

# Preservation is Revolutionary

ANNUAL HISTORIC PRESERVATION AWARDS

June 11, 2026 | 521 Overlook at Fenway Park



## 2026 People's Preservation Choice Award Nominee

### Henry G. Dorr Building (Boston) Rehabilitation

Henry G. Dorr Building, 281-283 Franklin St., Boston, MA People's Preservation Choice (PPC) Narrative  
The Henry G. Dorr Building, located at 281-283 Franklin Street in downtown Boston, was constructed in two phases between 1878 and 1895. Upon completion, the building served as a warehouse for dye stuffs and other goods. As a contributing resource to the Custom House Historic District, the building highlights late-19th century commercial architecture in the city. Specifically, the building's use of brick illustrates changes in preferred building materials following the Great Fire of 1872. Though originally a warehouse, the building was utilized for commercial office use by the mid-20th century period, in line with surrounding buildings in the financial core of the city. The building was then rehabilitated for residential use, with construction completed and tenants moving into their new apartment units in the fall of 2025.

Boston Pinnacle Properties LLC rehabilitated the Dorr Building for residential use, with 15 new apartment units on the second through sixth floors. Through the rehabilitation, this historically and architecturally significant building in downtown Boston was preserved for future generations. As a result of the project, historic character-defining features were preserved and the historic character of the former warehouse retained. At the exterior, historic Late-Victorian design elements and masonry features, such as the decorative pattern brick between the third and fourth stories and the corbeled brick cornices, were maintained. Modern code-compliant emergency egress was sensitively established at the building's fire escape through the use of historically compatible casement windows that honor the historic double-hung window configuration. At the interior, new residential units were constructed while

preserving the building's historic utilitarian finishes, including wood floors, brick walls, and exposed wood ceilings.

In addition to the successful rehabilitation of the building itself, the project serves as the first successful implementation of the City of Boston's Office to Residential Conversion program. In the wake of the Covid-19 pandemic, occupied office spaces have been dwindling in cities across the country. Boston has not been immune to this trend, with a substantial number of vacancies in previously bustling buildings throughout downtown and the larger city. The rehabilitation of the Dorr Building achieved all goals of the program, including the introduction of much-needed housing, responding to the post-pandemic economic trends, activation of a property facing increased vacancy, and the expansion of foot traffic downtown beyond traditional work hours. Since the completion of this project, more than 1,700 additional housing units have been approved for construction. Further, the vast majority of these conversions are taking place in historic buildings, utilizing federal and state historic tax credits. These projects will all follow a similar path set forth by Boston Pinnacle Properties LLC in the rehabilitation of the Dorr Building.