

HIGHLIGHT

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The Newsletter of the High Street Hill Association

June 2009



Sunday, Father's Day, June 21



Bring family, friends, a dish to share and something for the grill
Soft drinks and grills will be provided

Pony Rides
(from 4:30 to 5:30 only)



The Results Are In. Survey Says...

Thirty years ago foresighted people worked hard to create the Hill Local Historic District and since then most would agree that the protections, benefits and restrictions have worked well to preserve this neighborhood. But in recent years complaints about the Preservation Commission (PC) have been on the rise and the HSHA board thought it was time to gather real data to see if the PC was meeting its goals and find what improvements could be made. So over the last year several from our board formed a committee with the other Brookline LHD's and the PC itself to build a survey that was sent out in March.

In order to gather data on the whole process-- the application, the hearing and the implementation-- the survey respondents were limited to those who had appeared before the PC at an application hearing within the last three years (a shorter, less quantitative questionnaire sent to all LHD residents is expected sometime soon).

The survey found that although most residents were glad to live in a historic district two-fifths of respondents found the process to be unsatisfactory. Some of the recommendations are that the PC should:

- improve the quality of its interaction with applicants
- clearly base its decisions on guidelines and historic preservation principles
- consider financial impact on applicants
- review and revise Guidelines with the goal of eliminating confusion
- work to ensure execution/implementation of approved design

These results were presented at a special meeting of the Preservation Commission on May 18. On June 9, the PC responded briefly to the major findings of the survey and decided to set up a special subcommittee that would include LHD representatives to further investigate ways to implement the survey findings. They also agreed to post their formal written response on the Town's PC webpage and asked that the HSHA post the complete data generated from the survey to which they would post a link on their site.

We would like to thank PC Chair Jim Batchelor, and PC Staff members Greer Hardwicke and Jean Innamorati for their full participation. Thanks especially to Tufts Assistant Professor Karen Jacobsen for her expert guidance. The HSHA, the Cottage Farm Neighborhood Association and the Chestnut Hill Neighborhood Association shared the data collection cost of this survey; the PC paid for the mailing costs.

For all the survey results visit the HSHA website: highstreethill.org

Walking Tour: History and Architecture of High Street Hill

Walnut Street was Brookline's main street until the early nineteenth century. The east side of High Street Hill wasn't part of Brookline until 1844. Learn how the High Street Hill neighborhood has changed across three hundred years. The oldest existing houses are two hundred years old; most are newer. Learn how to recognize architectural styles and the periods when various styles were popular. This tour will take about an hour and a half and include lower Walnut, Irving, Upland, High, Edgehill and Hawthorn Roads/Streets. Please meet at the intersection of Walnut and High Streets.

10 AM Saturday, June 27. Offered by Pill Hill resident Tom Elwertowski.

An "A+" for Conduct-ing

On May 18, **Joshua Weilerstein**, of Irving Street, won the international Malko Competition for Young Conductors in Copenhagen, Denmark. Josh, 21, son of Don and Vivian Weilerstein, both world-class musicians, is the youngest candidate to win the prestigious competition for conductors 20 to 35 years old. He prepared a dozen classical works and was picked the best from a field of 30 musicians chosen from 300 applicants from around the world. He wins 20,000 Euros, a DVD of his performances, a hand-painted ceramic trophy from Royal Copenhagen, and concerts with 16 Scandinavian orchestras.

Josh, who just graduated from the New England Conservatory, is the youngest member of an illustrious musical family: his father Donald was the founding first violinist of the Cleveland Quartet and teaches at NEC and Juilliard in New York; his mother Vivian directs NEC's Professional Piano Trio Training Program; and his sister Alisa, a cellist, has a burgeoning soloist career. Don, Vivian, and Alisa also perform as the Weilerstein Trio.

Josh graduated from Brookline High and then studied violin at NEC, only lately turning to conducting. Don and Vivian said it's been amazing to see their son take to conducting and they admitted that they have no idea how he's achieved so much so early. They also say that Josh is getting inundated with offers from around the world to conduct.

Josh and his dad performed a few years ago at our High Street Hill Musicale. To see videos of Josh in action and to watch him accept his award go to:

www.malkocompetition.com/home.

"Roland Hayes and His Love of Sacred Black Music"



Roland Hayes, who lived on Allerton Street, was a leading concert singer from the 1920's to the 1940's. He single-handedly broke the "color line" in classical music, paving the way for future generations of African-American artists. Paul Robeson, Marian Anderson, and others following in Hayes's footsteps achieved permanent recognition, whereas Hayes's name gradually receded from the pages of history.

Join in a celebration of his important musical contribution and remarkable life. Sponsored by the Brookline Adult & Community Education and the Roland Hayes Celebration Committee.

3:30 PM, Sunday, June 21, St. Paul's Episcopal Church, St. Paul Street, Brookline. \$10.

Plaque To Be Remounted

In 1999 the HSHA installed a bronze plaque in the memory of **Louise Castle** at the Allerton Overlook in Olmsted Park. Louise, who lived at 22 Irving Street, was the first woman selectman in Brookline (future Governor Michael Dukakis and Attorney General Eliot Richardson were her campaign managers), served on the HSHA board and was an ardent supporter of the reclamation of Olmsted Park. In the past years, however, the plaque has become dislodged from its mount and now, we have learned, plaques are prohibited in Olmsted Park. The solution, we believe, is to mount her plaque on a suitable stone near the HSHA-restored benches on Philbrick Square. Since this park is at the heart of her neighborhood we think it's a fitting location.

**Meet the
New HSHA Board**
On April 27, at our Annual Meeting, the HSHA membership elected a new board. Thanks to outgoing board members Nicola Moscufo, Maureen Coffey and Alida Hanson for their service.

High Street Hill Association Board 2009-2010

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