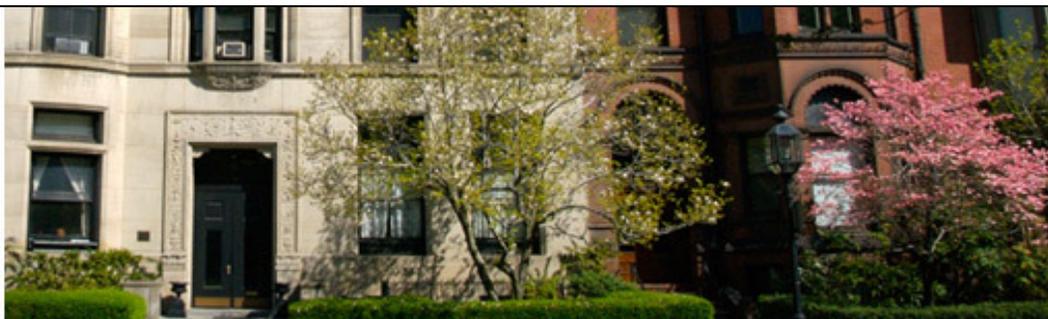


Neighborhood
Association of the
Back Bay



Bulletin

March 2013

“DOWNTOWN SCHOOLS FOR BOSTON” FORUM ON MARCH 13

On Wednesday, March 13, NABB will sponsor a public forum with representatives from the **Downtown Schools for Boston**, who will speak about the need for new public schools serving the Back Bay and other Downtown neighborhoods. The forum will be held from 6:30-8:00 p.m. at the French Cultural Center, 53 Marlborough Street in Boston. The meeting is open to the public and there is no charge. Parents and residents who founded the Downtown Schools for Boston group will present compelling reasons why new public schools should be added to serve the Back Bay and other downtown neighborhoods, and also will discuss Boston Public Schools and the assignment process. Anyone who is interested in keeping quality public education in the Downtown neighborhoods is encouraged to attend. For more information, go to nabbonline.com or call the NABB office at 617-247-3961

CHECK OUT THE GROUNDWATER LEVELS NEAR YOU!

Most buildings in the Back Bay are built on wooden pilings. It is important for building structural integrity that groundwater levels are high enough to cover the exposed wood. You can use the interactive map at http://geonetsystems.com/BGWT_GMAP/map.asp to find the level in your area. You can learn much more at the website of the Boston Groundwater Trust, www.bostongroundwater.org



COMING SOON! SAVE THE DATE! April 11. 2013

Taste of the Back Bay

Visit us on the web @ www.nabbonline.com

160 Commonwealth Avenue L8, Boston, MA 02116 Tel: 617.247.3961 Email: info@nabbonline.com

Friends & Neighbors Events

NABB's Gay and Lesbian Friends and Neighbors are getting together on Monday, April 8, 2013, from 6:30 to 9:00 p.m. Come join us for drinks, light fare and conversation as we hear about the federal Defense of Marriage Act (DOMA) and marriage arguments before the Supreme Court from Gary Buseck, Legal Director of Gay & Lesbian Advocates and Defenders (GLAD), and find out what else is on the horizon for the LGBT and HIV communities. RSVP for this congenial and informative evening by going to NABB's website, www.nabbonline.com, and signing up at the bottom of the event's description. We look forward to seeing you there!

YOUNG FRIENDS AND NEIGHBORS
Stay tuned to their Facebook page for upcoming details at <http://www.facebook.com/groups/170000949110/>

MOMS' GROUP Find new friends for your toddler or support during the critical first few months of parenthood. Our group meets at Hale House at 273 Clarendon Street, every Wednesday morning. Contact Angela Wang at NABBMoms@gmail.com or 617.823.5378 for more information.

MEN'S DISCUSSION GROUP This group meets for lunch the third Tuesday of every month for fun, new friendships and learning. For information, please contact Jonathan Bagg at jonathan@beachbagg.com. The next meeting is on March 19 at noon.

BACK BAY SALON next meets on Monday, March 25th, at 7:00 P.M. at Linda Morgan's. The topic is *Power*. For more information contact Linda at words6@verizon.net or 617.437.0542

Architecture Committee Report for February 2013

After a couple of months with no significant applications, our committee restarted with a bang this month.

284 Newbury Street – Charley's: As you may know, Charley's Restaurant has been closed. The building is being converted to Frye Boot flagship store. Unfortunately, this requires removal of several trees to provide more visibility for the storefront. The new owners are replanting a garden, however, and replacing the removed trees with new ones both on the site and on the sidewalk.

292 Marlborough Street: There is a particularly unattractive rear deck at this location, installed before the Commission had jurisdiction over the alleys. It will be replaced by a more compatible extended oriel and garden wall. While there may be a zoning issue regarding rear yard setback, the proposal is marked improvement over the existing condition.

699 Boylston (Darth Vader): In November, we reviewed a proposal for a glass storefront at the first floor level. There have been several design changes since then, and the proposal seemed much improved. There will be another presentation next month, at which time the developer hopes to have a final design..

Boylston St. sidewalk: The BRA has undertaken to revise the Boylston Street sidewalk plan, which has proved difficult to implement. A preliminary meeting was held in January, and a more extensive review process is planned for next Fall. At this point, the plan is to start with a pilot block on the north side of the D-E sidewalk of Boylston Street in conjunction with the 699 Boylston project. Tree pits and light fixtures will remain, but the sidewalk will be repaved in concrete and concrete block, and the curb will be raised to meet City standard (6-7").

NABB Licensing & Building USE (LBU) Committee Report for February, 2013

French Cultural Center (53 Marlborough St.). On July 12, the French Cultural Center plans to hold its 2013 *Bastille Day Celebration*, and is seeking approval of an entertainment license for the event. The celebration will begin at 6:00 p.m. and end at 11:00 p.m., with all music stopping at 10:00 p.m. NABB sent emails to members who live on the affected block of Marlborough (between Berkeley and Clarendon), which is closed for the event, inviting them to attend the LBU Committee meeting or provide their comments. All of the comments received were supportive. The Committee noted that the French Cultural Center has made extensive efforts in recent years to address concerns expressed by abutters, including have a plan for security and crowd control, notifying residents and vehicle owners who park on the block, and trash removal. The Committee agreed not to oppose the entertainment license.

The Proper Slice (222-224 Newbury St.). The operators of *The Proper Slice* propose to open a new pizza restaurant at the former location of the *Upper Crust*, and are seeking continuation of the restaurant use (with take-out service) for the property and also approval of transfer of the *Upper Crust* wine and beer license. The new restaurant will operate from 11:00 a.m. to 11:30 p.m. and will provide some local delivery by bicycle. Representatives of *The Proper Slice* stated that they will accept all of the zoning and licensing conditions that applied to the *Upper Crust's* operations at this location, including putting garbage out no earlier than one-half hour for collection on a daily basis (and, if physically possible, providing for indoor storage of garbage), imprinting *The Proper Slice's* logo on all paper products, maintaining a trash receptacle on the sidewalk in front of the premises, and serving alcoholic beverages only with meals. Based on these conditions, the LBU Committee agreed not to oppose the zoning and licensing applications.

A New Restaurant (50 Gloucester St.). Frank Ambrose (who ran *Ambrosia* on Huntington Ave. from 1993 to 2007) proposes to open a new restaurant at 50 Gloucester (which is located beside Café Jaffa) with an outdoor dining patio in the rear. The owner of the building is seeking zoning approval to allow the ground and first floors of the building, and the rear patio, to be used for a restaurant. The restaurant will serve lunch and dinner, with a 1:00 a.m. closing time. The applicant has agreed to all of the zoning and licensing conditions normally sought by NABB, including a requirement that 70% of the allowed occupancy be seated in chairs at tables, that alcohol is served at tables only with meals, that interior venting of the kitchen will be provided to the ultimate roof of the building, and that garbage is put out no earlier than one-half hour for collection on a daily basis (and, if physically possible, stored inside the building). In addition, the operator has agreed to obtain the alcohol license for the restaurant through a transfer of one that already has been issued for another location in the Back Bay. Based on these conditions, the LBU Committee agreed not to oppose the zoning and licensing applications.

Restoration Hardward (234 Berkeley). In August 2012, the LBU Committee had reviewed and agreed not to oppose a restaurant use in the building at 234 Berkeley Street (the former Museum of Natural History and, most recently, the home of *Louis of Boston* clothiers), which will soon be reopened as another *Restoration Hardware* location. In February, the Licensing Board approved the application for a smaller restaurant on the third floor of the building, with a wine and beer license (including the ability also to serve food and wine/beer on other floors for special events) and a midnight closing time.

2012 Crimes in the Back Bay – Bad News and Good News

The 2012 part one crime statistics for the Back Bay show significant increases over 2011 in two categories of the most disturbing types of crime – rape and attempts and aggravated assaults – and decreases in most property-related types of crime, including a major decrease in residential burglaries



Types of crime	2011*	2012*	% change
Homicide	0	0	0
Rape and attempts	3	6	+100
Aggravated assaults	45	60	+33
Robbery	59	56	-5
Residential burglary	58	34	-41
Commercial burglary	47	40	-15
Burglary total	105	74	-30
Larceny from Motor vehicles	375	437	+17
Larceny other (mostly shoplifting)	1,056	1,030	-2
Larceny total	1,431	1,467	+3
Vehicle theft	42	38	-10

*These data have been broken out for the Back Bay from overall District 4 data by Sgt. Gino Provenzano, Community Services Supervisor, D-4.

Sgt. Provenzano reports that a majority of the increases in assaults relate to assaults among the homeless and to “bar fights” rather than “street attacks.” A number of the sexual assaults are also among the homeless.

He also notes that the Police Department is working hard to reduce larcenies from motor vehicles – our most prevalent non-commercial type of crime, and certainly the most preventable. BPD units have been deploying a “bait car” and successfully used it to apprehend a frequent offender recently. Last year, the BPD had signs installed in the Back Bay with the simple message, “Do not leave valuables in vehicle”, a message we all need to heed, and to pass on to our visitors.

Don Carlson
Chair, NABB Crime Committee

Spring Fun Party! Come Celebrate Spring
with the
Friends of the Clarendon Street Playground

Join us for an egg hunt, coffee & donuts, and a
visit from the Easter Bunny!

Date: Saturday, March 30

Time: 10:00 a.m.

Place: Clarendon Street Playground

Volunteers are needed to hide eggs at 8 a.m.

To help with the event, please contact:

NABB: 617-247-3961

playground@nabbonline.com



New NABB Members

Bill and Sheila Beckeman
Mary Lou Boutwell
Nancy Burden
Thomas Iannotti
Meera Venkatraman
Steve and Joni Youngwirth



Important Meeting Dates

The **MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE** will meet on **Tuesday March 5th at 4pm** in the NABB office.

The **NABB LICENSING & BUILDING USE COMMITTEE** will meet on **March 4 at 7:00pm** at the Lenox Hotel.

The **NABB ARCHITECTURE COMMITTEE** meets next on March 6 at 6:30pm at the New England College of Optometry, 424 Beacon St.

The **CITY SERVICES COMMITTEE** will meet on **March 12 at 6pm** in the NABB office.

The **SPECIAL EVENTS COMMITTEE** will meet on March 20 at 5:30pm in the NABB office.

The **BACK BAY POLICE PANEL** meets on the last Wednesday of the month. **Next meeting: Wednesday, March 27, at 6:00pm** in the Boston Public Library. The **NABB CRIME COMMITTEE** meets at 7:00pm following the Police Panel. For information, please call the NABB office.

The **DEVELOPMENT AND TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE** will meet on March 26 at 6:30pm at the Learning Center.

SAVE THE DATE!

April 11, 2013

Taste of the Back Bay

Come and sample some of the finest food and drink Boston has to offer. This year a portion of the proceeds will benefit Lovin' Spoonfuls. Tickets: \$75 NABB members, \$85 non-members, \$100 at the door. Re-serve online at www.nabbonline.com

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

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