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This Fenway fixer-upper with Victorian charm is on the market for \$3.5M

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Where would you rather live: In somebody else's idea of the perfect home or your own version of the perfect home?

That's an easy question to answer for many buyers. But to create a fully customized, personalized home, you need to have a property and a vision for it.



ATLANTIC VISUALS

This fixer-upper property is waiting for its next owners at 38 Fenway. This Boston neighborhood is heating up now in terms of real estate sales. The 6,235 square foot single family is listed by Carmela Laurella of CL Properties for \$3.5 million. It will almost certainly take another million to update and restore the place to its former glory.

Built in 1880, the grand home has retained much of its period charm with four fireplaces, a dramatic sweeping staircase, soaring ceilings, big bay and bow windows, intricate relief work and hardwood floors.

There's a lot to work with, depending on what the next owners decide to do with the property. Some interesting possibilities: The place could be renovated as a substantial single family home, used as an investment or, with a change in zoning, it might be constructed into separate units.

This part of the Fenway is lined with mature trees, giving it a distinguished look. The Fens, an area of parks and gardens, is across the street. Fenway Park is nearby and the Back Bay is a short stroll away.

It's easy to spot the home. Its double doors show off intricate ironwork and they're flanked by flat columns called pilasters. Come into the entry hall and go through another set of double doors to reach an expansive foyer. When this home was built, spaces like this were meant to impress guests as they arrived. This space is still pretty impressive.

Ceilings are over ten feet tall. Paneled wainscoting, stained in a medium brown, surrounds the area. It borders the wall next to the home's magnificent staircase that ascends to the upper levels. Hardwood floors run throughout the home, though at this point, they badly need to be refinished.

The large fireplace here has an elaborate Victorian design with a stained, carved wood face reaching up to the ceiling. The oval mirror enhancing it echoes the shape of the tiled surround. Mosaic tiles line the firebox as well. Missing tiles on the hearth could use replacement. Although steam heat was invented in the 1850s, many homeowners still relied on fireplaces for warmth.

The living and dining rooms are extra-large and, once restored, they could be as perfect for entertaining as they were back in the home's original era.

The kitchen needs a total re-do to bring it into the 21st century. The large pantry would be convenient but the refrigerator probably should not reside there. White cabinetry and marble countertops would look great and make the most of the natural light coming in through double windows. The next owners could elect to keep the exposed brick wall.

A half-bath finishes the level.

Upstairs, either of the two large bedrooms could become the primary. They each have a fireplace. The room with the bow windows has the best views. It is adjacent to a study, which could be transformed into a nursery, office or potentially, a bathroom with a walk-in closet.

The big bedroom at the back is next to the floor's existing full bathroom, so plumbing is already in place for an en suite. Obviously, the bath will need a complete overhaul and could possibly be expanded into what is currently a closet next to it. Closets are plentiful here so there would still be ample storage available.

Four bedrooms and a full bath with shower occupy the top floor. The bathroom is centrally located off the main hallway, so it's easily accessed from each of the bedrooms.

One more floor completes the home. Down on the garden level, there's a tremendous amount of storage and a long utility room. Clean this area up and it could be very useful.

Plus, there's walk-out access to the home's three parking spaces.

Whatever the next owners decide to do with the property, it's in an excellent location near colleges, shopping, restaurants, and of

course, baseball.