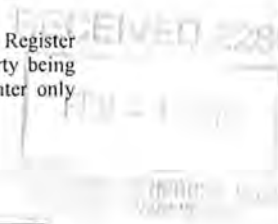


United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# 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: Intervale Street-Columbia Road Historic District

Other names/site number: N/A

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: 117-121, 123-127, 129-135, 137-143, 145-159, 161, 164 Intervale Street and 282-284, 286-288 Columbia Road

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Not For Publication:  Vicinity: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

<u>Brona Surin</u>	<u>January 28, 2019</u>
<b>Signature of certifying official/Title:</b>	<b>SHPO</b>
<b>Date</b>	
<b>State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government</b>	
In my opinion, the property <input type="checkbox"/> meets <input type="checkbox"/> does not meet the National Register criteria.	
<b>Signature of commenting official:</b>	<b>Date</b>
<b>Title :</b>	<b>State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government</b>

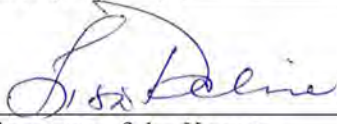
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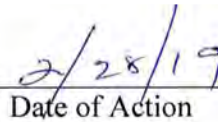
**4. National Park Service Certification**

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:
- Public - Local
- Public - State
- Public - Federal

**Category of Property**

(Check only **one** box.)

- Building(s)
- District
- Site
- Structure
- Object

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**Number of Resources within Property**

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>9</u>	<u>0</u>	buildings
<u>          </u>	<u>          </u>	sites
<u>          </u>	<u>          </u>	structures
<u>          </u>	<u>          </u>	objects
<u>9</u>	<u>0</u>	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/multiple dwelling

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Current Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

DOMESTIC/multiple dwelling

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

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## 7. Description

### Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions.)

LATE 19<sup>TH</sup> & 20<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY REVIVALS/Colonial Revival

LATE 19<sup>TH</sup> & 20<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY REVIVALS/Classical Revival

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**Materials:** (enter categories from instructions.)

Principal exterior materials of the property:

Foundation: STONE

Walls: BRICK

Roof: SYNTHETICS

Other: METAL

### 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.)

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### Summary Paragraph

The Intervale Street–Columbia Road Historic District is located in the Boston neighborhood of Dorchester. The district extends approximately 700 feet along the eastern end of Intervale Street where it intersects with Columbia Road. Intervale Street is a residential side street that runs east-west from Warren Street in Roxbury, across Blue Hill Avenue to Columbia Road in Dorchester. The street slopes down considerably at its eastern end from Magnolia Street to Columbia Road. The district is composed of nine brick apartment buildings constructed between 1911 and 1925. The buildings all rise three stories over raised basements to flat roofs and feature distinctive elements of both the Colonial and Classical Revival architectural styles. Common characteristics include accentuated entrances and fenestration with classically inspired surrounds and wide, galvanized-iron cornices. Each building has multiple addresses appearing as a line of row houses with narrow alleys between buildings. The district is surrounded by a generous amount of green space. Much of the north side of Intervale Street across from the district is occupied by a large city park known as Ceylon Park and a play area associated with the King School. The

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Fredericks Middle School Playground abuts the district to the west and south. The developed parcels directly across from the district at its western end consist of new construction and a heavily altered triple-decker that dates to the district's development. A number of the buildings in the district suffer from deferred maintenance and are in need of repair. However, limited investment in these properties has resulted in minimal loss of exterior historic fabric, with the exception of the replacement of original windows and doors on most buildings. When documented in the building records, the dates of these alterations are noted. The district retains a high degree of historic integrity.

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### **Narrative Description**

#### Thomas G. White Apartments I: 282–284 Columbia Road (BOS.16721, Photo 12)

This nine-unit apartment building was constructed in 1911 and is located at the southwest corner of Intervale Street and Columbia Road. The building faces east onto Columbia Road, and is set slightly back on its lot with a stone retaining wall abutting the sidewalk. Between the retaining wall and the building, a small tree and untended shrubs and grasses grow. The building rises three stories over a raised basement to a flat roof and is constructed of red brick with a granite foundation and first-floor sill course. The building is accented with cast-stone lintels, sills, third-floor sill course, decorative panels, door surrounds, and a galvanized-iron, ogee-profiled cornice with dentils and decorative modillions. A parapet extends above the cornice. The bow-fronted façade is organized into fourteen bays with two rounded bays that hold three windows each located two bays in from each of the ends of the building. Paired entrances are centrally located between the bowed bays. These entrances are reached by a long flight of concrete steps. The simple, rectangular entrances are adorned with quoins and molded arches above the doors. The entries hold non-historic glass doors. Centrally located between the entries on the second and third floors are rectangular, recessed decorative panels. Windows on the first and second floors are adorned with flat sills and lintels. Windows associated with 284 Columbia Road were replaced with 1/1 double-hung metal sash in 1972 and 1989. Original wood-sash windows remain on the portion of the façade associated with 282 Columbia Road. The first-story windows hold 6/1 double-hung wood sash with a three-light transom; the second- and third-story windows hold 6/1 double-hung wood sash.

The north elevation is a secondary façade. Decorative treatments in the form of the cornice and sill courses carry over from the main elevation. This elevation holds three fenestrated bays, simply adorned with flat lintels, and displays its granite foundation.

#### Thomas G. White Apartments II: 286–288 Columbia Road (BOS.16722, Photo 13)

This nine-unit apartment building was constructed in 1911 and is located at the northwest corner of Intervale Street and Columbia Road. The building faces east onto Columbia Road, and is set slightly back on its lot with a stone retaining wall that abuts the sidewalk. Between the retaining wall and the building, trees and small ground plants form the landscaping. The building rises three stories over a raised basement to a flat roof and is constructed of red brick with a granite foundation and first-floor sill course. The building is accented with cast-stone lintels, sills, third-

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floor sill course, decorative panels, door surrounds, and a galvanized-iron, ogee-profiled cornice with dentils and decorative modillions. The cornice is missing from the northernmost rounded bay. A brick parapet with a metal cap extends above the cornice. The bow-fronted façade is organized into fourteen bays with two rounded bays that hold three windows each located two bays in from each of the ends of the building. Paired entrances are centrally located between the bowed bays. These entrances are reached by a long flight of concrete steps. The simple, rectangular entrances are adorned with quoins and molded arches above the doors. The entries hold non-historic glass doors. Windows on the first and second floors are adorned with flat sills and lintels. There is a basement-level entrance in the northernmost bay, which has a green awning and non-historic glass door. The building is regularly fenestrated. Current windows hold 1/1 metal sash.

The south elevation is a secondary façade. Decorative treatments in the form of the cornice and sill courses carry over from the main elevation. This elevation holds three fenestrated bays, simply adorned with flat lintels, and displays its granite foundation.

David Yarchin Apartments: 117–121 Intervale Street (BOS.16715, Photos 1, 2 & 16)

The nine-unit tan-brick apartment building was constructed in 1915 and faces north onto Intervale Street. The building rises three stories over a raised basement to a flat roof and is constructed of tan brick with cast-stone lintels, sills, second-story sill course and door surrounds, with a galvanized-iron, ogee-profiled cornice with brackets and decorative modillions. It sits on a stone foundation. The façade is organized into fifteen bays; the end bays and the sixth, seventh, and eighth bays from the east are canted. The canted bays feature a window in each of their three faces. On the first story, the flat middle bays hold entrances reached by flights of three concrete steps. The building has three entrances; the entrance to 117 Intervale Street is located between the canted middle and western end bays. Entrances to 119 and 121 Intervale Street are paired and located between the canted middle and eastern end bays. All of the entrances are identical, adorned with segmental arches with keystones and Doric pilasters supporting a frieze. Keystones are either worn or missing at all entrances. The entries hold non-historic metal-and-glass doors. The building is regularly fenestrated. Lintels become simpler at each story: the first story features hooded lintels with corbels, the second-story lintels are hooded without corbels, and the third-story windows display flat lintels. Decorative brickwork enlivens the façade between floors and around windows. Second-story windows are flanked by raised-brick stretcher courses, panels of checkered header brickwork are located between the second- and third-story windows, and stringcourses of angled bricks run between the second- and third-floor windows and between the third-floor windows and cornice. Windows were replaced in 2002 when the building underwent a renovation. Current windows hold 1/1 metal sash.

Solomon Dvilnsky Apartments I: 123–127 Intervale Street (BOS.16716, Photo 3 & 16)

The nine-unit tan-brick apartment building was constructed in 1915 and faces north onto Intervale Street. The building rises three stories over a raised basement to a flat roof and is constructed of tan brick with cast-stone lintels, sills, second-story beltcourse and door surrounds, with a galvanized-iron, ogee-profiled cornice with dentils and decorative modillions. It sits on a

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stone foundation. The façade is organized into fifteen bays; the end bays and the sixth, seventh, and eighth bays from the east are canted. The canted bays feature a window in each of their three faces. The building has three entrances located between the canted bays; entrance to 123 Intervale Street sits between the canted middle and western end bays. Entrances to 125 and 127 Intervale Street are paired. Each entrance is reached by a flight of four concrete steps. The entrances are adorned with identical surrounds comprised of fluted Doric pilasters supporting friezes with corbeled cornices surmounted by corbeled, rectangular frieze panels. The entries themselves feature varying levels of historic fabric. 127 Intervale Street is the most intact entrance with what appears to be the original single-leaf, three-panel wood door set within a wood surround that includes five-light sidelights, a corbeled, denticulated cornice, and a large transom divided by wood mullions into three sections. 123 Intervale Street retains its sidelights, though they are not divided, as well as the cornice and transom, which is also undivided; the door is non-historic. The entry to 125 Intervale Street holds a non-historic door; its sidelights and cornice are covered with plywood, and the undivided transom remains. The evenly spaced fenestration is adorned by lintels that vary in detailing by story: the first-floor windows feature hooded lintels with corbels, the second-story lintels are hooded without corbels, and the third story displays capped keystone lintels. Rectangular recessed panels of herringbone brickwork are located between the second- and third-story windows. Windows in 123 Intervale Street were boarded up beginning in 1995. Current windows on 125 and 127 Intervale Street hold 1/1 metal sash.

Solomon Dvilnsky Apartments II: 129–135 Intervale Street (BOS.16717, Photos 4, 5 & 16)

This twelve-unit tan-brick apartment building was constructed in 1915 and faces north onto Intervale Street. The building rises three stories over a raised basement to a flat roof and is constructed of tan brick with cast-stone basement lintel course, second-story sill course, lintels, sills, and door surrounds, with a galvanized iron, ogee-profiled cornice with decorative modillions. It is set on a stone foundation. The façade is organized into eighteen bays with canted bays located at either end and in the center of the building. The canted end bays hold one window in each of their three faces. The centrally located canted bay stretches two bays across and holds paired windows in each flat bay and single windows in each of its canted faces. On the first story, the flat middle bays hold paired entrances reached by a flight of three concrete steps. The building's four entrances are adorned with identical surrounds comprised of fluted Doric pilasters supporting friezes with corbeled cornices surmounted by corbeled, rectangular frieze panels. The entries hold non-historic glass and metal doors. The building is regularly fenestrated. Narrow, double windows flank the entrances. Lintels vary at each story: the first-story windows feature hooded lintels with corbels, the second-story hooded lintels are without corbels, and the third-story windows display capped splayed lintels with keystones. Current windows hold 1/1 metal sash.

The original interior plan of the apartment building remains intact with three floors of four residential units. Building entrances lead to enclosed vestibules with stairs and non-historic metal-and-glass doors leading to single-loaded corridors from which first-floor units are accessed; these corridors contain the main stairs leading to the units on upper floors. First-floor

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units contain two bedrooms, a kitchen, living room, and bathroom; units on the second and third floors have an additional bedroom located above the ground-floor entry vestibules. Most historic finishes are located in the common spaces of the building, namely corridors and stairs. These include wood baseboards and stair components: stringers, bases, handrails, and newel posts. Historic finishes that remain in apartment units are limited to some wood flooring in hallways, living rooms, and bedrooms, wood thresholds, and windowsills.

In 2015 the building was renovated using historic tax credits. Alterations were aimed at addressing issues of deferred maintenance and included the repair and repointing of brickwork, and repair of concrete stairs, slabs, and curbs on the exterior. Interior work was limited to replacing drywall and rotted wood, repairing flooring, and replacing non-historic kitchen and bathroom fixtures. All work met the Secretary of Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties.

Solomon Dvilnsky Apartments III: 137–143 Intervale Street (BOS.16718, Photo 6 & 14)

This twelve-unit tan-brick apartment building was constructed in 1915 and faces north onto Intervale Street. The building rises three stories over a raised basement to a flat roof and is constructed of tan brick with cast-stone basement lintel course, second-floor sill course, lintels, sills, and door surrounds, with a galvanized-iron, ogee-profiled cornice with decorative modillions. Because Intervale Street slopes down to the east, the raised basement is more prominent on the eastern side of the building. Basement windows infilled with glass block are located in the easternmost bays. The façade is organized into eighteen bays with canted bays located at either end and in the center of the building. The canted end bays hold one window in each of their three faces. The centrally located canted bay stretches two bays across and holds paired windows in each flat bay and single windows in each of its canted faces. The four bays between the canted end and central bays hold paired entrances reached by flights of concrete steps. The four entrances are adorned with identical surrounds comprised of fluted Doric pilasters supporting friezes with corbeled cornices surmounted by corbeled, rectangular frieze panels. The entries hold non-historic glass and metal doors. The building is regularly fenestrated. Lintels vary at each story: the first-story windows feature hooded lintels with corbels, the second-story hooded lintels are without corbels, and the third-story windows display capped splayed lintels with keystones. Current windows hold 1/1 metal sash.

Louis Glazer Apartments: 145–159 Intervale Street (BOS.16719, Photo 7, 8, 9 & 15)

This fifteen-unit apartment building was constructed in 1925 and faces north onto Intervale Street. The building rises three stories over a raised basement to a flat roof and is constructed of tan brick. The façade is accented with cast-stone molded basement beltcourse, keystones, sills, and door surrounds, with a molded cornice and brick parapet. The façade is organized into fifteen bays grouped in sets of three with the center bay of each set projecting slightly. The projecting bays feature tripartite windows on each story. The flanking bays hold paired windows. The building has five entrances, each reached by a flight of concrete steps. Although varying in condition, each entrance is adorned with a classical surround. Fluted Ionic pilasters



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support an entablature with shield motifs. Finials above the cornice flank a broken scroll with a circle at the center. Entries hold non-historic doors. The building is regularly fenestrated. Many of the basement windows have been infilled with brick or plywood. Windows feature brick soldier-course splayed lintels with cast-stone keystones and endstones. Current windows hold 1/1 metal sash. Some of the lintels and parapet were replaced in 2003.

R.A. Gazzam Trust Apartments I: 161 Intervale Street (BOS.16723, Photo 10)

The six-family apartment building was constructed in 1914 and faces north onto Intervale Street. The building rises three stories over a raised basement to a flat roof and is constructed of red brick with cast-stone lintels, sills, second- and third-story sill courses and door surround, with a galvanized iron, ogee-profiled cornice with decorative modillions. Other decorative features include cast-stone diamond panels located between stories. The basement is more prominent in the eastern bays due to the slope of Intervale Street to the east. The façade is organized into six bays with a canted center bay that holds one window in each face of the bay. The westernmost bay holds the entrance reached by a concrete step that is angled into the hill. The entrance is adorned with a classical surround. Corinthian pilasters flank a keystone arch and support a shallow, pedimented entablature. The entry holds a non-historic wood and glass door with glass fanlight. The building is regularly fenestrated. Window lintels become simpler in each successive story: the first story features hooded lintels, the second-story lintels are splayed with endstones and keystones, and the third story features flat lintels. Current windows hold 1/1 metal sash.

R.A. Gazzam Trust Apartments II: 164 Intervale Street (BOS.16723, Photo 11)

The six-family apartment building was constructed in 1914 and faces south onto Intervale Street. The building rises three stories over a raised basement to a flat roof and is constructed of red brick with cast-stone lintels, sills, first-, second-, and third-story sill courses and door surround, with a galvanized iron, ogee-profiled cornice with decorative modillions. Other decorative features include cast-stone diamond panels located between stories. The façade is organized into four bays with the eastern two bays encompassed in a rounded bowfront. The westernmost bay holds the main entrance, which is reached by a concrete step that is angled because of the slope of Intervale Street. The entrance is adorned with a classical surround featuring a shallow, triangular pediment supported by Corinthian pilasters and arch with a keystone. The entry holds a non-historic door with a transom light above it. The building is regularly fenestrated. The first-story windows feature hooded lintels, the second-story windows display splayed lintels with keystones and endstones, and the third-story windows are minimally adorned with flat lintels. Concrete quoins run from the ground to the cornice line. Current windows hold 1/1 metal sash.

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## 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.)

- A. Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- 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.
- 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

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**Areas of Significance**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

COMMUNITY PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT

ARCHITECTURE

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Period of Significance**

1911-1969

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Significant Dates**

1911 (Construction of the first buildings in the district)

1914-1915 (The second wave of construction in the district)

1925 (Construction of the last building in the district)

\_\_\_\_\_

**Significant Person**

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

N/A

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Cultural Affiliation**

N/A

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Architect/Builder**

Silverman Engineering Co.

Samuel S. Levy

Solomon Dvilnsky

Max M. Kalman

J.C. Spillane

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**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 Intervale Street-Columbia Road Historic District consists of a collection of nine residential apartment buildings constructed between the years 1911 and 1925 in the Dorchester neighborhood of Boston. Together they represent a cohesive collection of buildings that were developed and occupied primarily by Jewish immigrants during a period of great migration of this population into Roxbury and Dorchester from Boston's downtown neighborhoods. For its association with the residential development of Dorchester and a vibrant Jewish immigrant community from the 1910s through the 1950s, the district meets criterion A in the area of Community Planning and Development. All of the buildings in the district were designed in the Classical Revival and Colonial Revival style, architectural aesthetics at the height of their popularity during the district's period of development. The adoption of architectural styles reflected the widespread proliferation of a fashionable architectural aesthetic and may also reflect a hopeful enthusiasm by an immigrant community for the values of freedom and opportunity embodied in these popular national styles. The district is therefore additionally significant under criterion C in the area of Architecture as a well-preserved collection of Classical and Colonial Revival apartment buildings that represent assimilation and the aspirations of Dorchester's Jewish immigrant community. The period of significance for the district begins with the construction of the first apartment buildings in 1911 and because of its continuous use extends to 1969, the fifty-year age requirement for listing on the National Register.

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

The Development of Dorchester and the Intervale Street Historic District

The Intervale Street-Columbia Road Historic District is located in the Boston neighborhood of Dorchester. Dorchester was founded by English settlers in 1630 and remained an independent town until 1870 when it was annexed to the City of Boston. Dorchester began as a rural farming community with a network of roads connecting outlying farms and small villages that were located at the crossroads of these local highways. Industry was centered on the lower Neponset River in southern Dorchester, which was home to various mills. Dorchester remained largely rural, characterized by farms and country estates, until the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century when the Boston & Providence and Old Colony Railway lines were introduced to the neighborhood in 1835 and 1844, respectively. The Boston & Providence line (later the Boston, Hartford, and Erie Railroad, the New York and New England Railroad, and the New York, New Haven, and Hartford Railroad until 1968, now part of the MBTA's commuter rail system) ran through the western portion of Dorchester while the Old Colony Railway line ran through the neighborhood's eastern villages. These rail lines made Boston accessible to Dorchester commuters and initiated the transformation of the rural town into an early suburb for wealthy Bostonians. Large, single-

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family homes in proximity to rail station stops were constructed on established streets such as Columbia Road (known until 1897 as Columbia Street), while smaller house lots were developed close to the stations.

As the 19<sup>th</sup> century progressed, Dorchester transitioned from a wealthy suburb to an increasingly dense, economically diverse streetcar suburb. Additional modes of public transportation were introduced to Dorchester along major thoroughfares like Columbia Road and Blue Hill Avenue; these included horse cars in the 1870s and electric streetcars in the 1890s. The electric streetcars along Columbia Road were part of a larger project that included the widening and extension of the road, an undertaking that dramatically increased the rate of development along the thoroughfare and its side streets. The formerly modest local road was widened to 110 feet and extended so that it connected Franklin Park to Dorchester Bay. Franklin Park, designed by Frederick Law Olmsted during the 1880s, is the largest park in a string of Olmsted-designed landscapes and parkways known as Boston's Emerald Necklace. The *Boston Globe* reported on the Columbia Road project enthusiastically, claiming the improved new road would "complete the magnificent chain of parkways which now encircles the city...it will be a magnificent boulevard, and over the greater portion of it the electric cars will run."<sup>1</sup> Another article speculated that the redesigned road would become one of the most significant in the neighborhood: "This improvement will prove a notable one, from the fact the street is used as much as any in Dorchester, and is now destined to be one of the prominent thoroughfares in this part of the city."<sup>2</sup> The work on Columbia Road was the largest and most expensive undertaking in Dorchester up to that time, with total land damages for takings associated with widening the street alone exceeding \$500,000.<sup>3</sup> The introduction of electric streetcars along the new boulevard served as the first affordable mass public transportation to Columbia Road. Railroad fare was significantly higher than the price of a ride on a streetcar; thus the introduction of electric streetcars to Columbia Road and elsewhere made their environs accessible to those who previously could not afford a suburban commute.

As Dorchester became increasingly accessible, speculative developers seized the opportunity for investment by purchasing large parcels from wealthy land owners and subdividing them for residential development. With the expansion of inexpensive mass transportation, Dorchester absorbed middle and working-class families, many of them immigrants, beginning in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century. The first quarter of the 20<sup>th</sup> century saw a boom in multi-family residential development in Dorchester with apartment houses, two-family houses, and triple-deckers lining major thoroughfares and side streets alike. By the end of the 1920s, much of Dorchester was densely developed, and home to vibrant communities of varying ethnicities, most notably Irish and Russian and Eastern European immigrants.

These broad patterns of Dorchester's development are reflected in the development of the Intervale Street Historic District. Intervale Street is a side street that extends a half a mile from Warren Street in Roxbury across Blue Hill Avenue to Columbia Road in Dorchester. The street was laid out in three stages in 1892, 1908, and 1914 moving from west to east. The majority of

<sup>1</sup> "Completing Chain of Parkways," *Boston Globe*, August 28, 1897, 9.

<sup>2</sup> "Real Estate Matters," *Boston Globe*, September 29, 1898, 9.

<sup>3</sup> "Columbia Road. Greatest Park Enterprise of Mayor Quincy's Administration," *Boston Globe*, August 27, 1897.

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the land through which Intervale Street would be laid was owned by two major landowners: Aaron Warner Spencer and Edward McKechnie, whose ownership dates back to the 1870s (Figure 1). The Spencer property comprised approximately thirteen acres and the McKechnie property approximately ten acres.

In the 1870s, this part of Dorchester fit the mold of an enclave for wealthy, enterprising Bostonians who arrived in Dorchester after the introduction of the railroad. Spencer built a sprawling home with a long driveway from Columbia Road sometime between 1850 and 1874.<sup>4</sup> He was a well-known Boston banker who worked at 31 State Street and divided his residence between the Hotel Berkley in Boston's Back Bay and his large home on Columbia Road.<sup>5</sup> Nearby neighbors like Alonzo Hamilton, Lyman F. Rhoads, and Richard Baker Jr. were of the same wealthy class of Boston businessmen. Hamilton was a dry-goods merchant, a named partner with the firm Hamilton, Richardson & Whitney. Rhoads was a leather merchant with Day, Wilcox, & Co.; Baker was a well-known Boston merchant at the helm of William F. Weld & Co.<sup>6</sup> Unlike these men, McKechnie did not reside on his large property, but lived further up the road on Hancock Street near its intersection with Columbia Road. McKechnie, a native of Maine, was a carpenter by trade, and a real estate developer in practice. He owned land in several locations in Dorchester, on which he constructed houses.<sup>7</sup> McKechnie acquired the property adjacent to Spencer's after 1869.<sup>8</sup>

The late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries brought change to the area around the Spencer and McKechnie properties. The two large properties remained undivided in 1894 but suburban development was gaining traction around them along nearby Lawrence, Magnolia, and Greenheys streets. Devon, Brunswick, and Intervale streets, extending east from Blue Hill Avenue to the western boundaries of the Spencer and McKechnie parcels, were subdivided and poised for development. (Figure 2) A survey of the Spencer and McKechnie properties in 1893 for the purpose of laying out streets provides insight into the qualities of these parcels at the time, and the reason they remained unaltered:

<sup>4</sup> The 1850 Map of Dorchester by E. Whiting shows an I. Howe as the large landholder off of Columbia Road south of Quincy Street. Spencer's house appears on Howe's former property in the 1874 Landowners Property map of Dorchester. E. Whiting, *Map of Dorchester Mass*, 1850. <http://maps.bpl.org/id/11129>; *U.S., Indexed County Land Ownership Maps, 1860-1918 for A. Warner Spencer, Massachusetts, Suffolk, 1874*. Ancestry.com. [database online]. Provo, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations, Inc., 2010.

<sup>5</sup> *The Boston Directory Embracing the City Record, A General Directory of the Citizens and Business Directory for the Year Commencing July 1, 1875*. (Boston: Sampson, Davenport, and Company, 1875). <https://dl.tufts.edu/catalog/tei/tufts:UA069.005.DO.00020/chapter/d.1875.su.Spencer>

<sup>6</sup> Boston City Directories 1870, 1878, and obituary for Richard Baker Jr. "Obituary," *Boston Post*, January 2, 1874, 4.

<sup>7</sup> Alonzo Hamilton conveyed land on Clark Street and Bellevue Street to McKechnie in 1889. "Lots of Land Sold," *Boston Sunday Globe*, July 21, 1889, 7.

<sup>8</sup> A record of McKechnie's property holdings in 1869 does not include the Columbia Road property, though it does include a house, stable, and land on Humphries Street, land on Dorchester Avenue and Parkman Street, a house in process and land on Sumner Street, and 2 houses and land on Boston Street. *The taxable valuation of the Real and personal Estates, with the Polls and Amount of Tax in the Town of Dorchester*. {Database on-line}. Provo, UT: Ancestry.com Operations Inc, 2004.

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The Spencer estate is under a high state of cultivation, with beautiful gardens and lawns, while the adjacent McKechnie property comprises, on the other hand, and in striking comparison, rugged places, heavily wooded, where troops of gray squirrels are safer from molestation than they would be in the forests of Maine. It is sufficiently diversified to make surveying difficult and tedious. In the plotting of it, it did not seem necessary to provide for any new thoroughfares, because Geneva Avenue and Columbia street (widened) furnish adequate facilities.<sup>9</sup>

A harbinger of neighborhood change came in 1894 when the first Jewish temple in Roxbury opened on Intervale Street near its intersection with Blue Hill Avenue. Agudas Achim, also known as the Intervale Street Synagogue, was located at 32 Intervale Street.<sup>10</sup> The wealthy enclave of the mid and late 19<sup>th</sup> century had been a Protestant community. The introduction of the synagogue shifted the neighborhood demographics, making it a desirable location for Jewish immigrants, who were increasingly able to move into Dorchester and Roxbury with the advent of electric streetcars along Blue Hill Avenue and Columbia Road. The small synagogue was replaced in 1906 by a large new synagogue, Congregation Adath Jeshurun, on Blue Hill Avenue just a block from its intersection with Intervale Street (BOS.11136, NR 1999). Significantly, the founders of the new synagogue were all in the real estate business. Of this cultural and professional relationship, historians of Jewish settlement in Boston have observed: “The construction of the new synagogue, while expressing sincere religious sentiments, would also reflect their interest in property development and the affluence that had started to come their way.”<sup>11</sup> Apartment buildings sprang up near the new synagogue almost immediately, much to the consternation of residents who protested that the apartment buildings were not in keeping with the exclusive air of the single-family homes that had been erected nearby a decade earlier. Of the dispute, the *Boston Post* reported: “It is claimed that Hebrew people desire to cluster in that neighborhood, because their new synagogue practically adjoins that property.”<sup>12</sup> The new synagogue was unquestionably connected to the subsequent development of the surrounding area. Intervale Street was extended to Normandy Street in 1908, and one of the synagogue’s founders, Myer Dana, was involved in a large real estate transaction along the new stretch shortly thereafter.<sup>13</sup>

Jewish migration into Dorchester and Roxbury began in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century and continued unabated through the 1920s. The majority of these immigrants arrived from Russia fleeing state-sanctioned repression of Jewish faith and culture under the Russian Tsar in the late 1880s and early 1900s.<sup>14</sup> Though the first wave of Jewish immigrants arrived in Boston in the 1840s and settled in the lower South End, a majority of Boston’s Jewish immigrants arrived in the 1880s and 1890s and settled in the North End. The West End gradually absorbed this population

<sup>9</sup> City of Boston, “*Annual Report of the Street Laying Out Department for the Year 1893*” (Boston: Rockwell and Churchill, City Printers) 1894, 27. <https://books.google.com>.

<sup>10</sup> Anthony Sammarco, *Roxbury*. (Charleston, SC: Arcadia Publishing) 2007, 50.

<sup>11</sup> Jonathan D. Sarna, Ellen Smith, and Scott-Martin Kosofsky, *The Jews of Boston*. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1995), 195.

<sup>12</sup> “Roxburyites in Arms about New Houses,” *Boston Post*, March 21, 1906, 4.

<sup>13</sup> “Intervale Street,” *Boston Sunday Post*, June 18, 1911, 21.

<sup>14</sup> Sarna, Smith, and Kosofsky, *Jews of Boston*, 65.

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between 1895 and 1905 and remained the largest Jewish district in Boston until about 1910.<sup>15</sup> Many immigrants found employment in Boston's textile and shoe industries, often beginning as peddlers and accumulating enough capital to open their own small businesses.<sup>16</sup> Beginning in the 1890s and continuing through 1917, many of the Jewish immigrants who had become successful in their trades began moving to less dense areas of the city like Dorchester, Roxbury, and Mattapan, which were just beginning to blossom into attractive streetcar suburbs.<sup>17</sup>

With the rising number of Jewish immigrants living in Boston in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century came the demand for Jewish-specific businesses and institutions. These businesses were prevalent in the North and West Ends, and migrated to Blue Hill Avenue as the Jewish population moved into Dorchester and Roxbury in large numbers after the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>18</sup> These included kosher butcher shops, bakeries, grocery stores, and fruit shops. As the Intervale Street synagogue and the Adath Jeshurun synagogue attest, religious institutions also migrated into Dorchester and Roxbury in the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. The Adath Jeshurun congregation became one of four major synagogues serving the Jewish population of Dorchester and Roxbury; many smaller congregations were spread throughout these neighborhoods as well. Synagogues were more than just religious institutions; they were places that solidified business relationships within the community and thus served as important centers for the developing neighborhoods of Roxbury and Dorchester.<sup>19</sup>

With the influx of Jewish business along Blue Hill Avenue following the construction of the new synagogue, residential development was beginning to encroach on the boundaries of the Spencer tract by 1910. Given the neighborhood's proximity to the synagogue, it is not surprising that Bromley Atlases reveal a large number of property owners with Jewish surnames. (Figure 3) An account of the sale of two new brick apartment buildings at 74 and 76 Intervale Street in 1911 reveals the attraction of the neighborhood to Jewish residents: "The property is located not far from the largest Synagogue Orthodox Congregation on the corner of Blue Hill Avenue and Brunswick Street, and the district is occupied mainly by orthodox Hebrews."<sup>20</sup>

Though paper streets are depicted through the Spencer property as early as 1898, Intervale Street was not extended to Columbia Road until 1914, following the introduction of sewer lines to that portion of the street in that year. Changes to the tract were underway prior to 1914, however. The Spencer property had been purchased by Pierce J. Grace by 1910. Grace was a lawyer and real estate developer who lived nearby on Crawford Street in Roxbury.<sup>21</sup> He declared bankruptcy in 1911, and began selling portions of the former Spencer property, spurring development of the tract.<sup>22</sup> (Not long after, the Grace family sold their Crawford Street estate and it became the site first of a Jewish hospital and later a synagogue for the Congregation Beth Hamidrash Hagodol,

<sup>15</sup> Sarna, Smith, and Kosofsky, 147.

<sup>16</sup> Sarna, Smith, and Kosofsky 69.

<sup>17</sup> Sarna, Smith, and Kosofsky, 69.

<sup>18</sup> Sarna, Smith, and Kosofsky. 73, 151.

<sup>19</sup> Sarna, Smith, and Kosofsky, 175-6.

<sup>20</sup> "Large Dorchester Sale," *Boston Sunday Post*, May 14, 1911, 21.

<sup>21</sup> United States Census 1910.

<sup>22</sup> "Real Estate Broker Now In Bankruptcy," *Boston Sunday Post*, November 5, 1911, 9. Records of Grace's land sales are reported in the *City Record*, January 7, 1911, 729. <https://books.google.com>.



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which is no longer extant.)<sup>23</sup> The first buildings constructed in the district were erected at this time. Thomas G. White, a local builder about whom little has been uncovered, purchased land at the eastern end of the Spencer tract where it abutted Columbia Road from Pierce J. Grace in 1911. With Jeremiah C. Spillane, White constructed the Thomas G. White Apartments I and II (BOS.16721, BOS.16722) at 282-284 and 286-288 Columbia Road.<sup>24</sup> These apartment buildings originally contained six residential units each. Units contained six rooms, a bathroom, and offered steam heat, continuous hot water, and janitor service.<sup>25</sup> Spillane was a real estate developer living in Dorchester with offices on Huntington Avenue at the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. He was active in the real estate business from about 1899 to 1913. He constructed many two-family houses and triple-deckers in the Francis Street-Fernwood Road National Register Historic District (BOS.ACA, NR 2016).

The next major wave of development in the district occurred between 1914 and 1915, following the extension of Intervale Street to Columbia Road. At this time, six new apartment buildings were constructed along Intervale Street. The owners, developers, and architects of these buildings were all of Jewish heritage. The R.A. Gazzam Trust Apartments I and II (BOS.16720 and BOS.167223) were constructed at 161 and 164 Intervale Street in 1914. Robert A. Gazzam, a trustee of the Gazzam Real Estate Trust located at 72 Pinckney Street, was the owner. Gazzam was a first-generation American born to Russian parents. He was a druggist in the 1920s and 1930s, with a pharmacy on Blue Hill Avenue in Mattapan.<sup>26</sup> No other real estate transactions involving the Gazzam Real Estate Trust were uncovered. These buildings contained six units each and were designed by the Silverman Engineering Company in 1914. Morris J. Rudnick, who lived at 128 Intervale Street, was the builder. Rudnick, a contractor, was born in Russia and emigrated in 1909. David Silverman, founding partner of the Silverman Engineering Company, was also part of Boston's Jewish community. He was a first-generation American born to Russian Jewish immigrants. The Silverman Engineering Company, later known as Silverman, Brown & Heenan and eventually Silverman & Brown, designed many apartment buildings in Boston neighborhoods including the North and West Ends, Beacon Hill, Dorchester, and Roxbury, as well as in the Fenway, Brighton, and the neighboring communities of Brookline and Cambridge from about 1910 through the 1920s. The Silverman Engineering Company also designed the David Yarchin Apartments (BOS.16715) at 117-121 Intervale Street. David Yarchin, owner and builder, was a carpenter residing at 126 Intervale Street. He immigrated to New York from Russia in 1906. He was also the developer of three triple-deckers, no longer extant, directly across the street.

The three other apartment buildings developed in the district during 1915 were the Solomon Dvlinsky Apartments I, II, and III (BOS.16716, BOS.16717, BOS. 16718), at 123-127, 129-135, and 137-143 Intervale Street. Solomon Dvlinsky was the owner and builder of all three

<sup>23</sup>“Buy Site for Jewish Hospital: Work Begins at Once Grace Estate, Roxbury,” *Boston Post*, November 9, 1912, 6.

<sup>24</sup> Original building permits could not be located for 286-288 Columbia Road. However, Spillane petitioned the city of Boston for sidewalks at 282-288 Columbia Road in 1912, confirming their joint construction. See *Index of Reports of Proceedings of the City Council of Boston for the Year Commencing February 6, 1911, and ending February 3, 1912*, (Boston: Printing Department, 1912), 515. <https://books.google.com>. In addition, the buildings are identical and have been in joint ownership since their construction.

<sup>25</sup> “To Let,” *Boston Sunday Globe*, September 30, 1917.

<sup>26</sup> Boston City Directory 1933.

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buildings, though Samuel Levy was the architect responsible for the design of 123-127 Intervale Street. Dvlinsky was a carpenter, living at 236 Magnolia Street when the buildings were being constructed.<sup>27</sup> He was born in Russia and emigrated to the United States in 1897. Samuel Levy was a registered architect who was extremely active in Chelsea where he filed permits for at least thirty projects between 1911 and 1916.<sup>28</sup> He was born in Russia and emigrated with his parents to New York in 1889. In addition to his long list of buildings in Chelsea, Levy worked on a handful of stand-alone projects in East Boston, Brighton, and Brookline between 1912 and 1915. During World War I, Levy worked as an architect for the Hood Rubber Company in Watertown, which was expanding their facilities as part of the war effort.<sup>29</sup> After the war, Levy produced a commercial building in Watertown, and three single-family houses of different styles on Verndale Street in Brookline before turning his architectural practice back to brick apartment house construction.<sup>30</sup> From 1924 until 1929, Levy produced at least twenty-one apartment buildings in Dorchester, Roxbury, Brookline, Jamaica Plain, and Newton. In 1928, Levy designed the Congregation Ezrath Israel Synagogue in Malden, which is no longer extant.<sup>31</sup> There are no records of commissions after 1929. He lived in a two-family home on Warren Street until his death in 1936.<sup>32</sup>

The new buildings in the Intervale Street district attracted Jewish investors and residents. By 1918 two properties in the district had changed hands: the David Yarchin Apartments and the Thomas G. White Apartments I and II. (Figure 4) Solomon Tarmy purchased the David Yarchin Apartments. Tarmy was a wool cloth manufacturer employed by the Boston Wool Stock Company in Chelsea. He was born in Russia, emigrated to New York in 1907, and lived briefly in Dorchester and Everett before settling in Chelsea.<sup>33</sup> The Abraham Shapira Trust purchased the Thomas G. White Apartments I and II. Shapira was also a manufacturer born in Russia. He emigrated to New York in 1900.<sup>34</sup> He lived nearby on Crawford Street in Roxbury from 1913 through at least 1920. The residents of the district in 1920 were first- and second-generation immigrant families mainly from Russia, but also from England, Hungary, and Poland. With the exception of one family, the Schwall family who owned and resided in the David Yarchin Apartments by 1920, the residents of the buildings were all renters. Most of the family heads were paid workers rather than employers, mainly in clothing and shoe-related businesses, working as furriers, milliners, tailors, petticoat factory workers, and clothing cutters. Some residents were small-business owners. These residents owned a cigar shop, barber shop, and

<sup>27</sup> Boston City Directory 1915-1916.

<sup>28</sup> Many of Levy's buildings in Chelsea are contributing resources to the Bellingham Square Historic District and the Downtown Chelsea Residential District, listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 1985 and 1988, respectively.

<sup>29</sup> "U.S., World War I Draft Registration Cards, 1917-1918," Ancestry.com, <http://ancestry.com>; "Hood Rubber Company – Watertown (Mass.)," *Digital Commonwealth*, <https://www.digitalcommonwealth.org/search/commonwealth:7d278t45x>.

<sup>30</sup> Heath, "Egleston Square"; "WAT.189, BKL.274, BKL.251, BKL. 272," MACRIS database, <http://mhc-macris.net>.

<sup>31</sup> "MAL.188," MACRIS database, <http://mhc-macris.net>.

<sup>32</sup> Boston City Directories 1928-1937.

<sup>33</sup> State and Federal Naturalization Records for Solomon Tarmy. Ancestry.com. *Massachusetts, State and Federal Naturalization Records, 1798-1950* [database on-line]. Provo, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations, Inc., 2011.

<sup>34</sup> State and Federal Naturalization Records for Abraham Shapira. Ancestry.com. *Massachusetts, State and Federal Naturalization Records, 1798-1950* [database on-line]. Provo, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations, Inc., 2011.

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bowling alley. There were also laborers and salesmen: carpenters, plumbers, chauffeurs, sheet metal workers, insurance agents, and department store salesmen.<sup>35</sup> One resident of the Thomas G. White Apartments II ran his business out of his apartment advertising in *The Boston Globe* in 1915: "Furs repaired, remodeled, and exchanged. New furs and fur coats at reduced prices, convince yourself before buying elsewhere, monthly charge accounts accepted, L.B. Schiller, 288 Columbia Road."<sup>36</sup> This vibrant Jewish community was bolstered by Jewish services along Intervale Street. A Hebrew School was completed at 35 Intervale Street in 1916, and a Jewish welfare center opened at 6 Intervale Street in 1918.

The First World War halted new construction in the district until 1925, when the Louis Glazer Apartments (BOS.16719) at 145-59 Intervale Street were erected. The land on which the fifteen-unit apartment building was constructed was owned by R. Elmer Townsend in 1918. Townsend was a well-known real estate broker active during the late 19<sup>th</sup> century into the 1920s, with real estate holdings in Roxbury, West Roxbury, and Jamaica Plain. His office was located at 27 State Street in Boston. He also owned three-and-a-half acres on the northern side of Intervale Street, what is now Ceylon Park (established by the city of Boston in 1923 and named for its location on Ceylon Street), and several lots on side streets off of Intervale Street. Louis Glazer was the owner and developer of the new apartment building, working with architect Max M. Kalman. Glazer was a house carpenter living in Chelsea. He was born in Russia and emigrated to the United States in 1905. Kalman was born in Russia, emigrating to the United States in 1885. He was both an architect and an attorney. Kalman was active in the architectural profession during the first quarter of the twentieth century with projects in Boston, Chelsea, and Brookline. During the 1910s he was a partner in the Tremont Street architectural firm of Minor and Kalman. He constructed numerous multi-family buildings on the North Slope of Beacon Hill as well as in Allston and Brighton, some of which he worked on in a partnership with the Silverman Engineering Company. He also designed the Vilna Shul synagogue at 14-18 Philips Street, 1919 (BOS.13014, NR District 1966).

The vibrant immigrant Jewish community established in Dorchester and Roxbury in the early decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century continued to expand and thrive in the second quarter of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. In 1920 approximately 44,000 Jews were living in Dorchester and Upper Roxbury.<sup>37</sup> As the Intervale Street-Columbia Road Historic District reflects, the Jewish immigrants moving into Dorchester and Roxbury in the 1910s and 1920s were typically working class. At this time, many of the more affluent Jewish early settlers of Dorchester and Roxbury began to move to Boston's outlying suburbs of Brookline and Newton. The working-class Jewish population of Dorchester, Roxbury, and Mattapan continued to expand, increasing their numbers to 77,000 by the early 1930s. This upward trend held through the 1940s.

The Intervale Street-Columbia Road Historic District reflects this broad pattern of migration and settlement. The neighborhood continued to attract Jewish property owners and working-class residents in the 1930s. At this time, property owners of six of the nine buildings in the district were Jewish: Annette Benson, Mollie and Joseph Goldenberg, Maurice Skalsky, Joseph

<sup>35</sup> United States Census 1920.

<sup>36</sup> "Clothing," *Boston Evening Globe*, November 15, 1915, 12.

<sup>37</sup> Sarna, Smith, and Kosofsky, *Jews of Boston*, 151.

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Weinberg, and Marion Levy, sister of architect Samuel Levy. (Figure 5) The majority of residents in the 1930s emigrated in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, some as late as the 1910s and 1920s, and the dominant native language in the district was still Yiddish. These new families emigrated from Russia, Poland, and Holland, as well as Austria, Hungary, Latvia, and Portugal. Like the residents of the 1920s, those who lived in the district in the 1930s and 1940s continued to be employed in many of the same working-class trades serving in the clothing and shoe-related industries as well as in sales and as laborers. By the 1940s, many family heads were born in America to immigrant parents, whereas in previous decades, family heads were predominantly immigrants themselves.<sup>38</sup>

By the mid 20<sup>th</sup> century, the demographics of Dorchester and Roxbury were changing. African-Americans were moving into these neighborhoods in increasingly large numbers beginning in the 1950s, and the Jewish population of Dorchester and Roxbury was beginning to follow their predecessors into Brookline and Newton. In 1950, about 70,000 Jews resided in the neighborhood.<sup>39</sup> In 1955, however, the large synagogues began moving out of Roxbury and Dorchester and into Brookline and Newton, creating a stronger attraction to the suburbs. Between 1950 and 1960, the Jewish population of Dorchester shrank from 70,000 to 47,000. The leadership and membership of Congregation Adath Jeshurun was part of this exodus. The synagogue was sold to the Mt. Calvary Pentacostal Church in 1967. The trend of closing synagogues and migrating congregants continued over the next decade: in 1970 there were 16,000 Jewish residents of Dorchester, and by the end of the decade only several hundred remained.<sup>40</sup> City directories reveal that a gradual migration of Jewish residents out of the Intervale Street–Columbia Road Historic District occurred between 1955, when many residents listed have traditionally Jewish surnames, and 1965, when just one resident with a Jewish surname remained.

### The Colonial and Classical Revival Movements and the Intervale Street Historic District

The architectural vocabulary of the Intervale Street–Columbia Road Historic District is that of the Colonial and Classical Revival styles. These styles are closely related with overlapping characteristics and were both immensely popular in the United States from the late 19<sup>th</sup> through the mid 20<sup>th</sup> century. The period of development of the Intervale Street–Columbia Road Historic District occurred during the height of the popularity of these revival styles. While early interest in the colonial past was triggered by the Philadelphia Centennial Exposition of 1876, the 1893 Worlds Columbian Exposition in Chicago cemented the enthusiasm for reviving its relics in the minds of the nation. The occasion marked the 400<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Christopher Columbus's discovery of America, and presented visitors with innumerable opportunities to experience the colonial past. Colonial architecture was on exhibit in many of the state buildings erected at the fair; their decorative interiors, commemorative displays, and historical exhibitions flooded the

<sup>38</sup> United States Census 1940.

<sup>39</sup> Sarna, Smith, and Kosofsky, *Jews of Boston*, 151.

<sup>40</sup> Sarna, Smith, and Kosofsky, 163.

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fair grounds.<sup>41</sup> Massachusetts recreated the John Hancock House, built on Beacon Hill in 1737 and demolished in 1863. The fair also reignited an enthusiasm for classical forms. The showpiece of the Columbian Exposition was the Court of Honor, a dramatic display of Neoclassical buildings inspired by the Italian Renaissance that made a lasting impression. This celebration coincided with mass immigration to the United States from Europe in the 1880s and 1890s, which fueled a desire to underscore and impart American values. Reviving elements of the Colonial past and adopting the classical trimmings associated with cultural achievement was reassuring at a time of great change.

Colonial Revival architecture began as loose interpretations of Colonial-period buildings, but took a more serious turn in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century when publications such as *The American Architect and Building News* began publishing measured drawings of colonial buildings and the *White Pine Series of Architectural Monographs* printed photographs of colonial precedents.<sup>42</sup> The single-most defining characteristic that was reproduced in the revival movement is an emphasis on the door surround of the main entrance, which often features pilasters or slender columns supporting a pediment or entablature as seen in the Georgian style, or a fanlight above the door as seen in the Federal style. Other characteristic elements of the revival style include elaborate cornices, symmetrical fenestration arrangement, light-colored brick, bay windows, multi-pane double-hung sash windows commonly featured in pairs, and in urban examples, bowed fronts, which allowed for increased light to reach apartments in buildings erected on deep, narrow lots.<sup>43</sup> The Classical Revival shares these stylistic elements, with a particular emphasis on elaborate columns, typically with Ionic or Corinthian capitals.

The apartment buildings in the Intervale Street-Columbia Road Historic District share the stylistic characteristics of the Colonial and Classical Revival styles. All of the building façades in the district are organized symmetrically, with decorative emphasis on door and window surrounds as well as cornice lines. The R.A. Gazzam Trust Apartments I and II exemplify the Classical Revival in the district with double-height, cast-stone door surrounds that incorporate classical pilasters with Corinthian capitals, molded cornices, and pediments. Other embellishment of the façade includes cast-stone quoining, lintel courses, inset diamond and rectangular panels, and corbeled lintels, as well as a wide, galvanized iron cornice with modillions. The wide cornices of the Thomas G. White Apartments I and II with denticulated friezes and modillions are particularly nice examples of Colonial Revival detailing in the district. The David Yarchin and Solomon Dvlinsky Apartments I, II, and III all employ buff-colored brick, bow-fronted façades, classically detailed entries, and wide galvanized iron cornices with brackets, friezeboards, and modillions, typical Classical Revival elements. Though constructed a decade later than most of the buildings in the district, the Louis Glazer Apartments employ Colonial Revival elements as well. Buff-colored brick with cast-stone detailing echoes the apartment buildings to the west, entrances are emphasized with double-height cast-stone surrounds that incorporate sidelights and transoms, and windows are grouped in pairs and trios.

<sup>41</sup> Susan Prendergast Schoelwer, "Curious Relics and Quaint Scenes: The Colonial Revival at Chicago's Great Fair" in *The Colonial Revival in America*, ed. Alan Alexrod (New York: W.W. Norton Company, 1986), 184-216.

<sup>42</sup> Virginia and Lee McAlester, *A Field Guide to American Houses* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1998), 321.

<sup>43</sup> McAlester, *A Field Guide to American Houses*, 326.

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Behind the Colonial and Classical Revival façades, the apartment buildings in the district offered varying numbers of apartments ranging from six to twelve units per building. The specific arrangement of original apartment interiors and architectural detailing is not known. However, buildings in the district generally adhered to a plan that included entry vestibules leading to single-loaded corridors and stair halls accessing upper floor units. Typically, attention to architectural detailing was limited to the entry vestibule, extending to the first-floor stair hall. The number of bedrooms varied from two to three, depending on the unit, and additional living space included living rooms and kitchens. Rear and side balconies offered access to the outdoors on upper floors.

The revival styles embraced by the developers of the Intervale Street-Columbia Road Historic District may have been appealing for several reasons. Firstly, elements of these styles would have been an architectural vocabulary that was familiar to them. Apartment buildings and commercial buildings along Blue Hill Avenue, especially between Intervale Street and the Congregation Adath Jeshurun Synagogue, employed Colonial and Classical Revival forms and details, as did apartment buildings along Columbia Road. A second explanation for the promotion of the styles in their buildings may be that the district's developers were businessmen with an interest in constructing marketable properties. Their buildings were typically quickly sold to third parties interested in long-term real estate investment. Operating within a favored architectural vocabulary guaranteed speedy sales. These stylistic elements would have been appealing to future residents as well, regardless of their heritage. The Jewish immigrants who resided in these buildings may have considered the presentation of the buildings as a welcome means of embracing their adopted country.

#### Summary of Activity in the Intervale Street-Columbia Road Historic District post-1969

The years following the gradual exodus of the Jewish community from the Intervale Street-Columbia Road Historic District were a transitional period for the district. The demographics of the neighborhood shifted from a predominantly Jewish community to a mixed community largely comprised of African American and Hispanic residents, which continues to reflect the population today.<sup>44</sup> Beginning in the 1960s, deferred maintenance and limited investment resulted in some buildings in the district being cited by Boston's Inspectional Services Department as being in an unsafe and dangerous condition. Citations for unsecured vacant buildings and vandalism continued through the 1980s and 1990s and into the 2000s.

The Solomon Dvlinisky Apartments II at 129-135 Intervale Street have been undergoing ongoing rehabilitation for use as affordable housing since the 1980s. In 2015, the building underwent a renovation for continued use as affordable housing using historic rehabilitation tax credits. Work was focused on addressing issues of deferred maintenance on the interior and exterior of the building, including the repointing and repair of masonry, repair of concrete stairs, slabs, and curbs, and repair of existing drywall, rotted wood, and wood flooring. Historic fabric and the original building plan were retained as part of the rehabilitation. All work met the Secretary of Interior Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties.

<sup>44</sup>*City Data Online*, s.v. "Dorchester neighborhood," accessed March 1, 2017, <http://www.city-data.com/neighborhood/Dorchester-Boston-MA.html>.

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Intervale Street–Columbia Road Historic District  
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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 # \_\_\_\_\_

**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):** \_\_\_\_\_

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**10. Geographical Data**

**Acreeage of Property** Approximately 1.5 acres

Use either the UTM system or latitude/longitude coordinates

**Latitude/Longitude Coordinates**

Datum if other than WGS84: \_\_\_\_\_  
(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

- |                        |                       |
|------------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. Latitude: 42.309952 | Longitude: -71.076278 |
| 2. Latitude: 42.309817 | Longitude: -71.075999 |
| 3. Latitude: 42.309685 | Longitude: -71.075688 |

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- |                        |                       |
|------------------------|-----------------------|
| 4. Latitude: 42.309546 | Longitude: -71.075350 |
| 5. Latitude: 42.309367 | Longitude: -71.074846 |
| 6. Latitude: 42.309224 | Longitude: -71.074476 |
| 7. Latitude: 42.309411 | Longitude: -71.074213 |
| 8. Latitude: 42.309082 | Longitude: -71.074342 |
| 9. Latitude: 42.309312 | Longitude: -71.074014 |

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

The boundary of the nominated historic district follows the lot lines of the assessor's parcels that are listed on the district datasheet and shown on the attached assessor's map.

**Boundary Justification** (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The boundaries of the nominated historic district have been drawn to include a cohesive group of Colonial Revival brick apartment buildings. This block of apartment buildings is visually distinct from adjacent properties, which are primarily recreational spaces. The Fredericks Middle School Playground abuts the district to the west and south, the King School Park, and Ceylon Park dominate the land on the north side of Intervale Street near the district. Two frame buildings on the north side of Intervale street across from the district would not contribute to the district due to their loss of historic integrity and recent construction.

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**11. Form Prepared By**

name/title: Roysin Younkin, Associate/Emily Dominijanni, Junior Associate, MacRostie  
Historic Advisors, with Betsy Friedberg, National Register Director, MHC

organization: Massachusetts Historical  
Commission

street & number: 220 Morrissey Blvd.

city or town: Boston state: MA zip code: 02125

e-mail betsy.friedberg@sec.state.ma.us

telephone: 617-727-8470

date: January 2019

Intervale Street—Columbia Road Historic District  
Name of Property

Suffolk, MA  
County and State

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### **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: Intervale Street Historic District

City or Vicinity: Boston

County: Suffolk

State: MA

Photographer: Megan Lydon

Date Photographed: January 2015, March 2017

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

Photo 1 of 16: Intervale Street streetscape, looking southeast

Photo 2 of 16: 117-121 Intervale Street, looking southwest

Photo 3 of 16: 123-127 Intervale Street, looking southeast

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- Photo 4 of 16: 129-135 Intervale Street, looking southeast
- Photo 5 of 16: 129-135 Intervale Street, looking southwest
- Photo 6 of 16: 137-143 Intervale Street, looking southwest
- Photo 7 of 16: 145-159 Intervale Street, looking southwest
- Photo 8 of 16: 145-159 Intervale Street, looking southeast
- Photo 9 of 16: 145-159 Intervale Street, looking southwest
- Photo 10 of 16: 161 Intervale Street, looking southwest
- Photo 11 of 16: 164 Intervale Street, looking northeast
- Photo 12 of 16: 282-284 Columbia Road, looking southwest
- Photo 13 of 16: 286-288 Columbia Road, looking north
- Photo 14 of 16: Intervale Street streetscape from 137-143 Intervale Street, looking southeast
- Photo 15 of 16: Intervale Street streetscape from 145-159 Intervale Street, looking northwest
- Photo 16 of 16: Intervale Street streetscape from 129-135 Intervale Street, looking northwest

**Figures:**

- Figure 1: Detail from 1874 Hopkins' Atlas of Suffolk County
- Figure 2: Detail from Plate 13, 1894 Bromley Atlas of Dorchester
- Figure 3: Detail from Plate 13, 1910 Bromley Atlas of Dorchester
- Figure 4: Detail from Plate 13, 1918 Bromley Atlas of Dorchester
- Figure 5: Detail from Plate 13, 1933 Bromley Atlas of Dorchester

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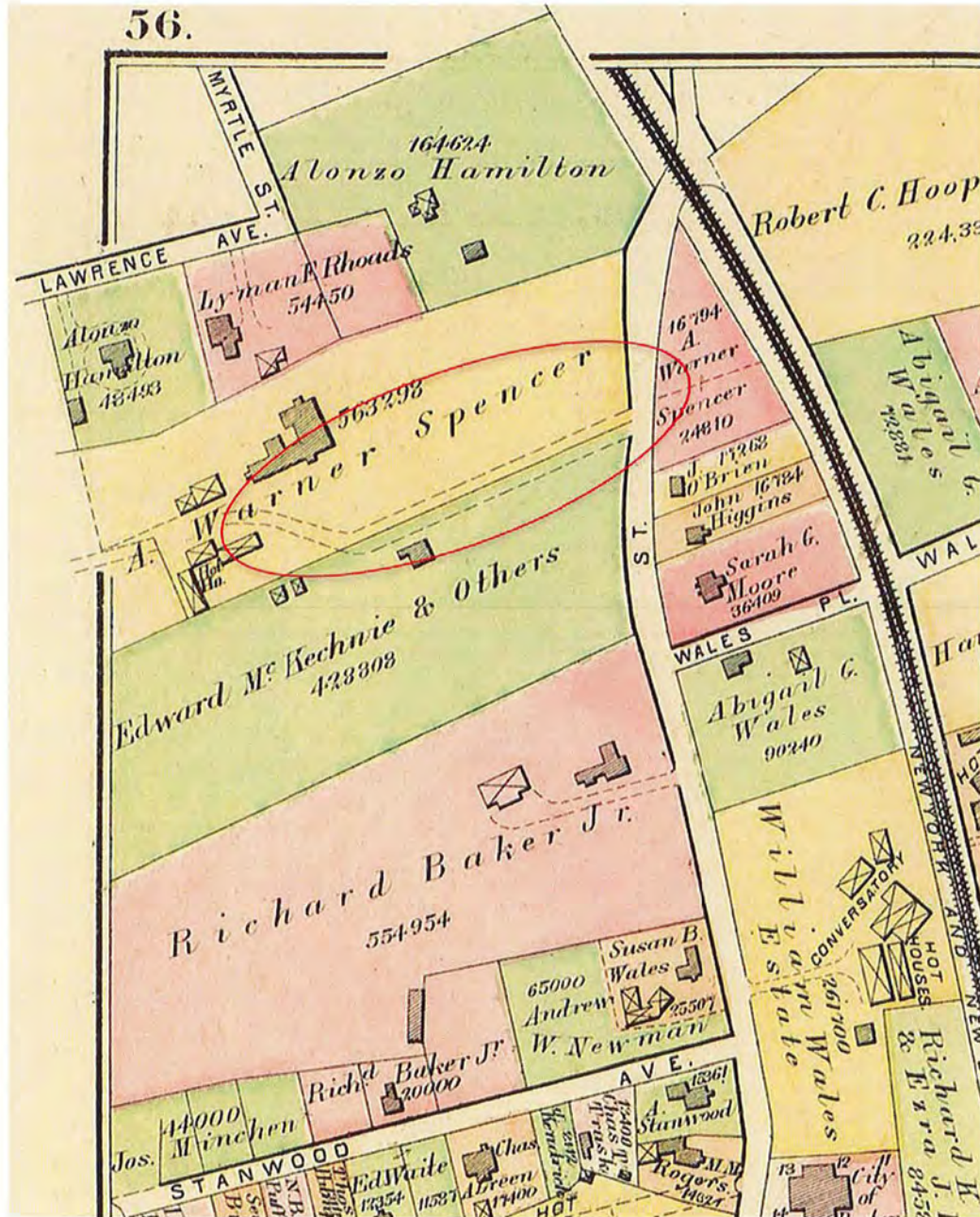


Figure 1: Detail from 1874 Hopkins' Atlas of Suffolk County with future Intervale Street-Columbia Road Historic District is circled in red.

Intervale Street–Columbia Road Historic District  
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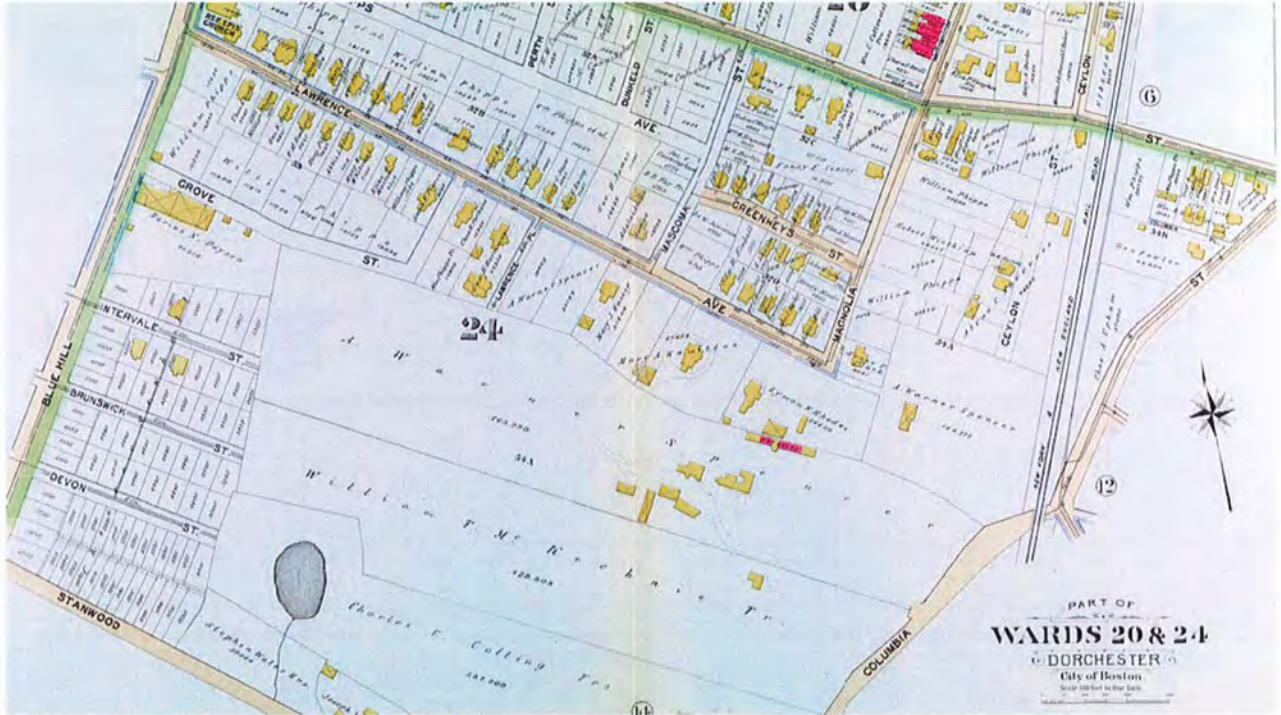


Figure 2: 1894 Bromley Atlas of Dorchester depicts the encroachment of suburban development on the Spencer and McKechnie tracts.

Intervale Street–Columbia Road Historic District  
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Figure 3: 1910 Bromley Atlas of Dorchester depicts accelerated development in the vicinity of Intervale Street following the 1906 construction of the Adath Jeshurun synagogue nearby on Blue Hill Avenue. A large number of property owners in the area with Jewish surnames indicate the influence of the synagogue on residential development in the neighborhood.

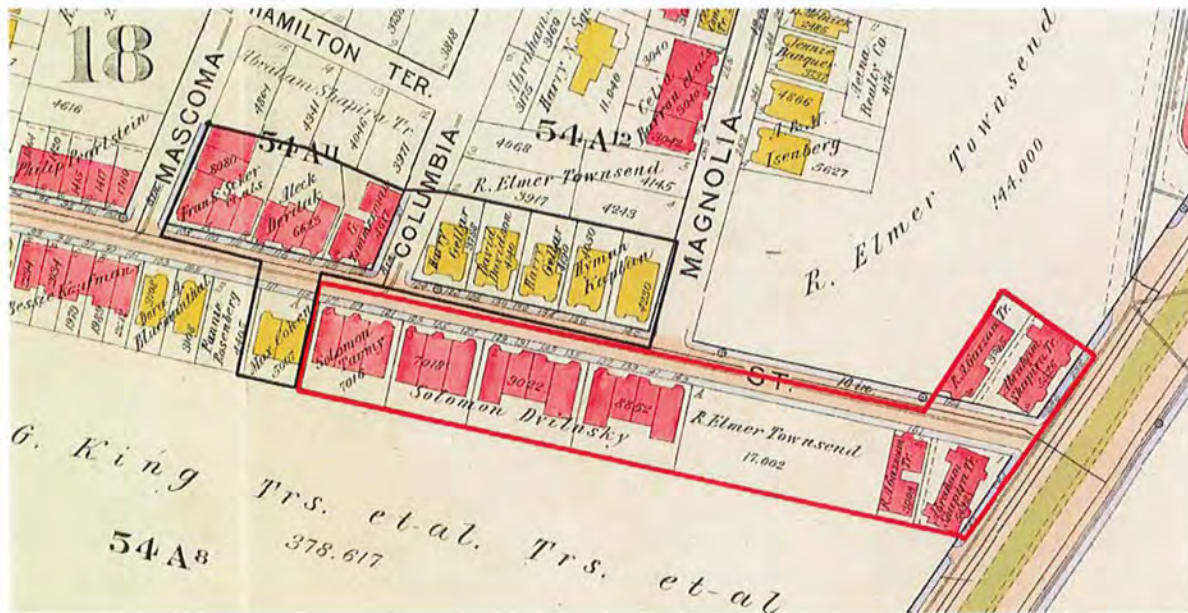


Figure 4: 1918 Bromley Atlas. Buildings in the district are outlined in red. All but one of the buildings outlined in black are no longer extant. The one remaining building has been altered.

Intervale Street-Columbia Road Historic District  
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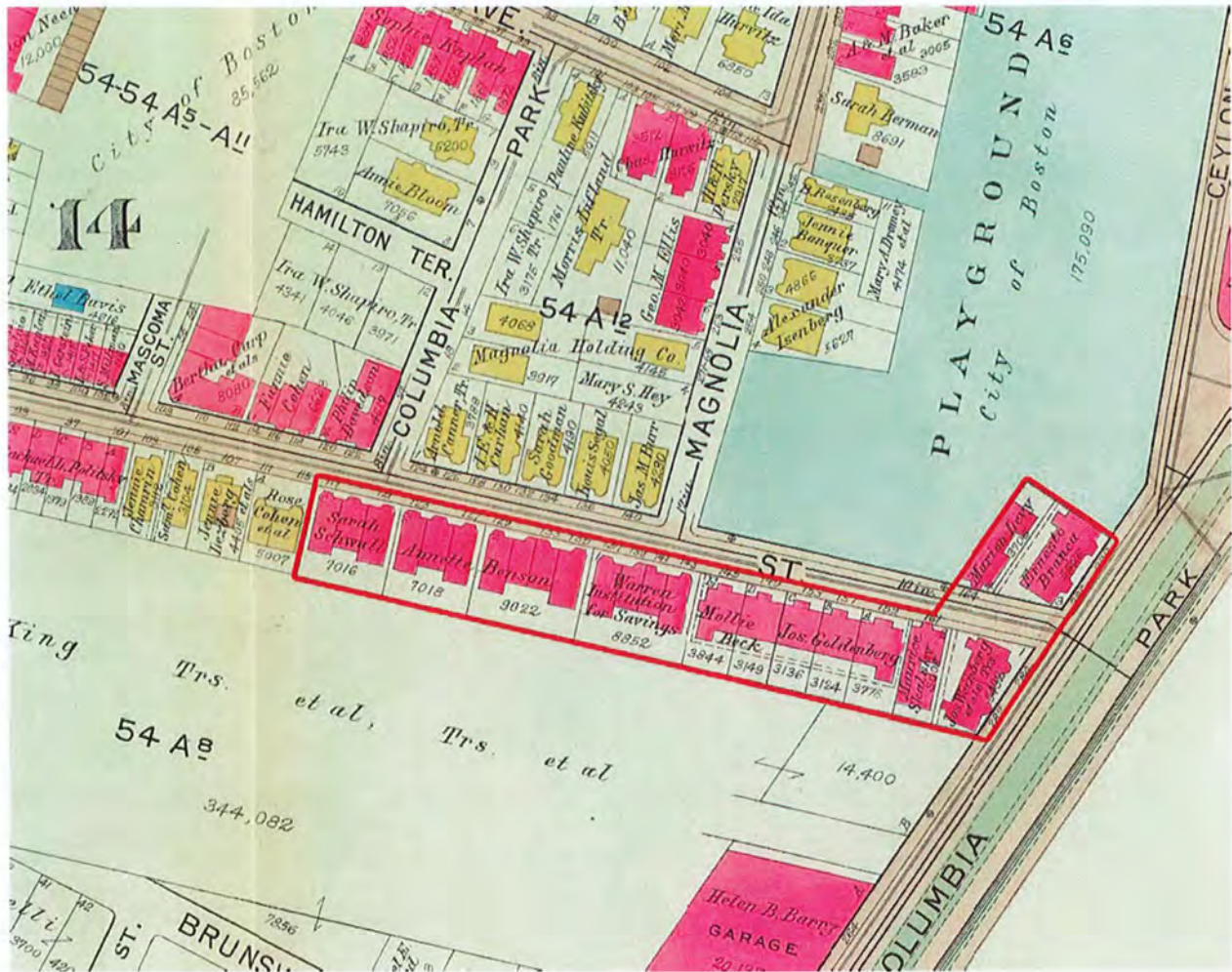


Figure 5: 1933 Bromley Atlas of Dorchester showing the full development of the district.

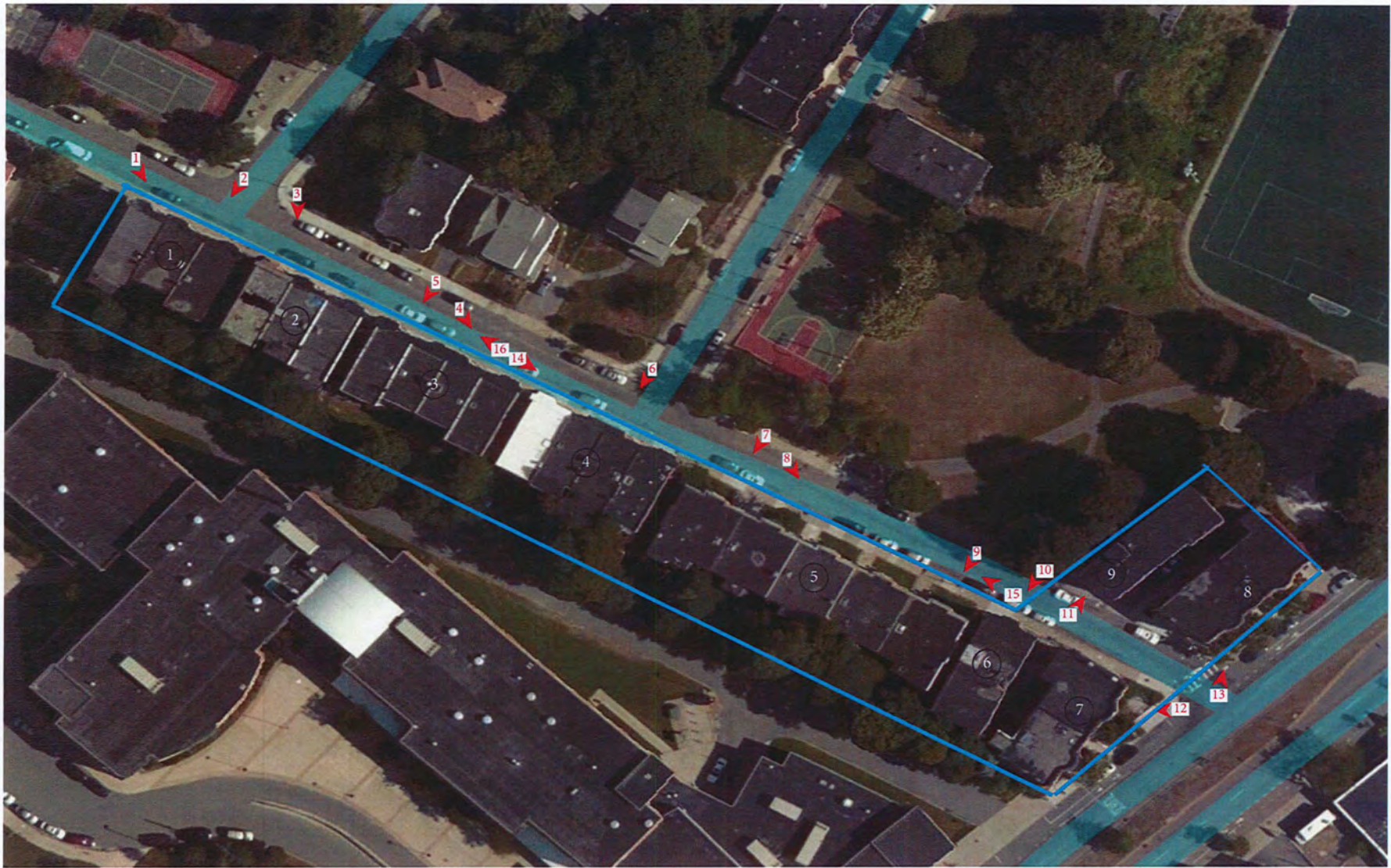
**Paperwork Reduction Act Statement:** This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 460 et seq.).

**Estimated Burden Statement:** Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 100 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Office of Planning and Performance Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.



**Intervale Street Columbia Road Historic District**  
 Boston (Suffolk Co.), Massachusetts  
*District Data Sheet*

MHC Number	Assessor's Parcel #	Resource Type	Property Type	Sketch Map Resource No	Street Address	Name	Photo Number	Construction Date	Architect/Maker	Style	Status (C/NC)
BOS.16721	1400355001, 1400355000	Building	9-Unit Apartment	7	282-284 Columbia Rd.	Thomas G. White Apartments I	12	1911	J.C. Spillane	Colonial Revival	C
BOS.16722	1400117000, 1400147001	Building	12-Unit Apartment	8	286-288 Columbia Rd.	Thomas G. White Apartments II	13	ca. 1911	J.C. Spillane	Colonial Revival	C
BOS.16715	1400385000, 1400385001, 1400385002	Building	9-Unit Apartment	1	117-121 Intervale St.	David Yarchin Apartments	1, 2, 16	1915	Silverman Engineering Co.	Classical Revival	C
BOS.16716	1400386000, 1400386001, 1400386002	Building	9-Unit Apartment	2	123-127 Intervale St.	Solomon Dvilnsky Apartments I	3, 16	1915	Samuel S. Levy	Classical Revival	C
BOS.16717	1400386003, 1400387000, 1400387001	Building	12-Unit Apartment	3	129-135 Intervale St.	Solomon Dvilnsky Apartments II	4, 5, 16	ca. 1915	Solomon Dvilnsky	Classical Revival	C
BOS.16718	1400388000, 1400388001, 1400388002, 1400388003	Building	12-Unit Apartment	4	137-143 Intervale St.	Solomon Dvilnsky Apartments III	6, 14	1915	Solomon Dvilnsky	Classical Revival	C
BOS.16719	1400389000, 1400389001, 1400390000, 1400391000, 1400392000	Building	15-Unit Apartment	5	145-159 Intervale St.	Louis Glazer Apartments	7, 8, 9, 15	1925	Max M. Kalman	Colonial Revival	C
BOS.16720	1400393000	Building	6-Family Apartment	6	161 Intervale St.	R.A. Gazzam Trust Apartments I	10	1914	Silverman Engineering Co.	Classical Revival	C
BOS.16723	1400118000	Building	6-Family Apartment	9	164 Intervale St.	R.A. Gazzam Trust Apartments II	11	1914	Silverman Engineering Co.	Classical Revival	C



Intervale Street-Columbia Road Historic District, Boston (Dorchester), Suffolk Co., Massachusetts

— District Boundary

*Sketch Map and Photo Key*

Resource number **5**

Photo number **12**

# Intervale St - Columbia Rd Historic District

January 18, 2019

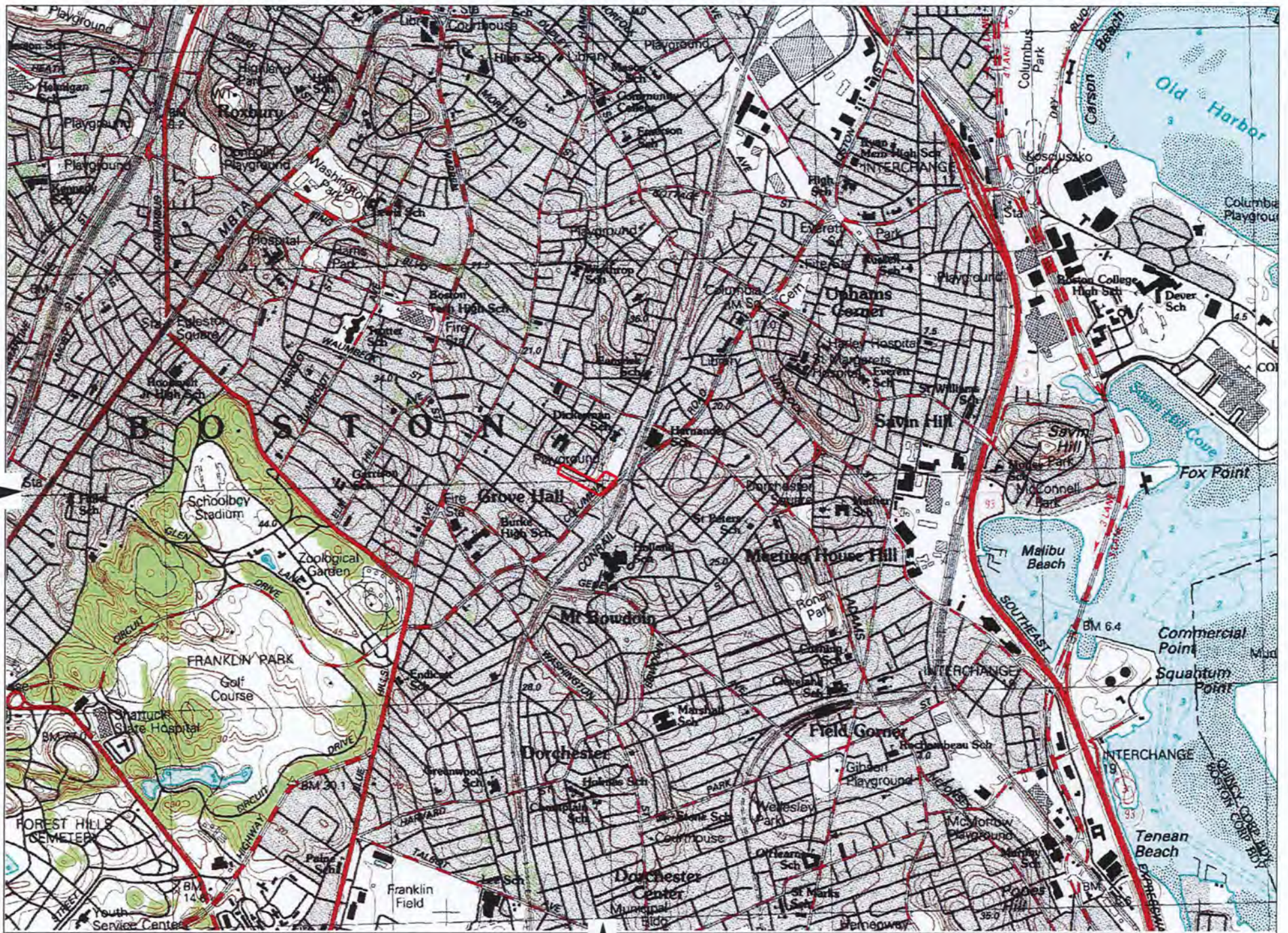


**MAP FOR REFERENCE ONLY  
NOT A LEGAL DOCUMENT**

The City of Boston makes no claims, no representations, and no warranties, expressed or implied, concerning the validity (expressed or implied), the reliability, or the accuracy of the GIS data and GIS data products furnished by the City, including the implied validity of any uses of such data. The use of this data, in any such manner, shall not supercede any federal, state or local laws or regulations.



Intervale Street - Columbia Road Historic District, Boston (Suffolk Co.), MA



Intervale Street - Columbia Road Historic District  
Boston (Suffolk Co.), MA



1. Intervale Street streetscape, looking southeast



2. 117-121 Intervale Street, looking southwest

Intervale Street - Columbia Road Historic District  
Boston (Suffolk Co.), MA



3. 123-127 Intervale Street, looking southeast



4. 129-135 Intervale Street, looking southeast

Intervale Street - Columbia Road Historic District  
Boston (Suffolk Co.), MA



5. 129-135 Intervale Street, looking southwest



6. 137-143 Intervale Street, looking southwest

Intervale Street - Columbia Road Historic District  
Boston (Suffolk Co.), MA



7. 145-159 Intervale Street, looking southwest



8. 145-159 Intervale Street, looking southeast



Intervale Street - Columbia Road Historic District  
Boston (Suffolk Co.), MA



9. 145-159 Intervale Street, looking southwest



10. 161 Intervale Street, looking southwest

Intervale Street - Columbia Road Historic District  
Boston (Suffolk Co.), MA



11. 164 Intervale Street, looking northeast (Jan. 2015)



12. 282-284 Columbia Road, looking southwest (March 2017)

Intervale Street - Columbia Road Historic District  
Boston (Suffolk Co.), MA



13. 286-288 Columbia Road, looking north (March 2017)



14. Intervale Street streetscape from 137-143 Intervale St., looking southeast (Jan 2015)

Intervale Street - Columbia Road Historic District  
Boston (Suffolk Co.), MA



15. Intervale Street streetscape from 145-159 Intervale Street, looking northwest



16. Intervale Street streetscape from 129-135 Intervale Street, looking northwest





121

119

ONE WAY

NO STOPPING

Street  
12noon-  
Tow 2





131

129

407N 231

576 W32





131

129

NO PARKING  
VIOLATORS  
WILL BE  
TOWED AWAY  
AT OWNER'S  
RISK

casella

casella



ONE WAY

STOP

143

ONE WAY

DO NOT ENTER

NO PARKING

143  
145



149

145







161



164



ONE WAY

DO NOT ENTER

↑

SCHOOL BUS





ONE WAY

DO NOT ENTER



STOP

STOP

SLOW

242 Y68

2HY 489

1SZ 645

W. WASHINGTON





131

29

576 WC6

Garage

NO LEFT TURN

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

Requested Action: Nomination

Property Name: Intervale Street-Columbia Road Historic District

Multiple Name: \_\_\_\_\_

State & County: MASSACHUSETTS, Suffolk

Date Received: 1/31/2019      Date of Pending List: 2/12/2019      Date of 16th Day: 2/27/2019      Date of 45th Day: 3/18/2019      Date of Weekly List: \_\_\_\_\_

Reference number: SG100003470

Nominator: Other Agency, SHPO

Reason For Review: \_\_\_\_\_

X Accept       Return       Reject      2/28/2019 Date

Abstract/Summary Comments: District is locally significant in Community Planning & Development and Architecture. Period of significance 1911-1969.

Recommendation/ Criteria: NR Criteria A & C

Reviewer: Lisa Deline      Discipline: Historian

Telephone: (202)354-2239      Date: 2/28/19

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.



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

January 28, 2019

Dr. Julie Ernstein  
Deputy Keeper  
Acting Chief, National Register of Historic Places  
Department of the Interior  
National Park Service  
1849 C Street NW, Stop 7228  
Washington, DC 20240

Dear Dr. Ernstein:

Enclosed please find the following nomination form:

Intervale Street–Columbia Road Historic District, 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 properties 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,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Betsy Friedberg".

Betsy Friedberg  
National Register Director  
Massachusetts Historical Commission

enclosure

cc: Mayor Martin Walsh, City of Boston  
Rosanne Foley, Executive Director, Boston Landmarks Commission  
Kathleen Von Jena, Boston Landmarks Commission, CLG Coordinator  
Lynn Smiledge, Chairperson, Boston Landmarks Commission  
Roysin Bennett Younkin, consultant, MacRostie Historic Advisors  
Albert Rex, consultant, MacRostie Historic Advisors  
John B. Cruz, III, Cruz Development