

New plan would restore long-vacant Alexandra Hotel in Boston's South End

By [Catherine Carlock](#) – Real Estate Editor, Boston Business Journal
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A development team that recently wrapped up work on a high-end condominium building in Boston's Fort Point wants to restore the historic Alexandra Hotel to its former grandeur.

[TCR Development](#) and JB Ventures, led by [Tom Calus](#) and [Jas Bhogal](#), [have jointly proposed](#) rehabilitating the long-vacant landmark into a 150-room boutique hotel. The property, located at the corner of Massachusetts Avenue and Washington Street on the border of Boston's South End and Lower Roxbury neighborhoods, is a landmark dating back to 1875.

"The property is a well-known historic landmark in need of serious rehabilitation in order to save the historic structure," attorney [Marc LaCasse](#) wrote in [a July 25 letter of intent](#) to the Boston Planning and Development Agency. "The proponent intends to fully restore the existing facade of the Hotel Alexandra and to erect a new structure behind the facade which will extend onto and occupy most of the adjacent vacant parcel."

The developers plan for the building to reach 10 stories in height and span 60,000 square feet, according to the letter of intent. The property would include a ground-floor restaurant, rooftop amenity space and a fitness center for hotel guests, but wouldn't have on-site parking, according to the letter of intent.

Calus and Bhogal recently partnered to develop a nine-unit luxury condominium complex at 10 Farnsworth St. in Boston's Fort Point neighborhood, down the block from the General Electric Co. headquarters.

"The development team is excited by the prospect of restoring this historic gem at this prominent corner location," LaCasse wrote in the July 25 Alexandra Hotel letter of intent. "Indeed, this building will once again take its place as an important landmark at the intersection of the South End and Roxbury."

A representative of the South End Forum, a collection of neighborhood associations of the South End, [last year told the Business Journal](#) that the neighbors saw a boutique hotel development as one of three options for the vacant Alexandra Hotel property.

“We certainly hope someone could make it worthwhile and do it in a way that serves that location,” said Carol Blair, president of the Chester Square Area Neighborhood Association, last year. “It should be something that respects the history. It should be something that takes advantage of the crossroads.”

The Church of Scientology had [long planned](#) a renovation of the Alexandra Hotel property into its headquarters. But the church put the former hotel back on the market [in late 2014](#), and last year [said](#) the property was under agreement to purchase by Cambridge-based property-management firm Common Management Corp.

The city of Boston assessor’s office [still lists](#) the Church of Scientology as the owner of the Alexandra Hotel property at 631 Massachusetts Ave. and the vacant commercial plot abutting the hotel site at 1769 Washington St. The church paid \$4.5 million to buy the hotel in 2008.

A representative from TCR Development was unavailable for comment Tuesday.