

HIGHLIGHT

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Celebrating 50 Years!
1958-2008

the Newsletter of the High Street Hill Association

April 2008

Please Join Us for Your Neighborhood Association's

Annual Meeting, Potluck Dinner, and 50th Anniversary Celebration Kickoff

Monday, May 5

Those with last names
beginning with A-I
please bring a salad,
J-R a main dish, and S -
Z a dessert.

6 pm Family Potluck Dinner
and 50th Anniversary Cake
7 pm HSHA Business Meeting

Latvian Lutheran
Church
58 Irving Street

Followed by "50 Years on Our Hill," discussion and stories about our neighborhood and its association as told by HSHA alumni.

Fifty years after its founding in 1958 the HSHA is still going strong. And to celebrate our first half century we have scheduled a series of commemorative events.

50 Years on the Hill

After our short (we promise) business meeting we will get to the fun portion of the evening: an informal discussion covering the highlights of our neighborhood on High Street Hill. We've called on HSHA alumni to share their memories of the 1958 Redevelopment Project that threatened our borders, the creation of the National Register District and the Local Historic District, the reclamation of Leverett Pond and Olmsted Park and the drive to build Lincoln School. For those that were there we hope that you'll join in; for those that weren't it's time to learn why Pill Hill is so special. Please contact Betsy Shure Gross at 617-731-1448 or betsyshuregross@gmail.com if you'd like to participate.

Bye-Bye to Old Bylaws

Every year during the business meeting portion of our Annual Meeting we present a report to the membership highlighting our activities from the previous year. This year, however, the main order of business will be approval of a revised set of HSHA bylaws. The HSHA board felt that the original bylaws from 1958 were outdated and, with the help of longtime resident and attorney Sandy Gadsby, we have developed an improved version that better describes our purpose, defines our procedures and clarifies our tax status, as well as indemnifies our board members. Please take the opportunity to review the proposed bylaws before the meeting. They will be posted on our website along with the original version. If you have any questions or would like to receive a paper copy please call Rob Daves at 617-285-1113.

50-year Benchmark

At our Annual Picnic on Philbrick Square on June 15, in addition to pony rides, the Brookline Community Band will perform and we'll dedicate a refurbished set of park benches. The current benches have seen better days but, with a bit of effort, they can be revitalized. On the morning of the picnic we plan to gather a group of neighbors to help reassemble the benches' restored frames with new slats, bolts and a brass plaque to commemorate the 50th year of the HSHA. Stay tuned to the next *Highlight* for more details.

Our Storied Past

We left the best event for last. On October 4, renowned storyteller Jay O'Callahan, will perform his famous Pill Hill stories in a special performance at Lincoln School. His stories are based on real people that he encountered growing up at 112 High Street and we are thrilled that he is able to join our celebration. It seems especially fitting since Jay's father, Edward, was the first President of the HSHA in 1958.

Thanks for the Poster

Over the next few months we will provide more information in the *Highlight* and on our website as details become available. Also, be on the lookout for our very wonderful 50th Anniversary poster which will be displayed in the town kiosks. Designed by neighbor Susan Scott, it includes photos of the neighborhood taken by her husband Robert Kaufman. We'd like to sincerely thank them for their generous gift of time.

We currently are forming a Host Committee to help underwrite the cost of this event. We will be seeking sponsorships at \$100 which will include two tickets to the performance and admission to a special reception with Jay O'Callahan. If sufficient funds are raised we plan to establish a maintenance and management endowment for Olmsted Park. Stay Tuned.

Have Spring Fever?

Here's your chance to get outside, meet new people and lend a helping hand.

2008 Olmsted Park Spring Schedule

Saturday

April 26, 10 am -1 pm.

Meet at the Allerton Street Overlook on Pond Avenue.

Focus: Pruning, raking and mulching.

At 9 am Hugh Mattison will lead a walking tour of the Muddy River

Thursdays

May 1 and 8, 5:30 -8 pm.

Meet at the Chestnut Street parking lot.

Focus: Removal of knotweed and invasive species

Saturday

May 17, 10 am -1 pm.

Meet at the Leverett Pond Bridge at Route 9.

Focus: Pruning, raking and seeding.

In recent years, the Town of Brookline has overseen the implementation of the Emerald Necklace Masterplan for the restoration of Olmsted Park. Paths have been built, trees have been planted and beds of shrubbery have been replaced according to Olmsted's design intent. The next challenge, however, is to maintain this wonderful resource and multimillion dollar investment.

But as has been demonstrated time and again with similar projects across the country, public funds alone can't sustain local parks. And so, what some are calling a "new model of stewardship" involving private funding and local volunteers is being developed to collectively support our parks.

At Olmsted Park, the Parks Department currently maintains the grounds with a mix of its own landscape staff, subcontractors and Department of Correction crews but their efforts and Town funding are not enough to keep the park in optimum condition.

So last year the HSHA's Friends of Leverett Pond collaborated with the Brookline GreenSpace Alliance and Town Parks and Open Space Director Erin Chute Gallentine (who, incidentally, is now on the Board of the National Association of Olmsted Parks in Washington, DC.) to develop a neighborhood volunteer program to help fill the gap. Over 50 volunteers came out on Saturdays and Thursday evenings in the spring and fall to help. Our initial but modest success has made this program a model for other parks in Brookline.

On next Saturday, which also happens to be Frederick Law Olmsted's birthday, we will need your help again. Tools will be provided and Town Parks Department staff will be on hand to guide our efforts. Prior to the start of the cleanup at 10 am, neighbor Hugh Mattison, who serves as the Administrator for the Muddy River Restoration Project Maintenance and Management Oversight Committee (MMOC) will lead a walking tour of the Muddy River.

All new volunteers will get a special T-shirt.

The front of the shirt is printed with a "Friends of Leverett Pond" logo created in 1978 by local artist Colleen for the original Olmsted Park activist group. The back of the shirt was recently designed by neighbor graphic artist Susan Scott specifically for this program.

Brookline GreenSpace Alliance

**NEIGHBORHOOD
VOLUNTEER** 

Town of Brookline-Parks and Open Space



It's your park and it needs your help this Spring.

You're Invited

Brookline GreenSpace Alliance would like to invite our neighborhood to its annual fundraising event, Growing GreenSpace. On Sunday June 22, at a garden party in the historic Pill Hill home and unique garden of Jay Veevers, Growing GreenSpace will celebrate 20 years of highlighting the needs of our open spaces and bettering our town by honoring the green space legacy that defines Brookline. Funds raised from this garden party event will help support environmental education, outreach and advocacy in Brookline. Tickets are \$75; RSVP by May 26th as space is limited. Contact event Co-chairs Jay Veevers or Betsy Shure Gross at 617-731-1448 for more information.

More Upcoming Events:

BGSA Field Trip: Riverway Park Walk to Celebrate Olmsted's Birthday

Saturday, April 26th, 9:00 – 10:30 am.

Meet at the parking lot outside Brook House in Olmsted Park

Join Brookline GreenSpace Alliance for a 3-mile walking tour along the Muddy River. We will walk through Riverway Park to the Landmark Center and return. Topics covered will be history, landscape architecture, and the Muddy River Restoration Project which is scheduled to start construction next spring. For more information, call 617-277-4777 or email info@brooklinegreenspace.org.

Sounds and Scenes Family Festival at Olmsted Park

A Celebration of Music and Landscape in the Emerald Necklace

Saturday, June 7, 10 am - 1 pm Free

Presented by Brookline Adult and Community Education and Frederick Law Olmsted National Historic Site and the HSHA. For more info call: 617-730-2700 or www.brooklineadulted.org

Thanks to graphic designer Kristin Leader for her generous donation of time to design the Sounds and Scenes flyer.

Thanks also to Tim and Alida Hanson for matching HSHA's \$200 donation in support of this event.

High Street Hill Annual Picnic

Sunday, June 15, 4 pm until dark at Philbrick Square.

Join the neighborhood for pony rides, a concert by the Brookline Community Band and dedication of restored park benches.

A San Francisco family of four is looking to rent (or purchase) a home in Pill Hill for at least a year beginning August 1st. Please call Lynn at 415-824-5049 or email lynnokelley@mac.com

Spare Any Loose Change?

Captain John O'Leary from the Community Service Division of the Brookline Police Department informs us that there have lately been a rash of vehicle break-ins in our neighborhood. In all cases the cars were left unlocked and, aside for one GPS unit, the culprit stole loose change. Police have collected fingerprints and Captain O'Leary says that our area will receive special attention including patrols in unmarked cars. For more info see the Police Department online blog.

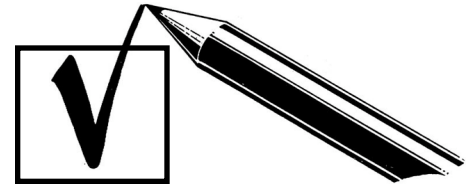
Former Red Cab Site Update

Leggat McCall Properties is proposing a 4-story medical office building with 260 parking spaces, most of which would be below grade. There would be about 65,000 sf of usable space with some retail on the street floor. The building would be almost 300 feet long and as much as 58 feet above Route 9, or 70 feet above the T tracks and White Place. A Design Advisory Team, appointed by the Planning Board, is working with White Place residents to improve the design and reduce its impacts. They are especially concerned that the new building would shadow their houses during the winter. A related warrant article for Town Meeting has been filed that would make it harder to get height bonuses such as the one sought for this proposal. For more information, call Polly Selkoe at the Planning Dept, 617-730-2126. Karl Neubauer (Karl.Neubauer@lmp.com) of Leggat McCall also has information on the proposal.

2 Brookline Place Update

After a 9 week hiatus, the Design Advisory Team has met a third time to review Children's Hospital's proposed designs for a 125-foot medical/administrative office building on the site of 2-4 Brookline Place. After hearing from the DAT that the building's massing and patient drop-off areas were unacceptable, the developer has returned with a more satisfactory building exterior and eliminated the drop-off area in the pedestrian plaza. The latest discussions at not only the DAT but also at recent Selectmen and Planning Board meetings have focused on Precinct 5 Town Meeting Member Hugh Mattison's warrant article to require a reduction in the number of the developments' 624 parking spaces, which is four times more than would be required in the Longwood Medical area. Some, including members of the Economic Development Advisory Board, feel that the site which was originally zoned for a lab building with 420 parking spaces and is considered to be in a prime mass-transit oriented location would attract more congestion to our area. The next DAT meeting will be held at 7 pm May 7 at the Police Station. Meetings are open to all. Call DAT rep Rob Daves for more info, 617-566-7334.

If the High Street Hill Association wasn't here, who would... ?



- send email notices for neighborhood events, important meetings and crime alerts?
- arrange for renowned storyteller Jay O'Callahan to perform at Lincoln school?
- give a free Musicale with musicians from the neighborhood who happen to be world-class performers?
- develop and maintain a really useful website with photos of every house and lots of historical information?
- work with other neighborhood groups in Brookline to meet common goals for zoning, parking, open space?
- organize a Fathers Day Picnic on the Green with free pony rides, volleyball and a band?
- lobby the Town to address the safety of pedestrian crossings on High Street?
- publish and distribute a free local neighborhood newsletter to each mailbox in the neighborhood?
- be a strong advocate for historic preservation and environmental issues?
- work with the Town to develop a Volunteer Program so residents can be involved in maintaining Olmsted Park?
- hold an annual meeting and potluck dinner?

**Do you think
our
neighborhood
would be as
special without
the HSHA?**

These are just a few of the important things that the committed volunteers of **High Street Hill Association** have done for our neighborhood in the past year or so. But it takes support from you to continue the activities and the advocacy. **We hope you agree your \$15 per year dues brings quite a return.** Thank you for your support.

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High Street Hill Association

Membership Application

New Renewal

Name _____

Address _____

Phone _____ Email _____

- Yes, I'd like to receive the HSHA newsletter, the *Highlight*, also by email.
- Enclosed is a check for \$15 for a one year family membership.
- I'd like to support the HSHA with an additional donation of \$ _____.

Mail to: High Street Hill Association
Maria Conner, Treasurer
36 Allerton Street
Brookline, MA 02445