



# THE NAVY YARD NEWS

A QUARTERLY PUBLICATION OF THE FRIENDS OF THE CHARLESTOWN NAVY YARD

Winter 2013

## Marina fined for poor conditions

Unsafe conditions at Shipyard Quarters Marina (SQM) over recent years led to the imposition in December of a \$25,000 per day fine against the owner as long as inadequate conditions are not addressed.

Starting in July with a directive from the Commonwealth's Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) to correct safety violations at Pier 8, discussions with the owner's representative and the community emerged in public view on August 15, 2012, when the Boston Conservation Commission held its first hearing. (The state order required SQM to obtain a permit from the Commission for the repair work.) Since then, three more hearings have been held, the latest on December 12 when the Commission voted to impose the fine.

In addition to the state complaints, Mayor Thomas Menino has sent strongly worded letters citing a history of complaints and uncorrected violations. City Councilor Sal LaMattina and BRA officials have also expressed dissatisfaction with the conditions and the owner's response.

Richard Mulligan, Boston Redevelopment Authority (BRA) property manager, whose purview is BRA property citywide, stated at a recent public hearing, "In 29 years,



*A temporary railing was installed to keep people off a portion of Pier 8. View is facing Shipway Place and 13th Street.*

I've never seen a worse property." Conditions at the marina and adjacent HarborWalk, for which SQM is responsible, include broken pilings, unwalkable piers, rotting piers, deteriorated and rusted metal, overflowing trash, missing railings, and tripping hazards. *(Continued on page 3)*

## New HarborWalk sculptures

Pedestrians moving too fast along HarborWalk may have missed a new installation of three soaring bronze sculptures at Parris Landing. Created by John Raimondi (<http://jrsculptor.com>), the sculptures have been loaned to Parris Landing where they are arrayed on lawns in front of the buildings. Standing at 10-to-12 feet tall, they are part of the sculptor's Jazz series. The Navy Yard three commemorate vocalist Billie Holliday, trumpeter Chet Baker, and saxophonist John Coltrane.



*'Trane,' a sculpture inspired by John Coltrane, is now on exhibit at Parris Landing.*

### *Inside this Issue*

- |                                  |        |
|----------------------------------|--------|
| • Shipyard park fountain         | Page 2 |
| • Rope Walk update               | Page 3 |
| • Spaulding environmental design | Page 4 |

## BRIEFLY NOTED

The World War II-era destroyer **USS Cassin Young** has been in Dry Dock 1 since August 2010. Repair work was halted with the discovery of more deterioration of the hull than had been expected. The National Park Service, which owns the pier facilities, and the Navy, which owns the ship, had to procure funding for sufficient repairs to allow the ship to be moved to a berth. Since the dry dock will be needed for USS Constitution, it put pressure on the Cassin Young work. Funding was assured last summer, and work resumed to make Cassin Young able to be moved. The destroyer is expected to leave dry dock in the spring and be reopened for public tours.

**Tavern on the Water**, located in a building on Pier 6 owned by Shipyard Quarters Marina, failed to renew its lease and is closed. The owners continue to operate Max & Dylan's in City Square.

A link in the city's **HarborWalk** was completed with the wrap-up of construction on Spaulding Rehabilitation Hospital in the fall. The link connects the harbor edge behind Building 114 with a floating ramp connecting to Sixteenth Street at Chelsea Street.



*The new HarborWalk connector will open in the spring.*

Look for an opening celebration in the spring.

**Positano**, the Italian restaurant planned by John Moore, owner of Navy Yard Bistro, will not open in Harborview after all. Moore began two years ago to plan a restaurant for the commercial first floor of the high-rise apartment building near Yard's End but he reports that he was unable to come to agreement with the owners. He has no other plans for the restaurant at this time.

The space set aside for public use in Building 114, has an occupant preparing an **environmental learning museum** to take advantage of the

waterfront resources at Yard's End. Called "e" inc., the ten-year old program, with offices in the Schraffts Building, is proposing a museum in the 3,500 square-foot space on Sixteenth Street. Headed by educator Ricky Stern, "e" inc. has been running educational programs in the region since 2002. They feature heavy involvement of families and urban communities in scientific learning. The museum would contain a small shop, a reception area, and action-oriented exhibits. Various approvals are needed before the museum could be built, and no date has been announced for an opening.

The **fountain in Shipyard Park** has been closed since early fall as the BRA plans for the construction of another water feature in the park. The BRA closed the water portion of the park in the fall out of concern for water quality and for other safety reasons. In warm weather, the fountain has been heavily used by children at play on its structure and in the pool. According to the Charlestown Patriot Bridge on November 1, a contract had been let for \$48,000 with the engineering firm Weston and Sampson for a recreational water feature nearby. A BRA spokesperson informed the Bridge that there would be a comprehensive community process in the next few months covering site location and design. At an unrelated community meeting in December, a BRA official indicated the agency would like a water feature to be opened by July.

*Shipyard Park is popular with younger members of the community especially in warm weather.*



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The organization is a 501(c)3 non-profit.



# Development in the Navy Yard

## Rope Walk Building

Word of the potential development of the Navy Yard's Rope Walk building emerged in public at a meeting of the Charlestown Neighborhood Council (CNC) on December 4. Developer Joseph Timilty presented preliminary plans depicting the potential for townhouse apartments and a museum in the quarter-mile long building. He expects to be designated by the Boston Redevelopment Authority (BRA) as the developer.

Built in 1838 to make rope for the Navy, the Rope Walk is a historically significant building owned by the BRA and protected by national historic preservation laws administered by the National Park Service. It closed in 1971, but maintains its prominence as the quarter-mile long granite building behind the Navy Yard fence on Chelsea Street.



*Interior view of the Rope Walk building, which may be redeveloped into town houses.*

The presentation by Timilty, who was accompanied by Jack French of Charlestown's Neshamkin French Architects, anticipated that the project would require \$5 million of remediation to address environmental issues. They envi-

sioned a complex of approximately 65 two-bedroom townhouse apartments and a museum, with restored roof and windows, and possibly new openings in the granite walls. The range of needed approvals and funding commitments means the project may take several years.

## Parcel 39A

In mid September, the BRA designated the Kavanaugh Advisory Group as the new developer of Parcel 39A, at the corner of First Avenue and Ninth Street.

In a public presentation on September 11, Kavanaugh's architect showed a conceptual drawing of a four-story brick building which will contain approximately 54 rental units. The complex conforms to guidelines established earlier on height, roof profile, and architectural details.

The building would have three types of units — studio, one-bedroom, and bedroom-with-den. The developer expects rents to range from \$1,900 to \$2,300, and approximately 11 units would be subsidized for low-income people.

Extensive public discussion at the meeting concerned parking. No on-site parking is planned, but tenants would have parking spaces in the Partners HealthCare garage on Fifth Avenue. Commenters repeatedly questioned whether this garage has sufficient space for vehicles which development projects continue to designate for resident parking.

A second public meeting was held on December 12 for discussion of the building's windows, facade appearance, and accommodation for a drop-off area. Subsequent community meetings will be held, notice of which will be posted on the FCNY website. Previously the parcel had been designated to developer Robert Kenny who was unable to complete the project within the agreed upon timeframes.

## Marina (Continued from Page 1)

SQM owner Martin Oliner, a New York lawyer and developer, has been represented before the Conservation Commission by Asher Herzberg. The Friends of Charlestown Navy Yard, joined by a contingent of neighbors and the Charlestown Waterfront Coalition have been present at all of the public hearings. An additional indication of the high profile of the marina's condition was the presence of the BRA director, Peter Meade, at the October 17 hearing, who expressed the city's exasperation with long-standing safety conditions and disrepair. At that meeting, Conservation Commissioner Vivian Li told Herzberg, "In my 15 years on this commission, no BRA director has ever appeared at a hearing — this shows how seriously we take this issue."

The Commission expects a progress report from SQM by mid-January.



*Broken planks on the Pier 8 boardwalk have been a chronic hazard for HarborWalk walkers, runners, wheel chairs, and carriages.*



# Spaulding building designed for climate change

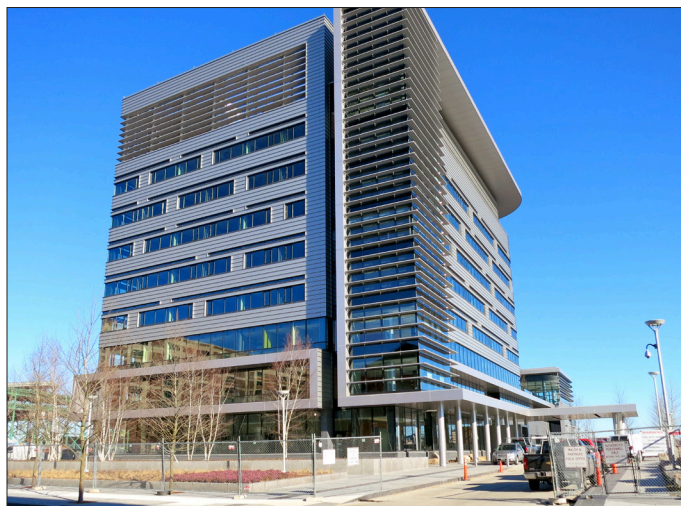
Recent storms focused attention on ocean surges along waterfronts, including the Navy Yard, which so far, has escaped inundation. But the designers of Spaulding Rehabilitation Hospital at Yard's End have planned for a rare storm event with designs that anticipate water surges. The first floor, for example, is 30 inches above the 500-year storm level, and the mechanical and electrical systems are located on the top of the building.

The 230,000 square-foot, eight-story building is designed to be highly energy efficient, to become a "green building" and a model for "universal design." The building will reduce artificial light by allowing natural light deep into the interior. Partners HealthCare, owner of Spaulding, expects to receive a LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) silver designation, or better.

Construction is expected to be complete within weeks, and the building will open officially on April 27. The project manager has kept neighbors informed of biweekly construction schedules and has held periodic meetings to address concerns. Immediate neighbors have occasionally requested modifications in the schedule to address noise, traffic, and planned utility shut-downs.

The new building will have 132 private patient rooms, research space, two underground parking levels for 203 patient, visitor, and some staff vehicles. Shuttle buses are expected to transport most staff members from off-site. There will be 1,000 full- and part-time staff.

Community residents may have access to ground floor facilities, including the therapy pool, cafeteria, conference space, public restrooms, family resource center, a meditation chapel, and a gift shop. "We expect to have more community conversations about uses" as construction winds down, said spokesperson Rebecca Kaiser. A new adaptive sports facility, to be accessible for community use, has been built behind the adjacent Building 114. Next to it is the extension of HarborWalk.



*Spaulding Rehabilitation Hospital was designed and built to withstand tidal surges, with an elevated first floor and mechanical equipment on top of the building. Expansive therapy room has sweeping views of Boston Harbor.*

The 41-year old hospital, located on the Charles River near North Station, was recognized as one the top rehabilitation hospitals in the country, achieving a rank of #5 in the 2011 US News and World Report 'America's Best Hospitals' issue, according to a hospital press release last summer.

## FRIENDS CORNER

Over the past year, the Friends of Charlestown Navy Yard has monitored development activities, advocated for action on several fronts, encouraged wide participation through calendar notifications on its website, and reported to the community on current issues. In the past year, the group figured prominently in the ongoing discussions about conditions at Shipyard Quarters Marina, has spoken out about

MBTA transportation, worked closely with prominent institutional neighbors and the city of Boston, started a new focus on young adult neighbors who may not typically become involved in community activities, and sponsored entertainment events and behind-the-scenes tours in the Navy Yard. Individual membership costs \$20 for a calendar year.

*Comments? Letters to the Editor? Send an email to Friends of Charlestown Navy Yard at [info@friendscnyc.org](mailto:info@friendscnyc.org)*