individually or as part of a larger National Register district in and around Maverick Square. Listing on the National Register makes the building eligible to receive historic tax credits related to the rehabilitation of the building. The building might also benefit from a preservation easement, which is tax deductible for the owner of the building, and ensures an extra layer of protection and review. Historic Boston Inc. is a certified easement-holding organization.

Commercial Casebook: East Boston
Historic Boston Incorporated, 2015

Stevenson Block

SITE INFORMATION

Address: 234-238 Meridian Street

Neighborhood: East Boston

Main Street District: East Boston Main Street

Owner: P & B Realty Trust

Property Type: commercial and offices

Lot Size: 2,942

Approximate Building Size: 9,000 square feet

Parcel Number: 0105940000

Ward: 01

Assessment (2010):	Land	\$ 145,500
	Building	\$ 380,500
	Total	\$ 526,000



Commercial Casebook: East Boston

Historic Boston Incorporated, 2015

ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION:

Date Built: 1883

Architect: Henry J Stevenson (builder)

Designations: None

SIGNIFICANCE: The fine, three story brick commercial building was built in 1883 by builder Henry J Stevenson, who retained ownership of the building for several decades after construction.

This building was once part of a much larger panel brick commercial block that dominated the north side of Central Square and included the East Boston post office, stores, a meeting hall (used by the Knights of Columbus in the first decades of the 20th century), offices and apartment flats. What exists today is the smaller wing of a whole block that was only dedicated to residential use when first built.

The building is one of the only remaining examples of a large scale brick commercial/residential/meeting hall block that once could be found throughout the commercial district.

CURRENT STATUS/EXISTING CONDITIONS:

The building features attractive arched window openings and architectural details on the upper floors, while its windows and storefronts have been unsympathetically altered.

PRESERVATION STRATEGY:

This building could benefit from being part of a National Register district by taking advantage of historic tax credits. Since much of the alterations have been made to the storefront level, working with East Boston Main Street and the City's ReStore program is another strong option. Above the storefront level, the windows should be replaced to better match what used to be there. This, paired with restoring the storefront level, will bring about a much more cohesive appearance to the building.

Commercial Casebook: East Boston

Historic Boston Incorporated, 2015

120-136 Meridian Street

SITE INFORMATION

Address: 120-136 Meridian

Neighborhood: East Boston

Main Street District: East Boston Main Street

Owner: Isabelle Nigro et al, Nigro Eupremio Trust,
Nigro IDA

Property Type: commercial and residential

Lot Size:

Parcel Number: 0105437000 (#120),

0105436000 (#124),

0105435000 (#128),

0105434000 (#134),

0105433000 (#136)

Ward: 01

Assessment (2010):

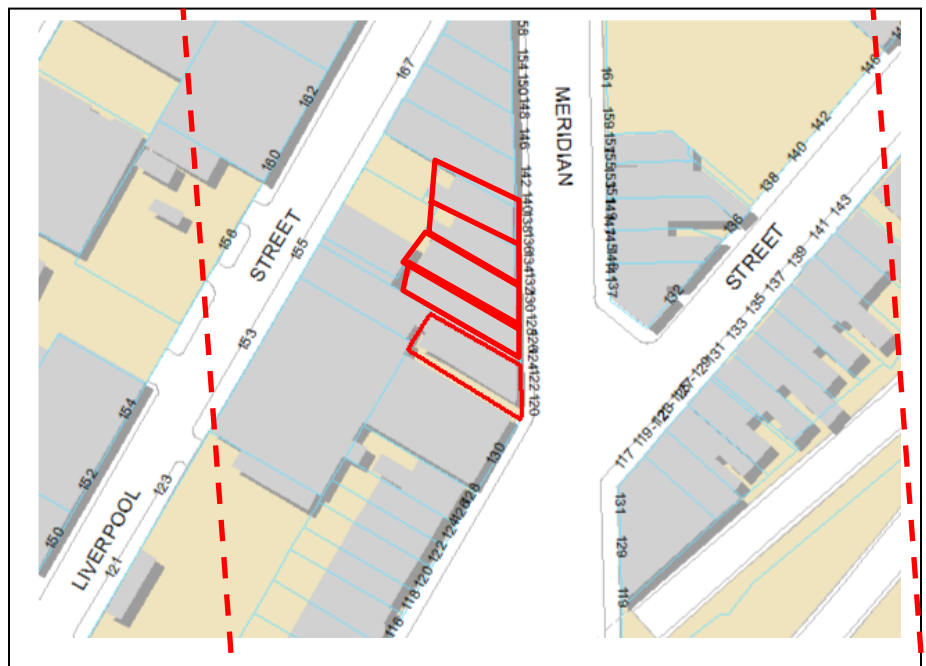
Land	\$ 105,500
Building	\$ 123,500
Total {120}	\$229,000

Land	\$ 105,800
Building	\$ 133,700
Total {124}	\$239,500

Land	\$ 65,600
Building	\$ 243,400
Total {128}	\$309,000

Land	\$ 56,600
Building	\$ 252,900
Total {134}	\$309,500

Land	\$76,600
Building	\$241,900
Total {136}	\$318,500



Historic Boston Incorporated, 2015

ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION:

Date Built: pre 1884

Architect: unknown

Designations: None

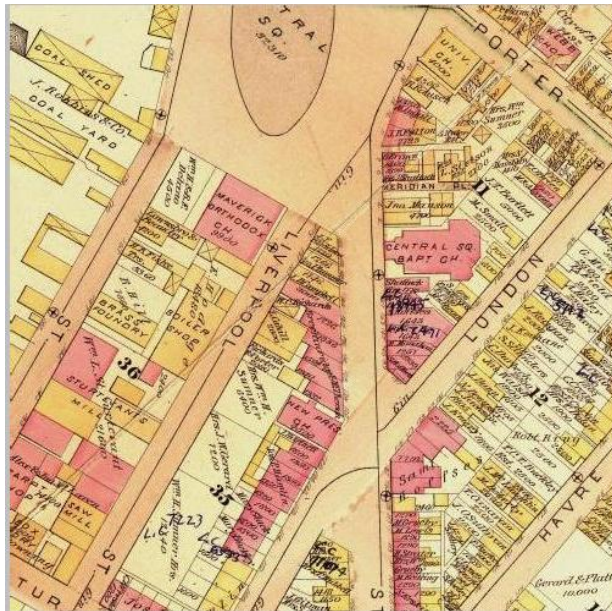
SIGNIFICANCE: This highly altered historic brick commercial and residential block is located at the heart of the commercial stretch between Maverick and Central Squares. The location and the size of the block makes this collection of buildings quite visible- the improvement of the buildings would result in a significant change that would change the look, feel, and the economic future of this part of the district.

CURRENT STATUS/EXISTING CONDITIONS:

The first floor has been unsympathetically altered and the windows have been replaced with poor vinyl windows. The projecting bays have been altered and covered with a different material.

The block could be part of larger economic development planning if redeveloped with historic preservation tools and resources.

PRESERVATION STRATEGY: Together, these buildings represent a great opportunity for concentrated impact. More research needs to be done on the original use of the building, its design and purpose. The first step would be for HBI and East Boston Main Street to meet with the owner, discuss future plans/goals, and to work together to produce a cohesive façade program for the collection of buildings.



(1884 map)

75 Meridian Street

DEMOLISHED March 2011

SITE INFORMATION

Address: 75 Meridian

Neighborhood: East Boston

Main Street District: East Boston Main Street

Owner: Antonio Contrada

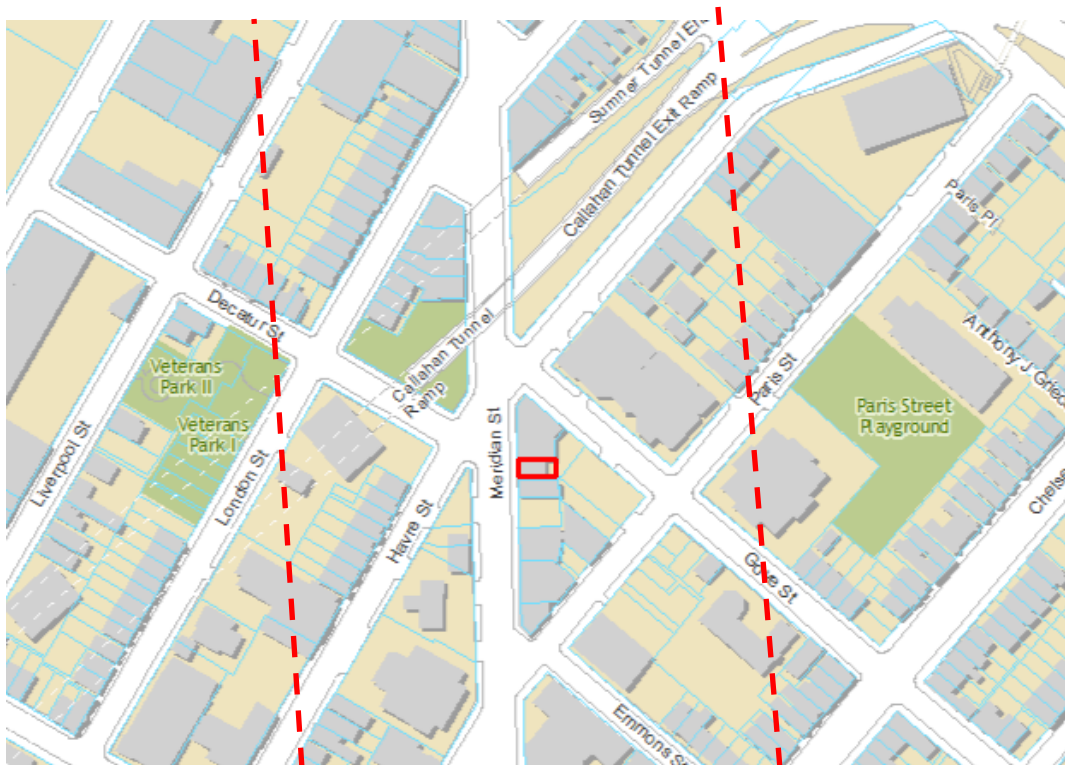
Property Type: commercial and residential

Lot Size: 1092 square feet

Parcel Number: 0105741000

Ward: 01

Assessment (2010):	Land	\$ 158,100
	Building	\$ 520,400
	Total	\$ 678,500



Commercial Casebook: East Boston

Historic Boston Incorporated, 2015

ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION:

Date Built: ca 1870

Architect: unknown

Designations: None

SIGNIFICANCE: This four story brick commercial and residential building was likely built in the 1870s, possibly by a man named John White. In the early 20th century, the first floor became a commercial unit and the owner transformed the upper stories into tenement housing. In the 1950s, the first floor was home to a shoe store, and in 1975, the current Laundromat came into existence.

CURRENT STATUS/EXISTING CONDITIONS:

While the building is not likely to be historically significant, it is a good contextual building that is currently suffering from structural problems that are causing the building to visibly lean to the right.

As of March, 2011- THIS BUILDING WAS DEMOLISHED.