



William Francis Galvin
Secretary of the Commonwealth

Contact: Brian McNiff
Telephone: 617-727-9180

October 8, 2014

**THEODORE LYMAN SCHOOL, BOSTON, APPROVED FOR NOMINATION TO THE
NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES**

Secretary of the Commonwealth William Francis Galvin is pleased to announce that the Massachusetts Historical Commission approved the Theodore Lyman School in Boston (East Boston) for nomination to the National Register of Historic Places at its September 10, 2014, meeting. The nomination will be submitted to the National Register of Historic Places at the National Park Service in Washington, DC, for final consideration and designation.

“The Massachusetts Historical Commission is dedicated to preserving the Commonwealth’s rich historic, architectural, archaeological, and cultural resources,” Secretary Galvin said. “Inclusion of the Theodore Lyman School in the National Register will help to preserve an excellent example of a neighborhood school designed by a prominent architect in the Italianate style.”

The Theodore Lyman School is a three-story, red-brick building with contrasting granite trim, designed by Gridley J. F. Bryant in the Italianate style and constructed between 1869 and 1871. Bryant was well known for his modern school designs, as well as his prison designs, such as the Suffolk County Jail in Boston (Charles Street Jail, listed in the National Register in 1980). He also collaborated with Arthur Gilman on Boston’s Old City Hall on School Street, the first Second Empire-style building in the country. The Lyman School building, the third by that name in East Boston, is located at the intersection of Paris & Gove streets, and an ornate, wrought-iron fence lines the property along these two streets.

-more-

The first Lyman School was the neighborhood's first public grammar school, constructed in 1837 southeast of the present Lyman School building, at the intersection of Paris, Meridian, and Wesley streets. The first building was destroyed by fire and rebuilt in 1846; the second building was demolished ca. 1912. The present school was designed to serve a new method of education. The earlier Lyman School buildings had two open rooms—one on the first floor, and one on the second floor—where children of mixed ages and levels learned together under two schoolmasters, one who taught in the morning and one in the afternoon. While the new method of separate classes for different age groups may have been used at the Lyman School prior to 1869, the new building was more ideally suited to this method because it accommodated multiple classrooms. The building was dedicated on October 18, 1870, but suffered a fire a year later, after which it was rebuilt with the addition of a full third floor and a new roof.

The Lyman School closed its doors in June of 1980, after which the building was converted to use as apartment units by the Lyman School Housing Committee, Inc. Ownership has not changed since that time, and is headed by the East Boston Community Development Corporation (CDC). The rehabilitation of the building into apartments, completed in 1985, consisted of 45 apartments, a senior daycare center, community room, and health center at the attic level, and an office in the basement. The six classrooms per floor were divided into two residential units per classroom, an elevator was installed, and accessible ramps were added at the building's rear entrance. The exterior is substantially intact, with the exception of replacement windows and a replacement rear door installed during the building's conversion to residential space.

The apartments are all affordable senior housing, and many residents, as well as seniors living off site, take advantage of services offered by the East Boston Health Center on the top floor. The owner is currently planning to rehabilitate the property while it is occupied, and residents will continue to live in the building after project completion. The proposed work will utilize state and federal historic rehabilitation tax credits, and will include general repairs, a new roof, accessibility improvements, and the replacement of 1980s windows with historically appropriate windows. The building's floor plan and existing uses will remain.

-more-

The Theodore Lyman School is one of 8 historic resources around the Commonwealth approved for nomination to the National Register of Historic Places by the Massachusetts Historical Commission at this meeting.

Secretary Galvin serves as Chairman of the 17-member board, which meets regularly and considers historic resources eligible for the National Register four times a year.

The National Register is the nation's official listing of significant historic resources. In Massachusetts, there are over 70,000 properties listed in the National Register. The Massachusetts Historical Commission has been administering the National Register of Historic Places program in Massachusetts since 1966.

The Massachusetts Historical Commission is the office of the State Historic Preservation Officer and the State Archaeologist. It was established in 1963 to identify, evaluate, and protect important historical and archaeological assets of the Commonwealth. Visit our website to learn more about the Commission's programs (www.sec.state.ma.us/mhc).

-End-