

Neighborhood
Association of the
Back Bay



Bulletin

December 2017

Update on the Proposed Conversion of Haddon Hall to a For-Profit Private Club

On October 31st, dozens of neighbors attended the Board of Appeals hearing to show their opposition to the proposed conversion of Haddon Hall (29 Commonwealth Avenue) to a private club. The proponent asked to defer the hearing for a second time in order to continue the community process and try to reach an agreement with neighbors and NABB. While the opponents were prepared to go forward, the Board voted to grant the deferment, and the case is now scheduled to be heard at 11:30 a.m. on January 9th.

The next six weeks will be an important time as we continue to work to prevent the proposed use which we believe will be a very substantial detriment to the neighborhood and will cause traffic problems that will have impacts well beyond those affecting Back Bay residents. While many concerned residents have written to the Board and elected officials, there is now more time for those concerned neighbors who have not yet had a chance to add their voices. There is also more time to learn about the issues which, in addition to traffic, include impacts on safety in the alley, parking on Berkeley Street, and the impact of a 24/7 operation on a residential block. There is likely to be more information coming out, and we invite you to continue to learn about how this can affect your quality of life as a resident of the Back Bay.



We will need a large turnout again when the case is heard on January 9th. If you can, we hope that you will be there. (Photograph of Haddon Hall courtesy of BackBayHouses.org.)

Update on the Proposed Medical Marijuana Dispensary

On Tuesday, November 14th, the Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA) approved the application by Compassionate Organics (CO) to occupy space at 331 Newbury Street for a medical marijuana facility. NABB opposed this facility because of its location, namely its proximity to residences occupied by families with children. NABB Chair Martyn Roetter and NABB Director Susan Baker gave testimony at the hearing. Kathryn Bell, representing City Councilor Josh Zakim, presented his similar opposition to a marijuana dispensary at this location. The ZBA's approval includes two provisos, that the facility stays restricted to selling medical marijuana (unless subsequently approved for recreational marijuana by the ZBA) and provides at least 10 parking spaces at a nearby garage. The facility still needs to gain final approval from the State Department of Public Health.

Visit us on the web @ www.nabbonline.com

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

Architecture Committee Report November 2017

Commercial Applications:

345-347 Newbury Street (Danker and Donohue): The Back Bay Architectural Commission (BBAC) approved the reinstallation of the telecommunications equipment that had been moved for the building renovation. We asked that it be painted light gray rather than black, and that change was approved.

Hubway: We have had an inquiry from the City regarding putting Hubway facilities in the residential district. They have previously been in commercial areas only, but the City may want to expand into the residential district. The issues of congestion and signage are of great concern.

Residential Applications:

35 Commonwealth Avenue: The penthouse which we supported at our July meeting was approved in August. However, it seems the proposal exceeds the allowed Floor Area Ratio and violates a 1982 zoning amendment that states that storage areas previously included in the FAR cannot be excluded from the calculation. Although this seems a somewhat arcane issue, it has great consequence for the neighborhood because, if a variance is allowed, it will be possible for developers to create interior garage space on the ground floor and use the FAR allowed for much more profitable penthouse space. The zoning hearing is November 28..

306 Dartmouth Street (the Ames-Webster House): The BBAC approved an expansion of an existing roof deck which is not visible from the street. We look forward to the completion of this renovation.

260-262 Commonwealth Avenue: This project was approved with a lower, smaller, more traditional penthouse design. The proposed expansion of the rear bays was denied. A single story rear addition was approved on the condition that the fire escape be removed and two interior stairs be installed.

349 Commonwealth Avenue: The BBAC approved a revised penthouse proposal which was pulled back at both the front and the rear so as not to be visible from the street.

If you have questions about these or any other projects in the neighborhood, please feel free to contact Sue Prindle or Susie Shafer, co-chairs, at the NABB office or by emailing them at architecture@nabbonline.com.



260-262 Commonwealth Avenue



349 Commonwealth Avenue

Licensing and Building Use Committee Report November 2017

The committee heard two applications. Neither has a hearing scheduled yet. All of the votes taken by the committee were unanimous.

1. **Barry's Bootcamp Boston, 10 Huntington Avenue** - This is a plan for a cardio and gym fitness center in a portion of the former Turner Fisheries space in the Westin Copley building. Entrance will be at the corner of Dartmouth Street and Huntington Avenue, generally below the pedestrian bridge. There will be no direct entrance from the hotel. Hours will be 5:00 AM to 9:00 PM. They expect to have 11 class sessions per day with occupancy of about 50 at any time. They will also offer smoothies to patrons. The committee voted not to oppose.
2. **Marine, 314 Newbury Street** - This is planned as a casual restaurant by the operators of Select Oyster Bar. They will be seeking a beer and wine license which they will likely have to bring in from outside the neighborhood. Capacity is 47 seats indoors and 12 on the patio. Hours at 8:00 AM to midnight, with the patio to close at 10:00 PM. There will be refrigerated indoor storage of trash. They will need zoning for a full service restaurant. The committee voted not to oppose subject to the refrigerated indoor storage of trash.

The Executive Committee ratified both votes.



NABB's Annual Christmas Tree Sale

**Saturday, December 2nd
and Sunday, December 3rd**

9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Clarendon Street Playground

Fresh cut Balsam Fir trees from Maine

Local delivery available

To make a special order or to find out further details, please contact the NABB office by emailing info@nabbonline.com or calling 617-247-3961.

Proceeds from the sale will benefit the Friends of the Clarendon Street Playground and the Neighborhood Association of the Back Bay.

Friends & Neighbors Events

MEN'S DISCUSSION GROUP - This group of working, semi-working and retired men with diverse backgrounds meets for lunch and discussion at noon on the 3rd Tuesday of the month (December 19). For more information, please contact Grant Schaumburg at mensgroup@nabbonline.com.

LWAD's HOLIDAY LUNCHEON

The last day to buy your tickets for LWAD's Holiday Luncheon is Monday, December 4th!

The luncheon will take place beginning at 12:00 noon at the Four Seasons Hotel, 200 Boylston Street, on **Sunday, December 10th**. The all-inclusive cost per person is \$75, which includes two glasses of wine or other beverage (one during the cocktail hour and one with lunch), and lunch with your choice of entrée (cod, chicken or pumpkin ravioli). For more information, please contact Bea Morse at lwad@nabbonline.com or (617) 262-9886.

Important Meeting Dates

The **Licensing and Building Use Committee** meets on the first Monday of this month. Next meeting: December 4 at 7:00 pm at the Lenox Hotel. For more information contact Elliott Laffer at lbu@nabbonline.com.

The **Architecture Committee** generally meets at 6:30 pm on the first Tuesday of each month in the Clausen Room of the New England College of Optometry, 424 Beacon Street. Next meeting: December 5. For more information contact Sue Prindle or Susan Shafer at architecture@nabbonline.com.

The **Green Committee** meets at 5:30 pm on the second Wednesday of each month at the Learning Project, 107 Marlborough Street. Next meeting: December 13. For more information, please contact Michael McCord at green@nabbonline.com.

The next **Police Panel/Public Safety Forum** will take place at 6:00 pm on Thursday, December 28, in the Sanctuary of the First Church in Boston, located at 66 Marlborough Street. For more information, please contact Don Carlson at publicsafety@nabbonline.com.



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