



NORTH END/WATERFRONT RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION

P.O. Box 130319 Boston, MA 02113

Email: info@newra.org Website: www.newra.org

Date: **Thursday, September 10, 2009**

Time: 7:00 PM

Location: ABCD Center

1 Michelangelo Street

September 10, 2009 Meeting Minutes

Reports

- President's Report
NEWRA's annual election of officers will be held at the monthly meeting on October 8. NEWRA encourages all of its members to run for one of the five officer positions.
Problem Properties – meets with City Councilors; Looking at student apartment problems
Report abusive properties to info@newra.org
- Reports from City Hall
Nicole Leo, Mayor's Office of Neighborhood Services – **No report**
Kathy Carangelo-McIsaac, Councilor Sal LaMattina's Office – **Not present**
- Membership Committee - **2 new members since last meeting**
- Clean Streets Committee
 - Naomi and other NEWRA members toured the neighborhood with City Councilor Sal LaMattina and Public Works highlighting recurring problems with trash and rodents.
 - Next CS meeting is Sept 15; subject is trash cans
- Zoning, Licensing and Construction Committee
ZLC Committee written report distributed and posted on NEWRA.org
In addition to that report:
 - Cross Street Plaza – Based on member input, NEWRA is writing a letter to BRA, MassPike. ZLC will also contact WalkBoston and Freedom Trail Commission.

 - Mural project on the corner of Salem & Prince Streets is now installed; looks good.
Artist is arranging to light the building.

 - Greenway District Planning Study – Tonight was a conflicting meeting discussing the North End scenarios, among other neighborhoods. There is one more public meeting in the series of 6 meetings as part of the GDPS.

Zoning and Licensing Applications

105 Prince St., Condominium Association has filed an appeal seeking zoning relief to rebuild and expand the headhouse on the roof of the 5-story residential building.

Headhouse and surrounding roof area had leak and drainage issues.

Needed to add 2 steps and therefore change the door which raised the height of the headhouse.

Water drainage will be away from the party wall.

ZBA hearing is Tues., 9/15 at City Hall

Abutter at 109 Prince St – is agreeable to the variance subject to a raised curb on their side

Condo association agreed to work out this issue with abutter and provide new drawings.

Vote: 43 Support, 0 Oppose – NEWRA supports the application

217 Hanover St., Sophia Anderson, Manager, has applied to the Licensing Board for a Fortune Teller License to be exercised on the 2nd floor of the premises, with storage in the rear. The applicant proposes to do tarot card and palm readings, teach tarot card and palm reading, and sell related retail products, such as books, cards and incense. Hours of operation 10:00 AM to 11:00 PM, possibly seven days.

Correction: 215 Hanover Street

On top of Dolce Vita, 2 picture windows on 2nd Floor

Displayed signs “Psychic Tarot Card Readings” for 2 Hanover St windows

Operates business in W. Bridgewater (licensed), previously had operation at 6 Flags amusement park.

Will not be burning incense.

Closing at 11pm, 7 days a week.

Abutter at 215 Hanover Street, Shirley M. spoke in support – Does real estate; wants more traffic on stairs

Abutter says fortune teller has psychic ability.

Business is mostly readings. Retail sales are mostly crystals.

No other employees anticipated.

Licensing hearing has already transpired. Licensing Board is waiting for community input.

Clientele is primarily middle aged women, 80% by appointment

Palm reading \$20, Tarot Cards \$40, Most expensive candle is \$10

No storage will be used.

Commitments:

No signage or anything else on sidewalk.

Signs will be approximately 2.5 ft x 3.0 ft. There will be 2 signs, 1 in each window. Signs will not be lit.

Applicant agrees not to provide services in restaurants.

Vote: 30 support, 16 oppose – NEWRA supports the application

Neighborhood Presentations

Update on the Armenian Heritage Park on Parcel 13, Rose F. Kennedy Greenway, by Donald Tellalian, Architect

NEWRA previously supported the project. This is a progress update.

Configuration - Sculpture will reconfigure every year. Labyrinth ... like a piazza, gives some activity.

Sculpture is Split Rhombic Dodecahedron – 12 sides

50% of construction documents now completed – positive response from officials (MassPike & BRA)

Design is essentially the same with the addition of sidewalks and minor configuration changes.

Challenge: Only 20 inches in some areas near ramp from surface down to tunnel ceiling

Needs enough support to have a vault for fountains.

MassPike does not have any “as built” information or bearing ability measures of the soil.

Digging test pits as soon as next week to see how far down can go before hitting tunnel.

Completion of documents will follow before it can be bid out to contractors.

Trust will be created to fund ongoing maintenance of the park and memorial.

Target opening is Fall 2010.

Q&A:

Lecture series included with Bostonian Society; Starts Fall 2010 when park opens.

Comment that fountain was moved to allow for pedestrian safety around ramp entrance.

Labyrinth is less exotic after BRA request to set in the lawn.

Conservancy is concerned about the viability of the grass within the labyrinth

Takes 30 minutes to get through entire labyrinth – could have “shortcuts” where lawn gets worn

Inscriptions? Only one inscription on face of black granite sculpture; Don has it available to read
Circle of Achievement still in discussion – BRA wants “Art-Commerce-Science-Service” engraved

Supermarket Committee, Lia Tota will present an update on plans for the Bullfinch Triangle supermarket. The committee is seeking NEWRA and community support to push the developer forward with the supermarket lease and building construction. With a general vote to support, NEWRA can then take a broader range of actions to support the committee’s work for an affordable supermarket serving the North End, West End and Beacon Hill neighborhoods.

10 years in the making – Due to bureaucracy and now struggling economy there is still nothing happening.
Parcel 2A and 2C in the Bullfinch Triangle

Handed out timeline of activity by the Supermarket Committee

Asking the BRA to meet with them – Has a meeting set on September 18th

Will be looking for them to create a plan to facilitate action

Would like NEWRA support in advance of BRA meeting

Q&A:

Hines-Raymond JV are willing to go forward when they have a lessee for upper floors.

Raymond has said he might pull out at a Gov’t Ctr Garage meeting, so Hines took lead.

Stop & Shop has concerns about Parcel 9 market district competing with them.

BRA is confident that numbers are sufficient to support a supermarket.

Protecting local merchants by not having directly in North End.

Holdup is no lessee for upper floors above supermarket.

Hines-Raymond JV won’t build until they have a lessee and the financing to build.

Currently, the JV does not have the financing to build and City won’t risk another hole.

Parking will be within the building, including for the supermarket.

Originally supermarket was supposed to be on the site now occupied by the Avinir.

Parcel 2A and 2C are owned by MassPike and MBTA

Vote: 36 support, 3 oppose – NEWRA supports the request of the Supermarket Committee

Paul Revere House Museum, Nina Zannieri, Executive Director, will present an update on the museum’s expansion plans, including a building the museum purchased on Lathrop Terrace, and related construction.

Lathrop Terrace building – Museum needs more room and wants to build an annex.

Attendance has grown to 36,000 per year.

Will be back for zoning and code variances.

One of few remaining wooden buildings in the neighborhood; eligible for National Historical designation
Land was originally owned by Paul Revere (not the building which was added after in 1835)

History of building was once an Irish boarding house. Museum has been tracking history of residents.

Around 1907, transitioned back to single family houses, owned by Italian families starting with Bruni

Museum is free to North End residents (only needs address); Museum also hosts NE educational groups

Extension work starts in the Fall or Spring 2010.

Raising money now, has enough to start.

Abutters are generally supportive.