



William Francis Galvin
Secretary of the Commonwealth

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**825-829 BLUE HILL AVENUE, BOSTON, APPROVED FOR NOMINATION TO THE
NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES**

Secretary of the Commonwealth William F. Galvin is pleased to announce that the Massachusetts Historical Commission approved 825-829 Blue Hill Avenue in Boston (Mattapan) for nomination to the National Register of Historic Places at its June 11 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 825-829 Blue Hill Avenue in the National Register will help to preserve buildings that are significant for their association with the growth of the Jewish community in this area of Boston during the first half of the 20th century.”

Located one block southeast of Franklin Park in Boston’s Mattapan neighborhood, the property at 825-829 Blue Hill Avenue includes two, three-story brick buildings, constructed in 1924 to serve the growing population of working-class Jews in Mattapan and neighboring Roxbury and Dorchester. Conveniently located near a streetcar line and a synagogue, the buildings housed members of the burgeoning Jewish community, many of whom were Eastern European immigrants, through the first half of the 20th century.

The buildings’ developer, Herman B. Barron, himself arrived from Lithuania in 1904, and Boston architect Samuel S. Levy, who designed the buildings in the Colonial Revival style, was born in Russia and arrived in the United States in 1889, at the age of four.

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By the late 1920s and 1930s, the Jewish community in Roxbury, Mattapan, and Dorchester reached a population of 77,000—approximately half of the entire Jewish population in Boston, and ten percent of Boston’s total population. During the late 1960s and 1970s, a large percentage of the Jewish population in the area dispersed, many moving to the western edges of the city in Brighton, Brookline, and Newton. The buildings at 825-829 Blue Hill Avenue continued in their intended use for multifamily housing, providing residences for a growing population of working-class African Americans and immigrants.

Today, the well-preserved buildings retain their original configuration of three apartments on each level, arranged around an open, central stairway. Nearly all wood window trim and wood flooring in the units is original. A recent rehabilitation utilizing state and federal historic tax credits updated kitchens, bathrooms, and finishes in the fully occupied, affordable apartments, while retaining the historic character of the property.

The 825-829 Blue Hill Avenue property is one of 6 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).

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