



## HBI to Restore Roxbury Fire House for New Headquarters

**Historic Boston Incorporated recently won a bid to renovate the Eustis Street Fire House, one of the city's most deteriorated landmarks, and will turn the Roxbury structure into its new headquarters.**



HBI is planning to restore the exterior of the red brick building and reconstruct a two-story wood-framed addition. Once it is complete, the organization will move into the space from its current home in the Old Corner Bookstore in downtown Boston.

"This is a watershed moment for Historic Boston," said Executive Director Kathy Kottardis. "It is an important opportunity for us to lead by example and demonstrate our commitment to redeveloping valuable historic resources for new uses in Boston's neighborhoods."

The city's oldest surviving fire house has seen years of neglect. The distinctive Italianate style building features a granite arched entry and hand-carved brackets. It currently is propped up with wooden braces installed as part of an interim rescue project HBI supported 15 years ago.

"We're proud to partner with Historic Boston on the restoration of the Eustis Street Fire House," said Evelyn Friedman, Director of the City of Boston's Department of Neighborhood Development. "Their ambitious plan to restore this important landmark will greatly

enhance the quality of life in the surrounding community."

HBI's move into the building is intended to spur greater interest in preservation projects as catalysts for neighborhood revitalization.

"Our neighborhoods have many important historic buildings that could become the cornerstone for revitalizing key areas of the city," Kottardis said.

As a future resident in the neighborhood, HBI will be able to more closely assist neighborhood advocacy organizations there with planning for historic preservation. It will also be an on-the-ground resource for property owners and local organizations for the preservation and rehabilitation of important historic places.

"Historic Boston is gratified to be given the opportunity to return this almost-forgotten architectural gem to active use as our home," said HBI Board President Matthew Kiefer. "We are eager to work with our preservation partners to make this catalytic project a reality."

This project incorporates safe access to

the adjacent Eliot Burying Ground through the fire house property. This will be the first time in decades that people with limited physical abilities will be able to enter the 1633 cemetery without assistance.

HBI will also train staff to provide interpretation of the Eustis Street Architectural Conservation district, which includes the fire house, burying ground and Owen Nawn Factory (1870). The organization will support and coordinate with tours and presentations given by other groups in the neighborhood.

The project is expected to take two years and will be conducted in accordance with the Secretary of the Interior's rehabilitation standards. It will be funded by a combination of public and private grants and loans. HBI will lease the structure from the City of Boston for 99 years.



### The Eustis Street Firehouse

was built in 1859 when Roxbury was still an independent municipality. After Roxbury's annexation in 1868, the City of Boston built an addition for stables and more modern equipment. That addition was demolished in 1991 due to concerns about structural stability.

The fire house served "Hook and Ladder Co. No. 4" until 1881. During that time, the company was called in to help fight the Great Boston Fire of 1872.

From 1889 until 1916, the building housed "Chemical Wagon No. 10."

The Fire Department abandoned the building in 1926 and leased the building to a Spanish-American War veterans post until 1954.

# Steeple Projects Underscore Social Value of Preservation

**Boston's historic houses of worship are growing and serve an increasingly vital role in their communities.**

As Historic Boston Incorporated works to restore and preserve the buildings that embody these sacred places, the organization must better define and communicate the contributions they make to their communities and how preservation projects can help, according to a recent assessment of the Steeple Project.

The assessment, conducted by Madeleine Taylor of Arbor Consulting Partners, showed that the 15-year-old program has played an important role in preserving religious structures but that there are hurdles such as raising funds and lack of awareness of the potential for preservation projects to revitalize a community.

"These places are beacons of hope for the city's neighborhoods," said Jillian Adams, Steeple Project program manager. "They are important not just for their historical value but also for what they provide to the community in terms of social services."

HBI conducted the in-depth assessment of the program to evaluate its strengths and weaknesses and direct its future.

Contrary to common perceptions, Boston congregations are growing, attracting younger members and becoming more diverse, the assessment showed.

The survey also confirmed that the services provided by these congregations have a significant monetary value. For instance, data collection and analysis shows that the Peoples Baptist Church, a Steeple Project grantee in Lower Roxbury, provides public value worth an estimated \$1 million a year. This includes such things as recreational programs for children and teens, holiday meals and meeting space for neighborhood groups.

This information can be used to help generate support and financial backing for much needed renovation projects.

"Many funders are interested in explicit data that defines the connection between the Steeple Project work and the increase in the public value of historic houses of worship," the report concluded.

The Steeple Project was founded in 1993 amid concerns that historic religious buildings were at risk. Congregations were shrinking and increasingly unable to keep up with the maintenance of their aging buildings. Historic Boston has awarded \$1.4 million to 51 congregations since it started. That money has been used to leverage an additional \$13.5 million.

Steeple Project participants reported being overwhelmed by the repair needs of their buildings. The program replaced fear with hope as it offered site-level technical advice and support, they said. Participants said they valued not only the grants given by the program but also encouragement to do additional fund raising.

The program's strength is that it allows for incremental steps that are manageable for congregations.

Moving forward, the report recommends increased fundraising for the program with new tools such as planned giving, corporate sponsorships and strategic outreach. The Steeple Project should also bolster its training programs including creating a well-developed training curriculum and providing online tools and publications for congregations that may not benefit directly from grants, hands-on assistance or technical help.

"At a certain point, there was a strong feeling of things returning to better days. Painting the Parish House..., these things generate a huge feeling of return to wellness," said Rev. Michael J. Godderz, rector of All Saints in Dorchester, in an interview for the assessment.



## Steeple Project Recommendations

- Focus on religious properties in neighborhoods with the highest levels of poverty and physical disinvestment.
- Build more assertive and lasting relationships with past and future program participants, neighborhood leaders and members of denominational hierarchies.
- Develop a comprehensive fundraising plan within HBI and an approach to resource development for each program participant.
- Diversify the program's financial portfolio by adding new resources and giving tools.
- Explicitly measure and articulate the relationship between preservation and social change.
- Develop a more strategic training program for grant recipients and congregations with historic buildings.
- Reach a deeper level of engagement and credibility with religious leaders.
- Enhance the program's visibility and partnerships.

## *The Steeple Project helps Eliot Congregational Church to reach its goals*



**Eliot Congregational Church** members have a strong vision for their Roxbury neighborhood.

They provide educational programs for local children, youth activities and even a place to vote. Their goals, however, have been hindered by deteriorating facilities.

The slate roof of the 137-year-old church was leaking and as a result any improvements made inside were soon ruined by water. It even damaged the gymnasium floor.

"It was discouraging," said Pastor Evan Hines. But the congregation was determined to make improvements and found help through Historic Boston's Steeple Project.

The program recently provided two grants - a \$12,500 major repairs grant and a \$5,000 challenge grant - and guidance on how to find other financial resources.

"We want to be a catalyst for these important restoration projects," said Jillian Adams, Steeple Project program manager. "This is a tool we use to encourage congregations to engage with the community."

The congregation has donated an additional \$65,000 to address major leaks in the roof, replace slate and copper flashing and refurbish dormers.

Separately, the congregation obtained a \$50,000 grant from the George B. Henderson Fund to support the work.

"This is a beautiful historic church that is worthy of restoration," said Brenda Taylor, administrator for the fund. "This project will have a significant impact on improving the neighborhood."

The High Victorian Gothic Revival church was originally built in 1872. A second section was added in 1887. The stone structure is graced with large certified Tiffany stained glass windows.

The church now houses the Eliot Educational Center, a kindergarten to second grade school. The renovations will move the church toward being able to use the gymnasium for the school and community.

HBI has been working with members of the congregation for 16 years on various projects including lighting, repair on the church's major tower and restoring its decorative front door.

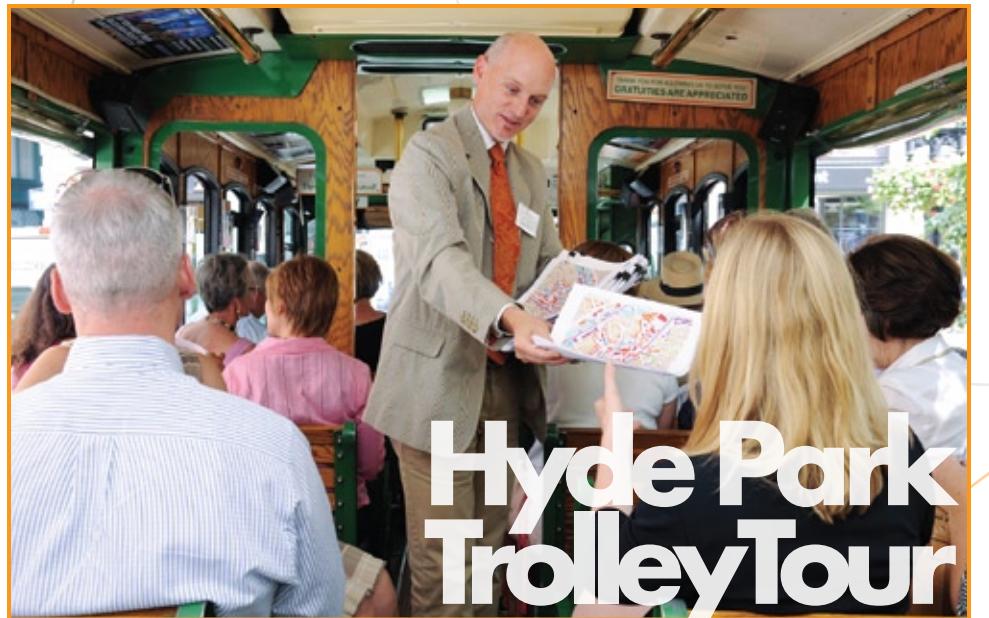
"It has been motivating for the congregation to see the work being done on the outside of the church, Hines said. "It's really encouraged us to take on some of the aesthetic work, such as painting and putting down new carpets."

*“It has been motivating for the congregation to see the work being done on the outside of the church.”*

*-Pastor Evan Hines*

They are even looking at doing interim repairs on the gymnasium floor so it can be used while they try to raise funds to replace it.

"The members of Eliot Church are working hard to reach their goals and Historic Boston is proud to be in partnership with them," Adams emphasized.



## Hyde Park Trolley Tour

HBI's Board, Advisory Council members, and partners from the Boston Landmarks Commission, Boston Preservation Alliance, and National Trust for Historic Preservation Northeast Office, toured Hyde Park's Cleary and Logan Squares this summer to see firsthand the preservation opportunities and projects that HBI and community stakeholders have identified through the Historic Neighborhood Centers program.

They were welcomed by Boston Mayor Thomas M. Menino, Hyde Park City Councilor Rob Consalvo, and local leaders. Mayor Menino talked about the city's priorities for the neighborhood and praised HBI's efforts to work with Hyde Park Main Streets and other local organizations in efforts to celebrate and preserve local history while encouraging economic development.

The trip began downtown on an Old Town Trolley. After a spin through Cleary and Logan Squares, the group stopped for tours of the Everett Square Theatre and French's Opera House (now home to the Riverside Theatre Works), and a reception at Townsend's Restaurant. The event wrapped up with ice cream—known to be among the world's best—at Ron's Ice Cream and Bowling.



The tour makes a stop at **Ron's Ice Cream and Bowling**. Photo by Craig Bailey



Along the way, HBI's Jeffrey Gonyeau, Hyde Park Main Streets Executive Director Patrice Gattozzi and Boston Redevelopment Authority Neighborhood Planner Marie Mercurio presented information about the history and development of this diverse and vibrant neighborhood and about ongoing efforts to revitalize its historic commercial districts.

**Boston Mayor Thomas M. Menino** talks with HBI's **Jeffrey Gonyeau**. Photo by Craig Bailey

*Could a deteriorated theater, an early neighborhood movie house, be turned into a performing arts space?*

*Or is there perhaps another use that would allow for the preservation of the Hyde Park landmark?*

With support from a grant from the National Trust for Historic Preservation's Eastern Massachusetts Fund, HBI has hired consultant Kennedy Smith of CLUE Group, LLC, to conduct a feasibility study for the Everett Square Theatre through Historic Neighborhood Centers. This program is looking for innovative ways to promote preservation as a catalyst for revitalization in Boston's neighborhood commercial centers.

The 1915 theater was used primarily for movies but also offered live performances. The interior was largely gutted after severe water damage, but the lobby, marble staircase, balcony box seats, proscenium arch, and stage structure are intact and convey its former grandeur.

With the cooperation of the building's owners and with support from Hyde Park Main Streets and the Hyde Park Arts Initiative, HBI is investigating alternatives for the structure. The study will assess the building's condition and potential for redevelopment, along with the local performing arts market. It will suggest potential redevelopment scenarios and costs to help develop strategies to rehabilitate and preserve the building.



Above: **Wendy Nicholas**, National Trust for Historic Preservation and **Sean McDonnell**, Architectural Heritage Foundation

Right: **Alan Issokson**, Field's Corner Main Street, **Joyce Stanley**, Dudley Square Main Street, and **Evelyn Darling**, Field's Corner Main Street

Photos by Craig Bailey



## HBI Holiday Celebration

Historic Boston held its annual Holiday Dinner at the **Boston Public Library**. The event was attended by more than 100 affiliates and supporters of the organization.

The event is an opportunity to bring together HBI's friends and partners and thank them for their commitment to preserving historic places and revitalizing Boston's neighborhoods.

At this year's celebration, **Evelyn Friedman**, director of Boston's Department of Neighborhood Development, announced HBI's designation as redeveloper of the Eustis Street Fire House.



Above Left: **Paul McDonough**, HBI Board, **Tod McGrath**, HBI Board  
Above: **Evelyn Friedman**, City of Boston and **Matthew Kiefer**, HBI Board  
Left: **Shelby Graham**, HBI, **Lisa Bailey**, Lee Kennedy Inc., and **Ira Baline**, Bergmeyer Associates



Top: **Carolyn Osteen**, HBI Board, **Matthew Kiefer**, HBI Board and **David Amory**, Amory Architects

Middle: **Kathy Kottaridis**, HBI and **Arthur Jemison**, GLC Development

Bottom: **Bill Nigreen**, Facilitator for Social Change, **Ellen Lipsey**, Boston Landmarks Commission and **Emily Axelrod**, HBI Board

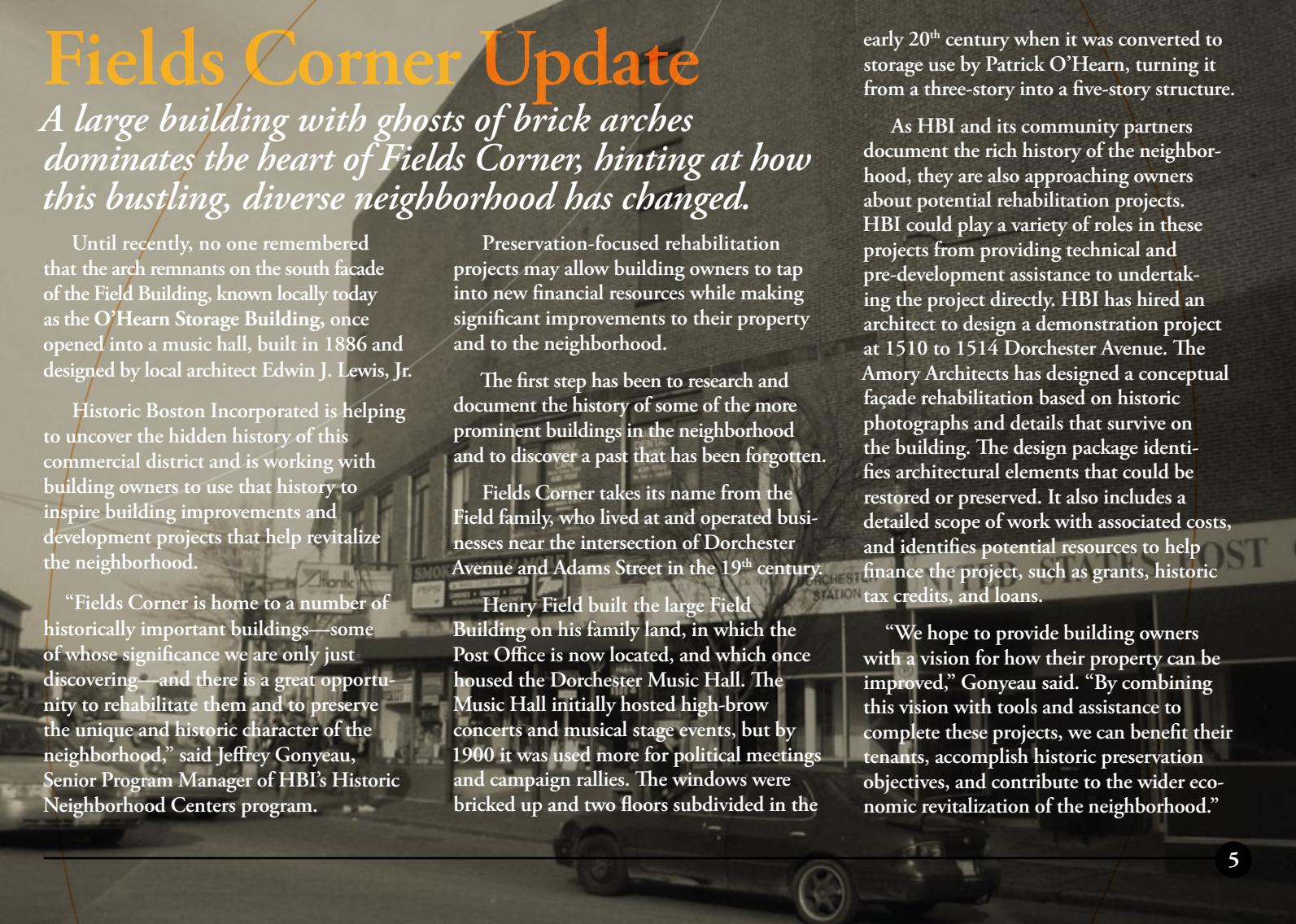
## Fields Corner Update

*A large building with ghosts of brick arches dominates the heart of Fields Corner, hinting at how this bustling, diverse neighborhood has changed.*

Until recently, no one remembered that the arch remnants on the south facade of the Field Building, known locally today as the O'Hearn Storage Building, once opened into a music hall, built in 1886 and designed by local architect Edwin J. Lewis, Jr.

Historic Boston Incorporated is helping to uncover the hidden history of this commercial district and is working with building owners to use that history to inspire building improvements and development projects that help revitalize the neighborhood.

"Fields Corner is home to a number of historically important buildings—some of whose significance we are only just discovering—and there is a great opportunity to rehabilitate them and to preserve the unique and historic character of the neighborhood," said Jeffrey Gonyeau, Senior Program Manager of HBI's Historic Neighborhood Centers program.



Henry Field built the large Field Building on his family land, in which the Post Office is now located, and which once housed the Dorchester Music Hall. The Music Hall initially hosted high-brow concerts and musical stage events, but by 1900 it was used more for political meetings and campaign rallies. The windows were bricked up and two floors subdivided in the

early 20<sup>th</sup> century when it was converted to storage use by Patrick O'Hearn, turning it from a three-story into a five-story structure.

As HBI and its community partners document the rich history of the neighborhood, they are also approaching owners about potential rehabilitation projects. HBI could play a variety of roles in these projects from providing technical and pre-development assistance to undertaking the project directly. HBI has hired an architect to design a demonstration project at 1510 to 1514 Dorchester Avenue. The Amory Architects has designed a conceptual façade rehabilitation based on historic photographs and details that survive on the building. The design package identifies architectural elements that could be restored or preserved. It also includes a detailed scope of work with associated costs, and identifies potential resources to help finance the project, such as grants, historic tax credits, and loans.

"We hope to provide building owners with a vision for how their property can be improved," Gonyeau said. "By combining this vision with tools and assistance to complete these projects, we can benefit their tenants, accomplish historic preservation objectives, and contribute to the wider economic revitalization of the neighborhood."

## Old Corner Bookstore, Hayden Building Under New Management

Historic Boston Incorporated has engaged the Architectural Heritage Foundation to serve as a property manager for the Old Corner Bookstore and Hayden Building.

AHF will manage operations including leasing and daily maintenance. This move is part of a reorganization of resources that allows staff at HBI to focus on the group's core preservation mission in Boston's neighborhoods.

"We are pleased to have found an organization with a mission that so closely matches our own and that has the experience to manage these properties," said HBI Executive Director Kathy Kottaridis. "This is an important move toward streamlining our operations."

The Architectural Heritage Foundation currently is the property manager for the nearby Old City Hall, which will allow for a shared maintenance staff and greater efficiency of operations.

"This is a nice opportunity for AHF as a neighbor to offer a service to HBI that will allow them to focus on their core services," said AHF Executive Director Sean McDonnell.

The Old Corner Bookstore is currently HBI's headquarters and houses four popular retail shops.

## Historic Boston Incorporated Staff

**Kathy Kottaridis**  
Executive Director  
[Kathy@historicboston.org](mailto:Kathy@historicboston.org)

**Jeffrey T. Gonyea**  
Senior Program Manager,  
Historic Neighborhood Centers  
[Jeff@historicboston.org](mailto:Jeff@historicboston.org)

**Jillian Adams**  
Program Manager, Steeples Project  
[Jillian@historicboston.org](mailto:Jillian@historicboston.org)

**Margo Mosher**  
Office Manager  
[Margo@historicboston.org](mailto:Margo@historicboston.org)

## HBI launches Neighborhood Preservation Partnership with Boston Preservation Alliance

Historic Boston Incorporated and the Boston Preservation Alliance work closely on many preservation issues in Boston, and with a grant from the National Trust for Historic Preservation, the two organizations have taken their partnership to a new level with the Neighborhood Preservation Partnership.

The goal of the Partnership is to extend field services for historic preservation deeper into Boston's neighborhoods. This will include a series of six annual workshops led by the Alliance and the provision of technical information and preservation project support to property owners and community based organizations in the city's 19 Main Street Districts by HBI.

HBI has hired **Shelby Graham** to be the organization's point of contact for neighborhood property owners and organizations with preservation needs or potential projects.

Before joining HBI, Graham worked with the Boston Preservation Alliance on historic preservation research, advocacy and program planning. She has a Master's degree in Preservation Studies from Boston University.

Graham has begun an extensive series of interviews with leaders of the city's Main Street districts to determine their specific needs and priorities. "For HBI, this is one way we can stay in touch with neighborhood partners while also building a pipeline of project opportunities that HBI can help address over time," said Graham. The program will make available a variety of services such as historic resource identification, development planning, financial incentives, and interpretation.

The partnership was started with a \$150,000 Partners in the Field matching grant from the National Trust for Historic Preservation. The award, one of 24 granted nationally, will expand assistance to property owners, developers and neighborhood residents needing information and tools to support historic preservation and economic development in their communities.

"We want to help residents and property owners recognize what is special about where they live, work and spend their time," Graham said. "By giving them information and tools, our preservation organizations can support neighborhood improvement while also protecting the things that are distinctive in Boston's neighborhoods and commercial districts."

*We want to help residents and property owners recognize what is special about where they live, work and spend their time.*

—Shelby Graham

# Letter from the Executive Director

Historic Boston Incorporated takes the long view on matters of preservation. We understand that it takes time, sometimes years, to overcome property owner resistance to preservation, bring together the right resources and work through myriad local, state and federal regulations.

We appreciate the value of taking interim and partial measures to save important historic resources during the long process of developing full restoration projects. The benefits of this strategy are clear with our recently announced plans to restore the **Eustis Street Fire House** and make it our new home.

HBI first noted the dire condition of the building more than two decades ago. We offered to take on the project in 1991, when it was thought that the structure was in imminent danger of collapse.

Even when the future of the fire house was uncertain, HBI worked with the City of Boston to design wooden braces put around the structure to support it while plans were discussed. Those braces were even more effective than planned, and the building has survived long enough to be rehabilitated.

This project will help reinvigorate a neighborhood and allow us to promote preservation from a new perspective, that of a neighbor and an organization in the community.

The benefits of our long-term strategy can also be seen in other significant projects that are moving ahead under the direction of other organizations. Suffolk University recently launched the rehabilitation of the 1913 Landmark **Modern Theater**. This project will bring a 184-seat theater to Downtown

Historic Boston is pleased to announce the appointment of **Chrystal Kornegay**, chief executive of Urban Edge Housing Corporation, to its Board of Directors.

Kornegay worked with Urban Edge for eight years before being appointed to chief executive in January of 2008.

She has worked with HBI on projects over the years, starting with the renovation of the Egleston power station for Boston Neighborhood Network (BNN). She said she is supportive of preservation projects that reinvigorate neighborhoods.

"It's important to me to think about the people who live there and use the space," she said. "I like that HBI is focused on neighborhood centers within communities and is working to revitalize real estate and maintain history and character while reactivating buildings."

Kornegay is a native of Brooklyn, New York. She began her career at the Bedford Stuyvesant YMCA where she supported a \$5 million development campaign for facility development. She spent four years at The Community Builders in Boston where she directed a development team through a \$10 million renovation of an 83-unit scattered site family development and supported a resident group through a \$15 million renovation to secure joint ownership of a 175-unit scattered site family development.

She is a graduate of Hunter College and received a Master of City Planning from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology with a concentration in housing, community and economic development.

Sincerely,

Kathy Kottaridis  
Executive Director  
Historic Boston Incorporated

# Historic Boston Incorporated

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**Eustis Street  
Firehouse** built in  
1859, when restored  
will be HBI's new  
headquarters.

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

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# HBI

HISTORIC  
BOSTON  
INCORPORATED

3 School Street  
Boston, MA 02108

Tel: 617•227•4679  
Fax: 617•742•7431  
Email: hbi@historicboston.org

Non-Profit Org.  
U.S. Postage  
PAID  
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