

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

September 12, 2018

DESIGN REVIEW HEARING

Commissioners Present: John Christiansen; Kathleen Connor; Jerome CooperKing; Iphigenia Demetriades; David Sampson; David Eisen; Patti Quinn; Robert Weintraub.

Commissioners Not Present: Lex Stevens; Kenneth Tutunjian; Jane R. Moss; Lisa Saunders;

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

5:04 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 from the Boston Sun made herself known. Commissioner Connor explained that during public comment periods of the hearing members of the public will be limited to five minutes to make comments; and explained that motions would be made by Commission members following public comment.

DESIGN REVIEW APPLICATIONS:

19.223 BB

235 Newbury Street

Representative: Ryan Noone

Proposed Work: At Newbury Street façade expand first-story and lower-level window openings in existing masonry bay.

Staff read its recommendation to approve with provisos, finding: that of the three options proposed option 1 is consistent with the commercial guidelines for the district which state that first story windows may be elongated and widened provided original decorative elements are not removed, and basement windows may be enlarged but should align with the first story windows and not exceed the size of the first story windows.

The representative showed images of existing condition, and presented three different options for their plans. Noone confirmed that the first option is the most similar to the original conditions. Noone also stated that they were open and willing to compromise with the Commission on what they feel would work best.

The Commission clarified the inspiration of the various options the representative proposed to them, and determined that the first option

presented was an elongated version of the original. P. Quinn advised the representative to keep as much of the original stone and width as possible. The Commission felt that options #2 and #3 presented had too much glass, and that a 5 foot width would be better for the historic façade than the 6 foot option. The more masonry kept would help keep the façade a more believable historic element.

Public comment was opened, and Sue Prindle from the Neighborhood Association of the Back Bay (NABB) spoke in favor of the first option presented, as the other options compromise too much of the façade.

In conclusion the application was approved with the provisos that the window width is reduced to 5 feet at the center, and that the lintels remain appearing as original as possible. J. Christiansen initiated the motion and P. Quinn seconded the motion. The vote was 7-0 (ID, JC, JCK, KC, DE, PQ, RW).

19.069 BB

115 Marlborough Street

Representative: Diane Lim

Proposed Work: Repoint masonry at chimneys and rear elevation; replace all one-over-one wood windows in-kind; at front façade replace non-historic entry door to lower level with new wood door and install new light fixture; at rear elevation install kitchen exhaust vent at wall above entry door, replace non-historic entry door to lower level with new wood door, restore lower level window openings, replace metal framing, decking and wood support posts at existing balcony, replace existing fence with wood fence, and replace asphalt paving at parking area with brick pavers; and at roof expand existing roof deck, remove three existing air conditioning units and install four new air conditioning units.

Staff read its recommendation to approve with provisos, finding: that the proposed work is consistent with the commission's guidelines with the exception of the kitchen exhaust vent proposed for the rear wall which, if possible, should be located at the roof.

Commissioner Sampson entered the chambers.

The representative showed images of existing conditions and plans for the proposed work. She shared that she is willing to paint the air conditioning unit whatever color the Commission feels is best, and agreed upon grey. She also stated a snow melting system will be installed at the rear parking area. She is open to the concept of adding greenspace, but felt that planting a tree in the location would be difficult.

The Commission was initially concerned with the height and color of the proposed air conditioning units. J. CooperKing shared he felt that the shadows cast by the rear deck is useful in concealing the proposed kitchen exhaust vent over the rear entry door, and that venting to the roof would require considerable maintenance and a cleanout.

Public comment was opened, and Sue Prindle from the Neighborhood Association of the Back Bay (NABB) shared that she felt it was good that the condensers were being moved to a less visible location on the roof. She also posed the question regarding the possibility of the rear deck being supported by a cantilever method alternative to the existing post, and also the possibility of including a green space at the rear of the building.

In conclusion the application was approved. J. Christiansen initiated the motion and J. CooperKing seconded the motion. The vote was 8-0 (ID, JC, JCK, KC, DE, PQ, RW, DS)

19.170 BB

82 Marlborough Street:

Representative: Elizabeth Marcus

Proposed Work: At front garden remove dead Magnolia tree.

Staff read its recommendation to approval with provisos finding: that the applicant consults with the Garden Club of the Back Bay for suggestions of an appropriate species tree for this site which gets minimal sunlight.

The representative presented photos of existing conditions and stressed that she wanted approval to remove the tree without having the obligation to replace it, because as proven with her magnolia tree, plants do not thrive in that location due to surrounding low light conditions. The representative did not have a plan for the future of the area in which the tree was planted, but she wanted to adhere her arborist's recommended method of stump removal by compost rather than grinding which would cause damage to the existing hedge.

The Commission felt that the applicant should have all details of the project complete prior to removal of the tree, and have a plan for what to do with the space the tree occupies.

During Public Comment Sue Prindle from the Neighborhood Association of the Back Bay (NABB) stated that her Association supports the suggestion of the garden club. Richard O'Dell, occupant of the neighboring house, shared that he does not have a preference for what happens to the space where the tree is. Laurie Thomas suggested an

understory tree such as a Japanese Maple or Paper Bark Maple, which don't require much sunlight.

In conclusion J. Christiansen initiated the motion to approve taking down the tree, approve delaying the removal of the tree stump with the proviso that within the next 6 months the applicant comes back to the Commission with a plan for what she plans on doing with the space. R. Weintraub seconded the motion. The vote was 7-1 (Yea: JC, JCK, KC, DE, PQ, RW, DS; Nay: ID)

19.181 BB

438 Marlborough Street:

Representatives: Chris Pellegrini, Longwood Properties

Proposed Work: At front garden remove dead tree and plant Rutgers Dogwood tree.

Staff read its recommendation to approve with provisos: finding that the tree is clearly dead and the proposed Dogwood tree is consistent with the Commission's guidelines. The new tree should be a three to four inch caliper tree.

The applicant presented a photo of the tree and stated that the tree is dead, and they want to remove it and grind the stump so they can plant a new one. The applicant spoke with the garden club, and they suggested a Rutgers Dogwood.

Public Comment from Laurie Thomas of the Garden Club of the Back Bay stated that there are a few different types of Rutgers Dogwood trees and that they should select a variety with pink blooms.

In conclusion the application was approved. P. Quinn initiated the motion, and R. Weintraub seconded the motion. The vote was 8-0 (ID, JC, JCK, KC, DE, PQ, RW, DS).

19.173 BB

237 Marlborough Street:

Applicant: Ian Urquhart, Chris Patzke and Peter White.

Proposed Work: At rear deck install planters and lighting; at roof deck install planters, privacy screen and lighting; and at roof install green roof.

Staff read its recommendation to deny without prejudice and approval with provisos, finding: that the proposed privacy screen be denied without prejudice because it is inconsistent with the Commission's guidelines which state that screening should not exceed the railing height. Planters

the height of the railing should be considered instead. The remaining work is consistent with the Commission's guidelines provided that the proposed conduit for the lighting is not exposed.

The applicant presented photos of existing conditions and plans for the proposed work to the Commission, and discussed the proposed planters in depth. The applicant intends to use the planters as a privacy wall on the rooftop, and prune the plants to maintain a height that meets the guidelines. The applicant showed examples of existing privacy screens in the Back Bay and suggested that a glass screen is not inconsistent with the Commission's guidelines because it allows light to pass through and is not opaque. The applicant also proposed different types of materials to be used for a privacy screen.

The Commission in general found the height of the planters to be problematic, but liked the design. The Commission disputed the claim that there is a precedent set that privacy screens have been approved in the Back Bay, and intend on reviewing the submitted properties for potential violations.

Public comment from Elizabeth Lay, a neighbor, stated that the proposed planters are currently on her side of the common wall. She also felt that the planters were too tall. Finally, she voiced her opinion that she did not like the lights on the rear deck, and the representative told her that they are facing only on their own property, they will only be on at night and they shouldn't interfere with her property. A letter that was mailed to the Commission from abutters Drew Carlson and Amy McCarthy stated that they were opposed to the rooftop screen, and their representative Dan Pasquarello shared that they recommend denying the request of a privacy screen above railing height. Sue Prindle from NABB shared that the guidelines are to keep the roof open and plastic isn't an original material so it should not be permitted, and The Commission doesn't support dividing buildings on the roof line.

Following public comment the applicant withdrew the privacy screen from the application.

In conclusion the application was approved with provisos that the lighting be dimmable and approved by staff, and to limit the height of the planters to a height of 42 inches with planting limit to a height of 5 feet. R.

Weintraub initiated the motion, and J. CooperKing seconded the motion. The vote was 8-0 (ID, JC, JCK, KC, DE, PQ, RW, DS).

19.229 BB

229 Beacon Street:

Applicant: Timothy Burke

Representative: Mehkan Jarieni

Proposed Work: Replace existing roof deck and black rubber membrane roof in-kind.

Staff read its recommendation to approve, finding: that although the existing and proposed decks are inconsistent with the guidelines, the existing deck was approved by the Commission in 1997 and is not visible from the street, and moving the deck to the inner edge of the chimneys will significantly reduce its size.

The representative presented images of existing conditions and plans for the proposed work. Public comment was called and there was none.

In conclusion the application was approved. J. CooperKing initiated the motion, and R. Weintraub seconded the motion. The vote was 8-0 (ID, JC, JCK, KC, DE, PQ, RW, DS).

19.228 BB

86 Marlborough Street:

Applicant: Richard Oedel

Proposed Work: At rear elevation replace existing air-conditioning condenser at third-story deck.

Staff read its recommendation to approve the application, finding: that the applicant explored installing the unit on the roof; however this would require replacing the entire existing HVAC system and running piping and conduit along the rear wall of the building up to the roof. The proposed condenser will be minimally visible from the alley, screened by the deck railing and painted to match the masonry wall.

The representative presented photos of existing conditions and plans for the proposed work. He clarified that the type of air conditioner being proposed is the only type they can use without destroying the interior

original fabric. He also stated that it will be painted to match the masonry and there will be plants around it.

The Commission questioned whether or not it was possible for the lines to be ran up the side of the building, but it was determined that it would have a detrimental visual impact to the rear of the building.

Public comment from Sue Prindle from NABB questioned how the neighbors feel about the noise from the machines, and it was determined that the new equipment is more quiet than the previous.

In conclusion the application was approved. I. Demetriades initiated the motion, and R. Weintraub seconded the motion. The vote was 8-0 (ID, JC, JCK, KC, DE, PQ, RW, DS).

19.183 BB

186 Commonwealth Avenue:

Applicant: Joshua Centeio

Proposed Work: At side elevation of rear addition install heat pump unit at existing window opening.

Staff read its recommendation to approve the application, finding: that the proposed area of work is at a concealed location of the building not visible from the alley.

The representative presented photos of existing conditions and plans for proposed work, and clarified that the unit would be placed inside the window.

The Commission questioned if the unit would block the fire escape

In conclusion the application was approved with provisos to be painted a dark color to match the existing wood infill at the window. I. Demetriades initiated the motion, and R. Weintraub seconded the motion. The vote was 8-0 (ID, JC, JCK, KC, DE, PQ, RW, DS).

19.209 BB

327 Commonwealth Avenue:

Applicant: Kamila Widulinski

Proposed Work: Expand existing headhouse at roof and install new window opening at fourth story of rear elevation.

Commissioner D. Sampson recused himself.

Staff read its recommendation to approve the application with provisos, finding: that the proposed work is consistent with the Commission's guidelines; however, the existing non-compliant railings at the deck should be replaced with black iron or steel railings.

The representative presented photos of existing conditions and the proposed plans. She pointed out that the existing bubble skylight will be removed as part of the project. The Commission suggested that there should be a sloped roof over the stairs.

Public comment from Laurie Thomas of the Garden Club of the Back Bay stated that there were potentially 4 trees on the property that were removed without an application, and staff stated that the Commission will pursue that. Sue Prindle from NABB asked if the additional window being installed will align with the others, and the representative stated that it would.

In conclusion the application was approved contingent to adding the black iron steel railings, approve windows as presented, and restudy the slope over the stairs. J. Christiansen initiated the motion, and R. Weintraub seconded the motion. The vote was 7-0 (ID, JC, JCK, KC, DE, PQ, RW).

19.200 BB

29 Commonwealth Avenue:

Applicant: Guy Grassi

Proposed Work: At roof install new headhouse, skylight, roof deck and mechanical equipment.

Staff read its recommendation to approve with provisos, finding: that the visibility of the proposed rooftop additions have been significantly reduced with the exception of the proposed railing at the north (alley) side of the building which should be set back further to reduce its visibility.

The representative presented the photos of the existing conditions and plans for the proposed work to the Commission. In response to past comments, he stated that he will paint the mechanical equipment whatever color the Commission feels most appropriate, and the railings will be black metal.

Public comment from Tom High stated that he felt it was a good application, and suggested to approve with provisos that there is a mockup provided that clearly shows all visibility. Sue Prindle agreed, and inquired about the color of the equipment.

R. Weintraub left the chambers

In conclusion the application was approved contingent upon staff confirmation that the rooftop mock-up reduces the visibility of the railing and equipment. J. Christiansen initiated the motion, and J. CooperKing seconded the motion. The vote was 7-0 (ID, JC, JCK, KC, DE, PQ, DS).

19.230 BB

217 Commonwealth Avenue:

Applicant: Guy Grassi, Mike Ross attorney on the project

Proposed Work: Restoration of exterior including window and door replacement, re-landscaping of front garden, masonry repair and restoration, replacement of roofing and mechanical equipment, removal of fire escapes, installation of rear loading door, and installation of louvers at two rear lower level windows; construction of sunken roof deck, removal of elevator headhouses, installation of new elevator headouses, new stair headhouse, and enlargement of existing headhouse; installation of solar panels; infill western lightwell; and installation of French balconies with doors at existing lightwells, removal of HVAC equipment, and installation of new terrace at east light well.

Staff read its recommendation for denial without prejudice and approval with provisos, finding: that the proposed rooftop equipment and glass screen, which are very visible from Commonwealth Avenue and the alley, should be denied without prejudice. A revised plan reducing the visibility of the mechanical equipment from Commonwealth Avenue and the alley, and omitting the proposed glass screen should be considered. The remaining work is consistent with the Commission's guidelines and

should be approved; however, removing cables and conduit at the rear elevation and adding decorative ironwork over the proposed louvers should be considered.

The representative presented photos of existing conditions and plans for the proposed work. He clarified that they are sinking 1-3 feet into the roofline for the deck, and that it isn't visible from the ground. They are still working out some small details, but may add more compressors. The representative discussed the proposed glass wall roof system at the roof and explained that it is necessary for noise reduction from the roof to the neighborhood.

The Commission clarified details of the application, such as whether or not the proposed deck is visible from the ground, and what its capacity is. I. Demetriades suggests lowering the deck, and J. CooperKing suggested raising the parapet on the other side of the roof as well to reduce visibility of the proposed rooftop additions. Commission members also asked if the proposed glass screen would be seasonal or a permanent installation.

When public comment was opened, K. Connor read 18 letters written in support of the project. An additional 16 members of the public voiced their support for this project. Vicki Smith from NABB stated that she received 100 letters in opposition of this project, and stated that their acoustical study differs greatly from that of Guy Grassi's. Upon request, Grassi has shared his acoustic report; NABB has not shared theirs in return. In addition, 3 members of the public present at the hearing opposed as well. Laurie Thomas from the Garden Club of the Back Bay requested that there is further review for the garden with the representative.

In conclusion, the application was approved with the proviso that no furnishings at the upper front terrace be visible from Commonwealth Avenue, and the roof deck was denied without prejudice. The Commission requested that the applicant return with a new application revising the deck and rooftop equipment. I. Demetriades initiated the motion and J. CooperKing seconded the motion. The vote was 7-0 (ID, JC, JCK, KC, DE, PQ, DS).

ADMINISTRATIVE REVIEW/APPROVAL

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

- 19.191 BB 192 Beacon Street: Replace roof slate, copper trim, and copper gutters and downspouts in-kind.
- 19.417 BB 229 Beacon Street: At rear yard construct new wood fence.
- 19.220 BB 246 Beacon Street: Replace black rubber membrane roof in-kind.
- 19.212 BB 341 Beacon Street: Install roof deck at uppermost roof.
- 19.202 BB 448 Beacon Street: Replace roof slate and copper gutters and downspouts in-kind, and repair and re-point masonry.
- 19.147 BB 483 Beacon Street: Replace black rubber membrane roof in-kind and clad existing head houses in standing-seam copper.
- 19.201 BB 528 Beacon Street: At front façade replace window sill and repair flagpole, install brick pavers at sidewalk, and repair entry steps.
- 19.157 BB 30 Commonwealth Avenue: At front façade replace one first story and one lower-level non-historic aluminum one-over-one windows with wood one-over-one windows, and at rear elevation replace one lower-level non-historic aluminum one-over-one window with a wood one-over-one window.
- 19.231 BB 33 Commonwealth Avenue: At front façade and rear elevation replace twelve second-story non-historic one-over-one wood windows in-kind.
- 19.158 BB 131 Commonwealth Avenue: At front façade replace lower-level non-historic wood double-hung one-over-one window with wood in-swinging wood window matching the appearance of the existing window.
- 19.215 BB 160 Commonwealth Avenue: At roof replace black rubber membrane roofing system in-kind.
- 19.219 BB 160 Commonwealth Avenue: At front façade and side elevation replace two non-historic aluminum sliding doors in-kind.
- 19.159 BB 333 Commonwealth Avenue: At rear elevation replace two one-over-one non-historic wood windows and one non-historic wood egress door in-kind.
- 19.221 BB 349 Commonwealth Avenue: At front façade and rear elevation re-point masonry; and at front façade repair bay window and re-paint sheet metal elements.
- 19.136 BB 362-366 Commonwealth Avenue: At side elevation replace two second-story wood one-over-one windows in-kind.
- 19.125 BB 371 Commonwealth Avenue: At front façade and rear elevation re-point and repair masonry, and replace deteriorated wood window trim in-kind.
- 19.165 BB 315 Dartmouth Street: Construct a deck at lower (library wing) roof (previously approved in 2013); and install ornamental iron cresting at lower and upper (tower) roof parapets.
- 19.186 BB 26 Exeter Street: At front façade's entry replace existing call button and security camera.
- 19.101 BB 29 Fairfield Street: At front façade replace one one-over-one wood window at fourth-floor dormer in-kind.
- 19.185 BB 30 Fairfield Street: At front façade's entry replace existing call button and security camera.
- 19.213 BB 10 Gloucester Street: At front façade install new window security bars at first story and lower level.
- 19.236 BB 49 Gloucester Street: Repoint masonry and repair chimney.

- 19.225 BB 168 Marlborough Street: At front façade replace three, first-story and three, lower-level non-historic wood one-over-one windows in-kind; and at rear elevation replace two, first-story non-historic wood one-over-one windows in-kind, one, first-story and two, lower-level non-historic wood two-over-two windows in-kind, and one first-story non-historic wood one-over-one window with a wood two-over-two window.
- 19.410 BB 142 Marlborough Street: At roof replace black rubber membrane roof in-kind and remove and rebuild roof deck per plans approved by the BBAC in 2001.
- 19.408 BB 197 Marlborough Street: At front garden repair curbing.
- 19.153 BB 313 Marlborough Street: At front façade replace four third-story wood one-over-one windows in-kind.
- 19.418 BB 341-343 Marlborough Street: Re-paint masonry portions of building to match existing colors.
- 19.178 BB 351 Marlborough Street: Replace black rubber membrane roof and existing roof deck in-kind.
- 19.127 BB 363 Marlborough Street: At roof deck replace deteriorated decking and repaint railings.
- 19.204 BB 436 Marlborough Street: At front façade repair entry steps and entry door, and install new hardware at entry door.
- 19.205 BB 38 Newbury Street: At front façade install temporary construction barrier and replace rooftop HVAC unit.
- 19.143 BB 117 Newbury Street: At front façade repair sidewalk and masonry.
- 19.226 BB 173 Newbury Street: At rear elevation restore three lower level windows and install mechanical louver at top sash of two windows.
- 19.232 BB 211 Newbury Street: At front façade install new wall sign at lower level retail space.
- 19.166 BB 333 Newbury Street: At front façade replace in-kind deteriorated wood at third-story bay window and repair existing windows.
- 19.190 BB 333 Newbury Street: At front façade install blade sign on existing bracket.

In conclusion the applications were approved. I. Demetriades initiated the motion and K. Connor seconded the motion. The vote was 6-0-1 (Yea: ID, JC, KC, DE, PQ, DS; Nay: 0; Recused JCK).

RATIFICATION OF THE 8/8/2018 PUBLIC HEARING MINUTES

The minutes were approved as presented. J. Christiansen the motion and D. Eisen seconded the motion. The vote was 7-0 (ID, JC, JCK, KC, DE, PQ, DS).

ANNUAL MEETING – ELECTION OF OFFICERS AND APPOINTMENT OF VIOLATIONS COMMITTEE

The required quorum of Commissioners was not present for the election of officers to take place. Meeting rescheduled for October 10, 2018.

STAFF UPDATES

Staff reported that the preservation planner for Beacon Hill, Aberdeen and St. Botolph has resigned and that the job opening will soon be posted.

8:55 PM Commissioner Connor adjourned the public hearing.