

Neighborhood  
Association of the  
Back Bay



Bulletin

May 2022

---

## NABB Members Spring Reception a Success!

On a beautiful Sunday afternoon, April 24<sup>th</sup>, a friendly crowd of NABB members gathered to celebrate each other at the Members Spring Reception held at the Newbury Boston Hotel.

Sipping champagne and wine and nibbling on passed hors d'oeuvres, (graciously provided by the Newbury Boston Hotel), NABB members delighted in seeing old friends and meeting many new NABB members. NABB Committees and Friends and Neighbors groups were available to give information, answer questions, and sign up members who wanted to get involved in all that NABB has to offer.

The view of the Boston Public Garden from the ballroom was lovely and a good time was had by all. Thank you to the Newbury Boston Hotel and to the Members Spring Reception committee, Gail Laffer, Paula Furst Neckyfarow, Roberta Orlandino, and Susan Richardson. Special thanks to Nancy Olson who managed the registration logistics.

---

## NABB's Wine Tasting Group is Back!

Wednesday, May 11, 2022 6:30 pm to 8:30 pm  
Back Bay Social (867 Boylston St., downstairs)  
\$20 per person

Back Bay Social is providing 6 complimentary Spring wines and hors d'oeuvres for our tasting pleasure!

To reserve your space, go to: <https://www.nabbonline.org/winetasting/>  
Reserve your space by May 3<sup>rd</sup>. No refunds after May 5<sup>th</sup>. NABB members' guests are welcome.  
Questions? Contact Kay Nagle at [kaynagle3@gmail.com](mailto:kaynagle3@gmail.com)

---

## Traffic and Parking Advisories

### **April 28<sup>th</sup> to May 5<sup>th</sup>: Film Crew and Production Trucks**

Parking Restrictions for Thursday, April 28<sup>th</sup> to Thursday, May 5<sup>th</sup> (Newbury St, Commonwealth Ave non-residential parking only, Arlington St)

Parking Restrictions for Sunday, May 1<sup>st</sup> to Thursday, May 5<sup>th</sup> (Boylston St, Charles St)

### **May 29<sup>th</sup> starting at 7:00 am: Run to Remember**

5 mile and half marathon courses. The Back Bay portion goes down Beacon from Charles to Arlington, south on Arlington, west on Comm, south on Berkeley, east on Comm, south on Arlington, east on Boylston.

---

*Visit us on the web @ [www.nabbonline.org](http://www.nabbonline.org)*

160 Commonwealth Avenue L8, Boston, MA 02116 Tel: 617.247.3961 Email: [info@nabbonline.org](mailto:info@nabbonline.org)

## **Architecture Committee Report—May 2022**

### **Sue Prindle and Serge Savard, co- Chairs**

Apologies for the length of this report – the neighborhood seems to be coming alive with projects. If you have questions about any of the projects, please contact us at [architecture@NABOnline.org](mailto:architecture@NABOnline.org).

Continuing the issues, we reported on last month: Our committee has reviewed the proposal for **415 Newbury Street** and is concerned about both zoning and architectural issues. We have submitted a letter outlining these concerns to the Boston Planning and Development Agency (BPDA). The project, which was scheduled for Advisory Review at the April 13 Back Bay Architectural Commission (BBAC) meeting, was withdrawn after the April 11 public meeting. Stay tuned - it will be rescheduled.

Two **Extenet** proposals to add 4-G antennas to streetlights were also on the BBAC agenda this month. The proposal for 280 Beacon was rejected, the one for 2 Commonwealth Avenue was postponed to the May hearing.

Several committee members attended the meetings concerning the **gas light replacements** proposed for Bay Village. Serge Savard prepared an analysis of the light levels of the new and existing fixtures and suggested appropriate changes to the color and level of the light, which the Lighting Department adopted. The current proposal was endorsed by the Bay Village Historic Commission, and the fixtures will be installed later this month. There are no immediate plans for installations in other parts of the city, but the Lighting Department has committed to a public process when the time comes.

#### **Residential Applications**

We supported a renovation proposal for **4 Marlborough Street**, including altering the base of the rear bay to create space for a garage door. (A two level garage excavation and lift was approved by the Board of Appeal in 2020.) However, because the rear façade was entirely original above the basement level, we did not support a proposed two-story extension of the existing single story rear bay. We asked that the proposed penthouse and condensers be moved to be less visible from the alley. The project was approved, with the fence design, walkway detail, and final roof plan referred to staff. The bay extension was denied.

In March, the BBAC approved significant remodeling of **397 Commonwealth Avenue**, with the exception of the treatment of the top of the new Marlborough Street bay and the landscaping plan. This month the landscaping plan was endorsed by the Garden Club and approved. The pergola that was proposed for the top of the bay, which we opposed, was withdrawn in favor of a modified brick cornice and additional chimney-like structures, which serve to extend the height of the bay more appropriately.

#### **Commercial Applications**

Our committee voted not to oppose two variances at **97-101 Newbury**, where the New England Historic Genealogical Society proposes to expand into the neighboring building. Because the project combines two buildings, the proposed Floor Area Ratio (FAR) for the site will be lower than the current FAR for 97 Newbury (although still over the FAR of 3 allowed on the street). There is also a 20' rear yard setback requirement in the alley because it abuts the residential district. The applicant plans to expand the bottom two floors of the building to the lot line, but the top two floors will respect the setback. Since all other buildings on the alley have similar additions, most stretching all the way to the alley on all floors, we did not oppose. The design of the remodeling buildings remains to be approved by the BBAC.

The Knoll building (currently Lenscrafters) at **37 Newbury Street** has been an anomaly on Newbury Street since its construction in 1980. The applicant came to the BBAC for an Advisory Review, asking to enlarge the first floor projection by an additional floor because of concern about visibility from the west. We opposed because the added depth would further obscure the visibility of the surrounding stores; the Commission agreed. Changes to the signage and entryways may be considered. The architect will be back for a formal review.

## Green Committee

Neighbor to Neighbor (N2N) Buildings Group

**Next Meeting:** Monday May 23<sup>rd</sup> 5:00 pm to 6:00 pm

**Topic:** Geothermal Heating and Cooling (An option for Back Bay buildings?)

**Speaker:** Larry Lessard, PG, AI, CGD, CGI  
Director, Achieve Renewable (A Geothermal Installation Company)

Join Zoom Meeting

[https://us04web.zoom.us/j/76637250323?pwd=wjXeI9TSdyFI9\\_omr66idHk8Pz0T8b.1](https://us04web.zoom.us/j/76637250323?pwd=wjXeI9TSdyFI9_omr66idHk8Pz0T8b.1)

Meeting ID: 766 3725 0323 Passcode: 5Kd4Ad

---

## Development and Transportation Committee Report

Jackie Yessian, Chair

### **415 Newbury Street (Harvard Club)**

**Overview of project:** The Harvard Club is proposing a significant construction project on approximately 1.1 acres of land on Newbury Street. The entire project area is located within the Back Bay Architectural District. The proposal is to construct two new buildings with 134 residential rental units. The taller structure, an 11-story building, is not allowable by current zoning.

**Primary questions about this project:** This proposed project presents numerous challenges, but two rise to the top of the list: (1) PDA/zoning questions and (2) affordable housing questions.

**Status:** Under review; the public comment period for the Project Notification Form (PNF) closes on April 25. See: <http://www.bostonplans.org/projects/development-projects/415-newbury-street>

For more information, you can view the PNF at:

<https://bpda.app.box.com/s/l0wx4eb9j6xm6ak6a4uloiey00r94o4y>

### **Parcel 13 (corner of Mass Ave. and Boylston Street)**

**Overview of project:** The developer (Peebles) recently filed a Letter of Intent which outlined the revised proposed project. The proposal now includes the construction of a mixed-use structure of approximately 432,000 square feet. The revised program will include a 300,000 gsf lab/office commercial component, a 100% affordable housing rental program of approximately 125 units, and ancillary retail spaces, public bicycle parking for approximately 100 commuter bicycles and new headhouses for the MBTA Green Line Hynes Station at Massachusetts Avenue and Boylston Street locations. The section of building to include affordable housing will reach the zoning height of 120' (136' with mechanicals). Approximately 2/3 of the building will be slated for biolab/office space at an estimated height of 177.5' (199' with mechanicals), which exceed current zoning. This entire parcel is also located within the Back Bay Architectural District and it is possible that Peebles will seek a PDA.

**Status:** Conrad Armstrong was elected by the EC to take over Fritz Casselman's position on the CAC.

For more information, see: <http://www.bostonplans.org/projects/development-projects/parcel-13>

### **Hynes Convention Center**

**Overview of project:** The governor has again decided to pursue the sale of the Hynes Convention Center, pending approval by the state legislature.

**Status:** With a collaboration between NABB and the BBA, Elliott Laffer and Meg Mainzer-Cohen drafted a letter outlining the neighborhood's concerns and the benefits of selling the convention center with conditions. These conditions include:

1. The site must maintain all connections to the Prudential Center and hotels.
2. The site must include 150,000 square feet of meeting space that will be privately managed.
3. Preference must be demonstrated for maintaining and improving the existing Hynes Convention Center structure.
4. Development rights should be included for a building on Dalton Street, with no new shadow placed on Commonwealth Avenue.

### **Of special interest: 350 Boylston Street, the Arlington building (aka Shreve, Crump & Low)**

**Overview of project:** After a delay of more than a decade, the Druker Company is moving forward with their proposal at 350 Boylston Street. In this proposal, the current building, would be demolished and replaced with a nine-story mixed-use development with office and retail uses and a below-grade parking garage for 150 vehicles.

See: <http://www.bostonplans.org/projects/development-projects/350-boylston-street>

## Committee Meetings:

NABB committees will continue to be actively engaged and operate virtually, as well as via email and phone, because of the COVID-19 pandemic. To protect the health of members and the community at large, at this time, in-person meetings are permissible so long as CDC guidelines and state and local regulations are followed.

The **Architecture Committee** normally meets on the first Tuesday of each month. The next meeting is on May 3rd at 6:30 pm. For more information contact Sue Prindle at [architecture@nabbonline.org](mailto:architecture@nabbonline.org)

The **Green Committee** normally meets at 4:30 pm on the second Wednesday of each month. For more information, please contact Michael McCord at [green@nabbonline.org](mailto:green@nabbonline.org)

The **Licensing and Building Use Committee** will have a virtual meeting May 2nd, at 7:00 pm, If you aren't on the LBU email list and want to receive the agenda and Zoom meeting link contact: [lbu@nabbonline.org](mailto:lbu@nabbonline.org)

The **City Services and Public Safety Committee** generally meets via zoom on the fourth Thursday of the month. Next meeting will be on May 26th at 6:00 pm. For more information, please email: [publicsafety@nabbonline.org](mailto:publicsafety@nabbonline.org)

---

## Community Service Awards

Please send your nominations by May 1 to [info@nabbonline.org](mailto:info@nabbonline.org). For more information: [www.nabbonline.org/about-us/nabbs-community-service-awards/](http://www.nabbonline.org/about-us/nabbs-community-service-awards/)

## Friends and Neighbors:

The **Men's Discussion Group** will meet at noon on May 17th, the 3rd Tuesday of May. The Men's Group will meet over lunch at Joe's American. For more information, please contact Grant Schaumburg at: [mensgroup@nabbonline.org](mailto:mensgroup@nabbonline.org).

---

## Special Events Presents

A Boston by Foot Walking Tour of Fort Point Channel

Save the Date: Saturday, June 11<sup>th</sup> - 11:00 am

Details to follow.

---

## Back Bay Coffee Hour With the Mayor

Join your neighbors and meet Mayor Michelle Wu with representatives from various City Hall departments.

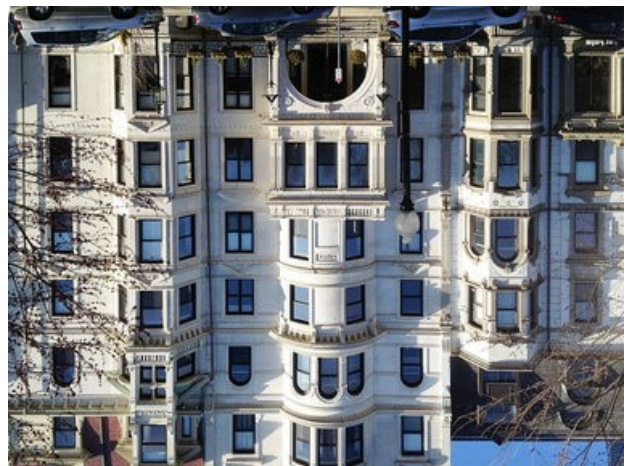
May 25, 2022 9:30 am to 10:30 am  
Commonwealth Ave Mall at Arlington St.

---

## Have You Moved?

If you received this Bulletin after it was forwarded to you by the Post Office, please let us know your new address.

You can send an email with your new contact information to: [info@nabbonline.org](mailto:info@nabbonline.org)



Neighborhood Association of the Back Bay, Inc.  
160 Commonwealth Ave. L8, Boston, MA 02116