

# Apollos Field House

## BOSTON LANDMARKS COMMISSION

### STUDY REPORT



Petition #277.21  
Boston Landmarks Commission  
Environment Department  
City of Boston

Report on the Potential Designation of

**The Apollos Field House**  
**30 Union Street, Charlestown (Boston), Massachusetts**

As a Landmark under Chapter 772 of the Acts of 1975, as amended

**Approved by:**



February 20, 2024

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Rosanne Foley, Executive Director

Date

**Approved by:**



February 20, 2024

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Bradford C. Walker, Chair

Date

Draft report posted on February 20, 2024.  
Amended draft report posted on April 12, 2024.

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## INTRODUCTION

The designation of the Apollos Field House, 30 Union St., Charlestown, was initiated in 2021 when a petition was submitted by registered voters to the Boston Landmarks Commission. The petition asked that the Commission designate two adjacent properties, the Apollos Field House at 30 Union St. and the James and Sophia Goodell Fosdick House at 8 Lawrence St., as an architectural conservation district under the provisions of Chapter 772 of the Acts of 1975, as amended. Following a completed Article 85 demolition review process, 8 Lawrence St. was demolished in June 2022. Therefore, this study report has been revised to propose designation of the Apollos Field House as an individual Boston Landmark. Appendix A includes information about the demolished structure at 8 Lawrence St.

### Summary

The Apollos Field House is significant as a sophisticated and well-preserved example of a Federal-style dwelling in the Union/Washington streets area in the Charlestown neighborhood of Boston. The building is also significant as a well-preserved example of the local Charlestown brick ender, oblong-form, ell-house-type dwelling and as the work of local housewright and carpenter William Wiley (1757–1827).<sup>1</sup> The building is distinguished by its brick end chimneys and full-height brick gable walls on the east and west elevations; center-hall, single-pile plan; elliptical fanlight and sidelights around the main entry on the south façade; and rear ell. The building also speaks to the complexity of the architectural milieu of buildings designed and constructed in Boston and surrounding towns in the early 19th century. During this period, the widespread publication and dissemination of architectural pattern books, precipitated by Asher Benjamin (1773–1845) in the 1790s, led to the establishment of a common Federal-style design aesthetic based on interpretations of Classical architecture by European architects Palladio and Robert and James Adams, and facilitated the application of this aesthetic to local building forms by housewrights and carpenters. Constructed in 1813–1815 for Apollos Field, the building has previously been attributed to Asher Benjamin, who established himself as one of the earliest professional architects in Boston, following Charles Bulfinch (1763–1843), during the first decade of the 19th century. However, a careful analysis of primary source documents, including property records and city directories, strongly supports the conclusion that the dwelling was designed by William Wiley, who most likely drew inspiration from Benjamin’s pattern books, and the published and well-publicized designs of Benjamin and Charles Bulfinch. Although the Apollos Field House is not under any direct threats or risk of demolition, the submittal of a demolition application for the neighboring James and Sophia Goodell Fosdick House (8 Lawrence St.) in June 2021 prompted concerned property owners in the neighborhood to submit a landmark designation petition for both properties to the Boston Landmarks Commission in July 2021. The James and Sophia Goodell Fosdick House was demolished in June 2022; this study report was prepared to protect the Field House from future development pressures.

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<sup>1</sup> The term “oblong form” was coined by historian James F. Hunnewell in his *A Century of Town Life: A History of Charlestown, MA 1775–1887* (published 1888) to describe the prevailing center-hall, single-pile layout that developed in Charlestown in the 17th and 18th centuries.

This study report contains Standards and Criteria that have been prepared to guide future physical changes to the property in order to protect its integrity and character.

**Boston Landmarks Commission**

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## **1.0 LOCATION**

### **1.1 Address**

30 Union St., Charlestown (Boston), MA 02129

### **1.2 Assessor's Parcel Number**

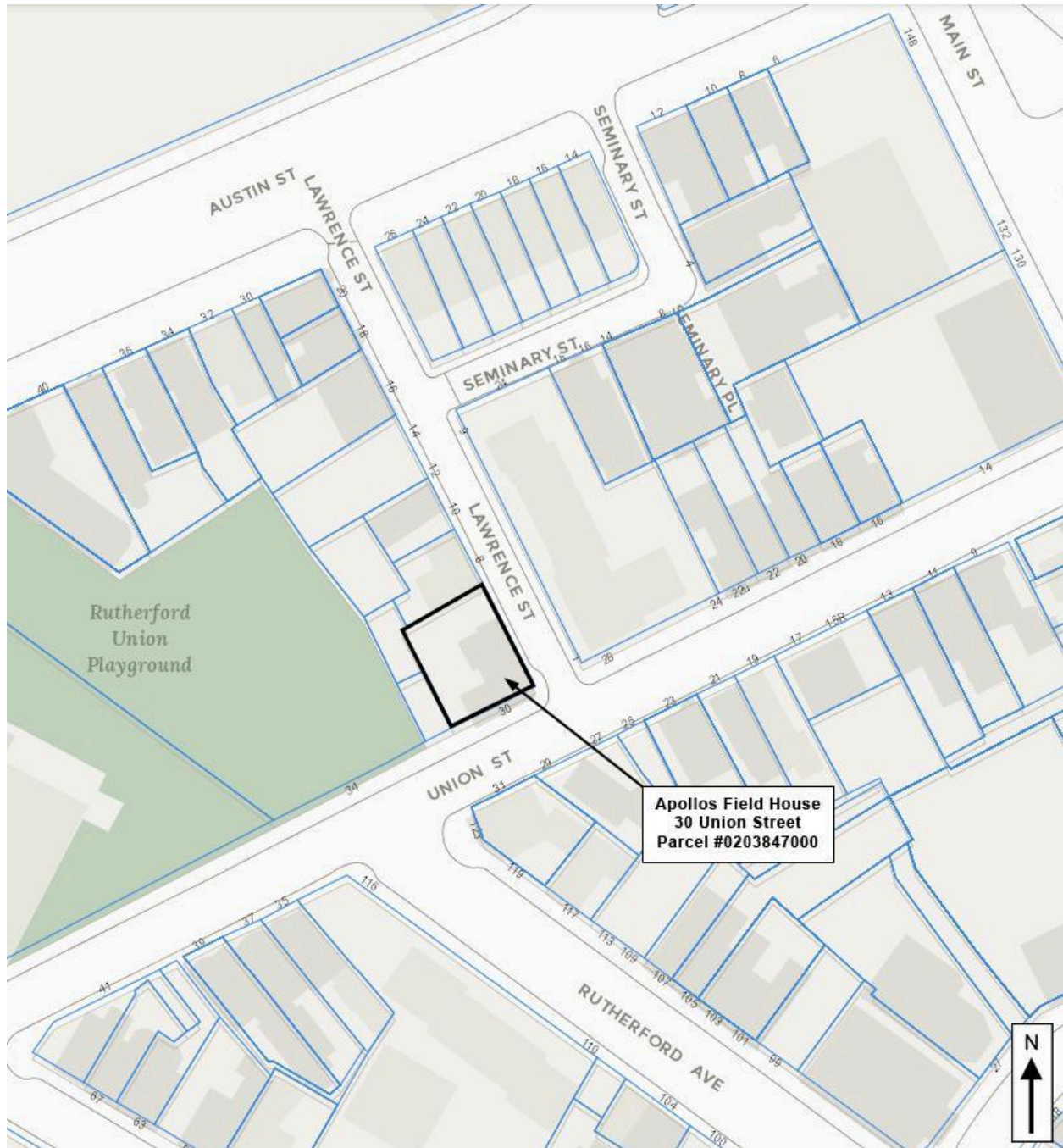
The Assessor's Parcel Number is 0203847000

### **1.3 Area in which Property is Located**

The Apollos Field House is on the north side of Union Street in the Union/ Washington streets section of Charlestown, an area of Boston on a peninsula north of downtown. Neighboring properties on the streets to the north, east, and south consist of a mix of early to mid-19th-century single-family dwellings and mid- to late-20th-century multi-family apartment buildings and townhouses. The area generally consists of level terrain that slopes down to the north, east, south, and west from high ground at the intersection of Union and Washington streets. The Apollos Field House occupies a single parcel at the northwest intersection of Union and Lawrence streets. A low-rise, L-shaped brick apartment building that comprises part of the General Warren Apartments complex owned and operated by the Boston Housing Authority occupies a large rectangular parcel on the east side of Lawrence Street directly opposite the subject property. Rutherford Union Playground and Emmons Horrigan O'Neill Memorial Rink abut the subject property to the west. Austin Street to the north has dense commercial development and is dominated by the Bunker Hill Mall, which occupies most of the block formed by West School, Main, and Austin streets and New Rutherford Avenue.

The property is not located within any National Register-listed historic districts or historic areas previously identified by the Massachusetts Historical Commission (MHC). Five National Register historic districts and individually listed properties, however, are located within a one-quarter-mile radius of the subject property, including the Town Hill Historic District (NRDIS 1973), Bunker Hill Monument (NHL 1961, NRDIS 1961), Phipps Street Burying Ground (NRDIS 1974), the Francis B. Austin House (NRDIS 1988), and Roughan Hall (NRDIS 1982).

## 1.4 Map Showing Location



**Figure 1.** Map showing the boundaries of 30 Union St., parcel number 0203847000.

## 2.0 DESCRIPTION

### 2.1 Type and Use

The Apollos Field House, 30 Union St., was built in 1813–1815 as the primary residence of Apollos (1783–1834) and Sally (née Davis) Field. It has served as a single-family residence since its construction.

### 2.2 Physical Description of the Resource

The Apollos Field House occupies a flat site of 2,173 square feet at the northwest corner of the intersection of Union and Lawrence streets. The rectangular parcel abuts a mix of single- and multi-family dwellings to the north, east, and south and Rutherford Union Playground to the west. The house faces south on Union Street immediately abutting the sidewalk. A modern vinyl privacy fence extends along the north boundary of the property to Rutherford Union Playground. A modern decorative wrought iron fence extends along the west boundary of the property and encloses a garden landscaped with a flagstone pathway, brick patio, flowering plants, shrubs, and a mature tree. A brick driveway abuts the dwelling on the north.

#### Exterior

The building is a three-and-one-half-story, wood-frame, brick-ender, Federal-style dwelling. It has a symmetrical, full-proportioned, five-bay façade and extends a single room in depth (**Figure 2**). The dwelling has a low-pitched, side-gable roof pierced by two pedimented gable dormers on each roof slope. Interior brick-end chimneys are centered within and integral to the brick-end walls that comprise the east and west elevations. These end walls are laid in common bond with a header course every five to 10 courses (**Figures 3–5**). The end walls are not parapeted and do not extend above the roofline. The façade and rear walls are clad in wood clapboards with a molded wood cornice beneath the roofline. The foundation consists of fieldstone below grade and common-bond-laid brick above grade.

The Federal-style front entry occupies the middle bay on the first story of the façade. It consists of a six-panel wood door with four-light sidelights above wood panels and an elliptical fanlight with radial muntins and has a molded casing surrounded by a simple wood entablature with a molded wood cornice supported by Tuscan pilasters (**Figure 6**). Two windows flank the front entry to the east and west on the first story and five windows are evenly spaced across the second and third stories above the first-story openings. The west elevation has a single window on the first floor, south of the chimney. The east elevation has single windows on the first, second, and third stories, aligned on top of each other south of the chimney. Window openings are evenly spaced across the north elevation on the first, second, and third stories, except where it is covered by the rear ell. Fenestration throughout the main block consists of replacement double-hung, six-over-six wood sash with molded wood surrounds. A one-and-one-half-story, three-bay-by-one-bay, wood-frame ell extends from the north elevation of the main block.



The ell projects north from the two eastmost bays on the north elevation and is flush with the east elevation of the main block. It has a front-gable roof covered with asphalt shingles, which is pierced by an interior brick chimney at the center ridgeline above the north elevation. The walls are clad with wood clapboards with plain corner boards and narrow wood rakes beneath the eaves. Similar to the main block, the foundation of the rear ell consists of fieldstone surmounted by common-bond brick above ground. It is unclear from an interior inspection if the rear ell is contemporaneous to the main block or if it was constructed after the main block was completed; it first appears on historic maps in 1852 (see **Figure 20**). Three windows are evenly spaced across the east elevation on the first story, and two windows are situated above the outermost windows on the second story. All of the windows contain replacement double-hung, six-over-six wood sash set in molded wood frames.

A one-story, one-bay-by-one-bay shed-roof addition, constructed in the late 20th century, extends from the west elevation of the rear ell. An arched dormer containing a fixed wood window with radial muntins pierces the roof of the addition on the west elevation. An arched, fixed, multi-light wood window is centered on the north elevation. Two sets of multi-light wood French doors surmounted by three-light transoms provide access to the interior (**Figures 7-8**).

### **Interior**

The dwelling has a center-hall, single-pile plan consisting of a double-loaded hall flanked on each side by a single room. The hallway extends the width of the main block and contains a U-shaped staircase that provides access from the first through third floors and ascends between each floor with two parallel runs and a half-story landing. On the third story, the southeast end of the hallway has been enclosed to form a bathroom. Each of the flanking rooms on the first and second stories has a fireplace.

The house sits on a full-height basement that extends beneath the main block and the rear ell and is accessible via a narrow brick staircase enclosed by the late twentieth century-addition. The interior brick end chimneys on the main block are supported on relieving arches on the east and west foundation walls (see **Figure 9**). The house and rear ell have the same foundation construction and are connected by an opening. The basement has a poured concrete floor, and portions of the interior walls have been parged.

The central hallway retains millwork and window and door trim that appear to be original, although sections have been altered and restored. On the first floor, the walls of the central stair hall are clad in rusticated wood blocks that imitate stone. The wood blocks extend to the ceiling and are capped by molded trim. The wood blocks on the east wall are not original and were restored in the early 21st century. The front entrance is enclosed by flat wood surround ornamented with hatch and star carvings. A wood keystone is centered above the fanlight. On the first floor, the staircase has turned wood newel posts, molded wood treads, scroll-shaped riser trim, square balusters, and a unique fluted wood handrail (see **Figure 10**). On the second floor, the staircase has turned-wood newel posts, molded-wood treads, round balusters, and a convex molded wood handrail. The riser trim is not present on the staircase at the second and third floors, and the third-floor balustrade has larger turned-wood newel posts (see **Figures 11-12**).

On the first floor, a parlor occupies the room on the west side of the central hallway. The parlor retains its original trim, fireplace, and cabinetry inset. The fireplace is centered on the exterior wall and has elaborately carved paired Corinthian pilasters that support a broad mantel. The flanking recessed bays (a window and bench to the south, and a cabinet and shelving to the west) have fluted, flush pilasters that support a molded wood flattened arch with a carved keystone. The same hatch-and-star detail found around the front entry is repeated on the arch trim and on a piece of molding above the mantel (**see Figure 13**). The room on the east side of the central hallway is used as a dining room. It has a fireplace centered on the exterior wall currently filled with a cast iron stove. The bay to the south contains a recessed window seat and the bay to the north has a closet. The fireplace has a brick hearth and wood paneling with a shallow mantel. The paneling continues into the window bay. A small, arched, recessed compartment is centered on the exterior wall above the fireplace.

The rooms on the second and third stories contain fireplaces flanked by recessed windows or built-in shelving. The trim and fireplaces in these rooms likely date to the mid-19th to early 20th centuries (**see Figures 14–15**).

The attic is unfinished. The exposed framing indicates that the house's form was raised in the mid-nineteenth century. The roof structure consists of closely spaced rafters and a ridge board. The rafters sit on a large top plate that is sistered twice along its length with dowels. It sits on posts that rise approximately eight inches above the floor of the attic (**see Figures 16–17**).

The rear ell contains a modern kitchen on the first floor that has been opened on the southwest to the late-20th-century addition, which has a cathedral ceiling. A metal spiral staircase in the addition provides access to the second story of the ell. The second story contains a bedroom on the north end and a modern bathroom on the south end with four steps ascending to the bedroom that occupies the east side of the main block. The rear ell has been extensively altered on the first and second stories to accommodate a modern kitchen and a full bath. The first floor retains its original kitchen hearth on the north wall and exposed ceiling joists (**see Figure 18**). The second story has a lower floor than the second story of the main block, requiring a short run of stairs from the modern bathroom and the east bedroom in the main block (**see Figure 19**).

Architectural analysis of 30 Union St., specifically inconsistent spacing between header and stringer courses on the brick end walls, indicates that the building was originally built as a two- or two-and-a-half-story, hip-roof dwelling with brick side walls and integral chimneys (**see Figure 21**). This form would have been consistent with the Federal-style, oblong-form dwellings that were commonly constructed in Charlestown in the early 19th century. This form adopted the symmetrical, five-bay, center-hall plan that characterized the Federal-style designs set forth in Asher Benjamin's early architectural pattern books, most notably *The Country Builder's Assistant* (published 1797) and *The American Builder's Companion* (published 1806). While buildings designed by both Asher Benjamin and Charles Bulfinch exhibited this configuration, the oblong form house was a regional building type that developed in Charlestown in the late 17th and early 18th centuries (*see Section 3.2*).<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> Hunnewell, *Century of Town Life*, 25, 55–56.

## 2.3 Contemporary Images



**Figure 2.** South façade, looking north. Photo by The Public Archaeology Laboratory, Inc.



**Figure 3.** West elevation and drive, looking northeast. Photo by The Public Archaeology Laboratory, Inc.



**Figure 4.** East elevation, looking northwest. Photo by The Public Archaeology Laboratory, Inc.



**Figure 5.** South and east elevations, looking northwest, 8 Lawrence St. at right. Photo by The Public Archaeology Laboratory, Inc.



**Figure 6.** Primary entrance in center of south façade. Photo by The Public Archaeology Laboratory, Inc.



**Figure 7.** North (rear) ell and 20th-century addition, looking southeast. Photo by The Public Archaeology Laboratory, Inc.



**Figure 8.** East (side) and north (rear) elevations and rear ell, looking southwest from Lawrence St. Photo by The Public Archaeology Laboratory, Inc.





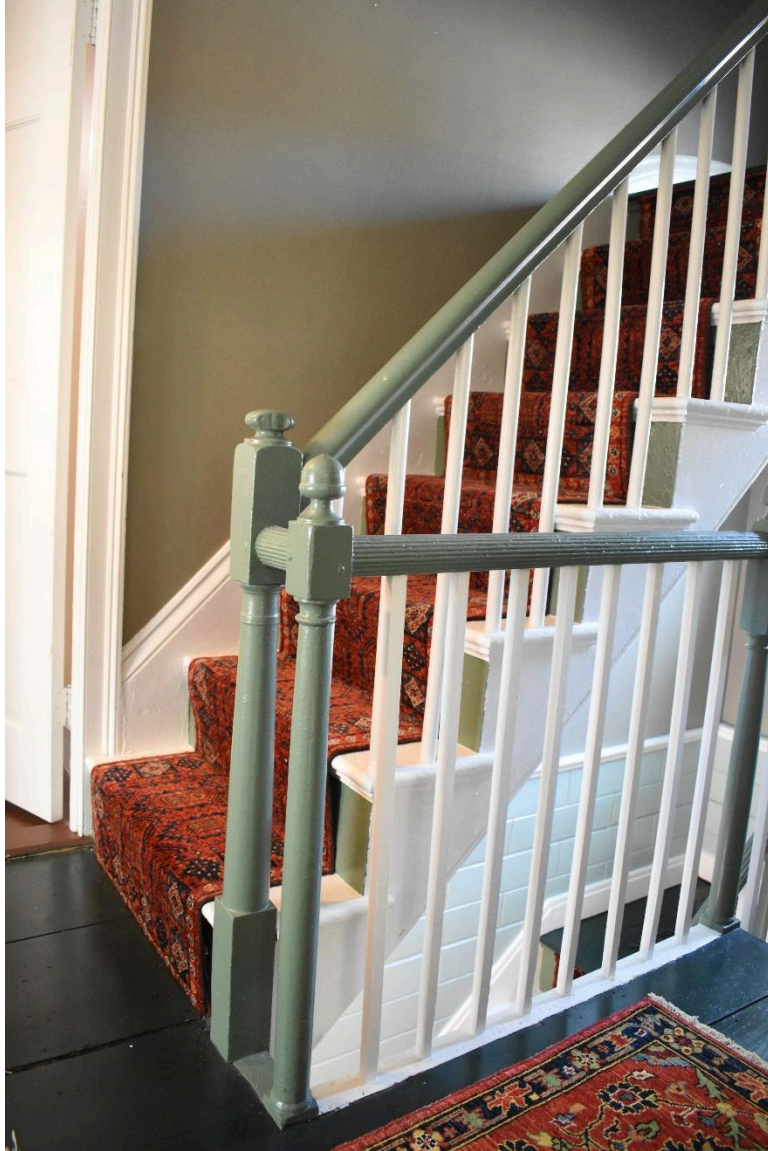
**Figure 9.** Basement, southwest chimney relieving arch. Photo by The Public Archaeology Laboratory, Inc.



**Figure 10.** First Story, entry hall stairs and rusticated wood panel treatment, looking northwest.  
Photo by The Public Archaeology Laboratory, Inc.



**Figure 11.** Second story, stair hall, looking northwest. Photo by The Public Archaeology Laboratory, Inc.



**Figure 12.** Second story, stair hall with balustrade change, looking west. Photo by The Public Archaeology Laboratory, Inc.



**Figure 13.** First story, parlor with ornate mantel, window, and inset cabinetry trim, looking west. Photo by The Public Archaeology Laboratory, Inc.



**Figure 14.** Second story, west room with mantel and trim, looking southwest. Photo by The Public Archaeology Laboratory, Inc.



**Figure 15.** Second story, east room with mantle, trim, and passage to rear ell, looking north. Photo by The Public Archaeology Laboratory, Inc.



**Figure 16.** Attic with brick end wall and ridge board, looking southwest. Photo by The Public Archaeology Laboratory, Inc.



**Figure 17.** Attic, showing sistered eave plate with dowels, rafter (white), and secondary post (red).  
Photo by The Public Archaeology Laboratory, Inc.



**Figure 18.** First story, rear ell fireplace, looking north. Photo by The Public Archaeology Laboratory, Inc.





**Figure 19.** Second story, rear ell stairs into main house, second story, looking southeast. Photo by The Public Archaeology Laboratory, Inc.

## 2.4 Historic Maps and Images

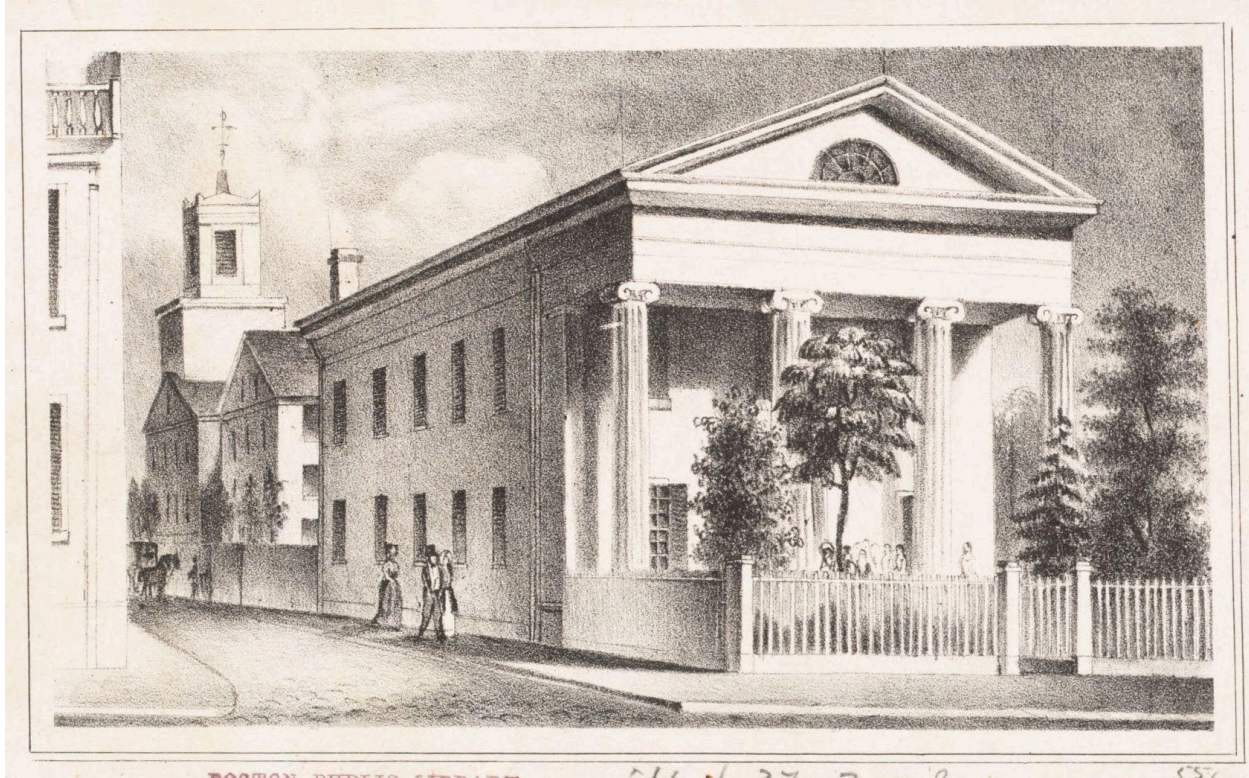


**Figure 20.** Detail showing the location of the Apollos Field House (circled in red).

**Source:** McIntyre, Henry. *Map of the City of Boston and Immediate Neighborhood*. Boston, MA: H. McIntyre, 1852.



**Figure 21.** 30 Union St.'s east-facing brick end wall with header rows highlighted to illustrate inconsistencies in construction. Deviating header intervals and omission at the chimney stack suggest that the house was originally two or two-and-one-half stories in height.



**Figure 22.** Earliest depiction of 30 Union St. (left) across Lawrence St. from the First Baptist Church's Female Seminary (not extant). Illustration shows 30 Union as a two-story building with brick end walls and a balustrade at the eaves.

**Source:** "Charlestown Female Seminary." Print. [1831?-1836?]. *Digital Commonwealth*.

<https://ark.digitalcommonwealth.org/ark:/50959/41688176v>, accessed June 2022.



**Figure 23.** Detail from *Plan of the City of Charlestown* showing the location of the Apollos Field House (outlined in red).

**Source:** *Plan of the City of Charlestown*, Felton & Parker 1848.

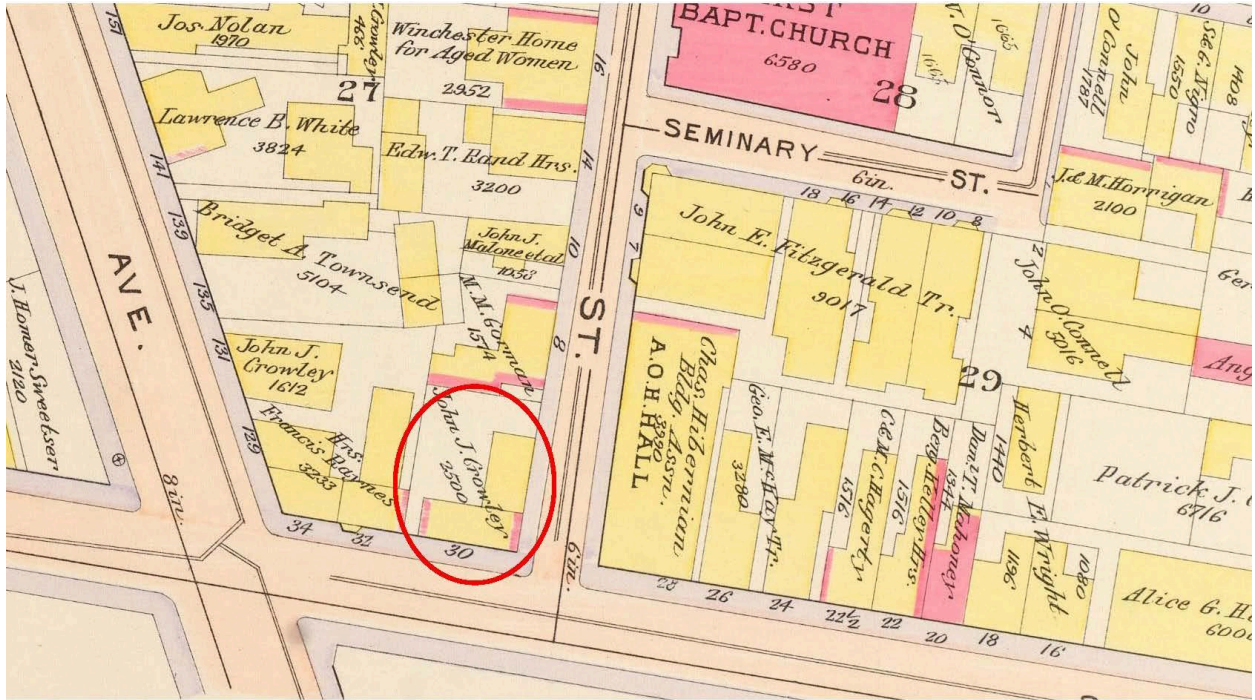


**Figure 24.** A mid- to late-19th century photograph of the Apollos Field House showing the alterations made by the Balfour family (Cutler ca. 1850–1925).



**Figure 25.** Detail from an Insurance Map of Charlestown showing the Apollos Field house (circled in red).

**Source:** Insurance Map of Charlestown, Sanborn 1868.



**Figure 26.** Detail from an Atlas of Charlestown and East Boston showing the Apollos Field House (circled in red).

**Source:** Atlas of Charlestown and East Boston, Bromley 1912.



**Figure 27.** A 1933 photograph of the Apollos Field House, looking northeast.  
**Source:** Historic American Buildings Survey 1936.





**Figure 28.** A 1933 photograph of the Apollos Field House, looking northwest.

**Source:** Historic American Buildings Survey 1936.

### 3.0 SIGNIFICANCE

The Apollos Field House is historically and architecturally significant as one of the oldest surviving dwellings in the Union/Washington Streets section of Boston's Charlestown neighborhood. The Apollos Field House predates many of the extant nineteenth-century dwellings on the surrounding streets and simultaneously illustrates the process by which Charlestown was rebuilt, following its destruction by British forces during the American Revolution, and transformed into a fashionable residential neighborhood that was home to members of many of Boston's elite and wealthy families during the first half of the nineteenth century. It is also architecturally significant as a well-preserved, sophisticated example of a Federal-style, brick-ender, oblong-form dwelling and as a good representative example of the Federal style. Like many houses of the period in Boston, the Apollos Field House exhibits a design reflective of the work of noted designer, builder, and pattern book author Asher Benjamin. The house is unusual in that Asher Benjamin owned it for a short period in 1815. The dwelling is an example of the work of Charlestown housewright and carpenter William Wiley.

#### 3.1 Historic Significance

Charlestown was originally founded in 1629 and settled in 1630 around Town Hill, near its southern peninsula. The neighborhood was devastated by the burning of the town by British forces during the Battle of Bunker Hill on June 17, 1775. Its rebuilding began in earnest in the 1780s, as ruined house lots were cleared, streets amended, and new public buildings erected.<sup>3</sup> During the 20 years between 1785 and 1805, the population of Charlestown increased from 999 to 2,800. By 1810, this number exceeded 4,700.<sup>4</sup>

Charlestown's waterfront was initially rebuilt in the late eighteenth century with wharves and rope walks, including one owned by Captain Archibald McNeill (b. 1747) at Lynde's (later Prison) Point on the Charles River Bay, south of the subject property. In 1794, McNeill purchased the 20-acre tract of land known as Lynde's Point from the descendants of Thomas Lynde, one of Charlestown's earliest settlers. The parcel extended southwest of Town Hill from Arrow St. to the Charles River Bay north of present-day Austin St., and encompassed all of present-day Washington, Austin, and Lawrence streets, Old Rutherford Avenue (formerly Richmond and Bow streets), and a portion of Union St. In the early nineteenth century, McNeill erected a large dwelling (not extant) for himself on Washington Street near Union St. As development in Charlestown accelerated during this period, large tracts of land, like Lynde's Point, became increasingly valuable for real estate speculation. Accordingly, McNeill began to subdivide Lynde's Point and sell off house lots between 1799 and 1806. Washington Street was laid out around 1804 and followed quickly by Union Street, Richmond Street (Old Rutherford Avenue), and Lawrence Street. The newly platted area around Washington and Union streets attracted wealthy Charlestown residents and builders looking for investment opportunities,

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<sup>3</sup> James F. Hunnewell, *Century of Town Life: A History of Charlestown, Massachusetts, 1775-1887* (Boston, MA: Little, Brown, and Company, 1888), 1, 15-17.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid*, 24.

and members of Charlestown's prominent families, including the Devens and Wiley families, among others, numbered among the purchasers of McNeill's house lots.<sup>5</sup>

William Wiley (1757–1827), an established Charlestown housewright and carpenter, purchased a large tract in McNeill's subdivision in 1804 for \$800.<sup>6</sup> While the 30 Union St. lot was not included in this purchase, Wiley acquired 30 Union St. from McNeill seven years later as part of a debt settlement. In an 1811 suit executed by the Middlesex County sheriff, Wiley received “the goods, chattels, or lands of said McNeill . . . to be paid and satisfied unto the said Wiley at the value thereof in money the aforesaid sums being \$224.11.” A portion of McNeill's land (30 Union St.) was appraised as sufficient to cover the debt, and its ownership was transferred to Wiley.<sup>7</sup>

Less than two years later, in January 1813, Wiley sold the 30 Union St. property to Apollos Field (1783–1834), a Charlestown painter, for \$300.<sup>8</sup> In turn, Field entered three financial arrangements: a builder's lien with William Wiley, housewright of Charlestown; a mortgage with Sally Bernard, a widow of Boston; and a mortgage with Daniel Fuller, a Leominster merchant. The mortgage deeds and liens required Field to make \$100 payments to each creditor for two years. Fulfillment of these payments would return ownership of 30 Union St. to Field; if he defaulted, he would lose all rights and privileges.<sup>9</sup>

Between 1813 and 1815, a house was built on 30 Union St., presumably under the direction of Wiley. It was originally built as a two-story or two-and-one-half-story, brick-end, hip-roofed house with a two-story rear ell. Federal-style houses of a similar form and scale were being built throughout Charlestown in the 1790s through 1820s. Although it appears Field occupied his new house after it was built, he was unable to pay off his mortgages to Fuller, Bernard, and Wiley and had other financial hardships. On July 29, 1815, sheriff Nathaniel Austin Jr. held a public auction “at the dwelling house of Apollos Field” for the sale of Field's real estate (i.e., 30 Union St.) to settle outstanding debts to Charlestown merchants and partners in trade, Samuel Abbott (1787–1852) and Ralph W. Jewett (1779–1842). The highest bidder was “Ashur Benjamin of Boston” with \$1,040.<sup>10</sup> Asher Benjamin (see Section 3.2) was a noted carpenter and architect, but he was most celebrated for the series of architectural pattern books that he published in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. This purchase appears to have been a business decision. The three mortgages/liens on the property

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<sup>5</sup> Edward Gordon, *Charlestown Survey Project Completion Report* (Boston, MA: Boston Landmarks Commission, 1987), 39; Nancy Hayford Kueny, “Historic Houses of the Month: Lynde's Point and the Charlestown Wharf Company,” *Charlestown Patriot-Bridge*, May 6, 2020,

<https://charlestownbridge.com/2020/05/06/historic-houses-of-the-month-lyndes-point-and-the-charlestown-wharf-company/>; Timothy T. Sawyer, *Old Charlestown: Historical, Biographical, Reminiscent* (Boston, MA: J.H. West Co., 1902), 58–59.

<sup>6</sup> Middlesex County Registry of Deeds (MCRD), Book 157/Page 508, November 12, 1804, A. McNeill to Wm. Wiley; Findagrave.com, “William Wiley,” Find A Grave Memorial ID 51164411 (2010). [Accessed June 2022, <https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/51164411/william-wiley>].

<sup>7</sup> MCRD, Book 192/Page 267–268, December 12, 1811, Wm. Wiley to Arch. McNeill.

<sup>8</sup> MCRD, Book 201/Page 255–256, January 27, 1813, William Wiley to Apollos Field.

<sup>9</sup> MCRD, Book 201/Page 255–256, January 27, 1813, William Wiley to Apollos Field; MCRD, Book 206/Page 412–413, January 14, 1813, Apollos Field to Wm. Wiley; MCRD, Book 205/Page 47–48, July 13, 1813, Sally Bernard to Apollos Field; MCRD, Book 205/Page 48–49, Apollos Field to Sally Bernard.

<sup>10</sup> MCRD, Book 213/Page 35–36, September 18, 1815, Nath. Austin Jr. to A. Benjamin.

were settled individually between the creditor and Benjamin in September 1815, when Benjamin sold 30 Union St. to Elisha Wheeler (ca. 1783–1822), a Charlestown merchant.<sup>11</sup>

Wheeler owned the house until his death in 1822, after which it was held by his heirs. 30 Union St. was purchased by Mary Devens Balfour (1786–1858), wife of Reverend Walter Balfour (1775–1852) of Charlestown.<sup>12</sup> Secondary sources suggest that the Balfours had been living in the house since 1818.<sup>13</sup> Reverend Balfour was born in Scotland and immigrated to the United States as a young man. He was introduced to Dr. Jedediah Morse, pastor of Charlestown’s Universalist Church, and visited the town frequently as an orator. In 1809, he moved to Charlestown upon his marriage to Mary Devens, whose family had a long, respected history in Charlestown.<sup>14</sup> To support his family, Balfour operated a store in Charlestown.<sup>15</sup> Mary was the paternal aunt of Charles Devens, Jr. (1820–1891), whom secondary histories and biographies report was born in the house at 30 Union St. in 1820.<sup>16</sup> Charles Devens, Jr., son of Charles Devens Sr. and Mary Lithgow Devens, studied at Harvard Law School, was admitted to the bar in 1841, and entered a career in politics when he was 28.<sup>17</sup> served as Attorney General of the United States under President Rutherford B. Hayes in the 1870s and Justice of the Supreme Judicial Court of Massachusetts.

By the 1840s, the area surrounding 30 Union St. was developed with residences, churches, and religious institutions, and, along Main Street, commercial enterprises. The Charlestown Female Seminary was built on the opposite corner of Lawrence and Union streets in 1831 (see **Figure 22**). Charlestown Baptist Church was constructed at the corner of Austin and Lawrence streets in 1843, replacing an older church on Austin Street.<sup>18</sup>

Between 1843 and 1868, under 25 years of Balfour-family ownership, 30 Union St. was extensively altered and likely raised to a full three stories (see **Figure 24**). The brick end walls were raised to carry a side-gable roof with dormers. On the façade, it appears that careful consideration was taken to match the fenestration of the new third story to that of the second story. It also appears that the center window of the second story may have originally been a Palladian window that was altered

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<sup>11</sup> MCRD, Book 213/Page 36–37, September 18, 1815, Danl. Fuller to Ash. Benjamin; Book 213/Page 37, September 18, 1815, Wm. Wiley to Ash. Benjamin; Book 213/Page 38, September 18, 1815, Sally Bernard to Ash. Benjamin; Book 213/Page 38–39, September 18, 1815, Ash. Benjamin to Elisha Wheeler; *Records of the Congregational Church of Charlestown 1817-1827* (Massachusetts Town and Vital Records, Ancestry.com); Sawyer, *Old Charlestown*, 38.

<sup>12</sup> MCRD, Book 253/Page 215–216, November 22, 1822, Ralph W. Jewett al. to Mary Belfour; Findagrave.com, “Mary Devens Balfour,” (Find A Grave Memorial ID 156915347, 2016).

<sup>13</sup> Mary Melvin Petronella, *Victorian Boston Today: Twelve Walking Tours* (Northeastern University Press, 2004), 173–174.

<sup>14</sup> Thomas Whittemore, *Memoir of the Rev. Walter Balfour, Author of Letters to Prof. Stuart, and Various Other Publications* (Boston, MA: J.M. Usher, 1852), 6, 10, 15–16.

<sup>15</sup> Whittemore, *Memoir of the Rev. Walter Balfour*, 19.

<sup>16</sup> The earliest reference describes the birthplace of Charles Devens, Jr. as, “Charlestown, corner Union and Lawrence streets . . . the house is still standing,” although it does not identify 30 Union Street specifically. Later secondary sources identify 30 Union Street as his birthplace but do not list primary sources. The relation between Devens and Balfour families and the Wheeler family, who owned the property until 1822, is unclear. The Devens and Balfour families were related by marriage; Mary Devens Balfour was the sister of Charles Devens, Sr. and the aunt of Charles Devens, Jr.. Boston City Council, *Reports of Proceedings of the City Council of Boston for the Year...* (Boston, MA: Rockwell and Churchill City Printers, 1892), 44; Petronella, *Victorian Boston Today*, 173–174; FindaGrave, “Mary Devens Balfour”; FindaGrave, “Charles Devens Sr,” (Find A Grave Memorial ID 156910460, 2016)

<sup>17</sup> Massachusetts Supreme Judicial Court, “Charles Devens, Associate Justice memorial,” 152 Mass. 601 (1891) [<https://www.mass.gov/person/charles-devens>].

<sup>18</sup> Hunnewell, *Century of Town Life*, 25, 55–56.

with removal of the arch section and that a similar window frame was installed above on the third story. Close visual examination of the historic photographic record shows that the second and third story center window frames and sills extended to the width of the shutters (**see Figure 24**). This configuration is confirmed in 1930s photographs that show the house without shutters (**see Figures 27 and 28**). The house design published as Plate XXV in Asher Benjamin's first pattern book, *The Country Builder's Assistant* (1797), notably incorporated a Palladian window on the second story above the front entry. The design depicted in Plate XXV closely resembled the First Harrison Gray Otis House at 141 Cambridge St. (BOS.4183), designed by Charles Bulfinch in 1796, with its symmetrical, five-bay, center-hall façade, low-pitched, hip roof, interior end chimneys, and second-story Palladian window (*see Section 3.2 Architectural (or Other) Significance*). Benjamin would likely have been familiar with Bulfinch's design for the First Harrison Gray Otis House and was likely inspired by it, for he designed the neighboring Old West Church at 131 Cambridge St. (BOS.4182) in 1806. Although the front entry of the Apollos Field House did not directly mimic a specific design for a door surround published by Benjamin in either *The Country Builder's Assistant* or *The American Builder's Companion* (1806), the door surrounds included in these books include sidelights, fanlights, entablatures, and pilasters arranged in various combinations. These types of entry treatments are seen at the First Harrison Gray Otis House in Boston and the Edward Everett House at 16 Harvard St. (BOS.1546) in Charlestown.

After the deaths of Walter and Mary Balfour in 1852 and 1858, respectively, the house was occupied by their children, Elizabeth (1811–1878), David (1812–1902), and Mary D. (1820–1904), who all remained unmarried. A fourth child, Janet (1822–1848) predeceased Mary and Walter.<sup>19</sup>

After Mary D. died in 1904, the property was purchased by John J. Crowley (b. 1865), an Irish grocer (**see Figure 26**). He lived in the house with his wife Ellen (b. 1871) and their eight children.<sup>20</sup> By 1928, it had been purchased by Margaret Mahoney (b. 1868), who lived at 19–23 Union St. and maintained 30 Union St. as a tenement.<sup>21</sup> Mahoney had the slate roof replaced with asphalt shingles in 1928 and likely made other improvements to the property, including replacement of the original six-over-six windows with two-over-two windows; elimination of shutters revealing the tripartite frame arrangement of the center second and third story windows on the façade (*see discussion above*); and removal of the tracery in the entry door sidelights and fanlight.<sup>22</sup> The appearance of the house in 1933 was captured in Historic American Buildings Survey photographic documentation (**Figures 27 and 28**).<sup>23</sup>

By 1935, Mahoney sold the property to Charles E. Lawrence (b. 1890). He lived in the house with his wife Ruth M. (b. 1915), their four sons, and Ruth's sister, Alice E. King (b. 1909).<sup>24</sup> Between 1938 and

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<sup>19</sup> US Census, 1880 *United States Federal Census* (NARA microfilm T9, 1,454 rolls); US Census, 1870 *United States Federal Census* (NARA microfilm M593, 1,761 rolls); Findagrave.com, "Mary Devens Balfour."

<sup>20</sup> US Census, *Thirteenth Census of the United States, 1910* (NARA: microfilm T624, 1,178 rolls, Ancestry.com); Suffolk County Registry of Deeds (SCRD), Book 2989/Page 433–434, September 8, 1904, Mary D. est. to John J. Crowley.

<sup>21</sup> Boston Building Permits (BBP), No. 3111, November 25, 1928.

<sup>22</sup> BBP, No. 2063, September 21, 1928.

<sup>23</sup> Historic American Buildings Survey, MA-346.

<sup>24</sup> US Census, *Sixteenth Census of the United States, 1940* (NARA microfilm T627, 4,643 rolls).

1950, Lawrence made minor improvements to the building including repairing the brick side walls, replacing portions of clapboard, and repairing asphalt shingles.<sup>25</sup>

The chain of title is unclear during the third quarter of the twentieth century. Sometime before 1968, the two tripartite window frames were altered to match the other façade fenestration and the entablature and side pilasters were removed from the entry.<sup>26</sup> By 1973, the property was owned by Andrew Steven Ivester.<sup>27</sup> In 1979, the house was purchased by James P. and Penelope Pigott.<sup>28</sup> By 1986, six-over-six windows were again installed in the building.<sup>29</sup> In 1994, the current owners, Marianne Gibbons and Ronald Kulich, purchased the house from Penelope Lane.<sup>30</sup> They made various interior alterations, installed a main entry surround based on historic photographs, and constructed an addition off the rear ell.

### 3.2 Architectural (or Other) Significance

The Apollos Field House is significant as a well-preserved, sophisticated example of a Federal-style, brick-ender, oblong-form type dwelling, in the Union/Washington Streets neighborhood and the Charlestown area of Boston and as the work of local housewright and carpenter, William Wiley (1757–1827). The building is distinguished by its brick end chimneys and full-height brick walls on the east and west elevations, center-hall, single-pile plan, elliptical fanlight and sidelights around the main entry on the façade, and rear ell. The building also speaks to the complexity of the architectural milieu in which buildings were designed and constructed in Boston and surrounding towns in the early 19th century. During this period, the widespread publication and dissemination of architectural pattern books, precipitated by Asher Benjamin (1773–1845) in the 1790s, led to the establishment of a common Federal-style design aesthetic, based on interpretations of Classical architecture by European architects Palladio and Robert and James Adams and facilitated the application of this aesthetic to local building forms by housewrights and carpenters.<sup>31</sup> The symmetrical, five-bay façade and Federal-style door surround with original sidelight and fanlight openings and reproduction enframing exhibit the defining characteristics of the design aesthetic popularized by the pattern books of Asher Benjamin, with its center-hall, single-pile plan being representative of the prevailing oblong-form house type constructed in Charlestown in the late 17th, 18th, and early 19th centuries. While there is no direct evidence linking William Wiley and Asher Benjamin, Benjamin's pattern books undoubtedly influenced Wiley's design for the Apollos Field House.

The Federal style became popular in Charlestown and the greater Boston area after the United States officially gained its independence from Great Britain in 1783. Representing a refinement of the earlier Georgian style and serving as a physical symbol of stability in the new nation, the Federal

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<sup>25</sup> BBP, No. 1952, July 29, 1938; BBP, No. 2328, May 1947; BBP, No. 1272, May 1950.

<sup>26</sup> Boston Landmarks Commission (BLC). *Building Information Form – 30 Union Street (BOS.4941)*, Boston, MA: Boston Landmarks Commission, 1986–1987.

<sup>27</sup> SCRD, Book 8655/Page 721, August 29, 1973, Andrew S. Ivester to Charlestown Savings Bank (mort.).

<sup>28</sup> SCRD, Book 9350/Page 167, December 31, 1979, Andrew Steven Ivester to Pigott.

<sup>29</sup> BLC, *Building Information Form*.

<sup>30</sup> SCRD, Book 19123/Page 182, June 9, 1994, Lane to Gibbons and Kulich.

<sup>31</sup> Boston Landmarks Commission, *Edward Everett House, 16 Harvard Street, Charlestown, Boston Landmarks Commission Study Report* (Boston, MA: Boston Landmarks Commission, 1996), 24.

style possessed the same strict symmetry and simple rectangular, double-pile, center-hall massing that characterized Georgian architecture. However, the Federal style is distinguished by lighter, more delicate ornamental details and larger structural elements, including windows defined by narrower muntins and larger panes of glass than their Georgian predecessors. Concurrent with the Federal style, the country's first professional architects emerged in the northeast, including Charles Bulfinch (1763–1844) and Asher Benjamin in Boston, Samuel McIntire (1757–1811) in Salem, Massachusetts, and Alexander Parris (1780–1852) in Portland, Maine. Bulfinch is commonly credited with bringing the Federal style to Boston and the United States, while the series of successful pattern books that Benjamin published in the late 18th and early 19th centuries popularized his and Bulfinch's designs, and the Federal style, with carpenters and housewrights in Boston and throughout the northeastern United States.<sup>32</sup> Benjamin's work was heavily influenced by that of Bulfinch, whose 1796 design for the First Harrison Gray Otis House at 141 Cambridge St. (BOS.4183) closely resembled the design Benjamin published as Plate XXV in his first pattern book, *The Country Builder's Assistant*, in 1797. The First Harrison Gray Otis House also served as a prototype for Federal-style buildings constructed in Boston and surrounding towns.<sup>33</sup> Benjamin further developed this design in his later books, most notably *The American builder's companion*, published in 1806, which were easily accessed by Boston-based architects and builders via the Boston Architectural Library. Founded in 1810 by a group of local housewrights, the library offered members access to over 53 builder's guides and pattern books, including *The Country Builder's Assistant* and *The American Builder's Companion*.<sup>34</sup>

In Charlestown, carpenters and housewrights generally adapted the new Federal style to fit the prevailing house type in the area, whose "signature layout . . . consisted of a central through-passage with a single room to either side."<sup>35</sup> Dubbed the "oblong form" by author James Hunnewell, these houses generally rose two to three stories in height and typically possessed a five-bay façade with a center-hall front entrance and a symmetrical fenestration pattern.<sup>36</sup> The addition of a rear ell to dwellings with oblong forms effectively transformed them into "ell houses," a term used by housewrights and carpenters to describe the characteristic L-shaped footprint of these buildings.<sup>37</sup> The oblong form, which originated in the late 17th century and became increasingly common as center chimney stacks gave way to end-wall and rear-wall chimneys in the 18th century, was well suited to the narrow lots and steep grades found around Bunker Hill and throughout Charlestown. The vast majority of these oblong houses were oriented perpendicular to the street. With its façade oriented to Union Street, the Apollos Field House represents a rare exception to this traditional

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<sup>32</sup> Douglass Shand-Tucci, *Built in Boston: City and Suburb, 1800-1850* (Amherst, MA: University of Massachusetts Press, 1988), 4-11; Virginia Savage McAlester, *A Field Guide to American Houses*, (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2013), 217-221; "Architectural Style Guide," Historic New England, accessed June 2021, <https://www.historicnewengland.org/preservation/for-homeowners-communities/your-old-or-historic-home/architectural-style-guide/>.

<sup>33</sup> Asher Benjamin, *The Country Builder's Assistant* (Greenfield, MA: Thomas Dickman, 1797); Florence Thompson Howe, "More About Asher Benjamin," *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians* 13, no. 3 (October 1954):19; Jack Quinan, "Asher Benjamin and American Architecture," *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians* 38, no. 3 (October 1979):246.

<sup>34</sup> Boston Landmarks Commission, *Edward Everett House*, 25.

<sup>35</sup> *Ibid.*, 24.

<sup>36</sup> James F. Hunnewell, *A Century of Town Life: A History of Charlestown, MA 1775-1887* (Boston, MA: Little, Brown & Co., 1888), 87.

<sup>37</sup> *Ibid.*

orientation.<sup>38</sup> Other extant examples of oblong houses sited full-width to the street include: the James C. Edmonds House at 1 Prescott St. (BOS.4855), a brick dwelling built around 1804; the John Tapley House at 14 Common St. (BOS.4420), a wood-frame dwelling constructed in 1806; and the Edward Everett House at 16 Harvard St. (BOS.4516), a brick dwelling erected in 1814. All three dwellings rise two-and-one-half stories in height, exhibit the symmetrical five-bay, center-hall façade characteristic of the Charlestown oblong house type and the Federal style, and have interior brick end chimneys and low-pitched hip roofs. Like the Apollos Field House, all three dwellings were enlarged beyond the typical oblong form through the inclusion of a rear ell.

Pre-existing secondary sources have previously attributed the design of the Apollos Field House to Asher Benjamin, but primary sources strongly indicate that the building was designed and built by local housewright and carpenter William Wiley (see Section 3.1 *Historic Significance*).<sup>39</sup> To date, only one other house in Charlestown has been identified as the work of William Wiley in addition to the Apollos Field House.<sup>40</sup> Located at 45 Old Rutherford Ave. in the Town Hill section of Charlestown, the William Wiley House (BOS.5011) was constructed around 1794 by the carpenter for himself and his family. The building is a symmetrical, two-story, five-bay, wood-frame, Federal-style dwelling with a hip-on-hip roof and a center-hall entry enclosed by an elaborate door surround consisting of a pediment supported by Tuscan pilasters. Although the dwelling was extensively renovated in 1986–1987, its textbook Federal-style façade, elegant proportions, and exterior ornamentation, most notably the pedimented entry surround with Tuscan pilasters and window surrounds with double mitered upper corners, clearly show that William Wiley was familiar with and influenced by popular late 18th century pattern books.<sup>41</sup> The house was built about 20 years prior to the Apollos Field House and shares the same symmetrical, five-bay façade and center-hall, single-pile plan and wood clapboard walls. The Apollos Field House is distinguished by the sidelights, elliptical fanlight, and simple wood entablature that comprise the door surround on the façade.

Although Asher Benjamin was not directly involved in the design or construction of the Apollos Field House, his work as a professional architect and pattern books undoubtedly informed and influenced William Wiley's design for the building. Born in 1773 in Hartland, Connecticut, Benjamin reportedly trained as a housewright and carpenter with a local builder.<sup>42</sup> He received his first major commissions in 1795, when he was hired to carve two Ionic capitals for Oliver Phelps in Suffield, Connecticut, and to design and build a circular staircase for Charles Bulfinch's State Capitol in Hartford, Connecticut. Benjamin spent much of the next seven years in Connecticut River Valley, where he designed at least three houses in Greenfield, Massachusetts, a school in Deerfield, Massachusetts, and a church in Northampton, Massachusetts, and Windsor, Vermont, where he is

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<sup>38</sup> *Ibid.*, 25.

<sup>39</sup> Edward Gordon, *Charlestown Survey Project Completion Report* (Boston, MA: Boston Landmarks Commission, 1987), 12; BLC, *Building Information Form*.

<sup>40</sup> Massachusetts Historical Commission Information System [MACRIS], Massachusetts Historical Commission, accessed June 2022, <https://mhc-macris.net/Towns.aspx>.

<sup>41</sup> Joseph M. Bagley, *Boston's Oldest Buildings and Where to Find Them* (Waltham, MA: Brandeis University Press, 2021), 124–125; Gordon, *Charlestown Survey Project Completion Report*, 12; Nancy Hayford Kueny, "Historic Houses of the Month: The Gambrel Houses," *Charlestown Patriot-Bridge*, December 12, 2019, <https://charlestownbridge.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/12/CPB-1212.pdf>.

<sup>42</sup> William Morgan, "Introduction to the Dover Edition," in *The American Builder's Companion* (New York, NY: Dover Publications, Inc., 1969), v.



credited with designing at least three dwellings and a church. Benjamin evidently decided to seek a larger market for his architectural skills around the turn of the 19th century, and he submitted a design for the proposed new United States Marine Hospital in Charlestown in 1801.<sup>43</sup> Benjamin moved to Boston around 1802 and appeared consistently in city directories between 1803 and 1845, with a brief hiatus between 1825 and 1828. In 1825, bankruptcy prompted Benjamin to leave Boston for Nashua, New Hampshire, where he worked as a mill agent for the Nashua Manufacturing Company until 1828. Benjamin designed numerous buildings during his approximately 50-year career as an architect.<sup>44</sup> Among his most notable commissions in Boston were: the Old West Church at 131 Cambridge St. (BOS.4182), completed in 1806; the Charles Street Meeting House at 70 Charles St. (BOS.4074), built in 1807; and a pair of twin houses at 54 Beacon St. (the Nathan Appleton-James Smith Colburn House, BOS.14902) and 55 Beacon St. (the William Hickling Prescott House, BOS.4089), which were constructed in 1808.

Interestingly, the second decade of the 19th century represented a hiatus in Benjamin's work as an architect. Although he designed a handful of buildings during this period, all of which were located outside of Boston, he appears to have concentrated on establishing a career as a businessman. Between roughly 1813 and 1825, Benjamin owned and operated a paint store on Broad Street in Boston. During this period, he transitioned from listing himself as an architect in city directories to identifying himself exclusively as the proprietor of a paint store.<sup>45</sup> Benjamin also appears to have either engaged in real estate speculation or worked as a kind of real estate agent during this period. Advertisements placed in a range of Boston newspapers between 1815 and 1820 identified him as the broker for properties for lease and sale in Boston and surrounding towns.<sup>46</sup>

Despite his extensive body of work as an architect, Benjamin is best known as the author of the "first original American architectural work," *The Country's Builder's Assistant*.<sup>47</sup> First published in Greenfield, Massachusetts, in 1797, *The Country Builder's Assistant* had been reprinted in three new editions by 1805.<sup>48</sup> It was followed quickly by six additional pattern books, including *The American Builder's Companion* in 1806, *The Rudiments of Architecture* in 1814, *The Practical House Carpenter* in 1830, *The Practice of Architecture* in 1833, *The Builder's Guide* in 1839, and *The Elements of Architecture* in 1843. Each of these books was reprinted multiple times during the first half of the 19th century. Altogether, Benjamin's seven pattern books produced a total of 44 editions and had a profound influence on the architecture of New England, and the United States. As historian William Morgan notes in his introduction to a 1969 reprinting of *The American Builder's Companion*, Benjamin's pattern "books served as the only architectural education for carpenter-builders

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<sup>43</sup> Ibid., v-vi; Howe, "More About Asher Benjamin," 16-17; Quinan, "Asher Benjamin and American Architecture," 244-245.

<sup>44</sup> Richard M. Candee, "Three Architects of Early New Hampshire Mill Towns," *Society of the Journal of Architectural Historians* 30, no. 2 (May 1971):155.

<sup>45</sup> E. Cotton, *The Boston Directory* (Boston MA: E. Cotton, 1813), 66; E. Cotton, *The Boston Directory* (Boston, MA: E. Cotton, 1816), 64; John H. A. Frost and Charles Stimpson, Jr., *The Boston Directory* (Boston, MA: John H. A. Frost and Charles Stimpson, Jr., 1823), 42; Quinan, "Asher Benjamin and American Architecture," 249.

<sup>46</sup> "This Day, at 12 o'clock" [Advertisement for a property on Warren Street in Boston], *Repertory* (Boston, MA), October 28, 1815, <https://www.genealogybank.com>; "A Large Farm to Be Sold or Let" [Advertisement for a property in Weston], *Boston Patriot and Daily Chronicle* (Boston, MA), April 6, 1818, <http://www.genealogybank.com>; "For Sale" [Advertisement for a property in Dorchester], *Columbian Centinel* (Boston, MA), April 15, 1820, <https://www.genealogybank.com>.

<sup>47</sup> Morgan, "Introduction to the Dover Edition," vi.

<sup>48</sup> Dorothee Wagner von Hoff, *Ornamenting the "Cold Coast": The Domestic Architecture and Interior Design of Upper-Class Boston Homes, 1760 - 1880* (Master's thesis, University of Munich, 2012), 167.

throughout New England” and “spread the Bulfinch–Benjamin interpretation of the Adamesque [Federal style] to the countryside beyond Boston.”<sup>49</sup> In short, while Bulfinch originated the Federal style in the United States, Benjamin ensured that it became the dominant national style during the early 19th century.

As described above, the design of the Apollos Field House reflected the influence of Asher Benjamin’s pattern books. As originally constructed in 1813–1815, the two-and-one-half-story dwelling resembled Plate XXV published in Benjamin’s *The Country Builder’s Assistant* with its symmetrical, five-bay, center-hall façade, second-story Palladian window, low-pitched hip roof, and interior brick end chimneys. While neither *The Country Builder’s Assistant* nor *The American builder’s companion* includes a door surround that clearly served as a direct model for that on the Apollos Field House, Benjamin’s published designs for door surrounds incorporated sidelights, fanlights, entablatures, and pilasters arranged in various combinations. As demonstrated by the door surround on the First Harrison Gray Otis House, which incorporates sidelights, an elliptical fanlight, and Tuscan pilasters, these elements were common to the Federal design aesthetic developed by Bulfinch, Benjamin, and other architects and popularized by Benjamin’s pattern books. A comparison of the original door and window trim, mantelpieces, millwork, and other ornamentation in the Apollos Field house with the examples published in *The Country Builder’s Assistant* and *The American Builder’s Companion* revealed no clear connection between its interior woodwork and these pattern books. This was typical of the period, however, when housewrights and carpenters generally copied details, rather than complete designs, from pattern books. As historian Daniel D. Reiff cautions in *Houses from Books*, “such comparisons, especially between house façades and plates, must be approached with care.”<sup>50</sup>

### **3.3 Archaeological Sensitivity**

Charlestown is archaeologically sensitive for ancient Native American and historical archaeological sites. Multiple archaeological surveys in this neighborhood have demonstrated the survival of ancient Native sites to the present, especially in open spaces (yards and parks) and under fill deposits. In the 17th century at the time of European colonization, there was a Massachusetts village at the current location of the Bunker Hill Community College. Native burials were removed from this area in the early 20th century. Charlestown’s shoreline may contain early submerged ancient Native archaeological sites, shipwrecks, piers, and other marine deposits that may be historically significant. Historically, Charlestown was a significant part of Boston’s 17th–19th century history, and likely contains intact archaeological sites related to Boston’s colonial, Revolutionary, and early Republic history especially yard spaces where features including cisterns and privies may remain intact and significant archaeological deposits. These sites represent the histories of Charlestown home-life, artisans, industries, enslaved people, immigrants, and Native peoples spanning multiple centuries.

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<sup>49</sup> Morgan, “Introduction to Dover Edition,” vii.

<sup>50</sup> Daniel D. Reiff, *Houses from Pattern Books, Treatises, Pattern Books, and Catalogs in American Architecture, 1738–1950: A History and Guide* (University Park, PA: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 2000), 39.

### **3.4 Relationship to Criteria for Designation**

The Apollos Field House meets the following criteria for designation as a Landmark as established in Section 4 of Chapter 772 of the Acts of 1975, as amended:

D. Structures, sites, objects, man-made or natural, representative of elements of architectural or landscape design or craftsmanship which embody distinctive characteristics of a type inherently valuable for study of a period, style or method of construction or development, or a notable work of an architect, landscape architect, designer, or builder whose work influenced the development of the city, the Commonwealth, the New England region, or the nation.

The Apollos Field House is significant as a well-preserved, sophisticated example of a Federal-style, brick ender, oblong-form dwelling in the Charlestown section of Boston and as a good representative example of the Federal style. Like many houses of the period in Boston, the Apollos Field House exhibits a design reflective of the work of noted designer, builder, and pattern book author, Asher Benjamin. The house is unusual in that Benjamin owned it for a short period in 1815. The dwelling is also an example of the work of Charlestown housewright and carpenter, William Wiley.

## **4.0 ECONOMIC STATUS**

### **4.1 Current Assessed Value**

\$1,343,000.00 (Building value: \$896,000.00; land value: \$447,000.00)

### **4.2 Current Ownership**

Marianne Gibbons and Ronald J. Kulich

## 5.0 PLANNING CONTEXT

### 5.1 Background

The Apollos Field had numerous owners and went through several transformations after its construction in 1813–1815, including the addition of a third story to the main block in the mid-nineteenth century and the construction of an addition to the rear ell in the late twentieth century. The house was built as a single-family residence on the newly-platted Union Street, which was laid out during the subdivision of Lynde's Point by Captain Archibald McNeill in 1799–1806. It has continued to function as a single-family residence since its construction.

### 5.2 Zoning

Parcel 0203847000 is located in the 3F-2000 zoning subdistrict, which allows for three-family residential properties, within the Charlestown Neighborhood zoning district. It is within the Union Street Neighborhood Design Overlay District as established in Section 62-19, Article 62 of the Boston Zoning Code.

### 5.3 Planning Issues

Although the Apollos Field House (30 Union Street) is not under any direct threats or risk of demolition, development pressure in Charlestown poses a potential and continued threat to the building if it is not designated as a Landmark. This threat is exemplified by the recent demolition of the neighboring James and Sophia Goodell Fosdick (8 Lawrence Street), a similar Federal-style, brick ender dwelling constructed in the early nineteenth century.

While an initial effort to demolish the James and Sophia Goodell Fosdick House in 2020 ultimately did not go forward, 8 Lawrence Street LLC filed a second application to demolish the House with the City of Boston in June 2021. BLC imposed a 90-day demolition delay on the building at a public hearing held on June 22, 2021.<sup>51</sup> Neighbors filed a Landmark Petition Form (Petition No. 277.21) to designate a two-building architectural conservation district, the Union Street Historic District, including the Apollos Field House (30 Union Street) and the neighboring James and Sophia Goodell Fosdick House (8 Lawrence Street). BLC voted to accept the proposed Union Street Historic District for further study on August 10, 2021. After the demolition delay expired, the James and Sophia Goodell Fosdick House was demolished in June 2022. An amended petition to designate the Apollos Field House (30 Union Street) as a Landmark was filed with BLC on January 17, 2024.

On September 28, 2023, the Boston Planning and Development Agency adopted a new planning initiative for all of Charlestown, called PLAN:CHARLESTOWN<sup>52</sup>. This plan addresses all manner of urban planning for the neighborhood including historic preservation. This property at 30 Union St. is included in the existing NDOD and for this area of the neighborhood. The zoning

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<sup>51</sup> Lauren Bennett, "BLC Imposes 90-Day Demolition Delay on 8 Lawrence St.," *Charlestown Patriot-Bridge*, June 24, 2021, <https://charlestownbridge.com/2021/06/24/blc-imposes-90-day-demo-delay-on-8-lawrence-st/>.

<sup>52</sup> <https://www.bostonplans.org/planning/planning-initiatives/plan-charlestown>

recommendations remain in place with some amount of clarification in PLAN CHARLESTOWN. The design review criteria for the NDOD are clearly laid out in the plan. The PLAN also makes an argument for changes to the Article 85 legislation which regulates demolition in the city to prevent demolitions in this area.

## **6.0 ALTERNATIVE APPROACHES**

### **6.1 Alternatives available to the Boston Landmarks Commission**

#### **A. Designation**

The Commission retains the option of designating 30 Union Street as a Landmark. Designation shall correspond to Assessor's parcel 0203847000 and shall address the following exterior elements hereinafter referred to as the "Specified Features":

- The exterior envelope of the building.

#### **B. Denial of Designation**

The Commission retains the option of not designating any or all of the Specified Features.

#### **C. National Register Listing**

The Commission could recommend that the property be listed on the National Register of Historic Places, if it is not already.

#### **D. Preservation Plan**

The Commission could recommend development and implementation of a preservation plan for the property.

#### **E. Site Interpretation**

The Commission could recommend that the owner develop and install historical interpretive materials at the site.

### **6.2 Impact of alternatives**

#### **A. Designation**

Designation under Chapter 772 would require review of physical changes to 30 Union St. in accordance with the Standards and Criteria adopted as part of the designation.

#### **B. Denial of Designation**

Without designation, the City would be unable to offer protection to the Specified Features, or extend guidance to the owners under Chapter 772.

#### **C. National Register Listing**

The Apollos Field House (30 Union St.) could be listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Listing on the National Register provides an honorary designation and limited protection from federal, federally-funded or federally assisted activities. It creates incentives for preservation, notably the federal investment tax credits and grants through the Massachusetts 19 Preservation Projects Fund (MPPF) from the Massachusetts Historical Commission. National Register listing provides listing on the State Register affording parallel protection for projects with state involvement and also the availability of state tax credits.

National Register listing does not provide any design review for changes undertaken by private owners at their own expense.

**D. Preservation Plan**

A preservation plan allows an owner to work with interested parties to investigate various adaptive use scenarios, analyze investment costs and rates of return, and provide recommendations for subsequent development. It does not carry regulatory oversight.

**E. Site Interpretation**

A comprehensive interpretation of the history and significance of 30 Union St. could be introduced at the site.



## **7.0 RECOMMENDATIONS**

The staff of the Boston Landmarks Commission makes the following recommendations:

1. That the Apollos Field House be designated by the Boston Landmarks Commission as an individual Landmark under Chapter 772 of the Acts of 1975, as amended (see Section 3.4 of this report for Relationship to Criteria for Designation);
2. That the boundaries corresponding to Assessor's parcel 0203847000 be adopted without modification;
3. And that the Standards and Criteria recommended by the staff of the Boston Landmarks Commission be accepted.

## 8.0 STANDARDS AND CRITERIA, WITH LIST OF CHARACTER-DEFINING FEATURES

### 8.1 Introduction

Per sections 4, 5, 6, 7 and 8 of the enabling statute (Chapter 772 of the Acts of 1975 of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, as amended) Standards and Criteria must be adopted for each Designation which shall be applied by the Commission in evaluating proposed changes to the historic resource. The Standards and Criteria both identify and establish guidelines for those features which must be preserved and/or enhanced to maintain the viability of the Designation. The Standards and Criteria are based on the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties.<sup>53</sup> Before a Certificate of Design Approval or Certificate of Exemption can be issued for such changes, the changes must be reviewed by the Commission with regard to their conformance to the purpose of the statute.

The intent of these guidelines is to help local officials, designers and individual property owners to identify the characteristics that have led to designation, and thus to identify the limitation to the changes that can be made to them. It should be emphasized that conformance to the Standards and Criteria alone does not necessarily ensure approval, nor are they absolute, but any request for variance from them must demonstrate the reason for, and advantages gained by, such variance. The Commission's Certificate of Design Approval is only granted after careful review of each application and public hearing, in accordance with the statute.

Proposed alterations related to zoning, building code, accessibility, safety, or other regulatory requirements do not supersede the Standards and Criteria or take precedence over Commission decisions.

In these standards and criteria, the verb **Should** indicates a recommended course of action; the verb **Shall** indicates those actions which are specifically required.

### 8.2 Levels of Review

The Commission has no desire to interfere with the normal maintenance procedures for the property. In order to provide some guidance for property owners, managers or developers, and the Commission, the activities which might be construed as causing an alteration to the physical character of the exterior have been categorized to indicate the level of review required, based on the potential impact of the proposed work. Note: the examples for each category are not intended to act as a comprehensive list; see Section 8.2.D.

- A. Routine activities which are not subject to review by the Commission:

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<sup>53</sup> U.S. Department of the Interior, et al. *THE SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR'S STANDARDS FOR THE TREATMENT OF HISTORIC PROPERTIES WITH GUIDELINES FOR PRESERVING, REHABILITATING, RESTORING & RECONSTRUCTING HISTORIC BUILDINGS*, Secretary of the Interior, 2017, [www.nps.gov/tps/standards/treatment-guidelines-2017.pdf](http://www.nps.gov/tps/standards/treatment-guidelines-2017.pdf).

1. Activities associated with normal cleaning and routine maintenance.
    - a. For building maintenance, such activities might include the following: normal cleaning (no power washing above 700 PSI, no chemical or abrasive cleaning), non-invasive inspections, in-kind repair of caulking, in-kind repainting, staining or refinishing of wood or metal elements, lighting bulb replacements or in-kind glass repair/replacement, etc.
    - b. For landscape maintenance, such activities might include the following: normal cleaning of paths and sidewalks, etc. (no power washing above 700 PSI, no chemical or abrasive cleaning), non-invasive inspections, in-kind repair of caulking, in-kind spot replacement of cracked or broken paving materials, in-kind repainting or refinishing of site furnishings, site lighting bulb replacements or in-kind glass repair/replacement, normal plant material maintenance, such as pruning, fertilizing, mowing and mulching, and in-kind replacement of existing plant materials, etc.
  2. Routine activities associated with special events or seasonal decorations which do not disturb the ground surface, are to remain in place for less than six weeks, and do not result in any permanent alteration or attached fixtures.
- B. Activities which may be determined by the staff to be eligible for a Certificate of Exemption or Administrative Review, requiring an application to the Commission:
1. Maintenance and repairs involving no change in design, material, color, ground surface or outward appearance.
  2. In-kind replacement or repair.
  3. Phased restoration programs will require an application to the Commission and may require full Commission review of the entire project plan and specifications; subsequent detailed review of individual construction phases may be eligible for Administrative Review by BLC staff.
  4. Repair projects of a repetitive nature will require an application to the Commission and may require full Commission review; subsequent review of these projects may be eligible for Administrative Review by BLC staff, where design, details, and specifications do not vary from those previously approved.
  5. Temporary installations or alterations that are to remain in place for longer than six weeks.
  6. Emergency repairs that require temporary tarps, board-ups, etc. may be eligible for Certificate of Exemption or Administrative Review; permanent

repairs will require review as outlined in Section 8.2. In the case of emergencies, BLC staff should be notified as soon as possible to assist in evaluating the damage and to help expedite repair permits as necessary.

C. Activities requiring an application and full Commission review:

Reconstruction, restoration, replacement, demolition, or alteration involving change in design, material, color, location, or outward appearance, such as: New construction of any type, removal of existing features or elements, major planting or removal of trees or shrubs, or changes in landforms.

D. Activities not explicitly listed above:

In the case of any activity not explicitly covered in these Standards and Criteria, the Landmarks staff shall determine whether an application is required and if so, whether it shall be an application for a Certificate of Design Approval or Certificate of Exemption.

E. Concurrent Jurisdiction

In some cases, issues which fall under the jurisdiction of the Landmarks Commission may also fall under the jurisdiction of other city, state and federal boards and commissions such as the Boston Art Commission, the Massachusetts Historical Commission, the National Park Service and others. All efforts will be made to expedite the review process. Whenever possible and appropriate, a joint staff review or joint hearing will be arranged.

### **8.3 Standards and Criteria**

The following Standards and Criteria are based on the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties.<sup>54</sup> These Standards and Criteria apply to all exterior building alterations that are visible from any existing or proposed street or way that is open to public travel.

#### **8.3.1 General Standards**

1. Items under Commission review include but are not limited to the following: exterior walls (masonry, wood, and architectural metals); windows; entrances/doors; porches/stoops; lighting; storefronts; curtain walls; roofs; roof projections; additions; accessibility; site work and landscaping; demolition; and archaeology. Items not anticipated in the Standards and Criteria may be subject to review, refer to Section 8.2 and Section 9.

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<sup>54</sup> U.S. Department of the Interior, et al. *THE SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR'S STANDARDS FOR THE TREATMENT OF HISTORIC PROPERTIES WITH GUIDELINES FOR PRESERVING, REHABILITATING, RESTORING & RECONSTRUCTING HISTORIC BUILDINGS*, Secretary of the Interior, 2017, [www.nps.gov/tps/standards/treatment-guidelines-2017.pdf](http://www.nps.gov/tps/standards/treatment-guidelines-2017.pdf).

2. The historic character of a property shall be retained and preserved. The removal of distinctive materials or alterations of features, spaces and spatial relationships that characterize a property shall be avoided. See Section 8.4, List of Character-defining Features.
3. Each property shall be recognized as a physical record of its time, place and use. Changes that create a false sense of historical development, such as adding conjectural features or elements from other historic properties, shall not be undertaken.
4. Changes to a property that have acquired historic significance in their own right shall be retained and preserved. (The term “later contributing features” will be used to convey this concept.)
5. Distinctive materials, features, finishes and construction techniques or examples of craftsmanship that characterize a property shall be preserved.
6. Deteriorated historic features shall be repaired rather than replaced. Where the severity of deterioration requires replacement of a distinctive feature, the new material shall match the old in design, color, texture and, where possible, materials. Replacement of missing features will be substantiated by documentary and physical evidence.
7. Chemical or physical treatments, if appropriate, shall be undertaken using the gentlest means possible. Treatments that cause damage to historic materials shall not be used.
8. Staff archaeologists shall review proposed changes to a property that may impact known and potential archaeological sites. Archaeological surveys may be required to determine if significant archaeological deposits are present within the area of proposed work. Significant archaeological resources shall be protected and preserved in place. If such resources must be disturbed, mitigation measures will be required before the proposed work can commence. See section 9.0 Archaeology.
9. New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction shall not destroy historic materials, features, and spatial relationships that characterize a property. The new work shall be differentiated from the old and shall be compatible with the historic materials, features, size, scale and proportion, and massing to protect the integrity of a property and its environment.
10. New additions and adjacent or related new construction shall be undertaken in such a manner that, if removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the historic property and its environment would be unimpaired.
11. Original or later contributing signs, marquees, and canopies integral to the building ornamentation or architectural detailing shall be preserved.
12. New signs, banners, marquees, canopies, and awnings shall be compatible in size, design, material, location, and number with the character of the building, allowing for

contemporary expression. New signs shall not detract from the essential form of the building nor obscure its architectural features.

13. Property owners shall take necessary precautions to prevent demolition by neglect of maintenance and repairs. Demolition of protected buildings in violation of Chapter 772 of the Acts of 1975, as amended, is subject to penalty as cited in Section 10 of Chapter 772 of the Acts of 1975, as amended.

### **8.3.2 Masonry at exterior walls (including but not limited to stone, brick, terra cotta, concrete, adobe, stucco, and mortar)**

1. All original or later contributing masonry materials shall be preserved.
2. Original or later contributing masonry materials, features, details, surfaces and ornamentation shall be repaired, if necessary, by patching, splicing, consolidating, or otherwise reinforcing the masonry using recognized preservation methods.
3. Deteriorated or missing masonry materials, features, details, surfaces, and ornamentation shall be replaced with materials and elements which match the original in material, color, texture, size, shape, profile, and detail of installation.
4. When replacement of materials or elements is necessary, it should be based on physical or documentary evidence.
5. If the same material is not technically or economically feasible, then compatible substitute materials may be considered.
6. Sound original mortar shall be retained.
7. Deteriorated mortar shall be carefully removed by hand raking the joints.
8. Use of mechanical hammers shall not be allowed. Use of mechanical saws may be allowed on a case-by-case basis.
9. Repointing mortar shall duplicate the original mortar in strength, composition, color, texture, joint size, joint profile, and method of application.
10. Sample panels of raking the joints and repointing shall be reviewed and approved by the staff of the Boston Landmarks Commission.
11. Cleaning of masonry is discouraged and should only be performed when necessary to halt deterioration.
12. If the building is to be cleaned, the masonry shall be cleaned with the gentlest method possible.
13. A test patch of the cleaning method(s) shall be reviewed and approved on site by staff of the Boston Landmarks Commission to ensure that no damage has resulted. Test patches

- shall be carried out well in advance. Ideally, the test patch should be monitored over a sufficient period of time to allow long-range effects to be predicted (including exposure to all seasons if possible).
14. Sandblasting (wet or dry), wire brushing, or other similar abrasive cleaning methods shall not be permitted. Doing so can change the visual quality of the material and damage the surface of the masonry and mortar joints.
  15. Waterproofing or water repellents are strongly discouraged. These treatments are generally not effective in preserving masonry and can cause permanent damage. The Commission does recognize that in extraordinary circumstances their use may be required to solve a specific problem. Samples of any proposed treatment shall be reviewed by the Commission before application.
  16. In general, painting masonry surfaces shall not be allowed. Painting masonry surfaces will be considered only when there is documentary evidence that this treatment was used at some significant point in the history of the property.
  17. New penetrations for attachments through masonry are strongly discouraged. When necessary, attachment details shall be located in mortar joints, rather than through masonry material; stainless steel hardware is recommended to prevent rust jacking. New attachments to cast concrete are discouraged and will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis.
  18. Deteriorated stucco shall be repaired by removing the damaged material and patching with new stucco that duplicates the old in strength, composition, color, and texture.
  19. Deteriorated adobe shall be repaired by using mud plaster or a compatible lime-plaster adobe render, when appropriate.
  20. Deteriorated concrete shall be repaired by cutting damaged concrete back to remove the source of deterioration, such as corrosion on metal reinforcement bars. The new patch shall be applied carefully so that it will bond satisfactorily with and match the historic concrete.
  21. Joints in concrete shall be sealed with appropriate flexible sealants and backer rods, when necessary.

### **8.3.3 Wood at exterior walls**

1. All original or later contributing wood materials shall be preserved.
2. Original or later contributing wood surfaces, features, details, and ornamentation shall be retained and, if necessary, repaired by patching, piecing-in, consolidating, or reinforcing the wood using recognized preservation methods.

3. Deteriorated or missing wood surfaces, features, details, and ornamentation shall be replaced with material and elements which match the original in material, color, texture, size, shape, profile, and detail or installation.
4. When replacement of materials is necessary, it should be based on physical or documentary evidence.
5. If using the same material is not technically or economically feasible, then compatible substitute materials may be considered.
6. Cleaning of wood elements shall use the gentlest method possible.
7. Paint removal should be considered only where there is paint surface deterioration or excessive layers of paint have coarsened profile details and as part of an overall maintenance program which involves repainting or applying other appropriate protective coatings. Coatings such as paint help protect the wood from moisture and ultraviolet light; stripping the wood bare will expose the surface to the effects of weathering.
8. Damaged or deteriorated paint should be removed to the next sound layer using the mildest method possible.
9. Propane or butane torches, sandblasting, water blasting, or other abrasive cleaning and/or paint removal methods shall not be permitted. Doing so changes the visual quality of the wood and accelerates deterioration.
10. Repainting should be based on paint seriation studies. If an adequate record does not exist, repainting shall be done with colors that are appropriate to the style and period of the building.

**8.3.4 Architectural metals at exterior walls (including but not limited to wrought and cast iron, steel, pressed metal, terneplate, copper, aluminum, and zinc)**

1. All original or later contributing architectural metals shall be preserved.
2. Original or later contributing metal materials, features, details, and ornamentation shall be retained and, if necessary, repaired by patching, splicing, or reinforcing the metal using recognized preservation methods.
3. Deteriorated or missing metal materials, features, details, and ornamentation shall be replaced with material and elements which match the original in material, color, texture, size, shape, profile, and detail or installation.
4. When replacement of materials or elements is necessary, it should be based on physical or documentary evidence.
5. If using the same material is not technically or economically feasible, then compatible substitute materials may be considered.



6. Cleaning of metal elements either to remove corrosion or deteriorated paint shall use the gentlest method possible.
7. The type of metal shall be identified prior to any cleaning procedure because each metal has its own properties and may require a different treatment.
8. Non-corrosive chemical methods shall be used to clean soft metals (such as lead, tinplate, terneplate, copper, and zinc) whose finishes can be easily damaged by abrasive methods.
9. If gentler methods have proven ineffective, then abrasive cleaning methods, such as low pressure dry grit blasting, may be allowed for hard metals (such as cast iron, wrought iron, and steel) as long as it does not abrade or damage the surface.
10. A test patch of the cleaning method(s) shall be reviewed and approved on site by staff of the Boston Landmarks Commission to ensure that no damage has resulted. Test patches shall be carried out well in advance. Ideally, the test patch should be monitored over a sufficient period of time to allow long-range effects to be predicted (including exposure to all seasons if possible).
11. Cleaning to remove corrosion and paint removal should be considered only where there is deterioration and as part of an overall maintenance program which involves repainting or applying other appropriate protective coatings. Paint or other coatings help retard the corrosion rate of the metal. Leaving the metal bare will expose the surface to accelerated corrosion.
12. Repainting should be based on paint seriation studies. If an adequate record does not exist, repainting shall be done with colors that are appropriate to the style and period of the building.

### **8.3.5 Windows (also refer to Masonry, Wood, and Architectural Metals)**

1. The original or later contributing arrangement of window openings shall be retained.
2. Enlarging or reducing window openings for the purpose of fitting stock (larger or smaller) window sash or air conditioners shall not be allowed.
3. Removal of window sash and the installation of permanent fixed panels to accommodate air conditioners shall not be allowed.
4. Original or later contributing window elements, features (functional and decorative), details, and ornamentation shall be retained and, if necessary, repaired by patching, splicing, consolidating, or otherwise reinforcing using recognized preservation methods.
5. Deteriorated or missing window elements, features (functional and decorative), details, and ornamentation shall be replaced with material and elements which match the

- original in material, color, texture, size, shape, profile, configuration, and detail of installation.
6. When replacement is necessary, it should be based on physical or documentary evidence.
  7. Replacement sash for divided-light windows should have through-glass muntins or simulated divided lights with dark anodized spacer bars the same width as the muntins.
  8. Tinted or reflective-coated glass shall not be allowed.
  9. Metal or vinyl panning of the wood frame and molding shall not be allowed.
  10. Exterior combination storm windows shall have a narrow perimeter framing that does not obscure the glazing of the primary window. In addition, the meeting rail of the combination storm window shall align with that of the primary window.
  11. Storm window sashes and frames shall have a painted finish that matches the primary window sash and frame color.
  12. Clear or mill finished aluminum frames shall not be allowed.
  13. Window frames, sashes, and, if appropriate, shutters, should be of a color based on paint seriation studies. If an adequate record does not exist, repainting shall be done with colors that are appropriate to the style and period of the building.

#### **8.3.6 Entrances/Doors (also refer to Masonry, Wood, Architectural Metals, and Porches/Stoops)**

1. All original or later contributing entrance elements shall be preserved.
2. The original or later contributing entrance design and arrangement of the door openings shall be retained.
3. Enlarging or reducing entrance/door openings for the purpose of fitting stock (larger or smaller) doors shall not be allowed.
4. Original or later contributing entrance materials, elements, details and features (functional and decorative) shall be retained and, if necessary, repaired by patching, splicing, consolidating or otherwise reinforcing using recognized preservation methods.
5. Deteriorated or missing entrance elements, materials, features (function and decorative) and details shall be replaced with material and elements which match the original in material, color, texture, size, shape, profile, configuration and detail of installation.
6. When replacement is necessary, it should be based on physical or documentary evidence.

7. If using the same material is not technically or economically feasible, then compatible substitute materials may be considered.
8. Original or later contributing entrance materials, elements, features (functional and decorative) and details shall not be sheathed or otherwise obscured by other materials.
9. Storm doors (aluminum or wood-framed) shall not be allowed on the primary entrance unless evidence shows that they had been used. They may be allowed on secondary entrances. Where allowed, storm doors shall be painted to match the color of the primary door.
10. Unfinished aluminum storm doors shall not be allowed.
11. Replacement door hardware should replicate the original or be appropriate to the style and period of the building.
12. Buzzers, alarms and intercom panels, where allowed, shall be flush mounted and appropriately located.
13. Entrance elements should be of a color based on paint seriation studies. If an adequate record does not exist, repainting shall be done with colors that are appropriate to the style and period of the building/entrance.

**8.3.7 Porches/Stoops (also refer to Masonry, Wood, Architectural Metals, Entrances/Doors, Roofs, and Accessibility)**

1. All original or later contributing porch elements shall be preserved.
2. Original or later contributing porch and stoop materials, elements, features (functional and decorative), details and ornamentation shall be retained if possible and, if necessary, repaired using recognized preservation methods.
3. Deteriorated or missing porch and stoop materials, elements, features (functional and decorative), details and ornamentation shall be replaced with material and elements which match the original in material, color, texture, size, shape, profile, configuration and detail of installation.
4. When replacement is necessary, it should be based on physical or documentary evidence.
5. If using the same material is not technically or economically feasible, then compatible substitute material may be considered.
6. Original or later contributing porch and stoop materials, elements, features (functional and decorative), details and ornamentation shall not be sheathed or otherwise obscured by other materials.

7. Porch and stoop elements should be of a color based on paint seriation studies. If an adequate record does not exist repainting shall be done with colors that are appropriate to the style and period of the building/porch and stoop.

### **8.3.8 Lighting**

1. There are several aspects of lighting related to the exterior of the building and landscape:
  - a. Lighting fixtures as appurtenances to the building or elements of architectural ornamentation.
  - b. Quality of illumination on building exterior.
  - c. Security lighting.
2. Wherever integral to the building, original or later contributing lighting fixtures shall be retained and, if necessary, repaired by patching, piercing in or reinforcing the lighting fixture using recognized preservation methods.
3. Deteriorated or missing lighting fixtures materials, elements, features (functional and decorative), details, and ornamentation shall be replaced with material and elements which match the original in material, color, texture, size, shape, profile, configuration, and detail of installation.
4. When replacement is necessary, it should be based on physical or documentary evidence.
5. If using the same material is not technically or economically feasible, then compatible substitute materials may be considered.
6. Original or later contributing lighting fixture materials, elements, features (functional and decorative), details, and ornamentation shall not be sheathed or otherwise obscured by other materials.
7. Supplementary illumination may be added where appropriate to the current use of the building.
8. New lighting shall conform to any of the following approaches as appropriate to the building and to the current or projected use:
  - a. Reproductions of original or later contributing fixtures, based on physical or documentary evidence.
  - b. Accurate representation of the original period, based on physical or documentary evidence.
  - c. Retention or restoration of fixtures which date from an interim installation and which are considered to be appropriate to the building and use.

- d. New lighting fixtures which are differentiated from the original or later contributing fixture in design and which illuminate the exterior of the building in a way which renders it visible at night and compatible with its environment.
9. The location of new exterior lighting shall fulfill the functional intent of the current use without obscuring the building form or architectural detailing.
10. No exposed conduit shall be allowed on the building.
11. Architectural night lighting is encouraged, provided the lighting installations minimize night sky light pollution. High efficiency fixtures, lamps and automatic timers are recommended.
12. On-site mock-ups of proposed architectural night lighting may be required. remove?

### **8.3.9 Roofs (also refer to Masonry, Wood, Architectural Metals, and Roof Projections)**

1. The roof forms and original or later contributing roof material of the existing building shall be preserved.
2. Original or later contributing roofing materials such as slate, wood trim, elements, features (decorative and functional), details and ornamentation, such as cresting, shall be retained and, if necessary, repaired by patching or reinforcing using recognized preservation methods.
3. Deteriorated or missing roofing materials, elements, features (functional and decorative), details and ornamentation shall be replaced with material and elements which match the original in material, color, texture, size, shape, profile, configuration and detail of installation.
4. When replacement is necessary, it should be based on physical or documentary evidence.
5. If using the same material is not technically or economically feasible, then compatible substitute material may be considered.
6. Original or later contributing roofing materials, elements, features (functional and decorative), details and ornamentation shall not be sheathed or otherwise obscured by other materials.
7. Unpainted mill-finished aluminum shall not be allowed for flashing, gutters and downspouts. All replacement flashing and gutters should be copper or match the original material and design (integral gutters shall not be replaced with surface-mounted).
8. External gutters and downspouts should not be allowed unless it is based on physical or documentary evidence.

**8.3.10 Roof Projections (includes satellite dishes, antennas and other communication devices, louvers, vents, chimneys, and chimney caps; also refer to Masonry, Wood, Architectural Metals, and Roofs)**

1. New roof projections shall not be visible from the public way.
2. New mechanical equipment should be reviewed to confirm that it is no more visible than the existing.

**8.3.11 Additions**

1. Additions can significantly alter the historic appearance of the buildings. An exterior addition should only be considered after it has been determined that the existing building cannot meet the new space requirements.
2. New additions shall be designed so that the character-defining features of the building are not radically changed, obscured, damaged or destroyed.
3. New additions should be designed so that they are compatible with the existing building, although they should not necessarily be imitative of an earlier style or period.
4. New additions shall not obscure the front of the building.
5. New additions shall be of a size, scale, and materials that are in harmony with the existing building.

**8.3.12 Accessibility**

1. Alterations to existing buildings for the purposes of providing accessibility shall provide persons with disabilities the level of physical access to historic properties that is required under applicable law, consistent with the preservation of each property's significant historical features, with the goal of providing the highest level of access with the lowest level of impact. Access modifications for persons with disabilities shall be designed and installed to least affect the character-defining features of the property. Modifications to some features may be allowed in providing access, once a review of options for the highest level of access has been completed.
2. A three-step approach is recommended to identify and implement accessibility modifications that will protect the integrity and historic character of the property:
  - a. Review the historical significance of the property and identify character-defining features;
  - b. Assess the property's existing and proposed level of accessibility;
  - c. Evaluate accessibility options within a preservation context.
3. Because of the complex nature of accessibility, the Commission will review proposals on a case-by-case basis. The Commission recommends consulting with the following document which is available from the Commission office: U.S. Department of the

Interior, National Park Service, Cultural Resources, Preservation Assistance Division; Preservation Brief 32 “Making Historic Properties Accessible” by Thomas C. Jester and Sharon C. Park, AIA.

### **8.3.13 Renewable Energy Sources**

1. Renewable energy sources, including but not limited to solar energy, are encouraged for the site.
2. Before proposing renewable energy sources, the building’s performance shall be assessed and measures to correct any deficiencies shall be taken. The emphasis shall be on improvements that do not result in a loss of historic fabric. A report on this work shall be included in any proposal for renewable energy sources.
3. Proposals for new renewable energy sources shall be reviewed by the Commission on a case-by-case basis for potential physical and visual impacts on the building and site.
4. Refer to the Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for Rehabilitation & Illustrated Guidelines on Sustainability for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings for general guidelines.

### **8.3.14 Building Site**

1. The general intent is to preserve the existing or later contributing site and landscape features that enhance the property.
2. It is recognized that often the environment surrounding the property has character, scale and street pattern quite different from what existed when the building was constructed. Thus, changes must frequently be made to accommodate the new condition, and the landscape treatment can be seen as a transition between the historic property and its newer surroundings.
3. All original or later contributing features of the building site that are important in defining its overall historic character shall be retained and, if necessary, repaired using recognized preservation methods. This may include but is not limited to walls, fences, steps, walkways, paths, roads, vegetation, landforms, furnishings and fixtures, decorative elements, and water features. (See section 9.0 for subsurface features such as archaeological resources or burial grounds.)
4. Deteriorated or missing site features shall be replaced with material and elements which match the original in material, color, texture, size, shape, profile, configuration and detail of installation.
5. When replacement is necessary, it should be based on physical or documentary evidence.
6. If using the same material is not technically or economically feasible, then compatible substitute material may be considered.

7. The existing landforms of the site shall not be altered unless shown to be necessary for maintenance of the designated property's structure or site.
8. If there are areas where the terrain is to be altered, these areas shall be surveyed and documented to determine the potential impact to important landscape features.
9. The historic relationship between buildings and the landscape shall be retained. Grade levels should not be changed if it would alter the historic appearance of the building and its relation to the site.
10. Buildings should not be relocated if it would diminish the historic character of the site.
11. When they are required by a new use, new site features (such as parking areas, driveways, or access ramps) should be as unobtrusive as possible, retain the historic relationship between the building or buildings and the landscape, and be compatible with the historic character of the property. Historic rock outcroppings like puddingstone should not be disturbed by the construction of new site features.
12. Original or later contributing layout and materials of the walks, steps, and paved areas shall be maintained. Consideration will be given to alterations if it can be shown that better site circulation is necessary and that the alterations will improve this without altering the integrity of the designated property.
13. When they are necessary for security, protective fencing, bollards, and stanchions should be as unobtrusive as possible.
14. Existing healthy plant materials which are in keeping with the historic character of the property shall be maintained. New plant materials should be appropriate to the character of the site.
15. Maintenance of, removal of, and additions to plant materials should consider restoration of views of the designated property.
16. The Boston Landmarks Commission encourages removal of non-historic fencing as documentary evidence indicates.
17. The Boston Landmarks Commission recognizes that the designated property must continue to meet city, state, and federal goals and requirements for resiliency and safety within an ever-changing coastal flood zone and environment.

### **8.3.15 Guidelines**

The following are additional Guidelines for the treatment of the historic property:

1. Should any major restoration or construction activity be considered for a property, the Boston Landmarks Commission recommends that the proponents prepare a historic building conservation study and/or consult a materials conservator early in the planning process.



- a. The Boston Landmarks Commission specifically recommends that any work on masonry, wood, metals, or windows be executed with the guidance of a professional building materials conservator.
2. Should any major restoration or construction activity be considered for a property's landscape, the Boston Landmarks Commission recommends that the proponents prepare a historic landscape report and/or consult a landscape historian early in the planning process.
  3. The Commission will consider whether later addition(s) and/or alteration(s) can, or should, be removed. Since it is not possible to provide one general guideline, the following factors will be considered in determining whether a later addition(s) and/or alteration(s) can, or should, be removed include:
    - a. Compatibility with the original property's integrity in scale, materials and character.
    - b. Historic association with the property.
    - c. Quality in the design and execution of the addition/alteration.
    - d. Functional usefulness.

#### **8.4 List of Character-defining Features**

Character-defining features are the significant observable and experiential aspects of a historic resource, whether a single building, landscape, or multi-property historic district, that define its architectural power and personality. These are the features that should be identified, retained, and preserved in any restoration or rehabilitation scheme in order to protect the resource's integrity.

Character-defining elements include, for example, the overall shape of a building and its materials, craftsmanship, decorative details and features, as well as the various aspects of its site and environment. They are critically important considerations whenever preservation work is contemplated. Inappropriate changes to historic features can undermine the historical and architectural significance of the resource, sometimes irreparably.

Below is a list that identifies the physical elements that contribute to the unique character of the historic resource. The items listed in this section should be considered important aspects of the historic resource and changes to them should be approved by commissioners only after careful consideration.

The character-defining features for this historic resource include:

1. **Architectural style:** Federal style
2. **Ornamentation:** molded wood cornice; molded wood window surrounds; Federal-style main entry door surround consisting of side lights and fanlights with reproduction plain wood entablature and Tuscan pilasters based on historic photograph documentation
3. **Building materials and finishes:** common-bond brick end walls; wood clapboards; plain wood corner boards

4. **Roof type, forms, and features:** low-pitched, side-gable roof flush with brick end walls; interior brick end chimneys; pedimented gabled dormers
5. **Cornices:** molded wood cornice on façade and north (rear) elevation
6. **Doors and windows:** six-panel wood door with sidelights and elliptical fanlight; double-hung, six-over-six wood windows
7. **Steps and/or stoops:** granite stoop at front entry
8. **Massing of building:** oblong form (symmetrical, five-bay, center-hall, single-pile); rear ell; third story
9. **Relationship of building to lot lines, sidewalks, and streets:** full-width orientation to Union Street; siting immediately abutting the sidewalks on Union and Lawrence streets
10. **Rear Ell:** rectangular two story ell with a gabled roof aligned with the edge of the property on Lawrence Street. (The later 20th century shed roof addition to the ell is sympathetic in materials but not character-defining.)
11. **Rear Yard:** an open space at the rear of the main house and to the east of the ell. The open space is partially filled in by the 20th century addition to the rear ell. Brick pavers are the predominant surface of the open space.

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## 9.0 ARCHAEOLOGY

All below-ground work within the property shall be reviewed by the Boston Landmarks Commission and City Archaeologist to determine if work may impact known or potential archaeological resources. An archaeological survey shall be conducted if archaeological sensitivity exists and if impacts to known or potential archaeological resources cannot be mitigated after consultation with the City Archaeologist. All archaeological mitigation (monitoring, survey, excavation, etc.) shall be conducted by a professional archaeologist. The professional archaeologist should meet the Secretary of the Interior's Professional Qualifications Standards for Archaeology.

The Apollos Field House is archaeologically sensitive due to its location within the 17th century Massachusetts town of Mishawum and early Colonial settlement and continual use through the present. The western shore of Charlestown, especially the area around what is today the Bunker Hill Community College, was the 17th century Massachusetts village of Mishawum and its burying place. As such, nearly all of the neighborhood has the potential to contain intact archaeological deposits.

The open spaces within the property are especially sensitive for preserved archaeological deposits. Any changes to the property that include ground disturbance, even temporary, shall be reviewed by the City Archaeologist for potential impacts to known or potentially significant archaeological deposits. Mitigation may include avoidance, archaeological mitigation prior to proposed work beginning, and/or monitoring of construction by a professional archaeologist. The City Archaeologist also recommends consultation with the Massachusetts Tribe at Ponkapoag regarding proposed landscape changes in the property.

Refer to Section 8.3 for any additional Standards and Criteria that may apply.

## **10.0 SEVERABILITY**

The provisions of these Standards and Criteria (Design Guidelines) are severable and if any of their provisions shall be held invalid in any circumstances, such invalidity shall not affect any other provisions or circumstances.

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All archaeological reports are on file at the Massachusetts Historical Commission and available by appointment to qualified researchers.



# **APPENDIX A**

# **The James and Sophia Goodell Fosdick House – 8 Lawrence Street**

## **LOCATION**

### **1.1 Address**

8 Lawrence Street, Charlestown (Boston), MA 02129

### **1.2 Assessor's Parcel Number**

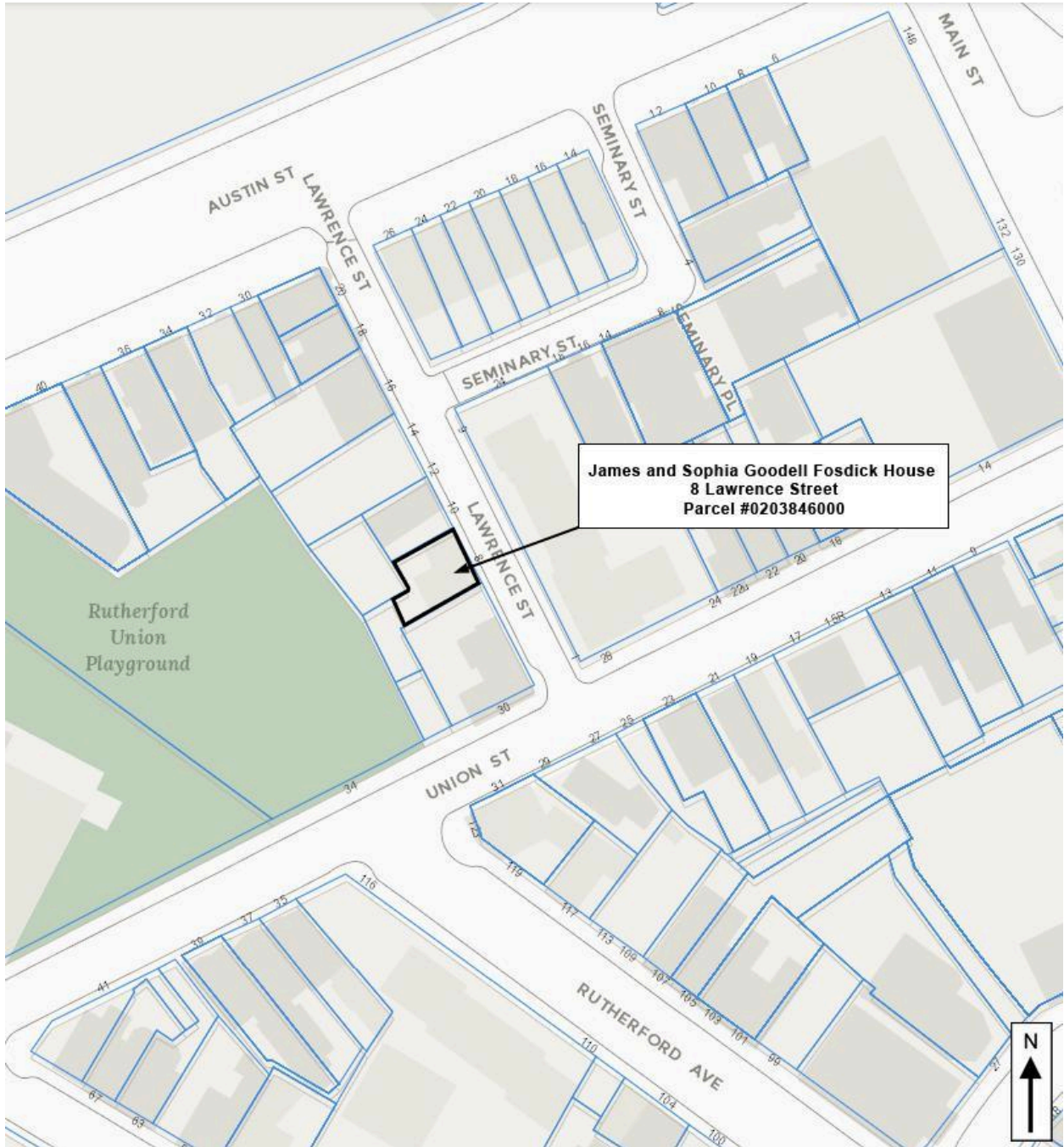
0203846000

### **1.3 Area in which Property is Located**

The James and Sophia Goodell Fosdick House, 8 Lawrence Street, was on the west side of Lawrence Street in the Union/Washington Streets section of Charlestown, a neighborhood in north Boston. Neighboring properties on the streets to the north, east, and south consist of a mix of early to mid-nineteenth-century single-family dwellings and mid- to late twentieth-century multi-family apartment buildings and townhouses. The neighborhood generally consists of level terrain that slopes down to the north, east, south, and west from high ground at the intersection of Union and Washington streets. The Fosdick House occupied a single parcel with frontage on Lawrence Street centered within the roughly wedge-shaped block formed by Austin, Lawrence, and Union streets and Rutherford Avenue. A low-rise, L-shaped brick apartment building that comprises part of the General Warren Apartments complex owned and operated by the Boston Housing Authority occupies a large rectangular parcel on the east side of Lawrence Street directly opposite the subject property. The Rutherford Union Playground and the Emmons Horrigan O'Neill Memorial Rink abut the subject property to the west. Austin Street to the north has dense commercial development and is dominated by the Bunker Hill Mall, which occupies most of the block formed by West School, Main, and Austin streets and New Rutherford Avenue.

The property is not located within any National Register-listed historic districts or historic areas previously identified by the Massachusetts Historical Commission (MHC). Five National Register historic districts and individually listed properties, however, are located within a one-quarter-mile radius of the subject property, including Town Hill Historic District (NRDIS 1973), the Bunker Hill Monument (NHL 1961, NRDIS 1961), the Phipps Street Burying Ground (NRDIS 1974), the Francis B. Austin House (NRDIS 1988), and Roughan Hall (NRIDS 1982).

## 1.4 Map Showing Location



**Figure 1.** Map showing the boundaries of the ACD, consisting of parcel numbers 0203847000 and 0203846000.

## 2.0 DESCRIPTION

### 2.1 Type and Use

The James and Sophia Goodell Fosdick House, 8 Lawrence Street, was built between 1813 and 1845, most likely in 1813–1814, as the primary residence of James Fosdick (1789–1854) and Sophia (née Goodell) Fosdick (d. 1833). The house continued to function as a single-family residence into the twenty-first century. It was vacant by June 2022, when it was demolished.

### 2.2 Physical Description of the Resource

The James and Sophia Goodell Fosdick House, 8 Lawrence Street, occupied a flat site encompassing 1,574 square feet, approximately 72 feet north of the intersection of Lawrence and Union streets. The L-shaped parcel abuts a mix of single- and multi-family dwellings to the north, east, and south, and the Rutherford Union Playground to the west. The house faced northeast on Lawrence Street immediately abutting the sidewalk. A modern vinyl privacy fence extended from the south (side) elevation of the dwelling along the south boundary of the property to the Rutherford Union Playground, and a modern wrought iron fence extended from the north (side) elevation of the dwelling to the neighboring house at 10 Lawrence Street. Landscaping was limited to a patio paved with concrete blocks at the rear of the parcel behind the dwelling.

The building was a symmetrical, two-story, five-bay-by-one-bay, wood-frame, vernacular Federal-style dwelling built between 1813 and 1845, likely in 1813–1814. The house had a shallow-pitched side-gable roof constructed of heavy, principal rafters with king post trussing covered in asphalt shingles (Figure 4). Two interior brick chimneys set within parapeted brick walls framed the roof on the north and south (side) elevations. The roof had minimal eaves and a flush rake obscured by modern round metal gutters. Any original trim or cornice had been removed. The walls were clad in wood shingles on the east (façade) and west (rear) elevations. The foundation, likely constructed of brick, was parged. There was a two-story, one-bay-wide, L-shaped addition, built ca. 1957, off of the west (rear) elevation.

The façade largely retained a typical Federal-style arrangement, consisting of a center-hall single entry flanked by windows on each side and five symmetrically placed windows above, though the first-story fenestration pattern had been altered in the mid- to late twentieth century. The entry consisted of a modern paneled wood door pierced by an oval light and sheltered by a flat hood. Brick steps with cast stone treads provided access to the front entry. Replacement three-part bay windows consisting of fixed and double-hung, one-over-one vinyl sash occupied the outer two bays on the first story of the façade. A modern hexagonal fixed vinyl window was centered on the second story of the façade above the front entry and flanked by two windows containing replacement double-hung, one-over-one vinyl sash to the north and south. A single window containing replacement double-hung, one-over-one vinyl sash was located on the first and second stories of the south (side) elevation at the front of the building. There were no windows on the north (side) elevation. All replacement window sash had been installed in the late twentieth or early twenty-first century.

The addition on the west elevation projected west from the two southmost bays. It consisted of a two-story, one-bay-by-two-bay, rectangular block topped by a flat roof and an attached one-story, one-bay-by-one-bay, shed-roof ell extending from the north (side) elevation. The addition was clad with wood shingles and a single window opening at each story on the south (side) elevation and two window openings at the second story on the west (rear) elevation above a modern sliding glass door. The foundation was not visible.

The James and Sophia Goodell House had undergone several major alterations since its construction. Although the building's main block retained its original orientation, form, and massing, the original fenestration pattern on the façade had been altered by the removal of the original first-story windows and the installation of three-part bay windows in the mid- to late twentieth century. The hexagonal second-story window and wood shingle cladding were likely installed during this period. The original front entry was also altered, and any original ornamentation or window and door trim was removed. Building permits and historic maps indicate that an early- to mid-nineteenth-century, one-and-one-half-story, wood-frame rear ell was removed in 1957 and replaced with a two-story, L-shaped addition. Replacement vinyl windows were installed throughout the dwelling in the late twentieth or early twenty-first century. Although the interior was not examined, the first-story fenestration pattern on the façade indicated that the original center-hall, single-pile layout had been altered.

### 2.3 Contemporary Images



**Photo 1.** 8 Lawrence Street (May 2022), northeast (façade) and southeast (side) elevations, looking northwest.



**Photo 2.** 8 Lawrence Street (May 2022) northeast (façade) and northwest (side) elevations, looking south with 30 Union Street behind.

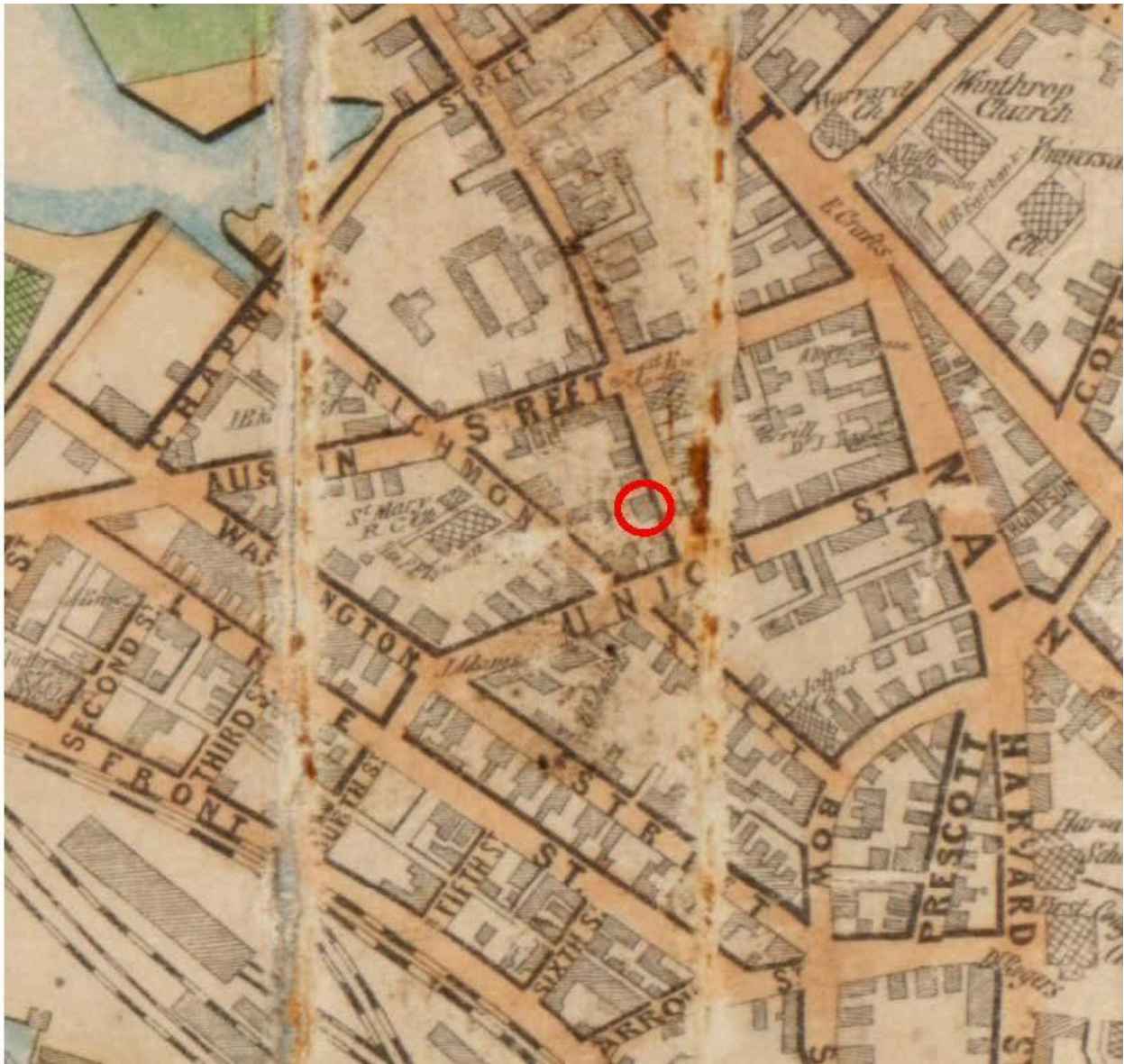


**Photo 3.** 8 Lawrence Street (May 2022), southeast elevation and rear addition, looking north.



**Photo 4.** 8 Lawrence Street (May 2022, during demolition), view of roof truss system and second-story rooms, looking north.

## 2.4 Historic Maps and Images

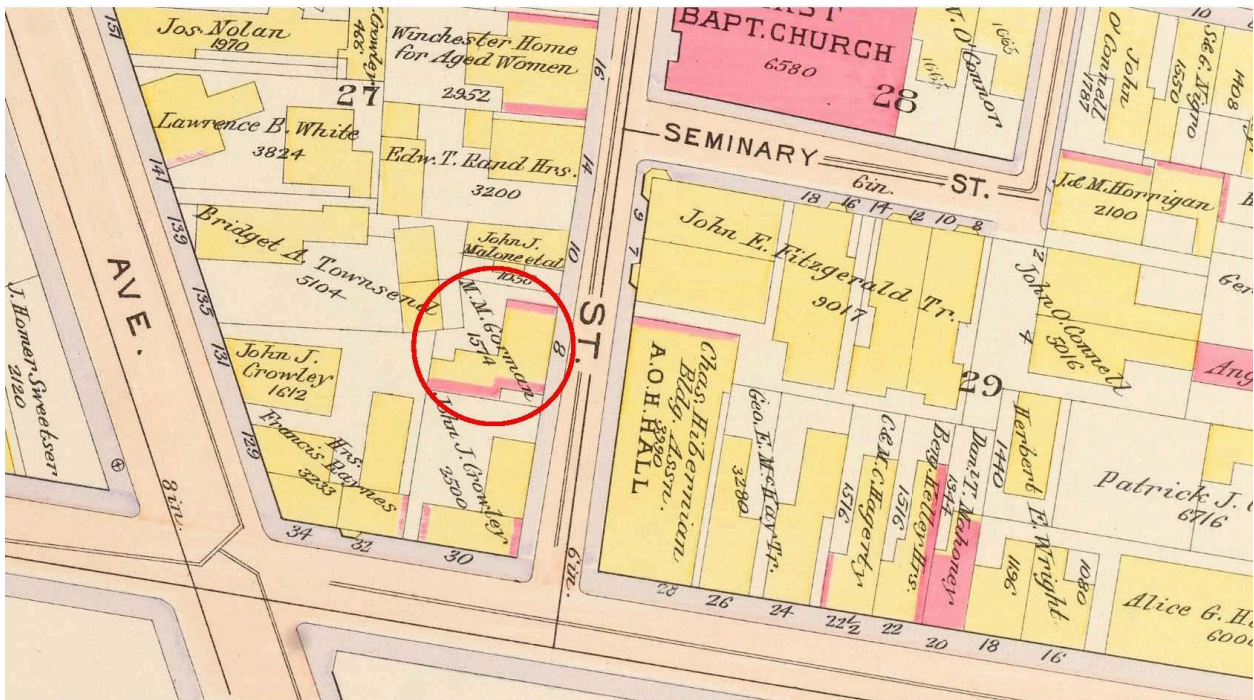


**Figure 2.** Detail from *Map of the City of Boston and Immediate Neighborhood* showing the location of the James and Sophia Goodell Fosdick House (circled in red) (McIntyre 1852).





**Figure 4.** Detail from an Insurance Map of Charlestown showing the James and Sophia Goodell Fosdick House (circled in red) (Sanborn 1868).



**Figure 5.** Detail from an Atlas of Charlestown and East Boston showing the James and Sophia Goodell Fosdick House (circled in red) (Bromley 1912).

## 3.0 SIGNIFICANCE

### 3.1 Historic Significance

Charlestown was originally founded in 1629 and settled in 1630 around Town Hill, near its southern peninsula. The neighborhood's extant physical history begins with the burning of the town by British forces during the Battle of Bunker Hill on June 17, 1775. Its rebuilding began in earnest in the 1780s, as ruined lots were cleared, streets amended, and new public buildings erected.<sup>55</sup> During the 20 years between 1785 and 1805, the population of Charlestown increased from 999 to 2,800. By 1810, this number exceeded 4,700.<sup>56</sup>

Charlestown's waterfront was initially rebuilt in the late eighteenth century with wharves and rope walks, including one owned by Captain Archibald McNeill (b. 1747) at Lynde's (later Prison) Point on the Charles River Bay, south of the subject property. In 1794, McNeill purchased the 20-acre tract of land known as Lynde's Point from the descendants of Thomas Lynde, one of Charlestown's earliest settlers. The parcel extended southwest of Town Hill from Arrow Street to the Charles River Bay north of present-day Austin Street, and encompassed all of present-day Washington, Austin, and Lawrence streets, Old Rutherford Avenue (formerly Richmond and Bow streets), and a portion of Union Street. In the early nineteenth century, McNeill erected a large dwelling (not extant) for himself on Washington Street near Union Street. As development in Charlestown accelerated during this period, large tracts of land, like Lynde's Point, became increasingly valuable for real estate speculation. Accordingly, McNeill began to subdivide Lynde's Point and sell off house lots between 1799 and 1806. Washington Street was laid out around 1804 and followed quickly by Union Street, Richmond Street (Old Rutherford Avenue), and Lawrence Street. The newly platted area around Washington and Union streets attracted wealthy Charlestown residents and builders looking for investment opportunities, and members of Charlestown's prominent families, including the Devens and Wiley families, among others, numbered among the purchasers of McNeill's house lots.<sup>57</sup>

McNeill retained ownership of Lynde's Point until 1808, when he sold the remainder of the property, excepting those lots he had subdivided and sold in 1799–1806, to James Magee (also spelled McGee).<sup>58</sup> In 1811, Sally Bernard purchased a lot that had previously been sold to Captain Nathan Sparhawk in 1803, a parcel of land on the north side of Union Street measuring 50 feet long and 100 feet deep, from McNeill. McNeill had reacquired the parcel from Sparhawk in 1804.<sup>59</sup> From the transfer deed recording the sale between McNeill and Bernard, it appears that the lot stood at the northwest corner of present-day Union and Lawrence streets and encompassed the premises currently occupied by the Apollos Field House (30 Union Street) and formerly occupied by the James and

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<sup>55</sup> James F. Hunnewell, *Century of Town Life: A History of Charlestown, Massachusetts, 1775–1887* (Boston, MA: Little, Brown, and Company, 1888), 1, 15–17.

<sup>56</sup> *Ibid.*, 24.

<sup>57</sup> Edward Gordon, *Charlestown Survey Project Completion Report* (Boston, MA: Boston Landmarks Commission, 1987), 39; Nancy Hayford Kueny, "Historic Houses of the Month: Lynde's Point and the Charlestown Wharf Company," *Charlestown Patriot-Bridge*, May 6, 2020,

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<sup>58</sup> Middlesex South Registry of Deeds, Book 177, Pages 327–333 (2/13/1808).

<sup>59</sup> *Ibid.*; Middlesex South Registry of Deeds, Book 159, Pages 78–79 (5/16/1804).

Sophia Goodell Fosdick House (8 Lawrence Street).<sup>60</sup> Bernard's claim to the southern half of the property (present-day 30 Union Street), which measured 50 feet long and 50 feet deep, was evidently superseded by William Wiley, a carpenter and housewright, who acquired it via a debt settlement with McNeill in December 1811.<sup>61</sup> Wiley subsequently conveyed the premises to Apollos Field, a painter, in January 1813, which may explain why Field mortgaged them to Bernard that same month.<sup>62</sup> Regardless, Bernard sold the northern half of the parcel that she had obtained from McNeill in 1811 (8 Lawrence Street) to Field on July 13, 1813.<sup>63</sup> Field subsequently cleaved the former Sparhawk/Bernard lot in two, selling the northern half (8 Lawrence Street) to James Fosdick on July 31, 1813, and retaining ownership of the southern half (30 Union Street).<sup>64</sup> Fosdick also purchased an adjoining tract of land to the north on Lawrence Street from James Magee (McGee) on November 8, 1813.<sup>65</sup> Fosdick likely erected the James and Sophia Goodell Fosdick House in 1813–1814 to accommodate his growing family shortly after acquiring the land on Lawrence Street from Fields and Magee.<sup>66</sup>

Born in Charlestown on January 8, 1789, James Fosdick (1789–1854) was the fifth child of David Fosdick (1757–1812) and Mary (née Frothingham) Fosdick (d. 1848). David Fosdick worked as a card maker, manufacturing either combs and implements used for carding wool or loom-cards used by Jacquard looms for textile manufacturing, and Mary Frothingham Fosdick was the daughter of James Frothingham, who served as the deacon of the First Church in Charlestown on Town Hill, and a descendant of William Fosdick (1604–1651), one of the first settlers to arrive in Boston with Governor John Winthrop in 1630.<sup>67</sup> Fosdick married Sophia Goodell (1787–1833) on February 10, 1811, and the couple eventually had seven children, five of whom were likely born in the family home on Lawrence Street.<sup>68</sup> At the time, Fosdick worked as a chair maker.<sup>69</sup> After Sophia Goodell Fosdick's death in 1833, Fosdick married a young widow named Abigail Reed (née Walker) Lincoln (1801–1885), with whom he had four children between 1834 and 1841.<sup>70</sup> Both Fosdick and Abigail Reed Walker Lincoln Fosdick were active members of the First Baptist Church of Charlestown and the Charlestown Female Seminary, which stood on the east side of Lawrence Street between Union Street and Austin Street. Fosdick served as deacon of the First Baptist Church from 1823 to 1854 and was a trustee of the Charlestown Female Seminary, which was founded by the First Baptist Church in 1831 and chartered in 1833. Abigail Reed Walker Lincoln Fosdick belonged the Charlestown Female Seminary's Maternal Board, which oversaw the students' boarding house, in the 1840s and 1850s.<sup>71</sup>

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<sup>60</sup> Middlesex South Registry of Deeds, Book 191, Pages 144–145 (1/2/1811).

<sup>61</sup> Middlesex South Registry of Deeds, Book 192, Page 267–268 (12/12/1811).

<sup>62</sup> Middlesex South Registry of Deeds, Book 201, Page 255–256 (1/13/1813); Book 206, Page 412–413 (1/14/1813)

<sup>63</sup> Middlesex South Registry of Deeds, Book 205, Pages 47–48 (7/13/1813).

<sup>64</sup> Middlesex South Registry of Deeds, Book 206, Pages 49–50 (7/31/1813).

<sup>65</sup> Middlesex County Registry of Deeds (MCRD), Book 205/Page 332, November 8, 1813, James Magee to James Fosdick.

<sup>66</sup> Amanda Zettel, *Form B – Building – 8 Lawrence Street (BOS.18654)* (Boston, MA: Charlestown Preservation Society, 2021), on file, Massachusetts Historical Commission, Boston, MA.

<sup>67</sup> *Ibid.*; Raymond B. Fosdick, *Annals of the Fosdick Family* (New York, NY: The American Historical Company, Inc., 1953), 160.

<sup>68</sup> *Ibid.*, 161.

<sup>69</sup> MCRD, Book 205/Page 332.

<sup>70</sup> Fosdick, *Annals of the Fosdick Family*, 162–163.

<sup>71</sup> *Catalogue of the Officers, Teachers and Pupils of the Charlestown Female Seminary* (Boston, MA: Press of J. Howe, 1841); *Catalogue of the Officers, Teachers and Pupils of the Charlestown Female Seminary* (Boston, MA: J. Howe, 1851); "James Fosdick [Obituary]," *Christian Watchman* (Boston, MA), December 14, 1854, 3, <https://www.genealogybank.com>; D.A. Sanborn, *Insurance Map of Charlestown* (New York, NY: D.A. Sanborn, 1868).

James and Abigail Reed Walker Lincoln Fosdick owned and occupied the dwelling on Lawrence Street until 1845, when they sold the property to Rebecca Estabrook and moved to Washington Street.<sup>72</sup> She, in turn, sold it to Trueworthy Smith Gordon Robinson (1809–1900) in 1848.<sup>73</sup> A native of Sanbornton, New Hampshire, Robinson worked with Fosdick and was a partner in his furniture business, Fosdick, Carter & Co., in the 1840s and 1850s.<sup>74</sup> Robinson briefly occupied the James and Sophia Goodell Fosdick House with his wife, Clarissa (née Kelsey) Robinson (d. 1892), his adopted daughter, Emeline E.C. Robinson (b. 1838), and Rebecca Estabrook (b. 1783).<sup>75</sup> In 1850, the family's neighbors represented a relatively even mix between businessmen and white-collar professionals, including a physician, fruit dealer, and two clerks, and craftsmen and other blue-collar workers engaged in trades, including tailoring, sail making, and painting.<sup>76</sup> By 1852, the Robinson family had relocated to a house on West Cambridge Street.<sup>77</sup> Robinson retained ownership of the James and Sophia Goodell Fosdick House until 1855, when he sold it to Edward Lawrence.<sup>78</sup> Charlestown had become densely developed by the 1850s and was characterized predominantly by a mix of brick and wood-frame residences erected by wealthy families from Boston, who moved to the area in increasing numbers in the 1830s and 1840s as immigrants from Ireland moved into the city. Charlestown was incorporated as an independent city in 1847 and eventually annexed by Boston in 1873 (Figure 2).<sup>79</sup>

The James and Sophia Goodell Fosdick House changed hands multiple times in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. By 1928, the property was owned and occupied by Nellie Fahey (b. 1871) (Figures 3 and 4).<sup>80</sup> The daughter of an Irish immigrant, Fahey worked as a servant for a private family and supplemented her income by renting rooms to boarders.<sup>81</sup> Reflecting the demographic shift that occurred in Charlestown in the late nineteenth century following its annexation by Boston in 1873, during which Irish immigrants flooded into the neighborhood and came to comprise over 90% of its population, the overwhelming majority of Fahey's neighbors in 1930 and 1940 were either Irish immigrants or the children of Irish immigrants.<sup>82</sup> Fahey likely altered the original fenestration pattern on the façade of the James and Sophia Goodell Fosdick House during her tenure as owner, for a building permit filed with the City of Boston in 1932 recorded the installation of wood shingles

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<sup>72</sup> Middlesex County Registry of Deeds (MCRD), Book 239/Page 461, April 13, 1845, James Fosdick to Rebecca Estabrook; C.P. Emmons, *Fletcher's Charlestown Directory* (Charlestown, MA: C.P. Emmons, 1848), 48, 100.

<sup>73</sup> Middlesex County Registry of Deeds (MCRD), Book 511/Page 594, January 20, 1848, Rebecca Estabrook to Trueworthy Smith Gordon Robinson.

<sup>74</sup> Emmons, *Fletcher's Charlestown Directory*, 100; George Adams, *The Charlestown Directory* (Charlestown, MA: Nathan Merrill, 1852), 95.

<sup>75</sup> Emmons, *Fletcher's Charlestown Directory*, 100; United States Census Bureau, *Seventh Census of the United States*, 1850, NARA microfilm publication (M432, 1,009 rolls), (Washington, DC: National Archives and Records Administration, 1850), Ancestry.com.

<sup>76</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>77</sup> Adams, *The Charlestown Directory*, 95.

<sup>78</sup> Middlesex County Registry of Deeds (MCRD), Book 701/Page 391, March 28, 1855, Trueworthy Smith Gordon Robinson to Edward Lawrence.

<sup>79</sup> Keith N. Morgan, Richard M. Candee, Naomi Miller, and Roger G. Reed, *Buildings of Massachusetts: Metropolitan Boston* (Charlottesville, VA: University of Virginia Press, 2009), 204–205.

<sup>80</sup> Suffolk County Registry of Deeds (SCRD), Book 5027/Page 260, August 1, 1928, Daniel O'Connell and Mary N. McCluskey to Nellie F. Fahey; United States Bureau of the Census, *Fifteenth Census of the United States*, 1930, NARA microfilm publication (T626, 2,667 rolls), (Washington, DC: National Archives and Records Administration, 1930), Ancestry.com.

<sup>81</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>82</sup> *Ibid.*; The United States Bureau of the Census, *Sixteenth Census of the United States*, 1940, NARA microfilm publication (T626, 2,667 rolls), (Washington, DC: National Archives and Records Administration, 1930), Ancestry.com; Morgan, Candee, Miller, and Moss, *Buildings of Massachusetts*, 204.

on the front and rear elevations of the building.<sup>83</sup> The 1940 federal census also listed a 65-year-old Fahey as residing in the dwelling with two separate households consisting of a single woman named Nellie Nicholson, who worked for the Works Progress Administration (WPA), and a 33-year-old garage attendant named John Morrissey and his wife and three young sons.<sup>84</sup> This may indicate that Fahey had reconfigured the interior to create separate rental units, though no building permits were filed with the City of Boston.

The James and Sophia Goodell Fosdick House had three major owners during the second half of the twentieth century and into the twenty-first century. The property varied between being used as a rental property in the late 1940s and early 1950s, when it belonged to Agnes V. Fahey, and being owner occupied, as it was from the late 1950s to the late 1990s, when Francis J. and Margaret T. Coleman owned the house.<sup>85</sup> The Coleman family retained ownership of the property until 2020, when it was sold to Premier Ventures LLC.<sup>86</sup> Efforts to demolish the building were made by subsequent owners in 2020 and 2021, but it was not demolished until June 2022 (see Section 5.3).

### **3.2 Architectural (or Other) Significance**

The James and Sophia Goodell Fosdick House, 8 Lawrence Street, was significant as a rare and relatively unaltered example of a vernacular Federal-style, brick ender, oblong-form<sup>87</sup> dwelling in the Union/Washington Streets section of Boston's Charlestown neighborhood. The building was distinguished by its interior brick end chimneys and brick end walls and symmetrical, center-hall, single-pile plan. The building also spoke to the complex interplay between pattern books and vernacular architecture in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, which witnessed the rapid spread and popularization of the Federal style through the work of the first professional American architects and the successful series of pattern books published by Asher Benjamin (1773–1845) in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries and the persistence of regional dwelling types and forms, including oblong-form houses in Charlestown.

The Federal style became popular in Charlestown and the greater Boston area after the United States officially gained its independence from Great Britain in 1783. Representing a refinement of the Georgian style and serving as a physical symbol of stability in the new nation, the Federal style possessed the same strict symmetry and simple rectangular, double-pile, center-hall massing that characterized Georgian architecture. The Federal style, however, is distinguished by lighter, more

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<sup>83</sup> City of Boston, Permit No. 3548, 1932, Inspectional Services Department, online database, <https://scerisecm.boston.gov/ScierIS/CmPublic>.

<sup>84</sup> The United States Bureau of the Census, *Sixteenth Census*.

<sup>85</sup> R. L. Polk & Co., *Polk's Boston (Suffolk County, Mass.) City Directory* (Boston, MA: R.L. Polk & Co., 1951), 589; R. L. Polk & Co., *Polk's Boston (Suffolk County, Mass.) City Directory* (Boston, MA: R.L. Polk & Co., 1960), 509; R.L. Polk & Co., 1981 *Boston (Suffolk County, Mass.) City Directory*, (Boston, MA: R.L. Polk & Co., 1981), 155; Suffolk County Registry of Deeds (SCRD) Book 6012/Page 161, October 21, 1942, Nellie F. Fahey to Agnes V. Fahey; Suffolk County Registry of Deeds (SCRD), Book 7081/Page 37, August 11, 1955, Agnes V. Fahey to Francis J. and Margaret T. Coleman; Suffolk County Registry of Deeds (SCRD), Book 22870/Page 37, September 3, 1998, Francis J. Coleman to Francis J. and Philip E. Coleman.

<sup>86</sup> Suffolk County Registry of Deeds (SCRD), Book 37268/Page 297, June 9, 2005, Philip E. Coleman to Mary and Philip E. Coleman; Suffolk County Registry of Deeds (SCRD), Book 62459/Page 289, January 19, 2020, Mary Coleman to Premier Ventures LLC.

<sup>87</sup> The term "oblong form" was coined by historian James F. Hunnewell in his *A Century of Town Life: A History of Charlestown, MA 1775–1887* (published 1888) to describe the prevailing center-hall, single-pile layout that developed in Charlestown in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

delicate ornamental details and larger structural elements, including windows defined by narrower muntins and larger panes of glass, than their Georgian predecessors. The Federal style appeared in the United States at the same time that the first professional architects emerged in the northeast, including Charles Bulfinch (1763–1844) and Asher Benjamin in Boston, Samuel McIntire in Salem, Massachusetts, and Alexander Parris in Portland, Maine. Bulfinch is commonly credited with bringing the Federal style to Boston and the United States, while the series of successful pattern books that Benjamin published in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries popularized his and Bulfinch's designs and the style with carpenters and housewrights in Boston and throughout the northeastern United States.<sup>88</sup> Benjamin's work was heavily influenced by that of Bulfinch, whose 1796 design for the First Harrison Gray Otis House at 141 Cambridge Street (BOS.4183) closely resembled the design Benjamin published as Plate XXV in his first pattern book, *The Country Builder's Assistant*, in 1797 and served as a prototype for Federal-style buildings constructed in Boston and surrounding towns.<sup>89</sup> Benjamin further developed this design in his later books, most notably *The American Builder's Companion*, published in 1806, which were easily accessed by Boston-based architects and builders via the Boston Architectural Library. Founded in 1810 by a group of local housewrights, the library offered members access to over 53 builder's guides and pattern books, including *The Country Builder's Assistant* and *The American Builder's Companion*.<sup>90</sup>

In Charlestown, carpenters and housewrights generally adapted the new Federal style to fit the prevailing house type in the area, whose “signature layout . . . consisted of a central through-passage with a single room to either side.”<sup>91</sup> Dubbed the “oblong form” by author James Hunnewell, these houses generally rose two to three stories in height and typically possessed a five-bay façade with a center-hall front entrance and a symmetrical fenestration pattern.<sup>92</sup> The addition of a rear ell to dwellings with oblong forms effectively transformed them into “ell houses,” a term used by housewrights and carpenters to describe the characteristic L-shaped footprint of these buildings.<sup>93</sup> The oblong form, which dated from the late seventeenth century and became increasingly common as center chimney stacks gave way to end-wall and rear-wall chimneys in the eighteenth century, was well suited to the narrow lots and steep grades found around Bunker Hill and throughout Charlestown. The vast majority of these oblong houses were oriented perpendicular to the street. With its façade oriented to Lawrence Street, the James and Sophia Goodell Fosdick House represented a rare exception to this traditional orientation.<sup>94</sup> Extant examples of oblong houses sited full-width to the street include: the James C. Edmonds House at 1 Prescott Street (BOS.4855), a brick dwelling built around 1804; the John Tapley House at 14 Common Street (BOS.4420), a wood-frame

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<sup>88</sup> Douglass Shand-Tucci, *Built in Boston: City and Suburb, 1800-1850* (Amherst, MA: University of Massachusetts Press, 1988), 4-11; Virginia Savage McAlester, *A Field Guide to American Houses*, (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2013), 217-221; “Architectural Style Guide,” Historic New England, accessed June 2021, <https://www.historicnewengland.org/preservation/for-homeowners-communities/your-old-or-historic-home/architectural-style-guide/>.

<sup>89</sup> Asher Benjamin, *The Country Builder's Assistant* (Greenfield, MA: Thomas Dickman, 1797); Florence Thompson Howe, “More About Asher Benjamin,” *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians* 13, no. 3 (October 1954):19; Jack Quinan, “Asher Benjamin and American Architecture,” *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians* 38, no. 3 (October 1979):246.

<sup>90</sup> Boston Landmarks Commission, *Edward Everett House*, 25.

<sup>91</sup> *Ibid.*, 24.

<sup>92</sup> James F. Hunnewell, *A Century of Town Life: A History of Charlestown, MA 1775-1887* (Boston, MA: Little, Brown & Co., 1888), 87.

<sup>93</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>94</sup> *Ibid.*, 25.

dwelling constructed in 1806; the Apollos Field House at 30 Union Street (BOS.4941), a wood-frame dwelling built around 1814; and the Edward Everett House at 16 Harvard Street (BOS.4516), a brick dwelling erected in 1814. With the exception of the Apollos Field House, which was raised to a full three stories in the 1820s, these dwellings rise two-and-one-half stories in height, exhibit the symmetrical five-bay, center-hall façade characteristic of the Charlestown oblong house type and the Federal style, and have interior brick end chimneys and low-pitched hip roofs.

### **3.3 Archaeological Sensitivity**

In 2022, the entire lot was excavated and covered by a large building.

## **4.0 ECONOMIC STATUS**

### **4.1 Current Assessed Value**

Prior to its demolition in June 2022, the value of the property was assessed as \$960,200 (Building value: \$601,900; land value: \$358,300)

### **4.2 Current Ownership**

8 Lawrence St LLC



## 5.0 PLANNING CONTEXT

### 5.1 Background

The James and Sophia Goodell Fosdick House had numerous owners and went through several transformations after its construction in 1813–1814, including alterations to the original fenestration pattern and front entry on the façade in the early to mid-twentieth century, the removal of an early to mid-nineteenth-century rear ell in 1957, and the subsequent construction of a new two-story, L-shaped addition off of the west elevation. The house was built as a single-family residence on the newly platted Lawrence Street, which was laid out during the subdivision of Lynde’s Point by Captain Archibald McNeill in 1799–1806. It continued to function as a single-family residence into the 21st century, though it was vacant by the time it was demolished in June 2022.

### 5.2 Zoning

Parcel 020384600 is located in the 3F-2000 zoning subdistrict, which allows for three-family residential properties, within the Charlestown Neighborhood zoning district. It is within the Union Street Neighborhood Design Overlay District as established in Section 62-19, Article 62 of the Boston Zoning Code.

### 5.3 Planning Issues

George and Jiovanka Sarkis, Jr. initially proposed to demolish the James and Sophia Goodell Fosdick House, 8 Lawrence Street, and filed a demolition application with the City of Boston on July 14, 2020.<sup>95</sup> The Boston Landmarks Commission (BLC) held an Article 85 Demolition Delay public hearing to discuss the proposed demolition on September 17, 2020.<sup>96</sup> The demolition apparently did not go forward, and the Sarkises sold the property to 8 Lawrence Street LLC on March 1, 2021.<sup>97</sup>

8 Lawrence Street LLC filed a second application to demolish the house in June 2021. BLC imposed a 90-day demolition delay on the building at a public hearing held on June 22, 2021.<sup>98</sup> On July 2, 2021, registered voters filed a Landmark Petition Form (Petition No. 277.21) to designate a two-building architectural conservation district called the Union Street Historic District, and including both the James and Sophia Goodell Fosdick House, 8 Lawrence Street, and the neighboring Apollos Field House, 30 Union Street. BLC voted to accept the proposed Union Street Historic District for further study on August 10, 2021. The demolition delay expired, and the James and Sophia Goodell Fosdick House was demolished in June 2022. An amended petition to designate the Apollos Field House, 30 Union Street, as an individual Landmark was filed with BLC on January 17, 2024.

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<sup>95</sup> City of Boston, “Demolition Delay Application: 8 Lawrence Street, Charlestown,” July 14, 2020, <https://www.boston.gov/news/demolition-delay-application-8-lawrence-street-charlestown>.

<sup>96</sup> Seth Daniel, “Neighbors, Preservation Society Unhappy with Plan to Demo Old Home,” *Charlestown Patriot-Bridge*, September 17, 2020, <https://charlestownbridge.com/2020/09/17/neighbors-preservation-society-unhappy-with-plan-to-demo-old-home/#comments>.

<sup>97</sup> Suffolk County Registry of Deeds (SCRD), Book 64886/Page 21, March 1, 2021, George and Jiovanka Sarkis, Jr. to 8 Lawrence Street, LLC.

<sup>98</sup> Lauren Bennett, “BLC Imposes 90-Day Demolition Delay on 8 Lawrence St.,” *Charlestown Patriot-Bridge*, June 24, 2021, <https://charlestownbridge.com/2021/06/24/blc-imposes-90-day-demo-delay-on-8-lawrence-st/>.

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