NPS Form 10-900 OMB No. 1024-0018

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form.* If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions.

1. Name of Property

Historic name: Malcolm X–Ella Little Collins House (preferred)
Other names/site number: Frederic W. Dorr House
Name of related multiple property listing: N/A
(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing

2. Location

Street & number: 72 Dale Street
City or town: Boston State: MA County: Suffolk
Not For Publication: ☐ Vicinity: ☐

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,

I hereby certify that this ✓ nomination ___ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.

In my opinion, the property ✓ meets ___ does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:

✓ **national** ___ **statewide** ✓ **local**

Applicable National Register Criteria:

✓ **A** ✓ **B** ___ **C** ✓ **D**

Brona Simon January 22, 2021

Signature of certifying official/Title: **SHPO** **Date**

State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

In my opinion, the property ___ meets ___ does not meet the National Register criteria.

Signature of commenting official: **Date**

Title : **State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government**

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

X entered in the National Register

___ determined eligible for the National Register

___ determined not eligible for the National Register

___ removed from the National Register

___ other (explain:) _____

Lisa Deline 2/12/2021

Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

5. Classification

Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply.)

Private:	X
Public – Local	
Public – State	
Public – Federal	

Category of Property

(Check only **one** box.)

Building(s)	X
District	
Site	
Structure	
Object	

Number of Resources within Property
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
2		buildings
1		sites
1		structures
2		objects
6	0	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

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6. Function or Use
Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions.)
DOMESTIC/Single Dwelling
DOMESTIC/Multiple Dwelling
DOMESTIC/Secondary Structure

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions.)
DOMESTIC/Multiple Dwelling
DOMESTIC/Secondary Structure
WORK IN PROGRESS

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions.)
LATE VICTORIAN/Italianate

Materials: (enter categories from instructions.)
Principal exterior materials of the property: Stone, Asbestos, Slate, Wood

Narrative Description
(Describe the historic and current physical appearance and condition of the property. Describe contributing and noncontributing resources if applicable. Begin with **a summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, type, style, method of construction, setting, size, and significant features. Indicate whether the property has historic integrity.)

Summary Paragraph

The Malcolm X–Ella Little Collins House at 72 Dale Street, in the Roxbury neighborhood of Boston, Suffolk County, Massachusetts. The property, encompassing six contributing resources (two buildings, one structure, one site, and two objects) on 0.16 acres, is on the south side of Dale Street in a residential neighborhood west of Warren Street, a major thoroughfare through Roxbury. A stone retaining wall runs east–west along the north edge of the property, and an asphalt and dirt driveway running south on the east side of the house terminates at the garage. The property has been continuously owned by the Collins family since 1941. The house is currently under restoration by the owner and, despite some past vandalism and deferred maintenance, retains integrity and conveys its significance as the home of Ella Little Collins and, intermittently, her brother Malcolm (Little) X.

Narrative Description

The Malcolm X–Ella Little Collins House is on a sloping, 0.16-acre rectangular parcel on the south side of Dale Street in the Roxbury neighborhood of Boston, Massachusetts. The property is surrounded by wood-frame houses on the north, east, and west, and the Higginson-Lewis

Elementary School is on the south. Malcolm X Park, formerly Washington Park, is approximately 100 feet to the west. The lot is bounded by a wood privacy fence on the west side and a metal picket fence on the south. The house is set back from and elevated above the street edge. An approximately three-foot-tall, mortared ashlar Retaining Wall (mid-19th century, contributing structure, Photos 1 and 2) capped with granite pavers runs along the north edge of the property at the sidewalk line with a run of five ashlar granite-block steps leading from the sidewalk to the house's terrace level. Two square Granite Posts (mid-19th century, contributing objects, Photos 1 and 2) flank the granite steps at the sidewalk. A square granite post marks the northwest corner of the property boundary, and a square granite post marks the west edge of the entrance to the unpaved driveway along the east side of the property; the east post appears to have been broken. Landscaping consists of grass and occasional shrubs near the house. A rough-dressed, angled, low granite marker is at the edge of the retaining wall, west of the driveway. A plaque from the Boston Landmarks Commission, designating the house a City of Boston landmark, is affixed to the granite marker.

The Malcolm X–Ella Little Collins House (ca. 1865, contributing building, BOS.14294, Photos 1–6) is a north-facing, Italianate-style, 2 ½-story, three-bay side-hall plan, wood-frame building on a rubblestone foundation and is topped with an end-gable roof. A 1 ½-story rear ell projects from the center and west bays of the south elevation. The walls are clad with asbestos shingles; gaps in the sheathing show the presence of prior, possibly original, wood clapboards. The house is trimmed in wood, including paired rectangular brackets on the roof cornice and eaves of the main block and ell, narrow and simple window and door surrounds, and flushboard sheathing on the façade second-floor bay window and front porch (described below). The roof is clad with slate shingles and is covered with a protective rubber membrane wrap, applied in 2014, which also encloses the cornice, to prevent damage from water infiltration. A brick chimney pierces the center of the ridgeline of the ell; interior hearths indicate a chimney was once in the approximate center of the east wall, near the edge of the roof, but is no longer extant above the roofline.

A full-width, shed-roof porch projects from the north façade elevation and is supported by grooved, chamfered square posts and enclosed by a low wood balustrade with turned balusters. Wood porch steps continue the vertical path and level changes from the sidewalk to the porch and main entrance. The porch was rebuilt, possibly for the second time, in the last quarter of the 20th century. Mid-20th-century photos of the Collins family on the porch show the porch was enclosed with a solid knee-wall clad with asbestos shingles and had Queen Anne-style turned posts, large carved brackets, and a spindlework frieze between the brackets along the porch cornice (Figure 1; BLC 1998:10). The original porch may have been modified in the 1880s (see Supplemental Information – Architecture).

A bay window projects from the east bay of the second story immediately above the porch. In the west bay, the porch shelters the main entrance, consisting of a half-light wood door with single-pane glass transom and sidelights. A secondary entrance, filled with a six-panel wood door with integral fan light, is in the center of the east elevation of the ell, and is sheltered by a metal-clad, hip-roof overhang with a molded cornice and carved wood brackets. Three second-story entrances are visible but are currently unusable. They consist of a six-panel metal door in the west bay of the south elevation of the ell and paired sliding-glass doors in the north bay of the east elevation of the ell and in the east bay of the south elevation of the main block. Ghost marks of a rear porch, including a stair outline, remain visible on the south elevation of the ell; the porch was removed ca. 1976 due to structural deterioration. The basement entrance, on the south elevation of the east bay of the main block, consists of a concrete-lined well with a ladder and a full height door below grade. Small horizontal window openings are along the top of grade in the foundation. Symmetrically spaced rectangular window openings throughout the building above the basement story are filled with 1/1 double-hung vinyl replacement sash that was installed in the late 20th century. The house was no longer occupied after about 1965, following the assassination of Malcolm X. In 1970 vandals broke into the building, smashing all of the sash windows and threw many of the Little Collins' possessions left in the house across the landscape. The building is currently undergoing rehabilitation/restoration, including complete rehabilitation of the two first-floor apartments.

The interior of the building consists of four main living areas: two on the first floor, one on the second floor, and one on the third floor; the basement is unfinished and is used for storage.

Basement

The basement encompasses the entire footprint of the building and shows evidence of a single building campaign, indicating the construction of the ell was concurrent with the main block of the house. The interior is accessed via an external door in the east bay of the south elevation of the main block, reached via ladder. Interior access initially was via wood stairs that run east–west along the interior of the south wall of the ell, but they are no longer in use. The walls are mortared rubblestone coated with remnants of plaster sealant applied in the mid-20th century, and the floor is poured concrete. Window openings consist of glass block on the east side of the main block and ell, and the other openings are infilled with concrete, likely done in the early 20th century. The ceiling is open, with exposed joists and floorboards; some joists retain evidence of lath and plaster, a small section of which remains extant at the north end of the basement. The space is generally undivided, save for two small partitioned areas in the northeast and northwest corners. Four brick pillars, evenly spaced along the longitudinal center line in the main block of

the house, run between the northwest room and a large brick chimney stack centered in the ell, which splays outward to the hearths on the floor above.

The northwest partitioned area, possibly a former pantry or cold storage area, is accessed from the east in an angled wall, has brick walls on the south and east, and a wide wood door frame. Open wood shelves are affixed to the south wall, and modern utility panels are affixed to the north wall. The room is used for storage. The northeast partitioned area, likely a former coal bin, has horizontal wood-plank walls on the west and south and an entrance opening on the south end of the west wall. Two window openings are at the top of the walls; the opening in the north end has been infilled with concrete and the opening in the east wall is filled with glass block. The space is used for storage.

First Floor

The living spaces are accessed via the main entrance from the front porch on the north elevation. Immediately inside is a small foyer with a modern linoleum floor and two entrance doors side by side. On the east is a modern metal exterior door leading to the first-story living spaces; on the west is a fully glazed wood French door leading to the second- and third-story spaces. Although living spaces have been repartitioned or repurposed over the long life of the building, plaster details such as crown molding and medallions and wood window and door surrounds remain extant.

The house has, and appears to have always had, a side-hall plan with the staircase against the west wall. According to building permits, the first and second floors were partitioned into two living spaces in 1925 by Mary and Daniel McDonald. During the Ella Little Collins and Malcolm X period of occupation of the building, the two apartments on the first story were occupied by extended family—the Little and Collins family members lived on the second floor, and Malcolm X occupied the third floor when he stayed at the property.

The first floor consists of three main rooms arranged longitudinally along the east side of a narrow corridor leading south to the ell, which is undergoing interior renovation. Floors are generally composed of approximately three-inch-wide hardwood planking, with small areas covered with mid-20th-century linoleum flooring. The location of crown molding indicates that the three rooms were originally one large room that likely was accessed via an entrance in what is now the center room. Original walls and ceilings are lath and plaster, and partition walls are likely gypsum board. The partition walls may date to ca. 1946 when Ella and Kenneth Collins converted the first-floor apartment into two separate apartments: one consisting of the north, center, and south rooms in the main block of the house and the north half of the ell and the other

comprising the south half of the ell. Door and window openings throughout have simple, wide-board surrounds with mitered corners. All rooms on the first floor in the main block of the house are currently used for storage.

The north room (Photo 3), formerly a parlor, has an arched, plaster-clad opening in the west wall and lath-and-plaster walls covered with vertically striped wallpaper. A doorway with a wide board surround is in the center of the south wall. Wide crown molding runs along the east, west, and north walls. A plaster medallion with extant, non-functional light hardware is south of center.

The center room, formerly accessed by a pair of French doors (not extant), has lath and plaster walls and ceilings; the walls are clad with vertically striped wallpaper. The room has no window openings, but an additional door opening in the center of the north wall leads to the former parlor. A brick hearth and chimney projects into the room from the east wall, south of center. The chimney appears to previously have been completely covered with stucco, as crown molding runs along the east wall and around the north and south sides of the chimney; part of the plaster appears to have been removed from the chimney face.

The south room is accessed by two doors, one off the hall in the west wall and one in the south wall, leading from the ell. The walls are partially covered with flowered wallpaper, and the floor is covered with floral linoleum. A small bathroom is on the west side of the hall, approximately between the center and south rooms. It is currently used for storage.

The ell, which was formerly divided into two living spaces, had an eat-in kitchen in the north half, and a small efficiency apartment in the south half that was accessed by a door in the west bay of the south elevation, which is currently covered over with plywood. The first story of the ell is undergoing restoration and is not currently in use.

Second Floor

The second floor, consisting of seven rooms, is accessed by a run of wood stairs (Photo 4) leading south from the west door in the foyer. The stairs are enclosed with solid walls on both sides. At the top of the stairs, a landing/hall provides access to two rooms at the north end of the floor and a bedroom in the center of the floor, all within the main block of the building. To the south, in the ell, are a bathroom, the living and dining rooms, and the kitchen and other small spaces at the south end of the building. The ell is separated from the north half, or main block, of the floor by an arched opening, built by Ella Little Collins, that separates the bedrooms and formal parlor from the less formal public spaces. The east side of the landing shows evidence of

a former balustrade and newel post, both of which are not extant; the balustrade, however, is in storage. The second-floor rooms generally have narrow hardwood floors and gypsum-board or lath-and-plaster walls and ceilings.

The northwest room was used as a bedroom during the Little Collins occupation. The small room has gypsum-board walls and ceilings, wide-board surrounds around the windows and doors, and built-in cabinets and bookshelves along the south wall.

To the east of the northwest bedroom is the parlor, which has a bay window in the north wall and a fireplace with a metal insert and brick surround and chimney in the southeast corner. The parlor is connected to the north bedroom and a second bedroom to the south via wood doors in the west and south walls. The entrance in the west wall has been infilled with gypsum board, and the south entrance has a four-panel wood door with a glass knob. The walls are lath and plaster, and the ceiling was formerly lath and plaster but is currently unfinished. Remnants of an original metal light fixture hang from the approximate center of the ceiling. The room is currently used for storage.

South of the parlor is the second (south) bedroom, used by Ella Little Collins and her husband Kenneth. A floating gypsum board wall installed by the Collinses removed the direct connection of the bedroom to the parlor. The space between the bedroom and the parlor formed by the floating wall is now used for storage and shows evidence of water infiltration and damage at the chimney stack. The south bedroom has wood floors, gypsum-board walls, and a gypsum-board ceiling. A sliding glass door is centered in the south wall of the room; there is no balcony or landing accessed by the door, nor is there evidence of one historically.

The south rooms, consisting of a bathroom, the living and dining rooms, the kitchen, and a laundry room, generally have gypsum-board walls and ceilings and wood floors, with the exception of the kitchen and back hall leading to the laundry room, which have modern tile floors. A built-in china cabinet is in the east side of the lath-and-plaster south wall of the dining room. In the late 20th or early 21st century, the kitchen was modernized; the door from the dining room to the kitchen was shifted to the west at that time. South of the kitchen, on the west side of the back hall, is a laundry room which was formerly a small bedroom. The walls and ceiling are gypsum board, and the floor is covered with strips of carpeting. A door is in the west side of the back hall, which formerly led to an entry porch (removed in the late 1970s).

Third Floor/Attic

The third floor, a half story under the attic eaves, is accessed by a run of wood stairs on the west wall leading north from the approximate center of the second floor in the main block. The floors are wide, painted pine boards, and the walls and ceiling are covered with gypsum board. The third floor consists of five spaces arranged in an approximate U-shape around the stairwell; all rooms except the bathroom have sloping ceilings matching the pitch of the roof. A storage space runs along the west side of the floor and is accessed by a multi-light wood door at the top of the stairs; two bedrooms take up the north half of the floor; a large open space is on the east side of the floor; and a small bathroom is in the southwest corner of the east half of the floor.

The west bedroom, formerly a sitting room used by Malcolm X, is accessed by a door at the top of the stairs. To the east is a second bedroom that was used by Malcolm X as a bedroom when he stayed at the property. The two rooms were originally connected by a door in the center of the partition wall dividing the two rooms but has since been infilled. Two of the rooms—the bathroom and the east bedroom—retain elements present when Malcolm X occupied the property while staying with his sister's family.

The east bedroom at the northeast corner of the house (Photo 5) is a small, rectangular space with one window and a low, two-shelf bookshelf with angled, irregularly spaced vertical supports attached to the kneewall along the length of the room. The bookshelf was constructed by Ella Little Collins for Malcolm X. The room also has a built-out closet in the southwest corner added in the late 20th century by the current owner.

The bathroom (Photo 6) is a small, rectangular space with a linoleum tile floor, textured particleboard wall panels, and a gypsum board ceiling. The bathroom has a free-standing cast iron clawfoot tub on wood block risers that span the north end of the room, a small toilet, and a corner ceramic sink with a marble surround. A mirrored medicine cabinet is affixed to the walls in the corner above the sink.

The McDonald Garage (1920, contributing building, Photo 7) is at the south end (rear), of the property southeast of the house. The garage is a north-facing, Art Deco-style, four-bay-by-two-bay brick-and-concrete building with a flat roof and a stone foundation. The roof is composed of board-formed reinforced concrete, and the floor is poured concrete over the stone foundation. The north (façade) elevation is composed of gray brick laid in running bond with red terra-cotta details. The side and rear walls are composed of red brick laid in running bond with irregularly spaced header rows. The façade comprises three sections: two single-car bays on the east and west flanking a two-car bay in the center topped with a parapet wall with metal coping. Above

each car bay is a rectangular panel outlined with header bricks and red terracotta square tiles at the corners. In the center of each rectangle is a diamond composed of four stretcher bricks with a red terracotta tile in the center. Wood and metal vertical-lift garage doors fill each of the three openings.

The garage is no longer in use and is in fair to poor condition. On the west side of the garage in the north bay is a wood door recessed under a segmental arch composed of a double row of header bricks. A former transom light above the door has been covered with plywood. Former full-height window openings on the west, south, and east elevations have been infilled with brick and concrete block, but rough-dressed granite sills and lintels remain. The reinforced-concrete roof has begun to delaminate and sections of brick on the façade are damaged or missing.

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria
(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- [x] A. Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- [X] B. Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- [ ] C. Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- [x] D. Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations
(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

- [ ] A. Owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes
- [ ] B. Removed from its original location
- [ ] C. A birthplace or grave
- [ ] D. A cemetery
- [ ] E. A reconstructed building, object, or structure
- [ ] F. A commemorative property
- [ ] G. Less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years

Areas of Significance
(Enter categories from instructions.)
Social History
Ethnic Heritage: Black
Archaeology, Historic – Non-Aboriginal
Civil Rights

Period of Significance
ca. 1765–1821
ca. 1865–1965

Significant Dates
ca. 1765–1821: First residential occupation of the property by the Seaver family
ca. 1865: 72 Dale Street constructed
1941: Ella Little Collins and Kenneth Collins purchased 72 Dale Street
1965: Malcolm X assassinated

Significant Person
(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)
Malcolm X
Ella Little Collins

Cultural Affiliation
Black

Architect/Builder
Nelson Curtis
Fred N. Russell

Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph (Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance, applicable criteria, justification for the period of significance, and any applicable criteria considerations.)

The Malcolm X–Ella Little Collins House is eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places at the national level under Criterion B and at the local level under Criteria A, B, and D. At the national and local levels, the property is significant under Criterion B in the areas of Social History, Ethnic Heritage: Black, and Civil Rights for its association with the life of preeminent civil and human rights activist Malcolm (Little) X. The house at 72 Dale Street is the only extant house associated with Malcolm X's childhood and formative years. At the local level, the property is eligible under Criterion A, in the areas of Social History and Ethnic Heritage: Black for its association with the development of Roxbury as a streetcar suburb of Boston and later a prominent black neighborhood. Under Criterion B, the property is eligible for listing at the local level in the areas of Social History, Ethnic Heritage: Black, and Civil Rights for its association with the life of human rights activist Ella Little Collins, an influential supporter of her brother Malcolm and an important organizer in the civil rights movement and in improving educational opportunities for black students in Boston and New York. Under Criterion D, the property is eligible at the local level in the area of Archaeology: Historic – Non-Aboriginal for its demonstrated potential to provide information about a middling to prosperous 18th-century farm in what is a remarkably intact landscape context for Roxbury. Supplemental information is provided about the property as a good example of a restrained Italianate style, single-family, wood-frame house constructed in Roxbury during the mid-19th century that was subsequently divided into a multi-family dwelling, which was a common occurrence in Boston during the late 19th and early 20th centuries.

The primary period of significance for the Malcolm X–Ella Little Collins House begins in ca. 1865, when the house was constructed, and ends in 1965, when Malcolm X was assassinated, and the house was no longer occupied or rented out by the family due to Ella's refusal to reenter the house after his assassination. Under Criterion D, the period of significance is from ca. 1765 to 1821, encompassing the first residential occupation of the property as a farm by the Seaver family.

Narrative Statement of Significance (Provide at least **one** paragraph for each area of significance.)

CRITERION B – MALCOLM X

The Malcolm X–Ella Little Collins House is eligible for listing in the National Register at the national level under Criterion B in the areas of Social History, Ethnic Heritage: Black, and Civil Rights as the only remaining residence associated with nationally significant human rights activist Malcolm (Little) X during the formative years in his youth. 72 Dale Street was his home during his peripatetic teenage years from 1941 to 1944, when he lived with his sister Ella Little Collins,[1] until he went to Massachusetts prisons from 1944 to 1952. In prison, influenced by his brothers Reginald and Wilfred and sister Hilda, he joined the Nation of Islam (NOI), then within weeks of his parole, met the Honorable Elijah Muhammad and became Malcolm X.[2] After he left prison and throughout his adult life, 72 Dale Street remained a locus for Malcolm X's relationship with Ella, including the last years of his life after he left the NOI and formed the Organization of Afro-American Unity (OAAU).

Early Life

Malcolm Little (1925–1965) was born May 19, 1925, at University Hospital in Omaha, Nebraska. He was the seventh of Reverend Earl Lee Little's (1890–1931) eleven children and was born to Earl's second wife, Louise Langdon Norton Little (1894–1991) (McDuffie 2016). Malcolm was the fourth of Earl and Louise's seven children (Levy 1996). Earl's oldest child, Ella Little Collins (1914–1996), whom he had with his first wife, Daisy Mason (later Washington), played a singularly significant role in Malcolm's life (see **Criterion B – Ella Little Collins**). Earl and Louise Little raised their children with awareness of black political consciousness and freedom struggles. Despite the pressures that fragmented Malcolm's family, it was unusual at the time for its transition from the rural South to the urban North as a relatively intact nuclear family (Sales 1994:31).

Born in a family of proud African Americans in Georgia, Earl was a skilled carpenter and a Baptist preacher. In addition, he became a dedicated organizer and leader for Jamaican-born

[1] The majority of sources consulted, especially those written during her life time, refer to Ella as Ella Little, then as Ella Johnson (married name), and lastly as Ella Collins, Mrs. Collins, or, very occasionally, Ella Little Collins (married names). Although a few posthumous sources refer to her as Ella Little-Collins, there is no evidence to suggest that she herself hyphenated her name in this way. Therefore, the name Ella Little Collins is used in this nomination.

[2]Throughout the nomination, Malcolm X is referred to by this name that he took when he entered the National of Islam, except for in this **Criterion B – Malcolm X** section on the chronological period of his childhood, youth, and young adulthood that predated that decision, when he is referred to as Malcolm or Malcolm Little.

Marcus Garvey's (1887–1940) Universal Negro Improvement Association (UNIA) and Pan-Africanism movement based in Harlem, New York City, which aimed to unify and connect people of African descent worldwide and preached for a return of blacks to Africa. Garvey's UNIA was intended to serve as a "government in exile" (quoted in Reed 2004) for African people dispersed around the world from their African homeland. Garveyism was particularly attractive to members of the working class, seeking a clear racial identity and a way to express a growing sense of group destiny. Malcolm recalled accompanying his father to UNIA meetings that always closed with leading attendees in affirming, "Up, you mighty race, you can accomplish what you will!" (X and Haley 1999 [1965]4:9; Reed 2004).

Louise was born in Grenada to a young black woman raped by an older white man, which infused her passion to promote African ancestry and black freedom. She immigrated to Canada where she joined the UNIA. When she and Earl met and married in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, she became a naturalized U.S. citizen. As the corresponding secretary of the local Marcus Garvey Society, she sent reports for the UNIA publication *Negro World* and was committed to promoting grassroots Garveyism and black self-determination in her family and the Midwest communities where they lived. The Garvey message was considered radical by many blacks and was strongly opposed by racist white supremacist groups like the Ku Klux Klan (McDuffie 2016:1, 157; Collins and Bailey 1998:14–16; Sales 1994:30).

Before moving to Omaha, Earl and Louise Little lived in Philadelphia, where their oldest child, Wilfred, was born (1920–1998); Hilda (1922–2015), Philbert (1923–1993), and Malcolm were born in Omaha (Collins and Bailey 1998:14). In 1926, the Littles moved to Milwaukee, Wisconsin, where Reginald was born (1927–2001), and then to Lansing, Michigan, in 1928. The next year, Earl and Louise were sued for eviction from their home based on a racist restrictive covenant that denied the sale of the house to blacks, which they were unaware of when they purchased the property. In November 1928, an explosion occurred in the middle of the night, and the Little house burned to the ground; the Lansing fire department refused to respond as the fire was at a "colored" residence. Malcolm later believed that the Black Legion, a local white supremacist group, was responsible. In December 1928, the family moved to East Lansing, where the youngest children, Wesley (1928–2009) and Yvonne (1931–2003), were born (Collins and Bailey 1998:14; Gallen 1992:11–12; Payne and Payne 2020:58–88; Strickland et al. 1994:8–10).

Louise, as an immigrant herself from the West Indies, raised her children to be comfortable with white European immigrants when they lived in Milwaukee and Lansing. Her upbringing in the Caribbean avoided exposure to the toxic racism of American legacy of slavery. She instilled in the children training to resist racial slurs and provocations by not overreacting, thereby reducing

the likelihood the perpetrators would continue. As a result, they grew up with a social perspective that they were not inferior and conveyed a sense of equanimity, independence, and racial pride that underlay Malcolm's persona throughout his life (Payne and Payne 2020:58–88).

On September 28, 1931, Earl Little was killed in Lansing in what police called a streetcar/trolley accident but the Little family and some blacks believed was a racially motivated killing, and Malcolm later said the Ku Klux Klan was responsible (X and Haley 1999 [1965]:13; Collins and Bailey 1998:17).[3] In December 1938, after struggling to raise her children alone during the Depression and resisting white welfare agency officials trying to place the children in foster care, Louise Little suffered a mental breakdown and, in 1939, was committed to Kalamazoo State Hospital, a psychiatric institution. She remained there for 26 years, until released as the result of efforts of her children, and lived with family members in Michigan for the remainder of her life (Associated Press 1996; Gallen 1992:12: McDuffie 2016:147; Strickland et al. 1994:11–13).

In 1939, the State of Michigan placed the Little children with foster families, and Malcolm was sent to a juvenile home of nearly all white children in Mason, Michigan, near Detroit. Malcolm did well in school, got straight As, and was elected president of his eighth-grade class. However, after a teacher discouraged him from thinking about becoming a lawyer, Malcolm became less interested in school and eventually stopped going. Malcolm contacted Ella, who in 1937 and 1938 had visited his siblings and him in Michigan and urged him to write her, and at her suggestion spent his summer vacations in 1939 and 1940 in Boston at 63 Waumbeck Street (no longer extant), where he was exposed to a large urban black community for the first time (BLC 1998:15) (see **Criterion B – Ella Little Collins**). After he returned to Detroit, Malcolm, no longer comfortable surrounded by whites, wrote to Ella asking her to help him, and she arranged to have official custody transferred from Michigan to Massachusetts (X and Haley 1999 [1965]:32).

During his childhood years in the Midwest, Malcolm thus witnessed a discriminatory environment around him and experienced a tumultuous family life with multiple moves and losses. By age 4, he saw his family home burned; by age 6, his father was killed; and at age 14, his mother was committed to a mental hospital, and he was sent to a foster home. All these disrupting events, repeated interactions with white racism, and the string of family tragedies had a profound and lasting influence on Malcom's personal development. When, at age 16, Malcolm moved to Boston to be with his half-sister Ella Little Collins, he joined a relatively stable extended family unit and was given his own generous physical space in the house for the first time in his life.

[3] Malcolm X biographer Bruce Perry's research supports the official determination of accidental death, as does that of investigative journalist Les Payne (Payne and Payne 2020:91; Perry 1991:12, 389).

Beyond participating in the family and household sphere, Malcolm was able to explore and navigate the black urban communities of Boston and later New York and along the East Coast. The world of major northern US cities that he entered in 1941 and experienced as a young black man had been shaped by dramatic changes in the country after the Civil War, many as a direct consequence of the conflict, such as urbanization, industrialization, immigration, expansion of education, settlement of the West, and emergence of women's professions (NHLP 2008:8). In 1883, the US Supreme Court had declared the Reconstruction-era Civil Rights Act of 1875 unconstitutional and asserted that the Fourteenth Amendment forbid states but not citizens from discrimination. In 1896, the same court had issued the *Plessy v. Ferguson* ruling that "separate but equal" facilities satisfied the Fourteenth Amendment equal protection guarantees. After Reconstruction, while northern whites, unlike those in the South, had not enshrined Jim Crow practices limiting black freedoms into state and local laws, they had developed racist and segregationist customs and traditions with much the same effect on African Americans. In the first four decades of the 20th century, sweeping social and governmental changes emerging from the Progressive Era (1900–1920), World War I (1914–1918), and the Great Depression (1929–1939) fueled social change, discrimination practices, and the civil rights movement. One of the nation's oldest civil rights organizations, the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), formed in 1909. Between 1915 and 1970, in the Great Migration, some six million black southerners, including members of the Little family, fled southern states with entrenched racist Jim Crow laws for greater freedom and the right to vote in northern cities.

One of the results of racism and segregation by the 1930s and 1940s was a transformation in the spatial configuration of cities in the South and North to a social geography of black and white neighborhoods, including the rise of black ghettos and middle-class enclaves, and public housing projects. Discriminatory and segregated housing practices such as racist restrictive covenants, which had caused the Littles' Milwaukee house destruction, were expanded and contributed to this trend. The National Housing Act of 1934, one of President Franklin D. Roosevelt's New Deal initiatives, was intended to improve housing conditions and make mortgages more affordable and accessible. As part of this program, the administration created the Home Owners Loan Corporation (HOLC) to help manage loan defaults. The HOLC's nationwide color-coded map system, of every metropolitan area defining mortgage risk, assigned any neighborhood with African American residents as red, the highest risk, known as redlining; banks would not issue mortgages in these areas (Rothstein 2017:5, 63–64; Wilkerson 2011:8–10).

In his groundbreaking 1944 study of race in the United States, *An American Dilemma*, the Swedish sociologist Gunnar Myrdal wrote, "The social paradox in the North is exactly this, that almost everybody is against discrimination in general but, at the same time, almost everybody

practices discrimination in his own personal affairs" (quoted in Sugrue 2008:xv). Racial inequality in the North differed from that in the South, as most places in the North did not have explicitly segregated facilities or schools, and black voters were not systematically disenfranchised throughout the region. In the North like the South, however, private exclusionary behaviors, local harassments and pressures, market practices including limitations of job opportunities, and public policies created and reinforced racial separation and inequality. In the North, the national renewed struggle for civil rights that began in the 1940s for the first time since post-Civil War Reconstruction thus extended beyond the "battle to strike down legally mandated segregation" to include fights against discrimination in the workplace, for the opening of housing markets, the provision of quality education, access to the consumer marketplace, employment options, economic development, and other arenas (Sugrue 2008:xvi; Kline and Pineo 2019:4). Malcolm's entry into the northern urban environment nine months before the U.S. entered World War II occurred on the cusp of the national shift from this legacy of policies and practices and a new phase of accelerated social change in which he would become a central figure. His preceding experiences of understated but profoundly present northern racism and the discrimination he experienced while in Boston deeply informed the trajectory of his life and his unique groundbreaking and enduring contributions to the national and international civil and equal rights movements.

72 Dale Street

When Malcolm arrived in Boston in February 1941, he first lived for six months with Ella and their aunt Sarah Alice Little (Aunt Sas) at 89 Harrishof Street (no longer extant) (BLC 1998:16). In August 1941, after attempting to acquire a property at the southwest corner of Dale and Walnut streets in Roxbury, Ella purchased **72 Dale Street**. The house became the extended Little family base, where Malcolm was firmly ensconced in Ella's household and transitioned from boyhood to young adulthood, even as he spent increasing time away, staying with his friend Malcolm Jarvis when in Boston, visiting Michigan, and living and working in New York (Figures 1, 2, 3). On the impact of his move to Boston as a teenager, he later remarked, "No physical move in my life has been more pivotal or profound in its repercussions," and "All praise is due to Allah that I went to Boston when I did. If I hadn't, I'd probably still be a brainwashed black Christian" (X and Haley 1999 [1965]:39–40). Referring to the third-floor changes that Ella made for him and that remain today, Malcolm X recalled, "Ella had fixed up a nice little upstairs room for me" (X and Haley 1999 [1965]:45) (see **Section 7 – Description**, **Criterion B – Ella Little Collins**, and **Supplemental Information – Architecture**).

In the family sphere at 72 Dale Street, Malcolm learned many stories from Ella, Aunt Sas, Aunt Gracie, and visiting Michigan siblings about the Little family's history, beginning in Africa and

through slavery and emancipation in the South, and about the effects of white supremacy on members of the family and their efforts to support one another. These accounts combined with Malcolm's younger experiences with his mother and father further helped shape Malcolm's beliefs in black self-support, the terrorism of white supremacy, and the value of studying history (Bagley et al. 2018:32; Collins and Bailey 1998:3–37).

In the early 1940s, the house may also have served as a locus of the Little family's early exposure to Islamic ideas through Boston's growing Ahmadiyya Muslim community.[4] While the sect is different from the NOI, which Reginald, Philbert, Wilfred, Wesley, and Hilda joined and began writing and talking with Malcolm about in 1947 when he was in prison, it presented a different and ancient world view of religion than the Little family's traditional Christianity. The Ahmadiyya Muslim movement originated in late 19th-century India under self-proclaimed messiah Hadhrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad and first reached the United States in the 1920s. The sect concentrated on missionary work and eventually spread, including to Boston by the 1960s (Harvard University 2018). The Ahmadiyya teachings, while not a fully traditional form of Islam, were based on the Qur'an, and emphasized racial equality, which appealed to blacks (DeCaro Jr. 1996:84, 1346–137). One of the Littles' neighbors, the Perry family, of which several were jazz musicians, became Ahmadiyya followers. Bazeley E. (later Abdul) Perry, had encountered the teaching while on tour in Chicago in the 1940s. Malcolm enjoyed visiting the Perry home and clubs to hear their music. Perry may have helped set the stage for the Little siblings' religious conversion to the Nation of Islam (NOI) in the mid-to-late 1940s (BLC 1998:18; Collins and Bailey 1998:116). Little siblings in Boston and in Michigan rejected the traditional white iconography of their Christian Baptist family upbringing and were receptive to the NOI as a religion for blacks only that, similar to the familiar Garveyism, was intended to affirm the black identity (von Jena 2017; Bagley et al. 2018:33; BLC 1998:17–18; Perry 1991:142).

Under Ella's legal guardianship between February 1941 and May 19, 1946 (Malcolm's twenty-first birthday), Malcolm rebelled against Ella's middle-class aspirations and her criticisms. Rather than embracing the education, mainstream employment, and black associates she envisioned for him, his life was increasingly drawn toward urban nightlife and illicit activities. His closest companions in Boston were three worldly young men, considerably older than him, who he merged as the character "Shorty" in his autobiography: his half-brother Earl, Jr. who had already served two stints in reformatory school; Boston native and jazz trumpeter Malcolm Jarvis, and Ella's husband Kenneth Collins, who had known Malcolm's older brothers in Lansing. He frequented pool halls and other entertainment businesses around Dudley Square in

[4] The Ahmadiyya Muslim sect was separate from the Nation of Islam, although both were non-traditional forms of Islam and advocated racial equality (DeCaro Jr. 1996:136–137, 151–153).

Roxbury and the Roseland ballroom, which featured big band entertainment. He discarded his country background for a hip self-presentation with conked (chemically straightened) hair and zoot suits (Figure 2). With Ella's help and connections, Malcolm held a series of jobs in Boston as a parking-lot attendant, shoe-shine boy, dishwasher, and soda jerk. Ella contacted a friend who was an official in the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters and arranged a job for him as a Pullman porter on the New Haven Railroad between Boston and New York. She hoped the job would divert him from his nightclub activities and friends. However, once in the Harlem neighborhood of New York, he later recalled, "within the first five minutes in Small's [Smalls Paradise Club], I had left Boston and Roxbury forever" (X and Haley 1999 [1965]:76) (Payne and Payne 2020:152–154, 165; X and Haley 1999 [1965]:60–76).

While his time at 72 Dale Street was limited and erratic, his continuous connection to the house and family through Ella's presence is evident. He kept some of his expensive clothes in his third-floor room and frequently slept there when the train he worked on was in Boston, although he also stayed elsewhere in the city. Biographer Bruce Perry notes that Malcolm's longest stays at 72 Dale Street between 1941 and 1944 were for three weeks in December 1941 (he had been staying with his friend "Shorty" starting in July 1941); during regular train layovers in January to November 1942; and for three months in the fall of 1944 (Perry 1991:59, 84; BLC 1998:16–17).

New York City

In December 1942, Malcolm moved to Michigan for about four months and then, in early 1943, to New York City, where he worked intermittently for the railroad. In the Harlem section of the city, on his own at age 17 to 18, he frequented clubs and music venues such as the Apollo Theater and the Savoy Ballroom (X and Haley 1999 [1965]:82–83). He engaged in gambling, hustling, drug dealing, and numbers running for mobsters, for which he earned the nickname "Detroit Red." He still continued to visit Ella at 72 Dale Street in Boston, and he described one visit in 1943:

> Free now to do what I pleased, upon an impulse I went to Boston. Of course, I saw Ella. I gave her some money: it was a token of appreciation, I told her, for helping me when I had come from Lansing. She wasn't the same old Ella; she still hadn't forgiven me for Laura.[5] She never mentioned her, nor did I. But, even so, Ella acted better than she had when I left for New York. We reviewed the family changes (X and Haley 1999 [1965]:115).

In 1943, the Boston draft board attempted to contact Malcolm at 72 Dale Street; when he did not respond, it tracked him down in New York. He appeared at the draft board in a wild zoot suit and

[5] Ella had been displeased when Malcolm dropped his former girlfriend Laura for a white woman.

loudly proclaiming he wanted to fight for Japan and kill whites. After examinations by a psychiatrist and others, he was found mentally unfit for military service and classified as 4F (X and Haley 1999 [1965]:40–42).

From late 1943 to the fall of 1945, Malcolm spent time in Michigan and Harlem working in nightclubs and ballrooms and still visited Ella in Boston. Musical entertainment and the role of black jazz musicians remained an important thread in Malcolm's life, and his associations in Harlem included many well-known jazz and big band performers including members of Lionel Hampton's band as well as Duke Ellington's drummer and vocalist Sonny Greer (1895–1982) and violinist Ray Nance (1913–1976). In 1943, he was fired from his job as a waiter at Smalls Paradise club in Harlem for offering an undercover military officer the services of a prostitute (X and Haley 1999 [1965]): 83, 101). In 1944, while staying at 72 Dale Street, Malcolm stole a fur coat from his great aunt Gracie Little and pawned it for $5. Ella contacted the police and Malcolm was sentenced to three months in jail and one year of probation for larceny (Perry 1991:84; X and Haley 1999 [1965]): 83, 89, 127).

Return to Boston; Prison in Massachusetts

In the fall of 1945, Malcolm returned to Boston after his life was threatened by Harlem mob figure and bookie "West Indian Archie" (Lehman and Phelps 2005:402). Malcolm reflected in his autobiography that "Ella couldn't believe how atheist, how uncouth I had become" (X and Haley 1999 [1965]:137). In December of that year, Malcolm and his friend Malcolm Jarvis, aided by white girlfriends, went on a several-weeks' "stealing spree" with three white women (one of whom he was dating) in Boston. A few weeks later, in January 1946, Malcolm attempted to retrieve a stolen $1,000 watch from a pawn shop and was arrested and charged with grand larceny, breaking and entering, and firearms possession. He was convicted and, along with Jarvis, sentenced to 8 to 10 years in prison. Malcolm's girlfriend spent seven months in prison, but the sentences of the other white women were suspended. At the sentencing, Ella is reported to have screamed "You're sending my boy to prison," and when the judge ordered the courtroom cleared, to have pushed the marshal ushering her out (Payne and Payne 2020:215; Strickland et al. 1994:39).

Malcolm spent a total of six and a half years in Massachusetts prisons starting in February 1946. During this time, Ella was living at 72 Dale Street and was his closest family connection. She was his first visitor, sent him money, watched out for his well-being, and encouraged him to find ways to become educated. She decried the severity of the sentence and partly blamed herself for it as related to some of her own lifestyle patterns that she found necessary in the racial context of Boston, saying, "I often believe that he was sent to prison because I raised so much hell" (quoted

in Payne and Payne 2020:219). Malcolm's other siblings also wrote and visited him frequently (Lehman and Phelps 2005:402; Strickland et al. 1994:39).

In Charlestown State Prison (not extant), Malcolm suffered withdrawal from cocaine, marijuana, and nicotine while spending time in solitary confinement for bad behavior. In January 1947, Malcolm was transferred to the Concord Reformatory (now Massachusetts Correctional Institution – Concord). His Michigan-based siblings, who had converted to the NOI, began sending letters starting in 1947 and talking with him on visits about accepting the teachings of the Honorable Elijah Muhammad and joining the sect. In letters, Philbert described the NOI as a "natural religion for the black man," and Reginald wrote about Allah and urged Malcolm to stop eating pork (X and Haley 1999 [1965]:169). Muhammad stayed with Wilfred when he was in Detroit, and Hilda told Malcolm that Muhammad had been in prison for sedition and violation of draft laws and suggested that Malcolm should write to him (X and Haley 1999 [1965]:171–178). While at Concord, Malcolm met a fellow convict he called "Bimbi," now identified as John E. Bembry, who may have been an Ahmadiyya follower, who convinced Malcolm to study and develop his mind (Ce Caro, Jr. 1996:136; Payne and Payne 2020:222). In 1948, Malcolm was transferred to the Norfolk Prison Colony (now Massachusetts Correctional Institution – Norfolk) thanks to Ella's efforts. She wanted him to enroll in Norfolk's innovative education program, which allowed inmates to complete high school through General Educational Development (GED) coursework and participate in debates and other intellectual pursuits, and had connections with local colleges and universities, including Harvard and Boston University (Ehrenbold et al. 2019).

Malcolm's entry into the NOI occurred at Norfolk Prison. The sect started in the United States in the 1930s, when its founder Wallace D. Fard Muhammad (1877–ca. 1934) built the first Temple of Islam in Detroit, Michigan. Fard's origins and background are somewhat obscure. He identified himself as "Allah's messenger" and preached a form of Islam with its own creation story that identified all whites as devils, which drew many blacks as followers. In 1934, Fard disappeared, and Elijah Muhammad (1897–1975) took over leadership in the NOI, blending Fard's teachings with the ideas of Marcus Garvey. The NOI belief system was not based on the Qur'an but on "Yacub's History," a genesis mythology of the Earth populated by the black tribe of Shabazz. According to the teaching, blacks were the original and genetically superior race to "white devils," Elijah Muhammad was the self-appointed last messenger, and Allah would eventually raise black people to power. Elijah Muhammed was the messenger of Allah. The religion required adherence to a strict moral code with no smoking, drinking, fornication, or eating pork (X and Haley 1999 [1965]:179–182; DeCaro Jr. 1996:83).

Malcolm and Elijah Muhammed corresponded, and Malcolm concentrated on his studies, eventually writing to the Massachusetts governor to demand the right to practice Islam in prison. His intellectual training through reading and writing covered African and African-American history, philosophy, religion, and literature. He earned a certificate in theology from the prison's Boston University program (BLC 1998:19; DeCaro Jr. 1996:85). He joined the prison debate team and began attracting attention for his oratory skills. His prowess in debate was a key to his subsequent success as a leader in the NOI and the black liberation movement. Civil rights leader James Farmer recalled that "Malcolm X was one of the most feared debaters on the American platform, capable of demolishing an opponent with a one-liner. Despite his lack of formal education, I found Malcolm X to be a well read and brilliant man with a sharp and exceptionally quick mind" (Farmer 1985:224).

Nation of Islam Leader and Public Figure

On August 7, 1952, Malcolm was released on parole from the Norfolk Prison Colony. He spent one night with Ella in Boston, then went to Detroit where he stayed with his brother Wilfred, who was the minister of Temple No. 1, which Elijah Muhammad had formed in 1931. Malcolm joined, and got a job at the Ford Motor Company's Lincoln-Mercury Division. In September, Malcolm traveled to visit Chicago Temple No. 2 with members of Detroit Temple No. 1. There he met Elijah Muhammad and received his "X" from the NOI, as did other converts, dropping the Little surname because of its association with slave owners and becoming Malcolm X. At that initial meeting, Malcolm X noted about 200 members with the two temples combined and asked Elijah Muhammad how many members there should be; Muhammad replied, thousands, for by going after young people, the older ones will follow. Up until that time, there was little recruitment for new members beyond inviting friends and word-of-mouth. Malcolm began recruiting on the streets after work, and within a few months the Detroit membership had tripled (X and Haley 1999[1965]:202-203).

Elijah Muhammad saw Malcolm X's potential, invited him to speak at the Detroit temple, appointed him Detroit's #1 assistant minister in 1953, and brought him to Chicago for personal training. Malcolm X quickly became a trusted inner-circle leader and minister of the NOI, rising to prominence for his devotion, intellect, and skillful speaking manner. According to the account of a Detroit member at the time, Elijah Muhammad did not want Malcolm to speak at the founding temples, all with numbers under seven—Detroit No. 1, Chicago No. 2, Milwaukee No. 3, Washington, DC No. 4, Cincinnati No. 5, and Baltimore No. 6—as some older members were not comfortable with his presentation on a strict code of conduct and calling others to account. But seven East Coast temples including Boston, New York, and Philadelphia needed stronger organization and support. With the blessing of Elijah Muhammad, Malcolm X quit his job in

1953 and began an intensive full-time recruiting campaign to increase the Northeast region NOI membership, then at 400 members, and help establish new temples (Payne and Payne 2020:274; Strickland et al. 1994:70).

In various cities where members lived or moved to, NOI meetings began in private living rooms where Malcolm X or other visiting ministers spoke, then grew to temple capacity. Malcolm X's itinerary was directed by Elijah Muhammad and by invitations to speak. He also reached out to individuals in black communities who he thought would be interested in the message and willing to open their home for a meeting. Once a group was created, the local leaders were responsible for finding temporary meeting spaces and permanent temple properties, although final approval and purchase would have gone through NOI leadership and Elijah Muhammad. Temples typically had a chief minister and assistant ministers. Malcolm X's approach was to serve as a sort of evangelist traveling minister who carried out "revival" type meetings in established temples, which invariably increased membership, but did not compete with the sitting minister (DeCaro 1994:288–290).

Over the next few years, Malcolm X was instrumental in developing and executing, with the help of many others and the support of Elijah Muhammad, a highly effective recruiting campaign for the NOI. The recruiting method that evolved, as Malcolm X describes in his autobiography, combined friends' referrals with street-corner and strategically targeted venue solicitation, and printed media. In New York in 1954, frustrated by the slow growth as people brought friends, and because he "*knew* the streets," Malcolm X started making leaflets that NOI members handed out when recruiting, which they called "fishing" or reeling in converts. He, together with other leaders, developed methods for fishing on street corners and other opportunities. Rather than competing with other organizations like the black nationalists, the NOI operated at the shifting edge of audiences that others had gathered. Avoiding the larger churches of the middle class, they fished storefront Christian churches on Sundays, which usually comprised southern migrant people who would go where there was good preaching. The church services ended about an hour before NOI services started at 2:00 pm, so NOI members approached congregants exiting churches and invited them to continue over to the NOI temple and hear more preaching. They also naturally recruited at funerals when visiting friends and family of members became interested in the NOI ritual (DeCaro 1994:205; X and Haley 1999[1965]:222–223, 228).

Due largely to Malcolm X's charisma and tireless recruiting, membership in the NOI reached an estimated 40,000 with 49 temples across the country by 1959—100 times its size in 1952 (Strickland et al. 1994:72). While Malcolm X held the spotlight of the NOI expansion, it was largely through the efforts of the combined Little family, most working in the Midwest, that the NOI grew from a small sect to a highly visible, multi-million-dollar organization in less than a

decade. The other Little brothers involved—Wilfred, Philbert, Reginald, and Wesley—brought strong leadership qualities. In the early years, Wilfred and Philbert together administered seven Midwest temples, while Reginald and Wesley helped with recruiting. Also at this time, Hilda worked hard teaching and inspiring women. Through the remainder of their lives, Wilfrid and Philbert X were ministers and remained leaders of Mosque No. 1 in Detroit and the Lansing mosque (BLC 1998:20; Collins and Bailey 1998:101–102). About 1950, when Malcolm was in prison, Elijah Muhammad expelled Reginald from the NOI for having an extramarital affair. Malcolm X tried unsuccessfully to appeal to Elijah Muhammad on Reginald's behalf, but ultimately the NOI members of the Little family chose allegiance to Elijah Muhammad over Reginald. Following the suspension, Reginald had a mental breakdown and was placed in an institution (X and Haley 1999 [1965]:214–217).

The first place Elijah Muhammad sent Malcolm X was to Boston inlate 1953/early 1954, to be the first minister of Temple No. 11. Initially the expanding group met in homes and storefronts, including the brick rowhouse home of Lloyd X at 5 Wellington Street off Massachusetts Avenue, and 504 Massachusetts Avenue (both extant, not surveyed). After three years, the temple was established in a former synagogue at 35 Intervale Street (MHC No. BOS.17193), one mile south of 72 Dale Street. Once the mosque was established, Ella first went to hear Malcolm X speak. He wrote in his autobiography that "She sat staring, as though she couldn't believe it was me. Ella never moved…but contributed when our collection was held." However, he had no expectations that the "toughminded and cautious" Ella would be converted (X and Haley 1999 [1965]:245). That trip was the first time in seven years that he had been in Roxbury, except for the one night between jail and Detroit. Malcolm X stayed only briefly in Boston; in March 1954, with Temple No. 11 established and left in charge of Minister Ulysses X, and with a childcare program created and run by Ella Little Collins (see **Criterion B – Ella Little Collins**) he was sent to organize Temple No. 12 in Philadelphia, which was established by the end of May. Because of the successes in forming temples in Boston and Philadelphia, in June, Elijah Muhammad appointed him chief minister of Temple No. 7 in Harlem. Based in a storefront, the temple had the largest growth potential due to the population of about one million black people in the five New York City boroughs. As the recruiting techniques produced results and new faces appeared at Temple No. 7 meetings, Minister Malcolm X tailored his teachings to the life experience of the people present. He addressed objections newcomers might have to NOI's strict moral code and discipline saying "The white man *wants* black man to stay immoral, unclean and ignorant…We never can win freedom and justice and equality until we are doing something for ourselves!" (X and Haley 1999 [1965]:225) (BLC 1998:20; X and Haley 1999 [1965]:45, 215–218, 224–225, 234, 245).

Over the next few years, Malcolm X's life, based in Harlem and living in Queens, became increasingly busy with domestic and international travel to establish new temples and make speeches. His efforts attracted thousands of new, mostly urban, followers drawn in by his eloquent speaking and powerful message for black people, criticizing Christianity and the white race. In an example of the sequences of recruiting events, Malcolm X taught on Wednesdays at Philadelphia Temple No. 12, where someone from Springfield, MA, asked him to help set up a new temple in Springfield with the help of Brother Osborne. He was asked to go to Hartford, CT, on a Thursday when domestic servants had the day off; the initial group recruited among servants to open Temple No. 14, and Malcolm X then went there to preach weekly. In 1955, he took his first trip of any distance to help open Temple No. 15 in Atlanta, GA. Brother James X, one of the top Temple No. 12 members, had moved to Atlanta, interested enough people, and rented a funeral parlor, the only place he could afford that was large enough for a meeting. In 1955 and 1956, Malcolm X traveled extensively along the East Coast between New England and Florida, and he also made some exploratory trips to the Midwest and the South. He moved by bus and train until 1956, when the NOI provided him with a car in which he averaged about 200 miles a day. Once a month, he went to Chicago to report to Elijah Muhammad and deliver the monthly collection. Malcolm X built the temple congregations from scratch, largely by virtue of his independent and creative approaches to tireless recruiting, seeking converts in the streets and in lecture halls, his masterful oratory skills, his attention to organizational details, and his interpersonal skills (Strickland et al. 1994:71–73; X and Haley 1999[1965]:226–227).

During this period, the current of racism in the U.S. continued to flow. In May 1954, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled unanimously, in the Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka case, that racial segregation in public schools violated the Fourteenth Amendment to the Constitution. However, change was slow, especially in the South. In August 1955, 15-year-old Emmett Till, a northerner visiting his grandfather, was murdered in Mississippi for calling out to a white woman on a dare from friends, and his killer was acquitted. In December 1955, on a bus in Alabama, Rosa Parks refused to move her seat when directed and was arrested. This event sparked the Montgomery Bus Boycott and initiated the nonviolent resistance and protest led by Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and others. The growth of the NOI and Malcolm X's increasingly visible presence occurred against larger backdrop of racist events and civil rights actions in America and was in sharp contrast to the nonviolence movement.

Malcolm X and the NOI emerged from relative obscurity at this time into the national general public's eye due to two key events. The first, on April 14, 1957, occurred when Johnson X Hinton, a member of Harlem's Temple No. 7, was savagely beaten by police. Malcolm X joined Muslims at police headquarters in Harlem who were demanding that Hinton receive medical attention and refusing to leave. After Hinton was taken to a hospital, Malcolm X dispersed the

crowd with a wave of his hand. Media coverage of the incident brought Malcolm X to national attention and triggered more intense Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) surveillance (Strickland et al. 1994:77–78). A few months later, Congress passed a civil rights Bill of 1957, but Governor Faubus of Arkansas refused to integrate the Little Rock's Central High School; President Eisenhower federalized the National Guard and sent 10,000 troops to guard the safety of the Little Rock Nine black high school students so they could enter the building and attend class.

The second event that shone a spotlight on the NOA came in the spring and summer of 1959, when New York television aired a five-part documentary by Mike Wallace called *The Hate that Hate Produced* with a widely publicized interview with Malcolm X. Although the documentary's tone was negative about the black Muslims, interest and membership in the NOI increased. When the series aired, Malcolm X was on his first foreign travel trip visiting Sudan, Nigeria, Iran, Syria, Egypt, the United Arab Republic, and newly independent Ghana on behalf of the NOI to lay the groundwork for Elijah Muhammad's Middle East tour planned for later that year. The press attention that greeted Malcolm X upon his return to the U.S. continued unabated for the rest of his life. In 1960, Alex Haley's article "Mr. Muhammad Speaks" appeared in *Reader's Digest*, and in 1961 Dr. C. Eric Lincoln published *The Black Muslims in America*. Malcolm X was interviewed for *Life*, *Look*, *Newsweek*, *Playboy*, and *Time*. Recognizing the value of an NOI newspaper, Malcolm X learned how to produce a paper and use a camera and, in 1960, established *Muhammad Speaks* to promote the NOI's message. He expanded his international connections, meeting with the heads or delegates of newly independent African states visiting the United Nations in New York and with Cuba's Fidel Castro at the Hotel Theresa.

Though almost constantly travelling and speaking during these years, Malcolm X also established a family during this time, marrying Betty X (formerly Sanders) on January 14, 1958. Betty had become a member of the Harlem temple in 1956, adopted the name Betty X, and later became Betty Shabazz. Malcolm X and Betty moved to the Elmhurst section of Queens, New York where they lived in two houses owned by the NOI, at 25–46 99th Street from April 1957 to October 1960 and then at 23–11 97th Street from November 1960 to February 1965 (both houses are extant; BLC 1998:24). They had their first three children: daughters Attalah (b. 1958), Qubilah (b. 1960), and Ilyasah (b. 1962). In Boston, Ella Little Collins joined the NOI in 1957, but left in 1959. Perhaps because Malcolm X was settled with his own family in New York, ca. 1964, Ella moved from 72 Dale Street to a different house she owned in Boston and turned over responsibility for the mortgage payments on the house to her son, Rodnell Collins (see **Criterion B – Ella Little Collins**).

Malcolm X's visibility and central role in the NOI continued. In 1961, Elijah Muhammad, who had moved from Chicago to Phoenix, Arizona, for health reasons related to a chronic bronchial condition, appointed Malcolm the national representative of the NOI. As a result, Malcolm X's increased exposure through lectures in public venues and participation in television and radio interviews and debates. He also spoke at numerous New England universities, including Harvard University, Boston University, and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (*Harvard Crimson* 1992; Collins, personal communication 2018). Also in Boston, he made two broadcasts for the NOI radio program titled "Mr. Muhammad Speaks" and appeared on the talk-radio pioneer Jerry Williams's show (probably on WMEX) in 1962 (NYPL 2005).

About 1961 as Malcolm X gained in notoriety and power, some others in the NOI leadership in Chicago, while impressed by his unparalleled fundraising abilities, felt threatened by what would happen if he took over. Tensions between Malcolm and the NOI leadership began as Malcolm X became increasingly troubled by Elijah Muhammad's extravagant lifestyle and rumors about his sexual relations with young women and girls. Malcolm X was also frustrated with the conservative constraints of the NOI organization and the religion amid the political atmosphere surrounding social justice and civil rights issues. The tenor of this period was perhaps captured in the October 1961 debate at Howard University between the nationalist NOI minister, Malcolm X, and pacifist and Martin Luther King, Jr. advisor, Bayard Rustin, on the subject of separatism vs. racial integration. Malcolm X also debated representatives from CORE—the Congress of Racial Equality— and the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People youth secretary at Yale University. He led a protest march at the United Nations after the assassination of Congolese Prime Minister Patrice Lumumba and spoke at Adam Clayton Powell's Abyssinian Baptist Church (Strickland et al. 2013:91; NYPL 2005).

On April 27, 1962 in Los Angeles, an altercation on the street led to police entering Los Angeles Temple No. 27 and killing its unarmed secretary, Ronald Stokes, whom Malcolm X had known in Boston and may have recruited into the NOI. Malcolm X gave the eulogy for Stokes before 2,000 people. Despite the brutality of the police, Elijah Muhammad resisted calls for an aggressive response, which Malcolm X accepted but strongly disagreed with, feeling that a more overt rejoinder was warranted (Strickland et al. 1994:81–82).

In June 1962, Malcolm X met the young, outspoken boxer Cassius Clay, Jr. (1942–2016) in a luncheonette in Detroit where they were both attending a Black Muslim rally. Clay was from Louisville, KY, and, like Malcolm X, his father had been influenced by Marcus Garvey. He had first encountered the NOI and Elijah Muhammad in 1959 in Chicago and was drawn to the ideas and teachings. He sought out Malcolm X, and in turn Malcolm X liked him and also saw potential to gain access through Clay to a new group of NOI recruits. Over the next year, as

Clay's successes and reputation as a boxer grew, he and Malcolm X became friends (Perry 1991:245–246).

In 1963, Malcolm X began working on his autobiography with Alex Haley. In discussing this period, Malcolm X wrote "…if anyone had noticed, I spoke less and less of religion. I taught social doctrine to Muslims, and current events, and politics. I stayed wholly off the subject of morality." The reason, he continued, was that his faith had been deeply shaken when he discovered Muslims had been betrayed by the Elijah Muhammad (X and Haley 1999 [1965]:339).

In 1963, Malcolm X confirmed publicly that Elijah Muhammad had engaged in repeated adultery and had fathered children with at least three of his young secretaries who brought paternity suits against him. In response, the NOI newspaper *Muhammad Speaks* staff was directed to minimize coverage of Malcolm X's activities and speeches. In April, Malcolm X flew to Phoenix with Elijah Muhammad's son Wallace to speak directly about the accusations. The three men agreed with Malcolm X's suggestion that the behavior would be defended by likening it to that of several Old Testament prophets. However, when Malcolm X described the idea to several other NOI ministers, he was accused of inflaming the situation. In May, Malcolm X wrote Elijah Muhammad a letter of apology, but relations between the two men continued to cool (X and Haley 1999 [1965]:339–334).

Tensions peaked following the November 22, 1963, assassination of President John F. Kennedy. Despite Elijah Muhammad's order to all NOI ministers not to mention it, Malcolm X responded to a press question at a New York NOI rally, saying that Kennedy "never foresaw that the chickens would come home to roost so soon" (Gallen 1992:18) referring to the United States role in violence in Vietnam, Cambodia, and other conflicts. In December 1963, Elijah forbade Malcolm X to speak to the press for 90 days. In January 1964, Elijah removed Malcolm X from his posts as NOI national representative and minister of Harlem Temple No. 7 and suspended him from the NOI.

A welcome respite occurred at this time when Cassius Clay invited Malcolm X and his family to visit him at his training camp in Miami Beach, where he was training to fight champion Sonny Liston for the boxing world heavyweight title. From January 15–19, 1964, Malcolm and Betty traveled with their three daughters to Florida for the only vacation they ever shared. At this time, while Clay had close association with Malcolm X and the NOI, he did not officially belong to the NOI, which would likely have jeopardized his budding career. On February 25, 1964, Cassius Clay defeated Sonny Liston in Miami Beach and claimed world heavyweight boxing championship. The victory party was held in Malcolm's hotel suite, and the next day, Clay publicly acknowledged he was a Muslim and began using the name Muhammad Ali (Perry

1991:247–249). The rapport between the two men was short-lived, however, as Muhammad Ali turned his back on Malcolm X when Elijah Muhammad reaffirmed that Malcolm X was suspended from the NOI indefinitely.

On March 8, 1964, Malcolm X announced his separation from the NOI, which responded by demanding that Malcolm relinquish all NOI property, including his car and house in Queens. Malcolm X predicted that NOI leaders would kill him because of his knowledge of the unscrupulous workings of the organization.

Muslim Mosque, Inc. and Organization of African-American Unity

On March 12, 1964, four days after his separation from the NOI and Elijah Muhammad, Malcolm X announced plans to form his own organization, Muslim Mosque, Inc., at a press conference at the Park Sheraton Hotel in New York City. He described the new entity as providing "a religious base, and the spiritual force necessary to rid our people of the vices that destroy the moral fiber of our community." the new organization would be temporarily based at the Hotel Theresa in Harlem and would "be the working base for an action program designed to eliminate the political oppression, the economic exploitation, and the social degradation suffered daily by 22 million Afro-Americans" (X and Haley 1999 [1965]:346). In an interview a week later with the Socialist magazine *Monthly Review*, Malcolm X asserted his intent to also establish a Muslim "action group designed to eliminate the same ills that the teachings of the Honorable Elijah Muhammad have made so manifest in this country." The political, economic, and social philosophies would be black nationalism with the long-term goal for all blacks to return to the African homeland and the short-term goal to "enable us to live a better life while we are still here" (quoted in Spellman 1964).

The ensuing year was filled with a flurry of travel and appearances. On March 26, 1964, Malcolm X met by chance for the first and only time with Martin Luther King, Jr. in Washington D.C., where he was observing the Senate filibuster of the pending Civil Rights Act of 1964 (enacted July 2, 1964) for which King was scheduled to testify. On April 12, Malcolm X delivered his famous presidential election year "The Ballot or the Bullet" speech in Detroit, during which he declared his black nationalist philosophy and intent to expand the freedom struggle "from the level of civil rights to the level of human rights" (quoted in American Radioworks, n.d.). Malcolm X then left for a pilgrimage to Mecca followed by a five-week tour of the Middle East including Lebanon and Saudi Arabia, and independent African states of Egypt, Liberia, Senegal, Nigeria, and Ghana. During the Hajj, paid for by Ella (see **Criterion B – Ella Little Collins**), Malcolm X converted to orthodox Islam and received a new Sunni Muslim name, El-Hajj Malik El-Shabazz. The trip changed Malcolm X's philosophical,

religious, and political trajectories. Through exposure to predominantly black nation states he gained an international perspective on America's civil rights issues and confidence in the social and economic possibilities demonstrated by their achievements. Long steeped in the theology of the NOI, he now directly experienced Islamic religion, traditions, and culture, saw that many races were Muslim, and realized the vast separation between the NOI and "real Islam" of the East (X and Haley 1999 [1965]:183).

When he returned to New York, Malcolm X distanced himself from the tenets of the NOI, including its narrow inherent racism, and in his autobiography refers to Elijah Mohammad as a "religious faker" (X and Haley 1999 [1965]:183). Nevertheless, he attempted to end the hostilities between the NOI and his supporters and sent an open letter to end the fighting to Elijah Muhammad that was published in the *New York Post* on June 26, 1964 (Strickland et al. 1994:185). However, tensions remained high. One illustration is when Malcolm X and others were leaving a meeting with some Muslims at Malcolm X's sister Ella's house (she was living then at 486 Massachusetts Avenue), some NOI members unsuccessfully tried to block their route to the airport in the Callahan Tunnel (Strickland et al. 1994:186).

On June 28, 1964, at the Audubon Ballroom in Harlem, Malcolm X held a rally to announce the establishment of the action group he had noted three months earlier. The Organization of Afro-American Unity (OAAU) was modeled after the Organization of African Unity that he learned about on his March visit to Africa. Malcolm X espoused a pan-African approach in fighting for the human rights of all Africans and people of African descent in the Americas. Malcolm X proclaimed the aim of the OAAU as "We want freedom by any means necessary. We want justice by any means necessary. We want equality by any means necessary" (X 1964). The OAAU charter highlighted the rights for black self-defense in the face of violence, for black people to control their own destiny, and a pledge to fight for unity, to promote justice, and to transcend compromise in the name of human rights (Strickland et al. 1994:158).

From July to November 1964, Malcolm X traveled abroad in Africa and Europe. On July 17, he attended the African Summit Conference in Cairo, Egypt, as a representative of the OAAU and appealed to the delegates of 34 African nations to bring the cause of the 22 million black people in the United States before the United Nations. From September to November, he toured 11 African countries, talking with heads of state and addressing many parliaments. He returned to New York on November 24 and a week later flew to London for an Oxford Union debate.

In contrast to the welcome he received abroad, Malcolm X was under increased attack at home. The NOI began formal eviction proceedings for the house where his family lived, his brother Philbert denounced him for betraying the NOI, and his life was threatened. Yet he continued to

speak at OAAU rallies and publicly supported other social justice and political organizations, include the Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party created in 1964. Also in 1964, Malcolm X's and Betty Shabazz's fourth daughter, Gamilah Lumumba, was born, and his mother, Louise Little, was released from the Kalamazoo State Hospital.

In January 1965, Malcolm X flew to Los Angeles to meet with Gladys Towles Roots and two NOI secretaries who were filing paternity suits against Elijah Muhammad. On February 4, Malcolm X spoke in Selma, Alabama, at the invitation of the Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee. The next day, he flew to London to address the first Congress of the Council of African Organizations. He then flew to Paris to speak, but French government officials refused him entry to the country for unspecified cause, so he returned to London and then back to New York on February 13. On February 14, Malcolm X's home in Queens was firebombed, and the family was evicted four days later (Strickland et al. 1994).

On February 21, 1965, with his wife and daughters present, Malcolm X, El-Hajj Malik El-Shabazz, was assassinated while speaking at an OAAU programmatic launch rally at the Audubon Ballroom in Harlem. After his opening greeting, a disturbance occurred in the audience, three men rushed to the stage, and Malcolm X was killed with a fusillade of gunshots. Three members of the NOI—Thomas Hayer (also known as Thomas Hagan), Thomas Johnson, and Norman Butler— were convicted of the murder in April 1966. However, scholars and observers have determined that the latter two men were not at the Audubon Ballroom that day and also have identified a broad pattern of official cover-ups that has allowed the details of the responsibilities for the assassination of Malcolm X to remain unresolved (Payne and Payne 2020:487, 500).

Malcolm X's funeral, organized by Ella Little Collins, was held on February 27 at the Faith Temple of God in Christ in Harlem. More than 20,000 people filed past his body in a Harlem funeral home. Actor and civil rights activist Ossie Davis led the service and gave the eulogy in which he praised Malcolm X as "our manhood" and "our own black shining prince!—who didn't hesitate to die, because he loved us so" (X and Haley 1999 [1965]:521). An overflow crowd of 1,500 people, including members of SNCC and other civil rights activists, attended. Malcolm X was buried at Ferncliff Cemetery in Hartsdale, New York, about 25 miles north of New York City. Later that year, *The Autobiography of Malcolm X* was published (X and Haley 1999 [1965]), and Betty Shabazz gave birth to his last two daughters, twins Malikah and Malaak (CBS

News 2005; Payne and Payne 2020:520; Strickland et al. 1994:215; X and Haley 1999 [1965]:520).[6]

Malcolm X Legacy

Malcolm X's life can be viewed as passing through at least three transformations: from rural Midwest boyhood to adolescent petty criminal; from self-taught disciple and ascendant amplifier of Elijah Muhammad's teachings in the NOI; and lastly to preeminent leader and inspiration for black nationalism and international activism before his life was abruptly cut short. At the time of his death in 1965, Malcolm X was a nationally and internationally prominent human rights leader (BLC 1998:22–23). He seems to have been aware of his influence at the time and the potential for the future, because, as he wrote in his *Autobiography:* "Yes, I have cherished my 'demagogue' role. I know that societies often have killed the people who have helped to change those societies. And if I can die having brought any light, having exposed any meaningful truth that will help to destroy the racist cancer that is malignant in the body of America—then, all of the credit is due to Allah. Only the mistakes have been mine." (X and Haley 1999 [1965]:417–418).

One week before his murder, in responding to a question from the Islamic Center of Geneva about why he focused only on black people, Malcolm X wrote:

> As a Black American I do feel that my first responsibility is to my 22 million Black Americans who suffer the same indignities because of their colour as I do. I don't believe my own personal problem is ever solved until the problem is solved for all 22 million of us (quoted in Payne and Payne 2020:253).

From the moment of his death to the present, countless public officials, scholars, activists, artists, and others have shared their thoughts about the impact of Malcolm X's life and work on their personal lives, culture, civil rights, racism, human rights, and national and global politics. This multi-faceted, broad, and dynamic understanding of Malcolm X's legacy acknowledges the complexities of his life and philosophical trajectories and their current value today. Malcolm X's influence is similarly manifest in the actions of individuals and organizations in the spheres that he cared about.

[6] Malcolm X's brothers Wilfred and Philbert spoke at a large Black Muslim National Convention gathering held in Chicago several weeks after Malcolm X's death, where Philbert introduced Elijah Muhammad and reaffirmed his dedication to the NOI (X and Haley 1999 [1965]:516).

One of Malcolm X's key contributions was that he consistently and unashamedly pointed out the confidence and pride black people could have in themselves, their history, their culture, and their agency to provoke change. This message was not completely new, but his potent delivery made it both impossible to ignore and an invitation to boldly experiment with different forms of black cultural and voice expression from hair treatment to political activism. It was this aspect of Malcolm X's legacy that Ella Little Collins continued most strongly to foster in her public event presentations and conversations after his death.

Within this broad umbrella, actor, playwright, and civil rights activist Ossie Davis—who gave the eulogy at Malcolm X's funeral, calling him "our black prince"—expanded further on this view in his afterword to the *Autobiography of Malcolm X*. Davis remarked that while many black people he encountered, including himself, often disagreed with "much or all of what Malcolm said and what he stood for. That is, with one singing exception, they all…knew that Malcolm—whatever else he was or was not—*Malcolm was a man!* White folks do not need anybody to remind them that they are men. We do! This was his one incontrovertible benefit to his people." (X and Haley 1999[1965]:524).

A corollary to this self-confidence building was the actions of Malcolm X's contemporaries, especially the youth, starting in the 1960s and 1970s while he lived and after his death. Inspired by his vision, many of them pioneered new ground in defining the pride of the black community, the "true" black history (as opposed to the traditional white perspective), the place of black cultural institutions, and an assertive approach to race relations. Poet LeRoi Jones, later Amiri Baraka, and writer and critic Larry Neal led the Black Arts Movement combining activism and art, and James Baldwin wrote his influential book on race relations, The Fire Next Time (1963). In Oakland, CA, two youth formed the revolutionary political organization, the Black Panther Party for Self Defense (against police brutality) in 1966. In Raleigh, NC, the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) formed in 1960 following student sit-ins was a key civil rights movement. Stokely Carmichael, later Kwame Ture, became an effective civil rights organizer in the U.S., serving as chairman of SNCC, and in the Pan-African movement. In 1964, Adam Clayton Powell, Jr., then Democratic Congressman from New York and who was also a Little family friend, convened the first Black Power Conference in Washington DC (Strickland et al. 1994:163).

In the 1960s and 1970s, black nationalism led to the formation of militant black power and student protest groups intent on controlling politics and economics and to the development of black studies programs in colleges and universities such as the Afro-American Institute at Northeastern University and at the City College of New York (Rojas 2007:43; Van Deburg 1997:13–14). Black writers, commentators, and scholars recognized that for Malcolm X's

contributions to continue to have social, economic, and political relevance beyond simple historical interest, scholars, followers, and activists must freshly and accurately transmit his radical vision of equality and justice to younger generations (Byrd and Miri 2016:1; Edozie and Stokes 2015:3). Journalist and Malcolm X biographer Les Payne, who heard Malcolm X speak in Hartford, CT, in 1963, wrote in a 1989 *Newsday* column, "More than any other leader of the 1960's, Malcolm moved blacks to consider who they are and whence they came, and to plan for what they could be become" (quoted in Payne and Payne 2020:xvii).

Since his death more than 50 years ago, Malcolm X's life and accomplishments have influenced many threads of American culture (Strickland et al. 1994:219–222). The influence of Malcolm X's concepts has played a role in shaping the ideas of notable American black leaders, including 1984 and 1988 presidential candidate Jesse Jackson and President Barack Obama, in office from 2009 to 2017. In an opinion piece in *The Guardian* written 50 years after Malcolm X's assassination, Jesse Jackson said "I did not always agree with Malcolm X, specifically his critiques of Martin Luther King, Jr. and of the philosophy of nonviolent resistance. But I have always admired Malcolm the man. He was a giant: his courage pierced the darkness of racism. And his life story is still an inspiration" (Jackson 2015).

In his memoir, *Dreams from My Father* (1995), President Obama spoke of his affinity to Malcolm X's experience and ideas in his young formative years. Regarding similarities in their families, Obama reflected, "As I imagined myself following Malcolm X's call, one line in his book stayed me. He spoke of his wish that the white blood that ran through him, there by an act of violence, might somehow be expunged. I knew that, for Malcolm, that wish would never be incidental. I knew as well that traveling down the road to self-respect my own white blood would never recede into mere abstraction. I was left to wonder what else I would be severing if and when I left my mother at some uncharted border." On a shared vision of the future, Obama commented, "If Malcolm X's discovery toward the end of his life, that some whites might live beside him as brothers in Islam, seemed to offer some hope of eventual reconciliation, that hope appeared in a distant future, in a far-off land. In the meantime, I looked to see where the people would come from who were willing to work toward this future and populate this new world." (Obama 1995:80; Mendell 2007:54–55).

Another central legacy of Malcolm X was in the tension of the American national debate between black separatism and integration. Malcolm X's laser-like insistence on promoting black empowerment, nationalism, and separatism created a sharp contrast to the more mainstream civil rights movement of integration and nonviolence led by Martin Luther King, Jr. Many people, both black and white, found Malcolm X to be quite threatening, although it is clear that while his message could be frightening, as a person he was charismatic and approachable. Nevertheless,

fear and mistrust of the NOI and of the outspoken Malcolm X repelled many people. At the same time, leaders in the nonviolent movement recognized how he affected these essential conversations. As Peter Bailey, one of Malcolm X's associates and a member of the OAAU put it, "Even if you didn't agree with him, Malcolm made you rethink your position." In early February 1965 shortly before his death, Malcolm X went to Selma, AL, at the request of SNCC to speak. Martin Luther King Jr. was in jail there and Malcolm X was seated next to Coretta Scott King at a church where he was to speak. She later told *Jet* magazine that while they were seated together on stage in a church, he told her that he was "trying to help…, to present an alternative; that it might be easier for whites to accept Martin's proposals after hearing him…Later in the hallway, he reiterated this. He seemed sincere…" (quoted in X and Haley 1999[1965]:490). The Selma to Montgomery March led by Martin Luther King, Jr. took place a few weeks later on March 7, and on August 6, 1965, President Johnson signed the Voting Rights Act of 1965 preventing the use of literacy tests as a voting requirement. This perspective shift is perhaps reflected in Martin Luther King's comment to his associate Rev. D.E. King in 1967 that, "…I have found out that all that I have been doing in trying to correct this system in America has been in vain…I am trying to get at the roots of it to see just what ought to be done…The whole thing will have to be done away with" (quoted in Strickland et al. 1994:164; Garrow 1986). King was assassinated on April 4, 1968. A few days later, on April 11, President Johnson signed the Civil Rights Act of 1968, also known as the Fair Housing Act, providing equal housing opportunity regardless of race, religion, or national origin.

Others who acknowledged the strength of Malcolm X's message in combination with his powerful presentation, even if they did not agree with him, included civil rights activist and journalist James Farmer (1920–1999), a follower of nonviolent methods who led the Congress of Racial Equality (CORE) and organized the Freedom Rides of 1961, when northern blacks and whites traveled to the South to counter segregation. Farmer said Malcolm X was "exciting and controversial," referring to provocative and generative debate his views initiated, and also noted that his strong message magnetized urban black America as a parallel to Martin Luther King, Jr.'s broad coalescing of people in churches and rural areas (Farmer 1998:223). In his 1980 *A People's History of the United States*, historian Howard Zinn describes Malcolm X as the most eloquent spokesman for black separation and independence and as "more influential in death than during his lifetime" (Zinn 1980:194–195, 204).

Due to his interest in Pan-Africanism, Malcolm X also redirected the discourse of racism internationally. In his view, the success of the domestic civil rights movement required a counterpart in global human rights. The vision that developed from his travels in Africa and the Middle East and that he promoted in his speeches helped foster long-term threads of connection for dialog about social justice, religion, and civil rights between nongovernmental organizations

in the United States and other parts of the world. A groundbreaking outcome of these ideas, following the United Nations' Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 1948, was a series of declarations and conventions on racial discrimination in the 1960s, culminating in the first United Nations World Conference Against Racism in 1978, which focused on Apartheid in South Africa, followed by conferences in 1978, 1983 (both in Geneva, Switzerland), and 2001 (held in Durban, South Africa). The conferences focus on developing action-oriented, practical strategies and measures to racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia, and related intolerance, The 2001 conference was attended by 11,500 delegates and observers, including 3,000 American delegates, two-thirds of whom were black, and resulted in a "Programme of Action" containing 219 points regarding human rights, legal frameworks, and recommended actions (United Nations 2001a, 2001b; Re-evaluation Counseling 2019).

Today, Malcolm X has an iconic status as one of America's great multicultural leaders. His death came before and after those of two other key black civil and human rights leaders killed during the 1960s: Medgar Evers, field secretary of the NAACP in 1963 (in Mississippi) and Martin Luther King, Jr. in 1968 (in Tennessee). Malcolm X's unique and essential contribution to the multifaceted black liberation movement of the 1960s' civil rights debates was to courageously and profoundly shift the discourse of racism and the path to fundamental social change in the United States. He spoke of his observations and experiences in what he believed was the hypocrisy of integration that sought continued control of blacks and in institutional racism in law enforcement, government, and social systems. His message provided an alternative perspective to nonviolent integration, instead advocating black self-defense when threatened by violence, self-reliance, and self-determination (Strickland et al. 1994:218–223).

One of Malcolm X's strengths was his understanding of the value of organizations as a vehicle for harnessing and focusing ideas and people. His strategy with the formation of the OAAU was to establish three tactical objectives: to stand for the right for self-defense, including education for building self-identity; to cultivate political and economic power, including exercising the right to vote and social uplifting using internal black community resources; and to build a working relationship between the civil rights movement and the emerging human rights movement. Although the OAAU was not able to reach its full potential without Malcolm X, the black liberation movement and Malcolm X's contribution to it survived and evolved (Sales 1994:107–109, 160–161).

Across the United States, the legacy of Malcolm X, like that of other notable black leaders, is publicly commemorated by the naming of parks and roads in his honor. In Roxbury, Washington Park (MHC No. BOS.9838) near 72 Dale Street was renamed Malcolm X Park on May 19, 1986, and New Dudley Street was renamed Malcolm X Boulevard in the 1990s (Ball 1986; Miller

2017). In New York City, a portion of Lenox Avenue in Harlem was named Malcolm X Boulevard in 1987, and the 97th Street block in Queens containing number 23–11 was named Malcolm X Place in 2005.

Comparison to Related Properties Associated with Malcolm X

72 Dale Street is significant as the sole surviving building of Malcolm X's several childhood homes and for the history it embodies during his critical transition from youth to adulthood. It was his home base during his formative coming-of-age years and a haven following a time of foster care; its importance is underlined by the preserved physical record of the changes Ella made to the house for him, photograph documentation of him at the house, and the associated archaeological record. Malcolm was born in Omaha, Nebraska, and the house at 3448 Pinkney Street in Omaha where he lived from 1925 to 1929, until age 4, when the family moved to Michigan, was demolished before 1970. A marker was placed at the site in 1971, and the 0.15-acre location was commemorated as the Malcolm X House Site and listed in the National Register in 1984 (BLC 1998:13; Jensen 1983). The site also became the seed for creation of the Malcolm X Foundation, a private non-profit educational and cultural institution that now owns more than 15 acres. Rowena Moore, whose family owned five lots including the house site, inaugurated the organization in 1971 (Malcolm X Foundation 2020). Malcolm's boyhood home in Lansing, Michigan (at 4705 South Logan Street [now Martin Luther King, Jr. Boulevard], is no longer extant, and the site is designated with a marker placed in 1975 (BLC 1998:17).

During his time in Boston in the 1940s, Malcolm resided in several places in Boston with Ella Little Collins, but 72 Dale Street was the principal residence, and the only one documented to be extant. Malcolm recalled in his autobiography that when he visited Ella in the summers of 1939 and 1940, her house was "on Waumbeck Street in the Sugar Hill section of Roxbury, the Harlem of Boston" (X and Haley 1999[1965]:36). This house was at 63 Waumbeck Street and is no longer extant. By September of 1940, Ella was living with her aunt and surrogate mother Sarah Alice Little nearby at 89 Harrishof Street (BLC 1998:15). After arriving in Boston, Malcolm's first residence was at the 89 Harrishof Street house (no longer extant). He lived there for about six months from February to August 1941 before Ella completed the purchase of 72 Dale Street. In the mid-1950s, while he was in Boston during his NOI recruiting visits, 72 Dale Street served as a meeting place and home (Bagley et al. 2018:33). In a 1955 interview with the FBI, which had him under surveillance as a potentially dangerous person, he described his residence from 1941 to 1943 as 72 Dale Street, and his name appears in Boston city directories at this address every year from 1954 to 1962 (FBI 1955:85; Polk 1954–1962).

While other buildings associated with the childhood phases of Malcolm X's life existed, none survive today except 72 Dale Street. Furthermore, even in the context of that group of homes, none relate to his formative teenage to young adult period or his strong bond with his half-sister Ella Little Collins, the effects of which extended indelibly into his adult years. This is a testament to 72 Dale Street as a signature place in the trajectory of his life that is rooted in their shared family connection, and why it is preserved.

Two of the three jails in Massachusetts where Malcolm was incarcerated between 1946 and 1952 are extant: Massachusetts Correctional Institution – Concord (1878); and Massachusetts Correctional Institution – Norfolk (1927). These facilities have long and complex histories, of which Malcolm X's time is a small portion; Concord is where he first learned of the NOI, and Norfolk is where he stayed the longest and where he became educated. The Charlestown Jail, Boston, is not extant.

Several residences in Michigan and New York remain extant from Malcolm X's adult and active years with the NOI. Two houses where he lived for less than one year in Michigan after leaving prison and joining the NOI exist at 4336 Williams Street in Inkster (May 1953–February 1954) and 18887 Keystone Street in Detroit (March–August 19540 (BLC 1998:249). After he left Detroit and resided in Queens, Malcolm X travelled often and did not have a fixed residence. Three single-family houses in the Elmhurst area of Queens, New York, where Malcolm X lived with his family during the last decade of his life, survive but are not recognized or designated in the state historic inventory: 25–35 Humphrey Street, East Elmhurst (September 1954–March 1957); 25–46 99th Street, Elmhurst (April 1957–October 1960); 21–11 97th Street, East Elmhurst (November 1960–February 1965). The 97th Street block containing number 23–11 was renamed Malcolm X Place in 2005 (BLC 1998:24).

Two public buildings where Malcolm X spoke and notable events occurred in New York City and Detroit are listed in the National Register, and a third has been widely recognized for its association with Malcolm X's life and death. In Harlem, New York City, two public buildings associated with Malcolm X survive. The Hotel Theresa, 2082–2096 Adam Clayton Powell, Jr. Boulevard, which has associations with Malcolm X's New York organizing activities and is where the OAAU had its first temporary headquarters, was listed in the National Register in 2005. It is now an office building. The Audubon Theatre and Ballroom (at 3940 Broadway at West 165th Street and generally known as the Audubon Ballroom) is where Malcolm X spoke many times and where he was assassinated; it has been altered and adaptively reused to incorporate Columbia University's Audubon Business and Technology Center in the northern part of the building. Part of the original façade and a portion of the interior ballroom where

Malcolm X was killed have been restored. In 2005, the Malcolm X and Dr. Betty Shabazz Memorial and Educational Center opened in the lobby (Columbia News 2005).

Temple Baptist Church-King Solomon Baptist Church in Detroit, Michigan, where Malcolm X gave two of his most famous and influential speeches, "Message to the Grass Roots" (1963) and The Ballot or the Bullet" (1964), was listed in the National Register in 2015. The 1963 address marked a turning point in his fully mature career, preceding his break from the NOI and the shift in orientation towards politics and global human rights that dominated his final year of life and remains a central aspect of his legacy (Boscarino and Webb 2014:8-1).

CRITERION B – ELLA LITTLE COLLINS

The Malcolm X–Ella Little Collins House is eligible for listing in the National Register under Criterion B in the areas of Social History, Ethnic Heritage: Black, and Civil Rights at the local level for its association with Ella Little Collins, a key influential figure in the life of her brother––the preeminent civil and human rights leader Malcolm (Little) X, and in her own right as an important organizer in the civil rights movement and in her efforts to improve educational opportunities for black students in Boston and New York. From the time Ella purchased the property and Malcolm X came to live with her in 1941, until his assassination in 1965, 72 Dale Street was the locus of their close association. The family has owned and preserved the property in honor of Malcolm X and the Little family for 79 years.

Early Life

Ella Lee Little Collins (1914–1996) was the sister of Malcolm X and 11 years his senior. She and Malcolm X were children of the Rev. Earl Little, a Baptist minister and proponent of Marcus Garvey's black separatist and "back to Africa" philosophy (see **Criterion B – Malcolm X**). Ella Lee Little was born December 4, 1914 as the eldest child to Earl Little and his first wife, Daisy Mason Little, in Butler, Georgia (Collins, personal communication 2019; Lehman and Phelps 2005). Her siblings were Mary (b. 1915) and Earl Jr. (b. 1917) (Collins and Bailey 1998:14). Ella grew up as part of a large family on her grandfather's plantation in Butler and visited relatives in Boston as a child (Shaw 1969; Tarter 1977; Levy 1996). Members of Malcolm X's and Ella's extended family, the Grays and Masons, had previously gone to Boston from Butler and Reynolds, Georgia, in the 1920s and 1930s during the beginning of the Great Migration northward of some six million blacks that continued until about 1970 (Collins and Bailey 1998:32; Wilkerson 2010:8–11). In 1917–1918, Earl and Daisy divorced, and about 1920, Daisy moved to Boston, taking Earl Jr. with her. Ella and Mary stayed in Butler with Earl Sr.'s parents, Pa John and Ella Little, who raised them to young adulthood. Daisy's move north caused a split

between the Little and Mason families. By 1935, Malcolm's half-sisters Ella and Mary, and two aunts, had moved north to Boston, where he later connected with them (Lehman and Phelps 2005; Payne and Payne 2020:103).

Ella's and Malcolm X's family was infused with pride for its African base of identity and culture as well as with a fierce sense of courage and personal and black independence, nationalism, rebelliousness, and family cohesion (Collins and Bailey 1998:5–10; Shaw 1969; Tarter 1977). These qualities and values are evident in how Ella lived her life and how she guided and related with Malcolm X. He reported in his autobiography that at their first meeting Ella told him, "We Littles have to stick together" (X and Haley 1999 [1965]:38).

In 1929, at age 15, Ella left Georgia for New York City, as part of the Great Migration, and worked as a church secretary for minister, community activist, and author Adam Clayton Powell, Sr. (1865–1953) at the Abyssinian Baptist Church in Harlem for a few years. Powell developed the church as the largest Protestant congregation in the country, with 10,000 congregants. Ella's connection to Powell led to a long-standing professional relationship with Adam Clayton Powell, Jr. (1908–1972), a civil rights activist and later Harlem's first black Congressional representative who served 12 terms between 1945 and 1971 (U.S. House of Representatives, n.d.).[7] Ella then moved to Boston to work in and manage her mother, Daisy Mason Washington's grocery and variety store on Shawmut Avenue at the corner of Lenox Street in Roxbury (exact address and location unknown) with her aunt Emmy Walker (Collins and Bailey 1998:51). Ella's mother lived at 63 Waumbeck Street in a neighborhood that included the Humboldt and Townsend streets of middle-class, well-to-do black families known as "the Hill" and considered the equivalent of Harlem's "Sugar Hill." Her brother, Earl Jr., was an entertainer in Boston, performing under the stage name "Jimmy Carleton" (Collins and Bailey 1998:38).

Ella's and Malcolm X's father Earl Little died in a streetcar incident that some thought was racially motivated in Lansing, Michigan, in 1931 (Collins and Bailey 1998:17) (see **Criterion B – Malcolm X**). In 1933, Ella married Jamaican-born Dr. Thomas Lloyd Oxley, a follower of Marcus Garvey like her father; they divorced in 1934 (Lehman and Phelps 2005). In 1935, Ella's aunts Sarah (known as Sas) and Gracie Little went north to Boston and lived there together, initially with Ella, until their deaths (Collins and Bailey 1998:36). By 1937, Ella had remarried, and she and her second husband, Frank Johnson, lived at 10 Elbert Street in Roxbury (no longer extant, now within Marksdale Gardens). They had moved to 801 Tremont Street (likely no longer extant) by 1939, in a home they shared with Sas and Gracie (Collins and Bailey 1998:12; Polk 1937, 1939).

[7] Ella remained friends with Adam Clayton Powell, Jr. throughout her life. His papers are scattered in more than a dozen archives, and an electronic file search did not reveal any indication of documents relating to Ella.

Businesswoman

Ella Little Collins started in business as a young woman and became a self-made entrepreneur in Boston owning and renting out real estate to support herself and her family. While working at her mother's market, Ella met Maurice Gordon, an emerging developer in the area and cultivated an interest in real estate (BLC 1998:16). Starting in the 1940s, she owned rowhouses, including 486, 478, 539, and 679 Massachusetts Avenue, 680 Tremont Street, and 103 West Springfield Street that she ran as boarding/rooming houses (Collins, personal communication 2018; SCRD 6972/495). One of her methods was to buy properties, including 72 Dale Street, at foreclosure when owners were eager to sell. In the 1940s, Ella, her mother, and her mother's sister owned and leased approximately 200 acres of land in Duxbury, a coastal town about 30 miles south of Boston. The Duxbury properties included approximately 25 acres on Keene Street at the northeast side of the Union Street intersection. Portions of the land were sold in the 1950s and 1960s, and 2.5 acres stayed in the family until 2000, when the parcel was sold by Rodnell Collins. Ella also owned an approximately 10-acre farm with a pond on the southwest side of Mayflower Street in Duxbury and had a lease and option to buy of a large parcel across the street. She kept horses and chickens and would trade eggs for baked goods at local Roxbury markets. The farm property was transferred to the town in 1969, and it and the leased land are now conservation land (Collins, personal communication 2019; Collins and Bailey 1998:52; PCRD 3541/349, 350).

Ella helped finance her work and that of her brother with proceeds from her rental properties. She was generous with the family and sent money to members in Georgia for various needs, including burials. Continuing the family's participation in the Great Migration," she personally brought 20–30 Little, Mason, and Gray family members from Georgia to Boston and helped them get settled (Collins and Bailey 1998:49). Later, she passed along Malcolm X's teachings and sent several young family members on pilgrimages to Mecca. In his autobiography, Malcolm X described their father's characterization of Ella as someone successful who "owned some property," was "in society," and furthermore, "had come North with nothing, and she worked and saved and had invested in property that she built up in value, and then she started sending money to Georgia for another sister, brother, cousin, niece or nephew to come north to Boston" (X and Haley 1999 [1965]:38). As his legal guardian, Ella provided for everything for Malcolm X from the time he came to Boston and continued to help him after he turned 21 (X and Haley 1999 1965]:67).

In addition to her business dealings, during the late 1930s at the height of the Great Depression, and into the early 1940s, in her determination to meet her commitments to sustain herself and her extended family, Ella also engaged in street enterprises of the underground economy. Her

brother Wilfred later commented, "Ella had her hustle going, she didn't work" (quoted in Payne & Payne 2020:104). However, these activities were an expediency under the circumstances of her life, and the limited public assistance available for black Bostonians at the time, not a career, and by the time Malcolm arrived, she was focused on legal pursuits, primarily real estate investments. These included the purchase of 72 Dale Street in the desirable Sugar Hill neighborhood, where she envisioned influencing Malcolm and molding him into a respectable man of society with a good profession (Collins and Bailey 1998:50; Payne and Payne 2020:104, 147–149).

Ella was acquainted with many people involved in business, politics, and social activism in Roxbury and Boston. She often entertained her friends and associates in the formal front parlor on the second floor of 72 Dale Street. Her social circle included Boston civil rights leaders Muriel S. Snowden and Otto P. Snowden (Barry et al. 2017; Collins, personal communication 2018). The Snowdens founded Freedom House in 1949 to facilitate dialogue between whites and blacks, and to promote community activism, and engagement with social justice and education for low-income and minority students. The headquarters was originally about a half mile south of 72 Dale Street in a small office at 151 Humboldt Avenue near the intersection with Waumbeck Street in Roxbury (site now occupied by Trotter School playground). Freedom House moved about a half mile southeast to its current home in the former Hebrew Teachers College at 14 Crawford Street (1925, 1960; MHC No. BOS.11157) in the Grove Hall neighborhood of Dorchester in 1952 and remains an active organization (Snowden 2013; Barry et al. 2017). The Snowdens were among Boston's upper-class black society, and Freedom House engaged prominent speakers including John F. Kennedy. However, according to Ella's son Rodnell Collins, it was not a place that would have invited Malcolm X to speak in the late 1950s and early 1960s (Little and Connolly 1998:98–99). Ella does not appear to have been actively involved in Freedom House programs, although she was acquainted with the Snowdens and may have attended some events.[8]

Ella also knew many local business people including Norris G. and Helen Young Davis who were the founders and owners of the Davis Funeral Home, which started in 1935 at the corner of Humboldt Avenue and Townsend Street and moved to 89 Walnut Avenue near Dale Street in 1950 (Davis Funeral Home 2019; Collins, personal communication 2018). Ella did business with Charlie Roundtree, a leader in the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters union, one of the largest employers of black labor in the United States, and a realtor with an office on Humboldt Avenue. Ella's lawyer was Endicott Peabody, a Harvard-educated liberal Democrat who served as

[8] Freedom House archives are at Northeastern University in Boston. A search of the finding aids and conversation with the archivist turned up one item on Ella, a newspaper article in 1973 when she spoke at the Afro-American Institute of Northeastern University. There is also a separate photograph file that matches the one in the news article (Onyx Staff 1973:3).

governor of Massachusetts from 1963 to 1965 (Collins, personal communication 2018). Peabody supported laws to prevent discrimination in housing and felt his accomplishments were in "breaking up the racial and religious holds of the parties and making them truly parties of reform" (quoted in Molotsky 1997).

Comparison to Related Properties Associated with Ella Little Collins

72 Dale Street is significant for its association with Ella Little Collins and as the primary property and domestic space affiliated with approximately 20 years of her family and community activities when Malcolm X was alive and closely connected with her. Unlike other properties that Ella owned, it fully embodies Ella's aspirations for herself and her family. She purchased the house in 1941 to create a shared home for her half-brother, her husband, and later their son, and the larger family group including her aunts Gracie and Sas, sister Hilda, and occasional others. The house was her home, and that of her husband until their divorce in 1958, and was where she raised her son from his birth in 1945. Ella's short-term residences in Boston before 72 Dale Street at 63 Waumbeck and 89 Harrishof streets no longer exist. The majority of other properties she owned were rental businesses, such as 486, 478, 539, and 679 Massachusetts Avenue, 680 Tremont Street, and 103 West Springfield Street that she ran as boarding/rooming houses.

72 Dale Street, as an originally single-family freestanding house on its own lot with a separate garage in a stable, black, middle-class residential neighborhood in Roxbury represents Ella's statement on home ownership. Her relationship with the house captures the African-American struggle to create places of "social comfort and cultural affirmation if not racial pride, a 'safe space' in which to nurture families and educate children, a symbol of resistance to white supremacy and a foundation for politics, if not economic and political power" (Wiese 2004:8). With 72 Dale Street and the Duxbury farm, Ella gathered and aggregated the elements of a suburban life that many African Americans envisioned and were carrying out in the years following World War II.

Ella lived at 72 Dale Street between 1941 and ca. 1964. During that time, she was active in the community, with her businesses, social life, raising her son, and keeping an eye on Malcolm; watched Malcolm's engagement in the NOI; and carefully supported Malcolm's work as it developed. It was from here that she underwrote his pilgrimage to Mecca and supported the subsequent creation of the OAAU. Sometime shortly before Malcolm X's assassination on February 21, 1965, she moved to the basement apartment in the rooming house she owned at 486 Massachusetts Avenue. She was interviewed there after Malcolm's assassination and she remained there until she moved to a nursing home in 1988 (Murphy 1965). During Ella's residency there, she was central in the memorial and commemorative events following Malcolm X's death, some of which became annual markers and are ongoing today. She was active in

carrying on key aspects of his civil and human rights legacy, most notably leading the continuation of the OAAU in the 1960s and 1970s. Overall, however, Ella chose to remain primarily a private person, and the 486 Massachusetts Avenue building does not convey the depth and breadth of associations with her life as does 72 Dale Street. Her feelings about the importance of 72 Dale Street are crystallized in her decision to never return to the house after Malcolm X's death, yet to direct her son and family to keep and preserve it.

Malcolm Little at 72 Dale Street

In 1939, Malcolm X's mother, Louise Little, was committed to a state mental hospital, and the children were placed in foster care (see Criterion B – Malcolm X). After Ella and Frank Johnson separated in 1940, Ella lived with her mother on Waumbeck Street (U.S. Census 1940). In the 1930s, Ella visited her younger siblings in Lansing and suggested Malcolm X might like to visit her in Boston for the summer, which he did in 1939 and 1940. In a letter to Malcolm X after the second visit, she said "I would like for you to come (back) but under one condition. Your mind must be made up. If I should send your fair (sic) could you pay all your bills; let me know real soon" (quoted in BLC 1998:16–17). Ella arranged to take over his legal custody, and at age 16, he moved to Boston to live with her in 1941; she remained his guardian until he turned 21 in 1946. Recalling this period in an interview, Ella said that their father had picked Malcolm X for her to raise should anything happen to him and that she "felt responsible for Malcolm" (Shaw 1969; X and Haley 1999 [1965]:36; BLC 1998:16–17).

Writing about his recollection of first meeting Ella in his autobiography, Malcolm X said,

> Ella wasn't just black, but like our father, she was jet black. The way she sat, moved, talked, did everything, bespoke somebody who did and got exactly what she wanted… All that I had heard was reflected in Ella's appearance and bearing. I had never been so impressed with anybody (X and Haley 1999 [1965]:34).

By February 1941, when Malcolm X came in Boston, Ella (then Ella Johnson) was living at 89 Harrishof Street. In August 1941, after attempting to acquire a property at the southwest corner of Dale and Walnut streets in Roxbury, Ella purchased the 72 Dale Street property from Eliot Savings Bank (SCRD 5939/137) (see **Criterion A – Social/Ethnic Heritage**). In June 1942, Ella and Frank Johnson divorced, and she married Kenneth Collins that same month (Collins and Bailey 1998:54; Lehman and Phelps 2005). Kenneth was a Lansing, Michigan, native and childhood friend of the older Littles, especially Wilfred. The house at 72 Dale Street was Malcolm X's home until he moved to New York City in 1943, and it remained a home base for him in Boston while Ella lived there.

At 72 Dale Street, Ella and Malcolm X became close as Little family siblings and as surrogate mother and son and developed the relationship instrumental in shaping who he became as an adult. During his time there, Malcolm X shared the second and third floors with Ella and Kenneth, and later their son Rodnell. Ella made changes to the third floor of 72 Dale Street for Malcolm X (see **Section 7 – Description** and **Supplemental Information – Architecture**) that remain in place. Ella's aunts Sas and Gracie and her sister (Malcolm X's older sister) Hilda lived on the first floor. Ella furnished the house and tended the gardens. Historic photographs show a profusion of shrubs and flowers growing against the house and potted plants on the porch. She brought stones from her farm property in Duxbury to create a rock garden along the east side of the driveway (Collins, personal communication 2018). In an interview, Ella remarked that she was fond of flowers and plants and recalled that Malcolm X would bring her plants from his travels (Brown ca. 1994).

The extended Little-Collins family unit remained in place in the 72 Dale Street house when Malcolm X was in Boston-area prisons from 1945 to 1952, and family members resided there until about 1965. Rodnell P. Collins, Ella's only child and Malcolm X's nephew, was born to her and Kenneth Collins in 1945 and raised in the house. Ella and Kenneth divorced in 1958, and she did not remarry (Collins and Bailey 1998:63). Shortly before Malcolm X was killed in 1965, Ella moved to an apartment in her townhouse at 486 Massachusetts Avenue, where she resided until 1988.[9] After his death, she never returned to 72 Dale Street and turned it over to her son Rodnell Collins (see **Supplemental Information – Architecture**). In 1988, Ella lost her legs to diabetes and later suffered strokes. She moved to a nursing home in Norwood and died there on August 3, 1996, at age 82.

Role in Malcolm X's Life

When Ella became legal guardian of Malcolm (Little) X in 1941, he was a 15-year-old student from the Midwest. She was 27, married, and an experienced street-smart and businesswoman who was raised in the rural South and was knowledgeable about life in the urban Northeast. Ella removed Malcolm X from the welfare system and directed him into the U.S. working class. She played an integral role throughout his life, raising him through adolescence to adulthood and serving as a primary advisor and motivational force (X and Haley 1999 [1965]; Sales 1994:31). In an interview, she explained that in African mythology, it is believed that the seventh child, in this case Malcolm X, was special and destined to do great things (Collins and Bailey 1998:xii). Her role, as she described, "was to stimulate his arrogance, stimulate his impulsiveness. Let him

[9] 486 Massachusetts Avenue is a four-story brick-and-brownstone rowhouse built in 1870. It is included in the Massachusetts Cultural Resources Inventory database as BOS.13968, Elizabeth and Robert Kemp House. The house was a lodging/boarding house with mostly absentee ownership beginning by 1917 through conversion to apartments in 2001. The ownership between 1961 and the 1990s is not specified (Chase-Harrell 2007).

feel that the life that God gave him belonged to him. He did not have to pay homage to anyone. This is how I guided him" (Shaw 1969).

In his autobiography, Malcolm X writes "she was the first really proud black woman I had ever seen in my life," of first meeting Ella. "She was plainly proud of her very dark skin. This was unheard of among Negroes in those days…. The way she sat, moved, talked, and did everything bespoke somebody who did and got exactly what she wanted… I had never been so impressed with anybody" (X and Haley 1999 [1965]:37–38). Reflecting on his move to Boston, Malcolm X remarked, "No physical move in my life has been more pivotal or profound in its repercussions" (X and Haley 1999 [1965]:43). Malcolm X's biographer Alex Haley described Ella as "Malcolm's protector and confidante and a "source of grown-up advice, experienced advice, streetwise advice" (quoted in Levy 1996).[10] Ella supported Malcolm X's rebelliousness to resist oppression, but not to engage in the nightlife lifestyle and activities of which she did not approve (Collins and Bailey 1998:40).

When Malcolm X arrived in Boston, Ella used her connections to structure his new life. She took him to meet John Walker, Sr., her uncle by marriage, who owned Walker's Auto Parks Company, a parking lot business in Chinatown. Malcolm X immediately got a job working for John, although he soon moved onto other opportunities. She enrolled him in an all-boys' school, envisioning his education and a successful career, perhaps as a lawyer. She then got him a job as a Pullman porter on the train between Boston and New York. However, Malcolm X was drawn into more risky aspects of urban life and made other choices. He moved to Harlem for a time, then returned to Boston, where he was arrested and imprisoned from 1945 to 1952 (see **Criterion B – Malcolm X**) (X and Haley 1999 [1965]4:79–164; Collins and Bailey 1998:23).

After the 20-year-old Malcolm X was sentenced to prison for larceny in Boston in 1945, Ella was the first person to visit him and encouraged him to use his time there to better himself. In 1948, she was instrumental in having Malcolm X transferred from the Massachusetts Correctional Institute–Concord (where other family members, especially his younger brother Reginald Little, introduced him to the NOI) to the Massachusetts Correctional Institute–Norfolk, formerly the Norfolk Prison Colony, which had an experimental educational program with a variety of opportunities for inmates (see **Criterion B – Malcolm X**). In Norfolk, Malcolm X

[10] Though Malcolm X credited Ella Little Collins with only positive influence, his widow, Betty Shabazz felt otherwise, and aspects of her life have suggested her role may have been more complex. *West's Encyclopedia of American Law* biography mentions Ella received 10 convictions "for offenses including petty larceny and assault and battery," which is, however, accompanied by a statement from the family that "the run-ins occurred when she was defending others who were being harassed or taken advantage of by people in positions of authority" (Lehman and Phelps 2005:340–343; BLC 1998:17). No incidents are known to have been associated with 72 Dale Street. See also **Businesswoman** section.

accepted the teachings of the Honorable Elijah Muhammad, leader of the NOI, and developed his reading, writing, and debating skills (X and Haley 1965:184–207). Looking back, Ella assessed Malcolm X's time in prison as when she was able to help him by "…accepting facts as a guideline for life. Prison is real. Malcolm was able to see this." She observed that he lost his youthful illusions and saw life for real; one of the most valuable assets he acquired in life was to have courage and to accept life from a realistic point of view (Shaw 1969).

Throughout his life, Malcolm X relied on Ella for her moral and financial support and her support of his vision and ministry. Ella continued providing for Malcolm X until his death. Observing Ella's skills as a real estate investor, Malcolm X and his two brothers, Wilfred and Philbert Little, encouraged the NOI to buy property, which it might not otherwise have done (Collins and Bailey 1998:55). After the NOI dismissed him as a spokesperson in 1963, Malcolm X approached Ella for help to make a pilgrimage to Mecca: "I was turning again to my sister Ella. Though at times I'd made Ella angry at me … [she] had never once really wavered from my corner." Ella's response was, "How much do you need?" (X and Haley 1999 [1965]:347), although she had been saving for her own Hajj to Mecca. The important, formative trip in the spring of 1964 that took Malcolm X to Mecca, elsewhere in the Middle East, and Africa showed him other Muslim cultures and international contexts. The experience shifted his ideas about the struggle for civil rights away from the relatively narrow black nationalist stance of the NOI and instilled a perspective on the need for broader human rights. Malcolm X's proclaiming of these new concepts, along with his acknowledgement of Elijah Muhammad's indiscretions with women, was a key factor that led to his split with the NOI and his forming the Organization of Afro-American Unity (OAAU) and Muslim Mosque, Inc. in New York when he returned to the United States (see **Criterion B – Malcolm X**).

On February 21, 1965, Malcolm X was assassinated while speaking at an OAAU rally at the Audubon Ballroom in Harlem. Ella went with Malcolm's widow, Betty Shabazz, to the medical examiner's office to identify the body. She helped organize the funeral held on February 27 in New York, where her son Rodnell was a pallbearer, and covered all of Malcolm X's funeral and business expenses.

In a February 22, 1965, interview with the *Boston Globe* when she was living at 486 Massachusetts Avenue in a basement apartment, she discussed Malcolm X's premonition that he was going to die violently (X and Haley 1999 [1965]:413; Murphy 1965). Malcolm X's killers "took something from me, something that I put a lot into," Ella later said in a *Boston Globe*. Interview. "He was at the point where he could become stronger than ever," she continued, "I could see Malcolm becoming the greatest black man in the history of the world" (Cunningham 1992).

Maintaining and Protecting Malcolm X's Legacy

Following her brother's death, Ella succeeded Malcolm X temporarily, and then permanently, as the leader of the OAAU, based in Harlem at the Teresa Hotel, and supported the group financially.[11] She held a press conference at her Sarah A. Little Preparatory School (see *Civil Rights and Community/Education Activist* below) a few days after Malcolm X's death to announce her intentions (O'Donnell 1965). Without Malcolm X and his charisma as a coalescing force, some members left the relatively young organization, and the broad international scope originally envisioned was set aside. Nevertheless, under Ella's leadership the OAAU continued its founder's intentions on a smaller scale in its commitment to black nationalism and grassroots organizing while also demonstrating the contributions of women in leadership positions. The OAAU gave a yearly award in Malcolm X's honor to individuals who contributed to black social justice causes including Harlem lawyer and judge Cora T. Walker and women's and civil rights activist Fannie Lou Hamer (Collins, personal communication 2019). Early in her tenure, Ella hosted an all-women panel to discuss "the role of the black woman in the coming revolution" (quoted in Felber 2016). Guest speakers included Harlem-based civil rights leaders Mae Mallory (1927–2007) and Audley "Queen Mother" Moore (1898–1997). Ella established OAAU chapters in Boston under black feminist pioneer Mary Ann Weathers and in New Rochelle under activist and writer Louise Moore. The activities of the OAAU and its women leaders helped bridge the time between Malcolm X's death and the rise of the Black Power movement (Felber 2016; Sales 1994:160–161).

James Small, an African history and religion professor at City College of New York (CCNY; now City University of New York) and the OAAU's eastern regional director, noted in Ella's obituary in 1996 that in her capacity as president of the OAAU, Ella oversaw the organization's efforts to establish clinics and libraries in Africa and the Caribbean and supported efforts for black political freedom worldwide. Small also stated that the OAAU started study groups, ran an agricultural employment program for inner-city youths from 1967 to 1977, and did other grassroots organizing in the United States (Levy 1996). Each year to the present, the OAAU has sponsored workshops during the week including May 19, the anniversary of Malcolm X's birthday.

In 1969, during her time as president of the OAAU, Ella was a strong ally of the April and May CCNY strike of black and Puerto Rican students (with white supporters) for diversity and representation of these largely overlooked communities in the college's Harlem neighborhood. The first of their five demands was for "a School of Black and Puerto Rican Studies" so that

[11] Malcolm X's widow Betty Shabazz, and Ella disagreed over the future leadership of the OAAU, in which neither previously had been directly involved (Sales 1994:160).

"…for the first time we will be able to study our true past history in relation to our present condition" and "bring about an increased understanding of the political, social, and economic forces which work to exploit us" (CCNY 1969a). Students organized marches and occupied and barricaded buildings. After Congressman Adam Clayton Powell, Jr. spoke at a rally at the barricaded CCNY South Gate, Ella offered encouragement and told students she was with them "all the way." In an *Amsterdam News* photograph of the event, shows she appears as the only woman in a group of five men (*Amsterdam News* 1969).

Over the course of the strike, violence broke out between the pro-strike students and the anti-strike students and police, which led to the resignation of CCNY President Buell Gallagher on May 12, 1969. Ella, the OAAU, and Adam Clayton Powell, Jr. were instrumental in setting up CCNY's degree-granting collegiate black studies department, one of the nation's first, which led the college to initiate a policy of open admissions (that is, unselective and non-competitive admissions) in the fall of 1970, five years earlier than previously announced (CCNY 1969a & b; CUNY 2019; Lehman and Phelps 2005).

The OAAU saw its highest level of activity in the 1960s and 1970s, after which its influence waned (Sales 1994:161). Aside from occasional lectures and appearances and presiding over observances of Malcolm X's birthday, Ella maintained a low public profile and believed that keeping Malcolm X's visions for black liberation alive was most effectively done by others. According to James Small, she was aware that Malcolm X's "intellectual children are expressing those views all over the world" (Levy 1996). As part of the family's guardianship of Malcolm's legacy, Ella sought to ensure that he was accurately portrayed by authors and filmmakers, as did her son and Malcolm X's widow and six daughters.

In another attempt to maintain Malcolm X's legacy and his influence on the black community, Ella conceived of an annual pilgrimage to his gravesite in Ferncliff Cemetery in Ardsley, New York, which has occurred every year since 1966 and is organized by the Malcolm X Commemoration Committee (*New York Beacon* 2011). On February 23, 1967, a Malcolm X Memorial March and Service was held in New York, where Ella was listed as president of the OAAU in the program and one of five speakers, sharing Malcolm X's contributions during his life with the mourners (Carson 1991:422, 444). Ella successfully petitioned the mayor of Omaha, Nebraska, (Malcolm's birthplace) to declare the week of May 16–22, 1971, as Malcolm X Week.

In 1995, 30 years after Malcolm X was assassinated, and one year before Ella died, Ella and Rodnell proposed a biography to "to set the record straight about Malcolm X," Rodnell Collins said in an interview (Gates 1995:32). The book, *Seventh Child, a Family Memoir of Malcolm X*, written by Rodnell with A. Peter Bailey, was published in 1998, two years after Ella's death. In

the early 2000s, Rodnell established the Malcolm X–Ella L. Collins Family Foundation to support educational activities about their legacies. In addition, the Ella Little Collins Institute was established at the Islamic Society of Boston Cultural Center to "…develop a culture of religious knowledge, personal empowerment, and civic engagement…to establish a vibrant community by joining a classical understanding of Islam with modern scholarship and a healthy understanding of the current cultural context" (Ella Little Collins Institute 20112a, 2012b).

Civil Rights and Community/Education Activist

The 1950s–1960s was the height of the national modern civil rights movement with its primary goals to end racial discrimination and segregation and provide equal access to jobs and the political system (see **Criterion B – Malcolm X**). Issues of urban renewal, public housing, and school desegregation were also in the forefront. In the 1950s, major demographic shifts occurred in Boston, especially in Roxbury where blacks became the predominant population group. Ella, like Malcolm, believed in black nationalism and self-determination. She encountered injustices and bigotry, especially in business and education, did not rely on organized civil rights organizations for assistance, and remained fierce in her consistent demand for respect for her family and herself.

Though Little siblings Wilfred, Reginald, Philbert, Wesley, and Hilda had become members of the NOI in the late 1940s, and Malcolm X, after he signed up in 1952, recruited Ella to join, she remained resistant because she did not trust the organization. In her opinion, the head of the organization, Elijah Muhammad, prioritized himself and his family over the members. In addition, she was put off by rumors of his promiscuity, and she felt Reginald was badly treated when the NOI suspended him for adultery (Collins and Bailey 1998:60, 87).[12]

In 1957, when Boston Mosque 11 (formed in 1952–1953 at 405 Massachusetts Avenue with Malcolm X as the first minister) moved to 35 Intervale Street about one mile south of 72 Dale Street, Ella decided to become involved "up to a point" for Malcolm X's sake and set up its first in-house daycare center, which she was likely involved with for about two years (quoted in Collins and Bailey 1998:87) (Collins and Bailey 1998:87, 99). However, she remained skeptical of the NOI and in 1959, she left with the organization, five years before Malcolm X did. She presumably dropped her association with the day-care center at that time.[13] She became an

[12] Malcolm X had tried unsuccessfully to appeal to Elijah Muhammad on Reginald's behalf, but ultimately the NOI members of the Little family chose allegiance to Elijah Muhammad over Reginald. Following the suspension, Reginald had a mental breakdown and was put in an institution (X and Haley 1999 [1965]:214–217).
[13] 35 Intervale Street continued to be an NOI mosque until the late 1970s when it became an orthodox Al-Islam congregation and was renamed Masjid Al-Qur'aan, which it remains today, with an active children's program (Masjid Al-Qur'aan 2011).

orthodox Sunni Muslim and remained so until her death. Her Arab Muslim name was Alize Aliya Abdullah Hamid (Collins 2018, 2019 personal communications).

In 1958, Ella organized the Sarah A. Little School of Preparatory Arts (named for her Aunt Sas) at 539 Massachusetts Avenue in Boston (one of her properties), where children and adults were taught Arabic, Swahili, French, and Spanish (O'Donnell 1965; Associated Press 1996). Malcolm X cited this accomplishment as an example of her strength and resourcefulness: "Ella had started studying under Boston orthodox Muslims, then she founded a school where Arabic was taught! *She* couldn't speak it, she hired teachers who did. That's Ella!" (X and Haley 1999 [1965]:349). The school remained open for 10 years, closing in 1968 (Lehman and Phelps 2005).

In the 1960s, Ella was the first black woman to win a court case against the Boston Police Department when she was falsely charged and acquitted of bicycle theft (Collins and Bailey 1998:57–58). She confronted public school officials about the lack of black history in Boston school curriculums. When Rodnell's elementary school social studies teacher assigned an essay on George Washington, Ella told him to write two essays—one on George Washington and one on George Washington Carver. After the teacher ignored the Carver essay and gave Rodnell a low grade on the George Washington essay, Ella raised her concern with the teacher and school principal but got no satisfaction. She then became one of, if not the first, black person to confront the Boston School Board on the failure to teach black history. Louise Day Hicks, a board member strongly opposed to busing, declared that black history did not belong in Boston Public Schools and when Ella confronted her about it, their interaction resulted in a physical altercation. Ella transferred Rodnell to another school, where he was taught by Agatha Guilford (later Howard), one of the first black women to graduate from Boston Teacher's College, in 1936 (Collins and Bailey 1998:56; Long 2003).

Ella focused on family, nurturing strong cultural pride, and struggling for black civil and human rights. In her social and business life, Ella aspired to be financially successful and to fit into and be respected by Boston's black society, which in turn desired acceptance by the city's white aristocrats. She planned to surround Malcolm X with focused and productive black people to help him succeed. In Malcolm X's view, starting at his arrival in Boston, these two goals—black self-determination and integration in white society—were contradictory (X and Haley 1999 [1965]:45–47; Collins and Bailey 1998:66–68). Ella's belief system throughout her life integrated religious teachings with a social justice and political focus on the struggle for black liberation issues, including supporting the needs of black children and black women leaders. She was raised as a Christian and in the context of Garvey's Pan-African concepts (see **Criterion B – Malcolm X**). As an adult and with Malcolm X's influence, she further developed her convictions of black pride, self-determination, and nationalism and became an orthodox Sunni Muslim. In

general, like Malcolm X, her views were not closely aligned with the non-violent, passive-resistance, integrationist approach of the civil rights movement advocated by Reverend Martin Luther King, Jr. and others. She was not in favor of bussing and school segregation, nor assimilation of blacks into white society. However, in a manner similar to Malcolm X's ideological evolution in the 1960s before his death (see **Criterion B – Malcolm X**), Ella characterized herself as a proponent of human rights, because she felt that universal human rights were of primary importance (Collins, personal communications 2018, 2019).

Ella maintained a public presence in the black community and attended and spoke at many events. In February 1973, for example, Ella spoke at the Black History Week events at the Afro-Institute at Northeastern University in Boston. In her remarks, she quoted from the Bible and advised black people to "start thinking for yourself and listen to the voice inside you…Surprise yourself with the wisdom you have…As long as we've got a superior brain, we've got a power house…We need to know who we are, why we are and why there is an enemy who wants us to think we're not who we are" (quoted in Onyx Staff 1973:3). Other programs that week included a dance performance and a talk on pan-Africanism by Stokely Carmichael (Onyx Staff 1973:3).

CRITERION A – SOCIAL HISTORY and ETHNIC HERITAGE: BLACK

The Malcolm X–Ella Little Collins House is significant at the local level in the areas of Social History and Ethnic Heritage: Black for its association with the mid-19th-century development of Roxbury as a streetcar suburb of Boston and the subsequent demographic changes that characterize the neighborhood's rich and complex history.

Roxbury was originally settled by 1630 but grew slowly through the 17th century. In the early 18th century, many slaughterhouses and tanneries were established, and Roxbury became America's most important tanning center by 1810. The northern and eastern sections of Roxbury developed as an industrial center, especially after the completion of the Boston and Roxbury Mill Dam in Boston's Back Bay in the 1820s, which drew other heavy industry, including iron and lead works, rubber manufacturing, and cordages. Due to the uneven topography of much of Roxbury, few industries were in the central and west areas, instead being located in the flatter lowlands of Lower Roxbury to the east. As a result, much of Roxbury is predominantly residential or commercial, with only a few industrial buildings.

As early as 1826, hourly stagecoach service from Boston to Roxbury began, spurring residential and commercial development, as did the street railways built by the 1840s (Rawson 2010:136). In 1834, the Boston and Providence Railroad extended into Roxbury along Tremont Street, west of the Washington Park neighborhood. With it came expanded access to the area from Boston

proper and an increase in residential construction. In 1846 Roxbury incorporated as a city (Loveday 2015:29). Between 1840 and 1850, the population increased by 120 percent, and the country feel of Roxbury quickly became urbanized as the large estates in the southern end were parceled out and subdivided into house lots (Rawson 2010:137–138). The residential areas in the north part of the neighborhood near today's Dudley Square began to develop first with platted streets lined with wood-frame houses as early as ca. 1842, followed by areas to the south as the street railway extended its routes (Adams et al. 2018; Walling 1853, 1858; Warner 1973:23). Land near railroad stations was frequently by developed by land speculators who sold to builders or built houses themselves (O'Connell 2013:42). Residential development was restrained through the mid-19th century before a building boom in the last quarter of the century as Roxbury became a streetcar suburb of Boston. The part of Roxbury nearest Boston was the most densely developed. Residents of the more rural areas resented paying for services such as streetlights and road paving in the more urban area, and ultimately Roxbury split into two municipalities—Roxbury and West Roxbury. In 1868, Roxbury merged with the City of Boston (Rawson 2010:150–154).

The new residential neighborhoods were occupied by a mix of native-born Yankee New Englanders and European immigrant families of mostly lower- or middle-class economic status (Rawson 2010:138). The Irish arrived in large numbers between 1845 and 1855 due to the potato famine (O'Connell 2013:42). By 1900, Roxbury was home to immigrants from across Europe (including Ireland, Germany, and Scandinavia), Canadians from the Maritime provinces (Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, and Prince Edward Island), and first-generation Americans and native New Englanders. By the late 19th century, a significant number of Eastern and Western European and Russian Jews were immigrating to America to escape pogroms and economic hardship and, by the early 20th century, many had settled in Roxbury, Dorchester, and Mattapan (Gamm 1999:176; Rosenstein 2018:277). In 1901, elevated rail service was constructed in Dudley Square, adjacent to the district, which made the northern section of Roxbury more accessible to working-class Bostonians. The streetcar system was electrified beginning in the late 1880s, which improved transit service along Washington and Dudley streets. As a result, rowhouses and wood-frame multiple family buildings, like three deckers, became the predominant building type constructed in this period.

The area where the **Malcolm X–Ella Little Collins House (ca. 1865, contributing building, BOS.14294)** was constructed, near the center of Roxbury, was part of a large estate that was owned by Abijah Seaver (b. 1737) until the late 18th century, and passed to his children and then his grandson, William Seaver (Bagley et al. 2018:22). By 1837, the Seaver estate, which extended roughly from Dale Street on the north to Townsend Street on the south and bounded by Walnut Street on the east and Centre Street on the west, was broken into various parcels. A 2.5-

acre lot near the corner of Dale and Walnut streets that contained the Seaver house (no longer extant), along with the land that would eventually be 72 Dale Street, was sold to the Roxbury Land Company, a conglomerate of wealthy investors that purchased large parcels of land in Roxbury and elsewhere and generally parceled it out to house builders (Bagley et al. 2018:25; Drake 1878:227).

In 1842, noted Boston housewright Nelson Curtis (1810–1887) purchased one of the Roxbury Land Company parcels. Dale Street was formally laid out by the City of Boston in 1845, and Curtis may have purchased land along the proposed street to build and sell speculatively built single- and multiple-family houses (Bagley et al. 2018:25). Curtis sold the property to Frederic W. Dorr in 1866 (NCRD 339/609). The deed indicates there were buildings on the property, but an 1873 map of the area shows a house but no attending outbuildings (Figure 4).[14] To the west of the house was Washington Park (now Malcolm X Park) surrounding Honeysuckle Hill, which also was once part of the Seaver estate. To the east are Walnut Street and Humboldt Avenue, two connected major north–south thoroughfares through Roxbury from Boston proper that provided easy access into the growing city.

At the time of his purchase of the property, Dorr (1835–1877) was a young Civil War veteran, having served in the Union Army as a surveyor. During the war, he used skills gained as a surveyor with the U.S. Coast Survey to map Confederate positions at numerous battlefields, including Yorktown and Chattanooga. Dorr and his partner, John Donn, traveled behind enemy lines to clandestinely map the enemy's positions and assisted Union generals in planning routes and finding passage across obstacles (Bagley et al. 2018:26; Donn 2006).

Although Dorr owned the Dale Street property, he did not live there. His parents William and Mary Dorr lived at the property with his brother Walter and an Irish servant named Bridget Burns (U.S. Census 1870), and Frederic lived on Salem Street in Medford with his brothers Henry and Benjamin (Greenough 1870). Most of the neighbors on Dale Street were New England natives predominantly from Massachusetts; others included a small number of immigrants who were mostly housekeepers and maids from Ireland (U.S. Census 1870). In 1873, Dorr sold the property to his parents' next-door neighbor, carpenter and builder William Rumrill (SCRD 1180/262). The Hopkins 1873 map shows that by that time much of the area north of Circuit Street, above Dale Street, was platted and built up; although much of the area between Circuit and Dale streets had been platted, it was still relatively undeveloped.

[14] Previous documentation of the property indicates the house was constructed in 1874, but deed, map, and city tax records indicate the building was constructed by ca. 1865 (Bagley et al. 2018:26).

In 1874, New Englanders Daniel and Caroline Nichols purchased 72 Dale Street from William Rumrill (SCRD 1213/94). Daniel Nichols (b. ca. 1830) was a carriagemaker who had his business offices at 118 West Brookline Street in Boston's South End. He lived at 72 Dale Street with his wife, their son Wendell and daughter Mary, and an Irish servant named Kate Connolly (U.S. Census 1880). As it was in 1870, much of the neighborhood residents were native-born New Englanders; a small number of European immigrants were homeowners, but others were house servants. Residents' occupations varied, but most were skilled laborers engaged in tailoring, dressmaking, and construction (U.S. Census 1880).

In 1890, the house was purchased by newspaper seller John Murphy and his wife Mary (Bagley et al. 2018:27). By that time, the area between Dale and Circuit streets was largely built out, with only a small number of large, open lots remaining (Bromley 1890). In 1892, the Murphy's next-door neighbors at 70 Dale Street were Canadian immigrants Anthony and Janet Patten and their children Stephen, Jessie, and Ida. The 1892 *Boston Directory* lists Anthony as a physician and Stephen as a student (Sampson, Murdock, & Company 1892). By 1902, Anthony (ca. 1841–1917) and Janet had moved to 72 Dale Street, and Stephen, by then a physician like his father, lived and worked at 240 Warren Street (1890, BOS.11760, NRDIS 1894) (Sampson, Murdock, & Company 1902). By 1910, Anthony was a widower and lived with his daughters Jessie and Ida, sister Edna, a boarder, and an Irish servant. More immigrant families moved to the neighborhood, mostly from the Canadian Maritimes, and worked as teachers, auto repairmen, pharmacists, and in other occupations (U.S. Census 1910). The Pattens lived in the house until 1913, when they moved to Wellesley; in 1915, Stephen had his offices at 141 Milk Street, Room 931 (1903, BOS.1894) and 7 Waumbeck Street (extant, within BOS.QP), and lived in the Waumbeck Street building (Sampson & Murdock 1915). By this time, the area around 72 Dale Street had places and organizations that raised its desirability as a place to live. These included Washington Park, created in 1860 and redesigned by Olmsted Brothers in 1912 (rededicated as "Malcolm X Park" in 1980), the Lewis-Higginson School (1912), and the Eliot Congregational Church (1873) at the corner of Dale and Walnut streets. As early as 1920, a small but growing middle-class black population in Roxbury was in the Elm Hill (known as "the Hill") neighborhood along Waumbeck and Humboldt streets a few blocks south of Dale Street that was sometimes likened to Harlem's "Sugar Hill" (Gamm 1999:11).

In 1920, the property was purchased from the Murphys by Canadian immigrants Daniel and Mary McDonald. Daniel was a building carpenter and, in 1920, the McDonalds lived at 40 Harold Street before moving to Dale Street with their sons Lewis, John, and Raymond and their daughter Dorothy, along with an Irish maid, Mollie Morris (Bagley et al. 2018:28; U.S. Census 1920). In general, Roxbury (and nearby Dorchester) at that time were home to thousands of Irish immigrants and Irish Americans and a growing Jewish population (Gamm 1999:179). In 1925,

the McDonalds converted the house into a two-family residence, likely providing a private residence for one of their children (Bagley et al. 2018:182). In 1928, the house was owned by widow Mary Linehan, a first-generation Irish American. Two other households lived at the property: Albert and Agnes Gleason and Anna Galvin. Albert was a first-generation Irish American and worked at the post office; his wife Agnes was a native New Englander; and Anna was a first-generation Scots American who worked as a private nurse. The neighborhood remained predominantly native New Englanders, Irish, and Canadian, and the residents' occupations included restaurant and store owners, steamship longshoremen, and bookkeeper (U.S. Census 1930). Linehan owned the property until 1937, when it was foreclosed on by mortgage holder Eliot Savings Bank (SCRD 5646/569).

The Eliot Savings Bank appears to have rented the building for approximately four years before selling it to Ella Johnson (née Little, later Little Collins) and Kenneth Collins in 1941. During the rental years, one of the two apartments was occupied by William and Isabella Hallion, immigrants from England and Scotland, respectively, and their eight children, and the other was rented to Mary Carroll and her uncles Charles and Frank Sullivan (Polk 1939; U.S. Census 1940). Unlike other parts of Roxbury, including along Elm Hill Avenue and Blue Hill Avenue to the south, which became predominantly Jewish neighborhoods, the immediate area surrounding Dale Street continued to be predominantly occupied by Irish and Canadian immigrants and native-born Americans. However, by 1940, as more black families migrated north from the South, particularly from Georgia (like the Littles), North Carolina, and Virginia, some settled in Roxbury (U.S. Census 1940). Census data from 1940 and 1950 indicates that Roxbury's black community coalesced into two distinct residential areas: one centered on Humboldt Avenue and a smaller area centered on the Charles Street African Methodist Episcopal (AME) church at the corner of Warren Street and Elm Hill Avenue (Gamm 1999:61). The Dale Street neighborhood was a half-mile south of the commercial areas of Dudley Square and Boston's South End, which had expanded with numerous dance clubs, restaurants, movie theaters, and other entertainment locations (X and Haley 1999 [1965]:48–49).

In 1941, Ella, then separated from her second husband, Frank Johnson, purchased 72 Dale Street from the Eliot Savings Bank. By 1942, she lived there with her third husband, Kenneth Collins, and her younger brother, seventeen-year-old Malcolm, who had moved to Boston from Michigan at age fourteen to live with her. The purchase of the house vaulted Ella into the ranks of the Hill elite. Native-born black New Englanders generally looked down on recent Southern black transplants who became homeowners, believing themselves to be more cultured, dignified, and better off than blacks living in less wealthy parts of Roxbury. Often, these native Southerners not only owned the houses they lived in, but owned rental properties as well, as Ella eventually would on Massachusetts Avenue in the South End (X and Haley 1999 [1965]:46–47).

In 1945, Ella and Kenneth had a son, Rodnell.[15] The following year the Collinses converted the first floor apartment into two apartments: the front one for Malcolm's sister Hilda (1921–2015) and their aunts Gracie (d. 1978) and Sarah Little (d. 1962), and a rear efficiency apartment in for the use of visiting family (BISD 1946; Collins and Bailey 1998:36, 2018).

After World War II, Roxbury became a predominantly minority neighborhood that unlike much of Boston went into economic and physical decline (Gaston and Kennedy 1987:8). Around 1950, the population of Roxbury was two-thirds white and one-third black. During the 1950s large numbers of white residents, predominantly of Russian Jewish heritage, left Roxbury for western suburbs such as Brookline and Newton or moved south to Dorchester and Mattapan (Gamm 1999:13, 15). By 1960, the population ratio was reversed, with black residents making up two-thirds of the population. Many of the new black families in the Hill area of Roxbury had moved there from the South End or the eastern, more industrial section of Roxbury (Gamm 1999:225) and others were transplants from the South seeking to escape Jim Crow laws or Civil Rights-era unrest (Wilkerson 2010:177–179).

In 1949, Otto and Muriel Snowden, a married couple who were social workers in Roxbury, established Freedom House in response to the needs of the burgeoning black community in a small office at 151 Humboldt Avenue in Roxbury (not extant). Otto (1914–1995), a graduate of Howard University, was the director of the St. Mark Social Center, which was affiliated with the first black church in Boston, St. Mark's Congregational Church. Muriel (1916–1988), a graduate of Radcliffe College, was the Executive Director of the City of Cambridge Civic Unity Committee. Freedom House was incorporated to "provide without duplication of adequate existing services, a program to improve the civic, educational, recreational, and general welfare of the entire Upper Roxbury community, the area bounded by Dudley, Seaver, Washington Streets and Blue Hill Avenue" (Freedom House 1974:7). The organization also worked to remove barriers to educational, employment, and housing opportunities for blacks in Roxbury.

The mid-20th century transition of class and race occurred alongside a series of institutional actions that had a profound effect on the character of the built environment. With an increase in black residents, the Federal Housing Authority (FHA) and many insurance companies and banks denied federal mortgage insurance, mortgage and home improvement loans, and affordable insurance policies to property owners based on biased racial and socioeconomic considerations. Robbed of the investment incentives of other portions of the city and region, many property owners sold or simply stopped maintaining their buildings in the late 1950s and through the

[15] Rodnell Collins, his wife Annie C. Collins, and his children Arjun K. C. Collins and Dayorsha E. Collins are the current owners of 72 Dale Street (SCRD 2017).

1960s. By the late 1950s, absentee landlords owned one quarter of the housing stock in the area, a number that only continued to rise. Blockbusting, or fostering property turnover with constructed connections between racial makeup of neighborhoods and property value, was also common in the period. The resulting disinvestment led to deteriorating conditions in the district's building stock. The situation worsened in the late 1960s, when the Boston Banks Urban Renewal Group, a consortium of local banks, encouraged black settlement in parts of Roxbury and Dorchester by guaranteeing mortgages for low-income black families. The project proved financially disastrous, resulting in a 50% default rate by 1974 and continued deterioration and abandonment of local properties (Gamm 1999:30–55). In the 1960s and 1970s, significant urban renewal campaigns in Roxbury, primarily in Washington Park, altered the fabric of the neighborhood.

Planning for the urban renewal projects by the Boston Redevelopment Authority (BRA, now Boston Planning and Development Agency) began in the late 1950s and early 1960s, to combat perceived blight, likely caused at least in part by redlining practices (Gamm 1999:40). In 1958, the Boston City Planning Board proposed a 186-acre site in the Washington Park area for redevelopment, which was altered and approved by the board the following year as a 1,000-acre site encompassing a larger section of Roxbury (Spiers 2009:225). The final Washington Park area, named for Washington Park near its center, ran from Dudley Square at the north to Franklin Park on the south and from Warren Street on the east to Washington Street on the west and included 72 Dale Street and encompassed the Hill neighborhood (Figure 5; BRA 2019). In 1960, 70% of this area's population of 26,000 was black. Otto and Muriel Snowden spearheaded community engagement efforts during the urban renewal process, along with other community members such as Elma Lewis and Melnea Cass (Vrabel 2014:25). By the mid-1960s, Roxbury was an almost entirely black community and a center of grassroots activism in Boston. Community groups such as Snowden's Freedom House and the Organization of Afro-American Unity (OAAU), founded by Malcolm X, engaged citizens organizing for justice, equality, and power and to fight discrimination in housing, education, and employment (RHS 2019).

Approved by the City of Boston in February 1963, the Washington Park Urban Renewal Area was the first residential urban renewal project approved by the City, and "the only major urban renewal effort in the black community" (Osgood 1978 quoted in Adams et al. 2016:15). The overall Washington Park urban renewal project was intended to rehabilitate houses that could be saved, demolish those that were in such bad condition that it was not economically feasible to rehabilitate them, and, on those cleared areas, build new housing, public facilities, and recreational spaces (BRA 1969:1). The area of Roxbury that was the focus of the redevelopment programming was predominantly black, and was home to a mix of socio-economic groups including skilled and unskilled workers (BRA 1969:3). The BRA was responsible for overseeing

the urban renewal programming, but in Roxbury in particular, the neighborhood was highly invested in the project.

Between 1963 and 1975, the Washington Park urban renewal project resulted in 1,800 units of new housing and 4,600 rehabilitated units, the expansion of Washington Park west to Washington Street, and the construction of a new swimming pool/skating rink (Melnea Cass Rink and Swimming Pool) and recreation center (Shelburne Recreational Center); a shopping center on the south side of Dale Street at Warren Street; and a new civic center on the south side of Dudley Square (Vrabel 2014:27).[16] Despite the perceived initial success of the project, there was a continued shift toward lower-income residents in Roxbury as residents with the financial means moved out of the neighborhood. The nearby Washington Park shopping center at the intersection of Martin Luther King, Jr. Boulevard and Warren Street became a target for vandalism, which may have spread to the surrounding neighborhood (Vrabel 2014:27).

After the assassination of Malcolm X on February 21, 1965, Ella Little Collins left 72 Dale Street and never returned (Rodnell Collins, personal communication 2018). The Little Collins family retained ownership of the house, but the property deteriorated as the family directed its attention to preserving Malcolm X's civil and human rights activism legacy (see **Criterion B – Ella Little Collins**). In 1970, the house was vandalized. Windows were broken and personal items belonging to the Little and Collins families were thrown outside around the house (see **Criterion D – Archaeology** for the description of the representatively meaningful surface-collected artifacts from the Little-Collins period and **Supplemental Information – Architecture**).

Following her brother's death, Ella took over leadership of the OAAU, which Malcolm X had founded in early 1964, along with Muslim Mosque, Inc., after his split with the Nation of Islam (see **Criterion B – Ella Little Collins** and **Criterion B – Malcolm X**). Both organizations were headquartered in New York City and held a small number of activities in Boston.

The 72 Dale Street house has remained in the family to the present. In the intervening years between Malcolm X's death and her own, Ella was insistent that the house not become a monument to Malcolm X, but instead be used for an educational purpose. In 1998, 72 Dale Street was made a Boston City Landmark by the Boston Landmarks Commission, protecting the property from demolition and recognizing the Little and Collins families' contributions to United States culture and history. The house is currently undergoing renovation and rehabilitation and is

[16] On May 19, 1986, the entirety of Washington Park, bounded by Dale, Paulding, and Washington streets and Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard, was renamed Malcolm X Park.

slated to become housing for visiting scholars and offices for the Malcolm X–Ella Little Collins Foundation (Collins, personal communication 2018).

CRITERION D – ARCHAEOLOGY- HISTORIC, NON-ABORIGINAL[17]

The Malcolm X–Ella Little Collins House is eligible for listing in the National Register at the local level under Criterion D for its demonstrated potential to provide information about a middling to prosperous 18th-century farm in what is a remarkably intact landscape context for Roxbury. The property also contains representatively meaningful surface-collected artifacts from the Little-Collins period. Ella Little Collins and her extended family were the last of a long line of families who lived at 72 Dale Street in Roxbury. Roxbury was settled by the English in 1630 with the Dale Street parcel first owned by Reverend Thomas Weld (Welde), Sr. in 1638. Weld was a Puritan minister who emigrated from England to the Massachusetts Bay Colony in 1632. In 1638, he was deeded 533 acres around what is now Dudley Square as reward for his successful petition that 4,000 acres of land in Dedham be transferred to Roxbury (Middlesex County Registry of Deeds [MCRD] 4/1). Deeds and secondary histories suggest that Weld and his brother, Joseph, built their homes near the square (Bagley 2018:20; Putnam 1913:28–29), so it is unlikely there was any 17th-century residential occupation of what is now 72 Dale Street. The Dale Street property, however, no doubt fell within the boundaries of Thomas Weld's more than 500-acre landholding.

Weld's large estate passed to his son, Thomas Weld, Jr.; at his death in 1682, the land was divided equally among his four sons. After that ownership change, the chains-of-title for the various properties become difficult to reconstruct until 1733, when Samuel Stevens owned a large portion of the former Weld estate, including what would become 72 Dale Street. Stevens forfeited the property as repayment of a debt to the merchant James Smith in 1750 (Suffolk County Registry of Deeds [SCRD] 78/224). Smith likely never lived on the property before it was repurchased by the Stevens family in 1761. Money troubles, however, continued to plague the Stevens family because they purchased the land through a mortgage issued by Commodore Joshua Loring, a prominent Roxbury landowner and avowed Loyalist. In 1765, yeoman Abijah Seaver assumed the Stevens family mortgage; the associated deed indicates that Seaver was living on the property at the time, so he likely had a sort of tenant agreement with the Seaver or Loring family before his purchase agreement with Loring.

Abijah, his wife, and their seven children lived on the property until 1774 when Abijah lost the land to Loring because he was unable (or unwilling) to make his mortgage payments. However,

[17] A detailed occupational history of the property is provided in **Criterion A – Social History and Ethnic Heritage: Black**; that history is summarized here only to the extent needed to justify the significance of the property under Criterion D.

it was not a good time to be a Loyalist and, on March 17, 1776, Loring and other like-minded Tories fled Boston, giving up all rights to their colonial land claims.

As was common practice, Abijah Seaver applied for the right of administration for Loring's land and was granted the property shortly thereafter (George 1895:141). In 1798, Loring's son, Joshua Jr., filed a counterclaim demanding ownership of the property or the delinquent mortgage payments owed his father by the Seaver family from 1774 on (NCRD 8/13). The counterclaim was either ignored or successfully disputed, because in 1821 the 17-acre "estate" was sold by Abijah Seaver's great grandchildren to the yeoman Joseph H. Hawes (NCRD 64/132). The deed specifies a 2.5-acre lot containing the former Seaver house in the approximate location of what is now the Higginson-Lewis K-8 School west of 72 Dale Street.

In 1837, the 2.5-acre lot—including the house—was sold to the Roxbury Land Company (RLC) (NCRD 113/349). A conglomerate of wealthy investors, the RLC bought up large land parcels throughout Roxbury that eventually would be developed for residential use as the town's economic focus shifted from agriculture to industry.

The housewright Nelson Curtis purchased 0.18 acres of the larger 2.5-acre lot from the RLC in 1842 (NCD Book 135, Page 109); no building is mentioned in the deed. In 1845, Dale Street was laid out along the subdivided lots formerly owned by the RLC (City of Boston 1910:145). The road likely was planned and mapped out well before 1845 and Curtis, along with other enterprising housewrights, purchased lots speculatively to build new houses along its length. As detailed in **Supplemental Information – Architecture**, Curtis built an Italianate-style, single-family home on the lot sometime between 1858 and 1866, and then sold the house and lot to Frederic W. Dorr in 1866 (NCRD 339/609). After 1866, the house was occupied by a succession of families that reflected the changing socioeconomic and ethnic profile of Roxbury until 1965, after which it was not lived in full-time but remained, and remains, in Ella Little Collins's family's ownership.

From March 2015 to May 2016, the City of Boston Archaeology Program conducted the first—and to date only—archaeological investigations at the Malcolm X–Ella Little Collins House under the direction of Boston City Archaeologist Joseph Bagley. The work consisted of surface collecting artifacts from the yard and the excavation of 10.75 square meters primarily within three meters of the house's south foundation wall. In addition, archaeologists from the Andrew Fiske Memorial Center for Archaeological Research (Fiske Center) at the University of Massachusetts Boston conducted a ground-penetrating radar (GPR) survey across the property (Bagley et al. 2018).

The archaeological investigations resulted in the identification of the **Collins Site (contributing site)** consisting of four components: a temporally unaffiliated pre-contact flake scatter; evidence of the late 18th-/early 19th-century residential farmstead occupation of the Abijah Seaver family; evidence of a late 19th-century residential occupation likely associated with the first families living at the extant ca. 1865 72 Dale Street house; and evidence of the 20th-century occupation of the Dale Street house by Ella Little Collins and her extended family, including Malcolm (Little) X (Bagley et al. 2018). The site yielded more than 18,000 artifacts and contained seven features, including a buried outbuilding foundation (Feature 6) (discussed below) and a GPR-documented brick-vaulted cistern (Feature 7).

According to Bagley et al.'s report (2018:13), "the artifact assemblage documents a near-complete cross section of Roxbury history" from the Pre-Contact Period to the mid-20th century (Bagley et al. 2018:13). While strictly speaking true, the stratigraphic integrity of those artifacts and, by extension, their interpretive value is extremely limited because of the degree of documented and inferred soil disturbance across the property. The amount of post-contact material reportedly found in B_1 subsoils suggests that most of the property has been stripped and graded multiple times and the artifacts have been redistributed throughout the redeposited topsoil, subsoil, and fill contexts. One Blue Hills rhyolite flake, one argillite flake, and one hornfels flake were collected from buried plow zone in three different testing units (Bagley et al. 2018:147). This exceedingly low density of pre-contact material, especially when compared to the overall assemblage size in general and the substantial 18th-century assemblage collected from the buried plow zone in particular, indicates minimal pre-contact activity at the site with low interpretive potential.

The 19th-century occupational profile of the property is similarly problematic. Most of the artifacts that could be associated with residents of the property after 1865 were collected from heavily mixed, stratigraphically undifferentiated contexts or from concentrated trash deposits. While trash deposits are often extremely useful for parsing household occupations over time, those at 72 Dale Street were poorly stratified and have been subjected to repeated documented and undocumented landscape disturbances. Ella Little Collins's hobby of collecting 19th-century ceramic sets from trash dumps in Duxbury during the 1930s further complicates any effort to associate artifacts recovered from the lot to specific households (Bagley et al. 2018:30, 96–97).

As for the 20th-century archaeological signature, the limited occupancy of the house after 1965 and later vandalism resulted in a wide sheet of surface yard trash. Some of these artifacts were owned by members of the Little-Collins household, and Ella's son, Rodnell Collins, was able to identify them. Several surface-collected artifacts are certainly evocative: a small metal button from one of Ella's sweaters; fragments of a floral-decorated plate and a carnival glass bowl used

to hold candy for visitors; a piece of red plastic from a toy car that Ella's son played with as a child; a fragment of horn-rimmed eyeglasses; and a 1959 LP vinyl record of American folksongs (Figures 6, 7, and 8). These modern artifacts, while they do not provide new or important information and thus do not meet Criterion D, provide a material connection to the Little-Collins family and their Civil Rights activism, have exhibition value, and have emotional resonance as artifacts linked to the property's historically and culturally important residents. Indeed, 20th-century artifacts from the Little-Collins period have been incorporated in an exhibition about the archaeology of the property at the Dillaway Thomas House (NRDIS) in Roxbury Heritage State Park.

The surface-collected artifacts from 72 Dale Street that can be associated with known residents through oral history challenge traditional archaeological considerations of "significance." Archaeological approaches at the intersection of public history and historical memory[18] use evocative and personal artifacts as "performative actors" to provide teaching moments in public presentations and exhibits. In this framework, the prioritization of *in situ* artifacts is replaced by the prioritization of artifacts that have ability to spark meaningful dialogue and debate among the lay public. These objects are valued by non-specialists for their (real or imagined) association and representation with historical figures, places, and events, and can serve as neutral mechanisms to promote contemporary discussions about difficult political, economic, and social issues. These discussions, in turn, have the potential to decolonize, liberate, encourage, and empower the public toward civic engagement.[19]

Moreover, the performative approach to artifact analysis is amendable to more traditional research questions such as "How can artifacts associated with Ella Collins and Malcolm X help the public understand how both individuals managed their roles in the Civil Rights movements while maintaining a functioning household and attending to their everyday lives?" To address this question, selected artifacts with demonstrable associations with Ella and Malcolm can be

[18] Defined as popular historical understandings of significant people, places, and events.

[19] The scholarly literature on what is variously called "public archaeology," "community archaeology," "community empowerment," "collaborative archaeology," "civic engagement," and "applied heritage research" is vast. For recognition of the practice and examples, see the Society for American Archaeology's Education & Outreach webpage, under Public Outreach, "What is Public Archaeology?" and "Centers of Public Archaeology," https://www.saa.org/education-outreach, accessed October 8, 2020. Mark P. Leone (1981:13) introduced archaeologists to fundamental temporal epistemology, recognized public "boredom" with specialists' technical concerns, and prioritized "public performance" as integral to interpretive goals. In "Uniting Public History and Historical Archaeology," Charles E. Orser, Jr. (1981) was another early advocate for archaeology as public history projects. Understandably for the time, Orser suggested that such projects should incorporate archaeological data of traditional specialist importance with integrity and research significance. Importantly, Patricia A. McAnany and Sarah M. Rowe (2015:499) recognized that "the evolving social context of archaeological practice," involving "changes in the triadic relationship among archaeologists, contemporary communities, and things of the past," were of such magnitude and impact as to be characterized as a true Kuhnian "paradigm shift."

presented to the public, museum specialists, and educators to solicit their opinions about the objects' capacity to prompt meaningful discussions about Civil Rights and everyday life in mid-century America. For example, the eyeglass frame fragments, despite lack of certain identification with a particular individual, can be imaginatively transformed to have been Ella Collin's or to have been Malcolm X's iconic eyewear, evoking the inspiring images of those Civil Rights activists so well-known to the interested public (Figure 9).

The historical and modern soil disturbances that characterize the top two+ feet of the yard at 72 Dale Street cap a small foundation at the northwest corner of the property and mostly intact plow zone and subsoil strata in more than half the test pits and all three excavation units. The buried foundation was constructed of mortared fieldstone on conglomerate puddingstone bedrock and likely was used as a detached dairy by the Seaver family before being left to collapse after the house was demolished in the 1830s (Bagley et al. 2018:144). The large and diverse assemblage of 19th-century artifacts at the location indicates it was favored for trash disposal by later residents.

The materials collected from the buried plow zone (Figure 10), which make up 42% of the site assemblage (and far more if the surface-collected materials are discounted) consist of solidly mid-18th-century ceramic types (e.g., creamware, pearlware, white salt-glazed stoneware, and Staffordshire slipware). Only twelve, likely intrusive artifacts, post-date 1795 (Bagley et al. 2018:146). The assemblage also contains a high concentration of food remains consisting mostly of mammal bone (sheep, pig, and cow) followed by clam, oyster, and quahog shells, and one fish bone (Bagley et al. 2018:150). Nearly 2,000 architectural artifacts (bricks, nails, plaster, and window glass) also were collected, mostly from the property's southwest corner. Personal items include a ball clay wig curler and tobacco pipe fragments, metal cufflinks and buttons, and a lead musket ball. The artifacts' dates suggest that 1) the plow zone dates to the Seaver occupation (1765–1821); 2) the area likely was used as a utilitarian farm yard space with associated outbuildings; and 3) the space was used primarily by Abijah Seaver, rather than by his children or grandchildren.

The sharp break in the artifact assemblage between the mid-18th century and the mid-19th century is important because it may indicate the area was no longer used after Abijah's death ca. 1787. Abijah was descended from one of the founding families of Roxbury, but his status within the family is unclear. The personal artifacts (e.g., wig curler and cufflinks) suggest some measure of personal wealth and public visibility, but the absence of a will or probate prevents a comparison of status with other family members or neighbors.

Nearly a dozen 18th-century farm estates have been excavated in Roxbury, including the Williams Homestead Site (BOS-HA-97), home of the prominent Roxbury landowner Colonel Joseph Williams, II. Like the Collins Site, the Williams Homestead Site was heavily impacted by 19th- and 20th-century landscape modifications but it, too, contained a dry-laid fieldstone and puddingstone rubble wall similar to that found at the Collins Site. The authors of the Phase III archaeological data recovery report interpreted the feature as a remnant of the disturbed lower course of the northern cellar wall of the Williams house (Charles et al. 1988). The site was subsequently destroyed as part of the Orange Line construction for the Boston Metropolitan Transportation Authority.

The interpretation of the Williams foundation as that of a house is important because it suggests the foundations in the lot's northwest and southeast corners are part of a larger residential complex including an as yet unidentified occupation. The large number of 18th-century kitchen and architectural artifacts collected from plow zone contexts is characteristic of domestic yard spaces in which sheet scatter—rather than discrete middens—was the standard method of trash disposal.

Sheet scatters also can be indicative of a razed building that formerly stood nearby. The inferred foundation at the Collins Site may be evidence of a residential occupation pre-dating the Seavers, with that earlier house demolished and filled sometime after Abijah Seaver purchased the land. Alternatively, the foundation may be the Seaver house foundation itself. Mapping in the 18th- and early 19th-century often was more representational than locationally accurate regarding house placements, so the use of Mather Withington's (1821) map to re-position the Seaver house on the modern landscape is best regarded as generally but not specifically correct. It is possible the house was farther east—closer to or overlapping what is now 72 Dale Street—than what is currently believed.

In light of the presumed integrity of the Collins Site 18th-century component, several research questions may be developed to inform future archaeological work. How extensive is the buried plowzone? Is the possible foundation that of a residential occupation pre-dating the Seaver family or that of Seavers'? If it is the Seavers', it is significantly farther east than depicted on the Mather (1821) map. What does that misplacement, then, mean for other buildings depicted on the Mather map and for the overall landscape? In an archaeological sensitivity assessment of the adjacent Malcolm X Park, Bagley suggests the south and east edges of the park closest to 72 Dale Street likely retain some degree of landscape integrity with the potential to provide stratigraphic sequences and artifact assemblages similar to the Collins Site (BLC 2020). As such, excavations in those areas could yield sufficient structural and landscape data to reconstruct the

physical layout of the Seaver property for comparison with similar Roxbury sites such as the Williams Homestead.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION – ARCHITECTURE

The Malcolm X–Ella Little Collins House is a good representative example of a restrained Italianate-style, three-bay side-hall plan, wood-frame house in an urban setting. The house was likely constructed speculatively by locally prominent builder Nelson Curtis and embodies a common expression of a popular style and form of the mid-19th century.

The Italianate style was popular in the United States between 1840 and 1885 and was the predominant building style beginning about 1850. The style began in England during the early part of the Picturesque movement (ca. 1840–1900) and reflected a belief that architectural styles should move away from the dominant Classical-inspired styles and instead embrace a romanticized notion of the past (Harris 2006:723). The Italianate style was essentially a mid-19th-century revival of 15th-century Italian Renaissance architectural forms, which were a revival of Roman architecture (Shand-Tucci 1988:20).

The first Italianate buildings in the United States were constructed in the late 1830s, and the style soon grew in popularity due in part to the influence of style books such as those by Andrew Jackson Downing published in the 1840s and 1850s (McAlester 2013:302). The style is found predominantly in the Midwest and in towns and cities in the North particularly along the Eastern Seaboard. Few examples are found in the South, as the Civil War, Reconstruction, and economic depression stagnated building construction, and the style fell out of favor before building resumed in earnest (McAlester 2013:286). In the North and Midwest, the style was less popular after the Panic of 1873 and the following economic depression (McAlester 2013:302).

An Italianate-style house may be identified by its low-pitched roof with bracketed eaves; one- and two-pane sash windows with arched or curved surrounds; single-story porches which may be entry porch or full-width supported by square posts with chamfered corners; and entryways with single- or double-leaf doors and often with large windows embedded within the door. Building forms may be rectangular with hip or end-gable roofs, L- or U-shaped topped with a hip roof, or a townhouse with a flat roof and projecting cornice. Particularly ornate forms may have a square cupola or tower at the peak of the hip roof (McAlester 2013:282–284).

The Malcolm X–Ella Little Collins House is an end-gable variant of the Italianate style, which accounts for approximately 10% of surviving examples in the United States and is frequently found on narrow lots in large cities. Buildings of this subtype are frequently similar in form to earlier, often Greek Revival-style buildings, but with Italianate detailing such as bracketed door

and window surrounds (McAlester 2013:284). The end-gable house was a popular New England house type on narrow urban and suburban lots, particularly the side-hall entrance variant. As is common in this house type, a narrower ell projects from the rear elevation and generally contained the kitchen and other service spaces. Public spaces, such as the parlor, were at the front of the house in the main block (BLC 1998:4). If the ell was two stories, the bedrooms would frequently be above the service block. A small room under the stairs was sometimes included in the plan, or secondary stairs, perhaps leading to the basement, might be under the stairs (Driemeyer 2006:231). In urban areas, particularly with speculatively built houses, the expression of the Italianate style was generally restrained and frequently limited to eave brackets and door and window surrounds.

The side-hall plan, common in attached row- and townhouses in urban European cities, traveled across the Atlantic with English settlers. In the United States, the side-hall plan was also found in free-standing houses and was one of the most popular building plans of the 19th and early 20th centuries. The plan was organized with a stair and entry hall on one side, approximately one bay (or half a room) wide, with interconnected public rooms organized longitudinally along opposite the stair hall, and with a kitchen space in line with the stair hall. Side-hall plan buildings generally also had rear ells associated with their construction. The side-hall plan was also frequently employed in small, 1 ½-story worker's cottages (Hubka 2013:54; Gottfried and Jennings 2009:150–155).

The **Malcolm X–Ella Little Collins House (ca. 1865, contributing building, BOS.14294)** was likely constructed by noted Boston housewright Nelson Curtis (1810–1887) as speculative real estate (see **Criterion A – Social/Ethnic Heritage**). Speculative construction of middle-class housing was common in the emerging suburbs of Boston in the second half of the 19th and early 20th centuries. Builders would purchase a large lot of land and subdivide it into smaller home lots, sometimes laying out additional cross streets or small, dead-end streets to increase the number of street frontage lots (Warner 1973:121–123). Builders built in common, popular forms and styles and, after construction, frequently lived near or in the areas they were developing (Warner 1973:127, 130). They were influenced by surrounding buildings, plan and style books, and middle-class magazines such as *Scribner's*, which published popular articles on architecture (Warner 1973:131).

The Malcolm X–Ella Little Collins House is an example of an urban house built in the restrained Italianate style likely due to its location and speculative construction. The house has bracketed eaves and a bracketed door hood over the kitchen entrance in the east elevation of the ell. Historic images indicate that an earlier porch was in the Queen Anne style, which was used shortly after the Italianate style; it is possible that the spindlework and carved brackets were

added after the construction of the house, possibly by the Nichols family at some time in the 1880s (BLC 1998). Daniel Nichols, a carriagemaker, may have added decorative elements to the house to project his status and knowledge of current fashions to his neighbors.

In 1925, Daniel and Mary McDonald converted the house into a two-family building, with one apartment on each story (BISD). Although the house was constructed as a single-family dwelling, the conversion followed the common interior division of a contemporaneous two-family house, with the homeowner living on the second floor and the tenants on the first floor (Warner 1973:131). The conversion of the house at 72 Dale Street was accomplished by the construction of a wall enclosing the stair hall, the construction of a bathroom under the stairs, and, likely, the construction of an interior vestibule accessed from a common main entrance and the longitudinal hallway seen on the first story of the building today. This entrance would have led to two entrance doors: one to the stair hall and the other to the first-story hall (BISD 1925). As of 1935, the first floor of the house had a front hall, bathroom, front and rear bedrooms, a den off the front bedroom, a sitting room, and a kitchen. The second story had a front bedroom, living room, and rear bedroom in the main block, and a bathroom, living room, and kitchen in the ell, along with a rear entrance hallway at the second story (BISD 1935).

Ella Little Collins and Kenneth Collins purchased the building in 1941 and began making a series of alterations. The formerly clapboard-clad house was covered with asbestos shingles in 1944 and, in 1946, the house was converted into a three-family residence by the installation of a third bathroom and new kitchen on the first floor and alteration to the basement stairs. The changes were primarily in the ell and were made to accommodate members of Ella Little Collins's family when they visited or stayed in Boston (BISD 1946a; Collins, personal communication 2018).

The desire to divide houses and apartments to accommodate additional tenants was a common occurrence in Boston in the first half of the 20th century that was frequently documented as rejections of building permit applications because of zoning issues and subsequent documentation of appeals and decisions from the Board of Appeals (BISD 1946b, c). The 1946 permit application to convert 72 Dale Street from a two-family to three-family residence was denied because zoning regulations allowed only one- or two-family houses in the neighborhood. Kenneth Collins appealed in March 1946, stating that the house had been occupied by three families for a year and that the installation of a third bathroom would improve living conditions.

Collins also stated that the house was over 60 years old at that time and had the conversion been made between 1922 and 1925 that there would have been no issue (BISD 1946b).[20]

On April 5, 1946, the Board of Appeals issued its decision, reversing the building commissioner's refusal to grant a permit and ordering him to issue a permit for the conversion of the house into a three-family residence provided there were no exterior changes other than doors. The decision was based on the earlier conversion of the house into two apartments and recognized that few, if any, renters were looking for eight-room apartments instead of smaller units. The board wrote that the proposed conversion of the first story into two apartments (one three-room and one five-room) was "the only logical development of same to meet present day living conditions and will provide an additional suite which will aid in relieving the present acute housing shortage" (quoted in BISD 1946c).

Beyond the repartitioning in 1946, which resulted in a formal change in occupancy in city records, other changes to the building through the early to mid-1940s included the construction of two arched openings, one each on the first and second stories, both executed by Ella Little Collins, and the partitioning of the attic space into storage, a bedroom and small sitting room for Malcolm X, a larger sitting space on the east side of the floor, and the installation of a small bathroom. It is unclear precisely when the partitioning or bathroom installation took place. The bedroom was outfitted with a low, two-shelf bookshelf constructed by Ella for Malcolm X's use, and the sitting room had a table where Malcolm X could sit during meals, if he chose to eat alone rather than with the rest of the family on the first or second stories (Collins, personal communication 2018).

As mentioned in previous sections (e.g., see **Criterion B**), after the assassination of Malcolm X in 1965, the family no longer lived in or rented out the building. In 1970, after the end date of the period of significance, the building was vandalized, and all the windows were destroyed. In the mid-1970s, the rear porch was removed, and portions of the front porch were altered due to structural concerns. In the late 20th century all of the windows were replaced with vinyl units (BISD 1973; Collins, personal communication 2018).

In 1920, the Art Deco-style **McDonald Garage (1920, contributing building)** was designed by Boston architect Fred N. Russell and constructed for Daniel and Mary McDonald in the approximate location of a former carriage house that was extant by about 1880 but gone by 1899 (Bagley et al. 2018:27; Bromley 1884; Sanborn 1899; BISD 1920). Garages became popular in

[20] It appears from building permit research that for a short time in the 1920s building owners were permitted to subdivide dwelling units into smaller units without having to file for a building permit, but instead simply inform the Building Department of the change.

the United States in the early 20th century as automobile use increased and were considered nearly essential to suburban living as places to store, work on, and protect cars. This was partially due to the fact that many cars were open-roofed and needed an enclosed place when not in use. Early garages might have been converted barns or carriage houses, but later garages were often built from mail-order kits or by construction companies that offered catalogs of various styles and sizes (Hunter 1999:151; Ford 1994:155–156).

Initially, garages were constructed as far from residential spaces as possible—hidden in alleys along with garbage cans and other refuse or in backyards away from the house—because of the concerns about flammable liquids like gasoline and oil. However, beginning in the late 1920s, garages were moved closer to the street edge, and driveways ran from the street to the garage. If a garage was built concurrent with a new house, the two buildings frequently were in the same style. Others, constructed to accompany older buildings, were often built in popular styles of the time, such as Art Deco or Colonial Revival (Ford 1994:155–156). Garages were built of wood or masonry, although masonry was the more popular building material due to its fireproof attributes. Pressed metal buildings were also constructed, but less frequently (Goat 1989:63). Although typical garages were designed to accommodate one or two cars, it is possible that the McDonalds either anticipated dividing the house into two units and thus providing garage space for new tenants or built a larger garage and rented unused portions to generate additional income (Goat 1989:69).

The Art Deco style was popular from 1920 until about 1940 and generally made use of a variety of geometric shapes and forms often used in repetition and perhaps reflecting the dawning of the machine age and hinting at assembly lines or manufacturing (Liebs 1985:54). Other elements might include vertically projecting stepped parapets and zig zags (McAlester 2013:581). The McDonald Garage incorporates the prevalent Art Deco style in elements such as repeating rectangle and diamond motifs on the façade, which is topped with a stepped parapet that adds height and vertical emphasis to the wide, low, four-car garage.

Current Preservation Status

During the more than 50 years since the end of the period of significance in 1965 and direct association as the residence of Malcolm X and Ella Little Collins, the 72 Dale Street property has been preserved and remains largely intact. However, the extensive vandalism suffered by the Malcolm X–Ella Little Collins House in the 1970s, coupled with deferred maintenance due to limited available resources has resulted in the buildings being in fair to poor (McDonald Garage) condition. The house is temporarily protected from water infiltration with a rubber membrane

wrap applied to the roof, and other stabilization measures, installed in 2014 with a grant from Historic Boston, Inc. (HBI 2019).

Nelson Curtis (1810–1887)

Nelson Curtis was a Boston area builder and businessman who began his building career as an apprentice mason in 1828. By 1850, his construction company employed 50 people and produced $175,000 of building value annually (Bagley 2018:25). Curtis was responsible for the construction of a variety of Massachusetts buildings, including the Fitchburg Railroad Station, the Dedham stone prison designed by Gridley J. F. Bryant, and numerous Catholic churches in Boston (Bagley 2018:26; Worthington 1890:30). Curtis likely also constructed numerous houses in Roxbury, possibly in the vicinity of 72 Dale Street.

By ca. 1862, Nelson Curtis lived at 363 South Huntington Avenue in Jamaica Plain (BOS.7954) in an Italianate-style house he likely constructed. Before 1862, he lived and worked on Dudley Street in Roxbury, near the Roxbury City Hall; after his move to Jamaica Plain, he maintained his business presence on Dudley Street. Curtis was the largest shareholder in the Roxbury Gas Company and the People's National Bank at 114 Dudley Street and served as alderman for Roxbury for many years. Only one building in the Massachusetts Cultural Resources Inventory System (MACRIS) is attributed to Curtis: West Roxbury Town Hall, also known as Curtis Hall, on South Street (1868, BOS.10165). Other, no longer extant, buildings attributed to Nelson Curtis are the 1880 Roxbury Carpet Factory at 80–82 Hampshire Street and its attendant warehouse at 170–176 Vernon Street (BLC, n.d.).

Fred N. Russell (1875–1942)

Fred N. Russell was a draftsman and real estate dealer who began working with his uncle Cornelius A. Russell in the mid-1890s. In 1903, the two men formed a partnership, C.A. and F.N. Russell, which persisted until 1918. The men worked primarily in Roxbury, building residential buildings. By 1919, Fred Russell had gone into practice for himself, working out of his office at his home in Milton (Back Bay Houses 2020).

There are 25 properties attributed to Russell in MACRIS, predominantly wood-frame residential buildings constructed in the Colonial Revival and Arts and Crafts styles, in Boston and surrounding cities and towns including Brookline, Milton, and Quincy. Information about other garages he may have designed was not readily located.

STATEMENT OF INTEGRITY

The Malcolm X–Ella Little Collins House is a ca. 1865 three-bay side-hall plan wood-frame building constructed during the initial period of Roxbury's growth into a streetcar suburb of Boston. The addition of the four-car garage at the rear of the property demonstrates the shifting dependence on the automobile in the first quarter of the 20th century. The house, which has undergone several alterations during its existence to meet the changing needs of the residents and owners, and the garage retain integrity of location, setting, materials, design, workmanship, feeling, and association. The setting remains generally intact, with the surrounding neighborhood having developed with similar residences within ten to twenty years of the construction of the house. Remnants remain of the gardens that photographs show were more densely planted in the 1940s–1960s with shrubs along the house and a planting bed between the driveway and east property line. The building's original exterior materials, primarily wood clapboards and slate roof shingles, remain intact under more modern coverings of asbestos shingles and rolled rubber. The building's association with the lives of Ella Little Collins and Malcolm X remains evident, with numerous architectural details built by Ella and her husband Kenneth that include arched door openings, room partitions, and a built-in bookshelf constructed for Malcolm X. The third-floor bedroom and bathroom used by Malcolm X have been retained with few changes. The building was no longer occupied after about 1965, following the assassination of Malcolm X, and in 1970 vandals damaged the house, breaking all of the windows and throwing the Little-Collins's possessions out onto the ground below. Windows were replaced in the late 20th century.

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Personal Communications

Collins, Rodnell
2018 & 2019 Personal communication with the authors.

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

____ preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
____ previously listed in the National Register
____previously determined eligible by the National Register
____designated a National Historic Landmark
____ recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey #_____
____recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____
____ recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # _____

Primary location of additional data:

____ State Historic Preservation Office
____ Other State agency
____ Federal agency
____ Local government
____ University
____ Other
Name of repository: _____

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): __BOS.14294_____

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property ____less than one acre_____

Use either the UTM system or latitude/longitude coordinates

Latitude/Longitude Coordinates (decimal degrees)
Datum if other than WGS84:_____
(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)
1. Latitude: 42.321373 Longitude:-71.086406

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property.)

The boundary of the Malcolm X–Ella Little Collins National Register property conforms to the parcel boundary of 72 Dale Street, City of Boston Assessor number 1201734000.

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The boundary of the Malcolm X–Ella Little Collins National Register property was selected to encompass the entire property owned by Ella Little Collins and occupied at times by Malcolm X on the south side of Dale Street in Boston (Roxbury), Massachusetts. The selected boundary conforms to the historic and current boundary of the property following its sale to Frederic W. Dorr by builder/developer Nelson Curtis in 1865.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title: Virginia H. Adams, Sr. Architectural Historian; Gretchen M. Pineo, Architectural Historian; Kristen Heitert, Sr. Archaeologist; Tracy Jonsson, Asst. Architectural Historian, The Public Archaeology Laboratory, Inc. (PAL); Edward L. Bell, Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer & Senior Archaeologist, Massachusetts Historical Commission; with Betsy Friedberg, National Register Director
organization: Massachusetts Historical Commission
street & number: 220 Morrissey Boulevard
city or town: Boston state: Massachusetts zip code: 02125
e-mail: betsy.friedberg@sec.state.ma.us
telephone: (617) 727 8470
date: December 2020

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:** A **USGS map** or equivalent (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

- **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.

- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO, TPO, or FPO for any additional items.)

Photographs

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels (minimum), 3000x2000 preferred, at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map. Each photograph must be numbered and that number must correspond to the photograph number on the photo log. For simplicity, the name of the photographer, photo date, etc. may be listed once on the photograph log and doesn't need to be labeled on every photograph.

Photo Log

Name of Property: Malcolm X-Ella Little Collins House

City or Vicinity: Roxbury

County: Suffolk State: Massachusetts

Photographer: Gretchen M. Pineo

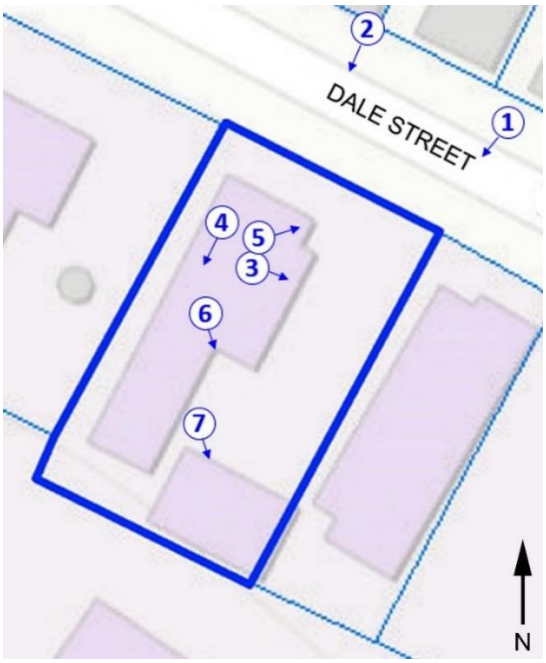
Date Photographed: November 9, 2018

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera:

1 of 7. Malcolm X–Ella Little Collins House (right) and McDonald Garage (left), looking southwest.
2 of 7. Malcolm X–Ella Little Collins House, looking southwest.
3 of 7. Plaster medallion and crown molding in first floor parlor, looking east.
4 of 7. Stairs from first story entry to second story living space, looking southwest.
5 of 7. Third Floor Bedroom of Malcolm X, looking northeast.
6 of 7. Third Floor Bathroom with original sink, used by Malcolm X, looking southeast.
7 of 7. McDonald Garage, looking southeast.

List of Figures

Photo Keys


DALE STREET
1
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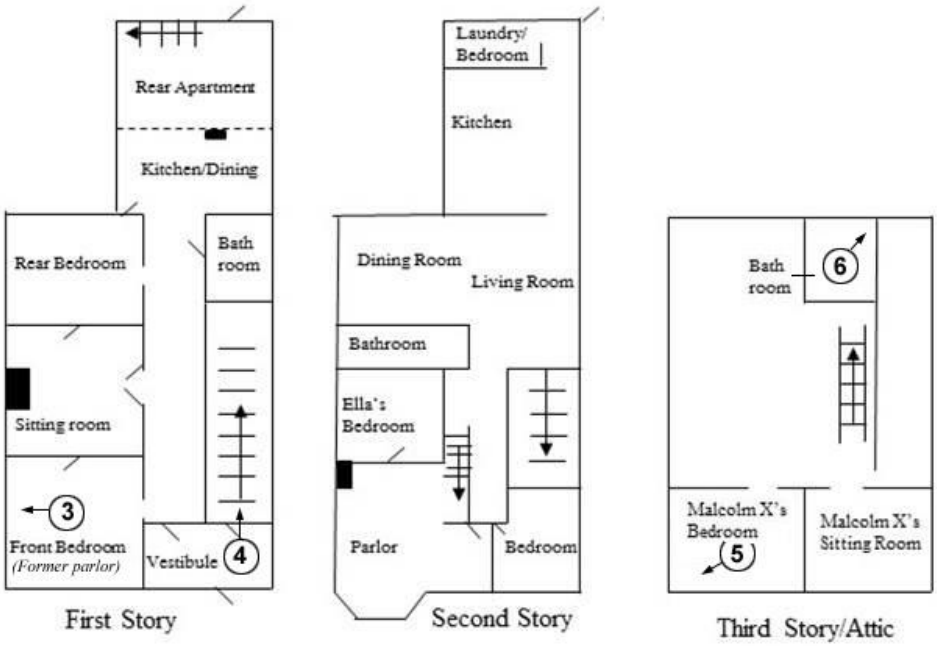
N


Rear Apartment
Kitchen/Dining
Rear Bedroom
Bath room
Sitting room
3
Front Bedroom
(Former parlor)
Vestibule
4
First Story
Laundry/ Bedroom
Kitchen
Dining Room
Living Room
Bathroom
Ella's Bedroom
Parlor
Bedroom
Second Story
Bath room
6
Malcolm X's Bedroom
5
Malcolm X's Sitting Room
Third Story/Attic

Historic Images and Figures

Figure 1. 1952 photograph of Malcolm X–Ella Little Collins House, showing Ella Little Collins in front and Sarah A. Little on porch (image courtesy Rodnell Collins)

Figure 2. 1941 photograph of Malcolm X and Ella Little Collins at 72 Dale Street, on the east side of the house near the ell (image courtesy Rodnell Collins).

Figure 3. Undated photograph of Malcolm X (left), Ella Little Collins (right), and two unnamed friends, Franklin Park, Roxbury (image courtesy Rodnell Collins).

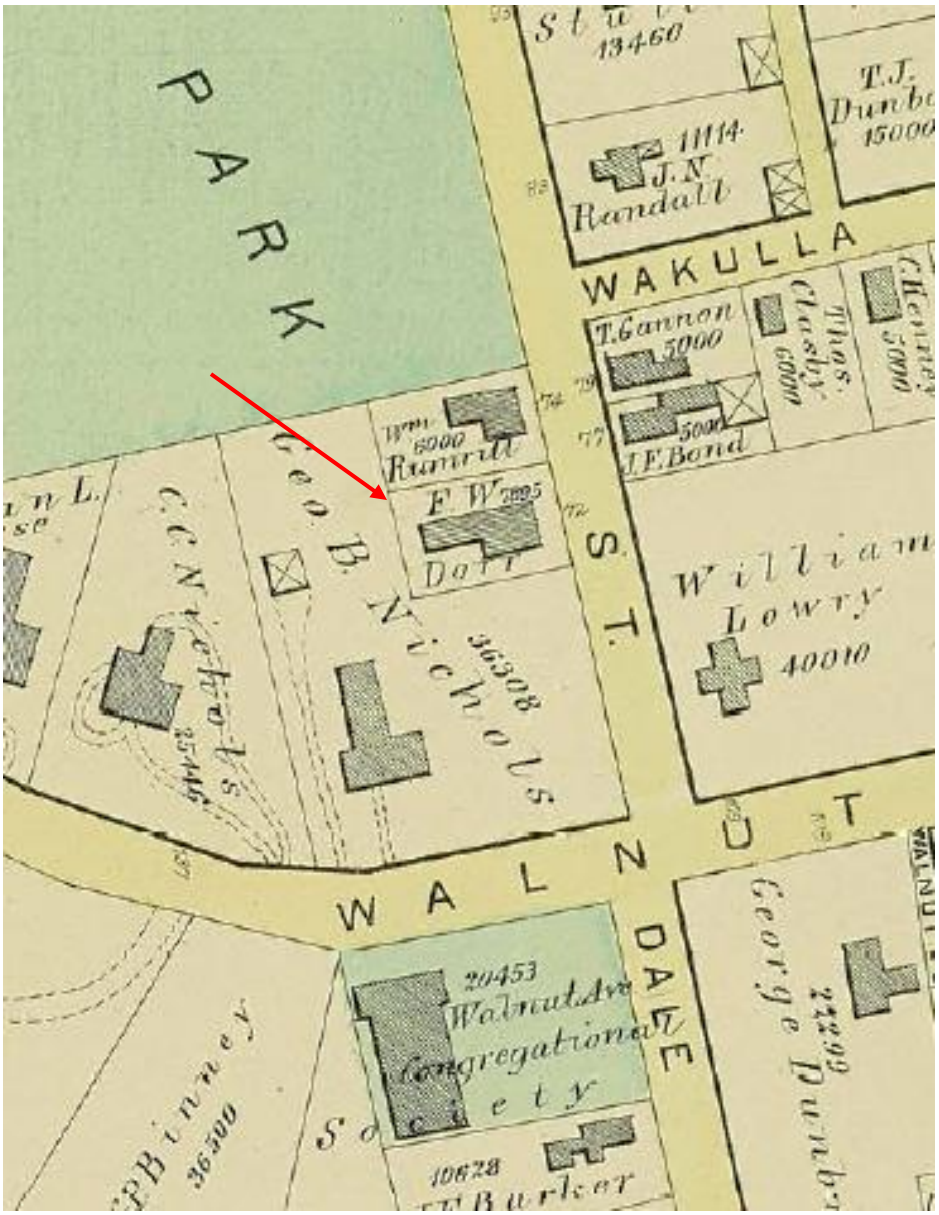


Figure 4. Detail of 1873 map, showing first appearance of 72 Dale Street house (red arrow) on published maps (Hopkins 1873).

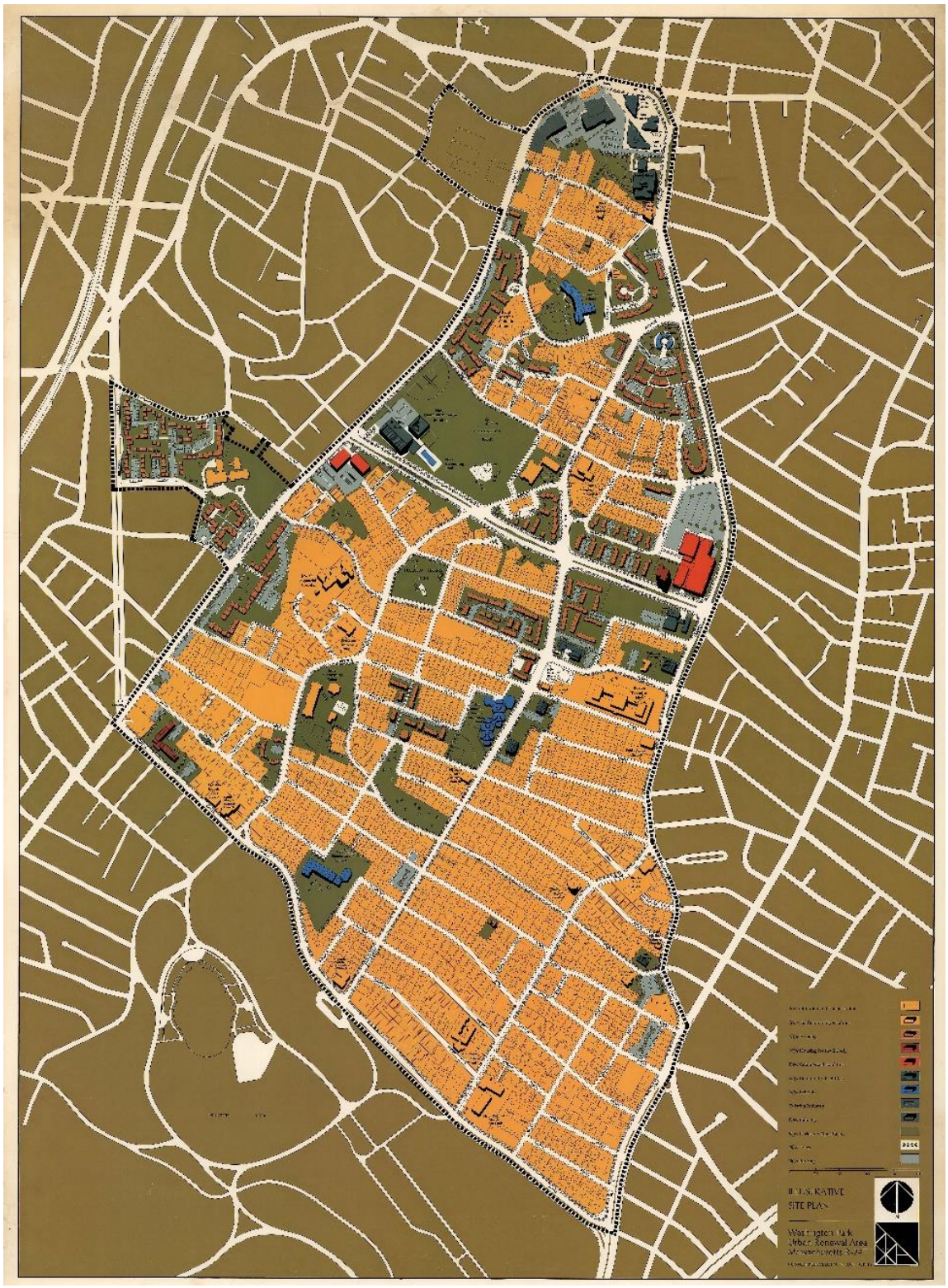


Figure 5. Illustration showing Washington Park Urban Renewal Area (BRA 2019).

Figure 6. An intact record from the 1960s, surface collected during 2015–2016 archaeological investigations by the City of Boston (Bagley et al. 2018:110).

Figure 7. Fragment of a plate that belonged to Ella Collins, found during 2015–2016 archaeological investigations by the City of Boston (Bagley et al. 2018:120–121).

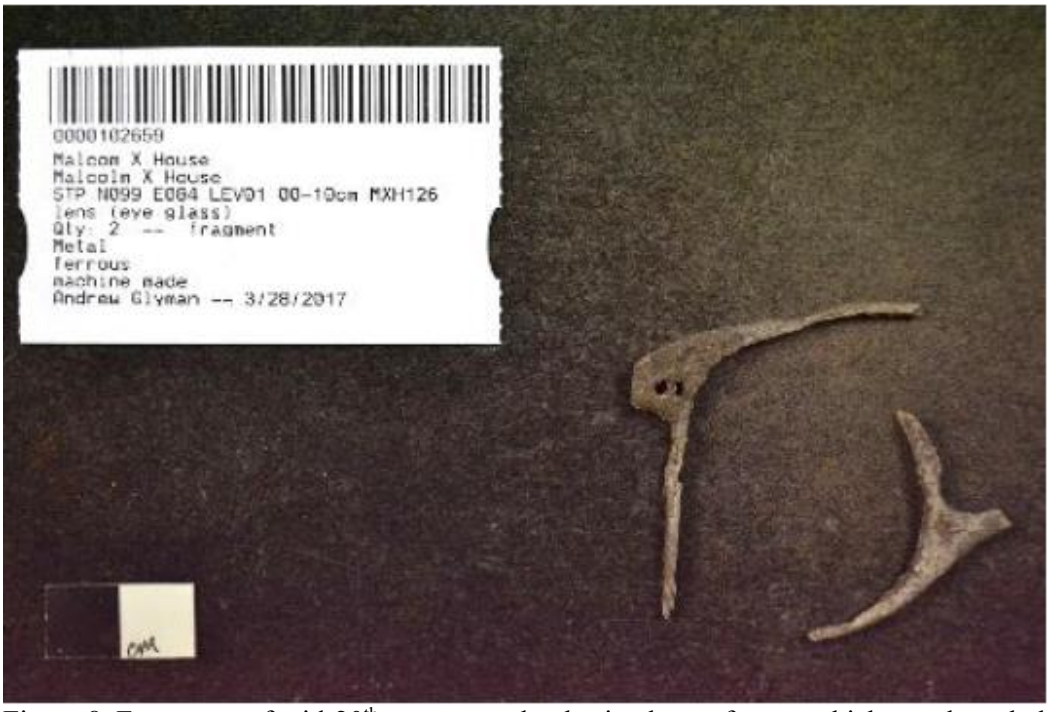


Figure 8. Fragments of mid-20th-century-style plastic glasses frames which may have belonged to Malcolm X or another member of the family, found during 2015–2016 archaeological investigations by the City of Boston (Bagley et al. 2018:137).

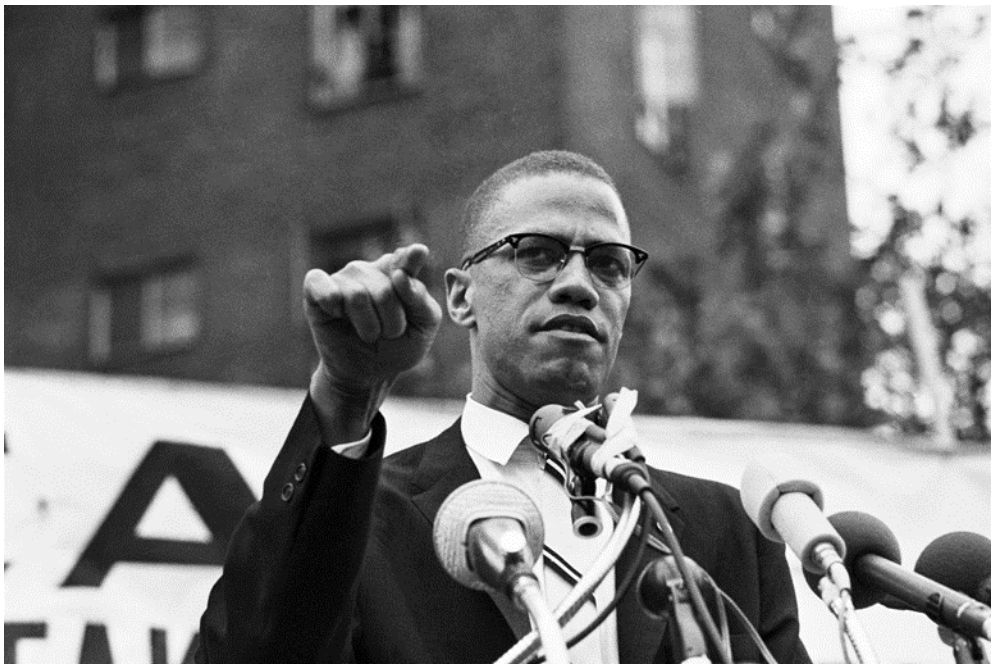
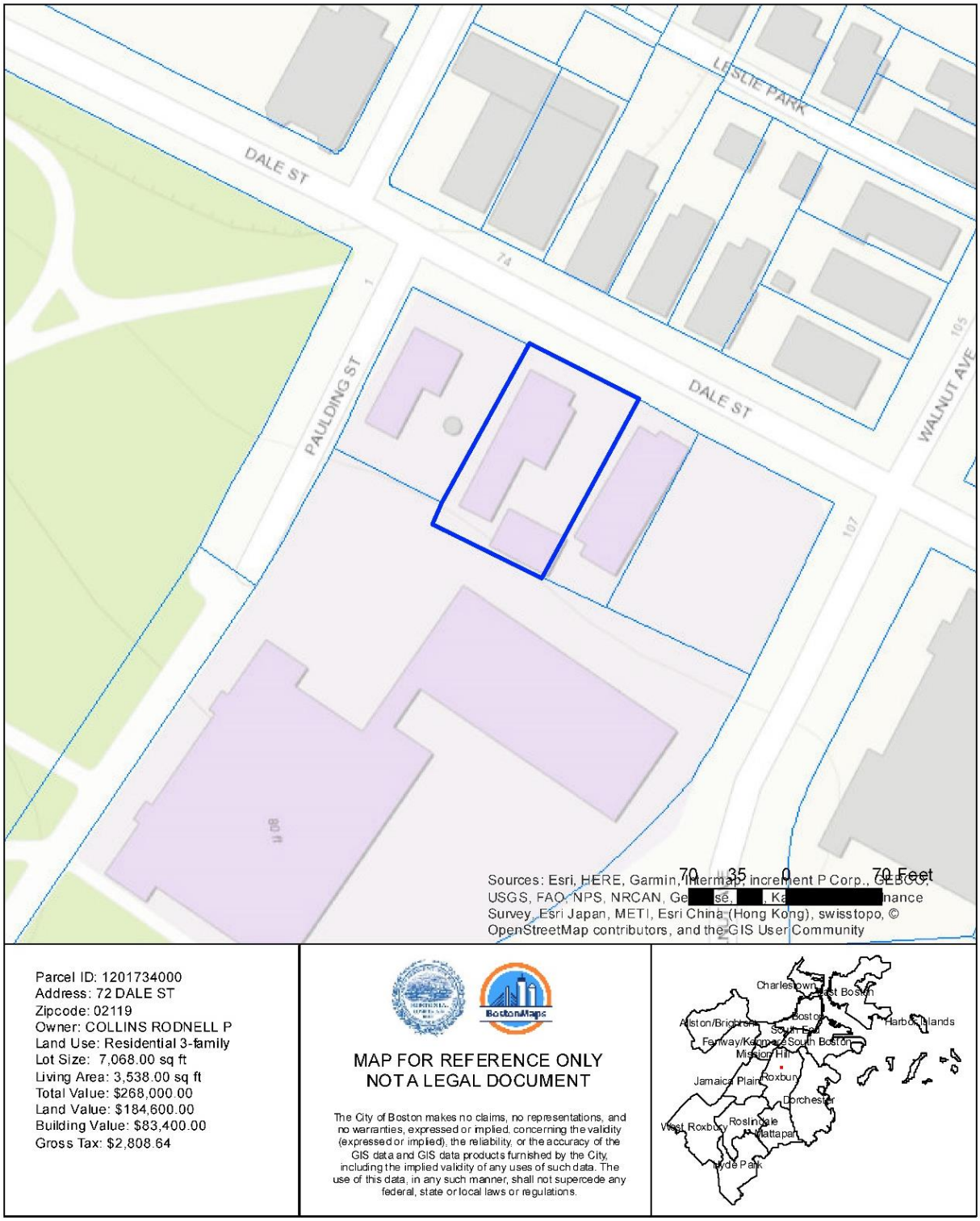


Figure 9. Ella Collins (undated) and Malcolm X (Unity Rally, Harlem, NY, June 29, 1963). These and many other iconic images of the civil rights activists show them wearing fashionable mid-20th-century eyeglasses. The eyeglass fragments shown in Figure 8 could have belonged to either of them or to another household member (Images courtesy Wikipedia (source unidentified) and Bettman Archive via Getty Images).

Figure 10. Sample of artifacts collected from the buried 18th-century plowzone at the Collins Site (left–right, top–bottom: free-blown glass pharmaceutical vial; hand-painted overglazed porcelain; black lead glazed redware base fragment; pencil lead; cuprous cufflinks or buttons; “EP”-stamped ball clay pipe bowl fragment; and banded blue-and-grey Westerwald stoneware tankard fragment (image compiled from Bagley et al. 2018).

March 27, 2019



Assessor's Map, 72 Dale Street

USGS Coordinate Map

Malcolm X - Ella Little Collins House, Boston (Suffolk Co.), MA

1. Malcolm X-Ella Little Collins House (right) and McDonald Garage (left), looking southwest.

2. Malcolm X-Ella Little Collins House, looking southwest.

All photos; Gretchen M. Pineo, November 2018

Malcolm X - Ella Little Collins House, Boston (Suffolk Co.), MA

3. Plaster medallion and crown molding in first floor parlor, looking east.

4. Stairs from first story entry to second story living space, looking southwest.

All photos; Gretchen M. Pineo, November 2018

Malcolm X - Ella Little Collins House, Boston (Suffolk Co.), MA

5. Third Floor Bedroom of Malcolm X, looking northeast.

6. Third Floor Bathroom with original sink, used by Malcolm X, looking southeast.

All photos; Gretchen M. Pineo, November 2018

Malcolm X - Ella Little Collins House, Boston (Suffolk Co.), MA

7. McDonald Garage, looking southeast.

All photos; Gretchen M. Pineo, November 2018

National Register of Historic Places
Memo to File

Correspondence

The Correspondence consists of communications from (and possibly to) the nominating authority, notes from the staff of the National Register of Historic Places, and/or other material the National Register of Historic Places received associated with the property.
Correspondence may also include information from other sources, drafts of the nomination, letters of support or objection, memorandums, and ephemera which document the efforts to recognize the property.

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts
William Francis Galvin, Secretary of the Commonwealth
Massachusetts Historical Commission

July 8, 2020

Joy Beasley
Keeper
National Register of Historic Places
Department of the Interior
National Park Service
1849 C Street NW, Stop 7228
Washington, DC 20240

Dear Ms. Beasley:

Enclosed please find the following nomination form:

Malcolm X – Ella Little Collins House, Boston (Suffolk County), Massachusetts

The nomination has been voted eligible by the State Review Board and has been signed by the State Historic Preservation Officer. The owners of the property in the Certified Local Government community of Boston were notified of pending State Review Board consideration 60 to 90 days before the meeting and were afforded the opportunity to comment.

Sincerely yours,

Betsy Friedberg

Betsy Friedberg
National Register Director
Massachusetts Historical Commission

enclosure

cc: Rodnell Collins
Martin Walsh, Mayor of Boston
Rosanne Foley, Boston Landmarks Commission
Kathleen von Jena, Boston Landmarks Commission
Brian Golden, Boston Planning and Development Agency
Virginia Adams, Steve Olausen, PAL

220 Morrissey Boulevard, Boston, Massachusetts 02125
(617) 727-8470 • Fax: (617) 727-5128
www.sec.state.ma.us/mhc

NPS Form 10-900
1024-0018

OMB No.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form.* If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions.

1. Name of Property

Historic name: Frederic W. Dorr House
Other names/site number: Malcolm X–Ella Little Collins House (preferred)
Name of related multiple property listing: N/A
(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing

2. Location

Street & number: 72 Dale Street
City or town: Boston State: MA County: Suffolk
Not For Publication: ☐ Vicinity: ☐

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,

I hereby certify that this ✓ nomination ___ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.

In my opinion, the property ✓ meets ___ does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:

Returned

✓ **national** ___ **statewide** ✓ **local**

Applicable National Register Criteria:

✓ **A** ✓ **B** ___ **C** ✓ **D**

Brona Simon	July 8, 2020
Signature of certifying official/Title: SHPO	**Date**
State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government	

In my opinion, the property ___ meets ___ does not meet the National Register criteria.

Signature of commenting official:	**Date**
Title :	**State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government**

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

___ entered in the National Register

___ determined eligible for the National Register

___ determined not eligible for the National Register

___ removed from the National Register

___ other (explain:) _____

_____

Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

5. Classification

Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply.)

Private:	X
Public – Local	
Public – State	
Public – Federal	

Returned

Category of Property

(Check only **one** box.)

Building(s)	X
District	
Site	
Structure	
Object	

Number of Resources within Property
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
2		buildings
		sites
1		structures
2		objects
5	0	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

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6. Function or Use
Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions.)
DOMESTIC/Single Dwelling
DOMESTIC/Multiple Dwelling
DOMESTIC/Secondary Structure

Returned

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions.)
DOMESTIC/Multiple Dwelling
DOMESTIC/Secondary Structure
WORK IN PROGRESS

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions.)
LATE VICTORIAN/Italianate

Materials: (enter categories from instructions.)
Principal exterior materials of the property: Stone, Asbestos, Slate, Wood

Narrative Description
(Describe the historic and current physical appearance and condition of the property. Describe contributing and noncontributing resources if applicable. Begin with **a summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, type, style, method of construction, setting, size, and significant features. Indicate whether the property has historic integrity.)

Summary Paragraph

The Malcolm X–Ella Little Collins House at 72 Dale Street, in the Roxbury neighborhood of Boston, Suffolk County, Massachusetts. The property, encompassing five contributing resources (two buildings, one structure, and two objects) on 0.16 acres, is on the south side of Dale Street in a residential neighborhood west of Warren Street, a major thoroughfare through Roxbury. A stone retaining wall runs east–west along the north edge of the property, and an asphalt and dirt driveway running south on the east side of the house terminates at the garage. The property has been continuously owned by the Collins family since 1941. The house is currently under restoration by the owner and, despite some past vandalism and deferred maintenance, retains integrity and conveys its significance as the home of Ella Little Collins and, intermittently, her brother Malcolm (Little) X.

Narrative Description

The Malcolm X–Ella Little Collins House is on a sloping, 0.16-acre rectangular parcel on the south side of Dale Street in the Roxbury neighborhood of Boston, Massachusetts. The property is surrounded by wood-frame houses on the north, east, and west, and the Higginson-Lewis

Elementary School is on the south. Malcolm X Park, formerly Washington Park, is approximately 100 feet to the west. The lot is bounded by a wood privacy fence on the west side and a metal picket fence on the south. The house is set back from and elevated above the street edge. An approximately three-foot-tall, mortared ashlar Retaining Wall (mid-19th century, contributing structure, Photos 1 and 2) capped with granite pavers runs along the north edge of the property at the sidewalk line with a run of five ashlar granite-block steps leading from the sidewalk to the house's terrace level. Two square Granite Posts (mid-19th century, contributing objects, Photos 1 and 2) flank the granite steps at the sidewalk. A square granite post marks the northwest corner of the property boundary, and a square granite post marks the west edge of the entrance to the unpaved driveway along the east side of the property; the east post appears to have been broken. Landscaping consists of grass and occasional shrubs near the house. A rough-dressed, angled, low granite marker is at the edge of the retaining wall, west of the driveway. A plaque from the Boston Landmarks Commission, designating the house a City of Boston landmark, is affixed to the granite marker.

The Malcolm X–Ella Little Collins House (ca. 1865, contributing building, BOS.14294, Photos 1–6) is a north-facing, Italianate-style, 2 ½-story, three-bay side-hall plan, wood-frame building on a rubblestone foundation and is topped with an end-gable roof. A 1 ½-story rear ell projects from the center and west bays of the south elevation. The walls are clad with asbestos shingles; gaps in the sheathing show the presence of prior, possibly original, wood clapboards. The house is trimmed in wood, including paired rectangular brackets on the roof cornice and eaves of the main block and ell, narrow and simple window and door surrounds, and flushboard sheathing on the façade second-floor bay window and front porch (described below). The roof is clad with slate shingles and is covered with a protective rubber membrane wrap, applied in 2014, which also encloses the cornice, to prevent damage from water infiltration. A brick chimney pierces the center of the ridgeline of the ell; interior hearths indicate a chimney was once in the approximate center of the east wall, near the edge of the roof, but is no longer extant above the roofline.

A full-width, shed-roof porch projects from the north façade elevation and is supported by grooved, chamfered square posts and enclosed by a low wood balustrade with turned balusters. Wood porch steps continue the vertical path and level changes from the sidewalk to the porch and main entrance. The porch was rebuilt, possibly for the second time, in the last quarter of the 20th century. Mid-20th-century photos of the Collins family on the porch show the porch was enclosed with a solid knee-wall clad with asbestos shingles and had Queen Anne-style turned posts, large carved brackets, and a spindlework frieze between the brackets along the porch cornice (see Figure 1; BLC 1998:10). The original porch may have been modified in the 1880s (see Supplemental Information – Architecture).

A bay window projects from the east bay of the second story immediately above the porch. In the west bay, the porch shelters the main entrance, consisting of a half-light wood door with single-pane glass transom and sidelights. A secondary entrance, filled with a six-panel wood door with integral fan light, is in the center of the east elevation of the ell, and is sheltered by a metal-clad, hip-roof overhang with a molded cornice and carved wood brackets. Three second-story entrances are visible but are currently unusable. They consist of a six-panel metal door in the west bay of the south elevation of the ell and paired sliding-glass doors in the north bay of the east elevation of the ell and in the east bay of the south elevation of the main block. Ghost marks of a rear porch, including a stair outline, remain visible on the south elevation of the ell; the porch was removed ca. 1976 due to structural deterioration. The basement entrance, on the south elevation of the east bay of the main block, consists of a concrete-lined well with a ladder and a full height door below grade. Small horizontal window openings are along the top of grade in the foundation. Symmetrically spaced rectangular window openings throughout the building above the basement story are filled with 1/1 double-hung vinyl replacement sash that was installed in the late 20th century. The house was no longer occupied after about 1965, following the assassination of Malcolm X. In 1970 vandals broke into the building, smashing all of the sash windows and threw many of the Little Collins' possessions left in the house across the landscape. The building is currently undergoing rehabilitation/restoration, including complete rehabilitation of the two first-floor apartments.

The interior of the building consists of four main living areas: two on the first floor, one on the second floor, and one on the third floor; the basement is unfinished and is used for storage.

Basement

The basement encompasses the entire footprint of the building and shows evidence of a single building campaign, indicating the construction of the ell was concurrent with the main block of the house. The interior is accessed via an external door in the east bay of the south elevation of the main block, reached via ladder. Interior access initially was via wood stairs that run east–west along the interior of the south wall of the ell, but they are no longer in use. The walls are mortared rubblestone coated with remnants of plaster sealant applied in the mid-20th century, and the floor is poured concrete. Window openings consist of glass block on the east side of the main block and ell, and the other openings are infilled with concrete, likely done in the early 20th century. The ceiling is open, with exposed joists and floorboards; some joists retain evidence of lath and plaster, a small section of which remains extant at the north end of the basement. The space is generally undivided, save for two small partitioned areas in the northeast and northwest corners. Four brick pillars, evenly spaced along the longitudinal center line in the main block of

the house, run between the northwest room and a large brick chimney stack centered in the ell, which splays outward to the hearths on the floor above.

The northwest partitioned area, possibly a former pantry or cold storage area, is accessed from the east in an angled wall, has brick walls on the south and east, and a wide wood door frame. Open wood shelves are affixed to the south wall, and modern utility panels are affixed to the north wall. The room is used for storage. The northeast partitioned area, likely a former coal bin, has horizontal wood-plank walls on the west and south and an entrance opening on the south end of the west wall. Two window openings are at the top of the walls; the opening in the north end has been infilled with concrete and the opening in the east wall is filled with glass block. The space is used for storage.

First Floor

The living spaces are accessed via the main entrance from the front porch on the north elevation. Immediately inside is a small foyer with a modern linoleum floor and two entrance doors side by side. On the east is a modern metal exterior door leading to the first-story living spaces; on the west is a fully glazed wood French door leading to the second- and third-story spaces. Although living spaces have been repartitioned or repurposed over the long life of the building, plaster details such as crown molding and medallions and wood window and door surrounds remain extant.

Returned

The house has, and appears to have always had, a side-hall plan with the staircase against the west wall. According to building permits, the first and second floors were partitioned into two living spaces in 1925 by Mary and Daniel McDonald. During the Ella Little Collins and Malcolm X period of occupation of the building, the two apartments on the first story were occupied by extended family—the Little and Collins family members lived on the second floor, and Malcolm X occupied the third floor when he stayed at the property.

The first floor consists of three main rooms arranged longitudinally along the east side of a narrow corridor leading south to the ell, which is undergoing interior renovation. Floors are generally composed of approximately three-inch-wide hardwood planking, with small areas covered with mid-20th-century linoleum flooring. The location of crown molding indicates that the three rooms were originally one large room that likely was accessed via an entrance in what is now the center room. Original walls and ceilings are lath and plaster, and partition walls are likely gypsum board. The partition walls may date to ca. 1946 when Ella and Kenneth Collins converted the first-floor apartment into two separate apartments: one consisting of the north, center, and south rooms in the main block of the house and the north half of the ell and the other

comprising the south half of the ell. Door and window openings throughout have simple, wide-board surrounds with mitered corners. All rooms on the first floor in the main block of the house are currently used for storage.

The north room (Photo 3), formerly a parlor, has an arched, plaster-clad opening in the west wall and lath-and-plaster walls covered with vertically striped wallpaper. A doorway with a wide board surround is in the center of the south wall. Wide crown molding runs along the east, west, and north walls. A plaster medallion with extant, non-functional light hardware is south of center.

The center room, formerly accessed by a pair of French doors (not extant), has lath and plaster walls and ceilings; the walls are clad with vertically striped wallpaper. The room has no window openings, but an additional door opening in the center of the north wall leads to the former parlor. A brick hearth and chimney projects into the room from the east wall, south of center. The chimney appears to previously have been completely covered with stucco, as crown molding runs along the east wall and around the north and south sides of the chimney; part of the plaster appears to have been removed from the chimney face.

The south room is accessed by two doors, one off the hall in the west wall and one in the south wall, leading from the ell. The walls are partially covered with flowered wallpaper, and the floor is covered with floral linoleum. A small bathroom is on the west side of the hall, approximately between the center and south rooms. It is currently used for storage.

The ell, which was formerly divided into two living spaces, had an eat-in kitchen in the north half, and a small efficiency apartment in the south half that was accessed by a door in the west bay of the south elevation, which is currently covered over with plywood. The first story of the ell is undergoing restoration and is not currently in use.

Second Floor

The second floor, consisting of seven rooms, is accessed by a run of wood stairs (Photo 4) leading south from the west door in the foyer. The stairs are enclosed with solid walls on both sides. At the top of the stairs, a landing/hall provides access to two rooms at the north end of the floor and a bedroom in the center of the floor, all within the main block of the building. To the south, in the ell, are a bathroom, the living and dining rooms, and the kitchen and other small spaces at the south end of the building. The ell is separated from the north half, or main block, of the floor by an arched opening, built by Ella Little Collins that separates the bedrooms and formal parlor from the less formal public spaces. The east side of the landing shows evidence of

a former balustrade and newel post, both of which are not extant; the balustrade, however, is in storage. The second-floor rooms generally have narrow hardwood floors and gypsum-board or lath-and-plaster walls and ceilings.

The northwest room was used as a bedroom during the Little Collins occupation. The small room has gypsum-board walls and ceilings, wide-board surrounds around the windows and doors, and built-in cabinets and bookshelves along the south wall.

To the east of the northwest bedroom is the parlor, which has a bay window in the north wall and a fireplace with a metal insert and brick surround and chimney in the southeast corner. The parlor is connected to the north bedroom and a second bedroom to the south via wood doors in the west and south walls. The entrance in the west wall has been infilled with gypsum board, and the south entrance has a four-panel wood door with a glass knob. The walls are lath and plaster, and the ceiling was formerly lath and plaster but is currently unfinished. Remnants of an original metal light fixture hang from the approximate center of the ceiling. The room is currently used for storage.

South of the parlor is the second (south) bedroom, used by Ella Little Collins and her husband Kenneth. A floating gypsum board wall installed by the Collinses removed the direct connection of the bedroom to the parlor. The space between the bedroom and the parlor formed by the floating wall is now used for storage and shows evidence of water infiltration and damage at the chimney stack. The south bedroom has wood floors, gypsum-board walls, and a gypsum-board ceiling. A sliding glass door is centered in the south wall of the room; there is no balcony or landing accessed by the door, nor is there evidence of one historically.

The south rooms, consisting of a bathroom, the living and dining rooms, the kitchen, and a laundry room, generally have gypsum-board walls and ceilings and wood floors, with the exception of the kitchen and back hall leading to the laundry room, which have modern tile floors. A built-in china cabinet is in the east side of the lath-and-plaster south wall of the dining room. In the late 20th or early 21st century, the kitchen was modernized; the door from the dining room to the kitchen was shifted to the west at that time. South of the kitchen, on the west side of the back hall, is a laundry room which was formerly a small bedroom. The walls and ceiling are gypsum board, and the floor is covered with strips of carpeting. A door is in the west side of the back hall, which formerly led to an entry porch (removed in the late 1970s).

Third Floor/Attic

The third floor, a half story under the attic eaves, is accessed by a run of wood stairs on the west wall leading north from the approximate center of the second floor in the main block. The floors are wide, painted pine boards, and the walls and ceiling are covered with gypsum board. The third floor consists of five spaces arranged in an approximate U-shape around the stairwell; all rooms except the bathroom have sloping ceilings matching the pitch of the roof. A storage space runs along the west side of the floor and is accessed by a multi-light wood door at the top of the stairs; two bedrooms take up the north half of the floor; a large open space is on the east side of the floor; and a small bathroom is in the southwest corner of the east half of the floor.

The west bedroom, formerly a sitting room used by Malcolm X, is accessed by a door at the top of the stairs. To the east is a second bedroom that was used by Malcolm X as a bedroom when he stayed at the property. The two rooms were originally connected by a door in the center of the partition wall dividing the two rooms but has since been infilled. Two of the rooms—the bathroom and the east bedroom—retain elements present when Malcolm X occupied the property while staying with his sister's family.

The east bedroom at the northeast corner of the house (Photo 5) is a small, rectangular space with one window and a low, two-shelf bookshelf with angled, irregularly spaced vertical supports attached to the kneewall along the length of the room. The bookshelf was constructed by Ella Little Collins for Malcolm X. The room also has a built-out closet in the southwest corner added in the late 20th century by the current owner.

The bathroom (Photo 6) is a small, rectangular space with a linoleum tile floor, textured particleboard wall panels, and a gypsum board ceiling. The bathroom has a free-standing cast iron clawfoot tub on wood block risers that span the north end of the room, a small toilet, and a corner ceramic sink with a marble surround. A mirrored medicine cabinet is affixed to the walls in the corner above the sink.

The McDonald Garage (1920, contributing building, Photo 7) is at the south end (rear), of the property southeast of the house. The garage is a north-facing, Art Deco-style, four-bay-by-two-bay brick-and-concrete building with a flat roof and a stone foundation. The roof is composed of board-formed reinforced concrete, and the floor is poured concrete over the stone foundation. The north (façade) elevation is composed of gray brick laid in running bond with red terra-cotta details. The side and rear walls are composed of red brick laid in running bond with irregularly spaced header rows. The façade comprises three sections: two single-car bays on the east and west flanking a two-car bay in the center topped with a parapet wall with metal coping. Above

each car bay is a rectangular panel outlined with header bricks and red terracotta square tiles at the corners. In the center of each rectangle is a diamond composed of four stretcher bricks with a red terracotta tile in the center. Wood and metal vertical-lift garage doors fill each of the three openings.

The garage is no longer in use and is in fair to poor condition. On the west side of the garage in the north bay is a wood door recessed under a segmental arch composed of a double row of header bricks. A former transom light above the door has been covered with plywood. Former full-height window openings on the west, south, and east elevations have been infilled with brick and concrete block, but rough-dressed granite sills and lintels remain. The reinforced-concrete roof has begun to delaminate and sections of brick on the façade are damaged or missing.

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria
(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- [x] A. Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- [x] B. Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- [ ] C. Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- [x] D. Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Returned

Criteria Considerations
(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

- [ ] A. Owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes
- [ ] B. Removed from its original location
- [ ] C. A birthplace or grave
- [ ] D. A cemetery
- [ ] E. A reconstructed building, object, or structure
- [ ] F. A commemorative property
- [ ] G. Less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years

Areas of Significance
(Enter categories from instructions.)
Social History
Ethnic Heritage: Black
Archaeology, Historic – Non-Aboriginal
Civil Rights

Period of Significance
Ca. 1765–1821
ca. 1865–1965

Significant Dates
Ca. 1765–1821 – First residential occupation of the property by the Seaver family
ca. 1865 – 72 Dale Street constructed
1941 – Ella Little Collins and Kenneth Collins purchased 72 Dale Street
1965 – Malcolm X assassinated

Significant Person
(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)
Malcolm X
Ella Little Collins

Cultural Affiliation
Black

Architect/Builder
Nelson Curtis
Fred N. Russell

Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph (Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance, applicable criteria, justification for the period of significance, and any applicable criteria considerations.)

The Malcolm X–Ella Little Collins House is eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places at the national level under Criterion B and at the local level under Criteria A, B, and D. At the national and local levels, the property is significant under Criterion B in the areas of Social History, Ethnic Heritage: Black, and Civil Rights for its association with the life of preeminent civil and human rights activist Malcolm (Little) X. The house at 72 Dale Street is the only extant house associated with Malcolm X's childhood and formative years. At the local level, the property is eligible under Criterion A, in the areas of Social History and Ethnic Heritage: Black for its association with the development of Roxbury as a streetcar suburb of Boston and later a prominent black neighborhood. Under Criterion B, the property is eligible for listing at the local level in the areas of Social History, Ethnic Heritage: Black, and Civil Rights for its association with the life of human rights activist Ella Little Collins, an influential supporter of her brother Malcolm and an important organizer in the civil rights movement and in improving educational opportunities for black students in Boston and New York. Under Criterion D, the property is eligible at the local level in the area of Archaeology: Historic – Non-Aboriginal for its demonstrated potential to provide information about a middling to prosperous 18th-century farm in what is a remarkably intact landscape context for Roxbury. Supplemental information is provided about the property as a good example of a restrained Italianate style, single-family, wood-frame house constructed in Roxbury during the mid-19th century that was subsequently divided into a multi-family dwelling, which was a common occurrence in Boston during the late 19th and early 20th centuries.

The primary period of significance for the Malcolm X–Ella Little Collins House begins in ca. 1865, when the house was constructed, and ends in 1965, when Malcolm X was assassinated, and the house was no longer occupied or rented out by the family due to Ella's refusal to reenter the house after his assassination. Under Criterion D, the period of significance is from ca. 1765 to 1821, encompassing the first residential occupation of the property as a farm by the Seaver family.

Narrative Statement of Significance (Provide at least **one** paragraph for each area of significance.)

CRITERION B – MALCOLM X

The Malcolm X–Ella Little Collins House is eligible for listing in the National Register at the national level under Criterion B in the areas of Social History, Ethnic Heritage: Black, and Civil Rights as the only remaining residence associated with nationally significant human rights activist Malcolm (Little) X. 72 Dale Street was his home during his peripatetic formative years from 1941 to 1944, when he lived with his sister Ella Little Collins[1] until he went to Massachusetts prisons from 1944 to 1952 In prison, influenced by his brothers Reginald and Wilfred and sister Hilda, he joined the Nation of Islam (NOI), then within weeks of his parole, met the Honorable Elijah Muhammad and became Malcolm X.[2] After he left prison and throughout his adult life, 72 Dale Street remained a locus for Malcolm X's relationship with Ella, including the last years of his life after he left the NOI and formed the Organization of Afro-American Unity (OAAU).

Early Life

Malcolm Little (1925–1965) was born May 19, 1925, at University Hospital in Omaha, Nebraska. He was the seventh of Reverend Earl Lee Little's (1890–1931) eleven children and was born to Earl's second wife, Louise Langdon Norton Little (1894–1991) (McDuffie 2016). Malcolm was the fourth of Earl and Louise's seven children (Levy 1996). Earl's oldest child, Ella
Little Collins (1914–1996), whom he had with his first wife, Daisy Mason (later Washington), played a singularly significant role in Malcolm's life (see **Criterion B – Ella Little Collins**). Earl and Louise Little raised their children with awareness of black political consciousness and freedom struggles. Despite the pressures that fragmented Malcolm's family, it was unusual at the time for its transition from the rural South to the urban North as a relatively intact nuclear family (Sales 1994:31).

[1] The majority of sources consulted, especially those written during her life time, refer to Ella as Ella Little, then as Ella Johnson (married name), and lastly as Ella Collins, Mrs. Collins, or, very occasionally, Ella Little Collins (married names). Although a few posthumous sources refer to her as Ella Little-Collins, there is no evidence to suggest that she herself hyphenated her name in this way. Therefore, the name Ella Little Collins is used in this nomination.

[2]Throughout the nomination, Malcolm X is referred to by this name that he took when he entered the National of Islam, except for in this **Criterion B – Malcolm X** section on the chronological period of his childhood, youth, and young adulthood that predated that decision, when he is referred to as Malcolm or Malcolm Little.

Born in a family of proud African Americans in Georgia, Earl was a skilled carpenter and a Baptist preacher. In addition, he became a dedicated organizer and leader for Jamaican-born Marcus Garvey's (1887–1940) Universal Negro Improvement Association (UNIA) and Pan-Africanism movement based in Harlem, New York City, which aimed to unify and connect people of African descent worldwide and preached for a return of blacks to Africa. Garvey's UNIA was intended to serve as a "government in exile" (quoted in Reed 2004) for African people dispersed around the world from their African homeland. Garveyism was particularly attractive to members of the working class, seeking a clear racial identity and a way to express a growing sense of group destiny. Malcolm recalled accompanying his father to UNIA meetings that always closed with leading attendees in affirming, "Up, you mighty race, you can accomplish what you will!" (X and Haley 1999 [1965]4:9; Reed 2004).

Louise was born in Grenada to a young black woman raped by an older white man, which infused her passion to promote African ancestry and black freedom. She immigrated to Canada where she joined the UNIA. When she and Earl met and married in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, she became a naturalized U.S. citizen. As the corresponding secretary of the local Marcus Garvey Society, she sent reports for the UNIA publication *Negro World* and was committed to promoting grassroots Garveyism and black self-determination in her family and the Midwest communities where they lived. The Garvey message was considered radical by many blacks and was strongly opposed by racist white supremacist groups like the Ku Klux Klan (McDuffie 2016:1, 157; Collins and Bailey 1998:14–16; Sales 1994:30).

Before moving to Omaha, Earl and Louise Little lived in Philadelphia, where their oldest child, Wilfred, was born (1920–1998); Hilda (1922–2015), Philbert (1923–1993), and Malcolm had been born in Omaha (Collins and Bailey 1998:14). In 1926, the Littles move to Milwaukee, Wisconsin, where Reginald was born (1927–2001), and then to Lansing, Michigan, in 1928. The next year, Earl and Louise were sued for eviction from their home based on restrictive covenants that denied the sale of the house to blacks. In November 1928, the Little house burned to the ground; Malcolm later believed that the Black Legion, a local white supremacist group, was responsible. In December 1928, the family moved to East Lansing, where the youngest children, Wesley (1928–2009) and Yvonne (1931–2003), were born (Collins and Bailey 1998:14; Gallen 1992:11–12; Strickland et al. 1994:8–10).

On September 28, 1931, Earl Little was killed in Lansing in what police called a streetcar/trolley accident but the Little family and some blacks believed was a racially motivated killing, and Malcolm later said the Ku Klux Klan was responsible (X and Haley 1999 [1965]:13; Collins and

Bailey1998:17).[3] In December 1938, after struggling to raise her children alone during the Depression and resisting white welfare agency officials trying to place the children in foster care, Louise Little suffered a mental breakdown and, in 1939, was committed to Kalamazoo State Hospital, a psychiatric institution. She remained there for 26 years, until released as the result of efforts of her children, and lived with family members in Michigan for the remainder of her life (Associated Press 1996; Gallen 1992:12: McDuffie 2016:147; Strickland et al. 1994:11–13).

In 1939, the State of Michigan placed the Little children with foster families, and Malcolm was sent to a juvenile home of nearly all white children in Mason, Michigan, near Detroit. Malcolm did well in school, got straight As, and was elected president of his eighth-grade class. However, after a teacher discouraged him from thinking about becoming a lawyer, Malcolm became less interested in school and eventually stopped going. Malcolm contacted Ella, who in 1937 and 1938 had visited his siblings and him in Michigan and urged him to write her, and at her suggestion spent his summer vacations in 1939 and 1940 in Boston at 63 Waumbeck Street (no longer extant), where he was exposed to a large urban black community for the first time (BLC 1998:15) (see **Criterion B – Ella Little Collins**). After he returned to Detroit, Malcolm, no longer comfortable surrounded by whites, wrote to Ella asking her to help him, and she arranged to have official custody transferred from Michigan to Massachusetts (X and Haley 1999 [1965]:32).

Returned

72 Dale Street

When Malcolm arrived in Boston in February 1941, he first lived for six months with Ella and their aunt Sarah Alice Little (Aunt Sas) at 89 Harrishoff Street (no longer extant) (BLC 1998:16). In August 1941, after attempting to acquire a property at the southwest corner of Dale and Walnut streets in Roxbury, Ella purchased **72 Dale Street**. The house became the extended Little family base, where Malcolm was firmly ensconced in Ella's household and transitioned from boyhood to young adulthood, even as he spent increasing time away, staying with his friend Malcolm Jarvis when in Boston, visiting Michigan, and living and working in New York. On the impact of his move to Boston as a teenager, he later remarked, "No physical move in my life has been more pivotal or profound in its repercussions," and "All praise is due to Allah that I went to Boston when I did. If I hadn't, I'd probably still be a brainwashed black Christian" (X and Haley 1999 [1965]:39–40). Referring to the third-floor changes that Ella made for him and that remain today, Malcolm X recalled, "Ella had fixed up a nice little upstairs room for me" (X and Haley 1999 [1965]:45) (see **Section 7 – Description**, **Criterion B – Ella Little Collins**, and **Supplemental Information – Architecture**).

[3] Malcolm X biographer Bruce Perry's research supports the official determination of accidental death (Perry 1991:12, 389).

In the family sphere at 72 Dale Street, Malcolm learned many stories from Ella, Aunt Sas, Aunt Gracie, and visiting Michigan siblings about the Little family's history, beginning in Africa and through slavery and emancipation in the South, and about the effects of white supremacy on members of the family and their efforts to support one another. These accounts helped shape Malcolm's beliefs in black self-support, the terrorism of white supremacy, and the value of studying history (Bagley et al. 2018:32; Collins and Bailey 1998:3–37).

The house may also have served as the locus of the Little family's initial exposure to Islamic ideas through Boston's growing Ahmadiyya Muslim community.[4] The Ahmadiyya Muslim movement originated in late 19th-century India under self-proclaimed messiah Hadhrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad and first reached the United States in the 1920s. The sect concentrated on missionary work and eventually spread, including to Boston by the 1960s (Harvard University 2018). The Ahmidayya teachings, while not a fully traditional form of Islam, were based on the Qur'an, and emphasized racial equality, which appealed to blacks (DeCaro Jr. 1996:84, 1346–137). One of the Littles' neighbors, the Perry family, of which several were jazz musicians, became Ahmidiyya followers. Bazeley E. (later Abdul) Perry, had encountered the teaching while on tour in Chicago in the 1940s. Malcolm enjoyed visiting the Perry home and clubs to hear their music. Perry may have helped set the stage for the Little siblings' religious conversion to the Nation of Islam (NOI) in the mid-to-late 1940s (BLC 1998:18; Collins and Bailey 1998:116). Little siblings in Boston and in Michigan rejected the traditional white iconography of their Christian Baptist family upbringing and were receptive to the NOI as a religion for blacks only that, similar to the familiar Garveyism, was intended to affirm the black identity (von Jena 2017; Bagley et al. 2018:33; BLC 1998:17–18; Perry 1991:142).

Under Ella's legal guardianship between February 1941 and May 19, 1946 (Malcolm's twenty-first birthday), Malcolm rebelled against Ella's middle-class aspirations and her criticisms. Rather than embracing the education, mainstream employment, and black associates she envisioned for him, his life was increasingly drawn toward urban nightlife and illicit activities. He frequented pool halls and other entertainment businesses around Dudley Square in Roxbury and the Roseland ballroom, which featured big band entertainment. He discarded his country background for a hip self-presentation with conked (chemically straightened) hair and zoot suits (Figure 2). With Ella's help and connections, Malcolm held a series of jobs in Boston as a parking-lot attendant, shoe-shine boy, dishwasher, and soda jerk. He then worked as a Pullman porter on the New Haven Railroad between Boston and in New York. In New York, he later

[4] The Ahmidayya Muslim sect was separate from the Nation of Islam, although both were non-traditional forms of Islam and advocated racial equality (DeCaro Jr. 1996:136–137, 151–153).

recalled, "within the first five minutes in Small's [Small's Paradise Club], I had left Boston and Roxbury forever" (X and Haley 1999 [1965]:60).

While his time at 72 Dale Street was limited and erratic, his continuous connection to the house and family through Ella's presence is evident. He kept some of his expensive clothes in his third-floor room and frequently slept there when the train he worked on was in Boston, although he also stayed elsewhere in the city. Biographer Bruce Perry notes that Malcolm's longest stays at 72 Dale Street between 1941 and 1944 were for three weeks in December 1941 (he had been staying with his friend "Shorty" starting in July 1941); during regular train layovers in January to November 1942; and for three months in the fall of 1944 (Perry 1991:59, 84; BLC 1998:16–17).

New York City

In December 1942, Malcolm moved to Michigan for about four months and then, in early 1943, to New York City, where he worked intermittently for the railroad. In the Harlem section of the city, on his own at age 17 to 18, he frequented clubs and music venues such as the Apollo Theater and the Savoy Ballroom (X and Haley 1999 [1965]:82–83). He engaged in gambling, hustling, drug dealing, and numbers running for mobsters, for which he earned the nickname "Detroit Red." He still continued to visit Ella at 72 Dale Street in Boston, and he described one visit in 1943:

> Free now to do what I pleased, upon an impulse I went to Boston. Of course, I saw Ella. I gave her some money: it was a token of appreciation, I told her, for helping me when I had come from Lansing. She wasn't the same old Ella; she still hadn't forgiven me for Laura.[5] She never mentioned her, nor did I. But, even so, Ella acted better than she had when I left for New York. We reviewed the family changes (X and Haley 1999 [1965]:115).

Also, in 1943, Malcolm was fired from a job at, and banned from, the nightclub Small's, when he offered a soldier in uniform from Georgia a contact for a prostitute. The soldier turned out to be a "plant" for the police to catch hustlers and those impairing the morals of servicemen, and Malcolm was taken to the 135th Street precinct (Malcolm X 1965:40). That same year, the Boston draft board attempted to contact Malcolm at 72 Dale Street; when he did not respond, it tracked him down in New York. He appeared at the draft board in a wild zoot suit and loudly proclaiming he wanted to fight for Japan and kill whites. After examinations by a psychiatrist and others, he was found mentally unfit for military service and classified as 4F (X and Haley 1999 [1965]:40–42).

[5] Ella had been displeased when Malcolm dropped his former girlfriend Laura for a white woman.

From late 1943 to the fall of 1945, Malcolm spent time in Michigan and Harlem working in nightclubs and ballrooms and still visited Ella. Musical entertainment and the role of black jazz musicians remained an important thread in Malcolm's life, and his associations in Harlem included many well-known jazz and big band performers including members of Lionel Hampton's band as well as Duke Ellington's drummer and vocalist Sonny Greer (1895–1982) and violinist Ray Nance (1913–1976) (X and Haley 1999 [1965]:89, 127). In 1944, while staying at 72 Dale Street, Malcolm stole a fur coat from his great aunt Gracie Little and pawned it for $5. Ella contacted the police and Malcolm was sentenced to three months in jail and one year of probation for larceny (Perry 1991:84).

Return to Boston; Prison in Massachusetts

In the fall of 1945, Malcolm returned to Boston after his life was threatened by Harlem mob figure and bookie "West Indian Archie" (Lehman and Phelps 2005:402). In December of that year, Malcolm and his friend Malcolm Jarvis, aided by white girlfriends, went on a several-weeks' "stealing spree" with three white women (one of whom he was dating) in Boston. A few weeks later in January 1946, Malcolm attempted to retrieve a stolen $1,000 watch from a pawn shop and was arrested and charged with grand larceny, breaking and entering, and firearms possession. He was convicted and, along with Jarvis, sentenced to 8 to 10 years in prison. Malcolm's girlfriend spent seven months in prison, but the sentences of the other white women were suspended (Strickland et al. 1994:39).

Malcolm spent a total of six and a half years in Massachusetts prisons starting in February 1946. During this time, Ella was living at 72 Dale Street and was his closest family connection. She was his first visitor, sent him money, watched out for his well-being, and encouraged him to find ways to become educated. His other siblings also wrote and visited frequently (Lehman and Phelps 2005:402; Strickland et al. 1994:39).

In Charlestown State Prison (not extant), Malcolm suffered withdrawal from cocaine, marijuana, and nicotine while spending time in solitary confinement for bad behavior. In January 1947, Malcolm was transferred to the Concord Reformatory (now MCI Concord). His Michigan-based siblings, who had converted to the NOI, began sending letters and talking with him on visits about accepting the teachings of the Honorable Elijah Muhammad and joining the sect. In letters, Philbert described the NOI as a "natural religion for the black man," and Reginald wrote about Allah and urged Malcolm to stop eating pork (X and Haley 1999 [1965]:169). Muhammad stayed with Wilfred when he was in Detroit, and Hilda told Malcolm that Muhammad had been in prison for sedition and violation of draft laws and suggested that Malcolm should write to him (X and Haley 1999 [1965]:171–178). While at Concord, Malcolm met a fellow convict he called

"Bimbi," who may have been an Ahmadiyya follower (Ce Caro, Jr. 1996:136), who convinced Malcolm to study and develop his mind. In 1948, Malcolm was transferred to the Norfolk Prison Colony (now MCI Norfolk) thanks to Ella's efforts. She wanted him to enroll in Norfolk's innovative education program, which allowed inmates to complete high school through General Educational Development (GED) coursework and participate in debates and other intellectual pursuits, and had connections with local colleges and universities, including Harvard and Boston University (Ehrenbold et al. 2019).

Malcolm's entry into the NOI occurred at Norfolk Prison. The sect started in the United States in the 1930s, when its founder Wallace D. Fard Muhammad (1877–ca. 1934) built the first Temple of Islam in Detroit, Michigan. Fard's origins and background are somewhat obscure. He identified himself as "Allah's messenger" and preached a form of Islam with its own creation story that identified all whites as devils, which drew many blacks as followers. In 1934, Fard disappeared, and Elijah Muhammad (1897–1975) took over leadership in the NOI, blending Fard's teachings with the ideas of Marcus Garvey. The NOI belief system was not based on the Qur'an but on "Yacub's History," a genesis mythology of the Earth populated by the black tribe of Shabazz. According to the teaching, blacks were the original and genetically superior race to "white devils," Elijah Muhammad was the self-appointed last messenger, and Allah would eventually raise black people to power. Elijah Muhammed was the messenger of Allah. The religion required adherence to a strict moral code with no smoking, drinking, fornication, or eating pork (X and Haley 1999 [1965]:179–182; DeCaro Jr. 1996:83).

Malcolm and Elijah Muhammed corresponded, and Malcolm concentrated on his studies, eventually writing to the Massachusetts governor to demand the right to practice Islam in prison. His intellectual training through reading and writing covered African and African-American history, philosophy, religion, and literature. He earned a certificate in theology from the prison's Boston University program (BLC 1998:19; DeCaro Jr. 1996:85). He joined the prison debate team and began attracting attention for his oratory skills. His prowess in debate was a key to his subsequent success as a leader in the NOI and the black liberation movement. Civil rights leader James Farmer recalled that "Malcolm X was one of the most feared debaters on the American platform, capable of demolishing an opponent with a one-liner. Despite his lack of formal education, I found Malcolm X to be a well read and brilliant man with a sharp and exceptionally quick mind" (Farmer 1985:224).

Nation of Islam Leader and Public Figure

On August 7, 1952, Malcolm was released on parole from the Norfolk Prison Colony. He spent one night with Ella in Boston, then went to Detroit where he stayed with his brother Wilfred and

got a job at the Ford Motor Company's Lincoln-Mercury Division. In September, Malcolm traveled to Chicago with members of Detroit Temple No. 1. There he met Elijah Muhammad and received his "X" from the NOI, as did other converts, dropping the Little surname because of its association with slave owners and becoming Malcolm X. He quickly became a trusted inner-circle leader and minister of the NOI, rising to prominence for his devotion, intellect, and skillful speaking manner. With the blessing of Elijah Muhammad, Malcolm X quit his job and began an intensive full-time recruiting campaign to increase the nationwide NOI membership, then at 400 members. Less than a year later, in August 1953, when membership at Detroit's Temple No. 1 (founded in 1931) had tripled, Malcolm X was appointed assistant minister of the temple. Elijah Muhammad then brought him to Chicago for personal training (Strickland et al. 1994:70).

Due largely to Malcolm X's charisma and tireless recruiting, membership in the NOI reached an estimated 40,000 with 49 temples across the country by 1959—100 times its size in 1952 (Strickland et al. 1994:72). While Malcolm X held the spotlight of the NOI expansion, it was largely through the efforts of the combined Little family, most working in the Midwest, that the NOI grew from a small sect to a highly visible, multi-million-dollar organization in less than a decade. The other Little brothers involved—Wilfred, Philbert, Reginald, and Wesley—brought strong leadership qualities. In the early years, Wilfred and Philbert together administered seven Midwest temples, while Reginald and Wesley helped with recruiting. Also at this time, Hilda worked hard teaching and inspiring women. Throughout the remainder of their lives, Wilfrid and Philbert X were ministers and remained leaders of Mosque No. 1 in Detroit and the Lansing mosque (BLC 1998:20; Collins and Bailey 1998:101–102). About 1950, when Malcolm was in prison, Elijah Muhammad expelled Reginald from the NOI for having an extramarital affair. Malcolm X tried unsuccessfully to appeal to Elijah Muhammad on Reginald's behalf, but ultimately the NOI members of the Little family chose allegiance to Elijah Muhammad over Reginald. Following the suspension, Reginald had a mental breakdown and was placed in an institution (X and Haley 1999 [1965]:214–217).

In the mid-1950s, while Malcolm X was in Boston during his NOI recruiting visits, which he referred to as "fishing," 72 Dale Street served as a meeting place and home (Bagley et al. 2018:33). In a 1955 interview with the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), which had Malcolm X under surveillance as a potentially dangerous person, Malcolm described his residence from 1941 to 1943 as 72 Dale Street, and his name appears in Boston city directories at this address every year from 1954 to 1962 (FBI 1955:85; Polk 1954–1962). In late 1953/early 1954, Malcolm X was sent to Boston to be the first minister of Temple No. 11. Initially the expanding group met in homes and storefronts, including the brick rowhouse home of Lloyd X at 5 Wellington Street off Massachusetts Avenue, and 504 Massachusetts Avenue (both extant, not surveyed). After three years, the temple was established in a former synagogue at 35 Intervale

Street (MHC No. BOS.17193), one mile south of 72 Dale Street. Once the mosque was established, Ella first went to hear Malcolm X speak. He wrote in his autobiography that "She sat staring, as though she couldn't believe it was me. Ella never moved…but contributed when our collection was held." However, he had no expectations that the "toughminded and cautious" Ella would be converted (X and Haley 1999 [1965]:245) . Malcolm X did not stay long in Boston; in March 1954, with Temple No. 11 established and left in charge of Minister Ulysses X, and with a childcare program created and run by Ella Little Collins (see **Criterion B – Ella Little Collins**) he was sent to organize a temple in Philadelphia (Temple No. 12), which was established by the end of May. In June, Elijah Muhammad appointed him chief minister of Temple No. 7 in Harlem, the temple site with the largest growth potential because members would come from the population of about one million black people in the five New York City boroughs (X and Haley 1999 [1965]:45, 215, 234, 245; BLC 1998:20).

Over the next few years, Malcolm X's life, based in Harlem, became increasingly busy with domestic and international travel to establish new temples and make speeches. His efforts attracted thousands of new, mostly urban, followers drawn in by his eloquent speaking and powerful message for black people, criticizing Christianity and the white race. In 1955 and 1956, he traveled extensively along the East Coast between New England and Florida, and he also made some exploratory trips to the Midwest and the South. He moved by bus and train until 1956, when the NOI provided him with a car in which he averaged about 200 miles a day. Once a month, he went to Chicago to report to Elijah Muhammad and deliver the monthly collection. Malcolm X built the temple congregations from scratch, largely by virtue of his independent and creative approaches to tireless recruiting, seeking converts in the streets and in lecture halls, his masterful oratory skills, his attention to organizational details, and his interpersonal skills (Strickland et al. 1994:71–73).

During this period, the current of racism in the U.S. continued to flow. In May 1954, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled unanimously, in the Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka case, that racial segregation in public schools violated the Fourteenth Amendment to the Constitution. However, change was slow, especially in the South. In August 1955, 15-year-old Emmett Till, a northerner visiting his grandfather, was murdered in Mississippi for calling out to a white woman on a dare from friends, and his killer was acquitted. In December 1955, on a bus in Alabama, Rosa Parks refused to move her seat when directed and was arrested. This event sparked the Montgomery Bus Boycott and initiated the nonviolent resistance and protest led by Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and others. The growth of the NOI and Malcolm X's increasingly visible presence occurred against larger backdrop of racist events and civil rights actions in America and was in sharp contrast to the nonviolence movement.

Malcolm X and the NOI emerged from relative obscurity at this time into the national general public's eye due to two key events. The first, on April 14, 1957, occurred when Johnson X Hinton, a member of Harlem's Temple No. 7, was savagely beaten by police. Malcolm X joined Muslims at police headquarters in Harlem who were demanding that Hinton receive medical attention and refusing to leave. After Hinton was taken to a hospital, Malcolm X dispersed the crowd with a wave of his hand. Media coverage of the incident brought Malcolm X to national attention and triggered more intense FBI surveillance (Strickland et al. 1994:77–78). A few months later, Congress passed a civil rights Bill of 1957, but Governor Faubus of Arkansas refused to integrate the Little Rock's Central High School; President Eisenhower federalized the National Guard and sent 10,000 troops to guard the safety of the Little Rock Nine black high school students so they could enter the building and attend class.

The second event that shone a spotlight on the NOA came in the spring and summer of 1959, when New York television aired a five-part documentary by Mike Wallace called *The Hate that Hate Produced* with a widely publicized interview with Malcolm X. Although the documentary's tone was negative about the black Muslims, interest and membership in the NOI increased. When the series aired, Malcolm X was on his first foreign travel trip visiting Sudan, Nigeria, Iran, Syria, Egypt, the United Arab Republic, and newly independent Ghana on behalf of the NOI to lay the groundwork for Elijah Muhammad's Middle East tour planned for later that year. The press attention that greeted Malcolm X upon his return to the U.S. continued unabated for the rest of his life. In 1960, Alex Haley's article "Mr. Muhammad Speaks" appeared in *Reader's Digest*, and in 1961 Dr. C. Eric Lincoln published *The Black Muslims in America*. Malcolm X was interviewed for *Life*, *Look*, *Newsweek*, *Playboy*, and *Time* and, in 1960, he established *Muhammad Speaks*, a newspaper to promote the NOI's message. He expanded his international connections, meeting with the heads or delegates of newly independent African states visiting the United Nations in New York and with Cuba's Fidel Castro at the Hotel Theresa.

Though almost constantly travelling and speaking during these years, Malcolm X also established a family during this time, marrying Betty X (formerly Sanders) on January 14, 1958. Betty had become a member of the Harlem temple in 1956, adopted the name Betty X, and later became Betty Shabazz. Malcolm X and Betty moved to the Elmhurst section of Queens, New York where they lived in two houses owned by the NOI, at 25–46 99th Street from April 1957 to October 1960 and then at 23–11 97th Street from November 1960 to February 1965 (both houses are extant; BLC 1998:24). They had their first three children: daughters Attalah (b. 1958), Qubilah (b. 1960), and Ilyasah (b. 1962). In Boston, Ella Little Collins joined the NOI in 1957, but left in 1959. Perhaps because Malcolm X was settled with his own family in New York, about 1960, Ella moved from 72 Dale Street to a different house she owned in Boston and turned

over responsibility for the mortgage payments on the house to her son, Rodnell Collins (see **Criterion B – Ella Little Collins**).

Malcolm X's visibility and central role in the NOI continued. In 1961, Elijah Muhammad, who had moved from Chicago to Phoenix, Arizona, for health reasons related to a chronic bronchial condition, appointed Malcolm the national representative of the NOI. As a result, Malcolm X's increased exposure through lectures in public venues and participation in television and radio interviews and debates. He also spoke at numerous New England universities, including Harvard University, Boston University, and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (*Harvard Crimson* 1992; Collins, personal communication 2018). Also in Boston, he made two broadcasts for the NOI radio program titled "Mr. Muhammad Speaks" and appeared on the talk-radio pioneer Jerry Williams's show (probably on WMEX) in 1962 (NYPL 2005).

About 1961 as Malcolm X gained in notoriety and power, some others in the NOI leadership in Chicago, while impressed by his unparalleled fundraising abilities, felt threatened by what would happen if he took over. Tensions between Malcolm and the NOI leadership began as Malcolm X became increasingly troubled by Elijah Muhammad's extravagant lifestyle and rumors about his sexual relations with young women and girls. Malcolm X was also frustrated with the conservative constraints of the NOI organization and the religion amid the political atmosphere surrounding social justice and civil rights issues. The tenor of this period was perhaps captured in the October 1961 debate at Howard University between the nationalist NOI minister, Malcolm X, and pacifist and Martin Luther King, Jr. advisor, Bayard Rustin, on the subject of separatism vs. racial integration. Malcolm X also debated representatives from CORE—the Congress of Racial Equality— and the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People youth secretary at Yale University. He led a protest march at the United Nations after the assassination of Congolese Prime Minister Patrice Lumumba and spoke at Adam Clayton Powell's Abyssinian Baptist Church (Strickland et al. 2013:91; NYPL 2005).

On April 27, 1962 in Los Angeles, an altercation on the street led to police entering Los Angeles Temple No. 27 and killing its unarmed secretary, Ronald Stokes, whom Malcolm X had known in Boston and may have recruited into the NOI. Malcolm X gave the eulogy for Stokes before 2,000 people. Despite the brutality of the police, Elijah Muhammad resisted calls for an aggressive response, which Malcolm X accepted but strongly disagreed with, feeling that a more overt rejoinder was warranted (Strickland et al. 1994:81–82).

In June 1962, Malcolm X met the young, outspoken boxer Cassius Clay, Jr. (1942–2016) in a luncheonette in Detroit where they were both attending a Black Muslim rally. Clay was from Louisville, KY, and, like Malcolm X, his father had been influenced by Marcus Garvey. He had

first encountered the NOI and Elijah Muhammad in 1959 in Chicago and was drawn to the ideas and teachings. He sought out Malcolm X, and in turn Malcolm X liked him and also saw potential to gain access through Clay to a new group of NOI recruits. Over the next year, as Clay's successes and reputation as a boxer grew, he and Malcolm X became friends (Perry 1991:245–246).

In 1963, Malcolm X began working on his autobiography with Alex Haley. In discussing this period, Malcolm X wrote "…if anyone had noticed, I spoke less and less of religion. I taught social doctrine to Muslims, and current events, and politics. I stayed wholly off the subject of morality." The reason, he continued, was that his faith had been deeply shaken when he discovered Muslims had been betrayed by the Elijah Muhammad (X and Haley 1999 [1965]:339).

In 1963, Malcolm X confirmed publicly that Elijah Muhammad had engaged in repeated adultery and had fathered children with at least three of his young secretaries who brought paternity suits against him. In response, the NOI newspaper *Muhammad Speaks* staff was directed to minimize coverage of Malcolm X's activities and speeches. In April, Malcolm X flew to Phoenix with Elijah Muhammad's son Wallace to speak directly about the accusations. The three men agreed with Malcolm X's suggestion that the behavior would be defended by likening it to that of several Old Testament prophets. However, when Malcolm X described the idea to several other NOI ministers, he was accused of inflaming the situation. In May, Malcolm X wrote Elijah Muhammad a letter of apology, but relations between the two men continued to cool (X and Haley 1999 [1965]:339–334).

Tensions peaked following the November 22, 1963, assassination of President John F. Kennedy. Despite Elijah Muhammad's order to all NOI ministers not to mention it, Malcolm X responded to a press question at a New York NOI rally, saying that Kennedy "never foresaw that the chickens would come home to roost so soon" (Gallen 1992:18) referring to the United States role in violence in Vietnam, Cambodia, and other conflicts. In December 1963, Elijah forbade Malcolm X to speak to the press for 90 days. In January 1964, Elijah removed Malcolm X from his posts as NOI national representative and minister of Harlem Temple No. 7 and suspended him from the NOI.

A welcome respite occurred at this time when Cassius Clay invited Malcolm X and his family to visit him at his training camp in Miami Beach, where he was training to fight champion Sonny Liston for the boxing world heavyweight title. From January 15–19, 1964, Malcolm and Betty traveled with their three daughters to Florida for the only vacation they ever shared. At this time, while Clay had close association with Malcolm X and the NOI, he did not officially belong to the NOI, which would likely have jeopardized his budding career. On February 25, 1964, Cassius

Clay defeated Sonny Liston in Miami Beach and claimed world heavyweight boxing championship. The victory party was held in Malcolm's hotel suite, and the next day, Clay publicly acknowledged he was a Muslim and began using the name Muhammad Ali (Perry 1991:247–249). The rapport between the two men was short-lived, however, as Muhammad Ali turned his back on Malcolm X when Elijah Muhammad reaffirmed that Malcolm X was suspended from the NOI indefinitely.

On March 8, 1964, Malcolm X announced his separation from the NOI, which responded by demanding that Malcolm relinquish all NOI property, including his car and house in Queens. Malcolm X predicted that NOI leaders would kill him because of his knowledge of the unscrupulous workings of the organization.

Muslim Mosque, Inc. and Organization of African-American Unity

On March 12, 1964, four days after his separation from the NOI and Elijah Muhammad, Malcolm X announced plans to form his own organization, Muslim Mosque, Inc., at a press conference at the Park Sheraton Hotel in New York City. He described the new entity as providing "a religious base, and the spiritual force necessary to rid our people of the vices that destroy the moral fiber of our community." the new organization would be temporarily based at the Hotel Theresa in Harlem and would "be the working base for an action program designed to eliminate the political oppression, the economic exploitation, and the social degradation suffered daily by 22 million Afro-Americans" (X and Haley 1999 [1965]:346). In an interview a week later with the Socialist magazine *Monthly Review*, Malcolm X asserted his intent to also establish a Muslim "action group designed to eliminate the same ills that the teachings of the Honorable Elijah Muhammad have made so manifest in this country." The political, economic, and social philosophies would be black nationalism with the long-term goal for all blacks to return to the African homeland and the short-term goal to "enable us to live a better life while we are still here" (quoted in Spellman 1964).

The ensuing year was filled with a flurry of travel and appearances. On March 26, 1964, Malcolm X met by chance for the first and only time with Martin Luther King, Jr. in Washington D.C., where he was observing the Senate filibuster of the pending Civil Rights Act of 1964 (enacted July 2, 1964) for which King was scheduled to testify. On April 12, Malcolm X delivered his famous presidential election year "The Ballot or the Bullet" speech in Detroit, during which he declared his black nationalist philosophy and intent to expand the freedom struggle "from the level of civil rights to the level of human rights" (quoted in American Radioworks, n.d.). Malcolm X then left for a pilgrimage to Mecca followed by a five-week tour of the Middle East including Lebanon and Saudi Arabia, and independent African states of

Egypt, Liberia, Senegal, Nigeria, and Ghana . During the Hajj, paid for by Ella (see **Criterion B – Ella Little Collins**), Malcolm X converted to orthodox Islam and received a new Sunni Muslim name, El-Hajj Malik El-Shabazz. The trip changed Malcolm X's philosophical, religious, and political trajectories. Through exposure to predominantly black nation states he gained an international perspective on America's civil rights issues and confidence in the social and economic possibilities demonstrated by their achievements. Long steeped in the theology of the NOI, he now directly experienced Islamic religion, traditions, and culture, saw that many races were Muslim, and realized the vast separation between the NOI and "real Islam" of the East (X and Haley 1999 [1965]:183).

When he returned to New York, Malcolm X distanced himself from the tenets of the NOI, including its narrow inherent racism, and in his autobiography refers to Elijah Mohammad as a "religious faker" (X and Haley 1999 [1965]:183). Nevertheless, he attempted to end the hostilities between the NOI and his supporters and sent an open letter to end the fighting to Elijah Muhammad that was published in the *New York Post* on June 26, 1964 (Strickland et al. 1994:185). However, tensions remained high. One illustration is when Malcolm X and others were leaving a meeting with some Muslims at Malcolm X's sister Ella's house (she was living then at 486 Massachusetts Avenue), some NOI members unsuccessfully tried to block their route to the airport in the Callahan Tunnel (Strickland et al. 1994:186).

Returned

On June 28, 1964, at the Audubon Ballroom in Harlem, Malcolm X held a rally to announce the establishment of the action group he had noted three months earlier. The Organization of Afro-American Unity (OAAU) was modeled after the Organization of African Unity that he learned about on his March visit to Africa. Malcolm X espoused a pan-African approach in fighting for the human rights of all Africans and people of African descent in the Americas. Malcolm X proclaimed the aim of the OAAU as "We want freedom by any means necessary. We want justice by any means necessary. We want equality by any means necessary" (X 1964). The OAAU charter highlighted the rights for black self-defense in the face of violence, for black people to control their own destiny, and a pledge to fight for unity, to promote justice, and to transcend compromise in the name of human rights (Strickland et al. 1994:158).

From July to November 1964, Malcolm X traveled abroad in Africa and Europe. On July 17, he attended the African Summit Conference in Cairo, Egypt, as a representative of the OAAU and appealed to the delegates of 34 African nations to bring the cause of the 22 million black people in the United States before the United Nations. From September to November, he toured 11 African countries, talking with heads of state and addressing many parliaments. He returned to New York on November 24 and a week later flew to London for an Oxford Union debate.

In contrast to the welcome he received abroad, Malcolm X was under increased attack at home. The NOI began formal eviction proceedings for the house where his family lived, his brother Philbert denounced him for betraying the NOI, and his life was threatened. Yet he continued to speak at OAAU rallies and publicly supported other social justice and political organizations, include the Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party created in 1964. Also in 1964, Malcolm X's and Betty Shabazz's fourth daughter, Gamilah Lumumba, was born, and his mother, Louise Little, was released from the Kalamazoo State Hospital.

In January 1965, Malcolm X flew to Los Angeles to meet with Gladys Towles Roots and two NOI secretaries who were filing paternity suits against Elijah Muhammad. On February 4, Malcolm X spoke in Selma, Alabama, at the invitation of the Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee. The next day, he flew to London to address the first Congress of the Council of African Organizations. He then flew to Paris to speak, but French government officials refused him entry to the country for unspecified cause, so he returned to London and then back to New York on February 13. On February 14, Malcolm X's home in Queens was firebombed, and the family was evicted four days later (Strickland et al. 1994).

On February 21, 1965, with his wife and daughters present, Malcolm X was assassinated while speaking at an OAAU rally at the Audubon Ballroom in Harlem. After his opening greeting, a disturbance occurred in the audience, three men rushed to the stage, and Malcolm X was killed with a fusillade of gunshots. Three members of the NOI were convicted of the murder in April 1966. Malcolm X's funeral, organized by Ella Little Collins, was held on February 27 at the Faith Temple of God in Christ in Harlem. Actor and civil rights activist Ossie Davis led the service and gave the eulogy in which he praised Malcolm X as "our manhood" and "our own black shining prince!—who didn't hesitate to die, because he loved us so" (X and Haley 1999 [1965]:521). An overflow crowd of 1,500 people, including members of SNCC and other civil rights activists, attended. Malcolm X was buried at Ferncliff Cemetery in Hartsdale, New York, about 25 miles north of New York City. Later that year, *The Autobiography of Malcolm X* was published (X and Haley 1999 [1965]), and Betty Shabazz gave birth to his last two daughters, twins Malikah and Malaak (X and Haley 1999 [1965]:520; CBS News 2005; Strickland et al. 1994:215).[6]

[6] Malcolm X's brothers Wilfred and Philbert spoke at a large Black Muslim National Convention gathering held in Chicago several weeks after Malcolm X's death, where Philbert introduced Elijah Muhammad and reaffirmed his dedication to the NOI (X and Haley 1999 [1965]:516).

Malcolm X Legacy

Malcolm X's life can be viewed as passing through at least three transformations: from rural Midwest boyhood to adolescent petty criminal; from self-taught disciple and ascendant amplifier of Elijah Muhammad's teachings in the NOI; and lastly to preeminent leader and inspiration for black nationalism and international activism before his life was abruptly cut short. At the time of his death in 1965, Malcolm X was a nationally and internationally prominent human rights leader (BLC 1998:22–23). He seems to have been aware of his influence at the time and the potential for the future, because, as he wrote in his *Autobiography:* "Yes, I have cherished my 'demagogue' role. I know that societies often have killed the people who have helped to change those societies. And if I can die having brought any light, having exposed any meaningful truth that will help to destroy the racist cancer that is malignant in the body of America—then, all of the credit is due to Allah. Only the mistakes have been mine." (X and Haley 1999 [1965]:417–418).

From the moment of his death to the present, countless public officials, scholars, activists, artists, and others have shared their thoughts about the impact of Malcolm X's life and work on their personal lives, culture, civil rights, racism, human rights, and national and global politics. This multi-faceted, broad, and dynamic understanding of Malcolm X's legacy acknowledges the complexities of his life and philosophical trajectories and their current value today. Malcolm X's influence is similarly manifest in the actions of individuals and organizations in the spheres that he cared about.

One of Malcolm X's key contributions was that he consistently and unashamedly pointed out the confidence and pride black people could have in themselves, their history, their culture, and their agency to provoke change. This message was not completely new, but his potent delivery made it both impossible to ignore and an invitation to boldly experiment with different forms of black cultural and voice expression from hair treatment to political activism. It was this aspect of Malcolm X's legacy that Ella Little Collins continued most strongly to foster in her public event presentations and conversations after his death.

Within this broad umbrella, actor, playwright, and civil rights activist Ossie Davis—who gave the eulogy at Malcolm X's funeral, calling him "our black prince"—expanded further on this view in his afterword to the *Autobiography of Malcolm X*. Davis remarked that while many black people he encountered, including himself, often disagreed with "much or all of what Malcolm said and what he stood for. That is, with one singing exception, they all…knew that Malcolm—whatever else he was or was not—*Malcolm was a man!* White folks do not need anybody to

remind them that they are men. We do! This was his one incontrovertible benefit to his people." (X and Haley 1999[1965]:524).

A corollary to this self-confidence building was the actions of Malcolm X's contemporaries, especially the youth, starting in the 1960s and 1970s while he lived and after his death. Inspired by his vision, many of them pioneered new ground in defining the pride of the black community, the "true" black history (as opposed to the traditional white perspective), the place of black cultural institutions, and an assertive approach to race relations. Poet LeRoi Jones, later Amiri Baraka, and writer and critic Larry Neal led the Black Arts Movement combining activism and art, and James Baldwin wrote his influential book on race relations, The Fire Next Time (1963). In Oakland, CA, two youth formed the revolutionary political organization, the Black Panther Party for Self Defense (against police brutality) in 1966. In Raleigh, NC, the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) formed in 1960 following student sit-ins was a key civil rights movement. Stokely Carmichael, later Kwame Ture, became an effective civil rights organizer in the U.S., serving as chairman of SNCC, and in the Pan-African movement. In 1964, Adam Clayton Powell, Jr., then Democratic Congressman from New York and who was also a Little family friend, convened the first Black Power Conference in Washington DC (Strickland et al. 1994:163).

In the 1960s and 1970s, black nationalism led to the formation of militant black power and student protest groups intent on controlling politics and economics and to the development of black studies programs in colleges and universities such as the Afro-American Institute at Northeastern University and at the City College of New York (Rojas 2007:43; Van Deburg 1997:13–14). Black writers, commentators, and scholars recognized that for Malcolm X's contributions to continue to have social, economic, and political relevance beyond simple historical interest, scholars, followers, and activists must freshly and accurately transmit his radical vision of equality and justice to younger generations (Byrd and Miri 2016:1; Edozie and Stokes 2015:3).

Since his death more than 50 years ago, Malcolm X's life and accomplishments have influenced many threads of American culture (Strickland et al. 1994:219–222). The influence of Malcolm X's concepts has played a role in shaping the ideas of notable American black leaders, including 1984 and 1988 presidential candidate Jesse Jackson and President Barack Obama, in office from 2009 to 2017. In an opinion piece in *The Guardian* written 50 years after Malcolm X's assassination, Jesse Jackson said "I did not always agree with Malcolm X, specifically his critiques of Martin Luther King, Jr. and of the philosophy of nonviolent resistance. But I have always admired Malcolm the man. He was a giant: his courage pierced the darkness of racism. And his life story is still an inspiration" (Jackson 2015).

In his memoir, *Dreams from My Father* (1995), President Obama spoke of his affinity to Malcolm X's experience and ideas in his young formative years. Regarding similarities in their families, Obama reflected, "As I imagined myself following Malcolm X's call, one line in his book stayed me. He spoke of his wish that the white blood that ran through him, there by an act of violence, might somehow be expunged. I knew that, for Malcolm, that wish would never be incidental. I knew as well that traveling down the road to self-respect my own white blood would never recede into mere abstraction. I was left to wonder what else I would be severing if and when I left my mother at some uncharted border." On a shared vision of the future, Obama commented, "If Malcolm X's discovery toward the end of his life, that some whites might live beside him as brothers in Islam, seemed to offer some hope of eventual reconciliation, that hope appeared in a distant future, in a far-off land. In the meantime, I looked to see where the people would come from who were willing to work toward this future and populate this new world." (Obama 1995:80; Mendell 2007:54–55).

Another central legacy of Malcolm X was in the tension of the American national debate between black separatism and integration. Malcolm X's laser-like insistence on promoting black empowerment, nationalism, and separatism created a sharp contrast to the more mainstream civil rights movement of integration and nonviolence led by Martin Luther King, Jr. Many people, both black and white, found Malcolm X to be quite threatening, although it is clear that while his message could be frightening, as a person he was charismatic and approachable. Nevertheless, fear and mistrust of the NOI and of the outspoken Malcolm X repelled many people. At the same time, leaders in the nonviolent movement recognized how he affected these essential conversations. As Peter Bailey, one of Malcolm X's associates and a member of the OAAU put it, "Even if you didn't agree with him, Malcolm made you rethink your position." In early February 1965 shortly before his death, Malcolm X went to Selma, AL, at the request of SNCC to speak. Martin Luther King Jr. was in jail there and Malcolm X was seated next to Coretta Scott King at a church where he was to speak. She later told *Jet* magazine that while they were seated together on stage in a church, he told her that he was "trying to help…, to present an alternative; that it might be easier for whites to accept Martin's proposals after hearing him…Later in the hallway, he reiterated this. He seemed sincere…" (quoted in X and Haley 1999[1965]:490). The Selma to Montgomery March led by Martin Luther King, Jr. took place a few weeks later on March 7, and on August 6, 1965, President Johnson signed the Voting Rights Act of 1965 preventing the use of literacy tests as a voting requirement. This perspective shift is perhaps reflected in Martin Luther King's comment to his associate Rev. D.E. King in 1967 that, "…I have found out that all that I have been doing in trying to correct this system in America has been in vain…I am trying to get at the roots of it to see just what ought to be done…The whole thing will have to be done away with" (quoted in Strickland et al. 1994:164; Garrow 1986). King

was assassinated on April 4, 1968. A few days later, on April 11, President Johnson signed the Civil Rights Act of 1968, also known as the Fair Housing Act, providing equal housing opportunity regardless of race, religion, or national origin.

Others who acknowledged the strength of Malcolm X's message in combination with his powerful presentation, even if they did not agree with him, included civil rights activist and journalist James Farmer (1920–1999), a follower of nonviolent methods who led the Congress of Racial Equality (CORE) and organized the Freedom Rides of 1961, when northern blacks and whites traveled to the South to counter segregation. Farmer said Malcolm X was "exciting and controversial," referring to provocative and generative debate his views initiated, and also noted that his strong message magnetized urban black America as a parallel to Martin Luther King, Jr.'s broad coalescing of people in churches and rural areas (Farmer 1998:223). In his 1980 *A People's History of the United States*, historian Howard Zinn describes Malcolm X as the most eloquent spokesman for black separation and independence and as "more influential in death than during his lifetime" (Zinn 1980:194–195, 204).

Due to his interest in Pan-Africanism, Malcolm X also redirected the discourse of racism internationally. In his view, the success of the domestic civil rights movement required a counterpart in global human rights. The vision that developed from his travels in Africa and the Middle East and that he promoted in his speeches helped foster long-term threads of connection for dialog about social justice, religion, and civil rights between nongovernmental organizations in the United States and other parts of the world. A groundbreaking outcome of these ideas, following the United Nations' Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 1948, was a series of declarations and conventions on racial discrimination in the 1960s, culminating in the first United Nations World Conference Against Racism in 1978, which focused on Apartheid in South Africa, followed by conferences in 1978, 1983 (both in Geneva, Switzerland), and 2001 (held in Durban, South Africa). The conferences focus on developing action-oriented, practical strategies and measures to racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia, and related intolerance, The 2001 conference was attended by 11,500 delegates and observers, including 3,000 American delegates, two-thirds of whom were black, and resulted in a "Programme of Action" containing 219 points regarding human rights, legal frameworks, and recommended actions (United Nations 2001a, 2001b; Re-evaluation Counseling 2019).

Today, Malcolm X has an iconic status as one of America's great multicultural leaders. His death came before and after those of two other key black civil and human rights leaders killed during the 1960s: Medgar Evers, field secretary of the NAACP in 1963 (in Mississippi) and Martin Luther King, Jr. in 1968 (in Tennessee). Malcolm X's unique and essential contribution to the multifaceted black liberation movement of the 1960s' civil rights debates was to courageously

and profoundly shift the discourse of racism and the path to fundamental social change in the United States. He spoke of his observations and experiences in what he believed was the hypocrisy of integration that sought continued control of blacks and in institutional racism in law enforcement, government, and social systems. His message provided an alternative perspective to nonviolent integration, instead advocating black self-defense when threatened by violence, self-reliance, and self-determination (Strickland et al. 1994:218–223).

One of Malcolm X's strengths was his understanding of the value of organizations as a vehicle for harnessing and focusing ideas and people. His strategy with the formation of the OAAU was to establish three tactical objectives: to stand for the right for self-defense, including education for building self-identity; to cultivate political and economic power, including exercising the right to vote and social uplifting using internal black community resources; and to build a working relationship between the civil rights movement and the emerging human rights movement. Although the OAAU was not able to reach its full potential without Malcolm X, the black liberation movement and Malcolm X's contribution to it survived and evolved (Sales 1994:107–109, 160–161).

Across the United States, the legacy of Malcolm X, like that of other notable black leaders, is publicly commemorated by the naming of parks and roads in his honor. In Roxbury, Washington Park (MHC No. BOS.9838) near 72 Dale Street was renamed Malcolm X Park on May 19, 1986, and New Dudley Street was renamed Malcolm X Boulevard in the 1990s (Ball 1986; Miller 2017). In New York City, a portion of Lenox Avenue in Harlem was named Malcolm X Boulevard in 1987, and the 97th Street block in Queens containing number 23–11 was named Malcolm X Place in 2005.

Comparison to Related Properties

72 Dale Street is the sole survivor of Malcolm X's numerous childhood homes. His birthplace in Omaha, Nebraska (at 3448 Pinkney Street, no longer extant), and his boyhood home in Lansing, Michigan (at 4705 South Logan Street [now Martin Luther King, Jr. Boulevard], no longer extant), were designated with markers placed by each city in 1971 and 1975, respectively (BLC 1998:13, 17). After arriving in Boston, his first residence was 89 Harrishoff Street (no longer extant), where he lived from February to August 1941.

Two houses where he lived for less than one year in Michigan after leaving prison and joining the NOI are extant at 4336 Williams Street in Inkster (May 1953–February 1954) and 18887 Keystone Street in Detroit (March–August 19540 (BLC 1998:249). After he left Detroit and resided in Queens, Malcolm X travelled often and did not have a fixed residence. Three single-

family houses in the Elmhurst area of Queens, New York, where Malcolm X lived during the last decade of his life survive but are not recognized or designated in the state historic inventory: 25–35 Humphrey Street, East Elmhurst (September 1954–March 1957); 25–46 99th Street, Elmhurst (April 1957–October 1960); 23–11 97th Street, East Elmhurst (November 1960–February 1965). The 97th Street block containing number 23–11 was named Malcolm X Place in 2005 (BLC 1998:24).

In Harlem, New York City, two public buildings associated with Malcolm X survive. The Hotel Theresa, 2082–2096 Adam Clayton Powell, Jr. Boulevard, which has associations with Malcolm's New York organizing activities and where the OAAU had its first temporary headquarters, was listed in the National Register in 2005. It is now an office building. The Audubon Theatre and Ballroom (at 3940 Broadway at West 165th Street and generally known as the Audubon Ballroom) is where Malcolm X spoke many times and where he was assassinated; it has been altered and adaptively reused to incorporate Columbia University's Audubon Business and Technology Center in the northern part of the building. Part of the original façade and a portion of the interior ballroom where Malcolm X was killed have been restored. In 2005, the Malcolm X and Dr. Betty Shabazz Memorial and Educational Center opened in the lobby (Columbia News 2005).

CRITERION B – ELLA LITTLE COLLINS

The Malcolm X–Ella Little Collins House is eligible for listing in the National Register under Criterion B in the areas of Social History, Ethnic Heritage: Black, and Civil Rights at the local level for its association with Ella Little Collins, a key influential figure in the life of her brother––the preeminent civil and human rights leader Malcolm (Little) X, and in her own right as an important organizer in the civil rights movement and in her efforts to improve educational opportunities for black students in Boston and New York. From the time Ella purchased the property and Malcolm X came to live with her in 1941, until his assassination in 1965, 72 Dale Street was the locus of their close association. The family has owned and preserved the property in honor of Malcolm X and the Little family for 78 years.

Early Life

Ella Lee Little Collins (1914–1996) was the sister of Malcolm X and 11 years his senior. She and Malcolm X were children of the Rev. Earl Little, a Baptist minister and proponent of Marcus Garvey's black separatist and "back to Africa" philosophy (see **Criterion B – Malcolm X**). Ella Lee Little was born December 4, 1914 as the eldest child to Earl Little and his first wife, Daisy Mason Little, in Butler, Georgia (Collins, personal communication 2019; Lehman and Phelps

2005). Her siblings were Mary (b. 1915) and Earl Jr. (b. 1917) (Collins and Bailey 1998:14). Ella grew up as part of a large family on her grandfather's plantation in Butler and visited relatives in Boston as a child (Shaw 1969; Tarter 1977; Levy 1996). Members of Malcolm X's and Ella's extended family, the Grays and Masons, had previously gone to Boston from Butler and Reynolds, Georgia, in the 1920s and 1930s during the beginning of the great northward migration of blacks that continued until about 1970 (Collins and Bailey 1998:32; Wilkerson 2010). In 1917–1918, Earl and Daisy divorced, and about 1920, Daisy moved to Boston, taking Earl Jr. with her. Ella and Mary stayed in Butler with Earl Sr.'s parents, Pa John and Ella Little, who raised them to adulthood (Lehman and Phelps 2005).

Ella's and Malcolm X's family was infused with pride for its African base of identity and culture as well as with a fierce sense of courage and personal and black independence, nationalism, rebelliousness, and family cohesion (Collins and Bailey 1998:5–10; Shaw 1969; Tarter 1977). These qualities and values are evident in how Ella lived her life and how she guided and related with Malcolm X. He reported in his autobiography that at their first meeting Ella told him, "We Littles have to stick together" (X and Haley 1999 [1965]:38).

In 1929, at age 15, Ella left Georgia for New York City and worked as a church secretary for minister, community activist, and author Adam Clayton Powell, Sr. (1865–1953) at the Abyssinian Baptist Church in Harlem for a few years. Powell developed the church as the largest Protestant congregation in the country, with 10,000 congregants. Ella's connection to Powell led to a long-standing professional relationship with Adam Clayton Powell, Jr. (1908–1972), a civil rights activist and later Harlem's first black Congressional representative who served 12 terms between 1945 and 1971 (U.S. House of Representatives, n.d.).[7] Ella then moved to Boston to work in and manage her mother, Daisy Mason Washington's grocery and variety store on Shawmut Avenue at the corner of Lenox Street in Roxbury (exact address and location unknown) with her aunt Emmy Walker (Collins and Bailey 1998:51). Ella's mother lived on Waumbeck Street in a neighborhood that included the Humboldt and Townsend streets of middle-class, well-to-do black families known as "the Hill" and considered the equivalent of Harlem's "Sugar Hill." Her brother, Earl Jr., was an entertainer in Boston, performing under the stage name "Jimmy Carleton" (Collins and Bailey 1998:38).

Ella's and Malcolm X's father Earl Little died in a streetcar incident that some thought was racially motivated in Lansing, Michigan, in 1931 (Collins and Bailey 1998:17) (see **Criterion B – Malcolm X**). In 1933, Ella married Jamaican-born Dr. Thomas Lloyd Oxley, a follower of Marcus Garvey like her father; they divorced in 1934 (Lehman and Phelps 2005). In 1935, Ella's

[7] Ella remained friends with Adam Clayton Powell, Jr. throughout her life. His papers are scattered in more than a dozen archives, and an electronic file search did not reveal any indication of documents relating to Ella.

aunts Sarah (known as Sas) and Gracie Little went north to Boston and lived there together, initially with Ella, until their deaths (Collins and Bailey 1998:36). By 1937, Ella had remarried, and she and her second husband, Frank Johnson, lived at 10 Elbert Street in Roxbury (no longer extant, now within Marksdale Gardens). They had moved to 801 Tremont Street (likely no longer extant) by 1939, in a home they shared with Sas and Gracie (Collins and Bailey 1998:12; Polk 1937, 1939).

Businesswoman

Ella Little Collins started in business as a young woman and became a self-made entrepreneur in Boston renting real estate to support herself and her family. While working at her mother's market, Ella met Maurice Gordon, an emerging developer in the area and cultivated an interest in real estate (BLC 1998:16). Starting in the 1940s, she owned rowhouses, including 486, 478, 539, and 679 Massachusetts Avenue, 680 Tremont Street, and 103 West Springfield Street that she ran as boarding/rooming houses (Collins, personal communication 2018; SCRD 6972/495). One of her methods was to buy properties, including 72 Dale Street, at foreclosure when owners were eager to sell. In the 1940s, Ella, her mother, and her mother's sister owned and leased approximately 200 acres of land in Duxbury, a coastal town about 30 miles south of Boston. The Duxbury properties included approximately 25 acres on Keene Street at the northeast side of the Union Street intersection. Portions of the land were sold in the 1950s and 1960s, and 2.5 acres stayed in the family until 2000, when the parcel was sold by Rodnell Collins. Ella also owned an approximately ten-acre farm with a pond on the southwest side of Mayflower Street in Duxbury and had a lease and option to buy of a large parcel across the street. She kept horses and chickens and would trade eggs for baked goods at local Roxbury markets. The farm property was transferred to the town in 1969 and it and the leased land are now conservation land (Collins, personal communication 2019; Collins and Bailey 1998:52; PCRD 3541/349, 350).

Ella helped finance her work and that of her brother with proceeds from her rental properties. She was generous with the family and sent money to members in Georgia for various needs, including burials. She personally brought 20–30 Little, Mason, and Gray family members from Georgia to Boston and helped them get settled (Collins and Bailey 1998:49). Later, she passed along Malcolm X's teachings and sent several young family members on pilgrimages to Mecca. In his autobiography, Malcolm X described their father's characterization of Ella as someone successful who "owned some property," was "in society," and furthermore, "had come North with nothing, and she worked and saved and had invested in property that she built up in value, and then she started sending money to Georgia for another sister, brother, cousin, niece or nephew to come north to Boston" (X and Haley 1999 [1965]:38). As his legal guardian, Ella

provided for everything for Malcolm X from the time he came to Boston and continued to help him after he turned 21 (X and Haley 1999 1965]:67).

Ella was acquainted with many people involved in business, politics, and social activism in Roxbury and Boston. She often entertained her friends and associates in the formal front parlor on the second floor of 72 Dale Street. Her social circle included Boston civil rights leaders Muriel S. Snowden and Otto P. Snowden (Barry et al. 2017; Collins, personal communication 2018). The Snowdens founded Freedom House in 1949 to facilitate dialogue between whites and blacks, and to promote community activism, and engagement with social justice and education for low-income and minority students. The headquarters was originally about a half mile south of 72 Dale Street in a small office at 151 Humboldt Avenue near the intersection with Waumbeck Street in Roxbury (site now occupied by Trotter School playground). Freedom House moved about a half mile southeast to its current home in the former Hebrew Teachers College at 14 Crawford Street (1925, 1960; MHC No. BOS.11157) in the Grove Hall neighborhood of Dorchester in 1952 and remains an active organization (Snowden 2013; Barry et al. 2017). The Snowdens were among Boston's upper-class black society, and Freedom House engaged prominent speakers including John F. Kennedy. However, according to Ella's son Rodnell Collins, it was not a place that would have invited Malcolm X to speak in the late 1950s and early 1960s (Little and Connolly 1998:98–99). Ella does not appear to have been actively involved in Freedom House programs, although she was acquainted with the Snowdens and may have attended some events.[8]

Returned

Ella also knew many local business people including Norris G. and Helen Young Davis who were the founders and owners of the Davis Funeral Home, which started in 1935 at the corner of Humboldt Avenue and Townsend Street and moved to 89 Walnut Avenue near Dale Street in 1950 (Davis Funeral Home 2019; Collins, personal communication 2018). Ella did business with Charlie Roundtree, a leader in the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters union, one of the largest employers of black labor in the United States, and a realtor with an office on Humboldt Avenue. Ella's lawyer was Endicott Peabody, a Harvard-educated liberal Democrat who served as governor of Massachusetts from 1963 to 1965 (Collins, personal communication 2018). Peabody supported laws to prevent discrimination in housing and felt his accomplishments were in "breaking up the racial and religious holds of the parties and making them truly parties of reform" (quoted in Molotsky 1997).

[8] Freedom House archives are at Northeastern University in Boston. A search of the finding aids and conversation with the archivist turned up one item on Ella, a newspaper article in 1973 when she spoke at the Afro-American Institute of Northeastern University. There is also a separate photograph file that matches the one in the news article (Onyx Staff 1973:3).

Malcolm Little at 72 Dale Street

In 1939, Malcolm X's mother, Louise Little, was committed to a state mental hospital, and the children were placed in foster care (see **Criterion B – Malcolm X**). After Ella and Frank Johnson separated in 1940, Ella lived with her mother on Waumbeck Street (U.S. Census 1940). In the 1930s, Ella visited her younger siblings in Lansing and suggested Malcolm X might like to visit her in Boston for the summer, which he did in 1939 and 1940. In a letter to Malcolm X after the second visit, she said "I would like for you to come (back) but under one condition. Your mind must be made up. If I should send your fair (*sic*) could you pay all your bills; let me know real soon" (quoted in BLC 1998:16–17). Ella arranged to take over his legal custody, and at age 16, he moved to Boston to live with her in 1941; she remained his guardian until he turned 21 in 1946. Recalling this period in an interview, Ella said that their father had picked Malcolm X for her to raise should anything happen to him and that she "felt responsible for Malcolm" (Shaw 1969; X and Haley 1999 [1965]:36; BLC 1998:16–17).

By February 1941, when Malcolm X came in Boston, Ella (then Ella Johnson) was living at 89 Harrishoff Street. In August 1941, after attempting to acquire a property at the southwest corner of Dale and Walnut streets in Roxbury, Ella purchased the 72 Dale Street property from Eliot Savings Bank (SCRD 5939/137) (see **Criterion A – Social/Ethnic Heritage**). In June 1942, Ella and Frank Johnson divorced, and she married Kenneth Collins that same month (Collins and Bailey 1998:54; Lehman and Phelps 2005). Kenneth was a Lansing, Michigan, native and childhood friend of the older Littles, especially Wilfred. The house at 72 Dale Street was Malcolm X's home until he moved to New York City in 1943, and it remained a home base for him in Boston while Ella lived there.

At 72 Dale Street, Ella and Malcolm X became close as Little family siblings and as surrogate mother and son and developed the relationship instrumental in shaping who he became as an adult. During his time there, Malcolm X shared the second and third floors with Ella and Kenneth, and later their son Rodnell. Ella made changes to the third floor of 72 Dale Street for Malcolm X (see **Section 7 – Description** and **Supplemental Information – Architecture**) that remain in place. Ella's aunts Sas and Gracie and her sister (Malcolm X's older sister) Hilda lived on the first floor. Ella furnished the house and tended the gardens. Historic photographs show a profusion of shrubs and flowers growing against the house and potted plants on the porch. She brought stones from her farm property in Duxbury to create a rock garden along the east side of the driveway (Collins, personal communication 2018). In an interview, Ella remarked that she was fond of flowers and plants and recalled that Malcolm X would bring her plants from his travels (Brown ca. 1994).

The extended Little-Collins family unit remained in place in the 72 Dale Street house when Malcolm X was in Boston-area prisons from 1945 to 1952 and family members resided there until about 1965. Rodnell P. Collins, Ella's only child and Malcolm X's nephew, was born to her and Kenneth Collins in 1945 and raised in the house. Ella and Kenneth divorced in 1958, and she did not remarry (Collins and Bailey 1998:63). Shortly before Malcolm X was killed in 1965, Ella moved to her townhouse at 486 Massachusetts Avenue. After his death, she never returned to 72 Dale Street and turned it over to her son Rodnell Collins (see **Supplemental Information – Architecture**). In 1988, Ella lost her legs to diabetes and later suffered strokes. She moved to a nursing home in Norwood and died there on August 3, 1996, at age 82.

Role in Malcolm X's Life

When Ella became legal guardian of Malcolm (Little) X in 1941, he was a 15-year-old student from the Midwest. She was 27, married, and an experienced businesswoman who was raised in the rural South and was knowledgeable about life in the urban Northeast. Ella removed Malcolm X from the welfare system and directed him into the U.S. working class. She played an integral role throughout his life, raising him through adolescence to adulthood and serving as a primary advisor and motivational force (X and Haley 1999 [1965]; Sales 1994:31). In an interview, she explained that in African mythology, it is believed that the seventh child, in this case Malcolm X, was special and destined to do great things (Collins and Bailey 1998:xii). Her role, as she described, "was to stimulate his arrogance, stimulate his impulsiveness. Let him feel that the life that God gave him belonged to him. He did not have to pay homage to anyone. This is how I guided him" (Shaw 1969).

In his autobiography, Malcolm X writes "she was the first really proud black woman I had ever seen in my life," of first meeting Ella. "She was plainly proud of her very dark skin. This was unheard of among Negroes in those days…. The way she sat, moved, talked, and did everything bespoke somebody who did and got exactly what she wanted… I had never been so impressed with anybody" (X and Haley 1999 [1965]:37–38). Reflecting on his move to Boston, Malcolm X remarked, "No physical move in my life has been more pivotal or profound in its repercussions" (X and Haley 1999 [1965]:43). Malcolm X's biographer Alex Haley described Ella as "Malcolm's protector and confidante and a "source of grown-up advice, experienced advice, streetwise advice" (quoted in Levy 1996).[9] Ella supported Malcolm X's rebelliousness to resist

[9] Though Malcolm X credited Ella Little Collins with only positive influence, his widow, Betty Shabazz felt otherwise, and aspects of her life have suggested her role may have been more complex. In order to sustain herself and her family in the 1930s and 1940s, Ella "unashamedly resorted to shoplifting" (Collins and Bailey 1998:50). *West's Encyclopedia of American Law* biography mentions Ella received 10 convictions "for offenses including petty larceny and assault and battery," which is, however, accompanied by a statement from the family that "the run-ins occurred when she was defending others who were being harassed or taken advantage of by people in positions

oppression, but not to engage in the nightlife lifestyle and activities of which she did not approve (Collins and Bailey 1998:40).

When Malcolm X arrived in Boston, Ella used her connections to structure his new life. She took him to meet John Walker, Sr., her uncle by marriage, who owned Walker's Auto Parks Company, a parking lot business in Chinatown. Malcolm X immediately got a job working for John, although he soon moved onto other opportunities. She enrolled him in an all-boys' school, envisioning his education and a successful career, perhaps as a lawyer. She then got him a job as a Pullman porter on the train between Boston and New York. However, Malcolm X was drawn into more risky aspects of urban life and made other choices. He moved to Harlem for a time, then returned to Boston, where he was arrested and imprisoned from 1945 to 1952 (see **Criterion B – Malcolm X**) (X and Haley 1999 [1965]4:79–164; Collins and Bailey 1998:23).

After the 20-year-old Malcolm X was sentenced to prison for larceny in Boston in 1945, Ella was the first person to visit him and encouraged him to use his time there to better himself. In 1948, she was instrumental in having Malcolm X transferred from the Massachusetts Correctional Institute–Concord (where other family members, especially his younger brother Reginald Little, introduced him to the NOI) to the Massachusetts Correctional Institute–Norfolk, formerly the Norfolk Prison Colony, which had an experimental educational program with a variety of opportunities for inmates (see **Criterion B – Malcolm X**). In Norfolk, Malcolm X accepted the teachings of the Honorable Elijah Muhammad, leader of the NOI, and developed his reading, writing, and debating skills (X and Haley 1965:184–207). Looking back, Ella assessed Malcolm X's time in prison as when she was able to help him by "…accepting facts as a guideline for life. Prison is real. Malcolm was able to see this." She observed that he lost his youthful illusions and saw life for real; one of the most valuable assets he acquired in life was to have courage and to accept life from a realistic point of view (Shaw 1969).

Throughout his life, Malcolm X relied on Ella for her moral and financial support and her support of his vision and ministry. Ella continued providing for Malcolm X until his death. Observing Ella's skills as a real estate investor, Malcolm X and his two brothers, Wilfred and Philbert Little, encouraged the NOI to buy property, which it might not otherwise have done (Collins and Bailey 1998:55). After the NOI dismissed him as a spokesperson in 1963, Malcolm X approached Ella for help to make a pilgrimage to Mecca: "I was turning again to my sister Ella. Though at times I'd made Ella angry at me … [she] had never once really wavered from my corner." Ella's response was, "How much do you need?" (X and Haley 1999 [1965]:347),

of authority" (Lehman and Phelps 2005:340–343; BLC 1998:17). No incidents are known to have been associated with 72 Dale Street.

although she had been saving for her own Hajj to Mecca. The important, formative trip in the spring of 1964 that took Malcolm X to Mecca, elsewhere in the Middle East, and Africa showed him other Muslim cultures and international contexts. The experience shifted his ideas about the struggle for civil rights away from the relatively narrow black nationalist stance of the NOI and instilled a perspective on the need for broader human rights. Malcolm X's proclaiming of these new concepts, along with his acknowledgement of Elijah Muhammad's indiscretions with women, was a key factor that led to his split with the NOI and his forming the Organization of Afro-American Unity (OAAU) and Muslim Mosque, Inc. in New York when he returned to the United States (see **Criterion B – Malcolm X**).

On February 21, 1965, Malcolm X was assassinated while speaking at an OAAU rally at the Audubon Ballroom in Harlem. Ella went with Malcolm's widow, Betty Shabazz, to the medical examiner's office to identify the body. She helped organize the funeral held on February 27 in New York, where her son Rodnell was a pallbearer, and covered all of Malcolm X's funeral and business expenses.

In a February 22, 1965, interview with the *Boston Globe* when she was living at 486 Massachusetts Avenue in a basement apartment, she discussed Malcolm X's premonition that he was going to die violently (X and Haley 1999 [1965]:413; Murphy 1965). Malcolm X's killers "took something from me, something that I put a lot into," Ella later said in a *Boston Globe*. Interview. "He was at the point where he could become stronger than ever," she continued, "I could see Malcolm becoming the greatest black man in the history of the world" (Cunningham 1992).

Maintaining and Protecting Malcolm X's Legacy

Following her brother's death, Ella succeeded Malcolm X temporarily, and then permanently, as the leader of the OAAU, based in Harlem at the Teresa Hotel, and supported the group financially.[10] She held a press conference at her Sarah A. Little Preparatory School (see *Civil Rights and Community/Education Activist* below) a few days after Malcolm X's death to announce her intentions (O'Donnell 1965). Without Malcolm X and his charisma as a coalescing force, some members left the relatively young organization, and the broad international scope originally envisioned was set aside. Nevertheless, under Ella's leadership the OAAU continued its founder's intentions on a smaller scale in its commitment to black nationalism and grassroots organizing while also demonstrating the contributions of women in leadership positions. The OAAU gave a yearly award in Malcolm X's honor to individuals who contributed to black social

[10] Malcolm X's widow Betty Shabazz, and Ella disagreed over the future leadership of the OAAU, in which neither previously had been directly involved (Sales 1994:160).

justice causes including Harlem lawyer and judge Cora T. Walker and women's and civil rights activist Fannie Lou Hamer (Collins, personal communication 2019). Early in her tenure, Ella hosted an all-women panel to discuss "the role of the black woman in the coming revolution" (quoted in Felber 2016). Guest speakers included Harlem-based civil rights leaders Mae Mallory (1927–2007) and Audley "Queen Mother" Moore (1898–1997). Ella established OAAU chapters in Boston under black feminist pioneer Mary Ann Weathers and in New Rochelle under activist and writer Louise Moore. The activities of the OAAU and its women leaders helped bridge the time between Malcolm X's death and the rise of the Black Power movement (Felber 2016; Sales 1994:160–161).

James Small, an African history and religion professor at City College of New York (CCNY; now City University of New York) and the OAAU's eastern regional director, noted in Ella's obituary in 1996 that in her capacity as president of the OAAU, Ella oversaw the organization's efforts to establish clinics and libraries in Africa and the Caribbean and supported efforts for black political freedom worldwide. Small also stated that the OAAU started study groups, ran an agricultural employment program for inner-city youths from 1967 to 1977, and did other grassroots organizing in the United States (Levy 1996). Each year to the present, the OAAU has sponsored workshops during the week including May 19, the anniversary of Malcolm X's birthday.

In 1969, during her time as president of the OAAU, Ella was a strong ally of the April and May CCNY strike of black and Puerto Rican students (with white supporters) for diversity and representation of these largely overlooked communities in the college's Harlem neighborhood. The first of their five demands was for "a School of Black and Puerto Rican Studies" so that "…for the first time we will be able to study our true past history in relation to our present condition" and "bring about an increased understanding of the political, social, and economic forces which work to exploit us" (CCNY 1969a). Students organized marches and occupied and barricaded buildings. After Congressman Adam Clayton Powell, Jr. spoke at a rally at the barricaded CCNY South Gate, Ella offered encouragement and told students she was with them "all the way." In an *Amsterdam News* photograph of the event, shows she appears as the only woman in a group of five men (*Amsterdam News* 1969).

Over the course of the strike, violence broke out between the pro-strike students and the anti-strike students and police, which led to the resignation of CCNY President Buell Gallagher on May 12, 1969. Ella, the OAAU, and Adam Clayton Powell, Jr. were instrumental in setting up CCNY's degree-granting collegiate black studies department, one of the nation's first, which led the college to initiate a policy of open admissions (that is, unselective and non-competitive

admissions) in the fall of 1970, five years earlier than previously announced (CCNY 1969a & b; CUNY 2019; Lehman and Phelps 2005).

The OAAU saw its highest level of activity in the 1960s and 1970s, after which its influence waned (Sales 1994:161). Aside from occasional lectures and appearances and presiding over observances of Malcolm X's birthday, Ella maintained a low public profile and believed that keeping Malcolm X's visions for black liberation alive was most effectively done by others. According to James Small, she was aware that Malcolm X's "intellectual children are expressing those views all over the world" (Levy 1996). As part of the family's guardianship of Malcolm's legacy, Ella sought to ensure that he was accurately portrayed by authors and filmmakers, as did her son and Malcolm X's widow and six daughters.

In another attempt to maintain Malcolm X's legacy and his influence on the black community, Ella conceived of an annual pilgrimage to his gravesite in Ferncliff Cemetery in Ardsley, New York, which has occurred every year since 1966 and is organized by the Malcolm X Commemoration Committee (*New York Beacon* 2011). On February 23, 1967, a Malcolm X Memorial March and Service was held in New York, where Ella was listed as president of the OAAU in the program and one of five speakers, sharing Malcolm X's contributions during his life with the mourners (Carson 1991:422, 444). Ella successfully petitioned the mayor of Omaha, Nebraska, (Malcolm's birthplace) to declare the week of May 16–22, 1971, as Malcolm X Week.

In 1995, 30 years after Malcolm X was assassinated, and one year before Ella died, Ella and Rodnell proposed a biography to "to set the record straight about Malcolm X," Rodnell Collins said in an interview (Gates 1995:32). The book, *Seventh Child, a Family Memoir of Malcolm X*, written by Rodnell with A. Peter Bailey, was published in 1998, two years after Ella's death. In the early 2000s, Rodnell established the Malcolm X–Ella L. Collins Family Foundation to support educational activities about their legacies. In addition, the Ella Little Collins Institute was established at the Islamic Society of Boston Cultural Center to "…develop a culture of religious knowledge, personal empowerment, and civic engagement…to establish a vibrant community by joining a classical understanding of Islam with modern scholarship and a healthy understanding of the current cultural context" (Ella Little Collins Institute 20112a, 2012b).

Civil Rights and Community/Education Activist

The 1950s–1960s was the height of the national modern civil rights movement with its primary goals to end racial discrimination and segregation and provide equal access to jobs and the political system (see **Criterion B – Malcolm X**). Issues of urban renewal, public housing, and school desegregation were also in the forefront. In the 1950s, major demographic shifts occurred

in Boston, especially in Roxbury where blacks became the predominant population group. Ella, like Malcolm, believed in black nationalism and self-determination. She encountered injustices and bigotry, especially in business and education, did not rely on organized civil rights organizations for assistance, and remained fierce in her consistent demand for respect for her family and herself.

Though Little siblings Wilfred, Reginald, Philbert, and Hilda had become members of the NOI in the late 1940s, and Malcolm X, after he signed up in 1952, recruited Ella to join, she remained resistant because she did not trust the organization. In her opinion, the head of the organization, Elijah Muhammad, prioritized himself and his family over the members. In addition, she was put off by rumors of his promiscuity, and she felt Reginald was badly treated when the NOI suspended him for adultery (Collins and Bailey 1998:60, 87).[11]

In 1957, when Boston Mosque 11 (formed in 1952–1953 at 405 Massachusetts Avenue with Malcolm X as the first minister) moved to 35 Intervale Street about one mile south of 72 Dale Street, Ella decided to become involved "up to a point" for Malcolm X's sake and set up its first in-house daycare center, which she was likely involved with for about two years (quoted in Collins and Bailey 1998:87) (Collins and Bailey 1998:87, 99). However, she remained skeptical of the NOI and in 1959, she left with the organization, five years before Malcolm X did. She presumably dropped her association with the day-care center at that time.[12] She became an orthodox Sunni Muslim and remained so until her death. Her Arab Muslim name was Alize Aliya Abdullah Hamid (Collins 2018, 2019 personal communications).

In 1958, Ella organized the Sarah A. Little School of Preparatory Arts (named for her Aunt Sas) at 539 Massachusetts Avenue in Boston (one of her properties), where children and adults were taught Arabic, Swahili, French, and Spanish (O'Donnell 1965; Associated Press 1996). Malcolm X cited this accomplishment as an example of her strength and resourcefulness: "Ella had started studying under Boston orthodox Muslims, then she founded a school where Arabic was taught! *She* couldn't speak it, she hired teachers who did. That's Ella!" (X and Haley 1999 [1965]:349). The school remained open for 10 years, closing in 1968 (Lehman and Phelps 2005).

In the 1960s, Ella was the first black woman to win a court case against the Boston Police Department when she was falsely charged and acquitted of bicycle theft (Collins and Bailey

[11] Malcolm X had tried unsuccessfully to appeal to Elijah Muhammad on Reginald's behalf, but ultimately the NOI members of the Little family chose allegiance to Elijah Muhammad over Reginald. Following the suspension, Reginald had a mental breakdown and was put in an institution (X and Haley 1999 [1965]:214–217).
[12] 35 Intervale Street continued to be an NOI mosque until the late 1970s when it became an orthodox Al-Islam congregation and was renamed Masjid Al-Qur'aan, which it remains today, with an active children's program (Masjid Al-Qur'aan 2011).

1998:57–58). She confronted public school officials about the lack of black history in Boston school curriculums. When Rodnell's elementary school social studies teacher assigned an essay on George Washington, Ella told him to write two essays—one on George Washington and one on George Washington Carver. After the teacher ignored the Carver essay and gave Rodnell a low grade on the George Washington essay, Ella raised her concern with the teacher and school principal but got no satisfaction. She then became one of, if not the first, black person to confront the Boston School Board on the failure to teach black history. Louise Day Hicks, a board member strongly opposed to busing, declared that black history did not belong in Boston Public Schools and when Ella confronted her about it, their interaction resulted in a physical altercation. Ella transferred Rodnell to another school, where he was taught by Agatha Guilford (later Howard), one of the first black women to graduate from Boston Teacher's College, in 1936 (Collins and Bailey 1998:56; Long 2003).

Ella focused on family, nurturing strong cultural pride, and struggling for black civil and human rights. In her social and business life, Ella aspired to be financially successful and to fit into and be respected by Boston's black society, which in turn desired acceptance by the city's white aristocrats. She planned to surround Malcolm X with focused and productive black people to help him succeed. In Malcolm X's view, starting at his arrival in Boston, these two goals—black self-determination and integration in white society—were contradictory (X and Haley 1999 [1965]:45–47; Collins and Bailey 1998:66–68). Ella's belief system throughout her life integrated religious teachings with a social justice and political focus on the struggle for black liberation issues, including supporting the needs of black children and black women leaders. She was raised as a Christian and in the context of Garvey's Pan-African concepts (see **Criterion B – Malcolm X**). As an adult and with Malcolm X's influence, she further developed her convictions of black pride, self-determination, and nationalism and became an orthodox Sunni Muslim. In general, like Malcolm X, her views were not closely aligned with the non-violent, passive-resistance, integrationist approach of the civil rights movement advocated by Reverend Martin Luther King, Jr. and others. She was not in favor of bussing and school segregation, nor assimilation of blacks into white society. However, in a manner similar to Malcolm X's ideological evolution in the 1960s before his death (see **Criterion B – Malcolm X**), Ella characterized herself as a proponent of human rights, because she felt that universal human rights were of primary importance (Collins, personal communications 2018, 2019).

Ella maintained a public presence in the black community and attended and spoke at many events. In February 1973, for example, Ella spoke at the Black History Week events at the Afro-Institute at Northeastern University in Boston. In her remarks, she quoted from the Bible and advised black people to "start thinking for yourself and listen to the voice inside you…Surprise yourself with the wisdom you have…As long as we've got a superior brain, we've got a power

house…We need to know who we are, why we are and why there is an enemy who wants us to think we're not who we are" (quoted in Onyx Staff 1973:3). Other programs that week included a dance performance and a talk on pan-Africanism by Stokely Carmichael (Onyx Staff 1973:3).

CRITERION A – SOCIAL HISTORY and ETHNIC HERITAGE: BLACK

The Malcolm X–Ella Little Collins House is significant at the local level in the areas of Social History and Ethnic Heritage: Black for its association with the mid-19th-century development of Roxbury as a streetcar suburb of Boston and the subsequent demographic changes that characterize the neighborhood's rich and complex history.

Roxbury was originally settled by 1630 but grew slowly through the 17th century. In the early 18th century, many slaughterhouses and tanneries were established, and Roxbury became America's most important tanning center by 1810. The northern and eastern sections of Roxbury developed as an industrial center, especially after the completion of the Boston and Roxbury Mill Dam in Boston's Back Bay in the 1820s, which drew other heavy industry, including iron and lead works, rubber manufacturing, and cordages.

As early as 1826, hourly stagecoach service from Boston to Roxbury began, spurring residential and commercial development, as did the street railways built by the 1840s (Rawson 2010:136). Between 1840 and 1850, the population increased by 120 percent, and the country feel of Roxbury quickly became urbanized as the large estates in the southern end were parceled out and subdivided into house lots (Rawson 2010:137–138). The residential areas in the north part of the neighborhood near today's Dudley Square began to develop first with platted streets lined with wood-frame houses as early as 1853, followed by areas to the south as the street railway extended its routes (Walling 1853, 1858; Warner 1973:23). Land near railroad stations was frequently by developed by land speculators who sold to builders or built houses themselves (O'Connell 2013:42). The part of Roxbury nearest Boston was the most densely developed. Residents of the more rural areas resented paying for services such as streetlights and road paving in the more urban area, and ultimately Roxbury split into two municipalities—Roxbury and West Roxbury. In 1868, Roxbury merged with the City of Boston (Rawson 2010:150–154).

The new residential neighborhoods were occupied by a mix of native-born New Englanders and European immigrant families of mostly lower- or middle-class economic status (Rawson 2010:138). The Irish arrived in large numbers between 1845 and 1855 due to the Potato Famine (O'Connell 2013:42). By 1900, Roxbury was home to immigrants from across Europe (including Ireland, Germany, and Scandinavia), Canadians from the Maritime provinces (Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, and Prince Edward Island), and first-generation Americans and native New

Englanders. By the late 19th century, a significant number of Eastern and Western European and Russian Jews were immigrating to America to escape pogroms and economic hardship and, by the early 20th century, many had settled in Roxbury, Dorchester, and Mattapan (Gamm 1999:176; Rosenstein 2018:277). As early as 1920, a small but growing black population in Roxbury was in the Elm Hill (known as "the Hill") neighborhood along Waumbeck and Humboldt streets a few blocks south of Dale Street that was sometimes likened to Harlem's "Sugar Hill" (Gamm 1999:11).

The area where the **Malcolm X–Ella Little Collins House (ca. 1865, contributing building, BOS.14294)** was constructed, near the center of Roxbury, was part of a large estate that was owned by Abijah Seaver (b. 1737) until the late 18th century, and passed to his children and then his grandson, William Seaver (Bagley et al. 2018:22). By 1837, the Seaver estate, which extended roughly from Dale Street on the north to Townsend Street on the south and bounded by Walnut Street on the east and Centre Street on the west, was broken into various parcels. A 2.5-acre lot near the corner of Dale and Walnut streets that contained the Seaver house (no longer extant), along with the land that would eventually be 72 Dale Street, was sold to the Roxbury Land Company, a conglomerate of wealthy investors that purchased large parcels of land in Roxbury and elsewhere and generally parceled it out to house builders (Bagley et al. 2018:25; Drake 1878:227).

In 1842, noted Boston housewright Nelson Curtis (1810–1887) purchased one of the Roxbury Land Company parcels. Dale Street was formally laid out by the City of Boston in 1845, and Curtis may have purchased land along the proposed street to build and sell speculatively built single- and multiple-family houses (Bagley et al. 2018:25). Curtis sold the property to Frederic W. Dorr in 1866 (NCRD 339/609). The deed indicates there were buildings on the property, but an 1873 map of the area shows a house but no attending outbuildings (Figure 4).[13] To the west of the house was Washington Park (now Malcolm X Park) surrounding Honeysuckle Hill, which also was once part of the Seaver estate. To the east are Walnut Street and Humboldt Avenue, two connected major north–south thoroughfares through Roxbury from Boston proper that provided easy access into the growing city.

At the time of his purchase of the property, Dorr (1835–1877) was a young Civil War veteran, having served in the Union Army as a surveyor. During the war, he used skills gained as a surveyor with the U.S. Coast Survey to map Confederate positions at numerous battlefields, including Yorktown and Chattanooga. Dorr and his partner, John Donn, traveled behind enemy

[13] Previous documentation of the property indicates the house was constructed in 1874, but deed, map, and city tax records indicate the building was constructed by ca. 1865 (Bagley et al. 2018:26).

lines to clandestinely map the enemy's positions and assisted Union generals in planning routes and finding passage across obstacles (Bagley et al. 2018:26; Donn 2006).

Although Dorr owned the Dale Street property, he did not live there. His parents William and Mary Dorr lived at the property with his brother Walter and an Irish servant named Bridget Burns (U.S. Census 1870), and Frederic lived on Salem Street in Medford with his brothers Henry and Benjamin (Greenough 1870). Most of the neighbors on Dale Street were New England natives predominantly from Massachusetts; others included a small number of immigrants who were mostly housekeepers and maids from Ireland (U.S. Census 1870). In 1873, Dorr sold the property to his parents' next-door neighbor, carpenter and builder William Rumrill (SCRD 1180/262). The Hopkins 1873 map shows that by that time much of the area north of Circuit Street, above Dale Street, was platted and built up; although much of the area between Circuit and Dale streets had been platted, it was still relatively undeveloped.

In 1874, New Englanders Daniel and Caroline Nichols purchased 72 Dale Street from William Rumrill (SCRD 1213/94). Daniel Nichols (b. ca. 1830) was a carriagemaker who had his business offices at 118 West Brookline Street in Boston's South End. He lived at 72 Dale Street with his wife, their son Wendell and daughter Mary, and an Irish servant named Kate Connolly (U.S. Census 1880). As it was in 1870, much of the neighborhood residents were native-born New Englanders; a small number of European immigrants were homeowners, but others were house servants. Residents' occupations varied, but most were skilled laborers engaged in tailoring, dressmaking, and construction (U.S. Census 1880).

In 1890, the house was purchased by newspaper seller John Murphy and his wife Mary (Bagley et al. 2018:27). By that time, the area between Dale and Circuit streets was largely built out, with only a small number of large, open lots remaining (Bromley 1890). In 1892, the Murphy's next-door neighbors at 70 Dale Street were Canadian immigrants Anthony and Janet Patten and their children Stephen, Jessie, and Ida. The 1892 *Boston Directory* lists Anthony as a physician and Stephen as a student (Sampson, Murdock, & Company 1892). By 1902, Anthony (ca. 1841–1917) and Janet had moved to 72 Dale Street, and Stephen, by then a physician like his father, lived and worked at 240 Warren Street (1890, BOS.11760, NRDIS 1894) (Sampson, Murdock, & Company 1902). By 1910, Anthony was a widower and lived with his daughters Jessie and Ida, sister Edna, a boarder, and an Irish servant. More immigrant families moved to the neighborhood, mostly from the Canadian Maritimes, and worked as teachers, auto repairmen, pharmacists, and in other occupations (U.S. Census 1910). The Pattens lived in the house until 1913, when they moved to Wellesley; in 1915, Stephen had his offices at 141 Milk Street, Room 931 (1903, BOS.1894) and 7 Waumbeck Street (extant, within BOS.QP), and lived in the Waumbeck Street building (Sampson & Murdock 1915). By this time, the area around 72 Dale

Street had places and organizations that raised its desirability as a place to live. These included Washington Park, created in 1860 and redesigned by Olmsted Brothers in 1912 (rededicated as "Malcolm X Park" in 1980), the Lewis-Higginson School (1912), and the Eliot Congregational Church (1873) at the corner of Dale and Walnut streets.

In 1920, the property was purchased from the Murphys by Canadian immigrants Daniel and Mary McDonald. Daniel was a building carpenter and, in 1920, the McDonalds lived at 40 Harold Street before moving to Dale Street with their sons Lewis, John, and Raymond and their daughter Dorothy, along with an Irish maid, Mollie Morris (Bagley et al. 2018:28; U.S. Census 1920). In general, Roxbury (and nearby Dorchester) at that time were home to thousands of Irish immigrants and Irish Americans and a growing Jewish population (Gamm 1999:179). In 1925, the McDonalds converted the house into a two-family residence, likely providing a private residence for one of their children (Bagley et al. 2018:182). In 1928, the house was owned by widow Mary Linehan, a first-generation Irish American. Two other households lived at the property: Albert and Agnes Gleason and Anna Galvin. Albert was a first-generation Irish American and worked at the post office; his wife Agnes was a native New Englander; and Anna was a first-generation Scots American who worked as a private nurse. The neighborhood remained predominantly native New Englanders, Irish, and Canadian, and the residents' occupations included restaurant and store owners, steamship longshoremen, and bookkeeper (U.S. Census 1930). Linehan owned the property until 1937, when it was foreclosed on by mortgage holder Eliot Savings Bank (SCRD 5646/569).

The Eliot Savings Bank appears to have rented the building for approximately four years before selling it to Ella Johnson (née Little, later Little Collins) and Kenneth Collins in 1941. During the rental years, one of the two apartments was occupied by William and Isabella Hallion, immigrants from England and Scotland, respectively, and their eight children, and the other was rented to Mary Carroll and her uncles Charles and Frank Sullivan (Polk 1939; U.S. Census 1940). Unlike other parts of Roxbury, including along Elm Hill Avenue and Blue Hill Avenue to the south, which became predominantly Jewish neighborhoods, the immediate area surrounding Dale Street continued to be predominantly occupied by Irish and Canadian immigrants and native-born Americans. However, by 1940, as more black families migrated north from the South, particularly from Georgia (like the Littles), North Carolina, and Virginia, some settled in Roxbury (U.S. Census 1940). Census data from 1940 and 1950 indicates that Roxbury's black community coalesced into two distinct residential areas: one centered on Humboldt Avenue and a smaller area centered on the Charles Street African Methodist Episcopal (AME) church at the corner of Warren Street and Elm Hill Avenue (Gamm 1999:61). The Dale Street neighborhood was a half-mile south of the commercial areas of Dudley Square and Boston's South End, which

had expanded with numerous dance clubs, restaurants, movie theaters, and other entertainment locations (X and Haley 1999 [1965]:48–49).

In 1941, Ella, then separated from her second husband, Frank Johnson, purchased 72 Dale Street from the Eliot Savings Bank. By 1942, she lived there with her third husband, Kenneth Collins, and her younger brother, seventeen-year-old Malcolm, who had moved to Boston from Michigan at age fourteen to live with her. The purchase of the house vaulted Ella into the ranks of the Hill elite. Native-born black New Englanders generally looked down on recent Southern black transplants who became homeowners, believing themselves to be more cultured, dignified, and better off than blacks living in less wealthy parts of Roxbury. Often, these native Southerners not only owned the houses they lived in, but owned rental properties as well, as Ella eventually would on Massachusetts Avenue in the South End (X and Haley 1999 [1965]:46–47).

In 1945, Ella and Kenneth had a son, Rodnell.[14] The following year the Collinses converted the first floor apartment into two apartments: the front one for Malcolm's sister Hilda (1921–2015) and their aunts Gracie (d. 1978) and Sarah Little (d. 1962), and a rear efficiency apartment in for the use of visiting family (BISD 1946; Collins and Bailey 1998:36, 2018).

After World War II, Roxbury became a predominantly minority neighborhood that unlike much of Boston went into economic and physical decline (Gaston and Kennedy 1987:8). Around 1950, the population of Roxbury was two-thirds white and one-third black. During the 1950s large numbers of white residents, predominantly of Russian Jewish heritage, left Roxbury for western suburbs such as Brookline and Newton or moved south to Dorchester and Mattapan (Gamm 1999:13, 15). By 1960, the population ratio was reversed, with black residents making up two-thirds of the population. Many of the new black families in the Hill area of Roxbury had moved there from the South End or the eastern, more industrial section of Roxbury (Gamm 1999:225) and others were transplants from the South seeking to escape Jim Crow laws (Wilkerson 2010:177–179).

Through the 1950s and early 1960s, real estate practices such as redlining and blockbusting[15] led to declines in Roxbury housing stock due to the inability of homeowners to obtain loans to make

[14] Rodnell Collins, his wife Annie C. Collins, and his children Arjun K. C. Collins and Dayorsha E. Collins are the current owners of 72 Dale Street (SCRD 2017).

[15] Redlining was a policy instituted and supported by the Federal Housing Authority (FHA) through at least the 1960s that allowed banks and insurance companies to declare properties in certain areas of cities ineligible for loans or mortgages. It was based largely on demographics, and the term came from color-coded maps created in the mid-1930s by the Home Owners Loan Corporation and the FHA and adopted by the Veterans Administration. Any areas in or around where blacks lived were colored red, indicating neighborhoods considered too risky to insure mortgages. Blockbusting was the practice of real estate agents encouraging residents to rapidly sell their property

necessary home repairs and reduced the number of owner-occupied buildings due to the inability of homeowners to secure mortgages (Gamm 1999:40). In the late 1950s and early 1960s, urban renewal projects were planned for Roxbury by the Boston Redevelopment Authority (BRA, now the Boston Planning and Development Agency) to combat perceived blight, likely caused at least in part by redlining practices, which included the refusal of banks to provide mortgages for home buyers, significant increases in property insurance costs for urban properties, and the denial of home improvement loans (Gamm 1999:40). Roxbury became a center of grassroots activism and community organizing to combat unjust housing practices and inequality in housing, education, and employment (Roxbury Historical Society [RHS] 2019).

In 1958, the Boston City Planning Board proposed a 186-acre site in the Washington Park area for redevelopment, which was altered and approved by the board the following year as a 1,000-acre site encompassing a larger section of Roxbury (Spiers 2009:225). The final Washington Park area, named for Washington Park near its center, ran from Dudley Square at the north to Franklin Park on the south and from Warren Street on the east to Washington Street on the west and included 72 Dale Street and encompassed the Hill neighborhood (Figure 5; BRA 2019). In 1960, 70% of this area's population of 26,000 was black. In 1949, Otto and Muriel Snowden, black community organizers and friends of Ella Little Collins, founded Freedom House[16] and spearheaded community engagement efforts during the urban renewal process, along with other community members such as Elma Lewis and Melnea Cass (Vrabel 2014:25).

The Washington Park project resulted in 1,800 units of new housing and 4,600 rehabilitated units, the expansion of Washington Park west to Washington Street, and the construction of a new swimming pool/skating rink (Melnea Cass Rink and Swimming Pool) and recreation center (Shelburne Recreational Center); a shopping center on the south side of Dale Street at Warren Street; and a new civic center on the south side of Dudley Square (Vrabel 2014:27).[17] Despite the perceived initial success of the project, there was a continued shift toward lower-income residents in Roxbury as residents with the financial means moved out of the neighborhood. The nearby Washington Park shopping center at the intersection of Martin Luther King, Jr. Boulevard and Warren Street became a target for vandalism, which may have spread to the surrounding neighborhood (Vrabel 2014:27).

because of impending neighborhood change and the potential for deterioration (Gamm 1999:40–41; Rothstein 2017:vii–viii).

[16] The original mission of Freedom House was to foster a cooperative relationship between Roxbury's Jewish and black communities to remove barriers to educational, employment, and housing opportunities for black residents. Today, Freedom House assists underserved students with academic support, career and college counseling, and civic engagement training (Hayden 1991:26; Freedom House 2014).

[17] On May 19, 1986, the entirety of Washington Park, bounded by Dale, Paulding, and Washington streets and Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard, was renamed Malcolm X Park.

By the mid-1960s, Roxbury was an almost entirely black community and a center of grassroots activism in Boston. Community groups such as Snowden's Freedom House and the Organization of Afro-American Unity (OAAU), founded by Malcolm X, engaged citizens organizing for justice, equality, and power and to fight discrimination in housing, education, and employment (RHS 2019).

After the assassination of Malcolm X on February 21, 1965, Ella Little Collins left 72 Dale Street and never returned (Rodnell Collins, personal communication 2018). The Little Collins family retained ownership of the house, but the property deteriorated as the family directed its attention to preserving Malcolm X's civil and human rights activism legacy, occupation and activity (see **Criterion B – Ella Little Collins**). In 1970, the house was vandalized. Windows were broken and personal items belonging to the Little and Collins families were thrown outside around the house (see **Criterion D – Archaeology** and **Supplemental Information – Architecture**).

Following her brother's death, Ella took over leadership of the OAAU, which Malcolm X had founded in early 1964, along with Muslim Mosque, Inc., after his split with the Nation of Islam (see **Criterion B – Ella Little Collins** and **Criterion B – Malcolm X**). Both organizations were headquartered in New York City and held a small number of activities in Boston.

The 72 Dale Street house has remained in the family to the present. In the intervening years between Malcolm X's death and her own, Ella was insistent that the house not become a monument to Malcolm X, but instead be used for an educational purpose. In 1998, 72 Dale Street was made a Boston City Landmark by the Boston Landmarks Commission, protecting the property from demolition and recognizing the Little and Collins families' contributions to United States culture and history. The house is currently undergoing renovation and rehabilitation and is slated to become housing for visiting scholars and offices for the Malcolm X–Ella Little Collins Foundation (Collins, personal communication 2018).

CRITERION D – ARCHAEOLOGY- HISTORIC, NON-ABORIGINAL[18]

Ella Little Collins and her extended family were the last of a long line of families who lived at 72 Dale Street in Roxbury. Roxbury was settled by the English in 1630 with the Dale Street parcel first owned by Reverend Thomas Weld (Welde), Sr. in 1638. Weld was a Puritan minister who emigrated from England to the Massachusetts Bay Colony in 1632. In 1638, he was deeded 533

[18] A detailed occupational history of the property is provided in **Criterion A – Social History and Ethnic Heritage: Black**; that history is summarized here only to the extent needed to justify the significance of the property under Criterion D.

acres around what is now Dudley Square as reward for his successful petition that 4,000 acres of land in Dedham be transferred to Roxbury (Middlesex County Registry of Deeds [MCRD] 4/1). Deeds and secondary histories suggest that Weld and his brother, Joseph, built their homes near the square (Bagley 2018:20; Putnam 1913:28–29), so it is unlikely there was any 17th-century residential occupation of what is now 72 Dale Street. The Dale Street property, however, no doubt fell within the boundaries of Thomas Weld's more than 500-acre landholding.

Weld's large estate passed to his son, Thomas Weld, Jr.; at his death in 1682, the land was divided equally among his four sons. After that ownership change, the chains-of-title for the various properties become difficult to reconstruct until 1733, when Samuel Stevens owned a large portion of the former Weld estate, including what would become 72 Dale Street. Stevens forfeited the property as repayment of a debt to the merchant James Smith in 1750 (Suffolk County Registry of Deeds [SCRD] 78/224). Smith likely never lived on the property before it was repurchased by the Stevens family in 1761. Money troubles, however, continued to plague the Stevens family because they purchased the land through a mortgage issued by Commodore Joshua Loring, a prominent Roxbury landowner and avowed Loyalist. In 1765, yeoman Abijah Seaver assumed the Stevens family mortgage; the associated deed indicates that Seaver was living on the property at the time, so he likely had a sort of tenant agreement with the Seaver or Loring family before his purchase agreement with Loring.

Abijah, his wife, and their seven children lived on the property until 1774 when Abijah lost the land to Loring because he was unable (or unwilling) to make his mortgage payments. However, it was not a good time to be a Loyalist and, on March 17, 1776, Loring and other like-minded Tories fled Boston, giving up all rights to their colonial land claims.

As was common practice, Abijah Seaver applied for the right of administration for Loring's land and was granted the property shortly thereafter (George 1895:141). In 1798, however, Loring's son, Joshua Jr., filed a counterclaim demanding ownership of the property or the delinquent mortgage payments owed his father by the Seaver family from 1774 on (NCRD 8/13). The counterclaim was either ignored or successfully disputed, because in 1821 the seventeen-acre "estate" was sold by Abijah Seaver's great grandchildren to the yeoman Joseph H. Hawes (NCRD 64/132). The deed specifies a 2.5-acre lot containing the former Seaver house in the approximate location of what is now the Higginson-Lewis K-8 School west of 72 Dale Street.

In 1837, the 2.5-acre lot—including the house—was sold to the Roxbury Land Company (RLC) (NCRD 113/349). A conglomerate of wealthy investors, the RLC bought up large land parcels throughout Roxbury that eventually would be developed for residential use as the town's economic focus shifted from agriculture to industry.

The housewright Nelson Curtis purchased 0.18 acres of the larger 2.5-acre lot from the RLC in 1842 (NCD Book 135, Page 109); no building is mentioned in the deed. In 1845, Dale Street was laid out along the subdivided lots formerly owned by the RLC (City of Boston 1910:145). The road likely was planned and mapped out well before 1845 and Curtis, along with other enterprising housewrights, purchased lots speculatively to build new houses along its length. As detailed in **Supplemental Information – Architecture**, Curtis built an Italianate-style, single-family home on the lot sometime between 1858 and 1866, and then sold the house and lot to Frederic W. Dorr in 1866 (NCRD 339/609). After 1866, the house was occupied by a succession of families that reflected the changing socioeconomic and ethnic profile of Roxbury until 1965, after which it was not lived in full-time but remained, and remains, in Ella Little Collins's family's ownership.

From March 2015 to May 2016, the City of Boston Archaeology Program conducted the first—and to date, the only—archaeological investigations at the Malcolm X–Ella Little Collins House under the direction of Boston City Archaeologist Joseph Bagley. The work consisted of surface collecting artifacts from the yard and the excavation of 10.75 square meters primarily within three meters of the house's south foundation wall. In addition, archaeologists from the Andrew Fiske Memorial Center for Archaeological Research (Fiske Center) at the University of Massachusetts Boston conducted a ground-penetrating radar (GPR) survey across the property (Bagley et al. 2018).

The archaeological investigations resulted in the identification of the Collins Site consisting of four components: a temporally unaffiliated pre-contact flake scatter; evidence of the late 18th-/early 19th-century residential farmstead occupation of the Abijah Seaver family; evidence of a late 19th-century residential occupation likely associated with the first families living at the extant ca. 1865 72 Dale Street house; and evidence of the 20th-century occupation of the Dale Street house by Ella Little Collins and her extended family, including Malcolm (Little) X (Bagley et al. 2018). The site yielded more than 18,000 artifacts and contained seven features, including a buried outbuilding foundation designated as Feature 6 (discussed below) and a GPR-documented brick-vaulted cistern (Feature 7).

According to Bagley et al.'s report (2018:13), "the artifact assemblage documents a near-complete cross section of Roxbury history" from the Pre-Contact Period to the mid-20th century (Bagley et al. 2018:13). While strictly speaking true, the stratigraphic integrity of those artifacts and, by extension, their interpretive value is extremely limited because of the degree of documented and inferred soil disturbance across the property. The amount of post-contact material reportedly found in B_1 subsoils suggests that most of the property has been stripped and graded multiple times and the artifacts have been redistributed throughout the redeposited

topsoil, subsoil, and fill contexts. One Blue Hills rhyolite flake, one argillite flake, and one hornfels flake were collected from buried plow zone in three different testing units (Bagley et al. 2018:147). This exceedingly low density of pre-contact material, especially when compared to the size of the site assemblage in general and the substantial 18th-century assemblage collected from the buried plow zone in particular, indicates minimal pre-contact activity at the site with low interpretive potential.

The 19th-century occupational profile of the property is similarly problematic. Most of the recovered 19th-century materials that could be associated with residents of the property after 1865 were collected from heavily mixed, stratigraphically undifferentiated contexts or from concentrated trash deposits. While trash deposits are often extremely useful for parsing household occupations over time, those at 72 Dale Street were poorly stratified and have been subjected to repeated documented and undocumented landscape disturbances. Ella Little Collins's hobby of collecting 19th-century ceramic sets from trash dumps in Duxbury during the 1930s further complicates any effort to associate artifacts recovered from the lot to specific households (Bagley et al. 2018:30, 96–97).

As for the 20th-century archaeological signature at the site, the limited occupancy of the house after 1965 and later vandalism resulted in a wide sheet of surface yard trash. Only some of these artifacts were likely owned by members of the Little-Collins household. Several surface-collected artifacts are certainly evocative: a small metal button from one of Ella's sweaters; fragments of floral-decorated plate and a carnival glass bowl used to hold candy for visitors; a piece of red plastic from a toy car that Ella's son, Rodnell Collins, played with as a child; a fragment of horn-rimmed eyeglasses; and a 1959 LP vinyl record of American folksongs (Figures 6, 7, and 8). But their value is not in any new or important information they provide about the Little-Collins family (and thus do not meet Criterion D), but rather in their exhibition value and their emotional resonance as artifacts linked to the property's historically and culturally important residents. Indeed, 20th-century artifacts from the Little-Collins period have been incorporated in an exhibition about the archaeology of the property at the Dillaway Thomas House (NRDIS) in Roxbury Heritage State Park.

The historical and modern soil disturbances that characterize the top two+ feet of the yard at 72 Dale Street, however, cap a small foundation at the northwest corner of the property and mostly intact buried plow zone and subsoil strata in more than half the test pits and all three excavation units. The buried foundation was constructed of mortared fieldstone on conglomerate puddingstone bedrock and was likely used as a detached dairy by the Seaver family during their tenure on the property. The building likely was left to collapse after the Seaver house was

demolished in the 1830s (Bagley et al. 2018:144). The large and diverse assemblage of 19th-century artifacts at the location indicates it was a favored trash dumping spot by later residents.

The materials collected from the buried plow zone, which make up 42% of the site assemblage (and far more if the surface-collected materials are discounted) consist of solidly mid-18th-century ceramic types (e.g., creamware, pearlware, white salt-glazed stoneware, and Staffordshire slipware) with only twelve artifacts (likely intrusive) post-dating 1795 (Bagley et al. 2018:146). The site assemblage also contains a high concentration of food remains consisting mostly of mammal bone (sheep, pig, and cow); followed by clam, oyster, and quahog shells, and one fish bone (Bagley et al. 2018:150); and nearly 2,000 architectural artifacts (bricks, nails, plaster, and window glass), most of which were concentrated at the southwest corner of the property. Recovered personal items include a ball clay wig curler and tobacco pipe fragments, metal cufflinks and buttons, and a lead musket ball. The recovered materials suggest that 1) the plow zone strata dates to the Seaver occupation (1765–1821); 2) the area likely was used as a utilitarian farm yard space with associated outbuildings; and 3) the space was used primarily by Abijah Seaver, rather than by his children or grandchildren, based on the temporal profile of the assemblage.

The sharp break in the artifact assemblage between the mid-18th century and the mid-19th century is important because it may indicate the area was no longer used after Abijah's death ca. 1787. Abijah was descended from one of the founding families of Roxbury, but his status within the family is unclear. The artifacts collected from the site (e.g., wig curler and cufflinks) suggest some measure of personal wealth and public visibility, but the absence of a will or probate prevents a comparison of status with other members of his family or his neighbors.

Nearly a dozen other 18th-century farm estates have been excavated in Roxbury, including the Williams Homestead Site (BOS-HA-97), the home of prominent Roxbury landowner Colonel Joseph Williams, II. Like the Collins Site, the Williams Homestead Site was heavily impacted by 19th- and 20th-century landscape modifications but it also contained a dry-laid fieldstone and puddingstone rubble wall similar to that found at the Collins Site. The authors of the Phase III archaeological data recovery report for the Williams Homestead Site interpreted the wall as a remnant of the disturbed lower course of the northern cellar wall of the Williams house (Charles et al. 1988). The site was subsequently destroyed as part of the Orange Line construction for the Boston Metropolitan Transportation Authority.

The interpretation of the Williams foundation as that of a house is important because it suggests the documented foundation (Feature 6) at the northwest corner of the Little Collins lot and the inferred foundation at the southeast corner of the lot are part of a larger residential complex

including an as yet unidentified residential occupation. Large numbers of temporally consistent kitchen and architectural artifacts from plow zone contexts are characteristic of 18th-century domestic yard spaces in which sheet scatter—rather than discrete middens—was the standard method of trash disposal. The artifacts and method of disposal are also often strong indicators that a former nearby house was razed and filled so that the land could be used for farming.

The inferred foundation at the Collins Site may be evidence that someone lived on the property before the Seaver family in a completely different house that was subsequently razed and filled when Abijah Seaver purchased the land. Alternatively, the foundation may be the Seaver house foundation itself. Given the vagueness of 19th- and early 19th-century mapping, the placement of the Seaver House on the modern landscape using a property map drawn in 1821 by Mather Withington map should be considered generally but not specifically accurate. In other words, the Seaver house may have been built farther east—closer to or overlapping what is now 72 Dale Street—than what is currently believed. For those reasons, the 18th-century component of the Collins Site is important for its demonstrated and potential ability to provide substantive and new information about a discrete colonial farmstead occupation for comparative purposes with similar sites in Roxbury in less well-preserved (or destroyed) contexts.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION – ARCHITECTURE

The Malcolm X–Ella Little Collins House is a good representative example of a restrained Italianate-style, three-bay side-hall plan, wood-frame house in an urban setting. The house was likely constructed speculatively by locally prominent builder Nelson Curtis and embodies a common expression of a popular style and form of the mid-19th century.

The Italianate style was popular in the United States between 1840 and 1885 and was the predominant building style beginning about 1850. The style began in England during the early part of the Picturesque movement (ca. 1840–1900) and reflected a belief that architectural styles should move away from the dominant Classical-inspired styles and instead embrace a romanticized notion of the past (Harris 2006:723). The Italianate style was essentially a mid-19th-century revival of 15th-century Italian Renaissance architectural forms, which were a revival of Roman architecture (Shand-Tucci 1988:20).

The first Italianate buildings in the United States were constructed in the late 1830s, and the style soon grew in popularity due in part to the influence of style books such as those by Andrew Jackson Downing published in the 1840s and 1850s (McAlester 2013:302). The style is found predominantly in the Midwest and in towns and cities in the North particularly along the Eastern Seaboard. Few examples are found in the South, as the Civil War, Reconstruction, and economic

depression stagnated building construction, and the style fell out of favor before building resumed in earnest (McAlester 2013:286). In the North and Midwest, the style was less popular after the Panic of 1873 and the following economic depression (McAlester 2013:302).

An Italianate-style house may be identified by its low-pitched roof with bracketed eaves; one- and two-pane sash windows with arched or curved surrounds; single-story porches which may be entry porch or full-width supported by square posts with chamfered corners; and entryways with single- or double-leaf doors and often with large windows embedded within the door. Building forms may be rectangular with hip or end-gable roofs, L- or U-shaped topped with a hip roof, or a townhouse with a flat roof and projecting cornice. Particularly ornate forms may have a square cupola or tower at the peak of the hip roof (McAlester 2013:282–284).

The Malcolm X–Ella Little Collins House is an end-gable variant of the Italianate style, which accounts for approximately 10% of surviving examples in the United States and is frequently found on narrow lots in large cities. Buildings of this subtype are frequently similar in form to earlier, often Greek Revival-style buildings, but with Italianate detailing such as bracketed door and window surrounds (McAlester 2013:284). The end-gable house was a popular New England house type on narrow urban and suburban lots, particularly the side-hall entrance variant. As is common in this house type, a narrower ell projects from the rear elevation and generally contained the kitchen and other service spaces. Public spaces, such as the parlor, were at the front of the house in the main block (BLC 1998:4). If the ell was two stories, the bedrooms would frequently be above the service block. A small room under the stairs was sometimes included in the plan, or secondary stairs, perhaps leading to the basement, might be under the stairs (Driemeyer 2006:231). In urban areas, particularly with speculatively built houses, the expression of the Italianate style was generally restrained and frequently limited to eave brackets and door and window surrounds.

The side-hall plan, common in attached row- and townhouses in urban European cities, traveled across the Atlantic with English settlers. In the United States, the side-hall plan was also found in free-standing houses and was one of the most popular building plans of the 19th and early 20th centuries. The plan was organized with a stair and entry hall on one side, approximately one bay (or half a room) wide, with interconnected public rooms organized longitudinally along opposite the stair hall, and with a kitchen space in line with the stair hall. Side-hall plan buildings generally also had rear ells associated with their construction. The side-hall plan was also frequently employed in small, 1 ½-story worker's cottages (Hubka 2013:54; Gottfried and Jennings 2009:150–155).

The **Malcolm X–Ella Little Collins House (ca. 1865, contributing building, BOS.14294)** was likely constructed by noted Boston housewright Nelson Curtis (1810–1887) as speculative real estate (see **Criterion A – Social/Ethnic Heritage**). Speculative construction of middle-class housing was common in the emerging suburbs of Boston in the second half of the 19th and early 20th centuries. Builders would purchase a large lot of land and subdivide it into smaller home lots, sometimes laying out additional cross streets or small, dead-end streets to increase the number of street frontage lots (Warner 1973:121–123). Builders built in common, popular forms and styles and, after construction, frequently lived near or in the areas they were developing (Warner 1973:127, 130). They were influenced by surrounding buildings, plan and style books, and middle-class magazines such as *Scribner's*, which published popular articles on architecture (Warner 1973:131).

The Malcolm X–Ella Little Collins House is an example of an urban house built in the restrained Italianate style likely due to its location and speculative construction. The house has bracketed eaves and a bracketed door hood over the kitchen entrance in the east elevation of the ell. Historic images indicate that an earlier porch was in the Queen Anne style, which was used shortly after the Italianate style; it is possible that the spindlework and carved brackets were added after the construction of the house, possibly by the Nichols family at some time in the 1880s (BLC 1998). Daniel Nichols, a carriage maker, may have added decorative elements to the house to project his status and knowledge of current fashions to his neighbors.

In 1925, Daniel and Mary McDonald converted the house into a two-family building, with one apartment on each story (BISD). Although the house was constructed as a single-family dwelling, the conversion followed the common interior division of a contemporaneous two-family house, with the homeowner living on the second floor and the tenants on the first floor (Warner 1973:131). The conversion of the house at 72 Dale Street was accomplished by the construction of a wall enclosing the stair hall, the construction of a bathroom under the stairs, and, likely, the construction of an interior vestibule accessed from a common main entrance and the longitudinal hallway seen on the first story of the building today. This entrance would have led to two entrance doors: one to the stair hall and the other to the first-story hall (BISD 1925). As of 1935, the first floor of the house had a front hall, bathroom, front and rear bedrooms, a den off the front bedroom, a sitting room, and a kitchen. The second story had a front bedroom, living room, and rear bedroom in the main block, and a bathroom, living room, and kitchen in the ell, along with a rear entrance hallway at the second story (BISD 1935).

Ella Little Collins and Kenneth Collins purchased the building in 1941 and began making a series of alterations. The formerly clapboard-clad house was covered with asbestos shingles in 1944 and, in 1946, the house was converted into a three-family residence by the installation of a

third bathroom and new kitchen on the first floor and alteration to the basement stairs. The changes were primarily in the ell and were made to accommodate members of Ella Little Collins's family when they visited or stayed in Boston (BISD 1946a; Collins, personal communication 2018).

The desire to divide houses and apartments to accommodate additional tenants was a common occurrence in Boston in the first half of the 20th century that was frequently documented as rejections of building permit applications because of zoning issues and subsequent documentation of appeals and decisions from the Board of Appeals (BISD 1946b, c). The 1946 permit application to convert 72 Dale Street from a two-family to three-family residence was denied because zoning regulations allowed only one- or two-family houses in the neighborhood. Kenneth Collins appealed in March 1946, stating that the house had been occupied by three families for a year and that the installation of a third bathroom would improve living conditions. Collins also stated that the house was over 60 years old at that time and had the conversion been made between 1922 and 1925 that there would have been no issue (BISD 1946b).[19]

On April 5, 1946, the Board of Appeals issued its decision, reversing the building commissioner's refusal to grant a permit and ordering him to issue a permit for the conversion of the house into a three-family residence provided there were no exterior changes other than doors. The decision was based on the earlier conversion of the house into two apartments and recognized that few, if any, renters were looking for eight-room apartments instead of smaller units. The board wrote that the proposed conversion of the first story into two apartments (one three-room and one five-room) was "the only logical development of same to meet present day living conditions and will provide an additional suite which will aid in relieving the present acute housing shortage" (quoted in BISD 1946c).

Beyond the repartitioning in 1946, which resulted in a formal change in occupancy in city records, other changes to the building through the early to mid-1940s included the construction of two arched openings, one each on the first and second stories, both executed by Ella Little Collins, and the partitioning of the attic space into storage, a bedroom and small sitting room for Malcolm X, a larger sitting space on the east side of the floor, and the installation of a small bathroom. It is unclear precisely when the partitioning or bathroom installation took place. The bedroom was outfitted with a low, two-shelf bookshelf constructed by Ella for Malcolm X's use, and the sitting room had a table where Malcolm X could sit during meals, if he chose to eat alone

[19] It appears from building permit research that for a short time in the 1920s building owners were permitted to subdivide dwelling units into smaller units without having to file for a building permit, but instead simply inform the Building Department of the change.

rather than with the rest of the family on the first or second stories (Collins, personal communication 2018).

As mentioned in previous sections (e.g., see **Criterion B**), after the assassination of Malcolm X in 1965, the family no longer lived in or rented out the building. In 1970, after the end date of the period of significance, the building was vandalized, and all the windows were destroyed. In the mid-1970s, the rear porch was removed, and portions of the front porch were altered due to structural concerns. In the late 20th century all of the windows were replaced with vinyl units (BISD 1973; Collins, personal communication 2018).

In 1920, the Art Deco-style **McDonald Garage (1920, contributing building)** was designed by Boston architect Fred N. Russell and constructed for Daniel and Mary McDonald in the approximate location of a former carriage house that was extant by about 1880 but gone by 1899 (Bagley et al. 2018:27; Bromley 1884; Sanborn 1899; BISD 1920). Garages became popular in the United States in the early 20th century as automobile use increased and were considered nearly essential to suburban living as places to store, work on, and protect cars. This was partially due to the fact that many cars were open-roofed and needed an enclosed place when not in use. Early garages might have been converted barns or carriage houses, but later garages were often built from mail-order kits or by construction companies that offered catalogs of various styles and sizes (Hunter 1999:151; Ford 1994:155–156).

Initially, garages were constructed as far from residential spaces as possible—hidden in alleys along with garbage cans and other refuse or in backyards away from the house—because of the concerns about flammable liquids like gasoline and oil. However, beginning in the late 1920s, garages were moved closer to the street edge, and driveways ran from the street to the garage. If a garage was built concurrent with a new house, the two buildings frequently were in the same style. Others, constructed to accompany older buildings, were often built in popular styles of the time, such as Art Deco or Colonial Revival (Ford 1994:155–156). Garages were built of wood or masonry, although masonry was the more popular building material due to its fireproof attributes. Pressed metal buildings were also constructed, but less frequently (Goat 1989:63). Although typical garages were designed to accommodate one or two cars, it is possible that the McDonalds either anticipated dividing the house into two units and thus providing garage space for new tenants or built a larger garage and rented unused portions to generate additional income (Goat 1989:69).

The Art Deco style was popular from 1920 until about 1940 and generally made use of a variety of geometric shapes and forms often used in repetition and perhaps reflecting the dawning of the machine age and hinting at assembly lines or manufacturing (Liebs 1985:54). Other elements

might include vertically projecting stepped parapets and zig zags (McAlester 2013:581). The McDonald Garage incorporates the prevalent Art Deco style in elements such as repeating rectangle and diamond motifs on the façade, which is topped with a stepped parapet that adds height and vertical emphasis to the wide, low, four-car garage.

Current Preservation Status

During the more than 50 years since the end of the period of significance in 1965 and direct association as the residence of Malcolm X and Ella Little Collins, the 72 Dale Street property has been preserved and remains largely intact. However, the extensive vandalism suffered by the Malcolm X–Ella Little Collins House in the 1970s, coupled with deferred maintenance due to limited available resources has resulted in the buildings being in fair to poor (McDonald Garage) condition. The house is temporarily protected from water infiltration with a rubber membrane wrap applied to the roof, and other stabilization measures, installed in 2014 with a grant from Historic Boston, Inc. (HBI 2019).

Nelson Curtis (1810–1887)

Nelson Curtis was a Boston area builder and businessman who began his building career as an apprentice mason in 1828. By 1850, his construction company employed 50 people and produced $175,000 of building value annually (Bagley 2018:25). Curtis was responsible for the construction of a variety of Massachusetts buildings, including the Fitchburg Railroad Station, the Dedham stone prison designed by Gridley J. F. Bryant, and numerous Catholic churches in Boston (Bagley 2018:26; Worthington 1890:30). Curtis likely also constructed numerous houses in Roxbury, possibly in the vicinity of 72 Dale Street.

By ca. 1862, Nelson Curtis lived at 363 South Huntington Avenue in Jamaica Plain (BOS.7954) in an Italianate-style house he likely constructed. Before 1862, he lived and worked on Dudley Street in Roxbury, near the Roxbury City Hall; after his move to Jamaica Plain, he maintained his business presence on Dudley Street. Curtis was the largest shareholder in the Roxbury Gas Company and the People's National Bank at 114 Dudley Street and served as alderman for Roxbury for many years. Only one building in the Massachusetts Cultural Resources Inventory System (MACRIS) is attributed to Curtis: West Roxbury Town Hall, also known as Curtis Hall, on South Street (1868, BOS.10165). Other, no longer extant, buildings attributed to Nelson Curtis are the 1880 Roxbury Carpet Factory at 80–82 Hampshire Street and its attendant warehouse at 170–176 Vernon Street (BLC, n.d.).

Fred N. Russell (1875–1942)

Fred N. Russell was a draftsman and real estate dealer who began working with his uncle Cornelius A. Russell in the mid-1890s. In 1903, the two men formed a partnership, C.A. and F.N. Russell, which persisted until 1918. The men worked primarily in Roxbury, building residential buildings. By 1919, Fred Russell had gone into practice for himself, working out of his office at his home in Milton (Back Bay Houses 2020).

There are 25 properties attributed to Russell in MACRIS, predominantly wood-frame residential buildings constructed in the Colonial Revival and Arts and Crafts styles, in Boston and surrounding cities and towns including Brookline, Milton, and Quincy. Information about other garages he may have designed was not readily located.

STATEMENT OF INTEGRITY

The Malcolm X–Ella Little Collins House is a ca. 1865 three-bay side-hall plan wood-frame building constructed during the initial period of Roxbury's growth into a streetcar suburb of Boston. The addition of the four-car garage at the rear of the property demonstrates the shifting dependence on the automobile in the first quarter of the 20th century. The house, which has undergone several alterations during its existence to meet the changing needs of the residents and owners, and the garage retain integrity of location, setting, materials, design, workmanship, feeling, and association. The setting remains generally intact, with the surrounding neighborhood having developed with similar residences within ten to twenty years of the construction of the house. Remnants remain of the gardens that photographs show were more densely planted in the 1940s–1960s with shrubs along the house and a planting bed between the driveway and east property line. The building's original exterior materials, primarily wood clapboards and slate roof shingles, remain intact under more modern coverings of asbestos shingles and rolled rubber. The building's association with the lives of Ella Little Collins and Malcolm X remains evident, with numerous architectural details built by Ella and her husband Kenneth that include arched door openings, room partitions, and a built-in bookshelf constructed for Malcolm X. The third-floor bedroom and bathroom used by Malcolm X have been retained with few changes. The building was no longer occupied after about 1965, following the assassination of Malcolm X, and in 1970 vandals damaged the house, breaking all of the windows and throwing the Little-Collins's possessions out onto the ground below. Windows were replaced in the late 20th century.

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1821 Book 64 Page 132 Children of William Seaver to John H. Hawes
1837 Book 113 Page 349 John Clarke to Roxbury Land Company
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Previous documentation on file (NPS):

____ preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
____ previously listed in the National Register
____previously determined eligible by the National Register
____designated a National Historic Landmark
____ recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey #_____
____recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____
____ recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # _____

Returned

Primary location of additional data:

____ State Historic Preservation Office
____ Other State agency
____ Federal agency
____ Local government
____ University
____ Other
Name of repository: _____

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): __BOS.14294_____

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property ____less than one acre_____

Use either the UTM system or latitude/longitude coordinates

Latitude/Longitude Coordinates (decimal degrees)
Datum if other than WGS84:_____
(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)
1. Latitude: 42.321373 Longitude:-71.086406

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property.)

The boundary of the Malcolm X–Ella Little Collins National Register property conforms to the parcel boundary of 72 Dale Street, City of Boston Assessor number 1201734000.

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The boundary of the Malcolm X–Ella Little Collins National Register property was selected to encompass the entire property owned by Ella Little Collins and occupied at times by Malcolm X on the south side of Dale Street in Boston (Roxbury), Massachusetts. The selected boundary conforms to the historic and current boundary of the property following its sale to Frederic W. Dorr by builder/developer Nelson Curtis in 1865.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title: Virginia H. Adams, Sr. Architectural Historian; Gretchen M. Pineo, Architectural Historian; Kristen Heitert, Sr. Archaeologist; Tracy Jonsson, Asst. Architectural Historian, The Public Archaeology Laboratory, Inc. (PAL); Edward L. Bell, Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer & Senior Archaeologist, Massachusetts Historical Commission; with Betsy Friedberg, National Register Director
organization: Massachusetts Historical Commission
street & number: 220 Morrissey Boulevard
city or town: Boston state: Massachusetts zip code: 02125
e-mail: betsy.friedberg@sec.state.ma.us
telephone: (617) 727 8470
date: November 2019

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:** A **USGS map** or equivalent (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

- **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.

- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO, TPO, or FPO for any additional items.)

Photographs

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels (minimum), 3000x2000 preferred, at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map. Each photograph must be numbered and that number must correspond to the photograph number on the photo log. For simplicity, the name of the photographer, photo date, etc. may be listed once on the photograph log and doesn't need to be labeled on every photograph.

Photo Log

Name of Property: Malcolm X-Ella Little Collins House

City or Vicinity: Roxbury

County: Suffolk State: Massachusetts

Photographer: Gretchen M. Pineo

Date Photographed: November 9, 2018

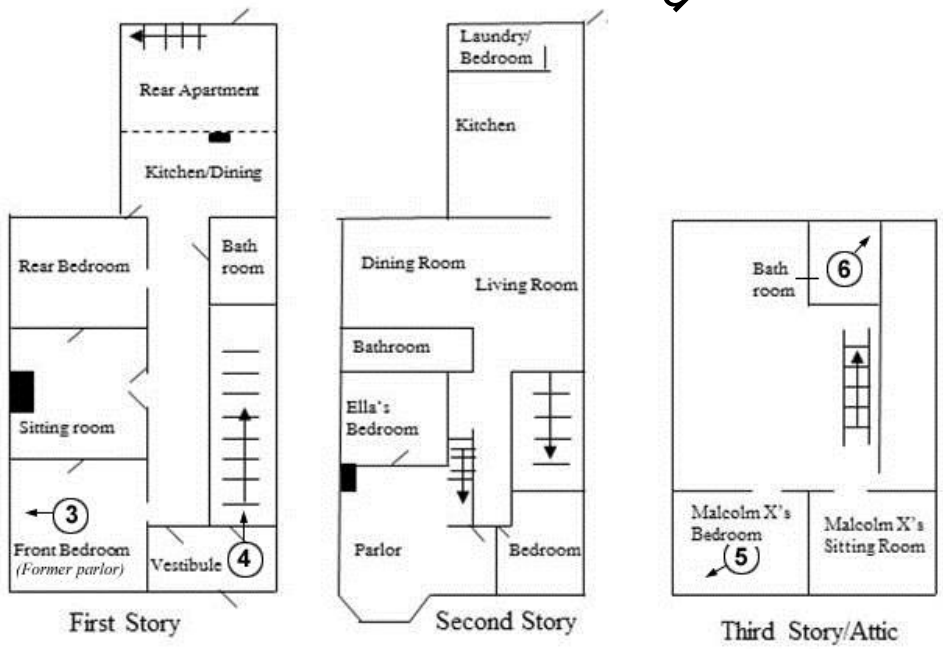
Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera:

1 of 7. Malcolm X–Ella Little Collins House (right) and McDonald Garage (left), looking southwest.
2 of 7. Malcolm X–Ella Little Collins House, looking southwest.
3 of 7. Plaster medallion and crown molding in first floor parlor, looking east.
4 of 7. Stairs from first story entry to second story living space, looking southwest.
5 of 7. Third Floor Bedroom of Malcolm X, looking northeast.
6 of 7. Third Floor Bathroom with original sink, used by Malcolm X, looking southeast.
7 of 7. McDonald Garage, looking southeast.

List of Figures

Photo Keys

Returned



Historic Images and Figures

Figure 1. 1952 photograph of Malcolm X–Ella Little Collins House, showing Ella Little Collins in front and Sarah A. Little on porch (image courtesy Rodnell Collins)

.

Figure 2. 1941 photograph of Malcolm X and Ella Little Collins at 72 Dale Street, on the east side of the house near the ell (image courtesy Rodnell Collins).

Figure 3. Undated photograph of Malcolm X (left), Ella Little Collins (right), and two unnamed friends, Franklin Park, Roxbury (image courtesy Rodnell Collins).

Figure 4. Detail of 1873 map, showing first appearance of 72 Dale Street house (red arrow) on published maps (Hopkins 1873).

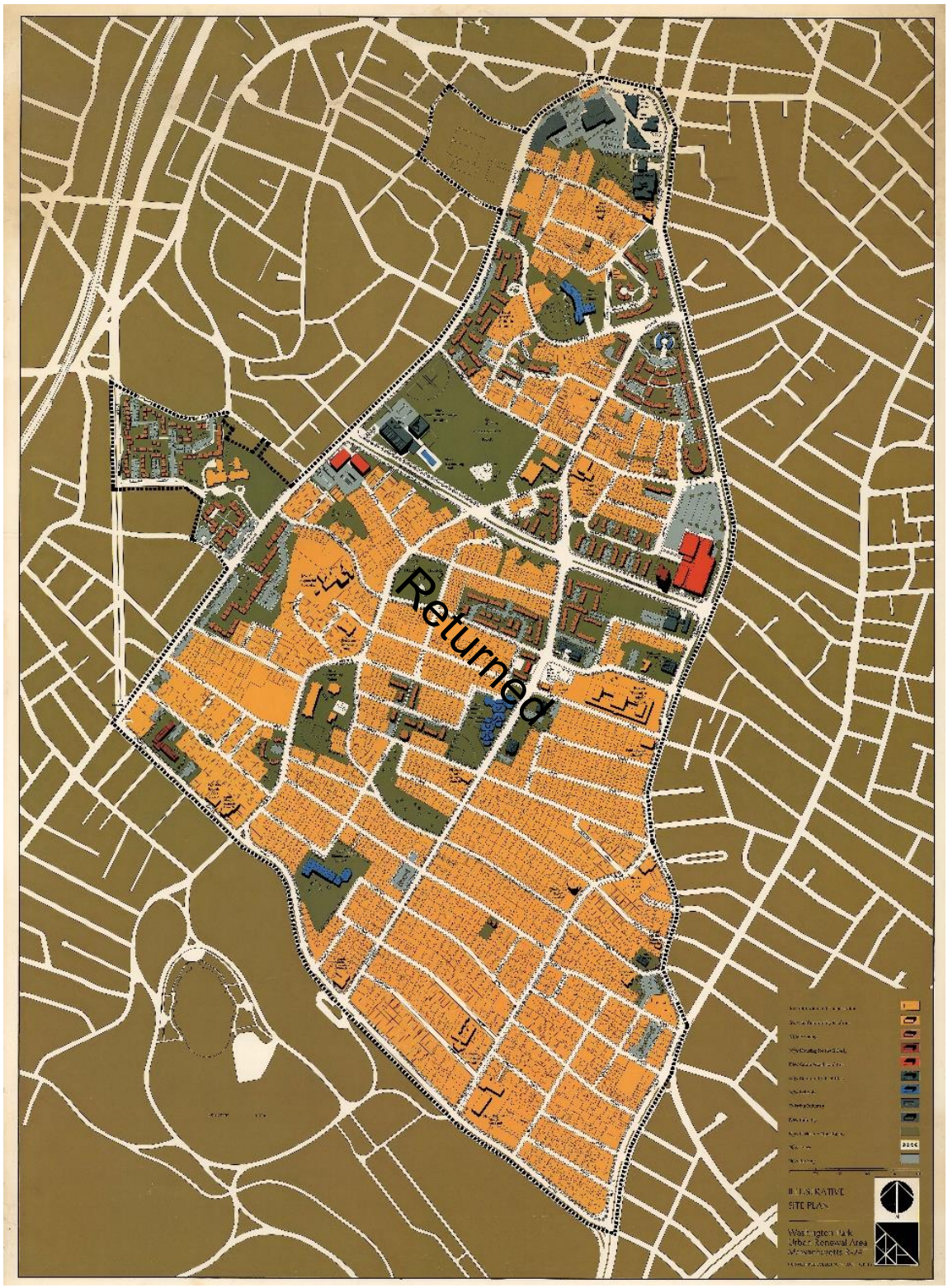


Figure 5. Illustration showing Washington Park Urban Renewal Area (BRA 2019).

Figure 6. An intact record from the 1960s, surface collected during 2015–2016 archaeological investigations by the City of Boston (Bagley et al. 2018:110).

Figure 7. Fragment of a plate that belonged to Ella Collins, found during 2015–2016 archaeological investigations by the City of Boston (Bagley et al. 2018:120–121).

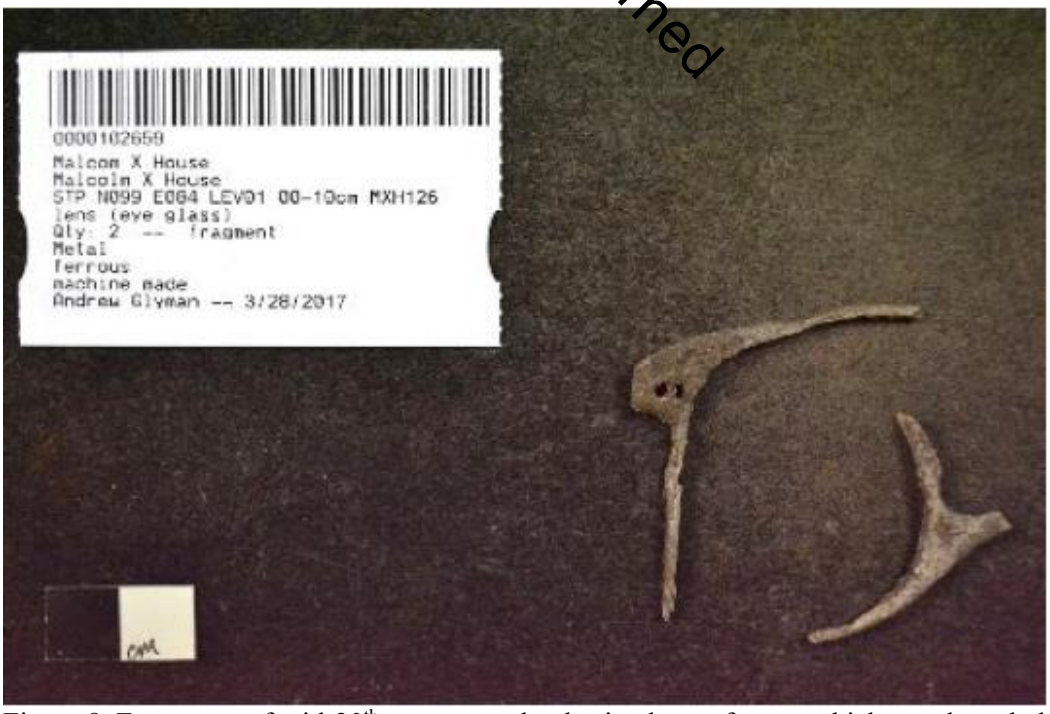
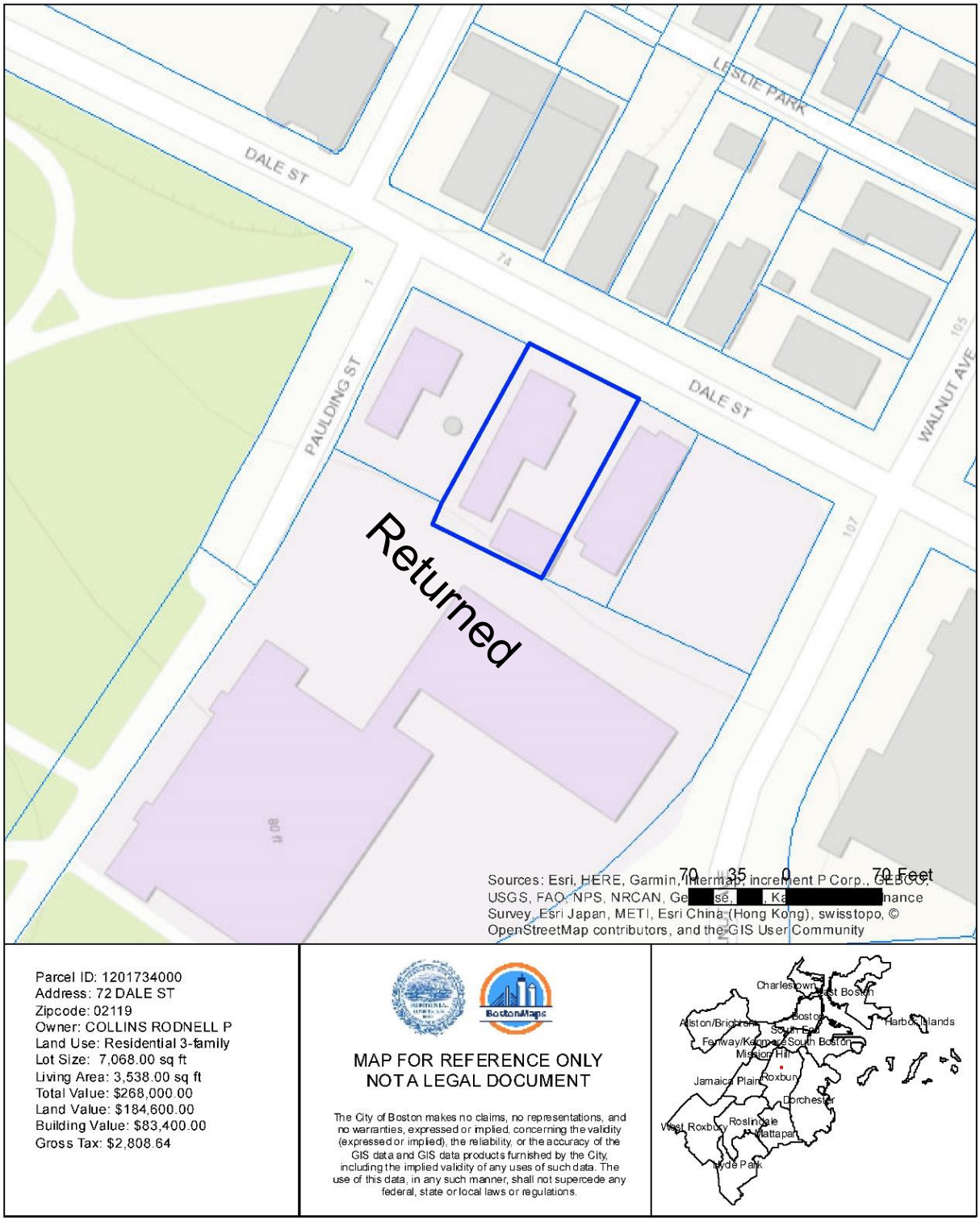


Figure 8. Fragments of mid-20th-century-style plastic glasses frames which may have belonged to Malcolm X or another member of the family, found during 2015–2016 archaeological investigations by the City of Boston (Bagley et al. 2018:137).

March 27, 2019



Assessor's Map, 72 Dale Street

USGS Coordinate Map

Malcolm X - Ella Little Collins House, Boston (Suffolk Co.), MA

1. Malcolm X-Ella Little Collins House (right) and McDonald Garage (left), looking southwest.

Returned

2. Malcolm X-Ella Little Collins House, looking southwest.

All photos; Gretchen M. Pineo, November 2018

Malcolm X - Ella Little Collins House, Boston (Suffolk Co.), MA

3. Plaster medallion and crown molding in first floor parlor, looking east.

4. Stairs from first story entry to second story living space, looking southwest.

All photos; Gretchen M. Pineo, November 2018

Malcolm X - Ella Little Collins House, Boston (Suffolk Co.), MA

5. Third Floor Bedroom of Malcolm X, looking northeast.

6. Third Floor Bathroom with original sink, used by Malcolm X, looking southeast.

All photos; Gretchen M. Pineo, November 2018

Malcolm X - Ella Little Collins House, Boston (Suffolk Co.), MA

7. McDonald Garage, looking southeast.

All photos; Gretchen M. Pineo, November 2018

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

Requested Action:	Nomination
Property Name:	Malcolm X-Ella Little Collins House
Multiple Name:	
State & County:	MASSACHUSETTS, Suffolk

Date Received:	Date of Pending List:	Date of 16th Day:	Date of 45th Day:	Date of Weekly List:
7/9/2020	7/28/2020	8/12/2020	8/24/2020	

Reference number:	SG100005455
Nominator:	SHPO

Reason For Review:

__ Appeal	__ PDIL	**X** Text/Data Issue
__ SHPO Request	__ Landscape	__ Photo
__ Waiver	**X** National	__ Map/Boundary
__ Resubmission	__ Mobile Resource	__ Period
__ Other	__ TCP	__ Less than 50 years
	__ CLG	

_____ Accept ___**X**___ Return _____ Reject ___**8/24/2020**___ Date

Abstract/Summary Comments:	See attached comments.
Recommendation/ Criteria	Please refer to attached comments.

Reviewer Lisa Deline Discipline Historian

Telephone (202)354-2239 Date

DOCUMENTATION: see attached comments : No see attached SLR : No

If a nomination is returned to the nomination authority, the nomination is no longer under consideration by the National Park Service.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service
National Register of Historic Places

Comments
Evaluation/Return Sheet

Property Name: Malcolm X-Ella Little Collins House

Property Location: Boston, Suffolk Co., MA

Reference Number: SG100005455

Date of Comments: 9/18/2020

Nomination Synopsis
The Frederic W. Dorr House, better known as the Malcolm X-Ella Little Collins House, is located in the Roxbury neighborhood of Boston, Massachusetts. The property is recommended for listing in the National Register of Historic Places under significance criteria A, B, and D.

This property is nationally significant under significance criteria A (areas of significance: Civil Rights, Ethnic Heritage: Black, and Social History) and B for both Malcolm X (1925-1965) and his half-sister and one-time legal guardian Ella Little Collins (1914-1996). The property ". . . conveys its significance as the home of Ella Little Collins and, intermittently, her brother Malcolm (Little) X" (Section 7, p. 4). It is widely understood that Malcolm X resided at the house during the years 1941-1944. Ella Little Collins served as Malcolm's legal guardian for the period spanning 2/14/1941 to 5/19/1946, so both prior to and overlapping the earliest years of his incarceration from 1944-1952. Moreover, Malcolm occupied the third floor when he stayed at the property during his subsequent adult life.

The primary period of significance is ca. 1865-1965, bracketed by the approximate date of construction of the house and Malcolm X's assassination, respectively. The property is also demonstrated to be locally significant under criterion D (area of significance: Archeology/Historic-Nonaboriginal), with a period of significance spanning ca. 1765-1821, for the first residential occupation of the property on which the current house sits, which was operated as part of a farm by the Seaver family.

Return Comments
These return comments address a handful of technical matters intended to clarify select aspects of the property's history and remaining components and to positively inform future management decisions which may rely in part on this documentation.

Name of Property
The historic name of a property is the name that "best reflects the property's historic importance or commonly used for the property during the period of significance" (*National Register Bulletin 16A*, p. 8). In light of the fact that Frederic W. Dorr only constructed the house and used it as a rental property, the preparers should consider switching the historic name to the "Malcolm X-Ella Little Collins House," to more accurately reflect the key period of significance for this property.

Resource Counts
Block 5 (Number of Resources within Property), Sections 1-6, p. 2, should be changed to include the presence of 1 contributing site (for a total of 6 contributing resources) as the nomination includes detailed discussion in Section 8, p. 55, of the Collins Site as the source for invoking significance criterion D. Associated text such as the summary paragraph in Section 7, p. 4, should also be changed to include one site and a total of six contributing resources.

Date of Construction of the 72 Dale Street Property
Much of the nomination's narrative consistently identifies a date of construction of ca. 1865 to the Dale Street property. The "Significant Dates" entry in Section 8, p. 13 provides a different date of construction (i.e., ca. 1865-1872.) Please ascertain which is the correct date and make the corresponding change(s).

Malcolm's Move to Boston
The central focus of this nomination with regard to Malcolm X and in support of a national level of significance, is the fact that this is the only remaining property associated with his formative years. To assist understanding the dynamics of racism at that time, some additional historic context would be helpful to set the stage regarding what African Americans experienced in major northern cities during the 1930s-1940. Not only did young Malcolm witness a discriminatory environment but he also experienced a tumultuous family life. By age 4, he witnessed his family home burned, by age 6, his father was killed, by age 14, his mother was sent to a mental hospital, and by age 14, he was sent to a foster family. All of these events and interactions with white racism and family tragedies would have a profound and lasting influence on Malcolm's personal development. Finally, in moving to Boston, "he was exposed to a large urban black community for the first time." At age 16, Malcolm finally had a home with his half-sister and was "firmly ensconced in Ella's household" (Section 8, p. 17).

Comparison with Other Malcolm X-related Properties
The comparison of the 72 Dale Street property in Roxbury to other Malcolm X-related properties is an incredibly important part of making the case for the significance of *this* property in the arc of Malcolm X/El Hajj Malik El-Shabazz's career. The *Boston Landmark Commission's Study Report* (1998) discusses other Roxbury/Boston addresses at which Ella Little Collins resided and was visited by her half- brother, Malcolm. Those other addresses are not called out in the current nomination. Unless that scholarship is no longer valid, the case for 72 Dale Street as the sole address where young Malcolm resided with Ella is overstated. The stronger case that could be made is that the 72 Dale Street property is significant in both the adult trajectory of Malcolm's career as well as that of Ella Little Collins as his successor in leading the Organization of Afro-American Unity (OAAU) following his assassination.

The comparison with other extant Malcolm X-related properties should also compare this property to the two other Malcolm X-associated National Register-listings—the first, at 3448 Pinkney St., in Omaha, Nebraska, and the second, Temple Baptist Church-King Solomon Baptist Church, in Detroit, Michigan. Both are mentioned in the nomination, but not in a tight comparison with the 72 Dale Street property. Some of the information contained in Section 8, pp. 21-22, particularly Malcolm's reference to this address as his residence (as supported by City Directories for the period 1954-1962) could be moved to this section of the nomination to support the case for why this property best represents Malcolm's formative years, his strong bond to his half-sister, Ella, and on into his adult years. Finally, it appears to us that a strong case should be made that the 72 Dale Street property is significant for its association with Ella Collins Little—something the two previously-listed properties cannot claim.

The characterization of 72 Dale Street property as the location of the family's first exposure to Islam appears to warrant double-checking given the fact that Malcolm's siblings back in Michigan converted to Islam before he did.

When Malcolm X was 28, he was back in Boston to serve as first minister of Temple No. 11 (Section 8, p. 22). The nomination notes that he also went on to organize temples elsewhere. Please provide some additional context on what organizing temples would involve—for instance, was it mainly recruiting? Establishing a location for a temple? Section 8, p. 23, notes that by age 29, he was made chief minister of Harlem's Temple No. 7. What were the duties as "chief minister?"

In Section 8, p. 35, please correct the address of the 97th Street house to read "21-11 97th Street."

On p. 47, local significance is claimed in the areas of Social History and Ethnic Heritage: Black for the mid-19th century development of Roxbury as a streetcar suburb of Boston. Some additional context is necessary to place 72 Dale Street against a backdrop of suburban development and demographic change.[1]

Archeology
To more fully understand the archeological deposits at 72 Dale Street and the criterion D argument articulated in the nomination, the archeological reviewer turned to the site report titled *Report for Intensive (Locational) Archaeological Survey at the Malcolm X/Ella Little-Collins House, 72 Dale Street, Boston (Roxbury), Massachusetts* (Bagley, Glyman, and Johnson, 2018). In short, the site contains four archeological components—only one of which is a comparatively undisturbed buried plow zone associated with 18th- and 19th-century occupation of the property as part of a larger farm. A surface collection and sampling of the site including 15 STPs, 3 1×2 m units, and non-intrusive ground penetrating radar survey, revealed numerous Little-family related items of material culture, but the most intact and artifact-rich deposit was the buried APZ horizon seen as:

> . . . represent[ing] an agrarian history of Roxbury and the occupation of the property in the 18th centuries by the Seaver and possibly earlier families. It is a thick deposit with a crisp transition between itself and lower B soils strongly suggesting the land was plowed. It is also relatively mixed in date due to the plowing, though it is pre-1872 in origin (Bagley, Glyman, and Johnson 2018: 85).

As noted in the National Register documentation, this Seaver occupation archeology is important for its comparative value to other 18th-century farm estates excavated in Roxbury. For this reason, two modest additions are worth considering to better support the case made in the nomination for significance under criterion D. First, given that the site's 18th-century farmstead element is the one that demonstrates sub-surface integrity and for which criterion D is invoked, the artifact illustrations in support of criterion D ideally should be artifacts derived from that context and not from the surface and disturbed contexts associated with the property's nationally significant 20th-century occupants. Second, the significance criterion D case would be strengthened by inclusion of a small number of research questions to which this site is expected to produce significant answers.

Finally, the case is made elsewhere in this document and in the archeology report that the 20th-century occupation does not have sufficient sub-surface integrity to support significance under criterion D for that period. That said, the text in the second paragraph of Section 8, p. 53 is a little confusing as it appears to be linking criterion D to the 20th-century occupants. This might be clarified with a short sentence or parenthetical aside.

In closing, thank you for the opportunity to read the nomination for this important historic property. We are providing copies of the National Register documentation for the two listed Malcolm X-associated

[1] In future, perhaps consideration may be given to documenting the transformation of the social history and ethnicity of the groups that lived in this neighborhood via a potential Roxbury historic district nomination. In such a case, the community's Social History will no doubt occupy a central place. While such a robust context is beyond the scope of the current nomination, a bit more information about the changing nature of the community will bolster this section as it can be challenging for a single property (vs. a community) to demonstrate this area of significance.

properties, as those may be of some assistance. Given their file size, we will forward them separately from our secure, FTP site. Should you have any questions regarding these comments or wish to discuss the nomination, we are available via telephone, email, and/or videochat.

Sincerely,

Lisa Deline, Historian, National Register Program (tel: 202.713.0897; lisa_deline@nps.gov)

and

Julie H. Ernstein, Ph.D., RPA, Supervisory Archeologist, National Register and National Historic Landmarks Program (tel: 202.440.2764; julie_ernstein@nps.gov)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

Requested Action:	Resubmission
Property Name:	Malcolm X-Ella Little Collins House
Multiple Name:	
State & County:	MASSACHUSETTS, Suffolk

Date Received:	Date of Pending List:	Date of 16th Day:	Date of 45th Day:	Date of Weekly List:
2/1/2021			3/18/2021	2/12/2021

Reference number:	RS100005455
Nominator:	SHPO

Reason For Review:

X Accept _____ Return _____ Reject **2/12/2021** Date

Abstract/Summary Comments:

The Malcolm X–Ella Little Collins House is eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places at the national level under Criterion B and at the local level under Criteria A, B, and D. At the national and local levels, the property is significant under Criterion B in the areas of Social History, Ethnic Heritage: Black, and Civil Rights for its association with the life of preeminent civil and human rights activist Malcolm (Little) X. The house at 72 Dale Street is the only extant house associated with Malcolm X's childhood and formative years. At the local level, the property is eligible under Criterion A, in the areas of Social History and Ethnic Heritage: Black for its association with the development of Roxbury as a streetcar suburb of Boston and later a prominent black neighborhood. Under Criterion B, the property is eligible for
listing at the local level in the areas of Social History, Ethnic Heritage: Black, and Civil Rights for its association with the life of human rights activist Ella Little Collins, an influential supporter of her brother Malcolm and an important organizer in the civil rights movement and in improving educational opportunities for black students in Boston and New York. Under Criterion D, the property is eligible at the local level in the area of Archaeology: Historic – Non-Aboriginal for its demonstrated potential to provide information about a middling to prosperous 18th-century farm in what is a remarkably intact landscape context for Roxbury. Supplemental information is provided about the property as a good example of a restrained Italianate style, single-family, wood-frame house constructed in Roxbury during the mid-19th century that was
subsequently divided into a multi-family dwelling, which was a common occurrence in Boston during the late 19th and early 20th centuries.

Recommendation/ Criteria: NR Criteria: A, B, and D

Reviewer Lisa Deline Discipline Historian

Telephone (202)354-2239 Date _____

DOCUMENTATION: see attached comments : No see attached SLR : No

If a nomination is returned to the nomination authority, the nomination is no longer under consideration by the National Park Service.