



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

February 12, 2018

Contact: Suzanne Besser, President
Beacon Hill Civic Association
617-275-6696

BHCA and City of Boston reach agreement over sidewalk ramp improvements

The Beacon Hill Civic Association (BHCA) is pleased to announce a settlement agreement in its litigation with the City of Boston over improvements to sidewalk curb ramps in the Historic Beacon Hill District. This agreement will provide for the use of less concrete and more brick in the upgraded ramps where feasible. It also will allow for non-standard ramp designs at uniquely historical locations, and the exploration of innovative design solutions. Finally, the settlement also creates a new way forward for the City and BHCA to work cooperatively on accessibility improvements for Beacon Hill. With the successful execution of this agreement, the BHCA has dropped its appeal in the litigation and agreed to dismiss all claims.

“Accessibility is critically important to the BHCA, and we share Mayor Walsh’s goal of improving accessibility for all our residents and visitors,” said BHCA President Suzanne Besser. “Beacon Hill is home to six housing facilities, including elder housing, housing for persons with disabilities, and downtown Boston’s only purpose-built facility for persons disabled by HIV/AIDS, along with a disproportionate number of residents over-65. Navigating Beacon Hill’s steep streets and narrow sidewalks presents a significant obstacle for the many among us living with mobility and/or visual challenges,” said Besser.

Beacon Hill also has long been a pioneer in innovative accessible design, as demonstrated by its Temple Street pedestrian thoroughfare, and we believe that accessibility and historic preservation are completely compatible. “This agreement will help make Beacon Hill a more hospitable environment while also furthering our shared commitment to the preservation of our historic resources,” said Besser.

Building on this agreement, BHCA has also established an Accessibility Working Group that will work with the City and the disability community to develop a vision and plan for further addressing Beacon Hill’s accessibility challenges over the next decade. “We thank Mayor Walsh for his continued leadership on this important issue, and look forward to working with him and his team going forward,” said Besser. A copy of the agreement is available on our website at www.bhcivic.org, or can be obtained from the BHCA office.