



**BACK BAY ARCHITECTURAL COMMISSION
PUBLIC HEARING/ MEETING MINUTES**

Held virtually via Zoom

August 9, 2023

Commissioners Present: John Christiansen, David Eisen, Zsuzsanna Gaspar, Tom High, Ethel MacLeod, and Robert Weintraub.

Commissioners Absent: Anddie Chan-Patera, Kathleen Connor, Iphigenia Demetriades, Tanvi Nayar, and David Sampson.

Staff Present: Joseph Cornish, Director of Design Review.

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

5:00 PM: Commissioner Robert Weintraub called the public hearing to order. He 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 applications. He also briefly explained how to participate in the online hearing.

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

I. DESIGN REVIEW

APP # 24.0069 BB

ADDRESS: 149 Newbury Street

Applicant: Whitney Robinette

Proposed Work: At rear elevation screen unapproved air compressors at ground level.

Project Representatives: Whitney Robinette, Peter Habib, and Keith O'Hearn were the project representatives.

The Commissioners reviewed a presentation consisting of photos of existing conditions and plans for the proposed work.

Discussion Topics: The Commissioners discussed the current details of the equipment currently located at the roof, and the distance between the roof and the first-story spaces that need conditioning. They also asked why the ground level equipment was installed without the prior review and approval of the commission.

Public Comment: Serge Savard, Neighborhood Association of the Back Bay (NABB), commented that there are other systems available that can be located on the roof instead of having equipment at the ground level. Laurie Thomas and Alan Helms both expressed concern about the status of the trees that have been planted as part of this project.



Commissioner T High motioned to continue the hearing. Commissioner J Christiansen seconded the motion. The vote was 6-0 (Y: JC, DE, ZG, TH, EM, RW) (N: None).

- The application is continued, with the proviso that the applicant is to explore other HVAC systems that can be placed on the roof without installing piping or conduit to the exterior of the building, and is return to the Commission no later than the October hearing. If the applicant identifies a solution that complies with the guidelines it can be approved administratively. However, if the applicant concludes that there is no feasible alternative, then the application must come back to the Commission for action, including any proposal for screening.

APP # 24.0062 BB

ADDRESS: 447 Marlborough Street

Applicant: Harrison Levitsky

Proposed Work: At front garden remove Ailanthus tree.

Project Representative: Harrison Levitsky was the project representative.

The Commissioners reviewed a presentation consisting of photos of existing conditions and an arborist's report.

Discussion Topics: The Commissioners agreed that the tree had to be removed and asked for input from the Garden Club of the Back Bay on a replacement tree.

Public Comment: Laurie Thomas and Margaret Pokorny, Garden Club of the Back Bay, explained that the small size of the front garden and existence of the tree stump prevent the planting of a replacement tree, and there is not an area in the rear of building where a tree can be planted. There also does not seem to be an area to plant a street tree at the front of the building.

Commissioner J Christiansen motioned to approve the application. Commissioner E MacLeod seconded the motion. The vote was 6-0 (Y: JC, DE, ZG, TH, EM, RW) (N: None)

II. ADMINISTRATIVE REVIEW/ APPROVAL

24.0089 BB **Arlington Street:** Realignment of Arlington Street at Beacon Street and Mugar Way, installation of new crosswalk at Commonwealth Avenue Mall, and reconstruct curb ramp at Marlborough Street.

~~**24.0060 BB** **179 Beacon Street:** Remove roof deck; replace rubber roofing, slate, copper gutter and trim in-kind; and repair masonry. **WITHDRAWN BY STAFF**~~

23.1119 BB **280 Beacon Street:** Replace eleven third-story windows with historically appropriate wood windows, and at rear elevation install vent at location of former vent opening.



- 24.0061 BB** **282 Beacon Street:** Repoint masonry, replace deteriorated window trim in-kind, repaint trim.
- 24.0046 BB** **334 Beacon Street:** Replace three first story one-over-one wood windows in-kind.
- 23.1209 BB** **388 Beacon Street:** Replace rubber membrane roofing in-kind.
- 24.0034 BB** **825 Boylston Street:** At front façade, replace broken glass panel in-kind.
- 24.0081 BB** **907 Boylston Street:** At front façade, replace existing wall sign, blade sign and awning.
- 24.0086 BB** **131 Commonwealth Avenue:** Replace all existing windows with historically appropriate wood windows.
- 24.0001 BB** **213 Commonwealth Avenue:** Repair masonry and repaint windows.
- 24.0053 BB** **239 Commonwealth Avenue:** At side elevation replace seventh-story non-historic aluminum window unit with wood window unit.
- 24.0101 BB** **332 Commonwealth Avenue:** At front façade replace deteriorated slate and wood trim at Mansard roof in-kind.
- 24.0112 BB** **362 Commonwealth Avenue:** At front façade replace three first-story non-historic aluminum windows with historically appropriate wood windows.
- 24.0002 BB** **22 Marlborough Street:** At roof replace rubber membrane roofing in-kind.
- 24.0014 BB** **22 Marlborough Street, Unit 7:** At roof replace existing roof deck in-kind.
- 24.0015 BB** **22 Marlborough Street, Unit 8:** At roof replace existing roof deck in-kind.
- 23.1032 BB** **66 Marlborough Street:** Replace existing wood windows and doors in-kind.
- 24.0113 BB** **66 Marlborough Street:** Clean and repoint masonry, replace sealants, install new roofing system above window well systems, and repair copper panels.
- 24.0105 BB** **103 Marlborough Street:** At rear Mansard roof replace slate in-kind.



- 24.0075 BB** **337 Marlborough Street:** At front façade replace deteriorated slate and deteriorated wood elements in-kind.
- 24.0065 BB** **353 Marlborough Street:** At front façade repair existing façade elements and replace in-kind as necessary.
- 24.0054 BB** **440 Marlborough Street:** At rear elevation repair existing fire escape.
- 24.0077 BB** **119 Newbury Street:** At front façade reorient existing handicapped access ramp.
- 24.0058 BB** **123 Newbury Street:** At front façade install temporary signage at first story retail space.
- 24.0026 BB** **174 Newbury Street:** At front façade replace wall signage at first story retail space.
- 23.1082 BB** **177 Newbury Street:** At front façade remove existing non-historic fencing and replace in limited areas.
- 23.1083 BB** **179 Newbury Street:** At front façade replace wall signage.
- 24.0038 BB** **222 Newbury Street:** At front façade replace wall sign at lower retail space.
- 23.1207 BB** **230 Newbury Street:** At front façade replace signage.
- 24.0006 BB** **343 Newbury Street:** At front façade replace existing signage.

Commissioner J Christiansen motioned to approve the administrative review items. Commissioner T High seconded the motion. The vote was 6-0 (Y: JC, DE, ZG, TH, EM, RW) (N: None).

6:00pm – Commissioner E MacLeod left the hearing.

III. Advisory Review

415 Newbury Street: Demolish existing addition and develop 2 residential buildings at 415 Newbury Street. Building 1 is a 3-story approximately 32,000 sf residential building with below grade parking. Building 2 is an 11-story approximately 123,000 sf mixed use building attached to the existing Harvard Club building located at 374 Commonwealth Ave. The mixed uses include residential and Harvard Club athletic facilities.

Project Representatives: Alfred Wojciechowski, Daniel Gelormini and William Young were the project representatives.



The Commissioners reviewed a presentation consisting of photos of existing conditions and plans for the proposed work.

Discussion Topics: The Commissioners were pleased with the design of the proposed three-story building; however, they felt that the June 2023 design of the eleven-story building was more appropriate and more cohesive than the proposed design. Commissioners agreed that the building height in the presented design is over emphasized, and that the view and experience of the building while driving into Boston should be considered. Commissioners asked to see more details showing the north elevation of the three-story building,

Public Comment: Sean Reagan of Windsor Place spoke in support of the project and commended the design team for its public outreach. Margaret Pokorny, Garden Club of the Back Bay, spoke in favor of the proposed street trees and asked that more thought be given to the proposed green wall and sculpture park area. John Tankard commented on his preference for the June 2023 design, and he suggested that the cornice of the proposed three-story building wrap around the building. Sue Prindle, Neighborhood Association of the Back Bay (NABB), expressed concern about the height of the eleven-story building in relationship to the district, and questioned the appropriateness of the area east of the building proposed to display artwork.

IV. Minutes

Ratification of 7/12/2023 Public Hearing Minutes

Commissioner T High motioned to approve the 7/12/2023 public hearing minutes. Commissioner J Christiansen seconded the motion. The vote was 4-0-1 (Y: JC, ZG, TH, RW) (N: None) (ABS: DE)

V. Adjourn – 6:41 PM

Commissioner T High motion to adjourn the hearing. Commissioner J Christiansen seconded the motion. The vote was 5-0 (Y: JC, DE, ZG, TH, RW) (N: None).