BEACON HILL ARCHITECTURAL COMMISSION
Public Hearing Minutes
Boston City Hall, Piemonte Room
Boston, MA, 02201

April 16, 2020

Commissioners Present: Arian Allen, Matthew Blumenthal, Joel Pierce, Alice Richmond, Miguel Rosales, Danielle Santos, P.T. Vineburgh
Staff Present: Nicholas Armata, Senior Preservation Planner, Gabriella Amore, Preservation Assistant, Joseph Cornish; Director of Design Review

5:10 Commissioner Rosales called the public hearing to order.

I. VIOLATIONS

APP # 20.704 BH 5 West Cedar Street
Applicant: Anne Stetson
Proposed Work: Ratification of unapproved “private way” signage.

The applicant submitted an application to rectify the violations of two "No Trespassing" signs at the top and bottom of Acorn Street which is classified by the city as a private way. The representative, Nonnie Burnes, argued that tourists and professional photographers have essentially taken over the street and are becoming burdensome to the property owners. Ms. Burnes indicated that they would follow their recommendations. This was the first attempt at curbing such behavior. Ms. Burnes, also indicated that there has been some version of the proposed signage for as long as anyone can remember. This signage would not exclude neighborhood residents, as it was argued that there is an easement of access for them.

The Commissioners discussed the proposal and whether it was appropriate for the street. The signage itself was made from similar materials and dimensions as the previous signage but instead of one sign at each end of the street there were now two. The Commission said that one signage would be suitable for the location, and the other sign should be removed. The Commission also requested for any holes in the mortar joints and or damage to the brick as the result of mounting the sign should be corrected.

During public comment, the Beacon Hill Civic Association expressed a strong concern that this proposal would prohibit neighborhood residents from using this street as an access point between West Cedar Street and Willow Street. The Civic Association also indicated that installing such signage would lead to further
measures to block out the public such as barriers and a gate. The Civic association also argued that the signage does not comply with the City Zoning code and thus, non-compliant with the BHAC signage guidelines.

In conclusion, the application was approved with the following provisos:

- That the single "private way" signage may remain, the photography sign must be removed.
- That all hardware that existed to affix the "photography" sign from the wall must be removed.
- When the "photography" sign is removed, the holes where the sign was affixed to the masonry must be filled in with mortar that matches the surrounding mortar.
  - If the signage was installed into the brick face, the brick must be repaired/replaced.
- Documentation that the above work has been completed should be submitted to staff in order to rescind the violation.

Commissioner Rosales motioned to approve the application, Commissioner Vineburgh seconded the motion. The vote was 5-0 (AA, JP, MR, DS, PV).

**AFFIRMATIVE:** MO: Arian Allen*, BHCA: Joel Pierce*, HNE: Miguel Rosales*,
BSA: Danielle Santos*, GBREB: P.T. Vineburgh*

**NEGATIVE:** None

**ABSTAIN:** BHCA Matthew Blumenthal, MO: Alice Richmond

*Indicates vote which was counted towards the final decision based on participation. For more information, please refer to the enabling legislation online at https://www.boston.gov/historic-district/beacon-hill-architectural-district

VIO # 20.014 BH 4 Pinckney Street
Applicant: Sandy Steele
Proposed Work: Ratification of unapproved work at the rear of the property and an unapproved shoe scraper

The representative for the property owner, Sandy Steele, indicated that they have received several violations related to this property. The old shoe scraper and granite block at the front of the property, and several items at the rear of the structure that is visible from Joy Street through an alley gate. Those items include new fencing, a television, and two portions of a deck, a new, painted partition wall, new fire stairs and concrete landing. The representative did not submit an application to legalize the items.

The Commission felt that most of the violations were not compliant with the guidelines and thus inappropriate for the district. The granite at the front steps and replacement shoe scraper should be removed and restored to its original condition.
During public comment there were a number of neighboring abutters who wrote in and attended the hearing who expressed a great deal of concern for these projects. Furthering this concern, the residents indicated that the project did not go through the proper city process and thus an illegal build.

In conclusion, the Commission decided that all of the listed work items must be removed and restored to their original condition. Those work items include:

- Shoe scraper and granite slab at the front
- Wall mounted TV at rear
- Privacy fence
- Fire stairs
- Two balconies visible from Joy Street
- Concreate landing
- Extended, painted privacy fence at the upper level.*

*Later discovered to be property of the adjacent property.

If the applicant wishes to legalize these items, an application must be submitted after working with staff to accommodate the Commission recommendations.

Commissioner Pierce motioned to deny the application, Commissioner Allen seconded the motion. The vote was 7-0 (AA, MB, JP, AR, MR, DS, PV).

**NEGATIVE:** None  
**ABSTAIN:** None

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APP # 20.927 BH 54 Pinckney Street
Applicant: John Corey
Proposed Work: Ratification of unapproved work at front façade including crack repair in lintel, cracked sills, step crack. Replace exterior lantern, doorbell. Paint front Door.

Commissioner Rosales Recused himself from the vote.

The applicant, John Corey, presented the details to the violation and had submitted an application to rectify the design. The applicant explained that there was a miscommunication with his contractor, and that he was willing to make any necessary updates to the project to make it legal. A stop work order was currently in place that was issued by BHAC staff.

The Commission discussed whether the items were appropriate and saw no issues related to the project.

During public comment there were several comments that were made that were not relevant to the decision at hand. In conclusion the application was approved as submitted.

Commissioner Vineburgh motioned to approve the application, Commissioner Pierce seconded the motion. The vote was 4-2-1 (AA, MB, JP, AR, MR, DS, PV).

**AFFIRMATIVE:** MO: Arian Allen*, BHCA: Joel Pierce*, GBREB: P.T. Vineburgh*, BHCA: Matthew Blumenthal,
**NEGATIVE:** BSA: D. Santos*, MO: A. Richmond **ABSTAIN:** HNE: M. Rosales*

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II. DESIGN REVIEW

APP # 20.740 BH 35 Beacon Street:
Applicant: Jeremy Kindall; New England Window Works
Proposed Work: At front façade level four, remove six existing storm windows and replace with new ProVia storms. Fabricate and install wood sills to replace the existing deteriorated sills in kind.

The applicant presented the details of the project which was originally on the administrative review section of the February hearing. The applicant was installing new storm windows and making slight adjustments to the lower sill in order to make the storm windows fit properly. There will be no difference visible from the exterior of the structure.

The Commission discussed some concern over the storm windows, and how they may detract from the design of the overall façade. The Commission struggled to understand how the new windows would fit into the openings and felt that professional window drawings were necessary in order to approve the project.

During public comment there was some concern over pushback on storm windows, as it has been decided in the preservation profession, as well as Beacon Hill, that they were necessary to preserve historic windows.

In conclusion the application was approved with the provisos that professional shop drawings were to be submitted to staff for final approval.

Commissioner Vineburgh motioned to approve the application, Commissioner Pierce seconded the motion. The vote was 7-0-0 (AA, MB, JP, AR, MR, DS, PV).


**NEGATIVE:** None

**ABSTAIN:** None

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10 Charles River Square
Applicant: Anthony Griseto
Proposed Work: Repaint front door. At rear façade level 1 through 5, replace five (total), wood, 6 over 6 windows with five, aluminum clad, 6 over 6 windows. (See additional items in administrative review).

The Applicant, Anthony Griseto of Pella Windows and Doors presented the details of the project. The windows at the rear of the structure are slightly visible from an oblique angle and therefore in the purview of the Commission. As a result, the guidelines require visible windows to be true divided light, wood windows. The applicant was asking for an exception of simulated divided light aluminum clad windows. Additionally, the front door is to be painted red, visible from a pedestrian pathway along Revere Street (Public Street) was also being applied for.

The Commission discussed the details of the project and whether it was ok to approve aluminum clad windows. It was decided that there was only a sliver of the actual window visible through an alley, that they were approvable. The Commission then discussed the door color and whether any of the other doors were painted this color. It was decided that since there were other doors that were a similar color, that the red color could be approved but with a dull finish. These finish colors should be submitted to staff for final approval.

During public comment, the civic association requested for the windows to adhere to the guidelines of the district and that the color of the door has a different finish.

In conclusion the application was approve with the provisos that the front windows are true divided light, wood windows and that the front door is painted a red with a matte finish. A color sample should be submitted to staff for final approval.

Commissioner Vineburgh motioned to approve the application, Commissioner Richmond seconded the motion. The vote was 7-0-0 (AA, MB, JP, AR, MR, DS, PV).


**NEGATIVE:** None
**ABSTAIN:** None

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APP # 20.789 BH 52 Beacon Street (Continued from 2/2020)
APPROVED AS SUBMITTED 7-0 (AA, MB, JP, AR, MR, PV, DS)
Applicant: John Day
Proposed Work: Install sliding glass access hatch with copper clad end walls.

The applicant presented the updated details of the project, which provided additional alternatives for the hatch. These alternatives were in addition to the previous version that was presented at the hearing in February. The alternatives were lower in profile and less visible from Boston Common and Beacon Street.

The Commission discussed the options and agreed that the option with the angled entrance and low profile would be the best alternative to the original option.

During public comment members of the public expressed concern over the visibility. In conclusion, the application was approved with the provisos that the option with the slanted surface would be the approved option. Details and shop drawings are to be submitted to staff for final approval.

Commissioner Vineburgh motioned to approve the application, Commissioner Richmond seconded the motion. The vote was 7-0-0 (AA, MB, JP, AR, MR, DS, and PV).

   **AFFIRMATIVE:** MO: Arian Allen*, BHCA: Joel Pierce*, HNE: M. Rosales*, BSA: D. Santos*,
   GBREB: P.T. Vineburgh*, BHCA: Matthew Blumenthal, MO: A. Richmond
   **NEGATIVE:** None  **ABSTAIN:** None

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APP # 20.868 BH 20 (16) Beacon Street
Applicant: Cara Forcellati; Boston Bar Association
Proposed Work: Install small vent for new boiler at front façade.

The applicant explained the reasoning for placing a vent on the front of the property. The building is in the process of updating their heating systems and needed a place for the furnace to draw from. The applicant explored locations with staff that would be less visible; however none of them were viable options. Previously, the heater was vented through the chimney, but according to the contractor, this was no longer an option.
The Commission discussed the project, and was very concerned regarding the location because the building is one of the oldest and most prominent buildings in the district. The location would also obstruct the memorial plaque on the front of the structure. The Commission also struggled to understand why the other locations were not viable.

During public comment, the Civic Association did not recommend such a project and suggested an alternative location on locations that were not as prominent.

In conclusion, the application was denied without prejudice.

**Commissioner Rosales motioned to approve the application, Commissioner Pierce seconded the motion. The vote was 7-0-0 (AA, MB, JP, AR, MR, DS, and PV).**

**APP # 20.783 BH 73 Mount Vernon Street**
Applicant: Elise Nash
Proposed Work: At front yard, install seasonal planter, add stone garden bench, granite pavers, pea stone path.

The applicant returned to the commission after they requested additional research for the project at the last hearing. The applicant presented photographs of precedent planters as well as lighting, and new, more appropriate bench styles.

The Commission thought that the additional options for the lighting and planters were significant improvements since the last hearing, where the peastone walk and bench landing was approved. The Commission decided that

There was no public comment. In conclusion the application was approved as submitted with the presented “Westland Bench” is the option chosen by the Commission to be installed and that the lighting fixtures are both a bronze color.

**Commissioner Richmond motioned to approve the application, Commissioner Blumenthal seconded the motion. The vote was 7-0-0 (AA, MB, JP, AR, MR, and PV). D. Santos left the hearing and did not vote.**

**AFFIRMATIVE:** MO: Arian Allen*, BHCA: Joel Pierce*, HNE: M. Rosales*,
GBREB: P.T. Vineburgh*, BHCA: Matthew Blumenthal, MO: A. Richmond

**NEGATIVE:** None
**ABSTAIN:** None

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APP # 20.833 BH 17A Branch Street
APPROVED W/ PROVISOS 7-0 (AA, MB, JP, AR, MR, PV, DS)
Applicant: James Fay
Proposed Work: Install light fixture to the right of the main door.

The applicant presented the details of the project which consisted of adding a light fixture near a
doors facing Branch Street. The light was needed because the area is very dark, and a recent
violation notice requiring the applicant to remove the unapproved flood lights, which were acted
upon.

The Commission thought that the proposed lighting was suitable, but there was some concern
that the position would extend from the wall too much. The applicant did not have the dimensions
for the proposed.

During public comment, the civic association expressed the same sentiment that the light fixture
stuck out too far on the street.

In conclusion, the application was approved with the provisos that the applicant submit shop
drawings, including dimensions, are to be submitted to staff for final approval.

Commissioner Vineburgh motioned to approve the application, Commissioner
Pierce seconded the motion. The vote was 7-0-0 (AA, MB, JP, AR, MR, and PV).
D. Santos left the hearing and did not vote.

**AFFIRMATIVE:** MO: Arian Allen*, BHCA: Joel Pierce*, HNE: M. Rosales*,
GBREB: P.T. Vineburgh*, BHCA: Matthew Blumenthal, MO: A. Richmond
**NEGATIVE:** None **ABSTAIN:** None

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the enabling legislation online at https://www.boston.gov/historic-district/beacon-hill-architectural-district

APP # 20.863 BH 99 Pinckney Street
APPROVED W/ PROVISOS 7-0 (AA, MB, JP, AR, MR, PV, DS)
Applicant: Bryan Driscoll
Proposed Work: Remove and replace roof deck in the same dimensions with a new code compliant
handrail (See Additional Items in Administrative Review).

The applicant provided the details as to the need for removing the deck, which was to repair the
roof underneath. The applicant provided the documentation of a previous approval for the deck.
The plan was to reinstall the deck in the exact location as it was installed before.
The Commission discussed the approvability of the deck, because it was significantly visible from multiple angles in the neighborhood and struggled to understand the reasoning behind the decision to approve. At the recommendation of staff, the Commission decided they would approve the deck but without the 2 overhangs over the dormer and with a fascia board painted to shield the view of the underpinnings.

During the public comment period, the civic association stressed whether the deck should ever be reinstalled, considering the visibility.

In conclusion, the application was approved with the provisos that once the roof deck is reinstalled, it will be reduced in size by eliminating the two outcroppings above the dormer level windows at the rear of the structure. A fascia board is to be installed under the roof deck at the rear so as to obscure the deck support infrastructure. The fascia board is to be made from wood, and painted to match the color of the deck. Updated drawings of the new deck should be submitted to staff for final approval.

**Commissioner Vineburgh motioned to approve the application, Commissioner Blumenthal seconded the motion. The vote was 7-0-0 (AA, MB, JP, AR, MR, and PV). D. Santos left the hearing and did not vote.**


**NEGATIVE:** None

**ABSTAIN:** None

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**APP # 20.881 BH 104 Mount Vernon Street**

**APPROVED W/ PROVISOS 7-0 (AA, MB, JP, AR, MR, PV, DS)**

Applicant: Brigid Williams; Hickox Williams

Proposed Work: Rebuild front brick wall, restore to include a granite foundation veneer that existed historically, install new handrail. Recast stone sills at side façade

The applicant presented the details of the project which consists of restoring the front lower level of the structure with granite veneer based on historic evidence and documentation, the applicant also wished to add a hand rail leading up to their front door. The design of the hand rail was creating using area examples.

The Commission questioned whether it was necessary to add granite to the lower level due to a concern that the veneer would not look original. Additionally, the veneer return showed the true thickness of the granite and might detract from the overall look of the historic architecture. Regarding the hand rail; the commissioners thought that the design was fine, but there should be a reduction in the amount of spindles that are drilled into the granite steps.
During public comment the Civic Association addressed their issues with project.

In conclusion the Commission voted to approve your application with the provisos that the hand rail is installed with a reduced amount of spindles and that the granite veneer is significantly thicker than originally proposed. Details are to be submitted to staff for final approval.

Commissioner Rosales motioned to approve the application, Commissioner Blumenthal seconded the motion. The vote was 7-0-0 (AA, MB, JP, AR, MR, and PV). D. Santos left the hearing and did not vote.


**NEGATIVE:** None **ABSTAIN:** None

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APP # 20.965 BH 10.5 Beacon Street

**APPROVED W/ PROVISOS 7-0 (AA, MB, JP, AR, MR, PV, DS)**

Applicant: Matthew Bronski P.E; Simpson, Gumpertz & Heger

Proposed Work: Extensive façade restoration at north (Beacon Street) façade and terrace.

The applicant presented extensive details as to how the front of the property will be restored. The structure (The Boston Antheneum) suffered from extensive weather damage and insensitive repairs over the years and was badly in need of repairs. The presentation documented the areas of the façade that needed replacement and/or restoration. The documents also showed the rails which were being replaced with historically appropriate elements.

The Commission was very impressed with the extensive documentation of the project and emphasized the importance of this structure for the community. The Commission did question some of the renderings of the railings and whether they were presented as too heavy. It was later decided that it was the rendering that was giving that perception.

During public comment, the civic association expressed their thoughts on the project.

In conclusion, the application was approved with the provisos that mock-ups are installed for all of the masonry changes and approved by staff and that the balusters match the typical baluster thickness and dimensions.
Commissioner Vineburgh motioned to approve the application, Commissioner Richmond seconded the motion. The vote was 7-0-0 (AA, MB, JP, AR, MR, and PV). D. Santos left the hearing and did not vote.


**NEGATIVE:** None

**ABSTAIN:** None

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APP # 20.967 BH 10.5 Beacon Street

**APPROVED AS SUBMITTED 7-0 (AA, MB, JP, AR, MR, PV, DS)**

Applicant: Shwartz Silver Architects

Proposed Work: Small alterations to front bronze doors and interior leather doors.

The applicant provided the details of the project which consisted of restoring/ resetting the bronze and leather doors at the front façade. The applicant indicated that the leatherette doors were not original and were likely installed sometime at the beginning of the twentieth century. The restoration project would involve stripping and removing/replacing the leatherette as well as set the leatherette with new fasteners.

The Commission questioned the scope of the project, and asked questions regarding the upper transom, the operability of each of the panels and the positioning of the door in the doorway.

During public comment, the civic association expressed their thoughts on the project.

In conclusion, the application was approved as submitted.

Commissioner Richmond motioned to approve the application, Commissioner Blumenthal seconded the motion. The vote was 7-0-0 (AA, MB, JP, AR, MR, and PV). D. Santos left the hearing and did not vote.


**NEGATIVE:** None

**ABSTAIN:** None

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III. RATIFICATION OF 2/20/2020 PUBLIC HEARING MINUTES & 1/15/2020 PUBLIC SUBCOMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

There was no vote due to questions the chair had on procedure.

IV. ADVISORY REVIEW

2 Beaver Place presented their proposal for opening a previously bricked up window and the possibility of adding a gate in the brick garden wall.

V. ADMINISTRATIVE REVIEW/APPROVAL: In order to expedite the review process, the commission has delegated the approval of certain work items, such as those involving ordinary maintenance and repair, restoration or replacement, or which otherwise have a minimal impact on a building's appearance, to commission staff pending ratification at its monthly public hearing. Having been identified as meeting these eligibility criteria and all applicable guidelines, the following applications will be approved at this hearing:

► Applicants whose projects are listed under this heading NEED NOT APPEAR at the hearing. Following the hearing, you will be issued a Determination Sheet to present at the Inspectional Services Department (1010 Massachusetts Avenue) as proof of project approval when applying for permits. ISD personnel will send an electronic copy of your building-permit application to the commission staff for review. (To avoid potential confusion, the text of your building-permit application should be consistent with the project description given below.) Commission staff will accordingly authorize the execution of the work, attaching any applicable provisos, reflecting the relevant guidelines and precedents.

► PLEASE NOTE THAT FOLLOWING ISSUANCE OF THE DETERMINATION SHEET NO FURTHER CORRESPONDENCE WILL BE ISSUED FOR THE APPLICATIONS LISTED BELOW. The electronic building-permit application as annotated by commission staff will constitute your Certificate of Appropriateness; this will be valid for one year from the date of the hearing. The applicant is required to notify the commission of any project changes; failure to do so may affect the status of the approval.

► If you have any questions not addressed by the above information, please contact staff at 617.635.3850 or BeaconHillAC@boston.gov Thank you.

Commissioner Vineburgh motioned to approve the application, Commissioner Pierce seconded the motion. The vote was 4-0-1 (MB, JP, MR, and PV). A. Richmond abstained from the vote. D. Santos and A. Allen left the hearing and did not vote.
AFFIRMATIVE: MO: BHCA: Joel Pierce*, HNE: M. Rosales*,
BHCA: Matthew Blumenthal:
NEGATIVE: None ABSTAIN: MO: A. Richmond

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APP # 20.880 BH 48 Beacon Street: At right side façade, repoint masonry above windows and door, install flashing above windows and door, remove brick bulge on 11th floor, scrape and repaint windows. Replace deteriorated wood in kind.

APP # 20.831 BH 77 Charles Street: At front façade, restore brownstone brackets at gutter line, rebuild brickwork at fire escape braces, cut and point brick masonry joints.

APP # 20.825 BH 137 Charles Street: At front façade, repair brick façade in kind.

APP # 20.860 BH 10 Charles River Square: At front façade levels one, two, and three, replace five, wood, 6 over 6 windows with five, wood, 6 over 6 windows (See Additional Items in Design Review).

APP # 20.881 BH 50 Chestnut Street: At dormer level, front façade, replace two, 6 over 6, simulated divided lite, wood windows and at rear façade dormer level, replace four, simulated, 6 over 6, wood windows with six, 6 over 6, wood, true divided light windows.

APP # 20.851 BH 68 Chestnut Street: Repair and repoint right side and chimney of 68 Chestnut Street with mortar type N.

APP # 20.872 BH 11 Hancock Street: At front façade, spot repoint brick and repair in kind. Replace deteriorated trim in kind. Replace gutter in kind.

APP # 20.920 BH 129 Mount Vernon Street: Repoint right façade with mortar 6-7 Parts Sand, 1-2 Parts Portland, 1-2 Parts Lime.

APP # 20.863 BH 99 Pinckney Street: Remove and replace front and rear slate roof and dormer cheek wall in kind. Replace copper flashing in kind, cut and repoint left and right side rising wall, and rear façade using mortar type N. Repaint front shutters and window sash and trim in kind with BM Aura, Grand Entrance Black (See Additional Items in Design review).

APP # 20.899 BH 112 Pinckney Street: At front façade level 1, replace three, wood 6 over 1, windows with three, 6 over 1, wood, true divided light windows

APP # 20.864 BH 3 Spruce Street: Repoint front and side facades using mortar type N. Repair deteriorated wood to match existing.
APP # 20.881 BH 9 Temple Street At front façade, level two replace three 6 over 6 wood replacement windows and storm windows, with three 6 over 6 wood windows, no storm windows.

VI. Staff Updates

VII. Adjorn – 9:30 P.M.

Commissioner Rosales motioned to approve the application, Commissioner Pierce seconded the motion. The vote was 6-0-0 (AA, MB, JP, AR, MR, and). D. Santos and P. Vineburgh left the hearing and did not vote.


NEGATIVE: None ABSTAIN: None

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BEACON HILL ARCHITECTURAL COMMISSION
Members: MO: Arian Allen, BHCA: Joel Pierce, HNE: Miguel Rosales, BSA: Danielle Santos, GBREB: P.T. Vineburgh,
Alternates: MO: Alice Richmond, BHCA Matthew Blumenthal, HNE: Vacancy, BSA: Wen Wen, GBREB: Vacancy