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THE BOSTON SUN

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SERVING BACK BAY - SOUTH END - FENWAY - KENMORE

Mass/Cass activist said he was given stay-away order

By Seth Daniel

One of the loudest voices in the new effort to bring attention to quality of life conditions on Mass/Cass – Domingos Darosa – told the Sun Friday morning he had been given a “stay away” order allegedly by Gov. Charlie Baker’s wife, Lauren – an order delivered to his home, he said, by what he was told were Gov. Baker’s personal police details.

Efforts to confirm whether the “stay away” order is authentic and that Gov. Baker and his wife filed it are underway, but there has been no response to the Sun since an inquiry about it last Friday. The Sun has received a copy of the order presented to Darosa by

the law enforcement officers at his home.

However, a video of Darosa apparently being served at his home by two men in law enforcement indicated he would allegedly be arrested if he came up again and dumped needles on the Governor’s lawn. It was explained by the men as a restraining order on Darosa requiring him to be 100 yards away from the governor’s house at all times, and came “for being up in Swampscott.”

“We’re not charging you with it, but we can,” said the law enforcement official in the video, which was posted by Darosa Friday. “We have enough for criminal harass-

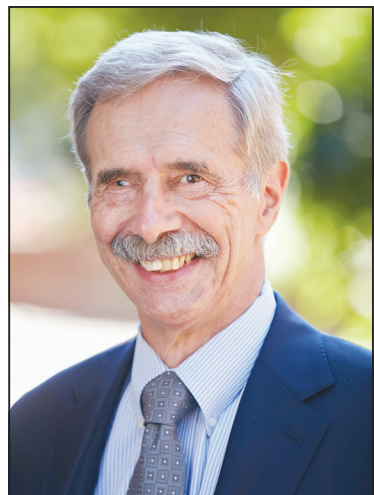
(DAROSA, Pg. 3)

Martyn Roetter at home in the Back Bay

By Dan Murphy

Martyn Roetter had just arrived at Logan Airport from a business trip in Montenegro in 2004 when he listened to a message that would change not only the course of his life, but also the direction that the Neighborhood Association of the Back Bay would ultimately take.

His wife, Joyce, had called while Roetter was en route to tell him that after several months of searching, she had finally found their ideal new home in Back Bay – a 1,900



Martyn Roetter, a Beacon Street resident and past chair of the Neighborhood Association of the Back Bay.

square-foot, two-bedroom condo that occupied the entire fourth floor of a Beacon Street

(ROETTER, Pg. 4)



A rendering of the new, 10-story building being proposed at the current Midtown Hotel site on Huntington Street bordering the Christian Science Plaza and St. Botolph neighborhood. National Development presented the plan to the general public for the first time on Tuesday, and plan to file their Project Notification Form (PNF) in the coming weeks.

National Development outlines Midtown Hotel proposal to St. Botolph

By Seth Daniel

National Development unveiled its specific plans for the long-term development of the Midtown Hotel in a meeting with St. Botolph Neighborhood Association on Tuesday night – a use that will take over after Northeastern students vacate the existing hotel next spring.

Ted Tye of National Development appeared before a special meeting of St. Botolph Neighborhood Association (SBNA) on Tuesday evening to give a first public look of the plan and designs for the Midtown Hotel. That plan includes 325 rental apartments (42 affordable on-site) in a 10-story building that includes 17,000

sq. ft. of retail and 153 underground parking spaces. Additionally, there are a number of improvements to the sidewalk, traffic flow and alleyway proposed around the property.

Tye said having informal meetings with the neighborhood revealed they wanted something that matched the

(MIDTOWN HOTEL, Pg. 6)

BPDA holds South End Urban Renewal meeting

By Lauren Bennett

The Boston Planning and Development Agency (BPDA) held a virtual community meeting on October 8 regarding Urban Renewal in the South End, as the renewal of the plan is set to expire in April 2022.

The agency presented to the community about UR tools and how it is still used today, as well as took questions and comments from residents.

Chris Breen, the BPDA’s Urban Renewal manager, went through a history of UR in the South End and how it has affected certain parcels of land in the neighborhood. He also explained how the BPDA is looking towards the future when it comes to UR.

The South End is one of 16 UR areas in Boston, Breen said, and the plan was originally approved in 1965 with the goals of reducing “blight and

incompatible uses in residential areas, improve the quality of housing with preserved or new housing, provide new housing for elderly, [and] preserve the street patterns, row houses, and parks and squares,” according to a slide presented at the meeting.

Back when the plan was first approved, residents were looking for new things in the South

(URBAN RENEWAL, Pg. 8)

EDITORIAL

RENTAL RELIEF PROGRAM IS A WIN-WIN

The announcement by Gov. Charlie Baker on Monday of a \$171 million package of programs that will help renters stay in their homes comes as welcome news for both tenants and landlords alike.

Housing insecurity never is a good thing both for individuals and society-at-large, but that is especially true amidst a pandemic, when overcrowded shelters could become a breeding ground for the coronavirus.

With the state's moratorium on evictions set to expire at the end of this week, the need to provide relief for renters, many of whom have been affected by the decline in the need for their services in the hospitality industry (hotels, restaurants, and travel), is immediate and necessary to avoid a societal and humane catastrophe for tens of thousands of families across the Commonwealth.

The governor's plan also comes as good news for landlords for whom evicting a tenant for non-payment always is a last resort. Although the big real estate companies that own and manage thousands of apartments probably could get by with an increase in defaults on rents, the small landlords, who have just a few apartments and who need the monthly rent in order to pay their mortgages, would be facing financial disaster without a relief package.

Although some may question whether the \$171 million is enough to get everybody to the other side of the pandemic -- and quite frankly, it probably won't be -- it nonetheless is a good start that can be supplemented as circumstances warrant in the future.

Gov. Baker's rental relief program comes as good news for all of us. We trust the legislature will join in, and perhaps even augment, what the governor has proposed.

MASK UP AS WE APPROACH WINTER

The wonderful weather we enjoyed for much of this past weekend certainly was welcome as we approach the darker and colder days that lie ahead.

However, make no mistake about it: Winter is coming, and so is the need for all of us to be extra-vigilant about taking precautions to ensure the health and safety of ourselves and our loved ones in the months ahead.

This means that wearing masks, not gathering in large groups, and always maintaining physical distancing become crucial measures that all of us easily can follow in order to avoid spreading the coronavirus.

We were struck by a statistic from the CDC that we saw the other day concerning the state of Arizona. COVID-19 cases in Arizona spiked 151% after a statewide stay-at-home order expired, but then dropped precipitously by 75% after local mask mandates were put into effect.

Each of us has the ability to stay safe amidst a pandemic if we just follow a few simple rules -- wearing masks, avoiding crowds, washing our hands frequently, and staying at least six feet apart from others when out in public.

Admittedly, this is not an ideal way to lead our lives. But with 215,000 of our fellow Americans already dead, the only way we can avoid doubling that number in the months ahead is if we adhere to these common-sense measures at all times.



APPLE PICKING TIME, WILL MAKE YOU FEEL JUST FINE

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

BATHROOMS ON THE COMMON, PLEASE

Dear Editor,

The lack of 24/7 bathrooms on the Boston Common and at Copley Square continues to be a serious public health problem which affects homeless people who sleep outside as well as the many people and tourists who enjoy these beautiful parks. Because of Covid 19 we need to have public bathrooms open 24/7 more than ever. Many homeless people formerly used the bathrooms at the Copley Library which has been closed since March. Hotels will not let non-guests use the facilities. Six weeks ago, I thought getting some 24/7 bathrooms to these very busy locations would be a simple thing. I advocated and wrote to the mayor, the city council, Parks and Recreation, the Massachusetts Public Health Commission, the governor and many others a number of times. I got very few responses but still no 24/7 bathrooms -- or porta potties. I got bounced from one city department to another with no success and they were clear that "it's not something we do."

Actually, there already are some great bathrooms on the Common: at The Frog Pond and at the Visitors Information Center. However, the City of Boston doesn't manage them. The Frog Pond bathrooms are managed by the Skating Club of Boston and close at 4 PM. It would be great if they would stay open later or all night. The Visitors Information Center on the Common is managed by the Greater Boston Convention and Visitors Bureau. Their bathrooms reopened in early September, but only from nine to three and are closed all day Monday.

Clearly we need to advocate for longer hours at these existing bathrooms, as well some porta-potties on the Common and at Copley as soon as possible. I believe that the city should collaborate with the Skating Club and the Greater Boston Convention Bureau and provide funding so they can extend their hours and hire the staff needed to maintain and supervise these bathrooms. I also believe it's possible to use porta-potties in a safe and clean manner.

Maria Termini

MBA CHARITABLE FOUNDATION SOCIAL MEDIA CAMPAIGN

Dear Editor,

Thank you for all those who participated in the MBA Charitable Foundation Social Media Campaign. Your votes helped us distribute funds to various agencies who have worked endlessly in supporting those affected by the COVID-19 pandemic across the Commonwealth.

Each campaign awarded \$5,000 to six organizations. All selected organizations received a base of \$500 and we used your input and the general public to allocate the remaining \$2,000. Here is a review of the September campaign:

- Boston Health Care for the Homeless - \$550
- Bread of Life, \$1,650
- Friends of Boston's Homeless - \$700
- Greater Boston Food Bank - \$550
- Project Hope - \$1,050
- Boston Resiliency Fund - \$500

Daniel Forte
Massachusetts Bankers
Association

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GUEST OP-ED

Our future depends on a solution for the Methadone Mile

By Councilor Frank Baker

There is a very alarming trend growing in Boston. We have the famous “Methadone Mile” in our city and the conditions in this area – known as “Mass and Cass” – are worsening. As a life-long resident of this amazing city, I find myself saddened. The conditions in this area are terrible. But at the same time, I find myself motivated and driven to help fix this before it turns into the same situation affecting some West Coast cities. We need to do something.

If COVID has taught us anything, it is that we need to take serious and substantive action on corrosive issues...or they will grow beyond our capabilities. For years, Mass and Cass has been home to a great deal of vagrancy and drug use —

and residents there say it’s only gotten worse, leading to recent neighborhood protests over the continued devolution in the area and our own legislative inaction. We need leadership on this, and we need to act with a stepped-up sense of urgency. In order to enact the right solution, we have to open our eyes to the fact this situation was polluting our streets and endangering our children well before anyone on the “Methadone Mile” knew what COVID was.

There are more people coming in, however there are fewer people seeking treatment. They are coming there seeking a safe harbor for their addiction. This goes beyond just drugs and addiction. This situation is NOT due to COVID but has in some way been exacerbated by it. We can blame a lot on

COVID, there are more people out of work — more people out on the street.

So...what do we do?

Mayor Walsh believes the situation at Mass and Cass is one of the biggest challenges the city faces. I agree with him. We have acted, but we need to do more. We have opened an Office of Recovery Services. We have a dedicated Mass and Cass working group that has taken substantive steps to provide mobile bathrooms and cleanup crews around the area and we need to implement a command center to respond more quickly and efficiently to the needs and concerns of the people on the street and the people living in the nearby neighborhoods threatened by the sprawl of the problem.

We need a more robust Sec-

tion 35 program and we need to educate as many people as possible about the availability of these programs and resources. If we can utilize civil holds and get courts involved in this process, we can complement the hard-working recovery coaches out there trying to help these people get treatment.

We need to take a serious look at decentralizing services. The red tape and lethargy of a burdened bureaucracy only serves to make a situation like Mass and Cass worse. And in the same breath, we HAVE TO change the way we dispense methadone.

We have approximately 1,000 units of homeless housing in the pipeline, but we cannot just house them. Taking the problem out of our sight and tucking them into subsidized housing will not fix the

problem. It does not deliver the help that people need the most. We need real recovery campuses like Mayor Walsh has been pushing for on Long Island and Shattuck. Long Island had been used as a home for people who were homeless or battling addiction, and the Mayor is meeting resistance at every step in his effort to bring this type of resource back into the fold.

They need a lifeline. If we do not act and provide real solutions soon, I fear it will only get worse. And in an environment where COVID is still afflicting the very highest levels of our government, we need actions and legislation that make things better...not worse. Our future depends on it.

Frank Baker is a City Councilor for the City of Boston.

DAROSA (from pg. 1)

ment. We don’t want to charge you with it but a violation of this would result in your arrest. If you send other people up to drop needles, they will be arrested for disorderly and littering. We don’t want to do this. This is out of Lynn District Court. They can explain it to you. It’s to stay 100 yards away from this address (Governor’s House)."

Darosa and the South End-Roxbury Comfortable Community Coalition have been protesting weekly at the Washington/Mass Avenue corner about the quality of life conditions in the South End, calling heavily on Gov. Baker to get involved in the solution. As part of that protest effort, the Coalition had gone on the road to Swampscott and protested in front of Gov. Charlie Baker’s home. To get some attention to the matter, Darosa said they had gathered needles from their homes and stoops, and left them on Baker’s lawn to make a point about what they find every day at their front doors, he said.

Sunday, Oct. 4, was the second such protest there, and

apparently, Darosa said, it must have been too much for the governor and his wife.

"I understand how she feels; I empathize with her and this is what we deal with every day," said Darosa Friday morning. "I didn’t want to be too offensive but we’re trying to get their attention. It shouldn’t have to be reaching that point to get their attention...When we talk about this being a national issue, being able to deal with it locally gives us a way to think nationally. Boston is a City that trends, but we lack in many areas.

"The issue is to show all of us that pick up poop, pick up needles and watch people having intercourse out our front windows that we have no power and no legal rights to fall back on in our efforts," he continued. "Because he is a person of power and privilege, he is able to go find a way to have a silence for my community. For us, we can’t really do anything but march, send e-mails and make phone calls...I (drop the) needles because it is the most visual way to make the point. I’m fighting gun violence too,

but I’m not going to go put bullet casings on the mayor’s lawn or the governor’s law. That’s illegal. But I know people are dropping needles in front of my house and the houses of many in our neighborhood all the time and we want him to do something."

Darosa said he was served by the governor’s personal detail at his home, with numerous police vehicles delivering the message and scaring his family. That was reflected on the video he posted as well. He said it was unpleasant. The Sun has not been able to confirm with the Governor’s Office or State Police if they did initiate that visit.

"They made it a point to have these guys come see me," said Darosa. "They came right in front of my 11-year-old daughter who sat there and cried and wondered why they were doing this to me."

On the video, a law enforcement officer off camera said, "Message received. We understand what’s going on. He totally understands...But if anyone else comes they’ll be arrested."

Darosa said he would have

rather seen the governor talk to him personally or attend one of their meetings before initiating a "stay-away" order.

"We’ve had the protests, but now it’s the humanity part," said Darosa. "His wife didn’t like it and my wife didn’t like it either, how I was served...He could have just made a phone call instead. My number is public. They could have called me and said the governor would like to have a sidebar on this. He could have come to a meeting that we’ve had. He has been invited to all of them. This is the reaction we get from our leaders to us."

He also said he wants to make sure the leaders don’t try to divide the Coalition between Roxbury and the South End. Already, Darosa said, he has heard of leaders trying to convince South End advocates to focus only on the northern side of Mass Ave. He said the Coalition has been unified to date, and he doesn’t want to see it divided.

"As a black person to hear that from a neighbor isn’t right," he said. "We have to be looking at each other...I’m not

doing anything for a position in power. People are the power. If we can change the conversation in Boston; we can change the world."

Darosa said he had concerns about the paperwork delivered to him, which asked that he appear in Lynn District Court on Oct. 19. He said, having seen court paperwork before, it didn’t appear to be consistent with what he’s seen in the past. He also said the order said for him not to go near the First Lady’s home in Swampscott or her workplace.

"It seems to have a 2013 docket number," he said. "I have a lot of questions. I wonder if this is a real document... It says I’m not supposed to go to her place of work. I never did that and I don’t know that address. Anyway, I would never go to her place of work to protest."

He said those that delivered the letter to him said to call the court in Lynn, but so far he hasn’t had any luck getting in touch with anyone there. The complaint indicates he should be in Lynn District Court at 10 a.m. on Oct. 19.

COVID-19 UPDATE FOR BACK BAY

Positive test rate increases by 40 percent in the area

By John Lynds

The COVID-19 positive test rate increased by 40 percent in the Back Bay and surrounding neighborhoods but the infection rate remains steady according to Boston Public Health Commission data released last Friday.

The infection rate in the Back Bay and surrounding neighborhoods increased 3 percent in one week according to the latest city statistics.

The BPHC data released last Friday showed Back Bay, Beacon Hill, North End, West End and Downtown had an infection rate of 122.5 cases per 10,000 residents, up from 118.9 cases per 10,000 residents last Friday.

Twenty more residents became infected with the virus and the total number of cases in the area increased from 663 cases to 683 cases as of last Friday.

However, compared to other neighborhoods Back Bay, Beacon Hill, North End, West End and Downtown have the second lowest infection rates among residents second to only Fenway.

The Back Bay and surrounding neighborhoods are also still well below the city's average infection rate of 262.6 cases per 10,000 residents.

Last week the BPHC reported that 25,009 Back Bay, Beacon Hill, North End West End and Downtown residents were tested for COVID-19 and the data shows that 2.1 percent of

those tested were COVID positive. This was an increase of 40 percent from the 1.5 percent testing positive as reported last Friday. The citywide average was 4.1 percent.

Overall since the pandemic began 2.7 percent of Back Bay, Beacon Hill, North End, West End and Downtown residents were found to be COVID positive.

The statistics released by the BPHC as part of its weekly COVID19 report breaks down the number of cases and infection rates in each neighborhood. It also breaks down the number of cases by age, gender and race.

Citywide positive cases of coronavirus rose by 3.5 percent last week from 17,649 cases to 18,275 confirmed cases. So far 15,445 Boston residents have fully recovered from the virus and four additional Boston residents died during the week. The total of fatalities in the city is now 768.

On Tuesday at his daily press briefing Mayor Martin Walsh said that Boston continued to experience the somewhat elevated rate of coronavirus activity that we've seen for the past several weeks.

"Positive tests went down, from about 73 new cases per day to 69 per day," said Mayor Walsh. "But testing was down slightly as well, with roughly 1,725 Boston residents tested each day. Thus, the positive test rate remained at 4.1%."

Walsh added that the City continues to focus on multilingual outreach and expanded testing and health care access in communities across the city.

ROETTER (from pg. 1)

townhouse in close proximity to the Public Garden – and that they had first dibs on it, since the property wasn't scheduled to come on the market for another week.

After the youngest of their three children, Natasha, went off to college at Duke University in 2002, Roetter had willingly obliged to his wife's wish that they leave Lexington to move into the city, and they had spent the previous months looking at condos in the Back Bay and South End, but to no avail up until this point.

The Roetters had settled in Lexington in 1983 – eight years after they married at the Lyman Estate in Waltham. Martyn, who was born in Scotland and raised in London before emigrating from the UK to the U.S. at age 25 on a work visa, met Joyce, a Massachusetts native and his future wife, in the early '70s when they were both working at the Cambridge offices of the international management consulting firm, Arthur D. Little.

In April of 2005, the Roetters moved into their new home on Beacon Street, which, Martyn said, immediately prompted them to think: "How do we meet people?"

And it was then that Martyn, who would go on to chair NABB for three years from September of 2017 until last month, first heard about the organization.

He and Joyce started off attending wine tastings and participating in wine-and-dine groups hosted by NABB, but Roetter said he didn't become "seriously involved" in the organization until he learned of Fisher College's plan in 2013 to substantially expand its base on Beacon Street – just one block away from his new home.

Roetter soon agreed to serve on NABB's Executive Committee as his duties and responsibilities within the organization grew, but he said it still came as a surprise about four years ago when Vicki Smith, the organization's chair at the time, asked him to succeed her in that role.

"It was very flattering, but I wasn't expecting it," Roetter said. "My first thoughts were:

I haven't been around all that long, and what does it entail?"

Roetter credits Howard Kassler, another former NABB chair who died last year at age 88, for ultimately convincing him to accept the offer.

"He said, 'you have a lot to gain and nothing to lose, and you'll learn an awful lot, if you take on this job,'" Roetter recalled, "but obviously how much you learn is based on how much you put into it."

Admittedly, Roetter said he had "some apprehension" because he didn't know how he'd be received when he officially assumed the reins of NABB during the organization's 62nd annual meeting in September of 2017 at the Algonquin Club.

"What I said then and at the first board meeting I chaired, which has come back to me in spades, is that the chair's job is to set a tone to represent NABB to the outside world, and to get to know as many of the important things as possible," he said.

Roetter has also made it a high priority to forge close relationships with the neighborhood's elected officials, and he said, "We've been fortunate that they've been extremely helpful in particular circumstances we've come across."

For instance, Roetter credits State Rep. Jay Livingstone for helping to draft the good-neighbor agreement when Hexagon Properties purchased the Algonquin Club two years ago.

Sen. William Brownsberger "pays a lot of attention to NABB," as does State Rep. Jon Santiago, who, along with Rep. Livingstone, recently advised the group on how to navigate the process surrounding the state's proposed sale of the Hynes Convention Center, Roetter said, while City Councilors Kenzie Bok and Ed Flynn also keep in close contact with the organization.

Moreover, first-term City Councilor Julia Mejia attended this year's virtual NABB annual meeting at the group's invitation, Roetter added, and City Councilor Michelle Wu was the guest speaker at its 2018 annual meeting.

"We have developed better

and wider relationships with our elected officials over the last three years that I hope will keep us in good stead," Roetter said.

During his time as chair, Roetter also worked to strengthen relations with ADCO (Alliance of Downtown Civic Organizations), as well as with other city neighborhoods.

"It's very important to be connected not only with our immediate, adjacent neighbors, but also with other ones that have different priorities," Roetter said.

Yet at the same time, affordable housing, climate change and homelessness have emerged as issues that impact not only Back Bay, but every neighborhood across the city.

"Our responsibility is to the neighborhood, and at the same time, the neighborhood isn't immune to things going on in the wider world...so how do we balance it?" Roetter said.

Elliott Laffer, who replaced Roetter as chair of NABB during the group's 65th annual meeting on Sept. 16, describes Roetter as a "deep thinker who worked very hard to expand NABB's relationship with ADCO."

"Martyn was involved in every significant issue that NABB has dealt with in the past three years in his role as chair," Laffer said. "He also worked through the difficulties from COVID and remote meetings and all of that, and he took a leading role in our relationship with Fisher College, which is very important."

And in the end, Laffer added: "Martyn took an organization that was in good shape and left it in better shape that he found it, which I think is what we all try to do."

But even though Roetter has relinquished his seat as chair of the organization, don't think for a minute that he is stepping away from NABB entirely.

"I'm not washing my hands of NABB," Roetter said. "I'll remain on executive committee and the board, and will be paying particular attention to our relationship with elected officials and other neighborhoods in the city."

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Latest plans for new Josiah Quincy Upper School unveiled

By Dan Murphy

The latest plans for the new Josiah Quincy Upper School (JQUS) were unveiled during a virtual meeting co-sponsored by the Boston Public Facilities Department and Boston Public Schools on Tuesday, Oct. 13.

The 116-foot, six-story building with an occupiable-roof will be built on the site of the existing Boston Chinese Evangelical Church building at 249 Harrison Ave., according to members of the design team. The ground floor would be home to an open cafeteria, a library for the school and academic learning time in physical education (ALT-PE) programming while classrooms, as well as spaces for the orchestra and band, would occupy the upper levels. Construction is scheduled to start next summer, and the school is slated to open for the 2024-25 academic year.

Matt LaRue, a senior associate with HMFH Architects of Cambridge, said the site of the new school sits on the “historical gate that connected the Shawmut peninsula to the mainland,” as well as “the main thoroughfare connecting Colo-

nial Boston to mainland that is Washington Street today.”

LaRue added: “This is an important opportunity to revitalize a stretch of Washington Street that needs it today.”

Also, LaRue said the project wouldn’t adversely impacting frontage on Harrison Street, as well as the historic residences on Pine Street.

“Pine Street is an opportunity for vegetation to improve the street experience there,” he said, adding that “pockets” of landscaped space would be created along that street.

(One change from the earlier iteration of the project unveiled in June is that cafeteria and loading dock have been moved to the south side to mitigate the impact on Pine Street.)

The Marginal Road sidewalk, LaRue said, would also be widened to incorporate a bike lane, and while street parking would still be available there, Marginal Road would also be where deliveries to the school take place.

As far as aesthetics of the new building go, Rohn MacNulty, senior project manager for the Boston Public Facilities Depart-

ment, said its 40-foot base portion of the building would be made of brick to match the appearance of the nearby townhouses, although the exterior design has yet to be finalized.

Brian McLaughlin, chief of staff for the city’s Facilities Department, said during construction of the new school building, modifications will be made to the existing JQUS building at 152 Arlington St., allowing the entire staff and student body of JQUS to occupy it as “swing space” until the completion of the new school.

Afterwards, the Boston Chinese Evangelical Church is expected to move into the space, which will remain in the BPS inventory, McLaughlin said.

Next up: the Massachusetts School Building Authority (MSBA) will review the overall project scope, budget and design scheme on Oct. 28, according to Jim Dowd, senior project manager with OPM, and the Boston City Council is set to vote on the funding for and scope of the project before the design-development phase begins.

FORMER CACTUS CLUB SITE LANDS NEW TENANT



PHOTO BY DAN MURPHY

The site of the erstwhile Cactus Club – the longstanding, once-popular Mexican restaurant at 939 Boylston St. that closed in 2014 – has a new tenant.



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PLAN: Nubian Square

Nubian Square ASCENDS Blair Lot Discussion

Monday, October 26
6:00 PM - 7:00 PM

Zoom Link: bit.ly/33JU46j
Toll Free: (833) 568 - 8864
Meeting ID: 160 904 9781

Event Description

Join the Boston Planning and Development Agency for a developer’s presentation on the Blair Lot in Nubian Square. Nubian Square ASCENDS will discuss their response to the Blair Lot request for proposal and answer community questions.

Comment period will close November, 9th 2020.

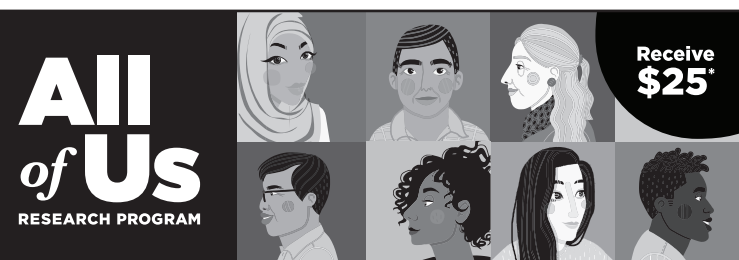
For interpretation services, contact the planner listed below.

Contact:

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Boston Planning & Development Agency
One City Hall Square, 9th Floor Boston, MA 02201
617.918.5493 | kelly.sherman@boston.gov

bostonplans.org | @bostonplans

Teresa Polhemus, Executive Director/Secretary



Why have some communities not been a part of medical research?

You can help researchers develop new and better treatments that benefit all of us.

Many groups of people have been left out of research in the past. That means we know less about their health. When you join the All of Us Research Program, you’ll help researchers learn more about what makes people sick or keeps them healthy.

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*All participants will receive \$25 after completion of their visit. To complete the visit, participants must create an account, give consent, agree to share their electronic health records, answer health surveys, and have their measurements taken (height, weight, blood pressure, etc.), and give blood and urine samples, if asked.

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BOSTON
MEDICAL

Prudential Center Observatory project schedules meeting Oct. 21

By Seth Daniel

A public meeting with the Boston Planning and Development Agency (BPDA) has been scheduled for Oct. 21 to review the Prudential Center Observatory renovation and pavilion project.

The meeting will take place online Weds., Oct. 21, at 6 p.m. It will be the first public meeting on the Prudential Planned Development Area (PDA) amendment. Boston Properties will share their vision for the construction and improvements and there will also be questions taken by the development team.

The Prudential Center

Observatory and Pavilion project proposes a renovation and expansion of the existing Prudential Tower Observatory encompassing floors 50, 51 and 52 of the Prudential Tower, entryway corridors to facilitate access, and the construction of a Pavilion. The Pavilion will be a new, publicly-accessible enclosed gathering space of about 8,200 sq. ft. on the South Courtyard. It is proposed to enhance and extend the public's ability to use this portion of the Courtyard as well as provide access to the Observatory.

The meeting will be hosted online, using Zoom. Attendees must register by going to the BPDA project website, or fol-



A rendering of the newly proposed pavilion on the South Courtyard of the Prudential Center. A meeting will be held on Oct. 21 as the first discussion of the amendment.

lowing the instructions on the meeting notice. The meeting will open 15 minutes before 6

p.m. for folks to join and troubleshoot any technical issues. The presentation will also be

uploaded to the project page one hour before the meeting.

MIDTOWN HOTEL (from pg. 1)

existing corridor and came in under current zoning – and that's what's been done as the project does not need any variances or considerations beyond the normal Article 80 review process.

"What I heard loud and clear is bring this back within zoning and make it conform to what was intended and that's exactly what we did," he said.

"We'd like to think of our-

selves as really great placemakers," he said. "Some of our projects have been transformative. The Midtown project is in need of a great transformation and we're excited to be able to do that. We pay a lot of attention to quality design and we've been found to be good community partners. I say to my staff we're only as good as our last project so we invite you to ask others about our last few proj-

ects."

Some of those recent projects include Ink Block in the South End, which is about to finish its development track with its seventh building now under construction, as well as The Circle development in Cleveland Circle by Boston College.

At the Midtown, National Development is using Architect David Nagahiro of CBT – and they have quickly identified that the site is at the nexus of two incredibly different areas. Those areas include the urban, well-planned Christian Science Center in the front, and the charming, historic St. Botolph neighborhood in the back. They have approached the project early on in those terms, he said.

"These are two very different sides and we wanted to find the opportunity to mediate between the two – one a large urban side and one a modest historic scale," said Nagahiro.

Added Tye, "It is a building with two fronts and transcends two neighborhoods and two neighborhoods that have a very different style. There are a lot of 19th Century brick designs, but we thought we could produce a good face to the St. Botolph neighborhood. We have actually pulled back and used that opportunity to create light and air and made that alley more of a place than a back alley. We see this as having two fronts."

The building is largely designed with pre-cast pieces that appear to be limestone with bronze trim, having a new sidewalk setback to match the other buildings on the corridor, and a stepped back area further up about the fifth floor to create balconies and an aesthetic.

Tye spent a great deal of time talking about the improvements to the sidewalk, the new bike lane, signalization on Cumberland, a service road and improvements in the alley that will prevent trucks from backing up and beeping loudly in the windows of neighbors.

Part of that sidewalk activation will be retail, and many questioned what retail spaces would look like post COVID-19. Tye said they have scaled back the retail in the building and put active amenities on the first floor in place of what would have been retail. However, he said part of the branding of the building is having quality retail options on the ground floor that activate and enliven the street scape. That could take a lot more work than it did in the past with Ink Block or other developments. One thing he said he won't do is put inappropriate retail in the new building.

"If we build a nice high-end building then retail has to be consistent with that product," he said. "I look at Ink Block as a good example of that. We

can't do a project like this and have the retail be pizza, nail salons or a collegey atmosphere you might find further down the street. We're not going to do that here. I'd rather sit with empty space than do that."

There were also questions about the rental vs. condo product, and Tye said he felt there was a demand for new, high-quality rentals in the Back Bay area. However, it also has to do with the fact that National Development holds a ground lease with the Christian Science Church – and don't fully own the land. That can be hard in a product that is for sale, but equates well to a rental product.

A key concern for St. Botolph neighbors is the fact that their view will be changed forever – as the smaller hotel will be replaced with a taller, 115 foot building.

"It won't be the same thing as what you had before," said Tye. "But it will have more light and more air in the alley. We've tried to be sensitive to that, but when you have new buildings that get built, it's never exactly the same as before they were built."

The SBNA will have its monthly meeting to talk more about Midtown and other neighborhood issues in a Zoom session on Tuesday, Oct. 27, at 6:30 p.m.



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November 12 and December 3 at 6:30 PM

Register at www.parkstreetschool.org
to attend virtually.

URBAN RENEWAL *(from pg. 1)*

End, Breen said, and there was a strong focus on senior housing and multi family housing dating back to the mid 1960s.

Breen explained that to this day, many other cities still use UR, including Boston. In the South End, “the BPDA used Urban Renewal tools to protect expiring affordable housing uses and to help create a new parcel whose building will also have 100% affordability” on Parcels 57 and 59, according to the presentation.

Breen also talked about the Urban Renewal Action Plan, which is a “list of objectives that the City Council and the state Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) gave us to complete by 2022,” Breen said.

He also said that the BPDA was asked to create a website dedicated to UR, which has been completed, as well as to put all UR related meetings in a calendar format to be accessed via the BPDA website, which has also been completed. Additionally, the records management system has been

recently switched over to Box, a cloud content management and file sharing service, where deeds and other paperwork are stored and organized for easy reference.

Additionally, the BPDA has to provide a 30 day notice for minor modifications to the City Council and the DHCD. UR is also available for viewing on the BPDA zoning viewer, and there is an inventory of BPDA owned property, as well as Land Disposition Agreements (LDAs). Breen explained that an LDA is “a contract between buyer and seller regarding use of land,” and if UR goes away, the LDA restrictions will go away as well.

Breen then gave some examples of buildings and parcels in the South End that are part of Urban Renewal, including such affordable rentals as Castle Square, Parmelee Court, Roxbury Corners, Langham Court, and others, as well as places like the Boston Center for the Arts and Tropical Foods.

Breen also talked about deed restricted parcels, such as public facilities like the Boston Police

station, as well as many open space parcels like the gardens at 1561 Washington Street, 75 Northampton Street, 108-138 Worcester Street, 561 Columbus Ave., and others, as well as parks like Titus Sparrow and Peters Park.

“A lot of the South End’s open space is due to Urban Renewal,” Breen said.

The BPDA also owns many small parcels and strips of land in the South End. He said that UR is still used because the BPDA still owns a lot of property in the City and the tools can still be used, such as certain zoning and land use controls and housing affordability.

Neighbors seemed to enjoy the thoroughness of the presentation and learning about the history of UR in the South End.

Carol Blair, president of the Chester Square Neighbors asked how the UR plan will address infrastructure changes in the city moving forward.

Raul Duverge of the BPDA said that the federal funding is not really available, and the BPDA does try to address

this issue during its Article 80 reviews for large scale projects. Breen added that if a developer wants a minor modification or an LDA amendment, the BPDA and the community “have leverage to request things like that,” referring to the infrastructure changes.

Resident Shiela Grove asked why it was “good to override the zoning,” as well as “why aren’t the LDAs enforceable if Urban Renewal is gone?”

Breen said that many of the LDAs are more strict than the City’s zoning code, and “The land use is generally pretty different.”

BPDA Urban Designer Alexa Pinard said that she has “never understood” why both the zoning code and UR have control over things like height and Floor Area Ratio (FAR).

In response to Grove’s second question, Breen said “that’s a legal question,” and because of the way the LDAs are written, they have a time frame that says how long they can be enacted for. It’s a legally binding document that states “if a

project goes beyond that [time frame], it says or to the extent of the plan,” he said.

Grove said that she does not want to see affordable housing go away should the plan not be extended beyond 2022.

Other residents thanked Breen and others at the BPDA for all of their work on this topic.

Ken Kruckemeyer said that he urges the BPDA to “pay sufficient attention, equitable attention” to the Lower Roxbury portion of the neighborhood, and Breen said that he will ensure the next meeting is advertised to Roxbury residents.

Breen said that next steps include community workshops, and “many, many meetings over the next year or year and a half.”

The slideshow with all the information presented at this community meeting, as well as the full Zoom video is available for viewing at <http://www.bostonplans.org/news-calendar/calendar/2020/10/08/urban-renewal-community-meeting-south-end>.

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Watson Park looking to secure CPA funding in Eight Streets

By Seth Daniel

The coziest corner in the South End is looking to get a boost from the current Community Preservation Act funding round, with the Eight Streets Neighborhood Association (ESNA) announcing they are in the process of applying for funds to spruce up Watson Park and Little Watson.

Eight Streets had its first online meeting on Tuesday night with a busy agenda that

included Councilor Ed Flynn and a lively discussion on plans to upgrade Watson Park.

“We are seeking CPA funding and the application is due this month,” said Ramy Rizkalla. “In order to get the program going, we engaged landscape architect Jon Pate who lives in the neighborhood. He guided Symphony Park through the process and it turned out great. This park is not owned by the neighborhood. It’s owned by Parks and Recreation. They

have the final say. Any changes would also have to go through Landmarks.”

The current CPA funding round is now accepting applications, which are due this month and will be evaluated this fall. Announcements for funding awards are typically made in January or February for the fall round.

Pate said he has come up with a preliminary plan that focused on the priorities neighbors gave him. That included better safety

by lowering the fence to about 28 inches high, making it ADA accessible, include a gathering space for small groups, and to add composted dirt to help and enhance plantings.

The centerpiece of the design is a gathering area in the middle that is made of pavers and surrounded by a retaining wall that would act as seat walls. There would be new benches and some additional plantings to enhance what is already there. They would also include new concrete pavers to replace the brick path so it is sturdier and ADA accessible. The far corner would include a less-visible gravel path so that neighbors in the back could access the park from their gates, as they do now.

A lowered fence on the perimeter would be installed, and that fencing would also be taken inside along the pathway in Watson to protect existing plantings. Large-scale addition of composted dirt would help to reduce the compaction of the soil and make plantings more successful.

The plan was seen in a very positive way by neighbors attending the online meeting. There was some hope that the lonely southwest corner of the park could get something exciting, but Pate said the soil conditions, tree canopy and slope prevented much from happening there. He said keeping it open also pre-vented anyone from hiding in there, or rats

from making hidden burrows there.

•COUNCILOR FLYNN JOINS MEETING

A highlight of the Eight Streets meeting was the appearance of Councilor Ed Flynn for a short presentation and questions from constituents. Flynn first ex-pressed his support for the Watson Park CPA funding, but the remainder of the conversations centered on Mass/Cass and quality of life issues.

Echoing what Mayor Martin Walsh told the South End Forum last week, Flynn said it’s time for suburban communities to begin offering drug treatment programs in their communities.

He amplified that by saying when he worked in the Probation Department, if he had 80 probationers to oversee, some 60 had come from outside of Boston on transfers from other counties.

“I think Bostonians are incredibly compassionate,” he said. “I just don’t think we can maintain this any longer. I think if you have a case outside of Suffolk County, that case shouldn’t be transferred to Suffolk county for supervision or pro-bation. I’m committed to working with the community on quality of life issues...I think cities and towns across Massachusetts need to do more and not rely on Boston to help people with medical issues and drug treatment issues. There is

(EIGHT STREETS, Pg. 9)



PLAN: Nubian Square

The Roxbury Strategic Master Plan Oversight Committee

Monday, November 2
6:00 PM - 7:45 PM

Zoom Link: bit.ly/30O6fx8

Toll Free: (833) 568 - 8864

Meeting ID: 160 297 4344

Event Description

The Roxbury Strategic Master Plan Oversight Committee was developed to oversee projects that fall under the Roxbury Strategic Master Plan. The committee meets monthly to discuss development and planning in Nubian Square. All meetings are held on zoom and open to the public. For more information, on how to Join, Engage, and Take Action, please visit the website.

Upcoming meetings/Próximas reuniones/Dat pwochen rankont yo se:

November/Noviembre/Novanm 2

December/ Diciembre/ Desanm 7

For interpretation services, contact the planner listed below one week before each meeting.

Para los servicios de interpretación, comuníquese con el planificador que se indica a continuación una semana antes de cada reunión.

Si w bezwen sèvis entèpretasyon, kontakte moun kap planifye a pi ba a, yon semèn anvan chak reyinyon.

Contact:

Kelly Sherman
Boston Planning & Development Agency
One City Hall Square, 9th Floor Boston, MA 02201
617.918.5493 | kelly.sherman@boston.gov

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Teresa Polhemus, Executive Director/Secretary

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Mayor Martin J. Walsh

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City Council holds hearing on housing discrimination, fair housing testing

By Lauren Bennett

The City Council Committee on Housing and Community Development, chaired by Councilor Lydia Edwards, held a virtual hearing on October 13 regarding housing discrimination. The hearing, which went on for more than five hours, covered three different dockets, including an “order for a hearing on establishing a municipal fair housing test program in the City of Boston,” an “order for a hearing regarding Section 8 Voucher discrimination,” and an “order for a hearing regarding discrimination in the metro Boston rental housing market.”

The hearing was split into three sections with three different sets of panelists that answered different questions. The first panel dealt with the current state of fair housing, the second looked at what discrimination looks like and consisted of agencies who give out vouchers, and the third panel discussed what can be done about the discrimination as far as policy solutions and testing for fair housing.

WHAT IS THE STATE OF FAIR HOUSING?

In the first panel, Professor William Berman from Suffolk University talked about a recent July study by the university that found that those who hold Section 8 vouchers in the Greater Boston area are not being provided the same opportunities by landlords and realtors as those who don't.

“I can't tell you how profoundly this kind of thing affects people,” Berman said. “The issue has been with us for the entire history of our country...It's all of us; it's our community and we have to change

the culture so that kind of thing doesn't happen.”

He then talked about the study and how it was conducted. He said that 50 tests were completed by training 100 Black and 100 white testers in completely randomized areas. Race associated names were used for the testers, which came from another academic study, he said. Some were voucher holders and some were not.

He said that they “did find that unfortunately...some of our Black testers got screened out immediately just by their name.”

He said that 86 percent of the voucher holders experienced discrimination, and 71 percent of the Black testers experienced discrimination in the form of “ghosting, questions regarding credit, [and] ability to tour the unit,” according to a presentation from the hearing.

“Some voucher holders were expressly told that their voucher was not a barrier to renting the unit,” the presentation stated, but “in 81 percent of those tests, evidence of discrimination was ultimately found. In 56 percent of those cases, the real estate professional ceased all communication with the testers in spite of efforts on each testers' part to make contact.”

Berman said that calls from “Tyrone” and “Ebony” were not returned by realtors, but “Brad” and “Jill,” who did not have a voucher, were invited to tour a unit.

Berman said that many voucher holders who experience discrimination do not file complaints because they only have a certain amount of time to use the voucher, so it would hold up the process. He said they typically will just take a

They “did find that unfortunately...some of our Black testers got screened out immediately just by their name.”

— Professor William Berman

unit anywhere they can get one, which ultimately does not provide the freedom and choice that Section 8 was intended to provide.

Justin Steil, Associate Professor of Law and Urban Planning at MIT, said that discrimination on the basis of credit could be a cover for racial discrimination, since Section 8 holders have a significant portion of their rent covered for them.

“Addressing discrimination requires public education for home seekers,” he said. He also said there is not enough enforcement or penalty for discrimination in the city, because this it is happening all over the city and state even though it is illegal.

VULNERABLE POPULATIONS, SECTION 8 DISCRIMINATIONS

Kate Bennett, Administrator and CEO for the Boston Housing Authority (BHA) said that the BHA administers about 12,000 vouchers in Boston and Greater Boston.

She said that zip codes where BHA families rent are tracked, and “many of our voucher holders are concentrated in certain neighborhoods.”

She said the BHA is working to make the housing search easier for voucher holders by providing information about certain areas, as well as public transportation and other amenities.

She also said that the BHA is “strengthening our landlord recruitment” as well. “We have a lot of work to do on the supply side of this issue,” she said. The BHA is also currently offering Boston landlords one month's rent as an incentive to rent to voucher holders.

Additionally, voucher holders are being given more time

to find housing if they feel they are being discriminated against, she said.

Barbara Chandler of Metro Housing Boston said they are doing similar things to the BHA, and they administer around 10,000 vouchers as the “largest regional administrator of vouchers in the Commonwealth.” They administer vouchers through the state program as well as Section 9.

“This issue is way beyond the Section 8 program,” Chandler said. She said that Metro Housing Boston is “in the process of implementing a mobile counseling program to see if we can do more landlord recruitment,” and they have seen “an increase in not accepting voucher holders.”

Tim Davis of the City's Department of Neighborhood Development (DND) said that the department is “dedicated to working with sister agencies to find solutions,” and \$250,000 of the police overtime budget is being reallocated to the Office of Fair Housing and Equity.

WHAT CAN BE DONE?

Will Onuoha, Executive Director of the Mayor's Office of Fair Housing and Equity, said that “housing is the single most social determinant” to things like health, transportation, safety, and more.

“Fair housing is civil rights,” he said. He said the office is part of a “public-private coalition” with a selection of agencies, and another test will be conducted. He said enforcement will be sought against those who are found to be discriminatory. As the secret testing commences, information will be collected and used against the “bad actors.”

Andrew Espinoza, Director of Investigations for the Office of Fair Housing and Equity, said that the office has contracted Suffolk University, through its Housing Discrimination Testing Program, to begin this testing. The testing is funded using some of the money from the police overtime budget, he said.

“Suffolk will be testing targets multiple times,” he said. “Based on the July study, we are expecting a majority of the tests to come back positive,” which in turn will cause the majority of the tests to turn

into investigations, and then enforcements.

He said that “bad actors” will be compiled into a report, which will then be shared with the Boston City Council.

Espinoza said that the “goal is to make this partnership with Suffolk a yearly endeavor,” but currently there is only funding for one year.

Also on the call were people from other cities who are implementing similar testing scenarios.

Stephanie Thorpe, a civil rights testing manager in Seattle, talked about the testing process in Seattle, and how the city enforces nondiscrimination laws.

Fred Freiberg of the Fair Housing Justice Center in New York City, said he has been working in the field of fair housing enforcement for 44 years.

He said that Black people and other people of color would experience a slammed door in their face or discriminatory remarks made directly to them, but now discrimination can happen “in a more police and subtle way,” and continues to happen if no complaints are filed and no action is taken.

He said that the Fair Housing Justice Center employs actors on a “part time, as needed basis” and the office uses “state of the art technology in our testing program.”

Frieberg said that he does not believe that the “burden of enforcing fair housing laws” should rest solely on those who are affected by discrimination.

Throughout the hearing, the Council had many questions for all of the panelists and the discussion on this issue is not over. Some questions were answered at the hearing, but others will need following up by different parties. The Council will continue to talk about this issue and work towards solutions that will prevent housing discrimination in the City.

Councilor Lydia Edwards said that she recognizes that there are many people interested in this issue and who have a stake in it. Many other councilors said they look forward to implementing solutions in the near future. The full video from the hearing is expected to be posted to the Boston City Council YouTube channel.

EIGHT STREETS (from pg. 8)

a big need for facilities outside of Boston.”

•BUTCHER SHOP SEEKS LIQUOR LICENSE

The Butcher Shop on Tremont Street is seeking a full liquor license, which is an upgrade from their beer and wine license now. The restaurant is hosting an online meeting for neigh-

bors Thursday, Oct. 15, said President Michael Almond. That process had started before COVID-19, but was put on hold. Now they are resuming the process, he said.

The next event for Eight Streets will be an online Holiday Social on Dec. 8. Look for more details in the coming weeks on that.

ATTENTION TO DETAIL

By PENNY CHERUBINO

THIS WEEK'S ANSWER




The stained glass window in the last clue will be found on the Waldorf Apartments at 41 Ederly Road. In 1912, when it was built to a design by architect Frederick A. Norcross, the building per-mit listed 41 Bickerstaff Street. That had been the street name since 1904. From 1894 to 1904 it had been Turner Street. The next clue will be found in the South End.
Do you have a favorite building or detail you would like featured? Send an email to Pen-ny@BostonZest.com with your suggestion.

THIS WEEK'S CLUE



Real Estate Transfers

BUYER 1	SELLER 1	ADDRESS	PRICE
BACK BAY			
Hooper, James	Montano, Anthony	78 Berkeley St #5	\$739,000
Kern, Brittany L	Erceg, Todd M	36 Clarendon St #2	\$523,000
Donahue, Amy	Childs, Martha B	461 Beacon St #4	\$1,149,000
Xiong, Wei	Wu, Janice	416 Commonwealth Ave #610	\$720,000
BEACON HILL			
Morse FT	3-5 Joy LLC	3 Joy St #1	\$4,000,000
Sack, August	Patterson, Alexandra K	73 Myrtle St #1	\$1,225,000
A&Jennifer Harris LT	Kelton, Elizabeth M	28 Temple St #5	\$1,438,125
BAY VILLAGE/SOUTH END/KENMORE			
Lars T 2020	Lane, Jayne	130 Appleton St #21	\$1,675,000
May, Lisa	Baudanza, Amanda J	150 Appleton St #1E	\$935,000
Webber, Stephen	A P Liebermann T	23 Follen St #1	\$1,675,000
Keutzler 2020 RET	Au Isabella LLC	11 Isabella St #2	\$1,369,000
May, Lisa	Kelly, Dean K	183 W Canton St #2	\$740,000
Erceg, Todd M	Swartz, Richard	17 Concord Sq #1	\$1,650,000
Sherwin, Julian F	Jennifer L Roshon LT	35 Fay St #501	\$799,000
Mackenzie, Margaret L	Trueblood, Jenny R	735 Harrison Ave #W404	\$307,000
Singh, Sarabjit	7 Keswick Street LLC	7 Keswick St #1	\$1,060,000
Georgiev, Teodor	Hornsby, Jennifer	514 Massachusetts Ave #3	\$600,000
Anastasia, Marsha	Pace, Megan E	33 Milford St #3	\$1,650,000
Leve, Stefan	Lynch, Michael J	301 Shawmut Ave #25	\$1,170,000
Shamardi, Sam	Armitage, Marshal	30 Union Park St #205	\$1,345,000
Karaman, Sertac	Guren Lewandowski T	46 Upton St #4	\$1,599,000
Schachter, Maxwell S	Curley, Jonathon P	43 W Newton St #1-10	\$585,000
WATERFRONT/DOWNTOWN			
Marmillion, Jason	Klein, Gabriel T	9-15 Battery St #10	\$760,000
Segal, Samuel A	S&A Offices RT	109-119 Beach St #COMM1	\$720,000
Frazer 80 Holdings LP	80 Mont Summer LLC	80 Summer St #1	\$1,325,000



Virtual Public Meeting

Prudential Center Observatory / Pavilion

Wednesday, October 21

6:00 PM - 7:30 PM

Zoom Registration Link: bit.ly/2GIARtJ

Toll Free: (833) 568 - 8864

Meeting ID: 160 305 7043

Project Proponent:

Boston Properties

Project Description:

This is the first public meeting for the proposed amendment to the Prudential Center Planned Development Area. It will provide an opportunity for the Boston Properties team to share their vision for the construction of an Observatory and Pavilion at the Prudential Center.

The meeting will begin with a presentation by the development team followed by an open Q&A session with the development team and BPDA staff.

mail to: **Nupoor Monani**
Boston Planning & Development Agency
One City Hall Square, 9th Floor
Boston, MA 02201


phone: 617.918.4425

email: nupoor.monani@boston.gov

Close of Comment Period:

11/9/2020

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Teresa Polhemus, Executive Director/Secretary

Councilor Flynn hosts Community Preservation Act meeting for District 2

Staff report

City Councilor Ed Flynn partnered with the Community Preservation office to host an information session for District 2 residents on the Community Preservation Act (CPA) on Tuesday, October 13. This meeting aimed to provide information and resources for residents, civic groups and organizations in District 2 who may want to apply for funding from the CPA.

The CPA provides funding for initiatives related to affordable housing, historic preservation, open space, and outdoor recreation facilities. The application round for the fall opened on October 5, and will close on

November 13, and interested applicants must complete eligibility forms by this Friday, October 16.

Recognizing the opportunities that CPA presents for residents and organizations who want to preserve and improve our neighborhoods, Councilor Flynn hosted this meeting to allow residents and organizations to learn more about how they can utilize CPA funding to enhance our community. In the meeting, staff from the Community Preservation office spoke about the funding application process, the timeline, eligible projects, other related information, and took questions from residents.

"With the new round of applications for CPA funding now available, we want to make sure that our neighbors have the information and resources to take full advantage of this opportunity," said

Councilor Flynn. "I'm delighted to partner with the city and CPA staff to host this meeting so that residents can learn more about what this funding can do for our community."

For more information on

CPA, please visit <https://www.boston.gov/community-preservation>. For questions on this informational session, please contact Councilor Flynn's office at 617-635-3203 and ed.flynn@boston.gov.

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For the Record

CORONAVIRUS UPDATE: Due to public health concerns, the hearings that normally would be held on a week have been postponed or canceled due to the guidance of Mayor Martin Walsh and the order of Gov. Charlie Baker. Some meetings, however, have been moved to an online or teleconference format under the emergency order on the Open Meeting Law issued by Gov. Baker.

From the Oct. 14 Cannabis Board hearing, 1 p.m., online:

•Sira Naturals, Inc.

Proposed Licensed Premise: 827-829 Boylston Street, Fenway.

License Type: Retail Recreational Cannabis Dispensary License

Proposed Hours of Operation: Monday - Saturday: 10:00a.m. - 8:00p.m.; Sun-day: 10:00a.m. - 6:00p.m.

Equity Status: Non-Equity Applicant

Date of Initial Application: August 21, 2018

Date of Filing with Inspectional Services Department: August 22, 2018

Date of Community Meeting: April 8, 2019

Presentation Team:

David Rosenberg, Co-Founder, President, and Board Member
Louis Karger, Co-Founder, Treasurer, and Board Member

Dwan Packnett, Vice President of Govern-

ment Relations and Community Investment

Michael Foley, Regional Dispensary Manager

Christian Regnier, Attorney for Landlord

Yareni (Yari) Sanchez, Attorney for Landlord

From the Oct. 15, 10 a.m., COMMITTEE ON HOUSING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT WORKING SESSION: Order for a hearing regarding condominium conversion protections in the City of Boston. This matter is sponsored by Councilor Lydia Edwards and was referred to the Committee on Housing and Community Development on February 12, 2020.

From Oct. 15 the Zoning Advisory Board of Appeal, 5 p.m., 1010 Mass. Ave. and online:

•161 West Newton St., South End. Applicant: Urike Sitter. Purpose: Allow a tiny oilpress in the Garden Level of our Single-Family Townhouse. For food and beauty oil. Tiniest scale. No noise, no smell, no delivery disturbance of neighbors. I am a stay at home mum. Existing double sink, extra entrance, window, ventilation system, own bathroom, separate door in place.

From the Oct. 20, 4 p.m., CITY COUNCIL COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION HEARING: A hearing regarding the implementation of the #BPS-

Ready reopening plan. NOTE: This hearing is designated for public testimony only. This matter was sponsored by Councilor Anissa Essaibi-George, and was referred to the Committee on September 16, 2020.

From the October 20 BU Charles River Campus Community Task Force Meeting from 6:00-8:00pm: Meeting of the Boston University Charles River Campus Community Task Force to discuss the proposed Amendment to the Boston University Institutional Master Plan (IMP). This Amendment seeks to include 16,280 square feet of leased space at 540 Commonwealth Avenue into the existing IMP for academic and administrative use. The public is encouraged to attend. Register for the webinar at www.zoomgov.com/webinar/register/WN_RTaDvvnMQA2WlpmbjYu6xg.

OUTDOOR DINING EXTENSION

The Mayor announced an extension of the Outdoor Dining Program beyond its original end date of October 31. Restaurants using private outdoor space can continue to do so for the duration of the public health emergency. And restaurants using public space on streets and sidewalks can continue until December 1. The City will also waive application fees for the use of outdoor propane heaters in dining areas. Restaurants will still need a per-

mit from the Fire Department, and safety regulations around their use will remain in place. Restaurants can use electric heaters without a permit, as long as no cords are crossing sidewalks.

FIRST THURSDAYS AT THE GARDNER MUSEUM

Beginning today, First Thursdays are back at the Gardner Museum! Entry is free on the first Thursday of each month from 3-9pm, however, timed ticket reservations are required and guests must adhere to all safety protocols once inside. Visit the museum's ticket website to reserve now. There may still be tickets available for this evening!

FREE BPS BREAKFAST IN SOUTH END/FENWAY

Students who wish to get a free breakfast Monday through Friday, 8:30 to 11:30 a.m.,

have three sites to choose from in the South End and Fenway. This is the BPS initiative,

but other organizations are also serving meals in the area as well.

•Blackstone Elementary School - 380 Shawmut Ave. (South End).

•Boston Chinese Evangelical Church, 120 Shawmut Ave. (Monday, Weds., and Friday only - South End).

•Boston Latin School - 78 Avenue Louis Pasteur (Fenway).

REPORTING WORKPLACE

SAFETY CONCERNS

•Workers in any size organization have options if they feel they are being pressured into

an unsafe situation. Attorney General Maura Healey has created resources for workers

to report safety concerns during reopening. They include an online form at the Attorney

General's website and a dedicated Fair Labor hotline at 617-727-3465. People can also find those resources by calling 311.

HOW TO REPORT A PROBLEM PROPERTY

Since taking office in 2014, Mayor Walsh has made fixing quality of life issues a priority

in his administration. From investing in Public Works to making sure community policing is a staple in every neighborhood, we are making sure every neighborhood is clean,

safe and a great place to live and work in. Unfortunately some properties in Boston

need more help than others, and that's why we are here. If you know of a property that

fits one of the following criteria: multiple calls to 911, one that's blighted or just a general

concern, we encourage you to reach out to your neighborhood liaison.



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