

# PBNA Meeting

May 26, 2011 6:30pm

## South End Branch Library

1. Treasurer's Report Distributed and reviewed. It is available at [pilotblock.org](http://pilotblock.org).

2. New Business

- 85 Pembroke Development

Agenda Item: The developers of 85 Pembroke would like to replace the wooden fence with a cast iron fence. They would also like to create a garden in the alley area below the fence, between the buildings. Also being considered is a gate and stairway allowing access to the alley. They are looking for support from PBNA.

### Presentation by Gail Ide of Kunz Architects

- Question as to the ownership. Discussion is that abutters own to middle of the main alley, but that the T area is common area.
- Gail recommended:
  - Gate with key, 3 stairs lead to alley leading to pavers, then 3 further steps to alley.
  - Neighbors could decide who has a key or access to gate.

### Discussion Items:

- David Sprogis mentioned that fences were installed because vandals used to 'raise cain' in the alleys, using the T's to escape. Over time, people unwittingly replaced the high fences using cross-pieces which could re-enable vandals.

- David also noted that many iron fences do not last long without maintenance.

- Fence on W. Brookline St (Near Tremont 647) is open constantly, leading to frequent trucks/vehicles double-parked, etc.

- Marcia (direct abutter) noted that nobody has 'ownership' of the current fence. She has painted it because it's near her bldg and better to paint than let it remain unmaintained.

- Marcia noted that having a gate/steps would help with trash issues, however she would prefer not to have a gate/steps for crime purposes. She is willing to deal with cith/trash issues rather than risk increased criminal activity.

- Judy Wright noted that she does not think having an open gate will change trash behavior, but that W. Brookline/Canton alley abutters do have problems with deliveries.

Other discussion items included;

- a. Iron Fence vs Wood
- b. Durability and maintenance of fence.
- c. Liability
- d. Garden

Discussion will be open to all - vote for or against the proposal will taken from W Brookline/Pembroke alley abutters.)

**Final Vote Taken of alley abutters:**

1) Is anyone for a gate. No hands were raised.

2) Do people support iron fence replacing wood: Very few hands raised, PBNA supports retaining wood.

**Conclusion: replace wood fence with a similar fence.**

- Veolia Energy work on West Newton St

Presentation by Project Director: Tom Herlihy from Veolia Energy.

- See .PPT Presentation at <http://pilotblock.org/pbnaeventandhistory.html>
- Veolia is a French company with business on most every continent. 13000 employees in water, energy, environmental, and transport.
- Existing system needs work to maintain steam lines.
- Another company in Cambridge is dumping hot water into Charles. Veolia is looking to harness that energy. Safety, reliability, efficiency.
- Replacing & upgrading approx 120 expansion joints throughout the city, including Harrison Ave, Tyler St, and vicinity of Boston Garden.
- W. Newton St: Approx 8x10 excavation between Tremont/Columbus and Also up to SW Corridor and Huntington. Remove asbestos insulation following environmental regulations. Replace joint. x-ray to confirm solid welds. Backfill and repave.
- 4 joints between Columbus/Tremont. Work will shift during excavation time. June 7-Jul 7. 7am-6pm.
- Vehicles include backhoe. (See Attachment. Will take about 2 hrs/joint of jackhammering, dump truck, some pickups, etc.
- City is now requiring utilities to install a token with their name and date, so the city can ID who left the patch if it does not last.
- Tom asked for a call first, before any other issues surface.

Contact: Tom Herlihy

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- Boston Police Community Affairs and Alley Security
  - An officer from Boston Police D4 will discuss security for residents with a focus on preventing crime in & around our alleys.
  - There are tentative plans for an 'alley-walk' at a future date, where officers will walk the alleys with neighbors in order to point out specific risk areas, examples of residences with strong security measures, and tips to improve your security.
  - Steve from Clarendon B&B had a recent break-in. Witnesses saw kids checking windows and doors, and his window was unlocked. Kids went through 2 levels while people were home. Stole laptop, wallet. Charge card were used within 20 minutes in downtown crossing.

Boston Police Officer Richie Litto Spoke:

- Frequent window breaks if any valuables are visible, including GPS cords or window circles. Leave ash-tray open with no change.
  - Also frequent car breaks where car door is open.
  - Home Break-ins/B&E's: Air Conditioners not secured in windows with a stick to prevent lifting of windows.
  - **Please put your house numbers on back of homes facing the alley.**
  - Ensure workers & homeowners lock any ladders in area.
  - 911: Don't hesitate to call police. When in doubt, call 911. A witness saw these guys going down alley trying other windows, but they were 'clean cut and area homes were recently under renovation, so the witness did not call 911.
  - Tell 911 what you think you may be seeing if people are in your yard or messing with cars/homes, etc. Best possible description.
  - Another patrol car will usually respond to a call via the alley. Very important to put numbers on back of property.
  - Calling 911 from a cell phone reaches Mass State Police, who then transfer a caller to the Boston Police.
  - So a **Preferred / Better way to call Boston Police Emergency** from your cell phone is 617.343.4911. Program this into your phone.
  - From a Landline- Dialing 911 will reach Boston Police.
  - "Alley Walk" with Officer Litto is coming soon. One alley per visit / night.
  - Contact Officer Litto at BPD 617.343.4457.
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- PBNA Summer Picnic plans – June 16th. Watch for flyers.
  - Mention of PBNA Website ([pilotblock.org](http://pilotblock.org)) and Twitter Account (@pilotblock)

### 3. Old Business

- Alley Hearing. The City Council held a hearing on April 27th regarding the challenges of our private alleys, obstacles and processes regarding making them public ways. Several board members and residents of the PBNA attended and testified. News coverage included (links):

[South End News](#)\* [Universal Hub](#)\* [Patch](#)\* [Boston.com](#)

- Guest Appearance: Boston City Councilor Felix Arroyo: explained the recent private alleyway hearing.
- Neighborhood Cleanup / Boston Shines. Focus for this recent event was Tubman Park
- Reminder to use the Mayor's 24 Hour Constituent Services Line (617-635-4500), or via their [website](#) and some cool mobile phone apps to report broken streetlights, trash issues, potholes, etc. They can't fix it if they don't know about it!

### 4. Following the meeting, some folks adjourned for Pizza and Beer at a nearby restaurant.