



**BACK BAY ARCHITECTURAL DISTRICT  
PUBLIC HEARING MINUTES**

Boston City Hall Boston, MA, 02201

Held virtually via Zoom

APPROVED BY COMMISSION  
December 10, 2025

**NOVEMBER 12, 2025**

**I. DESIGN REVIEW HEARING**

**5:00 PM**

**COMMISSIONERS PRESENT:** Kathleen Connor; Iphigenia Demetriades; Zsuzsanna Gaspar; Thomas High; Tanvi Nayar; Franklin Ross; David Sampson; and Robert Weintraub.

**COMMISSIONERS ABSENT:** David Eisen; Ethel MacLeod; Lisa Tharp; and Kenneth Tutunjian.

**STAFF PRESENT:** Joseph Cornish, Director of Design Review and Sarah Lawton, Preservation Assistant.

**5:00 PM:** Commissioner Connor called the public hearing to order. She explained that, pursuant to the Commonwealth of Massachusetts Executive Order Suspending Certain Provisions of the Open Meeting Law, that the public hearing was being conducted virtually via the online meeting platform Zoom in order to review Design Review applications. She also briefly explained how to participate in the online hearing. There were no members of the press present.

Following this brief introduction she called for the review and ratification of the meeting minutes.

**II. RATIFICATION OF HEARING/ MEETING MINUTES**

The review and ratification of public hearing minutes from October 8, 2025 have been postponed until December 10, 2025.

Following this Commissioner Connor called the first Design Review application.



### III. DESIGN REVIEW

**APP # 26.0381 BB**

**ADDRESS: 302 BEACON STREET**

Applicant: Douglas Mills

Proposed Work: At front and rear elevation, and roof replace existing fencing, railings and window grills with consistent design of metalwork.

**PROJECT REPRESENTATIVES:** Doug Mills was the project representative.

**DOCUMENTS PRESENTED:** Documents presented included existing condition photographs and plans for the proposed work.

**DISCUSSION TOPICS:** Discussion topics included an overview of the existing conditions and multiple railing designs, the previous Commission approvals, the applicant's rationale for requesting a single cohesive fence and railing design, details regarding the dimensions and material of the proposed code-required hand railing and how it will attach to the brick, the method of installing the new fence and railings, whether the applicant will build what was previously approved at the building's facade, specifically replacing existing stonework below the first story windows with brick or submit a new application, the Neighborhood Association of the Back Bay's recommendations to paint the rear deck railing black, the proposed fence layout and relationship to the stoop, and the proposed dimensions and design of the proposed fence.

**PUBLIC COMMENT:** Serge Savard, a representative from the Neighborhood Association of the Back Bay, offered comments and recommendations for the proposed work at the entrance.

**COMMISSIONER HIGH MOTIONED TO APPROVE THE APPLICATION WITH PROVISOS. COMMISSIONER DEMETRIADES SECONDED THE MOTION. THE VOTE WAS 8-0-0 (Y: KC, ID, ZG, TH, TN, FR, DS, RW)(N: NONE)(ABS: NONE).**

- *The limestone below the front first floor window is to be replaced with brick matching the existing brick, as approved by the Commission in March 2023 and in April 2023, with the brick selection to be approved by staff.*
- *The rear deck currently painted white is to be painted black.*
- *A handrail will be installed to the lower door, with the design approved by staff.*
- *The width of the front gate opening will be no less than the existing opening.*



**APP # 26.0387 BB**

**ADDRESS: 290 BEACON STREET**

Applicant: Timothy Burke

Proposed Work: At rear elevation construct deck on top of existing one-story structure and add connecting bridge from Main House.

**PROJECT REPRESENTATIVES:** Timothy Burke was the project representative.

**DOCUMENTS PRESENTED:** Documents presented included existing condition photographs and plans for the proposed work.

**DISCUSSION TOPICS:** Discussion topics included an overview of the existing conditions, the visibility of the proposed work, the Commission's previous approvals, the proposed dimensions, material, and location of the new deck, the dimensions and material of the existing and proposed deck railings, the location of the existing HVAC units on the roof, and the visibility of the mechanical equipment.

**PUBLIC COMMENT:** Suzan Keles, resident of 286 Beacon Street, offered questions and comments regarding the height of the proposed deck and the impact of abutters' views of the Charles River.

Dan Kelley, a resident at 306 Beacon Street, questioned whether the proposed deck's height aligns with that of similar decks on Back Street.

Serge Savard, a representative from the Neighborhood Association of the Back Bay, spoke in support of the balcony but offered comments regarding the relocation and visibility of the mechanical equipment.

**COMMISSIONER WEINTRAUB MOTIONED TO APPROVE THE APPLICATION WITH PROVISOS. COMMISSIONER DEMETRIADES SECONDED THE MOTION. THE VOTE WAS 8-0-0 (Y: KC, ID, ZG, TH, TN, FR, DS, RW)(N: NONE)(ABS: NONE).**

- *The HVAC unit is moved out of sight, and the applicant is to meet with staff onsite to confirm the setback of the deck on the east side of the roof.*

**APP # 26.0388 BB**

**ADDRESS: 11 MARLBOROUGH STREET**

Applicant: Nick Winton

Proposed Work: At rear elevation convert existing lower level window into a door and revise previously approved courtyard design.



**PROJECT REPRESENTATIVES:** Emily Whitbeck and Nick Winton were the project representatives.

**DOCUMENTS PRESENTED:** Documents presented included existing condition photographs and plans for the proposed work.

**DISCUSSION TOPICS:** Discussion topics included an overview of the existing conditions, the proposed plan to convert an existing window into a door, the dimensions and material of the existing window, details regarding the proposed preservation of an existing Ailanthus tree, details regarding the health and height of the existing tree, the condition of the existing retaining wall and its proximity to the tree, the applicant's plans not to change the existing grade and to extending the amount of coverage to create a two foot buffer against the tree, concerns regarding the new retaining wall cutting portions of the tree root system, the proposed shape and height of the new retaining wall, details about the proposed porous pavers around the tree to allow water infiltration, whether the new door can open without hitting the tree, the dimensions and material of the proposed door, clarifications regarding the stairs on the plans and whether they indicated a grade change, the current grade for the parking area.

**PUBLIC COMMENT:** Laurie Thomas, a representative from the Back Bay Garden Club, spoke in support of the project and offered advice about preserving the existing tree and recommended that they receive another opinion from an arborist.

John Ansteth, a resident at 7 Marlborough Street questioned whether the proposed work would impact access to their parking space and whether the walls, while maneuvering in the parking area, would be difficult to access.

Serge Savard, a representative from the Neighborhood Association of the Back Bay, recommended that the Commission receive a detailed fence design from the applicant.

**COMMISSIONER HIGH MOTIONED TO APPROVE THE APPLICATION WITH PROVISOS. COMMISSIONER WEINTRAUB SECONDED THE MOTION. THE VOTE WAS 8-0-0 (Y: KC, ID, ZG, TH, TN, FR, DS, RW)(N: NONE)(ABS: NONE).**

- *The approval is subject to the receipt by staff of written verification by a certified arborist that the design will not cause damage to the tree or its root structure, and to confirmation by staff that the dimensions of the proposed parking spaces are sufficient to ensure that the spaces can be used without obstructing the alley sidewalk.*
- *The design of the rear yard fencing is remanded to staff.*



The Chair announced that the Commission would next review Administrative Review/Approval applications.

#### IV. ADMINISTRATIVE REVIEW/ APPROVAL

**APP # 26.0382 BB 128 BEACON STREET:** At existing rear roof deck replace deck boards.

**APP # 26.0323 BB 173 BEACON STREET:** At front facade repair Mansard roof.

**APP # 26.0412 BB 232 BEACON STREET:** At rear elevation install light fixture at first story balcony.

**APP # 26.0377 BB 336 BEACON STREET:** At front facade replace one first-story one-over-one wood window in-kind.

**APP # 26.0369 BB 361 BEACON STREET:** At front facade and rear elevation replace non-historic wood doors with wood true-divided light wood doors.

**APP # 26.0031 BB 391 BEACON STREET:** Replace eight first-story windows with historically appropriate wood windows.

**APP # 26.0343 BB 501 BEACON STREET:** At front facade repair and repoint masonry.

**APP # 26.0403 BB 355 BOYLSTON STREET:** At front facade replace caulking and repaint non-brick materials in-kind.

**APP # 26.0379 BB 437 BOYLSTON STREET:** At front facade remove existing deposit box, repair masonry and replace signage.

**APP # 26.0386 BB 1 COMMONWEALTH AVENUE:** At existing roof deck repaint railing and replace deck boards.

**APP # 26.0386 BB 1 COMMONWEALTH AVENUE:** At roof replace rubber membrane roof in-kind.

**APP # 26.0370 BB 229 COMMONWEALTH AVENUE:** At roof replace existing roof hatch.

**APP # 26.0346 BB 321 DARTMOUTH STREET:** At rear elevation replace five fourth-story one-over-one non-historic wood windows in-kind.

**APP # 26.0328 BB 4 GLOUCESTER STREET:** At rear elevation repair existing fire escape.



**APP # 26.0368 BB 7 HEREFORD STREET:** At rear elevation replace rubber membrane roof at bay window in-kind.

**APP # 26.0376 BB 32 HEREFORD STREET:** At roof front facade install two handrails at entrance steps.

**APP # 26.0347 BB 13 MARLBOROUGH STREET:** At roof replace existing deck and rubber membrane roof in-kind.

**APP # 26.0380 BB 123 NEWBURY STREET:** At front facade replace handrail to lower retail space; install signage at front and rear entrances to lower level retail space; and install rooftop mechanical equipment and refrigerant lines concealed by downspout at rear elevation.

**APP # 26.0395 BB 215 NEWBURY STREET:** At roof replace rubber membrane roof in-kind.

**APP # 26.0385 BB 289 NEWBURY STREET:** At front facade replace three lower-level non-historic wood windows with historically appropriate wood windows.

**APP # 26.0413 BB 316 NEWBURY STREET:** At Hereford Street entrance replace concrete steps in-kind.

**COMMISSIONER DEMETRIADES MOTIONED TO APPROVE THE ADMINISTRATIVE REVIEW ITEMS. COMMISSIONER WEINTRAUB SECONDED THE MOTION. THE VOTE WAS 8-0-0 (Y: KC, ID, ZG, TH, TN, FR, DS, RW)(N: NONE)(ABS: NONE).**

## **V. STAFF UPDATES**

Joseph Cornish, Director of Design Review, announced that the scaffolding has been removed from the First Baptist Church on the corner of Clarendon Street and Commonwealth Avenue.

## **VI. ADJOURN – 6:00 PM**

**COMMISSIONER SAMPSON MOTIONED TO ADJOURN THE HEARING. COMMISSIONER DEMETRIADES SECONDED THE MOTION. A VOICE VOTE WAS CALLED AND ALL COMMISSIONERS PRESENT VOTED IN FAVOR.**