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Fifteen Beacon Street, the Current Site of Boston's Renowned XV Beacon Hotel, Listed on the National Register of Historic Places

1903 Classical Revival Building Receives Federal Honor for Its Historic Significance

September 20, 2007 ... Boston, MA ... The elegant building that houses the renowned XV Beacon Hotel in downtown Boston 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. The announcement was made today by the Trust for Architectural Easements (www.architecturaltrust.org) (formerly the National Architectural Trust), which was instrumental in supporting the nomination of the building for the important designation.

"Fifteen Beacon Street is a jewel of New England architectural history," said Steve McClain, president of the Trust for Architectural Easements. "Much of Boston's mercantile, cultural and political heritage can be traced to upper Beacon Street and this very location. Today it earns its proper place among our nation's architectural treasures."

A prominent Boston architectural historian, Pauline Chase-Harrell of Boston Affiliates, wrote the report nominating 15 Beacon Street to the National Register of Historic Places. The report was submitted to and affirmed by the Boston Landmarks Commission and then the Massachusetts 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 Street 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 at 15 Beacon Street were drawn in 1903 by architect William Gibbons Preston, and the building was completed in 1905. The building's first occupant was the Boston Transit Commission, which is credited as the nation's first public transportation agency, and which built the nation's first subway system. 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 prominent Boston developer and entrepreneur, who converted it into XV Beacon (www.xvbeacon.com), an elegant 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. Artwork is also prominent throughout XV Beacon, whose collection includes works by renowned artists including Gilbert Stuart, Martha Lloyd, Joe Greene, Tony Evanko and Ben Freeman, who were specially commissioned to create pieces for the hotel. XV Beacon is also home to MOOO..., the newest steakhouse experience in Boston. Guests enjoy easy proximity to one of the city’s most prominent neighborhoods, and the hotel is located just a block from Boston Common and the gold-domed Massachusetts State House.

“This handsome ten-story commercial building embodies the Classical Revival style of the late-19th and early 20th centuries,” said Pauline Chase-Harrell. “Its characteristics include use of symmetry, hierarchy of spaces, and heavy use of architectural details. Preston was one of Boston’s leading architects in the late 19th century, and in his hands, 15 Beacon Street incorporates many Beaux-Arts accents, such as gilded shields and scrolls, a painted cast iron storefront, and a commanding copper cornice. The grand marble staircase adds to the Beaux-Arts grandeur. It is fully worthy of this important national recognition.”

“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.

To inquire about the Trust for Architectural Easements activities and work in Boston, please contact Mory Bahar at 978-352-5615, or mbahar@architecturaltrust.org. For more information about XV Beacon Hotel, please contact Jennifer Hawkins at (212) 255-6541 or jennifer@hawkpr.com.

About the Trust for Architectural Easements

The Trust for Architectural Easements advocates voluntary preservation through its support of the Federal Historic Preservation Tax Incentive Program. As the leading non-profit historic preservation organization in the nation committed to this Program, the Trust is dedicated to championing preservation efforts that protect America's architectural heritage for future generations.

About XV Beacon Hotel

Prominently placed and conveniently located, the 60-room XV Beacon is tucked in a turn-of-the-20th-century Beaux-Arts building on Boston's historic Beacon Hill. Each of the hotel's ten stories has seven rooms with individually designed Italian-inspired decors. Guests enjoy queen-size four-poster beds, in-room fireplaces, high-speed Internet access, 300-thread-count linen sheets, complimentary Lexus sedan service, and museum-quality artwork throughout.

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