

HIGHLIGHT

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The Newsletter of the High Street Hill Association

September 2007

Is the triangle a "Square" or a "Green?" You Decide

Just before this year's HSHA Annual Picnic, a handsome new sign appeared on the grass, touting the triangular green space on Upland Road as "Philbrick Square." But before the paint was barely dry, a petition was circulated to contest the designation. Should the name be "Philbrick Square" or, say the petitioners, "Philbrick Green?"

There actually is a Brookline Naming Committee to decide such matters. At a hearing last month, proponents and opponents made their cases and then received the committee's Solomonian suggestion: perhaps it should be renamed "Green at Philbrick Square." Translation: Work things out among yourselves and come back to us.

So in the spirit of neighborly harmony, the two sides offer their arguments below. The BNC awaits our decision (sorry, the Leonard P. Zakim Bunker Hill Green at Philbrick Square is not an option). Cast your vote by emailing your response to philbrick@highstreethill.org *no later than October 14*. You can offer whatever comments you wish, but please be sure clearly state your choice: SQUARE or GREEN.

When Edward Philbrick's heirs hired Frederick Law Olmsted's firm to complete the subdivision of their estate in the 1880's, the triangular parcel appeared as just another house lot ("#18") on "Walley Ave., as the upper part of Upland Road was then known. Lot #18 became a public space in 1901 when it was purchased for \$5000-- \$2500 from the Town and \$2500 contributed by "residents in the vicinity." The name Philbrick Square first appeared on the Town maps in 1913. Thanks to Dennis DeWitt and Greer Hardwicke.

The Case for "PHILBRICK SQUARE"

- Philbrick Square is the official name of the park, as designated on official town maps.
- We live in a Local Historic District. We have struggled to preserve our unique aluminum street signs and our graceful porches and columns. Historic names deserve the same protection as the physical attributes of the neighborhood.
- The word "square" echoes the time during which the park was named. Philbrick Square is historically linked to Brookline's Knyvet Square, Linden Square and Mason Square. We should respect the initiative of our forebears, who expected the names to be carried on.
- We have only one "green" in Brookline: the original Town Green at the intersection of Walnut and Warren. This is a proper use of the word, which denotes a village center. It is a familiar New England concept that doesn't apply to our small park.
- It is simply priceless that our Square is actually a triangle. That kind of quirkiness should be valued.

The Case for "PHILBRICK GREEN"

- The Brookline Greenspace Alliance website variously refers the park as "The Upland Green" and as "The Upland Road Triangle, also known as Philbrick Square"— not exactly a ringing endorsement for "Square." "Upland Road Green" even appears on HSHA website map.
- Our community has gathered annually for our Picnic on the Green, ever since Olive and George Smith's children started the tradition over a half-century ago.
- Each December, for as long as most of us can recall, there has been "Caroling on the Green."
- At the other end of Walnut St. is the Town Green. At this end, Philbrick Green seems a reasonable compromise.
- At this year's Picnic on the Green, 41 neighbors — the majority of those present — signed a petition asking that the park's official name be Philbrick Green. Only two who were asked declined.
- The director of the Parks Department has said the sign can easily be changed.

NEIGHBORHOOD VOLUNTEER

Town of Brookline-Parks and Open Space



Olmsted Park Fall 2007 Volunteer Plan

Saturday, Sept 29th, 10 am – 1 pm
Volunteer Kick-Off

Target: Beds along Babbling Brook; (meet at Chestnut St. Parking Lot)

Focus: weed beds and brook

Thursday, October 4th, 4 pm – dusk

Target: Willow Pond

Focus: remove knotweed; reseed bank

Thursday, October 11th, 4 pm – dusk

Target: Trench leading to Leverett Pond

Focus: remove weeds and debris

Thursday, October 18th, 4 pm – dusk

Target: Allerton Overlook

Focus: remove leaves and weeds from beds

Saturday, October 20th, 10 am – 1 pm

Target: Garden Beds near Pond Ave.

Parking Lot and Route 9

Focus: excavate beds, replace shrubs

FALL UPDATE

Last spring the HSHA partnered with the Town's Division of Parks and Open Space and the Brookline GreenSpace Alliance to develop a series of volunteer work dates to help maintain Olmsted Park. With the guidance of Town Parks staff, over fifty neighbors pitched in to rake, mulch, remove knotweed and unplug the Babbling Brook.

It was such a success that Parks Director Erin Chute Gallantine has asked us to help out again this fall. The

first of five work dates will be Saturday, September 29, at 10 am.

Everyone in the family is encouraged to participate. A free, neighbor-designed tee shirt will be given to all volunteer workers and tools will be provided.

This program adds an important hands-on, neighborhood component to Brookline's recent park restoration effort. Your help is needed to keep our park looking great. For more information please call 617-566-7334.

Neighborhood News.....

The proposal to develop the Foley's Liquor Store site on Cypress Street is still alive. On September 6, the Board of Appeals set up an informal 3-member design review team in an effort by the appellant, the neighbors and the Board to reach some middle ground that may be more acceptable to all. The DAT is advisory and their meeting on Tuesday, October 2 at 7pm at the Main Library, is open to the public. The continued hearing at the Board of Appeals is scheduled for October 11 at 7:00 pm, 2nd floor Main Library.

The long-awaited pedestrian-activated traffic light at the intersection of Kennard, Chestnut and Walnut Streets is getting closer to becoming a reality. Peter Ditto, Director of the Engineering and Transportation Division, says he anticipates having specifications and estimates within the next two weeks. His department expects that the light will be installed by the spring.

71 neighbors filed a petition last April to address safety concerns at the intersection of Allerton and High Streets and finally the Town has taken some action. The petitioners, led by neighbors Tom LaSalvia and Sheryl Casey, asked the Town to review the speed limit, pedestrian crossing design and enforcement. This week the Police department installed a speed monitor on High Street and the DPW repainted the nearest crosswalk at Irving. Also, newly appointed Transportation Administrator Tom Kirrane is in the process of conducting a review of the Allerton intersection. Residents have also asked the Transportation Board to review the intersection which has recently been the site of some serious accidents.

Developers of the old Red Cab Taxi site on Boylston Street have invited the neighborhood to a meeting to discuss shadow studies and other issues. October 3, 7:00 pm - 8:30 pm, Hunneman Hall, Town Library.

The Brookline GreenSpace Alliance is celebrating 20 years of advocacy with a series of events. *An Enduring Legacy*, a landscape photo exhibit of Brookline open spaces in the main library's Hunneman Hall, is getting rave reviews ("Brookline is so beautiful! Where are these parks?"). At the Coolidge Corner branch library is *Brookline Parks: Friends Volunteers Making a Difference*. It includes 23 photos of Friends groups at work including the Friends of Leverett Pond and the HSHA. The finale event of this celebration will be a free concert at in Hunneman Hall at 2 pm September 30, featuring Pill Hill's own Lorraine and Bennett Hammond.

You are invited to a Brookline Bird Club Walk at Leverett Pond in Olmsted Park, Sunday, Nov. 18 at 8:30 am. Look for winter ducks at this easily viewable urban pond as well as search for land birds throughout the park on an easy two-hour walk. Meet at the parking lot on Pond avenue near the Brook House. For more info contact Bob Mayer 617-983-3330 or email rgmayer@comcast.net.

Snow Removal Anyone?

Diana Post is interested in finding others to join her to create a neighborhood group to contract for snow plowing and shoveling. Sound like a good idea? Email Diana at dpost@partners.org or call 617-738-5096.