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May 11, 2020

Councilor Kenzie Bok
Chair, Ways and Means Committee
Boston City Council
One City Hall Square
Boston, MA 02110

RE: Increases to Boston Landmarks Commission 2021 Operating Budget

Dear Councilor Bok:

On behalf of Historic Boston Inc. (HBI), I am writing to express our support for long overdue increases to the Boston Landmark's Commission's (BLC) 2021 operating budget.

HBI is a non-profit organization that redevelops endangered historic buildings in Boston's neighborhoods for new uses. As a non-profit partner to the Landmarks Commission, we are most concerned that 1) the Landmarks Commission employees achieve and maintain pay equity with comparable professionals in their own department (Environment), the BPDA, and Transportation Planning; and 2) the Commission budget grow to allow for its work to be more equitably spread around the entire city, so that historic places important to all Bostonians are known and preserved.

For too many years, the Boston Landmarks Commission has been underfunded, limiting its ability to keep up with the demand for its regulatory functions throughout the city. As a consequence, many neighborhood plans rely on historic survey information that is as much as 40 years old and the Commission sits on dozens of petitions for the designation of Boston Landmarks that, after many years, have not been acted upon.

In this strong real estate climate, staff time is overwhelmingly directed to the demands of regulated historic districts like Beacon Hill, Back Bay and the South End. But the rest of our city also hums with development and our neighborhoods, many with few historic protections, are experiencing the greatest level of demolition of historic buildings since Urban Renewal, despite the City's 90-day demolition delay ordinance. There is simply not enough staff or funding to research the significance of buildings that have placed under the three-month demolition delay ordinance.

The consequences of persistent under-funding are obvious at the BLC: there is high staff turnover in a high employment market; historic preservation policy and strategy suffer

Councilor Bok
Ways and Means Committee
May 11, 2020
P. 2

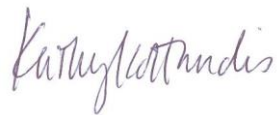
in favor of the regulatory demands of historic district project review; and proactive outreach and planning with communities are limited.

The small staff at the BLC is made up of well trained professionals committed to preservation. However, the disparity between both the volume of their work, and their compensation -- especially compared with those of planners and development review project managers at the BPDA, the planners at the Transportation Department and their colleagues in the Environment Department – leaves historic preservation at a serious disadvantage in land use planning.

Boston is very fortunate to be an historic city with rich architecture and vibrant communities that value the past. In the next 10 years, the nation will honor Boston's leadership in the 250th anniversary of American Independence, and in 2030, Bostonians will celebrate the city's 400th birthday. An investment now in historic preservation planning will help identify the places that are important to our residents and deserve preservation for the future.

Please don't hesitate to contact me if you have any questions. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Kathy Kottaridis".

Kathy Kottaridis
Executive Director
kathy@historicboston.org

May 12, 2020

Boston City Council
Boston City Hall, One City Hall Square
Boston, MA 02201

Dear Boston City Council,

I write to encourage you to support a significant increase in the Boston Landmark Commission budget. A city with iconic historic landmarks and world-renown history requires well-funded regulatory agency to oversee the critical, ongoing work of historic preservation.

Boston By Foot, Inc. is an educational nonprofit organization dedicated to revealing the many layers of Boston's story by leading guided walking tours throughout the City. Since our founding in 1976, we have led hundreds of thousands of visitors and locals on historical explorations around the city. Our tours not only feature the well-known sites in Boston's downtown area, but we also explore Boston unique historic neighborhoods. Our tour guides, all devoted volunteers who care deeply about Boston, know that historic structures are the best visual aid for telling stories – stories of our how our city was shaped, how it evolved, and most importantly the stories of the many people who have called it home. We also know that Boston's unique historic fabric – its buildings, streetscapes, parks, and public areas – is what makes our City a desirable place to visit, to live and to develop businesses.

As both the Executive Director of Boston By Foot and as a resident of one of Boston's many neighborhoods at risk of losing its historic character, I am a strong supporter of historic preservation and value the critical work of the Boston Landmarks Commission. With an increase in resources, the BLC could develop and oversee new historic districts, engage in proactive education and advocacy measures and review the significant backlog of pending landmark applications.

A city that prides itself in its historical identity deserves a well-supported and well-funded agency to provide oversight for its valuable historical assets. Thank you for considering a significant increase to the Boston Landmarks Commission budget.

Sincerely,

Samantha Nelson
Executive Director

CC: Greg Galer, Executive Director, Boston Preservation Alliance
Michelle Goldberg, Boston Planning and Development Authority
Rosanne Foley, Executive Director, Boston Landmarks Commission
Lynn Smiledge, Chair, Boston Landmarks Commission



HISTORIC[®] NEW ENGLAND

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Carl R. Nold, President and CEO

May 8, 2020

Councilor Kenzie Bok
Chair, Ways and Means
One City Hall Square
Boston, MA 02201

141 Cambridge Street
Boston, MA 02114-2702
tel 617-227-3956
HistoricNewEngland.org

RE: Budget Needs for Boston Landmarks Commission

Dear Councilor Bok:

I write on behalf of Historic New England to encourage the Committee on Ways and Means to support the Boston Landmarks Commission (BLC) by increasing their funding in the coming fiscal year. Historic New England has played an important role in preserving Boston's historic architecture since our founding in 1910 and our work is particularly effective in generating critical, targeted support for individual landmarks such as our Boston museums: the first Harrison Gray Otis House between the West End and Beacon Hill, and Pierce House in Dorchester. However, philanthropy alone is insufficient to protect the diverse architectural character and historical associations of entire communities, which are irreplaceable and vital to Boston's cultural and economic sustainability. Historic preservation at such a scale requires collaboration among community leaders, politicians, architects, real estate developers, organizations, and individuals. This complex work is made possible in Boston under the coordination and direction of the BLC.

Of course, these stakeholders rarely agree on what resources merit preservation and how to prioritize investment in them. To ensure that decisions are grounded in facts and are reasonable, the BLC therefore depends on research and documentation to determine the historic and architectural significance and integrity of resources throughout the City. Historic resource surveys, Landmark studies, and planning initiatives enable proactive decision-making, empower communities to establish preservation priorities, and support development efforts by clarifying where new construction is appropriate and where historic resources should be adaptively reused. Increased funding for the BLC would help address a frustrating backlog in survey and Landmarking projects, and bring greater clarity and transparency to the BLC's regulatory process.

Along with researching and identifying historic resources, the BLC has a wide range of responsibilities regarding known historic resources, including oversight of the more than 8,000 properties designated as individual Landmarks or located in one of the City's nine historic

NOLD TO BOK, May 8, 2020

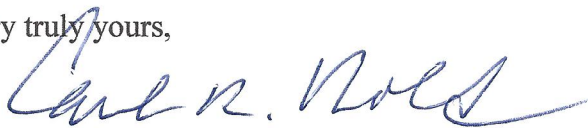
Budget Needs for Boston Landmarks Commission

districts. Historic New England supports these efforts by nominating committee members for the BLC, the Beacon Hill Architectural Commission, and the Bay Village Historic District Commission. With sufficient funding, the Landmarks and historic district commissions could provide robust, consistent, and thoughtful design review that efficiently protects historic streetscapes. Unfortunately, the current funding model results in frequent staff turnover and vacant positions, delays and inconsistencies in the review process, and increased legal challenges. Ultimately, insufficient resources undermine the credibility of the regulatory process altogether.

In November 2016, Boston voters expanded resources for preservation activities by adopting the Community Preservation Act (CPA). These resources are enormously beneficial and Historic New England has gladly worked with the City's community preservation staff as they have established this successful program. Nevertheless, this new initiative creates additional responsibilities for the BLC, particularly as CPA-funded preservation projects are completed and preservation restrictions are imposed on the properties by the BLC in order to protect the City's investment. The regulatory work involved calls for additional budgetary support for the BLC, in line with the new investment the City is making through the CPA.

We hope the Committee on Ways and Means appreciates, as we do, the outstanding contributions of the BLC to the cultural and economic vitality of Boston and will carefully evaluate the financial resources allocated to support this work. Historic New England strongly encourages increased funding for the BLC, recognizing that their regulatory authority and effectiveness requires resources to support effective planning and a stable, professional staff. We look forward to many decades of continued collaboration with the BLC, and welcome any opportunity for further discussion about how to support this important agency. Thank you for your consideration.

Very truly yours,



Carl R. Nold, President and CEO

cc: Mayor Martin J. Walsh
Councilor Anissa Essaibi George, Vice Chair, Ways and Means
Councilor Frank Baker, Ways and Means
Councilor Andrea Campbell, Ways and Means
Councilor Michael Flaherty, Ways and Means
Councilor Ed Flynn, Ways and Means
Councilor Julia Mejia, Ways and Means
Chris Cook, Chief of Environment, Energy, and Open Space
Carl Spector, Commissioner, Environment
Roseanne Foley, Executive Director, Boston Landmarks Commission
Lynn Smiledge, Chair, Boston Landmarks Commission

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Carl Jay

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Leslie Reid

Anthony Ursillo CFA

Peter Vanderwarker

Nancy Welsh

Executive Director

Gregory J. Galer, Ph.D.

Councilor Kenzie Bok
Chair, Ways & Means
Boston City Hall, One City Hall Square
Re: Budget Needs for Boston Landmarks Commission

Dear Councilor Bok,

The Boston Preservation Alliance is Boston's primary, non-profit advocacy organization that protects and promotes the use of historic buildings and landscapes in all of the city's neighborhoods. With 39 Organizational Members, 142 Corporate Members, and a reach of 35,000 friends and supporters we represent a diverse constituency advocating for the thoughtful evolution of the city and celebration of its unique character. We appreciate the opportunity to offer comments on projects and policies that impact the historic character of the city. Since May is Preservation Month across the country this is the perfect time to write regarding the city's funding for historic preservation.

Boston's historic fabric- everything from its street patterns to open spaces to buildings to its skyline- are crucial to the city's thriving economy, livability, and identity. This city would not be the hub that it is today without the prominence and preservation of its historic resources and the thoughtful blend of old and new. Additionally, continued use, retrofit, and adaptation of historic properties is an essential aspect of any successful environmental and carbon-neutral strategy being pursued by the City. And yet, financial support for the regulatory agency responsible for the ongoing, complicated, and critical work of historic preservation has been consistently underfunded in the City's budget. The Alliance strongly urges a significant increase to the operating budget for the Boston Landmarks Commission (BLC) for the following reasons:

- The BLC has an important regulatory role. Efficient and informed review of projects in the Zoning Article 85 process, properties proposed as new Boston Landmarks, and review of owner proposals to modify existing individual Boston Landmarks and those within the nine neighborhood Landmark Districts are necessary actions to both support neighborhoods and project proponents. The regulatory demand on the BLC in numbers of applications and therefore reviews required has been on an increasing trajectory for years, but the office has seen no significant budget adjustments in response. This demand for BLC services doesn't even consider the non-regulatory work of the City department responsible for guiding one of the Boston's most valuable assets, its historic resources.
- The work of historic preservation planners requires advanced degrees and specific experience and skill sets. The professional staff at the Boston Landmarks Commission work with the public, developers, and private property owners, make important decisions that permanently impact the future of the city and the trajectory of construction and development in all Boston neighborhoods. The

salaries of these positions have long been woefully low in proportion to the education and skills they are required to have, to the gravity of their work, and to their peers in surrounding communities. Regular turnover in this office is in part due to the attraction of higher paying parallel positions both within City Hall and in nearby cities. The regular need to post, hire, and train new staff has greatly hampered the BLC's effectiveness and ability to accomplish its role in the past several years. Boston is one of the most historic cities in the United States and it requires a stable team of highly qualified professionals to guide its preservation efforts.

- In addition to salary adjustments to bring this department on par with its peers, the Boston Landmarks Commission needs additional staff. The workload outpaces the number of staff members and limits the initiatives that can be undertaken. Other cities that are similar to Boston in size and historic integrity are able to accomplish far more because they employ an appropriate number of staff in their preservation departments. Our department should be employing at least three additional staff members to accommodate new historic districts desired by several neighborhoods (such as Highland Park, Charlestown, and Ashmont Hill), as well proactive efforts such as survey, education, and advocacy to assure residents and other departments at City Hall receive appropriate, accurate, and professional guidance on preservation issues. For example, information on how historic properties play an essential role in today's environmental challenges, including carbon neutrality and sea level rise, is critical to the City's broader success in these priority issues. With such an abundance of historic resources in Boston, many city agencies engage with historic resources but are unable to get the professional, internal guidance they need to make informed decisions.
- The Boston Landmarks Commission requires an increase in budget to resolve a significant City liability, a backlog of dozens of pending Boston Landmark properties that have been accepted for further study, some waiting since the 1970s, that have not been completed. This backlog leaves significant historic properties vulnerable in a state of perpetual limbo, unfair to the community, to neighborhoods, to property owners, and to potential project proponents. Lack of funding to either hire consultants or to have sufficient internal staff to complete these studies must be resolved. BLC has in recent months been trying to address this backlog but ultimately find that without an increase in funding the task is near impossible, and historic resources thus remain vulnerable for years, even decades. And, properties that are clearly landmarks in everyone's eyes do not even reach this first stage of the process because it is so backed up. These are thus completely exposed to the whims of the market, forcing a reactive rather than thoughtful preservation process.
- Due to funding and staffing limitations the BLC is constantly playing defense and is challenged to provide proactive information to guide neighborhoods, property owners, or potential property purchasers. By necessity nearly always being reactive, the BLC is unable to provide the proactive planning and informative preservation guidance and services Boston should have. A particularly important

example is our lack of a modern, up-to-date comprehensive citywide survey of historic resources. Many of the survey forms we have, which describe buildings and their historic significance, are many decades old and fail to recognize aspects of history considered important today. A wide variety of historic events and segments of the population with rich and valuable parts of our heritage are poorly represented. With such inadequate documentation and mapping of our city's historic resources it is impossible to prioritize needs or advocacy efforts. Without knowing what resources we have, how many of each are extant, the conditions of the resources that remain, where these resources are, or how current challenges like climate change may impact them, it is a difficult to truly assess what should be protected or what is worthy of investment through programs like the CPA. A survey is a planning tool that could also guide developers to areas less dense with historic resources. A comprehensive study is overdue, but to be done well it needs to be fully funded and those funds should be dedicated in the City's budget.

For too long the Boston Landmarks Commission has struggled to professionally manage the resources of the city due to insufficient resources. Given the pride the city takes in its history and the real financial value history brings to the city in dollars by attracting tourists, residents, and businesses, it is time the city's budget reflected a proportionally appropriate investment in this agency.

We look forward to a discussion about how to provide for the needs of the Boston Landmarks Commission and our preservation community in the City of Boston's budget. The Alliance offers itself as a resource.

Thank you,



Greg Galer
Executive Director

CC:

Mayor Walsh, City of Boston
Councilor Annissa Essaibi George, Vice Chair, Ways & Means
Councilor Frank Baker, Ways & Means
Councilor Andrea Campbell, Ways & Means
Councilor Michael Flaherty, Ways & Means
Councilor Ed Flynn, Ways & Means
Councilor Julia Mejia, Ways & Means
Chris Cook, Chief of Environment, Energy, and Open Space
Carl Spector, Commissioner, Environment
Rosanne Foley, Executive Director, Boston Landmarks Commission
Lynn Smiledge, Chair, Boston Landmarks Commission



Michelle Goldberg (City Council) <michelle.a.goldberg@boston.gov>

Budget Needs for Boston Landmarks Commission

DENTILS@aol.com <dentils@aol.com>

Sat, May 9, 2020 at 3:41 PM

Reply-To: "DENTILS@aol.com" <dentils@aol.com>

To: "ccc.wm@boston.gov" <ccc.wm@boston.gov>

Cc: "michelle.a.goldberg@boston.gov" <michelle.a.goldberg@boston.gov>

May 9, 2020

Councilor Kenzie Bok
Chair, Ways & Means
Boston City Hall, One City Hall Square
Re: Budget Needs for Boston Landmarks Commission

Dear Councilor Bok,

As a long term member of the Board of Directors of the Boston Preservation Alliance I am writing in support of the detailed letter being sent to you by our Executive Director, Greg Galer.

Over the years, I have grasped the enormity of the responsibility of the Boston Landmarks Commissions for historic resources in the City's far flung neighborhoods. As a member (also long term!) of the BPA's Preservation Awards Committee, I have had a unique opportunity to tour most of the Boston's neighborhoods, to review nominated projects, at least once a year. Each year I am impressed by the hard work and dedicated funds making these preservation projects happen and how every project contributes to the strength and uniqueness of each neighborhood.

All of these projects and neighborhoods look for guidance from the Boston Landmarks Commission. This Commission does a herculean job of fulfilling this responsibility but can only stretch staff and resources so far. Please see your way clear to increasing the operating budget of the BLC so it can respond to the City's preservation needs in a timely and comprehensive fashion.

Thank you,

Minxie Fannin

Minxie Jensvold Fannin, Managing Principal
James C. Fannin, Jr., Senior Associate
Fannin•Lehner Preservation Consultants
[271 Lexington Road](#)

5/11/2020

City of Boston Mail - Budget Needs for Boston Landmarks Commission

Concord MA 01742-3722

O: 978-369-6703 M: 508-353-7396

dentils@aol.com

fanninlehner.com



Michelle Goldberg (City Council) <michelle.a.goldberg@boston.gov>

FY 2021 funding for Boston Landmarks Commission

Thomas Hart <thart5@comcast.net>
Reply-To: Thomas Hart <thart5@comcast.net>
To: ccc.wm@boston.gov

Wed, May 13, 2020 at 5:17 PM

Dear Councilor Bok,

I am a member of the Boston Preservation Alliance, a resident of a neighboring Boston suburb, and a visitor along with my out of town guests to Boston's many landmarks. I write to request that the City of Boston adequately fund the Boston Landmarks Commission. Given the pride the city takes in its history and the real financial value history brings to the city in dollars by attracting tourists, residents, and businesses, it is time the city's budget reflected a proportionately appropriate investment in this agency.

Regards,
Thomas J. Hart

Tom Hart (Thomas J. Hart), [173 Oak St., Unit 402, Newton, MA 02464](#)

E-Mail: thart5@comcast.net

Tel: Landline (617) 916-9029, Cell (802) 558-3226



Michelle Goldberg (City Council) <michelle.a.goldberg@boston.gov>

historic preservation

Nancy Dean <nhdean@comcast.net>
To: ccc.wm@boston.gov

Thu, May 7, 2020 at 7:03 PM

Dear Governor Baker,

Although I have been a Vermonter for sixty years, now, my roots are deep in Massachusetts' soil, beginning in 1620. The history contained within Boston and the surrounding towns is tremendous and inspiring. The work of the Preservation Alliance is vital to keeping that history alive, visible and available to generations to come. I encourage you and the other decision makers to increase the State's investment in that work.

Sincerely,

Nancy H. Dean

Norwich, VT



Michelle Goldberg (City Council) <michelle.a.goldberg@boston.gov>

In support of BLC

rmkthomas@gmail.com <rmkthomas@gmail.com>

Fri, May 8, 2020 at 5:14 PM

To: michelle.a.goldberg@boston.gov

Cc: wm@boston.gov

To the City Council:

The quality of its historic resources has long been fundamental to Boston's character and economic success. Boston's built environment is one of the critical components in its attractiveness as a city and as a magnet for talent from around the world.

Additionally, continued use, retrofit, and adaptation of historic properties is an essential aspect of any successful environmental and carbon-neutral strategy being pursued by the City.

And yet, financial support for the regulatory agency responsible for the ongoing, complicated, and critical work of historic preservation has been consistently underfunded in the City's budget. With the value that historic resources bring to Boston, it is critical that we adequately fund the BLC.

I urge that the City Council provide robust funding for the BLC, funding which should be viewed as an investment and based on past history will surely pay dividends.

Thank you,

Bob Thomas

Board of Advisors, Boston Preservation Alliance

617-513-2704



Michelle Goldberg (City Council) <michelle.a.goldberg@boston.gov>

Increase funding for the Boston Landmarks Commission!

1 message

Jennifer Uhrhane <jennifer@detailphoto.com>

Thu, May 14, 2020 at 12:16 PM

To: ccc.wm@boston.gov, michelle.a.goldberg@boston.gov, mayor@boston.gov, Annissa Essaibi-George <annissa.essaibi-george@boston.gov>, Michael Flaherty <michael.flaherty@boston.gov>, Julia Mejia <julia.mejia@boston.gov>

Cc: Alison Frazee <afrazee@bostonpreservation.org>

To whom it may concern,

I fully support the function and increased funding of the Boston Landmarks Commission as outlined in their letter to the Ways and Means Committee attached.

I would like to make my additional comments to the hearing today: that the BLC should be given more authority and decision making power in the demolition delay process in order to better help preserve the city's great historic buildings. They are constantly in danger of being replaced by massive soulless development projects in the name of the need for housing and offices while ignoring the importance of this city's history. Boston tourism dollars come from visits to historic landmarks. The city's appeal comes from its historical character in general. The city needs to be sure to keep this character intact otherwise there will no longer be a reason to visit.

Sincerely,
Jennifer Uhrhane

—

Jennifer Uhrhane
47 Rossmore Road
Jamaica Plain, MA 02130
617-983-0637
jennifer@detailphoto.com
www.linkedin.com/in/detailphoto



BPA Request for BLC Budget 2020.pdf

240K



Michelle Goldberg (City Council) <michelle.a.goldberg@boston.gov>

My Written Testimony

Steve Hollinger <steve@sjh.com>
To: michelle.a.goldberg@boston.gov

Tue, May 12, 2020 at 11:29 AM

To Whom it May Concern:

Regarding:

CITY COUNCIL COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS HEARING ON DOCKETS #0588-0596, FY21 BUDGET:
LANDMARKS COMMISSION
Hearing: May 14, 2020

Please accept my written comments:

I served as the Spokesperson for the Petitioners in the petitioning of Fort Point as as a Landmark District; drafted the history of Fort Point for the petition; served as an appointee on the Study Committee; and saw the petition to designation in 2009.

In brief, Fort Point has benefited greatly from its designation. A wave of demolitions that we saw leading up to the designation was effectively terminated. Compliance with guidelines by property owners, from ground floor renovations to additions and beyond, has lent itself to creating a district that is recognized worldwide as a truly wonderful and unique destination in Boston.

1. I strongly urge the Boston City Council to support funding for BLC. I have great admiration for the work of BLC's Director, planners and staff. The Landmarks team including our Fort Point planner and volunteer commissioners have provided an invaluable service to our community.
2. I do remain greatly concerned about interminable delays in appointments to our Commission. At least two highly qualified applicants (Heyne, Yothers), both registered AIA architects, reconsidered their applications after waiting over a year for action on open seats. Both of these applicants cleared background checks. And both applicants repeatedly registered their concerns. Our commission has had empty seats that extend for years while these and other applicants have awaited forward motion.
3. There has been some indication that City officials outside of BLC have been making direct contact with, and registering an interest in selectively supporting, applicants from within our community. Some insight into this practice by City officials outside of BLC would be helpful.

In summary, holding the work of BLC in the highest regard, I strongly urge support for funding, if not an increase in funding. I look forward to viewing the hearing.

Best,
Steve Hollinger
21 Wormwood St. #215
Boston, MA 02210
617 338-2222



Michelle Goldberg (City Council) <michelle.a.goldberg@boston.gov>

Please increase BLC funding

Beth Edwards Harris <beth.edwards.harris@gmail.com>
To: ccc.wm@boston.gov

Thu, May 7, 2020 at 2:32 PM

Dear Sirs and Madams,

Please increase the funding of the BLC. The work they do will be essential to shaping our city in the new normal because our historic resources are irreplaceable economic and social drivers in all of our diverse neighborhoods and communities.

Five years ago I moved back to Boston's South End after living 35 years in Los Angeles where I practiced as an architectural historian and preservation advocate. Returning to Boston I was taken by how well the historic buildings were holding up side by side with so much new development. Of course preservation in Boston has always been an economic driver when it comes to upgrading neighborhoods and raising real estate values as clearly seen in the transformation of the South End from the late 70's when I first lived here to what it has become now. Still what is best about the South End is its enduring diversity; how it developed and improved while still providing affordable housing and support for homeless people in its shelters. Many of these buildings along with the swanky 18th and 19th Century row houses are now important historic resources, embodying the groundbreaking social advocacy Boston advanced in the mid-20th century, work which still carries on today.

As the city works to improve neighborhoods beyond its core, each one deserves to have its history preserved, told and celebrated through its material remnants, the buildings that still exist to tell these unique stories.

I recently attended a Los Angeles Conservancy seminar that unveiled the results of a study demonstrating through much data the value of historic preservation to bolster underserved communities, how preserved buildings can coexist with or even supplement affordable housing, and how preservation can bolster local cultures and small businesses. I am sharing that link here.

<https://www.laconservancy.org/study-preservation-positive-los-angeles>

The BLC has been woefully understaffed as can be seen in the backlog of work on their website. A high level of professionalism and dedication is required of the BLC staff to support the city's many historic resources and guide applicants to restore, maintain and appropriately modernize them to serve communities today. A key component of planning and development in the city, this is the time to increase funding to allow the BLC to expand its support of the city's long term goals.

Best regards,
Beth Edwards Harris PhD.
Columbus Ave. South End.

--
beth.edwards.harris@gmail.com.



May 12, 2020

Sent via Email

Councilor Kenzie Bok
Chair, Ways and Means Committee, Boston City Council
Boston City Hall, One City Hall Square

In Re: *Increased Budget Needs for Boston Landmarks Commission*

Dear Councilor Bok:

We are writing in support of increased budget support for the Boston Landmarks Commission (“Landmarks”) for the upcoming 2020/21 fiscal year.

The Saint Botolph Neighborhood Association (SBNA), formed in 1966, was established...”to promote the general welfare of the St. Botolph Street community and to protect and upgrade the neighborhood’s *residential and historic character*.” [Excerpted from SBNA’s bylaws]. The St. Botolph area is one of nine designated Architectural Conservation Districts within the City. As such, development projects affecting the exterior appearance of structures within the neighborhood require review and approval by Landmarks prior to the issuance of a building permit.

Boston, in general, and our historic St. Botolph neighborhood in particular, are shining examples of the positive economic and quality-of-life contributions that sensible, historic preservation efforts can produce. Recently, our historic neighborhoods are under siege by developers seeking to build projects that care little about preserving Boston’s precious historic character. Thankfully, Landmarks is our partner in regulating such development to adhere to standards and criteria that respect the historic character of the affected neighborhoods. And their participation in the Article 80 Major Project review process is highly contributory to minimizing major projects’ impacts on the surrounding historic neighborhoods.

The preservation of the historic character of the St. Botolph district has benefitted significantly from Landmarks assistance. We are a highly-coveted development area, at the boundary between Back Bay and the South End, adjoining the SW Corridor Park, surrounded by high-rise and high-end properties. Our little enclave of historic residential properties would have long-ago been overrun by modern developers, were it not for the help and intervention of Landmarks.

We are especially grateful for the work and commitment of Landmarks staff, particularly Nick Armata (our district's Senior Planner) and Rosanne Foley (Exec. Director). They are always responsive, helpful, and attendant to our questions and needs. It is clear that their work could benefit from increased budget support, and Boston citizens would benefit as a result.

We believe that local historic preservation contributes to the vitality, quality of life, and essential character of the Boston community. Therefore, regulating to protect historic areas is not a discretionary issue – it's what makes our City and community such an attractive place to live. We therefore urge you to increase budgetary support for the Landmarks Commission.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in purple ink, appearing to read "Lee Steele", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Lee Steele, Chair, SBNA Arch. Review Committee

Copies to:

Councilor Annessa Essaibi George, Vice Chair, Ways and Means

Councilor Kim Janey

Rosanne Foley, ED, Boston Landmarks Commission

Nick Armata, Senior Planner, Boston Landmarks Commission



**Preservation Massachusetts
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Ryan Lynch

John Mackey

James E. McDermott

Antonia Pollak

Gordon Pulsifer

Nicholas Ratti

Michael H. Rosenberg

Jon R. Rudzinski

Robert Score

Mary Thompson

Scott Winkler

Claudia Sauermaun Wu

President & CEO

James W. Igoe

Associate Director

Erin D. A. Kelly

May 11, 2020

Councilor Kenzie Bok,
Chair, Ways and Means
Boston City Council
Boston City Hall, One City Hall Square

RE: Budget Needs for the Boston Landmarks Commission

Dear Councilor Bok,

On behalf of Preservation Massachusetts, we respectfully submit this letter regarding the funding of the Boston Landmarks Commission and its impact on historic preservation in one of our nation's most historic and vibrant cities. We thank you for the opportunity to support one of our partners in preservation.

Preservation Massachusetts is the statewide non-profit historic preservation advocacy organization dedicated to preserving the Commonwealth's historic and cultural heritage. We actively promote the preservation of historic buildings and landscapes as a positive force for economic development and the retention of community character. We support, collaborate and work with a wide array of organizations, agencies, businesses and individuals in an effort to empower, educate and advocate for historic preservation as beneficial tool for community planning and growth for the future.

Preservation is an ethic and a profession rooted in dualities; it is both emotional and practical. There are strong feelings and deeply rooted sentiments and there are precise standards and guidelines to follow. Beginning as a civic movement and evolving into an ever-expanding professional realm, historic preservation relies on not just the acknowledgment and appreciation of the historic resources that surround us, but on the precise implementation of regulations, guidelines and processes that have allowed buildings, neighborhoods and landscapes of the past to endure as part of our communities today. It is agencies like the Boston Landmarks Commission who we look to for that professional regulatory oversight that complements the advocacy and educational work of local non-governmental organizations, like the Boston Preservation Alliance.

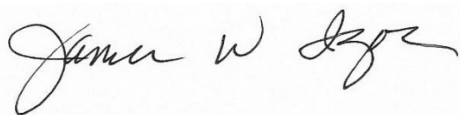
Preservation is a practice that relies on partnerships and collaborations. An essential partnership is with regulatory agencies, like the Boston Landmarks Commission. Since the passage of the National Historic Preservation Act in 1966, such agencies have guided, informed and shaped how cities, towns and states interpret and apply historic preservation principles to protect and enhance community character. In a city as rich with history and extant resources that are of extreme local, state and national significance as Boston, it is essential that its Landmarks Commission should be well supported and adequately funded by the City. A properly funded Boston Landmarks Commission ensures that Boston can effectively manage historic resources and retain its character while blending the old with the new as the city continues to grow and evolve.

In our statewide role we work with local historic commissions and regulatory agencies all across the Commonwealth and we view the Boston Landmarks Commission in the highest regard for their efforts and dedication on behalf of the historic resources of Boston. As Boston has evidenced a surge in growth over the past several years, having a Commission that is well funded, well-staffed and well equipped to implement the principals and regulations they have been charged with is essential. The Boston Landmarks Commission has an important role within city government, planning and operations and we join our local partners in urging that a significant increase to their budget be made.

An increase to the Boston Landmarks Commission's budget will allow them to not only fulfill their regulatory role for the City, it will also allow them to address the backlog of pending Boston Landmark properties and also engage in proactive planning and guidance. An increase to the Boston Landmarks Commission's budget is an investment in the city itself, in its past and also in its future. Preservation is as much about planning for that future as it is about protecting the past; having an agency that is well equipped and able to address the reactive and proactive aspects of preservation is essential.

We once again urge the Boston City Council to make a significant increase to the budget for the Boston Landmarks Commission. Ensuring that our partner in preservation receives an adequate level of funding will benefit not just the Commission, but Boston as a whole and the quality of life of its residents.

Sincerely,



Jim Igoe
President & CEO



Erin Kelly
Associate Director

Cc:

Mayor Walsh, City of Boston
Rosanne Foley, Executive Director, Boston Landmarks Commission
Lynn Smiledge, Chair, Boston Landmarks Commission
Greg Galer, The Boston Preservation Alliance

**SOCIETY OF
ARCHITECTURAL
HISTORIANS**

13 May 2020

Councilor Kenzie Bok Chair, Ways & Means
1 City Hall Square
Room 550
Boston, MA 02201-2043
CITY.COUNCIL@BOSTON.GOV

Re: Support for the Boston Landmarks Commission

Dear Ms. Bok:

The Society of Architectural Historians (SAH) strongly supports the efforts of the Boston Landmarks Commission (BLC), and encourages the Boston City Council to support it during the current budget process.

Boston is renowned not just for its historic fabric, but for its thriving economy, livability, and unique identity. It is the blend of the old and the new that makes Boston an international destination as well as a place valued by its residents. Boston has also prioritized successful environmental and carbon-neutral strategies that continue to seek ways to make historic fabric an important part of residential, commercial, and industrial solutions for the future. Clearly historic preservation has not only protected the most important of those historic resources, but demonstrated ways that the old and the new can be creatively blended through continued use and creative adaptation.

Unfortunately, as in so many places across the United States, funding for the important ongoing work of historic preservation, so critical to Boston's vibrant future, is less than sufficient. We recognize that all municipalities face continual budget pressure, and the Covid-19 pandemic renders those pressures even more acute. However, studies undertaken across the United States demonstrate that historic preservation has always brought value to places where it is embraced, by attracting tourists, residents, and businesses. The rehabilitation of historic buildings has long proved to have a positive economic impact that has transformed neighborhoods, towns, and cities across the United States. Boston relies upon a well-funded, highly trained historic preservation staff, as provided by the BLC. By continuing to fund the work of this organization, you help Boston retain its iconic nature and allow these dedicated individuals to identify creative ways that the new can build upon the old.

SAH strongly encourages City Council to fund and support the Boston Landmarks Commission to the maximum extent possible in this current crisis, and to take steps to ensure its viability into the future to support the vital role of historic preservation in Boston.

Sincerely,



Bryan Clark Green, Ph.D., LEED AP BD+C
Chair, Society of Architectural Historians Heritage Conservation Committee

cc: Martin J. Walsh, Mayor; Councilor Annissa Essaibi George, Vice Chair, Ways & Means; Councilor Frank Baker, Ways & Means; Councilor Andrea Campbell, Ways & Means; Councilor Michael Flaherty, Ways & Means; Councilor Ed Flynn, Ways & Means; Councilor Julia Mejia, Ways & Means; Chris Cook, Chief of Environment, Energy, and Open Space; Carl Spector, Commissioner, Environment; Rosanne Foley, Executive Director, Boston Landmarks Commission; Lynn Smiledge, Chair, Boston Landmarks Commission; Greg Galer, Executive Director, Boston Preservation Alliance; Mr. Kenneth Breisch, Ph.D.; Mr. Jeffrey Cody, Ph.D.; Mr. Anthony Cohn, AIA; Ms. Phyllis Ellin; Mr. David Fixler, FAIA; Mr. Theodore H. Prudon, Ph.D., FAIA, Ms. Pauline Saliga; Ms. Deborah Slaton; Ms. Victoria Young, Ph.D.; Members SAH Heritage Conservation Committee.



Educational exhibitions and programs

617.657.4278

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Brighton, Massachusetts 02135

www.unboundvisualarts.org
info@unboundvisualarts.org

May 11, 2020

Councilor Kenzie Bok, Chair
Ways & Means
Boston City Hall
One City Hall Square

Re: Budget Needs for Boston Landmarks Commission

Dear Councilor Bok,

Unbound Visual Arts is an organizational member of the Boston Preservation Alliance (BPA). We fully support the BPA letter of May 1, 2020 to increase funding for the Boston Landmarks Commission.

Unbound Visual Arts (UVA) is a 7-year-old local 501(c)(3) non-profit organization of artists and art enthusiasts based in Allston-Brighton. UVA enriches the community with educational and inspiring art exhibitions and programs. UVA has completed over 70 curated educational art exhibitions in 11 locations across 8 communities and has over 200 members and supporters.

There is on-going need for the Boston Landmarks Commission to study properties for designation as Boston Landmarks and to recommend properties and districts to the National Register of Historic Places. Both designations have been instrumental in enhancing art and cultural opportunities throughout the City. In Allston-Brighton this has recently resulted in a dedicated art exhibition gallery at the new St. Gabriel's complex and artist and crafter maker spaces at the Speedway Administration complex. We are also eager for the DCR Christian Herter Center to be rehabilitated and reopened as an arts center for the visual and performing arts. Historic designations have also contributed to much needed affordable housing and open space throughout the City. Thank you.

Yours truly,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'John A. Quatralo'.

John A. Quatralo
Executive Director
Unbound Visual Arts, Inc.

May 12, 2020

Councilor Kenzie Bok
Chair, Ways & Means
Boston City Hall,
One City Hall Square
Boston, MA 02201

Re: Budget Needs for Boston Landmarks Commission

Dear Councilor Bok,

Without its role in the development of our country, Boston would be unremarkable, just as it would be without its historic architecture. We love our city for these attributes, therefore, they must be protected.

The Boston Landmarks Commission (BLC) serves to consider the role history plays in our identity as Bostonians by studying resources and working to protect the vulnerable and unique. In order to perform at the level required to make decisions, the BLC needs appropriate support from the City.

The wealth of structures worthy of protection is both a gift and a burden to Boston. The time and expertise it takes to research and study proposed new projects, the staff and salaries such work requires, not to mention past studies waiting for decisions cannot be supported at current levels.

My familiarity with the BLC comes from attending many hearings over the years, most often concerning the fate of Fenway Park. In 1998, Fenway Park, built in 1912 and considered obsolete, was under threat of demolition by its ownership at the time which was uninterested in its importance to its neighborhood, its city and of course to baseball. Through years of advocacy and education, not to mention a change in ownership, Fenway was saved from those with only financial gain as their motive to destroy it. It was saved because disparate groups came together to protect something unique to Boston, a fact known to fans and neighbors as important in the long run but ignored by the shortsighted.

After its sale to a more enlightened ownership in 2001, Fenway was rehabilitated over the course of a decade and placed on the National Register in time for its centennial celebration in 2012. But this would not have been possible without the guidance of Boston's preservation community. The Red Sox presented before the BLC numerous times in order to steer a plan for change that both respected the history of the ballpark and prepared it for the future. After a history of heart-breaking Game 7 losses and a drought of 86 years, the team has since won four World Series championships with Fenway as its home.

The work of historic preservation consultants and advocates, architects and engineers as well as neighbors and historians who serve on and present to the BLC take part in a process that aims to protect and improve on that what makes Boston Boston. As those who work in historic preservation know, you don't know what you've got until it's gone. The Boston Landmarks Commission deserves your full support.

Thank you

Erika Tarlin, Director

Save Fenway Park!
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