

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

March 11, 2020

DESIGN REVIEW HEARING

Commissioners Present: John Christiansen; Kathleen Connor; Iphigenia Demetriades; David Eisen; David Sampson; and Robert Weintraub.

Commissioners Not Present: Jerome CooperKing; Patti Quinn, 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 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

20.842 BB

314Newbury Street

Representatives: Tom Trykowski and Michael Serpa

Proposed Work: At front façade install outdoor dining area including six tables, twelve chairs, three umbrellas and string lighting; and install seasonal entry enclosure.

Commissioner R. Weintraub recused himself.

Staff read its recommendation to approve the application.

Mr. Trykowski presented photos of existing conditions and plans for the proposed work. The Commission discussed the appropriateness of the string lights, the number and size of the umbrellas, and the design and size of the proposed entry enclosure. They also suggested that an interior curtain should be used instead of an enclosure; however, Mr. Serpa explained that interior curtains at entry doors are discouraged by the fire department.

During public comment, Commissioner Connor reported that there were letters from Mark Christo and Rick Walter's (306B Newbury Street) in opposition to the project. Richu Ma Lure and Hunter Castaglioni spoke in opposition to the project. Rachel Walsh expressed concern about her nearby retail space being blocked by the umbrellas. Tom Christo questioned the accuracy of the plans and expressed concern about the size of the umbrellas. Mark Christo referenced several points in his letter opposing the project and questioned the credibility of the applicant. Brian Gillis expressed concerns about the negative impact the project will have on residential tenants in this area. Tom High of backbayhouses.org stated that the proposed lighting and enclosure are approvable. Sue Prindle from the Neighborhood Association of the Back Bay (NABB) expressed concern about the umbrellas blocking views of the building.

In conclusion the application was approved with provisos. D. Sampson initiated the motion and I. Demetriades seconded the motion. The vote was 5-1-1 (Y: KC: ID; DE; DS; N: JC; RECUSED: RW).

- The proposed string lights be eliminated from the project.
- The proposed umbrellas be shortened in height.
- The seasonal entry enclosure's door be re-designed to include a larger area of plexiglass and remain in place a maximum of sixty (60) days per season.
- This approval is not setting a precedent for future projects in the district.

20.757 BB

7 Hereford Street:

Representative: Paul Curtis

Proposed Work: At front façade install steel ladder between third and fourth-story fire balconies and install collapsible ladder between third-story and ground-level.

Staff read its recommendation to deny this application.

Mr. Curtis presented photos of existing conditions and plans for the proposed work. He explained that the unit owner received a violation in 2018 for the existing fire escape. The Commission discussed the guidelines which state that fire escapes and balconies at front facades are inappropriate, and the proposed collapsible ladder will adversely alter the historic appearance of this building and this area of the district.

There was no public comment.

In conclusion the application was approved with provisos. I. Demetriades initiated the motion and D. Sampson seconded the motion. The vote was 6-0 (JC; KC; ID; DE; DS; RW).

- A black steel ladder may be installed between the existing third-story and fourth-story fire balconies only- the proposed collapsible ladders may not be installed.

20.815 BB

284 Commonwealth Avenue:

Representative: Kelly Bonzani and David Winston

Proposed Work: At rear yard remove Ailanthus tree.

Staff read its recommendation to approve the application with provisos.

Ms. Bonzani and Mr. Winston presented photos of existing conditions and explained they consulted with the Garden Club of the Back Bay which supports removal of the tree due to its state of decline.

During public comment Margaret Pokorny from the Garden Club of the Back Bay spoke in support of the project and recommended planting a 3.5 inch caliper Honey Locust tree.

In conclusion the application was approved with provisos. J. Christiansen initiated the motion and D. Sampson seconded the motion. The vote was 6-0 (JC; KC; ID; DE; DS; RW).

- The tree must be replaced with a 3.5 inch caliper Honey Locust tree.

20.847 BB

417 Beacon Street:

Representative: Anthony Griseto

Proposed Work: At rear elevation replace six fourth-story two-over-two non-historic windows with wood one-over-one wood windows.

Staff read its recommendation to deny this application without prejudice.

Mr. Griseto presented photos of existing conditions and plans for the proposed work. The Commission discussed that while the windows are part of a later alteration they felt that they should remain two-over-two to be consistent with the remaining windows at this elevation.

During public comment, James Tankard expressed his opinion that one-over-one windows would be too stark in comparison to the existing two-over-two windows at this elevation of the building.

In conclusion the application was denied without prejudice. I. Demetriades initiated the motion and D. Sampson seconded the motion. The vote was 6-0 (JC; KC; ID; DE; DS; RW).

20.846 BB

126 Marlborough Street:

Representative: Elizabeth Perko

Proposed Work: Replace all non-historic windows with historically appropriate wood windows; at rear elevation remove non-historic elevator addition and machine room addition, restore rear elevation, and construct garage structure; and at roof remove existing headhouse and deck and construct penthouse and deck.

Staff reported that the applicant withdrew the proposed rooftop work from the application and read its recommendation to approve the application with provisos.

Ms. Perko presented photos of existing conditions and plans for the proposed work. The Commission eliminating the French doors that access the addition's roof deck and instead installing a window and a door that align with the windows of the upper stories. They also discussed the rear parking area and suggested planting a tree somewhere on the property.

During public comment Sue Prindle from the Neighborhood Association of the Back Bay (NABB) explained that she is pleased that the elevator will be removed but suggested adding more green space. Tom High of backbayhouses.org distributed a sketch of the rear of the building to the Commissioners and explained that he felt the garage was appropriate at this location; however, he suggested that the French doors be eliminated from the design and windows and/or doors match the rhythm of the windows above, and that replacement brick match the existing brick. Margaret Pokorny of the Garden Club of the Back Bay asked that the applicant consider planting a tree on the property. Paul and Breanna Mammola asked if the penthouse that was proposed would be re-designed. Marie Lefton explained that she submitted a letter in opposition to the project citing that the garage with deck would alter the open air and character of the alley.

In conclusion the application was approved with provisos. J. Christiansen initiated the motion and I. Demetraides seconded the motion. The vote was 6-0 (JC; KC; ID; DE; DS; RW).

- The that the proposed French doors that access the addition's roof deck should be revised to a window and a door (or two doors) that align with the windows of the upper stories, and a parapet wall be built at the garage roof to minimize the visibility of the deck. In addition, the Commission requested that the applicant explore

planting a tree at the rear of the property- if this is not possible planting a tree at the front garden should be explored.

ADMINISTRATIVE REVIEW/APPROVAL

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

- 20.784 BB** **188 Beacon Street:** At front façade replace five second-story one-over-one wood windows in-kind.
- 20.840 BB** **225 Beacon Street:** At roof install green roof trays and install planters at existing roof deck.
- 20.808 BB** **266 Beacon Street:** At front façade repair masonry, replace deteriorated wood window trim in-kind and re-paint trim black; and at rear elevation repair downspout.
- 20.838 BB** **275 Beacon Street:** Install two rooftop HVAC condensers.
- 20.848 BB** **417 Beacon Street:** At front façade replace five third-story one-over-one non-historic wood windows in-kind.
- 20.807 BB** **528 Beacon Street:** Repair and re-point masonry at front façade and rear elevation.
- 20.833 BB** **64 Commonwealth Avenue:** At front façade repair and re-point masonry, replace roof slate in-kind, re-paint windows and trim, and replace deteriorated wood at dormer window.
- 20.835 BB** **64 Commonwealth Avenue:** At front façade and rear elevation replace five third-story one-over-one wood windows in-kind.
- 20.819 BB** **207 Commonwealth Avenue:** Re-pave rear parking area with Yankee Cobble pavers.
- 20.849 BB** **349 Commonwealth Avenue:** At front façade re-point masonry, install new copper roof at bay window, and re-paint cornice.
- 20.766 BB** **18 Fairfield Street:** Replace fifteen wood windows in-kind.
- 20.839 BB** **20 Fairfield Street:** Replace roof slate and copper gutters in-kind.
- 20.804 BB** **273 Newbury Street:** At front façade replace roof slate in-kind, install copper flashing, and re-paint wood trim.
- 20.803 BB** **302 Newbury Street:** At front façade install wall sign at lower retail space.
- 20.850 BB** **341 Newbury Street:** At rear elevation install one louver at existing first-story window opening.

In conclusion the applications were approved. I. Demetriades initiated the motion and J. Christiansen seconded the motion. The vote was 6-0 (JC; KC; ID; DE; DS; RW).

RATIFICATION OF THE 2/12/2020 PUBLIC HEARING MINUTES

The minutes were approved. I. Demetriades initiated the motion and J. Christiansen seconded the motion. The vote was 6-0 (JC; KC; ID; DE; DS; RW).

ADVISORY REVIEW

Harvard Club, 415 Newbury Street: Development project that includes demolition of rear addition, construction of addition and construction of building at existing parking lot.

Abby Goldenfarb, William Young and Alfred Wojciechowski presented photos of existing conditions and plans for the proposed project. They discussed the ownership of the property, the adjacent project at Parcel 12, and the height allowed by zoning. The Commissioners discussed the location of parking, the transition of the proposed addition in relation to the Parcel 12 project. They also discussed enhancing the pedestrian experience at this location. Several members of the public commented on the project including: Sue Prindle who expressed concern about the flat roof, and that zoning has not changed in the district; Tom High expressed concern that the project at parcel 12 is being considered in the review of this project; Jim Berkman suggested that more height variation should be considered; Margaret Pokorny asked that more emphasis be placed on the streetscape; Deborah Perry expressed concern about traffic and suggested that Newbury Extension should be one-way; H. Parker James supported the project provided that it adheres to all BBAC regulations and zoning requirements; Travis Roy and Amanda Kennedy expressed support of the project; and Victor Castellani reminded the Commission that the proposed project does not comply with current zoning.

STAFF UPDATES

J. Cornish reported that several new commissioners will be sworn-in in the coming weeks.

7:36 PM Commissioner Connor adjourned the public hearing.