

**Back Bay Architectural Commission**  
**Public Hearing Minutes**  
Boston, Massachusetts, 02201

**September 9, 2020**

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**DESIGN REVIEW HEARING**

**A public hearing of the Back Bay Architectural Commission was held virtually through [HTTPS://US02WEB.ZOOM.US/J/86551606937](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86551606937)**

**Commissioners Present:** James Berkman; John Christiansen; Meredith Christensen; Kathleen Connor; Iphigenia Demetriades; Zsuzsanna Gaspar; David Sampson; and Robert Weintraub.  
**Commissioners Not Present:** Jerome CooperKing; David Eisen; Ethel MacLeod; Lisa Saunders and Kenneth Tutunjian.

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

**5:02 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 made herself known as a member 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 two minutes per person and that comments should be focused on a project's exterior architectural features which include landscaping. She reminded members of the public that issues related to use, street traffic and noise are outside of the Commission's purview.

**DESIGN REVIEW**

21.0157 BB

15 Arlington Street

Representatives: Alfred Wojciechowski

Proposed Work: Replace four chimney stacks above level 17 at top of building.

Staff read its recommendation to approve the application.

Mr. Wojciechowski presented photos of existing conditions and plans for the proposed work. The Commission discussed the material and dimensions of the proposed replacement chimneys.

There was no public comment.

In conclusion the application was approved. R. Weintraub initiated the motion and J. Berkman seconded the motion. The vote was 8-0 (JB, JC, MC, KC, ID, ZG, DS, RW)

21.0161 BB

79 Newbury Street:

Representatives: Thomas Trykowski and Vin Norton

Proposed Work: At front façade redesign stairs and dig-out area at lower retail space.

Staff read its recommendation to approve the application with provisos

Ms. Trykowski presented photos of existing conditions and plans for the proposed work. The Commission discussed the width of the proposed steps, conditions that are attractive to retail tenants on Newbury Street, and the proposed color of the masonry.

During public comment Sue Prindle of the Neighborhood Association of the Back Bay (NABB) commented that the property owner generally does a good job maintaining plantings; however, it is important to balance aspects of commercial properties in the district. John Tankard spoke in opposition to the project.

In conclusion the application was approved. R. Weintraub initiated the motion and D. Sampson seconded the motion. The vote was 8-0 (JB, JC, MC, KC, ID, ZG, DS, RW)

~~21.0162 BB~~

~~252 Newbury Street: WITHDRAWN BY APPLICANT~~

~~Representative: Thomas Trykowski~~

~~Proposed Work: At front façade construct bump-out.~~

21.0163 BB

292 Newbury Street:

Representative: Thomas Trykowski

Proposed Work: At rear elevation convert window into door.

Staff read its recommendation to approve the application with provisos

Ms. Trykowski presented photos of existing conditions and plans for the proposed work. The Commission discussed the fact that the existing arch above the window will remain after it is converted into a door.

There was no public comment

In conclusion the application was approved. J. Christiansen initiated the motion and R. Weintraub seconded the motion. The vote was 8-0 (JB, JC, MC, KC, ID, ZG, DS, RW)

21.0159 BB

28 Exeter Street

Representatives: James Greene and Aeron Hodges

Proposed Work: Construct rooftop addition.

Staff read its recommendation to approve this application with provisos..

Mr. Greene and Ms. Hodges presented photos of existing conditions and plans for the proposed work. Commission members discussed cladding materials and visibility from Newbury Street.

During public comment Tom High of backbayhouses.org and Sue Prindle of the Neighborhood Association of the Back Bay (NABB) spoke in favor of brick cladding for the addition.

In conclusion the application was approved with provisos. J. Christiansen initiated the motion and I. Demetriades seconded the motion. The vote was 8-0 (JB, JC, MC, KC, ID, ZG, DS, RW)

- Elevator penthouse be brick, screening be reduced to size of headhouse, applicant to work with staff on details & review final mockup.

21.0165 BB

137 Beacon Street:

Representative: Meghan Gelardi Holmes

Proposed Work: At front yard install temporary exhibit panels.

Staff read its recommendation to approve the application with provisos.

Ms. Holmes presented photos of existing conditions and plans for the proposed work. The Commission discussed the amount of text on the panels, numbers of visitors to the property, and access to the panels by people with mobility issues.

During public comment Sue Prindle of the Neighborhood Association of the Back Bay (NABB) commented that the applicant should take a look at the panels currently installed at the Shaw monument for a good example of for temporary panels. Ms. Prindle also commented that if approved the Commission should be clear in its motion that this is in response to the pandemic and no precedent is being set. Alfred Wojciechowski spoke in favor of the application. Kathleen Young spoke in opposition to the application.

In conclusion the application was approved with provisos. I. Demetriades initiated the motion and R. Weintraub seconded the motion. The vote was 8-0 (JB, JC, MC, KC, ID, ZG, DS, RW)

- Due to the closing of the museum during the current COVID 19 pandemic and the temporary nature of the signage this project will allow the museum to further its educational mission while closed. This approval is unique to the current pandemic situation and is not a precedent for future signage installation at this property.

21.0019 BB

15 Commonwealth Avenue

Representative: Eugene F. Kelly, Esq.

Proposed Work: At rear elevation construct garden wall and re-landscape rear yard.

Staff read its recommendation to approve the application.

Mr. Kelly presented photos of existing conditions and plans for the proposed work. The Commission discussed the proposed height of the wall and existing garage door opening.

During public comment Sue Prindle of the Neighborhood Association of the Back Bay and Margaret Pokorny of the Garden Club of the Back Bay spoke in support of the application.

In conclusion the application was approved with provisos. J. Christiansen initiated the motion and I. Demetriades seconded the motion. The vote was 8-0 (JB, JC, MC, KC, ID, ZG, DS, RW)

- Staff review and approve the limestone material.
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~~21.0158 BB~~

~~341 Commonwealth Avenue: WITHDRAWN BY APPLICANT~~

~~Representative: Peter Vanko~~

~~Proposed Work: Construct roof deck.~~

21.0164 BB

129 Commonwealth Avenue

Representative: Guy Grassi

Proposed Work: Construct one-story rear addition and re-landscape rear yard.

Staff read its recommendation to deny the application.

Mr. Grassi presented photos of existing conditions and plans for the proposed work. Commission members discussed the fact that construction of the proposed addition will result in the loss of historic features and will alter this building's intact rear elevation.

During public comment Tom High of backbayhouses.org, Sue Prindle of the Neighborhood Association of the Back Bay (NABB) and Dell Mitchell all spoke in opposition to the project. Alice Murphy questioned the use of twentieth-century motifs in the design of the addition.

In conclusion the application was denied. J. Christiansen initiated the motion and J. Berkman seconded the motion. The vote was 8-0 (JB, JC, MC, KC, ID, ZG, DS, RW)

## **ADMINISTRATIVE REVIEW/APPROVAL**

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

- |                   |                                                                                                                                   |
|-------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>21.0166 BB</b> | <b><u>107 Beacon Street:</u></b> At front facade Mansard roof replace slate, gutters, and wood trim in-kind.                      |
| <b>21.0168 BB</b> | <b><u>259 Beacon Street:</u></b> At front façade clean masonry.                                                                   |
| <b>21.0169 BB</b> | <b><u>282 Beacon Street:</u></b> Re-point and repair masonry.                                                                     |
| <b>21.0167 BB</b> | <b><u>291 Beacon Street:</u></b> At front façade replace deteriorate roof slate and repair masonry.                               |
| <b>21.0170 BB</b> | <b><u>450 Beacon Street:</u></b> At roof replace black rubber membrane roofing in-kind.                                           |
| <b>21.0173 BB</b> | <b><u>488 Beacon Street:</u></b> At roof install HVAC unit.                                                                       |
| <b>21.0155 BB</b> | <b><u>341 Commonwealth Avenue:</u></b> Replace 31 windows in-kind.                                                                |
| <b>21.0172 BB</b> | <b><u>349 Commonwealth Avenue:</u></b> At rear elevation replace two second-story one-over-one non-historic wood windows in-kind. |
| <b>21.0171 BB</b> | <b><u>69 Newbury Street:</u></b> At rear elevation repoint and repair masonry and replace wood trim in-kind.                      |
| <b>21.0183 BB</b> | <b><u>156 Newbury Street:</u></b> At front façade replace window signage.                                                         |

In conclusion the applications were approved. I. Demetriades initiated the motion and D. Sampson seconded the motion. The vote was 8-0 (JB, JC, MC, KC, ID, ZG, DS, RW)

## **RATIFICATION OF 8/12/2020 PUBLIC HEARING MINUTES**

The minutes were approved. J. Christiansen initiated the motion and R. Weintraub seconded the motion. The vote was 8-0 (JB, JC, MC, KC, ID, ZG, DS, RW)

**7:15 PM** Commissioner Connor adjourned the public hearing.