

LIGHTHOUSES OF MASSACHUSETTS
THEMATIC GROUP NOMINATION

LIGHTHOUSE INFORMATION FORM

NUMBER 22

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
80 Boylston Street, Boston, MA 02116

PHOTOGRAPH KEY

Leslie Fox - MHC - 1981

1. Long Island Head Light

2. Closer view of tower

HISTORIC NAME: Long Island Head Light

TOWN: Boston

LOCATION: Long Island, near Fort Strong-Boston Harbor

COUNTY: Suffolk CODE: 025

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT: 8

LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION:

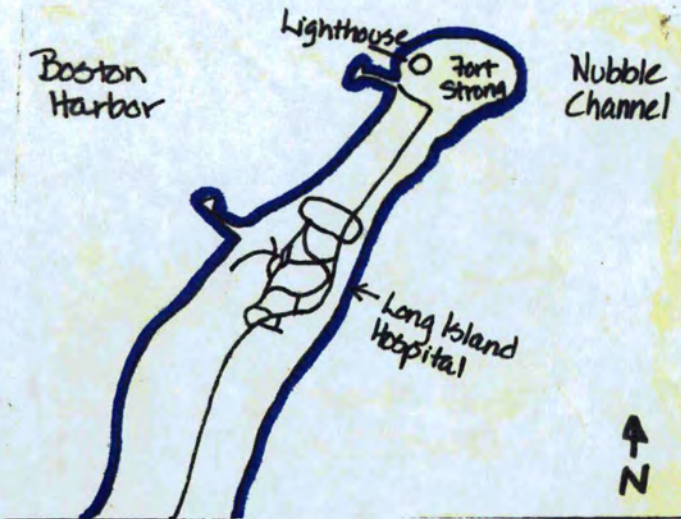
Suffolk County Registry of Deeds

(Book 6, p. 152) (Comm. of Massachusetts to U.S.)

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION:

The nomination is confined to the light and the 50 sq. ft. around it.

SKETCH MAP



LAT./LONG.: LAT 40° 19' 48" N LONG 70° 57' 30" W

UTM COORDINATE: 19/338/800/4687/800

USGS QUADRANGLE: BOSTON, MA; NH; CT; RI; ME

SCALE: 1: 250,000

ACREAGE: 50' x 50' (.1A)

OWNER(S): First Coast Guard District
408 Atlantic Avenue
Boston, MA 02210

STATUS: Unmanned/Active

RECORDED BY: L. Fox

ORGANIZATION: MHC

DATE: September 1981

Long Island Head Light, Boston

SITE DESCRIPTION: The Long Island Head Light, Boston, marks the President Roads, at the north entrance to the Nantasket Roads, and is an Inner Harbor Light for Boston Harbor. It was, in fact, known for many years as the Inner Harbor Light, and was in two other locations before it was built finally on the highest point of land at the north end of Long Island. The World War I Fort Strong's remains lie a short distance from the tower, revealing its strategic location. Access to the island is made over a bridge from Wollaston, a town long since incorporated into the city of Quincy, but is highly restricted due to the city's prison hospital located in the center of the island. Small one-lane roads lead through the hospital buildings to the far end of the island and the lighthouse.

MAJOR ELEMENTS: Only the tower (1819) and entranceway remain, although the immediate area is covered by a thick underbrush and the oil house may still exist.

- Exterior - The white brick 1819 tower has a small brick gable-roofed entranceway with single window, now blocked up with a plywood sheet. The wooden eaves of the entryway strongly resemble those of many New England oil houses. A stone step leads to the interior through a solid steel door, obviously not original. Inside the walls, floor and ceiling are all brick, with a thin wood moulding that runs around the four sides of the ceiling.
- Tower - The cylindrical tower has four windows with wooden frames set slightly into the brick wall. One 2/2 window is located on the inland side, above the entryway and the other three face Boston Harbor and are all on different levels of the tower. The remains of a grounding strap can be found on the northwest side. A decorative four course brick stepped corbel table runs around the tower directly beneath the Italianate iron arches that support the balcony, and is the only aesthetic feature in the otherwise simple structure.
- Balcony - The circular iron balcony is 50" wide and is made up of segments fitted together. Ornate cast iron molded balusters (Italianate) like those at other Massachusetts 19th century lights are connected to one another by a simple flat strip near the finial and a thin round pole of iron at the base. An iron half door with a hood above it leads into the lens room.
- Lens Room - The ten-sided lens room has five intact aluminum air vents, situated within the exterior wall. the metal conical roof is typical of others, in that it is made of the same number of triangular segments as there are windows. A black metal ball-shaped air vent tops the roof, and above that extends the lightning rod. The ten single-pane windows of the lens room are visible from all sites, and are taller than most others. That is, the metal wall up to the windows is quite short in comparison with other lens rooms. The windows, therefore, offer a greater light range. They measure 26 1/2" by 47 1/2".
- INTERIOR
- Tower - Another set of iron doors, measuring 34" X 75", separate the brick entranceway and the tower itself. A three course brick arch is located directly above the doors. The floor of the tower is brick and a staircase of twenty-three iron steps circle upwards to a platform.
- Stairs - From this platform, another twenty-seven steps leads to a second metal semicircular platform which comprises the lamproom. Each iron stair measures 8" on the narrow end, 10 1/2" on the center, and 13" at the widened, and all are 32" long from side to side. A wooden hand-cut railing runs the length of the stair.
- Windows - The four windows in the tower are virtually the same size. The middle one is 24" X 40", and the top window is 24 3/4" X 40 1/2". All four have a three course brick arch above them and are set into the wall of the tower with granite posts, lintels and sills. Slightly curved outward, the sills measure 10 3/4" at the center and 11 1/2" at each end.

Lens Room - A straight eleven-rung iron ladder leads directly up to the lens room which has been stripped of many of its original technological parts, such as the smoke vent above the lantern, and, the original air vents. The walls were probably at one time covered with vertical wooden sheathing but the exterior metal wall has since been exposed. An automatic plastic lens has replaced the old.

CHRONOLOGICAL HISTORY:

- 1819 - referred to as the Inner Harbor Light. Present tower built.
- 1845 - Keeper Charles Beck ran a signal system for pilots in Boston Harbor. He would hoist up a black ball to indicate that more pilots were needed to guide ships in.
- 1918 - intensity of light was increased to 1700 candlepower and the tower was repainted.
- 1942 - candlepower reduced to 2000; 56-watt bulbs inside a frosted lamp were installed; and the tower was painted olive for camouflage.
- 1945 - candlepower was increased to 5,500. New lamps installed.
- 1947 - tower repainted white.
- 1954 - light was extinguished from April to June and from October to December.
- 1966 - the 3 1/2 Order Fresnel lens gave 14,000 candlepower; had 120 volt, 250 watt daylight control, called a Sauter Time Switch.
- 1979 - Coast Guard reported water damage, bricks swelling, rotting balcony, railings and window frames.
- 1982 - Long Island Head Light extinguished as an active aid to navigation.
- 1985 - Light re-established, converted to solar power and relit, October, 1985; light tower repaired and repainted at the same time.

LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Long Island Head Light, Boston, possesses integrity of location, design, setting, materials and workmanship as well as important associations with the development of aids to navigation in Massachusetts. Erected in 1817, it is an excellent example of an early brick tower with unique architectural detail such as triple courses over the windows and door and ringing the exterior. Historically, it is especially important as the major light marking Boston's Inner Harbor. Long Island Light meets criteria A and C of the NRHP on the state level as well as survey criteria 1a, 2a.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

MAY 4 1987

Section number Page 174

Multiple Resource Area
Thematic Group

Name Lighthouses of Massachusetts TR
State MASSACHUSETTS

Nomination/Type of Review

Date/Signature

Cover Substantive Review

Keeper

[Signature] 6/15/87

< 50 1. Cleveland LEDGE Light Station
Substantive Review

Keeper

[Signature] 6/15/87

Attest

2. Highland Light Station (Cape Cod Light)
Entered in the
National Register

for Keeper

[Signature] 6/15/87

Attest

3. Gay Head Light
Entered in the
National Register

for Keeper

[Signature] 6/15/87

Attest

4. Edgartown Harbor Light
Entered in the
National Register

for Keeper

[Signature] 6/15/87

Attest

5. Derby Wharf Light Station
Entered in the
National Register

for Keeper

[Signature] 6/15/87

Attest

6. East Chop Light
Entered in the
National Register

for Keeper

[Signature] 6/15/87

Attest

7. Eastern Point Light Station
Entered in the
National Register

for Keeper

[Signature] 9/28/87

Attest

8. Long Island Head Light
Entered in the
National Register

for Keeper

[Signature] 6/15/87

Attest

9. Long Point Light Station
Entered in the
National Register

for Keeper

[Signature] 9/28/87

Attest

10. Marblehead Light
Entered in the
National Register

for Keeper

[Signature] 6/15/87

Attest

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

Long Island Head Light (Lighthouses of Massachusetts TR)
Suffolk County
MASSACHUSETTS

Working No. 4/28/87
Fed. Reg. Date: 3/2/88
Date Due: 6/18/87
Action: ACCEPT 6-15-87
 RETURN
 REJECT
Federal Agency: US CG - DOT

Entered in the
National Register

- resubmission
- nomination by person or local government
- owner objection
- appeal

Substantive Review: sample request appeal NR decision

Reviewer's comments:

Recom./Criteria _____
Reviewer _____
Discipline _____
Date _____
_____ see continuation sheet

Nomination returned for: _____ technical corrections cited below
_____ substantive reasons discussed below

1. Name

2. Location

3. Classification

Category	Ownership Public Acquisition	Status Accessible	Present Use
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4. Owner of Property

5. Location of Legal Description

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

Has this property been determined eligible? yes no

7. Description

Condition		Check one	Check one
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input type="checkbox"/> original site
<input type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved date _____
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed		

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

- summary paragraph
- completeness
- clarity
- alterations/integrity
- dates
- boundary selection

8. Significance

Period _____ Areas of Significance—Check and justify below

Specific dates _____ Builder/Architect _____

Statement of Significance (*in one paragraph*)

- summary paragraph
- completeness
- clarity
- applicable criteria
- justification of areas checked
- relating significance to the resource
- context
- relationship of integrity to significance
- justification of exception
- other

9. Major Bibliographical References

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property _____

Quadrangle name _____

UTM References _____

Verbal boundary description and justification _____

11. Form Prepared By

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

____ national ____ state ____ local

State Historic Preservation Officer signature _____

title _____ date _____

13. Other

- Maps
- Photographs
- Other

Questions concerning this nomination may be directed to _____

Signed _____ Date _____ Phone: _____



AUG 1981

Long Island Head Light
BOSTON # 22

Lighthouses of MA, TR

Photo #1 of 2

Long Island Light

LIGHTHOUSES OF MASSACHUSETTS
THEMATIC GROUP NOMINATION



Long Island Head Light
Boston #22

Lighthouses of MA, TR

Photo #20F2

AUG 1931

Long Island

LIGHTHOUSES OF MASSACHUSETTS
THEMATIC GROUP NOMINATION

Please refer to the map in the
Multiple Property Cover Sheet
for this property

Multiple Property Cover Sheet Reference Number: 64000282