



HBI *nsights*

News From Historic Boston Incorporated • Winter 2007

Letter from the President

If you look closely, you will notice HBI's new seal at the top of this issue of *HBI Insights*. This subtle change (described in more detail on page 3) symbolizes the continued evolution of our organization's mission to strengthen community through historic preservation.

This evolution is also reflected in our recently completed Preservation Priorities Plan, which many readers of this newsletter helped to shape. True to its name, the plan articulates our future priorities for preservation projects and programs. In particular, it articulates a new focus on neighborhood commercial centers with historic assets that could play a greater role in their regeneration, as described in more detail elsewhere in this issue. A copy of the plan may be downloaded from HBI's website at <http://www.historicboston.org>.

Our Board of Directors is also evolving; we are delighted to welcome Emily Axelrod to our Board. Emily is the Director of the Rudy Bruner Award, which recognizes excellence in the urban environment across the country. We look forward to benefiting from her national perspective on urban placemaking.

Finally, as this issue goes to press, we are in the midst of a search for a new Executive Director to lead our entrepreneurial organization in addressing these future challenges. We hope and expect that the next *HBI Insights* will introduce you to HBI's next leader. Until then, we welcome your continued insights and support for our shared goal of using historic preservation to guide the evolution of Boston's neighborhoods.

Matthew J. Kiefer
President

HBI to Focus Resources on Historic Neighborhood Centers

At the heart of Boston's neighborhoods are small districts that developed to serve the commercial, social, spiritual, and financial needs of nearby residents. These neighborhood centers typically contain clusters of historic buildings that represent the highest aspirations of their builders and of the community that they were built to serve.

Unfortunately, many of these centers have not recovered from trends such as suburbanization and the resulting disinvestment of the mid-to-late twentieth century, in spite of a booming real estate market in Boston. As a result, some of these neighborhood centers are unappealing, underperforming, and do not adequately serve the needs of the surrounding community.

With these challenges and opportunities in mind, and following the mandate outlined in our recently-completed Preservation Priorities Plan, Historic Boston is developing its new Historic Neighborhood Centers initiative. In collaboration with neighborhood-based partners, we intend to invest our resources and expertise using historic preservation as a neighborhood revitalization tool to rehabilitate and preserve pivotal historic resources, strengthen community identity and cohesiveness, catalyze economic revival, and improve the quality of life in these neighborhood centers.

A more in-depth description of this new program, which will be launched this year, is available on our website at <http://www.historicboston.org>. Regular program announcements and project updates will be featured in upcoming issues of *HBI Insights*.



Many of Boston's neighborhood commercial districts contain pivotal historic structures, such as these examples in Dorchester, that are underused or in poor repair, whose rehabilitation would help drive economic revitalization.

HBI Opens Executive Director Search

HBI seeks a dynamic executive director to lead the organization in its mission to strengthen community through historic preservation. The candidate must possess the qualities of an entrepreneurial leader and be able to advance the goals articulated in HBI's Preservation Priorities Plan. These goals include launching a new program to revitalize Boston's historic neighborhood centers, advancing the Steeple Project, and expanding HBI's preservation revolving fund activities. For a complete position description, please go to <http://www.historicboston.org> or contact Nancy Archer-Martin, J. Robert Scott Executive Search, 260 Franklin Street, Suite 620, Boston, MA 02110, or by email at hbi@j-robert-scott.com.



Calf Pasture Pumping Station, Dorchester



Rosindale MBTA Substation

HBI Receives Grant to Study Calf Pasture Pumping Station

HBI has received a \$5,000 Preservation Fund for Eastern Massachusetts grant from the National Trust for Historic Preservation to help fund a feasibility study/charrette for the redevelopment of the Calf Pasture Pumping Station. Designed by George Clough and completed in 1884 on Columbia Point in Dorchester, the massive granite, Romanesque Revival structure served as the headworks for Boston's first comprehensive sewage system until 1968, when it was replaced by a new facility on Deer Island in Boston Harbor. Vacant since then, the National Register listed building has suffered from neglect and resulting decay, and was included in HBI's 1999 *Preservation Revolving Fund Casebook*.

The City of Boston recently transferred the disused property to the University of Massachusetts Boston, whose campus abuts the 9.5 acre waterfront site. HBI's study will coincide with a major strategic planning effort by UMass, including the creation of a Master Plan for the campus, which is already underway. The goal of our study is to help UMass envision creative uses for the historic structure that will not only preserve it but transform it into a vibrant amenity for the campus and the surrounding community. The grant has been matched by a generous personal donation from Joseph E. Corcoran, Chairman of the Corcoran Jennison Companies, a neighbor on Columbia Point and a long-time supporter of creative development there. HBI and its consultants will finish the study by early summer to coincide with the completion of the UMass campus Master Plan.

HBI Completes Rosindale Substation NR Application

At the request of Rosindale Village Main Street (RVMS), HBI recently prepared an application to place the 1911 Rosindale Substation on the National Register of Historic Places. RVMS Board of Directors member (and former HBI staffer) Wayne Beitler approached HBI about the project in the summer of 2006, hoping that listing the property on the National Register would help ensure its preservation and give potential developers access to historic preservation tax credits and other funding sources available to projects that rehabilitate historic properties.

With the expected transfer of this pivotal building from the Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority to the Boston Redevelopment Authority, the community is eager for the property to be sold through an RFP process to a developer who will execute a thoughtful and timely project along the lines of the recommendations included in HBI's and RVMS's jointly-prepared 2002 *Feasibility Study to Rehabilitate the Rosindale Substation*. These recommendations incorporated the community's objective for a redevelopment scenario that would preserve the historic integrity of the structure. It is hoped that the eventual re-use will consist of a financially self-supporting enterprise that allows for perpetual maintenance of the landmark structure and that increases foot traffic in Rosindale Square, especially during evening hours.

Preserving a Successful Rehabilitation Project: HBI's Easement Program and the Cedar Street Marble Rowhouses

HBI holds preservation restriction easements on six architecturally significant properties in Boston. The easements—legal agreements with property owners that help ensure the maintenance and preservation of historic properties—have proven to be an important complementary tool for HBI's revolving fund projects. By holding easements on buildings whose rehabilitation HBI has undertaken, HBI helps guarantee that its own preservation work and financial investments, as well as investments from other sources, are protected in perpetuity. While all six of our easements require periodic inspections for compliance and regular contact between owners and HBI staff, the Cedar Street Marble Row Houses have warranted particular attention over the past year.

HBI's involvement with this elegant, marble-clad block of row houses in Roxbury's Fort Hill neighborhood began in 1983, when we assisted Urban Edge, a Roxbury-based community development corporation, in the redevelopment of the then largely abandoned and partly-ruined block. A group of preservation-minded neighbors thwarted plans to demolish the houses, buying time for Urban Edge to acquire the properties and develop a project that would provide home ownership opportunities for low to moderate income buyers in the form of 18 condominium units. In exchange for HBI's contribution of \$255,000 in loans, grants, and technical assistance, the initial owners of the condominiums agreed to the



terms of the easement, which requires maintaining the historic appearance of the property in perpetuity.

Last year, the Cedar Street Condominium Trust began planning for a \$200,000 project to repair the building's elaborate mansard roof. In close consultation with HBI staff, the Trustees developed a scope of work that included replicating ornate but deteriorated wood trim, installing high quality copper flashing and gutters, and replacing the existing three-tab asphalt roof shingles with a new asphalt product whose proportions are very close to those of slate tiles—the mansard's original cladding material. In addition, Cedar Street Trustees brought into the project the owners of the two buildings in the block that are not a part of the condominium. These owners used the same contractor and materials to replace their roofs and to perform carpentry repairs. Now that the project is complete, a consistent appearance for the whole block has been restored for the first time in at least 50 years.

HBI Awards Steeples Grants

HBI is pleased to announce the 2006 Steeples Project awards, totaling \$112,000, granted to the following five congregations: First Parish Church, Dorchester (\$15,000), Saint Peter Church, Dorchester (\$34,000), Second Church, Dorchester (\$32,000), Stratford Street United Church, West Roxbury (\$8,000), and World Revival Church, Allston (\$23,000). In addition to the monetary awards, HBI staff offers recipients extensive hands-on project management assistance and training.

All of this year's grant recipients demonstrated a strong desire to expand their community programs and social services activities. However, their buildings suffer from deferred maintenance, and are in need of both immediate emergency repairs and long-term rehabilitation planning. Upon receiving news of their awards in August, the congregations formed project teams and quickly began working with HBI staff to create their plans of action.

First Parish Church, an 1896 Colonial Revival Meetinghouse style church atop Dorchester's Meeting House Hill, has been preparing for the rehabilitation of their deteriorating steeple. The congregation is organizing a fundraising team and the project team is working with John Pilling of Pilling + Smith Architects who is overseeing the vital repairs being performed this winter.

With guidance from HBI, the project team at Saint Peter Church has retained the services of Wendall Kalsow of McGinley Kalsow & Associates to oversee emergency repairs to their roof, prepare a comprehensive assessment report of the church building, and conduct a preliminary assessment of the remaining four buildings on the church's campus. The church is an immense 1884 Gothic style structure designed by noted architect Patrick Keely and constructed of local puddingstone.

After many years of struggling to maintain their magnificent 200-year-old Federal Meetinghouse style building, the project team of Second Church in Dorchester's Codman Square is preparing to launch a capital campaign and major building restoration project. They have retained the services of architect Don Mills of Mills Whitaker Associates to manage emergency repairs to the roof. In the coming months,



Steeples Project Director Jillian Adams and the First Parish Church project team.

Mr. Mills will also work on a comprehensive assessment that will identify preservation and repair priorities for the congregation's long-term rehabilitation planning.

Stratford Street United Church and World Revival Church are preparing requests for proposals to solicit bids from qualified preservation architects to assess their buildings. Stratford Street United Church is a 1910 Craftsman style puddingstone church located in the Highland neighborhood of West Roxbury. World Revival Church is an 1891 Richardsonian Romanesque structure located between Coolidge Corner and North Brighton in Boston's Allston-Brighton neighborhood. Both buildings are architecturally significant, and both congregations have the potential to increase the services they offer to their respective communities once their buildings are repaired.

All five project teams are participating in quarterly training workshops offered by HBI. These workshops are part of a new program initiative to achieve greater success in the areas of project management and fundraising. Each project team has graciously offered to host a session at their house of worship, providing the attendees with opportunities to learn about a variety of challenges and resources.

Sister Sally McLaughlin, Local Project Coordinator at St. Peter Church, spoke recently of the sense of direction and momentum that HBI's grant and training are giving to her congregation, remarking "We are very grateful that HBI is partnering with us in our mission to preserve this historic landmark, architectural treasure and important place of worship and ministry in Dorchester."



HBI Gets New Look with 300 Year Old Image

This issue of *HBI Insights* presents the first opportunity to unveil HBI's new corporate seal. Designed by Boston graphic artist Nan Porter, the seal incorporates an image of the distinctive gambrel-roofed building at the corner of Washington Street and School Street. Built in 1718, this is the earliest portion of the Old Corner Bookstore Buildings complex, which HBI rescued from demolition in 1960 and which has come to symbolize our organization's work to revitalize Boston through strategic investment in historic resources. This seal replaces an older version that featured the weathervane from Boston's 17th-century Province House.

History for Rent

HBI is seeking new tenants for rental space in both of its historic downtown properties. At its flagship Old Corner Bookstore Buildings on the corner of Washington and School Streets in Downtown Crossing, 4,750 square feet of office space is available on the 2nd and 3rd floors. At the Hayden Building at 681 Washington Street in Chinatown, 1,060 square feet of ground floor retail space (plus basement storage) is available in H.H. Richardson's only extant commercial building in Boston. Not only do these wonderful spaces present opportunities to locate businesses in two of Boston's most historic properties, but the rent tenants pay to HBI helps fund our charitable preservation work throughout Boston. Please contact HBI at 617-227-4679 for information on either of these spaces.

About Historic Boston...



Historic Boston Incorporated is a private, non-profit organization that uses the tools of historic preservation to strengthen Boston's neighborhoods. It gives priority to projects that will leverage additional public

and private commitments, embody thoughtful restoration standards, catalyze neighborhood renewal, and protect cultural resources.

To accomplish these objectives, Historic Boston engages in a variety of entrepreneurial activities that include buying property, making grants, providing technical assistance, lending money, building the capacity of other organizations with similar goals, and seeking new funds.

Historic Boston provides leadership, leverage and focus for people and organizations throughout the region who share the ideals and objectives of safeguarding America's heritage.

Currently, Historic Boston owns two properties: the Old Corner Bookstore Buildings, acquired in 1960, and the Hayden Building, acquired in 1993. Both of preeminent significance to Boston and the nation, threats to their future inspired Historic Boston to marshal the resources to purchase and rehabilitate them. Today they provide continuing income streams while serving as examples of the impact a proactive preservation organization can have upon a city.

HBI is a charitable, non-profit organization under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code and a private operating foundation under code Section 4942 (j)(3). Tax-deductible gifts or bequests may be sent to Historic Boston Incorporated at 3 School Street, Boston MA 02108.

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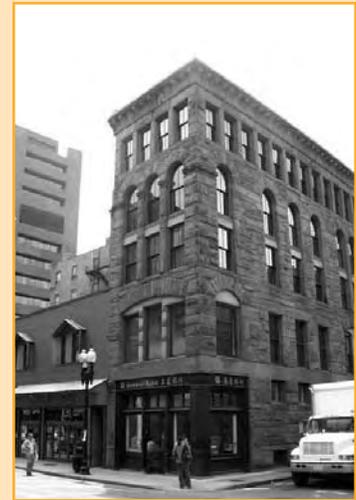
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