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Brookline police plan community meeting to discuss recent spate of robberies near BU

Posted by Matt Rocheleau February 5, 2013 04:40 PM

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By Matt Rocheleau, Town Correspondent

The Brookline Police Department plans to hold a neighborhood meeting next week to address public safety issues, including residents' concerns over the recent spate of robberies near the Boston University campus.

Lt. Philip Harrington said the meeting has been scheduled for Monday, Feb. 11 at 7 p.m. in the cafeteria of The Edward Devotion School on Harvard Street. He said a representative from BU Police, possibly the campus department's chief, is expected to attend.

The meeting will focus on other concerns in the neighborhood, including issues related to college students who live in the area, town by-laws and nuisance complaints.

A recent [wave of street crime](#) – a mix of robberies and attempted robberies, most at gunpoint and the most recent that ended in a non-fatal stabbing – has been reported around a concentrated area of northern Brookline near BU's campus, stirring fear among the neighborhoods' residents and students.

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Line on both sides, the C and D. We're near Coolidge Corner. Everybody walks to everything."

But, "Now mentality is children and families are staying indoors," she said, adding, "We've never had a crime wave here before."

Toomey credited Brookline Police and other authorities for the "terrific job" they've done to make arrests.

But, she said she often learns about the incidents secondhand from people who receive alerts directly from BU. And, she said she hopes local authorities can find a better way to notify residents who do not receive the university's alerts.

"For the most part, this is not happening on BU's campus. This is Brookline. We're just as scared as they are," said Toomey.

The town police department often posts key updates and alerts to its [blog](#) and [Twitter account](#).

Both Toomey and Epstein said the key question for them is why.

"Why in this one block?," asked Toomey.

"It doesn't make sense," said Epstein. "What is drawing crime here? Who could know why certain people are coming into the community and preying on certain people."

The crimes have been unusual for those who live on the quiet network of residential streets that branch off Commonwealth Avenue. The area includes a diverse mix of housing – some high-end homes and condominiums that sell for more than \$1 million; some apartment buildings that draw a range of off-campus college students; and some public housing reserved for low-income residents.

"Why can't all of this coexist without crime," Epstein said. "It has for all of these years."

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