QUAKER LANE

BOSTON LANDMARKS COMMISSION STUDY REPORT





Petition # 103.85 Boston Landmarks Commission Office of Historic Preservation City of Boston

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|--------------|--------------------------------------|------------|
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Report posted on October 22, 2025

Cover image: Quaker Lane looking north toward State Street. Photograph taken by Laura Sitterley, March 3, 2023.

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#### 1. DESIGNATION

The Boston Landmarks Commission was established by Ch. 772 of the Acts of 1975 as amended to identify and safeguard the public's interest in preserving historic sites that represent distinctive features of the political, economic, social, cultural or architectural history of the city. As part of the process of designating a new Landmark or District, a Study Report is prepared to locate and describe the site; to provide a record of the rationale for creating the designation; to identify the character-defining features; and to list Standards and Criteria that will guide the Boston Landmarks Commission in evaluating proposed changes in the future.

The designation of Quaker Lane was initiated in 1985 after a petition was submitted by a Boston Landmarks Commissioner 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. 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.

Quaker Lane is historically significant as one of the earliest walkways that connected the first Town House to Water Street and the spring source there. The earliest section was laid out ca. 1632, but the full streetscape that became today's Quaker Lane developed over four phases between the mid-17th and early 19th centuries (see **Figure 3**). As the street expanded over time, it covered the sites of multiple former buildings whose archaeological traces may still survive under the street. The Quaker Lane streetway may preserve intact ancient and historical archaeological deposits, including undeveloped land, former building footprints, a historic burying ground, and associated artifacts. However, the original buildings that shaped Quaker Lane in the 17th and 18th centuries are no longer extant. The lane is currently abutted by buildings that date from the late 19th and early 20th centuries and have adhered to the historic street configuration, preserving the non-perpendicular layout of Quaker Lane. Some sections of Quaker Lane have granite block and bluestone pavement that probably dates to the mid-to-late-nineteenth century.

This study report concludes that Quaker Lane does not meet the criteria for designation as a Boston Landmark as established in Section 4 of Chapter 772 for the following reasons:

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

Does not apply.

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

It is indisputable that this area of Boston was the site of important developments in Boston's early cultural, political, economic, and social history, as will be discussed later in the study report. However, neither the events that occurred in the vicinity of Quaker Lane nor the institutions that once were located in the area are associated with its current physical materiality, or even most of its layout. Although the earliest section of Quaker Lane was laid out in 1632, subsequent segments were laid out through 1819 (see **Figure 3**). Furthermore, there is no historic material from the 17th or 18th centuries extant above ground in Quaker Lane. One thus cannot accurately claim that all of Quaker Lane dates back to or is associated with Boston's earliest history. Although much of the site has been disturbed, there is some potential for

significant archaeological materials to be discovered below ground, but this possibility is not sufficient on its own to merit Landmark designation.

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

Does not apply.

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.

While part of Quaker Lane dates back to 1632, it is not the only street layout in the area that survives from that era. For example, the first Puritan settlers built their earliest houses along what is now State Street in 1630; the origins of Washington and North streets are similarly old.

The extant buildings adjacent to Quaker Lane were constructed primarily between 1894 and 1914, with one building built in 2019. Thus, the Lane is not an example of a First Period or colonial streetscape.

The granite pavers at Quaker Lane most likely date to the mid-to-late-nineteenth century, as granite paving blocks are believed to have been introduced into Boston in 1840. They have some significance as an example of historic paving, but there are other instances of large quarried granite block pavers in the commercial district and the waterfront, such as the State Street Block (177-199 State Street) and the Mercantile Wharf Apartments (221 Atlantic Avenue). Furthermore, over half of the granite pavers are not in their original location as they were relocated from Devonshire Street to Quaker Lane (see **Figures 4-5**). The presence of the granite pavement at Quaker Lane is not sufficient to merit Landmark designation.

Similarly, the bluestone pavers at Quaker Lane also likely date to the mid-to-late-nineteenth century, as commercial quarrying of bluestone grew into a major industry in the Northeast in the 1850s.<sup>2</sup> Again, however, there are other instances of bluestone paving located throughout the city. The presence of bluestone pavers at Quaker Lane is not sufficient to merit Landmark designation.

Because Quaker Lane does not satisfy the criteria for Landmark designation established by Chapter 772 of the Acts of 1975, Boston Landmarks Commission staff recommends that the Commission does <u>not</u> vote to designate Quaker Lane.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Arthur W. Brayley, History of the Granite Industry in New England (Boston: Published by the authority of the National Association of Granite Industries of the United States, 1913), Volume 1. https://archive.org/details/historygranitei01braygoog/page/n12

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Hilary Rayport Hedges, Charles Sullivan, and Brian Pfeiffer, "Historic Paving and Sidewalks in New England," *Archipedia*, June 2019.

https://www.archipedianewengland.org/1600-1699/historic-paving-and-sidewalks-in-new-england/; "Quarrying," The Manufacturer and Builder: A Practical Journal of Industrial Progress, Volume XXIII, No. 1, (1891), 80-81. https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=coo.31924080795275&seq=86

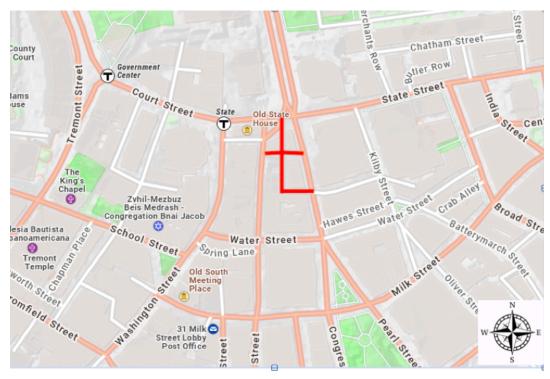
If the Commission votes to designate, staff recommends that the boundaries of the Landmark designation for Quaker Lane correspond to those shown in **Figure 2**. The effect of this designation shall be that review by the Boston Landmarks Commission and/or Commission staff shall be required for any proposed alterations to the following elements:

- Any changes to layout of the lane and sidewalks.
- Any changes to granite or bluestone paving.
- Any building alterations or new construction that would protrude into the volume of space above the designated area.

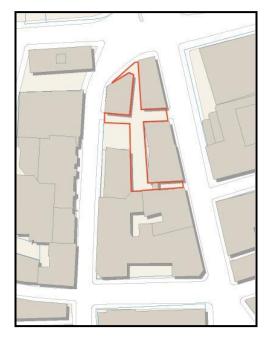
#### 2. LOCATION AND ZONING

Quaker Lane is a series of intersecting segments of public way extending from 11 Congress St. to 50 Devonshire St. and from 25 Congress St. to 31 State St. It is located in Ward 3, Precinct 6, and District 1, and has a ZIP code of 02109.

The proposed landmark designation of Quaker Lane would be inclusive of the street and sidewalk areas between private property lines.



**Figure 1**. Map showing the location of Quaker Lane outlined in red.



**Figure 2.** Map of the possible extents of designation.

Quaker Lane is located in a prominent and densely developed section of the Financial District in downtown Boston. The block that encompasses Quaker Lane is bounded by State Street to the north, Water Street to the south, Congress Street to the east, and Devonshire Street to the west.

Properties bordering Quaker Lane include (from the northwest corner and running clockwise around the block):

- Second Brazer Building, 25-29 State St. (1896)
- Worthington Building, 31-33 State St. (1894)
- Suffolk Trust Company Building, 13-17 Congress St. (1899)
- Congress Street Trust Building, 19-25 Congress St. (1902)
- National Shawmut Bank Building, 20-42 Water St. (1906)
- Newport Building, 56-68 Devonshire St. (1914)
- 54 Devonshire St. (2019)

The Second Brazer Building on the corner of State and Devonshire streets received Boston Landmark status in 1985. The Worthington Building (31-33 State St.) and the National Shawmut Bank Building (20-42 Water St.) are pending city Landmarks.

The Prince Building (52-54 Devonshire St.), which dated to 1854 and was the oldest building in the block, was razed in 2017; a new building built in 2019 is now on the site.

The Old State House and the site of the Boston Massacre are directly northwest of the block containing Quaker Lane.

Quaker Lane is located in the Boston Proper zoning district, a B-10 General Business subdistrict, and the following overlay districts: PDA Allowed and Restricted Parking District.

The City of Boston's PLAN: Downtown initiative generated zoning updates that were approved by the Boston Planning and Development Agency (BPDA) Board on September 19, 2025; the proposed new zoning will go to the Boston Zoning Commission for final approval on October 22, 2025. If approved, Quaker Lane will be located within a "SKY" district.

#### 3. OWNERSHIP

Quaker Lane is owned by the City of Boston Department of Public Works, with a mailing address at 1 City Hall Square, Room 714, Boston, MA 02201.

The lane is not recorded as a parcel by the City of Boston Assessor, and it does not have an assessed value.

#### 4. DESCRIPTION

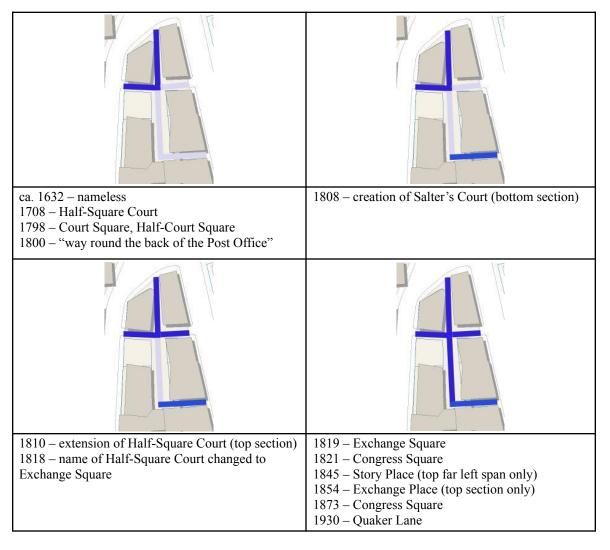
Quaker Lane serves as a public, pedestrian walkway between State, Congress, and Devonshire streets (there is no outlet to Water Street). It is accessible to vehicular traffic from Congress and Devonshire streets. At present the buildings that back up to Quaker Lane use it as a service alley.

Nineteenth-century granite paving lines three spurs of Quaker Lane, although more than half of it has been relocated from Devonshire Street into Quaker Lane (see **Figures 4-5**). The rectangular granite blocks vary in massing, with the smallest stone measuring 32 inches x 26 inches and the largest 61 inches x 43 inches. The color of the granite differs widely and includes mid- to dark gray, gray with brown tinting, and pink. Most of the stones retain evidence of deep scoring – probably to improve pedestrians' traction. The scoring patterns also differ drastically and demonstrate several styles, which can be roughly categorized as cross-hatched, diagonally hatched, and cratered, with some of the pavement blocks more weathered than others (**Figures 6-12**).

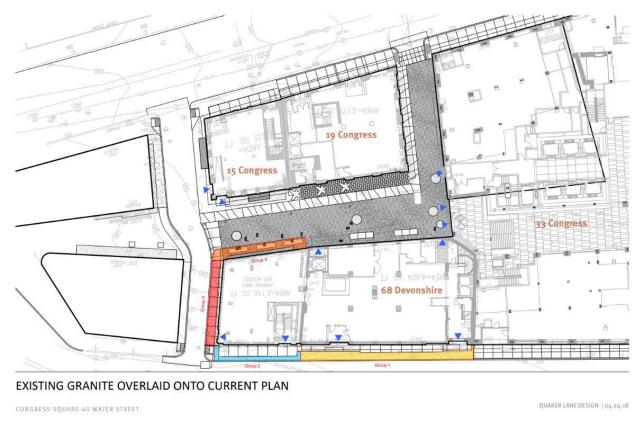
Quaker Lane also has nineteenth-century bluestone paving. The bluestone pavers are quite large, with the largest paver measuring 7 feet x 12 feet 3 inches. Bluestone pavers are present today in the areas marked "Existing Bluestone to Remain" in **Figure 5**; in addition (not indicated in Figure 5), there is a strip of bluestone pavers along the southern edge of 19 Congress Street that extends 19 inches from the face of the masonry piers.

The roadway surface of Quaker Lane is precast concrete pavers at the two southernmost spurs, and paved asphalt at the east-west connector between Devonshire Street and Congress Street. The northernmost spur is concrete sidewalk.

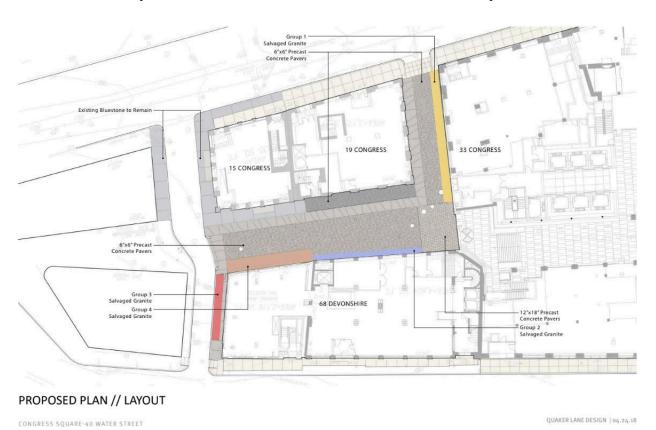
#### 5. IMAGES



**Figure 3.** The development and historic name changes of what is now Quaker Lane between 1632 and 1930 (overlaid on a contemporary map).



**Figure 4.** 2018 plan showing existing locations of granite pavers in orange, red, blue, and yellow. From Related Beal's presentation to the Boston Landmarks Commission on April 24, 2018.



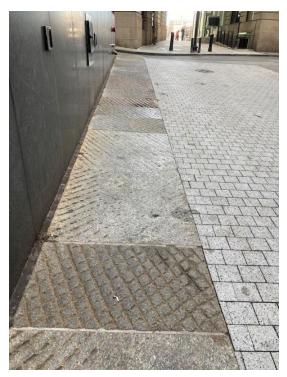
**Figure 5.** 2018 plan showing relocated granite in blue and yellow. Existing bluestone to remain is also labeled. From Related Beal's presentation to the Boston Landmarks Commission on April 24, 2018.



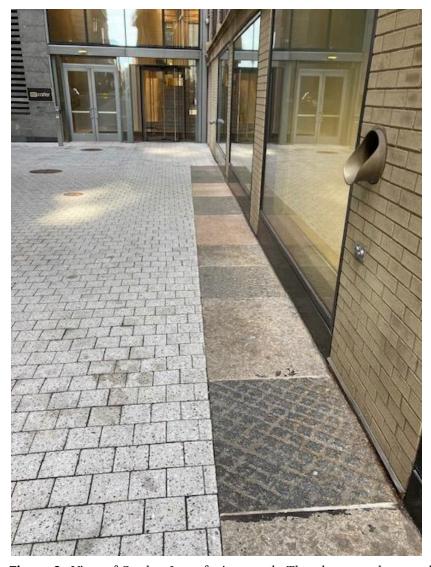
Figure 6. Sample of dark gray granite blocks with pronounced cross-hatch scoring.



Figure 7. Sample of pink granite blocks with worn cross-hatch scoring.



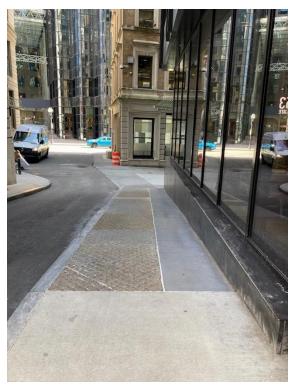
**Figure 8**. View of Quaker Lane facing north toward State Street (in the far background). The streetscape in front of the bollards is the east/west spur of Quaker Lane that connects Devonshire Street with Congress Street. The building on the left is the rear elevation of 54 Devonshire St.



**Figure 9**. View of Quaker Lane facing south. The photograph was taken from the east/west spur of Quaker Lane connecting Devonshire and Congress streets. The building on the right is the rear elevation of the Newport Building (56-68 Devonshire St.).



**Figure 10**. View of Quaker Lane facing west. This photograph is of the southernmost east/west spur of the lane (originally called Salter's Court) and was taken from Congress Street. The building on the left is the back expanse of the National Shawmut Bank Building (20-42 Water St.). The rear of the Newport Building (56-68 Devonshire St.) is visible in the background.



**Figure 11**. View of the east/west spur of Quaker Lane that connects Devonshire Street to Congress Street, taken from Devonshire facing east toward Congress.



**Figure 12**. View of the east/west spur of Quaker Lane that connects Devonshire Street to Congress Street, taken from Congress facing west toward Devonshire Street.



**Figure 13**. Extant buildings lining Quaker Lane primarily date to the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, with the exception of 54 Devonshire Street (2019), visible as the second building on the left. Looking north toward the intersection of Devonshire and State streets.

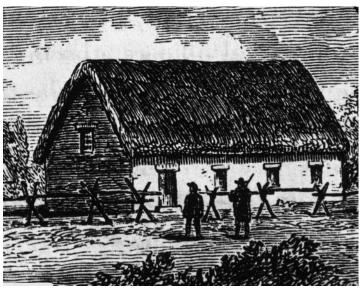
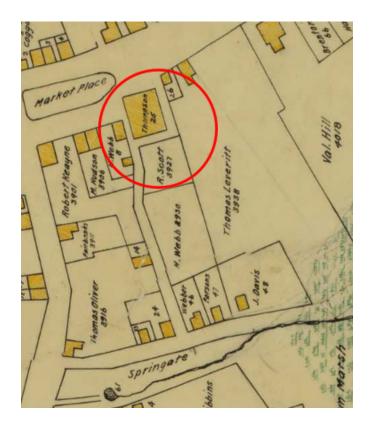


Figure 14. Depiction of the original First Church in Boston (1632).

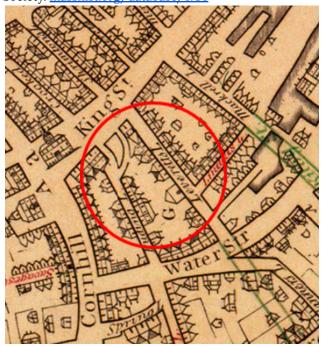
Source: "First Church in Boston, 1632." Charlestown Lantern Slides, Boston Public Library. Digital Commonwealth. <a href="mailto:ark.digitalcommonwealth.org/ark:/50959/8k71p274z">ark.digitalcommonwealth.org/ark:/50959/8k71p274z</a>



**Figure 15.** Map of Boston in 1648, as depicted by Samuel C. Clough in 1919. The Leveritt property and the approximate current location of Quaker Lane is visible, as is the original Market Place.

Source: "Map of the Town of Boston 1648/Drawn by Samuel Chester Clough in accordance with Information compiled from the records of the colony, town, registry of deeds, Suffolk probate, and Supreme Court, Book of Possessions, Winthrop Journal, Lechford note-book, Aspinwall's notes and city surveys." April 10, 1919. From the

Samuel Chester Clough research materials towards a topographical history of Boston. Massachusetts Historical Society. <a href="masshist.org/database/1736"><u>masshist.org/database/1736</u></a>



**Figure 16.** Detail of the 1722 Bonner Map (the first map printed of Boston) with Leverett Lane marked. The Quaker Meeting House (marked as "G") is sited halfway between King and Water streets on the western elevation of Leverett Lane.

Source: "The Town of Boston in New England by Capt. John Bonner, 1722." Massachusetts Historical Society. <a href="masshist.org/database/1733">masshist.org/database/1733</a>



**Figure 17.** Detail of Clough's 1798 map, Plate II, showing the Quaker Meeting House, adjacent burying ground, and the outline of the current Quaker Lane with a dashed line.

Source: Samuel Clough, "Clough's Atlas 1798 Property Owners of the Town of Boston, Mass. Historical Society. <a href="https://www.masshist.org/online/massmaps/clough-plt-viewer.php?item\_id=1771&mode=zoomify&nmask=16&img\_step=3&tpc=#page3">https://www.masshist.org/online/massmaps/clough-plt-viewer.php?item\_id=1771&mode=zoomify&nmask=16&img\_step=3&tpc=#page3</a>



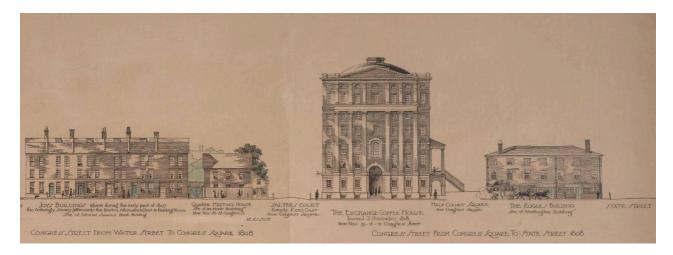
**Figure 18.** Boston in 1814, as depicted by John Groves Hale. The form of today's Quaker Lane (circled in red) is continuing to take shape.

Source: Hale, John Groves. "Map of Boston in the State of Massachusetts: 1814." Library of Congress, Geography and Map Division. <a href="https://www.loc.gov/resource/g3764b.wd000501/?r=-0.307,0.136,1.336,0.692,0">www.loc.gov/resource/g3764b.wd000501/?r=-0.307,0.136,1.336,0.692,0</a>



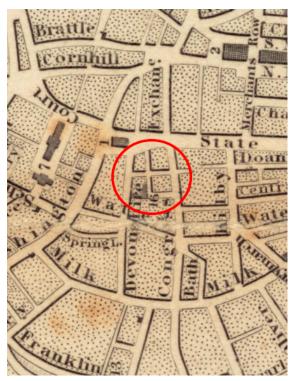
Figure 19. Detail from an 1829 map of Boston. Quaker Lane is labeled "Exchange Square."

Source: Stimpson, Charles. "Plan of the city of Boston." 1832. Norman B. Leventhal Map Center Collection.



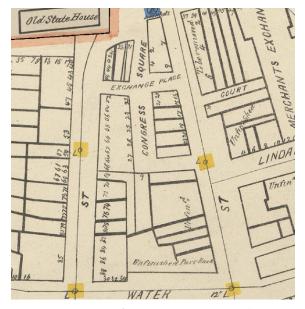
**Figure 20.** This 1808 drawing depicts the buildings along the western elevation of Congress Street from Water Street (left side) to Congress Square (right). The buildings from south to north (left to right) are Joy's Building (dates unknown), the Quaker Meeting House (1710–1825), the Exchange Coffee House (1808–1818), and the Rogers Building (1800–1894). Salters Court (which is now the southernmost east/west spur of Quaker Lane) is labeled in the middle of the drawing (the area between the Meeting House and the Coffee Exchange).

Source: Park, Lawrence. "West Side of Congress (or Dalton) Street in 1808." 1909. Boston Athenaeum Digital Collection. <a href="mailto:cdm.bostonathenaeum.org/digital/collection/p15482coll8/id/13">cdm.bostonathenaeum.org/digital/collection/p15482coll8/id/13</a>



**Figure 21.** Map of Boston in 1840, as depicted by John G. Boynton. Today's Quaker Lane is visible in its entirety.

Source: Boynton, George W. "Plan of the city of Boston, 1840." 1840. Norman B. Leventhal Map Center Collection. Boston Public Library. collections.leventhalmap.org/search/commonwealth:cj82m121n



**Figure 22.** Map of Boston in 1874. Quaker Lane as it is today is fully visible, labeled Exchange Place (east/west) and Congress Square (north/south).

Source: F. W. Beers & Co. "Fire insurance district atlas: showing the fire insurance districts of the city of Boston: as established by the State Insurance Commissioner of Massachusetts." 1874. Norman B. Leventhal Map Center Collection. Boston Public Library. <a href="mailto:collections.leventhalmap.org/search/commonwealth:tt44pw407">collections.leventhalmap.org/search/commonwealth:tt44pw407</a>

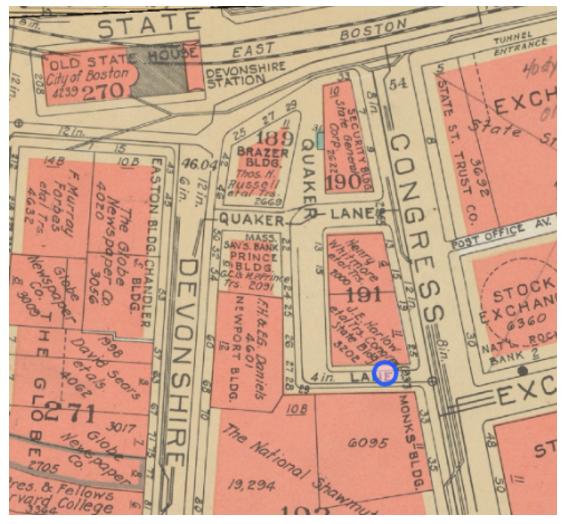


Figure 23. Map of Boston in 1938. Quaker Lane received its current name in 1930.

Source: G. W. Bromley & Co. "Atlas of the City of Boston: Boston proper and Back Bay." 1938. Norman B. Leventhal Map Center Collection. Boston Public Library.

collections.leventhalmap.org/book\_viewer/commonwealth:tt44pw09r#1/1

#### 6. HISTORY AND SIGNIFICANCE

#### 6.1 Historic Significance

While historic buildings have enjoyed the attention of preservation professionals for decades, streets and walkways have often gone understudied. The layout and material choices for streets and public walkways can also tell a story about the past. Before the Industrial Age, paving materials tended to be stone or fired bricks, although wood boardwalks were used in some communities. As city services modernized and the automobile emerged, stone and brick were replaced or paved over.<sup>3</sup> Historian Brian Pfeiffer noted: "Over the past century, a high proportion of early paving has been disturbed by the installation of sewers and utility conduits. Some of it remains as a base for modern pavement, but much of it has been removed and either sold as salvage for landscaping or used as landfill. Consequently, original installations of pre-1914 paving are rare."

Prior to European colonization, the region around modern-day Boston was inhabited by the Indigenous Massachusett people. The area that is now Quaker Lane was in close proximity to a natural spring (Spring Lane) as well as the shoreline, making the area an excellent space for potential Native use. The first settlers of the Massachusetts Bay Company arrived on the Shawmut Peninsula in 1630. In search of potable water, Governor John Winthrop and his community of English Puritans established a settlement on what they called the Trimountain for the three hills—Pemberton, Beacon, and Mount Vernon—around which the colony was built. (The settlement would be renamed Boston on September 7, 1630, after Boston, England, the colonists' hometown.) It was between the Trimountain and the harbor that the principal part of the town would develop.

Without the luxury of leisure nor the resources to surmount natural obstacles and carefully plan the town from its inception, the first buildings were scattered according to the need and/or desire of their owner. The streets, too, were casually laid without the conscious planning that occurred in other colonial cities, and followed landscape features while attempting to create the shortest routes. Like many other colonial settlements, small streets and byways emerged organically in Boston as routes for people to pass through and between each other's properties.

The 1722 Bonner Map (**Figure 16**) shows 42 streets, 36 lanes, 22 alleys, and "houses near 3,000, 100 Brick, rest Timber." The pattern of growth over the first 92 years of Boston's development is clear. The heart of the town is the intersection of Cornhill (today's Washington Street) and King Street (now State Street), at First Church and the Town House.<sup>6</sup>

#### Establishment of the first section of Quaker Lane, ca. 1632

Boston's first meeting house, referred to as "First Church" (**Figure 14**), was built on the site of today's Second Brazer Building (25–29 State St.) in 1632. It functioned as a place of worship as well as the site for town meetings and sessions of the General Court before construction of the First Town House was completed in 1658. In **Figure 15**, the first suggestion of Quaker Lane takes shape as a means for

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> Brian Pfeiffer, "Historic Paving and Sidewalks in New England," Archipedia New England. June 2019, http://www.archipedianewengland.org/1600-1699/historic-paving-and-sidewalks-in-new-england/

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> Pfeiffer, "Historic Paving and Sidewalks in New England."

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> Justin Winsor, ed. The Memorial History of Boston: Including Suffolk County, Massachusetts. 1630-1880, Vol. I (Boson: James R. Osgood and Company, 1882), 530-531.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> Massachusetts Historical Society, "The Town of Boston in New England by Capt. John Bonner, https://www.masshist.org/database/viewer.php?ft=Massachusetts%20Maps&from=/online/massmaps/list.php&item\_id=1732

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup> Josiah Henry Benton, "The Story of the Old Boston Town House, 1658-1711 (Boston: The Merrymount Press, 1908) p. 3-4.

accessing the rear of First Church and the abutting properties of merchant Robert Scott and town elder Thomas Leverett (also spelled "Leveritt" and "Leverit"). It was called Half Square Court in 1708, the year the town officially named its streets. The upper left quadrant of **Figure 3** shows Half Square Court.

#### **Quaker Meeting House**

The Quaker Meeting House (1710-1825) on Congress Street became the second home for the Religious Society of Friends. The first Quakers (Mary Fisher and Anne Austin) disembarked in Boston in 1656, and others followed. In 1694 the Quakers purchased a lot on Brattle Street in Boston, which would contain a small meeting house and a burying lot. By 1708, the Friends had outgrown their Brattle Street home and decided to construct a new building with a burying ground on the west end of the property. The new meeting house was built in 1710 on the part of today's Congress Street known then as Leverett's Lane, directly south of the most southern stretch of today's Quaker Lane (**Figure 16**). Just north of the meetinghouse was a series of small shops along Rea's Court (later Salter's Court).

The Quaker Meeting House building suffered damage during the Great Boston Fire of 1760, but was repaired and used by the congregation until 1808, at which time a decline in membership led to a vote to discontinue meetings. The building stood on the site until 1825 when the property was sold and the building was immediately demolished. The remains of the 111 bodies in the burying ground were removed to Lynn, Mass. 10

#### **Early Financial District Development**

Although Quaker Lane was shaped by two of Boston's earliest religious and civic structures (First Church and the Quaker Meeting House), the area in immediate proximity to the lane also functioned as an important commercial center, eventually becoming a regionally significant financial district.

The block containing Quaker Lane housed a variety of businesses that facilitated the city's prosperous economic enterprises. In turn, the phases of development that occurred on the block directly transformed Quaker Lane (**Figure 17**). The lane, which originated as a means around First Church, was maintained as a thoroughfare around the block's most northern lots. It was later extended in phases to provide access to and around the large buildings that were built along Congress and Devonshire streets in the first half of the 19th century. This extension resulted in the removal of at least eight buildings. Portions of the footprints of these buildings and their associated archaeological deposits most likely remain under the surface of Quaker Lane.

#### **Exchange Coffee House, 1808**

In the same year (1808) that the Friends voted to discontinue meeting, the monumental Exchange Coffee House was completed adjacent to the abandoned Quaker meeting house. Envisioned as a combined hotel, office building, and merchant exchange, the building was an early design of noted architect Asher Benjamin. At seven stories, the brick structure was the largest building in Boston and one of the tallest in the Northeast. 11

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>8</sup> City of Boston, "A Record of the Streets, Alleys, Places, Etc. in the City of Boston," Printing Department (Boston, 1910)

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>9</sup> Caleb H. Snow, "A History of Boston: The Metropolis of Massachusetts, from Its Origin to the Present Period; With Some Account of the Environs, 2nd ed." p. 197-199

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>10</sup> Snow, "A History of Boston," p. 200.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>11</sup> Jane Kamensky, "The Exchange Artist: A Tale of High-Flying Speculation and America's First Banking Collapse (New York: The Penguin Group, 2008) p. 202.

To make room for the Exchange Coffee House, the building's developer purchased several lots between Congress and Devonshire streets along with a courtyard simply called Salter's (named after the brewer who once owned it). The lots were lined with the shops and homes of various businessmen, including grocers, blacksmiths, bookbinders, and tailors.

The Coffee House faced Congress Street with the only alternative access to the building from Salter's Court to the south (**Figure 18**). Directors of the Coffee House negotiated with the town, the courts, and the owners of adjacent lots to create a new street along the northern side of the building. In August 1810, a sum of \$20,000 was allocated to compensate neighbors and the town for the laying of such a road. After receiving approval from the town, the buildings at the site of the proposed street were razed, the site leveled, and a 30-foot-wide avenue was laid. Direct access between Congress and Devonshire streets was now possible (**Figure 19**). The nameless street was completed in 1811, but wasn't called Exchange Square until 1818.<sup>12</sup>

Only nine years after its completion, the Exchange Coffee House was destroyed in a fire on November 3, 1818. Early attempts to plan for its reconstruction subsequently ceased due to financial difficulties.

#### Final phase, 1819

The ground upon which Exchange Coffee House stood was divided into lots that were put on the market in December 1819. At the same time, a new, L-shaped street was established that extended Salter's Court north to Exchange Square (**Figure 21**). The new street had a width of 19 feet at Salter's Court and 32 feet along its northern section. The layout of this street—what we today call Quaker Lane—was complete at this time (1819). The street remained nameless until 1921 when it became Congress Square.<sup>13</sup>

Although the buildings within the block containing Quaker Lane were replaced numerous times, the memory of the block's connection to the Society of Friends continued. On February 20, 1930, the Street Commissioner of Boston issued orders that the street should hereafter be known as Quaker Lane. The City Council concurred and voted to approve the name change on March 3, 1930.<sup>14</sup>

#### 6.2 Architectural Significance

Quaker Lane is located at the site of the oldest public-use building (First Church) and commercial center in Boston. Early English colonists selected this site for its proximity to the harbor and to a natural spring (Water Street). The lane developed to access First Church and as a public throughway between properties.

The lane is situated at the nexus of two of the oldest streets in Boston (today's Washington and State). It is also directly adjacent to the Old State House and site of the Boston Massacre. Its 1632 origins coincide with the founding of the town in 1630.

The commercial aspect of Quaker Lane dates from its proximity to one of the original marketplaces in Boston. Over the course of the 18th and 19th centuries, the property lots abutting Quaker Lane were continually being bought and sold as the area quickly transformed from primarily residential to primarily commercial.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>12</sup> Kamensky, "The Exchange Artist..." p. 142

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>13</sup> City of Boston, "A Record of the Streets, Alleys, Places, Etc. in the City of Boston," p. 182.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>14</sup> "Bulletin of Friends Historical Association, Vol 19, No. 1," (Haverford, PA: Friends Historical Association, 1930).

Today, Quaker Lane retains the look and scale of a late-19th century commercial streetscape and is likely to contain remnants of earlier periods under its surface. The granite block pavement in three of the five spurs of the lane probably dates from the mid-to-late nineteenth century, although more than half of it has been relocated (see **Figures 4-5**). The bluestone pavement also probably dates from the mid-to-late nineteenth century, and may be in its original location.

#### 6.3 Archaeological Sensitivity

Downtown Boston is archaeologically sensitive for ancient Native American and historical archaeological sites. There are possibilities for the survival of ancient Native and historical archaeological sites in the rare areas where development has not destroyed them. As the ancient and historical core of Shawmut, now Boston, any surviving archaeological deposits are likely significant. Any historical sites that survive may document Boston's 17th-19th-century history related to the colonial, Revolutionary, early Republic past, especially yard spaces where features including cisterns and privies may remain intact and contain significant archaeological deposits including cemeteries. These sites represent the histories of homelife, artisans, industries, enslaved people, immigrants, and Native peoples spanning multiple centuries.

In addition to potential ancient Native presence, the area of Quaker Lane has recorded evidence of multiple historically significant spaces including but not limited to the 1632 First Church, 1710 Quaker Meeting House and burying ground, the 1809 Exchange Coffee House, and numerous homes, businesses, and outbuildings dating to the late 18th and early 19th centuries. As such, the likelihood for preserved archaeological deposits in and around the roadway is high.

These sites represent the histories of home-life for artisans, industries, enslaved people, immigrants, and Native peoples spanning multiple centuries.

Additionally, though some human remains were exhumed from the Quaker burying ground near this location and removed to Lynn in 1826, historic exhumations are rarely complete. Historic burying grounds are also known to extend past their marked borders. As such, the possibility of unmarked burials and disarticulated human remains is high in the area, and is cause for extreme caution if any changes are proposed to this area in the future. However, the burying ground was located south of the current footprint of Quaker Lane, so it is not likely that there are any remains specifically within the bounds of the proposed designation.

See 7.4.2 for Archaeological standards for this site.

#### 6.4 Planning Context

Quaker Lane serves much the same function today as different portions of it did during the 17th century—providing public access (pedestrian and vehicular) to the buildings that front State, Congress, Devonshire, and Water streets, and serving as a public, pedestrian walkway between State, Congress, and Devonshire Streets (there is no outlet to Water Street). It is accessible to vehicle traffic from two entries on Congress Street and one on Devonshire Street. The buildings that back up to Quaker Lane currently use it as a service alley.

On April 18, 1985, a petition to designate Quaker Lane was submitted by Pauline Chase-Harrell, a Boston Landmarks Commissioner and commission Chair. It is believed that the petition was spurred by concerns about possible development that would affect Quaker Lane. At a public hearing on May 14, 1985 the Boston Landmarks Commission voted to accept Quaker Lane for further study.

In 2016-2018, work proposed for Quaker Lane was presented to the Boston Landmarks Commission due to the lane's status as a pending Landmark. Plans from the presentation made by Related Beal to the Commission on April 24, 2018, are shown in **Figures 4 and 5**. The work included relocation of granite pavers that were on Devonshire Street to within Quaker Lane, as well as the placement of new concrete pavers on the roadway of Quaker Lane. In April 2018, the Commission issued a Certificate of Design Approval with Provisos for the proposed work.<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>15</sup> See Application #16.047.105 on file with the Boston Landmarks Commission.

#### 7. STANDARDS AND CRITERIA

#### 7.1 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 shall require the prior review and approval of the Commission.

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

#### 7.2 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 the exterior have been categorized to indicate the level of review required, based on the potential impact of the proposed work.

- A. Routine activities that are not subject to review by the Commission:
  - 1. Activities associated with normal cleaning and routine maintenance.
    - a. For landscape maintenance, such activities might include the following: normal cleaning of paths and sidewalks, etc. (no power washing above 700 PSI, no chemical or abrasive cleaning), non-invasive inspections, in-kind repair of caulking, in-kind spot replacement of cracked or broken paving materials, in-kind repainting or refinishing of site furnishings, etc.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>16</sup> U.S. Department of the Interior, et al. *THE SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR'S STANDARDS FOR THE TREATMENT OF HISTORIC PROPERTIES WITH GUIDELINES FOR PRESERVING, REHABILITATING, RESTORING & RECONSTRUCTING HISTORIC BUILDINGS*, Secretary of the Interior, 2017, www.nps.gov/tps/standards/treatment-guidelines-2017.pdf.

- 2. Routine activities associated with special events or seasonal decorations that do not disturb the ground surface, are to remain in place for less than six weeks, and do not result in any permanent alteration or attached fixtures.
- B. Activities 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, ground surface or outward appearance.
  - 2. In-kind replacement or repair.
  - 3. Phased restoration programs will require an application to the Commission and may require full Commission review of the entire project plan and specifications; subsequent detailed review of individual construction phases may be eligible for Administrative Review by BLC staff.
  - 4. Repair projects of a repetitive nature will require an application to the Commission and may require full Commission review; subsequent review of these projects may be eligible for Administrative Review by BLC staff, where design, details, and specifications do not vary from those previously approved.
  - 5. Temporary installations or alterations that are to remain in place for longer than six weeks.
  - 6. Emergency repairs that require temporary tarps, board-ups, etc. may be eligible for Certificate of Exemption or Administrative Review. In the case of emergencies, BLC staff should be notified as soon as possible to assist in evaluating the damage and to help expedite repair permits as necessary.
- C. Activities requiring an application and full Commission review:

Reconstruction, restoration, replacement, demolition, or alteration involving change in design, material, color, location, or outward appearance, such as: New construction of any type either at grade or in the volume of space above Quaker Lane, removal of existing features or elements, major planting of trees or shrubs, or changes in landforms.

D. Activities not explicitly listed above:

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

#### E. Concurrent Jurisdiction

In some cases, issues 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.

#### 7.3 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 may 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 the Commission only after careful consideration. The Commission acknowledges that some changes to the character-defining features may be necessary or beneficial; the standards and criteria established in this report are intended to make the changes sensitive to the historic and architectural character of the property.

The character-defining features for this historic resource include:

- Granite paving blocks with scored patterns
- Bluestone paving blocks
- Layout of the lane with the five sections or spurs that developed between 1632 and 1819
- Archaeological features, artifacts, or remains (both in ground and in collections)

#### 7.4 Standards and Criteria

The following Standards and Criteria are based on the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties.<sup>17</sup> These Standards and Criteria apply to all exterior alley alterations that are visible from any existing or proposed street or way that is open to public travel.

#### 7.4.1 General Standards

Subject to review and approval under the terms of this report, the following standards shall apply:

- 1. The historic character of a property shall be retained and preserved. The removal of historic materials or alteration of features, spaces, and spatial relationships that characterize a property shall be avoided. See the list of Character-Defining Features in the previous section.
- 2. 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.
- 3. The period of significance is not determined by this study report. However, proposals for alterations to the property should be presented to the Commission with a clear

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>17</sup> U.S. Department of the Interior, et al. *THE SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR'S STANDARDS FOR THE TREATMENT OF HISTORIC PROPERTIES WITH GUIDELINES FOR PRESERVING, REHABILITATING, RESTORING & RECONSTRUCTING HISTORIC BUILDINGS*, Secretary of the Interior, 2017, www.nps.gov/tps/standards/treatment-guidelines-2017.pdf.

- argument for how they fit the most current understanding of the property's period or periods of significance and their impact on historic or existing fabric of the building.
- 4. Changes and additions to the landmark that have taken place over time are evidence of the history of the property and its context. These changes may have acquired significance in their own right; if so, that significance should be recognized and respected. (The term "later contributing features" will be used to convey this concept.)
- 5. Distinctive or significant historic and architectural materials, features, finishes and construction techniques or examples of craftsmanship that characterize a property shall be preserved.
- 6. Deteriorated historic features will be repaired rather than replaced. Where the severity of deterioration required replacement of a distinctive feature, the new feature will 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, will be undertaken using the gentlest means possible. Treatments that cause damage to historic materials will not be used.
- 8. New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction shall not destroy historic materials, features, and spatial relationships that characterize a property. The new work shall be differentiated from the old and shall be compatible with the historic materials, features, size, scale and proportion, and massing to protect the integrity of a property and its environment.
- 9. 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.
- 10. Demolition of a designated structure can be allowed only as a last resort after all practicable measures have been taken to ensure preservation, or unless required to comply with requirements certified by a duly authorized public officer to be necessary for public safety because of an unsafe or dangerous condition.
- 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.

#### 7.4.2 Archaeology

- 1. Due to the roadways' archaeological sensitivity, all below-ground work within the property shall be reviewed by the Boston Landmarks Commission and City Archaeology staff to determine if work may impact known or potential archaeological resources. Efforts should be made to limit excavations within areas of existing hollow roadways or areas that can be documented as disturbed within the past 50 years.
- 2. Any changes to the property that include ground disturbance, even temporary, shall be reviewed by the City Archaeologist and Archaeology staff for potential impacts to known or potentially significant archaeological deposits. Mitigation may include avoidance, archaeological investigation prior to proposed work beginning, and/or monitoring of construction by an archaeologist who meets the Secretary of the Interior's Professional Qualifications Standards for Archaeology as of the submission of this report.

#### **7.4.3** Layout

- 1. Original layout of the sidewalks and streets shall be maintained.
- 2. Consideration will be given to minor alteration if it can be shown that better site circulation is necessary and that the alteration will improve this without altering the integrity of the design.

#### **7.4.4** Paving

- 1. The historic granite and bluestone pavers shall be preserved.
- 2. Resetting or otherwise repairing the granite and bluestone pavers shall be considered preferable to replacing them with new pavers.
- 3. When deteriorated beyond repair, historic paving materials shall be replaced with the same material.
- 4. When they are necessary for security, protective fencing, bollards, and stanchions should be as unobtrusive as possible and should not damage the historic granite or bluestone pavers.

#### 7.4.5 Accessibility

- 1. Alterations to Quaker Lane 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 should be reversible when possible and preserve as much of the original materials as possible. 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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