



Saint Botolph Neighborhood Association

Saint Botolph Neighborhood Architectural Review

Statement of Purpose

The Saint Botolph community has a strong interest in preserving and shaping the distinct architectural heritage of our neighborhood. We recognize that the neighborhood is dynamic, and that every home in our neighborhood has undergone a major transformation over the past century. Aside from the many forms of modernization, many of our homes have been renovated from single-family homes to rooming houses, from empty lots to apartment buildings, and from having head houses and fire escapes to having penthouses and decks. The Saint Botolph community supports the dynamic evolution of our neighborhood, but reserves the right to ensure that such changes do not detract from either the neighborhood's architectural merits or our community's quality of life.

The community's only existing design review process, the Saint Botolph Historic District Commission, consists of a narrow mandate to review alterations that are visible from street-level sight lines. The community believes that independent design review is extremely important and so must be broader than just this visibility criterion. Alterations and additions, even if not visible, have the potential to materially increase the scale of the neighborhood, alter the historic conception of the neighborhood's buildings, increase the population density and congestion of the neighborhood, and impact the roof-level views of neighbors.

The Saint Botolph Neighborhood Architectural Review addresses these additional concerns in addition to the visibility criterion, in assessing the appropriateness of a proposed change in use or external alteration. The Review applies a well-defined set of criteria to assess any change in usage or external alteration that may be proposed by a homeowner in our neighborhood. The Review also formalizes the process by which a proposed project is brought to the attention of the neighbors of the proposed project and, finally, how the Review's assessment is communicated to the City of Boston.

Review Principles

The Review begins with the principle that a property owner has the right to reasonable use of his or her property for personal comfort and profit, including possible changes in its use or external alterations. However the Review aims to safeguard the neighborhood against undue encroachments upon the neighborhood's architectural merits or the community's quality of life. To this end, the Review is charged with confirming that any change in use of or external alterations to a property in the Saint Botolph Historic District meet the following three criteria:

- 1. An external alteration must not violate restrictions imposed under the Saint Botolph Historic District Commission.*
- 2. An external alteration must not materially increase the scale of the neighborhood. For example, a penthouse addition may be considered appropriate if (a) the building is located in close proximity to buildings of equal or greater height; (b) the addition does not necessitate the introduction of higher vertical historic elements (e.g., chimney extensions, handrails, ventilation structures, HVAC) that otherwise would not be visible from the front of the building; and (c) the ceiling height does not exceed the average floor-to-ceiling height of the existing building.*
- 3. An external alteration, even though not visible from street-level site lines, must conform to the same standard as any visible structure. In particular, it must: (a) be designed in a manner that is broadly consistent with the architectural details of the building, (b) be constructed of materials that conform broadly with the architectural styles of the neighborhood, (c) be built to a high standard of construction, and (d) must not have a significant adverse impact on adjacent buildings or public ways.*

Preference is given to a project that:

- 1 incorporates the restoration of other historical architectural elements that have deteriorated or been damaged or inappropriately modernized. Preference is also given to projects that eliminate or rehabilitate substandard conditions (eg., damaged masonry, unsightly fire escape, dilapidated head house.*
- 2 does not increase the density of the neighborhood (i.e., an alteration is more desirable if it is limited to extensions of existing housing units and not the addition of new units.)*

3 *Conveys a substantial benefit to the community.*

***St. Botolph Neighborhood Architectural Review
Application Form***

*First & Middle Names:
Work Ph.*

Last Name:

Home Ph.

Address:

Address of Property to be reviewed (if different):

*If you have previously submitted an application to the Saint Botolph
Neighborhood Architectural Review, please describe briefly:*

Describe the scope of the proposed change in use or the external alteration:

*On a separate page, briefly describe how this proposal conforms to the Review
Principles.*

*The undersigned represents that all of the above statements are true and correct.
The undersigned hereby makes application for an assessment of the proposed
project by the St. Botolph Neighborhood Architectural Review.*

Signature of Applicant: _____ *Date:* _____

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Please submit this application to the SBNA Real Property Chair or mail to 124 St. Botolph Street, 02115