

Bulletin

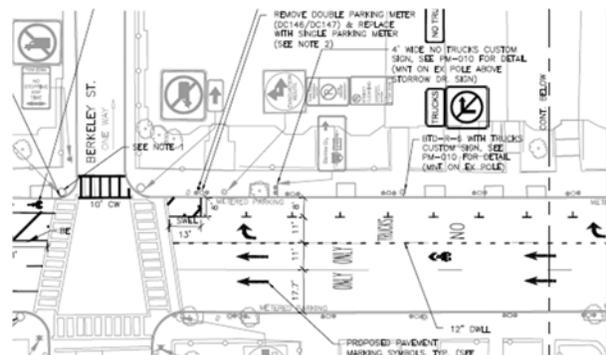
January 2018

Beacon Street Redesign Now Being Implemented

In early December, the City of Boston began making changes to Beacon Street to improve safety for people walking, biking and driving. The City hoped to complete the striping changes by mid-December (beginning between Arlington and Berkeley Streets and then proceeding block-by-block west down Beacon Street). Changes on Dartmouth Street approaching Beacon Street will likely need to wait until the spring, while signal changes and signs will take place through the winter months as the updated equipment becomes available. The redesign's Key Safety Components are:

- **FEWER TRAVEL LANES** - design encourages people to drive slower.
- **UPDATED WALK SIGNAL TIMING** - helps people know when to expect the WALK signal and provides a headstart to people walking across intersections.
- **SIGNALS TIMED FOR 25 MPH** - people who drive at the speed limit will encounter green along the corridor.
- **NO TURN ON RED** - reduces potential for conflicts at intersections.
- **DAYLIGHTING** - helps people see each other at intersections by prohibiting parking at specific corners.
- **PARKING-PROTECTED BIKE LANE** - beginning after Berkeley Street, provides dedicated space for people biking, and helps organize the road.
- **NEW "NO TRUCKS" MARKINGS AND SIGNAGE** - reminds people that they cannot drive trucks on Storrow Drive.

A drawing of the proposed improvements to Beacon Street approaching the Berkeley Street intersection.



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Architecture Committee Report December 2017

The economic boom continues, pushing prices up and pushing developers to press for more and more space, sometimes in inappropriate ways. This month was particularly active at the Back Bay Architectural Commission (BBAC), with a number of significant proposals in the residential portion of the district.

At **183 Commonwealth Avenue** the owners asked to remove the crossbar over a parking court that was installed in the 1980s, the gates of which have already been removed. The BBAC approved lowering the side walls to 5' and pulling them back from the alley sidewalk if possible.

175 Beacon Street is being converted to a single family home. The roof deck will be enlarged and the rear stucco bay will be refaced with copper and the original transoms restored. The existing glass block opening will be converted to a garage door. The rear yard will be repaved in brick with two small planters, and a dogwood tree will be planted in the front yard. We supported the proposal, which is a significant improvement, although we would have liked more greenery in the alley.

At **443 Marlborough Street**, where there currently are two ells (an original two story ell and a one story ell added later which is currently used as a garage), the BBAC approved the addition of a second garage door in the original ell, allowing expansion of the garage inside. It also approved the removal of extensive lattice work from the one story ell, and the installation of decks with metal rails on both ells. The original oriel will be restored, and a new access door will be located on the side of the two-story ell. The rear yard tree will remain, and the cinder block wall will be refaced, in brick if possible.

One more time on **361 Beacon Street**: A proposed penthouse, which was denied by the BBAC in October, was brought back with a somewhat smaller footprint. However, the elevator override and the condensers are still visible from Beacon Street. We asked that the elevator override not extend above the roof, and that the condensers be placed on the existing roof, as is specified in the BBAC guidelines, not atop the penthouse. The BBAC agreed, and specified that the elevator override not extend above the penthouse roof and that the architect find a more appropriate location for the condensers. A revised proposal will be heard again in January.

At **212 Commonwealth Avenue** the applicant sought a two-story rear addition, which we opposed, as well as a penthouse visible from Commonwealth Avenue. Although the penthouse was lowered at our request before the BBAC meeting, it still proved too visible for approval. The rear addition also was not approved because it violates the BBAC's guidelines, which specify that new additions, if entertained at all, should be no more than one story. A revised project will undoubtedly be back next year.

At **410 Beacon Street** the BBAC approved the removal of a large ailanthus, provided that it be replaced with a large specimen shade tree in the building's courtyard.

237 Marlborough Street redux. A penthouse was previously approved by the BBAC at this location, but concerns were raised by an abutter. After discussion with the abutter and his lawyer, the developer has reduced the size of the penthouse so that it does not impact the adjacent skylight. We supported the proposed reduction, as did the BBAC.

Licensing and Building Use Committee Report December 2017

The committee heard one application this month.

Eddie V's, 800 Boylston Street – This is a high-end mostly seafood restaurant to go into the former P.F. Chang's space in the Prudential Center. The committee considered it because there is an entrance to the outside onto Belvidere Street. This will be a corporation-to-corporation transfer of the all-alcohol license in the same space. Capacity is 274 at tables and 20 at the bar. Seating will include a "patio" that will be in the arcade outside the walled restaurant space. All seating is on the mall level, with ground floor space devoted to storage, preparation and office in addition to the entrance from the street, while the primary entrance will be from the mall. Anticipated hours include an opening of 11:00 AM with closings at 9:00 PM on Sundays, 10:00 PM Mondays through Thursdays, and 11:00 PM Fridays and Saturdays, although it will remain a 2:00 AM license. They have plans for live jazz from 5:00 PM to closing. There will be valet parking, presumably in the Prudential Garage although there is no formal arrangement; trash and deliveries are all internal to the Prudential Center. This will be the 21st restaurant in a chain owned by Darden Restaurants which also runs Capital Grille among many others.

The committee voted not to oppose. The Executive Committee ratified the decision.

The Special Events Committee presents

Below Stairs: Piecing Together Life in Service at the Ayer Mansion

**Reception at 6:30 p.m.
Presentation at 7:00 p.m.**

Tuesday, January 23, 2018

**The Ayer Mansion
395 Commonwealth Avenue**

In 1903, shortly after the Ayers moved in to their Tiffany-designed house, a housekeeper carefully recorded every item found in the Ayer Mansion. This extraordinary 352-page inventory reveals a wealth of information not only about what the Ayers owned, but about the every day lives of those who worked for them.

Join us, during this NABB-only event, to hear preservationist Jeanne M. Pelletier talk about her research on the servants' lives and quarters in this National Historic Landmark building. Tickets are \$10.00, and you can contact the NABB office to buy your tickets now!



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 (January 16). For more information, please contact Grant Schaumburg at mensgroup@nabbonline.com.

NABB's Condo Management Friends and Neighbors Group will meet at 7:00 p.m. on Thursday, January 25, in the First Church in Boston, located at 66 Marlborough Street. The topic will be proposed guidelines that NABB and other downtown neighborhood groups have developed for presentation to state and city policy makers regarding short-term rentals (such as Airbnb).

Important Meeting Dates

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: January 2. For more information contact Sue Prindle or Susan Shafer at architecture@nabbonline.com.

The **Licensing and Building Use Committee** meets on the first Monday of this month, but this month it is meeting on Monday, January 8, at 7:00 pm at the Lenox Hotel. For more information contact Elliott Laffer at lbu@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: January 10. 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, January 25, 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.
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