



NEWS

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SECRETARY GALVIN PRESENTS 2019 PRESERVATION AWARD TO THE UNION AT 48 BOYLSTON STREET

Secretary of the Commonwealth William F. Galvin, Chair of the Massachusetts Historical Commission, has announced that The Union at 48 Boylston Street, formerly known as the Boston Young Men's Christian Union (BYMCU) building, in downtown Boston has received a 2019 Massachusetts Historical Commission Preservation Award.

"The Massachusetts Historical Commission is proud to recognize the extraordinary accomplishments of this year's awardees," said Secretary Galvin. "The projects the Commission recognizes this year are particularly diverse and represent the many creative ways that significant historic resources are being preserved across the Commonwealth. The rehabilitation of the Union at 48 Boylston and its new use as housing for homeless individuals is an important success story in the city of Boston."

The BYMCU was designed by prominent local architect Nathaniel Bradlee of Bradlee and Winslow in 1875. It originally contained retail space on the ground floor, with an auditorium, gymnasium, library, social and game rooms above, as well as offices for the Union. Since the building's initial construction, three separate additions have been completed. In the late 19th century, it was one of three High Victorian Gothic buildings around the intersection of Boylston and Tremont streets in downtown Boston, but today it stands alone, a remarkable survivor in a neighborhood that has seen considerable change over the years. The building was designated a local landmark by the Boston Landmarks Commission in 1977 and was listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 1980.

St. Francis House and the Planning Office for Urban Affairs of the Catholic Archdiocese of Boston (POUA) partnered to rehabilitate the building into affordable housing. The project was supported with state and federal historic rehabilitation tax credits.

The project included the retention and restoration of architecturally significant features such as the historic marble fireplaces and interior Corinthian columns. The



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building now contains 46 units of affordable housing for homeless individuals and is known as The Union at 48 Boylston Street.

This is the 41st year of MHC's Preservation Awards program. Projects are considered annually for awards in the categories of Rehabilitation and Restoration, Adaptive Reuse, Education and Outreach, Archaeology, Stewardship, and Landscape Preservation. Individuals are considered in the categories of Lifetime Achievement and Local Preservationist. Secretary Galvin serves as the chair of the 17-member Massachusetts Historical Commission.



Secretary Galvin is pictured presenting the award for The Union at 48 Boylston Street at an afternoon ceremony on June 6, 2019, at the Massachusetts Archives Building at 220 Morrissey Blvd., Dorchester (left to right: Joe Fitzpatrick, Bill Grogan, Nicole Benjamin-Ma, Secretary Galvin, Bob Verrier, Phil Renzi, and Aaron Shenette. Photo by Goodnough Photography.).

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