



Boston Landmarks Commission

City of Boston
The Environment
Department

Boston City Hall, Room 709
Boston, Massachusetts 02201
617-635-3850

LANDMARK PETITION FORM

FOR BLC USE ONLY
DO NOT WRITE OR STAMP IN THIS BOX

Petition number: _____

Received on: _____

Attest:

Executive Director

Schedule for preliminary hearing:

Note: This petition must be completed in full in order to be accepted and scheduled for a preliminary hearing. *The petition may be returned if all questions have not been answered completely.* Type or print legibly. Please contact BLC staff if you have any questions regarding the petition process.

PETITION

We, ten undersigned voters of the City of Boston, petition the Boston Landmarks Commission as authorized by Chapter 772 of the acts of 1975 of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, as amended.

TO DESIGNATE

**TO AMEND THE
DESIGNATION OF**

**TO RESCIND THE
DESIGNATION OF**

THE FOLLOWING: 30-32 N Bennet St., Boston 02113

(street address, neighborhood, and zip code, and street boundaries if District or Protection Area)

NORTH BENNET STREET BATHHOUSE AND GYMNASIUM, AND NORTH END
(POLICAR) PLAYGROUND

(name, historic and/or common)

PROPERTY OWNER'S NAME AND MAILING ADDRESS FROM ASSESSOR'S RECORDS:

City of Boston

NAME: _____
CityHall, Boston, MA

ADDRESS: _____ ZIP CODE: _____

North End Bath House Parcel ID 0302342000

WARD AND PARCEL NUMBER FROM ASSESSOR'S RECORDS: North End Playground Parcel ID 0302320000

(The assessor's office is located on the 3rd floor of Boston City Hall. Assessing information is also available at <http://www.cityofboston.gov/assessing>, under the "Assessing On-line" option. A copy of the tax bill or list of owner(s) may be attached to the petition as necessary.)

We recommend the designation category to be: *(check one; see instructions for details)*

- LANDMARK** *(check one of the following)* Exterior only Interior only Exterior and Interior
- LANDMARK DISTRICT** **ARCHITECTURAL CONSERVATION DISTRICT** **PROTECTION AREA**

PETITIONERS must be residents and registered voters of the City of Boston.

Home Address and e-mail address (if applicable) must be provided for each petitioner; the petition may be returned if this information is incomplete. Names must be typed or printed legibly under the signature. It is advised to include more than ten petitioners in the instance that a name is illegible or a petitioner is not a registered voter. Attach additional copies of this page as necessary.

SIGNATURE AND NAME	ADDRESS	ZIP CODE	E-MAIL ADDRESS
1. _____ _____	_____	_____	_____
2. _____ _____	_____	_____	_____
3. _____ _____	_____	_____	_____
4. _____ _____	_____	_____	_____
5. _____ _____	_____	_____	_____
6. _____ _____	_____	_____	_____
7. _____ _____	_____	_____	_____
8. _____ _____	_____	_____	_____
9. _____ _____	_____	_____	_____
10. _____ _____	_____	_____	_____

Ellen Hume

Spokesperson for the petitioners: _____

Phone number: _____ E-mail: savethenazzaro@gmail.com

SURVEY RATING CATEGORY AND SIGNIFICANCE

City of Boston Building Inventory Form #: **BOS.**_____

Survey Rating Category (from Building Inventory Form): (check one)

- National Significance** (formerly I. Highest Significance)
- State Significance** (formerly II. Major Significance)
- Local Significance** (formerly III. Significant)
- Contributing to a Historic District & May Contribute to a Historic District** (formerly IV. Notable & V. Minor)
- Non-Contributing** (formerly VI. Non-Contributing)

The Building Inventory form can be accessed online through the Massachusetts Cultural Resource Information System (MACRIS) at <http://http://mhc-macris.net/>, or by contacting BLC staff. In the absence of a Building Inventory Form or Survey Rating Category, please contact BLC staff with a request for a National Register of Historic Places Criteria Statement and survey rating category. **The BLC shall not accept petitions for buildings rated Local Significance, Contributing to a Historic District or May Contribute to a Historic District, and Non-Contributing (formerly III, IV, V and VI, or unrated).** In lieu of accepting petitions for buildings rated Local Significance and lower, the BLC shall invite petitioners or other parties to submit a letter requesting the Commission to review the rating and consider changing it. It shall be the obligation of anyone requesting a rating change to submit information that will assist BLC staff and the Commission with its review.

RESEARCH CHECKLIST

Please fill out the checklist below to indicate sources of information, if applicable. Check which resources were reviewed and include a citation, or indicate "N/A" if unable to locate. For information and guidance on researching, please visit the BLC's website at <http://www.cityofboston.gov/landmarks/resources.asp>.

- Historical maps/atlases** _____
- Historical images** _____
- Building permits** _____
- Deeds** _____
- Probate records** _____
- City directories** _____
- Census records** _____
- Obituaries** _____
- Manuscripts/diaries/journals** _____
- Newspaper/magazine articles** _____
- Books** _____
- Other** _____

We recommend this action for the following reasons: *(Include architectural and/or historical significance from the Building Inventory Form and/or additional research materials, if available. Attach additional sheets as necessary.)*

Historical Significance: The North Bennet Street Public Bath and Gymnasium (also known as the North End Bath House and currently as the Nazzaro Community Center) is one of the last remaining grand public bath houses, situated at the heart of Boston's oldest neighborhood. This well-preserved structure and adjoining playground represent a defining moment in American history: the flood of immigrants from Ireland, Italy, and Jewish communities in Europe from 1850-1920. The North Bennet Street Bath House and Gymnasium also represents the peak of the American public bath movement, the early 20th century Progressive Era urban reform effort to address the unsanitary conditions in the crowded urban tenements that sprung up quickly, without plumbing or much public space. The North Bennet Street Bath House was sponsored in 1906 by Mayor John Francis “Honey Fitz” Fitzgerald, father of Rose Kennedy and maternal grandfather of President John F. Kennedy. Mayor Fitzgerald, the first of Boston’s Irish politicians to win the mayoralty, was especially keen to build an elegant public structure in the North End, which was his birthplace and the seat of his early power as ward boss. The building and adjacent community playground have been in public use at the heart of this working-class community for over 100 years. The North Bennet Street Bath House was considered the finest public bath house in Boston, featured in such books as Marilyn Williams' *Washing the Great Unwashed: Public Baths in Urban America 1840-1920* (Ohio State University Press, 1991) and Maureen Meister's *Arts & Crafts Architecture: History and Heritage in New England* (University Press of New England, 2014). (See attached for more historic detail).

Architectural Significance: Completed in 1910, the Second Renaissance revival building was designed after the Villa Medici in Rome by Maginnis & Walsh, one of America's most prominent architectural firms. Principals Charles Donagh Magginis (1867-1955), Timothy Walsh (1868-1934) and Matthew Sullivan (1868-1948; left the firm in 1905) were responsible for ecclesiastical work and schools throughout the United States and Canada. Maginnis served two terms as president of the American Institute of Architects and, in 1848, received the AIA Gold Medal for “outstanding service to American architecture.”

The North Bennet Street Bath House is a well-preserved red brick and white terra cotta Renaissance Revival design, compatible with and probably influenced by the adjacent Colonial Revival (1897) Paul Revere High School and other nearby North End buildings, whose urban red brick is reminiscent of some northern Italian cities. The building's design was published extensively at the time, appearing in *American Architect*, *Architectural Review*, and *The Brickbuilder*, as well as more contemporary publications including *Arts & Crafts Architecture* (Meister, 2014) and the *Society of Architectural Historians' Buildings of the United States: Metropolitan Boston* (Morgan). The 28,000 square foot, three-story building was carefully positioned for grandeur; the formal entrance was oriented to face onto an open piazza (known today as the Louis T. Polcari Playground) that originally featured a border loggia or colonnade. The projecting round-arched pavilion entrance sits on a plinth with flanking bullnose stairs, for added stature. The grand front entrance, featuring a barrel-vaulted top and decorated tympanum displaying the great Seal of Boston in white terra cotta, is accented on each white terra cotta side column by a black tablet, added in the mid-20th century to honor two community leaders. The entrance arch is covered by flat-seamed, patinated copper cladding. To either side of the entrance are round-arched windows suggesting ancient Roman style, as reinterpreted in the Renaissance; the arches are articulated with terra cotta keystones and voussoirs similar to those found on the adjacent former school and other nearby buildings. (See attached for more architectural detail)

REQUIRED ATTACHMENTS:

1. **A location map must be submitted with the petition form. The outline of the building, structure, or site and its property boundaries (for proposed Landmarks), or the proposed District boundaries or Protection Area boundaries, must be clearly delineated.** Maps may be obtained digitally, via an online mapping site, or through the City of Boston’s “Assessing On-line” function, available at <http://www.cityofboston.gov/assessing>. City of Boston Topographic and 100” Survey maps, available at the Boston Redevelopment Authority (BRA) on the 9th floor of Boston City Hall, may also be submitted.
2. **Include photographs of the property or district petitioned.** High quality, color photographs are preferred.

Instructions for Completing Boston Landmarks Commission Petitions

Follow these instructions when submitting a petition for a Landmark, Landmark District, Architectural Conservation District, or Protection Area. All sections of the petition must be completed in order for the Commission to accept the petition. **Prospective petitioners should contact Boston Landmarks Commission staff for assistance when submitting a petition.** For further information, see the Boston Landmarks Commission enabling legislation, Chapter 772 of the Acts of 1975 (sections 1 and 4), at <http://www.cityofboston.gov/landmarks>.

1. Check the “To Designate” line unless you know that the building, site, or area to which you refer is already designated by the Boston Landmarks Commission. Any change to an existing designation, such as enlarging or reducing its size (short of outright rescission), is an amendment; in such a case check the “To Amend the Designation Of” line.
2. A proposed individual Landmark is identified by its address and street, in addition to any commonly used name. Ward and precinct are also required to confirm the exact location of the proposed Landmark, Landmark District, Architectural Conservation District, or Protection Area.
3. Owners’ names and addresses are available at the City of Boston Assessing Department (Boston City Hall, 3rd floor) or online at <http://www.cityofboston.gov/assessing>, via the “Assessing On-line” function. This information is mandatory for Landmark petitions. The Commission does not require addresses for proposed Landmark Districts, Architectural Conservation Districts, or Protection Areas; however, providing this information may speed up the designation process. If ownership has changed within the last 12 months, fill in information for new owner, if known.
4. The designation category for an individual building or site is “Landmark.” To be considered for a Landmark designation, a property must have significance at the local level *and* at the state, New England region, or national level. To be considered for “Landmark District” designation, a district must have significance at the local level *and* at the state, New England region, or national level. A district will be considered for “Architectural Conservation District” status if its significance is at the local level. A “Protection Area” must be contiguous with an individual Landmark, Landmark District, or Architectural Conservation District and be visually related to the Landmark, Landmark District, or Architectural Conservation District and constitute an essential part of the physical environment of the individual Landmark, Landmark District, or Architectural Conservation District. A petition for the designation of a Protection Area will be considered only if an adjacent Landmark, Landmark District, or Architectural Conservation District has already been designated, or if a petition to designate an adjacent Landmark, Landmark District, or Architectural Conservation District accompanies the Protection Area petition.
5. Provide the City of Boston Building Inventory Form number and Survey Rating Category, if available. This information can be accessed online through the Massachusetts Cultural Resource Information System (MACRIS) at <http://http://mhc-macris.net/>, or by contacting BLC staff. In the absence of a Building Inventory Form or Survey Rating Category, contact BLC staff with a request for a National Register of Historic Places Criteria Statement and survey rating category. BLC staff will draft a National Register of Historic Places Criteria Statement form and will assign a rating within 30 days of receiving a written request. Please provide staff with any relevant information available that might assist in the preparation of the Criteria Statement and survey rating category.
6. Explain briefly the architectural and/or historical merit of the proposed Landmark, Landmark District, Architectural Conservation District, or Protection Area. Attach additional pages as necessary, but note that petitions marked only “See Attached” in this area will be returned.
7. A location map must be submitted with the petition form. The outline of the building, structure, or site and its property boundaries (for Landmarks), or the District boundaries or Protection Area boundaries, must be clearly delineated. Maps may be obtained digitally, via an online mapping site, or through the City of Boston’s “Assessing On-line” function, available at <http://cityofboston.gov/assessing>. City of Boston Topographic and 100’ Survey maps, available at the BRA on the 9th floor of Boston City Hall, may also be submitted.

8. Include photographs of the building, structure, site, or area petitioned. High quality, color photographs are preferred.
9. Petitioners must be current residents and registered voters of the City of Boston. Type or print the names of the petitioners under their signatures. There must be at least 10 petitioners; attach additional pages as necessary. Address, ward, and precinct must be included for all petitioners. The Secretary of the Commission must verify that all signers are registered Boston voters; this information, including a legible printed or typed name, is essential.
10. One petitioner should be selected to speak for all and to be available for contact in case the petition requires clarification. A phone number and email address must be provided for the spokesperson.

Please submit the completed petition to:

**Executive Director of the Boston Landmarks Commission
Boston City Hall, Room 709
Boston, MA 02201**

Petitions may not be submitted via fax or email.

The Boston Landmarks Commission will not accept a petition that does not have all sections completed, as noted previously. Any incomplete petition will be returned to the petitioners' spokesperson, who may then complete and resubmit the petition.

The Commission will hold a preliminary hearing with the petitioners to hear their reasons for proposing the designation. The petitioner or spokesperson for the petitioners is expected to attend the preliminary hearing and is encouraged to present the petition to the Commission. This brief hearing is held within 30 days of the Executive Director of the Commission's acceptance of the petition, and the petitioners and owner(s) of the petitioned property will be notified of it. Ordinarily, preliminary hearings take place at regular Commission hearings, held on the 2nd and 4th Tuesday of each month.