

The Brookline Improvement Coalition is a non-profit community group addressing the problem of low cost housing by purchasing buildings in need of substantial repair and converting them into affordable units. Sara Wallace House, a four story building on Lower Beacon Street, was renovated into 17 single-room units for occupancy in the summer of 1997.

BIC turned to COG for design assistance for the street garden and a small back yard. The result was an attractive, durable, and easily maintained greenspace along the street edge. The rear patio was transformed from dump to an attractive seating area for the residents.

The designer became involved initially for professional development and for future contacts. His experience “wildly exceeded expectations”. New experiences included providing a detailed estimate, exposure to the legal and technical side of construction, and hardscape installation. As a result, he has had some referrals for future design work. He feels the benefits to him were more than worth his time. He plans to volunteer for future projects simply to give back to the community.



Client: Brookline Improvement  
Coalition, Brookline

Designer: David McCoy  
Somerville, MA

Completion: Summer 1997