



**BACK BAY ARCHITECTURAL DISTRICT  
PUBLIC HEARING MINUTES**

Boston City Hall Boston, MA, 02201  
Held virtually via Zoom

**AUGUST 14, 2024**

**COMMISSIONERS PRESENT:** Anddie Chan-Patera, John Christiansen; Kathleen Connor; Zsuzsanna Gaspar; Thomas High; Ethel MacLeod; Tanvi Nayar; Franklin Ross; and David Sampson.

**COMMISSIONERS ABSENT:** Iphigenia Demetriades; David Eisen; Kenneth Tutunjian; and Robert Weintraub.

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

A full recording of the hearing is available at [Boston.gov/landmarks](http://Boston.gov/landmarks).

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**5:01 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. There were no members of the press present.

Following this brief introduction she called the first Design Review application.

**I. DESIGN REVIEW**

**APP # 25.0070 BB**

**ADDRESS: 191 Commonwealth Avenue**

Applicant: Jason Weiner

Proposed Work: Renovate and re-landscape front garden.

**PROJECT REPRESENTATIVES:** Ellen Abdow was the project representative.

**DOCUMENTS PRESENTED:** Documents presented included photos of existing conditions and plans for the proposed work.



**DISCUSSION TOPICS:** Discussion topics included an overview of the existing conditions, the property location and history, the proposed landscape changes and design, the proposed height and type of new trees, similar landscape designs at cornerstone properties, method for planting new trees, summaries of arborist assessments, invasive plants within the front garden, and structural and safety concerns with the existing trees.

**PUBLIC COMMENT:** Jason Weiner, owner at 191 Commonwealth, offered comments about the safety concerns with the existing tree.

Laurie Thomas, a Garden Club of the Back Bay representative, spoke in opposition to the proposed work.

Serge Savard, a Neighborhood Association of the Back Bay representative, spoke in opposition to the proposed work.

**COMMISSIONER SAMPSON MOTIONED TO APPROVE THE APPLICATION WITH PROVISOS. COMMISSIONER CHRISTIANSEN SECONDED THE MOTION. THE VOTE WAS 8-0-0 (Y: ACP, JC, KC, TH, EM, TN, FR, DS)(N: NONE)(ABS: NONE).**

- That this approval may not cited as a precedent for the removal of other trees because it reflects the characteristics of the specific species of this tree (a Callery Pear), the specific condition of the tree in question as verified by a certified arborist, and the fact that replacement of the tree is part of a complete renovation of the landscaping of a corner lot.

**APP # 25.0066 BB**

**ADDRESS: 230 MARLBOROUGH STREET**

Applicant: John Meyer

Proposed Work: At rear elevation construct a roof deck on top of an existing single story structure. Extend existing masonry walls up to create parapet walls using brick to match existing. Replace window with new door to match existing.

**PROJECT REPRESENTATIVES:** John Meyer and Heather Garfield were the project representatives.

**DOCUMENTS PRESENTED:** Documents presented included photos of existing conditions and plans for the proposed work.

**DISCUSSION TOPICS:** Discussion topics included the visibility of the deck from the alley, the massing of the masonry surrounding the deck, the impact of the project on the abutting properties, and the details of the relocation of the existing



vents.

**PUBLIC COMMENT:** Written comment was submitted by a trustee at 232 Marlborough street.

Dell Mitchell, offered comments and recommendations for the proposal.

June Mattey, spoke in opposition to the proposed work.

Serge Savard, a Neighborhood Association of the Back Bay representative, offered comments and recommendations for the proposal.

Sue Prindle, offered comments and spoke in support of a continuance for the application.

Ryan Belanger, owner of the property, spoke in support of the proposed work.

**COMMISSIONER CHRISTIANSEN MOTIONED TO CONTINUE THE APPLICATION.  
COMMISSIONER SAMPSON SECONDED THE MOTION. THE VOTE WAS 7-0-0 (Y:  
ACP, JC, KC, TH, TN, FR, DS)(N: NONE)(ABS: NONE).**

- *That the applicant return with a proposal that reduces the amount of masonry surrounding the roof deck, and with more details about the relocated vents.*

**COMMISSIONER MACLEOD LEFT THE MEETING.**

**APP # 24.1156 BB**

**ADDRESS: 18 COMMONWEALTH AVENUE**

Applicant: Allan Fraser

Proposed Work: Replace copper gutters and downspouts in-kind; replace all windows with historically appropriate wood windows; at front façade replace non-historic façade with historically appropriate masonry façade, construct new entry steps, and reconfigure front garden with new curbing, fencing and plantings; at rear elevation repoint masonry and remove fire balconies; and at roof repoint chimneys and reset chimney pots, replace damaged slate in-kind, repair rear dormer trim and repaint; install roof deck, and relocate headhouse and clad in standing seam copper.

**PROJECT REPRESENTATIVES:** David Freed and Fraser Allan were the project representatives.

**DOCUMENTS PRESENTED:** Documents presented included photos of existing conditions and plans for the proposed work.



**DISCUSSION TOPICS:** Discussion topics included an overview of the history of the building and its Architect, an overview of the existing conditions, configuration of the existing building, facade replacement plans, window replacement details, proposed roof deck and head house plans, proposed changes to the landscape, fencing, and paving, the material, dimensions, and design of the proposed work, the visibility of the proposed work, the height and location of the HVAC mechanicals, and a summary of recommendations from the Garden Club of the Back Bay.

**PUBLIC COMMENT:** During the public comment period, the following participants offered public comments:

Tim Mitchell, spoke in support of the proposed work.

Dell Mitchell, spoke in support of the proposed work.

James Berkman, a Neighborhood Association of the Back Bay representative, offered comments and recommendations for the proposal.

Sue Prindle, offered questions and comments for the proposal.

Laurie Thomas, a Garden Club of the Back Bay representative, spoke in support of the proposed work.

**COMMISSIONER HIGH MOTIONED TO APPROVE THE APPLICATION WITH PROVISOS. COMMISSIONER SAMPSON SECONDED THE MOTION. THE VOTE WAS 7-0-0 (Y: ACP, JC, KC, TH, TN, FR, DS)(N: NONE)(ABS: NONE).**

- All design details and materials are remanded to a subcommittee of the Commission for final approval with the objective of ensuring consistency with historic photographs of the property and the design of abutting original buildings, with the landscaping plan developed in consultation with the Garden Club.

**COMMISSIONER SAMPSON LEFT THE MEETING.**



**APP #25.0060 BB**

**ADDRESS: 127 COMMONWEALTH AVENUE**

Applicant: 127 Commonwealth, LLC

Proposed Work: Repoint and repair masonry and entry steps, replace windows with historically appropriate wood windows, replace in-kind copper gutters and downspouts; replace slate in-kind at Mansard roofs, repair rear dormers and rear oriel, and remove front and rear connecting iron fire balconies; at front facade restore garden fence, reset garden curbs, plant new Magnolia tree, install stair handrails, and install brick paving; at rear elevation remove stainless steel commercial vent, install garage door, install brick paved parking court, brick garden walls with iron gate, add landscaping including Dogwood tree, and install Juliet balcony with French door within modified window opening; and at roof construct penthouse, front and rear terraces, elevator override and mechanical equipment.

**PROJECT REPRESENTATIVE:** Ron Payne was the project representative.

**DOCUMENTS PRESENTED:** Documents presented included photos of existing conditions and plans for the proposed work.

**DISCUSSION TOPICS:** Discussion topics included an overview of the existing conditions, the visibility of the proposed work, the dimensions, material, and paint colors for all proposed work, proposed improvements to the roof and the front and rear facades, the plans to install a Juliet balcony with French door, the existing and proposed plant species, details regarding the garage, landscaping, brick paving, decorative details, and fencing.

**PUBLIC COMMENT:** Written comment was submitted by a resident at 118 Marlborough Street and they spoke in support of the proposed work but expressed concern regarding visibility of the rooftop additions.

James Berkman, a Neighborhood Association of the Back Bay representative, offered comments and recommendations for the proposal.

Sue Prindle, expressed concerns regarding the fencing and parking area.

Laurie Thomas, a Garden Club of the Back Bay representative, spoke in support of the proposed work.

**COMMISSIONER GASPAR JOINED THE MEETING.**

**COMMISSIONER HIGH MOTIONED TO APPROVE THE APPLICATION WITH PROVISOS. COMMISSIONER CHRISTIANSEN SECONDED THE MOTION. THE VOTE WAS 6-0-1 (Y: ACP, JC, KC, TH, TN, FR)(N: NONE)(ABS: ZG).**



- the visibility of the penthouse from the Mall is to be reduced, with approval of the final design remanded to staff;
- the rear wall be set back from the southern edge of the alley sidewalk, with determination of the location remanded to staff; and
- the location of the HVAC equipment is to be reviewed by staff to confirm that the units will not be visible were they to be modified with snow hoods or other equipment.

**APP # 25.0059 BB**

**ADDRESS: 125 COMMONWEALTH AVENUE**

Applicant: 125 Commonwealth LLC

Proposed Work: Repoint and repair masonry and entry steps, replace windows with historically appropriate wood windows, replace in-kind copper gutters and downspouts; replace slate in-kind at Mansard roofs, and remove front and rear connecting iron fire balconies; at front facade restore garden fence, reset garden curbs, install stair handrails, and install brick paving; at rear elevation remove shed structure, install garage door, install brick paved parking court, brick garden walls with iron gate, add landscaping including Dogwood tree, and install Juliet balcony with French door within modified window opening; and at roof construct penthouse, front and rear terraces, elevator override and mechanical equipment.

**PROJECT REPRESENTATIVE:** Ron Payne was the project representative.

**DOCUMENTS PRESENTED:** Documents presented included photos of existing conditions and plans for the proposed work.

**DISCUSSION TOPICS:** Discussion topics included an overview of the existing conditions, the visibility of the proposed work, details regarding the replacement handrails, the proposed modifications to the rear, the proposed material and dimension of the new garage door, the existing landscape, and the proposed renovations to the gardens, as well as the proposed materials, dimensions, and configurations of the windows.

**PUBLIC COMMENT:** James Berkman, a Neighborhood Association of the Back Bay representative, offered comments and recommendations for the proposal.

**COMMISSIONER HIGH MOTIONED TO APPROVE THE APPLICATION WITH PROVISOS. COMMISSIONER CHRISTIANSEN SECONDED THE MOTION. THE VOTE WAS 7-0-1 (Y: ACP, JC, KC, ZG, TH, TN, DS)(N: NONE)(ABS: FR).**



- the visibility of the penthouse from the Mall is to be reduced, with approval of the final design remanded to staff;
- the rear wall be set back from the southern edge of the alley sidewalk, with determination of the location remanded to staff; and
- the location of the HVAC equipment be reviewed by staff to confirm that the units will not be visible were they to be modified with snow hoods or other equipment.

**COMMISSIONER CHAN-PATERA LEFT THE MEETING.**

**APP # 25.0071 BB**

**ADDRESS: 175 MARLBOROUGH STREET**

Applicant: David Sharff

Proposed Work: Repoint masonry and replace all windows with historically appropriate wood windows; at rear elevation renovate existing 2nd floor deck with new decking and railings; and at roof repair slate, replace existing rubber roof and associated copper flashing, remove and reconstruct existing penthouse and deck to accommodate a new staircase and elevator, and relocate and add new HVAC units to existing roof.

**PROJECT REPRESENTATIVES** David Sharff was the project representative.

**DOCUMENTS PRESENTED:** Documents presented included photos of existing conditions and plans for the proposed work.

**DISCUSSION TOPICS:** Discussion topics included an overview of existing conditions, property lines, visibility of the proposed work, dimensions and materials of all proposed work, proposed changes to the mechanical units, plans to replace the existing windows, proposed changes to the roof, penthouse, and existing deck, and details regarding the existing and proposed railing.

**PUBLIC COMMENT:** During the public comment period, James Berkman, a Neighborhood Association of the Back Bay representative, spoke in support of the proposed work and offered recommendations for the proposal.

**COMMISSIONER HIGH MOTIONED TO APPROVE THE APPLICATION WITH PROVISOS. COMMISSIONER CHRISTIANSEN SECONDED THE MOTION. THE VOTE WAS 6-0-1 (Y: JC, KC, ZG, TH, TN, DS)(N: NONE)(ABS: FR).**

- Staff confirm that neither the penthouse nor the HVAC equipment is visible as viewed from the northern edge of the alley sidewalk;
- all replacement windows are to be of wood with true divided lights;



- the penthouse is to be clad in standing seam metal, preferably copper, the front of the penthouse is to be redesigned to utilize wooden French doors, and that the front and the rear windows are to be designed to relate to the window and door openings below;
- any extension of the chimneys shall be constructed in brick and conform with the existing design; and
- approval of all design details, materials, and location of mechanical equipment is remanded to staff.

**APP # 25.0087 BB**

**ADDRESS: 323 COMMONWEALTH AVENUE**

Applicant: Zachary Millay

Proposed Work: At front facade existing stair railings to be removed and replaced with new railings, existing areaway and stairs to lower level shall be removed and replaced with new brick pavers, granite steps, railing and door, existing non historical railing at front curb to be removed and replaced with new landscaping, existing curb to be repaired in-kind, and new railing at upper level balustrade to meet min height required by code; and at rear Elevation install new brick pavers in parking area, new landscaping, new trash and recycle storage, and new 6'-0"balcony off unit 1 living space with decorative metal railing.

**PROJECT REPRESENTATIVES** Zachary Millay was the project representative.

**DOCUMENTS PRESENTED:** Documents presented included photos of existing conditions and plans for the proposed work.

**DISCUSSION TOPICS:** Discussion topics included an overview of the existing conditions, the visibility of the proposed work, the proposed plans and changes to the front and rear elevations, the dimensions and material of the existing and proposed stair and balustrade railings, the proposed plans for the outdoor parking area, the existing and proposed plant materials, details regarding the new trash and recycle storage area.

**PUBLIC COMMENT:** Sue Prindle, offered questions and comments about the proposal.

James Berkman, a Neighborhood Association of the Back Bay representative, offered recommendations for the proposal.

Laurie Thomas, a Garden Club of the Back Bay representative, spoke in support of the proposed work and offered recommendations for the proposal.



Alec Stern, owner of parking pots at 321 Commonwealth Avenue, offered comments regarding the parking area and garbage receptacles.

**COMMISSIONER HIGH MOTIONED TO APPROVE THE APPLICATION WITH PROVISOS. COMMISSIONER CHRISTIANSEN SECONDED THE MOTION. THE VOTE WAS 7-0-0 (Y: JC, KC, ZG, TH, TN, FR, DS)(N: NONE)(ABS: NONE).**

- the applicant explore the feasibility of lowering the floor of the proposed deck above the front entrance to reduce or eliminate the need for a railing behind the original balustrade, and that the design any railing that may be required is remanded to staff;
- installation of stone pavers or similar material in the front garden area is denied and the applicant is to propose an alternate landscaping plan developed in consultation with the Garden Club, with final approval remanded to staff;
- approval of the design of front handrail is remanded to staff;
- the balcony above the rear door shall not extend to the bay, with the final design remanded to staff; and
- approval of the location of trash containers and the landscaping plan, including selection of plantings in the rear yard, is remanded to staff in consultation with the Garden Club.

**APP # 25.0092 BB**

**ADDRESS: 209 BEACON STREET**

Applicant: Guy Grassi

Proposed Work: Replace all windows and repair masonry; at front facade reset pavers at sidewalk, install fence and install new intercom; at roof construct penthouse addition with deck and install mechanical equipment; and at rear elevation install brick pavers, reduce size of rear ell, install garage door, remove fire escapes, and construct new balcony.

**PROJECT REPRESENTATIVE:** Guy Grassi was the project representative.

**DOCUMENTS PRESENTED:** Documents presented included photos of existing conditions and plans for the proposed work.

**DISCUSSION TOPICS:** Discussion topics included an overview of the existing conditions, the visibility of proposed work, the owners of the property, an overview of previous alterations to the front elevation, the dimensions and material of all proposed work, plans to repair the existing masonry, the plans to replace existing windows, similar buildings in Back Bay with French windows, an overview of the proposed changes to the front and rear elevations.



**PUBLIC COMMENT:** Serge Savard, a Neighborhood Association of the Back Bay representative, offered comments and recommendations for the proposal.

Sue Prindle, offered questions and comments about the proposal.

**COMMISSIONER CHRISTIANSEN MOTIONED TO APPROVE THE APPLICATION WITH PROVISOS. COMMISSIONER SAMPSON SECONDED THE MOTION. THE VOTE WAS 7-0-0 (Y: JC, KC, ZG, TH, TN, FR, DS)(N: NONE)(ABS: NONE).**

- That the applicant meets with staff to refine the window design details of the ell and ensure they are to make sure they're in character with the surrounding buildings.
- Penthouse doors at the top to be changed into 2 French doors and the multi-pane windows in the front are going to be retained.

The Chair announced that the Commission would next review Advisory Review item(s).

## II. ADVISORY REVIEW

**ADDRESS: 18 COMMONWEALTH AVENUE**

Applicant: Allan Fraser

Proposed Work: Construct garage at rear of property, and deck at uppermost roof.

**PROJECT REPRESENTATIVE:** David Freed was the project representative.

**DOCUMENTS PRESENTED:** Documents presented included photos of existing conditions and plans for the proposed work.

**DISCUSSION TOPICS:** Discussion topics included an overview of the existing conditions, plans and details about the proposed new garage, the district guidelines regarding additions, previous exceptions made by the Commission for rear additions, and the proposed dimensions, material and finish for the garage door.

**PUBLIC COMMENT:** Dell Mitchell, offered comments and recommendations for the proposal.

Serge Savard, a Neighborhood Association of the Back Bay representative, offered questions regarding egress for the building.

Sue Prindle, offered a recommendation for the proposal.



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

### III. ADMINISTRATIVE REVIEW/ APPROVAL

**25.0091 BB** **5 Arlington Street:** At rear oriel window replace decorative copper roofing and sheathing in-kind.

**25.0030 BB** **295 Beacon Street:** At front facade repair entry steps.

**25.0009 BB** **351 Beacon Street:** At rear elevation repoint masonry, and replace roofing, flashing and gutters, and repaint wood elements at oriel window.

**25.0074 BB** **351 Beacon Street:** At rear elevation repair masonry.

**25.0004 BB** **396 Beacon Street:** At front facade replace four second-story two-over-two wood windows in-kind.

**25.0093 BB** **419 Boylston Street:** Replace deteriorated roofing in-kind.

**25.0043 BB** **607 Boylston Street:** At roof replace black rubber membrane roofing in-kind.

**25.0079 BB** **224 Clarendon Street:** Replace eight sixth-story one-over-one wood windows in-kind.

**25.0110 BB** **64 Commonwealth Avenue:** At front façade remove non-historic entry door, sidelights and transom, and install new double doors and restore transom to match intact entrance at 66 Commonwealth Avenue.

**25.0023 BB** **120 Commonwealth Avenue:** At rear elevation replace two third-story one-over-one wood windows in-kind.

**25.0077 BB** **197 Commonwealth Avenue:** Repoint and repair masonry, and repair gutters and downspouts.

**25.0085 BB** **288 Commonwealth Avenue:** At rear elevation replace existing garage door.

**24.1185 BB** **333 Commonwealth Avenue:** At roof remove and rebuild top section of existing chimney in-kind.

**25.0031 BB** **28 Exeter Street:** At front facade replace signage,

**25.0089 BB** **7 Fairfield Street:** At front facade repair entry steps and coal chute.



**24.1196 BB** **2 Marlborough Street:** At roof repoint front chimney.

**25.0041 BB** **28 Marlborough Street:** At roof replace existing deck in-kind.

**25.00100 BB** **117 Marlborough Street:** At front facade replace non-historic upper-floor French doors and windows with wood doors and windows.

**25.0036 BB** **127 Marlborough Street:** At roof remove existing deck, replace rubber membrane roofing, flashing, skylights, gutter and downspouts in-kind.

**24.1180 BB** **170 Marlborough Street:** Repaint existing painted surfaces to match existing paint colors.

**24.1181 BB** **172 Marlborough Street:** Repaint existing painted surfaces to match existing paint colors.

**25.0057 BB** **230 Marlborough Street:** Replace seven second-story one-over-one wood windows in-kind.

**25.0058 BB** **303 Marlborough Street:** Repaint wood trim and entry doors.

**25.0075 BB** **337 Marlborough Street:** Replace four second-story one-over-one wood windows in-kind.

**25.0099 BB** **345 Marlborough Street:** At front façade repoint and repair masonry and replace deteriorated wood window sills in-kind.

**25.0078 BB** **97-101 Newbury Street:** Installation of security cameras at front facade and rear elevation.

**25.0065 BB** **92 Newbury Street:** At front facade replace existing signage.

**25.0113 BB** **133 Newbury Street:** At front façade replace signage, awnings and repaint storefront.

**25.0076 BB** **299 Newbury Street:** Repair masonry and egress balconies, and repaint wood trim.

**25.0033 BB** **324 Newbury Street:** At front facade install blade sign and window signage.

**25.0067 BB** **333 Newbury Street:** At front facade replace door hardware and signage.



**25.0052 BB**

**343 Newbury Street:** At front facade install signage on existing bracket.

**COMMISSIONER SAMPSON MOTIONED TO APPROVE THE ADMINISTRATIVE REVIEW ITEMS. COMMISSIONER CHRISTIANSEN SECONDED THE MOTION. THE VOTE WAS 7-0-0 (Y: TH, JC, KC, TN, DS, ZG, FR)(N: NONE)(ABS: NONE).**

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

Ratification of 7/10/2024 public hearing minutes has been postponed.

**IV. STAFF UPDATES**

There were no staff updates.

**V. ADJOURN – 9:58 PM**

**COMMISSIONER SAMPSON MOTIONED TO ADJOURN THE HEARING. COMMISSIONER CHRISTIANSEN SECONDED THE MOTION. ALL COMMISSIONERS PRESENT VOTED IN FAVOR OF ADJOURNMENT.**