

Pine Point & Boston Road Neighborhood



Walking Tour

PINE POINT & BOSTON ROAD NEIGHBORHOOD
BROCHURE

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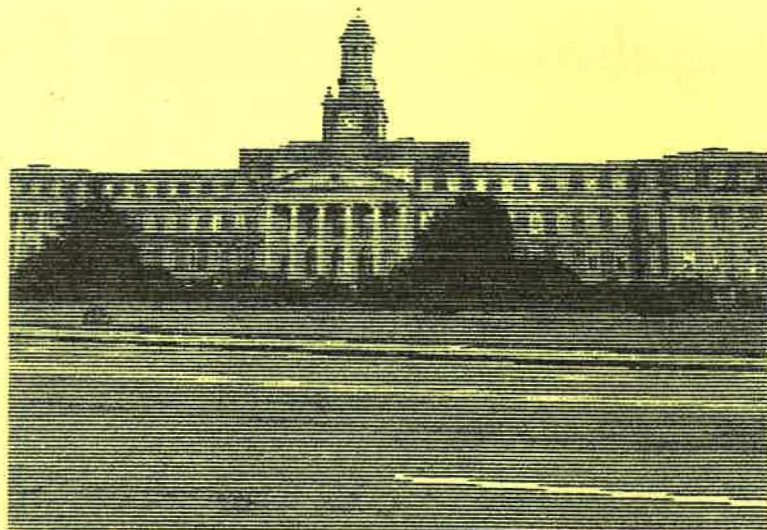
1532 Bay Street (c. 1800)

Pine Point & Boston Road Neighborhood Walking Tour

Dramatically named for the pine trees that once covered its essentially sandy and swampy topography, Pine Point -- in this history also including the Boston Road neighborhoods-- reflects two periods of development, 1910-1925 and 1950-1980.

The Berkshire Avenue area is noted for its bungalow architecture, which represented the American desire for inexpensive but "stylish" single-family housing. The bungalow also is the ancestor in design of the modern ranches and capes on the Boston Road side of the neighborhood. Boston Road also represents the modern business development of the eastern side of the City in its rectangular, shorn of ornamentation, one-story, concrete and steel commercial buildings. Berkshire Avenue development was sparked by the electric trolley connection between Main Street and Indian Orchard (c. 1910). Boston Road development was sparked by the availability of cheap, private transportation -- the automobile -- and the decentralization of the central business district.

1. Massachusetts Mutual Life Insurance Company, 1295 State Street - Massachusetts Mutual is designed in its massiveness to show the durability and profitability of one of America's most successful mutual insurance companies. It is a 20th-century version of Roman Imperial Style, sometimes called Beaux-Arts, with its dome, columns, and pilasters. Approximately 3,000 employees work at this headquarters.



Massachusetts Mutual Life Insurance Company,
1295 State Street

2. Putnam Vocational High School, 1300 State Street - Built between 1938 and 1940, Putnam Vocational High School, once known as the Trade School, was constructed to provide high school and post-high school education in highly skilled and technical fields. Four separate but interconnected brick buildings were constructed at a cost of \$1.5 million — with a fifth building added in 1959 and a sixth addition underway. Students learn salable skills in such areas as cabinet-making, machine shop and pattern-making. Typical of 20th-century functionalism, the buildings are almost free of ornamentation, relying essentially on the attractiveness of their brick facades.

3. 22 Edgemont Street - This Greek Revival house appears stylistically to represent the narrowly rectangular and unadorned Pennsylvania farmhouse built by prosperous farmers between

1740 and 1850. Yet it was built for Mrs. Jane Hale Scott by G. P. Stratton and was completed in January of 1916. The house is representative of the fact that by the turn of the 20th-century, regional architectural styles had become capable of reproduction anywhere in the nation. A garage was added in 1917.

4. 7 Peer Street - This L-ranch was built for Melvin C. and Minnie M. O'Leary in 1961. The architect was D. R. Baribault. George Sakakeeny built it for \$6,375.00. It is an excellent example of mid-20th-century architecture. It is compact, simple, quick to build, and easily expandable. Its low construction cost made it a favorite of builders and contractors for thirty years. Originally a five-room ranch, a breezeway and garage were added by 1971, this time with George Sakakeeny as architect.

5. 4 Haskin Street - This brick Cape Cod represents the most familiar post-1930 building style of the 20th century. Both the house and garage were designed and built by the original owner Howard J. Jensen in 1932-1933 for a total cost of approximately \$2,700.00. The arched hood of the main entry porch, the roof dormers, and the end chimneys are reminiscent of Georgian Style architecture.

6. 55 Marsden Street - This strikingly picturesque Spanish Colonial Revival represents a style which reached its peak of national popularity about 1925. It is a mix of Mediterranean Styles--stucco whitewashed walls, red roof tiles and a dormer ornamented with a Spanish-style curvilinear parapet. The floor plan is convenient: the now enclosed front porch, glazed in the 1930s, opens on the living room; bedrooms open off the living room, and, at the end of a short hall, is a small kitchen. The second half-floor served as maid's quarters for the

original owners -- a design typical of pre-World War I American life, when servants were inexpensive. The house was built by its first owner, Howard A. Clapp, in 1915, probably from plans which could be purchased from magazines or builders for as little as \$10.00. The total price of construction was about \$6,500, which was twice the usual cost of a bungalow.



55 Marsden Street

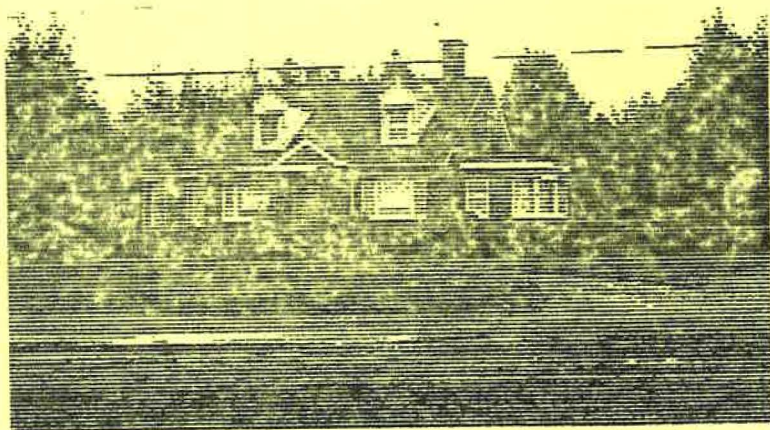
7. 1532 Bay Street - This nine-room woodframe farmhouse, essentially in Greek Revival Style and vaguely temple-like, has undergone considerable renovation since it was built for the Bradley family about 1800. A new porch, two new rooms, and a fireplace have been added in the last forty years. In 1948 hot water radiators replaced the fireplace as a source of heat. Little remains of the building's original appearance.

8. 66 Ambrose Street - In the 1920s many Americans looked for "proper ancestors" in 16th and 17th century England and found a "correct" form of architecture in the so-called English Tudor Style, actually a scaled-down version of an English country manor. This Americanized version, in shingle rather than half-timber and stucco, retains the steep gables, multiple roof lines, and long sloping roof over a false front, which identifies the house as Tudor and makes it appear larger than it actually is. In 1918, a small wooden storehouse occupied the site. A house was built here in 1928 by Leopold Martin. Claude Myers expanded and modernized that house in 1944 and added a garage in 1949.

9. 185 Breckwood Boulevard - This very simple unadorned Cape Cod -- no dormer, no garage, and an aluminum entrance hood added long after the house was built -- was very popular with the home-building industry because of its ease of construction and its rich history. The Cape was originally designed to provide shelter in a harsh environment: it was designed by ships' carpenters to ride the shifting sands of Cape Cod as well as withstand the prevailing winds -- thus the essentially "four square" design of most Capes and the lack of dormers. Completed in 1944, this Cape and its surrounding neighbors were designed by architect Joseph E. Kane of Hartford, built by Morris Stieh of Springfield, and owned by the Springfield Gardens Company. This four-room, one-and-a-half story single family was constructed of hemlock, spruce, fir and North Carolina pine for a cost of \$3,170.00. Its simplicity of design was due to material shortages caused by World War II.

10. 644 Boston Road - This brick Cape Cod, with pedimented roof dormers, street-front picture windows and wings, and an oval room, was

designed and built by Edward J. Barber. The foundation for the original five-room house was excavated in 1946. The dwelling was not completed until 1953.



644 Boston Road

11. 15 Rollins Street - A brick, one-family, five-room house, this bungalow has a brick and wood-frame porch with squared and battened supporting columns. A pair of windows at the gables let in light. Both home and garage were completed in 1926, and both were built by Jules Cevninck.

12. 46 Rush Street - This Colonial Style bungalow, with its oversized roof dormer and stone-faced cinderblock porch, was America's small house favorite between 1890 and 1925. It is

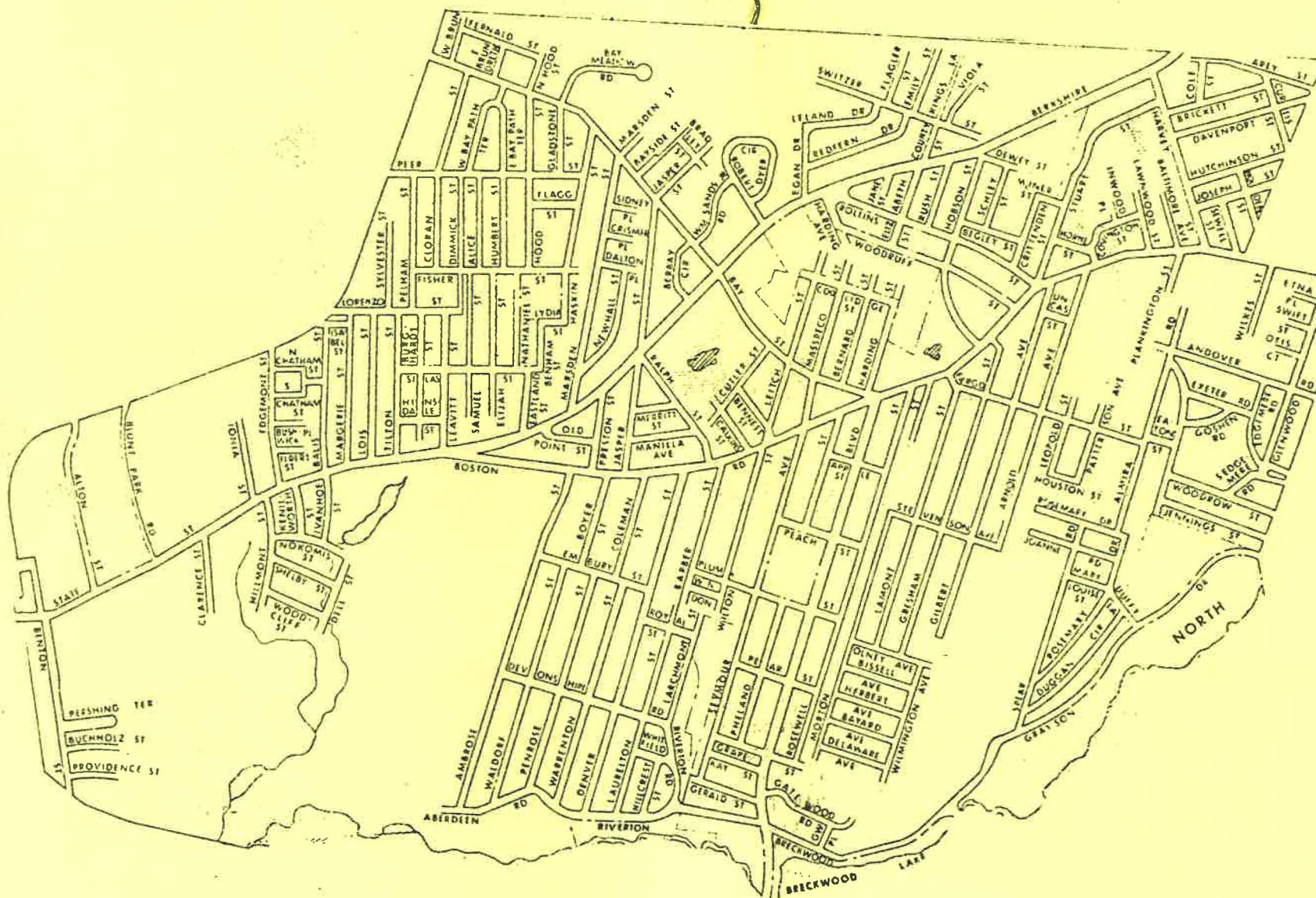
really an inexpensive one-and-a-half-story cottage with a open floor plan that led to the modern, one-floor ranch. This bungalow was designed and built by William R. Rush for \$2,500.00 in 1914.



46 Rush Street

13. 545 Berkshire Avenue - This bungalow, built for Mrs. Clara E. McCleary by Gregoire and Lapierre, was completed in 1912 at a cost of \$2,500.00. It is of "sement" (sic) block and, when built, was stove-heated. The reconstructed vertical board front porch is open as in the bungalow style. The hip roof is decorated with a Chinese-style ornament original to 1912.

14. 19 Hobson Street - This gambrel-roofed Victorian reflects medieval English design: narrow vertical windows, a narrow main silhouette suggesting a single file of rooms, a steep gambrel enlarging the upper story, and a "cross



Pine Point & Boston Road

house" or cruciform plan also capped with a gambrel roof. The front porch has an ornately shingled gable and ornate posts suggesting late 19th-century construction, but the date of construction and the builder are unknown.



545 Berkshire Avenue

15. **24 Hobson Street** - A very unusual rock-faced cinderblock bungalow built in 1914 by William R. Rush, the principal developer of Hobson Street. This \$2,800.00 structure is three stories high. The original bungalow concept originally allowed for a story and a half. This house shows a double and triple porch as well as exposed roof rafters and clipped gable roof dormers — all from a variety of architectural traditions for decorative effect.

16. **29 Hobson Street** - This bungalow, also of rock-faced cinderblock and built by Rush, "owner and mechanic," cost \$3,000.00 to build in 1911. The roof is hipped and flares over the porch and

projecting eaves, suggesting a thoroughly Americanized style which has been called "Japo-Swiss" because both Japanese and Swiss designs influenced American bungalow design.



19 Hobson Street

17. **34 Hobson Street** - This bungalow, built about 1910, has four undersized pedimented roof dormers designed to provide space and light. A large masonry chimney built of cobblestone-faced cinderblock, bays designed to provide space for window seats, and — a specialty in bungalows — built-in sideboards. The porch was enclosed in 1938, a time during which most of the neighborhood bungalows' open porches were glassed or screened.

18. **38 Hobson Street** - This one-and-a-half story bungalow originally owned by William R. Rush, has five gables, two shed roofs, massive

exposed purlins and rafters, and a cobblestone-faced cinderblock chimney. Despite its multiple roof lines and ornamentation, it has gently sloping roofs, and low horizontal proportions which may have been influenced by one of America's greatest architects, Frank Lloyd Wright. Wright was designing similar structures in the Midwest in the same period. This house was built for Rush by Eddy Desiletes in 1916 for \$2,500.00. The house was sold to Elizabeth M. Roesch who deeded it to Warren S. Rowland in November 1916.

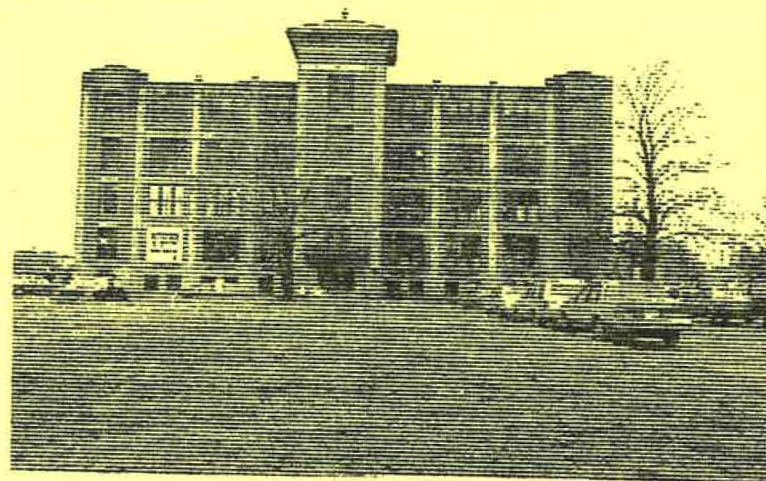
19. 39 Hobson Street - Each bungalow on Hobson Street is unique. This one has an oversized ribbon-windowed roof dormer, and a cobblestone or "boulder" chimney. The porch and stoop are also stone decorated. This six-room house of one-and-a-half stories was built by William R. Rush for \$2,800.00. It was completed in the fall of 1915. The garage was added in 1923. The two-story "sleeping" porch was glazed in 1934, and the aluminum siding was added by 1970.

20. 48 Hobson Street - A Spanish-Style bungalow with ornately-cut projecting rafters called vigas and stucco exterior. The porch is decorated in stone with minor arch work. Built by William R. Rush, this one-and-a-half story, five-room house was completed in 1916 at a cost of \$2,700.00. It became a beauty salon in 1969.

21. 48 King's Lane - King's Lane is an excellent example of street development in the early 20th century. It originally was a sixteen-foot-wide path to the King family farm. By about 1910, with no zoning codes in place, private developers began to build on the Lane with no consideration given to its width. Number 48 was built before 1910 as a one-and-a-half story

bungalow. Since that time a veranda, perhaps a dormer, a second floor bedroom, and a second floor bathroom have all been added, altering the shape of the original bungalow.

22. 616 Berkshire Avenue - In 1915, Bliss and Lavelle designed and D. J. O'Connell built this five-story concrete and brick building for the manufacture of chocolate and cocoa by the W.H. Miner Chocolate Company. In fact, many of the people who lived on Hobson and Rush and other area streets worked in the factory, which closed in the 1930s. Today a variety of tenants occupy the building. The central tower of this building, with its shallow tiled roof and double cornice brackets, identifies the building as Italian in style -- a factory masquerading as a palace. The canopy or entrance hood,



616 Berkshire Avenue

in its color and cresting, provides one of the most striking entrances to any building in Springfield.

23. Gethsemane Church of Jesus Christ, 47 Harvey Street - A very simple rectangular shingled wood-frame, this steep gable-roofed church is decorated at each end with castlelike, Gothic Style battlement towers. The structure is a modern, pre-1920 example of Carpenter Gothic Style. In Europe the structure would have been built in stone. In America, wood was far cheaper and could be cut or carved to appear as stone.

24. 44-46 Slater Avenue - This duplex, with its shallow pitched roof, wide support-free entrance hood, and decorative battenboard panels, is a dressed up version of post-1930 functional architecture -- a limited amount of exterior ornamentation which in no way shows any classical influence. The structure cost \$20,000.00 to build in 1973 and was designed by Richard Vara of Norwood, Massachusetts.

25. Taco Bell, 1140 Boston Road - A good example of Fantasy-Style architecture, this building is a revival of Spanish Mission Style in its red-tile roof, arched windows, and projecting roof rafters. The building was designed to appeal to the eyes of passing drivers and clearly broadcast the nature of the menu offered within. The building opened in 1980 and cost \$89,500.00 to build.

26. Springdale Mall, 1550 Boston Road - The Springdale Mall was designed in Art Modern Style, popular in the United States between 1932-1937. The style was inspired by aerodynamic machines: the car, the airplane, the train. Therefore its most obvious features



Springdale Mall, 1550 Boston Road

are its streamlined rounded corners and smooth external walls. Note the blind bays on either side of Bradlees' entrance, the absence of sharp corners, and the rounded columns that support the main entrance hood. The mall was built for the Stop and Shop Companies in 1976-1977.

27. Eastfield Mall, 1655 Boston Road (Rt. 20) - The famed Rouse Company, developers of Boston's Quincy Market and New York's South Street Seaport, opened the first enclosed mall in Western New England in 1968. It is one of over sixty Rouse shopping centers. This stylish mall has over eighty other stores and restaurants. Eastfield serves the extensive market of Sixteen Acres, Indian Orchard, Pine Point and Springfield's eastern suburbs.

28. Our Lady of Sacred Heart Church, 417 Boston Road - Our Lady of Sacred Heart Church, in wood-frame and stucco, was designed by John W. Donohue and built by J. G. Roy and Sons in 1929-1930 for \$35,000. It is an example of 20th-

century church architecture in that the overall design is clear and crisp, free of ornamentation apart from small stained glass windows, circular window frames, classical gables, doric entrance hood columns, and two towers -- one a Georgian-style air vent and the other a Romanesque-style bell tower. Our Lady of Sacred Heart was one of the most modest churches of John Donohue, who designed over a dozen as diocesan architect in the early years of the 20th-century.

29. Pine Point Community Center, 335 Berkshire Avenue - Operated by the Pine Point Community Council since 1980, the Community Center serves as a senior center, neighborhood council office, voting place, and meeting hall for the neighborhood. The senior center program includes, hot lunches, Golden Age Club meetings, and health screenings. The Pine Point Community Council was established in 1975 to represent the interests of the neighborhood in planning youth and elderly activities, housing development, and zoning issues. In 1986, the neighborhood council accepted responsibility for representing certain parts of the Boston Road neighborhood. For more information, call 732-1072.