

# HORTICULTURAL HALL

## Boston Landmarks Commission Study Report



Petition #239.11

Boston Landmarks Commission  
Office of Historic Preservation  
City of Boston

Report on the Potential Designation of  
**HORTICULTURAL HALL**  
**247 Huntington Avenue, Boston, Massachusetts**

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

Accepted by:



June 12, 2024

Murray Miller, Interim Executive Director

Date

Approved by:



June 12, 2024

Bradford C. Walker, Chair

Date

Draft Report posted on: August 3, 2021

Amended Draft Report posted on: June 12, 2024

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Report prepared by: Dayl Cohen, Architectural Historian

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## **1.0 LOCATION OF PROPERTY**

### **1.1 Address**

According to the City of Boston's Assessing Department, Horticultural Hall is located at 247 Huntington Avenue, Boston, Massachusetts 02115.

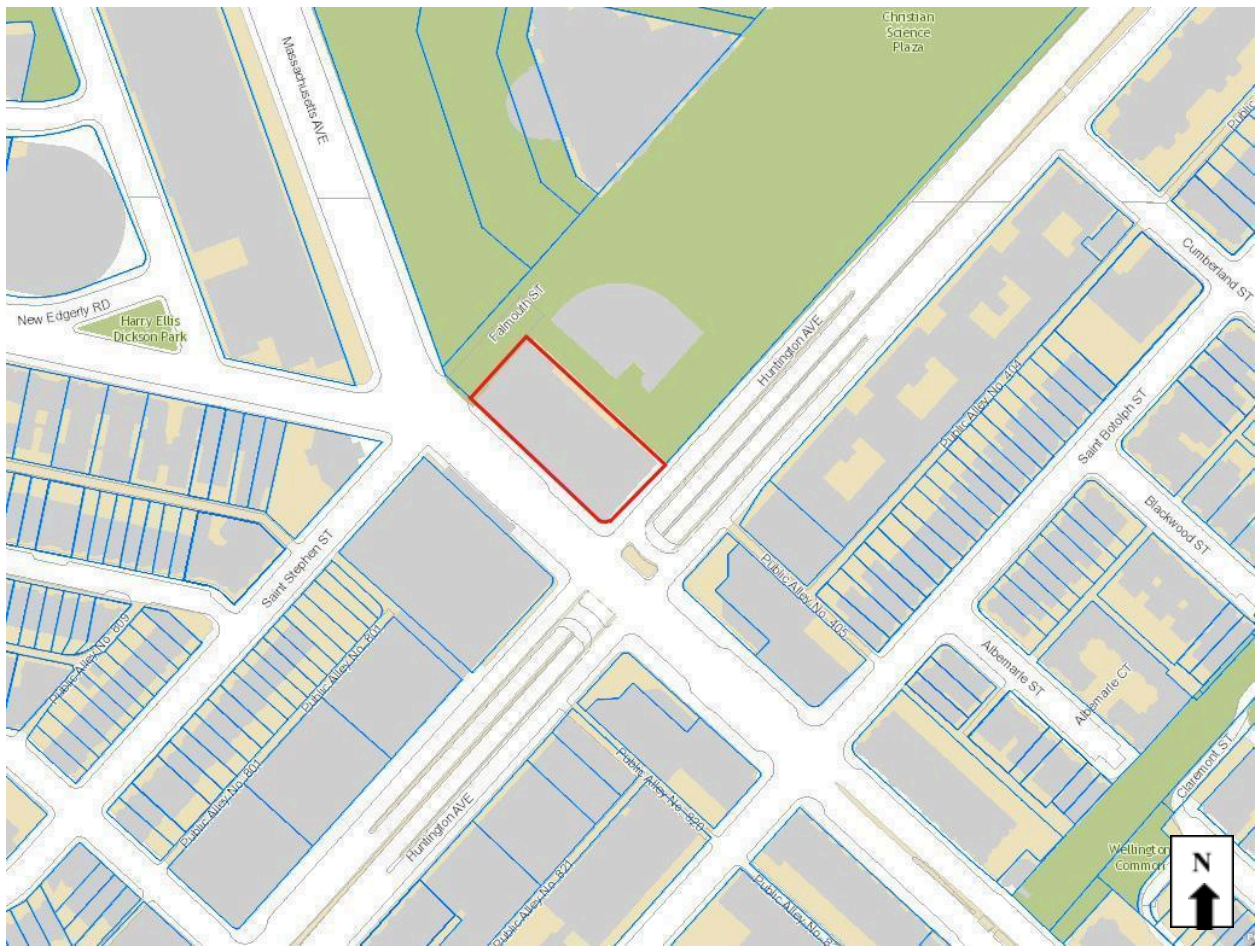
### **1.2 Assessor's Parcel Number**

0401160000.

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

Horticultural Hall is located on a 21,665-square-foot parcel in the Fenway/Kenmore neighborhood of Boston at the intersection of Massachusetts and Huntington avenues. The area remained as unfilled flats until it was filled as part of the Back Bay land-making project in the 1870s and early 1880s. The property abuts the Christian Science Center Complex (LL 2011) located to the north. The building is in proximity to the Saint Botolph Street Area Architectural Conservation District (LL 1981, NRDOE 1984), located to the east/northeast. Across Massachusetts Avenue to the south is Symphony Hall, a pending Boston Landmark (NRIND 1975; NHL 1999; PR 2003).

## 1.4 Map showing Location



**Figure 1.** Map showing the boundaries of parcel 0401160000.

## 2.0 DESCRIPTION

### 2.1 Type and Use

Horticultural Hall is an institutional structure purpose-built as the exhibition, lecture, and office space for the Massachusetts Horticultural Society. The building functioned in this capacity from the date of its opening in 1901 until the interior was renovated for adaptive reuse exclusively as office space in 1985. The First Church of Christ, Scientist purchased the building in 1992; Northeastern University leased it in 2020 for a 99-year term.

### 2.2 Physical Description

Horticultural Hall is a rectangular building designed in the Beaux-Arts style, 57 feet high to the top of the cornice and 69.5 feet high to the top of the roof.<sup>1</sup> A 13-bay façade faces west toward Massachusetts Avenue, and a five-bay façade faces south toward Huntington Avenue. The structure is two stories on three of its elevations, while the central 8 bays of the east elevation are one story. The roof over the two-story portion is hipped on the western Massachusetts Avenue and southern Huntington Avenue elevations, over three bays of the east elevation, and over one bay of the north elevation facing Falmouth Street (now part of Christian Science Plaza). The remaining portion of the roof over the north façade is a gable roof aligned to the pediment of the north elevation. A monitor roof covers the one-story portion of the east elevation. The two-story wings on the north, west, and south sides of the building wrap around the one-story section to create a light well for windows facing inward toward the monitor roof.

The Hall is of masonry construction. The structure sits on a foundation of Deer Island granite resting on footings of concrete. The high base course of the building that rests on the granite foundation is of buff-colored Bedford limestone. The exterior walls are red water-struck brick, laid in Flemish bond with contrasting trim, also of Bedford limestone. The terra-cotta cheneau at the cornice matches the color of the limestone, and the panels in the frieze of the entablature are of Brescia, Bois d'Orient, and Red of Levanto marble.<sup>2</sup> The roof is of slate.

The building occupies the entire parcel, leaving almost no room for landscaping. The main entrance façade on the west meets the concrete city sidewalk, while brick walkways surround the building on the other three elevations. The brick pavement on the south façade separates the building from the city sidewalk. The brick walkway on the east elevation is raised above the adjoining driveway leading to the parking structure next door by three concrete steps. Four large box planters bring some greenery to the entrance of the north elevation, with two planters flanking the doors and two more placed in the recesses between pilasters. Along the one-story section of the east elevation, six small trees rise from the brick walkway to the height of the monitor roof.

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<sup>1</sup> Albert E. Benson, *History of Massachusetts Horticultural Society*, (Boston, MA: Massachusetts Horticultural Society, 1929), 366-67.

<sup>2</sup> Massachusetts Horticultural Society, *Transactions of the Massachusetts Horticultural Society*. Boston, MA: Privately printed, 1901, 187-89.

The building has entrances on three sides. On the west façade facing Massachusetts Avenue, the main entrance is composed of three centrally located entrances at grade level. Each has a carved limestone surround and is surmounted by a triangular pediment. Above the center door beneath its pediment, a plaque with the name “Horticultural Hall” is carved into the limestone. Torchlights with globular bulbs flank the center door. The doors, which are not original, are of a single pane of glass. On the north elevation, a high, wide-arched window rises from grade level and is centered beneath the pediment at the cornice. Centered in this window also at grade level is a double-door entrance of wood with full-length glass panels. These doors are also not original to the building. The east elevation has two entrances. One is toward the south end of the building, where three bays are separated by pilasters. In the center of the three bays is a small wood door at grade level with a transom window above it. The limestone surround of the doorway is carved with a simple molding, as is the triangular pediment above the transom window. Further to the north on the single-story section of the east elevation is a low entrance with flat, metal double doors and a cast stone lintel.

The adornment of the exterior is regular and symmetrical on the west and south façades, which face the busy thoroughfares of Massachusetts and Huntington avenues. Massive corner piers are laid in brick to look like rusticated stone, and a colonnade of two-story pilasters with limestone Ionic capitals and bases mark the divisions between bays. Between these pilasters in each bay are the windows and doors of the two façades. The pilasters support a full entablature that wraps around the entire two-story portion of the building. The frieze of the entablature on the west and south façades is richly decorated with alternating stone swags and medallions, with the swags centered over the windows and the medallions centered over the pilasters. A marble plaque on the frieze is centered over the three main entrances on Massachusetts Avenue, reading “Massachusetts Horticultural Society.” Smaller marble plaques with no wording or decoration are placed over each corner pier. The limestone cornice of the entablature features courses of foliate, dentil, and egg-and-dart molding, and lions’ heads adorn it along the length of the two façades. The ornamental terra-cotta cheneau rises above the cornice.

The fenestration of these two façades consists of high, round-arched windows on the first story, and tall, rectangular 25/25 double-hung sash on the second story. The sills of the first-story arched windows are at the height of the door heads of the main entrances on Massachusetts Avenue, and they rise to the full height of the first story. The arched portions of the windows are heavily trimmed with limestone and surmounted by scrolled consoles, and each arched window rests on a large limestone panel. The lower portion of each arched window is a 9/9 double-hung window with sidelights separated by heavy mullions. The second-story windows are embellished with shallow balconies of delicate ironwork grills resting on projecting stone sills. On the south façade, narrow recessed windows, covered by cast iron grids, are visible in each bay of the granite foundation.

The north façade and east elevation depart from the regular pattern of pilasters and fenestration of the south and west façades, although each also features heavy corner piers laid in brick to look like rusticated stone. On the western end of the north façade, a single bay repeats the two-story windows of the west façade with a continuation of the ornamentation of the frieze and the cheneau above the cornice. This pattern of adornment, however, ends abruptly after this single bay. The elevation east of this bay features an additional heavy brick pier that marks a change in decorative configuration and a change in the roofline of the remaining portion of the elevation. The roof east of this pier becomes a gable roof, called out by a large triangular pediment. This pediment and the large,



multi-paned, arched window centered beneath it that enhances the north entrance become the focal points of the north façade. The large arched window is approximately 1.5 bays in width and rises nearly to the full height of the high ceiling of the first story. This window has a Gibbs surround with recessed panels and is surmounted by a heavy scrolled console. It is flanked by two-story pilasters with limestone Ionic capitals and bases. A small 6/6 window with a heavy limestone cornice and surround is centered above this entrance and below the pediment. The frieze on the north elevation is decorated with a simple marble plaque with the inscription "A. D. MCM." centered over the entrance, flanked by two marble roundels. An oculus is centered in the pediment.

The east elevation was not intended to face any street and differs significantly from the other three. The southern three bays of the east elevation continue the regular pattern of fenestration and pilasters established by the west and south façades. The same first-story high arched windows and second-story rectangular windows with wrought iron grills are in evidence, as are the recessed windows in the foundation found on the south façade. In addition, the ornamented entablature and cheneau of the south and west façades is continued in these three bays. The only difference is the door in the base of the middle of the three bays, which causes the arched window above it to be truncated in height. To the north of the third bay, a heavy, rusticated brick pier ends this pattern at the point where the east façade becomes one story in height. A brick chimney with limestone trim around the rim rises from the roof behind this brick pier. The two northern bays of the east elevation are a greatly subdued version of the southern bays. The high limestone base and the entablature of the other elevations are also found in these bays, but the entablature lacks swags and medallions. No pilasters appear between the windows, and no cheneau embellishes the cornice. The fenestration closely resembles that of the west and south façades but does not exactly match. The high arched windows on the first story lack the heavy mullions of the main street façades and, therefore, have space for 12/12 double-hung sash instead of 9/9. The rectangular windows above them on the second story are smaller than on the main façades with 12/16 sash instead of 25/25. In this location, the windows lack elaborate embellishments. Instead, the lintels of the arched windows are four courses of brick with simple limestone sills. The second-floor window lintels are flat arches of brick and also have simple limestone sills.

The one-story section of the building indents from the rest of the east elevation and is different in fenestration and decoration. In the most southerly bay of this section is an arched window at the same height as the other first-story arched windows but approximately half as tall. The other six windows on this section of the building are the full-height, high-arched windows of the northern two bays of the east elevation, with 12/12 double-hung sash, brick lintels, and simple limestone sills. Four brick piers with limestone caps are interspersed among the full-height arched windows. The granite foundation of this one-story section is rough-hewn, contrasting with the dressed granite foundation of the rest of the structure. This section of the building also lacks the high limestone base of the rest of the building. A fire escape descends from the roof of the one-story section across the southern portion of its east elevation, ending just above the low, double-door entrance.

The building is richly decorated with carved limestone details that announce it as the home of the Horticultural Society. These include the plaques with the Society's name and many botanical embellishments. On the west façade the three main entrances are set beneath three bold relief fruit-and-drapery wreathed roundels. The center roundel displays the seal of the Massachusetts Horticultural Society; the two outer roundels are windows that open to

the mezzanine level of the building. Inside the pediments capping the main entrance doors, horns of plenty carved in high relief. The brackets that support the ironwork balconies of the second-story windows have garlands of fruits and flowers, and fruit and flower carvings also decorate the cheneau. Scrolled consoles with a foliate pattern cap the limestone arched window surrounds of the first story windows. The swags in the frieze are also bold relief carvings of fruit and flowers.

### 2.3 Contemporary Images



**Figure 2.** West (facing Massachusetts Avenue) and north (facing Falmouth Street) façades of Horticultural Hall (looking southeast). June 2016.



**Figure 3.** South (facing Huntington Avenue) and east (facing Christian Science Center complex) façades of Horticultural Hall (looking northwest). June 2016.



**Figure 4.** North façade and north end of east elevation (looking southwest). July 2016.



**Figure 5.** Entablature and cheneau at the corner of south and west façades (looking northeast). July 2016.



**Figure 6.** The main entrance on the west façade on Massachusetts Avenue (looking east). June 2016.



**Figure 7.** Detail of cheneau and cornice on the west façade (looking east). July 2016.



**Figure 8.** Pediment with a horn of plenty carving over the central main entrance on the west façade (looking east). June 2016.



**Figure 9.** Medallion over the center main entrance on the west façade (looking east). June 2016.



**Figure 10.** Windows on the one-story section of east elevation (looking west). June 2016.



**Figure 11.** Monitor roof (from first story roof, looking north). July 2016.



**Figure 12.** East elevation second story and attic level windows (from first story roof, looking south). July 2016.

## 2.4 Historical Maps and Images



**Figure 13.** Plate from 1883 G. W. Bromley Atlas shows the location of the third Horticultural Hall as part of a larger parcel owned by Cora L. Shaw (right middle) bounded by Westchester Park (later renamed Massachusetts Avenue), Falmouth Street, and Huntington Avenue. Some of the parcels between Westchester Park and Dalton Street (left of Falmouth Street on the map) were not filled in until the late 1880s.

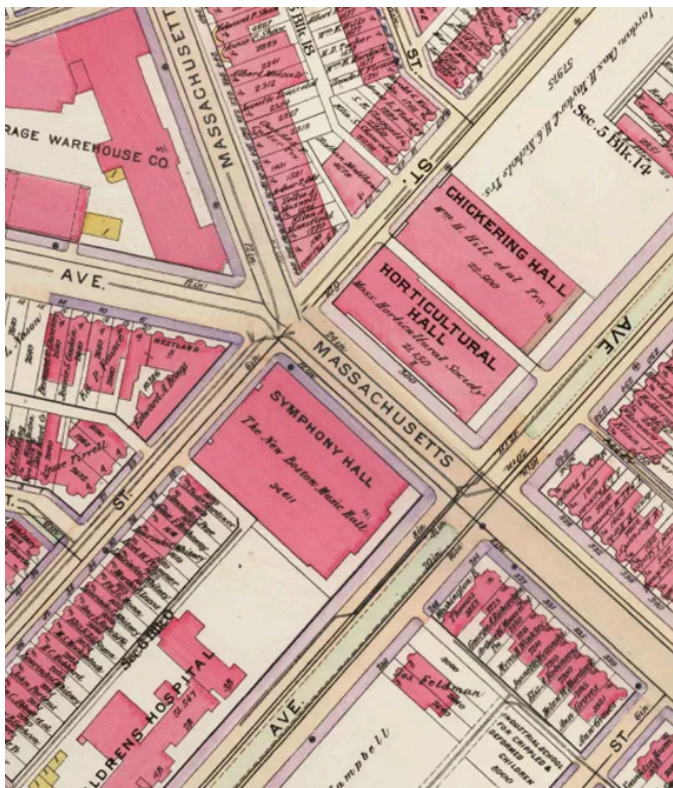
**Source:** <http://mapjunction.com/mj/start/boston>.





**Figure 14.** Plate from 1895 G. W. Bromley Atlas showing the location of the third Horticultural Hall as part of a larger parcel owned by Henry G. Nichols bounded by Massachusetts Avenue, Falmouth Street, and Huntington Avenue, and across from the New Boston Music Hall (later Symphony Hall).

**Source:** Norman B. Leventhal Map Center, [maps.bpl.org](http://maps.bpl.org).

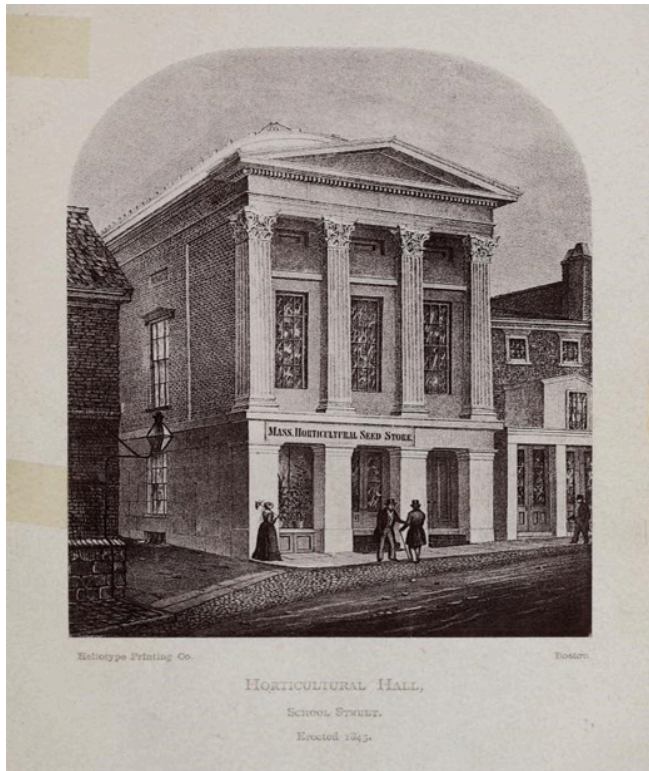


**Figure 15.**

Location of third Horticultural Hall in the year after its completion, from 1902 Bromley Atlas.

**Source:**

Norman B. Leventhal Map Center, [maps.bpl.org](http://maps.bpl.org).



**Figure 16.**  
 First Horticultural Hall, constructed in 1845 on School Street.

**Source:**  
 Robert Manning, *History of the Massachusetts Horticultural Society, 1829-1878* (Boston, MA: Massachusetts Horticultural Society, 1880), after page 156.

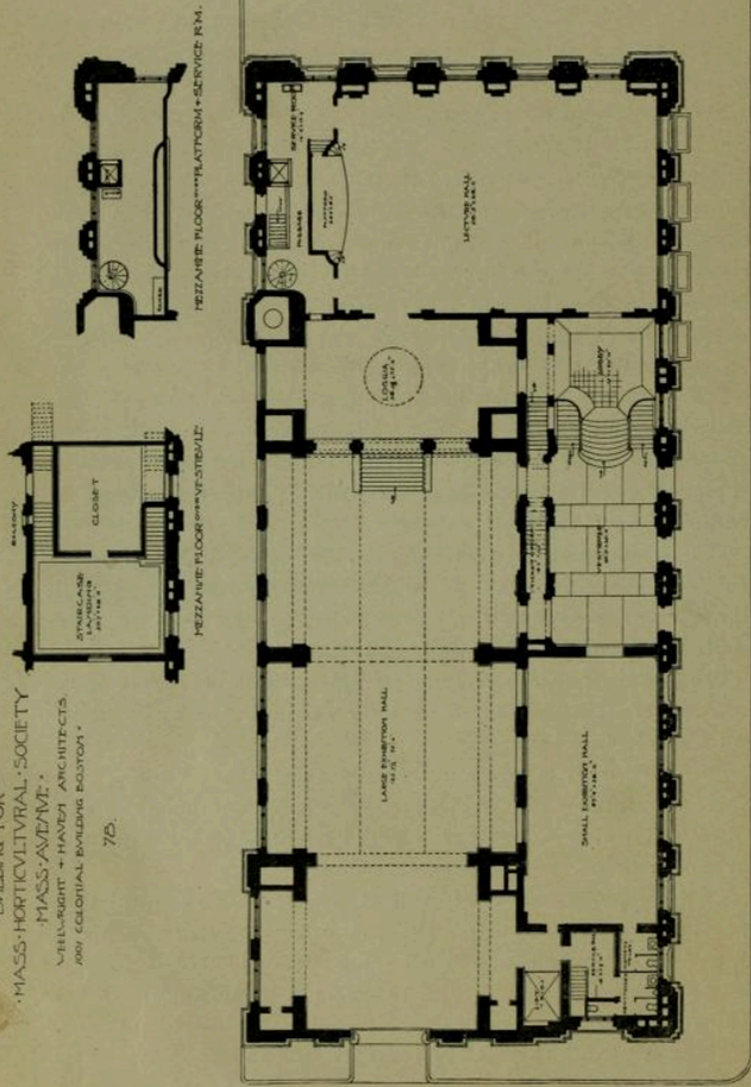


**Figure 17.**  
 Second Horticultural Hall on Tremont Street across from Granary Burying Ground, constructed in 1865.

**Source:**  
 Photograph. 1870. Digital Commonwealth, <http://ark.digitalcommonwealth.org/ark:/50959/c21gs594>, accessed June 29, 2016.

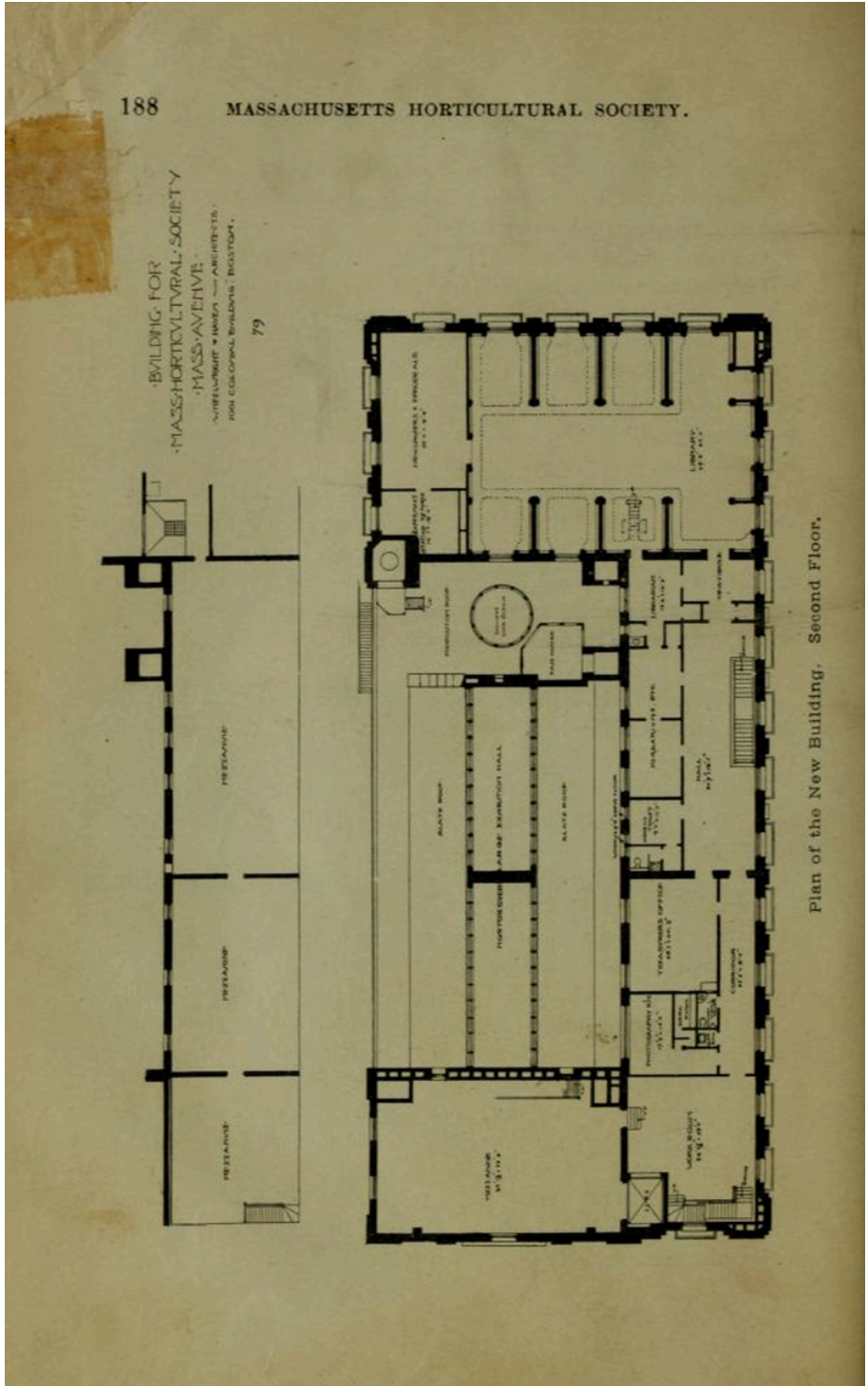
BUILDING FOR  
 MASS. HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY  
 MASS. AVENUE  
 WILLIAM HUNT & HANCOCK ARCHITECTS  
 1000 COLONIAL BUILDING BOSTON

70.



Plan of the New Building. First Floor.

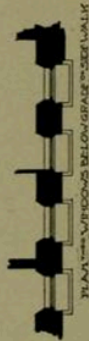
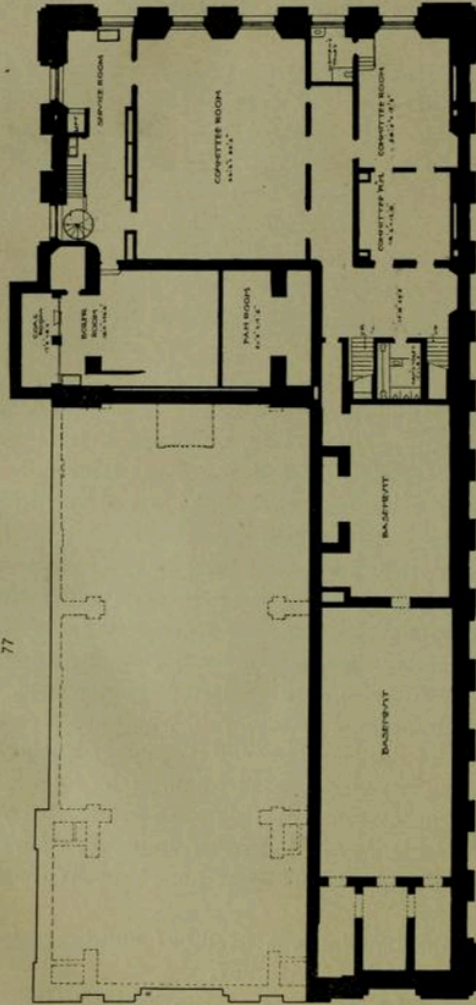
**Figure 18.** First-floor plan for third Horticultural Hall, constructed in 1901.  
**Source:** Massachusetts Horticultural Society, *Transactions of the Massachusetts Horticultural Society* (Boston, MA: Privately printed, 1901), 186.



**Figure 19.** Second floor and mezzanine plan for third Horticultural Hall, constructed in 1901.  
**Source:** Massachusetts Horticultural Society, *Transactions of the Massachusetts Horticultural Society* (Boston, MA: Privately printed, 1901), 188.

BUILDING FOR  
MASS HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY,  
MASS AVENUE,  
WHEELWRIGHT - HAVEN - ARCHITECTS,  
1001 COLONIAL BUILDING, BOSTON.

77



BASEMENT PLAN.

Plan of the New Building Basement.

Figure 20. Basement plan for third Horticultural Hall, constructed in 1901. Source: Massachusetts Horticultural Society, *Transactions of the Massachusetts Horticultural Society* (Boston, MA: Privately printed, 1901), 190.



**Figure 21.**

The first exhibition in the third Horticultural Hall, June 1901, looking toward the north exit.

**Source:** Photograph, 1901, Digital Commonwealth, <http://ark.digitalcommonwealth.org/ark:/50959/2801pr70f>, accessed June 29, 2016.



**Figure 22.**

West and south façades of third Horticultural Hall, looking northeast, 1901-1906.

Electrically lit signs on the roof advertise the flower show.

**Source:**

Library of Congress, Detroit Publishing Company Photograph Collection, <http://www.loc.gov:8081/pictures/item/det1994009432/pp>.



**Figure 23.** West and south façades, Massachusetts Avenue and Huntington Avenue in 1920.  
**Source:** Leon H. Abdalian, "Horticultural Hall, 300 Massachusetts Avenue and Huntington Avenue," Photograph, 1920, Digital Commonwealth, <http://ark.digitalcommonwealth.org/ark:/50959/8s45qx960>, accessed June 29, 2016.

## 3.0 BACKGROUND AND SIGNIFICANCE

### 3.1 Historical Background

#### *Founding of the Massachusetts Horticultural Society*

Founded in 1829, the mission of the Massachusetts Horticultural Society (MHS), as stated in 2016, is to encourage the science and practice of horticulture and develop the public's enjoyment, appreciation, and understanding of plants and the environment.<sup>3</sup>

On January 9, 1829, an article appeared in the publication *New England Farmer* proposing the formation of a horticultural society in Massachusetts. Pointing out that New York, Philadelphia, and other cities already had such organizations, the author, Zebedee Cook Jr. of Dorchester, urged the citizens of Massachusetts, who “have never been backward in promoting any object of public utility,” to act. Six weeks later, sixteen men met for an initial planning meeting to found a horticultural society, draft a constitution and bylaws, and solicit members. A letter in the *New England Farmer* expressed approval of this meeting by commenting on “the association of men of taste, of influence, and industry [that] has effected, in some of our neighboring cities, a wonderful improvement in the qualities of indigenous fruits . . . susceptible of successful culture in our climate.”<sup>4</sup>

These early organizers and founders of the Massachusetts Horticultural Society came from Boston, Dorchester, Roxbury, Cambridge, Salem, Lynn, Milton, Weston, Brookline, Newton, Plymouth, Lexington, Charlestown, and as far away as Worcester and Northampton. The Society petitioned the Massachusetts General Court for an act of incorporation in April 1829. Governor Levi Lincoln approved the act on June 12,. By September, membership had increased to 249, “including the names of many of the scientific and opulent citizens of Boston and vicinity, as well as a considerable number of the most respected practical cultivators.”<sup>5</sup>

Several of the founders were prosperous landowners. Zebedee Cook Jr., was a businessman who owned an estate of approximately 25 acres with a mansion house in Dorchester. Henry Dearborn, the first president of MHS, owned and occupied an estate of 80 acres in Roxbury. John Lowell also owned an estate in Roxbury. Samuel Downer (who is credited with developing the Downer Late Cherry) had an estate in Dorchester. Enoch Bartlett (for whom the Bartlett pear is named) had an estate in Roxbury. Cheever Newhall owned a 25-acre estate in Dorchester.<sup>6</sup>

The Society's membership rapidly grew to include businessmen, farmers, and gardeners of Boston and surrounding towns. The first printed list of 217 members in 1829 “discloses the names of many Boston men prominent for their scientific interests, public usefulness, or wealth.” The list revealed the regional appeal of a horticultural society with its inclusion of 54 Bostonians, 36 members from Roxbury, 21 from Salem, 20 from Dorchester, eight from Cambridge, and five each from Brookline, Milton, and Lexington. Four others lived in Worcester, and one each in Plymouth and Providence.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> *Mass Hort Fact Sheet*, [www.masshort.org/masshort-fact-sheet](http://www.masshort.org/masshort-fact-sheet), accessed June 16, 2016.

<sup>4</sup> Robert Manning, *History of the Massachusetts Horticultural Society, 1829-1878*, (Boston, MA: Massachusetts Horticultural Society, 1880), 56-60.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, 60-63

<sup>6</sup> Massachusetts Horticultural Society, *Transactions of the Massachusetts Horticultural Society*, (Boston, MA: Privately printed, 1901), 176-7.

<sup>7</sup> Benson, *History*, 30-31.



The Society soon embarked on the activities that it had formed to accomplish. It acquired a space in Boston to serve as headquarters and began to form a horticultural library through the donation of books. The leading horticultural and agricultural periodicals of the day were made available to the membership at its rooms, which were open all day. The Society also purchased specimens of fruits, flowers, and vegetables and deposited seeds and cuttings in its rooms for distribution among the members. In addition, correspondence was established with the principal horticultural societies in the United States and abroad.<sup>8</sup>

Weekly exhibitions of locally grown produce, flowers, and horticultural techniques that were open to the public were held on Saturdays, and these helped to increase the visibility and popularity of the organization. They were well attended at exhibition sites at Faneuil Hall and Quincy Marketplace. The earliest shows tended to feature fruits. Eventually, vegetables were featured, as well. Since the 20th century, flowers and shrubs have become the main interest of exhibitions.<sup>9</sup>

Although women could only participate as honorary members of MHS in the early years, they entered their flowers, fruits, and vegetables in the organization's exhibitions, often attracting much admiration. In 1830, during a discussion about whether to elect three women as honorary members, some of the members objected because "a woman in the garden made great trouble as long ago as the days of Adam." MHS president Henry Dearborn silenced them, however, and the women were admitted. At the Society's annual dinner in 1842, women were invited for the first time. Objections had been made to admitting them on the grounds that their presence would prevent wine from being served, but these were overruled. It is not clear exactly when women were admitted as active members, but a small number appeared on the lists of members at least by the late 1850s. It was not until 1880, however, that a woman read a paper before the Society.<sup>10</sup>

#### *Founding Mount Auburn Cemetery*

In the 1820s, people began to be troubled about burials within the borders of Boston. They were concerned about the lack of space for more cemeteries in the small peninsula of the crowded city, and they worried about the unhealthiness of continued burials beneath churches. Dr. Jacob Bigelow of Boston became very interested in establishing a rural cemetery, something that was unknown in the United States at that time. He was inspired by Pere la Chaise, which was then a large rural cemetery on the outskirts of Paris. After a search of some years, he identified land on the Cambridge-Watertown border as both suitable and available. It was named Stone's Woods after very early owners, but Harvard students, who often went there for recreation, had called it "Sweet Auburn" for many years, after a line in a poem by Oliver Goldsmith, and the land was commonly known by that name. George W. Brimmer had purchased the 72-acre site in 1825 to build a country estate but had never constructed a house. He was so enthusiastic about the idea of a rural cemetery that he was willing to sell the land at his cost.<sup>11</sup>

Bigelow then turned to the Horticultural Society to help establish the cemetery. Since its inception, MHS had wanted to develop an experimental garden, and it saw the land at Sweet Auburn as an opportunity to do this, in addition to creating America's first rural cemetery. In the spring of 1831, a committee that had been appointed to look into purchasing land agreed to finance the purchase of

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<sup>8</sup> Manning, *History 1829-1878*, 66-7.

<sup>9</sup> *Massachusetts Horticultural Society History*, [www.masshort.org/history](http://www.masshort.org/history), accessed June 16, 2016.

<sup>10</sup> See for example, Manning, *History 1829-1878*, 232, 338-39; Benson, *History*, 10, 209; *Mass. Hort. Transactions*, 1858.

<sup>11</sup> Manning, *History 1829-1878*, 69-74.

the property by selling burial lots at \$60 each. As soon as 100 lots were sold by subscription, Sweet Auburn could be purchased. On June 23, 1831, Governor Lincoln approved an Act authorizing the Horticultural Society to hold land for a rural cemetery and to lay it out and dedicate it for that purpose. By August 1831, the hundred lots were sold. Religious ceremonies were held to consecrate the Mount Auburn Cemetery (NHL, NRIND) on September 24.<sup>12</sup>

The Garden and Cemetery Committee of the Horticultural Society set about planning and designing the site. No formal record exists of the adoption of the name Mount Auburn for the cemetery, but it comes from the name given to the highest hill on the grounds. Henry Dearborn, MHS President, began to lay out the grounds, planning avenues, and paths and setting the size of lots. Dr. Jacob Bigelow designed the Egyptian Revival front gate, which was originally erected in wood and replaced by the present stone gate in the same design in 1842.<sup>13</sup>

From the time of its opening, Mount Auburn was open to the public, who used it as a rural park. It was described in regional and national newspapers and travel guides and newspapers, attracting more visitors than cemetery lot proprietors on a daily basis. The cemetery soon earned an international reputation. The unfortunate byproduct of this fame was often mutilated trees, broken fences, and trampled graves. Those on horseback did the worst damage by riding on paths meant solely for pedestrians and tethering their mounts to trees and shrubs. As a result, MHS passed new regulations that prohibited entry to the grounds to anyone on horseback and to anyone in carriages, except for burial lot proprietors, their family members, and guests. No mention was made of horticulturists without lots who were interested in an experimental garden. Anyone could enter on foot, but the lack of public transportation to the area limited access to Mount Auburn for some time.<sup>14</sup>

In 1834 it became apparent that the interests of the Horticultural Society and the proprietors of lots in the cemetery were too divergent for both groups to control the corporation. The diversion of funds from the sale of lots to the experimental garden was a major point of contention between the two groups. Cemetery lot sales were not producing enough revenue to support the garden. The lot owners had no interest at all in the experimental garden and wanted funds to be directed to improvements in the original cemetery plan, such as the stone gate, a chapel, and an observatory tower. In turn, the horticulturists, particularly those with large estates that had room for family burial plots, had little interest in the cemetery. In addition, the granting of special admission privileges with carriages to lot owners alone was a cause of resentment. Another problem was that every purchaser of a burial lot was given a lifetime membership in the Horticultural Society, and lots were being sold at such a rapid rate that soon cemetery proprietors would have a controlling vote in the Society's affairs.<sup>15</sup>

At the end of 1834, a committee negotiated an institutional separation. The Horticultural Society, which had purchased the land, relinquished ownership of the experimental garden, and proprietors of burial lots ceased to be members of the Society. On June 19, 1835, MHS deeded all land to a new cemetery corporation. The agreement also stipulated that the cemetery pay the Society an annual sum of one-fourth of the proceeds from lot sales after deduction of \$1,400 per year for operating expenses, provided the Society applied the money to an experimental garden or "the promotion of the Art and Science of Horticulture" only. Small modifications were made to this agreement in 1858

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<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, 74-80.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, 85-92.

<sup>14</sup> Blanche Linden-Ward, *Silent City on a Hill: Landscapes of Memory and Boston's Mount Auburn Cemetery*, (Columbus, OH: Ohio State University Press, 1989), 208-9.

<sup>15</sup> Manning, *History 1829-1878*, 109-111; Linden-Ward, *Silent City*, 210.

and 1910, but with those exceptions, the agreement remained in effect until 1975. Revenue from Mount Auburn Cemetery contributed to the financial stability of MHS for 140 years.<sup>16</sup>

Mount Auburn Cemetery was designated a National Historic Landmark District in 2003 for its pioneering role in 19th-century cemetery development. The Massachusetts Horticultural Society had created a designed landscape open to the public and the popularity of the design led to political support for local and regional parks and park systems. As the first landscaped rural cemetery in the United States, it is a nationally important example of landscape architecture that has maintained its romantic character down to the present.

### *Other MHS Activities*

Throughout the 19<sup>th</sup> century, MHS expanded its activities relating to the promotion of science and gardening. The Society was one of the first organizations to promote scientific papers and their applications. In the 1860s, MHS endorsed the work of Charles Darwin at a time of great controversy over the publication of his *Origin of Species*. MHS also established professorships in entomology, pomology, botany, and floriculture. A Committee on Gardens was formed, and in 1866, this committee was invited by the City of Boston to critique the land the city had acquired for the Public Garden. The committee gave it a harsh review and made recommendations, which the City of Boston then adopted.<sup>17</sup>

Some of the Society's most important activities were its annual exhibitions. By 1834, an annual three-day horticultural exhibition was held at Faneuil Hall. As the organization developed, the size of exhibitions grew, and new facilities had to be found. In 1852, a huge tent was erected in the Public Garden. The Concord grape was introduced to the world during the 1853 show at this venue. In later years, the Society used other venues, such as Symphony Hall, as well as each of the three successive Horticultural Halls. The Spring Flower Show was institutionalized as an annual event in 1871. The centennial flower show of 1929 was one of the first of the great spring shows to be held in Mechanics Hall, and it was at this show that garden clubs entered community leadership. The annual spring show was housed in Mechanics Hall until 1959, when it moved to Wonderland Park, where it remained until 1966, moving then to Suffolk Downs. In 1972, Commonwealth Armory became the home of this increasingly important event. In 1975, the show moved to the Commonwealth Pier Exhibition Hall and then to Bayside Exposition Center in 1983, where it remained for many years until moving back to Commonwealth Pier, now known as the Seaport World Trade Center.<sup>18</sup>

In the 20<sup>th</sup> century, MHS became active in the events of the era. During the Great Depression, the Society undertook a role as advisor on government policies involving unemployed surveyors and landscapers. At that time, Horticultural Hall on Massachusetts Avenue became the home of many gardening organizations and, in 1939, was called the largest and most complete garden center in the United States. With the war years of the 1940s came "Victory Gardens," and MHS was instrumental in persuading the City of Boston to turn vacant lots and sections of city parks into areas for vegetable gardens. The citywide gardening program was established under the direction of the mayor and the Society's director. After World War II, MHS returned to its extensive show schedule and began organizing tours to all parts of the world. The shows became increasingly elaborate, and attendance at the spring flower show began surpassing the 100,000 mark.<sup>19</sup>

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<sup>16</sup> Linden-Ward, *Silent City*, 211-12.

<sup>17</sup> *Mass. Hort. History*, [www.masshort.org/history](http://www.masshort.org/history).

<sup>18</sup> *Mass. Hort. History*, [www.masshort.org/history](http://www.masshort.org/history).

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*

## *Horticultural Society Buildings*

The early meetings of the newly formed Massachusetts Horticultural Society took place over the counting room of the *New England Farmer* at 52 North Market St., in the present North Market Building of Faneuil Hall Marketplace. An announcement in the *Farmer* publicized to all, “The room is furnished with various agricultural, and other periodic journals, and is open at all hours of the day for the use of members. At this room will be deposited all seeds, scions of superior fruits, drawings of fruits, new implements of use in horticulture, books for the library of the Society, and all fruits, vegetables, or ornamental flowers that may be offered for the premiums of the Society.” MHS quickly expanded to the front part of the third floor of 52 North Market Street, with a view looking out on Faneuil Hall and the new Quincy Market Building.<sup>20</sup>

For the next 16 years, MHS moved from one set of rented rooms to another as its membership grew and its activities expanded. It quickly outgrew its first home on North Market Street and moved to rooms on Washington Street, then Cornhill (now part of City Hall Plaza), then to larger quarters on Tremont Row (later Tremont Street). This last space was large enough to house the ninth annual flower show exhibition. The Society remained in this hall until the close of 1844. It held meetings in the Committee Room of Tremont Temple (a granite building preceding the present Tremont Temple) until their new building on School Street was completed in March of 1845.<sup>21</sup>

The Society was able to finance a new building because surplus income from donations and income from Mount Auburn Cemetery was well invested in stocks to provide for an endowment. These investments proved to be very successful and helped provide the funds for the erection of the Society’s hall on School Street and a later hall on Tremont Street. The Society paid for the land and the building on School Street partially with funds from the sale of stock and partially by a series of mortgages that came from private individuals at very liberal terms.<sup>22</sup>

In 1844 MHS purchased the Latin School House on School Street from the City of Boston for \$18,000.<sup>23</sup> The Society demolished the school building and hired architect Richard Bond to design a new building suited to their needs. The cornerstone was laid in September 1844 for a building to be known as Horticultural Hall (the previous rooms had sometimes been called “Horticultural Hall,” but usually the “Horticultural Rooms”). The building (demolished) was the first erected by a horticultural society for such purposes.<sup>24</sup>

Richard Bond (1797-1861) often worked on institutional buildings of masonry construction. Examples of his work before the first Horticultural Hall are the Salem’s City Hall (1837, NRIND, NRDIST) and Old Granite Courthouse (1841, NRDIST, NRMRA), St. John’s Episcopal Church (1841, NRDIST) in Charlestown, and the Lewis Wharf Building (1838) in Boston (all extant). The façade of Horticultural Hall was of granite in the Greek Revival style. The ground floor colonnade was composed of four massive, square Doric piers. Above the piers was a plain frieze and cornice, which formed a base for the fluted Corinthian pilasters that ornamented the tall windows of the second story. The pilasters were surmounted by an entablature and pediment.

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<sup>20</sup> Manning, *History 1829-1878*, 140-141.

<sup>21</sup> Manning, *History 1829-1878*, 143-147.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*, Chapter IV, 136.

<sup>23</sup> This was not the site of the original Boston Latin School on the north side of School Street, but a later location of the school across the street.

<sup>24</sup> Manning, *History 1829-1878*, 149, 156.

In May of 1845, MHS moved into the first Horticultural Hall on School Street. The new hall soon proved to be inadequate for the annual exhibitions, however, and as early as the 1850s, members began to speak of looking for a new location. In January 1860, less than 15 years after moving into the School Street hall, the Society sold its real estate there to Harvey D. Parker for an extension to his Parker House Hotel. In 1863, the Society purchased land on Tremont Street and voted to erect a building on this site. It planned to finance this new hall with proceeds from the sale to Parker of the School Street property and with the sale of stocks.<sup>25</sup>

The cornerstone for the second Horticultural Hall was laid on August 18, 1864. It was of Concord white granite, three stories in height and three bays wide. The central projecting bay was flanked by paired columns on each story: Doric on the first story, Ionic on the second, Corinthian on the third. A richly ornamented cornice surmounted the exterior elevations. Above the cornice of the central pavilion, a large broken pediment provided a pedestal for a great figure of Ceres, copied from a similar statue in the Vatican. Projecting one-story piers at the front corners of the building provided bases for statues of Pomona and Flora. The ground floor included five storefronts, two on Tremont Street and three on Bromfield (the rent from these provided income for MHS operations). The second floor held the Society's small hall, library, and some committee rooms. The third floor was entirely occupied by a great hall.<sup>26</sup>

Gridley J. F. Bryant and Arthur Gilman were the architects for the project. Gridley James Fox Bryant (1816-1899) was one of the most well-known and prolific Boston architects of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, designing hundreds of prominent structures, including the State Street Block (1858, NRDIST), Mercantile Wharf (1855, NRDIST), and the Suffolk County Jail (1851, NRIND, now the Liberty Hotel). Arthur D. Gilman (1821-1882) is best known in Boston for his design of the Arlington Street Church (1861, NRIND, NRDIST, LL) and for his collaboration with Gridley J. S. Bryant on the design of Old City Hall (1862-1865, NHL, NRIND).

Eventually, the Tremont Street building also became inadequate for the needs of the Society, and debates began about what to do. In May 1899, the Executive Committee voted to buy land at the corner of Huntington and Massachusetts Avenues, extending to Falmouth Street, opposite Symphony Hall. The committee further voted to erect a new building on the land and mortgage the Society's current property to do this. A subcommittee was formed to carry out these actions. This committee hired Edmund March Wheelwright's firm of Wheelwright and Haven as the architect of the new building.<sup>27</sup> By January 1900, the land had been purchased. Later that year, the Tremont Street building was sold for \$600,000. In May of 1901, the Tremont Street building was demolished and later replaced by an office building known as the Paddock Building (extant).<sup>28</sup>

The parcel chosen for the third Horticultural Hall is located on land that was originally part of Gravelly Point, a marshy promontory that extended northward from the mainland into the Back Bay. It was part of the Back Bay land-making project, and the area was not filled until the 1870s and 1880s.<sup>29</sup> The Massachusetts Horticultural Society purchased it from the Trustees under the will of Eben D. Jordan. The parcel was described as "land bounded by Huntington Avenue, Massachusetts Avenue, Falmouth Street and other land belonging to Eben D. Jordan on its northeast boundary." Jordan had purchased it from Henry G. Nichols, who had, in turn, purchased it from Cora L. Shaw in

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<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*, 137, 159-60.

<sup>26</sup> Benson, *History*, 141-47.

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*, 350.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*, 356; "Demolishing Old Horticultural Hall," *Boston Daily Globe*, May 7, 1901, pg. 6.

<sup>29</sup> Nancy S. Seasholes, *Gaining Ground: A History of Landmaking in Boston* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2003), 198.

1885. Cora Shaw had made several land purchases at West Chester Park (now Massachusetts Avenue) and Huntington Avenue in the early 1880s, as the land-making was being completed.<sup>30</sup>

Although the upper floors of the new Horticultural Hall were not yet completed, it opened to the public on June 4, 1901. Thousands attended the 10-day opening. The main hall, the adjoining small hall, the loggia between the two halls, and the lecture hall were all filled with multiple varieties of flowers, including a collection of 1,000 orchids. The later official ceremony dedicating the completed building was held in the library on November 9, 1901, while a chrysanthemum show was in progress in the exhibition hall below.<sup>31</sup>

The first floor of the third Horticultural Hall was originally designed to contain a large exhibition hall, a smaller exhibition hall, and a lecture hall. The basement was devoted to committee rooms, dressing and waiting rooms, and a large banquet hall, with the Falmouth Street end occupied by heating and electrical equipment. Because the large exhibition hall was only one story in height with no second story over it, the mezzanine and second floor were built around it, providing a light well to the inward-facing windows of the building. The second floor contained the library and rooms for the use of Society officers and committees. A large storage space was also available on this floor. The large exhibition hall was 52.5 by 123 feet with a monitor roof; the small hall was 28 by 57 feet. The floor of the large hall was concrete, and the walls were of unpainted red brick, although this was later found to be an undesirable color for flower displays, and the walls were painted. The building cost \$290,997; with the land, the total cost was \$515,997.<sup>32</sup>

The third Horticultural Hall served as headquarters for the Society's activities for 91 years. While located in this hall, MHS founded the New England Garden History Society, dedicated to sharing information on all aspects of garden history. Also, from this location, MHS published the magazine *Horticulture*, which became one of the most respected gardening publications in the country. In 1927 the Society organized the founding of the Garden Club Federation, which also headquartered in Horticultural Hall. The building eventually also gave a home to many other horticultural organizations, such as the Benevolent Fraternity Fruit and Flower Mission, the Wildflower Society, the Boston Mycological Club, the New England Gourd Society, the New England Gladiolus Society, and the Herb Society of America.

### *The Late 20<sup>th</sup> and Early 21<sup>st</sup> Century*

By the late 20<sup>th</sup> century, the Society was best known for its annual New England Spring Flower Show, which drew tens of thousands of visitors each March to the Bayside Exposition Center in Dorchester.<sup>33</sup>

In 1985, a \$4 million restoration and renovation program brought Horticultural Hall to a new life as a private office building. Faced with mounting deficits and maintenance costs, MHS entered into a business deal with private developers, Historic Hall Associates (HHA) of Quincy. The developers leased the property for 38 years, and they partially financed the restoration and adaptive reuse project with historic preservation tax incentives. The exterior was mostly unchanged, receiving only

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<sup>30</sup> Suffolk County Registry of Deeds, 17334-288, 2610-516, Grantee Index 1800-1899.

<sup>31</sup> *Mass. Hort. History*. [www.masshort.org/history](http://www.masshort.org/history); Benson, *History*, 367-68.

<sup>32</sup> *Mass. Hort. Transactions* 1901, 185-87; Benson, *History*, 366-67.

<sup>33</sup> *Mass. Hort. History*. [www.masshort.org/history](http://www.masshort.org/history).

a cleaning. Workers gave the brick and limestone facade a liquid chemical bath. The interior of the space, however, was planned for modern offices.<sup>34</sup>

Freed from maintaining the hall, MHS increased its membership to 9,000, improved its library facilities, and was able to raise more funds. It also won Boston Redevelopment Authority approval for a four-acre botanical garden and conservatory to be sited on the new Rose Fitzgerald Kennedy Greenway, to be called the "Garden Under Glass." In 1990, however, Historic Hall Associates defaulted on its mortgage obligations on Horticultural Hall with nonpayment of real estate taxes. This raised questions about the agreement with HHA and perhaps the Society's financial hold on the hall.<sup>35</sup>

The hall was taken over by the Federal Deposit Insurance Corp. (FDIC) in August 1991 after the tax default. The deed to Horticultural Hall had been pledged as collateral for the construction loan to HHA. The loan had been from the Bank of New England and ended up with the FDIC after that bank failed in January of 1991. In December of 1991, the First Church of Christ, Scientist of Boston, announced that it would purchase Horticultural Hall to spare the building from a foreclosure auction. Horticultural Hall is bordered on two sides by the Christian Science Church's campus, making it a natural acquisition for that institution. The Church promised existing leases in the building, including a lease with MHS for offices and the horticultural library, would be honored.<sup>36</sup>

While continuing to maintain offices at Horticultural Hall, in March 1996, the Massachusetts Horticultural Society and the Metropolitan District Commission signed a lease for development of a 40-acre horticultural education and information center at the Elm Bank Reservation, an estate along the Charles River on the Dover-Wellesley line. The lease is for 99 years at \$1 a year, with the stipulation that the MHS raise approximately \$6 million in the first five years for improvements.<sup>37</sup>

MHS at first intended to keep its headquarters downtown and its annual flower show at the Bayside Exposition Center, but continuing financial difficulties and mismanagement forced those plans to change. In 2002, the Society was forced to sell \$5.25 million in rare books and prints just to make ends meet. Donations slackened, and the society failed to build its planned "Garden Under Glass" as a showpiece of the Rose Fitzgerald Kennedy Greenway. It instead installed flowers and landscaping on three open-air parcels. The book sale did not solve all of MHS's financial problems, and, in November 2008, it announced that after more than a century, it would not be able to present the 2009 spring flower show. In 2008, despite the attendance of more than 100,000 people from around the region, MHS had lost money on the show. It had also frozen its business accounts, and payments to creditors changed its board and fired 18 of its 30 staff members, including the woman who had run the flower show for the preceding 12 years. Because the flower show had been a longstanding Boston tradition that people looked forward to from all over New England, MHS's announcement prompted reactions of regret from several state and city officials. A month later, MHS continued to

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<sup>34</sup> "Horticultural Hall; Renovation for Offices Saves the Details and the Grand Scale," *Boston Globe*, August 4, 1985, A.73, <https://secure.pqarchiver.com>.

<sup>35</sup> "Daley to leave Horticultural Society," *Boston Globe*, July 27, 1991, <https://secure.pqarchiver.com>.

<sup>36</sup> "Church may buy Horticultural Hall Mass Ave. landmark on auction block," *Boston Globe*, December 14, 1991, 26; "Horticultural Hall sold for portion of FDIC debt Christian Science church pays \$1.6m," *Boston Globe*, December 19, 1991, 5, <https://secure.pqarchiver.com>.

<sup>37</sup> "Flower power Society plants roots in Dover" *Boston Globe*, March 7, 1996, 75. Boston Globe Archives, <https://secure.pqarchiver.com>.

deal with its financial difficulties by announcing it would auction 27 more volumes of its most valuable books, worth hundreds of thousands of dollars.<sup>38</sup>

The Paragon Group, a Needham events marketer, best known for its auto shows, took over the organization of the flower show, and it resumed in 2010. The show was moved from the Bayside Exposition Center to the Seaport World Trade Center in South Boston and reduced from ten to five days. After receiving a half-dozen letters from commercial nurserymen, who said they would not mount garden displays for the new show unless MHS had a role, Paragon negotiated a deal for MHS to receive payments for their participation. Because MHS members also received free tickets to the flower show, the Society began to get 50 new memberships a day from gardeners who wanted flower show tickets, bringing new life to the organization. MHS's part of the flower show encompassed the nonprofit side of the show, including amateur horticulture and competitions, displays by plant societies and garden clubs, and floral design competitions.<sup>39</sup>

Since 2001, the headquarters of the Massachusetts Horticultural Society has been at Elm Bank. The Society is currently supported by revenues generated by membership (the organization currently has approximately 5,500 members), weddings and functions at Elm Bank, and by contributions.<sup>40</sup>

Under the proprietorship of First Church of Christ, Scientist, Horticultural Hall continued in use as an office building and library space. *Boston Magazine* was one of the first tenants after the 1985 renovation. The William Morris Hunt Memorial Library of the Museum of Fine Arts occupied the former horticultural library. It is now leased by Northeastern University.

### 3.2 Architectural Background

Horticultural Hall (NRIND) is one of several architecturally important institutional structures built in the first decade of the 20<sup>th</sup> century along a small section of Huntington Avenue that have made vital contributions to the cultural and civic life of Boston and New England. The firm of Wheelwright and Haven designed three of these buildings. In addition to Horticultural Hall, these institutions include Symphony Hall (McKim, Mead, and White, 1900, NHL, NRIND), the New England Conservatory of Music/Jordan Hall (Wheelwright and Haven, 1903, NHL, NRIND), the Boston Opera House (Wheelwright and Haven, 1903, demolished), and the Museum of Fine Arts (Guy Lowell, Huntington Avenue wing opened 1909).<sup>41</sup>

Wheelwright and Haven was one of the most prominent architectural firms in Boston from 1888-1912. Robert Balke Parkman (1859-1943) joined in partnership with Edmund March Wheelwright in 1888. While Wheelwright was given credit as the lead architect on many of the firm's commissions, the firm of Wheelwright and Haven is listed as architect for others.

In 1888, one of the firm's first commissions came from William D. Howland of the Howland Mills Corporation in New Bedford, Massachusetts. He hired them to design a workers' village of housing immediately west of the cotton mill complex that was then under construction. The Howland Mill Village (1888-89, NRDIST) was a striking departure from the norm of workers' housing. Fifty

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<sup>38</sup> "After 137 years, N.E. flower show folds," *Boston Globe*, November 1, 2008, A.1; "Horticultural Society peddles its petals Cash-strapped organization to auction rare-book collection," *Boston Globe*, December 11, 2008, B.1.

<sup>39</sup> "Flower show to bloom again in Boston," *Boston Globe*, February 25, 2010, G.19

<sup>40</sup> *Mass. Hort. History*, [www.masshort.org/history](http://www.masshort.org/history).

<sup>41</sup> Massachusetts Historical Commission. Massachusetts Cultural Resource Information System (MACRIS) Building Information Forms, various.



single-family homes were built in an arrangement that allowed for small gardens and some privacy. Wheelwright and Haven designed four distinct cottages for the development, displaying elements of the prevailing styles of the day: Queen Anne, Shingle, and Colonial Revival.<sup>42</sup>

In addition to Horticultural Hall, Wheelwright and Haven designed buildings for Boston City Hospital. In 1898, the firm designed a Richardson Romanesque Revival addition to the Boston Water Board High Service Pumping Station (1897, NRDIST, now the Waterworks Museum) in Brighton to house an additional steam engine.<sup>43</sup>

Edmund March Wheelwright is given credit for many of the major designs produced by the firm during his lifetime. He was born in Roxbury, Massachusetts, in 1854. He attended Roxbury Latin School and graduated from Harvard in 1876. Wheelwright was one of the founders of the Harvard Lampoon Society and wrote a pamphlet for private distribution about the early history of the society.<sup>44</sup> He then continued his studies at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology in 1876-77, specializing in architectural education. He went on to work as a draftsman for the architectural firms of Peabody and Stearns in Boston, McKim, Mead, and Bigelow (which later became McKim, Mead, and White) in New York, and E.P. Treadwell in Albany.<sup>45</sup> He traveled abroad in 1881-82, and although he never officially enrolled in Paris' Ecole de Beaux-Arts, this trip helped to develop his aesthetic understanding and sensibilities as an architect.<sup>46</sup> Following his study abroad between 1881 and 1882, he established his own architectural practice in Boston in 1883, later joining in partnership with Parkman Balke Haven. Wheelwright was well respected among his peers, serving as Secretary of the Boston Society of Architects and on the Board of Directors of the American Institute of Architects, where he was elected a fellow in 1891.<sup>47</sup>

During his professional career, he continued to travel in Europe to enhance his professional work. In 1900 he made a tour of Europe to study some of its finest bridges to prepare for the design of the Cambridge Bridge (1907, NRDIST, now the Longfellow Bridge). In 1903 Wheelwright and another respected Boston architect, R. Clipston Sturgis were chosen by the trustees of the Museum of Fine Arts to spend a year at the Museum's expense to study art museums throughout Europe to aid them in the design of a new museum on Huntington Avenue. They later wrote a lengthy report to the trustees advising them on museum design.<sup>48</sup> (Wheelwright served as a consulting architect to Guy Lowell, who designed the Museum of Fine Arts on Huntington Avenue.)

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<sup>42</sup> Kingston W. Heath, *The Patina of Place: The Cultural Weathering of a New England Industrial Landscape*. (Knoxville, TN: University of Tennessee Press, 2001), 94; New Bedford Preservation Society. "Howland Mill Village, 1888-1889," [www.nbpreservationsociety.org/howlandmillhousing.html](http://www.nbpreservationsociety.org/howlandmillhousing.html).

<sup>43</sup> "Edmund M. Wheelwright Obituary," *The Harvard Graduates' Magazine*, Volume 21, 1912-1913, 240; Waterworks Museum, "Architecture," <http://waterworksmuseum.org/history-and-stories/architecture-and-landscape/>.

<sup>44</sup> Carole A. Jensen, "Edmund M. Wheelwright," *A Biographical Dictionary of Architects in Maine* (1987), 4:13, 1/6, [www.maine.gov/tools/whatsnew/attach.php?id=607348&an=1](http://www.maine.gov/tools/whatsnew/attach.php?id=607348&an=1); Edmund March Wheelwright, *Lampy's Early Days, by an Old Lampooner* (Cambridge, MA: The Harvard Lampoon Society, 1909), <https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=loc.ark:/13960/t3bz73t6x;view=1up;seq=13>.

<sup>45</sup> Heath, *Patina of Place*, 202 ff.28.

<sup>46</sup> Although some biographical profiles say that Wheelwright did attend the Ecole des Beaux Arts, his obituary in *The Harvard Graduates Magazine* states he did not.

<sup>47</sup> Jensen, "Wheelwright," 1/6; Heath, *Patina of Place*, 202 ff.28; "Wheelwright Obituary," *Harvard Graduates' Magazine*.

<sup>48</sup> "Wheelwright Obituary," *Harvard Graduates' Magazine*; American Institute of Architects, "Obituary, Edmund March Wheelwright, FAIA," *Bulletin of the American Institute of Architects* (1912), Volume 13, <https://books.google.com>; Museum of Fine Arts, *The Museum Commission in Europe: Communication to the Trustees*, 3," (Boston, MA: Privately printed, 1906).

Wheelwright became the official Boston city architect in 1891 and served in that capacity until 1895. He designed over 100 city buildings, including schools, police stations, and fire stations, including the Bristol Street Fire Station (1894, currently the Pine Street Inn and part of the South End Landmark District Protection Area). In 1901, having designed several schools for the city of Boston, he authored a book, *School Architecture; A General Treatise for the use of Architects and Others*.<sup>49</sup>

Additional structures designed by Wheelwright, both publicly and privately commissioned, including the Tremont Street Subway Kiosks (1897, NHL, NRDIST, LL) that are now a section of Boston's subway system, the Massachusetts Historical Society Building (1899, NHL, NRIND, NRDIST), the Mattapan Bridge on the Blue Hills Parkway (1903, NRDIST), and the Harvard Lampoon Building (1909, NRIND, NRDIST, NRMRA). In 1907 he designed a conjectural reconstruction of the 17<sup>th</sup>-century church at Jamestown, Virginia.<sup>50</sup>

Wheelwright was known for working in a wide range of architectural styles, including the humorously Gothic Harvard Lampoon Building, the Beaux-Arts Horticultural Hall, the Federal Revival Massachusetts Historical Society, and the Renaissance Revival New England Conservatory of Music. His design for the Bristol Street Fire Station was inspired by the northern Italian Gothic architecture such as the Torre Della Mangia, the town hall at Siena, Italy and the Palazzo Vecchio in Florence, with the drying tower for fire hoses styled after the towers on those buildings.<sup>51</sup>

Edmund March Wheelwright died at the age of 58 in 1912 in a Connecticut sanitarium following a long struggle with depression. In the year of Wheelwright's death, Parkman Haven took on a new partner and the firm became Wheelwright, Haven and Hoyt, later Haven and Hoyt. That firm was known for its fashionable residences; in addition it designed the Larz Anderson Bridge (1915, NRDIST) between Allston and Cambridge, which stands on the site of the Great Bridge of 1662, the first bridge across the Charles River.<sup>52</sup>

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<sup>49</sup> MACRIS Building Forms, various; Edmund M. Wheelwright, *School Architecture; A General Treatise for the use of Architects and Others* (Boston, MA: Rogers & Manson, 1901), <https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=uc2.ark:/13960/t5t72bv04;view=1up;seq=11>.

<sup>50</sup> MACRIS Building Forms, various; "Wheelwright Obituary," Harvard Graduates' Magazine.

<sup>51</sup> "Bristol St. Fire Station," BOS.1463, MACRIS Building Form, Massachusetts Historical Commission, accessed June 21, 2016.

<sup>52</sup> Jensen, "Wheelwright," 4/6; MACRIS Building Forms, various.

### 3.3 Historic and Architectural Significance: Relationship to Criteria for Landmark Designation

Horticultural Hall meets the criteria for Landmark designation found in section four of Chapter 772 of the Acts of 1975, as amended under the following criteria:

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

Horticultural Hall is listed individually on the National Register of Historic Places (1975) with significance in the area of education for its association with the Massachusetts Horticultural Society.

**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 which 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.***

Horticultural Hall has played a significant role in the history of horticulture in Boston and the wider region as the former home of the Massachusetts Horticultural Society, a 187-year-old organization founded to encourage the science and practice of horticulture. The building served as the headquarters for the Society's activities for 91 years. From its inception, the organization's membership has come from all over the Commonwealth, and MHS members developed fruits that have become common to the American diet, such as the Concord grape and the Bartlett pear, introducing them at MHS exhibitions. In the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the Society promoted scientific knowledge by disseminating scientific papers, including the then-controversial work of Charles Darwin, and by establishing science-related professorships. While located in this hall, MHS founded the New England Garden History Society and published the magazine *Horticulture*, which became one of the most respected gardening publications in the country. The building has also served as the home for a number of other horticultural organizations including the Benevolent Fraternity Fruit and Flower Mission, the Wildflower Society, the Boston Mycological Club, the New England Gourd Society, the New England Gladiolus Society, and the Herb Society of America. On October 7, 1904, Horticultural Hall hosted the signature banquet of the 13th International Peace Congress, at which Robert Treat Paine, Jane Addams, and Booker T. Washington were featured speakers.

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

The building is a distinctive creation of the firm Wheelwright and Haven, which was active from 1888-1912, and particularly of the architect Edmund March Wheelwright. Wheelwright and Haven designed many structures in eastern Massachusetts that continue to contribute to the area's architectural, cultural, and transportation life. They include important institutional buildings, bridges and subway kiosks, and private homes. Wheelwright also served as the City Architect for the City of Boston from 1891-1895, designing over 100 schools, police stations, and fire stations, many of

which are still extant. Wheelwright's ability to produce striking edifices and structures in a wide range of styles is a particularly noteworthy aspect of his work.

## **4.0 ECONOMIC STATUS**

### **4.1 Current Assessed Value**

According to the City of Boston's Assessor's Records for fiscal year 2024, the property at 247 Huntington Avenue has a total assessed value of \$10,508,400.00 with the land valued at \$4,208,000.00 and the building valued at \$6,300,400.00.

### **4.2 Current Ownership**

Horticultural Hall, at 247 Huntington Avenue, is listed as of 2024 by the City of Boston's Assessing Department as being owned by 300 Mass Ave LLC (a subsidiary of Northeastern University). This entity holds a 99-year lease on the property from the First Church of Christ, Scientist.

## **5.0 PLANNING CONTEXT**

### **5.1 Background**

Horticultural Hall opened in 1901 as the purpose-built exhibition, lecture, and office space for the Massachusetts Horticultural Society. The building functioned in this capacity from until the interior was renovated for adaptive reuse exclusively as office space in 1985. The First Church of Christ, Scientist purchased the building in 1992, and leased it in 2020 to Northeastern University for a 99 year term.

Horticultural Hall was individually listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1975. The Massachusetts Horticultural Society entered into a preservation restriction agreement with the Massachusetts Historical Commission (MHC) in 1978. The preservation restriction guidelines outlined in the agreement expired in 2008, 30 years from the date of its execution.<sup>53</sup>

### **5.2 Zoning**

Parcel 0401160000 is located in the Huntington Avenue/Prudential Center zoning district, the Massachusetts Avenue/Belvidere Street Protection Area subdistrict, and the following overlay districts: PDA, PDA-permitted, groundwater conservation, and restricted parking.

### **5.3 Planning Issues**

The Boston Landmarks Commission's interest in designating Horticultural Hall as a Boston Landmark is a proactive planning measure. Horticultural Hall was leased by Northeastern University in 2020 for a 99-year term. The Commission anticipates that it will continue to

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<sup>53</sup> Suffolk County Registry of Deeds 2610-516.

work with Northeastern University as the steward of a Landmark if Horticultural Hall is designated.

The Commission recognizes the existing regulatory protection provided by the building's listing on the National Register of Historic Places, and current zoning. Landmark designation will provide an additional level of protection. The Standards and Criteria that the Commission may adopt through Landmark designation would provide fine-tuned design guidelines, specific to the building, that would ensure that future exterior work is done in a manner appropriate to the architecturally significant building.

## **6.0 ALTERNATIVE APPROACHES**

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

#### **A. Individual Landmark Designation**

The Commission retains the option of designating Horticultural Hall as a Landmark. Designation shall correspond to Assessor's parcel 0401160000 and shall address the exterior envelope of the building and the limited landscape/building site within the parcel.

#### **B. Denial of Individual Landmark Designation**

The Commission retains the option of not designating any or all of parcel 0401160000 as a Landmark.

#### **C. Preservation Plan**

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

#### **D. Site Interpretation**

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

### **6.2 Impact of Alternatives:**

#### **A. Individual Landmark Designation**

Landmark designation represents the city's highest honor and is therefore restricted to cultural resources of outstanding architectural and/or historical significance. Landmark designation under Chapter 772 would require review of physical changes to the exterior of Horticultural Hall in accordance with the Standards and Criteria adopted as part of the designation.

#### **B. Denial of Individual Landmark Designation**

Without Landmark designation, the City would be unable to offer protection to parcel 0401160000, most significantly the exterior envelope of the building, or extend guidance to the owners under Chapter 772.

Horticultural Hall is already listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Listing on the National Register provides an honorary designation and limited protection from federal, federally-funded or federally assisted activities. It creates incentives for preservation, notably the federal investment tax credits and grants through the Massachusetts 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.

**C. 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.

**D. Site Interpretation**

A comprehensive interpretation of the history and significance of Horticultural Hall could be introduced at the site.

## **7.0 RECOMMENDATIONS**

Staff of the Boston Landmarks Commission makes the following recommendations:

1. That Horticultural Hall be designated by the Boston Landmarks Commission as a Boston Landmark, under Chapter 772 of the Acts of 1975, as amended
2. That the boundaries of the Landmark, corresponding to Assessor's parcel 0401160000, be adopted without modification; and
3. That the attached Standards and Criteria be accepted.



## 8.0 GENERAL STANDARDS AND CRITERIA

### 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 Landmark Designation which shall be applied by the Commission in evaluating proposed changes to the property. 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 Landmark Designation. 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.

As intended by the statute, a wide variety of buildings and features are included within the area open to Landmark Designation, and an equally wide range exists in the latitude allowed for change. Some properties of truly exceptional architectural and/or historical value will permit only the most minor modifications, while for some others the Commission encourages changes and additions with a contemporary approach, consistent with the properties' existing features and changed uses.

In general, the intent of the Standards and Criteria is to preserve existing qualities that engender designation of a property; however, in some cases they have been structured as to encourage the removal of additions that have lessened the integrity of the property. It is recognized that changes will be required in designated properties for a wide variety of reasons, not all of which are under the complete control of the Commission or the owners. Primary examples are: Building code conformance and safety requirements; Changes necessitated by the introduction of modern mechanical and electrical systems; Changes due to proposed new uses of a property.

The response to these requirements may, in some cases, present conflicts with the Standards and Criteria for a particular property. The Commission's evaluation of an application will be based upon the degree to which such changes are in harmony with the character of the property. In some cases, priorities have been assigned within the Standards and Criteria as an aid to property owners in identifying the most critical design features. The treatments outlined below are listed in hierarchical order from least amount of intervention to the greatest amount of intervention. The owner, manager or developer should follow them in order to ensure a successful project that is sensitive to the historic Landmark.

- **Identify, Retain, and Preserve** the form and detailing of the materials and features that define the historic character of the structure or site. These are basic treatments that should prevent actions that may cause the diminution or loss of the structures' or site's

historic character. It is important to remember that loss of character can be caused by the cumulative effect of insensitive actions whether large or small.

- **Protect and Maintain** the materials and features that have been identified as important and must be retained during the rehabilitation work. Protection usually involves the least amount of intervention and is done before other work.
- **Repair** the character defining features and materials when it is necessary. Repairing begins with the least amount of intervention as possible. Patching, piecing-in, splicing, consolidating or otherwise reinforcing according to recognized preservation methods are the techniques that should be followed. Repairing may also include limited replacement in kind of extremely deteriorated or missing parts of features. Replacements should be based on surviving prototypes.
- **Replacement** of entire character defining features or materials follows repair when the deterioration prevents repair. The essential form and detailing should still be evident so that the physical evidence can be used to re-establish the feature. The preferred option is replacement of the entire feature in kind using the same material. Because this approach may not always be technically or economically feasible the commission will consider the use of compatible substitute material. The commission does not recommend removal and replacement with new material a feature that could be repaired.
- **Missing Historic Features** should be replaced with new features that are based on adequate historical, pictorial and physical documentation. The commission may consider a replacement feature that is compatible with the remaining character defining features. The new design should match the scale, size, and material of the historic feature.
- **Alterations or Additions** that may be needed to assure the continued use of the historic structure or site should not radically change, obscure or destroy character defining spaces, materials, features or finishes. The commission encourages new uses that are compatible with the historic structure or site and that do not require major alterations or additions.

In these guidelines the verb **Should** indicates a recommended course of action; the verb **Shall** indicates those actions which are specifically required to preserve and protect significant architectural elements.

Finally, the Standards and Criteria have been divided into two levels:

**Section 8.3:** Those general Standards and Criteria that are common to all Landmark designations (building exteriors, landscape features and archeological sites).

**Section 9.0:** Those specific Standards and Criteria that apply to each particular property that is designated. In every case the Specific Standards and Criteria for a particular property shall take precedence over the General ones if there is a conflict.

## 8.2 Levels of Review

The Commission has no desire to interfere with the normal maintenance procedures for the Landmark. In order to provide some guidance for the Landmark property's owner, manager or developer and the Commission, the activities which might be construed as causing an alteration to the physical character of the exterior have been categorized to indicate the level of review required, based on the potential impact of the proposed work. Note: the

examples for each category are not intended to act as a comprehensive list; see Section 8.2.D.

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

1. Activities associated with normal cleaning and routine maintenance.
  - a. For building maintenance (Also see Sections 9.0), such activities might include the following: normal cleaning (no power washing above 700 PSI, no chemical or abrasive cleaning), non-invasive inspections, in-kind repair of caulking, in-kind repainting, staining or refinishing of wood or metal elements, lighting bulb replacements or in-kind glass repair/replacement, etc.
  - b. For landscape maintenance, such activities might include the following: normal cleaning of paths and sidewalks, etc. (no power washing above 700 PSI, no chemical or abrasive cleaning), non-invasive inspections, in-kind repair of caulking, in-kind spot replacement of cracked or broken paving materials, in-kind repainting or refinishing of site furnishings, site lighting bulb replacements or in-kind glass repair/replacement, normal plant material maintenance, such as pruning, fertilizing, mowing and mulching, and in-kind replacement of existing plant materials, etc.
2. Routine activities associated with special events or seasonal decorations which are to remain in place for less than six weeks and do not result in any permanent alterations or attached fixtures.

**B. Activities which may be determined by the staff to be eligible for a Certificate of Exemption or Administrative Review, requiring an application to the Commission:**

1. Maintenance and repairs involving no change in design, material, color or outward appearance.
2. In-kind replacement or repair, as described in the Specific Standards and Criteria, Section 9.0.
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. See Section 9.1.
6. Emergency repairs that require temporary tarps, board-ups, etc. may be eligible for Certificate of Exemption or Administrative Review; permanent repairs will require review as outlined in Section 8.2. In the case of emergencies, BLC staff should be notified as soon as possible to assist in evaluating the damage and to help expedite repair permits as necessary.

**C. Activities requiring an application and full Commission review:**

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

**D. Activities not explicitly listed above:**

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

**E. Concurrent Jurisdiction**

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

### **8.3 General Standards and Criteria**

1. The design approach to the property should begin with the premise that the features of historical and architectural significance described within the Study Report should be preserved. In general, this may minimize alterations that will be allowed. Changes that are allowed will follow accepted preservation practices as described below, starting with the least amount of intervention.
2. Changes and additions to the property and its environment which have taken place in the course of time are evidence of the history of the property and the neighborhood. These changes to the property may have developed significance in their own right, and this significance should be recognized and respected.
3. Deteriorated materials and/or features, whenever possible, should be repaired rather than replaced or removed.
4. When replacement of features that define the historic character of the property is necessary, it should be based on physical or documentary evidence of original or later contributing features.
5. New materials should, whenever possible, match any historic material being replaced in terms of their physical properties and should be compatible with the size, scale, color, material and character of the property and its environment.
6. New additions or alterations should not disrupt the essential form and integrity of the property and should be compatible with the size, scale, color, material and character of the property and its environment.
7. New additions or related new construction should be differentiated from the existing, thus, they should not be imitative of an earlier style or period.
8. New additions or alterations should be done in such a way that if they were to be removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the historic property would be unimpaired.
9. Priority shall be given to those portions of the property which are visible from public ways or which it can be reasonably inferred may be in the future.
10. Surface cleaning shall use the mildest method possible. Sandblasting, wire brushing, or other similar abrasive cleaning methods shall not be permitted.

11. Should any major restoration or construction activity be considered for the 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.
12. Significant archaeological resources affected by a project shall be protected and preserved.

The General Standards and Criteria have been financed in part with funds from the National Park Service, U.S. Department of the Interior, through the Massachusetts Historical Commission, Secretary William Francis Galvin, Chairman.

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## 9.0 SPECIFIC STANDARDS AND CRITERIA

*Refer to Sections 8.0 for additional Standards and Criteria that may apply.*

### 9.1 Introduction

1. In these guidelines the verb **Should** indicates a recommended course of action; the verb **Shall** indicates those actions which are specifically required to preserve and protect significant architectural elements.
2. The intent of these standards and criteria is to preserve the overall character and appearance of Horticultural Hall including the exterior form, mass, and richness of detail of the building.
3. Conformance to these Standards and Criteria alone does not necessarily ensure approval, nor are they absolute. The Commission has the authority to issue Certificates of Design Approval for projects that vary from any of the Standards and Criteria on a case-by-case basis. However, any request to vary from the Standards and Criteria must demonstrate the reason for, and advantages gained by, such variation. The Commission's Certificate of Design Approval is only granted after careful review of each application and public hearing(s), in accordance with Chapter 772 of the Acts of 1975, as amended. Any variation from the Standards and Criteria shall not be considered a precedent.
4. The standards and criteria acknowledge that there may be changes to the exterior of the buildings and are intended to make the changes sensitive to the character of the property.
5. The Commission will consider whether later addition(s) and/or alteration(s) can, or should, be removed.
6. Since it is not possible to provide one general guideline, the following factors will be considered in determining whether a later addition(s) and/or alteration(s) can, or should, be removed include:
  - a. Compatibility with the original property's integrity in scale, materials and character.
  - b. Historic association with the property.
  - c. Quality in the design and execution of the addition/alteration.
  - d. Functional usefulness.
7. The exterior elevations and roof elements of Horticultural Hall are subject to the terms of the exterior guidelines herein stated.
8. Items under Commission review include but are not limited to the following: exterior walls, windows, entrances/doors, roofs, roof projections, additions, accessibility, new construction, paving, major plantings, fences, demolition, and archaeology. Items not anticipated in the Standards and Criteria may be subject to review. Please also refer to the General Standards and Criteria, Section 8.0.

## 9.2 Exterior Walls of the Building

### A. General

1. New openings are not allowed.
2. No original existing openings shall be filled or changed in size.
3. No exposed conduit shall be allowed.
4. Original or later contributing projections shall not be removed.
5. The Boston Landmarks Commission recommends that work proposed to the materials outlined in sections B and C be executed with the guidance of a professional building materials conservator.

### B. Masonry (Brick, Stone, Terra Cotta, Concrete, Stucco and Mortar)

1. All masonry materials shall be preserved.
2. Original or later contributing masonry materials, features, details, surfaces and ornamentation shall be retained and, if necessary, repaired by patching, piecing-in, or consolidating the masonry using recognized preservation methods.
3. Deteriorated or missing masonry materials, features, details, surfaces and ornamentation shall be replaced with material and elements which match the original in material, color, texture, size, shape, profile and detail of installation.
4. When replacement of materials or elements is necessary, it should be based on physical or documentary evidence.
5. If using the same material is not technically or economically feasible, then compatible substitute materials may be considered.
6. Sound original mortar shall be retained.
7. Deteriorated mortar shall be carefully removed by hand-raking the joints.
8. Use of mechanical hammers shall not be allowed. Use of mechanical saws may be allowed on a case-by-case basis.
9. Repointing mortar shall duplicate the original mortar in strength, composition, color, texture, joint size, joint profile and method of application.
10. Sample panels of raking the joints and repointing shall be reviewed and approved by the staff of the Boston Landmarks Commission.

11. Cleaning of masonry is discouraged and should be performed only when necessary to halt deterioration.
12. If the building is to be cleaned, **the mildest method possible** shall be used.
13. A test patch of the cleaning method(s) shall be reviewed and approved on site by staff of the Boston Landmarks Commission. Test patches should always be carried out well in advance of cleaning (including exposure to all seasons if possible).
14. **Sandblasting (wet or dry), wire brushing, or other similar abrasive cleaning methods shall not be permitted.** Doing so changes the visual quality of the material and accelerates deterioration.
15. Waterproofing or water repellents are strongly discouraged. These treatments are generally not effective in preserving masonry and can cause permanent damage. The Commission does recognize that in extraordinary circumstances their use may be required to solve a specific problem. Samples of any proposed treatment shall be reviewed by the Commission before application.
16. In general, painting masonry surfaces shall not be allowed. Painting masonry surfaces will be considered only when there is documentary evidence that this treatment was used at some significant point in the history of the property.
17. New penetrations for attachments through masonry are strongly discouraged. When necessary, attachment details shall be located in mortar joints, rather than through masonry material; stainless steel hardware is recommended to prevent rust jacking. New attachments to cast concrete are discouraged and will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis.

### C. Wood

1. All original or later contributing wood materials shall be preserved.
2. Original or later contributing wood surfaces, features, details and ornamentation shall be retained and, if necessary, repaired by patching, piecing-in, consolidating or reinforcing the wood using recognized preservation methods.
3. Deteriorated or missing wood surfaces, features, details and ornamentation shall be replaced with material and elements which match the original in material, color, texture, size, shape, profile and detail of installation.
4. When replacement of materials or elements is necessary, it should be based on physical or documentary evidence.



5. If using the same material is not technically or economically feasible, then compatible substitute materials may be considered.
6. Cleaning of wooden elements shall use **the mildest method possible**.
7. Paint removal should be considered only where there is paint surface deterioration and as part of an overall maintenance program which involves repainting or applying other appropriate protective coatings. Coatings such as paint help protect the wood from moisture and ultraviolet light and stripping the wood bare will expose the surface to the effects of weathering.
8. Damaged or deteriorated paint should be removed to the next sound layer using **the mildest method possible**.
9. **Propane or butane torches, sandblasting, water blasting or other abrasive cleaning and/or paint removal methods shall not be permitted.** Doing so changes the visual quality of the wood and accelerates deterioration.
10. Repainting should be based on paint seriation studies. If an adequate record does not exist repainting shall be done with colors that are appropriate to the style and period of the building.

**D. Architectural Metals  
(Including but not limited to Cast and Wrought Iron, Steel, Pressed Tin, Copper,  
Bronze and Zinc)**

1. All original or later contributing architectural metals shall be preserved.
2. Original or later contributing metal materials, features, details and ornamentation shall be retained and, if necessary, repaired by patching, splicing or reinforcing the metal using recognized preservation methods.
3. Deteriorated or missing metal materials, features, details and ornamentation shall be replaced with material and elements which match the original in material, color, texture, size, shape, profile and detail of installation.
4. When replacement of materials or elements is necessary, it should be based on physical or documentary evidence.
5. If using the same material is not technically or economically feasible, then compatible substitute materials may be considered.
6. Cleaning of metal elements either to remove corrosion or deteriorated paint shall use the mildest method possible.
7. Abrasive cleaning methods, such as low-pressure dry grit blasting, may be allowed as long as it does not abrade or damage the surface.

8. A test patch of the cleaning method(s) shall be reviewed and approved on site by staff of the Boston Landmarks Commission. Test patches should always be carried out well in advance of cleaning (including exposure to all seasons if possible).
9. Cleaning to remove corrosion and paint removal should be considered only where there is deterioration and as part of an overall maintenance program which involves repainting or applying other appropriate protective coatings. Paint or other coatings help retard the corrosion rate of the metal. Leaving the metal bare will expose the surface to accelerated corrosion.
10. Repainting should be based on paint seriation studies. If an adequate record does not exist repainting shall be done with colors that are appropriate to the style and period of the building.

### **9.3 Windows**

***Refer to Section 9.2 regarding treatment of materials and features.***

1. The Boston Landmarks Commission recommends that work proposed to original or later contributing windows be executed with the guidance of a professional building materials conservator or architect with experience with the specific window type.
2. The original or later contributing window design and arrangement of window openings shall be retained.
3. Enlarging or reducing window openings for the purpose of fitting stock (larger or smaller) window sash or air conditioners shall not be allowed.
4. Removal of window sash and the installation of permanent fixed panels to accommodate air conditioners shall not be allowed.
5. Original or later contributing window elements, features (functional and decorative), details and ornamentation shall be retained and, if necessary, repaired by patching, splicing, consolidating or otherwise reinforcing using recognized preservation methods.
6. Deteriorated or missing window elements, features (functional and decorative), details and ornamentation shall be replaced with material and elements which match the original in material, color, texture, size, shape, profile, configuration and detail of installation.
7. When replacement is necessary, it should be based on physical or documentary evidence.
8. Aluminum, vinyl, metal clad or vinyl clad replacement sash shall not be allowed.
9. Replacement sash shall be wooden sash matching the historic configuration.
10. Tinted or reflective-coated glass shall not be allowed.

11. Metal or vinyl panning of the wood frame and molding shall not be allowed.
12. Exterior combination storm windows shall have a narrow perimeter framing that does not obscure the glazing of the primary window. In addition, the meeting rail of the combination storm window shall align with that of the primary window.
13. Storm window sashes and frames shall have a painted finish that matches the primary window sash and frame color.
14. Clear or mill finished aluminum frames shall not be allowed.
15. Window frames and sashes should be of a color based on paint seriation studies. If an adequate record does not exist repainting shall be done with colors that are appropriate to the style and period of the building.

#### **9.4 Entrances/Doors**

***Refer to Section 9.2 regarding treatment of materials and features; and Section 9.5 for additional Standards and Criteria that may apply.***

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

10. Flush doors (metal, wood, vinyl or plastic), sliding doors and metal paneled doors shall not be allowed.
11. Storm doors (aluminum or wood-framed) shall not be allowed on the primary entrance unless evidence shows that they had been used. They may be allowed on secondary entrances. Where allowed storm doors shall be painted to match the color of the primary door.
12. Unfinished aluminum storm doors shall not be allowed.
13. Replacement door hardware should replicate the original or be appropriate to the style and period of the building.
14. Buzzers, alarms and intercom panels, where allowed, shall be flush mounted and appropriately located.
15. Entrance elements should be of a color based on paint seriation studies. If an adequate record does not exist repainting shall be done with colors that are appropriate to the style and period of the building/entrance.

#### **9.5 Recesses**

***Refer to Sections 9.2 regarding treatment of materials and features; and Sections 9.4, 9.6, 9.9, 9.10, and 9.12 for additional Standards and Criteria that may apply.***

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

8. Recess elements should be of a color based on paint seriation studies. If an adequate record does not exist repainting shall be

## **9.6 Ironwork**

**(Includes Balconies, Railings and Window Grilles, Fire Escapes.)**

***Refer to Section 9.2 regarding treatment of materials and features.***

1. All original or later contributing ironwork shall be preserved.
2. Original or later contributing ironwork materials, elements, features (functional and decorative), details, and ornamentation shall be retained and, if necessary, repaired by patching, splicing or reinforcing using recognized preservation methods.
3. Deteriorated or missing ironwork materials, elements, features (functional and decorative), details, and ornamentation shall be replaced with material and elements which match the original in material, color, texture, size, shape, profile, configuration, and detail of installation.
4. When replacement is necessary, it should be based on physical or documentary evidence.
5. If using the same material is not technically or economically feasible, then compatible substitute materials may be considered.
6. Original or later contributing ironwork materials, elements, features (functional and decorative), details, and ornamentation shall not be sheathed or otherwise obscured by other materials.
7. New balconies shall not be permitted on primary elevations.
8. New balconies or railings may be considered on secondary elevations if they are required for safety and an alternative egress route is clearly not possible.
9. The installation of new security grilles is discouraged.
10. Ironwork elements should be of a color based on paint seriation studies. If an adequate record does not exist repainting shall be done with colors that are appropriate to the style and period of the building/entrance.

## **9.7 Roofs**

***Refer to Section 9.2 regarding treatment of materials and features; and Section 9.8 for additional Standards and Criteria that may apply.***

1. The roof shapes and materials of the existing buildings shall be preserved.

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

#### **9.8 Roof Projections**

**(Includes satellite dishes, antennas and other communication devices, louvers, vents, chimneys, and chimney caps)**

***Refer to Section 9.2 and 9.7 for additional Standards and Criteria that may apply.***

Due to the historical and architectural significance of Horticultural Hall, roof projections shall not be visible from the public way.

#### **9.9 Lighting**

***Refer to Section 9.2 regarding treatment of materials and features.***

1. There are several aspects of lighting related to the exterior of the building and landscape:
  - a. Lighting fixtures as appurtenances to the building or elements of architectural ornamentation.
  - b. Quality of illumination on building exterior.
  - c. Interior lighting as seen from the exterior.
  - d. Security lighting.

2. Wherever integral to the building, original or later contributing lighting fixtures shall be retained and, if necessary, repaired by patching, piecing in or reinforcing the lighting fixture using recognized preservation methods.
4. Deteriorated or missing lighting fixture materials, elements, features (functional and decorative), details, and ornamentation shall be replaced with material and elements which match the original in material, color, texture, size, shape, profile, configuration, and detail of installation.
5. When replacement is necessary, it should be based on physical or documentary evidence.
6. If using the same material is not technically or economically feasible, then compatible substitute materials may be considered.
7. 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.
8. Supplementary illumination may be added where appropriate to the current use of the building.
9. New lighting shall conform to any of the following approaches as appropriate to the building and to the current or projected use:
  - a. Reproductions of original or later contributing fixtures, based on physical or documentary evidence.
  - b. Accurate representation of the original period, based on physical or documentary evidence.
  - c. Reproductions of original or later contributing fixtures, based on physical or documentary evidence.
  - d. Retention or restoration of fixtures which date from an interim installation and which are considered to be appropriate to the building and use.
  - e. New lighting fixtures which are differentiated from the original or later contributing fixture in design and which illuminate the exterior of the building in a way which renders it visible at night and compatible with its environment.
  - f. The new exterior lighting location shall fulfill the functional intent of the current use without obscuring the building form or architectural detailing.
9. No exposed conduit shall be allowed on the building.
10. As a Landmark, architectural night lighting is encouraged, provided the lighting installations minimize night sky light pollution. High efficiency fixtures, lamps and automatic timers are recommended.
11. On-site mock-ups of proposed architectural night lighting may be required.

#### **9.10 Signs, Canopies, Flagpoles, and Awnings**

**Refer to Sections 9.4, 9.5, 9.6, 9.8, and 9.9 for additional Standards and Criteria that may apply.**

1. Original or later contributing signs, marquees, and canopies integral to the building ornamentation or architectural detailing shall be preserved.
2. Awnings and canopies are not an original feature of any part of the Landmark property; new awnings and canopies shall not be allowed.
3. Signs are viewed as the most appropriate vehicle for imaginative and creative expression and it is not the Commission's intent to stifle a creative approach to signage.
4. All signage will be subject to the Boston Zoning Code in addition to these guidelines.
5. All signs added to the building shall be part of one system of design and reflect a design concept appropriate to the existing historic building.
6. Approval of a given sign shall be limited to the owner of the business or building and shall not be transferable; signs shall be removed or resubmitted for approval when the operation or purpose of the advertised business changes.
7. New signs shall not detract from the essential form of the building nor obscure its architectural features.
8. New signs shall be of a size and material compatible with the building and its current use.
9. The design and material of new signs should reinforce the architectural character of the building.
10. Signs applied to the building shall be applied in such a way that they could be removed without damaging the building. New penetrations should be avoided; where necessary, stainless steel hardware is recommended. See Section 9.2.
11. Lighting of signs and canopies shall be evaluated for the specific use intended, but generally illumination of a sign shall not dominate illumination of the building.
12. No back-lit or plastic signs shall be allowed on the exterior of the building.
13. Temporary signs and banners will be reviewed for size, location, and attachment details; approvals will be limited to agreed period of installation.

#### **9.11 Landscape/Building Site**

**Refer to Section 9.2 regarding treatment of materials and features. Refer to Sections 9.9, 9.10, 9.12, 9.13, and 9.14 for additional Standards and Criteria that may apply.**



1. The general intent is to preserve the existing or later contributing landscape features that enhance the Landmark property.
2. It is recognized that often the environment surrounding the property has character, scale and street pattern quite different from what existed when the building was constructed. Thus, changes must frequently be made to accommodate the new condition, and the landscape treatment can be seen as a transition feature between the Landmark and its newer surroundings.
3. Original or later contributing site features (decorative and functional), materials, elements, details and ornamentation shall be retained and, if necessary, repaired using recognized preservation methods.
4. Deteriorated or missing site features (decorative and functional), materials, elements, details and ornamentation shall be replaced with material and elements which match the original in material, color, texture, size, shape, profile and detail of installation.
5. When replacement is necessary, it should be based on physical or documentary evidence.
6. If using the same material is not technically or economically feasible, then compatible substitute materials may be considered.
7. New additions/alterations to the site (such as: parking areas, paved footpaths, and driveways, etc.) shall be as unobtrusive as possible and preserve any original or later contributing site features.
8. Removal of non-historic site features from the existing site is encouraged.
9. The existing landforms of the site shall not be altered unless shown to be necessary for maintenance of the Landmark or site.
10. Original or later contributing layout and materials of the walks, steps, and paved areas shall be maintained. Consideration will be given to alterations if it can be shown that better site circulation is necessary and that the alterations will improve this without altering the integrity of the Landmark.
11. Existing healthy plant materials which are in keeping with the historic character of the property shall be maintained. New plant materials should be appropriate to the pastoral character of the site.
12. Maintenance of, removal of, and additions to plant materials should consider restoration of views of the Landmark.

#### **9.12 Accessibility**

**Refer to Section 9.2 regarding treatment of materials. Refer to Sections 9.3, 9.4, 9.6, 9.11, and 10.0 for additional Standards and Criteria that may apply.**

1. 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; and
  - c. Evaluate accessibility options within a preservation context.
2. 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.

### **9.13 Renewable Energy Sources**

**Refer to Section 9.2 regarding treatment of materials. Refer to Sections 9.7, 9.8, and 10.00 for additional Standards and Criteria that may apply.**

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

### **9.14 Additions**

**Refer to Sections 9.6, 9.7, 9.8, 9.11, and 10.0 for additional Standards and Criteria that may apply.**

1. Additions can significantly alter the historic appearance of the buildings. An exterior addition should only be considered after it has been determined that the existing buildings cannot meet the new space requirements.
2. New additions shall be designed so that the character defining features of the buildings are not radically changed, obscured, damaged or destroyed.

3. New additions should be designed so that they are compatible with the existing buildings, although they should not necessarily be imitative of an earlier style or period.
4. New additions shall not obscure the front of the building as viewed from Massachusetts Avenue.
5. New additions shall be of a size, scale and of materials that are in harmony with the existing building.

## **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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