

# HIGHLIGHT

WWW.HIGHSTREETHILL.ORG

*The Newsletter of the High Street Hill Association*

*June 2012*

*Are you considering upgrading your home to take advantage of attractive promises of energy efficiency? How much do these upgrades cost and how much can I save? Are these changes suitable for my house in a local historic district?*

*Here's your chance to hear from those who really know.*



## Energy Efficiency, Renewable Energy, and Historic Homes

*Another HSHA Special*

A Forum sponsored by the High Street Hill Association  
10 AM - Noon Saturday - Free  
June 2, 2012  
Latvian Lutheran Church Hall, 58 Irving Street

*THIS SATURDAY!*

**Caitlin Corkins**, Stewardship Manager, Historic New England *Energy Retrofits and the Historic Home: Weighing the Risks and Opportunities*

**Greer Hardwicke**, Preservation Planner, Town of Brookline  
*A discussion of the new Guidelines for the Installation of Renewable Energy Systems*

**Lara Curtis Hayes**, Senior Planner, Town of Brookline  
*Town sponsored initiatives for energy upgrades and conservation: Climate Change Action Brookline and Green Homes Brookline*

**Kim Toigo**, Next Step Living  
*An energy efficiency company working with the town describes how it provides home energy diagnostics and improvements for residents*

### Introducing the 2012-3 HSHA Board

(voted at the April 30 Annual Meeting)

**Bill Weber**, President

**Alexis Hasiotis Wintersteen**, Vice President

**John Carpenter**, Secretary

**Kristin Leader**, Treasurer

**Margot Balboni**

**Kerry Brown**

**Blake Cady**

**Rob Daves**

**Anthony Flint**

**Betsy Shure Gross**

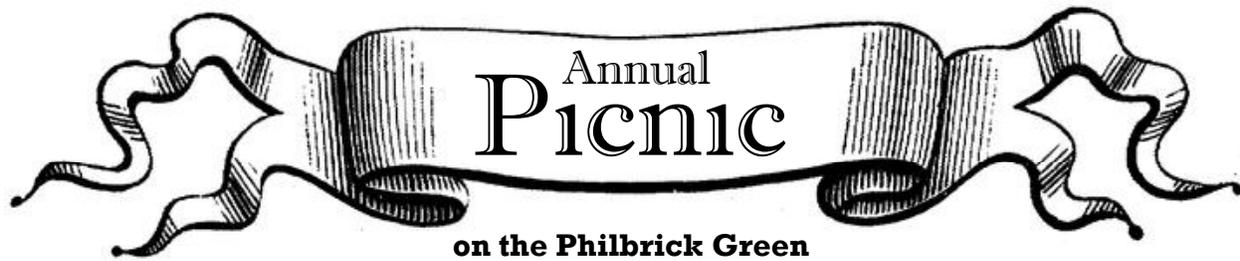
**Margaret Talcott**

### Have you paid your dues yet?

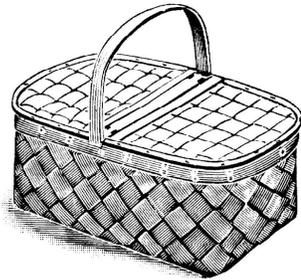
If not, see our website for a membership form. And thanks to all those that have already sent in their dues to support our events and neighborhood needs such as Steps to Success, the Lincoln After School Program and the New Brookline Teen Center

**Did you know** that HSHA gets a percentage (at no cost to you) of any purchase that you make from Amazon.com if you enter their site from the HSHA website? Make the HSHA a button (label it "Amazon") on your browser toolbar so you won't forget.

# HSHA



**4PM to 8PM Sunday, Father's Day, June 17**



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)

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## Historic Street Signs Get Exemption



It has taken more than ten years but, finally, our historic cast aluminum street signs have received formal recognition from the federal government so that they can remain in place without violating the rules. A few weeks ago the Federal Highway Administration issued a statement declaring that in local historic districts street signs that don't meet the guidelines for size, color and retroreflectivity would be granted an exemption from the rules in the MUTCD (Manual on Uniform Traffic Code Devices), the "bible" when it comes to traffic signs.

These distinctive black and silver signs were cast by town workers in a town foundry from 1937 through the 1960's and have been a welcoming icon on our streets (see Dennis Dewitt's [An Historic Legacy from Brookline's DPW](#) as well as photos on the HSHA website). But in recent years their numbers have been diminished by a natural attrition (e.g. car accidents, tree limbs) and, some might argue, a determined drive to replace them with computer-generated, flimsy signs that could be simply nailed to utility poles.

The High Street Hill Association, the Preservation Commission and Senator Kerry lobbied to request this federal guideline change as did citizens of Lower Merion, PA and Saugerties and Forest Hills, NY, other communities which also have rare historic signs.

According to an inventory done in 2006, about 500 of Brookline's historic street name and related cast aluminum signs survive in situ, representing perhaps 10% to 20% of the original number. At any given intersection there may be from one to four street name signs and the number of intersections with at least one street name sign is probably closer to 300. However, the survivors are unevenly distributed. In South Brookline there are almost none. In Pill Hill and Cottage Farm, the two oldest local historic districts, they may be the majority. There are also 287 street name and related signs in the town barn. However, most are duplicates of mounted signs.

In 2011 HSHA did a photo inventory to document what signs remained in Pill Hill. In the next few months we hope to build a list of signs that can be installed from stocks in the town barn as well as a prioritized list of where we would like to see replacements. New signs can be cast to closely mimic the old ones but the cost and how they would be paid for has yet to be worked out. Currently, the Lawrence Historic District is considering starting a drive to install "toppers," cast aluminum additions that sit on the top of street signs, that say "Lawrence Historic District."

The HSHA would like to thank all neighbors who have been working to save our signs, especially Dennis DeWitt and the staff of our Preservation Commission.