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Lee Kennedy completes Phase I of renovations at Harvard's Adam House - work will soon begin on phase two of the project at Randolph House

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Cambridge, MA Lee Kennedy Company completed the full restoration and renovation of the historic Harvard student residence, Claverly Hall, concluding the first phase of the three-phase Adams House Renewal project. Lee Kennedy is also putting the final touches on Aphthorp House, a residence built before the American Revolution that is also undergoing a historic renovation. Historic preservation renovation work will soon begin on phase two of the project, the adjacent Randolph House.

The full renovation of the Adams House, which once housed future luminaries Franklin D. Roosevelt, William Randolph Hearst, Sr., Henry Kissinger, and former Mass. governor William Weld, is the latest development in Harvard's House Renewal Initiative, begun in 2012. Located along Mt. Auburn St. and extending down Bow St. across from the iconic Harvard Lampoon building, Adams House is part of the Harvard Houses National Register Historic District and the Harvard Sq. Conservation District. The four buildings, known as the Gold Coast dormitories, were constructed around the turn of the 20th century as privately-owned luxury dormitories, offering wealthy Harvard men an alternative to the antiquated Harvard Yard student residences.

“Working in conjunction with Harvard on these historic projects and restoring them to their previous grandeur is a great source of pride for the employees of our firm,” said Lee Michael Kennedy, president & CEO Lee Kennedy. “In addition to making Claverly Hall accessible to all and supporting students’ academic and social development, this magnificent building is now nothing short of breathtaking.”

Claverly Hall was constructed in 1892 and had not seen any significant upgrades since it was first built. The architecture and design firm Beyer Blinder Belle (BBB), which previously partnered with Lee Kennedy on the renovation of the historic Standish Hall in the Winthrop House on the Harvard campus, was responsible for the renovation-design that preserves Claverly's history and character, improves its functionality, and provides ADA accessibility for visitors and residents.

Lee Kennedy performed a complete gut renovation of Claverly, strengthening the structure with new footings, structural steel, and resilient wood framing. A new entrance was created, opening into a redesigned lounge that leads to new, multipurpose spaces for student meetings and social interaction.

Lee Kennedy worked closely with the Cambridge Historical Society to ensure compliance with the stringent historic requirements for materials, windows, and paint colors. Claverly is on track to receive LEED Gold certification. Students will return to the dormitory in late August.

The Apthorp House, which was originally constructed in 1760 but had not been renovated since 1930, is expected to be completed in early August. Like Claverly Hall, work on Apthorp House was delayed for five months due to a city-wide COVID-19 construction moratorium but resumed in August 2020. Renovation work on Randolph House, originally built in 1897, began in mid-July, and like Claverly, will undergo a complete gutting of the building interior.

The scope of work on Randolph will include structural, mechanical, electrical, fire protection, and plumbing upgrades, as well as the refurbishing of the historic millwork, a replication of murals, replacement of flooring, and restoration of an ornate staircase. Exterior improvements include a complete repointing of the brick façade, rebuilding of the chimneys and roofline and the construction of additional drainage structures in the courtyard. Randolph House is expected to be completed in early 2023. Lee Kennedy has completed multiple historic renovation projects for Harvard in recent years, including the Sanders Theatre, the Widener Library, and Standish and Boylston Halls.