

The Boston Landmarks Commission
Boston City Hall
Room 709
Boston, Massachusetts 02201
(DATE)

I strongly support the Landmarks petition by the Save the Nazzaro coalition to protect the original North Bennet Street Bath House and Gymnasium (Nazzaro Community Center) at 30 N Bennet St., and the adjacent North End (Polcari) Playground. Please help us save this masterpiece by the notable New England architects Maginnis, Walsh & Sullivan, and the adjacent open space playground.

This elegant Renaissance Revival building was built by President John F. Kennedy's grandfather, Mayor Francis "Honey Fitz" Fitzgerald, during a colorful period in both our local and national history. The 1906 building represents the hopeful Progressive era, when our politicians built grand public buildings to serve the new immigrants arriving to create the America we know today. Working to stave off epidemics, they also hoped that impressive buildings like this one would lift up the morals and inspire good citizenship among working class and poor people crowded into the tenements of Boston, Philadelphia and New York.

The North Bennet Street Bath House (Nazzaro) building has been cited in history and architecture books, as one of the most elegant, and now, one of the last surviving, public bath houses in America. Used for over 100 years in the heart of this densely-settled neighborhood, the building and playground were renamed after one local hero who preserved the North End from demolition for high-rise development, and another who served General Patton in World War II. World Welterweight champion Tony DeMarco got his start working out in this gymnasium.

If we cannot save a building of this unique design and history, our quality of life-- and the culture on which our region's tourist economy is based--will be diminished. The Bath House is a definitive feature of Boston's famous North End neighborhood, which is "almost unique in the United States" for its "dense urbanity and tight irregular street pattern, worthy of a European village and long so closely identified with its Italian population of the past century," according to David Foxe, president of the New England chapter of the Society of Architectural historians.

Foxe wrote in the *Boston Globe* that "the effort to designate (the Nazzaro building) a Boston landmark is fully justified." Please help us achieve Landmarks protection for the building's exterior, and for the open space playground on which it sits.

Sincerely,

(NAME and FULL ADDRESS)

