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15 Beacon St. has been listed on the National Register of Historic Places

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The building that houses the XV Beacon Hotel downtown has been listed on the National Register of Historic Places, a federal designation that bestows honor on one of Boston's architecturally and historically significant buildings.

"15 Beacon St. is a jewel of New England architectural history," said Steve McClain, president of the Trust for Architectural Easements.

Architectural historian Pauline Chase-Harrell of Boston Affiliates wrote the report nominating 15 Beacon St. to the National Register of Historic Places. The report was submitted to and affirmed by the Boston Landmarks Commission and then the Mass. Historical Commission, which officially submitted the nomination to the National Park Service, the administrator of the National Register of Historic Places.

Potential impacts on 15 Beacon St. now will be considered during planning for federal, federally-licensed or federally-assisted projects in the vicinity. In addition, the property may qualify for federal historic preservation grants when funds are available.

Plans for the commercial building were drawn in 1903 by architect William Gibbons Preston, and the building was first occupied by the Boston Transit Commission.

The building was deeded to the city of Boston in 1920, and the Boston School Committee occupied the building until 1976 and oversaw the busing crisis from its offices there during the 1960s and 1970s. From 1976 to 1997, the Department of Public Facilities and its successor, the Department of Neighborhood Development, were housed in the high-rise.

In 1997 the property was conveyed to the Boston Redevelopment Authority. It was subsequently purchased by Paul Roiff, a city developer and entrepreneur, who converted it into XV Beacon, a 60-room boutique hotel. Designed by Celeste Cooper, then-creative director of Repertoire, a Boston-based design atelier, XV Beacon is handsomely modernist yet retains accents of "Old Boston," such as the building's original cage elevator and its cast-brass lit railing with brass newel post in the lobby.

XV Beacon is also home to MOOO, the newest steakhouse in the city. The hotel is located just a block from Boston Common and the gold-domed Mass. State House.

"This handsome ten-story commercial building embodies the Classical Revival style of the late-19th and early 20th centuries," said Chase-Harrell.

"We are thrilled that this recognition has been extended to the building that houses our world-class hotel," said XV Beacon Hotel general manager William Sander. "This building juxtaposes cutting-edge technology with extraordinary Classical Revival styling, making us a refined hotel that combines peerless personal service with the intimacy of a private residence. We believe this designation only adds to the history and allure of our facility for anyone visiting Boston."

"As an organization committed to the preservation of American architecture, we commend the National Park Service for listing 15 Beacon Street on the National Register of Historic Places. We are always delighted to see the voluntary preservation movement in action, protecting the historical and architectural integrity of America's cities," said Heather Massler, an architectural historian and director of operations and Stewardship at the Trust for Architectural Easements.

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