

HIGHLIGHT

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The Newsletter of the High Street Hill Association

October 2009

Call to Action

The \$91 million Muddy River Restoration Project that will provide essential flood control, historic restoration and environmental cleanup for our cherished park system is in jeopardy because the Town is considering not fully complying with 20 years of signed commitments with Boston, the State, and the Army Corps of Engineers.



Even though 75% of the water that flows into the Muddy River comes from Brookline, the Town is only required to pay for 1.8% of the \$91M cost (\$1.6M) *plus pay for the restoration of the Carlton Street Footbridge* -- a sweetheart deal considering the extraordinary benefits: prevention of devastating flooding like that which occurred in 1996 and 1998, an estimated \$2.1M cleanup of contaminated Willow Pond and \$6M worth of necessary sediment removal in Leverett Pond as well as restoration of Riverway Park which has been neglected for over 50 years.

Call Town Meeting Members now to ask them to adopt Article 5 without amendment.

Warrant Article 5, which asks for up to \$1.4 million in contingency funding (90% of which is widely expected to be reimbursed, leaving

Brookline to pay for only up to \$140,000) for the footbridge provides precise language that will ensure that our town will continue to be a partner in this very good fiscal deal. A similar Warrant Article, 4C, provided by the Board of Selectmen, simply requests the \$1.4M funding and will not provide the essential language that the State has demanded. The State has said the without Brookline's full commitment to restore the footbridge they will likely not commit their \$25M share of the costs and the project would be left unfinished.

We ask that you call Town Meeting Members and especially Advisory Committee members now to ask them to adopt Article 5 *without amendment*. To allow the Town of Brookline to renege on its long-standing commitments, to continue to neglect a historic park and to leave Brookline vulnerable to flooding and holding the bill for millions in liabilities unacceptable to us as taxpayers.

Go Green On Halloween

Climate Change Action Brookline (CCAB) and the Brookline Neighborhood Alliance (BNA) has asked each neighborhood to respond to the climate crisis and the responses have been as varied as the neighborhoods: one association held a green fair, one is organizing Low Carbon Diet groups and some are counting pounds of carbon with individualized checklists.

What is the HSHA doing? Last February the HSHA held a well-attended demonstration of a whole house energy audit and now we've established a board subcommittee to meet the following goals: to build awareness of the need to reduce carbon in every household and to make participation easy and useful, while addressing the special concerns of old house owners in our local historic district.

On Halloween you can expect a visit from a "green" visitor.

So get ready for the HSHA's "Go Green on Halloween." On that night you can expect to get a visit from a "green" visitor with a suitable-for-hanging-on-the-refrigerator flyer listing the easiest and fastest ways you can shed some unwanted carbon.

We need volunteers to hand out flyers. Contact Kristin Leader at 617-734-1964 or kkleader@comcast.net.



Back to School Jam

Each year, a few days before school starts, our **State Representative Jeffrey Sanchez** hosts a "Back to School Jam" for school children and their families at the High Street Veterans Apartments. They provide hotdogs, DJ's play music, kid's get their faces painted and Jeffrey hands out a few dozen free backbacks to eager kids. Thanks to those from our neighborhood who answered the HSHA call this year to help out: **Reita Ennis, Joe Horning and Heidi, Kayla, Ellie and Liora Krantz.**

What'll It Be --

Paper or Electrons?

You may have noticed that the first *Highlight* this fall is rather late. Usually we get one into everyone's mailboxes in September but here it is mid-October. What's up? Is the editor distracted by too many meetings in preparation for Town Meeting, one might ask? The real reason is that announcement and alert messages are getting regularly emailed to the neighborhood via the "HSHA Neighborhood News Updates." The paper version, which takes more effort and time to produce, just isn't as quick to react, especially for "late-breaking" news such as crime reports and hastily-called meetings. There are currently 208 neighborhood addresses on the "Update" list and a total of 297 in the "Highlight" list, which includes Selectmen, TMM's and those who have moved out of the neighborhood. Most people sign up using the annual dues form or by direct email request to the editor and no one is removed for not paying dues (but \$15 per year isn't that much, right?).

Since there are still some that do not have email addresses, don't want to get email or just prefer to read paper we will still produce a paper version *Highlight* for the near future. But we'd like to be able to reach everyone in the most convenient way possible. If you are not on our email list please consider it.

Incidentally, to date no one has asked to be removed from the list, although some have asked to us not to deliver the paper version in order to save paper. Unfortunately, it's not practical to selectively deliver the paper newsletter.

What do you think? Is a paper version of the *Highlight* still necessary?

Board Briefs:

One Way Only

A complaint to the HSHA board about traffic from The Park Condominium onto Cumberland Avenue reminded some of an agreement between the neighborhood and the developer back when the project was proposed. At Town Hall we located a 1983 Zoning Board decree that indeed required that "circulation of traffic on Glen Road extension shall be one-way only from Cumberland Avenue." The board sent a copy to Ron Brown Partners, managers of the The Park, and we promptly received a reply from the condo board saying that they have sent a notice to residents to ask them to comply.

Zoning Problems

At our last board meeting we met with Phyllis O'Leary and Tom Elwertowski, two Precinct 5 Town Meeting Members who live next to Downes Field, to discuss the neighborhood impact for a proposed conversion of a 2-family to a 4-unit at 48-50 Jamaica Road. Although the Planning Board is recommending that only a 3-unit be allowed with certain requirements for parking, landscape and design changes, Phyllis and Tom expressed concern since there are more properties that are expected to be converted. We all felt that it is time to consider changing the zoning from M1 (apartments) to the new F (family) zone and we said we would work with the Precinct 5 TMM's to conduct a review all of Precinct 5 zoning.

The case for 48-50 Jamaica Road will be heard by the Zoning Board of Appeals at 7:30PM Thursday, October 22 at Town Hall.

Friends of Fairsted Lecture

Neighbors and Networks:

The Olmsted Firm and the Development of Brookline, 1880-1936

Professor Keith N. Morgan, Boston University

Through more than three hundred commissions and multiple associations in the community, the Olmsted office and staff played seminal roles in the appearance and organization of Brookline. A study, led by Professor Keith Morgan and sponsored by the National Park Service and the Organization of American Historians, explored the impact of the Olmsted office and family on the evolution of the town. Based on this work, Professor Morgan will discuss the network of personal and professional relationships that facilitated the careful development of the suburban landscape surrounding Fairsted.

October 28, 2009, 6:00 PM Reception, 7:00 PM Lecture, Wheelock College, 43 Hawes Street, Brookline, MA

This lecture is free and open to the public. Seating is limited. Please RSVP to friendsoffairsted@gmail.com or by phone 617.566.1689 ext. 235.

Supported in part by the High Street Hill Association.

..... Not to Be Missed