

## Preservation in Transition

2022 ANNUAL REPORT

BOSTON PRESERVATION ALLIANCE

**2022 STATS** 

1,571

miles cycled or walked by staff to share Boston's unique places, spaces, and histories. The equivalent of going from Boston to New Orleans. 8,435

Number of words written about Boston's Legacy Businesses by Lilla G Frederick Middle School Students.

135,500

Number of page views of BostonPreservation.org

Cafe Marliave

**Dorchester Victorian** 

Most Read About Projects Graves Light and Fog Signal Station

Landmarks Center, Sears Roebuck (401 Park)

Christian Science Plaza

people interviewed, sharing their stories about Boston's Outstanding Preservation Projects.

150 FLOORS 2,250 STEPS

climbed by staff as they moved out of the Otis House. **We are now at 87 Mt Vernon Street.** 

Most important place as designated by Boston's 11-year-olds: The Corner Store

> Image Credits: All photos by Matthew Dickey unless otherwise noted.

Cover Image: Walking tour in Grove Hall with YouthBuild Boston © John Benford



#### THE REUSE SOLUTION

I recently saw a post on a family Facebook page asking for vacation recommendations for a historic city that's great for kids. Boston was the top suggestion. Our history, our walkable city, our character and charm-these are the things that make Boston a destination and a place people want to put down roots.

But these things are being threatened every day by climate change, underregulated speculative development, and an affordability crisis. There isn't just one solution for all of these problems, but there is something that can help-required reuse of existing buildings.

Think about this- the average single-family home in America, when demolished, creates about the same amount of waste that the average American does in their entire lifetime. Our local landfills are full; we regularly ship reusable materials long distances to landfills and incinerators. When we demolish an existing building, we not only lose reusable materials but we also sacrifice embodied carbon and energy, which often takes decades to recover even with the "greenest" of new buildings. Why do we obsess over reusable straws, bottles, and bags but throw away entire buildings without a second thought? We cannot claim to be a Green City if we continue to ignore the climate impacts of large-scale demolition.

So if we don't clear sites for new, bigger structures, what can we do to add the housing that we need? We can require affordable housing for all infill parcels,





**Above:** Beacon Hill. Byron Street Stables, reused as housing. **Right:** Dorchester carriage house in need of adaptive reuse.

add additional dwelling units to basements, attics, AND outbuildings, and build appropriate additions to existing buildings. We can have the best of both worlds with the proper priorities and regulations.

Each unit of new housing in Boston costs over half a million dollars to build, which can be hard to then make affordable to buyers and renters. But reusing an existing unit for affordable housing costs on average \$300,000 per unit, retains existing materials, carbon, and energy, and preserves neighborhood character, livability, and walkability. The money that the City commits toward affordable housing can go a lot farther if invested in existing buildings rather than new construction.

If you follow development across the city, you'll have noticed a trend. Developers prefer large lots which, in our outer residential communities, are almost always home to the oldest houses in their neighborhoods, retaining part of the original estate and grounds, trees, and open space. They help tell the story of the neighborhood's evolution. Developers demolish the historic structure and build a box of units spread lot line to lot line. The neighborhood loses old-growth trees which worsens heat island effects, reduces permeable ground for rain water retention, and erases what is often beautiful architecture. Instead of stoops, front porches, yards, and gardens that build community, we are left with boxy, copyand-paste buildings with units that are usually still too small and unaffordable for those who used to live on the lot to return.

I argue that Boston needs homes, not just housing. Unity, not just units. By reusing what we already have, we can add density without sacrificing the diversity of people, place, and permanence that make Boston, Boston.

Alison Frazee, Executive Director

#### **ADVOCACY**

As the definition of "historic" expands to include more stories, and our concept of "preservation" evolves to meet the needs of sustainability, affordability, and livability, the Alliance is intentionally pursuing new kinds of projects and initiatives as part of our mission to protect, promote, and preserve. Most of these efforts take multiple years, but a couple of them crossed the finish line last year and we're excited to share the results:

#### City Hall Plaza

City Hall has always been a building Bostonians love to hate. But if you know the history behind its intriguing configuration and appreciate its artistic design, you might understand why many of us love it so much. Even its most ardent advocates, however, could see that the plaza around City Hall was in desperate need of updates.



City Hall Plaza renovation work in action.

Thankfully, several years ago the City committed to a reimagination of the plaza. We consulted with the design team throughout the process to ensure that the historically significant aspects of the plaza are maintained, that iconic viewsheds to City Hall are preserved, and that users of the spaces have the opportunity to learn more about the site.

Last November we joined the design team and the community to celebrate the opening of the renovated plaza. With programmable public spaces, new trees and green infrastructure, accessibility upgrades, and plenty of space for civic gatherings, the plaza maintains its original design intent while making space for



all users and framing our historic City Hall. Plus, there's a dynamic new playground for our youngest visitors that reflects the shapes and materiality of City Hall! We are thrilled with the results and look forward to seeing our new City Hall Plaza blossom this spring. We hope you will go check it out and let us know what you think!

#### The CARE Tool

The Alliance consistently promotes the fact that Building Reuse IS Climate Action and urges the City to adopt policies that incentivize, or even require, reuse of existing buildings whenever possible. Older and historic existing buildings contain irreplaceable materials like old-growth wood as well as embodied carbon and energy that make leveraging their reuse critical for meeting our climate goals.

We have known for decades that the greenest building is the one that already exists but we needed a way to prove it with comprehensive data. The Alliance was able to secure partial funding through the National Trust for Historic Preservation to advance a new carbon calculator tool to do just that. The CARE (Carbon Avoided: Retrofit Estimator) Tool is used for calculating and comparing the embodied,

operating, and avoided carbon impacts and benefits of reusing and upgrading existing buildings or replacing them with new construction. After testing, feedback, and much anticipation, this free online tool launched to the public last year! Take a look at CARETool.org.

The Alliance will continue to promote utilization of the CARE Tool in Boston's planning process. Proponents should be required to make these calculations public and justify why demolition of existing buildings is the most beneficial outcome for the environment and the community. We look forward to working closely with developers and architects to find creative, sustainable ways to incorporate existing buildings into new projects. It is possible to balance growth with community preservation if we are thoughtful and intentional in our process.



The now-demolished Shreves Building.

#### **Tour Your Boston**

#### A Letter from Mayor Michelle Wu

Boston's biggest neighborhood, Dorchester, is brimming with history and community. Here you can find landmarks including The Mather School—the nation's first public elementary school, the Baker Chocolate Factory—the first of its kind in the country, and The Blake House—Boston's oldest building. Over the years, this historic, diverse community has grown and evolved with each generation of residents whose spirit, vision, and vibrancy have infused this corner of Boston with an unmistakable character. You can feel community in the small businesses, restaurants, and galleries that make Dorchester a thriving cultural hub. Across the neighborhood—and across our city—local businesses support our families and drive our economy. Multi-generational Legacy Businesses anchor our communities and introduce visitors and residents alike to a world of new experiences.

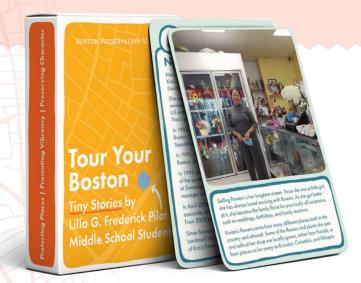
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The partnership between the Boston Preservation Alliance and students at the Lilla G. Frederick Pilot Middle School highlights some of the most meaningful spaces and places in Dorchester. I'm so grateful to our skilled team of urban curators for the opportunity to rediscover this neighborhood through their eyes.

It's my pleasure to invite you to celebrate their hard work by connecting with your neighbors, exploring our city, and learning more about the artists, entrepreneurs, and small business owners who make up this incredible community. Many of the young authors who wrote these cards are new to Boston, or—like me—are the children of immigrants. And I am so proud of them for using their voices to uplift others in our community, and so grateful for the time, care, and heart they've invested in bringing us these stories of inspiration and ingenuity.

Thank you to our young urban curators! Thank you for your wonderful words, your curious minds, and your generous hearts. I'm also grateful for the educators & artists, the small business owners & partners, and the Boston Preservation Alliance for collaborating with our students to bring Dorchester's stories to life.

Michelle Wu, Mayor of Boston



Here is an abbreviated story shared by Ngoc Bao Luu about Vivian Veth, owner of Kim's Flower Shop. Read all the stories online at <a href="https://www.bostonpreservation.org/tour-your-boston">www.bostonpreservation.org/tour-your-boston</a>.

Kim's Flower Shop opened in 2016. The owner is Vivian Veth. Kim's Flower Shop is located at 1491 Dorchester Avenue, Dorchester, Massachusetts 02122.

She came to America because her father was in the army and worked with the Americans during the Vietnam War. When the US Army withdrew, the communists hunted him to lock him up. That's why she and her family came to the United States.

Since September 2015, she is co-owner and broker at Landmark Unlimited Realty. She continues to be the co-owner of Kim's Flower Shop.

Selling flowers is her longtime dream. Since she was a little girl, she has always loved working with flowers. As she got better at it, she became the family florist for practically all occasions, such as weddings, birthdays, and family reunions.

Vivian's flowers come from many different places both in the country and abroad. Some of the flowers and plants she uses and sells at her shop are locally grown, either from Florida, or from places as far away as Ecuador, Colombia, and Ethiopia.



## 2022 Income 49% Membership and Individual Supporters 51% Fundraising events, programs, and in-kind 2022 Expenses Administrative Expenses 35% Payroll/Benefits— Advocacy & Programs 35% Payroll/Benefits—Other 10 | FINANCIAL SUMMARY

Statement of Activities		
INCOME	2022	2021
Membership & Individual Support	* # 0 0 1 0 0 0	¢0.40.700
Fundraising Events	*\$231,300	\$243,682
	227,567	340,502
Grants (including PPP)	-	89,823
Programs	5,540	6,495
In-Kind Support & Other Income	1,439	24,235
Total Income	\$465,846	\$704,737
EXPENSES		
Payroll/Benefits—Advocacy & Programs	\$163, <i>7</i> 62	\$18 <i>7</i> ,329
Payroll/Benefits—Other	162,995	186,452
Events	69,15 <i>7</i>	<i>75,</i> 95 <i>7</i>
Administration	30,513	51,689
Professional Services	9,600	8,600
Equipment/Software/Website	10,921	10 <i>,777</i>
Other	22,716	16,052
Total Expenses	\$469,664	\$536,856
Net Operating Income (Loss)	\$(3,818)	\$167,881
Other Income		
Gain (Loss) on Securities & Interest	\$(68,780)	\$45,173
NET SURPLUS (DEFICIT)	\$(72,598)	\$213,054

\*Note: 2022 numbers based on unaudited financials.

### **Statement of Financial Position**

	2022	2021
ASSETS		
Operating Accounts	\$125,720	\$97,850
Accounts Receivable	11,152	20,300
Unrestricted Reserve Accounts	561,667	647,596
Prepaid Expenses	2,153	1,406
Equipment	7,603	322
TOTAL ASSETS	\$708,295	\$767,474
LIABILITIES Accounts Payable & Accruals Total Liabilities	\$26,101 <b>\$26,101</b>	\$12,683 <b>\$12,683</b>
Total Liabilities	720,101	<b>712,003</b>
NET ASSETS		
Unrestricted Net Assets	\$669,430	\$718,149
Donor Restricted Assets	12,764	36,642
Total Net Assets	\$682,194	\$754 <i>,</i> 791
TOTAL LIABILITIES & NET ASSETS	\$708,295	\$767,474





## 34th Annual Preservation Achievement Awards

The best way to preserve a space is by making it useful. The collection of six outstanding preservation projects below does just that. Each one brings life to the city and are not only useful spaces, but are useful in telling the story of Boston. Our 2022 Award Winners included:

The Charles River
Speedway Complex
Christian Science Plaza
Dorchester Victorian

Landmark Center-Sears Roebuck (401 Park) Robert Gould Shaw and the 54th Regiment Sowa Power Station

Susan Park, who passed away on February 25th at the age of 83, was a founding member of the Boston Preservation Alliance and for over 40 years championed efforts to preserve historic resources. She was a force to be reckoned with and inspired many across the city to support her cause.

We have renamed our President's Award to the Susan Park President's Award in honor of Susan Park and her dedication to the City of Boston. **David Hacin and Hacin + Associates** is our first Susan Park President's Award recipient. David has been a consistent voice for preservation, both through his design work and his seat on BCDC.

**Lydia Lowe** was our 2022 recipient of the Codman Award for Lifetime Achievement for her work as President of the Chinatown Community Land Trust. Lydia's leadership and advocacy are inspirational. Her passion and determination for improving the community are to the benefit of us all.



Photo of the West End during "Urban Renewal." Historic image colorized by Adam Paul Susaneck.

## Annual Meeting: A City, Segregated by Design

Adam Paul Susaneck shared his research that documents the destruction of communities of color due to red-lining, "urban renewal," and freeway construction.

Using urban renewal and freeway construction, the government wiped out entire neighborhoods on a scale previously only seen in either natural disasters or war. The historic West End—one of those neighborhoods where the hope of America's "melting pot" perhaps came the closest to fruition as it ever would—was entirely razed; its dense, winding streets replaced with parking lots for suburban commuters. This melting pot was called "blighted" by politicians, while residents, such as Leonard Nimoy, spoke fondly of their time in the old West End.

Other Boston neighborhoods were demolished in the name of urban renewal including Scollay Square, the New York Streets, and Nubian Square. Redlining and blockbusting spread through Dorchester, Mattapan, and Roxbury.

The Alliance partnered with YouthBuild Boston and led a walking tour of empty plots in Dorchester's Grove Hall neighborhood. Students researched the plots and envisioned a new use that gave the land back to the community in which it was robbed. See the cover image of our tour in action.

Below: Rapid presentations at Club Cafe for Preser-GAY-tion Chatter

Right: 2022 Young Advisors on a boat!



#### Young Advisors

The Young Advisors (YAs) expand and amplify our mission by engaging Boston's young professional community. They are active participants in the Alliance at all levels, from community outreach and policy discussion to social engagement. Throughout the past year, the YAs have had a robust calendar of events exploring Boston's nooks. They invented a new event called Preser-GAY-tion Chatter where speakers shared queer histories of Boston. Learn more and explore with our Young Advisors:

♠ ☑ @PreservationHub

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Charlestown Preservation

Society

Eliot School of Fine and

Applied Arts

Friends of the Boston Public

Garden

Gibson House Museum Historic Boston, Inc. Historic New England Madison Park Development

Corp.

National Park Service

Nichols House Museum

North Bennet Street School Old North Church

Paul Revere Memorial

Association

South Boston Historical

Society

South End Historical Society
UNITE HERE Local 26

Vilna Shul

Background image: G.W.
Bromley & Co., Atlas of the
city of Boston, Roxbury (1931).
Leventhal Map & Education
Center at the Boston Public
Library.
Top Left: Image from the
Boston Public Library
Top Right: Map via the
Boston Public Library

Image credits from back cover

Frederick School 'urban curators' hail city from their perspective

DORCHESTER REPORTER

REVITALIZING
DOWNTOWN
BOSTON ONE
ZONE AT A TIME
WBUR

Local artist uses Instagram to promote Boston Preservation Alliance

#### IN THE PRESS

2022 was also an active year of press coverage for The Alliance! We were featured in many local publications including CBS Boston, WBUR, BOSToday, The Boston Globe, Dorchester Reporter, the American Institute of Architects, and more.

DORCHESTER ZIP TRIP BOSTON 25 NEWS 5 questions with Boston's "Streetscape Curator"

BOSTTOday

One man's quest to photograph, paint, and preserve Boston's historic buildings.

**BOSTON GLOBE** 

Greg Galer, Hon. AIA

AMERICAN INSTITUTE

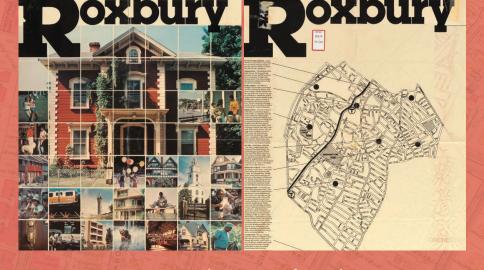
OF ARCHITECTS

Innovation Showcase:

Matthew Dickey,

the Streetscape Curator

NewTV



2023 Annual Meeting of Members

# Boston's Unwitting Preservationists: Black Homeowners of Roxbury in the Postwar Era

Featuring the Norman B. Leventhal Map & Education Center with a presentation by Maddie Webster

Maddie will discuss how the "filtering down" of Roxbury housing stock allowed owner-occupants to build equity despite exclusion from traditional funding sources. That much of the housing stock is still around today is a testament to this stewardship process.



Norman B. Leventhal Map & Education Center at the Boston Public Library



**When:** March 30, 5:30 pm Presentation starts at 6 pm

Where: Boston Public Library Central Library in Rabb Hall. 700 Boylston Street Boston, MA 02116

Reception to follow at Trinity Church.



Register Today!