

CHESTNUT HILL ASSOCIATION, INC.
P.O. BOX 67173 • CHESTNUT HILL, MA 02467-0002

October 2010

Dear Chestnut Hill Neighbors:

In case you haven't kept up with the national news, the Red Sox didn't win the American League pennant this year. We'll try to be content cheering on the Patriots, Celtics, and Bruins until next spring.

This letter is designed to provide an update on Chestnut Hill and local events. Most of this "home grown" news doesn't come from TV or even the Boston Globe. The Chestnut Hill Association serves the Newton 02467 neighborhood, and we hope that we give you useful information.

CHA Website is Open!

In our efforts to communicate faster and better, the Association has created a website (www.chanewton.org) and email network. When we hear news that should be shared with you, we will post such information on the website quickly. Check it out. Many thanks to Lauren Thill and Zibby Pyle!

If we have your personal email addresses on file, you will receive information about coming events or other information more quickly and efficiently. Although we'll continue to publish a paper version of the newsletter, we only publish two or three per year. Email is a better medium for spreading the word about events, and reminders of meetings.

Please register your membership information on the website by email to admin@chanewton.org or return the form at the end of this letter. Remember that we will not share your email addresses with anyone else.

Annual Meeting last April

At our brief annual meeting, held at the beautiful home of Nancy Adams last April, Verne Vance, who retired from the Board of Aldermen after a distinguished career in City of Newton leadership, stepped up to become president of the CHA. The vote was an enthusiastic, unanimous landslide.

After many years in the chair, our new Alderwoman, Ruthanne Fuller turned over the gavel to Verne. It's a nice transition, as she has been able to educate Verne in more detail about our Association, and he has enlightened her on the subject of Newton political life. As far as we know, no cash changed hands in this player trade.

Ruthanne set a high standard of leadership, intelligence, and cheerful energy as president, and we're lucky that someone as experienced and smart as Verne has agreed to carry on. Many local issues have an impact on our daily lives, and increasingly those issues involve political decisions or process – real estate development, trash collection, traffic/parking regulation, and animal control to name a few. The CHA cannot solve all problems, but knowledge and information are key ingredients of effective local government.

We're happy to report the addition of Gloria Gavis as Secretary and Tom Greytak as members of the Executive Committee. Please see the list of committee contacts on the last page of this letter.

NEIGHBORHOOD NEWS

Halloween Potluck Party – Save the Date

When: Halloween - Sunday, October 31st

Where: The Chestnut Hill School

Time 3:30-5:30 p.m. (You can be home before dark.)

Come celebrate Halloween with your neighbors before trick or treating!

We will bring: a DJ, pizza, and refreshments

You bring: yourselves, your kids, and if you dare...a trick or treat to share!

Watch the CHA website for updated information on this special event. Thanks to the Social Activities Committee for arranging this party!

New Restaurants and Shops

As reported in the last issue and more recently in the TAB, several new neighborhood restaurants and shops are either in the planning stage, about to open, or already open for business. The largest will be a 275-seat restaurant, called The Cottage, next to Legal Seafood in space currently occupied by Portobello Road, a specialty clothing store that will move closer to the Star Market in the next month or two. Legal Seafood and Aquitaine have both received permits for limited outdoor dining.

On the Route 9 side of Bloomingdale's at the parking level in the Chestnut Hill Mall, a new 50-seat Japanese restaurant, Daikanyama, is scheduled to open October 8. Your investigative reporter met the owner, who is most eager to welcome local residents to enjoy Japanese cuisine. A sister restaurant is in Lexington.

Next to the Star supermarket, new retail spaces include a The Urban Grape, a full-line wine and liquor store already in operation. According to the managers, they will offer wine tastings every Thursday, Friday, and Saturday, with at least 16 wines ready to sample.

A new AT&T cell phone outlet has opened close to the Verizon store, making it easy to compare rates and products without going very far. And if you need new eyeglasses, you can look into Eyespot, now under construction on the same strip near the Bank of America branch in the Shopping Center.

Also nearby, Angora Ice is now open and serving fancy ice cream and frozen yogurt. Nearby is a small Italian eatery called Comella's. The new place will be open to feed you soon, with eat-in and take-out options available. (You may have seen their other shop next to the West Newton Cinema.)

Anchored by the transformed Star Market, all of these new businesses are signs of renewed energy and activity in Chestnut Hill. The upgraded parking lot at the shopping center is a big improvement but still a traffic nightmare at times, especially in late afternoon when Hammond Street and the entrance to the shopping center are jammed. Be careful out there!

Chestnut Hill Square Development

The long awaited project on the former Omni Market site has finally moved forward. New England Development has presented more detailed plans for the site and for traffic management on both Route 9 and Hammond Pond Parkway. To review the information, go to the City of Newton website at www.ci.newton.ma.us/Planning/chestnuthillsquare/index.htm.) If you'd like to offer your own comments, send an email to the Newton Board of Aldermen via the City Clerk, David Olson (dolson@newtonma.gov) before final review by the Newton Board of Aldermen.

The developer's original plans have been scaled back but still include a supermarket, residential units, and other retail and office space. Route 9 will now include left hand turning lanes on the outbound side and a left hand turning lane from the Chestnut Hill Mall across Route 9 with a new traffic light in place. Plans also have been amended to remove the earlier proposed entry/exit road from Florence Street to the site.

BC Football Schedule

Boston College is well into football season, and four home games have already been played. The college continues to handle traffic and parking efficiently, and there have been no major problems so far this fall. The schedule is posted on street signs around the neighborhood where parking is restricted on game days.

Three home games remain: Maryland on October 23, Clemson on October 30, and Virginia on November 20. The exact starting times for these games are not available yet because network TV coverage may be changed on short notice. Watch for updated times in the Globe's sports section on game days or just go to Google "Boston College Football Schedule."

Boston College Master Plan Update

Boston College is moving ahead with the design for the new Stokes Hall. The site is on College Road, between Beacon Street and Commonwealth Avenue, specifically between McElroy Commons and Lyons Hall, space now primarily used for parking. The project will actually be two buildings connected with a bridge. The 160,000 square foot structure will serve as home to six departments (all in the humanities) occupying 60% of the space. The balance of the space will be used for classrooms, meeting areas, and advising centers. This project is likely to begin soon and will take 18 months or more to reach completion. As compared to earlier proposed changes, Boston College doesn't foresee any alterations at McElroy Student Center in the next ten years.

The CHA will continue to report on progress. As in the past, the CHA has maintained close contact with BC on issues of parking, traffic, development, and community relations.

Waterworks Museum

In March 2011, the new Waterworks Museum is scheduled to open across from the Chestnut Hill Reservoir on Beacon Street. The Museum incorporates the original pumping station for the reservoir, built in 1887, and it will likely become a great destination for school field trips. Many more details are available on the website, www.waterworksmuseum.org. Visitors will be able to visit and see the remarkable machinery in an architectural historic landmark.

Parking Meters and Bike Lanes on Beacon

You may notice the newly installed parking meters on the north side of Beacon Street by the Boston College campus. Also, new bike lanes have been marked on the same stretch of Beacon, and plans are under review for more designated bike lanes on College Road and Hammond Street between Beacon and Commonwealth Avenue. There is some current discussion about a possible flashing yellow light on the crosswalk on Beacon between the Hammond Street traffic light and the stadium. We'll try to keep you informed.

Off-Leash Dog Parks Update

As reported in the TAB, Newton's Parks & Recreation Commission has officially approved the opening of additional dog parks in Newton and has extended the use of Old Cold Spring Park, which was previously the only (legal) off-leash park. The newly designated areas, approved but not yet open for dogs, are Clafin Park, McGrath Park, and Hunnewell Park. Cold Spring Park is the closest to Chestnut Hill. Additional parks are under review and may be ready for play next spring. The website, ci.newton.ma.us, has more information under Parks & Recreation.

Local Real Estate News

Our friends at Hammond Real Estate have reported on residential home sales in the area. Although the media have highlighted the downturn in real estate transactions and prices over the past year or two, conditions in our area are not so depressing. The volume of transactions (completed sales) has increased in general for both single family homes and condos in Newton, Brookline, and neighboring towns. Furthermore, the inventory of available properties for sale remains quite strong. Sale prices continue to vary widely, depending on a range of factors. Based on personal observation, some properties have remained unsold for a year or more, with little or virtually no traffic.

Please Stay in Touch With Us

As new neighbors move into the area or old neighbors move away, please help us keep our address and member files up to date. Just send an email or a note to let us know if you have new neighbors who might like to get information about the CHA, and we'll contact them. Also, if you would like to volunteer to help setting up events or assisting a committee, please let us know. Our members are our most valuable asset! Thanks for your continued support.

Sincerely, on behalf of the Association,

Dick Tucker

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CONTACT INFORMATION

For more information, please contact any of the following:

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(Cut here)

UPDATED MEMBER INFORMATION (Please Print Clearly!)

Name(s) _____

Address: _____

Telephone: _____

Email address: _____

Please include your email address, which will not be shared with others

Contributions/Dues

We welcome non-deductible voluntary contributions in any amount, payable to “Chestnut Hill Association.” Our average donation is about \$50, but any amount will help to offset the costs of this newsletter, meetings, and social activities. Please send any contributions to the address above. Thank you for your support!