



70 TAPLEY STREET
SPRINGFIELD
MASSACHUSETTS
01104

Final Report
for the proposed
**ISOLATION HOSPITAL
LOCAL HISTORIC DISTRICT**

Springfield, Massachusetts



Prepared for the Springfield Historical Commission
by the Springfield Preservation Trust
March 17, 2023

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SUMMARY SHEET

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**Expected Date of Public
Hearing:** March 16, 2023

**Expected Date of City
Council Vote:** April 10, 2023

**Number of Properties
Included in the Proposed
Local Historic District** **1**

Conclusion of the Preliminary Study Report: To protect this 1930s Art Deco building, the Isolation Hospital Local Historic District should be created.

I. Introduction

The Historic Districts Act, Massachusetts General Law Chapter 40C, is the Commonwealth's enabling statute for creating local historic districts. Local historic districts are the mechanism by which municipalities can designate and protect areas of architectural and historical significance. Within a local historic district, no exterior architectural feature that is visible from a public street, park or water body can be altered without first receiving permission from the local historic district commission. The level of protection provided by a local historic district is much greater than that provided by inclusion on the National Register of Historic Places. Although being on the National Register is a formal recognition of property's historical significance and can offer limited review of projects funded or assisted by federal, state, or CDBG funds, the property itself is not protected from change if work is done exclusively with private funds. The local historic district provides greater protection and review for properties and has this power as a result of a town or city council vote.

Local Historic Districts were first established in Massachusetts in 1955. There are now more than 200 local historic districts in over 100 municipalities in the Commonwealth, including nineteen in Springfield. Neighboring municipalities with local historic districts include West Springfield, Longmeadow, Chicopee, and Holyoke.

In 1972, the Quadrangle-Mattoon local historic district was established in Springfield. Over the next six years, five other districts were created, protecting more than 1,200 properties. Three district expansions have also taken place. More recently, three small historic districts have been created to protect the Immaculate Conception Church complex, the Colony Hills area, and Apremont Triangle area. Single-building LHDs were created to protect Our Lady of Hope Church, Willys-Overland Block, Hubbard & Emily Bliss House, Thomas Wason House, Driscoll Block, Trinity Block, Thurston Munson House, All Souls Episcopal Church, Elias Brookings School, Aunchman House, Forest Park Trolley Waiting Pavilion, Gunn Block, and National Needle Building. Fifty years since the first LHD was created in Springfield, more than 1300 properties are protected in 23 LHDs. LHDs can be credited with protecting many of the city's significant structures, maintaining community character, preserving important architectural treasures, and adding to the quality of residents' lives.

II. Methodology

In 1991, the Springfield Preservation Trust commissioned a survey of the Pine Point neighborhood by Kathleen Kelly Broomer. Located in the center of the city, the area was developed primarily in the 1910s and 1920s and then after World War II. It is mostly residential, with a commercial corridor along State Street and Boston Road, a major east/west artery in Springfield. The Isolation Hospital is one of the earliest and largest nonresidential buildings in the area. In 2022, the Springfield Preservation Trust approached the SHC to request the creation of a LHD, fearing the Isolation Hospital was in danger of being demolished for potential new development.

The required public hearing was held on March 16, 2023. A Final Report and ordinance amendment would be sent to City Council for its consideration in April 2023.

III. Significance

The land on which the Isolation Hospital sits was once the extensive grounds of the City Alms House, a complex which included housing for indigent residents as well as a hospital and an isolation hospital. The complex was demolished and the current Isolation Hospital was constructed in 1930. It is a large “L” shaped Art Deco building, with sections varying from four to six stories. It was designed by the local firm of Kirkham & Parlett, which designed many buildings, including the nearby Massachusetts Mutual Life Insurance Building and the now-demolished Forbes & Wallace Department Store. Art Deco is a rare style in Springfield, and the Isolation Hospital is the largest Art Deco building in Springfield. It was used to house patients with contagious diseases, such as tuberculosis. In later years, it served as offices for the Health Department. In 1998, the City sold the 16-acre site, which includes the Isolation Hospital and the connected 1950s Municipal Hospital to a private entity. The property is again on the market and being advertised as a “development site.”

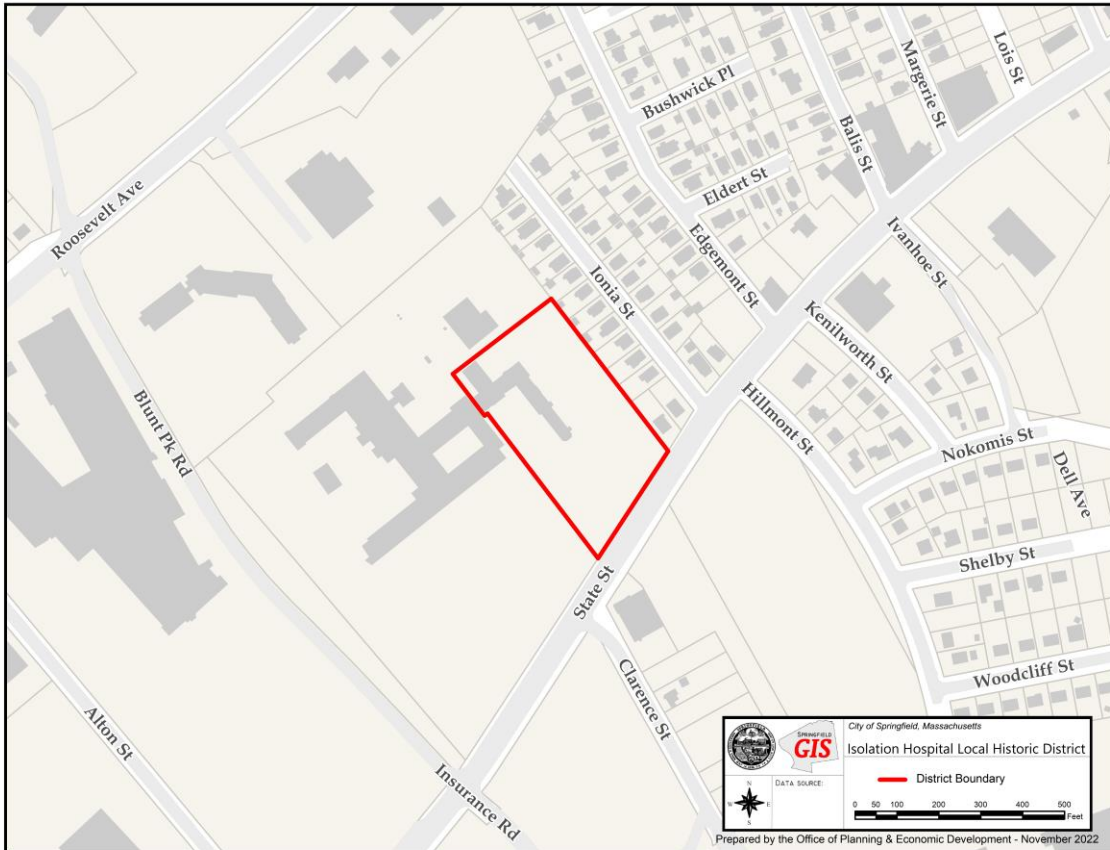
IV. Justification of the Boundaries

This is a single-parcel historic district with frontage along State Street. The proposed historic district is to protect the Art Deco Isolation Hospital threatened with the potential for demolition due to prospective redevelopment of the land.

To the west and north is the Municipal Hospital complex built in the 1950s with subsequent modifications and additions. To the east are the rears of residential homes inventoried as part of the Edgemont-Ionia Streetscape area. To the south, across State Street, is a 1960s 1-story commercial building and vacant land.

The 1950s Municipal Hospital is a 5-story complex containing more than 200,000 square feet on a 13-acre site. Including it in this proposed local historic district would hinder the effort to protect the Art Deco Isolation Hospital. A local historic district which includes this massive complex would be unlikely to receive the needed two-thirds majority of the City Council. A more conversative approach is needed.

V. Map of the Proposed District



VI. Property Street Address Index

Street Address	Historic Name	Year Built	Inventory form	Architectural Style
1414 State Street	Isolation Hospital	1930	SPR.3440	Art Deco
Total number of properties to be included in district:				1

VII. Recommendations for the Ordinance

The new district will be added to existing Springfield Ordinances. There will be some of the exemptions as many current historic districts overseen by the Springfield Historical Commission such temporary structures, color of paint, small signs, at grade sidewalks and driveways, exact reconstruction following disaster, screen windows and doors. The Commission will retain oversight of all other features.

VIII. The Ordinance

Proposed Ordinance

TEXT:

AN ORDINANCE AMENDING THE REVISED ORDINANCES OF THE CITY OF SPRINGFIELD, 1986, AS AMENDED BY CHAPTER 2.46 ENTITLED "SPRINGFIELD HISTORICAL COMMISSION"

Be it ordained by the City Council of the City of Springfield, as follows:

Chapter 49, Article II of the Revised Ordinances of the City of Springfield, as amended, entitled "Historic Districts" is amended by the addition of the following section:

Subsection "49-30":

49-30 Isolation Hospital

- A. There is established under the provisions of and in accordance with the Historic Districts Act, so-called, as mentioned in this chapter, the Isolation Hospital Historic District as shown on the map, labeled Exhibit 27-2Z, entitled "Isolation Hospital," said map to be considered part of this chapter.
- B. Exemption from Controls:
 - 1. Temporary structure or signs, subject to such conditions as to duration of use, location, lighting, removal and similar matters as the Commission may reasonably specify;
 - 2. Terraces, walks, driveways, and sidewalks provided that any such structure is substantially at grade level;
 - 3. Storm windows, screens, window air conditioners;
 - 4. Color of paint on wood features;
 - 5. Signs of not more than one (1) square foot in area in connection with use of a residence for a customary home occupation, or for professional purposes, provided only one (1) such sign is displayed in connection with each residence and, if illuminated, are illuminated only indirectly;
 - 6. The reconstruction, substantially similar in exterior design, of a building, structure or exterior architectural feature damaged or destroyed by fire, storm or other disaster, provided such reconstruction is begun within one year thereafter and carried forward with due diligence.

IX. Inventory Form

See attached

X. Photographs

PHOTOGRAPHS ID	Photograph Description
1 – South and East facing elevations	Front and side view from State Street
2 – South and East facing elevations 2	Front and side view from State Street
3 – South facing elevation	Front view of building from State Street
4 – South facing elevation 2	Front view of building from State Street
5 – West facing elevation	Side view of building from State Street
6 – South facing elevation 3	Front view of building from State Street
7 – South facing elevation 4	Front view of building from State Street
8 – East facing elevation	Side view of building from State Street
9 – East facing elevation 2	Side view of building from State Street
10 – East facing elevation 3	Side view of building from State Street
11 – East and North facing elevations	Rear and side view of structure









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