



The Heritage Guild, Inc.



## MEDIA ALERT / PHOTO OPPORTUNITY

Tuesday, May 20 at 1:15 pm

### MEDIA CONTACTS:

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**Governor Deval Patrick, the Heritage Guild, the Rose Kennedy Greenway Conservancy, and the Museum of African American History Unveil Plaque on the Greenway to Mark Location of First African-American Owned Home in Boston**

*New historic marker honors Zipporah Potter Atkins, who purchased her home in 1670.*

### WHAT

Governor Deval Patrick and members of The Heritage Guild will unveil and dedicate a new plaque in a brief ceremony in the North End Park on the Rose Kennedy Greenway to honor Zipporah Potter Atkins, the first African-American to buy property in Boston. **Zipporah is the only 17th century woman of African descent known to have purchased land in Boston.**

The Heritage Guild research revealed that Zipporah Potter Atkins (c1645-1705) was born free - atypical for Africans in Massachusetts who were more often enslaved during that time. In 1670, she purchased her house and land on a site that is now the Rose Kennedy Greenway. She remained a North End resident until 1699 when she sold her house and became the first woman of African-descent to sign her initials on a Deed in Suffolk County.

### WHO

- **Governor Deval Patrick**, Commonwealth of Massachusetts
- **Jesse Brackenbury**, Executive Director, Rose Kennedy Greenway Conservancy
- **Beverly Morgan-Welch**, Executive Director, Museum of African American History
- **Adelaide Cromwell**, President, The Heritage Guild, co-founder of African Studies Department and African American Studies Program, Boston University
- **Vivian Johnson**, Researcher, The Heritage Guild

### WHEN

Tuesday, May 20 at 1:15 pm

### WHERE

North End Park on the Rose Kennedy Greenway, at the corner of Hanover Street and John Fitzgerald Surface Road, Boston.

### **About the Heritage Guild**

The Heritage Guild was founded in 1975 in Boston by 15 black women with a mission to preserve and commemorate the lives of Boston's black citizens whose stories enrich the City and the country. Zipporah Potter Atkins is the 14<sup>th</sup> African-American to be honored by The Heritage Guild with a plaque in Boston. Others honored by Heritage Guild plaques include: Lewis Hayden, 66 Phillips St. and Maria W. Stewart, 8 Belknap St (now 81 Joy St.)

### **About the Museum of African American History, Boston and Nantucket**

The Museum of African American History is New England's largest cultural institution dedicated to preserving, conserving and accurately interpreting the contributions of people of African descent, and those with whom they found common cause in the struggle for liberty, dignity, and justice for all.

Founded in 1967, the Museum's campuses feature four historic sites — three are National Historic Landmarks — and two Black Heritage Trails®. The nation's first African Meeting House (1806) and Abiel Smith School (1835), first public school for black children, are on Beacon Hill. On Nantucket, the African Meeting House (1820s) and Absalom Boston-Florence Higginbotham House (1774) represent the most vivid reminders of a thriving black maritime community. Lectures, concerts, education programs, and exhibits showcase powerful stories of black and white abolitionists, including Frederick Douglass, William Lloyd Garrison, and Maria Stewart.

Web: [www.maah.org](http://www.maah.org)

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/maah.org>

Twitter: @MAAHmuseum

### **About The Rose Kennedy Greenway and Conservancy**

The Rose Kennedy Greenway is a mile-and-a-half of contemporary parks in the heart of Boston. It is a roof garden atop a highway tunnel that connects people and the city with beauty and fun. The non-profit Conservancy maintains, programs, and improves the Greenway on behalf of the public and in partnership with the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

GreatNonProfits.org included the Conservancy in its 2012 and 2013 lists of Top Rated organizations, based on public reviews. Boston Mayor Thomas Menino awarded the Conservancy a 2013 Greenovate Award for its sustainability practices. BostInno named the Greenway as one of the 2013 "50 on Fire" for Arts & Entertainment.

Web: [www.rosekennedygreenway.org](http://www.rosekennedygreenway.org)

Facebook: [www.facebook.com/rosekennedygreenway](http://www.facebook.com/rosekennedygreenway)

Twitter: @hellogreenway

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