



**BACK BAY ARCHITECTURAL DISTRICT
PUBLIC HEARING MINUTES**

Boston City Hall Boston, MA, 02201

Held virtually via Zoom

OCTOBER 11, 2023

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT: Kathleen Connor, John Christiansen, Thomas High, Zsuzsanna Gaspar, David Eisen, Anddie Chan-Patera. Tanvi Nayar, Ethel MacLeod.

COMMISSIONERS ABSENT: Kenneth Tutunjian, David Sampson. Lisa Saunders, Iphigenia Demetriades, Robert Weintraub.

STAFF PRESENT: Joseph Cornish, Director of Design Review; Sarah Lawton, Preservation Assistant.

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

5:01PM: Commissioner Connor called the public hearing to order. She 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. She also briefly explained how to participate in the online hearing. There were no members of the press present.

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

I. DESIGN REVIEW

APP # 24.0069 BB

ADDRESS: 149 Newbury Street

Applicant: Whitney Robinette

Proposed Work: *(Continued from 8/9/2023)*: At rear elevation screen unapproved air compressors at ground level.

PROJECT REPRESENTATIVES: Whitney Robinette, Dennis Quilty, Peter Habib, and Keith O'Hare were the project representatives. They presented the proposed scope of work to the Commission, which includes an overview of the proposed work and the existing conditions of the site.

DOCUMENTS PRESENTED: Documents presented include existing condition images, unit specifications, vantage point images, distance calculations, floor plans, side elevations, alternative studies, presentation drawings of the proposed work.



DISCUSSION TOPICS (BRIEF): Discussion topics included the existing conditions of the building, the two existing units on the rear of the building at the ground level, and the challenges associated with mechanical design of the building.

COMMISSIONER COMMENTS AND QUESTIONS: During the Commissioner Comment and discussion period, the following topics were discussed in greater detail: the visual impact of the proposed plan and the feasibility of allowing the existing mechanical units to remain at the rear of the building with screening. The possibility of allowing the mechanical units to be relocated to either a tenant unit, the current rooftop mechanical penthouse, the trash enclosure, inside the building, or behind the garden wall near Dartmouth was also discussed.

PUBLIC COMMENT: During the public comment period, the following individuals spoke:

Jaqueline Yessian - Spoke in favor of developers adhering to the design review process and coming before the BBAC to receive approval before completing their proposed work.

Serge Savard - Co-Chair of the Neighborhood Association of the Back Bay, expressed his concern about the precedent and message this case will send to developers who do not seek approval from the commission and proceed with their proposed work.

Sue Prindle- Spoke in support of option eight and would encourage the commissioners to look into option six behind the wall and see about raising the wall in the alley.

Meg Mainzer-Cohen- Spoke in support of approving Joe Cornish's staff recommendation. Additionally, Meg also referenced non-renewable and renewable energy in relation to new and existing buildings in the City of Boston.

COMMISSIONER HIGH MOTIONED TO APPROVE THE APPLICATION WITH PROVISOS. COMMISSIONER GASPAR SECONDED THE MOTION. THE VOTE WAS 6-2 (Y: KC, TN, TH, ZG, JC, DE) (N: ACP, EM).

- *Approve Option 8, which is to retain both units in the alley, moving unit 1 towards the trash enclosure, with both units screened from public view; with the provisos that (1) no refrigerant or conduit lines will be installed on the exterior of the building; (2) all details, including the design and location of the screens, shall be approved by the Commission's staff, and (3) this decision reflects the unique facts in this case, including the size and corner location of the building and the adverse visual impact that would*



result from installing additional HVAC units on the roof, and is not a precedent for future decisions.

APP # 24.0059 BB

ADDRESS: 32 Hereford Street

Applicant: Ricardo Sousa

Proposed Work: (Continued from 9/13/2023): Install city street light with DAS node at east side of Hereford Street beside 362 Marlborough Street (between Marlborough Street and Public Alley 428).

PROJECT REPRESENTATIVES: Ricardo Sousa was the project representative. He presented the proposed scope of work to the Commission, which included an overview of the proposed work to install a black pendant DAS node on a new black pendant city street light at the east side of Hereford Street.

DOCUMENTS PRESENTED: Documents presented include existing condition images, location maps, map of existing nodes near the proposed node site, site plans, pole elevations and a proposed photographic simulation.

DISCUSSION TOPICS (BRIEF): Discussion included the position of the proposed DAS node, the distance of this work from a fire hydrant and a tree in the area, community feedback on the proposed work, and the installation of the DAS node on the new black pendant city street light.

COMMISSIONER COMMENTS AND QUESTIONS: During the Commissioner Comment and discussion period, commissioners did not offer comments or questions as the primary concern was to rectify the incorrect address of the proposed work so abutters in the area could receive proper notification.

PUBLIC COMMENT: During the public comment period, the following individuals spoke:

Steven Burbage - Of 29 Hereford Street, submitted written testimony and spoke to the commission to express their concerns about the node being located across the street and the impact of having too many street lights in this area of Hereford Street.

Margaret Pokorny - Offered the support of the Garden Club to assist in pruning a tree near this installation.

COMMISSIONER CHRISTIANSEN MOTIONED TO APPROVE THE APPLICATION.

COMMISSIONER CHAN-PATERA SECONDED THE MOTION. THE VOTE WAS 8-0 (Y: KC, TN, TH, ZG, JC, DE, ACP, EM) (N: NONE).



APP # 24.0064 BB

ADDRESS: 232 Clarendon Street

Applicant: Douglas Bray

Proposed Work: *(Continued from 9/13/2023)*: At roof install deck and access hatch, and address unapproved rooftop vents.

PROJECT REPRESENTATIVE: Christopher Hemenway with Hemenway construction was the project representative. He presented the proposed scope of work to the Commission, which included an overview of the proposal to install a deck and access hatch at 232 Clarendon St.

DOCUMENTS PRESENTED: Documents presented include existing condition images, front and side elevations, as built drawings of existing structures,

DISCUSSION TOPICS (BRIEF): Discussion included the visibility of the proposed work, the existing conditions, the installation of stainless steel chimney caps on the front chimney, the redirection of the pipes on two rear chimneys, and the black paint color of the chimney caps and pipes.

COMMISSIONER COMMENTS AND QUESTIONS: During the Commissioner Comment and discussion period, the following topics were discussed in greater detail: whether there was a built drawing document that depicted the proposed work and whether the pipes coming out of the chimney would be cut or removed.

PUBLIC COMMENT: During the public comment period, the following individuals spoke:

Serge Savard - Co-Chair of the Neighborhood Association of the Back Bay, spoke in support of the proposed work and agrees with the staff recommendation.

COMMISSIONER CHRISTIANSEN MOTIONED TO APPROVE THE APPLICATION WITH PROVISOS. COMMISSIONER MACLEOD SECONDED THE MOTION. THE VOTE WAS 8-0 (Y: KC, TN, TH, ZG, JC, DE, ACP, EM) (N: NONE).

- *That a roof plan be prepared to represent the discussion of approval with option two.*

APP # 24.0318 BB

ADDRESS: 288 Commonwealth Avenue

Applicant: Douglass Godshall

Proposed Work: At rear elevation construct a one-story addition and convert first story window into a door; and at roof replace doors and windows at existing penthouse.



PROJECT REPRESENTATIVES: Monika Pauli, Richard Pignataro, and Doug Godshall were the project representatives. They presented the proposed scope of work to the Commission, which includes an overview of the project to extend the garage outward and move it two feet and one inch and relocating a vent in the rear of the building.

DOCUMENTS PRESENTED: Documents presented include existing condition images, front and rear elevations, the proposed garage extensions, existing floor and garage level plans, aerial view images, the proposed demolition plan, architectural drawings and dimensions of the proposed work, and shop drawings of the proposed garage doors.

DISCUSSION TOPICS (BRIEF): Discussion topics include the reasoning behind expanding the garage door, the visibility of the garage from a public way, the removal of the rear door to expand the garage, product details, and the dimensions of the garage door.

COMMISSIONER COMMENTS AND QUESTIONS: During the Commissioner Comment and discussion period, the following topics were discussed in greater detail: the relocation of a vent to make space for the expansion of the garage door, the removal of the existing masonry, the commission's previous approval of the garage door, the concern to not compromise the look of the masonry.

PUBLIC COMMENT: During the public comment period, the following individuals spoke:

Sue Prindle - asked the application questions in regard to the material of the garage door.

COMMISSIONER HIGH MOTIONED TO APPROVE THE APPLICATION WITH PROVISOS. COMMISSIONER CHRISTIANSEN SECONDED THE MOTION. THE VOTE WAS 8-0 (Y: KC, TN, TH, ZG, JC, DE, ACP, EM) (N: NONE).

- *Approve the proposed rear addition, noting that the rear façade has been previously altered with the approved insertion of a garage door, with the proviso that final design details of the rear addition, including venting, colors, and materials (including masonry), are remanded to staff. The proposed changes to the doors and windows of the penthouse are continued to a future meeting.*



APP # 24.0085 BB

ADDRESS: 124 Beacon Street

Applicant: Jahan Mohebali

Proposed Work: At rear elevation redesign upper level (between floors 9 and 10) roof and rear wall.

PROJECT REPRESENTATIVES: Jahan Mohebali and Josh Slader were the project representatives. They presented the proposed scope of work to the Commission, which included an overview of the proposal to reconstruct the rear exterior wall and position of the roof of the top 2.5 floors at 124 Beacon street.

DOCUMENTS PRESENTED: Documents presented include the rear elevations, shop drawings of existing and proposed rear elevation, aerial views, rendering images

DISCUSSION TOPICS (BRIEF): Discussion included the proposed window materials, the dimensions of the windows, the slope of the existing roof, the height of the proposed and existing sliders,

COMMISSIONER COMMENTS AND QUESTIONS: During the Commissioner Comment and discussion period, the following topics were discussed in greater detail: the number of stories and floors within the building, the height of the building, the dimensions of the skylights, the material of the roof, the materials of the proposed window, the visibility of skylights and reflective glass from a public way, the possibility of continuing this application to receive a clearer mock-up from the application.

PUBLIC COMMENT: During the public comment period, the following individuals spoke:

Serge Savard - Co-Chair of the Neighborhood Association of the Back Bay, offered recommendations to the applicant and expressed concerns with the images presented to the commission.

COMMISSIONER HIGH MOTIONED TO CONTINUE THE APPLICATION. COMMISSIONER MACLEOD SECONDED THE MOTION. THE VOTE WAS 8-0 (Y: KC, TN, TH, ZG, JC, DE, ACP, EM) (N: NONE).

- *Continue to a future meeting, with a mockup of the current proposal to be erected, increased detail to be provided on the proposed materials and window selection, and alternative fenestration options to be presented.*

APP # 24.0233 BB

ADDRESS: 131 Commonwealth Avenue

Applicant: Ryan Nevidomsky



Proposed Work: At rear elevation remove existing concrete and asphalt paving, slot drain and fencing, regrade for positive pitch away from building, provide new trench drain and new brick paving with granite curbing, install a new brick low wall where fence is removed abutting neighbor's parking, and at third floor lower existing deck, lower door sill and replace door and install new decking and railing; and at roof relocate heat pump location and install screening enclosure to match existing headhouse, install new windows and flat skylight at headhouse, install new walkable skylight at existing location, and install outdoor grill area, gas fireplace and surround, and new IPE wood decking.

PROJECT REPRESENTATIVES: Ryan Nevidomsky, William Young, Catherine Truman, Adam Wylie, Rachel Salch, AJ Proia were the project representatives. They presented the proposed scope of work to the Commission, which includes a description of the proposed changes to the parking area, roof deck, and third floor roof deck.

DOCUMENTS PRESENTED: Documents presented include the existing condition photos, rear elevations, existing site plan of the parking court, proposed parking court drawing, images of proposed steel railing and roof deck lighting, aerial viewpoint images.

DISCUSSION TOPICS (BRIEF): Discussion topics include the addition of the new granite curb, a new planted area, the proposed parking area, proposed changes to the roof deck and third floor deck, existing positions of the HVAC system.

COMMISSIONER COMMENTS AND QUESTIONS: During the Commissioner Comment and discussion period, the following topics were discussed in greater detail: the existing curb cut and new granite curb for parked cars, pavement materials and the heated driveway, the visibility of the roof deck from a public way, the dimensions and material of proposed enclosure for the existing HVAC units, the positioning of the existing HVAC system.

PUBLIC COMMENT: During the public comment period, the following individuals spoke:

Serge Savard - Co-Chair of the Neighborhood Association of the Back Bay, offered recommendations to the applicants regarding the condensers and expressed concerns about the copper enclosure.

Beth Kates - A neighbor at 133 Commonwealth mentioned that the top of the proposed copper enclosure would be visible in front of their roof deck level, and the HVAC units would be heard on their roof deck.

Sue Prindle- Recommended the exploring other options for the position of the HVAC system.



Laurie Thomas - Garden Club representative expressed concern about the treatment of the tree's distance from the parking area and offered a recommendation to the applicant regarding greenery.

COMMISSIONER HIGH MOTIONED TO APPROVE THE APPLICATION WITH PROVISOS. COMMISSIONER GASPAR SECONDED THE MOTION. THE VOTE WAS 8-0 (Y: KC, TN, TH, ZG, JC, DE, ACP, EM) (N: NONE).

- *Approve the proposed modifications of the third floor deck and the rear yard and wall plans, with the provisos that (1) the lower sills of the rear windows and no less than three courses of brick will remain uncovered by planting earth; (2) the existing tree on the 131-133 Commonwealth line will be protected; and (3) the feasibility of permeable paving will be explored and used if possible. The proposed roof plan, including the location of the HVAC equipment, is continued to a future meeting with the applicant to present alternatives to reduce visibility from the alley.*

APP #24.0218 BB

ADDRESS: 384 Marlborough Street

Applicant: Eileen Rosa

Proposed Work: At rear elevation re-landscape garden, redesign lower level windows and doors and install HVAC unit; and at roof install deck, access hatch, skylight and HVAC unit.

PROJECT REPRESENTATIVE: Eileen Rosa was the project representative. She presented the proposed scope of work to the Commission, which includes proposed changes to the rear patio.

DOCUMENTS PRESENTED: Documents presented include the site plan, existing condition images, front and rear elevations, zoning map of the property, floor plan, existing and proposed schematic landscape.

DISCUSSION TOPICS (BRIEF): Discussion topics included the proposed HVAC system, the visibility of the proposed work from a public way, dimensions of the condensers and railing.

COMMISSIONER COMMENTS AND QUESTIONS: During the Commissioner Comment and discussion period, the following topics were discussed in greater detail: whether the proposed railing and roof deck are visible from a public way and the condenser's position on the roof.

PUBLIC COMMENT: During the public comment period, the following individuals spoke:



Eileen Hulseley - 329 Commonwealth Avenue resident - submitted written comments and expressed concerns about parking of vehicles.

Bill Stritmatter - 329 Commonwealth Avenue resident - submitted written comments and expressed concerns about parking of vehicles.

Diane Pink- 329 Commonwealth Avenue resident - submitted written comments and expressed concerns about parking of vehicles.

Serge Savard - Co-Chair of the Neighborhood Association of the Back Bay, expressed concerns about the depiction of the proposed mock up and the visibility of the proposed work from the public view.

Laurie Thomas - Garden Club representative recommended the applicant hire an arborist familiar with the greenery in the Back Bay to make care plans for trees. Laurie offered the applicant support in locating an arborist if necessary.

Sue Prindle- Mentioned the issue with the sightline may be because it was taken from the sidewalk in front of the building rather than across the street.

COMMISSIONER HIGH MOTIONED TO APPROVE THE APPLICATION WITH PROVISOS. COMMISSIONER GASPAR SECONDED THE MOTION. THE VOTE WAS 7-0 (Y: KC, TH, ZG, JC, DE, ACP, EM) (N: NONE).

- *Approve the plan as presented with the following provisos: (1) the front edge of the roof deck is to be moved back to the point that the railing is not visible from Marlborough, to be confirmed by staff; (2) all replacement windows and doors are to be wood, with the selection of the specific windows to be approved by staff; (3) the HVAC unit currently located in the rear yard is to be located on the roof, with the location of this unit and any other unit proposed for the roof be approved by staff; (4) the applicant shall retain an arborist selected in consultation with the Garden Club of the Back Bay to assess and develop care plans for the existing trees on the property, and shall implement such plans in consultation with the Garden Club; and (5) any proposed change in the plans as approved the Commission resulting from their subsequent review by the National Architectural Trust in accordance with the Preservation Restriction Agreement easement applicable to this property shall be subject to review and approval by this Commission.*

The Chair announced that the Commission would next review Administrative Review/ Approval applications.



II. ADMINISTRATIVE REVIEW/ APPROVAL

24.0338 BB **148 Beacon Street:** At front façade replace copper roofing at bay in-kind.

24.0289 BB **172 Beacon Street:** At side elevation re-point masonry.

24.0305 BB **179 Beacon Street:** At roof replace existing roof deck with deck that is consistent with the district's guidelines.

24.0269 BB **255 Beacon Street:** At front façade replace five, fifth-story six-over-six wood windows in-kind.

24.0313 BB **259 Beacon Street:** At side elevation replace seventh-story non-historic windows in-kind.

24.0277 BB **280 Beacon Street:** At interior courtyard re-point masonry.

24.0302 BB **478 Beacon Street:** At rear elevation replace three non-historic wood windows in-kind.

24.0310 BB **109 Commonwealth Avenue:** At roof re-point chimney and replace flashing in-kind.



24.0333 BB **343 Commonwealth Avenue:** At front façade repair entry steps.

24.0315 BB **393 Commonwealth Avenue:** At roof relocate existing vent.

24.0285 BB **271 Dartmouth Street:** Replace three interior facing non-historic windows in-kind.

24.0331 BB **14 Hereford Street:** At rear elevation repaint windows, replace rubber membrane roof in-kind, and repair gutter.

24.0304 BB **130 Marlborough Street:** At rear elevation replace two lower level one-over-one non-historic wood windows in-kind.

24.0235 BB **184 Marlborough Street:** At front façade replace lighting at entrance and install fire strobe.

24.0320 BB **290 Marlborough Street:** At front garden remove existing Dogwood tree and replace in-kind.

24.0324 BB **441 Marlborough Street:** Replace copper gutter, downspout and deteriorated roof slate in-kind.

24.0275 BB **33 Newbury Street:** At front façade replace wall sign.



24.0282 BB **35 Newbury Street:** At front façade replace wall sign.

24.0270 BB **132 Newbury Street:** At front façade replace window signage.

24.0262 BB **136 Newbury Street:** At front façade install wall and window signage.

24.0316 BB **167 Newbury Street:** At front façade replace existing copper awning in-kind.

24.0297 BB **139 Newbury Street:** At front façade replace existing wall sign and window signage.

24.0301 BB **339 Newbury Street:** At front façade replace existing copper awning in-kind.

COMMISSIONER HIGH MOTIONED TO APPROVE THE ADMINISTRATIVE REVIEW ITEMS. COMMISSIONER EISEN SECONDED THE MOTION. THE VOTE WAS 7-0 (Y: KC, TH, ZG, JC, DE, ACP, EM) (N: NONE).

IV. RATIFICATION OF HEARINGS MINUTES FOR SEPTEMBER 13, 2023

Minutes for the September 13, 2023 hearing be placed on the agenda for the next hearing.

III. STAFF UPDATES

Introduction of Sarah Lawton, recently hired as the new Preservation Assistant for the Office of Historic Preservation.



City of Boston
Landmarks Commission



City of Boston
Mayor Michelle Wu

IV. ADJOURN – 8:57

DRAFT