EBEN JORDAN JR. HOUSE

BOSTON LANDMARKS COMMISSION STUDY REPORT





Petition # 24
Boston Landmarks Commission
Office of Historic Preservation
City of Boston



Report on the Potential Designation of

Eben Jordan Jr. House 46 Beacon Street, Boston, Massachusetts

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

Approved by:	Lune toly	April 2, 2024
	Rosanne Foley, Executive Director	Date
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	Brad Walker, Chair	Date

Draft report posted on April 2, 2024

Cover image: Eben Jordan Jr. House Music Room, 46 Beacon Street, Boston, taken August 21, 2023 by Martha Brest



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INTRODUCTION

The designation of the Eben Jordan Jr. House was initiated in 1977 after a petition was submitted by registered voters to the Boston Landmarks Commission asking that the Commission designate the property under the provisions of Chapter 772 of the Acts of 1975, as amended. Over the years building owners refused to allow access to view the interior spaces. This report intends to advance the 1977 petition. The purpose of such a designation is to recognize and protect a physical feature or improvement that in whole or part has historical, cultural, social, architectural, or aesthetic significance.

Summary

The Eben Jordan Jr. House is highly significant for its associations with a diverse range of people important to business, women's and African American rights, politics, arts, design, and culture. These individuals are associated with both the design and construction of the mansion and its subsequent utilization over decades as an important quasi-public space on Beacon Hill, with institutional use and a degree of public access for 99 years from 1924 to 2023.

The Eben Jordan Jr. House is significant at local, state, regional, and national levels as an important example of an *in situ* residential design by Wallace C. Sabine, founder of the field of architectural acoustics. The mansion has further significance at local and state levels for its association with Eben Jordan Jr. and several regionally important architects and designers and for its role as the first dedicated headquarters of the Women's Republican Club of Massachusetts (WRC) following the ratification of the 19th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution. Prominent activists Harriet C. Hall and Anna Julia Child Bird founded the WRC as an explicitly interracial membership organization. It served as an important platform for women's and African American civil rights advocates, in close proximity to the Massachusetts State House and related political actors who resided on Beacon Hill. Speakers included author and preservationist Clara Endicott Sears, former President Calvin Coolidge, George W. Goodman of the Urban League, and Matthew W. Bullock, an African American lawyer, politician, and human rights activist. The WRC also hosted social events open to the public, such as the recurring "officers dance" every Saturday during World War II. Those events attracted international stars who performed in the mansion, such as the Russian composer and conductor Igor Stravinsky and Adele Marcus, a leading pianist of the era.

After a controversial period of commercial use followed by a foreclosure, in 1977 residents of Boston filed a petition to protect the Eben Jordan Jr. House through an interior and exterior landmark designation. The petition remained active but no further steps were taken until nearly five decades later, when the property was purchased by a residential developer and threatened by demolition related to undocumented hazardous materials abatement as well as conversion into multiple condominium units, the details of which are unspecified and unknown. While the exterior, so much as is visible from the public way, is protected through the Historic Beacon Hill District, it is the totality of the building and particularly the interior spaces associated with public performance and meetings that are still, and most urgently, in need of protection through landmark designation.

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

According to the City of Boston's Assessing Department, the Eben Jordan Jr. House is located at 46 – 47 Beacon Street. Boston, Massachusetts 02108.

1.2 Assessor's Parcel Number

The Assessor's Parcel Numbers are 0501489000 & 0501489001.

1.3 Area in Where Property is Located

The Eben Jordan Jr. House sits on the north side of Beacon Street across from Boston Common in the Beacon Hill neighborhood of Boston. Neighboring properties to the west, north, and east consist of early nineteenth to early twentieth century brownstones and brick townhouses. Beacon Hill generally consists of inclined terrain that slopes down to the north, east, south and west from the high ground at the intersection of Mount Vernon and Joy Streets. The Eben Jordan Jr. House fronts on Beacon Street with Spruce Court to its rear on the block delineated by Spruce and Walnut Streets. To the west, it is joined to a twelve-story brick and stone condo building historically known as the Otto B. Cole Building and currently owned by Forty-Eight Beacon Condo Trust. A small two-family dwelling directly abuts the subject property to the north. The American Meteorological Society owns the large parcel to the east of the subject property and occupies an early nineteenth century building designed by Charles Bullfinch, known as the Third Harrison Gray Otis House. Across Beacon Street to the south of the subject property lies Boston Common.

The property is located within the Beacon Hill National Register Historic District (NRDIS 1966), the Beacon Hill National Historic Landmark District (NHL 1966), and the Historic Beacon Hill District (LHD 1955).

1.4 Map Showing Location



Figure 1.1. Map showing the boundaries of parcel #0501489000 & #0501489001



2.0 DESCRIPTION

2.1 Type and Use

The Eben Jordan Jr. House was created in 1913 by combining two existing townhouses at 46 and 47 Beacon Street into a single residence. In addition to residential use, it has, over the years, also served as a club, function space, auditorium, and restaurant. The property is in the Boston Proper zoning district, subdistrict H-2-65 (Apartment Residential). It is subject to zoning overlay Restricted Parking District and is within the Historic Beacon Hill District.

2.2 Physical Description of the Resource

The Eben Jordan Jr. House sits on an 8,042 square foot lot facing south. Located on the south slope of Beacon Hill, it is bordered by residential buildings to the west and north, the American Meteorological Society to the east and Boston Common across Beacon Street to the south. A private way, Spruce Court, extends halfway along the north edge of the property. The house shares a party wall with its western neighbor and is separated from the building to the east by a private driveway belonging to the American Meteorological Society. A sidewalk separates its southern façade from Beacon Street. There are no outbuildings or gardens on the parcel.

Exterior

The Eben Jordan Jr. House is a five-story, six-bay building that resulted from combining townhouses at 46 and 47 Beacon Street. A one-and-a-half story solarium is located at the southeast corner of the building. The first story is accentuated by ashlar sandstone on a highly finished granite foundation, with a thin cornice demarcating the brick-clad upper stories.

Nearly centered at the first story is a deeply inset entry, accented by a projecting porch with sandstone Corinthian columns and pilasters. A double door with cast iron tracery is set in an elaborate arched doorway and moulded architrave. An ornamental cast iron fence separates the building from the sidewalk and six simple one-over-one, hung wood windows light the interior spaces, three to the west of the door and two to the right. The solarium at the southeast corner is constructed out of glass and ornate copper tracery set above a single-story ashlar base with a modern door at the sidewalk.

The second story is distinguished by six symmetrical wood French doors with transoms, set into prominent, bracketed, jack arches above carved sandstone friezes. Cast iron balconies further accentuate the second-story fenestration. Beginning at the second story and through the attic level, quoins at the southwest and center of the façade visually divide the two combined buildings.

Asymmetrical fenestration above the first and second stories indicates differing story heights. The east half of the façade features symmetrical one-over-one sash in finely moulded sandstone surrounds with unbracketed jack arches at third and fourth stories. A carved sandstone cornice offsets the attic. Shorter one-over-one sash windows are seen below the elaborate entablature and cornice at the top of the building. At the west half of the façade, decorative brick appearing as moulded panels is seen between the second and third stories. Simpler decorative brick recesses are seen above the fourth story windows. Third story window adornment matches the windows at the eastern half of the building, while fourth story windows on the west half are slightly larger but stylistically comparable to the attic windows at the eastern half of the façade. It appears window sashes at the upper stories are of a modern construction, perhaps vinyl painted a dark color at the



exterior, as is likely true of windows at upper stories on the east elevation. The south façade is unified at the roofline by an elaborate modillioned entablature and bracketed cornice. A low balustrade screens the roof.

The fenestration and detailing of the Beacon Street façade carries around the southeast corner of the building and one bay of the east elevation is highly decorative. The fenestration at the remainder of the east elevation is much simpler and asymmetrical, apart from the solarium at the first story and a copper-clad bay window at the third story. At the northeast corner of the elevation is a projecting octagonal bay. Brick drip courses appear above the second story and halfway through the third story across the four forward-most bays. Two end-wall chimneys are seen at the roofline.

Interior

Plan

The plan of the Eben Jordan Jr. House is informed by the prior two-house configuration of the property, including retention of the central dividing wall between what were historically separate townhouses at 46 and 47 Beacon Street. Today, the first story of the mansion is organized around a central hallway leading from the Beacon Street entry to a two-story stair hall midway through the building at the east side. A principal reception room is located immediately east of the entry hall. A smaller room and administrative offices are located at the rear of the eastern half of the house.

The western half of the house is accessed through double doors from the central stair hall, which breaks through the central party wall into a second, substantial stair hall. A dining room is located at the northwest corner adjacent to a small kitchen. Office and administrative spaces have been created at the southwest corner, closest to Beacon Street. Large entertainment spaces anchor the second story: a monumental two-story Music Room at the northwest corner, a drawing room known as the French Room at the southwest corner, and a second Drawing Room at the southeast corner. Both stairhalls lead directly into the Music Room, while the west stair hall provides access to the French Room and the east stair hall leads via a hallway to the Drawing Room and to a smaller alcove room at the northeast corner of the mansion.

The third through sixth floors contain a mix of apartments that are heavily altered from their original forms and do not contribute to the significance of this property.

Finishes

The finishes throughout the public areas of the house are high quality and intact, reflecting the Renaissance Revival style found in unifying treatments at the exterior. There are no apparent areas of delaminating plaster, peeling paint, staining, or other indicators of long-term deferred maintenance or significant water damage. Rather, it appears the Eben Jordan Jr. House has been well-preserved throughout its history, with relatively minor modifications to these first and second story principal spaces.

Walnut paneling - likely veneer on secondary wood, such as poplar - and detailed ornamental carving is the dominant treatment throughout the first story central hall, both stairhalls, the second-story southeast Drawing Room (finished in an Elizabethan style), and the Music Room. Fruits, vegetation, florets, and heraldic shields are common motifs in the high-relief carvings. It is possible that the paneling and stair hall finishes at the east half of the house reflect the 1897 period



of construction, which was then duplicated at the western spaces during the 1913 combination of the townhouses.

The French Room is finished in the Louis XVI style, anchored by an elaborate marble mantelpiece and bronze-framed mirror, framed by electrified bronze sconces. A matching bronze and crystal chandelier hangs in the center of the ceiling, articulated by a large and finely detailed plaster medallion. An elaborate cornice and frieze at the ceiling features figures and vegetation. Rectangular panels at the walls are also framed with vegetative motifs. Plaster bas-relief motifs of baskets containing fruit and gardening tools appear at south and east walls.

The double-height Music Room at the northwest corner of the second story is the most magnificent interior space in the mansion. Of particular note is the highly decorative carved, coffered ceiling, which incorporates flowers, leaves, florets, and other stylized vegetative decoration. At the south wall, above the elaborate double-door entry from the west stairhall, is the musicians gallery with carved wood balustrades above Corinthian columns. The doors are accented by detailed wood inlay. The height of the room is further accentuated by canted corners and rectangular paneling at the walls. The floor is completed in wood parquet. Elaborate electric crystal chandeliers and wall sconces and a striking window at the north wall comprising ten six-over-six hung sash in a five-over five configuration light the space.

2.3 Contemporary Images

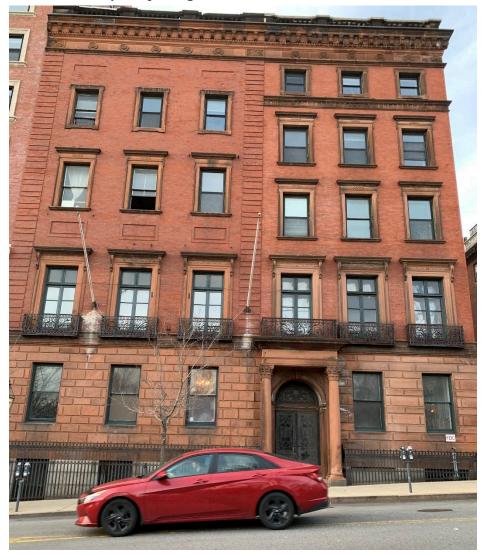


Figure 2.3.1 South façade. Photo by Martha Brest (March 25, 2024).



Figure 2.3.2. East elevation. Photo by Martha Brest (March 25, 2024).



Figure 2.3.3. North elevation. Photo by Martha Brest (March 25, 2024).

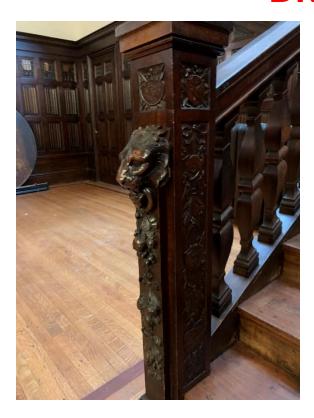


Figure 2.3.4. First floor, east stairhall, detail of newel post. Photo by Martha Brest (August 21, 2023).

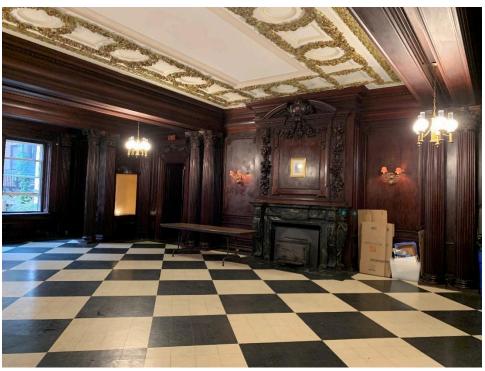


Figure 2.3.5. First floor northwest dining room, looking northeast. Photo by Martha Brest (August 21, 2023).



Figure 2.3.6. First floor southwest reception room looking southwest. Photo by Martha Brest (August 21, 2023).

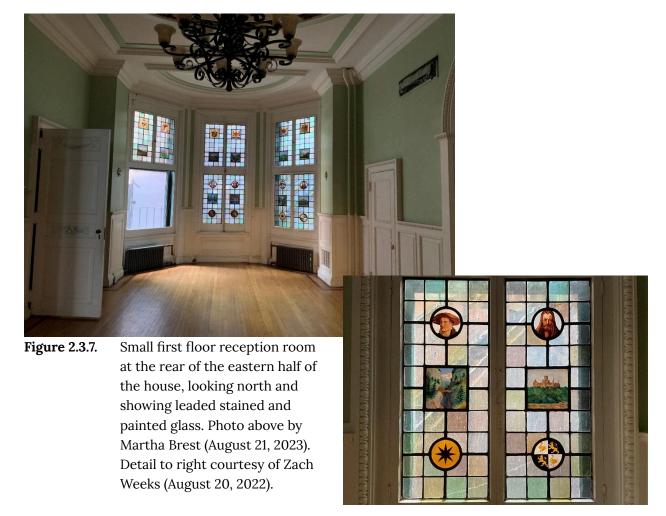




Figure 2.3.8. Second floor southeast French Room, looking southwest. Photo by Martha Brest (August 21, 2023).



Figure 2.3.9. Second floor French Room, looking southeast. Photo by Martha Brest (August 21, 2023).



Figure 2.3.10. Second floor southeast Drawing Room, looking northeast. Photo by Martha Brest (August 21, 2023).



Figure 2.3.11. Second floor Music Room, looking north. Photo by Martha Brest (August 21, 2023).

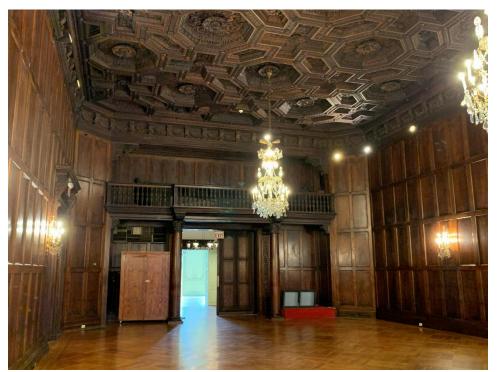


Figure 2.3.12. Second floor Music Room choir gallery, looking south. Photo by Martha Brest (August 21, 2023).



Figure 2.3.13. Second floor Music Room ceiling. Photo by Martha Brest (August 21, 2023).

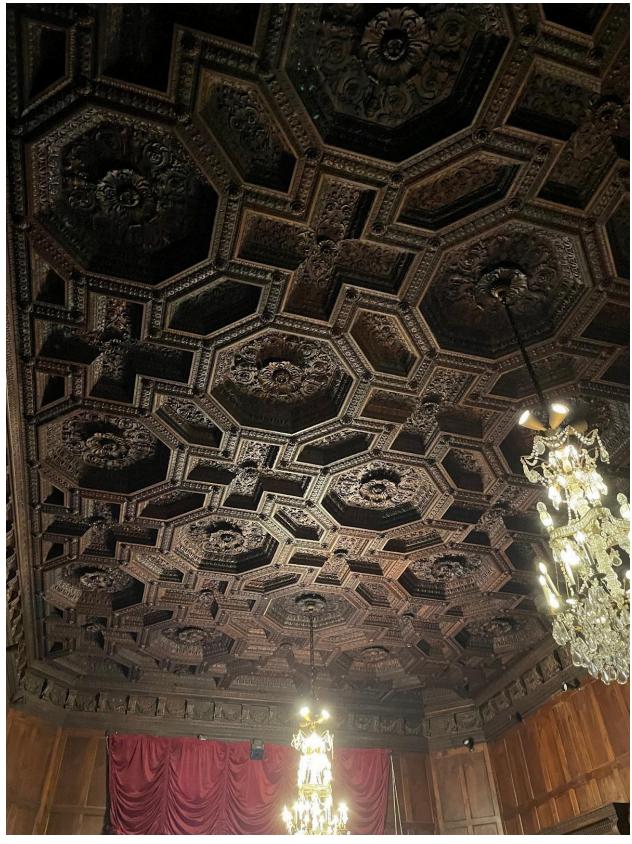


Figure 2.3.14. Second floor Music Room ceiling detail. Photo courtesy of Zach Weeks (August 20, 2022).

2.4 Historical Maps and Images

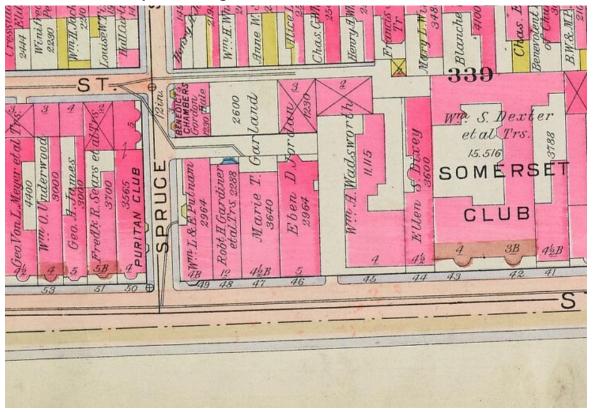


Figure 2.4.1. 1908 Bromley Atlas showing 46 and 47 Beacon Street and environs.

Source: Bromley, George W. and Walter S. Atlas of the City of Boston: Boston Proper and Back Bay. Philadelphia, PA: G.W. Bromley & Co., 1908, Plate 2.

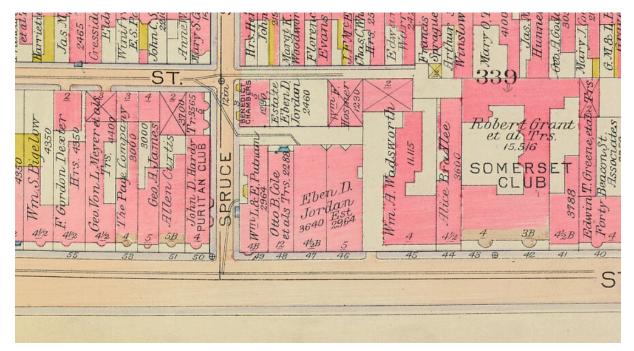


Figure 2.4.2. 1917 Bromley Atlas showing 46 and 47 Beacon Street and environs.

Source: Bromley, George W. and Walter S. Atlas of the City of Boston: Boston Proper and Back Bay. Philadelphia, PA: G.W. Bromley & Co., 1917, Plate 2.

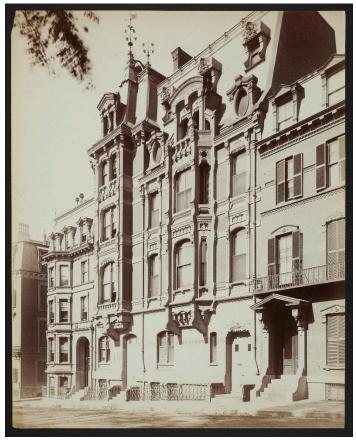


Figure 2.4.3 Facades of 46 Beacon Street (far right) and 47 Beacon Street (center), 1870 -1897. **Source:** Historic New England. "Exterior of 46-48 Beacon, Beacon Street, Boston, MA., undated." Accessed March 25, 2024.

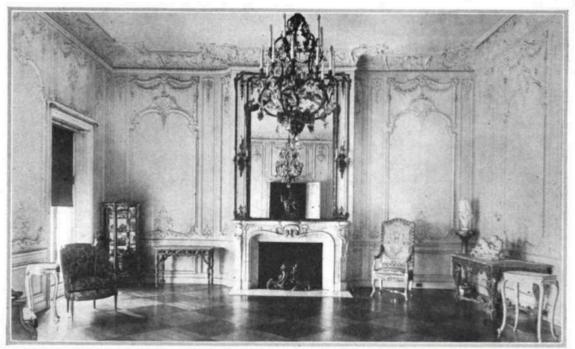
https://www.historicnewengland.org/explore/collections-access/gusn/252228.



Figure 2.4.4. Facades of 46 Beacon Street (right) and 47 Beacon Street (left), between 1897 and 1913.

Source: Clemson, John D. "A History and Description of the Eben Dyer Jordan, Jr. House." American Landmarks, Winchester, MA.: n.d.

22 The Woman Citizen



French room of pale green and gold, one of the most perfect examples of its kind, in the Women's Republican Club, Massachusetts

Figure 2.4.5. Image of the French Room at the southwest of the second story, looking west, ca. 1927.

Source: Herdman, Ramona. "Looking inside the Clubhouse." The Woman Citizen, January 1927, 24.



Figure 2.4.6. Image of the Music Room, circa 1931. **Source:** Boston Symphony Orchestra Fifty First Season

Boston Symphony Orchestra Fifty First Season Programme Booklet. Boston Symphony Orchestra, Inc., Boston, Mass., 1931-1932, 474.



Robert Jordan House on Beacon st., which Women's Republican Club of Massachusetts proposes to purchase for clubhouse.

Figure 2.4.7 Exterior Image from 1924, when property was being purchased by the Women's Republican Club.

Source: "Women's Republican Club Proposes to Buy Clubhouse." The Boston Globe, March 25, 1924, 11.

3.0 SIGNIFICANCE

3.1 Historic Significance

The Eben Jordan Jr. House is highly significant for its associations with a diverse range of people important to business, women's and African American rights, politics, arts, design, and culture. These individuals are associated with both the design and construction of the space and its subsequent utilization over decades as an important quasi-public space on Beacon Hill, with institutional use and a degree of public access for ninety-nine years from 1924 to 2023.

Eben Jordan Jr. (1857-1916)

The property at 46-47 Beacon Street is significant for its associations with the Jordan family and their architectural interventions at the property. Eben Jordan Sr. (1822-1895) purchased the townhouse at 46 Beacon Street in 1866. Jordan was the co-founder of Jordan Marsh Co., the first and largest department store in Boston. His son, Eben Jordan Jr. (1857-1916), inherited the property after the death of his father in 1895 and of his mother, Julia Clark, in 1897. Jordan Jr. and his wife Mary Sheppard Jordan (1861-1920) are responsible for the house entering its current form – first through an 1897 remodel of 46 Beacon Street with the firm Winslow & Wetherell and then through the



purchase of the adjacent townhouse at 47 Beacon Street and significant remodel to combine the two townhouses into one mansion in 1913 with the firm Haven and Hoyt. Jordan focused on hiring leading Boston architects, designers, and craftspeople to ensure the highest quality construction in his home.

Eben Jordan Jr. was a visionary businessman and philanthropist who left an indelible mark on the city. After receiving an education at Harvard, he worked his way up through the ranks at Jordan Marsh to become a partner in 1880 and helped innovate modern shopping concepts like "the customer is always right" and hassle-free returns.¹

Jordan's travels across Europe as a buyer for Jordan Marsh ignited a lifelong passion for the arts. As a major Boston arts philanthropist, he helped fund numerous arts organizations and helped establish cultural institutions like the New England Conservatory of Music and the Boston Opera Company. Known as "one of Boston's greatest patrons of the arts," Jordan left a lasting legacy by funding the construction of iconic venues like Jordan Hall, the Boston Opera building (now demolished), and the Majestic Theatre, enriching the cultural fabric of Boston. His influence extended beyond Boston as he served as president of Boston Opera Company and on the Board of Directors of the Metropolitan Opera Company of New York.

Winslow & Wetherell (1897)

For the 1897 alterations, Jordan hired the prominent local firm Winslow & Wetherell. Walter T. Winslow (1843-1909) studied in Paris before joining as a partner at the firm of one of mid-nineteenth century Boston's most prolific architects, Nathanial Bradlee. Winslow and the firm played a significant role in shaping Boston's central business district after the fire of 1872 wiped out many buildings. George H. Wetherell (1854-1930) was made a partner at the firm in 1884, having studied architecture at MIT and the École des Beaux-Arts in Paris. The firm became Winslow & Wetherell upon Bradlee's death in 1888. Notable nearby projects include the Walter Baker Chocolate Complex in Dorchester and the Hotel Touraine, Steinert Hall, and the S.S. Pierce Building at Coolidge Corner in Brookline. Winslow & Wetherell's interventions at the Eben Jordan Jr. House involved remodeling the interior of 46 Beacon Street and completely remodeling the exterior façade of the property to its current Renaissance Revival state.⁴

Haven and Hoyt (1913-1915)

After purchasing the adjacent townhouse at 47 Beacon Street, Jordan's commitment to architecture and music led him to hire the prominent local firm of Haven and Hoyt to redesign the two townhouses, joining them and remodeling the interiors of 47 Beacon Street for entertaining and hosting private musical performances. Jordan had a long-term relationship with the firm, having hired its predecessor Wheelwright, Haven, and Hoyt to design important musical spaces in Boston, including Jordan Hall (1903) at the New England Conservatory and the Boston Opera House (1909).

¹ "Jordan Marsh announces new store." Mass Moments. Accessed March 14, 2024. https://www.massmoments.org/moment-details/jordan-marsh-announces-new-store.html; Clemson, John D. "A History and Description of the Eben Dyer Jordan, Jr. House." American Landmarks, Winchester, MA: n.d.; Gordon, Edward. Eben D. Jordan, Jr. Mansion (BOS.14895), Boston, MA. On file, Massachusetts Historical Commission, Boston, MA, 2001.

² Gordon, Edward. Eben D. Jordan, Jr. Mansion (BOS.14895), Boston, MA

³ Clemson, John D. "A History and Description of the Eben Dyer Jordan, Jr. House"; Gordon, Edward. Eben D. Jordan, Jr. Mansion (BOS.14895), Boston, MA

⁴ Clemson, John D. "A History and Description of the Eben Dyer Jordan, Jr. House."

The firm was involved in a diverse range of other prominent projects, ranging from Horticultural Hall (1901) to the Anderson Memorial Bridge (1913-1915), constructed concurrently with 46 Beacon Street. After the death of Edmund Wheelwright in 1912, the firm became Haven and Hoyt and Jordan continued his relationship with them. Parkman Haven (1859-1943) had been a partner since 1888 and Edward Harrison Hoyt (1867-1936) became a partner in 1911 but had been with the firm for many years prior. The firm is significant not only for its impact on Boston's built landscape, but more broadly due to Parkman Haven's involvement in the design of many significant musical spaces in Boston and beyond. In addition to the Boston Opera House, Jordan Hall, and the Jordan House (with its significant music room), Haven consulted on the Théâtre des Champs-Elysées (1911-1913) in Paris after his success with the Boston Opera House. In Paris, Haven worked with architects Auguste Perret and Henry van der Velde, highlighting the importance of his experience and reputation.

Wallace C. Sabine

While Haven and Hoyt were already highly regarded for the design of musical performance spaces, for their long-term client Eben Jordan Jr. they hired the leading acoustic specialist at the time, Wallace C. Sabine (1868-1919) of Harvard University, to manage the acoustics of the grand Music Room. Sabine is considered to be the founder of the field of architectural acoustics. He conducted groundbreaking research on the absorption of sound in materials and its impact on room acoustics, which led to the development of principles for sound absorption in architectural space. The modern unit of sound absorption is known as the "sabin" in his honor. Sabine's contributions significantly advanced our understanding of how to optimize sound quality in architectural spaces and laid the foundation for modern architectural acoustics, greatly influencing the design of concert halls, theaters, and other performance spaces around the world.

Sabine had previously designed the acoustics at Boston Symphony Hall, with which Jordan was almost certainly familiar as a major patron of music and the arts in Boston. Jordan wanted his private music hall at 46 Beacon Street to be acoustically engineered for optimal sound quality during performances, and there was nobody better for that task than Wallace Sabine. Sabine even created a model of the room to test the acoustics. Sabine's contributions are foundational to the field of acoustics, and the Music Room at the Jordan House is an incredible rare surviving example of Sabine's work in a residential space, adding great importance to this space.

Martin Brimmer (1829-1896)

Prior to Jordan's 1913 renovation, 47 Beacon Street was a separate address and townhouse. The property had been in the Brimmer family since 1812 and its longtime owner, Martin Brimmer, left his mark on both 47 Beacon Street and the wider city of Boston. Brimmer was a State Representative, State Senator, founding president of the Boston Museum of Fine Arts, and a founder of the Union Club.⁸ Brimmer played a pivotal role in the reconstruction of 47 Beacon Street (and adjacent 48 Beacon Street) in the Second Empire style with his friend, renowned architect Richard Morris Hunt. The Brimmer family owned the property until Martin's wife, Marianne Brimmer, sold the residence to socialite Marie Tudor Garland (1870–1945) in 1906 following the death of Garland's husband James

⁵ Wilson, Dall. Alice Nielsen and the Gayety of Nations. N.p.: The Author, 2001: 484.

⁶ "This Month in Physics History - January 10, 1919: Death of Wallace Sabine, pioneer of architectural acoustics." *American Physical Society News*, Volume 20, no. 1 (2011): 2.

⁷ Clemson, John D. "A History and Description of the Eben Dyer Jordan, Jr. House."

⁸ "Obituary Record: Martin Brimmer." The New York Times (January 16, 1896): 5.



A. Garland and her inheritance of income on a \$10 million fortune. After remarrying, Garland sold the property to Eben Jordan Jr. in 1912.

Richard Morris Hunt (1827-1895)

Hunt's involvement in Brimmer's reconstruction of the east half of the house in 1870 is highly significant due to his national stature as a leading American architect of the nineteenth century. Hunt was the first American trained at the École des Beaux-Arts. He was commissioned for many of the nation's most prominent architectural projects, ranging from the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York City to numerous commissions for the Vanderbilt family, including their Biltmore Estate in North Carolina. Hunt's firm provided the floor plans for 47 Beacon Street to Haven and Hoyt and based on the floorplan and the archives of the firm, the dining room and its high-relief carvings likely survives from Hunt's original design.⁹

Luigi Frullini (1839-1897)

The 1870 renovation also brought leading craftsmen to 47 Beacon Street. Luigi Frullini (1839-1897), an internationally acclaimed carver and designer from Florence, Italy, worked with Richard Morris Hunt on the design of the dining room and likely executed the carvings. The dining room is possibly one of the only remaining interiors at the property from the Hunt campaign. Frullini was known for his Renaissance Revival designs and his displays at World's Fairs in London, Venice, and Paris attracted high-profile clients. He had previously worked with Hunt on other major commissions, such as Chateau-sur-Mer in Newport, Rhode Island, in 1875. 10

Women's Republican Club of Massachusetts (1924-1951)

The Eben Jordan Jr. House left the family in 1924 when the heirs of Eben Jordan Jr. sold it to the Women's Republican Club of Massachusetts (WRC), which had been established in 1922 and was looking for a permanent home. Prominent women from across Massachusetts established the WRC just two years after the ratification of the 19th Amendment. Many of these women had been highly influential in both the local and national suffrage movement. With the vote secured, they leveraged their newly gained political rights to bolster women's influence in politics through organized efforts. The WRC's transition from meeting in private homes to securing a dedicated location for the civic club reflects evolving social dynamics and cultural shifts in early-twentieth century Boston.

The founding of the WRC was described in its co-founder Anna Julia Child Bird's obituary as "one of the greatest steps forward on behalf of women workers after the long suffrage battle." The WRC played a significant role in Massachusetts civic life during its occupancy of 46 Beacon Street, drawing on the national stature of those who founded and participated in the organization, along with the diverse range of cultural and civic events they hosted on site.

The significance of the WRC to Massachusetts civic life is best understood when we recognize the impactful women who established and managed the club and subsequently purchased 46 Beacon Street. Despite its origin on Beacon Hill during a time of widespread racial segregation and marginalization across the nation, the WRC was intentionally founded as an interracial membership

⁹ Clemson, John D. "A History and Description of the Eben Dyer Jordan, Jr. House."

¹⁰ Clemson, John D. "A History and Description of the Eben Dyer Jordan, Jr. House"; Attributed to Luigi Frullini, Folio Stand, c. 1870. Minneapolis Institute of Art (Accessed March 14, 2024) https://collections.artsmia.org/art/96942/folio-stand-attributed-to-luigi-frullini.

¹¹ "Mrs. C.S. Bird, 88, Dies at Her E. Walpole Estate." The Boston Globe (November 20, 1942): 36.

organization. Much of the credit for that belongs to its co-founder Harriet C. Hall (1890-1975), a prominent black Bostonian active in many political and organizing circles in the city. Hall toured the nation with the Republican Party, speaking at many rallies, while back home she was busy helping to found and lead the Women's Service Club (WSG), chairing the Boston Anti-Lynching Crusade fund in 1922, running for the Massachusetts House of Representatives in 1924, and serving for many years as officer of the local NAACP. ¹²

The Club's other co-founder and inaugural president, suffrage activist Anna Julia Child Bird (1855-1942), was also pivotal to facilitating women's entry into the political arena. Bird's contemporaries viewed her as a "nationally known figure" and "one of the first and greatest leaders for women's suffrage in this country." Bird "became famous as an organizer of women in politics," according to her obituary, and she was not only the first president of the Women's Republican Club but also the first woman elected to represent Massachusetts at the Republican National Convention. A year after co-founding the WRC, she was elected head of the Department of International Relations of the General Federation of Women's Clubs. 14

After Bird's presidency, the Club continued to be led by distinguished Massachusetts women. Katherine Vose Parker (1888-1983), a Massachusetts State Representative, served as the third president. Katherine G. Howard (1896-1986), the fourth president, had a multifaceted career that included working as a federal administrator during the Eisenhower administration, serving as a U.S. delegate to NATO, acting as Deputy U.S. Commissioner General to the Brussels World Fair, and serving as secretary of the Republican National Convention. ¹⁶

46 Beacon Street was attractive to the members of the WRC for the "ample accommodations for members to stay overnight, in addition to a large assembly hall, large and small dining rooms, and other rooms suitable for meetings." Over their quarter-century occupying the mansion, the WRC made ample use of these spaces, transforming the house into a center for social and cultural

¹² Goganian, Susan, and Sarah Deutsch. "Women and the City: Gender, Space, and Power in Boston, 1870-1940." The New England Quarterly 74, no. 1 (March 2001): 161. https://doi.org/10.2307/31854681; Brown, Nell Porter. "A History of Forest Hills Cemetery." Harvard Magazine, March-April 2022,

https://www.harvardmagazine.com/2022/02/h2-forest-hills-cemetery; "Boston's Black history being unburied at cemetery"; AP News (September 28, 2009)' Larson, Sandra. "Cemetery project seeks unheard Black voices." Bay State Banner (August 19, 2009).

https://www.baystatebanner.com/2009/08/19/cemetery-project-seeks-unheard-black-voices/; "Boston Women's Heritage Trail - South End Tour." Boston Women's Heritage Trail (Accessed March 14, 2024) https://bwht.org/south-end-tour/.

¹³ "Mrs. C.S. Bird, 88, Dies at Her E. Walpole Estate." The Boston Globe (November 20, 1942): 36.

¹⁴ "Bird, Anna Julia Child (1855-1942)." Jane Addams Digital Edition. (Accessed March 14, 2024), https://digital.janeaddams.ramapo.edu/items/show/5085; Richard B. Sherman, "Charles Sumner Bird and the Progressive Party in Massachusetts," The New England Quarterly, vol. 33 (Sep. 1960): 325-40; Richard B. Sherman, "Charles Sumner Bird and the Progressive Party in Massachusetts," The New England Quarterly, vol. 33 (Sep. 1960): 325-40; "Memoirs of Deceased Members." The New England Historical and Genealogical Register, Volume 97 (January 1943): 96-97; Saed, Briana. "Biographical Sketch of Anna Julia Child Bird." Alexander Street Documents. (Accessed March 14, 2024). https://documents.alexanderstreet.com/d/1009860126.

¹⁵ "Katherine Vose Parker." *Wikipedia*, The Free Encyclopedia. Last modified February 28, 2023. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Katherine_Vose_Parker; "Heads Women's Republican Club: Miss Katherine V. Parker Elected," *The Boston Globe* (May 27, 1930): 9.

¹⁶ "Katherine G. Howard." Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia. Last modified January 6, 2024. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Katherine_G._Howard.

¹⁷ "Women's Republican Club Proposes to Buy Clubhouse." The Boston Globe (March 25, 1924): 11.



activities in Boston. Membership increased by 100% in the six months following the purchase of their permanent headquarters and the club found "the attractiveness of its rooms as a source of financial success," deriving a large source of their income to renting out rooms for entertaining. The club's many lounges, reception spaces, and dining rooms made it a popular venue.¹⁸

In 1925, the Club opened a political library, declaring that lectures would be a "feature of the organization's educational work." This lecture series, along with other programs, attracted a diverse slate of notable speakers to 46 Beacon Street. These events became an integral part of Boston's civic and cultural landscape, while also bucking societal norms by serving as platforms for the voices of women and people of color. The diversity of speakers fostered dialogue and understanding among different segments of society, contributing to a more inclusive civic and cultural landscape in Boston.

The speakers included both local luminaries and national figures, such as author and society heiress Isabel Weld Perkins, author and preservationist Clara Endicott Sears, and novelist Emilie Baker Loring (the latter two of whom were both Club members). Speakers with national profiles included economist and Congressman A. Piatt Andrew and former president Calvin Coolidge, who attended a luncheon in 1930 to mark the Massachusetts Tercentenary. In the contract of the contract

The WRC also regularly (and intentionally) provided a platform for female politicians and candidates. This was particularly evident in 1938, when several women running for public office in Massachusetts addressed the club. They not only discussed their own candidacies but also emphasized the importance of equal representation in public office. Additionally, they highlighted women's capability to fulfill these roles competently, if not surpassing the performance of many male incumbents.²²

Club members also organized special events dedicated to platforming important Black voices, such as their "Negro Guest Night", which in 1930 featured George W. Goodman of the Urban league and Matthew W. Bullock, lawyer, politician and human rights activist.²³ Bullock was a highly influential leader in Boston's Black community who made significant contributions to the fields of education, civil rights, and community development in the city. These events were unique for the time, giving him an audience with a largely white Boston Brahmin crowd. ²⁴

Cultural activities hosted by the club were wide-ranging, as well. They included events accessible to everyone, such as the recurring "officers dance" during World War II, held every Saturday in their Sherry Room.²⁵ They also attracted international stars such as the Russian composer and conductor

¹⁸ Herdman, Ramona. 'Looking inside the Clubhouse'. The Woman Citizen, (January 1927): 24.

¹⁹ "Political Library a Plan of the Women's Republican Club." The Boston Globe (September 4, 1925): 12.

²⁰ Bender, Patti. Happy Landings. Westport, CT: City Point Press, 2023: 404.; "Soloist," The Boston Globe (January 10, 1941): 19.

²¹ Andrew (A. Piatt) Papers, Collection No. 2006C26, Online Archive of California. https://oac.cdlib.org/findaid/ark:/13030/kt5z09r78p/dsc/; Fuess, Claude M. Calvin Coolidge: The Man from Vermont. Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1940, Chapter XVIII.

²² "Women Candidates Speak at Luncheon." The Boston Globe (September 17, 1938): 16.

²³ "Women Republicans to Host Negro Guest Night." The Boston Globe (March 11, 1930): 6.

²⁴ "Matthew W. Bullock." Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia. (Accessed March 14, 2024). https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Matthew_W._Bullock.

²⁵ "The Harvard Crimson: Navy Recreation," *The Harvard Crimson*, April 7, 1944, (accessed February 16, 2024) https://www.thecrimson.com/article/1944/4/7/navy-recreation-pbofficers-dance-tomorrowb-pthe/.



Igor Stravinsky. On March 6, 1940, Stravinsky performed a private chamber concert for the club, accompanied by leading pianist of the era, Adele Marcus.²⁶

The association between 46 Beacon Street and the WRC adds layers of historical and cultural significance to the building. The legacy of the WRC during its occupancy of 46 Beacon Street represents an important chapter in the history of women's involvement in politics and civic life in Massachusetts. As the headquarters of the WRC for over a quarter-century, the Eben Jordan Jr. House at 46 Beacon Street served as more than just a physical space: it was a symbol of women's progress and empowerment in the political sphere. The club's occupancy transformed the building into a hub of cultural and intellectual activity in Boston, hosting a wide array of events that fostered dialogue, education, and civic engagement, and contributed to a more inclusive civic and cultural landscape in Boston.

Boston Club (1951-1976)

After operating for more than a quarter-century at 46 Beacon Street, the Women's Republican Club sold the building to local businessman Benjamin White in 1951. Under White's stewardship, the building continued its institutional use and transitioned into the Boston Club, playing an ongoing role in Boston's social scene. The Boston Club provided a space for members to gather for various events, including dinners, receptions, and meetings, fostering connections and relationships. White took advantage of the size and grand interiors of the mansion to offer a wide range of services and amenities to the club's hundreds of members. This included a barbershop, steam and massage rooms, a gym, cocktail salons, dining rooms, and Saturday night dances in the ballroom. The International-style squash court was also built during White's ownership of the property as an additional amenity for club members. In 1961, White turned the first two floors into a restaurant called "Tiffany's Restaurant and Lounge," which resulted in a 1964 lawsuit by Tiffany Co. over the name.

White eventually sold the property to David Siegel of Brookline in 1968, who continued its use as a club and looked for ways to add additional uses to the building, such as the inclusion of an art gallery in 1971. As is the case today, there was significant local concern in the 1970s around the future of the building and its use and neighbors rallied around it. In 1968, around the time of the property sale, scenes for "The Thomas Crown Affair," featuring Faye Dunaway and Steve McQueen were filmed in the ballroom. By 1976, the "est" movement under Werner Erhard had set up its Boston headquarters in the building and quickly trained thousands of people there, but Siegel entered financial difficulties and the property was subsequently foreclosed on and sold at the beginning of 1977. 2728

Unification Church (1977-2023)

The Unification Church purchased the building at a 1977 foreclosure sale at the height of their efforts to build a real estate empire in the United States, which drew national attention and concern. The Unification Church's purchase and ownership of the property directly related to their wider

https://casetext.com/case/tiffany-co-v-boston-club-inc.

²⁶Brook, Claire, and David Rosen, eds. Words on Music: Essays in Honor of Andrew Porter on the Occasion of His 75th Birthday. Pendragon Press, Hillsdale, NY: 2003: 315.

²⁷ Gaffin, Adam. "Moonies Sell Long-Time Beacon Hill Pied-à-Terre." *Universal Hub*, Published September 23, 2023. https://www.universalhub.com/2023/moonies-sell-long-time-beacon-hill-pied-terre.

²⁸ "Tiffany & Co. v. Boston Club, Inc., 231 F. Supp. 836 (d. Mass. 1964)." Published July 2, 1964.

https://law.justia.com/cases/federal/district-courts/FSupp/231/836/1444870/.



international efforts and the considerable attention drawn to the organization during this period as it obtained a national profile.

Religious leader and messianic figure Reverend Sun Myung Moon originally founded the Unification Church in Korea in the 1950s, mixing Christian and traditional Korean shamanist practices. Moon came to the United States in 1972 and established a nonprofit corporation called Unification Church International to hold church assets in 1977, the same year the Church purchased the Eben Jordan Jr. House. The Unification Church established itself as a national movement in the mid-1970s, with activity in all fifty states and an explosion of membership. The main activity of the Church in the mid-1970s was collecting money and using it to make major real estate investments.

National anti-cult hysteria and concern about the organization's rapid acquisition of landmark properties in major metropolitan areas launched the Unification Church into the national spotlight, where they became derisively referred to as the "Moonies." The Sale of 46 Beacon Street to the Unification church was reported in the New York Times and the Boston Globe in the wider context of news reports during this same period about controversy brewing over the scale of major real estate acquisitions by the Church.³² The Church owned the Eben Jordan Jr. House and operated from it for four decades until its sale in 2023.

Conclusion

The combination of owners and uses at 46 Beacon Street speaks to the building's ability to be sensitively adapted to new uses and the incredible range of diverse stories preserved within its walls. The townhouses at 46 and 47 Beacon Street individually and collectively are significant for their associations with the owners who built the house, along with the renowned architects and craftspeople employed in construction. This significance is enhanced by its continued history as a quasi-public space hosting the first headquarters of the Women's Republican Club, then the Boston Club, and finally the Unification Church in Boston and the important associations each of these uses has had with Boston civic and cultural life.

3.2 Architectural (or Other) Significance

The Eben Jordan Jr. House is a significant example of the Renaissance-Revival architectural style with well-preserved exteriors as well as first and second floors. The high, boxy, imposing massing of the house and its rich decoration is typical of the style, which borrows freely from both the Italian Renaissance urban Palazzo and the Academic Classicism of nineteenth-century French design that was extremely popular at the turn of the century in the United States.³³ The first structure at 46

²⁹ Eisen, Nathaniel. "Lengthy Lawsuit Exposes Rifts Within Unification Church." Washington City Paper. Published September 7, 2021.

https://washingtoncitypaper.com/article/530522/lengthy-lawsuit-exposes-rifts-within-unification-church/. ³⁰ Mickler, Michael L. A History of the Unification Church in America, 1959–74 - Emergence of a National Movement. Garland, 1993, Chapter 6.

³¹ John Burgess and Michael Isikoff. "Moon's Japanese Profits Bolster Efforts in U.S." The Washington Post (September 16, 1984): A01.

³² "Unification Church Buys Mansion in Boston." The New York Times (January 5, 1977): 12, Claiborne, William.

[&]quot;Moon Cult Buys Old Tiffany Building." Washington Post (February 9, 1977): n.p.

³³ 'A History & Description of the Eben Dyer Jordan Jr. House' American Landmarks (p10).

Beacon Street was built in 1804, with consecutive structures constructed in 1824 and 1854.³⁴ Eben Jordan Sr. purchased the property in 1866 and after he and his wife died in 1895 and 1897, respectively, Eben Jordan Jr. inherited the house. It was at this time the first notable renovation of 46 Beacon Street took place. Plans from this time indicate the previous building was not completely torn down, but rather altered heavily, both internally and externally.³⁵ Architects Winslow & Wetherell were hired to design the highly decorative Renaissance-Revival façade and interior finishes.³⁶ Their other work included Boston's Hotels Touraine and Buckminster, the S. S. Pierce Building in Coolidge Corner, Brookline, and Union Station in Portland, Maine.³⁷ The unique interiors reflect an eclectic taste with a dedication to draftsmanship and quality.

Between 1913 and 1914, Jordan doubled the footprint of his home by acquiring and remodeling 47 Beacon Street. This row house was originally designed in 1870 by Richard Morris Hunt, famed architect of such notable works as the pedestal of the Statue of Liberty, the façade of New York City's Metropolitan Museum of Art, Biltmore in North Carolina, and Marble House and the Breakers in Newport, Rhode Island.³⁸ Jordan hired Haven and Hoyt, themselves a well-known local firm which designed the Massachusetts Historical Society Building, among others. While 47 Beacon Street was not completely demolished at this time, and Richard Morris Hunt's sons provided Haven and Hoyt with the original building blueprints to work from, all of the exterior was reconstructed to complement 46 Beacon Street while the internal layout was probably heavily altered.³⁹ The northwest first floor room, the dining room, may be a vestige of the original Hunt interiors. The carvings around the chimneypiece are consistent with mid-to-late nineteenth century design and resembles work done for Hunt by a carver under the direction of the Florentine decorator Luigi Frullini, with whom Hunt worked on other commissions such as Chateau-sur-Mer, in Newport, Rhode Island.⁴⁰

The interiors were lavishly decorated. Mantelpieces were ordered from Paris and the main eastern stairway paneling and decoration was replicated for the new western stair hall by the Cambridge, Massachusetts-based company, William F. Ross & Co. 41 The importation of materials and care for detail is substantiated by plans, correspondence, and work orders between Haven and Hoyt and suppliers, the building department, and Eben Jordan Jr. The 1913 Haven and Hoyt renovation is when the most impressive room in the house was constructed, the Music Room. This space exemplified Jordan's passion for music, of which he was an avid patron. It was custom built to host intimate recitals, its acoustics carefully honed by Harvard physicist Wallace Clement Sabine, who founded the field of architectural acoustics and helped design Boston Symphony Hall. 2 Sabine's work is unmatched, and the existence of this extant private commission is significant. The ceiling and woodwork of this room is also significant. Woodworkers William F. Ross & Co., who created woodwork elsewhere in the remodeling of 47 Beacon Street, fabricated the wall paneling and while

https://buildingsofnewengland.com/tag/winslow-and-wetherell/ (Accessed March 13, 2023).

https://www.britannica.com/biography/Richard-Morris-Hunt (Accessed March 13, 2024).

³⁴ Ibid.

³⁵ 'Alterations of House for Eben D. Jordan Esq., No. 46 Beacon St. Boston.' 1897. Boston City Archives.

³⁶ 'A History & Description of the Eben Dyer Jordan Jr. House' American Landmarks, (p10).

³⁷ 'Winslow and Wetherell,' Buildings of New England.

³⁸ "Richard Morris Hunt, American Architect," Britannica.

³⁹ 'A History & Description of the Eben Dyer Jordan Jr. House' American Landmarks (p11).

⁴⁰ Ibid (p6).

⁴¹ Ibid.

⁴² 'Wallace C. Sabine,' Collection of Historical Scientific Instruments, Harvard University. http://waywiser.fas.harvard.edu/people/3338/wallace-c-sabine. (Accessed 13 March 2024).



there is some speculation that they also carved the coffered ceiling, the design and appearance of age argue that it too may have come from Europe, specifically a Renaissance Italian palazzo.⁴³ It seems likely the Cambridge woodworkers helped fit the ceiling into its new home.

While the Eben Jordan Jr. House has served many purposes over the last century, including as a variety of clubs, restaurant, apartments, and a church headquarters; the main reception or public rooms of the first and second stories remain remarkably intact. Over the years there have been some modifications to adjacent ancillary spaces, including minor changes to the floorplan of the first story rear rooms in the eastern half of the house (where a staircase was added in 1938), around the small front rooms directly west of the entrance, and at the second story southeast room (where a partition was removed). Likewise, toilets were installed in the rear of the east part of the house in the late 1980s, but the main circulation and finishes of the reception rooms and stairhalls have remained intact.⁴⁴ More dramatic alterations have occurred in the private rooms on the third through sixth stories, as evidenced through the plethora of permits on file at the City of Boston. The records also indicate three fires, in 1951, 1960, and 1968, and while some plaster and framing were damaged, it appears the effects were limited to these more residential areas and the basement.⁴⁵ The outstanding significance of the property lies in the style, craftsmanship, and historical social narrative of the main first and second story spaces.

3.3 Archaeological Sensitivity

Though proximal to several significant ancient Native and historical archaeological sites and located within a Historic District, the footprint of the property at 46 Beacon Street does not include any open land beneath which intact archaeological deposits may remain. Additionally, the current building has a large underground basement, the excavation of which would have destroyed any archaeological deposits on the site. For these reasons, the property is not considered to be archaeologically sensitive.

3.4 Relationship to Criteria for Designation

The Eben Jordan Jr. House meets the following criteria for designation as a Boston Landmark as established in Section 4 of Chapter 772 of the Acts of 1975, as amended:

A. Inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places as provided in the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966.

The Eben Jordan Jr. House was included in the Beacon Hill Local Historic District in 1955, and, in October 15, 1966, as a contributing resource in the Beacon Hill National Register District and the National Historic Landmark District.

B. Structures, sites, objects, man-made or natural, at which events occurred that have made an outstanding contribution to, and are identified prominently with, or that best represent

⁴³ 'A History & Description of the Eben Dyer Jordan Jr. House' American Landmarks (p9).

⁴⁴ Building Permits for 46 Beacon Street, 1890-1985. City of Boston: Building Services Department.

⁴⁵ Building Permit for 46 Beacon Street. December 2, 1951. Permit. City of Boston: Building Services Department.



some important aspect of the cultural, political, economic, military, or social history of the city, the commonwealth, the New England region or the nation.

The Eben Jordan Jr. House is historically significant for its connection with the Women's Republican Club of Massachusetts and women's political and social history in the decades following ratification of the 19th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, and for its associations with the emergence of the Unification Church as a national religious and cultural movement in the 1970s.

C. Structures, sites, objects, man-made or natural, associated significantly with the lives of outstanding historical personages.

The Eben Jordan Jr. House is historically significant for its association with Boston arts patron Eben Jordan Jr. Its significance is further underscored by its association with Women's Republican Club of Massachusetts co-founders Anna Julia Child Bird and Harriet C. Hall, as well as with many political advocates and musicians who spoke and performed at the property.

D. Structures, sites, objects, man-made or natural, representative of elements of architectural or landscape design or craftsmanship that 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 Eben Jordan Jr. House is architecturally significant for its association with a range of locally and nationally significant architects and designers, including Richard Morris Hunt in 1870, the firm Winslow & Wetherell in 1897, and the firm Haven and Hoyt in 1913. The music room within the mansion is especially significant for its association with the founder of the field of acoustics, Wallace C. Sabine.



4.0 ECONOMIC STATUS

4.1 Current Assessed Value

According to the City of Boston's Assessor's records, the property at 46-47 Beacon Street (parcel #0501489000 & #0501489001) where the Eben Jordan Jr. House is located has a total assessed value of \$2,617,200.00, with the land valued at \$1,389,500.00 and the building valued at \$1,227,700.00 for fiscal year 2024.

4.2 Current Ownership

According to the City of Boston's Assessor's records, the Eben Jordan Jr. House is owned by Sailor 46 LLC, with a mailing address at 251 Newbury Street Boston, Massachusetts 02116.



5.0 PLANNING CONTEXT

5.1 Background

The Eben Jordan Jr. House has had multiple owners since its major 1897 remodel and 1913 expansion: Eben Jordan Jr. and family from 1897 to 1924; the Women's Republican Club of Massachusetts from 1924 to 1951; the Boston Club, a private gentleman's club, owned by Benjamin White from 1951 to 1968; David Siegel from 1968 to 1977; and the Unification Church from 1977 to 2023. In 2023, it was purchased by Sailor 46 LLC.

The Eben Jordan Jr. House was originally constructed as two separate townhouses at 46 and 47 Beacon Street. The property was used as two single-family townhouses until 1913, when it was combined into one single-family mansion. The east half of the Jordan House (46 Beacon Street) was originally constructed in 1854 and was substantially remodeled in 1897. In 1913, this townhouse was unified with the 1870 townhouse at 47 Beacon Street, which underwent substantial interior and exterior remodeling. From 1924 to 2023, the building served as a quasi-public space, serving as a women's political club that had public events and space available to rent by the public, then a gentleman's club, which included a public restaurant, art gallery, and other uses. Most recently, the Jordan House has served as a church property where church meetings and events were held, particularly in the Music Room. The property was sold in 2023 to Sailor 46 LLC and plans are underway for major development of the property and its interiors.

5.2 Zoning

Parcel numbers #0501489000 & #0501489001 are located in the Boston Proper zoning district, the H-2-65 subdistrict. It is subject to zoning overlay Restricted Parking District and part of the Historic Beacon Hill District.

5.3 Planning Issues

On August 23, 1977, a petition to Landmark the interior and exterior of the Eben Jordan House at 46 Beacon Street was submitted. At a public hearing on September 27, 1977, the Boston Landmarks Commission voted to accept the Eben Jordan House for further study.

The exterior of the Eben Jordan House is currently protected because it is part of the Historic Beacon Hill District. Any changes to the exterior of the building requires review and approval by the Historic Beacon Hill District Commission and the Boston Parks and Recreation Commission, as the building is located on the edge of the Boston Common.

In 2023 the property's new owners and their proposed condominium project raised concerns in the surrounding neighborhood that the work was likely to destroy the interior spaces which were part of the petition's proposed designation. In 2024, a group of concerned citizens hired Historic New England to produce a draft study report in order to move forward with the designation of the House as a Landmark, which would protect interior elements.

As of the posting date of this study report, no further information is available on the developers' proposal or the condition of the interior.



6.0 ALTERNATIVE APPROACHES

6.1 Alternatives available to the Boston Landmarks Commission

A. Designation

The Commission retains the option of designating Eben Jordan Jr. House as a Landmark. Designation shall correspond to Assessor's parcels 0501489000 and 0501489001 and shall address the following interior elements hereinafter referred to as the "Specified Features":

• Certain interior elements including: character defining features (as outlined in Section 8.4) at the principal spaces of the first and second stories including the Entrance Hall, the stair halls at the first and second stories, the northwest Music Room, and the southwest Drawing Room (also known as the 'French Room').

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 interior of the property be listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

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 Eben Jordan Jr. House interior spaces 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

Listing on the National Register provides an honorary designation and limited protection in cases when federal funds are involved in proposed physical changes. It also creates incentives for preservation, such as tax incentives for income-producing properties and possible eligibility for grants through the Massachusetts 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 Eben D. Jordan Jr. House could be introduced at the site.



7.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

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

- 1. That the interior principal spaces of the first and second stories including the entrance hall, the stair halls at the first and second stories, the northwest Music Room, and the southwest drawing room (also known as the French Room) of the Eben Jordan Jr. House be designated by the Boston Landmarks Commission as a 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 parcels 0501489000 and 0501489001 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 that 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 that 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. 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 that 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 that might be construed as causing an alteration to the physical character of specific interior spaces 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 that are not subject to review by the Commission:
 - 1. Activities associated with normal cleaning and routine maintenance.
 - a. For building maintenance, such activities might include the following: normal cleaning (no chemical or abrasive cleaning), non-invasive

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⁴⁶ 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.

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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.

- 2. Routine activities associated with special events or seasonal decorations that are to remain in place for less than six weeks, and do not result in any permanent alteration or attached fixtures.
- B. Activities that 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, 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.
- 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.

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 that 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.⁴⁷ 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: demolition; and archaeology. Items not anticipated in the Standards and Criteria may be subject to review, refer to Section 8.2 and Section 9.
- 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 impact of the 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 interior historic materials, features, and spatial relationships that characterize a property. The new work shall be differentiated from the old and shall be compatible with

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⁴⁷ 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.



- 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. 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, interior (including but not limited to stone, brick, terra-cotta, concrete, 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. Existing masonry features, details, surfaces, and ornamentation that become deteriorated or missing should be replaced with materials and elements that match the original in material, color, texture, size, shape, profile, and detail of installation. Alternative materials will be considered on a case-by-case basis.
- 4. When replacement of existing materials or elements is necessary, it should be based on physical or documentary evidence.
- 5. Sound original mortar shall be retained.
- 6. Deteriorated mortar shall be carefully removed by hand raking the joints.
- 7. Use of mechanical hammers shall not be allowed. Use of mechanical saws may be allowed on a case-by-case basis.
- 8. Repointing mortar shall duplicate the original mortar in strength, composition, color, texture, joint size, joint profile, and method of application.
- 9. Sample panels of raking the joints and repointing shall be reviewed and approved by the staff of the Boston Landmarks Commission.
- 10. Cleaning of masonry is discouraged and should only be performed when necessary to halt deterioration.
- 11. If the building is to be cleaned, the masonry shall be cleaned with the gentlest method possible.
- 12. 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).
- 13. 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.
- 14. Waterproofing or water repellent 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.
- 15. 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.
- 16. 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.

8.3.3 Wood, interior 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. Existing wood surfaces, features, details, and ornamentation that become deteriorated or missing should be replaced with material and elements that match the original in material, color, texture, size, shape, profile, and detail of installation. Alternative materials will be considered on a case-by-case basis.
- 4. When replacement of materials is necessary, it should be based on physical or documentary evidence.
- 5. Cleaning of wood elements shall use the gentlest method possible.

8.3.4 Architectural metals, interior (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. Existing metal materials, features, details, and ornamentation that become deteriorated or missing should be replaced with material and elements that match the original in



- material, color, texture, size, shape, profile, and detail of installation. Alternative materials will be considered on a case-by-case basis.
- 4. When replacement of materials or elements is necessary, it should be based on physical or documentary evidence.
- 5. Cleaning of metal elements either to remove corrosion or deteriorated paint shall use the gentlest method possible.
- 6. 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.
- 7. 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.
- 8. 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).

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 sash, 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. Existing window sash, elements, features (functional and decorative), details, and ornamentation that become deteriorated or missing should be replaced with material and elements that match the original in material, color, texture, size, shape, profile, configuration, and detail of installation. Alternative materials will be considered on a case-by-case basis.
- 6. When replacement of sash, elements, features (functional and decorative), details, or ornamentation is necessary, it should be based on physical or documentary evidence.
- 7. If replacement is approved, replacement sash for divided-light windows shall have through-glass muntins or simulated divided lights with dark anodized spacer bars the same width as the muntins.



8.3.6 Entrances/Doors

- 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. Existing entrance elements, materials, features (functional and decorative), details, and ornamentation that become deteriorated or missing should be replaced with material and elements that match the original in material, color, texture, size, shape, profile, configuration and detail of installation. Alternative materials will be considered on a case-by-case basis.
- 6. When replacement is necessary, it should be based on physical or documentary evidence.
- 7. Replacement door hardware should replicate the original or be appropriate to the style and period of the building.

8.3.7 Lighting

- 1. Interior lighting fixture elements of architectural ornamentation.
- 2. Wherever integral to the interior spaces, 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. Existing lighting fixture materials, elements, features (functional and decorative), details, and ornamentation that become deteriorated or missing should be replaced with material and elements that match the original in material, color, texture, size, shape, profile, configuration, and detail of installation. Alternative materials will be considered on a case-by-case basis.
- 4. When replacement is necessary, it should be based on physical or documentary evidence.
- 5. 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.
- 6. Supplementary illumination may be added where appropriate to the current use of the building.
- 7. New lighting shall conform to any of the following approaches as appropriate 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 that date from an interim installation and that are considered to be appropriate to the building and use.
- d. New lighting fixtures that are differentiated from the original or later contributing fixture in design.
- 8. No exposed conduit shall be allowed.

8.3.8 Additions, interior

- 1. Additions can significantly alter the historic appearance of the buildings, and will 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 be of a size, scale, and materials that are in harmony with the existing building.

8.3.9 Accessibility (for exterior only)

- 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.

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8.3.10 Interior Spaces, Features, and Finishes

- 1. The floor plan and interior spaces, features, and finishes that are important in defining the overall historic character of the building shall be retained and preserved.
- 2. Original or later contributing interior materials, features, details, surfaces and ornamentation shall be repaired, if necessary, by patching, splicing, consolidating, or otherwise reinforcing the materials using recognized preservation methods.
- 3. Interior materials, features, details, surfaces, and ornamentation that become deteriorated or missing should be replaced with materials and elements that match the original in material, color, texture, size, shape, profile, and detail of installation. Alternative materials will be considered on a case-by-case basis.
- 4. When replacement of materials or elements is necessary, it should be based on physical or documentary evidence.
- 5. When necessary, appropriate surface treatments such as cleaning, paint removal, and reapplication of protective coating systems shall be applied to historic materials (including plaster, masonry, wood, and metals) that comprise interior spaces.
- 6. Damaged or deteriorated paint and finishes shall be removed only to the next sound layer using the gentlest method possible prior to repainting or refinishing using compatible paint or other coating systems.
- 7. New material that is installed shall not obscure or damage character-defining interior features or finishes.
- 8. New or additional systems required for a new use for the building, such as bathrooms and mechanical equipment, should be installed in secondary spaces to preserve the historic character of the most significant interior spaces.
- 9. New mechanical and electrical wiring, ducts, pipes, and cables shall be installed in closets, service areas, and wall cavities to preserve the historic character of interior spaces, features, and finishes.
- 10. New, code-required stairways or elevators should be located in secondary and service areas of the historic building.

8.3.18 Guidelines

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

- 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.

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- 2. When reviewing an application for proposed alterations, the Commission will consider whether later addition(s) and/or alteration(s) to the features or elements proposed for alteration can, or should, be removed on a case-by-case basis. 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 existing 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
- 2. Ornamentation
- 3. Interior materials and finishes
- 4. Doors and windows
- 5. Balconies
- 6. Stairs and railings
- 7. Space configuration and door locations of designated rooms, halls and stairhalls
- 8. Hardwood floors
- 9. Plaster ornament at walls and ceilings
- 10. Woodwork including cornices, mantelpieces, paneling, wainscoting, baseboards, door stops, stairs, railings, balusters, newels, doors, door casings, windows, window sash, window casings, and other decorative elements, and the finish of such surfaces whether painted, stained, uncoated, or otherwise
- 11. Stone mantelpieces
- 12. The mirror above the fireplace in the French Room
- 13. Fireplaces and hearths
- 14. Door and window hardware
- 15. Light fixtures including chandeliers and wall sconces



9.0 ARCHAEOLOGY

The Eben Jordan Jr. House at 46 Beacon Street is not considered to be archaeologically sensitive and below-ground impacts do not require prior review by the City Archaeologist.

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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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