**MEDIA RELEASE - FOR IMMEDIATE USE**
Thursday, Nov. 1, 2018

*Photos and renderings are available upon request.*

 **HISTORIC BOSTON INC. BEGINS WORK ON HISTORIC COMFORT STATION**

***Neglected Upham’s Corner Facility on Columbia Road Will Open as Bike Kitchen***

BOSTON – Historic Boston Inc. has begun construction on the historic Upham’s Corner Comfort Station in Dorchester that will transform the neglected building into Sip ‘&’ Spoke, a café, bike repair shop and meeting place for the neighborhood.

In 2015, the City of Boston Department of Neighborhood Development
designated the redevelopment of the historic Upham's Corner Comfort Station, on Columbia Road, to the partnership of Historic Boston Inc. and The American City Coalition.

The Bowdoin Bike School is also a partner in the project, which is set to open in spring of 2019. Historic Boston Inc. and The American City Coalition are working with Noahde Amor, founder of Dorchester's Bowdoin Bike School, to repurpose the existing building, which has been empty since 1977.

The former rest station, a stucco 940-square-foot facility with full basement, is undergoing $1.4 million in renovation and improvements that will create a full-service bicycle shop joined with a coffee shop.

Historic Boston Inc. is the developer and will own the building and lease it to operator.

The Comfort Station served Boston’s streetcar system and is near the Upham’s Corner Station of the MBTA’s Fairmount commuter rail line, as well as being within the City of Boston’s Upham’s Corner Main Street District.

The Comfort Station is a one-story stucco and tile “mission style” building built as a convenience station in 1912 to support the expanding streetcar system in Boston. It was designed by architect William Besarick, who also designed the municipal building at the corner of Columbia Road and Bird Street, as well as many triple-decker residences in the area.

The Comfort Station lies on what was once part of the Dorchester North Burying Ground, which is listed in the State and National Register of Historic Places and within the Boston Landmark designation.

“Rehabilitation of the Comfort Station helps tell the story of the City of Boston’s 19th century expansion and the Dorchester neighborhood’s urbanization and related transportation growth into the 20th century,” said Kathy Kottaridis, Executive Director of Historic Boston Inc.

“The Comfort Station is a remnant of a time of growth and transportation innovation, and its rehabilitation and reuse -- particularly for a transportation-related purpose -- will help to preserve and express that story.”

Kottaridis said the renovation and reuse not only preserves a historic building but also supports and advances a mission-oriented entrepreneur and business. It promotes bike use at a time when roads and the MBTA system are at or exceeding capacity, and it creates a local business that will enhance the overall Upham’s Corner business district.

Fundraising totaling $450,000, plus $365,000 in Community Preservation Funds, were combined with capital from the tenant and permanent financing secured by Historic Boston to make the project possible. Historic Boston Inc. will employ $176,000 in proceeds from Massachusetts Historic Rehabilitation Tax Credits as a funding source to save and establish the new uses for the historic structure.

The joint proposal for the Comfort Station reflects the objectives of both
nonprofit organizations to strengthen the Upham's Corner business district
through their combined expertise in real estate development, historic
preservation, and economic development.

The Sip & Spoke Café proposal was chosen for support from Boston’s Department for Neighborhood Development.

The architect for the development is Utile, Inc. Architecture + Planning.  The contractor is MJ Mawn, Inc.

**ABOUT THE AMERICAN CITY COALITION**
TACC addresses the complex problems that create barriers to the wellbeing of
residents of Boston's communities. TACC works with a range of partners
including community-based organizations, anchor institutions and
private-sector developers, providing the technical support need to advance
positive social change.  TACC aligns projects with community preferences by
establishing early, close partnerships between developers, tenant, and by
providing nonprofit technical assistance. Please visit TACC at [www.tamcc.org](http://www.tamcc.org) .

**ABOUT HISTORIC BOSTON INC.**

HBI is a nonprofit preservation and real estate organization that
rehabilitates historic and culturally significant properties in Boston's
neighborhoods so they are a useable part of the city's present and future.
HBI works with local partners to identify and invest in historic buildings
and cultural resources whose reuse will catalyze neighborhood renewal. HBI
acquires and redevelops historic structures and provides technical
expertise, planning services and financing for rehabilitation projects. HBI
projects demonstrate that preserving historic properties is economically
viable and that they can be useable and functioning assets in a community.
Please visit HBI at  [www.historicboston.org](http://www.historicboston.org) .

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