

Bay Village Newsletter
December 1998

FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK...

As the holiday season is upon us, I think it is only fitting to pause and give thanks for such a wonderful place to call home. One of my favorite songs this time of year is "There's No Place like Home for the Holidays." There are many things that separate the place you live from the place you call home.

Bay Village has earned the respect of other neighborhoods, city officials, the police department, and our elected representatives.

Bay Village is beautiful to look at. The holiday decorations, the beautification efforts during the spring and summer, and the care homeowners put into maintaining their buildings all contribute to the beauty of Bay Village.

Bay Village is a relatively safe neighborhood in Boston. We have our troubles, to be sure, but we actively combat any intrusion that threatens to upset our sense of security.

Bay Village is a fun place, as well. Our successful street fairs, our block parties and our holiday parties all add to the comfortable and relaxed atmosphere.

We care deeply about development and growth in our area. Our planning committee works particularly hard to ensure our historical and residential character is never compromised. We can take pride in their efforts and all of the efforts of the BVNA. These are only a few examples of what makes Bay Village a great place to call home.

For me, it is the caring, dedicated and warm people who make Bay Village so special. It is the people who have worked over the years to make this place worth calling home. The folks who have been here before there was a neighborhood association have taught the rest of us what they have learned, allowing us to keep improving our area. A neighborhood is nothing without good, decent people. I am thankful for so many of you who make it the easiest thing in the world to call Bay Village home.

I would like to extend my warmest wishes for happiness and joy this holiday season to all of you and your families. If I may be permitted, ... "there's no place like Bay Village for the holidays!"

Paul Gagnon
President, BVNA

HOLIDAY HAPPENINGS!

Wreath Hanging

Saturday, December 5, 1998, 9:00 AM

Join your neighbors for the annual wreath hanging! Meet at the corner of Melrose and Church Streets. A limited number of wreaths, greens, and boxwood will be available for sale.

Tree Lighting and Holiday Caroling

Sunday December 6, 1998, 5:00 PM

Meet at the corner of Melrose and Church Streets to sing holiday songs and light the neighborhood tree! Victorian Carolers will again join us to lead the singing of holiday favorites! After the tree lighting we will spread the holiday cheer by caroling throughout the neighborhood, ending up at Chaps for the holiday party!

Bay Village Holiday Party

Sunday December 6, 1998, 5:30-7:30 PM

Chaps on Warrenton Street

Kick off the holiday season with the Bay Village Holiday Party, which will be held at Chaps! This is always a popular event in our neighborhood and is free to all BVNA members! If you are not already a member, this is another great reason to join!

Many thanks to Chaps for graciously agreeing to host the holiday party!

TIS THE SEASON!

Boston Police Officer Steve Hoffarty indicated that there have been a few break-ins and attempted break-ins in Bay Village. There have also been some suspicious people on bicycles seen in the area. Particularly during the holiday season, be aware of any suspicious activities you observe on the street. Do not hesitate to call 9-1-1 if you see any unusual activity or people loitering for no apparent reason.

BVNA ANNUAL MEETING A SUCCESS!

City officials joined new and long-time residents of Bay Village to celebrate community and the events of the past year at our Annual Meeting, held October 28th at the Radisson Hotel.. Attendees included Representative Sal DiMasi and Michael Kelley, our Neighborhood Services Coordinator, who represented Mayor Thomas Menino.

President Paul Gagnon highlighted the completion of many of the goals established earlier this year by the Executive Committee. They are as follows:

- > Increased BVNA membership by 50%
- > Established an Internet web page (www.bayvillage.net)
- > Established a scholarship fund for Boston High School students. (The BVNA and neighbors contributed over \$1,000 in scholarships this year)

- > Developed closer relationships with other neighborhood associations in areas of mutual interest
- > Developed stronger ties with Area A-1 police. (Each month a representation of BPD attends our Executive Committee meeting.)

Several residents were singled out for their tireless work on behalf of the Association this year, as well as over the years. June McCourt, Gene Hale, Tom Kauycheck and Domenic Mastrototaro were honored with certificates and donations made in their name to the charity of their choice. Also honored was the Park Plaza Citizens' Advisory Council, celebrating 25 years of common work in the Park Plaza area.

Speakers included Representative Sal DiMasi, Joe Larkin of the St. James Avenue development and Vice-President Christine Colley, who also presented the Executive Committee slate for 1999. The slate was elected unanimously.

The BVNA would like to thank the Radisson Hotel for their warm hospitality in hosting the meeting and to the many attendees who participated in a special evening to celebrate our community.

FREE BLOCK PARTY TICKETS!

Make our neighborhood a better place, and you'll earn two free tickets to the 1999 Block Party! All you need to do is help at four Bay Village neighborhood events over the next nine months. Some tasks already planned include:

- > Christmas wreath hanging (December 5 - for information, see the article in this newsletter)
- > Wreath removal (February)
- > Spring clean-up (March)
- > Street fair (June)
- > Block party preparation (September)

Updates about each opportunity will be posted on the bulletin board and in the newsletter. Please register in the Neighbor Team book available at the meeting place for each event.

Paul Buta
City Services

CALL 9-1-1: MORE CALLS EQUAL MORE COPS!

The new co-chairs of the BVNA Crime Committee met with A-1 representative Frank Walsh on November 16th (the first Crime Committee Meeting since the October General Meeting). We discussed many crime-related issues with Walsh and he had one important message for Bay Village: Call 9-1-1! More calls equals more cops.

All 9-1-1 calls are recorded to a database. The database keeps track of how many calls are made from each area of the city. If the 9-1-1 database shows a particularly high number of calls for a particular area (say Bay Village), more officers are eventually assigned to that area. If no 9-1-1 calls are coming from an area, the police may mistakenly conclude that the area needs less patrol coverage. In short, the more 9-1-1 calls made from the neighborhood, the more police presence we will get.

The Crime Committee and Area A-1 urge neighbors to call 9-1-1 if they see ANY suspicious activity or potential criminal activity, no matter how insignificant. If you see only one prostitute loitering on the street, CALL 9-1-1.

Finally, neighbors are encouraged to attend the monthly Crime Committee meetings, held the third Monday of every month at the Renaissance Charter School. Only with your participation can we effectively identify and respond to crime-related problems faced by the neighborhood!

Chris Engebretson
Executive Director, Crime Committee

WANTED!!!!

The BNVA newsletter would like to initiate a new section starting with our next newsletter. We would like to profile our "Unsung Heroes" in the neighborhood. Please contact either Ruth Knopf or Bill Rowbottom with your ideas!
Email addresses: knopf@bostonems.org or newsletter@bayvillage.net
Ruth Knopf: 426-7716
Bill Rowbottom: 426-5985

10 ST. JAMES AVENUE

After many years, ground has finally been broken for 10 St. James Avenue, a 530,000 square foot office building, which will be connected to the existing 250,000 square foot 75 Arlington Street building by a four-story skylit galleria. Construction on this parcel, formerly the home of the old Greyhound Bus Lines, was delayed for many years, in part due to the negative commercial real estate climate of the early 1990s.

To commemorate the groundbreaking, which took place on September 29, 1998, Millennium Partners-Boston made a donation to the Boston Public Library to assist in defraying the costs incurred by the disastrous flooding of part of the newly renovated building. Bernard Margolis, President of the Boston Public Library, was present to receive this generous gift.

Touted as "an office building for the new Millennium", this new building will add a new elegance to the Park Square area. Neighbor June McCourt labored for many years as a member of the Park Square Community Advisory Committee (CAC) to ensure that whatever was built on this parcel would not have a negative impact on the quality of life in Bay Village. Thank you, June, for your efforts on our behalf.

Millennium Partners also extended their thanks to the Friends of the Public Garden and the Common, the Back Bay Association, and the Bay Village Neighborhood Association for their participation in the planning process and for making Boston a better place to work and live.

BVNA PLANNING COMMITTEE REACHES 1998 GOALS!

The BVNA Planning Committee expresses its thanks to all who helped in accomplishing the following projects during the 1997-98 year. While the names are too numerous to mention here, the issues brought to closure are listed below.

Boston Edison: plans to convert their employee parking on Warrenton Street to for-fee parking were defeated.

Rezoning of Bay Village: two-year process of working with the BRA on the rezoning of the neighborhood is complete and has been approved by the City of Boston.

Shawmut Street: demolition of two historic buildings was thwarted by the efforts of both the Planning Committee and the Historic District Commission.

Suffolk University Dormitory: worked with Suffolk to ensure that the students will abide by the rules and regulations set down by the university and that their presence in the neighborhood will not disturb the abutters or impact resident parking.

Licensing Issues: defeated the proposed entertainment license for Rise, an all-night operation that wanted to locate above Baldini's in Park Square. Worked with Finale on their wine and cordial license. Continuing to work with the Motor Mart developers on licensing issues. Continuing to work with the Back Bay Neighborhood Association on the proposed club at Providence Street.

During the next year, Planning will be working on funding for the proposed Radio Park improvement and a sidewalk upgrade plan for Bay Village. Volunteers are needed to work on issues such as airplane noise and resident parking issues.

Meetings of the Planning Committee are held the last Monday of each month at 7:00 PM at the Renaissance Charter School.

Michael Maddigan
Executive Director, Planning Committee

IMPORTANT NUMBERS

If you are troubled by excessive airplane noise, please call the MASSPORT AIRPLANE NOISE HOTLINE at 567-3333.

If you are experiencing a problem with Suffolk University Dorm students, you can reach SUFFOLK CAMPUS SECURITY at 573-8333.

Boston High School concerns after hours, contact the BOSTON MUNICIPAL POLICE at 635-3237.

JOHN HANCOCK WEATHER BEACON

The lighted tower of the old John Hancock is a familiar sight to Bay Village. Every now and then, we like to refresh your memory regarding the meaning of the various lights. THEREFORE, yet again, we publish the following verse!

"Steady blue, clear view
Flashing blue, clouds due
Steady red, rain ahead
Flashing red, snow ahead."

(Flashing red in summer, the Red Sox game has been called off!)

UPDATE ON BOSTON HIGH SCHOOL

On November 24th, the ninth grade class celebrated Thanksgiving at a luncheon held at Trinity Church. Some participants also received academic and attendance awards. Headmaster Tom Hennessey gave special thanks to the BVNA for its continued support of the school.

This year the BVNA and neighbors contributed \$1,000 to scholarships for graduating students. Our 1999 goal is to develop outside support services for the school. If you would like to make a tax deductible contribution before the end of the year, please make your check payable to Boston High School and leave it in the mailbox at 33 Fayette Street. We will deliver your contribution to the school and make sure that you and the neighborhood will receive credit for your donation. The students, teachers and parents are most appreciative of our increased involvement with the school.

We continue to recruit volunteers to lead activity groups and to act as students mentors. For more information or to volunteer, please call Anne Kilguss at 426-5779.

WINTER TIPS

Please be a good neighbor and remove ice and snow from your walk after a snowfall. If there is a fire hydrant on your curb, please clear away snow. In the event of a fire emergency, valuable time can be saved if the hydrants are easily accessible.

If you have a Bay Village Parking Permit, please brush it free from snow so it is visible to the parking enforcement personnel. If it is not visible, you will be ticketed. Although a ticket can be appealed, this will save you an unnecessary trip to City Hall.

EDISON WILL NOT OPEN PARKING LOT!

Recently Boston Edison applied to the Zoning Board of Appeals to convert their employee parking lot (located between Warrenton Street and Charles Street South) into a paid public parking lot. The lot, which would be open on weekends, proposed a closing time of 3:00 AM. The BVNA Planning Committee coordinated a series of three meetings between abutters, the residents of Edgar Allen Poe Place and the attorneys representing Edison.

Hearing the concerns of the immediate neighbors, both the Planning Committee and the Executive Committee voted to oppose the variance. Representative Sal DiMasi, City Council President Jimmy Kelly, State Senator Stephen Lynch and City Councilor Mickey Roache all spoke in support of the Bay Village opposition to the change. As a result, the attorney for Boston Edison dropped the application at the ZBA hearing.

This is, yet again, proof that working together on neighborhood issues can yield a desirable conclusion.