



THE NAVY YARD NEWS

A QUARTERLY PUBLICATION OF THE FRIENDS OF THE CHARLESTOWN NAVY YARD

WINTER 2017

CONSTRUCTION of the ROPEWALK BUILDING to BEGIN

On Saturday Nov. 12th, the Friends of the Charlestown Navy Yard hosted a tour of the historic Ropewalk building at 58 Thirteenth Street to view the original interior before construction.

History of the Ropewalk Building

The over one-quarter mile long (1360 ft.) x 45 ft. wide Ropewalk building was built by Alexander Parris between 1834 and 1837 and is a fine example of form following function. Just four years after completing Quincy Market in the *Boston Granite Style* for which he is known, Parris was commissioned by the U.S. Navy to construct a facility to house the Navy's rope-making functions. Parris' design consisted of a 3-building complex: the Hemp House (Building 62) to store the raw material, the Ropewalk (Building 58) where the fiber was twisted into rope, and the Tar House (Building 60) where the rope was coated with tar as a waterproofing agent. This Charlestown facility made the US Navy's rope for over a century and is one of only three known Ropewalks in the world and the last remaining in the United States. In 1974 after the Navy Yard was decommissioned, several of the Navy buildings, including the Ropewalk and Tar House were acquired by the BRA. (now known as the BPDA) and have sat idle until now. The Ropewalk building sustained two fires, including a 9-alarm fire in 2002 that charred about one third of the first floor timbers, a portion of the roof trusses, and some of the rope making equipment.

Over the years developers have floated a multitude of ideas to the BRA to bring the building complex into the 21st century. Past proposals included a film studio, a fishery, a rifle range, artist studios and a bowling alley. Developers were faced with the extraordinary challenge of working with the building's unusual dimensions while adhering to the Federal, State and local historic requirements.

Plans for the Ropewalk Building

In 2012 Boston based Frontier Enterprises submitted a plan to convert the building into townhouses. In partnership with a team of 3 architectural firms; Souza Design, Neshamkin French, and The Architectural Team they created a design that satisfied historic requirements.

Minimal alterations will be made on the exterior of the building. Some of the historic exterior and interior features to be saved include exposed rails embedded in the hardwood floors, exposed masonry and exposed floor joists and trusses, and a restored bridge connecting the Ropewalk and Tar House. Exact replica windows, skylights and exterior doors are planned to be part of the design. The historic promenade referred to as the Flirtation Walk will be re-constructed in granite and concrete with steel rails. The building and grounds will encompass exhibition space to convey the story of rope making, display the original equipment and allow visitors to see demonstrations.

After a nearly five year due diligence period and a cooperative effort with the BRA and the National Park Service, this project will soon begin construction. The building will be leased from the BRA for 70 years with option to extend for another 29 years. Mass Housing tax credit investor will finance the \$26 million construction cost.

Ninety-seven townhouse units are proposed in the plan, half of which will be 1-bedroom units, and half 2-bedroom units. Twenty percent will be affordable units.

The development team would like to thank those within the Navy Yard Community who have helped to support this extraordinary effort and look forward to a successful completion.

Article submitted by Sarah Ritch Project Manager for the Rope Walk.

Members enjoy our Ropewalk Tour on November 12



Public Safety Meeting on October 3rd

Thanks to all who joined Friends of the Charlestown Navy Yard at the Navy Yard Safety meeting on Monday, October 3rd. Fifty people attended the meeting at Spaulding Rehabilitation Hospital to discuss community safety issues with Officer Robert Luongo, Sergeant John Doris and Detective Chuck Wilson, from the Boston Police Department (BPD). BPD stated that Charlestown, including the Navy Yard, is a safe neighborhood, but everyone should use common sense and report suspicious behavior. Among other things, the BPD representatives discussed the recently reported attempted robbery in the Navy Yard at Pier 6 and bicycle thefts both from inside parking garages and outside racks.

BPD has a profile photo of the person attempting to commit the robbery near Pier 6, which was shared with many other police departments. Sergeant Doris observed that the victim did the right thing in speeding away from the perpetrator - keeping distance is the best way to prevent a robbery. Making noise, such as blowing a whistle or yelling is effective when confronted by a perpetrator. FCNY still has whistles provided by Spaulding that were distributed after the meeting (if anyone wants one, please contact info@friendscny.org). Detective Wilson stated that the BPD has to prioritize each crime. For instance, a shooting in another part of the City will get priority attention.

Bike thefts are on the increase. Be aware of who is behind you when you drive into a secured parking garage. You could be innocently allowing someone

with intentions to steal bicycles into that garage. It was due to a vigilant observer that a bicycle thief in a Navy Yard garage was caught. The witness observed suspicious behavior and took a photo of the thief. BPD emphasized that people are not suspicious because of Race, but their activities may be. Do not be afraid to report suspicious activities by calling 911.

Some other topics discussed were:

- Call 911 for floating objects in the Harbor
- Use the 311 app to report street lights needing repair
- Contact either 911 or 311 for violators of the leash law-all dogs are supposed to be on a leash outside.
- The Navy Yard may not have enough lights in all places-good lighting helps deter crime.
- Ongoing enforcement of the new block the box intersections and citing people who do not comply.

SAVE THE DATE

WINTER WARM-UP: March 23rd

Where: DC Beane located on Pier 3

Time: 6-8 PM



Did You Know

- Boston streets have a new speed limit of 25 MPH?
- As a Charlestown resident, you need only pay 30 cents to use the Tobin Bridge with your EZ Pass, proof of residency and a visit to the RMV?
- You can obtain a Charlestown parking decal at Boston City Hall with proof of residency?
- By joining FCNY, you can receive discounts at Best Dressed, Blackmoor Bar & Kitchen, Danilchuk Auto Body, DECCA, Pier 6, SuperShag Dance Studio, and Warren Tavern

The Charlestown YMCA Kicks Off the New Year in a Big Way

In early January the Y unveiled its **newly renovated Fitness Center**. The Fitness Center facelift included new flooring and new paint, top to bottom. It also features new LED lighting that highlights the well-organized and spacious layout. In addition to the 8 new cardio machines with personal touch screen TVs already installed, 4 more new pieces of equipment, including a Smith Machine, Rower and Back Extension Machine, are expected soon. Stop in and check out the Fitness Center, and if you join in January pay a \$0 joiners fee! Contact or visit the Wellness Center with any questions 617-286-1220.

Childwatch, also known as babysitting, was introduced in 2016 and was a huge success! Childwatch has fully qualified care givers to supervise children while family members work out in the Wellness Center or while using Y programs. This January the hours have expanded from 9-1 AM, Monday through Thursday to include 4-7 PM Monday through Thursday. Childwatch is available to children, ages 6 months-12 years and free to Family Members of the Charlestown Y. For more information contact the Director of Youth and Family Services, Chris Ellison, at cellison@ymcaboston.org or 617-286-1220.

Join us at the **Community Kickoff Party** Thursday, February 2, 2017 from 6-9:30 PM at the Blackmoor Bar and Kitchen! Support the Charlestown Y as they kick off the 2017 Annual Fund Campaign to support programs such as an emergency shelter for women in recovery and also support important youth activities! For more information, please go to

www.ymcaboston.org/charlestown

Article submitted by Mary Shipman, Personal Trainer, Charlestown Y.

About Us

The Friends of the Charlestown Navy Yard (FCNY) is an independent, non-profit community based organization dedicated to promoting responsible development, and enhancing the quality of life for residents, businesses and visitors to the Navy Yard.

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Thayer & Associates, Inc.
The Stevens Group
Warren Tavern

Become a sponsor today!
Please contact info@friendscny.org

BENEFITS OF FCNY MEMBERSHIP

Our large membership gives the Navy Yard a strong voice in
the city. Your membership counts.



Become a member today! Go to our new website to join -
www.friendscny.org

Our annual membership runs from January 1 to December 31.

Membership cards expire annually. Each membership payment is acknowledged individually by email and the card will be included electronically in that email. If you have any questions contact info@friendscny.org

We are very excited to announce that this year we are offering discounts to our members from our local businesses. You must be an FCNY member to receive these benefits. Members must show their membership card to receive the discount. If you don't have a member card, that means you are not a member this year. Below is the list of participating businesses services.

NEW FCNY MEMBER BENEFITS

We are very excited to offer discounts to our members from our local businesses. Please be advised that discounts vary from restaurant to restaurant and business services.

Below are the current discounts:

- ***Best Dressed** – 15% off dress rentals, jewelry and accessories.
- ***Blackmoor Bar & Kitchen** – 15% off food.
- ***Danilchuk Auto Body** – 10% off on collision repairs, detailing and routine auto maintenance services.
- ***Decca** – 10% off food.
- ***Pier 6** – 25% off food from November to April and 15% off food from May to October.
- ***SuperShag** – Free private lesson plus 10% off your first package.
- ***Warren Tavern** – 10% off food