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Petition to Designate the Foundry a Cambridge Landmark

CAMBRIDGE HISTORICAL COMMISSION

East Cambridge was surely the center of industry during the turn of the century but lost in the accounts is the historic and substantial role of the neighborhood women (notably Polish) who worked in its Foundry. The remarkable evidence of their controversial contribution was memorialized by the New York Times in three articles appearing in September, 1911, and covered in the press as far away as San Francisco. Controversy concerned women in the workplace, doing a man's job, being paid half the man's hourly wage; lifting as much as 150 lbs. on the job; stripping from waist up because of the heat of the foundry itself; working far more hours than allowed by law. The public debate at the time was so notorious that Governor Eugene Foss authorized a raid on the premises by the State Police. Lieutenant Governor supported such action, as did Mayor Barry of Cambridge and various Congregational ministers. The debate extended to a formal meeting at Faneuil Hall. It appears the source of the complaints was male workers from the Foundry, represented by American Federation of Labor and Boston Central Labor Union, undoubtedly seeking more hours for the men, rather than advocating for the increase in wages for women, or better working conditions. Owners of the Foundries, and Governor Foss was a record owner, asserted that the women were fully capable of doing a man's job, with no mitigation necessary. Within a year, despite the investigation that found no violation of then existing law, Massachusetts passed the Employment of Women in the Core Rooms, Acts of 1912, Chapter 653, and the first Minimum Wage Act for Women in the country, Chapter 706, Acts of 1912.

Based on this uniquely historic building, we the undersigned, as duly registered voters of Cambridge, hereby petition the Cambridge Historical Commission to undertake a landmark designation process, as authorized by Cambridge Municipal Ordinance, Title 2, Article III, Chapter 2.78.180 D. Historical research in support of this Petition has previously been submitted to the Cambridge Historical Commission.

PROPERTY TO BE CONSIDERED FOR LANDMARK DESIGNATION:

The Foundry, 101 Rogers Street, Cambridge, owned by the City of Cambridge

PETITIONERS:

NAME AND SIGNATURE

ADDRESS

EMAIL OR PHONE

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Agnes Dattero

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~~Ralph Dattero~~

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Anne-Marie Dattero

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ILAN LEVY

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10. Helen Kobek 69 R Gore

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11. Stephen Lombardi, Jr 48 WARREN ST #3
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