Portland Historic Resources Inventory

Property Address: 15 Avon Street
Inventory #: 

Assessor’s C/B/L: 

District: Congress Street
Rating: Contributing

Local Code: 
National Register:
Date of Placement: Local 4/15/09 National

Architectural Description/Historic Significance:

c. 1860s

This building is a modest story-and-a-half wooden transitional Greek Revival/Italianate gable roofed single family residence. It appears, particularly in the 1924 photo before vinyl siding obscured parts of the trim, to be a quintessential gable-end-to-the-street Greek Revival style house showing transitional Italianate style in the profusion of brackets along the eaves, door hood, and box bay window on the façade (itself an Italianate feature). The slate roof is somewhat unusual for a relatively small and modest house. It remains in good condition.

The 1924 tax photo shows wide corner boards with recessed center panels, now hidden by vinyl siding. Since 1924, a dormer window has been added to the south face of the roof, above the first story window toward the rear. The sash in the bay window and one second story window on the front facade have been replaced with vinyl windows which have Arts and Crafts style diamond paned sash and the remaining windows have vinyl replacement windows which follow the original lite pattern.

This building is in generally intact condition with vinyl siding obscuring some of the trim detail. It retains its window trim, brackets, soffits and returns. It is likely that the wood clapboard siding and corner boards are under the vinyl siding. As a very modest single-family home just off Congress Street (immediately behind the eight-story brick and terracotta Trelawney Building) it is an unusual survivor of the type of structure once typical in the vicinity. The 1924 photo shows it closely surrounded by structures of a similar style and scale, now replaced with surface parking lots.
Portland Historic Resources Inventory

Property Address: 7 Brown Street

Assessor's C/B/L:

District: Congress Street

Rating: Contributing

Local Code:

National Register:

Date of Placement: Local 4/15/09 National

Architectural Description/Historic Significance:

Eastman Building
c. 1904

Four story brick late Victorian commercial building. The 1924 tax photo of this building is missing, but the upper floors do not show evidence of alterations and an early photo of the storefront in the Congress Street book shows the original treatment there. The restrained Classical elements of the façade document the transition toward the Beaux Arts/Classical Revival style after the turn of the century. At the storefront level three brick piers with stone bases and caps frame two asymmetrical openings. The larger opening, on the left, contained two large display windows with transoms above flanking a recessed entrance. The opening to the right contained a single display window to the right of another recessed entrance. The display windows had low bulkheads. A small stone cornice topped the iron lintels carried by the brick piers. A sign band for “Eastman Brothers and Bancroft” covered the iron lintels.

On the second story level rusticated brickwork is broken by three gently arched Chicago style windows. A stronger stone cornice than at the first floor level provides a base for the four brick pilasters of the third and fourth floors, which terminate in stone capitals. In each of the three bays between the pilasters there are two double hung windows with brick keystone lintels and stone sills at each floor. In the center bay, approximately 8” below the sills of the top floor windows is a stone plaque with “Eastman” carved into it. The upper floor pilasters are topped with a double belt course and plain frieze capped with a denticulated copper cornice. All of the cornices on the façade and the rusticated brickwork of the second floor wrap around the corners a short distance. The sidewalls contain numerous window openings with arched brick lintels, some in-filled with brick, that contain double hung windows.

A two-story one bay “annex” façade to the left of the building is recessed slightly from the plane of 7 Brown Street but continues the stone cornice at the top of the second floor level, and repeats the Chicago style window opening on the second floor. This small building and 15 Brown Street, to its left, are listed and described as part of 490 Congress Street and provide entrance to the upper floor residential units at 490 Congress St.
The storefront of 7 Brown Street has been in-filled with brick and hand-made tile with three glazed arched openings. The arches and tile suit the theme of the Mexican restaurant occupying the building but are at odds with the restrained Classical style of the façade. The recessed entrance on the right has a naturally finished wood paneled wall and aluminum framed glass door with an angled drop ceiling above. A modern fixed awning covers the transom area. Exposed conduit connects under-scaled lantern style lighting fixtures which are placed awkwardly high on the brick piers. The Chicago style windows on the second floor retain their cast iron mullion piers but the central sash and flanking double hung windows have been replaced with aluminum framed fixed glazing. The remainder of the windows have 1/1 aluminum double hung windows.
Portland Historic Resources Inventory

Property Address: 11 Brown Street (490 Congress Street)
Inventory #: 

Assessor’s C/B/L: 

District: Congress Street

Rating: Contributing

Local Code: ________________________________
National Register: ____________________________
Date of Placement: Local 4/15/09 National

Architectural Description/Historic Significance:

c. 1904

This is a two-story one bay “annex” façade to 7 Brown Street on the right. It is recessed slightly from the plane of 7 Brown Street but continues the stone cornice at the top of the second floor level, and repeats the Chicago style window opening on the second floor. This building and 15 Brown Street, to its left, are owned with 490 Congress Street/Kimball Court and provides entrance to the upper floor residential units at 490 Congress St.

The Chicago style window of the two story “annex” façade has recently (2006) been filled with two wide aluminum double hung windows with an awkwardly wide panel of aluminum paning between them. The three first floor openings are tall and narrow with brick lintels. It appears that originally there was a door with transom above in the left opening and high windows in the other two openings. Projecting brick formed decorative panels below the windows. A door has been cut in below the window on the right. Doors and windows are recent. The building has recently had its parapet extended above the original copper cap.

The 1924 tax information shows half of this building owned with 7 Brown Street and half owned with 15 Brown Street.
Portland Historic Resources Inventory

Property Address: 15 Brown Street (490 Congress Street)
Inventory #: 

Assessor’s C/B/L: 

District: Congress Street

Rating: Contributing

Local Code:
National Register:
Date of Placement: Local 4/15/09 National

Architectural Description/Historic Significance:

c. 1880

This building and 11 Brown Street, to its right, are owned with 490 Congress Street and provides entrance to the upper floor residential units at 490 Congress St. The 1924 photo is not available for this three story brick Victorian commercial structure.

The full length iron lintel above the first floor on the façade suggests a typical storefront treatment with recessed entrance and display windows at some point in the past. The two brick piers dividing the space below the lintel are probably later additions, as are the window and door openings as they currently appear. The iron lintels on the second floor window openings appear to have been inserted to make the windows taller. The sawtooth patterning below the windows and dentil detail between the windows suggests they were originally identical to the third floor windows, with brick lintels. The brick soldier row frieze and corbelled cornice appear to be as built.

The paired aluminum 2/2 double hung windows in the third floor window openings may be similar to the lost original fenestration pattern. The paired 2/2 double hung windows with a single transom above in the extended openings of the second floor windows seem unlikely to be following an earlier design. The highly reflective low-E glazing in all of the windows is at odds with the historic character of the building.

The building has recently had its parapet extended above the original copper cap.
Portland Historic Resources Inventory

Property Address: 15 Casco Street (Maine Savings Building)
Inventory #:
Assessor’s C/B/L:
District: Congress Street
Rating: Contributing

Local Code:
National Register:
Date of Placement: Local 4/15/09 National

Architectural Description/Historic Significance:

Maine Savings Bank Building

1949 (Second floor addition 1964)

This site previously had several earlier structures on it. In 1934 a one-story frame building was demolished to make way for a prefabricated metal diner. In 1941 Maine Savings Bank received permits to remove Lester Keating’s diner to outside the city limits and to demolish a 28’ x 50’ building on the site.

The red brick and white marble Colonial Revival bank building was designed by Thomas M. James Company, Architects of Boston, MA. Along with the W.T. Grant Co. store just around the corner on Congress Street, this is one of the few Colonial Revival buildings built in downtown during the post-war period.

A tall center block is flanked by lower wings which project slightly. The later second floor addition (by the same architectural firm) blends successfully with the original structure, creating the appearance of a large boxy two-story rear building enlivened at the street by the tripartite block and wings which are off-set from center on the two story block, with a slight two-story projection of the larger block on the right.

The central block on the front rises to the same height as the later two-story block behind it but is clearly articulated as a tall one-story building. The centered entrance has double wooden doors with a Federal style leaded transom and a marble pedimented portico with Doric columns. Two tall arched windows have 20/20 sash with fanlights in the arches are on each side of the entrance. A wide denticulated entablature at the top of the block is capped with a marble balustrade with turned urn shaped balusters between recessed panels. “MAINE SAVINGS BANK” is carved in the frieze of the entablature above the door.

The lower flanking wings have small 4/4 window facing each other across the façade of the center block, two larger 6/9 windows on their street facing facades, and a single 6/9 on their outer walls. The larger windows have marble keystones in brick lintels, as do the large arched windows on the central block. The wings have a cornice set at the height of the first floor ceiling with a short brick parapet above, which has a flat marble cap. The
cornice continues as a belt course around the two-story block of the building behind the wings. A granite water table on the wings continues as a raised planter in front of the recessed center block returning toward the entrance which has matching granite steps.

On the two-story block of the building the first floor windows are 6/9 with marble keystones, as on the front wings, the second story windows are 6/6 with brick lintels. A marble entablature with recessed rectangular panels tops the rear block, continuing the line of the balustrade on the central front block.

The building appears to be unchanged from the time it was altered with the second story addition in 1964. The only noticeable change being a metal door with (broken) plastic panel moldings in the two-story projection on the right.
Portland Historic Resources Inventory

Property Address: 16 Casco Street
Inventory #: 
Assessor’s C/B/L: 
District: Congress Street
Rating: Contributing

Local Code:
National Register:
Date of Placement: Local 4/15/09 
National

Architectural Description/Historic Significance:

Portland Water District Office Building 
c. 1902

Three bay, three story, red brick with granite trim Colonial Revival commercial building. The first floor has a heavy granite base and quoined piers framing a traditional storefront with iron lintel. A 1915 building permit for “removing limestone and carrying upper stories on 3 – 12” I Beams, with plate glass windows below,” documents that this was not the original design. Following that alteration, it had a recessed center entrance up four granite steps and a flush secondary entrance just one step up from the sidewalk at the right side of the façade. There were two basement level windows in the granite below the storefront window to the left of the entrance and one to the right.

A flat granite belt course separates the first floor from the upper floors. Each upper floor has three large windows with granite keystone lintels. The windows are 6/2 double hung with six pane transom panels above. The central bay is recessed one brick thickness with the indent continuing through the denticulated cornice. A second belt course at the third floor level is aligned with the mullions between the transoms and upper sash of the windows on that floor, creating a continuous band across the façade. Above the upper belt course, in each of the brick panels beside and between the windows, are granite rondels. The detailing of the façade wraps around the south side of the building into the alley behind the J.B. Brown Block. An interesting oddity on the very formal façade of this building is the purely functional projecting iron beam above the third floor center window, apparently for use in raising heavy objects to the upper floors with a pulley.

The masonry elements of the building are in good condition and intact other than the matching infill of the basement level window openings and secondary entrance opening in the granite base of the building, and the addition of quoined piers on either side of the center entrance, matching the original ones at the building corners. A detailed description of these changes, submitted by Wadsworth and Boston, Architects of Portland in 1963, is included in city building permit records.

Windows throughout the building have unfortunate replacements. Bronzed aluminum units have been used on the upper floors and although the transom-over-double hung
design was retained, the proportions were altered so that the third floor belt course is no longer continuous across the façade. At storefront level, the natural aluminum framed windows and entry are at odds with the formal character of the building. A sign panel currently covers the lower belt course and iron lintel over the display windows.
The Shepley

C. 1907

This six-story red brick Colonial Revival apartment building with buff brick detailing sits on a Redstone granite water table. The seven bay façade is asymmetrically arranged with the entrance in the second bay from the left which, along with the fifth bay from the left, is narrower than the other five bays. A vertical seam runs the height of the building between the third and fourth bays with slightly different shades of red brick on each side of the seam, suggesting that the three bays on the left were built first, with a centered entrance, and the four bays on the right were added later. In the wide bays there are two double hung windows on each of the first two floors, a three part Palladian window in each of the next three floors and a single double-hung window on the top floor. In the narrow bays there is a single double-hung window on each floor, except for where the entrance is located on the first floor.

Buff brick is used to define the two story base, with solid buff brick on the first floor and alternating bands of red and buff brick on the second. A cornice of buff brick caps the base. The third, fourth and fifth floors are red brick with buff brick quoins at the corners, capped with a buff brick cornice like that below. An attic story has panels of buff brick between the windows. A wider buff brick cornice caps the attic story with a parapet above which rises to a low flattened peak, perhaps an attempt to make the expanded asymmetrical façade feel balanced. All of the windows in the wide bays, except the sixth floor, have granite keystones. The keystones are set in buff brick lintels on the third through fifth floor. The current 1/1 windows appear to be recent replacements for similar original 1/1 windows.
The Ambassador

Completed 1926 (begun 1924)

This large six story tapestry brick apartment building has a restrained Colonial Revival feeling in its gently rounded window bays and 6/1 double hung windows. The façade is three bays wide. At the base a recessed central entry is reached by a long flight of stairs which interrupts the cast concrete water table belt. Cast concrete is also used for the window lintels and a belt course below the third floor window sills on the front portion of the building as well as the cornice, which continues around the rear portion of the building. A short parapet above the cornice is in a red brick that does not match the brownish tones of the tapestry brick used on the rest of the structure. Perhaps it was once finished in stucco to look like the cast concrete cornice below. A metal canopy with classical ornament hangs from iron rods above the arched cast concrete entrance.

The rear portion of the building steps in from the property line on both the south and north sides. The windows in this section have slightly arched brick lintels rather than the stone lintels in the front section.

The building appears little changed from its original design. The windows have been replaced with vinyl replacement windows which have simulated muntins between the glass, the 6/1 pattern has been retained. In the basement, the windows below the water table on the façade are a mix of two pane originals and single pane replacements.
Portland Historic Resources Inventory

Property Address: 45 Casco Street (Walker Manual Training School)

Inventory #:

Assessor's C/B/L:

District: Congress Street

Rating: Contributing

Local Code: C
National Register: N/A
Date of Placement: Local 4/15/09 National

Architectural Description/Historic Significance:

Walker Manual Training School

1897

Designed by Frederick A. Tompson, the Walker Manual Training School was a philanthropic legacy of the Walker family. The one-story red brick building with limestone trim sits on a granite water table. Granite is again used as the footing for a brick basement level that steps down the sloped grade of Casco Street and around onto Cumberland Avenue.

The eight bay façade has segmental arched openings between brick pilasters which have limestone caps. The four arches on the left and the three arches on the right contain tripartite windows that have 6/2 double-hung windows mulled between a pair of 4/1 windows, with corresponding arched four pane and six pane transom sash above. The arch in the remaining bay (fourth from the right) is framed by quoined limestone trim with a limestone cap above, in line with the pilaster caps of the other bays, and contains the recessed entrance, which is reached by four granite steps. In the basement level, nine windows increase in height as the street slopes down to the north. The two to the right of the entrance contain six light sashes (one higher than the other), the four immediately to the left of the entrance are all the same size 6/6 and the remaining three are taller 6/6.

The denticulated cornice is broken above the entrance with an arched pediment and a carved limestone panel reading "Walker Manual Training School" filling the arch of the pediment above the cap over the door.

Six bays on the Cumberland Avenue façade continue the design of the main façade with the first floor on Casco Street becoming the second floor on Cumberland Avenue due to the slope of the site. On Cumberland, the lower floor has single 6/2 windows in bays 1, 5 and 6 (left to right), double mulled 6/2 in bays 2 and 4 and a garage door in bay 3. The only notable changes to the structure are on the lower Cumberland Avenue façade where the window in bay 6 has been bricked in, the one in bay 5 extended to create a doorway and a modern overhead garage door is installed in bay 3 with an infill panel above, suggesting that perhaps a taller original garage door was previously in this location.
Portland Historic Resources Inventory

Property Address: 114-126 Center Street (482-484 Congress Street)

Inventory #: 

Assessor’s C/B/L: 

District: Congress Street

Rating: Contributing

Local Code: 
National Register: 
Date of Placement: Local 4/15/09 National

Architectural Description/Historic Significance:

This commercial five-story, three bay, façade is a secondary façade to the building, which also fronts on Congress St. where its address façade is located. The building is shown as “under construction” on the 1886 Sanborn Map. While the Congress Street façade is designated as Non-Contributing due to the wholesale loss of its historic design and material, the Center Street façade is largely intact and designated as Contributing.
Portland Historic Resources Inventory

Property Address: 11-19 Chestnut Street (Chestnut Street Methodist Church)
Inventory #:
Assessor's C/B/L:

District: Congress Street
Rating: Landmark

Local Code: L
National Register: Yes
Date of Placement: Local 08/01/90 National 10/20/77

Architectural Description/Historic Significance:

(Statement of Significance)

The Chestnut Street Methodist Church is one of Portland's few surviving buildings erected in the early Gothic Revival style. It is the only fully intact structure remaining as designed by Charles A. Alexander, a popular local architect of the 1850's and 1860's. Also significant is its location near City Hall, lending to the architectural variety of the city center.

Charles Alexander arrived in Portland in 1851, after practicing in Boston with William Washburn, architect of the State Street Church. Prior to the Chestnut Street Church, Alexander designed St. Luke's Episcopal Church (St. Stephens) (1854-1965) on Congress Street, in the English Gothic style. Alexander worked in the Italianate Style as well; J.B. Brown's estate, "Bramhall" (1855-1915), the Libby House (1853-1920) at High and Congress Streets, and the Falmouth Hotel (1868-1963) demonstrated his ability. None of these remain today. The Safford House on High Street, Grove Hall (Goddard Mansion) in Fort Williams and the Samuel & Andrew Spring Mansions on Danforth Street are other notable buildings attributed to the architect. He was also responsible for the rebuilding of J.B. Brown's Sugar House, and the Union Street Church, both presently standing in altered conditions. Alexander disappears from note in the late 1860's.

The façade of the Chestnut Street Methodist Church maintains much of its original architectural unity despite the removal of its tall, twin spires. Buttressing, the tripartite, arched entrances and steeply sloping roof all indicate its adherence to the Gothic Style. Open timbering, handcrafted woodwork and stained glass windows maintain the somber atmosphere of the original interior.

The Chestnut Street Church Society has been operating in the same location since 1808 when the first Methodist church was built. The present church was dedicated in 1857 and had the distinction of having the first organ in any Methodist church in America. The union of two nearby churches with the Chestnut Street church has increased its congregation and contributed to its constant use and upkeep. A community house and gymnasium imitating the Gothic Style were added in 1924.

(Present and Original Physical Appearance)
The Chestnut Street Methodist Church is located on a small side street behind City Hall, facing southwest. Designed by the Portland Architect Charles A. Alexander in the Gothic Revival Style. It was erected in 1856.

It's plan is rectangular, with vestibule, nave and two side aisles and a semi-circular apse. The nave is covered by a steep pitched roof with sloping ells on either side, housing the side aisles.

The building material is patent pressed brick, with lighter colored Connecticut brownstone used in trim, at the foundation level, around windows and doorways and for ornamental detailing. Much of the brickwork has been re-pointed over the years. The foundation is also brick, covered from street level to an approximate two-foot height with brownstone. Slate shingling covers the roof of the nave and side aisles.

Structural support is obtained through the use of cast iron posts at the basement level and brick buttresses (ten on each side, with one at each corner of the façade) along the side aisle walls. Further support is visible from the interior. Here, wood posts and trusses with arched braces create a vaulted ceiling. Metal rods running post to post across the nave were added at a later date to reinforce the roof.

The exterior façade, 70.1 feet across, contains the greatest number of ornamental features. Twin towers flank the central gable. Both are octagonal, and once rose to a height of 110-feet, 45-feet of this bell tower and spires. The spires were removed for safety reasons, as were the smaller spires once above the buttresses, which meet at right angles at both corners. Gone also is the uppermost portion of the chimney on the northwest side.

When the large spires were removed in 1950, several feet of brickwork were added with a brownstone cornice which has crosses set in relief on each octagonal surface. This gives the towers a less severed appearance.

Each corner formed by the octagonal shape of the tower originally contained slender brownstone columns. These rose from a stringcourse across the façade at approximately door level. Smaller columns with capitals continue below the stringcourse to the foundation level. Today the niches which once contained these tower columns, are partially filled with cement.

Three slightly recessed lancet-ogee shaped window openings are spaced one above the other on both towers. They are surrounded by brownstone moldings.

The façade is divided into three sections by the towers. This tripartite separation is characteristic of the Gothic Style. Each section is emphasized by a pointed-arch doorway.

The side aisle doorways are identical. Both have slightly recessed double wood doors and decorative iron hinges and door handles. Slender brownstone columns the height of the door flank both entrances. Four brownstone steps service each of the three entrances from the sidewalk. Above the side aisle doorways, close to the roofline, are small trefoil stained glass windows, surrounded with unusual drip-like shaped moldings in brownstone.

The main central doorway, although the same size as the side entrances, contains the area of greatest ornamental detail. The central doorway is also double, separated by a narrow column, and the doors are of wood painted red with iron hardware. It is also flanked by brownstone columns and is slightly recessed into the wall surface. The spandrel in the arch above the doors is tracered with stained glass.
Above the doorway is a light stone colored wall surface containing a decorated stonework molding, which articulates the central entrance and relates it to the large, arched stained glass window above. The window itself, over 100 years old and made in Florence, Italy, is composed of 5 lancet-shaped panes below a “Blue Rose” medallion. It is intact with all the glass in excellent condition. However, leadwork and wood framing need to be restored.

The interior of the church is in good condition and until later years, has been changed little. The interior of the church can be reached by three entrances on the street level or through the side doorway leading to the vestry in the basement. The three entrances open to a large vestibule where two separate stairways lead up to the level of the sanctuary or one stairway leads down to the vestry. Once on the sanctuary level, entrance to the interior is through three arched and paneled doors. Inside, two rows of columns divide the nave from the side aisles. These columns support the roof and side and front galleries. The side galleries are not built onto the walls, due to support from the columns. This allows the stained glass windows lining the side walls to rise uninterrupted by floor levels. The galleries terminate approximately 20-feet from the rear wall, creating a cruciform plan with transcepts marked by a trio of stained glass windows on either wall. Originally, the nave contained a central aisle.

The roof is open timbered; the wood is pine, painted in imitation of oak. The altar rail and pulpit were originally walnut. In 1959, a new altar, pulpit and lecturn were installed.

All stained glass windows are lancet shaped, their condition good, aside from their need of re-leading and re-framing.

The chancel is hexagonal and contains what is left of the original organ pipes, which are almost ceiling height. These are obscured by a large, wooden paneled replica of the church façade painted white. It’s front formation and carving was designed by the architect to be an exact replica of the church exterior. The organ stood originally on a dais that has been moved to the rear of the gallery three above the altar.

The color scheme is a soft olive paint on plaster, with gold colored stenciled borders between each area created by the timbered ceiling. The stained wood of the pine, the darker walnut and the dark red carpet create a properly somber Gothic Revival atmosphere.

In 2008-2009 the church was rehabilitated using state and federal tax credits for a new use as a restaurant.
Portland Historic Resources Inventory

Property Address: 19 Chestnut Street- Chestnut Street Chapel
Inventory #: 
Assessor’s C/B/L: 
District: Congress Street
Rating: Contributing

Local Code: 
National Register: 
Date of Placement: Local 4/15/09 National

Architectural Description/Historic Significance:

1924

This brick and pre-cast concrete Gothic Revival building was designed by John P. Thomas, who also designed the Gothic Revival Deering High School, which has similar detailing. Built as an accessory structure to the adjacent Chestnut Street Methodist Church, both were sold for adaptive reuse by the congregation in 2006.

The three bay façade is nearly symmetrical, with the entry door on the right balanced by a window on the left. A concrete water table rises to window sill height on the first story, supporting the concrete window surrounds and mullions. Like the window frames, the door surround has quoinied sides. It also has label mold hood above the Gothic arched opening, which contains a paneled wooden door. A window with four casement openings and transoms above is located in the slightly projecting center bay of the façade. A cast concrete belt course sits on the first story window and door surrounds.

A two story projecting concrete bay window fills the center bay above the first story, its corbelled base sitting on the belt course. Paired casement windows with transoms, like that in the left bay of the first floor, are located on either side of the bay window on the second floor. Similar windows, without the transoms, are located on the third floor. Another belt course tops the third floor windows, including the bay window, with a brick parapet above. At the top of the bay window a concrete balustrade has panels with an open quatrefoil design. Atop the brick parapet is a low gable with a small rectangular window forming the front extension of the cross gable roof.

Prior to the introduction of aluminum framed windows in 2006 (prior to designation) the casement windows on the upper stories were eight lite sash with four lite transoms. The first story windows contained stained glass, probably associated with the creation of the “Italian Methodist Chapel” in 1960, as commemorated by a brass plaque near the entrance.

In 2006 the attached gymnasium, connection to the church building, and apartment building extending from the gymnasium were removed as part of the Chestnut Street Lofts development and alterations were made to the back of the chapel associated with their removal.
Portland Historic Resources Inventory

Property Address: 21 Chestnut Street (Lofts)
Inventory #:

Assessor’s C/B/L:

District: Congress Street

Rating: Non-Contributing

Local Code:
National Register:

Date of Placement: Local 4/15/09 National

Architectural Description/Historic Significance:

Chestnut Street Lofts
2006

This new eight story, nine bay, residential structure is a well designed contemporary building carefully sited and related to the several Landmark structures which surround it, including the Portland City Hall, Chestnut Street Church, Portland High School and the Masonic Temple. The project included some alterations to the Landmark church building itself, requiring Historic Preservation Board review. Concurrently, the developer requested and received input from the Board on the new structure and site plan. Additional rooftop elements added during construction detract from the design and interfere with views of City Hall.
Portland Historic Resources Inventory

Property Address: 2 City Center (originally 230 Middle Street)
Inventory #: 

Assessor’s C/B/L: 

District: Congress Street

Rating: non-Contributing

Local Code: NC
National Register:
Date of Placement: Local 4/15/09 National

Architectural Description/Historic Significance:

1983

This contemporary structure is compatible with the character of the Congress Street Historic District through its scale, use of red brick, and post-modern fenestration - with bands of arched-top window openings as well as areas of large rectangular window treatment. While clearly a building of its own time it manages to relate well to the row of Victorian commercial buildings immediately to the west and the other contemporary buildings surrounding the intersection of Spring, Middle, Temple, and Free Streets. In particular, the sensitive relationship between the band of arch-topped windows at the top of the building and the arch topped dormers on the adjacent Victorian row buildings is well done.
Portland Historic Resources Inventory

Property Address: 4-8 City Center
Inventory #: 

Assessor’s C/B/L:

District: Congress Street

Rating: Contributing

Local Code:
National Register:
Date of Placement: Local 4/15/09

Architectural Description/Historic Significance:

c. 1870

The address of these buildings was 234-238 Middle Street prior to the Maine Way/Spring Street arterial street reconfiguration in the 1970s. This block is shown as having been destroyed by the 1866 Great Fire on the map in the Portland book, and the building appears stylistically to be later than that date. It seems certain that the building is from the boom period of post-fire reconstruction.

This classic Second Empire three unit row has two stories of nicely detailed gray-green sandstone above one-story cast iron storefronts and a slate Mansard roof above its heavy bracketed cornice. The storefront on #234 had a recessed entry at the center with display windows on low bulkheads and transoms above. The storefront for #236 and #238 were combined with a single entrance on the left side of the #238 front. #236 had three equal sized display windows with transoms above. #238 had no transom above the recessed entrance, a wide display window at the center of the façade and a narrower window, matching the width of the recessed entry on the right. The windows had transoms like on #236. Apparently access to the upper floors was from the same recessed entry used by the retail space. Access to the upper floor lofts of #234 was through a recessed door at the left side of the storefront. According to 1924 tax records, Finks Clothing Co. owned the building and occupied the first floor with “upper floors vacant”, the building is described as in “very poor” condition and “of little value to let.” A photo from 1912 shows signage for Finks Clothing Co. covering most of the first two stories... “Bargains All Over the Store”, “The Entire Bankrupt Clothing Store of Tracy-Rickards Co. Was Sold at Auction – Sale Now Going On”, “Suits, Overcoats, Raincoats, Furnishings, Sweaters and Pants at Almost Your Own Price”, etc. In the 1924 tax photo the signage is largely gone and it appears the storefront may be boarded up.

The upper floors have finely finished smooth ashlar stonework with bold carved trim typical of the style and era. Each building in the row has three bays in the upper floors. The second floor windows have low segmental arched heads with keystone hoods. The third floor windows have full Roman arched heads with bolder keystone hoods. A belt course forms the window sills at each level. At the outer edges and between each building a vertical row of pyramidal square quoins terminates in a heavy wooden bracket.
Between the brackets are five smaller brackets supporting a bold wooden cornice with dentils between the brackets.

Above the cornice nine arch topped dormer windows, three on each building, project from the steep Mansard roof and bring excitement to a fairly restrained (for Second Empire style) row. The side brackets supporting the hooded dormer roofs and the scrolls at the base of the surrounds are typical of the style.

The upper floors of these buildings are very little changed. Original windows remain in #236 and #238. Aluminum replacement windows in #234 do not replicate the original lite pattern but the round wood brick mold has been retained. The storefronts have all been replaced with unfortunate infill storefronts that are not suited to the period or style of the buildings. Several of the cast iron piers have lost all of their capital detailing, enough remains on one (though it is clearly failing) to allow replication if it is done soon.
Portland Historic Resources Inventory

Property Address: 6 City Center- 98 Cross Street

Inventory #: 

Assessor’s C/B/L: 

District: Congress Street 

Rating: Contributing

Local Code:

National Register: 

Date of Placement: Local 4/15/09 National 

Architectural Description/Historic Significance:

c.1890

Located at 98 Cross Street but now owned in conjunction with 6 City Center (originally 236 Middle Street) with which it shares a party wall. Until the 1970s extension of Spring Street this was a mid-block building with alleys on either side.

A two and a-half-story brick Victorian commercial structure, it had a six bay façade with exceptionally high arched openings sitting on brick piers which increase in height with the slope of Cross Street. Within each opening, very large windows sat on a wide sill approximately 7 feet off the ground on the low (right) end of the façade. Double wooden doors with rectangular glass panels above lower wood panels were located beneath the window sill in the second bay from the right. The other bays had glazing below the sill as well as above.

The top floor had conventional 6/6 double hung windows in gently arched openings, one in each bay. Above the upper floor windows a brick belt course followed the arched window tops, forming hoods for the windows. Paired wooden brackets supported the deep overhang of the cornice and wrapped around the ends of the building, continuing into the alleyways. An unattractive iron fire escape had been installed on the building’s façade by 1924.

The three bays on the right half of the building were removed for the extension of Spring Street, which now runs past the building on the right, making it a corner building. On the remaining three bays, the brickwork and cornice brackets of the building are intact. All of the openings facing Cross Street have been infilled with brick, recessed from the plane of the original wall. The fire escape has been removed from the façade and another has been located on the new south facing wall, served by several flush modern metal doors.
Portland Historic Resources Inventory

Property Address: 10 City Center
Inventory #: 
Assessor’s C/B/L: 
District: Congress Street
Rating: Contributing

Local Code: 
National Register:
Date of Placement: Local 4/15/09 National

Architectural Description/Historic Significance:
c. 1870s

The address of this building was 240 Middle Street prior to the Maine Way street reconfiguration in the 1970s. This block is shown as having been destroyed by the 1866 Great Fire on the map in the Portland book, and the building appears stylistically to be later than that date. It is likely that the building is post-fire construction.

It is a three-story red brick Victorian commercial row building with Mansard roof forming a fourth floor. The brickwork is quite detailed with three shallow arches sitting on brick outer piers and two square cast iron inner columns forming the store front, belt courses forming the sills of the second and third floor windows, a denticulated belt course combined with the arched hoods of the third floor windows form another belt course, and a saw-tooth pattern in the brick cornice, which is completed with a copper gutter.

Two wood dormer windows break through the slate Mansard roof. A wood cornice marks the change in planes on the roof. All of the upper floor windows were 2/2 double hung.

The three-bay storefront has a recessed entry at the center and display windows on either side. A granite base supports the bulkheads and forms the floor of the recessed entry. It appears the original display windows sat on a low bulkheads. Available old photos are dark and it isn’t clear, but it appears the windows were full height without transoms.

Overall the building is in very good condition with minor changes. Replacement windows are 2/2 brown aluminum units in the upper floors. The storefront infill has been altered with higher bulkheads, windows with transoms, and new wooden double doors with glazed upper panels.
Built as The Maine Savings Bank, this two-story hipped roof brick and granite Classical Revival building designed by Portland's first leading architect, Francis Fassett, had the address of 244 Middle Street prior to the Maine Way reconfiguration of the area streets in the 1970s.

The building sits on a granite water table base. The tall arched entrance is flanked by polished granite pilasters supporting a surround with foliate carving for the arch which is topped by a simple cornice and entablature/sign panel above. The windows on both floors have stone sills and keystone lintels. Upper floor windows have 1/1 double hung sash. The entry arch and the window openings have wide cast iron (bronze?) trim with a foliate pattern. A slightly projecting belt course of brick above the second floor window lintels creates a subtle frieze; brick dentils, brick egg and dart molding, and a copper gutter combine to form the cornice.

The secondary (though longer) facade on Cross Street continues the detailing of the front façade. The rhythm of the windows is varied by grouping the three at the center with a wider opening flanked by two narrower openings on both floors. On the first floor, to the far right, a half-round arched window is set high in the wall, aligned with the arch height of the entrance on the front façade. All of the first floor windows originally had heavy metal (bronze?) grilles for security which make it impossible to determine what type of sash they covered from old photos. At the corner of the front and side facades the copper downspout is set into a reveal, forming a rounded corner detail. The slate roof has copper flashing and edge detail.

A third façade has the same level of detailing even though it has always faced on an alley.

The windows have been replaced with aluminum 1/1 sash that closely match the originals on the second floor. The taller first floor windows have single panes of fixed glazing in aluminum frames. On the front façade the two windows to the right of the entrance have been sensitively combined into a single window with the granite lintels united by a
matching piece of granite. The opening contains a three-part fixed sash below a transom. The security grilles on all of the windows have been removed. The double wood entry doors and arched transom appear to be sensitive replacements. On the alley off Cross Street the door has been replaced with a modern flush metal door and ventilation ducts protrude through the transom. A snow fence has been added to the roof. In 2008 a large fire escape was built on the rear of the building.
The Byron Greenough (Lower H.H. Hay Block) is a four story triangular brick building situated at the intersection of Free and Middle Street near the center of the Portland peninsula. Built in 1848, the original exterior has been altered by the addition of the fourth story (1919) and various up-dates of the first story store fronts, but it retains most of its Greek Revival detailing and hence its massive, solid presence.

The building has two sections, with a slight horizontal offset to accommodate the rise in the ground level to the west. The major façade, facing north on Middle Street, is about 90 feet long. There are 5 bays, each determined by the vertical continuity of the windows on each story, to the section nearest the street intersection; six bays to the western section. A c. 1890 photo shows a mansard roof with dormers on the three westernmost bays – prior to the addition of the fourth floor to the entire structure.

Granite columns support a wide lintel above the first story. Originally, large windows and entrances alternated between the columns and signs for H.H. Hay and Sons covered the lintel. In 1889, 38 feet of the storefront was remodeled with new windows. Today, the first story has modern storefronts.

The original window openings with granite sills and lintels remain on the second and third floors. The projecting brick stringcourses of the original cornice remain except on the most westerly three bays, but the wooden balustrade was removed prior to the addition of the fourth story in 1919 (designed by John Calvin Stevens). The brick and detailing of this story match the original brick and trim; it is difficult to tell it has been added.

The cornice has bricks set in as dentils, supporting a wide overhanging wooden molding. The roof is flat, with a penthouse on the western section.

The façade facing southeast toward Free Street, about 100 feet long, is largely intact. There are four bays to the section nearest the intersection, and six bays to the western section. The windows are detailed as on the Middle Street façade. The cornice continues around the building. The first story is mostly solid brick with some windows blocked up and receiving doors inserted.
Facing the intersection of Free and Middle Streets is a narrow one bay façade. The detail of the Middle Street façade originally carried around to this façade. In 1889, a plate glass bay window was inserted. The third and fourth stories show the original slight bow to the brick at the middle of this façade. The windows c. 1890 were 6/6 on the second floor and 3/3 on the third, both having curved sash to match the bow in the wall.

The last three bays of the western section now form a separate building which does not connect through the party wall to the rest of the original block. This building has been sandblasted recently and with the offset of its fourth story windows and the lack of stringcourses between the third and fourth stories, does not look as if it were part of the original block. However, a sketch on an H.H. Hay bill of 1868 shows that it was.

The granite for the trim on the Byron Greenough Block came from Kennebunkport. It is in good condition today. The brick is in good condition also. The walls were probably painted originally. Today, mustard yellow paint is peeling from them.

(Statement of Significance)

The Byron Greenough (Lower H.H. Hay Block) occupies a crucial location in downtown Portland—the triangular land at the intersection of two major streets. It is a stately architectural solution for a building on such a difficult site. Its unusual shape and long history as the home of the H.H. Hay Drug Company give identity to that part of Portland's downtown today, as they have in the past.

One of the older Greek Revival commercial buildings in Portland, the Byron Greenough Block survived the Great Fire of 1866. The simply articulated Greek Revival features of the building—the granite columns, lintels and sills, the brick stringcourses, the balance of the vertical bays created by the windows with the horizontal continuity of the flat brick walls give the building a massive dignity.

The Byron Greenough Block acts as a foil to the more elaborate Victorian period commercial buildings opposite on Free Street, and will be able to hold its own against whatever new construction finally faces it on Middle Street. The block is an appropriate anchor for the rhythmic building facades along Middle Street, which with the recent Maine Way urban renewal improvements, is a focal point of downtown Portland.

The Byron Greenough (1820-1895) moved his wholesale and retail drug, paint and dyestuff business to this block in 1856, renting the space. His sons joined him in the business and it became H.H. Hay and Son, continuing in the same location. In 1945 the block was sold to the company, which owned it until 1964. H.H. Hay was a member of the New Jerusalem Church, the Natural History Society and the Board of Trade. He was respected by his contemporaries as an honest, hard working and talented business man. The long tenancy of his company has given the block the name it is most commonly known by; his business made it a landmark in a personal sense.
Portland Historic Resources Inventory

Property Address: 28 City Center
Inventory #: 

Assessor’s C/B/L: 

District: Congress Street
Rating: Contributing

Local Code: 
National Register: 
Date of Placement: Local 4/15/09 National

Architectural Description/Historic Significance:

c. 1824

This three story brick building, which originally had the address 266 Middle Street, is an interesting example of façade changes over a long period of time. This building is a survivor of the Great Fire of 1866, which destroyed many blocks in the immediate area. It was built around 1824 as a single storefront Federal or Greek Revival structure. It had two windows at each of the upper two floors, with simply detailed stone sills, lintels and a plain cornice.

In the early 20th century extensive modifications were made to “modernize” the building. The windows at the second floor were greatly enlarged. “Chicago-style” configurations of large central picture windows flanked by double-hung, 1/1 sash replaced the earlier 6/6 sash. In order to accommodate the increased glass, a large continuous steel lintel was placed above the windows. The original cornice remained in place, as did the original gable roof, with its ridge parallel to the street.

The early 20th century storefront was typical of the period: large display windows with a large transom flanking a recessed entry. At the right was a door leading to the upper floors. More recent renovations have combined the storefront with the adjoining storefront at 24 City Center by extending the wide granite storefront lintel that extends to the end of the block (with one step down to account for the sloping grade of the street). A simple wood cornice at the top of the lintel continues the profile of the granite cornice on the abutting building. New granite piers have been installed at the ends of the storefront along with a low granite bulkhead.

The third floor windows have been replaced with brown aluminum 1/1 double hung windows. The Chicago style windows of the second floor have been replaced with pairs of narrow 1/1 double hung windows flanking a pair of single pane French doors/windows. A decorative iron “balcony” is located in front of the French doors/windows. It has no floor and is not functional. The entire storefront opening has been glazed with three equal sized sheets of glass in brown aluminum framing. The entrance to the building has been shifted into the adjoining building.
A wide wooden cornice has replaced the simple original cornice. It has dentils and a gabled peak at the center, resembling that on the adjoining building at 30 City Center.
The original address of this three-story brick Venetian Gothic commercial structure attributed to Francis Fassett was 268 Middle Street. The Maine Way project of the 1970’s discontinued this portion of Middle Street and changed the address to 30 City Center. It was built in 1876 according to the date carved in the decorative stone panel in the gable of the parapet. Though the building has been subject to several modernizations at the storefront, the upper façade still features interesting original details, including Gothic inspired stone and brick windowsills and hoods, and a fine cornice with gabled parapet. It shares many characteristics with 486 Congress Street, 1877, also attributed to Fassett.

The storefront had a recessed entry with a wide display window the left and a narrower upper story entrance to the right. These components were separated by slender decorative piers. Small paneled transom windows with small panes glass and wood bulkheads below the display window were typical of small, Victorian commercial blocks. As are the square piers with cast iron capitals (?) framing the storefront at the outer edges. A post card with a 1906 postal cancellation shows the building housing “Vonyik’s Vienna Café” restaurant. The sign over the storefront reads, “Caterers for Receptions, Private Dinners, Wedding Breakfasts and Society Banquets.”

2/2 double hung windows on the upper floors have been replaced with aluminum 1/1 windows. The storefront follows traditional storefront principles although its material is modern brown aluminum. It has a center display window with recessed shop entrance to the left and recessed upper floor entrance on the right, all with a transom above, which is framed in wood. The bulkhead is granite. The pier detailing and capitals at the sides of the storefront are gone and brick piers remain.
Portland Historic Resources Inventory

Property Address: 34 City Center (The Benoit Bldg.)
Inventory #: 

Assessor’s C/B/L:  

District: Congress Street  

Rating: Non-Contributing  

Local Code:  
National Register:  
Date of Placement: Local 4/15/09 National  

Architectural Description/Historic Significance:  

A. H. Benoit Building  

c. 1880’s, Fourth floor added 1920.  

The original address of this building was 270-278 Middle Street. The Maine Way urban renewal project of the 1970s eliminated several blocks of Middle Street making Monument Square and this block a pedestrian only space. Now with frontage on both Middle Street and Free Street the building did not always have two distinct facades, its back was in the middle of the block and other properties were behind it on Free St. On Middle Street it was a four-story Victorian commercial block with storefronts on the first floor and double hung windows above. By 1924 the second story windows had mostly been replaced with two very wide Chicago style windows on the end closest to Monument Square and two shallow bay windows toward the other end. A single plate glass window turned the corner toward the square. The upper windows were 1/1 double hung in 1924. It was the long-time home of the A.H. Benoit store.  

The façade on Free Street is only two stories, with the second floor aligned with the first floor on the Middle Street façade. It appears to be a renovated Victorian façade with 9/9 double hung windows on the second floor topped with Italianate brick hoods. The 1924 photos show that, in fact, the current structure replaces an early 19th century wood building and two three-story Victorian brick buildings. Close examination of the current façade shows that the west end wall is older brick construction and the entire street façade is late 20th century Victorian Revival style brick work. It is suspected that a two story service structure for the Benoit Building facing on Middle Street replaced the buildings in the 1924 photo of Free St. sometime later in the 20th century and was then renovated into a “Victorian” façade in the 1980s. The large openings on the first floor level suggest the possibility that they were used as loading bays. The Porteous store on Congress Street had a similar arrangement, with its storefront on Congress and service areas on Free Street. Arched openings at either end of the first floor on this façade contain entry doors, the one on the right has a leaded fanlight that is possibly architectural salvage.
Renovations in the 1980s and 90s completely obscured the historic character of the façade on Middle Street. On Free Street the large first floor openings have been in-filled with modern storefronts.
Built on the site of the First Universalist Church (Congress Square Universalist) in 1977, this contemporary yellow brick office building relates in height and window openings to the Schwartz Building next door in the 4-story section, which abuts it. The main portion of the building steps back from the street with a 3-story block composed of ribbon banded windows on each story of the façade with the floors separated by panels of pebble stone work. There are two piers enclosing these windows. The remainder of the wall surface of the building is unadorned and lacks openings; there are two indented piers on the south sidewall. The ground floor street front has a flat roofed side entry porch and a ½ story flared brick wall compartment for utilities.

The building was built as the new headquarters and studio of the WSCH television station, when it relocated from the Congress Square Hotel (CSH) from which it had broadcast the first television signal in Maine. There had been intense competition between the Gannett family, owners of the Portland Press Herald and Evening Express newspapers, and the Rines family, owners of a major downtown department store, the Eastland, Columbia, and Congress Square hotels, and several radio stations, to become the first to get a television station on the air in Maine. The Rines family’s WCSH was the first on air in December of 1943.
Portland Historic Resources Inventory

Property Address: 7 Congress Square

Inventory #:

Assessor’s C/B/L:

District: Congress Street

Rating: Landmark

Local Code: L
National Register: Landmark – Spring Street Historic District
Date of Placement: Local 08/01/90 National 04/03/70 (District Listing)

Architectural Description/Historic Significance:

The Charles Shipman Payson wing of the Portland Museum of Art was completed in 1983 and already seems a historical presence on Congress Square. Designed by Henry N. Cobb of the noted New York architectural firm I.M. Pei and Partners, the building presents a bold, though familiar, face along Congress Street. Brick and stone details and arches recall other masonry structures in Portland although they are composed in a thoroughly contemporary way. The brick half-dome within the entry arch and the recessed blank sections of the circular motif at the top of the façade are contemporary reflections of historic Maine architecture, such as the brick half-dome entry and blank arched panels of the early 19th century Federal style Lincoln County Courthouse in Wiscasset. The high-quality materials and careful massing and rhythm, especially at the street-level colonnade, continue the street line and extend the compositional elements of the neighboring H.H. Hay Block of 1828, with its series of arched openings, to the High Street intersection. Thus, the building takes its place as perhaps the most sophisticated example of late 20th century architecture in the city.

The building won an American Institute of Architects National Honor Award in 1985.
Portland Historic Resources Inventory

Property Address: 380 Congress Street (Central Fire Station)

Inventory #: 

Assessor’s C/B/L: 

District: Congress Street 

Rating: Landmark

Local Code: L

National Register:

Date of Placement: Local 4/15/09 National

Architectural Description/Historic Significance:

Central Fire Station 

1923

A delightfully eclectic two-story buff brick and cast concrete municipal structure that is essentially Art Deco with hints of “Spanish Colonial-Aztec-Pueblo” style. It was designed by Miller and Mayo of Portland, who had designed the new Portland High School in 1919, and built at a cost of $86,918. Station opened November 10, 1924.

The building is six bays long and five bays deep with the corner bays pulled forward slightly and thickened with stepped and quoined corners that rise to arched decorative parapets to create low “towers” at the corners. Cast concrete ornamentation on the “towers” and parapets is quite stylized, appearing to draw inspiration from sources as diverse as Spanish Colonial style, Native American pueblo architecture and Aztec stonework. The cast concrete “vigas” projecting from the walls between the first and second stories are particularly interesting. Early postcard views show flower boxes sitting on these projections. Smooth brick parapets span the walls between the “towers” broken by a decorative cartouche in the center of the front façade which provides a visual base for the tall flag pole that rises from the flat roof. The Congress Street façade contains six garage doors with low arched tops on the first floor. Paired double hung windows are located in each bay on the second floor on all sides of the building, divided by narrow brick piers on the inner bays and mullioned together into a double unit in the corner “towers”. The same degree of detailing is continued on all four sides. The two end walls contain entry doors in the corner bays, except at the south west corner where there is a window. On the first floor the end wall bays contain two tall and narrow double hung windows, aligned with the outer edges of the windows above. On the façade facing Federal Street a sloping driveway between concrete retaining walls leads to a garage door into the basement level at the south east corner.

An earlier fire station was located on the site along with other 19th century buildings in private ownership. In 1908-09 the entire block was acquired by the City and plans were drawn up to make it an addition to Lincoln Park. The older buildings stood until 1914 and the earlier fire station until the construction of the current building in 1923-24. The initial design showed the new station opening onto Market Street.
Replacement garage doors and double hung windows are not of a quality suitable to this landmark structure. More appropriate wood units matching those in early photos should be used when they are next replaced. Remaining original doors in the sides of the “towers” should be preserved.

The granite Firemen’s Statue on the grounds was paid for by the citizens of Portland and originally stood approximately where the Thomas Brackett Reed statue stands on the Western Promenade. It was dedicated September 5, 1892. When the Reed statue was installed in 1910, the Firemen’s Statue was moved to the center of Evergreen Cemetery. In 1987 it was relocated again, to its current location at Central Fire Station.
Portland Historic Resources Inventory

Property Address: 389 Congress Street
Inventory #:
Assessor's C/B/L:
District: Congress Street
Rating: Landmark

Local Code:
National Register: Yes
Date of Placement: Local 8/1/90 National 5/7/73

Architectural Description/Historic Significance:

(Statement of Significance)

When the Portland City Hall burned in 1908, a plan was put forth to build a new city hall bordering Lincoln Park with other new city, county and federal buildings, creating a municipal complex. The city residents voted against this plan and the present City Hall was erected on the old site, one block from Lincoln Park. The county and federal courthouses were grouped around the park. Today these few blocks in the center of Portland form the heart of the city. The Portland City Hall, because of its central, high location and tall tower, is the focal point for this whole district.

The Portland City Hall is an important example of the work of the firm Carrere and Hastings. John M. Carrere is quoted as saying "he would rather have his reputation rest on the Portland City Hall than upon any other building he designed". The interior and exterior of the City Hall have a grand scale. The facades achieve elegance because of their restrained detail. The entrance space in front of the City Hall is large and impressive; it creates a real transition between the street and the building. The Portland City Hall asserts itself today, maintaining its own unusual importance among new competitors. The citizens of Portland use their City Hall for government and for entertainment. It has become a real part of their lives.

(Present and Original Physical Appearance)

The Portland City Hall rose from its ashes. The previous city hall, on the site of the present City Hall, completed in 1862, was burned in the Great Fire of 1866. It was reconstructed in 1867 by designs of Francis H. Fassett, Portland architect. In 1908 it burned again. So much damage was done that the building had to be removed.

The present City Hall was designed by the New York architectural firm of Carrere and Hastings and assisted by local Portland architects, John Calvin Stevens and John Howard Stevens. The impressive building was inspired by the New York City Hall, which was built in 1803-1812. The cornerstone was laid in 1909; the building dedicated in 1912.

The City Hall fills almost the entire block bounded by Chestnut, Congress and Myrtle Streets and Cumberland Avenue. It is built in a "U" shape. The open side of the "U" is the main façade, facing southeast toward Congress Street. The building is 225 feet wide and about 135 feet deep.
The 110-foot center of the façade is recessed 55 feet to form the "U". At the right rear of the building, along Myrtle Street, is a 150-foot long and 125-foot wide wing, which houses an auditorium. The City Hall is four stories high and has a full basement. The tower is about 200 feet tall and can be seen from everywhere in the city. The granite for City Hall came from North Jay Maine.

The main façade of the City Hall is symmetrical. The details are tightly organized; the surface is kept quite flat. The recessed center has projecting wings, which frame a large entrance space which focuses on the recessed section of the façade. The first floor level is raised above the ground level. The entrance platform in front of the recessed section is approached by wide stairs directly in front or by narrow stairs and a platform along the inside face of each wing.

The recessed section of the façade has five bays. On the first floor are three arched portals, which lead to the main entrance. On each side of these portals is an arched window. On the second floor are five rectangular windows with projecting, alternating arched and triangular pediments. The five third floor windows are simple squares. Above a dentil cornice and balustrade, five fourth floor dormer windows project from the roof. Similar windows are found around the wings of City Hall and down the sides: square basement windows, arched first floor windows, rectangular second floor windows and square third floor windows which alternate with solid plaques of the same size. The wings and sides have no balustrades. The basement and first floor levels are rusticated.

The tower rises from the recessed section of the façade. The square base has a round window in each face. Above, a balustrade rings open arches, flanked by columns supporting a square section with a clock. Above the round dome is a weather vane.

The three entrance portals have wrought iron gates. The phoenix and dolphins of the seal of the City of Portland top the center portal.

The interior of the Portland City Hall has been excellently maintained. The public spaces remain the size they were originally and are handsomely painted. The main part of the City Hall houses the city’s offices and departments. The rear wing contains a public auditorium which seats 3,000 people and is used by the Portland Symphony Orchestra and for other concerts and events. The auditorium has been recently repainted and gives a splendid appearance. The auditorium contains the Herman Kotzschmar organ, in 1912 the second largest organ in the world. Cyrus Herman Kotzschmar Curtis, Portland native and editor and publisher of the Saturday Evening Post, gave this memorial to Herman Kotzschmar, Portland music instructor, composer and organist.

In the 1990’s the auditorium was sensitively renovated, vastly improving the space acoustically while maintaining its historical character. Other recent work has included the replacement of inappropriate aluminum framed windows and entry doors with wood replicas of the originals (based on construction drawings in the Maine Historical Society collection), restoration of the central clock tower, and the addition of a contemporary marquee over the auditorium entrance on Myrtle Street (all of these projects reviewed and approved by the Portland Historic Preservation Board).
Portland Historic Resources Inventory

Property Address: 390 Congress Street (Front-Gannett Building)

Inventory #:

Assessor’s C/B/L:

District: Congress Street

Rating: Contributing

  Local Code:  C
  National Register:

Date of Placement:  Local: 4/15/09  National:

Architectural Description/Historic Significance:

1947

Five-story, five bay, commercial structure of buff colored brick, limestone and granite designed by Lockwood Greene Engineers, Inc., Boston, MA. The use of granite on the street front under the marquee on Congress Street and along the base of the wall on Exchange Street and Market Street provides a quality finish suitable to its prominent location at the pedestrian level. The absence of windows on the fifth floor on Congress Street and most of Exchange Street is somewhat relieved by the bands of limestone breaking the expanse of brick below the parapet of ribbed limestone panels. The fifth floor was originally the “flyway” above the WGAN television studio on the fourth floor, hence its windowless walls. The building has modern brown aluminum 1/1 replacement windows throughout.

This was the first purpose-built television studio in Maine (the competing WCSH studio was in renovated space in the Congress Square Hotel building). There was intense competition to get a television station on the air in Maine between the Gannett family, owners of the Portland Press Herald and Evening Express newspapers, and the Rines family, owners of a major downtown department store, several hotels, and radio stations. The Rines family’s WCSH was the first on air by several months. Given the important cultural role played by the development of television in the mid-twentieth century, the first purpose built studio in Maine is of historic cultural significance.

The Davis Building, a three-story, 19th century, red brick building stood on this site previously. In 1943 architect William O. Armitage of South Portland requested information from the Portland building inspections office about putting a USO club in the building, which was owned by the Portland Press Herald. Additional documents about this conversion from architects John Howard Stevens and John Calvin Stevens from 1944 and 1945 are in the records. In 1945 a certificate of occupancy for the Marian Anderson USO Club was issued to John Howard Stevens. In 1947 the Davis Building was replaced by the current building.
This is a seven-story Beaux Arts style commercial structure of limestone and buff brick by Desmond and Lord, Architects, Boston, MA. G. Henri Desmond formed his own architectural practice in 1907, shortly before his commission for the Fidelity Building at 467 Congress Street. Desmond is the architect of several notable early twentieth century buildings in Portland, including the Fidelity Building, the Portland Theatre on Preble Street, the Press Herald Building and Portland High School (Desmond collaborated with Miller & Mayo on the project). Desmond is also responsible for the expansion of the capitol building in Augusta and the chapel building at Poland Spring. Given the volume of work in Maine, he maintained a Portland office from 1909-1911 and from 1916-1921 in order to supervise the various projects. In addition to work in Maine, Desmond and Lord, as the firm became, was well known throughout New England.

The Press Herald building’s base is of limestone ashlar on the first floor with limestone bands alternating with buff brick on the second floor, capped with a limestone entablature. The shaft, floors three through six, is of buff brick with limestone sills on the windows. Two bands of limestone and limestone panels at the piers between windows create a separation between the shaft and an attic story, which is topped with similar bands and panels below a denticulated metal cornice. A brick parapet sits above the cornice with a raised copper crest marking the center of the Federal Street façade, above the entrance.

The building sits at the sidewalk on three sides of its irregular site and has a five bay façade on Federal Street, nine bays on Market Street, and eight on Exchange Street. On Federal and Market there are single 1/1 double hung windows in the end bays on each floor. The remaining bays in the shaft section of the building on those facades has paired 1/1 double hung windows in each bay (except one on the third floor on Market St.). In the base on Federal St. a central entry has a metal canopy. Single 1/1 double hung windows are used in both floors of the base on this façade. The fenestration in the base on Market Street matches that in the shaft above except for three loading doors and a pedestrian entrance in the northern four bays. A metal marquee extends over the sidewalk above the loading bays. On the Exchange Street façade paired 1/1 double hung
windows are used in all bays except the northernmost first floor bay, which has a pedestrian entrance with metal canopy above. “PRESS HERALD” in individual bronze letters is applied to the limestone band between the first and second floor windows on the Exchange and Market Street sides.

Windows have been replaced with modern brown aluminum 1/1 double hung units. The “Press Herald” lettering has been removed from the Market Street side. There is evidence the “Evening Express” lettering also appeared on the Exchange Street side for a period of time but has been removed. Oxidation from the bronze has left ghosts of the letters below the “Press Herald” lettering. The entry marquee on Federal Street has been removed and a fire escape (recently painted white) dominates that face of the building. The newspaper delivery truck loading dock canopy on the Market Street façade was extended three bays to the south in 1947 and removed in 2007.
Union Mutual Building

1929 Remodeling of 1882 building

The Union Mutual Insurance building is now a four story brick and stone Colonial Revival office building. It was originally a Second Empire style Victorian commercial block with a Mansard roof. In 1929, Hutchins and French, Architects, of Boston, MA radically altered the building for Union Mutual Insurance Company (upper floors) and Portland National Bank (first floor) by removing the Mansard roof, squaring off third-floor arched topped windows, and applying a new Colonial Revival style exterior.

As rebuilt, five three-story fluted pilasters with Corinthian capitals sit on a stone base story and support a wide entablature with projecting metal cornice. The bays created by the pilasters are not symmetrical, following the layout of the openings in the original building. The bay on the east and the two on the west each contain three windows, with stone sills and keystone lintels, on each floor, the fourth bay (second from the east) is wider and contains four windows on each floor. In the base story, the two bays to the west each contain two double hung windows, the wider bay contains the entrance flanked by two double hung windows and the east bay contains an asymmetrical arrangement with a double hung window and a wide Chicago Style window. The double hung windows on the first story are 6/6 with a solid wood panel above, on the second and third stories they are 9/1, and on the fourth story 6/1.

The current aluminum entry doors are modern replacements.
Portland Historic Resources Inventory

Property Address: 400 Congress Street (Post Office Square)
Inventory #:

Assessor's C/B/L:

District: Congress Street

Rating: Contributing

Local Code:
National Register:
Date of Placement: Local 4/15/09 National

Architectural Description/Historic Significance:

Post Office Square

1956

Buildings in the Moderne style are uncommon in Portland and prior to insensitive window replacement in the 1990s this was a very fine example of the style. It was designed by Wadsworth and Boston, Architects, of Portland, for the Union Mutual Insurance Company and built for a cost of $1,250,000 in 1956-57. Its sleek lines, extending from a short “tower” at the east end of the building, curved corner at Congress and Temple Streets, polished granite first story, and bands of windows in the brick upper stories made for an elegant composition. The “tower” sits where an alley once cut through the block and provides access and an elevator to serve both the newer building and Union Mutual’s older building next door at 396 Congress Street.

The south side, facing Federal Street, was perhaps originally intended to be a party wall. The current fenestration was added in the 1990s renovation. A return to the original window style on the primary facades (the building permit specifies that “glass for windows in the penthouse will be 7/32” “Factrolite”) in the future would restore historical integrity to the structure.
Portland's Masonic Temple, dating from 1911, is a large and well-designed example of a commercial block in the style of Beaux Arts Classicism. Designed by Frederick A. Tompson, the building is of brick construction, with a flat roof covering six stories.

The façade of the building, which faces southeast, is five bays wide with a central entrance. This entrance contains a recessed double doorway beneath a two-story arched bay flanked by large pilasters of Doric form.

The building's fenestration is complex. In the first story are a series of four large shop windows. At the second story level and above the bays at the ends of the façade consist of double windows, each containing three panes; the central bays (two in the second story and three above that level) consist of triple windows.

Between the second and third stories is an ornate frieze with denticulation and triglyphs and metopes in the classical manner. Extending the full height of the third, fourth, and fifth stories are Corinthian pilasters and framing the central bay, fluted attached columns in pairs. Between the fifth and sixth stories is a denticulated projecting cornice.

Although the sides and rear of the Masonic Temple feature more restrained detail, they are equally monumental in character.

The interior of the Masonic Temple portion of the building features a number of very large, highly decorated halls, some two stories in height. The grandest has attached 30' tall Corinthian columns along all four walls reaching to the ceiling. Floors are of inlaid stone. A three-hundred seat theater is among the interior spaces. The interior of the front portion of the building consists largely of undistinguished office space.
(Statement of Significance)

The Masonic Building, designed by Frederick A. Tompson of Portland, is a restrained but impressive Beaux Arts structure located in a key position on Congress Street between the First Parish Church (N.R. 1/12/73) and the Portland City Hall (N.R. 05/07/73) and was completed in the same year as the dedication of the latter.

In addition to office space in the front with stores on the ground floor, the rear portion is occupied by the Grand Lodge of Maine which is initiated in 1820 and is the chief center of Maine Masonic activities. Prior to that lodges had existed in what is now Maine, then under the aegis of Massachusetts, beginning with a charter for a lodge in Falmouth (now Portland) in 1762, signed among others by Paul Revere.

The Masonic Building is a handsome contributor to one of Portland’s finest streetscapes.
The First Parish Church is the oldest house of worship in Portland, Maine. It was commissioned in 1824 to replace a wooden frame meeting house (called “Old Jerusalem”) built in 1740. A building committee of three men was chosen; one of the three, John Mussey, is credited with much of the church’s design. On April 9, 1825, a contract was signed with Nathan Hose, joiner, and Henry Dyer, mason, to build and furnish the church. Completed in less than a year, it was dedicated on February 8, 1826.

The First Parish Church is located on the north side of Congress Street, between Elm and Chestnut Streets east of Monument Square. The building is rectangular, set back in a fenced lot. It is about 66 feet wide and 102 feet long. The exterior of the church has never been altered. It is built of granite quarried in Freeport, Maine. The regular coursed ashlar is undressed except for the corner quoins and the surrounds of the tall arched window and door openings, which employ cut granite stones. The roof of the church is gray slate.

The main part of the building is a rectangular hall, used as a sanctuary. It is actually two stories high, but is used as one space; it has a gable roof. A bell tower projects from the front of this hall, flanked by a vestibule on either side. These elements make up the façade of the building and form a three-bay entrance, which is approached from the street by a full-width flight of granite stairs. There are three entrance doors, one in each bay. Each is made up of two six-paneled wooden doors and has a fanlight in the arch above it. Set in the wall above each door is a rectangular panel of dressed granite. The eaves-line of each vestibule is at the same height as that of the sanctuary; the roofs slope back toward the gable of the sanctuary. The tower continues vertically. It is square to the height of the vestibule rooftop. An arched fanlight window set over a marble date stone in this section repeats the fanlights above the entrance doors. A smaller square granite section of the above this has a chamfered corner; it contains a three faced clock which was used in the previous church, and it is topped by a wooden balustrade. Above is an octagonal wooden cupola and a short wooden spire.

In the side wall of each vestibule is a window. The window openings are the same size as the entrance door openings, and the windows are identical to the four windows, which pierce each
side of the church sanctuary. All the windows are triple hung, 15 over 15, and they have fanlights in the arch above.

The rear wall of the sanctuary is entirely granite. A rounded apse projects in the center of it. A two-story parish house was built in 1890, next to the church on the right side. It covers the three rear windows of that side; they remain intact but let in no light. The front of the parish house is granite, architecturally harmonious with the church; its other walls are brick.

The lot on which the church stands is surrounded by the original wrought iron and granite fence, which was installed when the church was built. The enclosed grassy yard is shaded by large trees.
Portland Historic Resources Inventory

Property Address: 431-443 Congress Street
Metropolitan Building

Inventory #:

Assessor's C/B/L:

District: Congress Street

Rating: Contributing

Local Code:
National Register:
Date of Placement: Local 4/15/09 National

The Metropolitan

1876 with major alterations in 1926-27

Architectural Description/Historic Significance:

The five-story, nine bay, Metropolitan Building is an example of a simplified Classical Revival commercial building. Built in 1876 as a four story Italianate commercial block, it was known originally as the Farrington Block. The present facade is the result of a major renovation in 1926-27, when an addition to the rear was constructed as well. Building Department records first refer to it as “The Metropolitan” in 1928, shortly after completion of the major remodeling project. The building features a two-story limestone base incorporating four storefronts and a richly-decorated, arched main entrance. With its multi-paned sidelights, transoms, semicircular fanlight, richly-detailed pilasters, and inscribed building sign, the entrance constitutes the building’s only significant decoration.

A simple window layout using single or paired double-hung sash, stone sills and brick lintels, dominates the upper stories. The top of the building features a simple parapet with recessed panels and false balustrade sections.

Lacking early photographs of the present building, the original appearance of the storefronts is not known. Building Department records indicate some changes to the storefronts as early as the 1930’s, with a series of changes to various individual storefronts in the mid-1950’s.
Portland Historic Resources Inventory

Property Address: 443-449 Congress Street
Clapp Memorial Building

Inventory #:

Assessor’s C/B/L:

District: Congress Street

Rating: Landmark

Local Code:

National Register:

Date of Placement: Local 4/15/09 National

Clapp Memorial Building

1924

Architectural Description/Historic Significance:

The Clapp Memorial Building at 443 Congress is a seven-story brick and limestone commercial block designed by Henri Sibour of Washington, D.C. and the Boston firm of Desmond and Lord. It replaced the early 19th century home of the great Federal period merchant, Captain Asa Clapp.

Built in 1924, it is a good example of the Classical Revival style, complete with multiple cornices (above the second and the sixth floors); frieze with garlands and Roman lettering; hood moldings at the third-story windows; and grandly-decorated entry doors at either end of the building, each with a broken arched pediment. Upper façade windows are in pairs, separated by fluted stone pilasters rising from bases at the third floor to modified Corinthian capitals at the cornice. Above the cornice is the seventh story which features pairs of double-hung sash with engaged columns between them. A simple stone cornice with a brick parapet above, caps the structure.

The base of the building consists of the first three stories. The first and second floors are faced entirely with stone while the third, atop the lower cornice, consists of brick articulated by stone quoins. Second floor windows are Chicago-style, three-part units. The storefronts were originally display windows flanked by double-door entries at each end. The display windows, five in all on the Congress Street side, were separated by decorative and structural columns with wood and glass bulkheads and multi-paned transom sash above. The storefronts have been modified, as have the entry doors; the rest of the building remains in its original configuration.
The Portland Public Library at 455 Congress is a bold, granite-faced civic structure designed by Shepley, Bulfinch, Richardson and Abbott of Boston, in association with Schurman Associates of Portland. It is a very late example of the International style, completed in 1979. Unlike most International style masonry buildings (which were built earlier), it is faced in granite rather than concrete. The material choice may be attributable to the fact that traditional materials such as granite, marble and brick were returning to favor with the Post-Modern style, which was overtaking the International style by the late 1970s. Exhibiting a direct and geometric composition, it is a distinctly modern building constructed of the highest quality materials. It replaced the three-story Novick Building and a narrow five-story structure.

The building’s street-level face is composed of several recesses, multi-paned glass bays, columns, and wrought-iron grilles and fences. The upper façade is a smooth undecorated granite plane enlivened by the interplay of solids and voids. While the main entrance to the library is deeply recessed from the sidewalk, the predominating street wall of Congress Street is maintained by the continuity of the exterior columns which hold the building edge at the sidewalk. Defining characteristics of this modern building are:

- smooth, planar, granite wall surfaces;
- sharp-edged, rectangular voids in the front façade and the window bands on the upper façade and the Elm Street elevation;
- wrought iron arch of the entry gate, which evokes the Romanesque Revival stone entry door arch of the original Portland Public (Baxter) Library at 619 Congress St., and;
- play of light and shadow created by the voids in the main façade.

The building’s smooth contemporary facade provides an interesting and informative counterpoint to the neighboring Fidelity Building (1910) with its sculptural carved limestone surface. The important story of how architectural styles and tastes dramatically changed between the early years of the 20th century and the decades that followed World War II is documented by these contrasting but complimentary neighbors.
The Portland Public Library is reportedly the last International style public building built in the United States, and is Portland’s best example of the style. Its contemporary design contributes to the architectural diversity and vitality of Congress Street and is an important contribution to the catalogue of historical architectural styles lining Congress Street.

Additional Information:

The building permit, dated October 13, 1977, notes that the estimated cost of construction of the building was $4,500,000. This does not include architectural fees, interior fit-out (a quote for $299,000. for shelving is in the records), land acquisition costs, demolition costs for the existing buildings, and other miscellaneous costs. It is probable that the total cost of the library building was in excess of $6,000,000.
The Fidelity Trust Company Building at 467 Congress was Portland’s first true “skyscraper”. Designed by G. Henry Desmond of Boston in an interesting “Gothic-Beaux Arts” style and completed in 1910, the building is of steel frame construction faced with Indiana Bedford limestone.

The building shows the classic three-part composition of tall buildings of the time. A massive two-story base anchors the tower to the street. Eight pilasters with ornate capitals rest on base courses of finished stone. The corner bay at Preble Street has a large, rectangular, multi-pane window topped by a transom window; the two are separated by a spandrel decorated with a medallion and garlands. At the opposite end is the main building entrance. The doorway is essentially the same as the Preble Street bay. Between the two end bays are five two-story-high arched openings. The center bay contains the entrance to the main banking hall. Above the door is a more elaborate spandrel panel with a shield and garland motif. Above this is a three-part, arched window opening into the mezzanine. The other four bays have full-height windows divided into lower units, transom windows, and decorative metal spandrels covering the mezzanine floor structure. Intricate wrought-iron grilles provide security at the lower half of these windows. Above the windows and pilaster capitals is a bold cornice.

The shaft of the building is comprised of the next eight stories. The seven bays of the base continue to be defined by soaring pilasters. The outer two bays are distinguished from the center bays by their window treatment. Simple corrugated spandrel panels separate the floors vertically.

Between the ninth and tenth floor is the break between the shaft and the cornice. The ninth floor window groups in the center five bays have arched tops with huge, abstracted Gothic keystones that extend upward, creating a strong horizontal pattern at the cornice. Stone scrollwork between the arches and the cornice further define the cornice line. The outer two bays are not interrupted by the cornice and thus form continuous vertical towers that emphasize the building’s height.

The tenth floor serves as an elaborate cap for the middle bays, with Gothic-inspired, vertical piers between window groups and forceful, garland-like forms above each sash. The overall impression of the building is one of height and strength; its intriguing decoration recalls Gothic, Mayan, Egyptian, and even Viennese stylistic elements.
In 1909 when Charles Sumner Cook, organizer of the Fidelity Trust Company leased this piece of land there was standing on it Deering Hall, an Italianate structure, built in 1853. The lower level contained shops, the upper two stories were combined by tall arched openings, alternating with paneled pilasters and covered by a hipped roof. The building was razed and the Boston architect G. Henri Desmond designed the present “skyscraper” which was Maine’s tallest building. Fidelity remained a tenant of the State Loan Company until 1993 when the property was acquired by the National Bank of Commerce and the building was referred to as the Commerce Building. Over the years the main floor has been occupied by various banks.

G. Henri Desmond formed his own architectural practice in 1907, shortly before the commission for this building. He also maintained a Portland office from 1909-1911 and from 1916-1921 in order to supervise not only this project, but the expansion of the capitol building in Augusta, the chapel in Poland Spring, as well as the Portland Theater on Preble Street behind the Fidelity Building, the original part of the Guy Gannett building and work on Portland High School with the firm of Miller and Mayo. In addition to work in Maine, Desmond and Lord, as the firm became, was well known in New England.

The challenge in designing the early “skyscrapers” was sheer size; it was the problem of creating a compelling visual message and a coherent, “readable” design at a hitherto unknown scale. In this instance Desmond paid close attention to divisions, to framing elements and to transitions. The first and second story openings demonstrate his ability; the eight two-story arched openings are punctuated by different fenestration at the three corners and this motif is repeated in the principal entrance to the banking hall, in the center of the Congress Street façade. On the upper nine stories the corner the windows are visually stronger and more vertical than the tripartite window banks they frame. Desmond also used obviously sculptural decorative cast stone motifs to effect transitions; from below and above the second story cornice line and in a similar arrangement between the ninth and tenth stories. The decorative vocabulary is Beaux-Arts, i.e. the use of classical arches, pilasters, panels and swags, but simplified into a more modern idiom.

The importance of this building rests not only on its original novelty, but on the excellence of Desmond’s design; it is still an important feature of the Portland skyline and a key visual anchor of Monument Square; and it records the commercial history of the city.

The building was purchased in the 1990s by Elizabeth Noyce’s October Corporation along with numerous other large downtown properties. Maine Savings Bank, founded by Noyce, located its headquarters in the building. The “Maine Savings Bank” sign on the roof was installed at this time. In 2005-2007 the limestone exterior was cleaned and restored, with the stone veneer blocks reattached to the underlying steel framework. The original dark green color was restored to the painted window metalwork and grilles in 2007.

The lot behind the building, now occupied by the driveway and drive up teller window was the site of the Portland theater.
Portland Historic Resources Inventory

Property Address: 474 Congress Street (50 Monument Square)

Inventory #:

Assessor’s C/B/L:

District: Congress Street

Rating: Contributing

Local Code: C
National Register: Yes
Date of Placement: Local 08/01/90 National 09/29/82

Lancaster Block

1881, two stories added 1908

Architectural Description/Historic Significance:

(Present and Original Physical Appearance)

Portland’s Lancaster Block of 1881 is a large and very well preserved example of Romanesque Revival style in a commercial context.

The block, which faces northwest, is of brick construction with six stories. Originally it stood four stories high; in 1908 two stories were added, which are sympathetic to the original design.

The façade is seven bays wide, the central bay being a slightly projecting pavilion with triangular pediment above the fourth story. The first story has been modernized with a veneer of signage and siding which has not damaged the building. In the second story each bay consists of a large opening covered by a low brick arch; below this arch is a plate glass window with two small arched windows above. Immediately above the central bay is a granite block with “1881” carved upon it. The third story bays are of similar detail, except that here each contains two 1/1 windows below small arched windows. The fourth story bays consist of pairs of arched windows, fenestration being 1/1 with a small window above.

Above the fourth story is an ornate frieze with terra cotta panels containing floral motifs. Above the central bay of the fourth story is a granite block carrying the inscription “Lancaster”.

The fifth story bays are rectangular, being paired 1/1 windows with small windows above; here the central bay is a lunette with keystone. Separating the fifth and sixth stories are recessed panels, two per bay. The sixth and top story contains bays consisting of paired 1/1 window’s below brick arches with keystones. At the level of the flat roof there is a cornice with a wide projection.

The northeast side of the building is attached to another block to the fourth floor level. The southwest side of the block is fully exposed. While this, like the façade, is seven bays wide, the bays are much more widely-spaced, though of equivalent detail.
The Lancaster Block is a robust Romanesque Revival building which stands as a key structure in Portland’s Monument Square. This area, on the edge of the nationally recognized Exchange Street and Waterfront section, is now undergoing a similar rehabilitation and revitalization in which this block plays a vital role.

Built in 1881 from designs by Fassett and Stevens, this was the last of a number of important buildings erected by the noted Portland financier, John B. Brown, 1805-1881, who rose from grocery boy to become the leading capitalist in the city (A). The Lancaster Block, in fact, was built on the site of Lancaster Hall, constructed 30 years earlier by Brown. Both of these buildings were named after Brown’s place of birth in New Hampshire.

The original prime tenant, Loring, Short and Harmon, Stationers, remained for more than one hundred years later in that capacity.

The fourth and fifth stories, added in 1908, are attributed to Francis H. Fassett’s firm.

In the 1990s the “modernized” storefronts were replaced with a design more sympathetic to the original architecture of the building. Aluminum replacement windows in the upper stories do a reasonably good job of maintaining the appearance of the original wood windows.

(A.- See the J.B. Brown Memorial Block-N.R. 5/23/78.)
The fourteen-story Chapman Building (now referred to as the Time and Temperature Building) was designed as a twelve-story tower by Portland architect Herbert W. Rhodes. The original building was completed in 1924. The top two stories were added in 1962 and were redesigned in 1986-87.

The limestone building is a simple example of the Classical Revival style. When compared to the neighboring Fidelity Trust Building, it is Spartan in its decorative detail. The Chapman Building in its original configuration exhibited the base, shaft, and capital organization so typical of commercial structures of its period. The base is three stories high and divided into three parts. The base’s centerpiece is a slightly recessed main banking hall entrance, with a stone entablature complete with carved eagle, and grandly-scaled windows above and to its sides. The recessed, center three bays above the main entrance are emphasized by four, two-story-high, fluted engaged columns that provide liveliness to the base. They contrast to the rather plain storefronts on the first floor. A simple cornice caps the base at the third floor.

The fourth through tenth floors form the shaft and are simply detailed. On either side, outer bays have stone quoins at their edges and two vertical rows of single windows with double-hung one-over-one sash, separated by a full height pier. The main center section has three bays, each with a pair of double-hung windows separated by a mullion.

A simple cornice with an egg-and-dart design is atop the tenth story and forms the bottom edge of the building’s “capital”. Two balconies, each supported on four massive brackets, extend the cornice at the two edge bays.

The building “capital” continues as the eleventh and twelfth floors. Windows are separated by pilasters capped by Corinthian capitals. A simple cornice above these capitals was the original top edge of the building.

The main entrance to the building is also the entrance to Portland’s first “mall”, The Arcade, which extends through the Chapman Building and the older buildings at 10-20 Preble Street to the former B.F. Keith Theater lobby, which had its major entrance on Preble Street. All of the
buildings have been owned jointly since the construction of the Chapman Building and The Arcade in 1924.

When they were added in 1962, the thirteenth and fourteenth floors did not relate to the style, detail or materials of the original building. Window placement was totally unrelated to that of the lower stories. The corners of the addition extended to the very edge of the original cornice, giving the top of the building a precarious appearance. In 1986-87, the top two floors were reclad in a stucco coating that was detailed with simplified, stylized classical motifs. New windows were grouped to more closely correspond with original patterns below. The well-considered change in material and detailing served to better integrate the two-story addition with the original structure.
Portland Historic Resources Inventory

Property Address: 480 Congress Street

Inventory #: 
Assessor’s C/B/L: 

District: Congress Street

Rating: Contributing

Local Code: 
National Register: 
Date of Placement: Local 4/15/09 National

Architectural Description/Historic Significance:

480 Congress Street’s recently applied façade of stucco, aluminum and stone obscures or replaces what was a small, dignified façade in the Classical Revival style. Constructed in 1926, the Classical revival façade was actually a remodeling of an equally notable Victorian block on the site.

The 1926 Kamber Building had storefronts that wrapped around the corner of Congress and Center Street. The storefronts were executed in bronze, marble and glass within a frame comprised of stone piers and lower cornices. At the upper stories, the bays were separated by raised wood panels. A stone parapet crowned with six large urns capped the building.
Property Address: 481 Congress Street

National Register:
Date of Placement:  Local  4/15/09  National

Architectural Description/Historic Significance:

Directly to the west of the Chapman Bank Building and connected to it is a four-story structure that was originally part of the Preble House Hotel. The Preble House Hotel grew from the classic Federal style three-story brick mansion of Commodore Edward Preble. Designed by Alexander Parris, it was built 1806-08. Converted to a hotel in 1860, it eventually gained a fourth floor as well as a four bay addition to the east and a three bay addition to the west. 481 Congress Street is the three bay addition. Subsequently, the building served as an entrance to Keith’s Theater. The building has been remodeled several times and today presents a somewhat disjointed appearance due to the disparity in stylistic treatment of the street level and upper floors.

The street level was redesigned in 1924 to visually relate to the Chapman Building which was then under construction. 461’s Classical Revival first floor closely echoes the style of the adjacent tower. It has a stately composition of display windows with transoms, framed by storefront piers at outer edges and smaller piers at the inner edges. The smaller piers form the frame for the central door, which has carved trim and an entablature featuring decorative garlands and medallions. Above the doors and display windows is a richly-detailed cornice. Above and set back from the cornice are the upper three stories of the original building, built of brick with simple double-hung windows and virtually no decoration. The windows are neither in their original location nor configuration.
Portland Historic Resources Inventory

Property Address: 482-484 Congress Street

Inventory #: 

Assessor's C/B/L: 

District: Congress Street

Rating: Non-Contributing

Local Code: 

National Register: 

Date of Placement: Local 4/15/09 National

Architectural Description/Historic Significance:

Early photographs of this 1886 building reveal a fine Commercial style structure with an unusual two-story storefront surrounded by elaborate terracotta detailing. The storefront was divided into three bays by two-story high piers with stone bases. The massive glass area of each bay allowed light to penetrate deep into the interior space. The upper three stories of the façade were plainly but handsomely detailed with corbelled brick frames around two-part pivoting windows. The building was topped with a fine, simple cornice with a decorative terracotta frieze.

Unfortunately the historic character of the building has been completely lost to remodeling.
Portland Historic Resources Inventory

Property Address: 485 Congress Street

Inventory #: 

Assessor’s C/B/L: 

District: Congress Street

Rating: Landmark

Local Code: 

National Register: Yes

Date of Placement: Local 4/15/09 National

Architectural Description/Historic Significance:

Sharing the lot of the adjoining Wadsworth-Longfellow House, the building which houses the library and headquarters of the Maine Historical Society was built in 1907. Alexander Wadsworth Longfellow, a nephew of the poet, designed the building, with on-site supervision by Francis H. Fassett. The red brick Colonial Revival structure, with its hipped roof, Palladian window, and pedimented entry, complements the architecture of the Wadsworth-Longfellow House.

(Present and Original Physical Appearance)

The Maine Historical Society building of Portland, Maine, built in 1907, is a dignified and restrained example of Colonial Revival architecture.

It was designed by Alexander Wadsworth-Longfellow, a nephew of the poet, with the assistance of Maine’s most distinguished mid-19th century architect, Francis H. Fassett. The structure consists of a two-story brick exterior and a shallow hipped roof. The façade faces southeast and has a second story Palladian window flanked by decorative thick rectangular panels.

A 1950’s addition to the rear of the library was removed in 2008 and the larger contemporary style addition built. The Children’s Gate entrance to the garden was reconstructed from historic photos in 2009. Construction of the building addition required removal of the garden and its reconstruction after the building project was completed in 2009.
486 Congress Street is a three-story high, one bay wide Victorian commercial structure of a type more typical of the Old Port than of Congress Street. Built in 1877, its design is attributed to Portland architect Francis H. Fassett. Though the building has been subject to several modernizations at the storefront level, the upper façade still features interesting original details, including Gothic inspired stone and brick windowsills and hoods, and a fine cornice with gabled parapet.

The original storefront featured a large center display window, with a narrower window to the left and a door to the right. These components were separated by slender decorative piers. Small paned transom windows with small panes glass and wood bulkheads below the display window were typical of small, Victorian commercial blocks. Although the current storefront attempts to return the street level to a Victorian appearance, it utilizes components more commonly used for residential buildings and bears no resemblance to the original commercial storefront.
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Architectural Description/Historic Significance:

This classic late Georgian residence, built in 1785-86 and enlarged and renovated in 1815, was the home of poet Henry Wadsworth Longfellow when he wrote much of his early work. Construction was begun in 1785 by Longfellow’s grandfather, General Peleg Wadsworth, using bricks shipped to Portland from Philadelphia. It was one of the first brick structures in the city, erected by mason John Nichols.

A fire destroyed the original gable roof in 1814, resulting in the addition of a third story and Federal style hip roof the following year. The entry portico was also added at this time. The addition is clearly evident in the change in brickwork on the façade.

As the oldest house on the Portland peninsula and the home of Maine’s most famous poet, the Wadsworth-Longfellow House has been awarded National Historic Landmark status. The Wadsworth-Longfellow House is also significant on Congress Street in that it is set back from the predominating street wall. The setback and nicely landscaped grounds serve as a reminder of the street’s residential past.

The rear garden was created in the 1920’s by the Longfellow Garden Club. The Children’s Gate entrance to the garden, missing for several decades, was reconstructed from historic photos in 2009. Construction of the library building addition required removal of the garden and its reconstruction after the building project was completed in 2009.
Property Address: 489 Congress Street

Inventory #:

Assessor’s C/B/L:

District: Congress Street

Rating: Non-Contributing

Local Code:

National Register:

Date of Placement: Local 4/15/09 National

Architectural Description/Historic Significance:

The current appearance of 489 Congress is but the latest in a series of façade modernizations at this location. Built in 1826 as the Morton Block, it was remodeled in 1864 according to a Second Empire design by Charles A. Alexander. The building has been renovated numerous times since and in the process was reduced in height. The latest renovation (1987) is a modern composition of painted stucco-like coating, dark glass, aluminum frames, and stone tile trim.

The building does not relate well to its surroundings, especially in the quality of its materials and its dark windows. Furthermore, although the recessed entry at the east end of the building opens up the view of the Wadsworth-Longfellow House, the juxtaposition of the two buildings is discordant.

Since being acquired by the Maine Historical Society, a more recessive paint scheme, applied in 2007, has reduced the building’s impact on the character of the street. The plan by the Historical Society to replace the building with a high-quality new building which is sensitive to its context is a positive development.
Portland Historic Resources Inventory

Property Address: 490 and 492 Congress Street

Inventory #:

Assessor’s C/B/L:

District: Congress Street

Rating: Non-Contributing

Local Code:
National Register:
Date of Placement: Local 4/15/09 National

Architectural Description/Historic Significance:

In the 1980’s this building was described as follows: “The current three-story buildings at 490 and 492 Congress Street appear to be remnants or a replacement of an impressive four-story brick and stone Italianate style building. Known as the Bramhall Building, it housed a portion of the Eastman Brothers and Bancroft department store. No trace of the building remains visible on Congress Street. During the 1960’s, numerous main street buildings were remodeled in such a way that the upper floors became one large sign, intended to catch the attention of shoppers driving by in automobiles.” In 2005 the façade of the building was completely removed and replaced and the fourth floor added back (it had been removed during an earlier remodeling). The building was converted to residential condominiums on the upper floors, with retail retained on the first floor. It was renamed Kimball Court.

Kimball Court

2005

This striking contemporary façade replaces an inferior mid-20th century façade that had radically altered the character and appearance of the 19th century Bramhall Building. The new façade is significant for its role in continuing Congress Street’s tradition of eclecticism and introduction of new high quality design and materials. The new façade is clearly of its era, but manages to respect the scale, rhythm and relationship to the street of the surround historic structures.

As originally approved, the design called for slate cladding on the lower floor of the building which would have better related to the masonry of the surrounding structures. This was changed during construction.
Portland Historic Resources Inventory

Property Address: 496 Congress Street
Inventory #:

Assessor’s C/B/L:

District: Congress Street
Rating: Contributing

Local Code:
National Register:
Date of Placement: Local 4/15/09 National

Architectural Description/Historic Significance:

The building at the corner of Congress and Brown Streets, known as the Beaver Block, was built in 1885 to plans prepared by Francis H. Fassett. It is a four-story brick structure, which for many years housed a portion of the Eastman Brothers and Bancroft department store.

As built, the handsome Queen Anne commercial building features two storefronts separated by a central entrance to the upper floors. The bays were defined by brick pilasters of differing heights. Groupings of arched windows were arranged to vary from floor to floor. Most windows were four-over-four or two-over-two with brick arches. The central window openings at each upper story match the flanking window openings, but have always had solid infill rather than window sash. The third floor central opening was filled with a large carved plaque that contains the name and construction date of the building. The second and fourth floor central openings were infilled with brick, matching the brick of the surround wall, slightly recessed into the opening. A brick parapet topped the building, but it has been covered with an aluminum mansard roof in recent years.

The storefronts were typical of the period, with large glass areas and wood and glass bulkheads at the sidewalk to allow light to enter the basement. The large display windows flanked recessed entries. Transom windows, an elegant signboard and a simple lower cornice completed the storefront composition. The storefronts continued for one bay around the corner onto Brown Street. Early photos show extensive use of fabric awnings on both the storefronts and the upper story windows.

Angled metal flashing from the edge of the cornice up to the parapet is an unfortunate later addition, creating an awkward feature at the top of the façade. The current storefronts are an attempt to return to traditional storefront design elements and, although clearly contemporary, the effect is much more compatible with the historic character of the upper stories than the previous “modern” storefronts.
Portland Historic Resources Inventory

Property Address: 499-513 Congress Street

Inventory #:

Assessor’s C/B/L:

District: Congress Street

Rating: Non-Contributing

Local Code:
National Register:
Date of Placement: Local 4/15/09 National

Architectural Description/Historic Significance:

Maine Savings Plaza represents one of only a few breaks in Congress Street’s traditional street wall (others being at the Longfellow House on an adjacent block and the plaza in front of City Hall). Occupying about three-fourths of the block frontage, this 1974 complex was designed by the Boston architectural firms of Pietro Belluschi and Jung/Brannen Associates. It replaced three mid- to late-nineteenth century four-story brick commercial buildings, all of significant size.

The major element of the modern grouping is a nine-story tower set well back from the street. Out of the high-ceilinged first story extend two low wings that reach out to Congress Street. Between them is a multi-level plaza that broadens as it approaches the street. Primary construction materials are dark brown brick, bronze anodized aluminum and tinted glass.
Portland Historic Resources Inventory

Property Address: 500 Congress Street

Inventory #:  

Assessor's C/B/L:  

District: Congress Street

Rating: Contributing

Local Code:  
National Register:  
Date of Placement:  Local  4/15/09  National  

Architectural Description/Historic Significance:

In the early 1940's, the southwest corner of Congress and Brown was occupied by a 19th century brick commercial block, four stories high. After World War II, it was separated into two distinct buildings, each remodeled and reduced in height. The Markson Bros. Clothing store occupied the corner site (500 Congress) prior to and after the renovation. Markson Bros. large vertical sign (later identifying other second floor tenants) was a prominent feature of the building prior to being removed in the 1990s.

500 Congress represents a typical façade modernization of the 1950's or 1960's; it used readily available and relatively inexpensive materials. Its most distinctive features are the slanted display window and the (now removed) large sign. When originally renovated, the sign and façade were integrated through consistent materials and crisp lines.
Portland Historic Resources Inventory

Property Address: 502-506 Congress Street
Inventory #:

Assessor’s C/B/L:

District: Congress Street
Rating: Contributing

Local Code: National Register:
Date of Placement: Local 4/15/09 National

Architectural Description/Historic Significance:

502 Congress Street’s façade, when renovated in the Moderne style, was a fine example of the genre. The Moderne style, sometimes called Streamlined Modern (and a direct descendant of the Art Deco) was popular in the 1930’s and 1940’s. Moderne took its characteristics from the streamlined trains, ships, airplanes and automobiles over those years; it typically used stainless steel, glass and aluminum as primary materials. Curves and horizontal lines were emphasized; detail was in the form of bands, grilles, grids, vents or portholes in walls, as at the second floor of the 502 Congress Street façade.

The loss of the applied “Owen Moore” sign lettering from the façade, which created the effect of the upper façade serving as a stylish billboard, makes it unclear why the upper floors have so little fenestration and compromises the overall design of the façade.
The current building at 510 Congress Street was erected for the W.T. Grant variety store chain in 1942. The present structure replaced a four-story 19th century building (506) and a three and one-half story building occupied by Foster, Avery & Company (516). The present Colonial Revival style two-story building was designed by architects Leland and Larson of Boston. A significant feature of the original design is a six-foot model of the locally famous privateer, Dash, in the pediment. The model vessel was constructed under the direction of historian William H. Rowe.

The raising of the parapet to create an attic story in the 1980s and unfortunate storefronts installed at the same time have diminished the integrity of the building. The louvered wooden shutters on the upper story windows were removed in the 1990’s. The ship model was removed c. 2006. As of 2009, the restored ship model is displayed in the building at the Portland Harbor Museum, a tenant in the building.
Portland Historic Resources Inventory

Property Address: 518 Congress Street
Inventory #: 
Assessor’s C/B/L: 
District: Congress Street
Rating: Contributing B

Local Code: 
National Register: 
Date of Placement:  Local  4/15/09          National

Architectural Description/Historic Significance:

In the early 1900’s an uninspiring three-story structure stood on this site. Tax photographs from 1924 show it to have been entirely redesigned in the Classical Revival style and housing the S.S. Kresge Company. The storefront of the 1924 façade had a single recessed entry flanked by display windows. By the 1950’s, still as S.S. Kresge, it underwent a face-lift; in 1967 it was remodeled yet again by Porteous, Mitchell & Braun as an expansion of their store next door. In that form, the façade was a well designed and executed example of a 1960’s renovation, with porcelain enamel panels comprising the upper façade, large display windows framed in aluminum, and a recessed entry.

Unfortunately when Levinski’s clothing store relocated from the base of Munjoy Hill to this building in the mid-1990s, following the closing of Porteous, the 1960s façade was removed and the building received an undistinguished stucco coating that has little quality or character.
Mechanics Hall is one of the most significant buildings on Congress Street, dating from 1857-59. Designed by Thomas J. Sparrow, regarded as Portland’s first noteworthy native architect, this imposing structure was built for the Maine Charitable Mechanics Association, an organization whose charter language includes lofty objectives such as “cultivating the mind, and training up a race of mechanics of sound moral principle and intellectual power...” The Association still maintains a library on the second floor. The street level has since its construction housed two retail establishments.

Mechanics Hall is an outstanding example of the Italianate style. Three two-story arched windows formed by stone quoins and arches dominate the front façade, which is built primarily of granite block. The arches have keystones of carved stone, representing Archimedes, Vulcan, and the Arm of Labor. Granite pilasters extend from street level to cornice at each end of the façade, while the center bay that contains the door to the upper floors projects forward of the storefronts and the upper façade. Piers and a frieze with the words “Mechanics Hall” form the door opening. The main entrance features massive, paneled, double doors, and a mosaic-tiled threshold.

A wide, overhanging, densely-bracketed cornice crowns the façade. Set back behind the roofline is a large monitor running nearly the full depth of the building. Its windows provide light for the meeting hall below. The monitor has its own wide cornice, though less elaborate than that of the main roof.

Originally, the two storefronts were identical. Carter Bros.’ Co. (the left storefront) is in virtually original condition, featuring the characteristic recessed entry with double doors, prominent display windows, sign panel with raised-letter signage, gold-leaf window signage, and striped awnings. This is probably the only intact storefront of its period in Portland.

While the newer storefront on the right is of quality materials, it is not an outstanding example of design from its own time and is not compatible with the original design of the building.
The Miller (Porteous) Building is a five story, six bay department store building organized, as are other Congress Street buildings of the turn of the century into a base-shaft-capital arrangement, mirroring the classical column of the ancient and the renaissance worlds. The street level, or base, includes two entrances and three large display windows, while the shaft area is divided vertically by seven pilasters, which are three stories tall. Each bay contains a three-part window on each story, the center part of which is wider than the framing side windows. The Chicago-style windows have transoms subdivided, in many cases, into small square panes. The uppermost story, separated by an inscribed band and a cornice is similarly divided by short pilasters; and each bay has a group of three arched windows with the larger one in the center. Above this fenestration is a strongly projecting cornice, supported by brackets. The surface of this building is not brick, but white glazed terra cotta in which there are many elaborate decorative motifs. The street level façade has been covered by polished stone and a marquee introduced.

The Miller Building, which housed The Boston Store, a department store designed to replace many separate shops and to appeal to the woman shopper, was completed in 1904. The concept followed closely the introduction of trolley cars, which served not only the immediate urban neighborhoods, but many outlying towns as well. There were at one time easily a half dozen department stores in this Congress Street area, constituting an important addition to Portland’s economy and to the vitality of its downtown. The business was bought by Porteous, Mitchell and Braun in 1906 and the building enlarged in 1911.

Penn Varney from Lynn, Massachusetts was the first architect for this building. After its completion he did several more in Maine as well as elsewhere. The color, material and decorative formality he chose for this building make clear the aspirations of the department store concept, and the interior fittings — which included a tea room and ladies lounge — were equally elegant components. Varney’s original scheme was the six bay façade seen today; in fact, only the easternmost three bays were completed in 1904 and the remaining bays were added in 1911 when the business had changed hands and the second architect was Portland native George Burnham, who also designed the Cumberland County Courthouse. It is interesting to note that Burnham had to narrow the window openings in order to reconcile the available space with the original design.
Although his organization of the façade is typical for this period, Varney managed to combine Chicago style fenestration with its generous amounts of glass and it's strong horizontally with a Beaux-Arts decorative vocabulary. The tripartite window bays are divided by three story pilasters with sculptural capitals; the crowning story repeats the pilaster between the groups of three arched windows and adds festoons, rondels, pendants and keystones in high relief. At one time, the upper cornice was crowned by elaborate cresting, which, like the façade treatment, wrapped around each corner for one bay. The building is a significant example of the mercantile style of the turn of the century; it is testimony to two architects and to the rise of the department store and it is a strong visual anchor in the progress of Congress Street.

The three eastern most bays of what is now Porteous, Mitchell & Braun, designed by architect Penn Varney of Lynn, Massachusetts, opened as the Miller Building (Boston Store) in 1904. Two years later the structure was purchased by the present company and in 1911, architect George W. Burnham was hired to design three new bays in the same Beaux-Arts style. The western section, now virtually indistinguishable from the Miller Building, replaced a three-and-one-half-story 19th century building occupied by Blake bakery. The two portions of the building are nearly identical in every detail except that the bay width changes those of the eastern side being wider.

Although this building exhibits characteristics of several architectural styles, it is closest to Beaux Arts Classicism and the Renaissance Revival, both popular among East Coast architects from 1890 to 1920.

The top story, essentially one large cornice and frieze, is richly decorated with a crisp, elaborate cornice (originally capped with free-standing cresting, since removed); arched window groups; wreaths; festoons and grooved pilasters with exaggerated capitals of mixed origin. Beneath all of this is a simpler secondary cornice with the original building name and date inscribed in the frieze of the eastern half. The middle three levels have large Chicago-style windows, which originally brought large amounts of daylight deep into the interior of the building.

Small paned transom windows remain in some window units. The window groups are separated vertically by fluted pilasters with imaginative capitals, and horizontally by spandrel panels decorated with small pilasters and cartouches. The entire wall and cornice system is constructed of terra cotta; it is the most interesting and best-executed application of this material in Portland.

The original storefront was classically simple, composed of large piers reaching from sidewalk to a continuous horizontal sign panel covering the lintels. The piers and lintels en-framed display windows of huge glass lights with transom windows above. The center bay of the original building was and remains occupied by the main entrance.

The Maine College of Art purchased the building after the closing of the Porteous store in the 1990s and rehabilitated it as their new main building. Exterior changes have been very minimal. Upper floor windows on the Free Street façade had been infilled with glass block at some point which were replaced with aluminum framed windows in 2006.
The J.B. Brown Memorial Block of 1883-84 is one of the finest examples of a Queen Anne commercial block in southern Maine. Built in 1882-83, five-story brick building presents a rich catalog of Victorian decorative details. John Bundy Brown, for whom the building is names, began his career in Portland as a grocery clerk and quickly built a fortune in the grocery, sugar, real estate, and banking businesses, to become Portland's leading capitalist of his day.

The design was the work of the noted architect, John Calvin Stevens of Portland (while in the employ of Francis H. Fassett). During a career distinguished for its length as well as its brilliant productivity, Stevens achieved national recognition for his unusual skill in blending styles and for his contribution to the development of the Shingle Style. From 1873, when he began as a draftsman in the office of Portland architect Francis H. Fassett, until his death in 1940, he wrought for himself a reputation of enviable proportions. He was the first architect to become a Fellow of the American Institute of Architects. The block was erected as a memorial to John B. Brown, founder of the Portland Sugar Company in 1855 and builder of the Falmouth Hotel on Middle Street, center of Portland’s social life for half a century.

The J.B. Brown Memorial Block is one of the few commercial buildings in Portland designed in the Queen Anne style. This style was more commonly employed in residential buildings where its large architectural vocabulary could be applied with greater breadth of expression. The irregularity of surface textures, attention to detail, asymmetrical massing, and broken roofline of this building all contribute to the picturesqueness associated with the style. The general massiveness of the block is pleasingly tempered by these features. The building is an impressive example of the style adapted to a commercial building. In plan the block is u-shaped, with its principal façade facing southeast and a secondary façade northeast. A courtyard in the rear contains service entrances. The block is constructed of brick, contains 4 ½ - stories and carries a hipped roof pierced by elaborate gabled dormer windows. A granite faced foundation supports the structure.

The main façade is about 120 feet in length with four individual store fronts and street level entrances. Six bays are present, containing two, three or four 2/2 windows, except for the third bay from the left, which contains five windows per story and the most elaborate dormer on the roof. The brick walls contain horizontal banding created by string courses of sandstone which demarcate each story above and below the windows. Brick pilasters flank each window at every story. A frieze containing floral relief is present again in sandstone. Below the windows of the nearly central bay are panels with floral relief; one of these panels contains the inscription “J.B.
Brown in ornate script. Two brick chimneys rise flush above the façade and are ornate, in keeping with the Queen Anne taste. The roofline is unusual for a commercial building; it has three different types of gables, the largest of which has a 200-degree arched window in its pediment. The first story of the façade has been modernized with large plate glass windows and recent signing. In the third story of the off-center bays is an arched windows with scrolled keystone and spandrels decorated with floral relief; the window is divided into thirds by turned wooden posts, painted brick red.

The northeast elevation (the secondary façade) is five bays wide and is similar to the main façade, but for the following differences. A single chimney is present and fenestration is symmetrical. There is nothing here equivalent to the ornate off-center bay of the main façade.

Fenestration in the various rear walls of the block, contrasting with the southeast and northeast elevations, is functional and simple. Here the majority of the windows have granite sills and are slightly arched with brick headers. Most of the first and second story windows are covered with iron bars for security reasons.

In addition to alterations on the street level, the only other change to the external appearance of the block was the construction of a brick-like veneer wall added to the roof above the eaves, which links all the dormers together and hides the sharply pitched roof. This was designed to prevent snow from tumbling to the sidewalks below, but unfortunately gives the roofline a Mansard appearance which it was never intended to have.

Internally the building has been extensively modernized for sales areas and office, although this work is only a veneer (paneling and suspended acoustical ceilings).

The J.B. Brown Memorial Block is a dramatic piece of architecture and is rightly considered to be one of the key landmarks of the revitalized Congress Street area of Portland.

In the late 1980s Federal Rehabilitation tax credits were used to renovate the building and return the storefronts and main entrance to an approximation of their historic appearance, removing incompatible later changes. A cupola was added to the roof at this time, primarily visible from Oak and Shepley Streets. With the conversion of the upper floors to residential condominiums in 2006, changes were made to the cupola and a roof deck was added, with Historic Preservation Board review and approval.
Portland Historic Resources Inventory

Property Address: 538 Congress Street
Inventory #:

Assessor's C/B/L:

District: Congress Street

Rating: Contributing
Local Code: CA
National Register: No
Date of Placement: Local 4/15/09 National

Architectural Description/Historic Significance:

The Durant Block, a four-story structure built around 1908, is a good representative of the turn-of-the-century Commercial style. It has a simple upper cornice of metal and a frieze with a handsome Greek key design of three-dimensional brick. The windows constitute the major design element of the façade. The second and third floors are almost entirely glazed with only narrow brick piers at the outer edges and framing the two-story arched window at the center bay. Upper floor windows are original, in bold frames with central metal piers and massive steel lintels. Second floor windows, which are part of the same masonry opening as the third floor units, are separated from the third floor sash by a steel lintel. The central two-story high window above the main building entrance remains in its original state.

Historical photographs show that the two first floor storefronts were detailed differently, one with large grid-glass transoms with an awning below them, the other with display windows all the way up to the sign panel and an awning above. Both were typical of storefronts of the day, but showed how individuality was possible within the traditional storefront design vocabulary.
Property Address: 542 Congress Street

Assessor’s C/B/L:

District: Congress Street

Rating: Contributing

Local Code: C

National Register:

Date of Placement: Local 4/15/09 National

Architectural Description/Historic Significance:

The building that housed the J.J. Newberry store for many years was built for the F.W. Woolworth chain in 1946, on designs drawn prior to World War II by Clevendon, Varney & Pike of Boston. The two-story, seven bay, Art Deco structure replaced three substantial four-story buildings from the late nineteenth century.

A fine example of the Art Deco style, this building is typical of many stores constructed for Woolworth’s in the 1930’s and 1940’s all across the United States. The Art Deco style is characterized by an emphasis on verticality, even in one and two-story buildings. Egyptian, Byzantine and Moorish motifs are often incorporated, as at bronze window transom panels on this building. The unusual arrangement of lights in the second story windows is also representative of this style. The undulating terra cotta surfaces of the upper façade create interesting shadow lines and carry the eye upward rather than along the façade. Verticality is emphasized, too, by the stylized columns and capitals between the windows.

Storefronts were renovated in the 1990’s when Elizabeth Noyce’s October Corporation attracted LL Bean to open a new retail store in part of the building.
The building at 549 Congress Street is a handsome, five-story, brick commercial block. Built for John Bundy Brown and designed by Charles A. Alexander in 1865, it originally had three stories and a mansard roof. In later years it was enlarged to its present size.

The building is divided by brick pilasters into three, three-unit bays and one, one-unit bay. Windows of the three upper stories are arched-top, one-over-one sash. At the second floor in each wide bay is a Chicago-style window comprised of a large central light flanked by double-hung units. Understated trim includes the pilasters, projecting brick bands between floors, and a large, but relatively simple over-hanging cornice.

Historic photos show that the original storefronts were altered, possibly at the time the top story was added, to feature large, single-pane display windows. Subsequently remodeled numerous times, by the 1980’s the storefronts bore no resemblance to their historic appearance.

Storefronts were remodeled in a style consistent with historic storefront design principals prior to 2006. In 2006 the upper stories of the building were converted to residential condominiums and a contemporary rooftop addition built atop the building. Aluminum framed replacement windows unfortunately are set too close to the front plane of the building, reducing the depth of the reveals and play of light and shadow on the building, and do not replicate the original arch topped sash of the upper floors (the arches received black aluminum infill paning) or the Chicago style of the second floor windows. A contemporary glass hood was added over the entrance to the upper stories at that time as well.
Portland Historic Resources Inventory

Property Address: 550 Congress Street
Inventory #: 

Assessor's C/B/L: 

District: Congress Street

Rating: Contributing
  Local Code: C
  National Register: Yes
  Date of Placement:  Local 4/15/09 National 2001

Architectural Description/Historic Significance:

The Asa Hanson Heirs Block, also known as the Charles Perry Building, was built in 1888-89 to plans drawn by architects Francis H. Fassett and Frederick A. Tompson.

The building is a handsome late-Victorian commercial block, with characteristics of the Italianate and Romanesque Revival styles. It has a cornice of corbelled brick brackets with medallions of terra cotta between. Another highlight is the gabled parapet over the central, upper story entrance and stairway. Proportions are well considered. There is much masonry detail, such as recessed panels with bricks angled to form diamond patterns, pilasters and three-dimensional manipulation to produce interesting shadow lines. One-over-one wood sash remain in place at the upper two stories. The windows begin to show the influence of the Chicago style of commercial architecture in their larger-than-usual size at the center of a group of three.

Federal tax credits for rehabilitation of historic buildings were used in the 1990's for renovations that included the replacement of an inappropriate storefront with one closely following the original design.
The Lerner Stores Block at 551 Congress Street is one of Portland’s few Art Deco structures. Built in 1929 according to plans prepared by the firm of Charles N. Winston Bros. of New York, it is a two-story building with its major frontage on Oak Street and a single bay on Congress Street. It occupies the site of Dreamland, Maine’s first motion picture theater, designed by Howard Stearns and built in 1907.

The building is built of cream-colored brick. Its buff-colored terra-cotta decorative elements are Spanish in motif. The building exhibits an overall emphasis on horizontal lines, punctuated by vertical decorative pieces and arched window openings. The original storefront doors and windows were likely of wood or bronze. Entrances to second story spaces are at both the Congress Street and Oak Street facades.

On the Congress Street elevation, no original doors or windows remain. The arched windows have been replaced by flat-topped, modern aluminum windows and an aluminum infill panel. The storefront retains no hint of its original appearance, though many clues to restoration remain on the Oak Street side. The original entrance on Congress Street was tall and arched, reaching halfway up the current lintel.

Substantially renovated in 2006, many important historical features were restored and repaired. New stucco coating was applied and a new storefront was set back from the original wall plane on Congress Street. Unfortunately obtrusive exterior lighting fixtures were also added to the upper level of the Congress St. facade.
The Benjamin Larrabee Heirs Block is a four-story, three bay, brick commercial building designed in the Romanesque Revival style by John Calvin Stevens and completed in 1895. In its original form it was a stately, simple building with Romanesque detail confined to the arches, frieze, and cornice above the fourth story windows. The original windows at the second and third floors were rectangular one-over-one sash in simple wood frames. Wall surfaces below the cornice were plain brick. The comer storefront featured two large display windows on the Oak Street side. A classic storefront configuration on Congress Street consisted of a recessed entry flanked by large display windows with stone bases beneath and multi-pane transoms above. A lower cornice completed the composition. To the left of the storefront was a plain upper-story entrance with door and transom window.

The upper stories have changed little except for the enlargement of the three second-story windows to form a single large window unit. The storefront had been completely renovated with modern materials (aluminum and glass with a large internally lit box sign covering the transom) but more recently has been reworked with more traditional material (wood). Unfortunately the current design does not utilize traditional storefront design principles and introduces “colonial-esque” display windows with internal grilles which are at odds with the character of the Victorian building.
Portland Historic Resources Inventory

Property Address: 555 Congress Street

Inventory #: 

Assessor’s C/B/L: 

District: Congress Street

Rating: Contributing
Local Code: C
National Register: No
Date of Placement: Local 4/15/09 National

Architectural Description/Historic Significance:

The stately, three-story, Colonial Revival building that stands at 555 Congress Street is a 1918 renovation of a three-story, late Greek Revival commercial building. That building was in turn a major remodeling of the Machigonne Engine House, a two-story firehouse structure built in the 1850s. The transformations were so complete that there is left little trace of either earlier façade.

The building, as “modernized” in 1918, is a fine example of the Colonial Revival style, exhibiting such characteristic features as multi-pane sash and a decorative wood balustrade at the cornice line. Recessed panels depict in relief urns, swags, and other classical motifs. Above the third floor are additional recessed panels, each inscribed with a word of “Walk Over Shoes.”

The 1918 storefront reflected high technology of the time, with bronze bulkheads and large display windows with mitered corners. A recessed sign panel and fabric awning completed the composition. The current storefront was built in 1987, replacing an unsuitable previous alteration. As detailed in the Congress Street, A Guide for Rehabilitation and New Construction, it is a good example of a new storefront that returns to traditional design principles and materials where an original storefront has been lost to inappropriate alterations.
Portland Historic Resources Inventory

Property Address: 559 Congress Street
Inventory #:

Assessor's C/B/L:

District: Congress Street

Rating: Contributing
Local Code: C
National Register: No
Date of Placement: Local 4/15/09 National

Architectural Description/Historic Significance:

The four-story Robert F. Green Block at 559 Congress was built in 1895. It is Romanesque Revival in style, with four arched windows at the top floor, decorative corbelled brick, and a metal cornice. Handsome, subtle brickwork distinguishes this façade at the upper stories. Second and third story windows are large double-hung units framed by brick openings with gently arched lintels. Brick pilasters form frames around the upper story windows.

The original storefront consisted of a typical recessed door with display windows to either side, bulkheads and transom windows, and a simple sign panel with cornice molding at the top edge. The door to the upper story stairway was at the left-hand party wall. The form of the existing storefront is respectful of the original design except for the awkwardly tall signboard which covers both the original signboard area and the transom window area below it. The awkwardness could be removed by either recreating the missing transom windows or installing an awning to cover the lower half of the existing signboard, as they were often used to shade the transom windows of traditional storefronts.
The Baxter Memorial Building at 562 Congress Street was erected by James P. Baxter in 1894-96, in honor of Elihu Baxter. The building was the home of the J. R. Libby & Co. department store from 1896 until 1935, and later housed the Montgomery Ward store. Designed by Francis H. Fassett in the Queen Anne style, the five story brick building was one of the most ambitious mercantile buildings ever built on the Portland peninsula. Its towering corner turret, capped with a two story high, classically-detailed lantern pinnacle with a bell roof, served as a downtown landmark until 1954-55, when it was removed as part of a major remodeling.

Typical of the Queen Anne style were the elaborate and varied details in wood, metal and brick. In addition to the turret, prominent decorative features included a massive temple-form gable atop a slightly projecting center section that also had a two story arched main building entry at its center. Windows varied in size and configuration; bays were defined by pilasters, arches, and spandrel panels or decorative garlands.

Storefronts were typical of the time, with large expanses of glass, brick piers, wood and glass bulkheads, and flush sign panels. A corner entrance was cut out at Oak and Congress, with a diagonal entrance behind a two story column that rose to the bottom of the turret.

The 1954 renovation included the removal of the turret, the removal or covering of almost all other building decoration, and the replacement of all the windows. The only visible remnant of the building’s original appearance is the temple-roofed gable at the top of the building.

Further alterations in the 1990’s uncovered four of the original seven arched windows in the temple-form gable base, but also removed the cornice from the façade below the gable. The fact that the arched openings were still in place behind the stucco suggests that perhaps other aspects of the original design could be uncovered in the future.
The present Strand Building is actually a 1925 façade renovation of two three-story brick Italianate structures on the site. The Strand as remodeled is a fine example of the early 20th century Commercial style that combined Chicago and Classical Revival style elements. The regular pattern created by the six bays containing large, three-part Chicago-style windows at the second and third floors, the simple stepped parapet, the subtle pilasters with brick and stone detailing, and the light orange brick are all typical of commercial buildings of this type.

A large marquee marked the entrance to the Strand Theater in the bay just left of center. Four anchors still in place between the second and third floor windows were attachment points for the heavy chains which supported the marquee. The theater itself stood on the location of the current parking lot behind the Strand Building. The 2500-seat movie theater was the largest in the state when built. Rudy Vallee was an usher there and it was home to the 20 piece Strand Orchestra. It was torn down in 1970. A classic theater-style projecting vertical sign with hundreds of light bulbs, reading “STRAND”, rose from the top of the second story windows to above the parapet on the central pier of the façade.

The numerous storefronts, as originally designed, were most likely similar in plan, consistent with the uniformity of the upper stories.

The upper story windows have been replaced in a sensitive manner, keeping to the original configuration and using dark frames that compliment the color of the brick. The recessed double storefront at the east end of the building was renovated in 2008, bringing its plane back out to the sidewalk and recreating the missing pier between the storefronts.
Historic photographs of this site show a four-story masonry building in a simple late-Victorian Commercial style. The present building was constructed in 1936-37 and was designed by Portland architect Herbert W. Rhodes. Renovated several times since its erection, the 1980’s manifestation showed no trace of former facades. The storefront in 1987 was executed in brick, glass and bronze anodized metal. A balloon awning marked the upper story entrance. The upper story consisted of monolithic panels, wooden windows, an aluminum and plastic sign and a row of ribbon-line metal along the parapet.

Subsequent remodeling has created a new façade more in keeping with traditional storefront design principles.
Property Address: 574-576 Congress Street

Inventory #:

Assessor's C/B/L:

District: Congress Street

Rating: Contributing

Local Code: C

National Register: Contributing – Spring Street Historic District

Date of Placement: Local 8/1/90 National 04/03/70

Architectural Description/Historic Significance:

The twin brick storefronts at 574 and 576 Congress are interesting examples of changes over a long period of time. These buildings play a special role on Congress Street, as they are also the visual terminus for the in-town end of Forest Avenue. They were built around 1826 as a two-storefront late Federal or Greek Revival style structure. Each side had three windows at each of the upper two floors, with simply detailed stone sills, lintels and a plain cornice.

Around 1912, extensive modifications were made to “modernize” the building. The windows at the second and the third floors were greatly enlarged. “Chicago-style” configurations of large central picture windows flanked by double-hung, one-over-one sash were designed for the third floor. In order to accommodate the increased glass, large continuous steel lintels were placed above the windows. The original cornice remains in place, as does the original gable roof, with its ridge parallel to Congress Street.

The 1912 storefronts were typical of the period: large display windows with large transoms flanking recessed entries. At the center between the two buildings was a door leading to the upper floors. Both storefronts have undergone recent renovations.

Although much altered over time, these buildings are among the very few surviving first generation commercial buildings along Congress Street and their early character is still evident in their scale, form, and material.
Portland Historic Resources Inventory

Property Address: 575 Congress Street

Inventory #:

Assessor’s C/B/L:

District: Congress Street

Rating: Non-Contributing
  Local Code: NC
  National Register: NC – Spring Street Historic District
  Date of Placement:  Local 8/1/90  National 04/03/70

Architectural Description/Historic Significance:

The existing façade at 575 Congress is the most recent of several major renovations of a commercial block dating from the early 1800’s. The current appearance dates from 1957 and is an undistinguished façade of granite veneer and stucco. It presents an uninviting face to the street, with no windows to show activity inside except at the main entrance.

The loss of several panels of granite veneer and subsequent in-fill with diagonally laid ceramic tile squares adds to the discordance of the building.

Although much altered, this building is historically interesting as the long-time home of the Empire “Chop Suey” restaurant. Opened in 1916, the upscale Empire occupied the second story of the building with an “Oriental” marquee over the entrance on Congress Street. An 8’ wide by 28’ high electric sign reading “Chop Suey”, with exposed light bulb illumination, rose above the marquee to well above the building’s roofline. The restaurant remained in operation until 1953. There is strong evidence that American painter Edward Hopper based his painting “Chop Suey” on the view from inside the Empire looking out at the sign. Hopper was in Portland in 1927 and the painting was completed in January 1929.
Property Address: 578 Congress Street

Inventory #:

Assessor's C/B/L:

District: Congress Street

Rating: Contributing

Local Code: C

National Register: Contributing – Spring Street Historic District

Date of Placement: Local 8/1/90 National 04/03/70

Architectural Description/Historic Significance:

This three-story structure is one of the oldest commercial buildings on Congress Street, dating from the 1820's. When built, it housed the Clement Pennell store. It was originally a simple brick structure with two double-hung windows with stone heads and sills at each upper floor. A plain corbelled brick cornice topped the building and a basic recessed-entry storefront was at street level.

The building was later occupied and remodeled by Levi F. Drake and Amos Davis in 1859-60. During this renovation, a handsome bay window was added to replace the two individual windows at the second floor. 1980's renovations resulted in the removal of the bay window and its replacement with a Chicago-style window. At some point, shutters, lanterns and white paint were used in an effort to make the building appear "early American".

The storefront has not fared well in past modernization efforts due to extensive changes in proportions and materials. The most recent changes to the storefront have been more sympathetic, including the removal of metal panels and anachronistic details. Wood and glass doors were repaired, and a high quality retractable awning has been installed. Upper story work included removal of "colonial" details, projecting signs, and lanterns.
Portland Historic Resources Inventory

Property Address: 579 Congress Street (Congress Square Hotel)

Inventory #:

Assessor’s C/B/L:

District: Congress Street

Rating: Contributing

Local Code: C

National Register: Contributing – Spring Street Historic District

Date of Placement: Local 08/01/90 National 04/03/70

Architectural Description/Historic Significance:

The Congress Square Hotel, on the northwest corner of Congress Street and Forest Avenue is a steel frame structure faced principally with brick, with stone and terracotta trim. The first of the seven stories is defined by granite piers and lintels, which divide large display windows, topped by multi-pane leaded transoms for stores, and for the principal entrance to the upper stories. The Congress Street façade is seven bays wide, while the original part of the Forest Avenue façade is eleven bays, with an additional eight bays (added in 1905-1907) which step back from the original block. The final addition, of 1915, was also seven stories and built on a rear one-story ell northwest of the original block. The main block is organized horizontally into thirds by projecting cornices above the second story, fifth story, and at the roofline, above the seventh story. Vertical divisions are emphasized by pilasters between groups of two windows; these are crowned by capitals at the fifth story and terminated in arches on the uppermost story.

As far back as 1844 there was a small hotel on this corner and in 1858 the City Hotel is first recorded. By 1894, the City Hotel building was four stories high, five bays wide and was regarded as a fine place, especially under the proprietorship of J.W. Robinson and Son who had owned it since 1883 and who sold it to Henry Rines in 1894. When the new building was completed in 1896 it had been variously referred to as the Hotel Rines and the New City Hotel, but the final and present name prevailed. The Rines family had been successful in the clothing business and became active in real estate, development, and eventually radio and television. Rines commissioned Francis Fassett to design the new, elevator served hotel and the architect used a Romanesque Revival vocabulary to organize and embellish the exterior. During this same decade Fassett designed the Choate Block, Columbia Hotel and the Baxter Memorial Building, all on Congress Street. The Lafayette Hotel was to follow in seven years. Surface richness, strong cornices and round arch windows are hallmarks of the Romanesque Revival style. Notable in Fassett’s handling of these elements are the subtle projections and recessions around the large, paired windows, which create sharp shadow lines; the change, on the Forest Avenue façade, to tripartite windows which are slightly bowed; the use of terra cotta on spandrel panels above the fourth and sixth stories and on the pilaster capitals and arches. The meander pattern below the cornice is a motif used effectively on other buildings as well. It is interesting to note that for the final addition in 1915, the interior spaces were designed by Frederick A. Tompson, once an associate of Fassett’s and an architect well known for numerous Portland buildings. In this building in 1927, WCSH Radio and the First Radio Parish of America were founded.
This commercial building illustrates, as well as any, how one structure can bring together so many strands of Portland history; the westward development of Congress Street in the late nineteenth century; the acumen of a business man such as Henry Rines; the development of radio and the careers of two architects.

In the early 1940’s the top floor of the building was renovated to become the studio of the WSCH (W Congress Square Hotel) television station, which broadcast the first television signal in Maine. There had been intense competition between the Gannett family, owners of the Portland Press Herald and Evening Express newspapers, and the Rines family to become the first to get a television station on the air in Maine. The Rines family’s WCSH was the first on air in December of 1943.

In 1979 this property was part of a Federal Urban Development Action Grant which was used to convert the former hotel to elderly housing apartments. Also included in the UDAG project was the renovation of the abutting Eastland Hotel, the building of the parking garage at High Street and Cumberland Avenue, creation of Congress Square plaza on the site of a “notorious” donut shop, construction of the Payson Wing of the Portland Museum of Art, and restoration of the H.H. Hay flatiron building.

Upper story windows have been replaced with anodized aluminum, double hung units; and the transom windows have been covered with sheet acrylic, obscuring this important feature.
The Moulton Block is a four-story brick building with stone and brick trim. It is organized into a street level store front with two glass display windows, a central entrance to the store and another entrance on the west edge to the stories above. The upper stories repeat the central emphasis of the first with a single window; the two sides each have a bank of two windows on each level. The second story has always been treated differently from the third and fourth. Today the area is marked by strong central pilasters and by a wide horizontal band; the stone sills and lintels are the same as the upper stories, smooth stone cut into horizontal and square panels. The four pilasters reach up to the ornamental brick band beneath the deep cornice where each pilaster is decorated by a brick cascade pattern, which emphasizes the vertical.

Until 1912 this site held “Union Hall”, a brick building of two stories built in 1826 in the Greek Revival style. It had a gable roof with the ridge parallel to the street; the upper level had a central large Palladian window, flanked by two smaller arched windows and is reported to have been the scene of many large successful dancing parties. Just before it was rebuilt and enlarged, the street level had a grocer’s and a real estate office. By 1912, the block from Oak Street to Congress Square contained a mixture of old and new, with the twenty-plus year old Baxter Memorial Block and the William Milliken Block five and four stories respectively, while the other structures had the height and proportions of the 1820’s. The new building was already leased to the Carleton Furniture Company by the owners, David E. Moulton, a lawyer, and his brother Willis B., a physician. Llewellyn Carleton’s previous store was at 21 Monument Square. It was, at the time, not hard to imagine a new, taller building on this site, for immediately adjacent was the 1889 William Milliken block, designed by John Calvin Stevens. The designer of the Moulton Block took advantage of the party wall and simply continued the same cornice design.

It is important to note that the second story windows originally were quite different and even bolder than those of the Milliken Block. Old photographs show full plate glass windows with smaller transoms above, framed in metal. These second story windows were as generous and in the same plane as the display windows below. They completely filled the recessed area between the piers before the current windows were inserted with surrounding brick infill and stone sills and lintels matching the original upper story windows. Without early photographic evidence of the original window design it is unlikely one would suspect the current design is not original.

It was only in the upper two stories that the play of shadow caused by projecting pilasters and cornice becomes part of the design, as do the stone sills and lintels. The emphasis on verticality.
provided by the pilasters was enhanced by the lightness of the second story windows. Even with the innovative windows, the design has the central emphasis, which is to be noted in many of the late nineteenth century buildings that line Congress Street. It is not, however, a feature of the William Milliken Block.

Significant for its part in the retail development of Congress Street, this building also signals the cycles of change in the leasing of retail space. The design is noteworthy; its juxtaposition to and bolstering of the Milliken Block is visually significant as is the story of change still told by this streetscape.

Windows are one-over-one double-hung with stone lintels and sills. The present storefront dates from 1960. Well designed and executed in quality materials, it is a good example of its type. Only the aluminum and plastic sign across the entire width of the front strikes a discordant note.
The William Milliken Block is a narrow, brick, four-story structure on the south side of Congress Street in the block just east of Congress Square. The first story shop front with display windows is surmounted by a second story with a Chicago style broad window, divided into two lights by a steel strip and topped by a visible steel beam. Above, the two upper stories have, each, a band of four arched window openings and the whole is crowned by a bold cornice. In addition to the use of brick and metal, there are sills of rough-cut stone under the third and fourth story window banks. Other decoration is supplied by brick worked into stringcourses or decorative patterns between the second and third levels and under the cornice. The street level façade is of glass, both clear and opaque, and metal framing. In the past there were horizontal signs above the first, the second and the third stories.

The block between Oak Street and Congress Square still retains some of the scale of the 1820’s, in fact in seven of the buildings on the south side. The William Milliken Block in 1889 was the first to be “modernized”, with the Baxter Memorial Block following six years later. It is important to remember that Congress Square was still residential, as was Congress Street between there and Longfellow Square. From today’s evidence this area was the transition from the more intense commercial development of the Monument Square area to the residential development of the rest of the peninsula westward.

John Calvin Stevens had learned his profession in the office of Francis H. Fassett, had risen to partner in 1880 and had then opened his own office in 1883. The year 1889, of this building Stevens was elected a fellow of the American Institute of Architects. On Congress, as Fassett’s partner, he had already done the Lancaster Building in 1881 and the J.B. Brown Building in 1882 and on Middle Street in 1886 he designed the Oxford Building, which is a prototype for the William Milliken Block. Stevens was developing a heavier, more substantial style, Romanesque Revival, which is characterized by arched windows and the use of rough cut stone embellishments, in addition to often rich brick patterning. In this structure the first two stories are a solid base, with the two upper stories worked out in a lighter rhythm. This is especially apparent in the heavy steel beam above the Chicago windows, which anchors the lower part, and in the upper arched windows, which are joined by a continuous brick projecting outline, but still rest on a strong stone sill.

The significance of this building lies in the era of its construction, a time of downtown development in Portland; in it as a fine small building by John Calvin Stevens whose architecture
is evident and important in Portland and in Maine; and in its present day importance in the streetscape as it bolsters its neighbor and echoes buildings on the north side of the block.

The storefront, with its low paneled bulkhead and retractable awning is a fine example of a traditional Congress Street storefront.
Portland Historic Resources Inventory

Property Address: 585-587 Congress Street

Inventory #:

Assessor’s C/B/L:

District: Congress Street

Rating: Contributing

Local Code: C
National Register: Contributing – Spring Street Historic District
Date of Placement: Local 08/01/90 National 04/03/70

Architectural Description/Historic Significance:

The structure was built c. 1855 as a store and residence for Jonas W. Clark, a cabinetmaker. George C. Shaw, who is listed in the city directory as proprietor of a tea company on Middle Street had his residence in this building in 1869, although the business was not moved here until 1877 when he owned 589 Congress Street as well. By 1879 his residence was moved further west on Congress Street and he still maintained another store in Middle Street. Then, in 1880 he remodeled 589 Congress extensively and made some changes in the sash of this building. The headquarters of the George C. Shaw Company remained on the upper stories of these buildings into the 1970’s, long after the company had become an enormous regional chain of Supermarkets.

The three-story building, which is four bays wide, is of brick, which has been painted. The first story has granite uprights dividing three tall display windows and supporting a sturdy granite lintel. The second and third stories are each marked by a row of four windows with two upper over one lower panes topped by three curved brick courses forming shallow arches. The smaller third story windows rest on bracket supported sills. The roofline of this gabled building extends forward and is supported by a series of small brackets. Early photographs show the gable end returns continuing for a full pedimented end, matching that on the original portion of the William Hammond Heirs Block at 591 Congress St. Perhaps the central section was removed, leaving the returns, when the fourth floor gable end windows were added.

The granite framed storefront with its tall proportions was a traditional Portland design until the introduction of cast iron facades in the 1860’s. This one was divided as it is now, but the center bay was once a recessed entrance. The simple arched windows make an attractive visual rhythm across the upper part of the façade. They and the use of brackets are hallmarks of the Italianate style of the mid-century. Before the brick was painted there was a narrow, lintel size sign, which extended across both buildings and, in summer, an equally long awning provided shade to the sidewalk.

The building’s significance rests, first of all, on the important grocery business which was developed within its walls and which survives today. The structure and its joined neighbor were both converted from residence and partial residence to commercial use in the latter part of the nineteenth century. It was this neighborhood that became host to a number of grocery and provision businesses as the Congress Street commercial district moved westward. The first story,
although not free of change, retains the spare and imposing aspect of its original days, while the upper stories are in their mid-nineteenth century condition.

The original granite storefront frame is still intact and now frames clean, contemporary display windows executed in black-finished aluminum and tinted glass components. Located at the eastern end is a simple, well-designed, upper story entry which is distinguished from, yet compatible with, the storefront treatment.
Property Address: 586 Congress Street (Noah Harding Block)

Inventory #: 

Assessor’s C/B/L: 

District: Congress Street

Rating: Contributing

Local Code: C

National Register: NC – Spring Street Historic District

Date of Placement: Local 8/1/90 National 04/03/70

Architectural Description/Historic Significance:

This three-story painted brick building, known as the Noah Harding Block, dates from the 1820’s and today shows little of its original character. Though the top story windows may be close to their original appearance, the second story window was altered (probably in the early 1900’s) to a Chicago style configuration with a continuous steel lintel over it.

The original storefront and several subsequent remodelings were destroyed or completely covered in a recent remodeling. The large display window, lower cornice/sign panel, and recessed entry were destroyed or covered in an effort to provide a “colonial” residential look at street level. The result is incongruous, relating neither to the upper façade or the adjoining storefronts.
The building was part of the Charles Q. Clapp Block restoration by Greater Portland Landmarks, Inc. in 1979-80. It is a fine example of a Federal style commercial building that has been respectfully adapted to changing tastes and uses over its history and today is essentially a Colonial Revival style building. It was erected by Levi Sawyer around 1826. Its gable roof, with ridge parallel to the street originally had a very simple Federal cornice and eave detail. It now features a deep bracketed and denticulated cornice and finely detailed balustrade complete with urns, not seen in early views of the building, which are probably a Colonial Revival era addition. Directly below the classic cornice is a frieze with three small windows, where originally there were four larger windows. The second floor windows are the result of a subsequent remodeling but are distinctive in their own right. Four original individual windows were replaced by a single large group of three one-over-one double-hung windows separated by pairs of cast iron columns. A curved glass display window and wood bulkhead dating from the early 20th century lend an unusual touch. Two doors, with transoms overhead and a granite base, complete the storefront.

As it stands today very little evidence of its original Federal style appearance remains beyond its scale and basic form. However, it is a nicely detailed Colonial Revival commercial building, adapted from its original design with sensitivity and delicacy.

This building, along with its neighbors to the west, 590 and 594 Congress St. are owned as a single property. They are painted as a group in a low-key but attractive color scheme appropriate to their period. The common color scheme emphasizes the distinguishing details of each building.
The building is a two-story, three bay painted brick structure with a gable roof, parallel to Congress Street. The street level consists of two entrances on either side of a two-thirds length display window topped by a deep sign. The upper story has three segmental arched windows in a two-over-one configuration, with prominent, bracketed sills and projecting lintels. The narrow, but boldly profiled cornice is supported by a bracket at either end with thirteen simpler brackets between.

Originally designed as a three-story house in 1861 by the well-known architect George M. Harding, changes were made in 1880. During the time of Harding’s Portland activity, from 1858 to 1872, when he returned to Boston, he designed many buildings, including the first of the present Portland High School complex. He was particularly busy after the great fire of 1866 and his Woodman Building of 1867 stands on the corner of Middle and Pearl Streets. Two buildings in Congress Square, now demolished or unrecognizable, attest to the earlier activity in this part of Congress Street. Twenty years later this building was remodeled and joined to its neighbor, 585-587 Congress Street, to house the expanded George C. Shaw Company.

Harding’s design in 1861 had been for a three-story house. In 1880 a single line of three large windows replaced the two rows of smaller windows with their straight stone lintels and sills. This change also allowed the sign panel to be carried across the facades of both 585-587 and 589, helping to unify the two buildings. The new windows were made to match those of the neighboring building and a new cornice was designed to echo, but not align with, that at 585-587 Congress Street. The window change explains the generous spacing of the upper façade elements where the area between the window arches and the cornice is wider than might be expected in a building of this sort. The segmental arched windows are typical, not of 1880, but of a modest Italianate style house of the mid century, as is the bracketed cornice.

The significance of this modest building rests on its original architect, on its subsequent transformation and incorporation with its neighbor, on the commercial development of the Congress Square area and on the importance of the George C. Shaw Company in Portland history.

At street level a modern aluminum and glass storefront system has been installed, matching that next door at 585-587 Congress St. Unlike the portion next door, this section of the storefront is recessed several feet behind the original brick and granite storefront piers. An oversized sign has
been placed over what would have been the original sign panel and transom window area. The present contemporary storefront is well designed and built of quality materials. Although recessing the storefronts from the front plane of the building is generally not encouraged, it works reasonably well in this instance. This storefront, and that at 585-587 Congress St., is now 25+ years old and showing some signs of age. When the time comes for replacement it may be desirable to return to a storefront design more in keeping with the character of the upper stories.
Property Address: 590 Congress Street (Ebenezer Steele Block)

Inventory #:

Assessor’s C/B/L:

District: Congress Street

Rating: Landmark
Local Code: L
National Register: Contributing – Spring Street Historic District
Date of Placement: Local 08/01/90 National 04/03/70

Architectural Description/Historic Significance:

This three-story brick Federal/Greek Revival structure was part of Greater Portland Landmarks restoration of the Charles Q. Clapp Block, including 586 and 594 Congress Street (the three buildings are owned as a single property). It was built as the Ebenezer Steele Block in 1826. As built, the building featured a gable end to the street, reflecting the developing Greek Revival style, it was remodeled in 1887. Its storefront appearance dates from that renovation, but its upper story window configuration is probably original. The ridge of its current gable roof matches that of 588 Congress. The 3/3 double hung windows are unusual and interesting.
Portland Historic Resources Inventory

Property Address: 591 Congress Street (William Hammond Heirs Block)

Inventory #:

Assessor's C/B/L:

District: Congress Street

Rating: Contributing

Local Code: C

National Register: Contributing – Spring Street Historic District

Date of Placement: Local 08/01/90 National 04/03/70

Architectural Description/Historic Significance:

In 1857, Thomas Hammond had a three-and-one-half story Italianate house built here. His heirs decided in 1880 to “modernize” and change the residence into a commercial property, contributing to the commercial redevelopment of residential structures along Congress Street from Monument Square west to Longfellow Square. Congress Square was a mid-point where High Street came up from the harbor and descended toward Deering. For this development Francis Fassett supplied the design, his third commission of thirteen that are documented for Congress Street. Among the tenants for the first story shop over the years were G.M. Bosworth and Sons, paper hangings, windows shades and room moldings; E.E. Lambord, tailor, and Louis Schlosberg, furrier. Later, George C. Shaw and Company used this space, as well as the two buildings to the east.

Fassett’s strategy in “modernizing” the structure was to build out one shallow bay on the Congress Street façade, with a new façade at the sidewalk line, and to add the large dormer projecting forward from the peak of the original gable, conferring a monumental presence on the new Congress Street façade. It is worthwhile to note how Fassett contrived to integrate the dormer, he has three pilasters spring from the keystones of the third story windows, stop at a molding about a sixth of the height of the window and then continue up to the cornice. This overlap is an effective transition at the same time it emphasizes the verticality of the façade. Typical Queen Anne characteristics are the slenderness of the various pilasters and moldings; the use of strong decorative patterns and the variety of materials, including stone and terra cotta as well as the brick. Multiple changes have been made on the first story through the years; originally there were two entrances, one to the upper stories. The scrolled volutes, which once joined dormer to roofline on either side, have been lost.

The significance of remodeling this residence into a commercial property tells much of the nineteenth century history of Congress Street, as do its first story tenants. It is also a fine example of Francis Fassett’s design ingenuity, which secured him so many commissions over a quarter century of Congress Street development. And, finally, it is an unusually handsome building, its two visible facades marking well Congress Square.

The second story windows have shallow arches and strong keystones; the third story windows have a straight upper edge and similar keystones and the paired dormer windows return to the shallow arch of the second story, although the keystones are less prominent. The dormer is
crowned by a segmental arch supported by three slender brick pilasters. The horizontal divisions are colorful; that between the second and third stories includes several square stones, set flush with the brick and three terra cotta panels, the center one bearing the name of the building. At the next level is a checker pattern flanked by rondels in relief and above the dormer windows is a row of stone circles set evenly with the brick. The west, or High Street, elevation has always been visible and it shows the original gable roof, a recessed area of brick which comprises four windows on each story and is framed by one bay to the south and the north respectively.

The storefront has been greatly altered, with some resulting damage to masonry and decorative detail. However, the most recent storefront is generally in keeping with traditional storefront design principles. The arched dormer and roof were seriously damaged by fire in the 1990s and were subsequently restored with care and sensitivity.
Portland Historic Resources Inventory

Property Address: 593 Congress Street

Inventory #:

Assessor’s C/B/L:

District: Congress Street

Rating: Non-Contributing

Local Code: NC

National Register: Contributing – Spring Street Historic District

Date of Placement: Local 8/1/90 National 04/03/70

Architectural Description/Historic Significance:

This diminutive, one-story structure was built in 1882 to house the Joseph T. Stubbs Art Store. Frequently and extensively remodeled, its present façade dates from the early 1980s. Brick piers and two small granite corbels remain of the original façade.
Portland Historic Resources Inventory

Property Address: 594 Congress Street (C.Q. Clapp Block/H.H. Hay Building)

Inventory #: 

Assessor’s C/B/L: 

District: Congress Street

Rating: Landmark

Local Code: L

National Register: Landmark

Date of Placement: Local 08/01/90 National 01/31/78

Architectural Description/Historic Significance:

The H.H. Hay Block was known in earlier days as the Charles Quincy Clapp Block, named after its architect. It was a two-story building when constructed in 1826, a third story designed by John Calvin Stevens was added in 1922. Built in the shape of a flatiron to conform to the unusual lot created by the intersection of Congress and Free Streets, it is one of Portland’s most prominent and best known commercial buildings. The main floor housed the H.H. Hay Drug store for a century.

Its masonry handsomely highlighted by large brick arches at the first and second floor, the building features different window configurations at each story. Brick detailing is quite simple, with recessed panels between window groups and a frieze of raised brick panels below a basic metal cornice. Distinctive wood fans fill the arches above second floor windows. The ground floor windows and doors have arched transom sash and stone sills on a granite base.

As part of Greater Portland Landmarks 1979-80 restoration of the building, an entrance leading to the second floor replaced a display window at the narrow end of the building facing Congress Square. Although there was no door at this location originally, later 19th century photos show an entrance topped by a bay display window.

In 1979 this property was part of a Federal Urban Development Action Grant which was used to restore the H.H. Hay Block and two abutting early buildings. Also included in the UDAG project was the conversion the Congress Square Hotel to elderly housing apartments, the renovation of the Eastland Hotel, the building of the parking garage at High Street and Cumberland Avenue, creation of Congress Square plaza on the site of a “notorious” donut shop, and construction of the Payson Wing of the Portland Museum of Art.
The Schwartz Building has been an important focal point of Congress Square since its completion in 1920, when it replaced an elegant Greek Revival residence. In the Commercial style of the period, it features large windows in groupings of “picture” sash, double hung side windows and multi-part transom windows. The predominant wall material is brick with simple detailing in the form of pilasters, corner-laid bands and some raised panels. Stone lintels and sills add solidity. The building’s most distinctive features are its corner turret with clock tower and its animated parapet line trimmed with a stone cap.

The building is a four-story wide angled building at the intersection of Congress and High Streets. To mark the corner, the building’s round clock tower raises the equivalent of another two stories. The predominantly brick structure has stone lintels, sills and parapet edge. Brick pilasters, panels and smaller decorative flourishes enliven the surface. None of its seven vertical bays are identical, although each consists of a recessed area containing both large and smaller windows, all with transoms. The greatest variation occurs in the two final bays on Congress Street where the floor levels are clearly lower and five panels have been inserted below the parapet to maintain an even roofline. The entrance to the upper stories is in the center of this section. The windows throughout are either large fixed sash with transom, or double hung; in two bays large fixed windows are flanked by two windows which open. The original storefronts had large fixed windows and transom windows above which in turn were surmounted by a narrow signboard. Mid-twentieth century materials and their placement on the storefront level have obscured the original verticality of the façade, with the exception of the westernmost shopfront on Congress Street.

David Schwartz had left the clothing business for the real estate business in 1913 and had already remodeled 606 Congress Street in 1917 when, in 1920, he undertook the construction of this corner building between the High Street Congregational Church and his own earlier project at 606 Congress.

The design problem was to use substantial parts of previous buildings, create a unified façade and extend the space upwards. Thus, a uniform parapet line was established and brick panels were used as fillers where the floor levels did not match. In this west section is also found the tall, narrow, arched entrance to the upper stories. One of the elements used to give coherence to this complex façade is the strong outlining of stone against brick; another is the striking central
feature of the round clock tower which once echoed the steeple and cupola of the adjacent church.

The position of this building is prominent as it both defines and organizes Congress Square. It is significant as well for what it says of the westward expansion of the commercial district and the people responsible for it, and for the reworking of old buildings into new.

The original storefronts were tall, rising from sidewalk to steel lintel/sign board. Large display windows, low bulkheads and extensive transom windows contributed to a bold street-level façade. Adding to the building’s animation was a change of window level and storefront height for two of the four structural bays facing Congress Street, made necessary by the incorporation of a previous building, which had less floor-to-floor height. The main building entry on Congress Street is highlighted by a round brick arch with keystone at the street-level door.

The upper stories of the Schwartz Building are virtually unchanged, however, the storefronts have been substantially modernized. Only the westernmost storefront (“Cut Above”) retains its early configuration and detailing. The building’s strategic location and original architectural quality justify a significant restoration effort on the storefronts. Aluminum framed doors and windows should be replaced with wood and glass units similar to the originals. The upper story large pane windows opened by pivoting on a central axis. The windows were replaced in 2006 with new aluminum units that replicate the design of the original wood sash.
Property Address: 606 Congress Street (David Shwartz Building)

Inventory #:

Assessor’s C/B/L:

District: Congress Street

Rating: Contributing

Local Code: C
National Register: NC – Spring Street Historic District
Date of Placement: Local 8/1/90 National 04/03/70

Architectural Description/Historic Significance:

The David Schwartz Building, built in 1917, is a three-story utilitarian Commercial-style structure with little decoration other than its rock-face stone lintels and sills at the upper stories. It is a major reworking of one of the four John W. Lane townhouses, three of which remain to the west with more intact upper stories. The brick walls are detailed simply, with only minor brick corbelling to add interest. Upper story windows feature a single double-hung sash to one side of a large single light. The windows are quite large; when combined with the rustic appearance of the stone lintels and sills. A rock-faced stepped stone parapet tops the structure. There is a raised panel beneath it.

Little remains of the original storefront, which was typical of its period. Large display windows, probably in bronze frames, a recessed center door, an upper story entrance door at the side, and small-pane transom windows made up the storefront. Today only a piece of one storefront pier and a steel lintel above the storefront opening are visible, the rest covered by a 1960s remodeling utilizing black opaque glass panels, aluminum and glass bricks.
Portland Historic Resources Inventory

Property Address: 608-610 (John W. Lane Block)

Inventory #:

Assessor’s C/B/L:

District: Congress Street

Rating: Contributing

Local Code: C
National Register: NC – Spring Street Historic District
Date of Placement: Local 8/1/09 National 04/03/70

Architectural Description/Historic Significance:

Clearly visible behind the added commercial additions at the front, are three units of the John W. Lane Block, a three-story block of four Italianate row houses, designed by architect George M. Harding and built in 1864-65. The block reminds one that upper Congress Street was primarily residential in character until the first part of this century. In 1917 a two-story commercial addition at 608 Congress Street and the Rudolph M. Lewson addition at 610 Congress Street were completed. #608 had a two-story bay window on the 2nd and 3rd floors, which was removed sometime after 1924 resulting in the addition of four small windows, which lack the stone hoods and sills seen on the remainder of the upper story windows. All of the sash have been altered from 2/2 to 1/1. Beneath the bracketed cornice is an arched brick frieze. 612 Congress Street was altered in 1921 by a two-story commercial addition. A bay window on the third floor is partially obscured by the arched parapet of the second story commercial addition.

The three storefront additions are examples of alterations which have acquired significance in their own right, as documentation of the changing use of this section of Congress Street as it transitioned from a residential area to a commercial area.
Property Address: 615 Congress Street

Architectural Description/Historic Significance:

The prominent, six-story Congress (State Theater) Building at the northwest corner of Congress and High Streets was built in 1929. Designed by Herbert W. Rhodes in the Colonial Revival style, it is a very simple example of the style. From the time of its construction, it has contained retail businesses and office tenants, as well as the State Theatre. The Theatre’s elaborate Spanish Revival interior was created at a time of extravagance in theatre design and remains today remarkably untouched. Restoration of the State Theatre has preserved Portland’s last great movie palace and has helped to revitalize upper Congress Street (if only by removing one of the pornographic theaters which once were located there).

The building features ten storefront bays on the Congress Street elevation, a diagonal corner storefront, and six more storefronts facing High Street. Dominating the Congress Street façade is the main entrance to the theatre, which is three stories in height.

The Theatre entrance is recessed into the building, defined by a large marquee. Huge chains support the marquee from the building. The second and third story portions of the entrance are framed by limestone pilasters; a cornice of urns, scrolls and moldings, and a simple but impressive stone arch. Within the frame is an elaborate window arrangement of arches and circles. All combine to make this Spanish Revival entrance unique in Portland.

The remainder of the building is stately in proportion and basic in execution. The storefronts were originally all identical, with recessed side entrances, granite bulkheads, large display windows in bronze frames, bronze doors and uniform metal sign panels with awning bars above the windows.

The storefronts are separated by stone piers, which support a plain stone lower cornice. The stone is used as the primary material at the second floor, surrounding large Chicago-style windows, each with a transom window in the same three-part configuration, centered above each storefront. The stonework is capped by a large rolled cornice to terminate the two-story base of the building. The third through sixth floors feature simple brick construction with double-hung windows in pairs or in threes. The only interruption of the brick is in the form of stone pilasters, which visually support the undecorated limestone cornice.
In addition to the Theatre entrance, there is a main building (upper floors) entrance on Congress Street. This doorway features a simple metal canopy over a recessed double door with sidelights. Another entrance on High Street also accesses and elevators to all floors.

Windows in the third through fifth floors were replaced with aluminum units in the 1990s. The second story windows were replaced in 2007, with review and approval by the Historic Preservation Board. Elaborate copper creating was removed without approval from the top of the street-facing facades in 2006, reportedly to prevent it from falling. Its restoration should be a high priority.
Portland Historic Resources Inventory

Property Address: 616 Congress Street (Souviney’s Recreation Building)

Inventory #:

Assessor’s C/B/L:

District: Congress Street

Rating: Contributing

Local Code: C

National Register: NC – Spring Street Historic District

Date of Placement: Local 8/8/90 National 04/03/70

Architectural Description/Historic Significance:

The building at 616 Congress Street was constructed as Union Congregational Church, 1855-1856, designed by Charles A. Alexander; the church’s tall bell tower and roofline are clearly visible in old photos of the block. The large tower was centered on the gable end of the church, projecting well beyond the front wall. The church was renovated as Souviney’s Recreation Building, a dance hall with first floor retail along the street, in 1923. This involved creation of a new three-story façade on the plane of the front wall of the original tower, utilizing traditional storefronts on the first floor and three Chicago style windows on either side of smaller central windows on each of the upper floors. Above the simple cornice, a “Flemish Baroque” gable incorporated a portion of the front wall of the original tower with its two large arched windows. The result was an odd combination of a simple rectilinear commercial style building supporting a grand Baroque gable. Later, the high gable with its sculptural parapet was removed and replaced by a simple brick parapet and a flat roof. The main entrance portal of the church survived the renovation and remains today.

Today the building has a simple horizontal parapet above a stone and corbelled brick cornice. Windows are Chicago-style three-part units except above the central main building entry. Decoration is confined to flat brick arches with keystones above the windows and stone sills below. The main entrance with stone arch and scroll keystone remains, with tall wood double doors in substantial wood frames.

Storefronts were quite simple as was typical of this style. Doors were recessed to one side of each of the five shop fronts. Display windows were large single-light panes in bronze frames. Bulkheads were low, finished in stone. Above the display windows were leaded prismatic glass transom panels. Storefronts were bordered by brick above and brick piers with stone capitals at the sides. An ornate metal canopy with arched parapet and milk-glass lighting fixtures was located above the main entrance. At the front it had an arched shape that matched the arch of the original door opening behind it. On the rear of the building, visible from Park Street, the rounded apse section of the original church is still apparent.

Today the 1923 canopy has been replaced by a simple modern metal one with no decorative detail. It obscures the arched entryway, the last remaining visible element of the original church façade. Three projecting signs have been modified and the building retains its purposeful commercial appearance.
Portland Historic Resources Inventory

Property Address: 619-621 Congress Street (Baxter Library)

Inventory #: 619-621 Congress Street (Baxter Library)

Assessor’s C/B/L: Congress Street

District: Congress Street

Rating: Landmark

Local Code: L
National Register: Landmark – Spring Street Historic District

Date of Placement: Local 08/01/90 National 04/03/70

Architectural Description/Historic Significance:

The wonderfully detailed structure at 619 Congress was built as the Portland Public Library in 1888. Designed by Francis H. Fassett in the Romanesque Revival style originated by distinguished Boston architect Henry Hobson Richardson, the building was a gift to the City from philanthropist James P. Baxter. Baxter made his fortune in the canning business; he served six terms as Mayor of Portland. He is well remembered for his extensive involvement in civic and cultural affairs and was largely responsible for the creation of a unified plan for the City’s park system.

Fassett designed the Baxter Building using many of the classic characteristics of Richardsonian Romanesque architecture, including a massive entry arch, smaller but dynamic window arches and multi-colored and textured masonry. The abstracted rose window in the street-facing gable, recalls Romanesque churches. The Romanesque Revival style was used extensively for public buildings because of the monumental presence and distinctive character it imparts.

With the construction of the new Portland Public Library at Monument Square in 1979, the Baxter Building became part of the Portland School of Art (now Maine College of Art), thereby continuing its contribution to the cultural life of Portland. Exterior changes have been confined to minor window and door modifications. It is unfortunate that three statues, originally located on platforms provided at roof peak and at cornice eaves, have been lost. They represented history, literature and art and were removed in 1929 when the Congress Building next door was being excavated. Upper-story one-over-one double hung windows have been replaced with non-operable one-over-one opaque units. Fortunately, the arched window openings have not been modified. The medallions flanking these windows represent Homer and Socrates. At the main entrance, original multi-panel solid wood doors were replaced at some point with wood frame doors with large glass lights. The original doors were quite tall; when they were removed, a transom window was installed under the arched glass to fill the vacated space. The present doors, with decorative iron grills, are handsome in their own right. The building is further enhanced by a small fenced garden, as the building was sited back from the sidewalk line.

The Baxter Building was sold to a private developer by the Maine College of Art in 2008.
Property Address: 622 Congress Street

Inventory #:

Assessor’s C/B/L:

District: Congress Street

Rating: Non-Contributing

Local Code: NC
National Register: NC – Spring Street Historic District
Date of Placement: Local 8/1/90 National 04/03/70

Architectural Description/Historic Significance:

The present building at 622 Congress Street is an extreme renovation of the original erected in 1931 as the Sears, Roebuck and Company store, designed by the Chicago architectural firm of Nimmons, Carr and Wright. The Sears building, which replaced a handsome Second Empire style residence, was a straightforward Commercial style building with Chicago style three-part windows at the upper two stories.

The three story, three bay, building was renovated in the 1970’s when it became the U.S, Postal Service Station A. It appears a cornice was removed, brick replaced and a totally new bronze-anodized aluminum and glass storefront was created. The portion of the storefront brick area between the sills of the second story windows is awkward in comparison with what is typical on Congress Street.
Property Address: 624 Congress Street (William V. Jacobs House)

Inventory #:

Assessor’s C/B/L:

District: Congress Street

Rating: Contributing

Local Code: C
National Register: NC – Spring Street Historic District
Date of Placement: Local 8/1/90 National 04/03/70

Architectural Description/Historic Significance:

This building clearly shows how the residential character of upper Congress Street changed to accommodate commercial usage. The two-story Italianate brick residence of 1852 is still visible behind the later storefront addition. The five bay house has a bracketed overhanging cornice, typical of the Italianate style. Based on the roof and cornice details in early photos (which are identical to those existing today), it is very likely that the original hipped roof and cornice were jacked up five or six feet and the brick walls extended up to the new height when the third story was added to the house, c. 1911-14. In 1924, Rudolph M. Lewson constructed a one-story commercial addition to the front of his residence. Period photographs show a stately storefront with a recessed entry flanked by two large display windows with transoms. Today, the storefront has been modified beyond recognition by the installation of a concrete-block panel system that also greatly reduces the storefront window area. The window openings in the original house have been reduced for modern 1/1 double hung sash, in place of their original size and 2/2 configuration. The current storefront is at odds with traditional storefront design principles and further alienates the commercial addition from the original building. In spite of the inappropriate replacement windows in the original building and the unfortunate alterations to the storefront, the building still retains sufficient integrity to contribute to the historical character of the district and to help document the transition from residential to commercial uses that were typical along Congress Street in this area.
Portland Historic Resources Inventory

Property Address: 627 Congress Street
Inventory #:

Assessor’s C/B/L:

District: Congress Street

Rating: Non-Contributing

Local Code: NC
National Register: NC – Spring Street Historic District
Date of Placement: Local 8/1/90 National 04/03/70

Architectural Description/Historic Significance:

As is true of many of the lots on upper Congress Street, this parcel was originally occupied by prestigious residences. Earliest records list a two-and-one-half-story cottage on the site. This structure was demolished for the construction of the James A. Spalding House, built in the Romanesque Revival style to the design of John Calvin Stevens and Albert Winslow Cobb in 1889. This house was in turn demolished in 1939 and replaced by a utilitarian one-story brick commercial building. The brick has been covered by a stucco coating with embedded pebbles at the upper section of the façade. For many years the building housed a pornographic theater and blinds were drawn at all street level doors and windows, creating a “blank stare” to pedestrians. The building now houses a music performance venue.

The demolition of the adjoining building in 2005 left a raw edge to the façade of this building, making it even less attractive.
Property Address: 629-631 Congress Street (Casco Theater)

Inventory #: 

Assessor’s C/B/L: 

District: 


Local Code: 

National Register: Spring Street Historic District  

Date of Placement: Local 8/1/90 National 04/03/70 

Architectural Description/Historic Significance: 

A long neglected building on this site, built as an opera house, was demolished in 2005.
Portland Historic Resources Inventory

Property Address: 630-636 Congress Street (Rudolph M. Lewson Block)

Inventory #:

Assessor’s C/B/L:

District:

Rating: Contributing

Local Code: C

National Register:

Date of Placement: Local 8/1/90 National 4/3/70

Architectural Description/Historic Significance:

The one-story Rudolph M. Lewson Block was erected in 1911 and featured store fronts fronting on both Congress Street and Park Street. Originally each storefront was detailed in a similar fashion, tying the individual sections of the building together. The block was distinctive due to its extensive glass area and rounded corner entrance at Park Street. The features gave the structure a very modern appearance when it was constructed.

Each of the original storefronts on this block has been greatly remodeled, thus the perception of the block as a single entity has been diminished. Although the current storefronts bear little relation to the originals or to each other, each is handsome and well detailed in its own right. The block was recently repainted using a coordinated color scheme, which succeeds in visually relating each storefront to its neighbors.

One storefront has large arched display windows with multi-paned sash and a Colonial-style door surround with broken pediment. The next storefront has a double brick ribbed string course between the bottom of the windows and the ground. The piers are emphasized by vertical panels of ribbed stone.

Historic photos show large billboards lining the front edges of the roof, making the building appear much taller than it is.

Prior to the construction of the Lafayette Hotel on the opposite side of Park Street, a very similar one-story commercial building with a curved corner existed on that site.
Portland Historic Resources Inventory

Property Address: 633 Congress Street (J. Henry Rines Block)
Inventory #: 

Assessor’s C/B/L:

District: Congress Street

Rating: Contributing
Local Code: C
National Register: Contributing – Spring Street Historic District
Date of Placement: Local 8/1/90 National 04/03/70

Architectural Description/Historic Significance:

A narrow two by, six-story, brick building incorporating five stories of apartments and a first floor storefront, the J. Henry Rines Block was constructed in 1903. It was designed by Portland architect George Burnham. Its façade originally had a relationship to the façade of the Columbia Hotel next door, before that building lost its bay windows. Both were built by the Rines family, who also built the Congress Square and Eastland hotels. Its façade above the first floor is animated by two full-height bay windows featuring three double-hung windows per bay per floor. The rest of the bay structure is sheathed in sheet metal and decorated with recessed panels. A simple but impressive metal cornice crowns the building. The original storefront featured large display windows, brick piers and a stone lintel extending the full width of the building.

Today the upper stories are in their original configuration except for the addition of natural finish aluminum-framed storm sash. The storefront has been completely remodeled from the lintel down. The building provides a degree of interest on this part of Congress Street because of its height and undulating façade.

In 2007 an elevator tower was added to the east side of the building, partially occupying the site of the demolished Casco Theater next door.
Portland Historic Resources Inventory

Property Address: 633 ½ -651 Congress Street (Columbia Hotel)
Inventory #: 

Assessor’s C/B/L: 

District: Congress Street

Rating: Non-Contributing

Local Code: NC
National Register: NC – Spring Street Historic District
Date of Placement: Local 8/1/90 National 04/03/70

Architectural Description/Historic Significance:

The five-story David T. and Albert S. Rines Block, also known as the Columbia Hotel, was built at 639 Congress Street in 1893-94. It was designed by Francis H. Fassett. The Queen Anne style building was constructed of brick, with wood, freestone and terracotta. Prominent features were bay windows extending from the second to the fifth floor and a canopy at the main entrance. The Columbia was expanded in 1899 with the construction of the West Wing (647-651 Congress), similar in style but six stories in height.

The five and six-story buildings exist today in greatly altered condition. Most recently they served as the University of Southern Maine’s Portland Hall, a dormitory for students. The bay windows and cornices of both buildings were removed (as was the easternmost structural bay of the building) and the whole façade covered with stucco. The window pattern is the only clue to the former appearance of the buildings. The street-level façade also shows no vestiges of the older buildings. The current façade is uninspired in design and of poor quality materials.

At the street level, nothing suggests that the entire length of the building is part of a single entity. Long expanses of the street level are bricked-in or feature drawn curtains, resulting in an uninviting experience for the pedestrian. To the west of the building is an attached one-story enclosed porch. To the rear of the building is a two-story wing; a suspended glass walkway connects the main building to the easternmost detached two-story wing. The complex was sold by the University of Southern Maine in 2008. Plans call for the demolition of the modern wings at the rear and conversion of the main building to apartments with retail on the first floor. Plans call for a contemporary redesign of the façade that includes a return of bay windows to the upper façade and a more appropriate street level treatment.

Early photographs and records describe a Gothic residence with gable end to the street at 633 ½ Congress, which was later extensively modified by the addition of a commercial storefront in the front yard setback. This has now been replaced by a parking lot for the neighboring hotel. 635 Congress was a Second Empire style, four-story residence (then rooming house) sheathed in wood clapboards. On its site today is the driveway to the hotel building.
Portland Historic Resources Inventory

Property Address: 638-652 Congress Street (Lafayette Hotel)

Inventory #:

Assessor’s C/B/L:

District: Congress Street

Rating: Contributing
   Local Code: C
   National Register: Contributing – Spring Street Historic District
   Date of Placement:  Local 08/01/90 National 04/03/70

Architectural Description/Historic Significance:

The James Cunningham Block, or Lafayette Hotel, is a seven-story brick structure at the corner of Congress and Park Streets. It extends three bays on Park Street with the third bay only five stories high to incorporate the adjacent five-story structure. The Congress Street façade is fifteen bays long, although the latter eight bays were added seventeen years after the original construction. Possibly to accommodate the height change on Park Street, certainly to articulate its bulk, there is a strong ornamental brick projecting stringcourse between the fifth and sixth stories; another stringcourse above the seventh story and then a cornice crowns the building. The vertical divisions are formed by brick pilasters, which support arches over the top story windows—either over single or pairs of windows. The corner, curved and marked by a stone arched entrance, was sheathed by a straight glass, aluminum and concrete cover, as was the whole first story on the Park Street façade for several decades, prior to a sympathetic rehabilitation of the building in the 1980s. At street level on Congress Street were several storefronts to house businesses to serve the hotel clientele. These storefronts had tall glass display windows, recessed entrances, transom windows and broad sign panels. The shop fronts had been altered by the use of modern materials and changes in proportion caused by the blocking of transoms, also now sympathetically altered to reflect the original style of the building.

Congress Street from Forest Avenue almost to Longfellow Square became a hotel and apartment house area beginning in the 1890’s. The Congress Square Hotel, the Columbia and the Lafayette Hotel all went up in the decade of 1893 to 1903 and all were the designs of Francis H. Fassett. The Lafayette, built in 1903 was the project of James Cunningham, a mason and builder, born in 1839 in Ireland and with his own Portland business by 1870. Cunningham was a city councilor and became proprietor of his own development. Projects in which he participated as contractor were the J.B. Brown Building, the Lancaster Building and the Baxter Memorial Building, all on Congress Street downtown and the big Union Station project where Congress crosses St. John Street.

Francis H. Fassett, in 1903, had already designed thirteen buildings along Congress Street including the Portland Public Library nearby on the north side of Congress Street. For the new hotel he chose the Romanesque Revival style, but considerably simplified from the aspect of the 1888 Library. Salient features of this style are substantiality, round arch openings and surface richness. The building is organized round the prominent corner which culminates at the entrance. Each row of windows is defined by the slightly projecting brick pilasters, which terminate in a
round arch or a shallow arch, wide enough to encompass two windows. The rhythm goes from single to double, and the sequence is punctuated by the smaller windows of the stairway bays. These variations provide a lively play of light and shade which, with the various cornices and stringcourses and the use of stone around the original entrance, give a restrained surface richness to the building.

The Lafayette Hotel is significant in the development of Congress Street at the beginning of the 20th century, especially in the suitability of this area for hotels; it stands as a mark of two important people in architecture, that is James Cunningham and Francis H. Fassett; and it signifies a recognizable, albeit modest example of the commercial Romanesque style. The original Lafayette Hotel contained 162 sleeping rooms when it opened in June of 1903.

In 1920-1921, a 100-room addition (650-654 Congress) was erected, also designed by the Fassetts in the same style. It was referred to as the West Wing. Connected to the original hotel, together they created the single largest building on Congress Street.

Now known as the Lafayette Townhouse, the building underwent a curious renovation in 1968. The curved corner and storefronts were substantially altered using materials typical of commercial renovations of the period. The most prominent alteration of the upper façade of the Lafayette Hotel occurred at the corner of Congress and Park Street’s, where the curved corner bay and entrance, the building’s most significant features, were covered by an unfortunate modern glass and panel structure. This structure tied into the renovations at the main floor which involved the covering of all the Congress Street storefronts with a variety of modern materials (none relating to the original or upper story materials), and the addition of a glass and aluminum one-story structure along the main floor of the Park Street elevation. The upper story windows were altered at this time with three-part replacements. The round-headed windows on the top floor were filled in with opaque panels.

The building was fully rehabilitated in the late 1980’s, using historic preservation tax credits, the incongruous alterations of the 1968 renovation were removed and its original character was restored.
Portland Historic Resources Inventory

Property Address: 653 Congress Street (Henry T. Cummings Block)
Inventory #:

Assessor’s C/B/L:

District: Congress Street

Rating: Non-Contributing

Local Code: NC
National Register: NC – Spring Street Historic District
Date of Placement: Local 8/1/90 National 04/03/70

Architectural Description/Historic Significance:

This two-story building dates from 1868, when it was designed for the Henry T. Cummings Drug Store by architect Matthew Stead. It was built in a simplified Italianate style with a plain upper cornice, stone and brick lower cornice, double hung windows above and a classic center-door storefront below. The structure was enlarged and remodeled in 1911-1912 by Frederick A. Tompson, architect. A three-part Chicago window was installed at that time to modernize the upper floor. Additional remodeling in 1948 and more recently have resulted in a substantially altered storefront of new brick, natural aluminum frames and small display windows replacing a center recessed entry storefront with flanking display windows. The window caps were removed in 1911 on the second floor and a steel beam inserted for the Chicago-style window.

Its only significance now that its architectural character has been compromised is in its historical presence, which reminds us that this block was a part of “Doctor’s Row” at the end of the nineteenth century, as the homes and offices of many physicians were located along Congress Street between Park Street and Bramhall Square. Built as an apothecary to service that professional trade, the building was an early forerunner of the evolution from residential to commercial usages along Congress Street.
Portland Historic Resources Inventory

Property Address: 655 Congress Street

Inventory #:

Assessor's C/B/L:

District: Congress Street

Rating: Landmark

Local Code: L

National Register: Contributing – Spring Street Historic District

Date of Placement: Local 08/01/90 National 04/03/70

Architectural Description/Historic Significance:

Originally known as the Baxter Building, 655 Congress Street is today better known as the Trelawny Building. The impressive eight-story structure was built to house apartments, stores and offices. It was erected in 1917 according to plans prepared by architect Frederick A. Tompson. The structure is an exuberant example of a Colonial Revival commercial building (compare to 615 Congress). Materials are brick, stone, terracotta, wood and metal. Its most prominent features are a massive cornice with pediment, five bay windows rising from the third to the seventh floor, and transom panels between the second and third floors decorated with garlands and shields inscribed with the building's construction date strung between the collars of two dogs. The pilasters of the upper stories boast shields and quoins. Windows within the bays are three-part units at the upper floors and pairs of double hung sash at the second and third floors. A broad but unadorned lower cornice resting on massive brick piers separates the first from the second floor and a smaller cornice provides further interest between the third floor and those above.

The Trelawny Building is a brick, eight- story structure, five bays across with shops on the first story, and apartments and offices on the upper stories. The façade is organized into four horizontal bands separated by projecting moldings; the first story shops; the second and stories are grouped together and decorated with four wooden panels, four of them with garlands, the one over entrance an escutcheon between two Irish setters; stories four through seven which have shallow bay windows; and finally, the eighth story above which is a strongly projecting cornice, supported by brackets. The basic brick is enlivened by stone, wood, terra cotta and metal and capped above the cornice by a shallow triangular pediment. James P. Baxter, a pioneer in the food packing business, Mayor of Portland, philanthropist, donor of the Portland Public Library (now Baxter) Building and planner of parks and boulevards, understood the potential of this area of Congress Street and became an important developer with the erection of this multi purpose building: shops professional offices and apartments. The top, eighth, story was leased to the Portland Club and his own office was in the building along with that of Percival Baxter, to be governor of Maine and donor of Baxter State Park. E. J. Harmon, the florist, was a tenant from 1910 to 1917 and Louis H. Schlosberg opened here as a furrier in 1920 (remaining here until the beginning of the 21st century). Already several hotels and apartment houses had been built in this area where thirty years earlier handsome new single-family dwellings were going up. As the retail and office needs of Congress Street had expanded from the late 1880's the one and two family residential area had receded and many former homes had become shops.
Although Baxter had hired Francis H. Fassett frequently as his architect, Fassett had died in 1908 so James Baxter commissioned Frederick Tompson, one time associate of Fassett's to design this building. Tompson had already worked with Fassett on several Congress Street buildings and was designer of the State of Maine Armory on Milk Street as well. Tompson used a relatively new construction method relying on reinforced concrete piers supporting seven inch concrete slabs between floors, thus effectively cantilevering and leaving the brick as exterior skin, rather than as the sole load bearing factor. In organizing the exterior, Tompson had a narrow Congress Street frontage, compared to the depth of the building. He made the most of the principal façade by projecting the central three bays, by his horizontal groupings and by the colonial revival decorative accents. He relied on strong contrast between the dark brick and the much lighter stringcourses, the alternating quoins, the panels, ovals, window surrounds and the dentilled and bracketed cornice lines. Of particular note are the stone columns, which mark the entrance to the upper stories, the corner details and the shallow pediment, which crowns the façade.

When originally constructed, the building had handsome storefronts with small pane transom windows over bronze-framed display windows. The main entrance, at the east end of the building, is recessed behind sturdy Ionic columns. The detailing of the original entry is virtually intact.

The building’s innovative reinforced concrete frame and concrete floor slabs earned a ten-page article in the September 1909 issue of the technical journal *Cement Age*. The magazine noted the exterior trim “made of cast stone, which looks so much like limestone as to deceive anyone, except on close examination.”

An important anchor building at this end of Congress Street, the Trelawny Building retains its presence and dignity and is deserving of continued preservation.

A few of the center double hung window units in the bays have been replaced with single pane sash. There have also been several changes to the storefronts, especially the westernmost one which now projects beyond its original plane. This change throws off the symmetry of the building at street level. The lower cornice between the third and fourth floors is deteriorating on two of its corners.

Of significance in the Trelawny Building are its original owner, James Phinney Baxter who was so important to the economic and civic life of the city; the architect Frederick Tompson whose buildings still enhance Portland; its testimony to the development of Congress Street in the early years of the twentieth century; and its strong design statement at Longfellow Square, the third square to organize and focus the length of Congress Street.
Portland Historic Resources Inventory

Property Address: 656 Congress Street (Longfellow Apartments)

Inventory #:

Assessor’s C/B/L:

District: Congress Street

Rating: Contributing

Local Code: C
National Register: NC – Spring Street Historic District

Date of Placement: Local 08/01/90 National 04/03/70

Architectural Description/Historic Significance:

This four-story, brick apartment block was designed by architect Austin W. Pease and constructed in 1916. The otherwise plain façade is enlivened by two, three-story high bay window stacks and a stepped parapet with stone cornice. A unique aspect is the two-part angled façade, which address the curve in the street.

The three storefronts on the building were originally typical of the period, being composed of large display windows, transom panels and both flush and recessed entrances. The storefronts have been substantially altered. The upper stories have not been altered except for the painting of all brick and stone surfaces. A recessed plaque in the central bay between the third and fourth floors has the building’s name and construction date incised. The storefronts are 1980’s renovations. Storefront piers remain exposed, though they have been painted. The most jarring element of that renovation was a projecting laminated wood sign panel that extended along the entire frontage. This panel covered the former transom windows.

The deteriorated laminated wood sign panel was removed in 2007-08 and replaced with a more traditional sign band flush with the façade of the building.
Portland Historic Resources Inventory

Property Address: 660-662 Congress Street (George S. Hunt Block)

Inventory #:

Assessor’s C/B/L:

District: Congress Street

Rating: Landmark

Local Code: L

National Register: Contributing – Spring Street Historic District

Date of Placement: Local 08/01/90 National 04/03/70

Architectural Description/Historic Significance:

The George S. Hunt Block is a two and one-half story red brick double house. It is four asymmetrically spaced bays wide; it has four dormer windows in the mansard roof, two projecting bay windows on the second story, two entrances and three large display windows on the first level. The recessed entrances are spaced six granite steps above street level. Above each entrance is a significant Decorative feature; at the east end it is an oval window framed in brick with four stone embellishments, while that to the west is an oval, framed similarly, but containing a terra cotta cartouche. A bracketed portico marks the entrance to the recessed eastern entry; it is likely that a similar cover was at the west door. The original massive granite steps remain in place. The dormer windows are crowned by triangular pediments and within each is terra cotta decoration. Other important features are the brick pilasters with stone capitals, which articulate the second story; the decorative brickwork in the panels, which separate the dormer windows; the slate roof with a handsome upper edge. While all the first story display windows were added, the two west ones, built before 1924 have large panes, topped with small pane transoms. The other, added in the 1960’s, is deeper and is multi-paned. With this building it is important to note the west corner, which is adjacent to an alley and clearly visible. A fifth dormer, pilasters and brick panels continue the scheme of the principal façade.

In 1848 this land was owned and sold by John Neal, a well-known writer, cultural promoter and sometime developer. By 1860 the site had three “tenements”, as rental residences were often termed and in 1879 they were owned by Matilda G. Brown of whom J.B. Brown, one of the nineteenth century’s most important landowners, was guardian. It was Matilda Brown’s heir, Emily K. Andrews who sold the properties to George S. Hunt in 1885. Hunt was in the importing and sugar refining business, the Forest City Sugar Refinery on Commercial Street. He lived at 165 State Street, the rear of which is on the alley next to this building. Apparently Hunt developed this property as combination rental office and residential space. Dr. Stephen H. weeks was one of the first tenants and Whitman Sawyer who owned a livery stable elsewhere was the other. What this building says of this block of Congress Street is that by 1885 it was clearly mixed office and residential, a transition from the bustle of the retail area into residential neighborhoods. The Longfellow statue was dedicated in 1888, just two years after Hunt’s new building was completed, thus making an important square and link in the progress of Congress Street.

Hunt gave the design commission to Francis H. Fassett’s office – the associate on this project was Frederick Tompson who was shortly to work on the Hanson Block and the Choate Block
and then design the Trelawney Building across Congress Street in 1910. What seems unusual about this project is the finely thought out Queen Anne detail which is found in only a few other structures in the district. The 1882 John Bundy Brown Memorial Block at 529-543 Congress Street which the Fassett office designed is a much larger building, but one with a similar fineness of detail. In both structures the slender proportions of the pilasters and the tall, thinness of the window openings along with thin, but insistent shadow lines distinguish these two buildings from some of their more robust neighbors.

The significance of this block rests on the importance of the developer and the architect; on the unusual quality of the original design and on the history of the development of Longfellow Square and the transformation of Congress Street.

The upper stories remain in pristine original condition. The rich use of terra-cotta, slate and brick makes an eclectic yet cohesive design and perhaps distinguishes the building as the finest of the converted residences on upper Congress Street. At the street level, storefront structures were added to provide display spaces when the ground floor changed to retail use. The two storefronts were added at different times, the western storefront in the 1920’s and the tall eastern display window in the 1960’s, replacing a bay window. Although remarkably intact, the storefronts are currently deteriorating from lack of maintenance and need to receive attention soon to prevent critical damage from the elements.
Portland Historic Resources Inventory

Property Address: 664 Congress Street

Inventory #:

Assessor's C/B/L:

District: Congress Street

Rating: Contributing

Local Code: C

National Register: NC – Spring Street Historic District

Date of Placement: Local 8/1/09 National 04/03/70

Architectural Description/Historic Significance:

This small two-story Italianate structure may have been a rear addition to one of the large residences on State Street and/or the office of one of the occupants of a nearby mansion. Its shape, with a flat front on Congress but with diagonal corners at each end, suggests it was intended to stand free of its neighbor. It is a pleasing brick building, with a plain denticulated cornice and well-proportioned windows with stone sills and lintels. A storefront at the street level has wood trim, substantial areas of glass and an awning board. The base of the building is a foundation of large granite blocks. It is not known if the storefront was part of the original building, but it looks at home today, except at the west corner, where a new canopy links the building with 666 Congress and a new bronze aluminum door has been added. The denticulated cornice is the only indication of its Italianate origins. The sash is 4/1 and 6/1 on the second floor.
Property Address: 665 Congress Street

Inventory #: 

Assessor’s C/B/L: 

District: Congress Street

Rating: Non-Contributing

Local Code: NC

National Register: Contributing (West Addition: NC) – Spring Street Historic District

Date of Placement: Local 8/1/90 National 04/03/70

Architectural Description/Historic Significance:

One of the oldest remaining commercial buildings on Congress Street, the Job Randall Store was built c. 1833. A two-and-one-half-story wood clapboard building, it is a simple example of the Greek Revival style. Its gable end faces the street, accented by a simple frieze and partial returns at the roofline. Typical six-over-six windows appear at the second and third floors.

At the street level there were two storefronts typical of the time. There was no sign board, only a small upper cornice to which were attached canvas awning mechanisms. Signs were mounted on the clapboards below the second floor windows. Wood bulkheads and piers and a recessed entry between two large display windows completed the composition of each shop front.

There have been a great many changes, although the gable roof, multi-paned windows sash, and clapboards (now clad in aluminum siding), at the upper floors provide more than ample evidence of the building’s history [1987 description]. The storefront is where the most change has occurred. The entire first floor level has been faced with brick and new display windows have been installed. The first floor has been enlarged by the addition of one-story wings to the east and west of the main block. The addition continues the brick of the storefront up to the level of the clapboards, where concrete block fills out into a shed roofline. The addition does not blend well with the original building.

Since the above description was written in 1987 the upper story windows have been replaced with 1/1 vinyl sash and the clapboard has been covered with vinyl siding. The accumulation of incremental changes to the structure have resulted in a condition where significant restoration would be required for it to be considered as contributing to the historic character of the district. Only its wide gable form currently hints at its era and original appearance.
The Florence P. Locke Building was constructed c. 1922. It was a two-story commercial structure built of brick with a granite, wood and glass façade. The building was an unusual example of a Commercial style building executed in granite, a material not often used for an entire façade. The composition was quite simple, with two storefront bays unequal in size. The granite was finished in both rough and smooth textures and formed the parapet, frieze and storefront piers.

The second-story window openings, which were as large as the ground floor storefront openings, were filled completely with glass, with large picture windows and a band of transom glass. A plain wood lintel topped both windows. This was one of a handful of two-story storefronts in Portland’s downtown.

Unfortunately, a 1980s renovation destroyed the integrity of the building, introducing materials that are not equal to the quality of the originals and utilizing large arches that have no design relationship to this building. Further, the black glass used at the storefront and upper story levels is inappropriate for use in a retail district as it creates an alienating experience for the pedestrian.
Portland Historic Resources Inventory

Property Address: 670-676 Congress Street

Inventory #:

Assessor’s C/B/L:

District: Congress Street

Rating: Contributing

Local Code: C

National Register: Contributing – Spring Street Historic District

Date of Placement: Local 8/1/90 National 04/03/70

Architectural Description/Historic Significance:

The impressive structure that turns the corner of Congress and State Streets was constructed as the Dr. Israel Dana home in 1878. Designed by Francis H. Fassett, it was a substantial single-family residence and remained in that use until the early 1920’s. Showing characteristics of Classic Revival style, it was a three-story structure of brick and stone. Its most dominant features were a large dentilated cornice, a three-story stacked bay window on the State Street side, stone trim in the form of horizontal bands, keystones in flat brick arches and end caps at window arches.

The building was renovated in 1921, when the new owner, John J. Cunningham, constructed an addition at the first floor to house stores and converted the upper stories to offices and apartments. The one-story addition brought the structure out to the sidewalk line around the corner. It was designed in the Colonial Revival style and featured large display windows with multi-light transom windows above and bulkhead windows below. A recessed corner entrance served as the main building entry. The remainder of the storefronts were built of brick piers with stone trim and lintel/frieze. Original signage was applied to this frieze. At the same time the addition was constructed, a wrought-iron balcony was added to the State Street elevation at the third floor.

(For a continuing description of this property, refer to 181 State Street)
Portland Historic Resources Inventory

Property Address: 671 Congress Street
Inventory #:

Assessor’s C/B/L:

District: Congress Street

Rating: Non-Contributing
  Local Code: NC
  National Register: NC – Deering Street Historic District
Date of Placement: Local 4/15/09 National 01/27/83

Architectural Description/Historic Significance:

The small modernistic one-story structure at 671 Congress Street was built in 1945 and was originally occupied by Bill’s Café. It replaced a 2 ½ story Greek Revival frame building that housed Thomas J. McKenney’s store. The former building was nearly identical to the building that still stands next door at 673 Congress Street. Designed by architects Miller and Beale, the brick building replaced a two-and-one-half-story Greek Revival residence.

The original brick has been painted, while storefront windows have been changed using standard 1960’s natural aluminum frames seen today across the façade. The building does not contribute to the Congress Street Historic District, in age, style, massing, details, or use.
Architectural Description/Historic Significance:

The expanded and altered Greek Revival residential structure at 673 Congress Street was known as the Margaret W. Reeves-Charles A. Lord House, c. 1850-52. Original owner Margaret Reeves, widow of John Felt Reeves, built this house and lived here until 1856/57, before building her second Congress Square residence, next door at 675 Congress Street. She and her son were Portland shopkeepers who dealt in “English and fancy goods” at 254 Congress Street. The house was later owned by Charles Lord, editor of The Christian Mirror.

With its gable end to the street, partial returns, frieze and corner pilasters, this residence was typical of many Greek Revival houses throughout the city. When the character of the upper Congress Street changed from residential to commercial use, the house was converted to a business. In the recent past, a modern commercial storefront was built at the first floor. Large display windows with bulkheads below, a lower cornice and a corner entrance highlight the front. The upper stories remain much as they were, while a large dormer breaks the roofline on the western side.
Portland Historic Resources Inventory

Property Address: 675 Congress Street
Inventory #:

Assessor's C/B/L:

District: Congress Street
Rating: Contributing

Local Code: C
National Register: Contributing – Deering Street Historic District
Date of Placement: Local 8/1/90 National 01/27/83

Architectural Description/Historic Significance:

The building, which occupies the prominent northwest corner of Congress and State Streets, was built as the second Margaret W. Reeves residence (the first was next door at #673); later it was owned by Frederick H. Gerrish, a Portland physician. The original house was constructed in 1856-57 as a two-and-one-half-story brick Greek Revival building with elegant wood and stone trim, it has seen a series of alterations. In the first alteration in 1893, the roof was raised and a third story was added, along with several Queen Anne style details such as a bracketed entrance portico and several bay windows.

When the building’s use changed from residential to commercial in 1945 (the house had stood empty for the 14 years since Gerish’s death), the most dramatic alterations occurred. Although much of the original detailing remains, such as the fine decoration at the eaves and cornice, the building was compromised and extensively altered when a two-story addition was constructed in 1945-46. The addition, which abuts the sidewalk line of Congress Street, is in and of itself a simple and unassuming architectural element, but has little in common and shows no sensitivity toward the earlier structure to which it is attached. This addition currently has a stucco surface and modern window and entrance configurations. The third floor and attic gable end are still visible, as a reminder of the building’s residential past.

The most distinctive remaining feature are the Greek key frieze beneath the bracketed cornice, and a tripartite window on the third floor west elevation which has an elliptical fan light as an upper sash set between pilaster as mullions.

Other alterations include the addition of a one-story open porch on the western elevation which was added to the restaurant in the late 1980’s, the insertion of a door in a third floor window opening on the façade, 1/1 sash being placed in all the windows, and several skylights in the roof. The brick rear ell replaced a wooden ell circa 1882.
Portland Historic Resources Inventory

Property Address: 681 Congress Street (William Hammond House)

Inventory #:

Assessor’s C/B/L:

District: Congress Street

Rating: Contributing

Local Code: C

National Register: Contributing – Deering Street Historic District

Date of Placement: Local 08/01/90  National 01/27/83

Architectural Description/Historic Significance:

The William Hammond House is a 2 ½ story brick Italianate house with a cubical form and symmetrically arranged façade. The height of the building is emphasized through several techniques. The raised brick corner pilasters support an entablature comprised of an attic story created by several brick stringcourses beneath a wood belt course. Above these horizontal elements are three square frieze-band windows on each elevation. Paired brackets support the overhanging cornice at each corner. Smaller paired brackets adorn the cornice between the larger corner brackets. The verticality of the block is apparent in the long second story windows, the same size as the first story. Slightly pedimented entablatures cap the 6/6 windows. Two bay windows flank a central portico that has been altered by the addition of wood siding, the replacement of round columns by square piers, the removal of a denticulated cornice, and the loss of a wood balustrade. The bay windows have been similarly altered.

Other changes from the building's original appearance include the removal of a character-defining Italianate cupola, which rose above the tall interior end wall chimneys, and the removal of a stone hood and balcony that embraced the central window of the first floor of the eastern elevation. The original double doors remain though the windows have been replaced with wood panels.

The granite retaining wall and steps are extant, though the original fence is gone. The wrought-iron railing on the front steps is a replacement for the original cast-iron railing. The brick rear ell was originally two stories, its quasi-mansard roof was added along with a contemporary brick addition when the property was converted to Longfellow Commons, an elderly housing project. At the time the bricks of the main house were repointed.

This house was used by the Sisters of Mercy for their first hospital, prior to the construction of the 20th century building on State Street. At this writing the new Mercy Hospital on the Fore River campus is under construction, to replace the State St. building.
Portland Historic Resources Inventory

Property Address: 684-686 Congress Street
Inventory #:

Assessor’s C/B/L:

District: Congress Street

Rating: Contributing

Local Code: C
National Register: No
Date of Placement: Local 4/15/09 National

Architectural Description/Historic Significance:

Built in 1904 (according to 1924 tax assessment information) this three-story brick Colonial Revival commercial building was renovated in the 1990's after sitting vacant for a number of years following a fire. A 1980’s survey description of the building noted “The original storefront is unrecognizable at present; bays are obscured by vinyl siding, plywood or have been blocked in. A recessed arched entry remains. Upper two floors contain four symmetrical bays, bay windows framing two one-over-one double-hung granite lintels.” During the post-fire renovations sympathetic storefronts were installed.

Unidentified original owner, c. 1869-1871, 1919 addition/remodeled.
Portland Historic Resources Inventory

Property Address:
Inventory #:
Assessor's C/B/L:
District: Congress Street
Rating: Contributing

Local Code: C
National Register: No
Date of Placement: Local 4/15/09 National

Architectural Description/Historic Significance:

First National Grocery Store Building

1948

This one story post-war grocery store building has a red brick with granite trim façade. It was designed by Edmund J. Leeds & Associates, Architects and Engineers of Boston, MA, for the First National grocery store chain of Somerville, MA.

It replaced a building that appears to be an early gas station in photos from the early 1940's. Prior to the gas station, a large colonial era house that had been moved from Stroudwater in the late 19th century stood here.

The building is a low rectangular block with a flat roof. The façade uses Colonial Revival elements on a building form which is clearly of the mid-20th century. It is a classic first generation “super market” style grocery store, built at the time they were first appearing all across the nation in both traditional downtowns and in new strip developments on the outskirts. It is one of the few buildings built in downtown Portland during the immediate post-war years.

Although the original storefront has been lost, it is likely the current one follows its basic form. The window openings filled with glass block on either side of the façade probably originally had multiple light double hung sash or a similar “colonial” treatment.
Portland Historic Resources Inventory

Property Address: 687 Congress Street
Inventory #: 

Assessor’s C/B/L: 

District: Congress Street

Rating: Non-Contributing

Local Code: NC
National Register: 
Date of Placement: Local 4/15/09 National

Architectural Description/Historic Significance:

Parking Lot
Portland Historic Resources Inventory

Property Address: 690-692 Congress Street

Inventory #:

Assessor’s C/B/L:

District: Congress Street

Rating: Contributing

Local Code: C
National Register: NC
Date of Placement: Local 4/15/09 National

Architectural Description/Historic Significance:

This three-story Second Empire building retains its original elements. A street façade of three symmetrical bays marks the street level. A centered entry is housed in a flat roofed vestibule and consists of a Colonial Revival elliptical fanlight with side lights. Framing the entry are three-story bay windows, which terminate in the mansard roof. Above the entry are two symmetrically placed second story two-over-two double-hung sash with projecting brick caps and bracketed sills. The mansard roof of slate is supported by bracketed eaves and carries two symmetrically placed roof dormers.
Portland Historic Resources Inventory

Property Address: 693-695 Congress Street
Inventory #:
Assessor’s C/B/L:
District: Congress Street
Rating: Non-Contributing

Local Code: NC
National Register: No
Date of Placement: Local 4/15/09

Architectural Description/Historic Significance:
Parking Lot
Portland Historic Resources Inventory

Property Address: 696 Congress Street

Inventory #:

Assessor's C/B/L:

District: Congress Street

Rating: Contributing

Local Code: C
National Register: No

Date of Placement: Local 4/15/09 National

Architectural Description/Historic Significance:

This three-story brick Colonial Revival design is in good condition. Original elements are evident in the two bay asymmetrical façade. A side hall entry is housed in a pedimented surround of stone with side lights. Adjacent is a three-story curved bay window with one-over-one double hung sash. The second story contains a single one-over-one sash window with pedimented cornice of atone with third story window above. A wide frieze and denticulated cornice front the structure. A missing original element is a balustrade, which topped the flat roof.
Portland Historic Resources Inventory

Property Address: 699-701 Congress Street

Inventory #: 

Assessor’s C/B/L: 

District: Congress Street

Rating: Contributing

Local Code: C
National Register: No
Date of Placement: Local 4/15/09 National

Architectural Description/Historic Significance:

This c.1892 three-story brick Queen Anne design is in good condition. Resting on a granite foundation, the four bay symmetrical street façade is original with the exception of lost balustrade atop attached one-story porch. Two-story bay windows with one-over-one sash windows with granite sills and flat lintels flank the centered double entry. Centered above the entry are two one-over-one sash windows with granite sills and lintels. The centered gable contains a paired attic story one-over-one sash with a granite lintel. A hipped roof of slate contains an asymmetrically placed dormer.
Property Address: 702-704 Congress Street
Inventory #: 
Assessor’s C/B/L: 
District: Congress Street
Rating: Non-Contributing

Local Code: NC
National Register: No
Date of Placement: Local 4/15/09 National

Architectural Description/Historic Significance:

This modern 7-11 gas station/store does not contribute to the historic character of the Congress Street Historic District.
Portland Historic Resources Inventory

Property Address: 705A-707 Congress Street
Inventory #: 

Assessor's C/B/L: 

District: Congress Street

Rating: Contributing

Local Code: C
National Register: No
Date of Placement: Local 4/15/09 National

Architectural Description/Historic Significance:

This c. 1877-1879 Queen Anne style brick double-house with a storefront added in 1904 is in fair condition. The original street façade of four symmetrical bays is composed of two polygonal bay windows with polygonal roofs projecting from the hipped roof flanking a centered entry. A centered attic story gable with brick diapering contains a paired sash window.
The Neal Dow House, built in 1829, is a 17-room brick house of dignified and substantial late Federal style, ornamented by what is reputed to be the oldest major piece of ornamental ironwork in use in Portland, of a design created for the house. The landscaped grounds are defined by a hedge and a distinctive dowel fence at the front of the property. The brickwork of the house is painted gray with brown trim and black shutters. The grounds are enclosed by a chain-link fence on the west and south sides.

The house did not originally include the library, which was added in the 1830's and extended in 1875. A sun parlor added later was removed during the restoration in 1971.

The house was completely restored in 1971 at a cost of about $80,000, borne by the estate of Fred. N. Dow. The entire property and furnishings were willed by him to the Maine Women's Christian Temperance Union to be operated as a memorial to his father, Neal Dow, and to be maintained at the expense of the Fred N. Dow Estate. In accordance with the provisions of the will, the Main WCTU occupied offices on the second floor and permits use of other office space to other organizations of its choice.

The first floor memorial rooms, furnished exclusively (except for rugs and glass curtains) with furniture, paintings and other appointments original to the house during various periods, are two adjoining parlors, the library (each with black marble fireplace), and Neal Dow's study. Windows of the first three rooms mentioned are equipped with the original folding interior shutters. All furniture has been restored and reupholstered in 1971 and suitable rugs (of oriental design except in the study) and glass curtains purchased. All the paintings have been professionally restored and the frames refurnished.

Paintings include four large portraits done in the 1920's by the late Joseph Kahill of Portland. The portrait subjects are General Neal Dow, Mrs. Neal Dow, Colonel Fred N. Dow and Mrs. Fred N. Dow. There is a small oil portrait of Neal Dow, an oval, shadowboxed portrait of him and six other fine paintings, mostly landscapes.

Other furnishings of particular interest are large wall mirrors in the parlors and library, three grandfather clocks (one documented as being from Neal Dow's fathers house), marble mantel clocks, antique miniatures and silhouettes, and a variety of art objects.
Unique possessions of the house are a set of English china, about 200 pieces, bearing a portrait of Neal Dow, presented to his wife by British temperance colleagues, and testimonial silver presented to Neal Dow by temperance groups in this country, as well as memorabilia of his military and political career. The library of about 2,000 books is evidence of Neal Dow’s lifelong devotion to reading and a valuable source of research.

The dining room serves as a conference room and site for meetings. An adjoining kitchen has been furnished by the Maine WCTU. The second floor provides office space presently used by the Portland WCTU, in addition to state offices of the WCTU. The first floor of the rear wing provides apartment space for a custodial couple, with bedroom and bath over the garage, which has two storage rooms at the rear and ample car space.

The remainder of the house consists of a front entrance vestibule, stair hall, rear corridor, three room attic, full cellar with oil-fired heat plant, two public lavatory rooms in the second floor, one on the first floor, and an elevator between the first and second floors. There is a sizable parking area at the rear of the house.

(Statement of Significance)

Inclusion of the Neal Dow Memorial in the National Register is requested because of the unique significance of this property historically and politically. It was the home of Neal Dow, the leading nineteenth century proponent of Prohibition, Civil War General, Mayor of Portland, legislator, author of the Maine Law, which made Maine the first state to adopt a prohibitory law and was model for similar legislation in other states and abroad. The Dow Mansion was a center of political and humanitarian activity during Neal Dow’s long residence from his wedding day in 1830 to his death in 1897, and served as home to three succeeding generations of the great reformer. A candidate for the Presidency of the United States on the Prohibition Party ticket, Neal Dow was a force in the politics of his day, and an associate of many of the great men of his time.

The restoration of his home is a source of great satisfaction to the people of Portland, a credit to the city which shared Neal Dow’s fame.
Portland Historic Resources Inventory

Property Address: 717 Congress Street

District: Congress Street

Rating: Non-Contributing

Local Code: NC
National Register: No
Date of Placement: Local 4/15/09 National

Architectural Description/Historic Significance:

Modern concrete block Rite Aid store, and parking lot. It does not contribute to the historic character of the Congress Street Historic District.
Portland Historic Resources Inventory

Property Address: 723 Congress Street
Inventory #:

Assessor’s C/B/L:

District: Congress Street

Rating: Contributing

Local Code: C
National Register – Deering Street Historic District
Date of Placement: Local 08/01/90 National 01/27/83

Architectural Description/Historic Significance:

The Dr. E. Eugene Holt House is the only residential example of the Romanesque Revival style in the Congress Street Historic District. Designed by John Calvin Stevens in 1883, the building incorporates several Queen Anne motifs as well to produce a transitional design.

Except for the alteration of the window sash from 2/2 to 1/1, the addition of unpainted aluminum storms, and the loss of the iron fencing atop the portico, the building's appearance is virtually the same as when it was built and reminds us, better than others on this section of Congress Street, of the initial residential character of this neighborhood that was built after the success of Deering Street. Both Fassett and Stevens erected impressive homes for professional clients here using the eclectic styles popular in the 1880’s.

The most distinctive aspect of the building design is the multi-faceted roof treatment. Tall end wall chimneys with indented panels, ornamented surface decoration, and corbelled flues rise above a combination of dormers. Some have recessed openings and shed roofs, whereas those on the façade have parapet gable fronts with arched windows and terracotta-foliated finials. The cornice is broken by these insert dormers, which act as visually ornate, counterpoints to the flat, unadorned wall surface below. The frieze beneath the cornice and stringcourse that delineates the floor division are studded with brick dentils. The flush stone caps above the paired first floor windows are segmental arched over the paired windows of the second floor. On the east façade, a tall elaborate stairwell window terminates in a large arched sash containing a decorative muntin pattern (reminiscent of a Federal Style fanlight) and amber glass.

The asymmetricality of the Queen Anne influence is expressed through the two-story bay window on the right hand side of the façade. It is surmounted by Steven’s trademark wavy iron balustrade, also used as fencing which still remains atop the granite retaining wall. The portico incorporates Romanesque foliated cushion capitals atop polished stone piers and pilasters.
Property Address: 724 Congress Street

District: Congress Street

Rating: Non-Contributing

Local Code: NC
National Register: No
Date of Placement: Local 4/15/09 National

Architectural Description/Historic Significance:

Former 1970s gas station renovated for office use, does not contribute to the historic character of the Congress Street Historic District.
Portland Historic Resources Inventory

Property Address: 727 Congress Street
Inventory #:

Assessor’s C/B/L:

District: Congress Street
Rating: Contributing

Local Code: C
National Register: Contributing – Deering Street Historic District
Date of Placement: Local 08/01/90 National 01/27/83

Architectural Description/Historic Significance:

Woodbury Davis Mansion

After the Great Fire of 1866, this section of Congress Street developed, along with Deering and Mellen Streets, into fashionable residential neighborhoods for Portland’s leading merchants and professionals. Woodbury Davis, Portland’s Postmaster after the Civil War had this impressive mansion built in the popular Italianate style on the corner of Congress and Mellen Streets. Today it reminds us of a time when this stretch of upper Congress Street was residential, long before it became “Physician’s Row” and later a commercial thoroughfare.

Built of brick, its architectural stylishness derives from its sophisticated and restrained use of brick detailing. A double stringcourse encircles the building delineating the first and second stories. On the third floor a triple band of bricks, intercepted by smaller, plainer third floor windows, visually forms and attic story, thereby fooling the eye into believing the second story is of taller proportions on the exterior than actually exists within.

The windows are fully enframed; they have flared bases and are capped by segmental keystone arches on the first and second floors. On the western elevation is a pair of ground floor bay windows ornamented by Corinthian pilasters and denticulated cornices with semi-circular arches enclosing floral motifs. On the façade the center bay projects slightly to draw attention to the entryway with its rich use of carved wood. Approached by a flight of granite steps, the double doors and single pane transom are protected by a portico of paired Corinthian columns on replaced pedestals. The cornice is bracketed above the arched openings and was formerly graced by a balustrade behind which a tripartite bay window projects on the second floor. The overhanging bracketed cornice of the hipped roof is embellished in the central bay by a pediment, further adding to the symmetry of the façade. The corners are articulated by recessed paneled brick pilasters, which terminate in paired brackets at the cornice line. A handsome granite foundation and generous lot complete the enhancement of the building. A rear 2-story ell, designed in a simple style that complements the main block has windows with flush stone sills and lintels.
Portland Historic Resources Inventory

Property Address: 730 Congress Street (Walker Terrace)
Inventory #: 

Assessor’s C/B/L: 

District: Congress Street

Rating: Non-Contributing

Local Code: NC
National Register: No
Date of Placement: Local 4/15/09 National

Architectural Description/Historic Significance:

Walker Terrace

2005

This new structure, designed by architect David Lloyd for developers Nathan Szanton and Bobby Monks, is significant for restoring residential usage and the traditional street wall to this section of Congress Street where the demolition of residential properties for the construction of gas stations in the second half of the 20th century radically altered the character and quality of the area. The building itself is well designed in a contemporary style and uses quality materials, such as brick and copper, also found on the historic structures nearby. It is hoped that over time this structure will provide a model for quality re-development of other currently non-conforming structures along this stretch of Congress Street.
Portland Historic Resources Inventory

Property Address: 737 Congress Street
Inventory #: 

Assessor’s C/B/L: 

District: Congress Street

Rating: Contributing

Local Code: C

National Register: Contributing – Deering Street Historic District

Date of Placement: Local 08/01/90 National 01/27/83

Architectural Description/Historic Significance:

Israel P. Waterhouse House

The Israel P. Waterhouse House exemplifies the deleterious effects of Congress Street’s transition from a fine residential neighborhood to a commercial strip. Originally built as a cubical Italianate house with a symmetrically arranged façade on a corner lot, the house visually embodies the gradual transformation of the area by the turn of the century to physician’s offices and the supporting businesses created to service that change in use. In 1920, the owners of the Waterhouse House appended a two-story clapboard addition in what was formerly a side yard. Typical of the 1920’s storefronts it had transoms above large display windows on low bulkheads with awnings.

The wooden addition above it and on the Mellen Street elevation resembled the original structure as closely as possible. The small one-story side ell on the opposite end of the house was also erected at the same time; it housed a bakery and grocery store, had three large display windows and two entrances. Subsequent remodeling has had an unfortunate effect on the original building. The high-quality storefront has been altered to a large shingled shed roof over smaller plate glass windows set in vertical wood sheathing. The bakery’s display windows have been reduced to small openings and a blind window, boarded up from the inside, replaces the original grocery display window.

Remarkably, the main body of the house is relatively unaltered behind these commercial additions. The iron cresting remains atop the hip roof as do the elements, which characterize this as a Stick Style building. The vertical picket fence frieze and open brackets remain beneath the cornice. The 2/2 windows still have their wood hoods and the portico exhibits its original truss work and pendant trim. The bay window is bracketed beneath the cornice; its sash has been changed so that plate glass now fills the center opening.
The Samuel T. Pickard House was designed by John Calvin Stevens in 1884. Its cross gable plan is an effective massing scheme for the Queen Anne style as it establishes the desired asymmetrical composition. The details are also varied; the first story is clapboard, the second is shingled, and the large enclosed gable on the façade employs both patterned shingles and wood panel in the peak carved with a swirled pattern. Within the pediment two windows are visually united by a single surround; each opening has 16/2 sash. Wood stringcourses define the floor divisions thereby marking the difference in wall texture.

The T-shape plan emphasizes the entranceway which projects from the main body of the house. There are interesting architectural elements on the second floor which include a band of five windows that wrap around the left hand corner and are separated by mullions designed as pilasters. On the opposite end are two small, square windows on either side of the corner. All of the windows retain their 2/2 sash, but the shutters have been removed. Within the side gables are paired windows. A one-story arched porch that was on the left hand side has been removed.

The first floor was altered when this residential neighborhood changed to commercial use. A storefront, initially built in 1920 as a cleaning establishment was appended to the front of the house. Without historic photographs it is difficult to know the building’s early appearance. Was there another porch on this side or a front yard? As originally built, the storefront was typical of the small shops built after the First World War. A recessed door was flanked by large display windows on low wood bulkheads which were surmounted by transoms and an awning. The pediment so closely matches the pediment over the doorway that it makes one wonder if Stevens designed this addition, or if it was sensitively made to resemble the building’s original Colonial Revival trim? The current remodeling, which involved substituting a more “colonial” façade than the established early 20th century commercial shopfront, uses multi-paned sash and coach lanterns to create its historic motif. It is not compatible on a building of this design.
The Mellen E. Bolster House of 1881 is the most traditional of the houses Fassett and Stevens designed on Congress and Mellen Streets in the Deering Street area. Forthrightly Italianate, it has the symmetrical composition and detailing common to other homes built in this popular style during the 1870’s in the newly developing neighborhoods of the western section of the city.

The two and a half story brick building is well maintained and relatively unaltered. The attic story beneath the overhanging hip roof is separated from the body of the building by brick stringcourses. Frieze band windows set over the façade bays are interspersed between recessed brick panels. The windows are flanked by carved consoles which support denticulated entablatures that project slightly beyond the denticulated cornice surrounding the building.

The three bay façade consists of tall, narrow paired windows set between stone sills and segmentally arched brick caps that are punctuated by stone keystones. A brick beltcourse that encircles the building divides the two main floors. The classical portico is most likely a Colonial Revival addition to the Italianate building, instead of a bracketed hood or an Eastlake-inspired porch as seen on the Thomas Brackett Reed House at 30-32 Deering Street. Slender composite columns and pilasters on pedestals support a pedimented entablature that was originally topped by a balustrade.

The granite steps, posts and retaining wall are still topped by the original cast-iron fence and railings. The port-cochere at the rear of the building on the west side is unique in the Deering Street Historic District. It was in place by 1924. Its classical configuration of Tuscan columns and a large pediment is similar to the classically designed portico. They probably date from the same period.

The canopy leading to the front door, spotlights beneath the attic stringcourse, and the one-story brick addition on the east side, are all additions to accommodate the buildings current use as a funeral home. The cast-iron clock on the front lawn is a landmark site feature within the District and a significant contribution to Congress Street.

The house was converted to use as a funeral home in the 1920’s and continued as the Hay and Peabody Funeral Home into the 21st century. In 2007 the Historic Preservation Board approved alterations as part of the buildings conversion to office use by a new owner.
Property Address: 757 Congress Street (Original Carriage House)

Architectural Description/Historic Significance:

Of the two carriage houses behind 757 Congress Street this one is original to the house and was designed by G. Wilton Lewis for Daniel F. Emery, Jr. in 1883. It complements the Queen Anne house on Congress Street but does not match it. A gambrel shaped wood shingled dormer dominates the façade; it has an overhang supported on brackets and a flared hood, which protects the 6/1 sash window and paneled hay door. This treatment has a very characteristic Shingle style design. Above the openings is a hoist for hauling hay up to the upper story through the double doors and ventilator. Currently a fancy decorative iron grill that looks like a reused gate or bed headboard is placed in front of the doors. There are three openings on the ground floor; one is a door and the other two were barn doors now replaced by garage doors. The windows of one of the garage doors have been painted. Encircling the building is a denticulated cornice.

The two carriage houses form an attractive grouping and remind us of a time when Congress Street was home to prosperous merchants and professionals who were able to afford their own stables and carriages.

Primary Use: Other - Storage
Portland Historic Resources Inventory

Property Address: 757 Congress Street (Carriage House II)
Inventory #:

Assessor's C/B/L:
District: Congress Street
Rating: Contributing

Local Code: C
National Register: Contributing – Deering Street Historic District
Date of Placement: Local 08/01/90 National 01/27/83

Architectural Description/Historic Significance:

The Colonial Revival carriage house at the rear of 757 Congress Street was built after 1914 and placed beside the earlier, smaller Queen Anne carriage house erected for Daniel F. Emery, Jr. when his house was constructed in 1883. The Colonial Revival stable has a complex roof form; its steeply pitched roof walls culminate in a louvered gable that was built for ventilation. There are a variety of dormers. On the façade is a small dormer with scalloped wood shingles in the gable. A hoist projects from this gable which lifted bales of hay into the second story loft through the original paneled doors. A fluorescent light fixture has been attached to the hoist, which could probably be relocated so as to be a less dominant an element on the façade.

The other façade is a fully enclosed gable, denticulated at the cornice to match the trim on the rest of the building. It features a Federal Revival elliptical fanlight set between a granite sill and a brick jack arch. The gable bay projects forward from the body of the building and contains a garage door on the ground floor. Of the two dormers on the east elevation, one has a Palladian window. The asphalt roof shingles are replacements for the slate, which originally matched the shingles on the main house.

The two modern garage doors replace wood barn doors. One of the steel lintels that provides structural support for the large openings has lost its decorative anchors still extant over the other door. The window on the left hand bay is currently covered with a piece of plywood. Above it and above each of the garage doors are patches of brick repointing.

This handsome carriage house reminds us of a time when the homes on Congress Street were occupied by successful Portland merchants and professionals who were financially able to maintain their own horses and owned carriages. The placement at the far end of the back lot may indicate that a portion of the yard was a grazing ground for the horses.

Primary Use: Other - Storage
Portland Historic Resources Inventory

Property Address: 757 Congress Street

Inventory #:

Assessor’s C/B/L:

District: Congress Street

Rating: Contributing

Local Code: C
National Register: Contributing – Deering Street Historic District

Date of Placement: Local 08/01/90 National 01/27/83

Architectural Description/Historic Significance:

The Daniel F. Emery, Jr. House was designed by G. Wilton Lewis, a Boston architect, in 1883 in the newly fashionable western section of Congress Street. It is a highly decorative example of the Queen Anne style and makes an interesting comparison to John Calvin Stevens’ work of the same period in this neighborhood. Lewis concentrates his ornamentation at the roofline. A number of projections emerge from this slate-sheathed hip roof. A two-story bay window set on the left side of the façade terminates in a hipped roof. On the eastern elevation, a large hipped dormer juts up from the wall beside a tall interior end wall chimney. The outline of the chimney continues on the exterior to the foundation and deceptively contains a window on the first floor. Its clustered ornamental chimney pots add more variety to the uppermost story. The small gabled eyebrow window peeking out of the roof is a unique architectural element. A dominant gable emerges on the roof of the façade as an extension of the projecting central entrance. The gable has arched truss work over an oriel window with a patterned slate roof. Continuing down the bay, two small paired windows beneath flush stone lintels are set between the oriel window and the balcony of the brick portico. It is extant, unlike so many of the wooden Italianate balconies erected during the previous decade. Likewise, the original iron fence remains atop the granite retaining wall.

The remainder of the building is equally rich in detail. The bracketed cornice features a distinctive frieze comprised of regularly spaced panels containing recessed brick squares. The motif continues around the building interrupted only by the central projecting bay on the façade and the hipped dormer on the western elevation where paired brackets intercept to support the roofline.

Two stone belt courses, flush to the wall, mark the floor division of the façade; a wide beltcourse also marks the foundation line. A number of first floor windows, including the arched tripartite window on the façade have stained glass windows. Overall, the building is in a good state of preservation and happily has survived commercial additions.
Portland Historic Resources Inventory

Property Address: 760-762 Congress Street

Assessor's C/B/L:

District: Congress Street

Rating: Contributing

Local Code: C
National Register: No
Date of Placement: Local 1997 National

Architectural Description/Historic Significance:

c. 1880

Two story brick Mansard-roofed Second Empire style double house. This building and the neighboring building at 764-768 Congress Street were clearly identical when built, likely by the same developer at the same time.

The 1924 photo shows a classic storefront addition with large plate glass windows to the front of 762. The photo also shows that the second story bay windows had been added by this time. The difference in panel treatment below the windows and the absence of second story bay windows on 764-768 Congress Street suggests that the upper bay windows are not part of the original construction.

The storefront addition, probably done in the early 20th century as commercial usage crept westward on Congress Street, is sensitively integrated into the original design. The continuation of the entry hood roof line and replication of the original brackets on the newer addition help to make the storefront feel a part of the building, rather than something "pasted on".

With the exception of the storefront and upper floor bay windows, the building is largely as it was built. It is virtually unchanged from 1924, with the exception of 1/1 windows replacing 2/2 in the larger openings and multi-paned sash replacing plate glass in the storefront windows. Also, the wooden gutter has been removed, and replaced on the façade with aluminum gutter. Enamed metal street signs for Neal and Congress Streets, mounted on the corner of the building, are unusual survivors of a once common element of Portland’s streetscape character and should be preserved in place.
Portland Historic Resources Inventory

Property Address: 763 Congress Street

Inventory #: 

Assessor's C/B/L: 

District: Congress Street

Rating: Contributing

Local Code: C

National Register: Contributing – Deering Street Historic District

Date of Placement: Local 08/01/90 National 01/27/83

Architectural Description/Historic Significance:

Frances H. Fassett designed the Clarence Hale House in 1884, the year after John Calvin Stevens left the partnership of Fassett and Stevens to open his own practice. The Hale House marks a return to Fassett's work of the 1870's. It is in a remarkable state of preservation, unaffected by commercial alteration that has marred some of the other homes in this former residential neighborhood.

The composition is asymmetrical, the surface is enlivened by patterned ornamentation, and the roofline is a well-integrated grouping of a variety of shapes and sizes including corbelled chimneys with chimney pots on top of the flues. As is typical of Fassett's work, the building exhibits an overall emphasis on the vertical, here achieved by the steeply pitched pedimented gables and interior end wall chimneys. An unusual feature is the sunburst motif in a pediment within the larger façade gable.

The site is pleasingly landscaped and enclosed by its original iron fence on a granite retaining wall; this wall once extended across the yard where a driveway now exists. The Romanesque portico is particularly distinctive. Large semi-circular arches spring from brick piers, keystones punctuate each of the patterned arches, and the pediment contains foliated terracotta tiles. A granite staircase descends from the side, adding more of the desired asymmetry so integral to the Queen Anne style.
Portland Historic Resources Inventory

Property Address: 764-768 Congress Street
Inventory #: 

Assessor's C/B/L: 

District: Congress Street
Rating: Contributing

Local Code: C
National Register: No
Date of Placement: Local 1997 National

Architectural Description/Historic Significance:

Clarence Hale House

c. 1880

Two story brick Mansard-roofed Second Empire style double house. This building and the neighboring building at 760-762 Congress Street were clearly identical when built, likely by the same developer at the same time. By 1924 the neighboring building had been altered with the addition of upper story bay windows and a storefront on 762.

764-768 Congress Street is virtually unchanged from the time of construction, with the exception of 1/1 windows replacing 2/2 in the larger openings and a metal fire escape added to the east side. Built as single family homes, they had been converted to apartments by 1924. Still in residential use, this is one of the most unaltered and intact 19th century buildings in the Congress Street Historic District.
Portland Historic Resources Inventory

Property Address: 769 Congress Street

Inventory #:

Assessor’s C/B/L:

District: Congress Street

Rating: Contributing

Local Code: C
National Register: Contributing – Deering Street Historic District

Date of Placement: Local 08/01/90 National 01/27/83

Architectural Description/Historic Significance:

J. Henry Rines House

1887

Francis H. Fassett and Frederick A. Tompson designed this Queen Anne style brick home on Congress Street for J. Henry Rines, a successful Portland merchant, in 1887. Successfully converted to a restaurant in 1935, the building is well maintained and in an excellent state of preservation.

The irregularity of the Queen Anne style is expressed in this composition by the two-story bay window on the right hand side of the façade. It was originally ornamented by iron cresting as was the hip roof. Except for the fire escape, entrance canopy and entrance to the basement pub that was erected on the front yard, the building is unaltered. Textural interest is provided by recessed panels beneath the windows, the brick dog-tooth frieze beneath the cornice, the brownstone sills, brick stringcourses and terra cotta sunburst panels in the pedimented gables of the two dormers which break the cornice line on the façade. Large gables on the side elevations contain arched windows in the gable. On the eastern elevation is a two-story bay window.

The classical portico is denticulated and supported by Tuscan columns on pedestals. Originally, the porch extended to the west beneath the arched window of the first floor. The granite retaining wall and steps remains although the iron fencing is a replacement.

The window sash has been changed from 2/2 to 1/1 in some openings, 2/1 in others, and a pair of etched and frosted glass windows have been installed as upper sash in the arched window of the first floor.
Portland Historic Resources Inventory

Property Address: 773 Congress Street
Inventory #: 

Assessor’s C/B/L: 

District: Congress Street

Rating: Contributing

Local Code: C
National Register: No
Date of Placement: Local 4/15/09 National

Architectural Description/Historic Significance:

C.1882

This large wooden Queen Anne style house is one of many fine single family residences on this stretch of Congress Street. Unlike most of the others, this building continues to be in residential use, although it has been divided internally into five units.

The structure is essentially a large cube with a (flat topped) hipped roof and cross gables facing the street and to the east and west. The street facing gable is on the plane of the front of the main cube of the house with a wide two story bay projecting below and in front of it. The gables facing east and west are pulled out on top of bays. On the street façade the two-story bay is on the left and a bold entry porch on the right.

The 1924 photo shows square columns sitting on pedestal bases with turned wooden balusters creating asymmetrical arched bays on the porch. A balustrade on the porch roof had square posts with ball finials aligned with the columns and pilasters below, turned balusters and a top rail that curved up to meet the posts. A wide flight of wooden steps had wood posts at the bottom with ball finials and iron pipe railings up the steps. An open porch to the left of the front bay had turned balusters and a top rail that curved up to meet the posts. Square lattice was used for the apron.

A denticulated cornice on the porch continued as a belt course around the house. The main block of the house had clapboard siding. The front bay was paneled above and below the windows, the east and west bays were clapboarded. A bold denticulated cornice joined the walls to the roof and continued around the front bay, with a wrought iron balustrade above.

The front-facing gable had scalloped shingles and a carved scroll pediment above the window. The upper sash of the double hung windows had a large square pane framed by four small square corner panes and four oblong rectangular panes. The lower sash were typical two lite sash. A large arched stairwell window on the east side broke through the belt course and had a heavy molded surround. The double doors at the front entrance had lower panels with glass above.
Currently the building retains much of its historic character in spite of the application of aluminum siding. The slate roofing is intact, as are the scalloped shingles and carving in the gables. The belt course has been compromised. The wood panels of the front bay have been covered by aluminum siding with vertical “battens”. The original posts and bases on the entry porch have been replaced with plain square posts the railings are now iron, and the wood balustrade is on the porch roof is gone. The most noticeable change is probably the addition of an enclosed sun porch in place of the side porch which was originally un-roofed.
This wooden Queen Anne style double-house and the nearly identical double-house next door at 779 Congress Street were apparently built as rental units. In 1924 they were both owned by Gilbert Ward and R.H. McGreavy and all four units were rentals, one being used as a rooming house.

The building is a large clapboarded rectangular block with a hipped roof and projecting bays on the front and sides. Corner boards, frieze and sofit trim are simple, flat, and wide. On the street side the roof has a deep overhang supported on console brackets at the corners and the angled bay window in the center of the façade. A large dormer topped by a pediment sitting on small corner brackets has a three-part window and sits a bit awkwardly above the bay window. On 779 Congress St. this dormer has had its sides angled to match the bay below – perhaps a correction to an awkward feature of the design on the second building built. Two smaller pedimented dormers sit above the wide bays on the sides of the building.

On the façade a porch stretched the length of the façade with front facing gables at either end above wooden stairs from the sidewalk. The porch had relatively simple turned posts and balusters. The pediments above the entrances contained Adamesque applied ornament.

Above each entrance pediment there was an arched window with heavy hood and keystone. They appear to have each been a single sash with decorative muntin pattern and were either in-swinging casements or fixed sash. The rest of the windows were 1/1 except in the dormer (where the narrow sash were 4/1 and the wide sash was 6/1) and the stairwell window which had a decorative muntin pattern in the upper sash. The windows had slightly projecting flat hoods. Many of the double-hung windows had exterior shutters with bi-fold shutters mounted to one side of windows with limited wall area adjacent to the opening. A scroll pediment hood was mounted above the stairway windows on the sides of the building.
The building has lost its front porch and the left side entrance to the building has been eliminated (apparently when the building was converted to six apartments). A gabled entrance to the remaining entrance is not the original pedimented roof at this location. With the exceptions of the keystone hoods of the arched windows and the console brackets supporting the roof overhang all detail and trim have been removed or covered with the current vinyl siding. Although the historic character has been compromised by the loss of the porch and application of vinyl siding, the relatively simple details of the original design could be returned without enormous expense.
Architectural Description/Historic Significance:

Bramhall Fire Station

1965

The Bramhall Fire Station is a restrained example of 20th century International style architecture which demonstrates how the “form follows function” dictate can result in an attractive building. It was designed by John H. Leasure Associates, Architects, of Portland, and built for a cost of $524,000. Demolition permits for the 19th century residential structures which previously stood on the site were issued in 1964. The fire station opened in August 1966.

Although its deep setback from Congress Street breaks the street wall, and is not typical of development along the street, the way the building sets into the slope of the ground, the long sloping retaining walls on the sides of the property, the subtle angled forms of the hose tower, the brick base and ribbon window band of the wing, the ribbon band windows in the overhead doors on the facade, and the stylish graphics of the lettering on the cast concrete facade and shield on the tower give the building a subtle but powerful presence on the street.
This wooden Queen Anne style double-house and the nearly identical double-house next door at 775 Congress Street were apparently built as rental units. In 1924 they were both owned by Gilbert Ward and R.H. McGreavy and all four units were rentals, one being used as a rooming house.

The building is a large clapboarded rectangular block with a hipped roof and projecting bays on the front and sides. Corner boards, frieze and sofit trim are simple, flat, and wide. On the street side the roof has a deep overhang supported on console brackets at the corners and the angled bay window in the center of the façade. A large dormer topped by a pediment has a double hung window on the face and square fixed (or casement) sash on the angled sides. On 775 Congress St. this dormer does not have its sides angled and sits a bit awkwardly above the angled bay window – perhaps the dormer on 779 is a correction to an awkward feature of the design on the second building built. Two smaller pedimented dormers sit above the wide bays on the sides of the building.

On the façade a porch stretched the length of the façade with front facing gables at either end above wooden stairs from the sidewalk. The porch had turned posts with sawn brackets and thin balusters. The pediments above the entrances contained Adamesque applied ornament. The skirting was square lattice.

Above each entrance pediment there was an arched window with heavy hood and keystone. They appear to have each been a single sash with decorative muntin pattern and were either in-swinging casements or fixed sash. The rest of the windows were 1/1 except in the dormer (where the narrow sash were 4/1 and the wide sash was 6/1) and the stairwell window which had a decorative muntin pattern in the upper sash. The windows had slightly projecting flat hoods. Many of the double-hung windows had exterior shutters with bi-fold shutters mounted to one side of windows with limited wall area adjacent to the opening. A scroll pediment hood was mounted above the stairway windows on the sides of the building.

The building has lost the central section of its front porch and all original porch detailing on the remaining entry roofs. With the exceptions of the console brackets supporting the
roof overhang all detail and trim have been removed or covered with the current vinyl siding. Original windows remain in place. Although the historic character has been compromised by the loss of the porch detailing and application of vinyl siding, the relatively simple details of the original design could be returned without enormous expense.
Portland Historic Resources Inventory

Property Address: 785 Congress Street
Inventory #:

Assessor's C/B/L:

District: Congress Street

Rating: Contributing

Local Code: C
National Register: No
Date of Placement: Local 4/15/09 National

Architectural Description/Historic Significance:

c. 1850's-1860's

This building looks suspiciously like a two-story wooden transitional Greek Revival/Italianate two-bay side entry residence that was jacked up and had it's brick basement walls raised on the sides and back to create a storefront commercial space in the new first floor. It is possible it was built as it exists now, but it seems a less awkward access to the upper floors would have been provided in that case. It appears, particularly in the 1924 photo before asbestos siding obscured the trim, that a side entry porch was enclosed to create the covered stairwell on the side of the structure.

In the 1924 photo the upper floors are clapboarded, with 2/2 double hung windows. The windows on the second floor level have low pedimented hoods sitting on small brackets. Corner boards are flat and not very wide. They terminate in single brackets which support returns on the eaves.

The first floor had a typical late 19th century storefront. Large paneled display windows with bulkheads and transoms flanked a recessed entry, all wood framed between the ends of the brick side walls. A retractable awning spanned the width of the storefront. To the left of the storefront a door provided access to the upper floors. On the right of the storefront a single story addition had a recessed entry and one storefront window. This space contained a barber shop.

This building has been long neglected and is currently (2006) being renovated. It retains its window hoods, brackets, soffits and returns, though their condition is precarious. It is likely that the clapboard siding and corner boards are under the asbestos siding. The storefront has been awkwardly infilled with brick. The small storefront addition to the right was recently removed. A new dormer has been built on the west slope of the roof.
Portland Historic Resources Inventory

Property Address: 790-792 Congress Street

Assessor’s C/B/L:

District: Congress Street

Rating: Contributing

Local Code: C
National Register: No
Date of Placement: Local 4/15/09

Architectural Description/Historic Significance:

C.B. Varney - S.J. Reeves Houses

c.1865

This wooden Italianate style double-house appears much as it did in 1924.

The building is a large clapboarded rectangular block with a gabled roof and two story projecting bay windows on the façade and a rear ell. Corner boards, frieze, brackets, and sofit trim are typical examples of their style. On the façade a door hood is supported on large console brackets, covering the entrances to both houses. Dormers with two narrow mullioned windows are centered above the bay windows on the façade.

On the east façade a second story box-bay window, possibly a somewhat later addition, is supported on console brackets.

The 2/2 windows appear to be original, with 1/1 in the narrow windows on the sides of the bay windows and in the dormers. The wide sash in the bay window at 792 are 2/1, perhaps an old replacement.

The building is in remarkably original condition, including entry doors and windows. Vinyl siding has covered the corner boards, but left the majority of the trim exposed. Four chimneys, visible in the 1924 photo, have been removed above roof level. A porch off the rear ell has been enclosed.
Portland Historic Resources Inventory

Property Address: 794-800 Congress Street

Inventory #: 794-800 Congress Street

Assessor’s C/B/L: Congress Street

District: Congress Street

Rating: Landmark

Local Code: L
National Register: Landmark

Date of Placement: Local 08/01/90 National 09/25/86

Architectural Description/Historic Significance:

(Statement of Significance)
The Maine Eye and Ear Infirmary, planned and promoted by the distinguished Dr. Erastus Eugene Holt, was one of the first such institutions in the country. John Calvin Stevens, Maine’s most noted architect who was pre-eminent at the turn of the century, designed the building in a mixed Romanesque-English Renaissance style with bold commercial flourishes.

Dr. Holt (1849-1931) was one of a group of outstanding physicians and surgeons who gathered in Portland in the years following the Civil War. Graduating from the Maine Medical School in 1872, he continued his studies at the College of Physicians and Surgeons, Columbia College, New York. In Portland he became the first appointed House Physician of the Maine General Hospital. His quarterly reports of medical and surgical cases were published in the Boston Medical and Surgical Journal, which early attracted attention to his scientific attainments and literary abilities. In 1881 Dr. Holt went abroad for study in special departments of ophthalmology and otology and upon returning to Portland specialized in these fields. Becoming impressed with the great need for an eye and ear infirmary in the city, he began in 1884 to secure signatures to a petition for the incorporation of such an institution. In April of 1886, the Infirmary was opened with Dr. Holt appointed Executive Surgeon. In 1891 the cornerstone of the present structure was laid, the principal address being delivered by Dr. Holt. The Maine Eye and Ear Infirmary became part of the Maine Medical Center in the 1950’s when it was renamed Holt Hall in honor of the founder. It continued to serve hospital programs until 1980.

Architecturally, the building is significant as the work of John Calvin Stevens, Maine’s most famous architect. It represents an important period of transition for this noted designer, in which he began to abandon the Queen Anne and Romanesque styles for the Colonial Revival. The Maine Eye and Ear Infirmary is an example of what was then known as the “Free Classic” style, being an eclectic combination of primarily English Renaissance features. Although the interior has been extensively altered over the years, the exterior still displays essential features of Stevens’ original design. The architect was especially successful in creating a structure which, although an imposing presence on the urban landscape, compliments the residential neighborhood with its hipped roof and Georgian dormers.

Stevens and his son John Howard designed utilitarian additions to the building’s rear in 1916. A major alteration occurred in 1934 under the direction of Portland architect E. Leander Higgins.
Higgins is responsible for the altered entry and the undistinguished Colonial Revival woodwork still surviving in the main lobby.

(Present and Original Physical Appearance)

Situated on a corner lot at the intersection of Congress and Bramhall Streets, the Maine Eye and Ear Infirmary building dominates a densely built-up area which largely consists of smaller two and three story buildings. This physical dominance is enhanced by the terrain of the site, which slopes steeply down to the Fore River.

The nominated property is a six-story masonry building constructed of brick with stone trim. It is surmounted by a hipped roof with pedimented dormers. Attached to the south side is a three-story wing with a flat roof, which is original and repeats the design features of the main section. Five and six story brick additions were also added to the rear elevations, including the roof, which are the north and east sides. These service wings are generally not visible from Congress or Bramhall Streets.

The windows on this building consist of square-headed two-over-two double hung sash. The principal facades are ornamented in a Renaissance design popularly known as “Free Classic”. The principal decorative feature is the large two-story round arched entry on the west elevation. Constructed of quarry-faced pink granite, this feature had Romanesque impost blocks, a beaded archivolt and a denticulated cornice. The quarry faced stone extends all along the first story on Bramhall Street almost to Congress Street, where a series of storefronts are delineated by stone piers supporting a steel I-beam. Although the original doorway configurations for these stores are intact, the plate glass windows have been replaced by plywood with small openings.

Important decorative features on the two principal elevations include third story pilasters supporting round arches with wood coquillage, a corbelled belt course above the fourth story, square panels and Ionic columns in antis at the first story level, and a boldly projecting cornice with modillions. The dormers have alternating round arched and triangular metal pediments. Also noteworthy are the three shallow bay windows with thin engaged columns and, on the Congress Street elevation, a wrought iron balcony.

Exterior changes in 1934 include the removal of steps on the Bramhall Street elevation, lowering the main entry to grade level and adding a wooden infill for the arched entryway. The multi-paneled spandrels have also been covered or replaced on the bay windows and aluminum storm sash have been added throughout. Alterations to the Congress Street storefronts have already been noted.

The interior has been more extensively altered since 1892. The existing plaster partitions date from a variety of remodeling, the most substantial change having occurred in 1934 when the main entrance was changed and the lobby added. This remodeling is Colonial Revival in style and consists of fluted piers and pilasters, chair rails, panels and entablatures.
This three-story brick Second Empire building has commercial space on the first floor although it is building form that is more typically used for residential buildings in Portland. The location of the upper floor entry at the far left of the Congress Street façade and the series of low arches between the first and second floors on the east wall, allowing the possibility of large openings, suggest that this was never a purely residential structure.

The 1924 photo shows a classic storefront with large plate glass windows flanking a recessed entry on Congress Street and a single smaller display window wrapping the corner one bay on Deering Avenue. In the photo, the bay of the second arch on Deering Street has clearly been infilled with brick and has the logo for “A&P” painted over part of it. Retractable awnings were mounted on both sides, above the storefront. Round (cast iron?) posts resembling turned porch posts divided the bays of the storefront. The single double hung window in the last bay on Deering Ave. also has a retractable awning.

The entry to the upper floors has a hood on large brackets as is typical of the style and the double doors with glass upper panels are also typical of the style. The steps have cheek walls. The second story windows are 2/2 with slightly pedimented brick hoods sitting on shallow brackets and sills also on small brackets. The dormer windows on the third floor have wooden pediments similar to those in brick below. A wide overhanging cornice below the Mansard roof has a wide banded brick frieze with paired wooden brackets at the corners and between the window bays. The slate roof is ornamented with two wide bands of diamond shaped slates breaking the common square slate pattern. A two-story brick ell off the rear of the main block is angled to follow the curve of Deering Avenue.

With the exception of the storefront and upper floor entry the building is largely as it was in 1924. The storefront may retain the cast iron elements of its earlier form behind the plywood boxes now framing the openings. The entry to the upper floors has lost its hood and original doors and no longer has any particular historic character.
Rufus Tibbetts House

C.1865

This three story brick Italianate style double-house appears much as it did in 1924, when it was owned by the Maine Eye and Ear Infirmary and used as housing for nurses.

The building is a large brick rectangular block with a low hipped roof, one story projecting bay windows on the façade and a one story with Mansard roof rear ell which appears to be contemporaneous with the main block. A lower one story addition to the back of the ell appears to be later but is shown on the plot sketch from 1924. The recessed bays on the façade, brick window hoods, square bay windows with three narrow 1/1 sash across the front, door hood is supported on large console brackets covering the entrances to both houses and doors are typical examples of their style. It has a smooth-finished granite foundation, paired entry steps with cheek walls, and retaining wall along the sidewalk.

The 2/2 windows appear to be original, with 1/1 in the narrow windows on the bay windows. Aluminum combination storm windows have been installed.

The building is in remarkably original condition, including entry doors and windows. The painted finish on the brick window hoods and banding above and below the third floor windows appears in the 1924 photo.
Portland Historic Resources Inventory

Property Address: 807-809 Congress Street
Inventory #:

Assessor's C/B/L:

District: Congress Street

Rating: Contributing

Local Code: C
National Register: No
Date of Placement: Local 4/15/09 National

Architectural Description/Historic Significance:

c. 1880

Two-story wood Italianate double house. A hip roofed cube enlivened on the façade by a large central gabled dormer that interrupts the frieze and cornice, and first story bay windows flanking the side-by-side entrances.

Clapboard siding between moderately wide corner boards covers the walls, including the two rectangular bay windows on the façade. Three large Italianate brackets support the hood that spans both entrances. Brackets also appear supporting the wide sofit overhang at the corners and below the central dormer. Small brackets support the entablature hoods of all the windows except those on the bays. The gabled end of the dormer has a deep overhang and returns supported on brackets, creating the feeling of a pediment.

The two entries have the typical double doors of the style, with rectangular panels below and glass above. Windows are 2/2 except the very narrow 1/1 windows in the sides of the bays. The 1924 photo shows a wide stairway with cheek walls at the sides and center that have thick iron "pipe" handrails. Shutters appear on all of the windows. A below grade entrance flanked by windows had already been introduced under the bay on the right.

This building is remarkably intact other than the unfortunate railings that have been added to the stairs and porch in recent years. The stairs have been narrowed so both entrances are now served by one set of stairs. The window hoods over the two windows above the entrances are gone. A roof hood for the below grade entrance at 807 has been added to the front of the bay. The condition of the exterior paint is not good and some clapboards are missing above the right bay.
Property Address: 808-810 Congress Street

Rating: Contributing

Local Code: C
National Register: No
Date of Placement: Local 4/15/09 National

Architectural Description/Historic Significance:

c. 1880

Asymmetrical two-story Second Empire style double house. This is a variation of the three-story Second Empire house that is an established building form in the city. A few others of the two-story variation exist. Examples are located on Walker Street, Cumberland Avenue and on Munjoy Hill.

Typical Second Empire detailing includes a wide banded frieze and deep bracketed cornice below the flared slate Mansard roof, gabled hoods on brackets above the windows and dormers, door hoods on brackets, and clapboard siding with corner boards and water table. Windows are 2/2 except for the paired narrow 1/1 windows facing Congress Street and a 6/6 basement window in #808. By 1924 a few alterations had been made to #810, the storefront had been introduced into the exposed basement level (it housed a laundry) and the paired windows facing Congress Street had been replaced with one wide 2/1 window.

The slate roof has been replaced with asphalt shingle and the clapboard siding has been covered with vinyl siding. The vinyl siding was installed with care to preserve the trim details, only the water table was lost. Raw aluminum combination storm windows have been installed over original windows. A raw aluminum storm door and pre-cast concrete steps with aluminum railings have been installed at the entrance to #808. The basement window in #808 and the storefront in the basement level of #810 have been boarded over and painted out to match the painted brick foundation.
Portland Historic Resources Inventory

Property Address: Longfellow Square Statue Monument-Congress and State Street
Inventory #: 

Assessor’s C/B/L: 

District: Congress Street
Rating: Landmark

Local Code: L
National Register: Landmark
Date of Placement: Local 08/01/90 National 1990

Architectural Description/Historic Significance:

Located at Longfellow Square, the corner of State and Congress Streets in downtown Portland, this monument consists of a rectangular granite pedestal supporting the seated figure of Henry Wadsworth Longfellow. The pedestal, which is approximately ten feet in height, is comprised of a two-tier stepped plinth upon which is the centrally placed dado. This dado is ornamented with a molded base, two rectangular tablets, and a frieze embellished with anthemions and vines. The tablets feature eared upper corners, lower corners joined by a swag and an oval garland framing the single word Longfellow. A broad cornice with multiple moldings lies below the stepped cap.

The bronze statue depicts the seated Longfellow much as he appeared late in life. Rising some seven feet above the pedestal, the figure is seated in a chair whose arms terminate with Lion’s heads. Beneath the chair is a stack of books. Longfellow is clothed in an overcoat and a cape is draped across his lap and one shoulder. His right arm is propped on the chair back, whereas his left hand holds a manuscript. The head is tilted so as to gaze upon passers by.

Longfellow Monument 1888

In 1885 the Longfellow Statue Association was formed to raise funds, notably from schoolchildren, to commemorate Portland’s native son, the famed poet Henry Wadsworth Longfellow. Sculptor Franklin Simmons, a Portland native, was selected to create the sculpture. The granite pedestal was designed by Portland architect Francis H. Fassett.

The bronze sculpture was cast in Rome, Italy where Simmons had his studio, at the Fonderia Nelli. Dedication of the memorial, at the intersection of Congress, State and Pine Streets, was in 1888, six years after the poet’s death.

Changes to the square since the statue was installed have eliminated a traffic lane on the east side of the monument and created a small pedestrian plaza. A circular granite curb surrounding the rectangular base was removed at that time.

Conservation efforts were undertaken at the beginning of the 21st century to clean and preserve the monument. It currently is in very good condition and looks much as it did when installed.

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Portland Historic Resources Inventory

Property Address: Our Lady of Victory Statue
Inventory #:

Assessor’s C/B/L:

District: Congress Street

Rating: Landmark

Local Code: L
National Register: No
Date of Placement: Local 4/15/09

Architectural Description/Historic Significance:

Soldiers and Sailors Monument/Our Lady of Victory Statue

1891

Planning for a Civil War memorial in Portland began in 1873 but did not progress significantly for some years. In 1883 the Portland Soldiers and Sailors Monument Association was formed to raise funds. In 1888 sculptor Franklin Simmons, a Portland native, was selected to create the sculptures. The old City Hall and Market building was removed to clear the site for the monument and the cornerstone was laid in 1889. The granite pedestal was designed by noted New York City architect Richard Morris Hunt.

In 1890 the bronze sculptures were cast in Rome, Italy where Simmons had his studio, at the Fonderia Nelli. In 1891 they were installed in Market Square, which was then renamed Monument Square.

As part of the Maine Way urban renewal project in the 1970s Middle Street was discontinued through Monument Square and the entire area around the monument made into pedestrian space. The round granite ring that encircled the base of the monument, protecting it from traffic, was removed at this time.

Conservation efforts were undertaken at the beginning of the 21st century to clean and preserve the monument. It currently is in very good condition and looks much as it did when installed.
Portland Historic Resources Inventory

Property Address: 284 Cumberland Avenue
Inventory #:

Assessor’s C/B/L:

District: Congress Street

Rating: Landmark

Local Code: Local
National Register: National
Date of Placement: Local 4/15/09

Architectural Description/Historic Significance:

The Portland High School is a large four-story brick building with stone trim. Constructed in an E-shaped plan, the school consists of two distinct sections. Forming the center bar of the “E” is the original structure, built in 1863. Designed in the Italianate style, it features combinations of square headed windows on each elevation is a brick corbel table. The round arched entrance porch dates from the late nineteenth century and the hipped roof is an alternation following a 1911 fire.

The main portion of the school, completed in 1919, is designed in a neo-classical style characteristic of the early twentieth century. The principal façade, fronting Cumberland Avenue, is relieved by central and flanking end pavilions which, at the third and fourth floor levels have Tuscan columns in antis. The central pavilion contains the main entrance recessed behind three round-arched entrances. The tapestry brick walls are banded fourth floor levels. A simple brick parapet caps the flat roof. This is further embellished above the central pavilion by a carved stone cartouche. All of the windows consist of nine-over-nine double-hung sash. Similar classical motifs are employed on the northeast and southwest elevations.

(Statement of Significance)

Portland High School is a significant structure architecturally combining as it does the remains of George M. Harding’s 1863 Italianate design, visible from the rear, with the much grander neo-Classical main façade of Miller and Mayo in consultation with G. Henri Desmond which enfolds three-quarters of the earlier building. The institution is educationally important as well with its roots in one of the earliest urban public secondary schools in the country.

The work of George M. Harding in Maine particularly in Portland is well known and in many cases represented on the National Register. His design for the 1863 high school, while restrained, shows great dignity and as originally conceived had a more steeply pitched roof forming a classical pediment. This was lost in a 1911 fire, which gutted the building and was replaced by one nearly flat.

Miller and Mayo were an extremely prolific firm, some of whose work is also on the National Register, but their collaboration with G. Henri Desmond, the noted Boston architect, very likely contributed to the high style of the main façade. Desmond, incidentally, was the architect of the major expansion of the Maine State House including the redesign of the dome in 1910.
The Portland Latin School for boys, of which the present High School is the lineal descendent, was founded in 1821, and was combined with a later school for girls in the 1863 building which was then divided by a solid wall to prevent and mingling of the sexes. Very shortly, however, an enlightened principal, calling this the "wall of prejudice" caused a door to be cut through and thus upper level co-education came into being, again at an early date in public school history.

In the 1990's renovations at the rear of the building included a new entrance facing "Freshman Alley" and a building addition filling the corner of the alley and Chestnut Street.
Portland Public Market Building

In 1995, Philanthropist Elizabeth Noyce and the city of Portland discussed the possibility of building a new indoor market. In the fall and winter of 1996 and 1997, the architectural firm of Orcutt Associates of Yarmouth was hired. The architects teamed up with New Jersey-based architect Hugh Boyd, a renowned specialist in public market architecture, who added some of the Portland Market’s signature design elements. These include the pedestrian sky bridge which links the Market with the new Public Market Garage, as well as the massive fireplace located at the center of the L-shaped building. Every effort was made to make use of Maine-made materials and skilled local tradesmen. In June of 1997, a groundbreaking ceremony for the Portland Market was held.

Using local materials and incorporating traditional timber frame techniques, the architects created this award-winning indoor public market. Liberal use of glass was intended to draw foot traffic into the market. The central granite fireplace and works of art engaged the public while they shopped and congregated.

The Portland Public Market was recipient of the American Institute of Architects'/HUD Secretary's Award for Excellence in Housing and Community Design, the Rudy Bruner Award for Urban Excellence, Silver Medal, in 1999, and other awards.

Betty Noyce died in September 1996 before she could see her vision realized. The ownership of the market passed on to the Libra Foundation, a philanthropic foundation created by Ms. Noyce.

Although widely described as a gift to the city of Portland by Elizabeth Noyce at the time of its construction, it was, in fact, the property of the Libra Foundation. In 2006, the Libra Foundation divested itself of its downtown Portland properties, including the Portland Public Market, which was closed.
As an important, award winning, structure that received national recognition at the time of its construction, the Portland Public Market is clearly one of Portland’s most significant buildings of the recent past.

The building was sold in 2008. The new owners intend to convert it to office use.
Portland Historic Resources Inventory

Property Address: 338 Cumberland Avenue (Allen Storage Bldg.)
Inventory #:

Assessor’s C/B/L:

District: Congress Street

Rating: Contributing

Local Code:
National Register:
Date of Placement: Local 4/15/09 National

Architectural Description/Historic Significance:

Allen Storage Building
c. 1904

A five-bay, eight story, brick building with cast-in-place concrete façade on Cumberland Ave., it appears to have been built as a five story building, with three additional stories added before 1924. The façade has embossed Classical detailing. The lower portion is divided into five bays. The bays are separated by quoined pilasters on the first floor, with an entablature filling to the bottom of the 2nd floor windows, the next three stories have the bays articulated by recessed panels ending in shallow arches, the central bay has two rectangular windows at each floor with a single window in each of the flanking bays at each floor, the fifth story has three rectangular windows grouped above each arch, a cornice caps the composition and shows the original height of the building.

The additional three stories are simpler with no articulation of the bays beyond the windows being aligned with the lower bays. The center bay has three grouped windows at each floor. The flanking bays have one window at each floor. There is a very shallow pediment topping the building. The 1924 photo shows that it once had a large projecting cornice as well.

Other than the loss of the upper cornice the building appears little changed from 1924. The windows on the first floor are metal clad (galvanized iron over wood?) and appear to be original. Upper floor windows are aluminum replacement units.
Portland Historic Resources Inventory

Property Address: 364 Cumberland Avenue
Inventory #:

Assessor’s C/B/L:

District: Congress Street

Rating: Contributing

Local Code: C
National Register:
Date of Placement: Local 4/15/09 National

Architectural Description/Historic Significance:

c. 1921

Built as a simple wood framed, clapboard, two-story commercial structure, it originally had retail storefronts on the first floor and offices on the second. The façade is terminated with a simple wood cornice and the flat roof slopes slightly to the rear. The first floor is divided into asymmetrical bays for three store fronts. On the second floor three pairs of 1/1 windows are separated by two single 1/1 windows, arranged symmetrically.

In 1924 the building housed a motorcycle shop, bakery and a business advertising “Vulcanizing” on the first floor. A general contractor and “Jensen and Rosenblad Co.” occupied the second floor offices. Frantz Jensen and Walter C. Rosenblad owned the building.

The building is not much changed. In 1985 the second floor offices were converted to five apartments. The second floor windows are 1/1 replacements, retaining the appearance of the originals.
Property Address: 9 Deering Avenue
Inventory #:
Assessor's C/B/L:
District: Congress Street
Rating: Contributing

Local Code: C
National Register:
Date of Placement: Local 4/15/09 National

Architectural Description/Historic Significance:

c.1880

Three-story Second Empire style dwelling of the type built in great numbers throughout the city (particularly in the West End) after the Great Fire. The two story bay window filling one bay of the façade with a double-door entry below a single double hung window in the other bay is typical, as are the dormers centered over the bay window and second story double hung window in the mansard. Although a common building form, the detailing on each has variations making each structure unique.

In the 1924 tax photo, the building appears to have a wood shingled Mansard roof (unlike the majority of the form, which had slate roofing). The bracketed bay window rises two stories on the façade. There are recessed panels beneath each of the three window openings and brackets between them. The windows have 1/1 sash, unlike the 2/2 in the rest of the windows in the house. A wide overhanging cornice below the Mansard roof has a wide banded frieze. Wide corner boards terminate in brackets at the corners. The frieze and cornice continue around a projecting two-story bay window on the Cumberland Ave. side of the building. The door hood is supported on large brackets typical of the form. The dormer windows in the third floor have low gables. The eight steps of the front stairs have heavy posts with ball finials at the foot, a heavy handrail and relatively thin balusters. The doors are the typical rectangular paneled double doors with glass in the upper panel.

In spite of the loss of brackets and other trim and the addition of vinyl siding the essential form and character of the building are intact behind the unfortunate one-story storefront addition in front of the right side of the façade. It is unclear whether the first story of the bay window was destroyed, but it seems likely. The door hood is intact on the left side of the façade. At least some original windows remain.
Portland Historic Resources Inventory

Property Address: 11 Elm Street (Elm St. Garage)

Inventory #:

Assessor's C/B/L:

District: Congress Street

Rating: Non-Contributing

Local Code: NC

National Register:

Date of Placement: Local 4/15/09 National

Architectural Description/Historic Significance:

1990

This 400 car pre-cast concrete parking garage is located on a very restricted site with several important Landmarks adjacent or nearby. Although constructed prior to the existence of the Historic Preservation Ordinance it was clearly designed with great care to be compatible with the historic Portland High School and Clapp Memorial buildings, and also to relate to the 1970’s Portland Public Library, across Elm Street.

It is an example of a modern structure serving contemporary needs, which, through careful design and material selection, contributes to the character of the Congress Street Historic District.
This modest brick three-story building lacks any surface ornamentation or architectural style. Without photographic or historic documentation it is difficult to know its original function and appearance. As it appears now, it is a strictly utilitarian building, which does not contribute to the Congress Street Historic District.

The first floor display windows and door are set within opening beneath two steel beam lintels divided by a brick pier. The windows are modern; they have wood paneled transoms and are set above a continuous brick base. The door is recessed into the southernmost bay. It is likely that this bay, which abuts the rear of 575 Congress Street, is a two story addition and that the original three bay building had to display windows flanking a central door. The second floor windows have 1/1 sash as do the third floor windows, both have been altered probably from 2/2. The third floor windows have segmental brick arches, the ghosts in the brickwork around the second story windows indicates that they have been altered and were originally longer and probably arched. The flat roof line has no cornice ornamentation other than metal coping.
Odd Fellows Hall

C. 1914

Three story brick fraternal organization hall with retail space on the first floor. A central main entrance has carved granite brackets supporting a flat entablature containing carved Odd Fellow symbols and is flanked by a range of classic storefronts on the first floor with a signboard entablature below a seven bay upper façade. The bays contain recessed panels with large window openings between smooth piers.

The second floor window openings are rectangular, filled with wide 1/1 double hung windows mulled with narrow 1/1 double hung windows on either side. The third floor window openings are Romanesque Revival arches with stone keystones and 1/1 windows mulled as above, shape to fit within the arches, except the central bay which has a rectangular opening as on the second floor. Above the arches of the third floor a wide patterned brick frieze is capped with a stone cornice. A stone capped brick parapet steps up slightly above the central bay to emphasize the main entrance.

The south side wall has a large 2/2 double hung windows on each floor above the first floor display window that wraps around the corner. They appear to be wood sash with a metal cladding, perhaps for fireproofing. Further back on the wall are smaller windows with arched brick lintels.

The storefronts on either end of the building are a single bay wide and the other two are each two bays wide. The storefront on the right has square iron piers framing it and wraps around the corner with a window on the alley, the others have thin rectangular iron posts. The storefronts and the main entrance have full lite wooden doors. The bulkheads of the storefronts are granite like the rest of the stone trim on the façade.

Re-use as a performing arts venue has allowed the building to retain its historic dynamic as the home of an organization partially supported by the rents from the retail spaces. The building is remarkably intact and in good repair. All original doors and storefronts are in place as are the original windows. The small arched windows on the sides of the building have been blocked with plywood. A rooftop addition of a “flyway” for the stage
on the third floor and rear addition of a backstage area supported on metal columns have recessive metal siding and are located away from the façade and street frontage.
Portland Historic Resources Inventory

Property Address: 39 Forest Avenue (also 96-102 Oak Street)
Inventory #: 
Assessor’s C/B/L:
District: Congress Street
Rating: Contributing

Local Code: C
National Register:
Date of Placement: Local 4/15/09 National

Architectural Description/Historic Significance:

1917 (rear portion 1928)

The Albert S. Rines and R. Hight Block, a two story brick building, by architect Frederic A. Tompson, was constructed in 1917. It was built as an automobile showroom in front of an existing three story garage that had been built at the turn-of-the-century as a brick warehouse (demolished in 1928). The present garage building which extends from the rear of this block and fronting on Oak Street, has a parapet roof and dates from 1928. It occupies the sites of the earlier three-story garage as well as a frame Italianate house that stood at 92-96 Oak Street, and a frame Greek Revival house that stood at 98-102 Oak Street.

On the front building, facing Forest Avenue, four brick piers of equal width rise from sidewalk to parapet. The floor-to-ceiling windows on the second floor of the façade were originally Chicago style with transoms sitting on cast concrete sills. It appears that these second story windows were used for the display of automobiles. Second story access would probably have been provided through the attached garage at the rear. In 1924 the showroom windows were lettered for “Pierce Automobiles.” Narrower windows of the same style wrapped around the corners facing the alleys to the north and south. The first floor storefront windows were a bit shorter, with bulkheads below the glazing. The center bay on the first floor was filled with wide, tall, double wooden doors with paneled bottoms and glazing above, divided to appear as a transom above a window pane in the door. The left side first floor window was Chicago style with transom. The right side had a centered door with windows on either side and transoms over all. A simple cast concrete cornice sat on top of the window openings, continuing around the corners over the Chicago style windows on the sides, with a parapet above. The parapet was capped with a thin cast concrete band and there is a shallow peak on the parapet in the central bay. Rectangular double hung windows with iron lintels and cast concrete sills ran down the side walls, facing the alleys. There are 14 of them on the second floor. On both sides there are twelve windows on the first floor, aligned under those on the second, they decrease in height as the alley rises toward the rear on the south side, which was a ramp entrance to a garage on the rear of the lot in the 1920s. Interestingly, the windows also decrease in height on the north side although there is no slope to the grade there. Two additional windows were toward the front, one under the second floor Chicago style windows and one smaller window (not related to anything above) on each side.
City Building Inspections Department records show a long series of renovations to the front building on Forest Avenue, primarily internal, as its use changed through the decades from a parking garage to a repair garage, to the Chaplin Motor Co. showroom and garage, the Libby Parking Garage in the rear, and finally to retail and office use.

In the 1990s the fenestration was redesigned by SMRT Architects, greatly reducing the glazed area and relocating the main entrance to the right bay, which was partially bricked in. Ceramic tile and stucco was used in the infill areas of the window openings. Aluminum replacement windows were installed in the alley windows and one opening toward the rear was enlarged for a door. Glass block was used to infill the window closest to the front on the south side.

The main portal is now deeply recessed and consisting of an angled door to gain admittance to the ground floor and a side door for upper story access, has been placed within the right hand bay. The original central doors have been replaced with a window. The transoms of the window have been covered with panels of contemporary graphic design which reduce the size of the openings but enliven and modernize the façade without harm to the building’s structural integrity. The window sash repeats the six pane division though the flanking sash are treated in a contemporary manner of small panes. On the south elevation, the ground floor window has been replaced with glass brick. A stone cornice which wraps around the second story for one bay on the south elevation projects slightly beneath a pedimented parapet.

There is little indication in the building records of exterior changes to the rear garage portion facing onto Oak Street until a new door was created at the center of the Oak Street façade in 1994.
A.T. & T Building

1st A.T. & T Building
c.1913 (two additional stories and four-story rear addition built 1924)

The first American Telephone and Telegraph building on Forest Avenue is a classic early 20th century masonry-on-steel-frame commercial style building, by Densmore, LeClear and Robbins, Architects of Boston, MA. It was built as a four-story brick with stone trim structure. Eleven years later two additional stories were added in closely matching red brick. Interestingly, in the 1924 photo the newly built upper section was distinctly lighter in color than the lower floors, probably because it hadn’t yet been washed to remove the mortar on the surface of the bricks.

The seven bay façade has a central entrance with sandstone lintel and surround. Stone is also used as a base up to the first floor window sill height and for keystones in the brick lintels of those windows. A stone panel over the entrance is carved with the words “American Telephone and Telegraph Company”. The piers between the first floor windows are quoined and support a stone entablature.

The windows are set in slightly recessed panels which are terminated above the fourth floor windows (originally the top floor) with low segmental arches which have brick keystone lintels. A projecting band of brick above the arches marks where the original building stopped. The two additional floors follow the design of the original building without the arches at the top of the recessed bays. A simple cornice projects from the surface above the top floor windows, returning before reaching the corners, with the parapet rising above in a very low pediment.

The windows in both the original construction and the added floors are 3/3 double hung windows with 3 pane transoms above, creating the appearance of a 3/3/3 window. On the façade they are mulled in pairs, on in each bay on each floor. On the south side they are set in three bays, the one toward the front and the one in the center are paired with narrow brick piers between, in the bay toward the rear they are single windows. Basement level windows on the façade are set behind heavy metal screens. In 1929 two additional floors were added to the four-story rear addition built 1924.
On the façade, windows on the first four floors have been replaced with 1/1 aluminum double hung units with aluminum panels over the transoms. One of the windows in the center bay of the right half of the façade has been extended to create a door opening, a transom above fills the opening to the height of the adjoining window. Several windows on the third floor of the south side also have been replaced as above. The entry door is an aluminum replacement. A textured coating has been brushed onto the stone base of the façade and the door surround.
Portland Historic Resources Inventory

Property Address: 55 Forest Avenue (AT&T Building #2)

Inventory #:

Assessor’s C/B/L:

District: Congress Street

Rating: Landmark

Local Code: L

National Register:

Date of Placement: Local 4/15/09 National

Architectural Description/Historic Significance:

2nd A.T. & T. Building

1932 (addition 1972)

This six-story Art Deco style structure, clad in carved limestone on a polished black granite base, is an elegant example of a style of architecture which was never common in Portland. It was designed by Densmore, LeClear and Robbins, Architects, of Boston, MA. This is by far the largest Art Deco style building in Portland, of which no more than a half-dozen examples survive. The building presents nearly identical seven bay facades to both Forest Avenue and Cumberland Avenue. The two entrances on the Forest Ave. façade are the only substantial difference between the two sides.

The Art Deco style is often characterized by an emphasis on verticality, as is clearly evident in this structure. In essence a large cube of smooth limestone, the restrained carving on the building is focused at the corners. Small square carved panels set almost flush with the surface above each first floor window. Two stylized floral designs alternate with a bell design, using the A.T. & T. logo bell. A horizontal row of raised discs set between vertically ribbed rectangular panels create a frieze at the top of the building on the Forest and Cumberland Avenues facades. A base is created for the main shaft of the building by a rounded over projecting band of stone at the second floor window sill height which sits on a band of rounded under dentils.

The recessed entrance is on Forest Avenue at the corner of Cumberland and is flanked by pilasters with stylized foliate capitals. Between the tops of the pilasters two vertical ribbed bands rise to the top of the building, flanking the single window centered above the entrance at each floor. The panels between the ribbed bands above the door are carved with a stylized foliate design, including a raised vertical band at the center of the panel. Between the windows on the second, third, fourth and fifth floors the panels are carved with the same stylized foliate design flanking a smooth raised vertical band at the center of the panels. In the panels above and below the sixth floor window there is no carving on the panel or the raised vertical band. The same corner detail is repeated on the at the opposite end of the Forest Avenue façade. The recessed full-light bronze double door at the main (corner of Cumberland Ave.) entrance has a solid bronze panels above, the door at the other corner has a bronze grill above the door with a stylized foliate
pattern. There is no corner detailing at the eastern end of the Cumberland Avenue façade.

Windows on the first floor have fixed lower panes in bronze frames with three pane transoms. The second floor windows are bronze two 6/6 double hung with three pane transoms above. The windows in the remaining floors are 6/6 double hung. Overall the building is in very good condition. The glass panes in the doors and all of the first floor windows and transoms on the Cumberland Avenue façade have been in-filled with dark brown aluminum panels and the first floor windows on Forest Avenue have been blocked on the interior with aluminum framed interior shutters which create an uninviting façade at street level. Two third floor windows have been replaced with dark brown ventilation louvers.

The dark concrete bunker like addition that fills the corner of Cumberland Ave. and Oak Street was built in 1972. It was built to house telephone switching equipment and presents a barren and unfriendly face toward the public streets, with no windows or doors in it.
Portland Historic Resources Inventory

Property Address: 2-26 Free Street
Inventory #: 

Assessor’s C/B/L: 

District: Congress Street

Rating: Contributing

Local Code: C  
National Register: N/A
Date of Placement: Local 4/15/09 National N/A

Architectural Description/Historic Significance:

These four buildings form the south wall of Free Street from Cross Street west to the parking lot beside number 26. The largest, the Harrison J. Libby - John B. Brown Block of 1868 comprises numbers 4 through 18 and is a three and one-half story brick building fifteen bays long. The first story is finished with granite piers and lintels and the building is capped by a slate mansard roof with five pairs of dormer windows. All the windows terminate in elliptical arches; those of the second and third stories have projecting curved brick lintels supported by brackets. The shop windows of the first story extend from a low bulkhead to the stone lintel.

Number 20, the John G. Talford Block, built in 1850 has four full stories, a flat roof and more severe straight brownstone lintels. The street level, however, which includes a shop entrance and an entrance to the upper stories, is like its neighbor. The two end buildings, although both built in 1868, are quite different.

The Ebenezer Libby Block occupies the corner of Cross Street and exposes two facades. This three-story brick building has a curved corner, the granite lintel of the first story follows the curve and the openings below are separated by wood posts (formerly by cast iron). Two windows for each story are directly on Free Street while the third is on the curved corner; all have decorative lintels in a lighter color. On Cross Street the first story openings have full arches while the upper two levels have openings with segmental arches. The roof line on Free Street is elaborated by a double brick corbel table, painted a lighter color and once two vertical rows of quoins framed the corner. On the flat part of the façade two 2/2 double hung windows are located on each of the upper floors. A single matching window is placed in the curved corner section at each floor. All of these windows have decorative brick headers.

In the 1924 tax photo, the storefront does not curve around the corner like the upper floors. It consists of two straight iron lintels, supporting the upper floors, meeting at a cast iron column outboard of the curved wall above. The column sits on a stone base as do the bulkheads of the display windows. On the Free Street façade, a recessed entry was located on the right, probably allowing access to the upper floors as well as the first floor. A large plate glass window fills from the entry to the iron column with a three pane transom above. Around the corner a small plate glass window has a two pane transom above. The windows sit on very low bulkheads, higher on the Cross Street side due to the slope of the grade. A c. 1870 photo shows the original storefront following the curve of the wall above.
Brickwork forms a cornice along the Free Street façade and around the curved section with a row of small arches supporting an upper band with dentil detail. At the ends of the cornice and at the point where the curve begins brick “capitals” break the cornice and once terminated vertical rows of brick quoins.

The parapet of the long side of the building facing Cross Street steps down twice with the slope of the street (and roof?) with a chimney at each step. Windows in the upper floors of this side match those on the front and corner but have gently arched brick hoods. The first floor windows have Roman arch heads. A rectangular door opening is located two thirds of the way back from Free Street. Basement windows with low arched headers increase in height as Cross Street slopes down toward the rear.

In recent decades a sympathetic new storefront has been installed, following the curve of the wall above, which sits on a new cast concrete lintel. The building has been painted gray with cream trim that highlights the decorative brickwork.

At the west end of this row, numbers 22-26, the William T. Kilborn Block, has a much more formal design with granite facing the façade of the brick construction. The four story building has a base of four stone pilasters which support an articulated lintel; these pilasters – two paneled and the outer two rusticated – are repeated at each subsequent level, ultimately supporting another lintel and the projecting, bracketed cornice. There is a clear central focus with the middle bay projecting with wider window openings, terminating in an elliptical arch, while the paired side windows have semicircular arches. The openings are deeply profiled and each has a prominent keystone – the center three with carved faces. The two-story brick building at the end continued the granite ground story treatment while the three closely set window openings with contrasting lintels reflect the classical revival style of the early twentieth century.

This row is a direct reflection of the 1866 Fire in which both replacement buildings and new structures were speedily built. Matthew Stead (the Ebenezer Libby Block) was attracted to Portland’s post Fire opportunities and built several buildings in the late 1860’s; Charles A. Alexander (Libby-Brown Block) designed many structures for J.B. Brown; and Francis H. Fassett (the William T. Kilborn Block) who designed this and the Casco Bank Block on Middle Street early in his Portland career, continued to design dwellings, commercial blocks and institutional buildings until his death in 1908. There were always home furnishing businesses in this row: the Kilborn carpet store erected its two-story addition in 1905. The Walter Corey Company was here, James Bailey (then selling automobiles and bicycles), Louis Schlosberg, the furrier are a few names still familiar.

The cohesiveness of this row with ground level intact and stylistic interest above; the architects and developers involved; the business history embodied integrity of one of Portland’s early streets make this group significant.
Portland Historic Resources Inventory

Property Address: 44-48 Free Street

Inventory #: 

Assessor's C/B/L: 

District: Congress Street

Rating: Contributing

Local Code: C

National Register: 

Date of Placement: Local 4/15/09 National

Architectural Description/Historic Significance:

48 Free Street

Atherton’s Furniture Building

1923

Three-story brick Colonial Revival commercial block. In the 1924 photo the first floor storefront had two large plate glass display windows with very low bulkheads and thin posts on either side of a central recessed entry on Free Street with one display window wrapping the corner onto Center Street. Solid panels filled the transom area beneath a very wide sign board (“Atherton’s”) which also wrapped around the corner. Along Center Street beyond the display window pairs of 12/9 double hung windows were mulled together and spaced evenly along the wall below a stone entablature. Large retractable awnings were mounted above the storefronts on both facades.

On the Free Street façade the second floor had nine Federal style arched window openings with narrow granite keystones. The sash were arched 9/6. On Center Street and additional two arched openings were above the display window with rectangular 6/6 windows (w/ narrow granite keystones) centered over the paired first floor windows along the remainder of the wall. On the third floor 6/6 rectangular windows are aligned above the second floor windows on both facades.

Brick quoins at the corners of the building are terminated just above the third floor windows by a granite belt course. A brick frieze sits on the belt course and has small stone roundels centered above each window bay. A strong denticulated and bracketed stone cornice caps the façade composition on both streets.

The current storefront has new brick piers, smaller windows and higher bulkhead. A fixed awning covers the transom with a narrow paneled band and shingled hood above. Vinyl replacement windows do not have the delicately scaled muntins of the original windows and the fanlight design of the wide internal muntins on the arched windows are not appropriate.

In some details and in proportions this building echoes the second story of Faneuil Hall with rather delicate round arched windows. The Colonial Revival was a style which recombined
elements from American architecture of the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries as well as the sturdier elements which came from the classical style of the Renaissance. The rusticated corners and the nicely detailed cornice are reminiscent of these earlier European buildings, while the contrast of brick with light colored decorative details is quintessentially American.

This building's architectural significance lies in its style: it is an example of Colonial Revival commercial architecture, a style that Portland has only a few examples of. Walkover Shoe on Congress Street, the former Canal Bank building on Middle Street, and the Post Office on Forest Avenue are other surviving examples of this style. It should be noted that the original Atherton's sign which appeared on the Free Street façade and again on the Center Street corner was about twice as wide as the white banding above the first story and there were two striped awnings, one for Free Street and a shorter one for Center Street. At one time there were window boxes on several of the second story windows.

The 1980s trompe l'oeil painting on the east side of the building is an effective treatment for a party wall that has lost its adjoining structure. The elevation, which was always much simpler in details, has been painted with architectural details and with a partially furled blueprint push-pinned in place. The real windows on this four story elevation are narrow, multi paned and double, punctuated by two vertical rows of single windows.

The building's cultural and historical significance are derived from its original use. Free Street had been a neighborhood of home furnishing retailers since the 1860's with carpet and furniture dealers and manufacturers like Walter Corey, Sparrow and Libby, and William T. Kilborn. During the last decades of the nineteenth century the area of Free Street west of 2 through 26 had been occupied by dwellings and combination dwelling/businesses. Number 50 had a succession of laundries until about 1910. In 1923 the Atherton Furniture Company moved from 24 Preble Street where it had been since 1921 into this new building. Across Center Street was the E.T. Burrowes & Co. complex, manufacturers of window screen and, later, tools and pool tables. The five and six story brick factory buildings filled the current site of the Cumberland County Civic Center and Spring Street Garage. The Atherton Furniture building marked the boundary between the smaller scale retail buildings of lower Free Street and the large scale factory buildings between Center and Oak Streets. The business remained here until 1970 when it moved to Brighton Avenue where it closed in 1981.
This parking lot and the connect parking lot at 130-144 Free Street were formerly occupied by residential structures. Historic maps and photographs show that automobile parking and a gas station had begun to displace housing on this block by 1924. Over several decades, six residential structures were removed to create and expand the parking lots, leaving only the center section of a triple-house standing in the center of the lot at 128 Free Street. With increased dependence on automobiles in the early 20th century these parcels, just a block off Congress Street, were greatly impacted by the advent of the new technology – and consequent need to park it.
Portland Historic Resources Inventory

Property Address: 128 Free Street
Inventory #:

Assessor's C/B/L:

District: Congress Street

Rating: Non-Contributing

Local Code: NC
National Register: NC – Spring Street Historic District
Date of Placement: Local 4/15/09 National 04/03/70

Architectural Description/Historic Significance:

This building was once the center section of a handsome Greek Revival triplex when Free Street was a residential street. The change to commercial usage that affected Free Street over time can be clearly seen in the one-story addition in what was a small front yard. On the upper stories the 6/6 sash windows set between flush stone lintels and sills and the double banded brick frieze and recessed panels attest to its earlier residential character. The pedimented dormer was in the center of the triplex block. As one can discern at the eastern edge, bricks have been patched on the corner as a 2 bay section was demolished sometime after 1924; thus, there are no windows on the eastern wall as it was originally an interior partition. The commercial addition has been confined to the first floor where a flat-roofed, simple brick structure obliterated the fenced yard, steps, bay window, and portico of the house.

The addition consists of a recessed entryway with one door for the business and one for upper story access, and a tripartite display window. It dates to the 1920’s and consists of 4 bays, the door being placed on the corner. The window sash has all been changed, but one can still see vestiges of the classic storefronits topped by multi-paned transoms and awnings. The plain brick wall surface is enlivened by a brick frieze beneath the cornice and raised panels with diamonds in the center between the two floors.

As a fragment of the original triple-house, with significant alterations to the remaining portion, this building has been determined not to retain sufficient integrity of the original design intent to be considered contributing to the district.
Portland Historic Resources Inventory

Property Address: 130 - 144 Free Street
Inventory #: 

Assessor's C/B/L: 

District: Congress Street

Rating: Non-Contributing

Local Code: NC
National Register: NC – Spring Street Historic District
Date of Placement: Local 4/15/09 National 04/03/70

Architectural Description/Historic Significance:

This parking lot and the connect parking lot at 120 -126 Free Street were formerly occupied by residential structures. Historic maps and photographs show that automobile parking and a gas station had begun to displace housing on this block by 1924. Over several decades, six residential structures were removed to create and expand the parking lots, leaving only the center section of a triple-house standing in the center of the lot at 128 Free Street. With increased dependence on automobiles in the early 20th century these parcels, just a block off Congress Street, were greatly impacted by the advent of the new technology – and consequent need to park it.
Portland Historic Resources Inventory

Property Address: 133 Free Street
Inventory #: 

Assessor's C/B/L: 

District: Congress Street

Rating: Contributing

Local Code: C
National Register: NC – Spring Street Historic District
Date of Placement: Local 4/15/09 National 04/03/70

Architectural Description/Historic Significance:

This utilitarian brick structure was a front addition to a Second Empire dwelling that stood behind it. Its original 3 bays were expanded to the east with an infill 3 bay addition. The sash have changed over the years, originally all of the openings were small and arched with 1/1 sash flanking a recessed arched door. The crowns of these arched windows can still be seen in the brick above the windows which flank the door.
Architectural Description/Historic Significance:

This is a late three-story brick Federal duplex that has undergone significant alterations but retains clear evidence of its evolution. The conversion of the early residential character of the building can be seen on the upper as well as ground floors. The 1/1 sash replacement windows are set within the original upper story openings, the third floor had 3/3 and the second 6/6. The fire escapes had been added by 1924, and the aluminum ventilating apparatus sometime later. The Chicago-style window in the eastern end of the second floor was installed prior to 1924, probably around 1900; it replaced two 6/6 windows. The ground floor has received the most significant alterations. Originally, the doorways were arched and recessed as on any number of later Federal homes (see State Street or the How Houses for comparable examples). The current small windows between the door bays were arched, 6/6, the proportioned like the windows of the upper floors. Their original configuration can still be seen in the patching of the brickwork.
Portland Historic Resources Inventory

Property Address: 142 Free Street
Inventory #: 

Assessor’s C/B/L: 

District: Congress Street 

Rating: Contributing

Local Code: C
National Register: Contributing – Spring Street Historic District
Date of Placement: Local 4/15/09 National 04/03/70

Architectural Description/Historic Significance:

Originally the Romanesque style Free Street Baptist Church, the building was substantially renovated in 1926 by John Calvin Stevens and John Howard Stevens for the Chamber of Commerce and became an essentially Colonial Revival style building. The building is a dignified two-story structure with four monumental concrete columns of the Doric order and 2 brick piers and 2 pilasters. There is a symmetrical façade under the full-width two-story porch. The upper windows have 8/8 sash capped by flush stone lintels. The ground floor has a doorway surmounted by a balcony on brackets with a replaced doorway of glass and aluminum. It is flanked by 10/10 sash topped by semi-circular windows in elliptical keystone arches. In the flush board pediment is a bull’s eye window. The frieze and cornice are boldly delineated. The roofline was free of any dormers, thus maintaining its temple shape, until renovated for the Children’s Museum of Maine in the 1990s. The octagonal cupola and dormers were added at that time.
Portland Historic Resources Inventory

Property Address: One and Two Monument Square
Inventory #:

Assessor’s C/B/L:

District: Congress Street

Rating: Non-Contributing

Local Code: NC
National Register:
Date of Placement: Local 4/15/09 National

Architectural Description/Historic Significance:

1969 and 1979

These ten story modern office buildings are built of brown brick and tinted glass. They were developed by Muray Finard & Co., Wellesley, MA.

One Monument Square was built in 1969, on the site of the 19th century United States Hotel. The permit to demolish the historic five story brick structure which had long been the backdrop to Market/Monument Square, was issued 9/16/65. The new building was built as headquarters for Casco Bank and Trust and was initially called the Casco Bank Building. The builder was Consolidated Contractors of Portland and its estimated cost was $3,100,000. Its exterior is a series of narrow angled brick piers alternating with vertical bands of tinted glass windows and bronze tinted aluminum panels. The piers and panels run from foundation to roof without variation. The result is a building with a strong vertical emphasis.

Two Monument Square was developed ten years after One Monument Square. The two buildings share a one story entry lobby but are only related architecturally by the use of the same brown brick for both. The builder was Cutler and Associates of Worcester, MA. The exterior is smooth and planar, without any hint of the faceted piers on One Monument Square. The first two stories are a garage and present largely blank brick walls to the street at the pedestrian level. On the remaining floors, windows run horizontally in bands, giving the building a horizontal emphasis in spite of its ten story height.

Initially the principal pedestrian entrance faced onto Congress Street, between the two towers. In the 1990s the entrance was renovated to also provide access from Federal Street, facing the newer One City Center building.
Portland Historic Resources Inventory

Property Address: 15 Monument Square

Inventory #:

Assessor’s C/B/L:

District: Congress Street

Rating: Contributing

Local Code: C

National Register:

Date of Placement: Local 4/15/09 National

Architectural Description/Historic Significance:

This distinctive Romanesque Revival building located at 15 Monument Square has been known
as both the Choate Block and Columbia Hall. Built in 1891 to the design of architects Francis H.
Fassett and Frederick Tompson, the four story, three bay, buff brick and stone building is a
small-scale, classic example of this late 19th century commercial style. The top story has an
arched colonnade. Massive window bays with stone arches at the middle stories are framed by
brick pilasters. Pairs of windows with semicircular arched heads appear at the third story. Simple
one-over-one windows are used at the upper stories.

The original storefronts were dominated by large display windows. These were framed by large
stone piers at the outer edges and round columns at the inner edges. Simple sign panels were
located above the storefronts; there were bulkhead windows below. A recessed entry with center
door, angled side doors and transom sash completed the first floor composition.
The one bay, four-story brick building at 18 Monument Square dates from 1913 and was designed by John Calvin Stevens and John Howard Stevens. The building is of a hybrid style, incorporating Chicago Commercial, Classical Revival, and even some proto-Art Deco traits.

18 Monument Square is a decidedly vertical building. Three columns of windows are separated by narrow brick piers. Three columns are topped by a single shallow arch over three transom windows. The three window bays form a variation on the typical three-part Chicago-style window. (Originally the two outer sash and transom windows were divided into multiple small panes) A stepped parapet of brick and stone tops the building. Just below the parapet is a decorative panel of ceramic tile with brick and tile brackets at either end.
Portland Historic Resources Inventory

Property Address: 22-24 Monument Square

Inventory #:

Assessor's C/B/L:

District: Congress Street

Rating: Contributing

Local Code: C
National Register: National
Date of Placement: Local 4/15.09

Architectural Description/Historic Significance:

The six-story, three-bay, brick, stone, metal and terra-cotta building at 22-24 Monument Square dates from 1913, when a two-story building on the site was enlarged and remodeled by John Calvin Stevens. It anchors one of the City's most handsome blocks of commercial structures. It reflects the simplified Commercial style of the period, taking advantage of new materials while still incorporating a substantial amount of decorative detail. The three-part composition (base, shaft and capital) typical of commercial buildings of the time can be seen here. A stone base anchors the building firmly to the street. The base extends to the second floor through the use of rusticated "false-stonework" in brick; a terra-cotta cornice tops the base, above the second floor.

The center section, or shaft, consists of four stories of windows, divided into three vertical bays by soaring pilasters. Each bay has three windows separated by metal columns. The columns also divide spandrel panels between floors.

The top of the building, or capital, is an elaborate cornice of terra cotta applied to the brick façade. A variety of floral motifs are cast into the white terra-cotta frieze, brackets, finials and medallions, creating a work of architectural ornament that rivals the terra-cotta detail on the Porteous building. The original appearance of the storefronts is documented in several historic photos. They show angled recessed entrances with very low bulkheads below plate glass display windows that wrap into the recesses, and transom windows of prismatic glass. Only a few vestiges of the original storefronts remain, including cast iron piers and two metal columns flanking the entrance to the upper stories. Modern storefronts and a vestibule for the upper floor entrance occupy the original storefront openings.
Portland Historic Resources Inventory

Property Address: 28 Monument Square

Inventory #:

Assessor’s C/B/L:

District: Congress Street

Rating: Contributing

Local Code: C
National Register:
Date of Placement: Local 4/15/09 National

Architectural Description/Historic Significance:

The Emerson Clapp Building at 28 Monument Square is a subdued Commercial style, four-story masonry building constructed about 1875. Brick pilasters and cornice divide the façade into three bays. Large bays (three windows wide) flank a narrow center bay. Double hung windows have flat-topped sash in shallow arched openings. Decoration is provided by horizontal bands of decorative diagonal brickwork between the second, third and fourth floors, and a fine dentilated cornice with Greek key frieze. Photographic evidence from 1897 shows that the building originally was three stories with a mansard roof, an 1898 photo shows the full fourth floor added.

The original street-level façade consisted of two store fronts flanking a double door entrance to the upper stories. Both storefronts were classic in their simplicity. The composition consisted of recessed entrances, wood and glass doors with transoms, huge display windows reaching from low bulkheads to bold sign panel, and stone side piers. By 1909 the storefront had been reworked with the stone piers removed, a new entrance to the upper floors at the left side of the façade and access to the first floor through the recessed central door. Building permit records indicate that the current storefront was installed in 1959.

Built by the heirs of Asa Clapp, within sight of the family’s Federal style mansion (now the site of the Clapp Memorial Building at the corner of Elm and Congress Streets), the building housed for many years one of Portland’s early Chinese restaurants, with dormitory style housing for the immigrant employees upstairs.
Portland Historic Resources Inventory

Property Address: 44 Oak Street (Frye Bldg.)

Assessor’s C/B/L:

District: Congress Street

Rating: Contributing

Local Code: C

National Register:

Date of Placement: Local 4/15/09 National

Architectural Description/Historic Significance:

Frye Building
c. 1912

Located at the corner of Free Street and Oak Street, this four-story brick, stone and terracotta commercial building has an unusual two-story storefront facing onto Free St. that wraps around the corner onto Oak Street for two wide bays and around the other corner for one bay. Square terracotta piers (almost certainly hiding structural iron posts) frame the two-story storefront with iron members framing display windows with low bulkheads and a recessed central entry on the first floor on Free Street and large plate glass windows with transoms on the second floor. A heavy cornice sits on the corner piers and caps the storefront. The remainder of the first floor on Oak Street has smooth brick walls with single 1/1 double hung windows that have stone lintels and sills. A secondary entrance to the building is approximately 3/4 of the way back on this side.

The upper two floors are brick with recessed bays between flat piers on the front and both sides. The three wider bays on the front contain pairs of mulled 1/1 double hung windows with stone lintels and sills on each floor. Diamond shaped stone plaques are inset in the brick below the window sills on each floor. The ten narrower bays of the Oak Street side each contain one 1/1 double hung window with stone lintels and sills on each floor. The long side to the west also is plain flush brickwork on the first two floors. The upper floors have recessed bays like the east side. The 1/1 double hung windows have gently arched brick lintels and do not appear in every bay on this side. A deep cornice with brackets at the corners terminates the Free Street and Oak Street facades.

It was built to by the George C. Frye Company to house their pharmaceutical manufacturing operation and drug store. The company was founded as a drug store in 1866 and originally was located at the corner of Congress and Franklin Streets.

This building is very little altered. The storefronts appear untouched, including the mosaic tile floor of the recessed entry. The double hung windows have been replaced with 1/1 units that closely resemble those in the 1924 photo. An iron fire escape has been added to the Oak Street side, approximately in the center of the façade. A rooftop addition sits back from the edges and is not very visible from most vantage points. The
two-story storefront is the only remaining example of this never very common form in downtown Portland.
Portland Historic Resources Inventory

Property Address: 47-55 Oak Street
Inventory #:
Assessor's C/B/L:
District: Congress Street
Rating: Contributing

Local Code: C
National Register: Yes
Date of Placement: Local 4/15/09 National 2006 (?)

Architectural Description/Historic Significance:

Everett Chambers is a five-story brick building designed in the Colonial Revival style by Portland architect Frederick Tompson. It was originally constructed at three stories in 1902 and was raised to five stories in 1926. The building has an irregular plan that is roughly rectangular with a clipped southeast corner at the Free and Oak Street intersection. The two principal elevations face Oak and Free Streets (south and east elevations respectively), and are constructed of red brick. Street level storefronts at these elevations are separated by brick pilasters with granite bases and limestone capitals. Fenestration on the upper floors of both facades is asymmetrical. The Oak Street façade is fourteen bays wide, while the façade facing Free Street is three bays wide. The clipped southeast corner of the building is a single bay in width with one window per floor above the first-floor storefront entry. On the south elevation a four-story oriel window rises above the main Oak Street entry. The oriel window is constructed of wood and features paneled aprons and molded cornices with dentils. Formerly there was a matching oriel window centered on the Free Street façade, but in the 1950’s it was reduced to the two top stories and replaced with paired double hung windows on the second and third floors. To either side, the north and south bays are filled with a single window on each floor. Windows flanking the oriel window at the Oak Street (south) elevation are arranged in groups of three, except the easternmost bay, which has one window per floor.

The main entry pavilion is centered on the Oak Street (south) façade and features broad brick piers with granite bases and limestone capitals. The piers support a wide arch with limestone voussoirs, above which is a brick and limestone entablature. The original entry is virtually intact, and it consists of wood double doors with large glazed panels, sidelights, and a three-part transom. The original drawings of the building indicate that the sidelights and their transoms originally held decorative leaded glass windows, but currently only the transoms retain the leaded glass panels. These are made up of clear glass in a simple geometric pattern of five narrow vertical panes framed by small diamond-shaped panes. The main entry includes a shallow vestibule with a coffered ceiling and wood wainscoting. There is a set of interior vestibule doors that match those on the exterior. The decorative leaded glass (matching that on the exterior door) still exists in the transom above the sidelights of the vestibule door.

The building was designed with five storefronts running along the Oak Street elevation and one bay of the Free Street elevation. The original storefronts had low bases beneath very large single-pane display windows. However, these were altered to varying degrees over the years and very little of the historic fabric has survived. The storefronts and their entries were recently
reconstructed using the historic drawings as a guide for the new design. Today the storefronts consist of large wood-frame display windows with single glass panes set on low, paneled, wood bases and topped by large transoms with a single glass pane. Four of the storefronts have entrances on Oak Street while the fifth entry is located at the clipped southeast corner of the building. The storefronts along Oak Street each have a splayed side window to accommodate the recessed entries. These storefronts have wood doors with large glass panels and transoms that today hold air conditioning units. The entry at the clipped corner is framed by the original cast-iron columns set on painted granite bases. The wood door had a large glass panel and is flanked by narrow single-pane sidelights with paneled wood bases. A large transom now contains a modern air conditioning unit. A painted iron entablature runs continuously along the top of all the storefronts.

The four upper floors of the Oak and Free Street elevations are all detailed in a similar manner. The original 1902 brick cornice with dentils now serves as a belt course between the third and fourth floors. A second brick cornice with dentils defines the current roofline. Window openings on the second and third floors have limestone sills and brick jack arches with limestone keystones. Window details on the fourth and fifth floors match those of the lower floors, but the sills and keystones are made of reinforced concrete. Window openings on these elevations contain one-over-one double hung sash, all but eleven of which are original wood sash, the remainder are modern aluminum replacements.

The rear (north) elevation is constructed of red brick and has very little ornamentation. This elevation is twelve bays wide, and the fenestration is irregular, with a combination of doors and windows at each floor level. Window openings have rusticated granite sills and segmental-arched heads formed by double rows of header bricks. Window openings here contain modern aluminum one-over-one double hung sash. The eastern half of the elevation is exposed at all five floors. Along this half the first floor features five secondary entries; four provide access into retail spaces and the fifth is an entry into the rear of the main lobby. The latter retains the original glazed and paneled wood door, while the other entries contain modern doors. There are also three windows at the first floor. The western half of the elevation is exposed only above the first floor. The three westernmost bays are recessed approximately 15 feet from the remainder of the elevation. Fire escapes were added at each end of the rear elevation (most likely in the 1920’s). The four windows (second through fifth floors) in the easternmost bay were converted to doorways as part of a recent certified rehabilitation to provide access to the fire escapes; the openings now contain modern flush metal doors. The same is true of the windows in the east bay of the recessed plane of this elevation.

The narrow, west side elevation is only visible above the first floor. It is forty feet wide and has six small windows, which are located on the northern half of the elevation. Windows contain one-over-one double hung aluminum sash. This side of the building features a painted sign (c. 1950) reading “Hotel Everett” on its southern half.
Portland Historic Resources Inventory

Property Address: 104 Oak Street (Tennessee Hotel)
Inventory #:
Assessor's C/B/L:
District: Congress Street
Rating: Contributing

Local Code: C
National Register:
Date of Placement: Local 4/15/09 National

Architectural Description/Historic Significance:

Tennessee Hotel Building

c. 1908 (remodeled by 1924)

A four-story, four bay, polychrome brick and concrete block building with high base that increases in height to the north on the sloping site. Concrete block with a rusticated face is used for the base of the building. The rest of the building uses the same blocks as horizontal bands that alternate with bands of red brick (6 courses high), terminating in a wide wooden entablature and cornice. The most prominent features of the façade are the four bay windows that begin at the second story and continue through the cornice. They have framed panels below the windows (above also on the third floor) and secondary cornices between the floor levels. On the north side the horizontal banding continues to the setback. The rear ell of the building is in solid brick.

The main hotel entrance was at the left side of the façade. A secondary entrance to offices (and later a café) on the basement level was a bit off center on the façade (to the left) with pairs of mulled 1/1 double-hung windows on the right, aligned under the bay windows. Two double-hung windows were spaced between the two doors, each door and window pair was aligned under a bay window. Above the secondary entrance is a rectangular transom, with an arched muntin design, containing colored glass. To the right of the secondary entrance are two small windows on the basement level. The bay windows and the south side [north too?] of the building have 1/1 double-hung windows.

In 1940 the building (by then known as The Kenmore Hotel) was converted to an apartment building and the hotel entrance was eliminated, with another window added at the first floor level under the left-most bay window. In the base level on the façade a new entrance to the basement has been created by extending the window furthest on the right. The cast concrete lintel of the door opening is still in place and there is a noticeable difference in the mortar of the infill brick. All of the windows have been replaced with 1/1 vinyl units and the cornice and bays are clad in aluminum. The secondary cornices on the bays have been removed and the panels are covered, if they still are there.
Portland Historic Resources Inventory

Property Address: 10-20 Preble Street
Inventory #: 
Assessor’s C/B/L: 
District: Congress Street
Rating: Contributing

Local Code: C
National Register:
Date of Placement: Local 4/15/09 National

Architectural Description/Historic Significance:

c. Second half of the 19th century

This pair of four-story brick commercial buildings has segmental arched window lintels on the upper two floors. The wider building, on the right, has projecting belt courses between the upper floors and a restrained Italianate cornice in brick. The building on the left is very plain and unadorned. Both buildings have large Chicago style windows on the second floor, perhaps added in conjunction with the renovations undertaken in 1924. At that time the first floor of both buildings had classic storefronts with transom windows above display windows and recessed entries.

The buildings have been owned jointly with the adjoining Chapman Building (Time and Temperature Building) on Congress Street and the Keith Theater entrance on Preble St. since the construction of the Chapman Building and The Arcade in 1924. The Arcade was Portland’s first indoor “mall” and was cut through the interiors of these buildings when it was created.

The two story brick façade to the right, immediately adjoining the Keith Theater entrance, appears to be non-contributing late 20th century construction, replacing a two-story 19th century Italianate brick storefront façade.

Other than the storefronts, which have unsympathetic late 20th century replacements, and the painting of the exterior brick surfaces these buildings look much as they did in 1924. Aluminum replacement windows have maintained the 1/1 double hung style on the upper floors seen in 1924 and, with minor alteration, the Chicago style of the second floor windows.
Portland Historic Resources Inventory

Property Address: 22 Preble Street (BF Keith Theater)
Inventory #: 

Assessor’s C/B/L: 

District: Congress Street

Rating: Contributing

Local Code: C
National Register:
Date of Placement: Local 4/15/09 National

Architectural Description/Historic Significance:

B.F. Keith Theater and The Arcade entrance.

1906

Designed by Francis Fassett this Colonial Revival façade was the entrance to elegant B.F. Keith Theater (demolished in 1965), located behind this and several buildings on Preble Street (22 - 34 Preble St.). After renovation in 1924 it was also the Preble Street entrance to Portland’s first indoor “mall”, The Arcade, built in conjunction with the new Chapman Building on Congress Street, where it also has an entrance. It also runs through 10-20 Preble Street.

The exuberant two story façade is divided into nearly equal halves. The building entrance, on the left side, has a grand arch window with scrolled keystone ornament on the second floor level, surrounded with Adamesque stucco ornament, sitting on an entablature supported by round columns with Ionic capitals and flanking flat paneled pilasters with Doric capitals. In 1924 a boxy marquee extended out from the recessed entry over the sidewalk and had a scalloped lambrequin that appears to have been canvas.

The right side of the building is much more restrained. It has three windows with keystone lintels set in the brick wall on the second floor, above the entablature that continues from the left side of the building, the first floor storefront had windows flanking a recessed central entrance with typical transom windows above. A brick pilaster with a Doric capital sits on a granite base to the right of the storefront, balancing the more elaborate pilasters at the left side of the façade and at the center, framing the entrance, and carrying the entablature. A bracketed and denticulated cornice topped with a classical balustrade caps the façade.

The 1924 photo shows a projecting vertical sign centered on the entry arch rising from the top of the marquee to a full story above the cornice with “B. F. Keith” spelled out in electric light bulbs. At the entrance portion of the façade a pair of light fixtures with five white globes on approximately 6’ high cast metal posts (resembling shortened street light fixtures of the era) sat on the paneled bases in the balustrade. Two more white globes hung as pendant fixtures at the outer corners of the marquee with one tucked up under the center of the marquee as well, another pair were held on torch-like iron brackets mounted
to the pilasters flanking the entrance. Several more were hung from simple gooseneck fixtures on the adjoining storefronts.

Other than the replaced windows, everything above the first story entablature is largely intact. The current windows with multiple small panes have a sympathetic Colonial Revival feeling but are quite different from the original windows. The 1924 photo shows 1/1 double hung windows with transom panels on the right and an elaborate window with cast metal (?) rococo tracery in the arched window above the entrance. On the first floor the columns and flanking pilasters of the entrance are gone and the entablature is partially altered. The current paneled design of the recessed entry is a late 20th century treatment, as is the storefront infill on right side of the building.
Portland Historic Resources Inventory

Property Address: 24 Preble Street (Potter Bldg.)
Inventory #: 

Assessor's C/B/L: 

District: Congress Street

Rating: Contributing

Local Code: C
National Register:
Date of Placement: Local 4/15/09 National

Architectural Description/Historic Significance:

Potter Building

C. 1889

This is a four story brick commercial building, three bays wide, with very simple
detailing and hint of the Romanesque Revival style. In the flatness of its façade, clean
openings, and restrained cornice this building feels very contemporary at the beginning of
the 21st century.

In 1924 the first floor store fronts had transom windows divided horizontally into six
panes over large display windows on each side and a central entrance. The wide
rectangular second floor window openings each had a single plate glass window below a
transom band divided into two panes and the third floor had paired 1/1 windows in each
square opening and the fourth, paired 1/1 double hungs in the arched openings. A
projecting sign hung vertically from the top of the fourth floor windows to the sill of the
second floor windows, advertising “Potter’s Furniture”. Harry Potter owned the building.

All the openings in the building now have aluminum windows and doors. Painted panels
in the transom area of the store fronts resemble the original pattern of window panes. The
transom area is also still apparent on the second floor, as painted aluminum panels above
fixed glazing below (now divided into two vertical rectangular panes, rather than one
square pane. The replacement windows on the third and fourth floors are quite similar to
the appearance of the windows in the 1924 photo.
Portland Historic Resources Inventory

Property Address: 28 Preble Street (The Wadsworth)

Inventory #:

Assessor's C/B/L:

District: Congress Street

Rating: Contributing

Local Code: C
National Register:
Date of Placement: Local 4/15/09  National

Architectural Description/Historic Significance:

The Wadsworth

C. 1904

This six story brick building with granite trim is a classic early 20th century hotel building with retail on the first floor, designed by Portland architect Francis H. Fassett. For many decades the first floor contained a restaurant (Tom's Lunch) and a bar (The Morocco Lounge). In 1955 the building was converted to apartments. The façade uses Colonial Revival elements arranged into five bays with a central entrance flanked by restrained storefronts. At the second floor level an arched center window marks the entrance and paired double-hung windows with keystone lintels are separated by brick piers in the adjoining bays. A wide stone belt course divides the second floor from the upper floors, stepping out with the vertical piers and providing a base for the bay windows above.

The central bay has paired double hung windows at floors three through six with the fourth floor pair slightly recessed in an arched opening. The flanking bays on the third through sixth floors are a sophisticated design using mirror image asymmetry (a single double-hung window next to a projecting bay window) in adjoining bays to create symmetrical pairs of bays. Between the fifth and sixth floors an intermediary cornice is used on the Preble Street façade. A large denticulated cornice is at the top of the building and wraps around the entire north side of the building.

The 1924 photo shows what appears to be a glazed monitor above a stairwell on the south side of the building.

The building is in a fine condition and little altered other than the first floor storefronts, which have been changed and the windows, which are aluminum replacements.
Portland Historic Resources Inventory

Property Address: 38 Preble Street
Inventory #:

Assessor's C/B/L:

District: Congress Street

Rating: Contributing

Local Code: C
National Register:
Date of Placement: Local 4/15/09 National

Architectural Description/Historic Significance:
c. 1894

This is a three story brick commercial building with granite used for window sills and the bases and caps for the piers surrounding the storefront openings. The Preble St. façade is evenly divided into two storefront bays with iron lintels supported on the granite and brick piers, each bay has an entrance on the left and a six pane display window on the right. Another display window turns the corner onto Cumberland Ave. There are four large 2/2 double hung windows spaced evenly across the façade on the second and third floors which have nicely detailed terracotta lintels. Projecting brick belt courses are located at the third story sill level and slightly below the window lintels at the 2nd and 3rd story levels. A brick cornice caps the facades on Preble Street and Cumberland Avenue.

The Cumberland Ave. façade is divided into three asymmetrical bays by two slightly projecting chimneys. The eastern bay is the narrowest and contains the storefront window on the first floor and one 2/2 window on each of the floors above. The middle bay is the widest and has three 2/2 windows on each floor. The western bay is slightly wider than the eastern bay and has an off center wide arched doorway on the first floor and two 2/2 windows on each of the upper floors.

The south wall is a blank party wall, though it appears never to have had a neighboring building above the first floor level. In 1924 a new single story retail structure containing a “Preble Fruit Store” and “Steve’s Lunch” restaurant was located on the adjoining lot at 36 Preble St.

The storefronts have been recessed and filled in to contain smaller modern aluminum framed plate glass windows with a single entrance on the southwest corner. The double hung windows are 1/1 aluminum replacement windows. The chimneys have been removed to the cornice level.
Portland Historic Resources Inventory

Property Address: 11 Shepley Street
Inventory #: 

Assessor’s C/B/L: 

District: Congress Street
Rating: N/A Not in District

Local Code: 
National Register:
Date of Placement: Local 4/15/09 National

Architectural Description/Historic Significance:

The Miles Standish

c. 1920s

This five story apartment building of dark red wire cut brick with cast concrete trim has a three bay façade with the center bay slightly recessed above the rusticated first floor and sits on a concrete water table. There are hints of Tudor [or Mission?] style in the parapet which steps up into low pediments on the outer bays, flanking a flat step up on the center bay and in the shape of the pediment on the quoin cast concrete door surround.

Small 1/1 double-hung windows set high on the wall flank the entrance on the first floor, with single 6/1 windows in the other bays. The remaining floors have two 6/1 windows mulled together in the center of the outer bays and two 6/1 windows spaced apart in the center bay above the entrance. All of the windows are topped with a header course brick lintel. On the top floor this header course is continuous as a belt course around the building.

The main cornice of the building is between the fourth and fifth floors. The parapet at the top of the building has a sheet metal cap that continues approximately 8" down the face of the parapet, following the shapes of the pediments. There is a recessed rectangular concrete panel set in the brick above header course in the pediments. A secondary cornice is used at the top of the rusticated first floor, continuing across the door surround and back one bay on the sides of the building. The main cornice is continuous around the building except for a small gap on the rear (north) wall where small wooden porches are recessed into the block of the building.

The glass paned entry door, sidelights and transom are naturally finished wood and the light fixtures mounted on the quoined sides of the entrance appear to be original [?]. Windows have been replaced with 1/1 vinyl sash. The four floors below the main cornice have been repointed with a mortar that appears to be whiter than what remains on the fifth floor, making the pattern of the brick more apparent than was originally intended.
Portland Historic Resources Inventory

Property Address: 15 Shepley Street
Inventory #: 
Assessor’s C/B/L: 
District: Congress Street
Rating: N/A Not in District

Local Code:
National Register:
Date of Placement: Local 4/15/09 National

Architectural Description/Historic Significance:
c. 1906

Four-story wood framed apartment house with ell at the rear which has both wood framed and brick sections. The symmetrical façade has a centered entrance with a single double-hung window on each floor above, flanked by bay windows which run from foundation to the very simple cornice, and a single double hung at each floor between the bay windows and the corners. The eave of the roof over the front steps continues around the bay windows, separating the first floor of the bay windows from the upper three floors. On the brick ell wood bay windows rises through all four stories on either end of the west side. A wood door hood on the brick ell is Italianate or Queen Anne and seems, oddly, to be earlier than the building, perhaps suggesting the brick ell pre-existed the wood framed front section. The 1924 tax information indicated that the building exterior was galvanized iron. It isn’t completely clear from the photo but it seems probable that the iron was stamped to resemble brick. Rear porches are located in the intersection of the main block and ell on the west side of the building.

In form the building is little changed. The wood framed section is now sided in vinyl “clapboard” and has vinyl shutters on many of the windows (excepting those on the bay windows and the brick ell). It has had vinyl replacement windows installed which retain the 2/1 pattern of the original windows but lose depth and relief by having the muntins between the panes of glass. An iron fire escape is mounted on the brick section. The balustrades of the rear porches have been solidly sheathed with the vinyl siding. The nine-lite metal entrance door is recent.
Portland Historic Resources Inventory

Property Address: 188 State Street

Inventory #: 

Assessor’s C/B/L: 

District: Congress Street

Rating: Contributing

Local Code: C
National Register: No

date of Placement: Local 1997 National

Architectural Description/Historic Significance:

Leighton Apartment House and Store

1915

A six-bay, four-story, brick commercial building with restrained Colonial Revival/Classical Revival detailing, designed by John Calvin Stevens and John Howard Stevens.

In 1924 the first floor store fronts had wood framed plate glass windows with transoms above. Upper story windows were 2/2.

The storefront openings in the building now have aluminum framed windows and doors. Painted plywood panels in the transom area of the storefronts have replaced the window glazing. The replacement windows on the upper floors are 1/1, installed after a fire in 1989.