

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

February 12, 2020

DESIGN REVIEW HEARING

Commissioners Present: John Christiansen; Kathleen Connor; Jerome Cooper-King; Iphigenia Demetriades; Patti Quinn; David Sampson; and Robert Weintraub.

Commissioners Not Present: David Eisen; Lisa Saunders; and Kenneth Tutunjian.

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

5:00 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 three minutes to make comments; and explained that motions would be made by Commission members following public comment.

DESIGN REVIEW

20.764 BB

18 Newbury Street

Representatives: Michael McGowan

Proposed Work: At roof install two HVAC condenser units; at side (west) elevation infill four existing window openings; and at rear elevation remove existing HVAC units, supports, piping and conduit, install new HVAC piping and conduit, modify cellar door, replace cellar louvers with insulated panels, replace fire escape doors, replace windows obscured by elevator and mechanical area with spandrel glass, and replace existing windows.

Staff read its recommendation to approve the application with provisos.

Mr. McGowan presented photos of existing conditions and plans for the proposed work. The Commission discussed the size and color of the proposed HVAC units, and the scope of work proposed at the rear elevation.

During public comment, Sue Prindle from the Neighborhood Association of the Back Bay (NABB) asked if the dumpster currently at the rear elevation will be relocated.

In conclusion the application was approved with provisos. R. Weintraub initiated the motion and J. CooperKing seconded the motion. The vote was 7-0 (JC; KC; JCK: ID; PQ; DS; RW).

- Staff must review and approve a sample of the spandrel glass proposed for the rear elevation windows obscured at the interior by elevator and mechanical equipment

20.763 BB

8 Newbury Street:

Representative: Julie Reker

Proposed Work: At front façade re-paint façade bronze color, install flagpole and signage, install decorative metal screen at interior of first and second story windows and install new door hardware; and at rear elevation install new metal louver vent and install opaque film at windows.

Staff read its recommendation to approve the application with provisos.

Ms. Reker presented photos of existing conditions and plans for the proposed work. The Commission discussed the purpose of the proposed rear louver and asked if it could be lowered. They also discussed the appropriateness of the proposed signage at the side panels of the storefront.

During public comment, Meg Mainzer-Cohen of the Back Bay Association spoke in favor of the project stating that all the proposed signage is needed by the retailer.

In conclusion the application was approved with provisos. J. Christiansen initiated the motion and P. Quinn seconded the motion. The vote was 7-0 (JC; KC; JCK: ID; PQ; DS; RW).

- The proposed signage at the storefront returns be eliminated, and the proposed louver at the rear elevation be lowered so that its top aligns with the upper section of the adjacent arched window at the point where the curve of the arch begins, and that the louver be painted to match the surrounding masonry.

20.768 BB

3 Arlington Street:

Representative: Laura Meyer, Adam Gilmore and Ken Lyons

Proposed Work: At side (south) elevation replace two cellar windows in-kind; and at side (south) elevation of rear ell install three exhaust vents.

Staff read its recommendation to approve the proposed window replacement and to deny without prejudice the proposed vents.

Mr. Lyons explained that the Inspectional Services Department (ISD) issued a violation for the vents as currently installed through a party wall. Mr. Gilmore presented photos of existing conditions and plans for the proposed work. The Commission asked if a ventless clothes dryer could be used, and if two rather than three vents could be used.

There was no public comment.

In conclusion the application was approved with provisos. D. Sampson initiated the motion and R. Weintraub seconded the motion. The vote was 7-0 (JC; KC; JCK: ID; PQ; DS; RW).

- The applicant must explore if two vents instead of three are possible, and that the vents should all be a uniform size. In addition, the Commission noted that this approval is not setting a precedent for future projects in the district.

20.768 BB

149-155 Newbury Street:

Representative: Whitney Robinette, Haril Pandya and William Young
Proposed Work: Construction of a new, mixed-use (retail/office) building on the site of the existing surface parking lot.

Staff read its recommendation to continue this application and create a sub-committee to work with the design team on a revised proposal that will be reviewed by the full Commission at a future public hearing.

Mr. Pandya presented photos of existing conditions and plans for the proposed work. He explained how the proposal has evolved since the past Advisory Review sessions. The Commission discussed the location of the building's transformer, the treatment of the building's corner at Newbury Street and Dartmouth Street, the color of the proposed metal, and details of the proposed brick pilasters. The Commission also discussed the treatment of the landscape, and treatment of the rear wall facing the alley.

During public comment, Commissioner Connor read letters in opposition of the project from: Ann M. Beha FAIA; Kathryn Sweeney; Pamela Humphrey; Barry Solar; Jeanne Stanton; and Philip Dubuque. Alan Helms who lives in the Vendome building asked that more thought be given to the rear elevation facing the Vendome building. Sue Prindle from the Neighborhood Association of the Back Bay (NABB) commented on the black metal which will be a modern addition into the district and requested that a sub-committee be created to work with the developer on an appropriate design. Tom Moses of 171 Commonwealth Avenue expressed concern about the "A" Frame design and spoke in favor of creating a sub-committee. Ellen McCroskery asked about the sound related to the

transformer, and asked about the project’s impact on the Snowden School across the street. Jim Berkman spoke in favor of creating a sub-committee and expressed concern about the quality of the building’s materials and the “A” Frame design. Meg Mainzer-Cohen of the Back Bay Association spoke in favor of the project stating that the building needs to differentiate from the older buildings on Newbury Street and requested that the Commission work with the developer on a project that will meet everyone’s needs. Parker James expressed concern about the “A” Frame design and spoke in favor of creating a sub-committee. Tom High of BackBayHouses.org spoke in favor of creating a sub-committee. Kathleen Kolar expressed concerns about light and noise, asked if the building would be net-zero, and spoke in favor of creating a sub-committee. Emily Brown from Councilor Kenzie Bok’s office spoke in favor of creating a sub-committee and working with NABB to create an appropriate design for the building. Ms. Brown also asked that the building be energy efficient. Ann Beha spoke in favor of a sub-committee and emphasized that its goal be to create a better building design than what is currently presented.

In conclusion the application was continued and sub-committee created to work with the applicant on a revised proposal that will be reviewed by the full Commission at a future public hearing. R. Weintraub initiated the motion and D. Sampson seconded the motion. The vote was 7-0 (JC; KC; JCK: ID; PQ; DS; RW).

- The sub-committee consists of: J. Christiansen; K. Connor; J. CooperKing; I. Demetriades; D. Eisen; D. Sampson; and R. Weintraub.

ADMINISTRATIVE REVIEW/APPROVAL

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

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| 20.752 BB | <u>282 Beacon Street:</u> At rear elevation replace sixth-story bowed steel window in-kind. |
| 19.1113 BB | <u>342 Beacon Street:</u> Replace thirteen deteriorated wood windows in-kind. |
| 20.762 BB | <u>351 Beacon Street:</u> At front façade replace concrete sidewalk with granite pavers. Restore sandstone curb, refurbish fence and re-landscape front garden. |
| 20.711 BB | <u>565 Boylston Street:</u> At front façade replace existing window signage. |
| 20.771 BB | <u>35 Commonwealth Avenue:</u> At front façade’s entry install handrails and replace entry doors in-kind. |
| 20.722 BB | <u>61 Commonwealth Avenue:</u> At roof replace existing HVAC condenser in-kind. |

- 20.716 BB** **370 Commonwealth Avenue:** At rear elevation remove generator and install new steel frame and generator.
- 20.778 BB** **29 Fairfield Street:** At roof replace black rubber membrane roofing and copper flashing in-kind.
- 20.755 BB** **107 Marlborough Street:** At front façade add additional wall plaque.
- 20.760 BB** **382 Marlborough Street:** At rear elevation replace fence with new wood fence.
- 20.765 BB** **150 Newbury Street:** At roof replace slate and flashing in-kind, replace rubber membrane roof with bitumen roof, install new copper cladding and doors at penthouse, and install new heat trace system at gutters and downspouts.
- 20.772 BB** **222A Newbury Street:** At front façade replace existing wall sign.
- 20.756 BB** **223 Newbury Street:** At roof replace black rubber membrane roof and skylights in-kind.
- 20.747 BB** **226 Newbury Street:** At front façade replace existing wall sign.

In conclusion the applications were approved. I. Demetriades initiated the motion and J. CooperKing seconded the motion. The vote was 7-0 (JC; KC; JCK: ID; PQ; DS; RW).

RATIFICATION OF THE 1/8/2020 PUBLIC HEARING MINUTES

The minutes were approved. I. Demetriades initiated the motion and R. Weintraub seconded the motion. The vote was 7-0 (JC; KC; JCK: ID; PQ; DS; RW).

STAFF UPDATES

J. Cornish reported that he has a meeting scheduled with Commissioner Christopher Osgood to discuss moving sandwich sign proposal forward to City Council.

7:25 PM Commissioner Connor adjourned the public hearing.