

Back Bay Architectural Commission
Public Hearing Minutes
Boston City Hall, Room 900, Ninth Floor
Boston, Massachusetts, 02201

October 10, 2018

DESIGN REVIEW HEARING

Commissioners Present: John Christiansen; Kathleen Connor; Lisa Saunders; David Sampson; David Eisen; Robert Weintraub; Patti Quinn, Jane R. Moss

Commissioners Not Present: Lex Stevens; Kenneth Tutunjian; and Iphigenia Demetriades

Staff Present: Joseph Cornish, Director of Design Review; Gabriela Amore, Preservation Assistant

5:03 PM Commissioner Connor called the public hearing to order. Commissioner Connor reported that the public hearing is being recorded by staff and asked members of the public recording the hearing to make themselves known. Lauren Bennett, Yuki Zheng and Amelia Esposito made themselves known as members of the public recording the hearing. Commissioner Connor explained that during public comment periods of the hearing members of the public will be limited to five minutes to make comments; and explained that motions would be made by Commission members following public comment.

**DESIGN REVIEW APPLICATIONS:
RESIDENTIAL APPLICATIONS**

19.507 BB

278 Dartmouth Street & 691 Boylston Street

Representative: Kim Foltz, Boston Transportation Department

Proposed Work: Install one Bluebike Station near the corner of Dartmouth Street and Newbury Street (278 Dartmouth Street), and one Bluebike Station near the corner of Boylston and Exeter Street (691 Boylston Street).

Ms. Foltz presented photos of existing conditions and plans for the proposed station installations. She explained that the chosen locations of the bike stations are based off of public engagement surveys, and that both of the proposed stations would have 19 docks.

The Commission questioned the location of the stations on the proposed streets, suggesting that they should be integrated into the existing structures and landscapes so that more open space is not being taken. They also questioned why there was a station being proposed directly across the street from another location.

During public comments, letters in support of the project from Jonathan Burke and Josh Zakim were read by Commissioner K. Connor. Sue Prindle from the Neighborhood Association of the Back Bay (NABB) shared that the neighborhood association liked that there is no advertising being installed on the stations, but they did not like how much of the public way that the stations are taking up. Jacob Wetzel from BPW stated that bikes are on BPW sidewalks, and his department supports in full.

In conclusion the application was approved with the provisos that the bikes are approved for one year to assess the effect on the locations, and in 12 months the representative must come back to the Commission. R. Weintraub initiated the motion and J. Moss seconded the motion. The vote was 8-0 (JC, KC, LS, DS, DE, RW, PQ, JM).

19.517 BB

125 Newbury Street:

Representative: Neli Ialamov

Proposed Work: Install new signage and outdoor dining area.

Ms. Ialamov presented photos of existing conditions and plans of the proposed work. She explained that no damage will be done to the sidewalk, as the proposed dining area barricades will weigh themselves down.

The Commission questioned the choice of fabric at the railings, and the safety of railings not being attached to the sidewalk. The commission suggested the use of planters rather than the proposed barricades.

In conclusion the application was approved with provisos. The applicant must omit the sunbrella fabric railing and blade sign, and work with staff to find an appropriate barricade option. R. Weintraub initiated the motion and J. Christiansen seconded the motion. The vote was 8-0 (JC, KC, LS, DS, DE, RW, PQ, JM).

19.446 BB

240A Newbury Street:

Representative: Arman Bahram

Proposed Work: Install outdoor dining area.

Mr. Bahram presented photos of existing conditions and plans for the proposed work. He explained that although the business is a clothing store, they plan on having a café and therefore would like an outdoor dining area to accompany it. The planters proposed as a barricade will be concrete, and they will potentially take in the outdoor set-up during the winter months.

The Commission clarified some details of the project.

During Public Comment Sue Prindle from NABB suggested looking for an alternative to the planters to be placed on the stoop such as a metal bar across the steps or bench.

In conclusion the application was approved as submitted. R. Weintraub initiated the motion, and P. Quinn seconded the motion. The vote was 8-0 (JC, KC, LS, DS, DE, RW, PQ, JM).

19.419 BB

431 Boylston Street:

Representatives: Daniel Brennan Jr. and Megan Baxter

Proposed Work: At front façade replace entry doors and signage, and install planters, fixtures and furniture at existing patio dining area.

L. Saunders recused herself.

The representatives presented photos of existing conditions and plans for proposed work. They also explained that the items being placed on the patio dining area will be removed during the winter.

The Commission questioned the visibility of the graphics on the windows, and what would happen to the patio furniture during the winter. Concern was expressed by Commission members about the height of the trellis, and the string lights.

During Public Comment Sue Prindle from NABB shared that she is concerned about the precedent that this work may set, specifically the string lights, and the material of the chairs. Also, she speculated that there also may be a zoning issue due to enclosing a public space.

In conclusion the application was approved, with the provisos that staff confirms the details of the trellis. J. Moss initiated the motion, and R. Weintraub seconded the motion. The vote was 4-3 (Y: KC, JM, DS, RW; N: JC, DE, PQ; R: LS).

19.515 BB

294 Marlborough Street:

Representative: Eben Kunz

Proposed Work: At rear yard replace existing wood fence with a brick wall.

Mr. Kunz presented photos of existing conditions and plans for proposed work. He explained that the brick wall will be capped with cast concrete, with a smooth finish to resemble limestone.

The Commission suggested getting rid of the proposed dip in the wall and terminating the wall at two brick piers. They also suggested keeping the door the same height as the caps, anything over 6ft will require a zoning variance.

During Public Comment Laurie Thomas of the Garden Club of the Back Bay asked the representative if they had a picture of the backyard, because a tree that was there in 2016 is no longer standing. The representative stated that the tree was not there when he became involved with the project. Sue Prindle from NABB stated that the proposed charging station is small enough for her liking, but she is worried about the height of the wall. Staff Joe Cornish stated that the charging stations weren't included in the initial application, and the applicant must resubmit for those.

In conclusion, the application was approved, with the provisos that the capstone terminates at the door, the height of the wall is reduced to terminate at the top of the door, an application must be submitted for charging stations, and the detail of lights will be remanded to staff. J. Christiansen initiated the motion, and L. Saunders seconded the motion. The vote was 8-0 (JC, KC, LS, DS, DE, RW, PQ, JM).

19.513 BB

113-115 Marlborough Street:
Representative: Diane Lim

Proposed Work: Replace all existing windows with wood, one-over-one windows; at roof install new door opening at French doors at party wall between 113 and 115 Marlborough Street, install spiral staircase connecting roof decks at 113 and 115 Marlborough Street, and replace roof deck decking with pavers at 113 Marlborough Street; at rear elevation remove fire escapes between 113 and 115 Marlborough Street, and install awning over 113 Marlborough Street's rear entry; and at rear yard replace asphalt paving with brick pavers.

L. Saunder recused herself.

Ms. Lim presented photos of existing conditions and plans of the proposed work.

The Commission clarified some details of the project, including the plan for the trees on the property.

During Public Comment Sue Prindle from NABB expressed concern over the rear yard delineation and the railings.

In conclusion the application was approved as submitted. J. Christiansen initiated the motion, and P. Quinn seconded the motion. The vote was 7-0 (JC, KC, DS, DE, RW, PQ, JM).

19.500 BB

45, 47, 49, 51 and 53 Hereford Street:

Representative: Guy Grassi

Proposed Work: Patch, repair and repaint all exterior stone trim, stoops, curbs, lintels and sills.

Mr. Grassi presented photos of existing conditions and plans for proposed work. He explained that he would prefer to paint the exterior stone trim, as he finds it cheaper and performs better than stucco. A color has not yet been chosen, but they intend on doing samples of the paint and they have some ideas for colors. The representative also added that they intend on using paint because the stone has already been painted prior, and they're stained.

The Commission was concerned about whether or not the stone trim will be painted or not, due to conflicts with the guidelines for the district. Staff recommended stripping the stone and using a cementitious patch.

During Public Comment Sue Prindle from NABB shared that she was glad that the owners are appearing to start to care about their property. She also feels that whatever the most long lasting approach is should be followed.

In conclusion the application was approved with the provisos that 45 Hereford Street is included, and all efforts are taken to get the stone to a good bonding surface, and that the detail is kept. R. Weintraub initiated the motion, and D. Eisen seconded the motion. P. Quinn abstained from the vote, and the final vote was 4-2-1 (Y: KC, DS, DE, RW; N: JC, JM; ABS: PQ).

19.230 BB

217 Commonwealth Avenue:

Representative: Guy Grassi

Proposed Work: Masonry restoration; replacement of roofing and roof mechanical equipment; construction of sunken roof deck; removal of elevator headhouses; installation of new elevator headhouses, new stair

headhouse, and enlargement of existing headhouse; and installation of solar panels.

Mr. Grassi presented photos of existing conditions and plans for proposed work. He explained that the proposed stair headhouse has been lowered, the elevator headhouse has been eliminated, and the proposed glass screen has been eliminated from the area facing Commonwealth Avenue.

The Commission was concerned about the visibility of the roof equipment, and suggested pushing it back farther on the roof and discussed that sound is outside its jurisdiction.

During Public Comment, letters were sent to The Commission providing testimony against the project, from Carolyn Billingham, Patricia Corrigan, Ann Swanson, Michael McCord, Lauren Thomas, Kristen Field, Susan Ashbrook, Pat and David Squire, Wyatt McKean, Jolinda Taylor, and Kate Gallivan. There was a letter in support from Jacqueline Yessian. Sue Prindle from NABB stated that she hoped the application would be denied without prejudice, and claimed that Grassi did not produce any sideline drawings. Tom High from backbayhouses.org stated that the true visibility of the project has not been shared, and has concerns that the proposed plans will not be adhered to. He also stated that he felt the proviso that the front mockup should be reviewed by staff should be added when a motion is heard.

In conclusion the application was approved with the provisos that the screen be no more than two feet visible and a substitute for glass be used for the screen with details remanded to staff. R. Weintraub initiated the motion, and J. Christiansen seconded the motion. The vote was 7-0 (JC, KC, DS, DE, RW, PQ, JM).

ADVISORY REVIEW

256-260 Newbury Street: At roof construct penthouse addition and roofdeck area; at rear elevation construct a two-story rear addition; and at front façade remove two entry stoops, excavate front gardens, and use unitized glass elements at newly excavated ground level facade and selective replacement of a small portion of existing first floor facade.

Adam Gilmore and John Meyer of Meyer and Meyer presented photos of existing conditions and plans for proposed work. They discussed retail challenges on Newbury Street and showed examples of similar projects in Amsterdam. Comments from the Commission members were positive. The Commission discussed potential zoning issues and the challenges of using glass block in construction. There was also concern about the proposed glass railing barrier at the sidewalk.

ADMINISTRATIVE REVIEW/APPROVAL

Work that staff reviewed (conforms to standards and criteria) for administrative approval:

- 19.083 BB 100 Beacon Street: At roof remove existing roof deck, replace black rubber membrane roof in-kind, and re-install roof deck.
- 19.079 BB 128 Beacon Street: At rear elevation repair and re-point masonry, re-caulk window frames, replace deteriorated sections of wood window frames in-kind, and re-paint window frames, trim, cornice and balconies.
- 19.068 BB 225 Beacon Street: At front façade repair front entry steps; and at rear elevation replace non-historic wrought iron railing with new wood fence and gate, and install new light fixture, intercom and alarm keypad.
- 19.084 BB 450 Beacon Street: At rear elevation repair fire escape.
- 19.076 BB 399 Boylston Street: At front façade install new wall and window signage consistent with building's signage master plan.
- 19.017 BB 46 Commonwealth Avenue: At front façade repair brownstone; and at rear elevation repair stone balustrade at roof of bay.
- 19.088 BB 126 Commonwealth Avenue: At front façade replace deteriorated wood trim at fourth-story in-kind and re-paint to match existing.
- 19.070 BB 132 Commonwealth Avenue: At rear elevation replace three third-story non-historic aluminum one-over-one windows with wood one-over-one windows.
- 19.062 BB 333 Commonwealth Avenue: At rear elevation repair and replace deteriorated window lintels and sills, re-paint wood sills, sash and brickmoulds, repair copper bays, and replace storm windows in-kind.
- 19.072BB 366 Commonwealth Avenue: At front façade replace non-historic second-story aluminum door unit with wood door unit.
- 19.073 BB 390 Commonwealth Avenue: At front façade replace seventh-story aluminum-clad door unit in-kind.
- 19.074 BB 390 Commonwealth Avenue: At front façade replace seventh-story aluminum-clad door unit in-kind.
- 19.007 BB 31 Marlborough Street: At rear elevation repair fire escape.
- 19.004 BB 118 Marlborough Street: At front façade re-point entry steps and resurface with tinted cementitious stucco.
- 19.048 BB 342 Marlborough Street: At front façade replace three second-story non-historic wood one-over-one windows in-kind, and at rear elevation replace three second-story non-historic one-over-one wood windows in-kind.
- 18.1519 BB 355 Marlborough Street: At roof replace black rubber membrane roofing in-kind.
- 19.039 BB 375 Marlborough Street: At front façade and rear elevation replace seven second-story storm windows in-kind.
- 19.078 BB 24 Newbury Street: At front façade replace non-historic storefront and install new wall sign.
- 19.075 BB 28 Newbury Street: At front façade repair section of cornice below second-story window, and at roof install code required safety rail.
- 19.066 BB 201 Newbury Street: At rear parking area, replace asphalt paving with brick pavers and restore granite curb separating parking from alley; and repair damaged brick wall.
- 18.1522 BB 337 Newbury Street: At front façade replace existing blade sign and

In conclusion the applications were approved. D. Sampson initiated the motion and J. Moss seconded the motion. The vote was 7-0 (JC, KC, DS, DE, RW, PQ, JM).

RATIFICATION OF THE 9/12/2018 PUBLIC HEARING MINUTES

The minutes were approved as presented. J. Christiansen initiated the motion and D. Sampson seconded the motion. The vote was 7-0 (JC, KC, DS, DE, RW, PQ, JM).

9:25 PM Commissioner Connor adjourned the public hearing.