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HOTEL BUCKMINSTER

BOSTON LANDMARKS COMMISSION

STUDY REPORT



Petition #288.22
Boston Landmarks Commission
Office of Historic Preservation
City of Boston

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Report on the Potential Designation of

Hotel Buckminster
635-645 Beacon Street, Boston, Massachusetts

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

Approved by:



May 1, 2023

Rosanne Foley, Executive Director

Date

Approved by:



May 1, 2023

Lynn Smiledge, Chair

Date

Draft report posted on May 2, 2023

Cover image: Hotel Buckminster, 635-645 Beacon Street. March 2023. Kathleen Kelly Broomer.

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INTRODUCTION

The designation of the Hotel Buckminster was initiated in 2022 after a petition was submitted by registered voters to the Boston Landmarks Commission asking that the Commission designate the property under the provisions of Chapter 772 of the Acts of 1975, as amended. The purpose of such a designation is to recognize and protect a physical feature or improvement which in whole or part has historical, cultural, social, architectural, or aesthetic significance.

Summary

The first hotel built on a grand scale at Kenmore Square, the Hotel Buckminster is a red Roman brick and limestone Beaux-Arts/Renaissance Revival-style building with a prominent rounded corner that has anchored and defined the square since the turn of the 20th century. Built for occupancy as a luxury family or apartment hotel, the Buckminster for much of its history also catered to a commercial or transient clientele as its owners adapted to changing market conditions. The hotel is significant for its association with the growth of New England's radio broadcasting industry from 1930 to 1968, when radio station WNAC Boston maintained its studios here, establishing the Yankee Network to broadcast throughout New England and adding a television station by 1953. The building possesses further significance for its occupation and operation, during World War II, by the U. S. Army Service Forces First Service Command, serving the six New England states from headquarters in Boston. As the location, from 1951 to 1953, of Storyville, a widely known Boston jazz club operated by George Wein, the Buckminster hosted celebrated artists and became associated with the pioneer of jazz music promotion in New England. After serving as dormitory and classroom space (1966 to 1977) for the Cambridge School of Business, later renamed Gramm Junior College, and as Boston's largest lodging house by the late 1980s, the Buckminster was returned to hotel use by the turn of the 21st century. The Buckminster has been vacant since its closure in March 2020 as a consequence of the COVID-19 pandemic, and is at risk for demolition and redevelopment. Despite some limited exterior alterations, the Hotel Buckminster retains a high degree of integrity of location, setting, design, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association.

This study report contains Standards and Criteria that have been prepared to guide future physical changes to the property in order to protect its integrity and character.

Boston Landmarks Commission

Lynn Smiledge, Chair
John Amodeo
David Berarducci
Joseph Castro
John Freeman
Susan Goganian
Jeffrey Gonyeau
Christopher Hart
Richard Henderson

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Kirsten Hoffman
Thomas Hotaling
Felicia Jacques
Lindsey Mac-Jones
Justine Orlando
Anne Renehan
Brad Walker

Staff

Rosanne Foley, Executive Director
Dorothy Clark, Assistant Survey Director
Jennifer Gaugler, Architectural Historian
Chelsea Blanchard, Architect
Joe Bagley, City Archaeologist

Consultant for preparation of initial report

Kathleen Kelly Broomer

The activity that is the subject of this Study Report has been financed in part with Federal funds from the National Park Service, U.S. Department of the Interior, through the Massachusetts Historical Commission, Secretary of the Commonwealth William Francis Galvin, Chairman. However, the contents and opinions do not necessarily reflect the views or policies of the Department of the Interior, or the Massachusetts Historical Commission.

This program receives Federal financial assistance for identification and protection of historic properties. Under Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and the Age Discrimination Act of 1975, as amended, the U.S. Department of the Interior prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, disability or age in its federally assisted programs. If you believe you have been discriminated against in any program, activity, or facility as described above, or if you desire further information, please write to: Office for Equal Opportunity, National Park Service, 1849 C Street NW, Washington, DC 20240.

1.0 LOCATION

1.1 Address

According to the City of Boston's Assessing Department, the Hotel Buckminster is located at 635-645 Beacon Street, Boston, MA 02215.

1.2 Assessor's Parcel Number

The Assessor's Parcel Number is 0504150000.

1.3 Area in which Property is Located

Located at the juncture of Beacon Street and Brookline Avenue, the Hotel Buckminster anchors the southwest end of Kenmore Square, where U. S. Route 20 terminates at State Route 2 in the Fenway neighborhood. Surrounding the MBTA's Kenmore Station, a busy transportation node, the larger Kenmore Square area is lined with masonry-clad, mixed-use buildings, principally three to six stories. The square retains a limited number of Revival-style historic buildings from the late 19th and early 20th centuries, with appreciable 21st-century redevelopment. On the north side of the square across from the Buckminster, the 533 Commonwealth Avenue project has replaced six buildings and renovated 650-660 Beacon Street, where the rooftop CITGO sign is preserved. East of the Buckminster at 500 Commonwealth Avenue, the Hotel Commonwealth has replaced twelve buildings. Within 300 feet of the Buckminster are the Bay State Road/Back Bay West Architectural Conservation District to the north, the Boston University campus to the north and west, and the Massachusetts Turnpike (Interstate 90) to the south, beyond which lies Fenway Park (NRIND 2012).

1.4 Map Showing Location

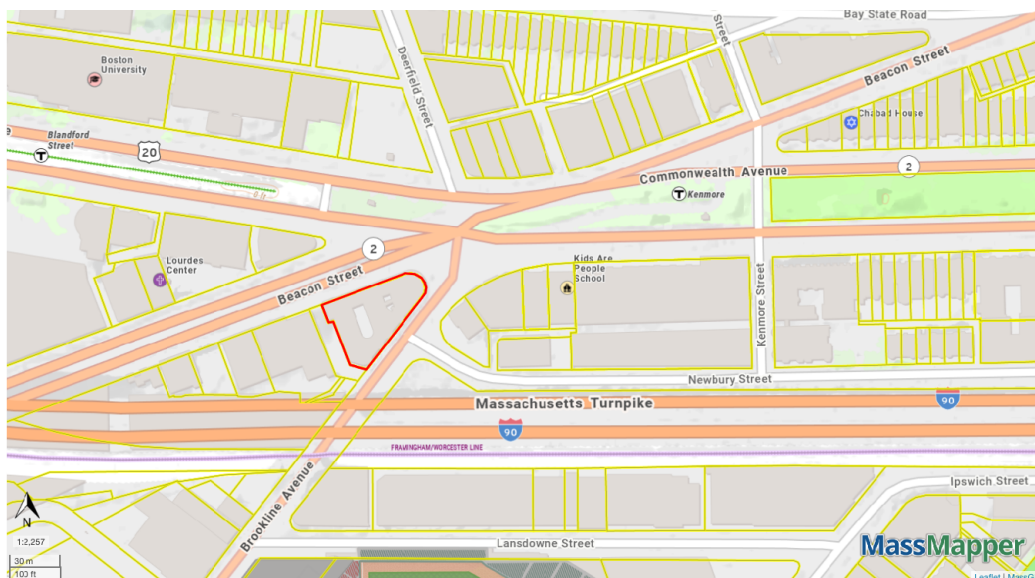


Figure 1. Map showing the boundaries of parcel # 0504150000.

2.0 DESCRIPTION

2.1 Type and Use

Unoccupied since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic in March 2020, the Hotel Buckminster (1897-1902) had been in nearly continuous hotel, residential, or school dormitory/classroom use since opening in 1900. Ancillary commercial uses have included offices, broadcasting studios, stores, restaurants and lounges, a place of public assembly (function room), and a wireless communications facility.

The property is in a B-4 district zoned for retail businesses and offices, as well as a groundwater conservation overlay district and a restricted parking district.

2.2 Physical Description of the Resource

The Hotel Buckminster occupies a wedge-shaped corner parcel defined by Beacon Street on the northwest, Kenmore Square on the northeast, and Brookline Avenue on the southeast, yielding three finished elevations. Variation in elevation height – six stories on a raised basement at Beacon Street, six stories facing Kenmore Square, and five stories on a raised basement at the building's south corner fronting Brookline Avenue – reflect an ascending grade along Brookline Avenue leaving the square (see further details on Brookline Avenue grade change below). The Buckminster stands directly at the sidewalk with no setbacks.

Designed in 1897 by the Boston firm of Winslow and Wetherell, the Beaux Arts/Renaissance Revival-style hotel has a granite foundation, walls of red Roman brick with ornament executed in contrasting limestone, and a flat roof. The principal elevations, facing Beacon Street and Kenmore Square, are united by a rusticated two-story base executed in limestone, hierarchy of window sizes and ornamentation, stone belt course at the sixth story, and highly ornamental entablature at the roof line. Paired corner quoins on slightly projecting pavilions define a symmetrical nine-bay facade centered on the hotel's main entrance on Beacon Street (**Figure 2**). A row of arched window openings on the second story incorporates the oversized transom above the entrance, surmounted by a cornice on consoles framing the foliated bas-relief ornament (**Figure 3**). The transom retains its ornamental iron grillwork, with additional ironwork used for the ornamental balustrades at select second-, third-, and fifth-story windows. Doors at the main entrance are currently boarded over.

The entrance canopy projecting over the sidewalk on posts (**Figure 4**) is of undetermined (apparently late 20th-century) vintage, replacing a marquee sign suspended over the entrance in the 1960s. Stone window ornamentation includes balustrades on the first story, classical pediments on paneled pilasters framing third-story windows, plain flat lintels on the fourth and fifth stories, and architrave surrounds on the nearly square windows of the sixth story. Two window bays on the first story were converted to restaurant entrances now incorporating contemporary steel and glass door systems. Most windows throughout the Buckminster contain white aluminum replacement sash in wood surrounds, largely replicating the 1/1 fenestration pattern and color of the original wood sash, except in the tall third-story windows of the Beacon Street and Kenmore Square elevations, where three-part sash has been installed. The highly ornamental entablature (**Figure 5**) consists of beaded

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consoles framing paneled metopes on the frieze, topped with fleur-de-lis motifs in bas relief on the cornice above, and cresting providing further visual interest at the roofline. In the absence of the original building permit from city records, the entablature material has not been confirmed, but appears to be terra-cotta or possibly cast stone; closer inspection of the entablature is recommended.

Like the hotel facade on Beacon Street, the Kenmore Square elevation (**Figure 6**) is strictly symmetrical, with five bays wrapping the rounded corner and an additional four bays extending down the Beacon Street and Brookline Avenue elevations, respectively. The rusticated stone base and stone belt course at the sixth story, both treatments seen on the Beacon Street elevation, carry around the corner but do not continue down the Brookline Avenue elevation (Figure 7). Replicating the design used elsewhere on the building, the entablature here is executed in metal; cresting at the top was removed in 1938 (**Figure 8**). Windows on the rounded corner display the same hierarchy of ornament seen on Beacon Street. Remodeling of the hotel in 1937 added a modest single-bay center entrance to this elevation (William Bradford Sprout Jr., architect) that was subsequently enlarged in 1946 to accommodate the first restaurant tenant at this corner. The current entrance, incorporating pilasters, paired columns, a suspended awning, transom, and a contemporary steel and glass door system, dates to the occupancy of the most recent restaurant tenant from the early 1990s to ca. 2020. A neon “spectacular sign” occupied the roof above this elevation from 1936 until the 1980s.

The Brookline Avenue or rear elevation (**Figure 9**) displays Roman brick walls, limestone ornament, and the same roofline entablature design seen on the Beacon Street and Kenmore Square elevations, here formed of terra-cotta or cast stone (see above) and retaining the cresting. A stone belt course defines the top of the rusticated two-story base, though the base is clad not in stone but Roman brick, which has been painted since 1969. Five-story stacks of bow windows in the first, fourth, sixth, and ninth bays impart a less formal character to this elevation (Figure 10). Centered among the bays of bow windows is the hotel’s original rear entrance, later converted to a storefront (Figure 11). The entrance bay retains its original brick surround with oversized arched transom and a cartouche above, along with an inset standing seam metal canopy from the last tenant. On this elevation, pedimented stone surrounds are confined to windows above the entrance, while remaining windows display simple flat lintels and sills. Remnants of 1930s cast stone ornament, now painted, survive at the former broadcasting studio entrance of 21 Brookline Avenue, at the southern end of this elevation (**Figure 12**). A narrow Art Deco-style chevron border frames what was originally a stepped entrance frontispiece of two full stories, with a band of horizontal grooves denoting the frieze above the entrance in a streamlined Moderne manner. Brick recessed ornamental panels above and flanking this entrance also survive. In 1962–1963, the street grade of Brookline Avenue was raised roughly three to four feet (compare **Figures 12 and 18**), rendering this entrance unusable and reducing the height of its flanking windows. Two other entrances were created from ground-floor windows on this elevation in the late 20th century.

Due to the vacant condition of the Buckminster, ground-level windows and doors are boarded over. The southwest elevation is an unfinished brick wall, currently clad on the first two stories with what appears to be cement or fiber cement panels intended to resemble stucco (**Figure 13**).

2.3 Contemporary Images



Figure 2. Beacon Street elevation, view southeast from Commonwealth Avenue. March 2023.

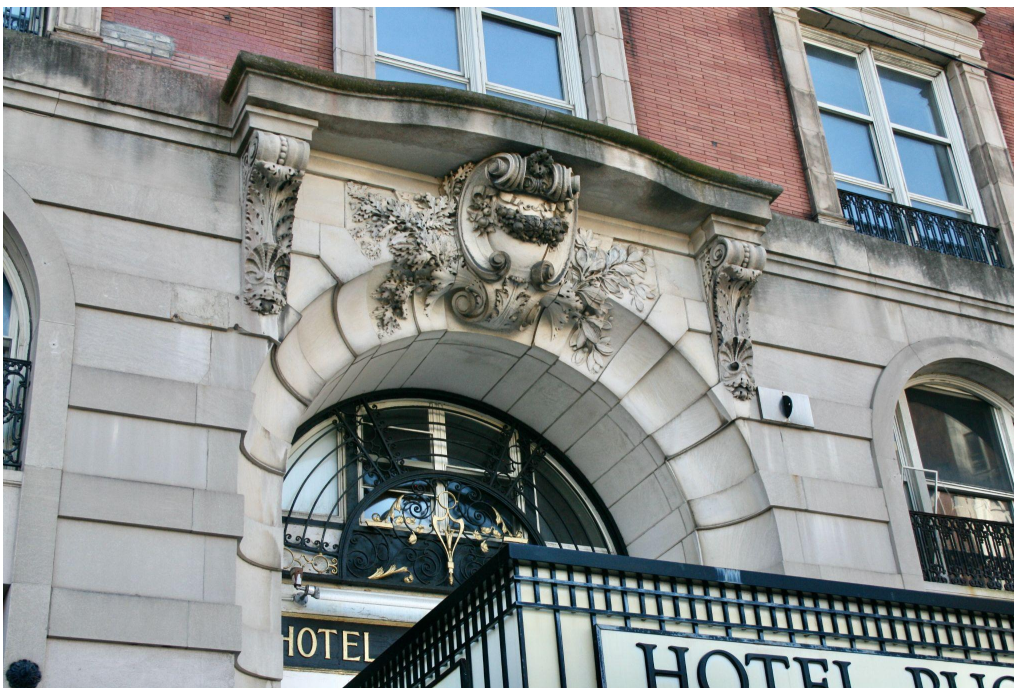


Figure 3. Beacon Street elevation, transom over main entrance. March 2023.



Figure 4. Beacon Street elevation, main entrance. March 2023.



Figure 5. Beacon Street elevation, entablature detail. October 2022.



Figure 6. View southwest from Kenmore Square (Beacon Street on right). March 2023.



Figure 7. View southwest from Commonwealth Avenue. March 2023.



Figure 8. Entablature detail, Brookline Avenue elevation: 1897 (left) and 1902 (right). October 2022.



Figure 9. Brookline Avenue elevation, view northwest from Newbury Street. March 2023.



Figure 10. Brookline Avenue elevation, detail of bow windows. October 2022.



Figure 11. Brookline Avenue elevation, detail of main entrance bay. October 2022.

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Figure 12. Brookline Avenue elevation, broadcasting (left) and hotel entrances. March 2023.



Figure 13. Beacon Street (left) and southwest elevations, view east. October 2022.

2.4 Historic Maps and Images



Figure 14. View southwest from Beacon Street (ca. 1912), with Brookline Avenue (left) and Beacon Street (right) elevations. Photograph predates the naming of this intersection with Commonwealth Avenue as Governor Square, later known as Kenmore Square.

Source: “Kenmore Square looking westerly,” ca. 1912. Photograph. Boston City Archives, Public Works Department Photograph Collection.
https://cityofboston.access.preservica.com/uncategorized/IO_422d668f-101d-442b-8582-a850e272b60d (accessed February 23, 2023).



Figure 15. Beacon Street elevation (1914). View southeast from Commonwealth Avenue.

Source: *De Luxe Hotels of New England. Containing Photographic Views and Description of Some of the Famous Hostelries and Beauty Spots of the Playground of America.* Boston: C. B. Webster & Co., 1914.

<https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=loc.ark:/13960/t9p271d8g&view=1up&seq=15&q1=Buckminster> (accessed February 13, 2023).



Figure 16. Aerial view (1929) northeast through the Kenmore Square area, showing the Hotel Buckminster in the left foreground. The building abutting the southwest elevation of the Buckminster (red arrow), demolished in 2003, is shown at its original one-story height. All buildings lining the south side of Newbury Street (yellow arrow) would be demolished ca. 1963 for construction of the Massachusetts Turnpike Extension.

Source: Aero Scenic Airviews Company. "Kenmore Square," 1929. Photograph. Boston Public Library, Print Department. Annotated March 6, 2023. Flickr. https://www.flickr.com/photos/boston_public_library/5352238487/in/photolist-99XC2V-aBuBn8-dSPtNf-dYAiVL-4CphcJ-dYAiVd-dYuAEr-nqEpSc-8sXoSu-o61MDw-aWgcVa-by1fV6-aWgcTX-8sXoWh-aWgcRB-aWgcSM-dYAjki-aBuBoc-dYAiWs-9nyM67-9nyM3q-aWm2xP-aWgcPD-dYuB2t (accessed March 1, 2023). CC BY-NC-ND 2.0. <https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/2.0/legalcode>.



Figure 17. Yankee Network entrance, 21 Brookline Avenue (1942).

Source: Richard Merrill. "The Yankee Network Brookline Avenue entrance," August 1942. Boston Public Library Arts Department, Richard Merrill Collection. Digital Commonwealth. <https://ark.digitalcommonwealth.org/ark:/50959/m900v602b> (accessed February 13, 2023). [Creative Commons – Attribution-NonCommercial-NoDerivatives 4.0 International – CC BY-NC-ND 4.0.](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0/)



Figure 18. Brookline Avenue entrances for the Yankee and Colonial Networks (left) and the Hotel Buckminster (right). Photograph appears to date to the hotel's occupation by the U. S. Army Service Forces First Service Command (1942-1946). Comparison with Figure 12 illustrates the change in the street grade of Brookline Avenue, due to construction in 1963 of a new Brookline Avenue bridge over the Massachusetts Turnpike Extension.

Source: Richard Merrill. "Three unidentified men and Jack Stanley standing outside the WNAC-WAAB studios," undated (ca. 1936-1942). Boston Public Library Arts Department, Richard Merrill Collection. Digital Commonwealth. <https://ark.digitalcommonwealth.org/ark:/50959/8w32rj61g> (accessed February 13, 2023). Creative Commons – Attribution-NonCommercial-NoDerivatives 4.0 International – CC BY-NC-ND 4.0.



Figure 19. Undated (early 1960s) view south from Commonwealth Avenue, showing neon signs of Howard Johnson's restaurant and White Fuel Corporation on Kenmore Square elevation. Image from Boston Public Library.

Source: Anthony M. Sammarco. *Kenmore Square and the Fenway of Boston Through Time*. Charleston, SC: America Through Time (Arcadia Publishing/Fonthill Media LLC), 2021.



Figure 20. View northeast on Brookline Avenue toward Kenmore Square during demolition of the old Brookline Avenue bridge over the New York Central (Boston & Albany) Railroad (summer 1963). Hotel Buckminster is on the left, bearing a wall sign for radio station WNAC. Construction of a new bridge to span the Massachusetts Turnpike Extension raised the street grade on Brookline Avenue.

Source: Yanni K. Tsipis. *Building the Mass Pike. Images of America Series.* Charleston, SC: Arcadia Publishing, 2002.



Figure 21. View southwest at dusk toward Hotel Buckminster, then operated as Leavitt Hall of Grahm Junior College, with White Fuel sign on roof (1970).

Source: Majunzkn. “Taken from the roof of Myles Standish Hall, BU dorm in Kenmore Square, Boston, MA,” 1970. Photograph. Flickr.

<https://www.flickr.com/photos/majunzkn/6386698515/in/photolist-aJnuXD-GhzjZm-mKVbPW-GhDCgh-GAU7c2-FM7zcv-GGEtfv-Gyv769-GhzkUh-nzUjA-GEkZ7f-pjXBD1-GERxYC-GhDLXW-ZMwP9V-Gyrjq7-GGJXui-GyqF3b-UhvAA5-GGEQ1Z-FMj7hV-8QbXCv-GEEmCE1-GAPoX6-WN5kWn-FM6D1W-GAUgi8-m5WX-2mNS8wL-FMiSaX-GAPpqa-FMos2X-8xa8YD-pUDSxN-s2RUGd-d4uCxQ-8xa8Tk-92VLo5-Py2Rbj-d4uCJj-df7HJo-9MNw9W-GyqTa7-FMiwoc-GGKbsx-d4uCBb-BXRiHU-d4uCEE-FMiL4P-GEqWmL> (accessed February 23, 2023). CC BY-NC-ND 2.0. <https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/2.0/legalcode>.

3.0 SIGNIFICANCE

3.1 Historic Significance

For its importance in the growth and development of the Kenmore Square neighborhood, and its unique associations with tourism, radio broadcasting, wartime support of the U. S. Army, jazz music promotion, and affordable housing advocacy and tenants' rights, the Hotel Buckminster is significant to the city of Boston, the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, and the New England region. From its earliest incarnation as a luxury family apartment hotel, designed in 1897 and opened, after some delay, in 1900, the building was continually adapted to additional uses as its owners identified new business opportunities. The oldest extant building at Kenmore Square and one of the first apartment hotels built in the Kenmore Square area, the Buckminster was on the frontier of new development in Boston, as landmaking operations pushed into the western section of the Back Bay in the last quarter of the 19th century. Prominently positioned on the historic approach to Boston from the west, which in the 1920s became the designated eastern terminus of the transcontinental U. S. Route 20, the Buckminster also operated as a commercial or "transient" hotel, attracting auto-borne tourism and emerging as a destination for restaurants and entertainment.¹ Hosting the studios of radio and later television station WNAC Boston from 1930 to 1968, the Hotel Buckminster is associated with important developments in the history of radio broadcasting in New England. Innovations included establishment of the Yankee Network to transmit broadcasts beyond New England, delivery of news by experienced reporters rather than radio announcers, and transmission of the first frequency-modulated (FM) radio station in greater Boston. WNAC was the only commercial or residential tenant permitted to remain at the Buckminster in 1942, when its owner turned the property over to the federal government for the duration of World War II. The Buckminster housed personnel, offices, and a Military Police (MP) location for the U.S. Army Service Forces First Service Command, a Boston-based operation covering the six New England states. In the postwar era, the hotel hosted nationally known jazz artists at Storyville, the club operated by jazz pianist and music promoter George Wein, widely recognized as Boston's "temple of jazz" in the early 1950s. The Buckminster was the focal point for city efforts in the 1980s to ensure affordable housing options for low- to moderate-income residents and protect tenants' rights.

Hotel Buckminster and its Guests

Over 125 years, the Hotel Buckminster housed permanent and temporary Boston residents, as well as short-term visitors to the city, under a variety of arrangements. The Buckminster opened October 1, 1900, as a luxury apartment hotel with E. R. Grabow as manager, later succeeded by Fred E. Jones.² The hotel catered to long-term residents who occupied suites of two to seven rooms featuring long-distance telephones in every room. Room charges included dining on the American Plan, in which scheduled meals were ordered from a limited menu and served in a common dining hall. Many early residents were business professionals and members of Boston's elite social circles, listed in Clark's *Boston Blue Book* and similar *Who's Who* directories. The *Boston Home Journal*, a

¹ The hotel's main entrance on Beacon Street is oriented toward this westerly approach, rather than downtown.

² Hotel Buckminster advertisement in *Boston Home Journal* 57, No. 1 (January 5, 1901): 24. The city assessing department classified the Buckminster as a family hotel; see City of Boston, *Annual Report of the Assessing Department for the Year 1900* (Boston: Municipal Printing Office, 1901), 44.

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weekly publication with nationwide circulation devoted to society, resorts, and travel news, regularly published advertisements for the Buckminster and updates on the activities of its residents and employees. Live music performances began in 1904, when Fred Jones introduced a series of “musical entertainments” on Wednesday and Sunday evenings, featuring The Buckminster Orchestra.³

Buckminster management began to offer a combination of tourist accommodations, long-term apartment rentals, and function space as demand for luxury apartments waned by World War I.⁴ Small businesses provided clothing, grooming, and coffee shop services ancillary to the hotel operation. Promotional materials noted the hotel’s proximity to both the subway, connecting travelers to Park Street and Cambridge, and the metropolitan park system, observing:

This hotel is built and conducted to cater to the tastes of people who desire the very highest class of service and appointments, and to whom the comfort thus afforded, means more than the expense attached thereto.⁵

Unlike some residential hotels in the area, the Buckminster was of sufficient size to accommodate large functions and hosted a range of social gatherings, from concerts, dances, and receptions to business meetings and luncheons. Upstairs, larger suites were repartitioned in the 1930s to increase the number of single and double rooms with baths. Other changes would be made to the floor plan in the decades to follow, though the building’s fenestration pattern would be preserved.

More than 75 residents of the Hotel Buckminster were forced to leave in September 1942, when the U. S. Army Service Forces took over the leases in the building to house personnel of the First Service Command for the duration of World War II (see below). Morel Peterson of Long Island, New York, manager and president-treasurer of Carlton Hotel, Inc. had offered his company’s hotel properties, including the Hotel Buckminster, to the federal government for war purposes. Described in newspaper coverage as permanent guests, many departing residents had lived at the Buckminster for nearly twenty-five years.⁶ Private occupancy of the hotel resumed after the war, and the business model of commercial hotel plus rental apartments continued at the Buckminster into the late 1960s. By 1953, Carlton Hotel, Inc. had increased the number of apartment units in the building to 40. The hotel chain leased, then sold, the Buckminster to Boston-area real estate investor Dr. George J. Colantino of Malden, who operated the business as the Hotel Saint George from circa 1961 to 1966.

Construction of the Massachusetts Turnpike Extension (1962-1965), involving appreciable building demolition in the vicinity of the Buckminster and reconstruction of the adjacent Brookline Avenue bridge (1963) over the turnpike and adjacent railroad right-of-way, significantly impacted the hotel’s immediate surroundings and its appeal to residential and commercial tenants alike. From 1966 to 1977, the building was known as Leavitt Hall, providing dormitory and classroom space for the Cambridge School, renamed Gramm Junior College in 1968. Offering associates’ degrees in

³ “Personally conducted land and sea,” *Boston Home Journal* 60, no. 45 (November 19, 1904): 38.

⁴ Seventy-two Buckminster residents were listed in Clark’s Blue Book for 1918, reduced from 118 in 1904. See *Clark’s Boston Blue Book for 1918. The Elite Private Address and Club Directory, and Ladies’ Visiting List* (Boston: Sampson & Murdock Company, 1917).

⁵ *De Luxe Hotels of New England. Containing Photographic Views and Description of Some of the Famous Hostelrys and Beauty Spots of the Playground of America* (Boston: C. B. Webster & Co., 1914), n.p..

⁶ “Another hotel here taken over by government,” *The Boston Globe* (August 19, 1942), 1.

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communications, liberal arts, and business, Graham Junior College, unlike its peer institutions, enrolled a sizable population of boarding students, leading to acquisition of the Buckminster and other buildings in the Kenmore Square vicinity for dormitory space. Amid the school's deteriorating financial condition and a declining demand for two-year junior colleges, Boston Kenmore Realty Corporation acquired the Buckminster at auction in 1977.⁷ By 1978, the building was the largest lodging house in Boston, with a capacity of 292 lodgers and approximately 160 single-room occupancy units, most rented to tenants of low to moderate income.⁸ Sparked by the recording of a master deed in 1986 for the Buckminster's conversion to condominiums, a tenant class-action lawsuit, settled by arbitration in the early 1990s, yielded greater protections for tenants, including rollbacks in rent, commitments for timely repairs, some rent-free months, and a clause that protected 30 rent-controlled units until 2008.⁹ Returned principally to hotel use by 2000, the Buckminster encompassed a 94-room hotel, lodging rooms, and apartments, in addition to restaurants, lounges, and office space.

The Buckminster as a Destination and Venue

From the 1930s onward, the Buckminster was a prime location for offices, radio broadcasting, live music, dining, and advertising independent of the hotel operation. The building's high-visibility location in the Kenmore Square neighborhood attracted commercial tenants seeking office, restaurant, or performance spaces, and even rooftop placement of radio equipment and large-scale neon signage. In 1930, radio station WNAC Boston (see below) converted the Buckminster's unused first-floor dining hall into two broadcasting studios: a grand studio large enough to accommodate a 22-piece orchestra and a second one for general broadcasting. In 1937 John Hancock Mutual Life Insurance Company, the first mortgage holder on the property, installed a third entrance to the building, in the rounded corner on the Kenmore Square elevation (635 Beacon Street), and maintained offices in that section of the building until 1942.

A sizable neon "spectacular" sign occupied the roof above the Kenmore Square elevation from 1936 to the 1980s. Though historic photographs indicate the original sign was associated with the Gulf Oil Company, Boston's White Fuel Corporation installed its sign at the Buckminster in the late 1940s, replacing an earlier roof sign at the corporation's Kenmore Square office, 642 Beacon Street.¹⁰ White Fuel operated its heating and appliance division at the Buckminster by 1946. Replete with neon signage in a new storefront, a Howard Johnson's restaurant occupied the building's rounded corner space from 1946 to 1962, during which time the Buckminster also hosted several clubs and lounges.

⁷ Graham Junior College closed in 1979. For a detailed history of the college and the Kenmore Square area during this period, see Bill Tarkulich, "The history of Graham Junior College," November 2013, <https://grahmjuniocollege.com/history/history2>, and "A history of Kenmore Square - Gateway to the city," updated July 2021, https://grahmjuniocollege.com/the_square/html/index (accessed October 2022).

⁸ Boston building permit applications, no. 4593, Certificate of Use and Occupancy (September 1, 1978).

⁹ Rent control in Boston ended in 1996. Condominium conversions subsequently required five-year notices to elderly, disabled, and low-income tenants. See Alison Pultinas, "It wasn't all glamour: hotel's closing recalls housing clashes," *The Fenway News* 46, no. 5 (May 1-May 29, 2020): 1-2; and Ed Quill, "Lodgers bring plea to Flynn," *The Boston Globe* (June 10, 1986), 19.

¹⁰ Richard Merrill, "Street scene with Yankee Network letter board sign advertising Quiz of Two Cities on WNAC sponsored by Listerine toothpaste," October 1946, Boston Public Library Arts Department, Richard Merrill Collection; Digital Commonwealth; <https://ark.digitalcommonwealth.org/ark:/50959/5h741876n> (accessed March 8, 2023).

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Most widely known was George Wein's Storyville jazz club (1951-1953, see below). Others included the Candlelight Room (ca. 1952- 1962), Jazz Village (1958-1960), and Sonny's, Camelot, Mother's Lounge, and Smokey Joe's (1960s). An effort by Boston Kenmore Realty Corporation to revive the Storyville jazz club at the Buckminster in 1982 was short-lived. The owners briefly rented rehearsal rooms on the hotel's second floor to local bands about that time. At the Buckminster's closure in 2020, commercial tenants were generally local or chain restaurants.

In 1963, Eliot Asinof, author of *Eight Men Out*, identified the Hotel Buckminster as the location of a meeting between Chicago White Sox first baseman Chick Gandil and Boston gambler Joseph "Sport" Sullivan to orchestrate the fixing of the 1919 World Series. Already destined to participate in the World Series by virtue of their season record, the White Sox were in Boston to play the Red Sox at Fenway. Cash payments to several White Sox team members ensured they would lose the World Series to the Cincinnati Reds. Eight White Sox players, including Gandil, left-fielder "Shoeless Joe" Jackson, and pitcher Eddie Cicotte, were indicted in 1920 for their role in the scheme, and ultimately banned from Major League Baseball.¹¹

Live from the Hotel Buckminster

Radio broadcasting in the United States was a significant phenomenon during the Depression era as the most direct way to reach the greatest number of people in real time, with news, entertainment, sports, and advertising. Wealthy retail executive and radio station owner John Shepard III (1886-1950), who established WNAC radio at 1 Winter Place in 1922, relocated the station's broadcasting studios, production department, and operations rooms to the Buckminster on March 5, 1930. Shepard outfitted two studios, and erected an antenna and later a penthouse on the roof for radio equipment. The station used the building's 21 Brookline Avenue address and maintained a large sign board or "letter board" on Beacon Street next to the hotel.

Also in 1930, John Shepard organized the Yankee Network, the largest regional radio chain in the country outside the national networks. In its first month at the Buckminster, WNAC debuted a 30-minute weekly entertainment program, broadcast over the Columbia Broadcasting System (CBS) to 35 radio stations from Maine to Texas, in what was reportedly the first radio broadcast of that scale originating in Boston. In addition to WNAC, the network included stations in Worcester, New Bedford, Providence (Rhode Island), Bangor (Maine), and Bristol (Connecticut), and would later expand to 26 stations throughout New England.¹² A sister station, WAAB, also broadcast in the building and the companion Colonial Network was established in 1936, with a television station added in 1953.

John Shepard was an innovator, and his radio station's relocation to the Hotel Buckminster in 1930 apparently set a precedent: during the next six years, radio station WBZ moved to the Hotel Bradford, WCOP opened at the Copley Plaza Hotel, WROL (formerly WBSO) moved to the Myles Standish Hotel, and WMEX moved to the Hotel Manger at North Station.¹³ From the Buckminster, WNAC management also implemented innovations in news reporting and radio transmission. In

¹¹ Eliot Asinof, *Eight Men Out. The Black Sox and the 1919 World Series* (New York, NY: Henry Holt and Company, 1987).

¹² "John Shepard 3rd, pioneer in radio broadcasting, dies," *The Boston Globe* (June 12, 1950), 1:3.

¹³ Donna L. Halper, *Boston Radio, 1920-2010. Images of America Series* (Charleston, SC: Arcadia Publishing, 2011).

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1934, the Yankee Network began offering the Yankee News Service, delivered by experienced reporters rather than radio announcers. At this time, radio broadcasting used amplitude modulation or AM transmission. Shepard put Greater Boston's first frequency-modulated or FM station on the air in July 1939, though FM radio would not become popular for several decades.¹⁴ WHAT's successor station is WRKO-AM 680. The station vacated its Buckminster studios in 1968, relocating to new studios at Government Center.¹⁵

The Buckminster “in the Army”

Hotel Buckminster possesses further significance to the New England region for its association during World War I with the U. S. Army Service Forces First Service Command, which covered the six New England states from headquarters at 808 Commonwealth Avenue in Boston. Under the War Department, the Army Service Forces supported a wide range of Army functions from administrative to technical, among them procurement, industrial mobilization, transportation, engineering, training, security, and personnel affairs. The Buckminster was one of at least four Boston hotels taken over by the federal government to house Army service personnel; the others—Hotel Victoria on Dartmouth Street, Hotel Brunswick on Boylston Street, and Hotel Somerset on Commonwealth Avenue—were occupied by Navy personnel. Hotel operations at the Buckminster were suspended, and apartment residents and most commercial tenants were required to relocate, among them nine businesses, including Samuel DeMarco's barbershop and the satellite offices of the John Hancock life insurance company.¹⁶

As the location of an Army Military Police unit, the Buckminster figured prominently in a wartime event of significance to New England. Fifty-four officers and seamen serving on the German submarine U-805 surrendered to U.S. authorities on May 15, 1945, in Portsmouth, New Hampshire. The German prisoners were bused under Marine guard to the Buckminster, where they were processed before being transported to prisons in the U.S. South. Their arrival drew a hostile crowd of several hundred people to Kenmore Square, reportedly with no violence.¹⁷

George Wein's Storyville

Swing piano player and future jazz festival promoter George Wein—hailed as the most important figure in Boston jazz in the 1950s—“set the standard as to how a club should be run and jazz should be presented” at Storyville, which operated in the basement of the Hotel Buckminster from February 8, 1951 through September 1953.¹⁸ Known as Boston's temple of jazz, and named for the red-light district of New Orleans where Dixieland jazz reportedly originated, Storyville was “a showcase for the best in jazz in the 1950s, [and] a magnet that attracted the music's top talent to Boston.”¹⁹ Before opening at the Buckminster, Wein ran the club for six weeks at the Copley Square Hotel, returning

¹⁴ Halper, *Boston Radio, 1920-2010*, 9.

¹⁵ Bill Tarkulich, “The history of Graham Junior College.”

¹⁶ “Hotel Victoria to house WAVES,” *The Boston Globe* (August 27, 1942), 1:6.

¹⁷ “Crowd reviles Nazis at Hotel Buckminster,” *The Boston Globe* (May 17, 1945), 3:2.

¹⁸ Richard Vacca, *The Boston Jazz Chronicles. Faces, Places, and Nightlife 1937-1962* (Belmont, MA: Troy Street Publishing, LLC, 2012), 5, 228.

¹⁹ Vacca, *The Boston Jazz Chronicles*, 228.

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there two-and-a-half years later. Storyville ended its run in 1960, under different ownership, at the Hotel Bradford on Tremont Street.

As proprietor of Storyville, Wein featured Dixieland jazz during his first season. By the start of the second season in September 1951, he had worked out “the formula that made Storyville iconic ... mixing the old-school players like Wild Bill Davison and Sidney Bechet, new-school modernists like Dave Brubeck and Lee Konitz, and singers such as Ella Fitzgerald, who worked the borderline between jazz and pop.”²⁰ Storyville “was a listening room, it wasn’t a bar that had music.”²¹ Wein fostered appreciation and respect for jazz as an art form, as well as for the performers and patrons at Storyville, discouraging talking during performances and paying special attention to acoustics, the sound system, and ambience.²²

Main attractions at the Buckminster included singers Lee Wiley and Billie Holiday; pianist Erroll Garner, whose biggest fan, Red Sox great Ted Williams, was a Storyville regular;²³ Boston native Rudi Vanelli, known in jazz circles for his guitar playing before concentrating on classical guitar;²⁴ and George Shearing, the blind British jazz pianist and composer who appeared at Storyville for 10 days and sold out every show.²⁵ During the Buckminster period, Wein relocated Storyville to Gloucester during the summer months. After a fire in August 1952 destroyed the Gloucester cottage of Storyville musicians, and their instruments, Wein organized a benefit show at the Buckminster. Featured performers were clarinetist Pee Wee Russell, trumpeter Frankie Newton, and conductor, composer, and Massachusetts native Leonard Bernstein on piano.²⁶

Born in Lynn and raised in Newton, George Wein (1925–2001; the surname is pronounced *Ween*) attended Northeastern University and graduated from Boston University in 1950 after serving in the Army during World War II. While operating Storyville in the 1950s, he also worked as a pianist, newspaper columnist, university instructor, disc jockey, personal manager, and record company owner.²⁷ Wein was a pioneering force in the outdoor jazz festival business, creating and producing the Newport Jazz Festival (1954 onward), and the Boston Globe Jazz Festival (1966 onward), produced with Boston-area concert promoter Harry Paul. Wein’s talents also extended to producing folk festivals. He reimagined the Storyville tradition in 1976 when he opened a jazz club of the same name in New York City, where he then resided.²⁸

²⁰ Vacca, *The Boston Jazz Chronicles*, 230.

²¹ Richard Vacca quoted in “Jazz from Storyville” (September 21, 2021), *Night Lights Classic Jazz*, hosted by David Brent Johnson, <https://indianapublicmedia.org/nightlights/jazz-storyville> (accessed March 6, 2023).

²² Vacca, *The Boston Jazz Chronicles*, 234–235.

²³ George Wein and Nate Chinen, *Myself Among Others: A Life in Music* (Cambridge: Da Capo Press/Perseus Books Group, 2003), 90. See this autobiography for a more detailed accounting of Wein’s career and the artists who performed at the Buckminster Storyville.

²⁴ “Lee Wiley at Storyville,” *The Daily Boston Globe* (February 11, 1952), 10:4.

²⁵ Wein and Chinen, *Myself Among Others*, 83.

²⁶ John William Riley, “Musical benefit,” *The Boston Globe* (August 13, 1952), 22:8.

²⁷ Vacca, *The Boston Jazz Chronicles*, 5.

²⁸ Peter Keepnews, “George Wein, Newport Jazz Festival trailblazer, is dead at 95,” *The New York Times* (September 13, 2021, updated September 16, 2021), accessed October 2022, <https://www.nytimes.com/2021/09/13/arts/music/george-wein-dead>; John Leland, “At home with George Wein: art, life, and all that jazz,” *The New York Times* (August 2, 2001), F1:1; William Buchanan, “Harry Paul, promoted festivals, nightclubs, entertainers; at 81,” *The Boston Globe* (December 18, 1990), 41:1.

George Wein was not involved in the operation of another Buckminster-based club by the Storyville name, which opened in 1982 but was short-lived. In the late 1950s, Jazz Village occupied the former Storyville space at the Buckminster, offering Dixieland jazz. The basement hall had a seating capacity of 300. Graham Junior College converted the space to a student lounge in 1970.

3.2 Architectural (or Other) Significance

The Hotel Buckminster introduced Beaux Arts/Renaissance Revival design on a grand scale into a newly developing area of Boston in the late 19th century. Its influential Boston-based architects set a high standard for the form, masonry materials, and workmanship used in subsequent construction of the area, later known as Governor Square (1916) and Kenmore Square (1931). The Buckminster's prominent rounded corner, facing the square at the intersection of Beacon Street and Commonwealth Avenue, complements another rounded corner to the east, on the Charles Rollins House, 497 Commonwealth Avenue (1895, Walker and Kimball, architects.; Bay State Road/Back Bay West Architectural Conservation District). The Buckminster anchors the western end of the larger commercial, residential, and transportation node that evolved over the next century.

In the absence of original building permits as well as the Commonwealth's earliest public safety inspection index cards for the Hotel Buckminster, the architects have been identified through announcements in period trade journals. Deeds and newspaper reports indicate an extended period of construction, from 1897 to 1902, due to financial difficulties incurred by the building's original developers. The firm of Winslow and Wetherell designed the Buckminster in 1897.²⁹ According to a July 1901 account in *The Boston Globe*, construction of the corner part of the building, at the junction of Beacon Street and Brookline Avenue, was "never finished" and "the larger part in consequence was finished as a hotel by itself," opening October 1, 1900.³⁰ By January 1902, new owners had commissioned architect Guy Lowell to furnish plans to complete the project.³¹ The Hotel Buckminster displays a unified exterior design and consistent use of materials throughout, with the exception of the roofline entablature capping the rounded corner, which matches the design of its 1897 counterpart, but is fabricated of metal rather than masonry, perhaps as a cost-savings measure. It appears Winslow and Wetherell designed the exterior in its entirety, and Lowell brought the project to completion.

Winslow and Wetherell played a significant role in shaping the late 19th-century streetscape in the city's central business district, especially the Ladder Blocks east of Boston Common, and Piano Row south of the Common. Walter T. Winslow (1843-1909), AIA, a Boston native, studied architecture with Nathaniel J. Bradlee, completing his studies in Paris and returning to Boston, where he was employed in Bradlee's firm as a draftsman and later junior partner. Bradlee and Winslow designed a large number of commercial buildings constructed in the aftermath of The Great Boston Fire of 1872. The partnership expanded in 1884 to include George H. Wetherell (1854-1930, FAIA), who studied

²⁹ "Building intelligence, Boston," *The Engineering Record* 36, No. 3 (June 19, 1897): 64; Anthony M. Sammarco, *Kenmore Square and the Fenway of Boston Through Time* (Charleston, SC: America Through Time [Arcadia Publishing/Fonthill Media LLC]), 2021.

³⁰ "Real estate. Handlers of Back Bay property confident. Sale of Hotel Buckminster on Beacon St.," *The Boston Globe* (July 9, 1901): 2.

³¹ "Building intelligence," *The American Architect and Building News* 25, No. 1361 (January 25, 1902): 10; "Buildings," *Engineering News* 47, No. 10 (March 6, 1902): 86.

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architecture at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) and Ecole des Beaux-Arts in Paris. Following Bradlee's death in 1888, the name of the firm was changed to Winslow and Wetherell. It operated as Winslow, Wetherell and Bigelow from 1898 to 1901, with Henry Forbes Bigelow (1867-1929), FAIA, as the newest partner. Bigelow, also a graduate of the MIT architecture program, had been associated with Winslow and Wetherell since 1888.

In addition to the Baker Chocolate Company factory in Dorchester (1880s-1910s, BOS.6747, NRDIS), notable surviving examples of work by Winslow and Wetherell include the Auchmuty Building on Kingston Street (1889, BOS.1819); the Steinert Hall office, showroom, and concert hall complex on Boylston Street (1896, BOS.2260; NRDIS); the Proctor Building on Bedford Street (1897, BOS.1558); the Jewelers Building on Washington Street (1897, BOS.2131); and the Hotel Touraine on Boylston Street (1897, BOS.2248), with which Bigelow was involved. The best known project of Winslow, Wetherell and Bigelow was the steel-frame South Street Building (1899, BOS.1982; NRDIS).³²

Guy Lowell (1870-1927), FAIA, graduated from Harvard College in 1892 and the MIT architecture program in 1894. He trained in the *ateliers* of Ecole des Beaux-Arts in Paris from 1895 to 1899, studying architectural history, architectural design, and landscape gardening before returning to Boston and opening his own firm. Lowell designed commercial and institutional buildings, grand estate houses, and formal gardens. His success, particularly among prominent families such as his own in Boston, led to the opening of a second office in 1906 in New York City. He is known most widely for designing the Boston Museum of Fine Arts on Huntington Avenue (1907-1914, BOS.7493), as well as the New York State Supreme Court on Centre Street in Manhattan (1913, built 1919-1925). Guy Lowell's Boston work includes additional buildings and structures in the Fenway and Longwood vicinity, among them the Johnson Memorial Gates at the Fenway's Westland Avenue entrance (1901-1902, BOS.9271) and the MFA's associated Museum School on the Fenway (1926, BOS.7407). Between 1905 and 1907, he also designed three buildings constructed on the Simmons College Residence Campus (BOS.AEM): South Hall (BOS.7358), the dining hall or Refectory/Alumnae Hall (BOS.7581), and North Hall (BOS.7580). Previously, Lowell had designed about 20 buildings on the campus of Phillips Academy in Andover (1902-1903).

Notable for his landscape work, Lowell served as architect and landscape architect on the Charles River Dam project (1910), which created the Charles River Basin; and in 1908 he redesigned Frederick Law Olmsted Sr.'s 1892 Charlesbank plan, yielding the Esplanade from Charles Circle to the Harvard Bridge. Lowell founded a landscape architecture program at MIT that operated from 1900 to 1910, where he donated his time as a teacher.³³

³² Boston Landmarks Commission, *Report on the Potential Designation of The Parker House, 60 School Street, as a Landmark under Chapter 772 of the Acts of 1975, as Amended* (draft report posted November 1, 2021).

³³ "Guy Lowell, Pioneer Information," The Cultural Landscape Foundation, accessed March 7, 2023, <https://www.tclf.org/pioneer/guy-lowell>; New York State Supreme Courthouse, Department of Citywide Administrative Services, City of New York, NY, accessed March 7, 2023, <https://www.nyc.gov/site/dcas/business/dcasmanagedbuildings/new-york-state-supreme-courthouse.page>.

3.3 Archaeological Sensitivity

Fenway-Kenmore (which includes Longwood) is archaeologically sensitive for ancient Native American archaeological sites, specifically ancient fishweirs, and may contain significant historical archaeological deposits. When the neighborhood was a marsh and tidal mudflat for the Charles River and the outlet of the Muddy River and Stony Brook, the Massachusetts Native people constructed the ancient fishweirs, a fence-like fishing structure used to capture spawning fish in the spring, approximately 3,000-5,200 years ago. There is historic documentation of stone fishweirs in the Muddy River. Many of the stakes and wooden elements used to build these weirs are preserved within the clay under the later historic fills, approximately 30-40 feet below the present ground surface. Weir elements have been encountered throughout the 20th century in multiple locations across nearby Back Bay and many thousands of weir elements likely remain preserved under the neighborhood. Any proposed project whose work will disturb the original clay deposits approximately under the historic fill deposits of the neighborhood may disturb significant Native fishweirs. The historic fills are not archaeologically sensitive. On original land, there may be particularly unique historical archaeological sites whose survey may provide significant archaeological data, specifically related to the industrial nature of this neighborhood in the 19th century, including but not limited to 19th-century ropewalks; immigrant/laborer housing; and religious, cultural, and reform institutions.

3.4 Relationship to Criteria for Designation

The Hotel Buckminster meets the following criteria for designation as a Boston Landmark as established in Section 4 of Chapter 772 of the Acts of 1975, as amended:

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.

The Hotel Buckminster is significant for its association with several events that have made an outstanding contribution to the cultural, economic, military, and social history of the city, the Commonwealth, and the New England region. The first hotel built on a grand scale at Kenmore Square, the Buckminster introduced the Beaux-Arts/Renaissance Revival style to a newly developing area of Boston in the late 19th century, and later marked the gateway to Boston for travelers on the transcontinental U.S. Route 20. The Buckminster is associated with innovations in New England's radio broadcasting industry from 1930 to 1968, when WNAC Boston maintained its studios in the building, establishing the Yankee Network to broadcast throughout New England and experimenting with FM radio transmission. The building possesses further significance for its occupation, during World War II, by the U.S. Army Service Forces First Service Command, serving the six New England

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states from headquarters in Boston, as well as its association with the processing of German prisoners in an event of wartime significance to New England. As the location from 1951 to 1953 of Storyville, the celebrated jazz club operated by George Wein, the Buckminster hosted jazz artists of national reputation and acquired its association with the pioneer of jazz music promotion in New England.

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 builder whose work influenced the development of the city, the Commonwealth, the New England region, or the nation.

The Hotel Buckminster is significant as an example of the high-style materials and detailing of Beaux Arts/Renaissance Revival commercial architecture in Boston (see sections 2.2 and 3.2), and a notable work of two important Boston-based design firms with partners who trained at the Ecole des Beaux-Arts in Paris. The architecture firm of Winslow & Wetherell played a significant role in shaping the late 19th-century streetscape in the city's central business district. Guy Lowell was a nationally known architect and landscape architect who later opened a second office in New York City.

4.0 ECONOMIC STATUS

4.1 Current Assessed Value

According to the City of Boston's Assessor's records, the property at 635-645 Beacon Street (parcel 0504150000) where the Hotel Buckminster is located has a total assessed value of \$24,035,700, with the land valued at \$11,154,400 and the building valued at \$12,881,300 for fiscal year 2023.

4.2 Current Ownership

According to the City of Boston's Assessor's records, the Hotel Buckminster is owned by IQHQ-645 Beacon LLC, with a mailing address at 201 Washington Street, Suite 3920, One Boston Place, Boston, MA 02108.

5.0 PLANNING CONTEXT

5.1 Background

With two exceptions, the Hotel Buckminster was in continuous commercial use from its 1897-1902 construction to its closure in March 2020 at the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic. These uses were principally hotel and residential accommodations, function rooms, office space, and ancillary services and small businesses. The hotel use was suspended from about 1977 to 1999. A radio broadcasting studio and associated production spaces were in the building from 1930 to 1968, initially utilizing the hotel's original dining room. Restaurants occupied the building's rounded corner space fronting Kenmore Square (635 Beacon Street) from 1946 to the 1960s, and again from 1978 to 2020, with clubs, lounges, and smaller restaurants operating during those periods in either the basement or spaces with Brookline Avenue frontage. Rooftop neon signage was installed in 1936, continuing with some modifications until the 1980s. Wireless communications equipment has been on the building since 2000. The Hotel Buckminster was in institutional use twice in its history: from 1942 to 1946, for the housing of military personnel and administrative offices during World War II; and from 1966 to 1977, as a college dormitory, classroom, and student lounge space.

Construction of the Massachusetts Turnpike Extension (1962-1965) significantly altered the historic setting of the Hotel Buckminster on the south, though the building's visual connection to the Kenmore Square streetscape and the wider commercial area to the north, east, and west remains unchanged and strong. Substantial building demolition occurred in 1963 on Newbury Street and Beacon Street adjacent to the turnpike right-of-way. Demolition and reconstruction of the Brookline Avenue bridge (1963) spanning the right-of-way raised the street grade roughly three to four feet, rendering the rearmost entrance to the Buckminster, at 21 Brookline Avenue, unusable. Preservation of the Hotel Buckminster in 1963, in an era characterized by urban renewal and interstate highway construction and a dearth of historic preservation mechanisms, protected the historic integrity of Kenmore Square.

The Hotel Buckminster has been vacant since 2020.

5.2 Zoning

Parcel number 0504150000 is located in the Boston Proper zoning district, a B-4 subdistrict, and the following overlay districts: Groundwater Conservation Overlay District and Restricted Parking District.

5.3 Planning Issues

At various moments in the 2010s, the Hotel Buckminster site has been included in several development redesign schemes for Kenmore Square. None of these developments of the surrounding area have had any physical effect on the Buckminster Hotel. When the Hotel Buckminster was sold to the current owners, it became known that the building's new owners were

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planning the development of the property. Community preservationists, including the Boston Preservation Alliance, began a campaign to save the historic property.

On November 10, 2022, a petition to designate the property as a Boston Landmark was submitted to and accepted by the Boston Landmarks Commission staff. At a public hearing on November 22, 2022, the Landmarks Commission voted to accept the Hotel Buckminster petition for further study.

The development team, IQHQ, approached the Boston Planning and Development Agency to submit a project proposal for an *Article 80B Large Project Review*. The BPDA accepted the developer's *Letter of Intent* for the project on January 24, 2023. The letter states that the Hotel Buckminster would be substantially renovated to become laboratory space; a large portion of the Brookline Avenue facade would be demolished, and a large glass tower would be built above and behind the existing building. The new building would stand at 212'-0". The existing Hotel Buckminster stands at 100'-0". The letter of intent and the pre-file presentation materials can be found in the appendix of this report.

It should also be mentioned that there are several planning efforts for the Kenmore Square area that are in progress by both public and private developers. The MBTA is in the midst of a several years-long construction project that will alter subway and bus access in the area. The Parks Department and the Friends of the Public Garden have proposed restoration of the Kenmore Block of the Commonwealth Avenue Mall. As the Commonwealth Avenue Mall is a Boston Landmark, the BLC is taking part in the review of that project.

Another project that will have a significant impact on the Hotel Buckminster is the new hotel tower proposed for 560-574 Commonwealth Ave. Under review by the BPDA, the tower will stand in front of the Beacon Street facade of the Hotel Buckminster. The developer proposes to construct a 29-story, approximately 391-room hotel surrounded by a public plaza. A new public street will connect Commonwealth Avenue and Beacon Street, between the new plaza and the former building site. This building will cast a large shadow on the Beacon Street facade of the Hotel Buckminster in the afternoons.

6.0 ALTERNATIVE APPROACHES

6.1 Alternatives available to the Boston Landmarks Commission

A. Designation

The Commission retains the option of designating the Hotel Buckminster as a Landmark. Designation shall correspond to Assessor's parcel 0504150000 and shall address the following exterior elements hereinafter referred to as the "Specified Features":

- The exterior envelope of the building.

B. Denial of Designation

The Commission retains the option of not designating any or all of the Specified Features.

C. National Register Listing

The Commission could recommend that the property be listed on the National Register of Historic Places, if it is not already.

D. Preservation Plan

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

E. Site Interpretation

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

6.2 Impact of alternatives

A. Designation

Designation under Chapter 772 would require review of physical changes to the Hotel Buckminster in accordance with the Standards and Criteria adopted as part of the designation.

B. Denial of Designation

Without designation, the City would be unable to offer protection to the Specified Features, or extend guidance to the owners under chapter 772.

C. National Register Listing

The Hotel Buckminster could be listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Listing on the National Register provides an honorary designation and limited protection in cases when federal funds are involved in proposed physical changes. It also creates incentives for preservation, such as tax incentives for income-producing properties and possible eligibility for grants through the Massachusetts Preservation Projects Fund (MPPF) from the Massachusetts Historical Commission. National Register listing provides listing on the State Register, affording parallel protection for projects with state involvement and also the

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availability of state tax credits. National Register listing does not provide any design review for changes undertaken by private owners at their own expense.

D. Preservation Plan

A preservation plan allows an owner to work with interested parties to investigate various adaptive use scenarios, analyze investment costs and rates of return, and provide recommendations for subsequent development. It does not carry regulatory oversight.

E. Site Interpretation

A comprehensive interpretation of the history and significance of the Hotel Buckminster could be introduced at the site.

7.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

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

1. That the exterior of the Hotel Buckminster be designated by the Boston Landmarks Commission as a Landmark, under Chapter 772 of the Acts of 1975, as amended (see Section 3.4 of this report for Relationship to Criteria for Designation);
2. That the boundaries corresponding to Assessor's parcel 0504150000 be adopted without modification;
3. And that the Standards and Criteria recommended by the staff of the Boston Landmarks Commission be accepted.

8.0 STANDARDS AND CRITERIA, WITH LIST OF CHARACTER-DEFINING FEATURES

8.1 Introduction

Per sections 4, 5, 6, 7 and 8 of the enabling statute (Chapter 772 of the Acts of 1975 of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, as amended) Standards and Criteria must be adopted for each Designation which shall be applied by the Commission in evaluating proposed changes to the historic resource. The Standards and Criteria both identify and establish guidelines for those features which must be preserved and/or enhanced to maintain the viability of the Designation. The Standards and Criteria are based on the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties.³⁴ Before a Certificate of Design Approval or Certificate of Exemption can be issued for such changes, the changes must be reviewed by the Commission with regard to their conformance to the purpose of the statute.

The intent of these guidelines is to help local officials, designers and individual property owners to identify the characteristics that have led to designation, and thus to identify the limitation to the changes that can be made to them. It should be emphasized that conformance to the Standards and Criteria alone does not necessarily ensure approval, nor are they absolute, but any request for variance from them must demonstrate the reason for, and advantages gained by, such variance. The Commission's Certificate of Design Approval is only granted after careful review of each application and public hearing, in accordance with the statute.

Proposed alterations related to zoning, building code, accessibility, safety, or other regulatory requirements do not supersede the Standards and Criteria or take precedence over Commission decisions.

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

8.2 Levels of Review

The Commission has no desire to interfere with the normal maintenance procedures for the property. In order to provide some guidance for property owners, managers or developers, and the Commission, the activities 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.

³⁴ U.S. Department of the Interior, et al. *THE SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR'S STANDARDS FOR THE TREATMENT OF HISTORIC PROPERTIES WITH GUIDELINES FOR PRESERVING, REHABILITATING, RESTORING & RECONSTRUCTING HISTORIC BUILDINGS*, Secretary of the Interior, 2017, www.nps.gov/tps/standards/treatment-guidelines-2017.pdf.

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- 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, 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 do not disturb the ground surface are to remain in place for less than six weeks, and do not result in any permanent alteration or attached fixtures.
- B. Activities 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, ground surface or outward appearance.
 2. In-kind replacement or repair.
 3. Phased restoration programs will require an application to the Commission and may require full Commission review of the entire project plan and specifications; subsequent detailed review of individual construction phases may be eligible for Administrative Review by BLC staff.
 4. Repair projects of a repetitive nature will require an application to the Commission and may require full Commission review; subsequent review of these projects may be eligible for Administrative Review by BLC staff, where design, details, and specifications do not vary from those previously approved.
 5. Temporary installations or alterations that are to remain in place for longer than six weeks.

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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 Landmarks staff shall determine whether an application is required and if so, whether it shall be an application for a Certificate of Design Approval or Certificate of Exemption.

E. Concurrent Jurisdiction

In some cases, issues 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 Standards and Criteria

The following Standards and Criteria are based on the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties.³⁵ These Standards and Criteria apply to all exterior building alterations that are visible from any existing or proposed street or way that is open to public travel.

8.3.1 General Standards

1. Items under Commission review include but are not limited to the following: exterior walls (masonry, wood, and architectural metals); windows; entrances/doors; porches/stoops; lighting; storefronts; curtain walls; roofs; roof projections; additions; accessibility; site work and landscaping; demolition; and archaeology. Items not anticipated in the Standards and Criteria may be subject to review, refer to Section 8.2 and Section 9.

³⁵ U.S. Department of the Interior, et al. *THE SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR'S STANDARDS FOR THE TREATMENT OF HISTORIC PROPERTIES WITH GUIDELINES FOR PRESERVING, REHABILITATING, RESTORING & RECONSTRUCTING HISTORIC BUILDINGS*, Secretary of the Interior, 2017, www.nps.gov/tps/standards/treatment-guidelines-2017.pdf.

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2. The historic character of a property shall be retained and preserved. The removal of distinctive materials or alterations of features, spaces and spatial relationships that characterize a property shall be avoided. See Section 8.4, List of Character-defining Features.
3. Each property shall be recognized as a physical record of its time, place and use. Changes that create a false sense of historical development, such as adding conjectural features or elements from other historic properties, shall not be undertaken.
4. Changes to a property that have acquired historic significance in their own right shall be retained and preserved. (The term “later contributing features” will be used to convey this concept.)
5. Distinctive materials, features, finishes and construction techniques or examples of craftsmanship that characterize a property shall be preserved.
6. Deteriorated historic features shall be repaired rather than replaced. Where the severity of deterioration requires replacement of a distinctive feature, the new material shall match the old in design, color, texture and, where possible, materials. Replacement of missing features will be substantiated by documentary and physical evidence.
7. Chemical or physical treatments, if appropriate, shall be undertaken using the gentlest means possible. Treatments that cause damage to historic materials shall not be used.
8. Staff archaeologists shall review proposed changes to a property that may impact known and potential archaeological sites. Archaeological surveys may be required to determine if significant archaeological deposits are present within the area of impact of the proposed work. Significant archaeological resources shall be protected and preserved in place. If such resources must be disturbed, mitigation measures will be required before the proposed work can commence. See section 9.0 Archaeology.
9. New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction shall not destroy historic materials, features, and spatial relationships that characterize a property. The new work shall be differentiated from the old and shall be compatible with the historic materials, features, size, scale and proportion, and massing to protect the integrity of a property and its environment.
10. New additions and adjacent or related new construction shall be undertaken in such a manner that, if removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the historic property and its environment would be unimpaired.
11. Original or later contributing signs, marquees and canopies integral to the building ornamentation or architectural detailing shall be preserved.
12. New signs, banners, marquees, canopies and awnings shall be compatible in size, design, material, location, and number with the character of the building, allowing for contemporary expression. New signs shall not detract from the essential form of the building nor obscure its architectural features.

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13. Property owners shall take necessary precautions to prevent demolition by neglect of maintenance and repairs. Demolition of protected buildings in violation of Chapter 772 of the Acts of 1975, as amended, is subject to penalty as cited in Section 10 of Chapter 772 of the Acts of 1975, as amended.

8.3.2 Masonry at exterior walls (including but not limited to stone, brick, terra cotta, concrete, adobe, stucco, and mortar)

1. All original or later contributing masonry materials shall be preserved.
2. Original or later contributing masonry materials, features, details, surfaces and ornamentation shall be repaired, if necessary, by patching, splicing, consolidating, or otherwise reinforcing the masonry using recognized preservation methods.
3. Deteriorated or missing masonry materials, features, details, surfaces, and ornamentation should be replaced with materials and elements which match the original in material, color, texture, size, shape, profile, and detail of installation. Alternative materials will be considered on a case-by-case basis.
4. When replacement of materials or elements is necessary, it should be based on physical or documentary evidence.
5. Sound original mortar shall be retained.
6. Deteriorated mortar shall be carefully removed by hand raking the joints.
7. Use of mechanical hammers shall not be allowed. Use of mechanical saws may be allowed on a case-by-case basis.
8. Repointing mortar shall duplicate the original mortar in strength, composition, color, texture, joint size, joint profile, and method of application.
9. Sample panels of raking the joints and repointing shall be reviewed and approved by the staff of the Boston Landmarks Commission.
10. Cleaning of masonry is discouraged and should only be performed when necessary to halt deterioration.
11. If the building is to be cleaned, the masonry shall be cleaned with the gentlest method possible.
12. A test patch of the cleaning method(s) shall be reviewed and approved on site by staff of the Boston Landmarks Commission to ensure that no damage has resulted. Test patches shall be carried out well in advance. Ideally, the test patch should be monitored over a sufficient period of time to allow long-range effects to be predicted (including exposure to all seasons if possible).
13. Sandblasting (wet or dry), wire brushing, or other similar abrasive cleaning methods shall not be permitted. Doing so can change the visual quality of the material and damage the surface of the masonry and mortar joints.

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14. 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.
15. In general, painting masonry surfaces shall not be allowed. Painting masonry surfaces will be considered only when there is documentary evidence that this treatment was used at some significant point in the history of the property.
16. New penetrations for attachments through masonry are strongly discouraged. When necessary, attachment details shall be located in mortar joints, rather than through masonry material; stainless steel hardware is recommended to prevent rust jacking. New attachments to cast concrete are discouraged and will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis.
17. Deteriorated stucco shall be repaired by removing the damaged material and patching with new stucco that duplicates the old in strength, composition, color, and texture.
18. Deteriorated adobe shall be repaired by using mud plaster or a compatible lime-plaster adobe render, when appropriate.
19. Deteriorated concrete shall be repaired by cutting damaged concrete back to remove the source of deterioration, such as corrosion on metal reinforcement bars. The new patch shall be applied carefully so that it will bond satisfactorily with and match the historic concrete.
20. Joints in concrete shall be sealed with appropriate flexible sealants and backer rods, when necessary.

8.3.3 Wood at exterior walls

1. All original or later contributing wood materials shall be preserved.
2. Original or later contributing wood surfaces, features, details, and ornamentation shall be retained and, if necessary, repaired by patching, piecing-in, consolidating, or reinforcing the wood using recognized preservation methods.
3. Deteriorated or missing wood surfaces, features, details, and ornamentation should be replaced with material and elements which match the original in material, color, texture, size, shape, profile, and detail of installation. Alternative materials will be considered on a case-by-case basis.
4. When replacement of materials is necessary, it should be based on physical or documentary evidence.
5. Cleaning of wood elements shall use the gentlest method possible.
6. Paint removal should be considered only where there is paint surface deterioration or excessive layers of paint have coarsened profile details and as part of an overall

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maintenance program which involves repainting or applying other appropriate protective coatings. Coatings such as paint help protect the wood from moisture and ultraviolet light; stripping the wood bare will expose the surface to the effects of weathering.

7. Damaged or deteriorated paint should be removed to the next sound layer using the mildest method possible.
8. 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.
9. 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.

8.3.4 Architectural metals at exterior walls (including but not limited to wrought and cast iron, steel, pressed metal, terneplate, copper, aluminum, and zinc)

1. All original or later contributing architectural metals shall be preserved.
2. Original or later contributing metal materials, features, details, and ornamentation shall be retained and, if necessary, repaired by patching, splicing, or reinforcing the metal using recognized preservation methods.
3. Deteriorated or missing metal materials, features, details, and ornamentation should be replaced with material and elements which match the original in material, color, texture, size, shape, profile, and detail of installation. Alternative materials will be considered on a case-by-case basis.
4. When replacement of materials or elements is necessary, it should be based on physical or documentary evidence.
5. Cleaning of metal elements either to remove corrosion or deteriorated paint shall use the gentlest method possible.
6. The type of metal shall be identified prior to any cleaning procedure because each metal has its own properties and may require a different treatment.
7. Non-corrosive chemical methods shall be used to clean soft metals (such as lead, tinplate, terneplate, copper, and zinc) whose finishes can be easily damaged by abrasive methods.
8. If gentler methods have proven ineffective, then abrasive cleaning methods, such as low pressure dry grit blasting, may be allowed for hard metals (such as cast iron, wrought iron, and steel) as long as it does not abrade or damage the surface.
9. A test patch of the cleaning method(s) shall be reviewed and approved on site by staff of the Boston Landmarks Commission to ensure that no damage has resulted. Test patches shall be carried out well in advance. Ideally, the test patch should be monitored over a

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sufficient period of time to allow long-range effects to be predicted (including exposure to all seasons if possible).

10. 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.
11. 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.

8.3.5 Windows (also refer to Masonry, Wood, and Architectural Metals)

1. The original or later contributing arrangement of window openings shall be retained.
2. Enlarging or reducing window openings for the purpose of fitting stock (larger or smaller) window sash or air conditioners shall not be allowed.
3. Removal of window sash and the installation of permanent fixed panels to accommodate air conditioners shall not be allowed.
4. Original or later contributing window sash, elements, features (functional and decorative), details, and ornamentation shall be retained and, if necessary, repaired by patching, splicing, consolidating, or otherwise reinforcing using recognized preservation methods.
5. Deteriorated or missing window sash, elements, features (functional and decorative), details, and ornamentation should be replaced with material and elements which match the original in material, color, texture, size, shape, profile, configuration, and detail of installation. Alternative materials will be considered on a case-by-case basis.
6. When replacement of sash, elements, features (functional and decorative), details or ornamentation is necessary, it should be based on physical or documentary evidence.
7. If replacement is approved, replacement sash for divided-light windows shall have through-glass muntins or simulated divided lights with dark anodized spacer bars the same width as the muntins.
8. Tinted or reflective-coated glass shall not be allowed.
9. Metal or vinyl panning of the wood frame and molding shall not be allowed.
10. 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.
11. Storm window sashes and frames shall have a painted finish that matches the primary window sash and frame color.

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12. Clear or mill finished aluminum frames shall not be allowed.
13. Window frames, sashes, and, if appropriate, shutters, 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.

8.3.6 Entrances/Doors (also refer to Masonry, Wood, Architectural Metals, and Porches/Stoops)

1. All original or later contributing entrance elements shall be preserved.
2. The original or later contributing entrance design and arrangement of the door openings shall be retained.
3. Enlarging or reducing entrance/door openings for the purpose of fitting stock (larger or smaller) doors shall not be allowed.
4. Original or later contributing entrance materials, elements, details and features (functional and decorative) shall be retained and, if necessary, repaired by patching, splicing, consolidating or otherwise reinforcing using recognized preservation methods.
5. Deteriorated or missing entrance elements, materials, features (functional and decorative), details, and ornamentation should be replaced with material and elements which match the original in material, color, texture, size, shape, profile, configuration and detail of installation. Alternative materials will be considered on a case-by-case basis.
6. When replacement is necessary, it should be based on physical or documentary evidence.
7. Original or later contributing entrance materials, elements, features (functional and decorative) and details shall not be sheathed or otherwise obscured by other materials.
8. 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.
9. Unfinished aluminum storm doors shall not be allowed.
10. Replacement door hardware should replicate the original or be appropriate to the style and period of the building.
11. Buzzers, alarms and intercom panels, where allowed, shall be flush mounted and appropriately located.
12. 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.

8.3.7 Porches/Stoops (also refer to Masonry, Wood, Architectural Metals, Entrances/Doors, Roofs, and Accessibility)

1. All original or later contributing porch elements shall be preserved.
2. Original or later contributing porch and stoop materials, elements, features (functional and decorative), details, and ornamentation shall be retained if possible and, if necessary, repaired using recognized preservation methods.
3. Deteriorated or missing porch and stoop materials, elements, features (functional and decorative), details and ornamentation should be replaced with material and elements which match the original in material, color, texture, size, shape, profile, configuration and detail of installation. Alternative materials will be considered on a case-by-case basis.
4. When replacement is necessary, it should be based on physical or documentary evidence.
5. Original or later contributing porch and stoop materials, elements, features (functional and decorative), details and ornamentation shall not be sheathed or otherwise obscured by other materials.
6. Porch and stoop 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/porch and stoop.

8.3.8 Lighting

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. Security lighting.
2. Wherever integral to the building, original or later contributing lighting fixtures shall be retained and, if necessary, repaired by patching, piercing in or reinforcing the lighting fixture using recognized preservation methods.
3. Deteriorated or missing lighting fixture materials, elements, features (functional and decorative), details, and ornamentation should be replaced with material and elements which match the original in material, color, texture, size, shape, profile, configuration, and detail of installation. Alternative materials will be considered on a case-by-case basis.
4. When replacement is necessary, it should be based on physical or documentary evidence.

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5. Original or later contributing lighting fixture materials, elements, features (functional and decorative), details, and ornamentation shall not be sheathed or otherwise obscured by other materials.
6. Supplementary illumination may be added where appropriate to the current use of the building.
7. New lighting shall conform to any of the following approaches as appropriate 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. Retention or restoration of fixtures which date from an interim installation and which are considered to be appropriate to the building and use.
 - d. 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.
8. The location of new exterior lighting 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. 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.

8.3.9 Storefronts (also refer to Masonry, Wood, Architectural Metals, Windows, Entrances/Doors, Porches/Stoops, Lighting, and Accessibility)

1. Refer to the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation and Guidelines for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings (Storefront section).

8.3.10 Curtain Walls (also refer to Masonry, Wood, Architectural Metals, Windows, and Entrances/Doors)

1. Refer to the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation and Guidelines for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings (Curtain Walls section).

8.3.11 Roofs (also refer to Masonry, Wood, Architectural Metals, and Roof Projections)

1. The roof shapes and original or later contributing roof material of the existing building 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

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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 material 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 and design (integral gutters shall not be replaced with surface-mounted).
8. External gutters and downspouts should not be allowed unless it is based on physical or documentary evidence.

8.3.12 Roof Projections (includes satellite dishes, antennas and other communication devices, louvers, vents, chimneys, and chimney caps; also refer to Masonry, Wood, Architectural Metals, and Roofs)

1. New roof projections shall not be visible from the public way.
2. New mechanical equipment should be reviewed to confirm that it is no more visible than the existing.

8.3.13 Additions

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 building cannot meet the new space requirements.
2. New additions shall be designed so that the character-defining features of the building are not radically changed, obscured, damaged or destroyed.
3. New additions should be designed so that they are compatible with the existing building, although they should not necessarily be imitative of an earlier style or period.
4. New additions shall not obscure the front of the building.
5. New additions shall be of a size, scale, and materials that are in harmony with the existing building.

8.3.14 Accessibility

1. Alterations to existing buildings for the purposes of providing accessibility shall provide persons with disabilities the level of physical access to historic properties that is required under applicable law, consistent with the preservation of each property's significant historical features, with the goal of providing the highest level of access with the lowest level of impact. Access modifications for persons with disabilities shall be designed and installed to least affect the character-defining features of the property. Modifications to some features may be allowed in providing access, once a review of options for the highest level of access has been completed.
2. A three-step approach is recommended to identify and implement accessibility modifications that will protect the integrity and historic character of the property:
 - a. Review the historical significance of the property and identify character-defining features;
 - b. Assess the property's existing and proposed level of accessibility;
 - c. Evaluate accessibility options within a preservation context.
3. Because of the complex nature of accessibility, the Commission will review proposals on a case-by-case basis. The Commission recommends consulting with the following document which is available from the Commission office: U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, Cultural Resources, Preservation Assistance Division; Preservation Brief 32 "Making Historic Properties Accessible" by Thomas C. Jester and Sharon C. Park, AIA.

8.3.15 Renewable Energy Sources

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 building 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.

8.3.16 Building Site

1. The general intent is to preserve the existing or later contributing site and landscape features that enhance the 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

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constructed. Thus, changes must frequently be made to accommodate the new condition, and the landscape treatment can be seen as a transition between the historic property and its newer surroundings.

3. All original or later contributing features of the building site that are important in defining its overall historic character shall be retained and, if necessary, repaired using recognized preservation methods. This may include but is not limited to walls, fences, steps, walkways, paths, roads, vegetation, landforms, furnishings and fixtures, decorative elements, and water features. (See section 9.0 for subsurface features such as archaeological resources or burial grounds.)
4. Deteriorated or missing site features should be replaced with material and elements which match the original in material, color, texture, size, shape, profile, configuration and detail of installation. Alternative materials will be considered on a case-by-case basis.
5. When replacement is necessary, it should be based on physical or documentary evidence.
6. The existing landforms of the site shall not be altered unless shown to be necessary for maintenance of the designated property's structure or site.
7. If there are areas where the terrain is to be altered, these areas shall be surveyed and documented to determine the potential impact to important landscape features.
8. The historic relationship between buildings and the landscape shall be retained. Grade levels should not be changed if it would alter the historic appearance of the building and its relation to the site.
9. Buildings should not be relocated if it would diminish the historic character of the site.
10. When they are required by a new use, new site features (such as parking areas, driveways, or access ramps) should be as unobtrusive as possible, retain the historic relationship between the building or buildings and the landscape, and be compatible with the historic character of the property. Historic rock outcroppings like puddingstone should not be disturbed by the construction of new site features.
11. 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 designated property.
12. When they are necessary for security, protective fencing, bollards, and stanchions should be as unobtrusive as possible.
13. 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 character of the site.

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14. Maintenance of, removal of, and additions to plant materials should consider restoration of views of the designated property.
15. The Boston Landmarks Commission encourages removal of non-historic fencing as documentary evidence indicates.
16. The Boston Landmarks Commission recognizes that the designated property must continue to meet city, state, and federal goals and requirements for resiliency and safety within an ever-changing coastal flood zone and environment.

8.3.18 Guidelines

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

1. Should any major restoration or construction activity be considered for a property, the Boston Landmarks Commission recommends that the proponents prepare a historic building conservation study and/or consult a materials conservator early in the planning process.
 - a. The Boston Landmarks Commission specifically recommends that any work on masonry, wood, metals, or windows be executed with the guidance of a professional building materials conservator.
2. Should any major restoration or construction activity be considered for a property's landscape, the Boston Landmarks Commission recommends that the proponents prepare a historic landscape report and/or consult a landscape historian early in the planning process.
3. When reviewing an application for proposed alterations, the Commission will consider whether later addition(s) and/or alteration(s) can, or should, be removed on a case-by-case basis. Since it is not possible to provide one general guideline, the following factors will be considered in determining whether a later addition(s) and/or alteration(s) can, or should, be removed include:
 - a. Compatibility with the 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.

8.4 List of Character-defining Features

Character-defining features are the significant observable and experiential aspects of a historic resource, whether a single building, landscape, or multi-property historic district, that define its architectural power and personality. These are the features that should be identified, retained, and preserved in any restoration or rehabilitation scheme in order to protect the resource's integrity.

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Character-defining elements include, for example, the overall shape of a building and its materials, craftsmanship, decorative details and features, as well as the various aspects of its site and environment. They are critically important considerations whenever preservation work is contemplated. Inappropriate changes to historic features can undermine the historical and architectural significance of the resource, sometimes irreparably.

Below is a list that identifies the physical elements that contribute to the unique character of the historic resource. The items listed in this section should be considered important aspects of the historic resource and changes to them should be approved by commissioners only after careful consideration.

The character-defining features for this historic resource include:

1. **Architectural style.** The Hotel Buckminster displays Beaux Arts/Renaissance Revival-style characteristics with its strict symmetry (on the most formal Beacon Street and Kenmore Square elevations), classically inspired details, hierarchy of door and window ornamentation, and flat roof. Roman brick walls and limestone ornament lend a refinement to the design that contributes to a sense of luxury and craftsmanship.
2. **Ornamentation.** In addition to the rusticated base and corner quoins, classically derived stone ornament includes balustrades on first-story windows (some have been painted), classical pediments and paneled pilasters framing third-story windows, architrave surrounds on sixth-story windows, and a belt course at the sixth story. See also **Entablature/cornice** and **Railings and other ironwork** below. A notable addition to the original decorative program is the narrow Art Deco-style chevron band in cast stone, framing the former broadcasting entrance on the Brookline Avenue elevation.
3. **Building materials and finishes.** Red Roman brick is an important character-defining feature of the Buckminster's design for its size, shape, and texture. On the Brookline Avenue elevation, this brick is also used in door surrounds at two historic entrance locations. The rusticated two-story base on the Beacon Street and Kenmore Square elevations, as well as classically derived ornament throughout the building, are executed in limestone. Granite forms the raised basement and integral main entrance steps on the Beacon Street elevation.
4. **Entablature/cornice.** The highly ornamented entablature consists of beaded consoles framing paneled metopes on the frieze, with fleur-de-lis motifs executed in bas relief on the cornice above, topped with cresting that provides further visual interest at the roofline. The building's three finished elevations display a unified entablature design built of different materials: the older section (1897, on Beacon Street and Brookline Avenue) appears to be constructed of terra-cotta or possibly cast stone, while the Kenmore Square entablature (1902) is metal. Cresting on the Kenmore Square elevation was removed in 1938. Closer inspection of the masonry entablature is recommended to confirm the material.
5. **Doors and windows.** The original hotel entrances off Beacon Street and Brookline Avenue retain the greatest historic integrity, with a classically trimmed limestone surround at the main entrance (Beacon Street) and brick surround at the rear (Brookline Avenue), each topped with elaborate bas relief ornament. In their size, shape, and ornamentation, the hierarchy of window openings is an important character-defining feature on the Beacon Street and Kenmore Square elevations. Stacks of bow windows convey a less formal character on the Brookline Avenue elevation.

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6. **Railings and other ironwork.** Ornamental ironwork is confined to the Beacon Street elevation. The oversized arched transom above the main hotel entrance retains delicate iron grillwork with brass accents. The nine-bay-wide section centered on the main entrance displays ornamental balustrades with straight railings in window bays 1, 4, and 6 of the first story (the balustrade in bay 9 has been removed); bays 1 through 4 and 6 through 9 on the second story; and bay 5 (center bay) on the fifth story.
7. **Massing of building.** The rounded corner fronting Kenmore Square is important to the character of the building. Finished elevations fronting Beacon Street, Kenmore Square, and Brookline Avenue, plus the unfinished southwest elevation, rise to a consistent height with no setbacks or infill construction. Rooftop construction associated with utilities is positioned to minimize visibility from the public way.
8. **Relationship of building to lot lines, sidewalks, and streets.** The Hotel Buckminster is built out to the lot lines (and sidewalks) on Beacon Street, Kenmore Square, and Brookline Avenue, and to the lot line on the unfinished southwest elevation. The entrance canopy on the Beacon Street elevation, projecting over the sidewalk on posts, is neither historic nor a character-defining feature.
9. **Views.** The Hotel Buckminster is a major character-defining feature of Kenmore Square. Though only six stories, the building is highly visible from five streets, in addition to the Massachusetts Turnpike Extension. The rounded corner on the Kenmore Square elevation provides a strong visual anchor for the square itself (at the junction of Beacon Street, Commonwealth Avenue, Deerfield Street, and Brookline Avenue), and announces the square's location within the broader Kenmore Square neighborhood, from approaches extending as far east as Charlesgate West and as far west as Silber Way.

9.0 ARCHAEOLOGY

All below-ground work within the property shall be reviewed by the Boston Landmarks Commission and City Archaeologist to determine if work may impact known or potential archaeological resources. While the footprint of the existing structure has likely impacted any historical archaeological deposits, if they existed there, it is possible that ancient Native landscape may be preserved beneath the fill under the existing building. An archaeological survey shall be conducted if archaeological sensitivity exists and if impacts to known or potential archaeological resources cannot be mitigated after consultation with the City Archaeologist. All archaeological mitigation (monitoring, survey, excavation, etc.) shall be conducted by a professional archaeologist. The professional archaeologist should meet the Secretary of the Interior's Professional Qualifications Standards for Archaeology.

Refer to Section 8.3 for any additional Standards and Criteria that may apply.

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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